



GUITARS
OVER
GUNS



GUITARS OVER GUNS

THE LABEL

EMPOWERING YOUTH THROUGH MUSIC & MENTORSHIP

OUR MISSION

Guitars Over Guns is a movement that empowers youth to create, succeed, and thrive through mentorship and the arts. Across Miami, Chicago, and New York, we provide students with music education and authentic mentoring relationships with professional musicians to help them overcome hardship, find their voice and reach their potential as tomorrow's leaders.

WHY MUSIC?

Music lessons with our mentors means educational empowerment, dignity, and mental health stability for our students. With your partnership, we are able to provide opportunities for our students to share their stories through song and dance. And that's where the magic begins.

WHAT DO STUDENTS SAY?

89%

of students encouraged by their mentors to work through difficult problems

89%

of students felt encouraged by their Guitars Over Guns mentors to work through difficult problems

88%

of students would recommend Guitars Over Guns to a friend

87%

of students demonstrated measurable growth in 2 or more core Positive Youth Development capacities

OUR PURPOSE



Through arts-based mentoring, Guitars Over Guns is addressing three primary interrelated challenges facing youth from low-income communities in Miami, Chicago, Los Angeles and New York:



Kids possess limitless potential. They're creative. They're fearless. They're bursting with energy and hungry for knowledge. They know how to make the most of every opportunity



But kids from our low income communities don't always have the chance to discover how wide the world of possibilities is. These kids are filled with promise. They have big dreams and bold stories to tell. And yet, they don't always have the freedom to choose a path of their own. We believe that young people who thrive in the face of adversity have the capacity to be our greatest leaders.

Lack of positive adult relationships

Barriers to access to high-quality arts programming

Cycle of disenfranchisement and exposure to trauma

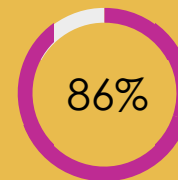




WHY CHICAGO

From proof of concept in Miami to proof of scale in Chicago, Guitars Over Guns Chicago launched in this region in 2014, starting with one school and now serving 22 schools and community sites. Chicago's vibrant music and arts culture inspires creativity, while the city's systemic challenges, such as youth violence and inequitable access to resources, highlight the urgent need for programs like ours.

Evidence-based violence prevention and intervention programs save \$5 for every \$1 spent compared to other social services, while significantly reducing crime and violence. By addressing these issues through mentorship and music, Guitars Over Guns Chicago empowers youth to express themselves, build resilience, and create safer, stronger communities.



86% of youth homicide victims are from firearms

Schools with music programs have an estimated **90.2%** graduation rate and **93.9%** attendance rate compared to schools without music education, which average

72.9% graduation and **84.9%** attendance

(The National Association for Music Education)

An estimated **50 - 60%** of urban youth are exposed to neighborhood violence. In some neighborhood samples, that number climbs to nearly **100%**

2024 - 2025 PROJECTIONS

STUDENTS	MENTORS	SITES
425	43	21

95% OF STUDENTS ARE AT OR BELOW THE POVERTY LINE

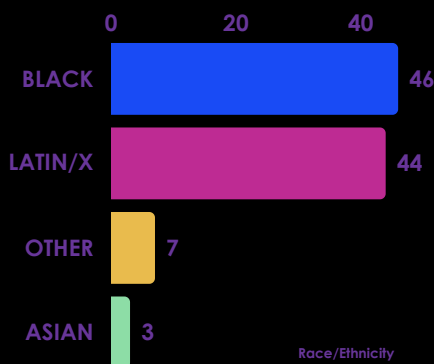
20% OF STUDENTS IDENTIFY AS HAVING A DISABILITY

ARTISTIC DISCIPLINES TAUGHT:

