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ONE
COMMON
UNITY

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Annual Report

OUR MISSION



One Common Unity (OCU) breaks cycles of violence and builds compassionate, healthy communities through the transformative power of music, arts, and peace education.

Our Story

Following a string of school shootings in Washington, DC, a group of educators and artists came together in the year 2000 to catalyze a community-wide shift away from violence and poverty. OCU's founders recognized that many of the District's youth lacked access to quality education, after-school enrichment activities, and leadership opportunities; and youth of color and low-income youth were disproportionately exposed to community violence.

In our rich 19-year history, OCU has impacted more than 28,500 youth, ages 11-18, and families through after school programming, summer retreats, community engagement opportunities, and citywide campaigns; worked in 52 schools throughout the DC region; produced five full-length youth music albums; and hosted 81 concerts and community art showcases.

Our award-winning documentary film about Fly By Light was featured at 16 film festivals and viewed by tens of thousands of people. We skillfully blend art and music lessons, social-emotional literacy activities, mental health services, and best practices of youth development to meet the needs of DC's most underserved youth.

In 2019, OCU partnered with the Department of Behavioral Health and District of Columbia Public Schools as an inaugural recipient of the Comprehensive School-Based Mental Health Expansion grant, through which OCU has placed full-time mental health clinicians at 14 DC public and public charter schools.



FRIENDS,

2019 has been a year of tremendous growth and excitement. With your support, our creative and passionate 30-person team served over **5,000 youth across 24 DC schools**. They supported them in building critical social-emotional literacy skills, conflict resolution, mindfulness, artistic expression, and the tools to advocate for peace and justice in their communities.

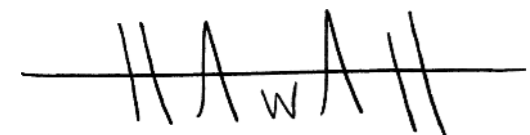
In February, we initiated our school-based mental health services through a new grant from the DC Department of Behavioral Health, positioning 14 full-time mental health therapists in DC public and public charter schools. In July, we launched the inaugural Fly By Light National Training, which certifies educators, artists, and activists from all over the country to lead Fly By Light chapters in their communities.

In September, we kicked off our Intention Not Detention® campaign, promoting Intention Rooms® as restorative justice-centered alternatives to in-school suspension or expulsion. We also released three incredible music videos, hosted two showcases, two “Elevate Peace” fundraising events, and led two transformative nature immersion retreats.

The growth we’ve seen this year gives us hope that our community and our society understands the importance of social-emotional literacy, mental health, and the arts. We couldn’t do any of this without you, and we are so grateful for your continued support.

As we move forward in this journey with you, we are thrilled to share this annual report, celebrating a truly transformative year.

Towards Peace,



Hawah Kasat,
Co-founder and Executive Director



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2019 in Numbers

3,373

students directly engaged in **Fly By Light** Programming



Delivered programming across **22** schools.

98

youth engaged in approximately **140 hours of FBL programming** which included after-school workshops, weekend field trips, overnight nature retreats to national parks, and participation in our citywide showcases.

1,271

youth participated in between **8-40 hours of programming** through a variety of in-school workshops, tailored to meet the requirements of each school.

2,004

students built awareness of self-care practices, social-emotional literacy, or restorative justice through school-wide assemblies or other school-wide initiatives.

389

students participated in Curriculum-Based Support Group

36

students participated in Lifeskills

130

students participated in the Intention Room activities

250

teachers participated in professional development trainings

315

parents and family members participated in family engagement sessions

Our Partner Schools

Ward 3

- Oyster-Adams Bilingual Middle School (FBL)

Ward 1

- Cardozo Middle School (FBL)

Ward 2

- School Without Walls Middle School at Francis Stevens (FBL)
- Deal Middle School (FBL and Mental Health Clinician)

Ward 6

- Eastern High School (FBL, Intention Room, and Mental Health Clinician)
- Stuart Hobson Middle School (FBL and Mental Health Clinician)
- Richard Wright PCS for Journalism and Media Arts (Mental Health Clinician)

