Cathedral Arts Project recognized in top 50 among thousands of arts programs

After more than a quarter century of providing quality arts education – including dance, music, theatre and the visual arts – the Cathedral Arts Project is more important than ever for children who otherwise would not have access to the arts.

Founded by Gail Weltsek and a small group of parishioners at St. John’s Cathedral in 1993, CAP began with one dance class for 10 students at the former Community Connections transitional housing facility.

Thanks to a principal who heard about the first dance program and wanted something similar in their school, CAP eventually responded to a pent-up demand for arts education in Duval County Public schools and is now offered at 27 schools and several community centers each year, said the Rev. Kimberly Hyatt, president and CEO since 2002.

CAP’s program portfolio includes school day and after-school instruction, arts integration and Camp Encore, a summer camp which exposes children to all the art forms. All the programs ensure students see the possibilities for all the arts and appreciate the importance of public investment in the arts in their future.

“We’ve been recognized by the President’s Committee on the Arts and the Humanities as one of the best arts and humanities-based programs for youth in the country,” Hyatt said.

The Cathedral Arts Project will celebrate its 15th annual Spring for the Arts, Friday, April 26, at the River Club. CAP’s signature fundraising event, featuring performances by current CAP students, has contributed more than $28,000 in scholarships and awards for three consecutive years.

“Each year, our Spring for the Arts event has reached new heights,” said Hyatt. “It opens up a new world for them – even beyond the arts – with educational opportunities.”

Pop-up goes permanent on Park Street

A new woman’s clothing boutique in the Park and King retail corridor didn’t take long to go from pop-up to permanent. After Bryanetta Humphrey opened Talk Pop-up last year; this year it was held March 3 at the Grand Rose Ballroom.

“Talk Pop-up is more important than ever for the visual arts – the Cathedral Arts Project should be a great source of pride for Jacksonville,” said Humphrey. “Cathedral Arts Project was founded in 2009 in Atlanta and Kansas City and launched the Prom Project to assist high school teen girls who are unable to financially afford the luxury of the perfect prom. The Jacksonville Chapter’s inaugural event was held at Sandalwood High School last year; this year it was held March 3 at the Grand Rose Ballroom.

Avondale realtors hold plant sale, raise funds for nonprofits

A rainy day didn’t deter the team at Coldwell Banker Vanguard Realty from beautifying the Avondale neighborhood with its inaugural #BeyondHome Plant Sale March 2. Sponsored by Plant Place Nursery, the event brightened up the Shops of Avondale and generated funds that will be granted back to local charitable organizations through CBV Cares.

High school girls get their hair styled by Jamie Picciarelli, left, and Sheeka Renee, right, from The New Corner Salon, at Prom Project: More Than a Dress.

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