

THE ART EFFECT

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Dutchess Arts Camps Nurture Creativity and Friendship



POUGHKEEPSIE, NY - Nine years ago, two six year old best friends attended Dutchess Arts Camp in Red Hook, NY for the very first time. Sadly, on January 11, 2017 one of the friends passed away from brain cancer at the age of 11. Owen Stier and Theo Alves truly embody the spirit and joy that Dutchess Arts Camp strives to provide children throughout the Hudson Valley for almost 40 years .

Owen and Theo had been best friends and inseparable since they were babies. Together the boys attended camp every summer for five years, enjoying each other's company and creating fantastical flights of artistic fancy.

The summer after Theo's passing, Owen could not bear to attend camp without his good friend, but in 2018 he returned with a plan to honor his friend and raise money for brain cancer research in Theo's name. While living without Theo continued to be difficult for Owen, he wanted to create ways to celebrate Theo's memory and their friendship. In addition to raising funds for cancer research, he began raising funds for a scholarship to give other children the opportunity to experience the place he and Theo both loved: Dutchess Arts Camp.

Owen raised \$570 dollars that summer and continued to raise money for the scholarship fund for the rest of the year, raising a total of \$2,000. Each day of camp Owen collected money at the front door and at the final

showcase where families are invited to come see all of the camper's work. The Art Effect's Theo Alves Scholarship Fund was established in celebration of a friendship between two boys and their love for art camp.

"Camp is an important part of a child's social development. Dutchess Arts Camp not only fosters a child's creativity but helps improve their social skills, and increases their sense of belonging as well as independence and values such as empathy". Says Nicole Fenichel-Hewitt, Executive Director.

For decades, The Art Effect's Dutchess Arts Camps have enriched and empowered local youth through art and exploration. With locations in Poughkeepsie, Millbrook, Red Hook, and New Paltz, The Art Effect provides high quality arts education to young people throughout the Hudson Valley, even through the COVID crisis. While only the Poughkeepsie camp will be running this summer, The Art Effect hopes to return to all its campuses next year. For more information on The Art Effect's 2020 Dutchess Art Camp summer program options for children ages 4-10, visit feelthearteffect.org/summer.

About The Art Effect: The Art Effect empowers youth to develop their creative voice to shape their futures and bring about positive social change. The organization facilitates educational programming for youth in the Hudson Valley to explore, experience and excel in the arts. The programs provide introductions to visual arts and media, giving participants the opportunity to develop real skills in these fields and guiding them towards achieving their academic and career goals. The Art Effect is anchored by the belief that the arts have the power to create a more vibrant, caring and sustainable world led by a generation of youth who value creative thinking, diverse voices and stronger connections between all people.

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