Ward 4

- Roosevelt High School (FBL, Intention Room, and Mental Health Clinician)
- Paul Public Charter School (FBL and Mental Health Clinician)
- Whittier Education Campus (Mental Health Clinician)
- Takoma Education Campus (Mental Health Clinician)

Ward 5

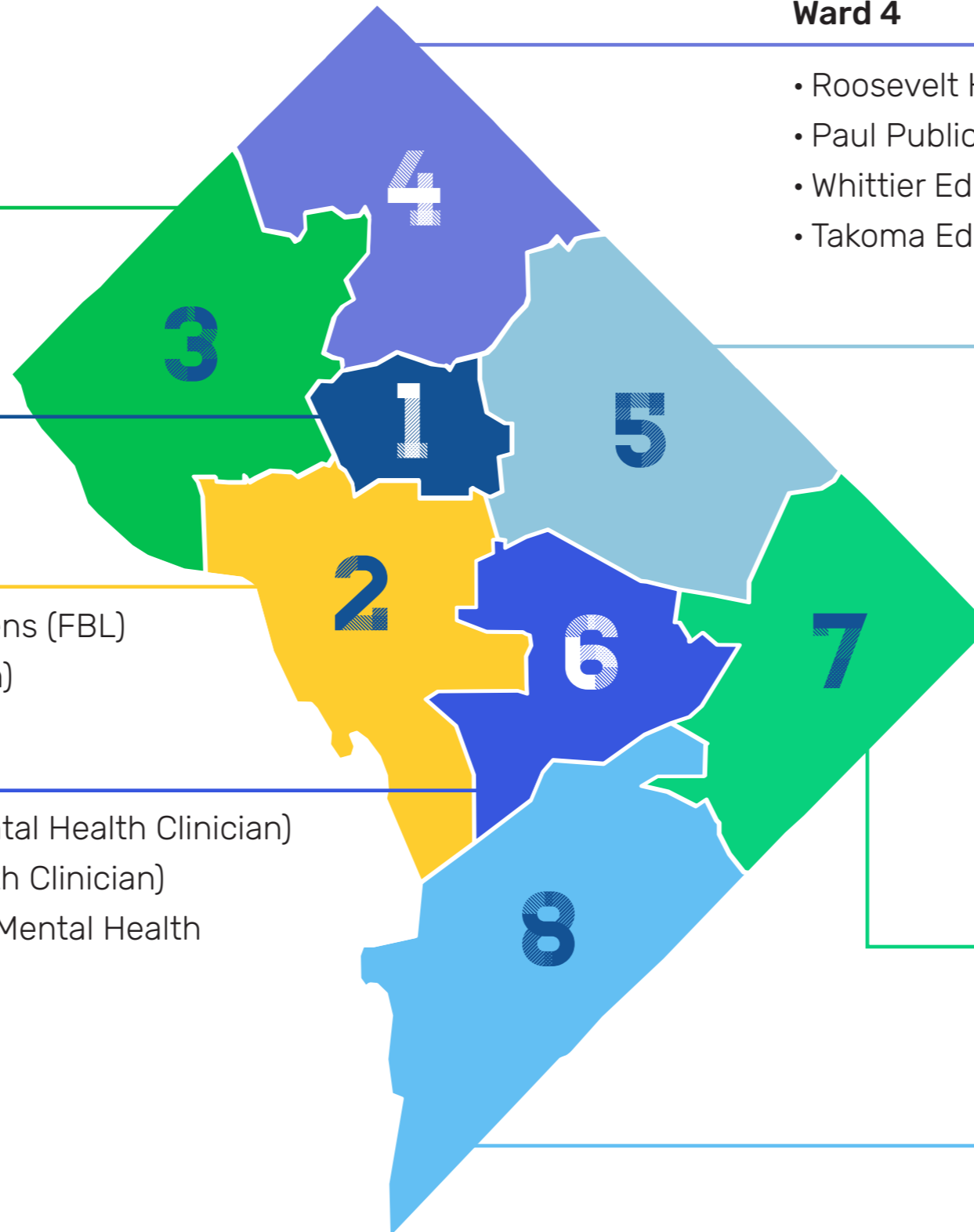
- Brookland Middle School (FBL)
- McKinley Middle School (FBL)
- Dunbar High School (FBL)
- Perry Street Preparatory Public Charter School (FBL and Mental Health Clinician)
- Browne Education Campus (FBL and Mental Health Clinician)
- Mary McLeod Bethune Day Academy PCS (Mental Health Clinician)
- Wheatley Education Campus (Mental Health Clinician)

