

5/17/2021

To Whom It May Concern:

I have been the Principal at Central Juvenile Hall for more than a year and a half. One of my immediate goals has been to connect the resources of Los Angeles to my students and extend learning beyond the classroom. This mission was severely impacted by the current pandemic and all visitation and programming was abruptly brought to a halt. This was especially difficult for my students because it also meant that they were not able to receive the support from their families as all visitation was also immediately prohibited with the onset of COVID-19.

Through the fortune of chance, we were able to partner with Steve Angel and Xavier Marshall to have the students participate in Drumming for Life. While most of the CBOs we partner with were unavailable during the Pandemic, Mr. Angel made his team available to support the students. While Drumming for Life works towards literacy development, the students were able to use the medium of drumming to improve academically which was all supported by pre- and post-tests, and ongoing data analysis. Through their positivity and commitment to support the students, Drumming for Life navigated the current situation and a huge impact on the students that participated in the program.

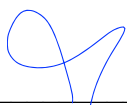
Drumming for Life was able to connect with the students through our digital learning platform which, admittedly is not the most ideal environment for guest speakers. Undeterred by all of the barriers that have kept the students especially vulnerable, Drumming for Life broke through all of the obstacles with their captivating programming and completely kept students engaged though all of the adversity.

We have had community-based organizations work with the students in person before the pandemic and others that were able to connect with the students during the pandemic however, there has not been a level of engagement that was seen when Drumming for Life works with our students. There are partnerships where there are issues around forming true connections with our students, who can be guarded, especially to strangers, but the Drumming for Life team is able to expertly address any barriers and create a space of trust where everyone was able to participate and most importantly learn.

Drumming for Life epitomizes that people can truly impact our kids positively and represents the example that my students need to see so they can understand that mistakes do not define the person. While my students may be at a vulnerable place in their life, and shut off to most, Drumming for Life, demonstrates that with the proper support and the encouragement of caring adults, they can make the changes in their live to become the productive people they have to potential to achieve.

It is truly an honor and privilege to have the support of such a dynamic program in our mission to support our students. Drumming for Life stands as one of our premier partners and we will always consider them as a member of our team in serving our students.

With humble gratitude,



Michael M. Massa, Ed.D.
Principal, Central PAU
Los Angeles County Office of Education
Phone: (323) 225-4362
Mobile:(562) 445-9610
Fax: (323) 225-3274