

# Arts Holding Hands and Hearts

## Annual Report 2021



**AHHAH**  
arts holding hands and hearts, inc

# Change

*(Collective poem 7.20.19 from youth in detention at CCYC)*

Nothing seems to matter.

I'm feeling tired.

In my body I feel

Anxious,

Distorted thoughts.

Ten toes down.

The only constant is change.

There's always a point in time

You have to change.

One day I'll be a free man and I will change.

I'm not going to do the things,

How I used to.

It's harder to do good

Than to be bad.

Shouldn't have to suffer for other people's actions.

More chances.

I want help

To change who I am

And become

The person

I know I am

And

Can be.

# Message from the 2020-21 Board Chair

## A Message from Richard Dowgun Past President

Dear Friends,

Thank you for your continued support for AHHAH's mission of serving disadvantaged children and families in southern Chester County. 2021 marked AHHAH's eighth year of operations and although it was a uniquely challenging one, we have emerged from it stronger and with a renewed dedication to those we serve. As you will see in this report, in response to the challenges posed by the pandemic, AHHAH has adapted our traditional programs, created innovative new ones, forged collaborative links with other non-profits, and stewarded our resources.

We enter 2022 confidently. We have an expanded Board of talented and committed trustees. Our core programs – Pop-Up Lending Libraries, classes at Chester County Youth Center, and at Coatesville HeadStart -- have resumed. Exciting new initiatives -- including workshops for adult caregivers and our Cultivating Change program -- are up and running. Finally, although the Covid-19 pandemic caused a net-loss on operations in FY 2021, our balance sheet is solid.

None of these accomplishments would have been possible without the contributions of our founder and outstanding Executive Director Jan Michener, our Board, our organizational partners, our teachers and staff, our volunteers, and our donors. One year ago, Jan Michener concluded her Annual Report letter by saying "Together we will come through this time of great change a stronger, kinder, more equitable and more just community." She was right.

Gratefully yours,

Richard Dowgun

2020-21 Board Chair, Arts Holding Hands and Hearts (AHHAH)



### Our Methods

AHHAH uses multiple intentional strategies (C.A.L.M.) to offset the stressful effects of long-term poverty. Our programs are designed to engage youth in mindful, artistic initiatives, building resiliency, and establishing positive pathways for a productive and fulfilling future.

*Community Partnerships and Programs* connect and engage youth, families, and seniors - creating lasting change in their lives and their communities

*Arts Programming* encourages youth to explore and discover their authentic voice

*Literacy Initiatives* enable youth to succeed in life by becoming powerful readers, writers, and thinkers

*Mindfulness Instruction* improves attention, self-awareness, self-control, and emotional resilience to offset prolonged exposure to childhood toxic stress

# AHHAH's 2021 Board of Directors



Photo taken at AHHAH's 2021 Strategic Planning retreat with Frank Cervone from the Center for Excellence in Child Advocacy as facilitator

**Peter Mike-Mayer, President**

**Shauna Yeldell, Treasurer**

**Sara Getchell, Secretary**

**Richard Dowgun, Past President**

## **MEMBERS**

**Bethany Crane Jacke**

**Jonette Marcus**

**Joseph Pomorski**

**Michael Weiss**

## **ADVISORY BOARD**

**Dr. Kate Henry**

**Kathy Hrenko**

**Peter Nelson**

**Paul Salvo**



# Serving Chester County in 2021

AHHAH's Fiscal year 2021 (from July 2020 through June 2021) was unprecedented.

Because of Covid-19, all in-person classes were cancelled at all the facilities where AHHAH traditionally delivers programming. This meant we lost almost 80% of income from our traditional programs for FY 2021. It also meant that our ability to hold traditional in-person fundraising events was drastically curtailed.

However, AHHAH was still able to end the fiscal year in relatively strong financial shape thanks to the outstanding generosity of our wonderful supporters, and to the introduction of some new programs and new fundraising strategies. AHHAH's response to the challenges of the Covid 19 epidemic has been to adapt, and to find innovative ways to fulfill our mission of serving children and families impacted by poverty and trauma in Chester County.