Ward 7

- Kelly Miller Middle School (FBL)
- SEED Public Charter School (Mental Health Clinician)

Ward 8

- Hart Middle School (FBL)
- Thurgood Marshall Academy PCS (Mental Health Clinician)





MAJOR HIGHLIGHTS

Major Highlights

Fly By Light: Impact Report

MEASURING IMPACT

FLY BY LIGHT

STUDENTS IN FLY BY LIGHT EXHIBITED:

8 % INCREASE

in their ability to understand what others are feeling.



15 % INCREASE

in the practice of creative arts outside of school or after school.



INCREASE 8 %

in the use of art to imagine a more just and peaceful world.



INCREASE 15 %

in their ability to focus and improved concentration skills.



7 % FBL STUDENTS

agreed to putting greater effort into their schoolwork.



17 % DECREASE

in their sense that they are "always failing."



INCREASE 22 %

in self confidence.



INCREASE 10 %

in stronger peer relationships.



TWO-YEAR STUDY CONDUCTED BY GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY'S CENTER FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE

For more information visit www.OneCommonUnity.org
email us at info@OneCommonUnity.org



Major Highlights

Mental Health Program Launch

In addition to offering our award-winning Fly By Light program across all 8 Wards of DC, we expanded our school-based mental health services through the city's Comprehensive School-Based Mental Health Expansion program. In addition to our Fly By Light facilitators, we have placed mental health clinicians in 14 public schools across the city to provide a three-tiered continuum of behavioral health support. Our clinicians offered prevention, early intervention, and treatment services to our students.

In 2019 OCU Clinicians provided a total of **257 hours** of direct therapeutic service, including individual, group, and family therapeutic services. They also dedicated 180 hours to Tier 1 Prevention and Tier 2 Early Intervention services, consultations, in-classroom presentations, and professional training.

Throughout the year, we had a total of **72 clients** enrolled in our services.



Major Highlights

Intention Room® Campaign

#IntentionNotDetention

We were excited to move forward on a new program within our partner schools. The youth we serve, attend under-resourced schools, lack access to enrichment opportunities, and too often struggle in the classroom; thereby, impacting their overall academic progress. Low-income youth and youth of color are disproportionately more likely to become truant, receive out-of-school suspensions, or be expelled.

To address these challenges, OCU partnered with eight DC public schools, across all eight wards, to embed social-emotional learning, trauma-informed, and restorative practices into school-level policies, procedures, and classroom experiences. Through this program, OCU facilitators collaborate with partner schools to establish Intention Rooms as designated alternatives to in-school suspensions. Intention Rooms are safe, trauma-informed spaces, prompting students to reflect upon and transform their behavior, with the long-term goal of preventing future truancy and violence and addressing mental health challenges.

Under the Intention Room® facilitator's leadership, students explore conflict resolution techniques, art and music therapy, mindfulness, restorative justice practices, and discuss the challenges they face in their daily lives.

On September 9th, we released a new music video, [Miss Intention](#), composed by and featuring OCU's dynamic and inspiring Facilitator and Performance Troupe Director, Princess Best (aka The HipHopMomma).

The video kicked off our #IntentionNotDetention campaign to establish Intention Rooms® as designated alternatives to in-school suspensions.



Major Highlights

The Curriculum-Based Support Group (CBSG®) Program

On September 30th, OCU completed a two-year implementation of the CBSG® Program in 11 schools across DC through the Department of Behavioral Health's Strategic Prevention Framework Grant School Pilot (one school representing each ward of the city: Cardozo Education Campus, School Without Walls at Francis Stevens, Oyster Adams Middle School, Roosevelt Senior High School, Brookland Middle School, Eastern High School, Kelly Miller Middle School, and Hart Middle School) and the Department of Behavioral Health High Needs Community Grant (in Wards 3, 4, 5, 8). CBSG is a unique, multicultural, evidence-based preventative intervention designed for students whose high-risk situations—including Adverse Childhood Experiences, attitudes, and behaviors—place them at an elevated risk for future behavioral and health problems, including substance abuse, delinquency, and violence. **In 2019, 389 students participated in CBSG across 24 cohorts.**





FIGHT

Fly By Light

Since 2011, our award-winning core program, Fly By Light (FBL), has provided youth after-school and in-school workshops focused on art, music, and social justice; violence prevention days; city-wide performances; art showcases; multimedia productions; and, nature immersion field trips and summer retreats.

