

December 15, 2017

Dear friend of SkyART,

I am thinking about a memory that often comes up when I take people on a tour of SkyART Studios. It is sparked when we reach the kitchen and I describe why it is attached to a studio. I explain that what happens in the kitchen – the act of cooking, tasting, eating, or simply a delicious smell – can be just as important to the experience and feel of SkyART as what happens in the studios. I believe that is the foundation, for many, of knowing they're in **a place where their basic needs will be met**, an essential part of us being **that third space** for our young people.

My memory is from when I was little. I may have been five or six years old. I was in an after-school program at a big house, a community center of sorts in the small town where I grew up. In this big house, you could choose the activity you wanted to do each day, and one day I chose cooking. I may have chosen it every day, but I only vividly remember this one particular day, and the feeling. We were baking. The smell filled the halls, and when the baked goods came out of the oven, I just remember the warmth, the sweetness, the comfort, and the happiness I felt in that place.



That memory, that brief moment, has contributed to shaping my life's work. That deep **feeling of well-being**, and the desire to give others the chance to feel the same, informs my practice, how I communicate, and how I choose to effect lives. **We want every young person at SkyART to experience a sense of security, connectedness, and belonging.** Your support and your belief in what we do makes that happen. Jermaine (pictured above, top center, with the hand-made "SkyART Junior Volunteer" badge and the big smile), says **SkyART feels like home.** Just the other day he said, "I'm 12 and I'm a junior volunteer. When I turn 14, I will be a volunteer. When I turn 18, I will be an intern. And when I'm 20, I will be a teaching artist working at SkyART. Because I know what I want to be, working to be an artist. That's all I dream of to be. Me. To be me."

These are young people hungry for a place to go, **to be safe, to learn, to create**, or even just to eat. Your support will give young people like Jermaine their moments. The ones they will remember, the ones that will guide them through life. Please use your tax-deductible end-of-year gift to help us reach more young people, and make SkyART more than just a moment. Make it **a life changer.**

Warmest regards,

Handwritten signature of Sarah Ward in blue ink.

Sarah Ward, MA ATR
Executive Director