PHILOSOPHY

Rock to the Future provides contemporary music education to Philadelphia’s underserved youth at no cost to them or their families. Through music, our programs ignite passion and creativity, support academic achievement, and improve self-esteem. We empower individuals and strengthen communities.

VISION

We envision:

- A community where comprehensive music education is readily accessible to those who would otherwise never experience the benefits of music;
- A community where youth come together through music;
- A city that is passionate about music and the arts;
- A 100% high school graduation and post-secondary program attendance rate for youth involved with Rock to the Future;
- The development of future leaders for Philadelphia;
- A city more culturally enriched with the inclusion of voices previously unheard.

VALUES

Students First
At Rock to the Future, our priority is our students. We believe that using contemporary instruments, infused music theory, and individualized and collaborative instruction will inspire a passion and energy for continued interest in music. We know that music education is necessary for a well-rounded education and advances success in academics, the workplace, and society. Our innovative program will create a better future for students engaged in Rock to the Future, local neighborhoods, and Philadelphia.

Passion for Performance
We have a passion for live musical performance. By focusing on quality programming and staff, and achieving measurable goals within the Rock to the Future programs, we yield excellent performance in other aspects of life.

People We’re Proud Of
The staff and volunteers at Rock to the Future are the strings and sticks of the organization; we could not successfully operate without them. Our staff and volunteers wholeheartedly support the program’s vision and have devoted their lives to the advancement of our students.

Powered by Research
Rock to the Future is not just about rocking out. Decades of research show that music education can positively affect academic and social aspects of life. We collect and analyze data about our students regularly to monitor their progress as well as our own. Using our research in conjunction with outside studies, we are ever improving our approaches and techniques.

Strength in Partnership
We know that connecting with other organizations, businesses, and the community is the path to success. We’re constantly searching for new ways to partner and collaborate, which will create additional exposure and opportunities for Rock to the Future as well as help and engage others outside of our program.

35% more youth served annually
100% college attendance rate for MusiCare After School
2 schools received in-school electric guitar (versus 1 school the previous year)
Dear friends,

These past five years have been absolutely exhilarating! When starting Rock to the Future, I had no idea the impact that the organization would have in the lives of our participants and community. I knew from personal experience the benefits of music education and that youth would be drawn to learning contemporary music. But Rock to the Future is so much more than just learning music. We help youth gain access to the high schools and colleges of their dreams, discover the ability to imagine and create, and find a place of love and acceptance. We’ve seen students transform as they return year after year. This year we had four students graduate high school and all four are attending college this fall. One of the graduates started attending Rock to the Future in 8th grade — 2010 — our inaugural year of programming. Over five years she struggled and succeeded in school, home, and life, continuing to attend our MusiCore after-school program throughout it all. This past August we drove her to Penn State York, where she will be studying psychology. At one point she said, “I didn’t think this was possible — that I would make it this far.” With our support and her determination, she is now a thriving college student who attends leadership conferences to speak on the importance of music education. With the kindness of many people along the way, we have created a first-class organization that continues to grow and transform lives through contemporary music education.

Sometimes it just takes one caring person, one chance, or one opportunity to change the life of a youth forever. We’ve seen that at Rock to the Future. Music gets them in the door. A friendly, caring, and positive environment keeps them coming back.

Jessica Craft
Founding Executive Director

We LOVE What We Do!

Jessica Craft
Executive Director and Founder

In 2010, Jessica won the $15,000 Turning Point Prize from Women for Social Innovation and left her prestigious financial services job to start Rock to the Future. Coming from a family that values a good education and relied on school-provided music education, she wanted to give Philadelphia youth the opportunities she had growing up but with a modern twist. Jessica worked on a volunteer basis for the first two years of Rock to the Future until the organization secured additional funding. Jessica has been featured in The New York Times, at the PA Conference for Women, and on iHeartRadio, and was named Featured Woman in Music at the Tau Beta Sigma northeastern conference. Jessica plays drums in numerous local bands.

Josh Craft
Program Director and Cofounder

Joshua Craft is a Philadelphia-based songwriter and music instructor who has been teaching music for more than 10 years. He worked for School of Rock, Farrington’s music, Major Music, and privately and studied Music Industry at Drexel University. Though his love of teaching and dedication to Rock to the Future, he dedicated his first two years on a completely volunteer basis. From arranging music for weekly band rehearsals to teaching music theory and songwriting, Josh is always ready to encourage, support, and inspire young creative minds. Josh continues to write and perform music in Philadelphia with his band Conversations (opened for The Beach Boys in 2014) and also as a solo artist.

Katie Feeney
Development Director

After graduating from Penn State University in 2006, Katie completed a two-year term of national community service with AmeriCorps working as a campus and community organizer with NJPIRG’s Community Water Watch program. Just prior to Rock to the Future, Katie worked as a policy analyst at Clean Air Council in Philadelphia, where she funded and coordinated projects to implement sound state and federal clean air policies while increasing community awareness via events, media and community outreach. Katie is passionate about music and in her spare time she sings lead vocals in local band You Do You.