FBL blends youth development best practices with holistic programming and a firm commitment to artistic expression. Passionate well-trained youth educators and artists, who are deeply committed to the development and empowerment of DC youth form our FBL facilitation team. Complementing our facilitators' strong ties to the community, numerous FBL alumni now serve as "alumni facilitators," leading Fly By Light chapters and supporting younger DC youth in their personal and artistic development.



Fly By Light — Showcases

Fly By Light Winter Showcase

On February 27, our Fly By Light youth and alumni artists from across the district, shared original music, poetry, and dance at the 2019 Fly By Light Winter Showcase at The Shakespeare Theater. Working in school and after-school with One Common Unity’s facilitators in the Fly By Light program, these youth worked through art to find their voices, express themselves, and bring awareness to the issues they face as teens in DC. Throughout the evening, **23 youth performed**, representing School Without Walls at Francis Stevens, Kelly Miller Middle School, School Without Walls High Schools, Cardozo Education Campus, Eastern High School, Roosevelt High School, and Fly By Light alumni. We were honored to have over **130 community members** who came out to see their art, listen to their stories, and be inspired by this beautiful, positive community of young leaders.

Fly By Light Summer Showcase

On June 5, **48 Fly By Light youth and alumni artists from across the city** shared original music, poetry, and dance at the 2019 Fly By Light Summer Showcase, held at the GALA Hispanic Theater. Working in school and after-school with One Common Unity’s facilitators in the Fly By Light program, these youth worked through

art to find their voices, express themselves, and bring awareness to the issues they face as teens in DC. **Over 250 community members** came out to see their art, listen to their stories, and get inspired by this beautiful, positive community of young leaders.



Fly By Light — Retreats

Self-Love Retreat

In April 2019, we hosted **12 high school students**, ages 14-17, from all over DC for a spring day-long (7-hour) self-love retreat. On their day off from school, these students chose to come together with us to explore how strengthening positive relationships with themselves can create change in their own lives and the lives of others in their communities.

Fly By Light Summer Nature Retreats

This summer, we hosted two Fly By Light youth retreats: one in June for **16 of our high school students** and another in July for 9 of our middle school students. Both retreats were four nights and five days, which included **51 instructional hours**. The retreats took place at the Am Kolel Sanctuary Retreat Center in Montgomery County, Maryland.

There, youth developed skills around artistic expression and social-emotional and environmental leadership. The curriculum focused on daily yoga and mindfulness team-building exercises, community dialogue around social justice issues, gratitude practice, nature immersion, specialized training in arts expression, and immersive day trips where they enjoyed hiking, kayaking, and visiting an animal sanctuary.

Youth emerged from the retreat ready to bring back the experiences and skills they learned and spread the work of Fly By Light throughout their schools and communities. Two of our high school students were so inspired by the retreat that they created an “Organizing Troupe,” which meets once a week at OCU’s central office to help build an intentional social justice movement and create connections across our programs.



Fly By Light — Events

Alumni Performance at NEXUS Summit

Our performance troupe consists of DC-Metro area youth who demonstrate a strong talent, passion, and commitment to performance and visual artistry as their central career focus. Our troupe artists train as transformative artists through the practice of “intentional creation:” concentrating in creating art that centers around OCU’s five pillars (artistic expression, social-emotional literacy, health and wellness, environmental leadership, and social justice). Through their art, they hope to promote healthy, thriving individuals and violence-free communities. We were thrilled to have several of our alumni students and performance troupe members perform at the DC NEXUS Summit on March 8.

