



the  
*circus*  
PROJECT

2015

*Annual Report*

# 2015 was a *monumental* year for the Circus Project.

From 2008 to 2014 we were based out of a shared gym space in a local community center. The size and limited access to the space constrained training opportunities for students and professionals alike. Our community stepped up, and contributed \$250,000 in just three weeks so that we could secure our first dedicated facility and open our doors in April of 2015.

Once established in our new facility, and with the support of major donors and a small army of volunteers, we were able to more than double the number of at-risk youth served through our Social Circus programs: from 119 in 2014 to 288 in 2015. Our public Academy witnessed a similar, dynamic trend, tripling from 152 students in 2014 to 452 in 2015. In addition, we produced our most successful gala to date, toured our pre-professional youth company across country to Maine, produced four Community Showcases, and created featured performances for a number of corporate and nonprofit events.

## We ended 2015 in the best organizational shape of our history.

The accomplishments described herein are a testament to the generosity of our donors and volunteers, the talent and determination of our staff, the dedication of our students, and the power of contemporary circus to nourish personal growth as well as community development. Our greatest achievement lies in uniting students, professional artists, staff, and donors to elevate the craft to new heights, and create a place where everyone, regardless of age, physical ability, economic, or social background, can become an artist.

Thank you for helping us build a sacred training ground where the joint spirits of creating art and living creatively are harnessed for community transformation.



Jenn Cohen  
*Founder & Artistic Director*



A woman with glasses and a beard is smiling and interacting with three young children in a stable. The children are lying on their stomachs on a dark surface, looking at the camera. The background shows stable equipment like saddles and bridles hanging on the wall.

# *Integrated Programs*

Give a kid a meal and you feed him for a day.

Teach a kid to fly and you  
*feed her for a lifetime.*



“Joyous, innovative and creative.  
This is a community gem.”

THERESA CAVANO, PARENT

t h e  
*circus*  
P R O J E C T

transcends social barriers  
+ inspires personal  
transformation through  
contemporary circus  
instruction + performance.

The Circus Project was founded on a simple yet innovative idea: that the unique appeal of circus arts can benefit marginalized youth in unprecedented ways— and that in turn, their unique perspectives will propel the growing field of circus arts to new heights.

What began in 2008 as a pioneering experiment to empower homeless youth through the development of original, skilled circus productions, has grown organically into a thriving arts organization that serves a diverse community through a public Academy, professional performances, and a spectrum of Social Circus programs that utilize circus arts to facilitate individual and community transformation.

Each of these programs support and enhance the others, working on multiple levels to promote personal development, artistry, and social justice.





CIRCUS IN  
THE SCHOOLS  
PARTNERS

SEI

Beach

Boise-Eliot

Creston

Ockley Green

HIGH  
FLYERS  
PARTNERS

Friends of the  
Children

p:ear

SMYRC

“SMYRC’s partnership with the Circus Project was the highlight of the summer.

The activities provided  
*new creative outlets*  
for physical wellness, emotional stability, and new coping skills.

Coaches challenged youth to go beyond their self-perceived limits, all while being respectful of each youths’ individual identity.”

ELAINA MEDINA, SMYRC PROGRAM MANAGER,  
NEW AVENUES FOR YOUTH

High Flyers

Outreach to homeless and at-risk youth through nonprofit partners

Circus in  
the Schools


After school programs in Title I schools, and schools serving predominantly low-income children

Continued  
Mentorship

Tuition-free training offered to graduates of High Flyers and Circus in the Schools in our recreational and pre-professional Academy

Art is food for the soul, but here at the Circus Project, it also offers a concrete pathway to independence for homeless and at-risk youth. The Circus Project’s award-winning Social Circus programs utilize circus arts as a vehicle to teach self-care, discipline, accountability and teamwork to youth for whom other paradigms have failed.





“Students learned the value of teamwork, unity, health & fitness and academic success. Students who started the term with behavioral challenges emerged as class leaders who were able to exercise self-control.”

CINDA R JACKSON, SEI/SUN BEACH SITE MANAGER

288 Total youth  
served in 2015 (up from  
152 in 2014)

Doubled the number  
of youth enrolled in  
after-school workshops

80% of students reported  
positive changes in  
self-esteem, body image, ability  
to take safe risks

90% of students expressed  
interest in continued  
training through extended  
offerings at partner  
sites and through  
free tuition in our  
Academy

# *Social Circus Highlights*



# *Dedicated Academy*

Tripled the Academy community  
from 152 students in 2014  
to 452 in 2015

Hired Lead Coach, Kari Jay  
Hunter, to update curriculum  
and ensure consistency  
across classes and levels

Introduced multiple new  
apparatus' to Portland,  
including Chinese Poles, Cyr  
wheel, and tightwire

Started a second  
pre-professional Training  
Company for youth  
ages 10–18

Hosted several master  
workshops featuring artists  
from Les 7 Doigts de la  
Main and Cirque du Soleil

Created membership program for  
professionals  
& dedicated students

“The Circus Project is  
the only educational  
opportunity in Portland  
that encompasses an array  
of circus training, all with  
opportunities for students  
to integrate theatrical and  
dance elements. We are  
lucky to have the Circus  
Project in our community!”

