



*“And it feels good to be known so well I can't hide from you like I hide from myself”
- True Blue by boygenius*

Hello YEAH! Community!

As we step into the New Year, may it resonate with abundant opportunities for you to express and share your authentic self.

We are thrilled to introduce our new Program Manager, along with available Board Member and Committee positions. Supported by generous funders like Bonnaroo Works Fund, Community Foundation of Middle TN, Metro Arts and the TN Arts Commission, we're committed to expanding access and enhancing the frequency of our services to better support and empower youth. Here's to a harmonious and community-strong year ahead!

Thank you for being an essential part of our journey!

Warm regards,

Mariela Moscoso
Executive Director



YEAH! NEWS

Christopher Mitchell has joined our team as Program Manager! Chris is a seasoned vocal performance major with over 30 years of expertise in coaching, performing, producing, sound engineering, stage managing, recording, and teaching vocals and music theory. His wealth of experience is complemented by a deep commitment to organization and project management, ensuring a structured and enriching environment for our young

participants and instructors.

Having contributed to local and national organizations such as Charleyville, World AIDS Day, Dee's Country Lounge, and Belmont University, Chris possesses exceptional communication skills honed through professional and personal experiences. His adeptness in navigating day-to-day learning and facilitating challenging transitions is a valuable asset to the YEAH! community.

Chris embodies a simple yet powerful life mantra: "nurture and develop." His approach extends to every band, artist, student, and co-worker he encounters, fostering a heartfelt desire to contribute to their success. As an openly gay recording artist and performer, Chris understands the challenges of finding acceptance. At YEAH!, he aims to empower young individuals, helping them recognize their worth and inspiring them to freely create, even in the face of hardship or marginalization.



YEAH! PROGRAMMING

YEAH! Rocks summer camp is scheduled for the first or second week of June. While we finalize venue details, we regret any inconvenience this delay may be causing. Your patience is greatly appreciated, and we assure you that we are working diligently to create an unforgettable and enriching experience for all participants. We extend a special invitation for you to pre-register for our upcoming summer camp if your schedule permits—stay tuned for the latest updates!



Exciting news at Donelson Middle School: Keith Proffitt and Thomas Spann are returning!

YEAH!'s Rock Block Metro Nashville Public Schools program, in partnership with Global Outreach Developments International's CASE After School Program, kicks off next week! This 10-week, twice-a-week program will build upon last semester's Hip-hop and percussion classes, showcasing songwriting, vocals, entrepreneurial skills and small and large group performances on April 27!

Keith Proffitt aka Remsteele is an artist & producer born in Mobile, AL. His musical journey began at Vigor High School, where he participated in the choir under the guidance of Mr. Don Gardner. It was here that he honed many skills including piano and harmonizing.

Keith's career took a significant turn when he joined the band UNEEKE, leading to a record deal with Bellmark Records in the late 90s. As a label mate with renowned artists like Prince, Tag Team, Johnny Guitar Watson and Jody Watley, Keith gained valuable experiences that shaped his artistic trajectory.

He later embarked on a solo career and established himself as a producer both locally and nationally. He founded his publishing company, BEATZFOREVER ENT, showcasing his entrepreneurial spirit. In 2006 he landed a record deal with SonyRed and moved to Nashville. Over the years, he has released three albums from the Nashville area and has become a prominent figure in the city's music scene, hosting events throughout.

During Covid, Keith worked as a facilitator for SoundCorp, a nonprofit organization out of Chattanooga, contributing to the funding of over \$100,000 to help artists in that area. His role involved instructing and mentoring artists about navigating the music industry and fostering an entrepreneurial mindset.

Since 2017, Keith has been a facilitator for YEAH! Programs being, where he became the first to teach on the elements of Hip-hop. His commitment involves educating youth on the importance of the history and culture of Hip-hop, leaving a lasting impact on the participants he engages with.

Thomas Spann Jr. was born in Charleston, SC, and a native of Eadytown, South Carolina, growing up under the musicianship of his father Thomas Lee Spann Sr. who inspired him to play the drums. His high school band director, Mack Guice II influenced him to pursue a career in music. Having these two giants in his life has propelled him towards finesse as a percussionist in academia and the music industry.

Mr. Spann graduated Cum Laude from Benedict College, earning a Bachelor of Arts degree in Music. He then forged ahead and earned a Master of Science degree in Music Education from Tennessee State University. Currently, he is pursuing a Doctorate of Educational Leadership Degree, EdD at Trevecca Nazarene University. This distinction has set him apart from the drummers of the world to being established as an accomplished percussionist. His extensive genre skill has afforded him the opportunity to record music with The Jonathan Pierce Band, Chris Simmons Jazz Trio, Cat Parks and Kindred Souls, Curtis Fields, Blended 328, and Dr. Sean Daniels. He has performed throughout the United States and abroad in Central Asia, Russia, Zimbabwe, Africa, Brazil, the Middle East, and Mexico.

