OUR MISSION

Spark Central is a 501(c)3 nonprofit that ignites the creativity, innovation, and imagination necessary for people to forge the path to their best future.

We break barriers to creativity like cost, confidence, and access by offering transformative programs, access to innovative technology, and a welcoming creative community for people of all economic backgrounds.

As a 501(c)3 charitable organization, we rely on the generosity of people like you to keep our membership and programs available at no cost so income is never a barrier to a brighter future.
FROM THE ENGINE ROOM

A Note from our Chief Engineer

Dear Friends,

At Spark Central, our mission is to ignite creativity, innovation, imagination, and lifelong learning through accessible arts and education programs. Throughout 2022 and 2023, we remained steadfast in our commitment to this mission. As with many other organizations, the pandemic tested our resilience, but it also underscored the importance of our work in providing inclusive and equitable access to education and enrichment opportunities to the West Central community and beyond.

I am proud to share that despite past challenges, we continue to make a meaningful impact in the lives of so many individuals and families. Through our diverse programming, including workshops, classes, and community events, we reach thousands of participants of all ages and backgrounds each year. One of my favorite moments witnessing creativity in action was in my first month as Executive Director during our Star Wars Day community event. After helping a 4-year-old visitor make a popsicle stick lightsaber, she asked if she could build another one and when I offered to assist again, she replied, "No thanks, I've got it." And sure enough, she did! Not only did she build another lightsaber, through trial-and-error she figured out how to put together a working circuit for a double-sided lightsaber. Talk about innovation and imagination!

As we look to the future, we are filled with optimism and excitement for the possibilities that lie ahead. Whether it is through our school-based program, Level Up, one of our summer camps, or the variety of drop-in programs at our Station, we remain dedicated to fostering creativity and empowering our community members to explore their passions. With your continued support, we are confident that we can further expand our reach and deepen our impact in Spokane for years to come. To those of you who have contributed your time, talent, and treasures with us, your generosity has been instrumental in our success, and we are immensely grateful for your partnership.

Thank you for being a part of Spark Central and helping us build a brighter future for all!

With gratitude,

Melissa Bedford, Ph.D.
Executive Director
In summer of 2023, at our ever-popular Minecraft Club, a young girl (Nina, approx. 7) joined and had technical difficulties with our iPad touch screens. But even with these challenges, she persevered and built an outdoor zoo to contribute to her group's build. Her resilience was rewarded by the compliments of other Minecraft Club attendees when her and her group shared their build on our projector at the end of the program. Nina returned the following week more practiced at interacting with the touchscreen and helped her group create a river bridge for their Spokane Landmarks build.
The heart of Spark Central programming continues to be our main space - Spark Central Station - located in Kendall Yards. Tuesdays through Saturdays, we are joined by various community members who come in to engage in our different programs, including Minecraft Club, LEGO Robotics, Art Club, and Drop In & RPG. We are grateful for the continued support from Greenstone Corporation to share our space with the West Central Neighborhood and Spokane community at large!
Since 2020, when Level Up first started, we have brought engaging programming to the youth of West Central, giving them the opportunity to share their voice. Level Up has evolved from a Station-based cohort model to a site-based program at our partner schools - Holmes and Audubon Elementary - where twice a week, 3rd - 5th grade students participate in creative projects. From storytellers in the Myth Makers program to budding journalists in the West Central Express, our Level Up youth are in the driver’s seat, sharing their interests and imaginations with the community.

Every youth that participates in Level Up grows in confidence, cultivates a growth mindset, and develops their future aspirations.
LEARNING TO COLLABORATE

Tyler (age 13) joined our Level Up program with a deep interest in technology - especially old video games - which he was eager to share with his mentor, Faith (age 20). Together, they developed this interest into experiments with creating digital music, using Garageband to combine different instruments, tracks, and vocal recordings. As Tyler explored this new skill, he encountered familiar challenges for any creative - sharing space and resources, finding ways to harmonize our vision with others’, and holding on to our motivation through setbacks. Faith and our staff coached Tyler on overcoming mistakes and collaborating creatively with others throughout the year. He progressed from reacting to setbacks with despair to engaging proactively with his peers, creating music to accompany other students’ animation projects and working with Faith to teach skills like making balloon animals to his peers. Tyler continues to report back to us from middle school, sharing new ideas for music when he visits our Creative Station and reflecting to our staff that the social skills he practiced with us, “helped me prepare for middle school, where things are tougher.”
**Play is Productive**

