Jeremy Dorson, RAW class of 2009 and a monthly sustainable donor

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RAW ALUMS: WHERE ARE THEY NOW

Guelmi Espinal • Age: 25
How old were you when you came to RAW?
I was in my junior year of high school at Lynn Tech. I graduated from Bucknell University in May 2018 with a BA in the classics and theater.

What are you up to now?
I am the Program Coordinator at RAW!

What did you learn at RAW?
I learned about dependability. Both how to be dependable and how to depend on other people.

What keeps you coming back?
The love.

Tell me about an important relationship you made at RAW?
I met Jason ten years ago. He’s a force that you can’t stop. He finds the best in people and reminds them of it when they don’t believe it themselves. I continually feel blessed to know a man that is unrelenting in making sure the people around him feel the best about themselves.

Melane Barrios • Age: 21
How old were you when you came to RAW?
17

What did you do after graduating?
I attended North Shore Community College and worked at RAW as the Administrative Assistant for two years.

What are you doing now?
I work for New England Historic Genealogical Society as their Accounts Payable Associate. I wouldn’t be here if it wasn’t for RAW. When I first entered RAW at 17 years old, I didn’t know what I wanted to do as a career nor did I have the mindset to push myself to pursue great things because I didn’t think I could. RAW gave me the tools to grow my confidence and self-love.

What I love most about RAW is how welcoming everyone is. You are able to be yourself and express yourself. RAW does an amazing job at making everyone feel loved and making them know that they belong here, not just in the building but in the world.
Dear friends of RAW,

Over 450 children and teens were actively engaged at RAW this past year thanks to our supportive community of which you are a part. The art, poetry, and digital films our youth created give a powerful voice to their concerns, curiosities, aspirations, and strengths. There is so much that they have to say and so much they want to tell the world—and so much for us to hear and learn from them.

A massive sculptural project, entitled “A Seat at the Table,” engaged over 40 teen artists to honor historic figures whose voices and passion have inspired them, and whose life works have challenged injustice. RAW’s mural teams embarked on their 19th year of creating public art in Lynn and beyond. Teens in our film school were invited to screen work and speak at festivals across the country. Our poets took to the stage multiple times, both inside RAW and at the historic gazebo on Lynn Common. Four of our teen girls shared their wisdom and hopes for the future as featured speakers at our annual Women’s Luncheon.

Our alums continue to deepen their involvement at RAW. Eight RAW grads held board or staff positions last year. Alum Jeremy Correnti Wood led the design plan and execution for our annual BASH. Real to Reel filmschool graduate Cinda Danh continues to inspire us all with her publication of *Faces of Lynn*, a magazine celebrating local residents, all while doing advocacy work AND running for political office in the city. And Doneeca Thurston, class of 2008, has just accepted the position of Director of the Lynn Museum and Lynn Arts. We have so many reasons to be PROUD!!

Celebrating our first quarter-century in Lynn, the timing is perfect to articulate what is core to RAW, and consider new ideas and opportunities to expand the impact of our work. As some of our long-time leaders have left the organization, moving into the next chapter of their lives, a new generation is stepping up and into expanded roles. They bring fresh thinking about the ways in which we do our work, such as deepening our practices of diversity, equity, and inclusion. As this newer generation works alongside seasoned staff and board members—those who hold the history of RAW, the knowledge built over years of experience—a new strategic plan is being created which we want to reflect both tradition and innovation. We will emerge from this process with a road map to move forward with ever-greater purpose and clarity, and a shared vision, into our second quarter-century.

We invite you to see the current exhibit *Out of the Shadows*, and hope that you will consider how you can help us “widen the circle” of support this year. What do we mean by that? In order to propel our work forward, for our long-term sustainability, we must expand our community of supporters. Who do you know that needs to meet RAW? What new faces should we be welcoming here? Who would be inspired to hear why you believe in RAW?

Again, none of this work with our kids, families, and the community would be possible without your support. The impact you help RAW make on the lives of our kids is deeply meaningful.

THANK YOU and onward!

Kit Jenkins, Executive Director

Bruce Herring, Chair of the Board
RAW’S PROGRAM OUTCOMES

In FY19, Raw Art Works expanded the ways we measure our program goals and outcomes. This year, we incorporated two new validated and reliable tools to measure social/emotional learning skills in our youth and their level of engagement in the artistic process. When combined with youth surveys, staff assessments, and other quantitative and qualitative metrics, these tools are helping us get an even more accurate picture of our youth impact. We are proud of these results, AND we continue to work hard to make sure every kid who comes through our doors is both seen and heard.

MY RELATIONSHIPS

RAW fosters strong, supportive, and trusting relationships at RAW.

- 100% of RAW youth report that they have formed trusting relationships with staff and peers.
- 100% of RAW youth report that RAW feels like a safe, supportive environment.
- 95% of Launch students report having a mentor or trusted adult in their life as a result of the program.

Positive relationships are essential for a child’s healthy development and increase resilience (Ungar, 2013).

MY STORY

RAW youth engage in art-making to tell their story.

- 100% of RAW youth report a positive experience making art for self-expression.
- 100% of RAW youth report a positive attitude toward their artwork.
- 100% of youth report that they can better express their ideas and feelings since coming to RAW.

Creative expression allows youth to create a visual narrative of their life challenges, hopes, and dreams (Slivinske & Slivinske, 2014).

MY COMMUNITY

RAW youth know how art can facilitate change in the world around them.

- 100% of RAW youth report they learned how art can be used to make a positive change in their community and the world around them since coming to RAW.

Community and public art can “reinforce values of the group, raise questions about current social conditions, and construct an image of social change” (Milbrandt, 2010).
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RAW... harbored a work ethic and creative passion that’s carried me through life. Though I got my degree in electrical engineering and now have a career as an engineering manager, my mindset is forever shaped by my time spent at RAW.

RAW enabled me to better visualize an end result to a project, gave me the resources and support to make it happen, and made the journey to get there memorable. I learned how to fail and how to succeed gracefully and humbly. Unlike my coursework in school, RAW never expected anything from me that wasn’t me.

Over time I’ve come to understand the support and resources that RAW provides to youth are so critical in developing skills that will last a lifetime. I’m so grateful to have been able to be a member of RAW, and to now be in a position where I can give back to help expand the resources RAW has to offer.”

—Jeremy Dorson, RAW class of 2009 and a monthly sustainable donor