



I CAN DO THAT!

PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

Danville is an incredible community, and our kids are so fortunate to have access to great schools and a terrific education. However, there is something happening that we cannot ignore; the world is changing. In a seemingly connected world via social media, our youth are actually losing the ability to understand themselves, connect with their peers and find the tools necessary to navigate the increasingly complex world they are growing into.

We founded our nonprofit youth theatre company 4 years ago with the goal of raising the bar on youth theatre. But over these 4 years it became very clear that theatre was not our purpose, it was our vehicle. What we had created was a safe environment for our kids to learn, connect, and grow. From day one, our middle school and high schoolers began coming early and staying late after rehearsals, sometimes until 10 or 11 PM! Together in the studio their phones were down and they were connecting with their friends and us about the reality of their lives. We talked about the incredible pressure they feel to be at the top of their class so they have a fighting chance to get into the college they want. We talked about the pressures of having social media and constant input of how you should look, act, or feel constantly at their fingertips. And too often we have been the adults that our students are coming to when they are on the brink of suicide due to verbal and physical abuse related to their shifting gender identification, or when they have been the victim of a rape or hidden abuse in their homes.

This reality is not going to change. It's only going to get more competitive to get into a top school, technology is only going to increase, but we believe there needs to be a balancing of the scales to counter this incredible pressure. We believe the antidote to the stresses and demands of our current environment on our kids are two things; a community and a purpose. When a child is struggling, as many undoubtedly will, we know that their chances of survival increase dramatically if they are surrounded by a healthy community. Friends and mentors who can hold space for them, acknowledge their pain, allow them to see that it is temporary, and help get them the tools to empower themselves through that difficult period. We also believe that when you have a purpose, a goal, a passion you are less likely to gravitate towards less desirable paths.

We thought that our goal was to create amazing youth theatre (and that remains true) but what we learned is that our youth are in desperate need of a place to belong. A place where they know they are loved and accepted, challenged and celebrated.

As our purpose has expanded, so now has our vision. We are in the process of renovating a 6,000 square foot facility in Downtown Danville and building a Youth Center that uses the power of community and the performing arts to fuel our youth; the individuals who will become the problem solvers, citizens, and leaders we need in this world. The center will have 3 large studio spaces for a multitude of performing arts, community, and wellness programming. We are also building a welcoming cafe at the entrance where youth are free to meet with their friends, do homework, and have a safe and healthy place to be.



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In this new space we will continue raising the bar in our theatre arts education as we challenge and expand those interested in exploring the arts, offering more productions, classes, and workshops. We will begin hosting activities and events for the whole family such as karaoke nights, family dance parties, and open mic nights as we create a more connected and supportive community. We will begin offering wellness programming focused on the physical, mental, and emotional health of our youth, giving them access to local teachers and leaders with classes in meditation, yoga, journaling, stress management and more.

Although ICDT has been a fully self sustaining non profit and we plan to continue in this way, we are raising funds through a Capital Campaign in order to complete this build. We are in the process of raising \$750,000. These funds will cover the complete renovation of the new space. Since our launch on November, 21st 2019 we have already raised over \$240,000! So far, 100% of our funds have come directly from the families of our students who believe in our vision and have experienced first hand how we have impacted their lives. We are now seeking corporate sponsorship as we align with companies who believe in this model to change our communities one child at a time.

We can't take away the pain of growing up, we can't change the world and shield our children from reality, but we can give them a place where they belong, where they feel safe, and the tools to become the empowered world-changers they are destined to be.

We appreciate your interest and support.

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