RHENNE MILES, STUDENT



The Circus Project’s Academy offers recreational and pre-professional programs for children and adults from all walks of life. A continuum of training opportunities advance the field by fashioning a new generation of innovative artists, while tuition fees support our Social Circus programs.



# *Inspired Performances*

Performances are a critical component  
to the success of our mission—

*using artistic excellence to  
promote social change.*

*Audience Members*

3250+

## 2015 ORIGINAL PRODUCTIONS

And still I rise:  
sold-out opening gala

S7nners Soiree:  
interactive live art event

Four Community  
Showcases featuring  
students and  
professionals from  
around the world



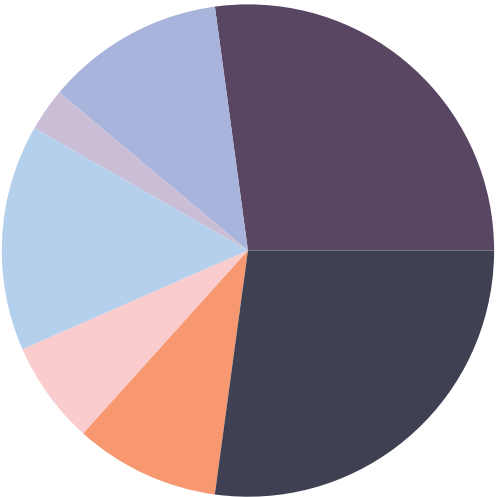




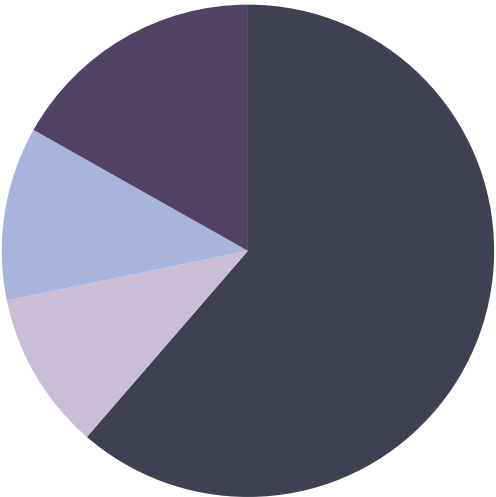
“I cannot even begin to describe how amazing this place is. The facility is incredible, the staff is even more incredible, and the classes are fabulous.”

LAURA MCKONE, PARENT

# Financial Snapshot



INCOME	
Capacity Campaign	\$150,000
Individuals	\$64,966
Corporations	\$15,573
Foundations	\$82,100
Government	\$37,310
In-Kind	\$52,599
Earned Income	\$149,968



EXPENSES	
Academy	\$288,855
Performances	\$49,030
Social Circus	\$53,703
General	\$79,235

2015 was our most successful financial year to date. We surpassed our goals for both earned and contributed income, and came in under projected expenses.



A full-page background image of a woman with long dark hair, wearing a grey tank top and black leggings, performing an aerialist pose on two black silks. She is suspended in the air, with one leg extended upwards and the other bent, holding onto the silks with both hands. The background is a soft, out-of-focus outdoor setting with trees and a fence.

## TCP FEATURED IN

Craft Brewing Convention,  
Beer City Big Top



Basic Rights Oregon Gala



Oregon Trial  
Lawyers Snowball



Galaxy Festival



American Youth Circus  
Festival,  
Portland, Maine

“Circus Project  
Teaches Homeless  
Kids to Fly.  
It’s Awesome.”

Upworthy

“The Circus Project  
Flying Higher than  
Ever with New Space  
and School Programs”

The Oregonian

“America’s Top  
Aerialist”

Willamette Week

# 2015 *Press*



# 2015 Circus Project Supporters

## In Honor of

Amelia Bear  
by David Powell  
Bonnie Bennett  
by Christine & Stuart Cohen  
Friends of the Children  
by Campbell Foundation  
FrightTown Staff and Volunteers  
by David Helfry & Stacy Bolt  
Hero Hogland-Mapes  
by James Mapes  
Kirsten Collins  
by Donna Flanders & Carl Collins  
Eric and Lisa Newman  
by Geoffrey and Joy Newman  
Blythe Olson  
by Lindsay Olson  
Adam Ochshorn  
by Linda & Steven McGeady  
Lenora Sher  
by Jeffrey Sher

