



[OWTA.org](http://OWTA.org)

**ANNUAL REPORT**

**2017**

## Message From Founder

For the past 8 years we've had the privilege of seeing thousands of youth take part in our in-school and after school programs. We've witnessed youth grow creatively and personally, and we've seen long-lasting friendships develop. There were challenges along the way but we persevered, and as we look back on our programming and achievements in 2017 we can't help but beam with pride. It was another exciting year for OWTA and we have our loyal supporters and generous donors to thank! Listed below is a snapshot of the events that we hosted in 2017:

- Slam Obsidian Black History Month National School Tour (Quebec, Alberta and British-Columbia)
- Diversity in the Arts Conference
- Girls Unite Workshops
- 8 Year Anniversary fundraiser
- Children's Sing-A-Longs at Chapters Pointe-Claire
- 5th Summer Breeze: Acoustic Music Concert Series in partnership with Chapters Pointe-Claire and Starbucks
- 2nd Annual Countdown to Christmas Vendor Fair
- 5th Annual Winter Wonderland Brunch



Each year we hope to deliver even more in-school and after school programs and workshops, and 2018 is on track to do just that! With a few new programs and events in the works we're gearing up for a fun-filled year. As we continue to grow, so will our mission. In 2018 OWTA will change our mandate to include the creation of professional theatre, dance and music productions. With the addition of professional productions, OWTA hopes to serve even more members of the Community.

Thank you for your continued support!

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Akilah Newton'.

**Akilah Newton**  
Founder & President



## Mission

Overture with the Arts (OWTA) is a non-profit organization based in the West Island, offering education in music, dance, drama and vocal training. Our free and low-cost programs enable young people to pursue their passion in the performing arts when they wouldn't otherwise have the financial means to do so.

## Vision

OWTA encourages youth to express themselves creatively and use the arts as a tool to empower their artistic inspirations and communicate in the areas of social justice.

## Values

Professionalism • Youth •  
Community • Diversity • Respect

## Board of Directors

- President: Modupeh Taylor-Cline
- Treasurer: Kelvin Newton
- Secretary: Diane Bates
- Administrator: Nan Beaton
- Administrator: Justine McIntyre
- Administrator: Tina Wentzel
- Administrator: Dyana Gampel

## Programs

To carry out our goal of engaging with youth, OWTa runs several programs throughout the year. The programs are diverse in nature, including music, dance and radio broadcasts. Additionally, we focus on building partnerships with local organizations. This allows us to create a strong network of committed volunteers, partners and participants who continue to benefit from our activities.



### Girls Unite

Girls Unite is a female empowerment music program that gives youth the opportunity to work with music industry professionals. In celebration of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (March 21), youth recorded original songs produced by Juno Award Nominee, singer/ songwriter, Patrick Lehman.



### Slam Obsidian

For an 8th consecutive year we visited secondary schools with an edutainment (education and entertainment) presentation in celebration of Black History Month. We visited schools in Quebec, Alberta and British-Columbia, and delivered 40 presentations. Approximately 8,500 youth benefitted from the presentation.

## Events



### 8-Year Anniversary Fundraiser

On Saturday, April 22nd we celebrated our 8-year anniversary at the Pierrefonds Cultural Centre. Guests sipped on wine, enjoyed hors d'oeuvres and a music performance by youth who participated in our Girls Unite program. Additionally, 4 local comedians had us in stitches! Lastly, Jimmy Baptiste created a painting in 30-minutes, which was then included in our silent auction for guests to bid on. All of the proceeds from the night will go towards funding our programs.



### Summer Breeze: Acoustic Music Concert Series

Due to popular demand we hosted a free concert every Friday in July and August at Starbucks inside Chapters Pointe-Claire. The shows were family friendly and all ages were welcome. Starbucks donated a fantastic gift basket to raffle off at each show and approximately 350 guests enjoyed the concert series.



