

# Urban League After School League Summer STEAM 2019

## Overview

After School League Summer STEAM 2019 program engaged eighteen youth (9 females, 9 males) ages 12- 18 in a variety of experiences for eight weeks from June 3, 2019 to July 26, 2019.

Twelve participants used Summer STEAM as their work experience and were employed by Cincinnati Youth Collaborative (CYC), the Cincinnati Recreation Commission (CRC), or the Urban League Year Round Youth Employment (YRP) program. Thirteen participants attended 90% of the time. Most students engaged in work readiness trainings and were responsible

The courses and activities included Media / Photography Workshop, Jr. Chef Experience, Environmental Science, Art with Math, Music with Math, Journaling, Yoga, Mindfulness, Memory Circle, Acting Workshop, a Youth Summit, a gallery walk and lunch on the Banks. Each course was specific in its content but intersect with the other courses at its constructs to consider the whole student, to create opportunities for students to learn, to lead, to think critically, problem solve and to connect to 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills such as math and other innovative technologies.

STEAM challenges students with projects, concrete knowledge development and experiences. Students engaged in Kayaking, hiking, music classes, performing, museum visits, tree planting and event catering. The various curriculums were shared with ASL Summer STEAM by each of the facilitators as they are established and recognized professionals in their individual fields.

## The Summer STEAM Journey

• **Media / Photography Workshop with Samuel Harris:** “A picture is worth a thousand words.” Photo documentation, digital age literacy, inventive thinking, students develop technical skills using industry standards applications. Participants used high-end equipment to produce, photo document, edit images and manage projects across the full spectrum of Summer STEAM 2019. Students viewed hundreds of images captured by their fellow participants and made editorial decisions in order to tell the story of their Summer STEAM journey. *Consensus building, effective communication, and patience paired in significance with how to set the lights, audio engineering, set design. Participants learned to ‘speak their truth in a safe supportive environment.*

• **Jr. Chef with Chef Michael Vinegar** exposed students to the health, joy and science of food preparation. Students learn to calculate nutrition values, read labels, measurements, discover cultural differences and similarities of iconic dishes. The students created the menu and setup a catered experience for their guests at the Public Presentation. The emphasis on team dynamics, listening skills, problem solving strategies, and self-management added value to the participant’s

experiences. *Youth voice, choice and shared leadership were exemplified by Chef Vinegar as he had students planned their sessions and menus.*

•**Art and Math with Alison Burns:** Ms. Burns planned a field excursion to the Cincinnati Art Museum as the introductory session. Students explored examples of ancient art as well as the Burning Man exhibit. *One student voiced concern about how he would be perceived and accepted in a space like the museum. “ Will they look at us funny or treat us weird.” The school Resource Coordinator spoke with the group about keeping their heads up and about how black youth belonged in ‘these spaces’ just as much as others in society.* The entire entourage caught the Metro, hiked up a log muddy hill and climbed a wall to get to the Museum. They adjusted their clothes, cleaned off their shoes and entered the building with their heads held high. The student’s subsequent journal entries were quite profound.

Ms. Burns introduced students to geometric design techniques creating multidimensional solids. They discussed the how and the why of Art, performed experiments with color, texture and found art artifacts. Their art projects were displayed at the Public Presentation. *Self-exploration, self-identification, self-expression, self-esteem and self-efficacy were key poignant learning experiences for these youth.*

•**CIC Percussion Music And Math:** Percussion classes at the Gardette Miller Salon. Students were introduced to Brazilian instruments, had lectures on the African diaspora culture, current celebrations and protocols.

The youth demonstrated their learning experience by performing at Kathy Wade’s Cincinnati Zoo’s Cultural Arts Day with other students and professional musicians. The students did not stop as they performed in a rain storm. *Community involvement, leadership, self-management, confidence enhancing, listening, collaboration and fun ruled that July day.*

•**Teens Against Bullying with Melonee Ridgeway/ YWCA:** These two day per week sessions were sponsored by the YWCA. Summer STEAM participants learned the definitions of various types of bullying and the devastating effects on people’s lives. They created a video facilitated by Ms. Melonee and participated in a public presentation of their project.