After a three month pause, in accordance with guidance from Chester County Library System we reopened our PULL stations in July 2020. During the year we added several new pull stations in both Coatesville and Kennett Square.

At Chester County Youth Center we developed and implemented on-line programming for youth in detention.



We also developed and implemented on-line programming for a new audience – teachers, caregivers and others working at schools and community organizations serving youth and families impacted by trauma. The thinking behind this was twofold. First, we intend our classes in mindfulness, stress-reduction and self-care to help participants individually as they deal with the challenges of the pandemic. Second, we hope that they will incorporate the principles they learn into their own teaching and professional practice.

In addition, we reached out to organizations that serve the same communities as AHHAH to explore opportunities for partnerships. These include A Child's Light, Chester County Futures, Revival Productions, Chester County Dept of Health, Friends Association, Good Works, Chester County OIC, Trellis for Tomorrow, One House at A Time, Crime Victims Center, Maternal and Child Health Consortium, GrandFamilies, and the Barn at Springbrook Farms. Together we looked for ways to create a stronger impact for the communities we serve by combining our strengths.



# Growing Awareness in 2021

Over Labor Day weekend 2020 AHHAH held our first on-line fundraising event titled “Labors of Love”. The event featured dramatized readings of poems, speeches, and essays from the book *Justice Restored 2.0* written by incarcerated youth in AHHAHs writing program at the Chester County Youth Center,

Also, from December 2020 through February 2021, AHHAH worked with eleven partner organizations (listed below) on a “Baskets of Love” campaign. The goal of the campaign was to increase understanding of the needs of children in southern Chester County by publicizing the mission and programming of each partner organization to the supporters of all the other partner organizations.



In May 2021, AHHAH held a live celebration for our supporters and partners at the beautiful home of Jen and David Hall. Speakers at the event included Jan Michener, Lele Galer (community arts proponent), Frank Cervone (legal advocate for children), Ryan Derfler (Chadd's Ford JunXion), and Dr Kate Henry.

Also in 2021, AHHAH was awarded generous grants from the Chester County Community Foundation and the Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance.



# AHHAH's New Programs

## Cultivating Change

Cultivating Change is a new program to be offered to the residents at Chester County Youth Center. Participants in this program will package herbs (grown at CCYC) and create spice blends which will be sold at area farmers' markets. They will create and publish a recipe book which includes stories and poems about their lives which will also be sold at the market. Income generated will go into a Restitution Fund (administered by Chester County Youth Center) to be applied to participants' court fees and victim restitution costs, thus shortening their time in the juvenile justice system. This program will teach organizational and business skills including planning, customer service, and handling money. It will also develop gardening and cooking skills and healthy eating habits. Due to Covid, implementation of this program was rescheduled to coincide with the expected resumption of live programs at Chester County Youth Center in late summer 2021.



## Professional Development and Self-Care Workshops

In response to the coronavirus pandemic AHHAH developed and implemented new on-line workshops for teachers and other caring professionals.



*Mindfulness and Self-Care: Compassion Fatigue, Burnout and the Importance of Self-Care.* Trauma is complicated, and everyone experiences it. Being able to identify the effects of compassion fatigue, vicarious or secondary-trauma and burnout are important for educators, facilitators, and community organizers. This workshop teaches skills to manage these forms of trauma and chronic stress and how mindfulness practices can mitigate stress for individuals and create compassion satisfaction in the workplace. AHHAH's Mindfulness Self-Care workshops focus on self-care as an act of self-love and a necessity, not a luxury; while building connections and cultivating caring and compassionate communities to live and work in. Understanding that everyone experiences trauma is just the first step. To create a culture of change and healing, organizations and individuals need to implement trauma-sensitive frameworks that center the embodied experience and create a safe and brave space for EVERY youth to learn and grow.