Peace & Positivity

Music Video, Block Party, and NBC Feature! On June 21, we released [“Peace and Positivity”](#)—an inspiring music video, written and performed by Fly By Light Alumni artists DougieD, Nfinity Zhy, and Isaiah King. To celebrate, we hosted a Peace & Positivity Block Party on July 13, which brought together and called upon community members to end violence. [The event was also featured on NBC!](#)



Fly By Light — Events

Mother-Daughter Dinner

On November 30, our program team, along with Program Facilitator and Performance Troupe Director, Princess Best, organized a Mother-Daughter Dinner at Eastern High School. It was a wonderful evening for creating space for mother-daughter connection, discussion, and performances over great food.

Winter Open Mic

On December 16, we hosted a special Fly By Light open mic at Busboys and Poets in Anacostia with **a packed house of 70 people**, who joined us from all across the DC region. It was a special night of music, poetry, and freestyle ciphers from youth, alumni, staff, and community members. The evening culminated in a freestyle “battle” between Fly By Light alumni and Fly By Light facilitator, Princess Best (aka The HipHopMomma), and other community members, which lifted the energy through the roof.





TRAININGS

Trainings

Fly By Light National Training

From July 15-19, we were honored to host **22 educators**, teachers, youth workers, community organizers, artists, and activists from around the world for our inaugural Fly By Light National Training! The 40-hour training in our award-winning program model and curriculum includes after-school and in-school workshops, overnight nature immersion retreats, annual city-wide showcases, professional development for teachers, parents, and other school administrators, and youth-led social justice campaigns. This new initiative allowed us to train and certify each participant to lead Fly By Light chapters in their communities, and we are excited to expand our movement both nationally and globally.

OSSE Partnership - Teacher Training Expansion

Thanks to a new partnership with the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE), our FBL facilitators offered professional development training for teachers and staff focused on trauma-informed care, social-emotional literacy, cultural competence and humility, and other topics. Through four day-long workshops (focused on social-emotional literacy, conflict transformation, cultural humility, and stress management), three 2-Day SEL Institutes, and two 3-Day

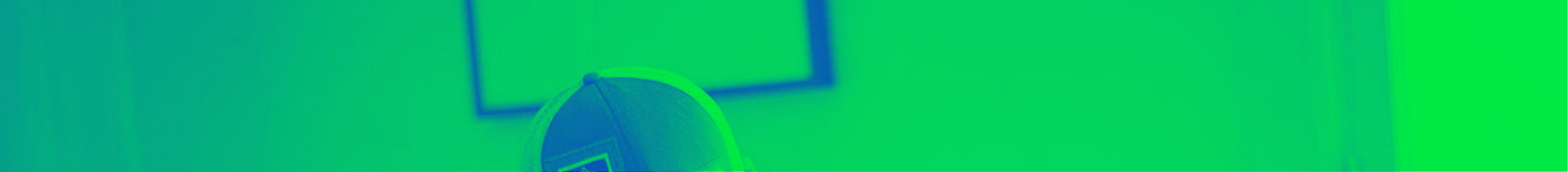
SEL Institutes, **118 educators from across the city received a total of 112 instructional hours.** In these workshops, OCU equips teachers with current youth development best practices and supports them long-term to transform classroom cultures and climates.

Facilitators led a successful training at School Without Walls Middle School for **30 teachers and staff**, after which one participant reported: “Because [OCU facilitators] come from outside of the school, [they] are able to see and say truths that those inside are unable to see or say.”



“Because [OCU facilitators] come from outside of the school, [they] are able to see and say truths that those inside are unable to see or say.”





FINANCES & FUNDING

Finances & Funding

Support and Revenue

	Total	Percentage
Contributions	\$155,905.00	5.28%
Foundation and Government Grants ^a	\$2,496,272.00	84.59%
Contributed Services and Materials	\$117,792.00	3.99%
Events	\$154,499.00	5.23%
Other Revenue	\$26,700.00	0.90%
Total Support and Revenue	\$2,951,069.00	

^a \$928,829 of government grants awarded in 2019 were reserved for 2020 deliverables

Expenses

Program Services	Total	Percentage
Fly By Light	\$387,779.00	
Health & Wellness	\$1,040,810.00	
Arts, Culture & Peace	\$139,563.00	
Total Program Services	\$1,568,152.00	90.38%