Ms. Melonee not only observed students in the classroom setting at Woodward but also on the field excursions to the Art Museum, the Zoo, percussion classes at CIC, hiking at Evergreen and the Youth Summit sponsored by the Urban League and the Children’s Law Center.

•**Environmental Science Literacy and Leadership:**

**Evergreen Holistic Learning Center;** This learning center is a working urban garden that sits on eight wooded acres of hiking trails. The Summer STEAM students engaged in the experience with twenty younger students who made an impromptu appearance because they were unable to complete a field trip that was scheduled for a nearby site. Our students agreed to pair with the young strangers for the entire

session. All of the students hiked, participated in a scavenger hunt, plant identification and explored the stream. They were introduced to the concepts of 'leaving a place better than how you find it' and not to disturb the natural habitats of other living things. Everyone ate together and discussed the shared experience of being in the woods, hearing unfamiliar sounds and discovering different types of animal tracks. Our students become teachers and mentors to young people they did not know. They embraced the opportunity to keep others safe, share their knowledge and excitement as they themselves discovered new things. *Optimistic thinking, social awareness, social responsibility and demonstrating an empathetic response were profoundly evidenced by the actions of the Summer STEAM participants.*

•**Adventure Club;** Kayaking on the Little Miami River, listening to a lecture on the river history and present environmental concerns, eating lunch at the riverbank, planting Sycamore trees along the banks provided memorable experiences that challenged the participants in a variety of ways. Several expressed fear of the water and stated emphatically that they were not going to participate. The Adventure Crew facilitators were effective in their persuasions. They provided the prerequisite lessons on safety, paddling techniques and journeyed in front of, along side and behind the participants. *Overcoming fear, looking out for each other and having fun were the signature moments of this experience. All of the students and two key STEAM staff participated on the river journey in a safe supportive environment.*

•**Yoga/Mindfulness, Memory Circles, Acting Workshop, Journaling, Writing and Research** were facilitated by Site Coordinator D. Brock-Blanks and AmeriCorps Volunteer Shannon Rokey. These were daily experiences for the youth when Summer STEAM was not out on field excursions. The students used the dictionary, and other books to research thirty-five terms such as demeanor, decorum, relevance, symbiotic, articulate, collaborate, tolerance, trust, apathy, acronym, and concepts such as "Use your eyes for information" "Help each other be right not wrong", "If you look for the good in others, you will find the best in yourself". *Active engagement, skill building, the ability to focus, planning, reflection and an increase in academic acuity were intrinsic to these activities.*

Social-Emotional Literacy (SEL) is aligned as a crucial component to program delivery and outcomes. The SEL focus provides students with an opportunity for *guided examination of self and community; foster positive values / moral compass/ optimistic thinking; promote compassion; improve self-management and personal responsibility; increase self awareness; expose students to a sense of purpose; enhance well-being and centeredness; and develop an appreciation the environment.*

•**Artifacts of the Summer STEAM 2019 experience:**

- Photos and videos included as document attachments.
- Student Journals and testimonials

- **Evaluation and Assessments:**

Youth Program Quality Assessment (YPQA) :

*Examples in italics through out this report.*

8 Social emotional competencies aligned with DESSA:

Course facilitators completed the DESSA mini assessment on each of the participants

*Examples in italics through out this report*

Scoring calculations place students in categories of either strength, typical or need.

4 participants scored mid to low typical; 3 participants scored low

4 participants scored in the strength; 3 participants scored high typical,

Pre/ Post Surveys; Participant self- assessment mirrors the DESSA-mini;

All participants scored themselves relatively high. This reflects a positive self-concept.

- **Project Completion;** Examples are in the Summer STEAM video and slide show.

- **Report submitted by Deborah Brock-Blanks 8/30/2019**

- **Financial Report** submitted by Urban League of Greater Southwest Ohio