

TIMELESS GIFTS

Youth Program for the Performing Arts

A 501 (C) (3) Organization

Our Mission: Positively impacting the lives of young performers by imparting and encouraging the perpetuation of character, confidence and professional etiquette, in order to insure the integrity of our musical and artistic communities, while providing avenues for artistic growth, greater opportunities and exposure.



"Hello, my name is Kenari Allison. I am 9 years old and I go to Dixon Elementary School (in Chicago's Chatham neighborhood). I play drums and congas, and I'm learning the trumpet. I have been with Timeless Gifts for 3 years. I've had mentors like Ernie Adams, Tony Carpenter and Ben Johnson, who are world known. I plan to travel the world playing music too. We have 2 big shows every year, but my favorite is the Christmas Show! I have met some very important people, performed all over Chicago, and even received an award because of Timeless Gifts! I really love music and I enjoy the time with my Instructors and the other protégés. Timeless Gifts is giving us the opportunity of a lifetime. I can't wait for the Timeless Gifts Performing Arts Center that Ms. Collaso is always talking about!"

Kenari wrote that in 2011. He is now 19 years old and a college student, playing professionally!

Timeless Gifts Youth Program for the Performing Arts is a 501c3 organization created to give aspiring young performing artists like Kenari the opportunity to receive coaching and instruction in their chosen discipline(s) from world-class and professional performing artists and technical experts. Youth from all over the Chicagoland area audition for our 7-week summer program, which culminates in a professionally produced performance before an audience of hundreds.

Founder, Executive and Artistic Director Joan Collaso, an accomplished Emmy Award winning vocalist and producer who has performed in many parts of the world, envisions that through **Timeless Gifts**, *"we are helping to fill the void for aspiring young performers who no longer have the outlet of performing arts in their schools, but just as important, we are creating a historical legacy in Chicago by contributing to the next generations of world-class performers and arts technicians."*

-Joan Collaso (circa, 2011)

In just eleven years, through the efforts of our instructors, Board of Directors, supporters and volunteers, TG has:

1. Worked with nearly 500 young people between the ages of 3 and 24
2. *Sponsored ten, Performing Arts summer programs (2011 - 2020) that have culminated with our amazing End of Summer productions!*
3. Produced eleven Christmas Concerts (Venues: Kennedy King College, Chicago's DuSable Museum, The Kroc Center, and The Logan Center for the Arts), featuring our TG protégés and their instructors, with feature performances from such greats artists as Willie & Bethany Pickens, Maggie & Africa Brown, Walt Whitman and the Soul Children of Chicago, and The Eleven Jazzy Divas. Each year TG recognizes those who pave the way! We've honored (2011) Oscar Brown, Jr. (Recording artist, songwriter, poet) and Willie Pickens (International Jazz Pianist), (2012) Jerry "Ice Man" Butler (Recording Artist), (2013) Walter Whitman (Soul Children of Chicago), (2014) Herald Johnson (Educator), (2015) Juanita Passmore (Timeless Gifts co-founder) and Diane Ellis (Educator), (2016) Patrick Woodtor (Music & Arts Festival Producer) and Charlie Thomas (President, Hyde Park Jazz Society), (2017) Donald Jackson (Central City Productions) and Gabrielyn Watson (Educator), (2018) Edward Ford (Jeweler & Philanthropist) and Bril Barrett (Master Tap Dancer, Educator), (2019) Val Ward (Founder, Kuumba Theater), Jeff Morrow (Film & TV Vocal Producer), Darius Brooks (Gospel Recording Artist), Abe Thompson (Radio Executive), Pemon Rami (Film Director).

4. Provided opportunities for our protégés to perform: on TV (Channel 7 & 5 news), Rainbow PUSH, South Shore Jazz Fest, Lake Meadows Art Fair, Children’s Brittle Bone Foundation, Chicago State University, and numerous private events. We’ve opened for recording artist, Chante Moore, performed in front of Chaka Khan, performed in (rapper) Common’s *AHHH! Festival*, One of our protégés had the privilege to perform on stage with Smooth Jazz saxophonist Kirk Whalum, and another performed for 2016 PBS Special, *An Evening with Valerie Jarrett* (The History Makers), with First Lady, Michelle Obama in the audience! In [April 2017 NBC 5 News recognized Timeless Gifts as an Organization “Making a Difference” as featured on their News broadcast! VIDEO to Feature — Click here.](#)

In April of 2019 *The Timeless Gifts Vocal Ensemble* embarked on our very first international performance tour in Milan, Italy, with an amazing send off from the NBC Chicago Channel 5 News and WLS Channel 7 News! In December of 2019 Timeless Gifts performed on the popular Chicago morning talk show *Windy City LIVE* on WLS Channel 7.

2020 was challenged by the worldwide pandemic but Timeless Gifts was grateful to be able to continue our programs and productions virtually.

The possibilities are endless!! Our hope is that 2021 will be our very best year!