



AOK Impact

September, 2019

With the help of an amazing community of caring adults and organizations, 2019 has been an exciting year of growth and success for AOK and our young artists.

- **Community.** AOK continues to create a diverse and growing community, including individuals of all ages and backgrounds, other nonprofits and businesses, in order to provide the support and resources our young artists need to fulfill their potential.
 - Our weekly Thursday Night Dinners gather the 15-20 members of the AOK family around the table for lively evenings with lots of laughter, connection, love and good food.
 - So far in 2019 we have served over 600 meals at Thursday Night Dinner.
 - We have connected 18 of our kids with one-on-one mentors, who help us ensure our kids are getting the support they need.
 - Union Market hosts bi-monthly networking dinners that bring together AOK young artists and established, working artists for evenings of animated conversations over delicious meals. These dinners have resulted in a number of internships and commissions for our young artists
 - 14 of our kids joined us in Wellfleet, MA in July, 2019 for our third annual Cape Cod Vacation. It was a much-needed and well-deserved week of bonding, relaxation and fun in the sun (Here's a link to a [video](#) about the trip).
 - 20 kids had specially-chosen presents to unwrap last holiday season, thanks to AOK Holiday Angels. Magical gatherings of the AOK family on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day at Kathy and David's home were warm and full of the holiday spirit of generosity and gratitude.
 - We celebrated 20 birthdays and other special occasions (graduations, new jobs, commissions, etc.) with special dinners, presents and shout outs at Thursday Night Dinner.
- **Education Support.**
 - Bisah and Maureen graduated with BAs and Vicky earned her Associate's Degree.
 - Bella is starting her second year in the MFA program at the University of Arizona in Tucson.
 - Eight more kids are on their way back to college to start their fall semester.
 - We provide a full range of support to our students, including tuition assistance, housing assistance, monthly allowance, travel assistance and help with school and dorm supplies.
 - James will graduate as an EMT/Firefighter from the DC Fire Academy in September.
 - We facilitated funding for Tatiana to do a semester abroad last winter at the Royal Welsh Academy of Drama and Music
- **Jobs and Housing.**
 - Vicky, Nabil, Maureen, Shiva and Tahrook got full time jobs with benefits!
 - Nina finished massage school and is now working as a full-time massage therapist.
 - Shaughn and Alexis are both thriving as independent, working photographers.
 - Craig began a job teaching art in juvenile detention facilities.

- We have provided internships for 3 young artists to produce and post content on AOK's social media and website and to help manage the Art Space
- 5 other kids began new part-time jobs, building an employment history that will serve them as they move toward larger educational and employment goals.
- 6 kids are moving from AOK-assisted housing to living independently on their own or with friends in apartments and houses.
- **Life Support.** Thanks to the help of our growing community of AOK adults, so far in 2019 we
 - Provided housing for 5 kids.
 - Provided hundreds of meals on a daily basis throughout the year to kids living in AOK-provided housing.
 - Helped our kids with health care, mental health care and dental care needs and expenses.
 - Provided 11 kids with cell phone service and new phones.
 - Provided computers for 4 young people.
- **Artist Support.** Our support for young artists is taking many forms so far in 2019.
 - The AOK Arts Space at Independent Sector provides space and resources young artists need, builds a mutually supportive creative community and provides exhibition, performance, internship and arts commission opportunities.
 - 3 AOK artists have had solo shows in the Lobby Gallery.
 - Every artist hanging work in the Lobby Gallery has sold work from their shows.
 - The work of 7 young artists is hanging in the 7th Floor Gallery.
 - Several of the artists hanging in the 7th Floor Gallery have sold work as a result.
 - We have hosted a film screening, a photo exhibit and talk and a yoga class, in addition to many unofficial meetings of artists in the 9th Floor Conference Rooms.
 - Hundreds of young people—artists and their supporters—have attended AOK events at the Art Space
 - We have provided artist studio and work space for 5 young artists
 - We have provided art supplies for all artists who use studio space
 - We have facilitated commissions for 3 young artists, including Craig's beautiful mural in the staff canteen at Independent Sector.
 - Our new AOK Wellfleet Artist Retreat in Cape Cod, MA is already providing life-changing experiences for young artists, even as we build the community and raise the resources needed to acquire a permanent home for the Center.
 - Multi-disciplinary Bella recently wrapped up a three week residency where she created a gorgeous fiber-art installation.
 - Tatiana is a talented actor who just wrapped up a three month residency, in which she performed in the Provincetown Theater's 8-week summer production of Sweeney Todd, in addition to doing an internship at the Theater. She just started her senior year at Boston University with an unforgettable summer under her belt.

We can only do this important work with the ongoing, generous support of AOK family members like you. Thank you for believing in our kids, and for everything you do to help them fulfill their potential. To learn more or to make a donation, please visit www.aokdc.org or call (413) 658-5406.