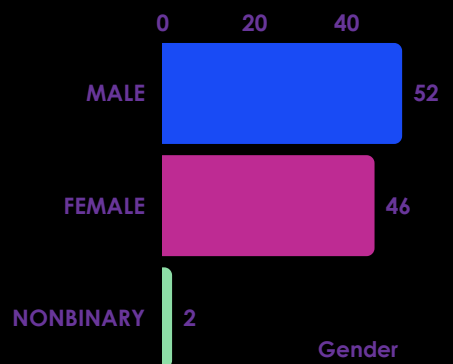
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- GUITAR
- MODERN BAND
- KEYS
- VOCALS
- PHOTOGRAPHY & DIGITAL MEDIA
- BASS
- MUSIC PRODUCTION
- POETRY AND CREATIVE WRITING
- LATIN PERCUSSION
- DRUMS
- SONGWRITING
- RAP
- SPOKEN WORD

RACE/ETHNICITY



GENDER



“EACH MENTOR I’VE MET HAS DONE SOMETHING FOR ME TO CHANGE MY VIEWS ON MUSIC AND LIFE. I’VE BEEN ABLE TO TAKE EVERY PIECE OF ADVICE THEY’VE GIVEN AND ADAPT IT TO MY ENVIRONMENT”

KYLA W., CURIE METRO HIGH SCHOOL

OUR SITES

SOUTHWEST SIDE

Evergreen Academy Middle School
James Shields Middle School
Curie Metro High School
A.O.N. Productions Career Pathway

WEST SIDE

Roberto Clemente Community Academy
Rusu-McCarten Boys & Girls Club
Washington Irving Elementary School
William H. Brown STEM Magnet School
William P. Nixon Public School

WAUKEGAN

Mosaic Hub
Waukegan High School – Brookside Campus
JNAC Creatives
John R. Lewis Middle School
Boys & Girls Club of Lake County

SOUTH SIDE

Art in Motion
Chicago Collegiate High School
CICS Prairie
CICS Lloyd Bond Charter School
Gary Comer College Prep Middle School
Kenwood Academy High School
Gary Comer Youth Center
Haven Studios
Juvenile Probation Program @ TASC
Haven Cinema
Cinema Career Pathway

SUMMER PROGRAMS

Camp GOGO @ Covenant Harbor
Haven Studios
Kenwood Academy High School
Curie Metro High School
Roberto Clemente Community Academy
Haven Cinema

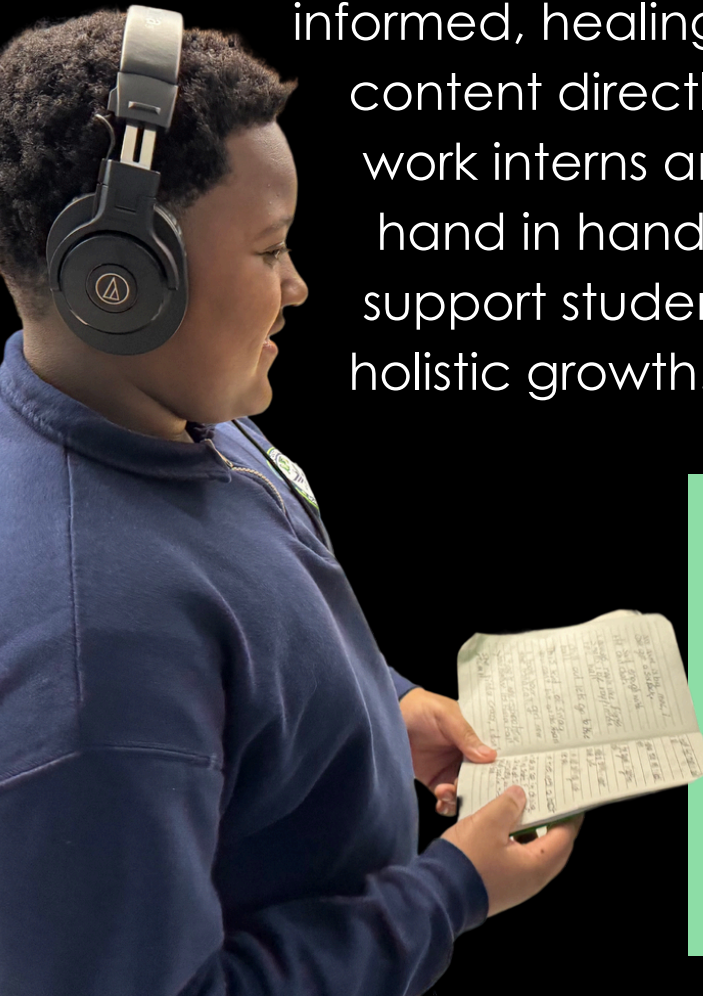
**2024-2025
PROJECTED NUMBER OF
MENTEES SERVED:**