Cameron DeWhitt
Assistant Program Director

Cameron DeWhitt is a classically trained pianist, clawhammer banjoist, songwriter, and music educator with a BA in Music Theory and Composition from George Fox University. Cameron teaches music theory, vocals, piano, and guitar lessons at Rock to the Future’s MusiCore after-school program and is leading MobileMusic workshops.

Rock to the Future also has teaching artists and part-time staff members as well as more than 20 volunteers who help on a regular basis with music, academics, programming, and committees.
For a child living in poverty, the unique opportunity to learn to play a modern “rock” instrument is life-changing. Most program participants never imagined picking up an instrument, let alone learning songs from their favorite artists and writing their own music to perform on stage. In addition, by forming bands with other students, they gain confidence and learn to work within a group while engaging in a positive outlet for expressing emotions. These experiences yield positive changes for the youth we serve. Rock to the Future uses music education to improve academics, build self-esteem and motivate youth to stay in school. Our programs range from daily, high-touch programs to annual, low-touch programs, and goals include improved academic grades, reading level, test scores, social behavior, and musical ability. Furthermore, we believe that this type of positive intervention with at-risk youth not only promotes high school graduation but also creates young leaders who will enrich their community.

Youth love contemporary music education and the chance to write and perform their own music. Rock to the Future is the only program in Philadelphia to offer comprehensive contemporary music education at no cost to participants, while striving to improve academic performance and social skills along with real musical ability. Rock to the Future consistently sees program goals achieved each year.

We believe in the power of music education to inspire and motivate young minds.

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Who We Serve

Rock to the Future believes that all youth, no matter their socioeconomic status, should have access to the benefits of music education, cultural experiences, and creative expression through the arts.

MusiCore
- Grades 6-12
- 23 different Elementary, Middle, and High Schools; District, Charter, Independent, Cyber
- 85% of families earned less than $30,000 — many with multiple adults and children in the household.
- 65% Caucasian, 21% African-American, 5% Hispanic, 3% Middle Eastern, 3% Native American, and 3% Asian
- 62% female; 38% male
- 100% of students attended on scholarship

MobileMusic
- Hackett Elementary School
- Grade 4 - 2 classes of 20 students
- North Philadelphia - Fishtown

- Conwell Middle Magnet
- Grades 7 & 8 - 2 classes of 30 students
- North Philadelphia - Kensington

Programs were provided at no cost to schools.

Summer Camp
- GuitarStars (ages 7 - 12), Rock*A*Delphia (ages 13 - 17)
- 54% of families earned less than $30,000 — many with multiple adults and children in the household
- 54% African-American, 11% Caucasian, 11% Hispanic, 11% Asian, 8% multi-diverse, 5% Native American
- 90% of students attended on scholarship

MusiCore Successes 2014-2015

Rock to the Future’s MusiCore program is our most comprehensive with academic, music, and social goals. Students receive weekly and daily individualized help with music and academics, as well as social support.

Academic
- 12% of students failing math at the beginning of the year brought their grades up to a B or higher
- 18% improved their grade overall in math
- 9% of students failing English at the beginning of the year brought their grades up to C or higher
- Student body average of B or higher in all core subjects
- For Philadelphia district students who take the Gates exam, all students are reading at or above grade level by high school
- 100% high school graduation rate and post-secondary education attendance (4 students in 2014-2015)

Social
- 100% of students completed survey
- 94% improved ability to follow directions and ability to create and reach goals
- 90% of students felt they were better at making friends and working with others
- 88% improved ability to think creatively
- 85% improved decision-making skills and self-confidence

Music
- 100% of students excited about opportunity to play an instrument
- 100% of students performed during the student showcases
- 97% of students performed and passed their year-end challenge piece

“I’m constantly learning something new. We’re not just learning about how to play, but also how to read and interpret music. I’m glad that I’m able to learn how to play an instrument like this at my school.”
Events & Press

Events, student performances, and press are essential for organization growth, exposure, and fundraising. Rock to the Future participates in dozens of events each year.

Student Performances

Student performances and showcases provide youth with an opportunity to perform their own original music as well as cover songs. Our students work hard and their performances are a rewarding experience. With the exception of the MusiCore showcase at World Cafe Live — which is a paid ticketed event (although tickets are provided to families in need so they may attend) — all student performances are free and open to the public.

Student house band — our only program area that requires an audition and additional weekly practice commitment — provides Rock to the Future with additional opportunities for exposure. The house band performs regularly at corporate, community, and partner events.

Press

Rock to the Future has never paid for advertisements or press. Through networking, press plans, and social media, Rock to the Future has received numerous earned press opportunities during the 2014-2015 year.

This year, Rock to the Future:
• Performed for more than 2,000 people through six student showcases and 11 house band performances
• Partnered with WXPN for the second year of providing youth programming at XPoNential Music Festival
• Partnered with Young Involved Philadelphia to hold Creative Solutions — a discussion on the troubles within the school district and a showcase of nonprofits that provide youth with enrichment opportunities
• Netted four times the amount of funds at the 2nd Annual Music for All Ball (versus previous year)
• Received local and national press opportunities

WEB PRESENCE

Facebook 1,137 +37%
Twitter 1,127 +22%
Instagram 325 +91%
Newsletter 2,000 +44%
Board of Directors

Rock to the Future has a diverse Board of Directors specializing in a variety of fields including development, marketing/PR, finance and accounting, legal, and youth development.

