



ANNUAL REPORT 2023

www.coloradomusicbridge.org

Colorado Music Bridge is a registered 501c3 nonprofit, est. 2020. EIN: 85-1825609

address: 3540 N Adams St, Denver CO 80205 **email:** admin@coloradomusicbridge.org **phone:** 617-957-2003

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1

Gratitude from our Executive Directors

2

2023: A Year of Connections & Changes

3

Products, Service, and Community

4

Stories from our Programs

5

2024 Goals: Sustainability and Scale

6

Financials and Donors

7

Our 2023 Partners and Grant Funders

GRATITUDE



2023 was a year of growth for the organization. A major highlight was the Piano Atlas being published, which is the first in our Music Atlas series. These books are the physical embodiment of our inclusive and accessible teaching philosophy.

I am very grateful for the reception of the IMPACT Music Program by our community of partners and peers. This year, we reached over 740 students, which is a testament to the hard work and dedication of our teachers and staff. We are in a period of innovation and expansion, committed to creating resources to support holistic modern music education.

I am so excited for what is on the horizon--launching the Music Atlas materials publicly and expanding our partnerships outside of Denver to help communities and educators across the state and beyond.

Executive Director: Product & Innovation



As we emerge from the darkest days of the year, the promise of spring ahead, I am buoyed by a hopefulness and faith in the significance of what Music Bridge is doing. Our evolving vision and staff has us poised to provide resources and training to music educators on a large scale, while cultivating the talents of youth in our local communities and providing mentorship and economic opportunity to emerging teaching artists. Reflecting back on my growth as a musician and educator, I am intimately cognizant of what a difference a caring and skilled teacher makes, and what *just one* opportunity or mentor can mean for shaping a music career. I am proud of what we have done, but even more so of what we are about to become. I hope you feel proud to be a part of this as well. With your support, we are making a real and lasting impact.

With sincere gratitude,

Executive Director: Service & Synergy

2023 CONNECTIONS & CHANGES

NEW STAFF

In the Spring, Jonas Peterson and Zoe Nassimoff joined Music Bridge as Teaching Artist Interns, supporting our programs at Kunsmiller Creative Arts Academy and Denver Center for 21st Century Learning. In the Fall, they both leveled up--Jonas became an Assistant Teacher and Content Creator, while Zoe became our Marketing Manager!

We worked 5 days a week with middle and high schoolers at Kunsmiller, with Sebastian Alvarez, Gonzalo Teppa, and Gabriel Santiago all chipping in with the jazz band, and Aaron and Peter teaching modern music. We ran 2 programs at the Rodarte Community Center in Greeley, led by Jordan Lobato and Mason Siders. In the summer, Mason and Aaron helped run the Band Blast Off program at the Museum of Discovery in Fort Collins in partnership with Blast'n'Scrap.

Aaron and Peter also taught twice a week at Gilliam Youth Services Center, a youth detention facility in Denver. In the Fall, Arts in Society generously allowed us to reallocate grant funds to build a recording studio in a storage room at Gilliam! This year, we are back there two days a week, with the addition of spoken word activist educator Ill Se7en.

Our most significant changes of 2023 were saying goodbye to co-founder Erik Gunderson, and welcoming our new Director of Education, Katrina Hedrick. Music Bridge is forever shaped by Erik's generosity and vision of mentorship and economic opportunity for musicians.

Katrina brings deep expertise in culturally responsive music education and full time public school teaching experience that will greatly increase our capacity to develop music teaching artistry both within Music Bridge and for modern music teachers around the globe.

NEW PROGRAMS

This 23-24 school year, in addition to Kunsmiller, Gilliam, DC 21, and Rodarte, we added partnerships with Florence Crittenton (a high school for pregnant and parenting girls), Compassion Road Academy, and Boys and Girls Club of Metro Denver, along with a collaborative community songwriting event with the Museum of Contemporary Art.

NEW BOARD, NEW BOOK

After a 2 year term on our Board of Directors, Greg Bruggeman stepped down and was replaced by Edwina Lucero. Music Bridge is grateful for Greg's support through crucial years building the organization. Edwina brings a lovely singing voice and a career of expertise in public school education, including a recent stint as the music coordinator for Denver Public Schools district. She is a passionate advocate for equity and inclusive music education.

In May, we published the Piano Atlas! Instantly, modern music teachers recognized it as an invaluable resource. It is already being used in music production classes at Aurora Central High School and Denver North High School, Polaris Expeditionary School and The Matthews House in Fort Collins, as well as all Music Bridge partner schools. Aaron is hard at work on the Guitar, Bass, Ukelele, and Audio Atlas workbooks, and Jonas is working on wind instruments! Coming in 2024: video lesson series', play along tracks, DAW templates, popular song maps, and much more!

The studio at Gilliam! ----->



STORIES FROM OUR PROGRAMS

Our IMPACT Music Programs have lofty intentions, but we approach each classroom from a grounded perspective. Not every student in every class comes away transformed, and not all transformation will be observed within our classrooms. But we go forward with faith, because we have been transformed by music, and we have evidence that students are as well.

At Gilliam Youth Services Center, we offer twice-weekly IMPACT Music Programs, producing tracks, learning keyboard skills, and lyric writing with students in the school within Denver's youth detention facility. Students there are experiencing a profound loss of freedom, but music gives them a vehicle to express their feelings and tell their stories.

Often, there are students who begin a class with a disinterested posture, or maybe in full hypo-arousal--head down on the desk, unresponsive. But music awakens and invites them to co-regulate through groove, to self-regulate through jamming, and ultimately to participate with genuine enthusiasm in learning and creativity.