Supporting Services	Total	Percentage
General & Administrative	\$37,084.00	2.14%
Fundraising & Membership Development	\$129,860.00	7.48%
Total Supporting Services	\$166,944.00	
Total Expenses	\$1,735,096.00	

Environmental
Leadership

Health and
Wellness

Soci

e

GRANTS & ACHIEVEMENTS



Grants & Achievements

In 2019, we were so grateful to receive the following support through local and national organizations:

- An [ArtWorks](#) grant through the National Endowment of the Arts
- A Capitol Hill Community Foundation Grant
- A General Operating Support Grant from the DC Commission on Arts and Humanities
- A [Project Innovation Grant](#) through NBC4 to provide cameras, iPads, and multimedia training to our Fly By Light students
- A Community Service Grant through the DC Rotary Foundation
- A DC Humanities Council grant for a new film project
- \$500,000 from the Department of Behavioral Health to continue to expand our mental health services
- A grant through the DC Mayor's Office on Latino Affairs to support the work of One Common Unity and Fly By Light

In January, our Executive Director, Hawah Kasat was honored with Georgetown University's prestigious **John Thompson Jr. Legacy of a Dream Award**. Given in recognition of outstanding service to the university's Jesuit tradition of being "women and men for others,"

the award honorees have included the likes of Rosa Parks and Dikembe Motumbo. For One Common Unity, the honor of this recognition cannot be overstated.

On November 14, we hosted a fundraiser called, "[Elevate Peace](#)," an evening to celebrate nearly 20 years of our transformative work. We were so thrilled to come together with so many generous supporters to hear from inspiring speakers and program alumni. The response from the evening was overwhelmingly positive, resulting in a host of newly committed and engaged donors and volunteers.





ONE COMMON UNITY STAFF

One Common Unity Staff

Name	Title
Hawah Kasat	Executive Director
Aaron Shneyer	Managing Director
Malauna Steele	Director of Finance
Shaden Dowiatt	Program Director
Maria Del Rosario Gomez	Clinical Director
Kristen Zory King	Operations Manager
Rebecca Walters	Development Officer
Madison McCoy	Program Associate
Kimberly Rose Williams	Media Producer
Kenn Korb	Graphic Design Fellow
Rachel Emmons	Development Fellow

Program Team

Princess Best	Facilitator and Performance Troupe Director
Tyler Grigsby	Facilitator
Jair Carrasco	Facilitator
Rodney Johnson	Facilitator
Angell Chiles	Alumni Facilitator

Name	Title
Program Team	
Nardia Strowbridge	Alumni Facilitator
Shardia Strowbridge	Alumni Facilitator
Delvin Douglas	Alumni Facilitator
Tiarra Diggs	Alumni Facilitator

Mental Health Team

Jake Frelick	Clinical Supervisor
Aleia Williams-Hillard	Mental Health Clinician
Ashlyn Harty	Mental Health Clinician
Caroline Santilli	Mental Health Clinician
Carrie Bacon	Mental Health Clinician
Chris Reeves	Mental Health Clinician
Manny Salazar	Mental Health Clinician
Jordan Berger	Mental Health Clinician
Joy Natwick	Mental Health Clinician
Logan Hewitt	Mental Health Clinician
Nasahe Woods	Mental Health Clinician

One Common Unity Staff

Name	Title
Mental Health Team	
Rachel Schultz	Mental Health Clinician
Rebecca Tolbert	Mental Health Clinician
Shannen Tunstall	Mental Health Clinician
Consultants	
Liz London	Program Consultant
Elli Nagai-Rothe	Program Consultant
Mikuak Rai	Event Producer
Interns	
Sky Navarro	Development Intern
Destinee Suber	Program Intern
Katherine Gordon	Program Intern
Kimberly Krane	Operations & Program Intern
Matthew Goon	Film & Media Intern
Kayla Groneck	Program Intern
Renata Urbina de la Flor	Development Intern

Name	Title
Interns	
Angelica Shaw	Film & Media Intern
Laurel Cooke	Program Intern
Erin Lynch	Program Intern
Paige Hofstad	Program Intern
Xin Suo	Program Intern
Lulu Zhang	Program Intern
Tiara Carbin	Film & Media Intern
Aarica Flowers	Program Intern



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Johanna Weber		
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Flow Yoga Center

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THANK YOU



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