### Summer Sing-A-Long

Every 2nd Thursday in July and August we hosted a children's Sing-A-Long at Chapters Pointe-Claire. From 11:00am to 11:30am children sang along to their favourite songs with Becky Fiset-Côté. There was no cost to participate and we had a fantastic prize to raffle off at the end of each workshop.



## Events



### 5th Annual Winter Wonderland Brunch

For a fifth consecutive year we treated 25 families in need in the West Island to an afternoon of free activities at the Pierrefonds Cultural Centre. Guests enjoyed a warm brunch, a live music performance, a dance workshop and received a framed family portrait as a keepsake. Every child in attendance received gifts from Hatley, Beaver Books, Hasbro Toys, Peter Pauper Press, Regal Confections, Starbucks Pointe-Claire, Chapters, Wow Wee Toys, and Sami Fruits donated products and food for the event. The event was sponsored by the Kiwanis Club of Lakeshore Montreal Foundation.



### Diversity In The Arts Conference

On March 21 we hosted our 1st Diversity in the Arts Conference in celebration of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, and Action Week Against Racism. We had a much needed discussion on the lack of cultural diversity represented in the arts and entertainment industry and had an open dialogue regarding racism. Hosted by Aisha Delpeche, panelists Aiza Ntibarikure (Actress/ Musician), Mark Ouimet (Actor/ Arts Administrator at Rezolution Pictures), Lateef Martin (Founder of Miscellaneum Studios) and Chandni Côté-Shah (Dancer/ Dance Coach) spoke about their experiences as visible minorities in the industry.



### Summer Sing-A-Long

On Sunday, November 19, we hosted 40 local vendors and artisans at Riverdale High School in the cafeteria. Cosmetics, Health & Wellness, Jewellery and toys were some of the exciting booths that were onsite at the event. This free event was family friendly and children enjoyed a dance workshop, face painting, a magic show, a music performance and more! The event served as a fundraiser for OWTa.

# Impact

Through various fundraising activities, OMTA cultivated new donors, reached new supporters and raised some much needed funds. As a result of this we were able to continue running our regular programs and introduce new programs.



## Support and Networking - Members And Partners

- Riverdale High School Community Learning Centre
- Pearson Educational Foundation

## 2018 Objectives

- Increase funding
- Increase number of programs
- New fundraising initiatives
- Launch Membership Program to keep OMTA supporters engaged

## Supporters

- City of Pierrefonds, Jim Beis, Mayor of Pierrefonds and City Councillors
- Frank Baylis, MP for Pierrefonds/Dollard-des-Ormeaux
- The Department of Canadian Heritage
- The Lester B. Pearson School Board Entrepreneurship Grant Program
- Alberta Association for Multicultural Education
- Arbonne Charitable Foundation
- Kiwanis Club of Lakeshore Montreal Foundation
- Martin Coiteux - MNA, Nelligan
- Carlos Leitão - MNA, Robert-Baldwin
- François Blais - Minister responsible for Recreation and Sport
- Kathleen Weil, Minister of Immigration, Diversity and Inclusion
- Sébastien Proulx, Minister of Families, Education, Sports & Leisure
- Luc Fortin, Minister of Culture and Communications
- Lise Thériault, Minister responsible for the Status of Women



## **We Need Your Help!**

While we receive some government support, we depend on the generosity of individuals and corporations to continue to run our programs. We are a non-profit organization supported primarily by donations. To keep running programs, we need your help. We kindly ask you to consider donating to OWTA. No amount is too small.

## **Volunteer**

Not everyone can make a financial contribution, but there are other ways that you can help OWTA. We are grateful for any involvement as it helps us to achieve our goal of providing free and low cost arts workshops to our community's youth. Please contact us if you would like to volunteer for OWTA, plan a fundraiser event, etc.





## Thank You!

To all our partners, board members, sponsors and volunteers for your continued support. Every year we will reach new heights with the energy, passion, and the commitment to change the lives of youth through the arts.

## Contact Information

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