Board of Directors

Theresa Malandra
Board Chair
Broad Street Ministry

Francesca Gunning
Secretary/PR Committee Chair
Tierney Agency

Carol Banford
Treasurer/Finance Committee Chair
CPA

Brian Sullivan
Legal Committee Chair
Morgan Lewis

Sarah Cho
Fundraising/Events Committee Chair
Temple University

Helen Bradley
University of Pennsylvania

William Mecaughey
Financial Consultant

Jeffrey Barg
Pennsylvania Horticultural Society

John Tigh
North Highland

Rich Neal
Youth Behavioral Therapist

Jeff Buchakjian
EisnerAmper

Advisory Board

Robert Drake
Producer of WXPN 88.5FM Kids Corner and Radio Host

Ellen Farber
Farber Family Foundation
Finances & Fundraising

In October 2012 Rock to the Future was selected as the charity recipient for the Delaware Investments & Macquarie Group Annual Golf Classic and received a one-time, unrestricted major gift of $214,565. This was at the end of Rock to the Future’s second program year. Prior to this award, the organization was primarily volunteer-operated and served only 22 youth.

This major income source allowed Rock to the Future to expand programming and hire staff. With the help from a volunteer from the Arts and Business Council, Rock to the Future developed a three-year strategic plan to use these funds to sustain and expand its mission, while continuing to raise additional funds from a variety of new donors.

Of the $214,565 grant, Rock to the Future used $97,748 during the 2012-13 program year, $87,880 during the 2013-14 program year, and reserves during the most recently completed 2014-2015 year. As anticipated, Rock to the Future’s Statement of Activities for the year ended June 30, 2015 reflects a decrease of $20,629 in 2015 annual income versus that of the previous fiscal year. As discussed above, Rock to the Future planned for this decline as new sources of funding have been and continue to be developed.

Since receiving this funding in October 2012, Rock to the Future has increased individual and major donors by 545% ($34,496), foundation/corporate/community support by 315% ($94,402), and special event income by 507% ($15,297).

Rock to the Future has aggressive fundraising strategies and goals. With secured multi-year funding, continued interest, and new opportunities, Rock to the Future will continue to supplant and supplement the funds received in 2012. For a copy of Rock to the Future’s annual financial review — completed by Snyder Daitz & Co — please contact Jessica@RocktotheFuturePhilly.org.
THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS!

CORPORATIONS & SMALL BUSINESSES
- Barring Eyewear
- Chef Barbie Marshall
- ChocAmo Cookie Cups
- DiPinto Guitars
- Fireball Printing
- Jacob’s Management Group
- Hayden Real Estate
- Morgan Lewis
- MOR Wealth Management
- North Highland
- Port Richmond Savings Bank
- Rushie Law
- SB1 Federal Credit Union
- Tierney Agency
- The Somers Team / REMAX
- Verizon Corporation
- Yards Brewing Company

FOUNDATIONS
- The Alfred and Mary Douty Foundation
- Arbonne Charitable Foundation
- The Barra Foundation Directors Grant Program
- Children Can Shape the Future
- The Clanell Foundation
- D’Addario Foundation
- Delaware Investments / Macquarie Group
- Dolfinger-McMahon Foundation
- Duffine Family Foundation
- Emergency Aid of Pennsylvania Foundation
- Farber Family Foundation
- Hamilton Family Foundation
- Hungry for Music Foundation
- The Leon P. Goldberg Physics Fund
- The McLean Contributionship
- Mill Spring Foundation
- The Nelson Foundation
- PA Council on the Arts
- The Patricia Kind Family Foundation
- Penn Treaty Special Services District Philadelphia Cultural Fund
- Rosenlund Family Foundation
- The Seybert Foundation
- The Sheila Fortune Foundation
- The Philadelphia Foundation
- Subaru of America Foundation

COMMUNITY PARTNERS
- Arts & Business Council of Greater Philadelphia
- Brolk
- Circle Thrift
- Crown of the Continent
- Curtis Institute of Music
- East Kensington Neighbors Association
- Fishtown Neighbors Association
- Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance
- MAD Dragon Records at Drexel University
- New Kensington Community Development Corporation (NKCDC)
- Philadelphia READS
- The Philly POPS
- The Philadelphia Phillies, Flyers, Eagles and 76ers
- The School District of Philadelphia
- Sustainable 19125 & 19134
- Thomas Jefferson Medical Hospital - The Arrhythmias A Capella Student Group
- University of Pennsylvania
- Tri State Indie
- Women for Social Innovation
- World Cafe Live
- WXPN 88.5
- Young Involved Philadelphia (YIP)

In Memoriam:
- Ian S. Haney Memorial Scholarship Fund
  (for Rock*A*Delphia Summer Camp)
- The Mark Webb GuitarStars Scholarship Fund
  (for GuitarStars Summer Camp)