

August 2023

Welcome! I'm delighted to provide this snapshot of the transformative experiences that Marwen offers to young people. As an arts nonprofit, we are dedicated to nurturing growth by providing opportunities to practice art, engage in creative fields, and join a welcoming, inclusive community. We are honored to share the profound impact your contributions have had on our students and their families.

So much has changed over the past few years. The pandemic altered where we work, how we live, learn, communicate, and even make art. Amid the challenges of our evolving world, Marwen has had to recalibrate and reinvigorate the organization and ourselves. Yet, we are here. We remain resilient, meeting families where they are and committed to supporting young people across Chicago now and into the future.

Art has the power to transform lives, freeing the immense potential of every individual. Over the past several years, your generosity has enabled us to deliver innovative programming, career and educational counseling, and resources to thousands of young people—in particular to those affected by financial or systemic barriers. Thanks to donors such as yourself, all Marwen offerings are provided at no cost to the young people and families we serve.

Fostering Creative Exploration: Through our wide range of courses and programs, Marwen provides an inclusive space for young artists to explore their creativity. Our instructors, who are practicing artists themselves, guide students through disciplines that include painting, sculpture, photography, 3-D modeling, digital media, and more. By fostering a supportive environment that embraces joy, promotes exploration, and encourages hope, we have witnessed tremendous growth in our students' skills and self-confidence.

Amplifying Voices: Marwen believes in the power of art to amplify diverse voices and perspectives. We actively champion the importance of representation, respect, and inclusivity within the arts. Through partnerships with local schools and organizations, we have expanded our reach, enrolling young artists from every one of Chicago's 77 neighborhoods to share their unique stories and experiences.

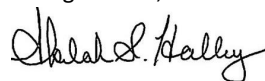
Building Life Skills: Beyond artistic development, Marwen recognizes the invaluable life skills that art develops. Arts participation has been proven to have a profound impact on the academic, social, and emotional lives of young people. However, while art's transformative impacts have long been recognized, its place in K-12 education has become increasingly tenuous, especially for individuals affected by financial or systemic barriers. That's where Marwen—and you—come in. Through our programs, students hone critical thinking, communication, and collaboration skills. Young people learn to navigate challenges with creativity and resilience, equipping themselves with essential tools for a successful adulthood.

Cultivating Community: Marwen understands the power of community and the impact of art in bringing people together. We actively engage families and community partners in our mission, fostering a sense of belonging and collective responsibility. Our exhibitions not only celebrate our students' achievements, but also spark meaningful conversations and connections within the wider community. Chicago has a civic soul. Marwen nourishes that soul by promoting the importance of art in society, participating in the city's art community, and supporting the creative lives of young people.

Your Support Matters: None of these accomplishments would have been possible without the unwavering support of our generous donors as well as the families who entrust us with the education and well-being of their young artists. Your contributions have directly transformed lives, creating a ripple effect that extends far beyond our studio walls. Together, we are nurturing the next generation of creative thinkers, innovators, and leaders.

As you look through this report, we invite you to witness the vibrant stories and inspiring testimonials of our young people. Thank you for being an integral part of Marwen's journey. With your continued support, we will inspire countless more young artists to grow, glow, dream big, and create a luminous future.

With gratitude,



Akilah Halley, Executive Director