



ACTS HOLLAND

ARTS. COMMUNITY.
TEACHING. SERVING.

2023 YEAR-END UPDATE



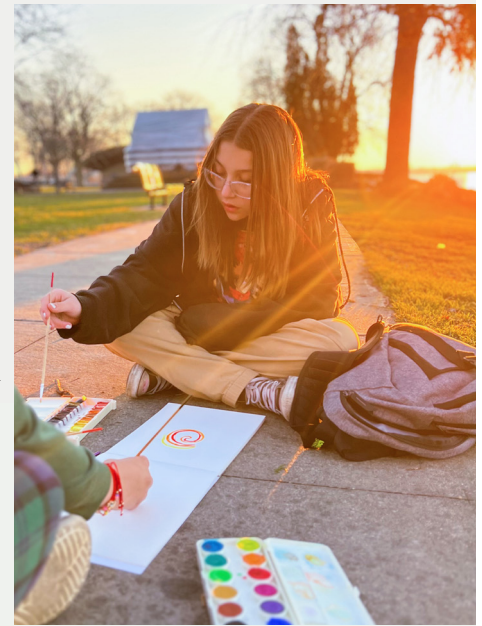
OUR DAILY MISSION

As the year comes to a close, it's the right time to reflect on our WHY. Why do we work with kids of so many ages? Why do we mentor and employ teen leaders from within ACTS instead of hiring a part-time local college student? Why do we value the arts, outdoors, and relational connection so much? It all reflects back to our three E's.

Our motivation everyday in our work with the children of ACTS is to welcome and appreciate them, to see and support them in all the fullness of what's happening in their lives, and to leave them better than we found them that day, as our time together draws to a close.

EMBRACE, EQUIP, & EMPOWER is not just the long-term journey or goal, it's a daily practice as well. There is compassion, intentionality, and action in gently welcoming, seeing, and then sending our kids each day.

Each day, in every season, we get the opportunity to meet a child (whether they are 4 or 14) with warmth and acceptance. We have the chance to listen to them and to intuit what they need most. That might be a hearty snack, help on a big research project, or someone to just sit with them and remind them that they are loved and valued, not for anything they have done, but just because they exist. And we get to deepen connections, discern gifts, and make available



ways they might share them. We pour into them as we create safe space for them to begin pouring into one another.

Every new day is a chance to live into our mission. From the top down, from the leaders to the littlest buddies, we each lean into either BEING or RECEIVING (often both!) the tangible support and love in action that is: EMBRACE, EQUIP & EMPOWER.

2023 HIGHLIGHTS

- Employed 6 Students
- Peace Camp
- Adventure (Surf) Camp
- Back-to-school event with 50+ students
- Printmobile Summer Celebration
- 1 High School Graduation
- New ACTS Community Garden
- Started Studio Art Night



ADVENTURE & PEACE CAMPS

This summer was bookended by week-long Peace and Adventure Camps. Each year we have the great privilege to work with First Presbyterian Church here in Holland to put on and attend Peace Camp. Our kids (and dozens others from our community) spend a week learning about how we can live at peace with our neighbors, families, nature and even ourselves. Peace Camp is such a great example

of how ACTS is in partnership with our greater community. Ending our summer biking, surfing, and climbing was the perfect way to celebrate a summer of adventures. For over a decade we have been blessed to be a part of Surf Camp with ARC Surf, but this was our first year of their new summer program which now includes biking with VeloCity and rock climbing with Scrapyard and the kids and teens

LOVED it! We will never tire of seeing a child's face light up as they learn a new skill, catch their first wave, or balance on a bike for the first time.

Thankful is an understatement. To our partner organizations, churches and businesses, thank you for making summer 2023 one that we won't soon forget - the kids are already talking about next year!



A FEW FAVORITE FIELD TRIPS

Experiencing the arts and engaging in creation can be very powerful. At ACTS we believe giving kids the opportunity to appreciate art and nature first-hand strengthens connections with one another, to their gifts & passions, and within the world.

Throughout the year our youth had the chance to take a number of special trips, including: Frederick Meijer Gardens, Kruizenga Art

Museum, and ArtPrize. Special moments happen for our kids when we get them outside their usual routines; we help them get outside their comfort zones... thinking bigger, seeing brighter, and dreaming larger.