## In Memory of

Helen McNichol and Bonnie Egan  
by Tim McNichol & Anne Egan  
Jack Schlatter  
by Dr. Maura & Andrew Conlon-McIvor

## In-Kind

Kelsey Aicher  
JennyB & Shaney Broome, Shady Lady Lighting  
Juliana Barlow  
Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream  
Theresa Cavano  
Jenn Cohen  
Cupcake Jones  
Joe Denother  
Gaby Donnell  
Figure Plant  
Fosler Portland Architecture  
Hopey's Heart Foundation  
Catherine Hyland  
Lucanus Newby  
Nike, Inc.  
James G. Pierson, Inc.  
Portland Badge & Sign Company  
Craig Rodda  
David Saintey  
Stainless Cable Solutions  
Cindy Thompson Event Productions  
Touch of Gray Painting  
AAA Quality Home Maintenance

## \$50,000+

Arlene Schnitzer  
  
The Collins Foundation\*  
Anonymous (2)

## \$15,000+

James F. & Marion L. Miller Foundation  
Nike Employee Grant  
Fund of the Oregon Community Foundation

## \$10,000+

Ronni Lacroute\*  
Oregon Arts Commission  
Oregon Cultural Trust  
Trail Blazers Foundation\*

## \$7500+

Charlotte Martin Foundation\*  
Hoover Family Foundation\*

## \$5000+

Cirque du Soleil  
Maybelle Clark Macdonald Fund\*  
McGeady Family Foundation\*  
Regional Arts & Culture Council

## \$2500+

Autzen Foundation  
Kirsten Collins  
Kay Richman & Daniel Kaplan  
Susan Richman & Peter Manis  
The Standard  
Wieden+Kennedy

## \$1000+

Christine & John Bakalar  
Brownstein Family Foundation\*  
Theresa & David Cavano\*  
Concept Entertainment  
Six LLC\*

Representative Margaret Doherty\*  
Ann Edlen\*  
Earl Hines\*  
The Jackson Foundation\*  
Barry & Melissa Miller\*  
Ioan Mitrea  
Pediatric Dental\*  
Mina Schnitzer  
Hertsel Shadian  
Megan and Thomas Shipley\*  
Philip (Tyler) Silver\*

## \$500+

George & Patricia Andries  
Bank of the Cascades  
Stephen & Anne Clemens\*  
Jenn Cohen  
Jonathan Edwards\*  
Teri Fitch  
Douglas Lovett\*  
David Saintey  
Kate Sokoloff\*  
Bob Speltz\*  
Sonja Straub  
Dorie Vollum\*

## \$250+

Patricia & Paul Buescher\*  
Ken & Anne Edwards\*  
Steve Fosler\*  
Jon Henrichsen & Monica Brenner  
Jesse Hudson\*  
Tom Manley\*  
Kathryn Menard  
Microsoft Matching Gifts  
Rebecca Morgan  
Nike Matching Gift Program  
George Thorn  
Susan Towers\*  
Suzanne Van Amburgh\*  
Sutter Wehmeier & Anna Bell-Hibbs\*

## \$100+

Stephen Aiguier\*  
Susan & Douglas Ainslie\*  
Tarn Allen  
AmazonSmile  
Pippa Arend  
Laura Becker\*  
Clay Biberdorf & Erika Schuster\*  
Margaret Bloomfield\*  
Susan Bragdon  
Heather Buss\*  
Eloise & Gary Damrosch\*

Gail & Dan Dougherty\*  
Robin Dunitz\*  
Jan Dworkin  
Ebay Employee Foundation\*  
Robert & Kathy Felder  
Fred Meyer Community Rewards  
David Goldman\*  
Eric Gonzales\*  
Diane Goodwin\*  
Nicolas Gros\*  
Dianna Hanken-Hu\*  
Sarah Hart\*  
Phillip Hillaire\*  
John Hinds\*  
Jamie Hurd\*  
Michael & Patricia Johnson\*  
Kris Jones\*  
Cindy Knowles\*  
Mark Lindau  
Jo Mason\*  
Mara McGeady\*  
Dawn Menken  
Monica Mueller\*  
Katherine Oberholtzer\*  
Laurie O'Brien  
Lia Ovelar\*  
Caroline Petrich & Kirk Weller\*  
Julia Plowman\*  
Paula Prince\*  
Annie Robb\*  
Francie & Michael Royce  
Shelia Seidl\*  
Jeanine Ward  
Mona Warner\*  
Brian Weaver\*  
Peter Vennewitz\*