425

SPOTLIGHT ON POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT:

M-POWER MENTAL WELLNESS PROGRAM

M-Power is our programmatic approach to serving our students' and alumni's diverse mental health needs. M-Power brings trauma-informed, healing-centered practices and content directly to our youth. Our social work interns and wellness mentors work hand in hand with arts mentors to support students' creative and holistic growth.



of Guitars Over Guns students increased or maintained their score on the Childhood Global Assessment Scale (C-GAS)*



GOGO EXPERIENCE CIRCLE

MUSIC EXPOSURE & MUSICIANSHIP

- Quality mentorship
- Introduction to instruments
- Methodology

NON-COGNITIVE SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

- Self-efficacy
- Self-esteem
- Collaboration
- Discipline
- Integrity

PIPELINE

- Holistic support: creative, academic, personal & professional
- Continuum of services from year 1 to alumnihood
- Mentees becoming mentors



M-POWER & ALUMNI WRAPAROUND SERVICES

- Mental health & wellness support services for students, parents, and school partners
- Staff & mentor trainings on trauma-informed practices
- Continued artistic & professional support and opportunities for alumni
- Upskilling our alumni, mentors and staff for internal hires & promotions
- Track a virtuous alumni network to provide youth with continued ongoing support

Thoughtful,
compassionate young
people are a product
of exposure to music
& the arts

SIGNATURE EVENTS

DAY OF GRATITUDE

Our organization gathers for an afternoon of deep gratitude, where our students, families, mentors, school partners, and community members enjoy a meaningful celebration of their collective achievements.

MUSIC VIDEO

Every spring, students from across all of our Chicago programs professionally film and record a collaborative music video. This annual project demonstrates the power of music as a universal language that can bridge neighborhood, cultural and other boundaries, finding common ground in the drive toward self-expression, connection, and empathy.

SPRING SHOWCASE

Watch our students shine on the big stage! This event is hosted at a local venue and students work with their mentors for months to be ready for their big performance.



SIGNATURE EVENTS

CAMP GOGO

We host our annual Camp GOGO in Covenant Harbor in the picturesque setting of Lake Geneva, Wisconsin. Over the course of four days, our young musicians enjoy a journey filled with outdoor adventures, creative exploration, and deep self-reflection. Every year Camp GOGO has an overarching theme and the youth create and record an EP during camp.

MENTOR INSTITUTE

Institute is our foundation for building both individual and collective leadership among our frontline workers. Mentors will receive 34 hours of paid training over the course of four days. Workshops cover instrument and song instruction, mental health and wellness, trauma-informed teaching tactics, and culturally affirming teaching practices.



THE LABEL

As an exclusive member of The Label, you are a distinguished VIP in every audience we captivate. You'll experience the music like never before, witness our talented youth shine on stage, and revel in the knowledge that your involvement is making a profound difference.

