



YOUTH EMPLOYMENT ACADEMY
Education • Employment • Empowerment



arts:street



DECATUR FRESH

**15 Years
of
Empowering
Youth!**



This month, the **Youth Employment Academy** is celebrating 15 years of providing our award-winning programming for underserved youth from marginalized communities. Throughout the years YEA has grown, pivoted and most importantly, listened to youth. With their input, we provide what they need most to reach their education and employment goals while empowering them to fulfill their dreams. YEA started in 2007 as a program of the Denver Housing Authority. Since that time, we have grown into a stand-alone non-profit and in 2013 opened our first social enterprise, the **Osage Café**, to provide hands on culinary training for youth. We expanded in 2016 with the acquisition of the outstanding non-profit, **Arts Street**, providing a unique creative industries incubator for youth, and then grew again in 2021 with the opening of our second social enterprise, **Decatur Fresh**, providing customer service training and fresh food to the Sun Valley neighborhood.

After working with thousands of young people, we continue to see over 200 unique youth a year, following an intensive model so that each youth receives the training and mentorship they need individually to be successful. Looking back, we have seen so many heartwarming, success stories; from congratulating youth on earning their high school or equivalency diplomas, to cheering at college graduations, to seeing youth beam with pride when they get their first job, to being amazed at their career promotions, seeing some become homeowners and starting families of their own. These success stories are even more powerful when we see the challenges and barriers that many of our youth had to first cross to even get to the starting line. We hope that YEA has had some small part in our youth participants lives by providing opportunities, building equity in our communities, and believing in them every step of the way.

A special thank you to Lynne Picard, our visionary founder, to DHA for supporting innovative programming, to our outstanding staff throughout the years who made our impactful programming possible, and our many, many partners, donors and cheerleaders who have been by our side since 2007. We hope to see you along the way during the next 15 years!

Thank You to Our 2021 Supporters!

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Arts Street 2021 Project Highlights

From January through May, Arts Street provided virtual programming for youth attending Colorado High School Charter in order for them to earn their elective credits and also enjoyed watching CHSC's seniors graduate in person! In addition, Arts Street also provided virtual internships for youth through DPS's Career Connect program and then kicked off the summer with multiple in-person programs. The fall brought more classes with Colorado High School Charter as well as amazing client projects with our interns. In addition to working towards outcomes of staying in school, graduating, building job skills and obtaining employment, Arts Street developed new programming around social and emotional wellbeing that was included in all of the arts curriculum so that youth have the tools they need for their own mental wellness. We also continued with our ecommerce site, teaching youth about entrepreneurship, social enterprises and creative industry career paths. [Click here to learn more.](#)



Want to Do More? Visit, Shop, Eat!

Have you been to [Decatur Fresh](#)? Visit our newest social enterprise providing fresh food, multi-cultural cooking ingredients and creative community products.



When did you last eat lunch at [Osage Cafe](#)? It's time to check out their weekly delicious specials!

Do you need a unique gift for someone special? Check out the art at [Arts Street ecommerce shop](#)!



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You haven't missed out. You can still donate and support YEA!

Thank You to Our Generous Sponsors and Donors like you!



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This was the best experience I received in my almost 3 years of high school, can't express enough the growth I feel I received from learning things I never thought I would.
– Erica L, age 16, Arts Street intern

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