We also offer IMPACT Music Programs twice a week at Compassion Road Academy, a DPS "Pathways School." These are non-traditional schools designed to help at-risk and under-resourced students find ways to graduate and thrive when they couldn't at larger more traditional institutions. Students in our class have a wide variety of interests, and we offer them validating and culturally responsive project options and a modular learning environment. Collaborations emerge spontaneously, and students are inspired to share the music they love to listen to while also learning to create music together.



Another pathways school we have been in 4 days per week this school year is Florence Crittenton, a school for pregnant and parenting students. Elyse Midgyett teaches the girls how play and create songs on the piano, and write lyrics in their journals. Jonas Peterson comes through each week and helps with keyboard stuff, and his impact is a testament to the importance of having multiple teachers with complimentary skills. This supports student learning AND regulation.



Both Aurora Central High School and Denver North High School are using the Piano Atlas in music production classes now.

"This is amazing, exactly how I teach my students songs, but I usually make all of the materials myself so this will save me so much time!!! THANK YOU! I am using the books often, they are super helpful in my modern band class but also my music production classes in my computer lab."

- Grant Stringham, Denver North High School



OUR 2024 GOALS

*NEW:
Website
CRM and LMS systems
Accountant
Lawyer
Education Director
Internships
Program Partners
Conference Presentations
Board Members
Amazing Concert Event
Books, Tracks, Videos,
and much more!*

1 Establish financial sustainability

Each year, we have met our financial goals, and the organization has expanded capacity. In 2023, because of a change-making \$100k donation by the Sorkin Foundation, we were able to grow significantly leading into 2024. This year, with the help of significant grants from the Colorado Health Foundation and the Latino Community Foundation of Colorado, we are positioned to again expand capacity, including taking on a development partnership with Colorado-based Philanthropy Experts. As we build a base of individual and corporate donors, along with fundraising events, and then add in curricular product sales, Music Bridge is poised to meet and exceed our 5-year goals, and become the sustainable organization we have envisioned!

3 Walk our IMPACT talk

Making the kind of impact we want to make means consistent self-examination, and a commitment to evolution. We are doing this by partnering with Caring4Denver to develop and implement evaluation measures that will give insight into how effectively our teachers are using self-regulation tools and therapeutic pedagogy. We are doing this by expanding our commitment to Gilliam Youth Services Center, and other pathways school in Denver. We are doing this by supporting programs in Boys and Girls Clubs in rural areas of Colorado. And we are doing this by meeting weekly within our organization with our staff and teachers to build skills and camaraderie, and become the resilient musicians and humans we want to see in the world!

2 Create robust curricular resources

Teaching is hard, y'all. We want to make it more joyful, more easeful, and more effective. For us, this means getting out of the mindset of "what am I doing in class tomorrow" and into a dynamic collaboration--consolidating our best practices, deep expertise, and creative visions, into sets of lesson plans, books, play along tracks, videos, guidebooks, templates and more. Music Bridge will have not just the Piano Atlas, but a Guitar Atlas, Ukelele Atlas, Bass Atlas, Groove Atlas, Audio Atlas, and eventually even Atlases for horns! We will have contemporary song maps that bridge iconic and symbolic notation, themed lesson plans that align with national standards, and guidebooks and templates that empower teachers to implement culturally responsive and therapeutic pedagogy.

Our intention is to alleviate the burden of teacher burnout, for teachers and districts alike. And in so doing, share methodologies that promote belonging and transformation for youth.

4 Build the infrastructure to test our Musician Sustainability Model

We want to create a specialized approach to workforce development tailored for the evolving needs of the music industry, with a Music Education path that nurtures individuals from foundational learning stages into community leadership roles, alongside a Music Industry path that escorts artists from initial creation stages to in-depth industry integration, embracing both artistic and business aspects.

2023 BY THE NUMBERS



13

PROGRAM PARTNERSHIPS

700+

STUDENTS SERVED

17

MUSIC EDUCATORS HIRED

\$143K

PAID TO THEM!

\$30K

TO PURCHASE EQUIPMENT
AND PUBLISH CURRICULA

FOR MUSIC PROGRAMS TO HAVE KEYBOARDS, GUITARS, BASSES,
ELECTRONIC DRUM KITS, HEADPHONES, AUDIO INTERFACES,
MICROPHONES, PIANO ATLASES, AND A RECORDING STUDIO!

FINANCES



Support & Revenue

Donations	\$109,855.54
Grants	\$77,250.00
Program Income	\$73,425.00
Curriculum Sales	\$2,136.40
Total Income	\$262,666.94

Expenses

Teachers/Instruction	\$142,848.08
Legal & Accounting	\$5,361.00
Marketing	\$1,114.95
Music equipment & instruments	\$21,040.88
Operations & Insurance	\$41,012.54
Curriculum Printing	\$8,604.65
Business Meals	\$1,125.71
Travel	\$590.29
Total Expenses	\$220,698.10

Donors

IMPACT

\$5,000+

Sorkin Foundation
Lucy Chapman

Atlas

\$500+

Owen Kortz
Mark Huggins
Sachin Ranchod & Kelly Watkins
First Unitarian Society of Denver

Patron

\$100+

Kathleen Parrish
Doug Redosh
Kent Stoltzman
Amiee & Peter Svenneby
Campbell Eshelman

Friend

\$10+

Bill Douglas
Jason Marfizo
Alicia Trujillo

Board of Directors

Derek Sorkin, President • Edwina Lucero • Peter Stoltzman, Secretary •
Aaron Marfizo, Treasurer

OUR 2023 PROGRAM PARTNERS!



OUR LOCAL GRANT FUNDERS!



WE THANK YOU

