

EQUITY COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT



2021
EDITION

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**SINGER'S
EDGE**



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MISSION STATEMENT

While we are still finalizing the specific wording of our Mission Statement, we are doing a shift in our focus.

Initially, we were focusing externally by creating different outreach opportunities for those in our community who may not be able to access arts education.

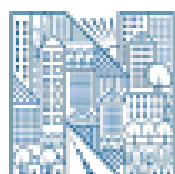
While we will continue with our outreach work, as we enter a new year, we have decided to focus internally first. We want to ensure that our workplace and the needs of our staff and students are met before we create and plan any new outreach initiatives.

Our 2021 Progress

It is very important for us to keep track of our goals and if we are accomplishing them. It helps us hold ourselves accountable, and see what kind of progress we have made. It also gives us a chance to reflect and see where we can improve. We aim to make an impact, and here's what we've done.

It is our mission to create diverse, accepting environments where the individuality and heritages of every student within our musical community are recognized and honoured. We aspire to create heritage-rich programming that is more equitable. We wish to be a part of the global conversation on equity issues by sharing voices, perspectives, and relevant resources

GOAL	ACTIVITY/PROJECT	OUTCOME
Raise awareness about current issues in our community	Use our voice and speak out through our social media platforms	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Higher engagement on social media posts• Students & community know our stance on political issues
Provide youth from marginalized communities free education about alternative arts careers	Created a 1-hour lecture series throughout August 2021 with topics delivered by guest speakers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 25 youth learned about different career pathways in the music industry
Provide youth the opportunity to access music education who may not be able to afford it	Partnered with Kids Up Front to launch our Scholarship Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 4 students are receiving free music lessons for up to 6 months



**North York
Community
House**



**SINGER'S
EDGE**



**TORONTO
ARTS ACADEMY**

ONLINE MUSIC LECTURE SERIES

EVERY SATURDAY IN AUGUST FROM NOON TO 1 PM
DO YOU HAVE INTEREST IN THE ARTS AND
ARE LOOKING TO GROW YOUR CAREER?
LEARN FROM SOME OF TORONTO'S DIVERSE
ARTS COMMUNITY LEADERS TO FIND OUT
HOW THEY ACHIEVE SUCCESS!

- August 7: **Bronwin Parks**- Music Marketing
- August 14: **Donna Flynn**- Voice Health Specialist & Performer
- August 21: **Ruben Esguerra**- Traditional and Urban Music Educator, Performer & Composer
- August 28: **Nigel Irwin**- Sound Library Developer & Touring Musician

For more information visit:

[Singersedge.com/equity](https://singersedge.com/equity)

or email:

equity@torontoartsacademy.com

To register contact Rey Fernandez **at**
rfernandez@nych.ca **or call:** (437) 343-5539

**Once registered you will receive a zoom link
to join the online music lecture**

SUMMER OUTREACH

In August 2021, our Singer's Edge Community Outreach program partnered with North York Community House for our Alternative Arts Career Series.



Purpose of Workshops:

Our Project Manager Dani organized a series of one hour lectures every Saturday in the month of August. Each week focused on a different topic that discusses different artistic pathways.

Participants:

Aug. 7: 15 participants

Aug. 14: 19 participants

Aug. 21: 21 participants

Aug. 28: 17 participants

Total = 25 youth and 7 adults

Guest Speakers and Topics Discussed:

Bronwin Parks - Music Marketing

Donna Flynn - Voice Health Specialist and Performer

Ruben Esguerra - Traditional and Urban Music Educator, Performer and Composer,

Nigel Irwin - Sound Library Developer and Touring Musician



SURVEY RESPONSES FROM OUTREACH

93%

of the participants reported increased knowledge on alternative arts career pathways

90%

of participants reported increased motivation to keep exploring alternative art-based career pathways

90%

reported they would like to attend more educational sessions like this.



SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGNS



Some of our social media campaigns throughout 2021:

Black History Month:

During Black History Month, we wanted to use our voices to share the wonderful music contributions of black people. We shared posts about Fun Facts, African Instruments, Black Music Genres

Stop Asian Hate:

As the pandemic continued, we used our voice to stand against the racism and violence towards Asians related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Asian Heritage Month:

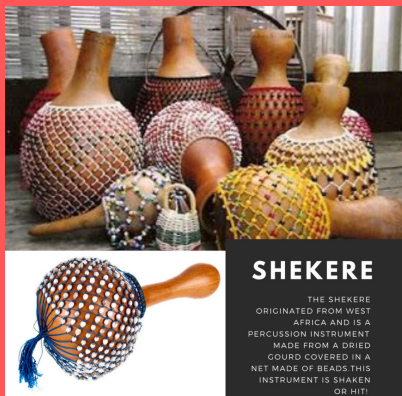
During Asian Heritage Month in May, we wanted to bring light to the 5 different regions in Asia and to promote different instruments and artists from each region.

London Attacks:

We do not tolerate Islamophobia & we stand with the family affected by the Islamophobic terrorist attacks in London, ON.

Every Child Matters & Orange Shirt Day:

We wanted to honor the children who survived the residential school system and those who did not make it home.



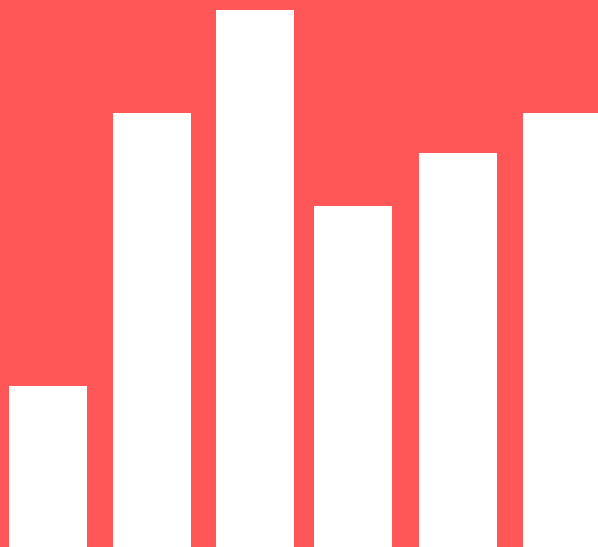
KIDS UP FRONT SCHOLARSHIP

In September 2021, we partnered with Kids Up Front to set up our Scholarship Program.

Kids Up Front provides free access to arts, culture, sports, and recreational events for children who otherwise would not have the opportunity.

Our scholarship provides up to 6 months of free singing lessons at Singer's Edge.* We currently have 4 students who are participating in our scholarship program. After the 6 months of lessons, we will offer our scholarship to 4 new students.





PURPOSE:

To learn how our staff and students feel about Toronto Arts Academy & Singer's Edge. To determine if we are being accommodated and inclusive and what areas we can improve on.

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION QUESTIONNAIRE

What it will be asking:

There will be 6 sections.

- 1)** Learning who our students/staff are (racial background, religion, etc.)
- 2)** Safety within our schools
- 3)** Measuring our diversity and inclusion impact

****Sections 4 - 6 will be specific to staff only:****

- 4)** Career Development and Leadership
- 5)** Workplace Culture and Personal Experience
- 6)** Policies and Procedures

Key Things to learn from the Questionnaire:

- Are we providing enough resources to staff and students?
- Do students and staff feel welcomed from all backgrounds?
- Are we providing enough accommodations?
- Do staff feel like they are having their voices heard
- Are we actively recruiting diverse staff?
- Is our work culture the way we want it?
- How can we improve?

Next Steps:

- 1)** There will be an equity meeting where we will be discussing the content of the questionnaire on January 27th at 11:00 AM and making any necessary changes.
- 2)** The Questionnaire will be sent out within the first few weeks of February after making any changes. Questionnaires will be due end of February.
- 3)** Report on the findings from the questionnaire will be sent out Mid-March
- 4)** The report on the findings will be discussed at the Equity Committee meeting on March 25th at 11:00 AM to discuss the findings and ways to implement change.