

# CULTURAL ARTS COALITION

Annual Report | 2023-24



**Lil Jake performs at the 44<sup>th</sup> Annual 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue Arts Festival**

## SCIENCE CLUBS & BUS

We celebrate our 10<sup>th</sup> year of providing Science Clubs in East Gainesville. We were able to continue to provide hands-on activities that were educational as well as fun. Our theme continues to be "Science is Fun".

For school year 2023/24, CAC served Caring and Sharing Learning School, Passage School, Partnerships for Strong Families, George Washington Carver Club at the Wilhelmina Johnson Center, Resilience school, and Saint Barbara School. We had more than 100 students to participate weekly, biweekly and monthly.

Our volunteers provided exciting and mentally stimulating activities from building solar ovens to building solar cars. They learned biology, physiology and chemistry from their garden. Our volunteers were a combination of students, retirees, community leaders and individuals who had an opportunity for our members to learn of natural sciences such as Sierra Club, a nationally known environmental group.

Our Science Bus visited schools in Gainesville and Bradford county and Hawthorne. The bus also participated in Science Night at Parker Elementary and Howard Bishop, Santa Fe Zoo, and at Santa Fe College Safety Training Center

### George Washington Science Club

This club had 90% attendance from October through May. This club continues to have a garden where they learned biology, physiology, entomology and other Sciences. From their plants they harvested ingredients they used in preparing



meatless chili meal, herbs for cremes they made and food for their worm composting bend. Club members continue to measure and record worms from their bend that has been going for more than 3 years. This club also enjoyed special activities ie field trips (including the Museum of Natural History





to celebrate Black History Month., their Annual Sleepover, Millhopper, and Sweetwater Park.

### Earth Day “Plastics vs The Earth”



Earth Day activities were especially great this year. We once again had a beautiful program at Caring and Sharing. Students again served as MCs, performing dances and songs as well as poetry. Winners of the essay contest were presented with cash prizes along with Certificates. Our special guests were County Commission Chair Mary Alford and City Commission Desmon Walker, Circuit Judge Gloria Walker, State legislator Yvonne Hinson, Chuck Chestnut County Commission, Stephen Hoffstetter Environmental Protection Department Director, and Santa Fe President Dr. Paul Broadie.

Tom Kay Director Alachua Conservation Trust attended and again provided trees to plant on the campus for the 4<sup>th</sup> year. He and teachers assisted students in planting trees.

In addition to our Essay Contest for Earth Day Celebration at Caring and Sharing CAC sponsored an Earth Day Contest at Mawuka High School for girls in Ho, Ghana. The winners were announced at a special assembly at the school.

### Internship Pilot

Cultural Arts Coalition launched its Teen internship, “Mike May Environmental Internship Program” in January with 6 teens. These teens spent 10 to 12 hours a week every 3 weeks. Sites our interns served were Florida



Museum of Natural History, Repurpose/Reuse Planet, Alachua County Solid Waste, Nicoya Farm, Alachua County Environmental Protection, CAC Science Clubs and Community Weatherization Coalition. At the end of the program CAC met with Site coordinators who were very positive about

experiences with the interns. They all felt they needed more time with the students. The students were very positive about their experiences and the parents were glad their youth had this experience. This project was possible due to donations.

### **EMPOWER Coalition**

This past year CAC has become very much involved in the EMPOWER Coalition. This is a group made up of City County, Santa Fe College and Community organization representatives.

The purpose of this group is to influence the community in moving towards 100% clean energy. This is being done through weatherization, Solar installation and Green Jobs.

There are three neighborhoods inclusive of this initial work that fall into underserved neighborhoods and energy burden neighborhoods. These neighborhoods are Duval, Springhill/Sugarhill, and SWAG.

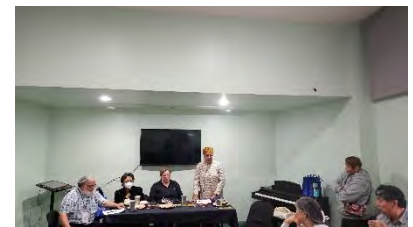
CAC has been involved in hosting 3 Outreach events in these neighborhoods this past year. A pilot project of putting solar panels on a municipal building and having those savings be a part of a community fund that would help to weatherize homes in our designated neighborhoods.

An initial grant has been given to begin repairs upgrades in our neighborhoods. Community Weatherization and Rebuilding together are working in partnership with CAC.



## RDLN Visits Gainesville

Rural Development Leadership Network members visited Gainesville Cultural Arts Coalition Sept 13<sup>th</sup> for a full day of activities. The group toured Depot Park and Williams Elementary formerly landfill for a discussion of Environmental Justice., Siembra Farm to discuss organic farming as a safe and healthy way to grow food. Alvin Butler joined us for lunch to share his experience as a local cattle farmer on land that is third generation. County Commissioner Mary Alford and City Commissioner Cynthia Chestnut also joined RDLN for lunch to discuss their experiences of working with CAC.



## The Environmental Ambassadors

The Environmental Ambassadors had its 34<sup>th</sup> year this summer. We had 10 students who attended the 5-week program. Students looked at energy by touring sites using solar including a community where all the households had solar a shared parking area with solar charging and walking areas. They toured Siembra farm to learn about organic farming and Butler farm to learn about grass feeding and rotation. Also the history of this third generation farmer. When looking at protecting our water Ambassadors took a river tour and visited 3 springs. Ambassadors toured FAMU Agriculture College led by GW Mingo.



### **Funders**

Children Trust of Alachua County  
Alachua County CAPP  
Visit Gainesville  
City of Gainesville Cultural Affairs

### **Board Members**

Yvette Clarke (Chair  
Barbara McDade  
Roberta Gastmeyer (Treasurer)  
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Cynthia Gainey (Driver)

### **Special Thanks**

Leslie May  
Dafydd Jones  
Florida Museum of Natural History