## Up to \$99

Rachel Altmann\*  
Steve Ammann\*  
Kimberly Anderson\*  
Kate Andries  
Anonymous  
Barbara Backstrand\*  
Justin Bigler\*  
Karla Bofill\*  
Ben Bowman\*  
Chris Bucci\*  
Kirsten Burt\*  
David Cantor\*  
Cary Clarke  
Amanda Clifton\*  
Gaby Donnell\*  
Rich Eichen\*  
Geoffrey Fanning\*  
Richard & Ruthellen Fein\*  
Frank Goff\*  
Debra & Michael Golden\*  
Dan Griffiths  
Gabriel Guard\*

Chad & Serra Hadsell\*  
Esther Haikkila\*  
Gail Hare\*  
Terri Hart\*  
Jay Harter\*  
Julie Hastings\*  
William & Elizabeth Hathaway\*  
Morton Henig\*  
Emelia Hiltner\*  
Tamara Horton\*  
Sheryl Horwitz & Larry Knudsen\*  
Le Happy\*  
Sun Lee\*  
Judy Jewell & Paul Levy  
(Delete :Linda Leyva)  
Nancy Johns\*  
Diana Johnson\*  
Michael Johnson\*  
Willa Keegan-Rodewald\*  
Matthew Kilger\*  
Danielle Klenak\*  
Sarah Knudsen\*  
Teresa Koberstein\*  
Jenn Lapier\*  
Jeremy Lee\*  
Christina Leopardi\*  
Crystal Lorenzo\*  
Sharon Manuel\*  
Amanda Mather\*  
Robert & Ann Mathers\*  
John Murphy\*  
Linda Nelson\*  
Jennifer Newlin\*  
Julie Ocken\*  
Heather Pennick\*  
Colleen Purwins\*  
Julie Saltrelli\*  
Joseph Shaine\*  
Eric Simons\*  
William Small\*  
Kimberly Smith\*  
Vivian & David Solomon\*  
Michael Spatzek\*  
Ari Steinberg-Lake  
William Stewart\*  
Teresa St. Martin  
Phil Stoddard\*  
United Way Workplace Giving\*  
Michael Wallisch\*  
Cherie Weintraub\*  
Shirley Williams\*  
Amanda Zabohne\*  
Lenore Zenger\*

\* First time support





“For once you have tasted flight, you will  
forever walk the earth with your eyes  
turned skyward, for there you have been,  
and there will you long to return.”

LEONARDO DA VINCI

# *Join the Circus!*

## Donate

Your contribution will more than quadruple the number of students we serve over the next three years. It will provide a training ground and employment for professional artists, as well as a home base for homeless students. And, it will ensure that children from all backgrounds can actualize their innate potential and become the gifted leaders they were destined to be.

## Volunteer

From dedicated committees to special projects, we'll match your interests with meaningful work.

## Take a Class

Drop-in & series classes, as well as private instruction are available for every age and ability. Check out our Circus Summer Camps, Intensives, and Corporate Workshops while you're at it. You're never too old to join the circus! .

## Book our Troupe

The Circus Project performs at corporate, civic, and private events throughout the U.S. We hire from around the world to ensure the best artist for your event. Awe your guests with cutting-edge entertainment while contributing to a worthy cause! .

## Rent our Space

Our beautiful, 4,184 sq ft contemporary Pearl District facility (with parking and AC) is available for meetings, events, and parties.



## Board of Directors

Jenn Cohen, *Founder & Director, the Circus Project, Process Worker*

Kirsten Collins, *Grant Writer & Fundraising Consultant, KC Grants*

Caroline Petrich, *Principal, CKP & Associates*

Nelda Reyes, *Principal, AB Cultural Drivers & Performer*

Hertsel Shadian, *Attorney at Law*

## Resource Council

Pippa Arend, *Program Director, p:ear*

Representative Margaret Doherty, *Oregon State Legislature*

Mary Faulkner, *Vice President of Marketing, Ferguson Wellman Capital Management*

Commissioner Nick Fish, *Arts & Cultural Council*

Phelim McDermott, *Director, Improbable Theatre, UK & Broadway, New York*

Linda McGeady, *RACC Board, Randall Children's Hospital Art Committee*

Jordan Schnitzer, *President, Harsch Investment Properties*

Kate Sokoloff, *Creative Director, Kate Sokoloff Creative*

George Thorn, *Arts Action Research*

Julie Vigeland, *Oregon Arts Commission, Jackson Foundation, & Arts Advocate*

## Staff

Jenn Cohen, *Artistic/Executive Director*

Monica Brenner, *Operations Manager*

Linda Sheeley, *Office Manager*

Amelia Bear, *Academy Coordinator*

Anna Sell, *Social Circus Coordinator*

Kari Jay Hunter, *Lead Coach*

