

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

REMEMBERING LESLIE ON HER BIRTHDAY

Trumansburg, NY - March 29, 2017 - The GrassRoots Festival matriarch, Leslie Puryear, had a deep love for both children and for music, and she especially thought it was important that the two co-mingled often. April 2, 2017 is the first birthday we'll be remembering Leslie, rather than celebrating with her around the kitchen table. So, in her honor, we are highlighting our **Roots in the Schools** program for the month of April.

Roots in the Schools is our collaborative outreach program aiming to inspire youth through music throughout the school year and in the summer months at camps. By bringing performers into schools and camps, we expose youth to music through performance, classroom presentations, and hands on experience. Our goal is to promote the creative health of children and provide them the opportunity to connect with the healing, transformative, and inspiring world of music.

"We love this program! It brings us great joy to see children light up when the beats begin. It allows them to have a break from their regular day, and to connect with their music roots," says program director Lissa Farrell. "Seeds are planted so that children may even grow to become musicians themselves."

In 2016, about 1,800 kids in twelve different schools, ages 5-18 years old, were impacted by the Roots in the Schools program. There were a wide range of performances throughout the year, including whole-school shows by Samite, Driftwood, and The Blind Spots, to interactive African dance workshops, and an intimate workshop with Hip Hop artist, Eyukaliptus.

In 2017, we've already brought the Roots in the Schools program to 1,250 kids in seven schools, and we're working on more engagements now!

Programming through Roots in the Schools is of no cost to the collaborating schools or camps. All programs are funded entirely by the GrassRoots Festival Organization.

Help us keep Leslie's spirit alive by bringing music performances and workshops to our youth all year long! All donations made to Roots in the Schools are tax deductible. Find the donation link on the Roots in the Schools page of our website at www.grassrootsfest.org, or send a check to: GrassRoots Festival, c/o Roots in the Schools, PO Box 941, Trumansburg, NY 14886.

If you are a teacher, student, administrator, or program coordinator at a school or community organization and are interested in having Roots in your school, please contact Lissa at RITS@grassrootsfest.org, or (607) 387-5098.

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Leslie Puryear was one of the creators and a longtime director of the Finger Lakes GrassRoots Festival. As fate would have it, Leslie passed on the eve of the 26th annual festival, in 2016. Learn more about Leslie on our website at www.grassrootsfest.org/about.

Roots in the Schools was created in 2010 by the Finger Lakes GrassRoots Festival Organization. Program costs are around \$300 per performance.

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Nana Monaco
Assistant Director/Marketing & PR Manager
Finger Lakes GrassRoots Festival Organization
(607) 387-5098
nana@grassrootsfest.org
www.grassrootsfest.org

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