In academia, Mr. Spann currently serves as a Music/Drumline Teacher at I.T. Creswell Middle Magnet Performing Arts School, serves as a Teaching-Artist at The National Museum of African American Music, percussion/drum educator at Creative Soul Music Academy and Fork's Drum Closet. He also served as Adjunct Professor, Marching Band Director, Percussion, World Music, and Music Education at Fisk University; and formerly served as Adjunct Professor in Applied Percussion at Tennessee State University. Within the music industry, Mr. Spann is the drummer for Sonja Hopkins, DSD Jazz Quartet, and various other artists.

Additionally, Mr. Spann is endorsed by Pearl/Adams Percussion, Regal Tip drumsticks; and is a songwriter with BMI music, and a sound designer with Sounds.com

ADVOCATE FOR THE ARTS

Art is a Unifier!

**A Creative Community is
a Problem-Solving
Community!**

1- SEND A LETTER TO YOUR LOCAL REPRESENTATIVE and...

Governor Bill Lee

1st Floor, State Capitol, Nashville, TN 37243, @GovBillLee @govbilllee

Lt. Governor McNally- lt.gov.randy.mcnally@capitol.tn.gov.

TN House Education Instruction Committee

Debra O. Moody - Chair rep.debra.moody@capitol.tn.gov

Terri Lynn Weaver-Vice-Chair rep.terri.lynn.weaver@capitol.tn.gov

TN House Education Administration Committee

Mark White - Chair - rep.mark.white@capitol.tn.gov

Chris Hurt - Vice- Chair - rep.chris.hurt@capitol.tn.gov

Metro Nashville Public Schools

Dr. Adrienne Battle - Director of Schools - adrienne@mnps.org

Mason Bellamy-Chief of Academics & Schools- Mason.Bellamy@mnps.org

2- IN YOUR LETTER, INCLUDE...

- art activities you like/engage with
- how they have impacted you
- who you have met while pursuing your interest(s)
- how they build your community
- request they increase funding for arts education in schools and local non-profit organizations

3- GET A TN ARTS LICENSE PLATE at THE COUNTY CLERK's



YEAH! EDUCATION

Call for Advocacy Resources

Do you have an article, book, movie, podcast, song or video that expresses the historic and current impact of music on positive social change? We'd appreciate your feedback as we develop our [Anti-Racism and Pro-Inclusivity page](#).

Send your suggestions to director@yeahrocks.org

YEAH! YOUTH VOICES

Every year, our campers delve into Arts Advocacy, gaining more understanding of its significance. Here's a compelling letter from one participant to Tennessee Representatives, articulating the vital role music plays in their life.

Dear TN Government Representative,
I enjoy doing many different art forms. I enjoy coloring, drawing, and anything involved with music. I enjoy them because they have deeply impacted me. It helps me find myself, and I feel like I can connect to something. Music especially. Due to music programs, I have met more youth that get me. I have made many friends, and they helped me change my mind-set. I used to write lyrics alone, and not accept help from others, but now I ask for help. Music & drawings/paintings have really impacted me. So I would like to request you increase funding for arts education in schools and local non-profit organizations.

- Thanks for your time,

YEAH! SUPPORT

Are you interested in being part of our transformative services? Join one of our monthly Board Committees Meetings from 5:30 - 6:30pm:

- Finance - 3rd Friday (February 16, March 15, April 19)
- Fundraising - 1st Thursday (February 1, March 7, April 4)
- Marketing & Engagement - 4th Thursday of the month **4:30 - 5:30pm**
- Programs - 2nd Tuesday of every month (February 13, March 12, April 9)

* Email director@yeahrocks.org for more info. *

THANK YOU to our monthly donors, recent funders and supporters, who help us reach out to the community and provide needed scholarships to 45% of our program participants.

- * [Blue Grass Community Foundation](#)
- * [Bonnaroo Works Fund](#)
- * [Broken Hip Records](#)
- * [Capital Music Gear](#)
- * [Community Foundation of Middle TN](#)
- * [Conexión Américas](#)
- * [Kroger Community Rewards](#)
- * [Moxie Print Market](#)

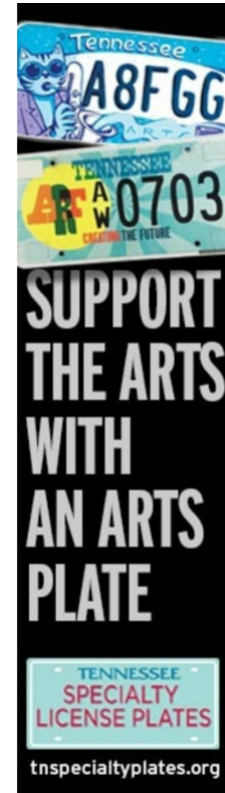
* [Nashville Symphony](#)

* [Soccer Mommy](#)

Visit our [online store](#) for some rad merch!

On average, 80% of arts grants in Tennessee are funded by the purchase of **state specialty license plates**.

More information about purchasing a specialty license plate and supporting TN arts [HERE!](#)



yeahrocks.org

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