On our trip to FMG we experienced a profound shift in kids who are usually very high-energy, who love to play and be silly and loud. As they walked in the Japanese Gardens they just went silent. They met that beauty with quiet, humble appreciation and awe - it was pretty remarkable to witness. During our time at the Kruizenga Art Museum one of our middle school boys was so moved by the art that we couldn't get him to leave. Long after the other eight students had walked the galleries,



asked questions, and pointed out favorite pieces, Jeremyah remained. The chance to witness someone's first life-changing encounter with the Arts is something very powerful. It is something the leaders of ACTS will remember for years to come.



ART SHOW 2023

This year it was really important to us that the Art Show included elements that were interactive and community-art based. Our hope was to share the pillars of ACTS: Arts, Community, Teaching and Serving with all who attended. The art the kids had on display was: ARTS. We created an XL canvas and painted in 60+ blank

faces and invited our guests to paint themselves into our ACTS community. This was our tangible representation of and call to join our COMMUNITY. There was a table set up with art materials, printed papers, glue, crayons and more where we made space for people to sit with one another and create. Our teen leaders helped man this table,

TEACHing and encouraging all who came and spent some time there. And finally we had a 8ft panel covering a wall filled with hand-painted affirmations, with the suggestion: Take What You Need. This was a way our kids were able to SERVE their neighbors, families and friends. We are so proud of our kids wanting to make room for this night to not just be about celebrating THEM, but also celebrating how beautiful life can be when we all come together: creating, sharing and serving one another. A special thank you to everyone who came to the art show, especially those who volunteered before, during and after the show!

"I made all of my pieces with a dark sky in mind. I'm in love with the sky because it has no limits. The night sky reminds me of the color purple. Purple is ALIVE, FUN, LONELY, and SCARED all at the same time, just as I feel the sky is too. Purple and the sky aren't afraid to show who they are. If the sky wants to be cloudy or rainy or maybe even sunny... it will be. PURPLE comes in different shades, and they all resemble different things. Some are fierce, some scared, some lonely, some happy and some lively. I admire that so much. So I put these into my paintings so that maybe you can see what I see and feel how I feel."

- Leilani, 8th Grade



Linocut Series

"These pieces are connected because there are a lot of lines and paths going different directions. The lines represent all the things people want and need out of life... The paths they can take and what might happen to them.

The piece 'A Beginning' represents where we all begin. We all start with so much potential, opportunity and life."

- Jeremiah, 6th Grade



NEW WEBSITE!

This Fall we massively reimagined and updated our ACTS Holland website. Now it will be much easier to share the site with a friend so they can learn more about our mission. It will be simple to hop on and see in real-time what our current needs are by following the link to our Amazon Wishlist. And if you enjoy hearing day-to-day stories of ACTS and seeing the sweet faces of our kids then you will be happy to know we are back to posting regular weekly blog posts!

It's a busy season now, but if after the new year you are feeling like you are ready to dive into a volunteer or other support role within ACTS, and would like more information about what that might look like, send us a message through our

contact form. We would LOVE to hear from you! ACTS is praying for people who might want to help make a meal once a month, people who might like to work with youth in a relational role, and people who would commit to helping behind the scenes in a communications role.



Our Family

We aren't a program. ACTS is a family.

We welcome and accept each of our youth exactly where they are. We celebrate their gifts and ideas while honoring

WISH LIST

- Household Cleaning Supplies
- Paper Products
- Meal Prep Containers
- Grocery Gift Cards
- Gas Gift Cards

Check out our website's wish list for more!



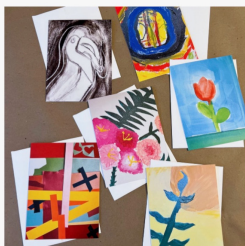
'COMMUNITY' Linocut Print



'A Beginning' Linocut Print



'The Upside Down'



2022 Art Show Prints

ACTS ART SHOP

Every year there are many of you who are unable to attend our Art Show, but really want to own an ACTS original. We now have a solution for you! The kids are excited to share that they have a little art shop now live on our website. Here you will find numbered prints from linocut designs debuted at this year's Art

Show, canvas tote bags with ACTS designs, and even some ACTS originals from the past decade of artists. The kids are excited for a chance to share new artwork more than once a year, so come back and check it out often. You never know what we might be adding to the shop next!