# Our Year in Finance

AHHAH believes in maintaining fiscal responsibility by making wise and efficient use of all resources entrusted to us. In Fiscal Year 2021 the pandemic presented us with major challenges as earned program revenue dropped dramatically because we were unable to deliver our core live programs at Chester County Youth Center and Chester County Intermediate Unit.

However, we started the year in a strong position, and with the ongoing generosity of our supporters we were able to end the fiscal year with close to \$50,000 in the bank.

AHHAH is a 501c(3) public-charity and is registered with the Pennsylvania Bureau of Charitable Organizations.

In fiscal year 2020-2021 AHHAH's financial results were:

## Revenues

Contributed revenue	\$ 47,508
Earned Revenue	\$ 9,692
Total Revenue	\$ 57,279

## Expenses

Program Expenses	\$ 27,888
Fundraising Expenses	\$ 1,162
Administrative Expenses	\$ 38,467
Total Expenses	\$ 67,517

**Net Income** \$-10,238

In addition to the above, AHHAH received and then used/ distributed a large volume of in-kind donations in the form of thousands of books for the PULL program.



# Appreciation for Our Supporters

The following individuals, corporations, and foundations made donations to Arts Holding Hands and Hearts from July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021. We sincerely thank them for their support of our mission.

## \$1,000 and more

Chester County Community Foundation

Vanessa Dell

Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance

Kerry Harper

Diane Larson

Peter Nelson

Pfizer

Paul Salvo

## \$500-\$999

John Baker

Jill Beach

Paula Brenn

Bethany Crane-Jacke

Julie DiVittorio

Richard and Kay Dowgun

Franklin Mint FCU

Lele Galer

Jennifer Hall

Richard May

Karen Myers

Gregory Sarian

Ray Smith

Scott Smith

## \$250-\$499

Anonymous

Erin Beattie

Mary Bogsch

Betty Bowman

Anne Coleman

Laura Dawyd

Peter Emster

Sarah Getchell

Sherry McCormack

Peter Mike-Mayer

David Morneau

Joe Pomorski

Paula Rind

Shauna Yeldell

Andrea Yount

# Messages from Chester County Youth Center

Dear Mom,  
 I miss you so much. The reason I am still going is because of you. I love you. It is almost Christmas. I wish you were here to spend the holiday with me. I hope you are ok. Even though you are no longer here, I will do what you always wanted me to do and become. I will get out of placement, I will get better, I will show my siblings the right way to go. I need help. I don't know how to do this on my own. Can you help me get through this? I want you to come back, I know you can't, can you show signs you are still here with me and that you are ok.

A letter from a CCYC youth to her deceased mother. This youth was unable to attend her mother's funeral because she was in detention. AHHAH staff helped her to express her feelings.

DEAR JAN / AHHAH, JESS, ZANDRA, HEATHER, JAMILLAH  
 WE WANTED TO SAY THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT, POSITIVITY, AND INSPIRATION THAT YOU BRING TO THE YOUTH CENTER. WE ARE SO GLAD TO HAVE YOU AND AHHAH BACK IN PERSON AND TO CONTINUE THE AMAZING THINGS THE PROGRAM OFFERS.

Darrell Louis Nadia  
 Jacquan Aaida  
 Bream M Charlay  
 Thx for The food C1955  
 Amirahmpen  
 Aidan Kristopher  
 Derek CAMOS  
 BenH  
 Thank you!

ALL CCYC STAFF



A thank you note to AHHAH from CCYC staff

**NEGATIVE**

BLOATED  
 STUCK HERE  
 TIRED  
 FATHER FAT  
 HEAD HURTS  
 BACK HURTS  
 SKIN SUCKS  
 COLD

**POSITIVE**

Having fun  
 my doggy  
 still alive  
 school / I'm happy  
 when I home  
 the sun is out  
 friends I have  
 getting better  
 better school  
 going ahead

