

We're celebrating our work in Chicago's schools! View this email in your browser



It's National Arts in Education Week!

NATIONAL ARTS IN EDUCATION WEEK



Passed by Congress in 2010, House Resolution 275 designates the week beginning with the second Sunday in September as National Arts in Education Week. During this week, the arts education field joins together in communities across the country to share stories about the transformative impact of arts in education. Read the entire resolution [HERE](#).

Silk Road Rising provides [Empathic Playwriting Intensive Course \(EPIC\)](#) for middle and high school students. EPIC enables students to express their ideas while developing critical thinking and problem-solving skills as well as alternative ways to communicate.

We are also now providing EPIC in colleges and in settings where lifelong learning is embraced such as senior housing and high-rise communities.

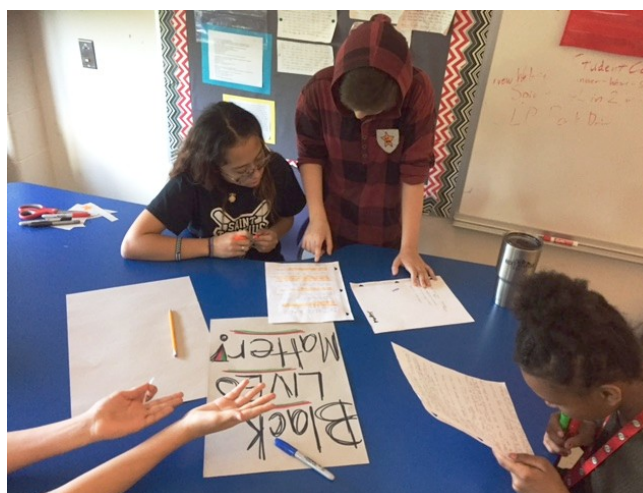
“After a certain high level of technical skill is achieved, science and art tend to coalesce in esthetics, plasticity, and form. The greatest scientists are artists as well.”

-Albert Einstein

Tijuana Discovers Her Voice

Tijuana did not know she had it in her to write a play. In fact, when we first met her, she protested that she could not — “absolutely not” — write a play. And she certainly wasn't going to participate in the fun (and sometimes silly!) improvisational activities built into our learning program.

You see, the 16-year-old Tijuana lives at home with her mother and two sisters. Her mom's shift at Starbucks begins at 5am; just getting to high school for her is a challenge. With her mother often at work to support the three girls, Tijuana steps in to rally her younger sisters in the morning to get to school on time.



We met Tijuana because Silk Road Rising brings playwriting programs to

Storytelling is not just “pretend.” It helps us make sense of the world and ignite an imagination to find solutions to our own problems. Most of all, it gives people voice — especially those who are not often heard or seen in our media and culture. **Your gifts allow children to discover their own voice.**



Each year, Silk Road Rising serves more than 500 students in schools that rarely have arts programming. Because arts learning has been declining for decades, practically no school offers a playwriting program. When we go into a classroom, we meet with students who have no exposure to theatre or drama. Most have never seen a play, never mind written one.

Although resistant at first, Tijuana slowly warmed up to our teaching artist and began writing. First slowly, then furiously. What came out of her was a play about making choices and the limited choices some in our society are offered. Although young, Tijuana was capable of tapping into such feelings and deep insights once she was able to overcome her own fears.

As a result of your donations, Silk Road Rising brings [EPIC \(Empathic Playwriting Intensive Course\)](#) to students in underserved communities. Over 20-sessions, delivered in school and during classroom time, students discover that they are inherently gifted as storytellers. We were all born with the ability to express ourselves, and EPIC helps students discover this ability.

"I want to thank you," Tijuana wrote in her final assessment, "for showing me how to express myself. I was so tied up in knots. You have given me a gift of a voice I didn't know I had."

[Please make a choice today](#) to support arts education for the 600 students each year who, like Tijuana, are discovering the gift of playwriting through EPIC.

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