By the Numbers

- **7,873** members
- **6,288** volunteer hours
- **17** school break camps
- **4,809** technology check outs
- **115** Level Up participants
- **4,653** youth served by programs
- **2,280** adults served by programs
- **1,540** hours of structured programming
- **6,342** in-house & professional publications
- **7** little libraries created & filled
- **14** original songs written
- **12** community partner organizations & schools
- **25** community events
- **1** hippo onesie
- **2,194** new members
- **1,697** books checked out
- **1,697** snacks provided
- An average of **35** people per day utilize our station
- **7,873** members
- **1,697** books checked out
- **1,697** snacks provided
- An average of **35** people per day utilize our station
- **7,873** members
Our greatest goal at Spark Central is to continue providing and expanding programming that unites youth and families of all economic backgrounds and from all over the Spokane area! We achieve this connection through hands-on activities and creative play. All our programs are designed to boost creative confidence, encourage a growth mindset, and inspire broader aspirations for folks’ futures. Every week, new creative connections are happening at Spark Central!
WHERE WE ARE...

Spark Central continues to welcome people of all socioeconomic backgrounds, with a special focus on serving our West Central community. We have seen enrollment success in our school-based Level Up program and have started providing priority registration for our partner schools and organizations for our school-break camps. We strive to break the "pay-to-play" barrier so that everyone has the opportunity to find what sparks their interests and pursue their passions.

... AND WHERE WE'RE GOING

As we enter our "next chapter," we always keep in mind where we've been. We strive to honor the visions of our co-founders, Jim Frank and Jess Walter, by creating a welcoming, safe space for people to have access to the resources they need to work towards the future they imagine. To make this happen, we will continue to partner with other organizations, work with local schools, engage in professional development, communicate with our stakeholders and fellow community members, and celebrate our accomplishments. We hope you will join us as we continue full steam ahead!
## Financial Sustainability

### 2022 & 2023 Operating Revenue

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2022</th>
<th>2023</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Operating Revenue</strong></td>
<td><strong>Operating Revenue</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Individual Giving</td>
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<tr>
<td>Board Giving</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fundraising Events</td>
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<td>Grants</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sponsorships</td>
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<tr>
<td>In-Kind (rent, etc.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Merchandise &amp; Other</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL INCOME</strong></td>
<td><strong>TOTAL INCOME</strong></td>
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<tr>
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<td>Staffing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marketing &amp; Development</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL EXPENSES</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Board-restricted reserve</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL RESTRICTED FUNDS</strong></td>
<td><strong>TOTAL RESTRICTED FUNDS</strong></td>
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### 2022 & 2023 Operating Revenue Sources

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<th>Source</th>
<th>2022</th>
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<td>Individual Giving</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grants</td>
<td>51.2%</td>
<td>11.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sponsorships</td>
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<td>In-Kind (rent, etc.)</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Merchandise &amp; Other</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Spark Central relies on the generosity of people like you to keep our membership and programs free so that cost is never a barrier to brighter futures. A hearty THANK YOU goes out to the following people and organizations who supported our work in 2022 & 2023:

**SPARK CENTRAL VISIONARIES $5,000+**
- Brad & Dana Van Slyke
- Brendon Townshend
- Cinda & Rob Reed
- Hollie Timmons
- Jeffrey Kinservik
- Jim & Mary Anne Frank
- Joe & Laura Frank
- Michelle & David Starr
- Patricia & Peter Elzy
- Thomas McLaughlin

**SNOZ SQUAD $2,500+**
- Ashli Myers
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Baker Construction
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Auntie's Bookstore
Arts WA
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ADDY Hatch
Alejandra Llamado
Allena Warren

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Shanda Gorder
Sophie Richardson
Stephaine Courtney
Susan Poindexter
Terry & Melinda Bedford

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BECU
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Hagen Foundation
Idaho Central Credit Union
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J-U-B Engineering
Kaiser Aluminum
Kroger
NEW ESD 101
Marie Lamfrom
OSPI
Party Krill
Platform Partners Real Estate
Providence
River Ridge Association of Fine Arts
Smith-Barbieri Progressive Fund
Spokane Arts Grant Awards
Spokane County United Way
Spokane Teachers Credit Union
Starry Financial Group
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Office Manager

LEAH DAWDY
Station Program Manager

TERRA PRICE
Level Up Program Manager

PAM ROLLISON
Station Lead

Special Thanks to the Following Individuals:

MAGGIE BICK
Whitworth University · Level Up Intern

WILLOW VAUGHN
Whitworth University · Summer Program Intern

GWENDOLYN BRANTNER
Whitworth University · Level Up Intern

KATELYN BUMBECK
Whitworth University · Station Intern

SPARK CENTRAL
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