\$100,000 DIAMOND

Recognition

Your family name/logo/company name will be included as a founding member of The Label in the following ways:

- Recognition in our national and regional newsletter and on our website's The Label page
- Inclusion as a 'Founding Member' at our (end of the year concert/student showcase) and our The Label fall event with print and digital logo recognition
- Opportunity to make opening remarks at our (end-of-the-year concert/Day of Gratitude)
- Prominent recognition in the Guitars Over Guns annual magazine
- Credit at the end of the student music video
- Dedicated social media post
- Spotlight in our newsletter

Programmatic Engagement

You will be invited to see our mission in action in the following ways:

- (6) tickets to our End-of-the-year concert and Day of Gratitude
- (4) invitations to the The Label event in the fall
- Invitations to the recording of the student music video, Mentor Institute, Choose Your Sound celebration in Miami
- Backstage passes to our student showcases to see our mission in action



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\$50,000 DOUBLE PLATINUM

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\$25,000 PLATINUM

Recognition

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- Recognition in the Guitars Over Guns annual magazine
- Credit at the end of the student music video
- Highlighted in an annual social media post

Programmatic Engagement

You will be invited to see our mission in action in the following ways:

- (6) tickets to our end-of-the-year concert and Day of Gratitude
- (4) invitations to the The Label event in the fall
- Invitations to the recording of the student music video, Mentor Institute, Choose Your Sound celebration in Miami
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\$10,000 DOUBLE GOLD

Recognition

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- Recognition in the Guitars Over Guns annual magazine
- Credit at the end of the student music video
- Highlighted in an annual social media post

Programmatic Engagement

You will be invited to see our mission in action in the following ways:

- (4) tickets to our end-of-the-year concert and Day of Gratitude)
- (2) invitations to the The Label event in the fall
- Invitations to the recording of the student music video, the Mentor Institute, Choose Your Sound celebration in Miami
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\$5,000 GOLD

Recognition

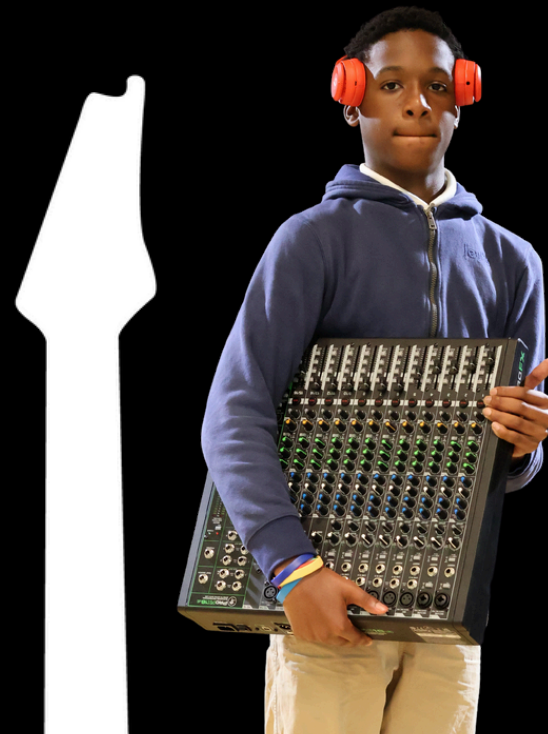
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- Recognition in the Guitars Over Guns annual magazine
- Credit at the end of the student music video
- Highlighted in an annual social media post

Programmatic Engagement

You will be invited to see our mission in action in the following ways:

- (4) tickets to our end-of-the-year concert and Day of Gratitude
- (2) invitations to the The Label event in the fall
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\$2,500 SILVER

Recognition

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Programmatic Engagement

You will be invited to see our mission in action in the following ways:

- (2) tickets to our end-of-the-year concert and Day of Gratitude
- (2) invitations to the The Label event in the fall
- Invitations to the recording of the student music video and the Mentor Institute
- Backstage passes to our student showcases to see our mission in action



THANK YOU



TEDxMiami
Talk



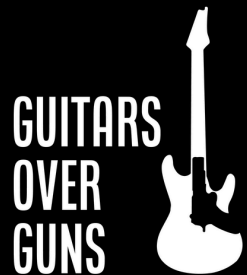
"All My Life"
Chicago Region, Music Video



New York
Mini Documentary



Barack Obama
Visit



Contact:
Ayrika Craig | Director of Development
ayrika@guitarsoverguns.org