

Project Description Mission statement

re:Active is a nonprofit arts-education program which uses communicative arts training and the publication of a theme-based, expressive magazine about issues affecting youth worldwide as the vehicle for introducing under served youth to jobs in the fields of writing, art & design.

Based in Portland, OR, re:Active's mission is to give voice to youth, worldwide, through a collaborative creative process with professional artists, writers, and designers. The students' artistic voice is developed and strengthened by treating it with the respect that something strong, beautiful, and worthwhile deserves. We strive to create a compelling alternative to the pitfalls of apathy, addiction and violence that plague our communities. re:Active not only develops the voice of the individual participants but also helps introduce them to jobs and processes unknown to them as career options. It is well known that young people who are involved in a creative process are less likely to engage in violent, criminal, or other anti-social behavior. They are more likely to graduate from high school, continue in higher education, and maintain a job. Productive individuals strengthen their communities and often become civic leaders. re:Active operates under the belief that creative development and the ability to see a path for the future is linked to academic and personal achievement, and that personal achievement is linked to community building. What benefits one person in a community, benefits the whole.

Project outcome objectives

- Provide highly marketable job-skills training and career direction for the expressive communication of 25-50 youths per year.
- Expand the students' sense of their own potential through mentorship, career advisement and scholarship assistance.
- Develop participants' creative and civic voices and fostering their ability to see themselves as effective agents of social change.

Strategies and methods to implement objectives Communicative arts & writing workshops (at the center)

re:Active participation will develop critical thinking skills and problem solving methods, enhancing the ability to make constructive choices, fostering an appreciation for cultural and ethnic diversity, and helping develop literacy, as well as convergent and divergent thinking skills. The re:Active workshops cycle every six months. Each six-month series is made up of a fourteen-week session of classes. The workshops deal primarily with communication theory, the principles of good design, writing and editing. If time permits we get into the production of the magazine.

Publications re:Magazine

Because we believe that the quality of student work is greatly enhanced when they are allowed to share it with an authentic audience, we are committed to publishing student works. We use professional editors and designers in our publishing efforts to allow the students' best work to shine through. The publishing process will provide students an unparalleled opportunity to participate in a collaborative process, helping them to understand invaluable concepts such as team building, leadership, respect for themselves and others, and directed cooperation toward a concrete goal while providing a strong foundation for their academic, professional, and personal lives. The final publication will also provide a framework for apprenticeship and mentoring and expose the students to the day-to-day workings of a job in the commercial, expressive arts.

A fundamental component of re:Active is the re-working process that shapes student material for presentation to a larger audience. Students share their work in a supportive and constructive environment through rough-drafts and sketches all the way through production. They will receive feedback from peers and professional staff and volunteers who will ultimately refine the communication and design for an outside audience. The publishing component gives direction to the discussion and provides an opportunity for students to receive feedback on their work. The students' confidence in self-expression and ability to solve and present visual and language problems will increase with each presentation. The publication is the final piece of the puzzle by which we create confident readers, writers, speakers and artists in our community.

Scholarship Assistance/Job Placement/Career Counseling

We are committed to not only placing our youths in jobs with local creative enterprises, and helping them to develop portfolios that will allow them access to higher education but also to counseling and encouraging them as they learn the self-discipline and patience necessary to excel.

Impact on targeted population and/or community at large.

re:Active impacts the community on three inter-related levels: the individual, the group, and the community.

Individual: Each year from 25 to 50 youth will have participated in re:Active. Ideally, a large percent of these participants will either be employed in a field where the skills they have developed at re:Active are utilized, pursuing higher education, or continuing their high school educations.

Group: re:Active encourages an ongoing relationship with students that have participated in the workshop program and anticipate that 25 to 50 percent of participants will continue to work with re:Active in some capacity, whether assisting with or facilitating workshops, working as informal mentors, participating in continuing workshops, or contributing to the magazines.

Community: Re:Active participants will actively further the expression of the information learned at re:Active in their peer groups and families. Participants are encouraged to solicit new students and volunteers through informal networking. Graduates will have a positive influence on their peers, families, and communities. They will all use the skills they have learned to address problems within their communities and personal lives.

Community

Vision for the community This project is being introduced to the Portland community and will serve outlying areas, as well. The location was chosen for a number of reasons. Portland and its surrounding communities are in need of cultural institutions to benefit the neighborhood community as well as individual participants. There are numerous neighborhood residents whose schedules and wide array of creative experience lend themselves to serving as volunteers in an expressive arts environment. We wish to capitalize on the creative talent that lives in the area. The continued presence of the re:Active arts space will help to foster other micro-enterprises in the Portland community, contribute toward the arts-friendly atmosphere of the neighborhood, and inspire arts and cultural tourism. Being a safe place within the community will continue to be a priority for re:Active. We envision a thriving community of productive and creative artists being engaged in helping youth simply because of the introduction of a means to do so.