



Catalyzing Social Change Through Music

2025 Accomplishments

12th Annual Springfield Jazz & Roots Festival

- **6,000 diverse people** flocked to downtown Springfield July 10-12 to relish **16 fabulous & free musical performances**, including: Afro-Caribbean jazz, classic jazz, blues, soul, funk, bebop, modern groove, bomba, salsa, Latin pop, hip-hop inflected pop, and hip-hop.
- Evening concerts on the 10-11th led into a joyous daylong event on the 12th, when Worthington and Bridge Streets became **pedestrian walkways lined with food and craft vendors and family art activities** between a main stage and a **local music tent** filling Stearns Square and Tower Square Park with music.



Special Highlight

Former Joe Cocker band members gave a **one-time only legacy tribute** as our 3-hour Friday night concert!



"I love the vibe – environmentally conscious, everyone welcome." ~Attendee

Please think of us in your year-end giving!
[Bluestogreen.org/donate](https://bluestogreen.org/donate)

Annual New Orleans-Style Parade



About 125 children and adults drummed and danced down the streets of Springfield to the festival site in our participatory parade kicking off the event.

Family Art Tent

In our art tent, 550+ children & adults:

- Made a **community drawing** on linen cloth
- Decorated pieces of a **“Be Love” community puzzle**
- Made and decorated **plant pollinator gardens**
- Made **eco-friendly rings** with ribbons for dancing
- Created **buttons from recycled** trading cards
- Used **art to unlock clues to a puzzle**
- Watched a **talented artist paint live**



“The positive energy carried throughout the day, and the setup created a natural flow that encouraged people to visit the [art] tent.”

~Teaching Artist

Highlights from Teaching Artists:

“Watching families work together on pollinator pots and share stories about their own gardens”

“Seeing kids light up when they solved the final clue in the art escape room and got to select a small prize”

“Community members of all ages adding to the linen cloth drawing, creating a collective artwork that reflected the day’s themes”

“The BE LOVE Puzzle drawing people into conversations about kindness and justice, with many signing the pledge on the spot”

4th Annual Legacy Education Project

3 acclaimed Black & Latinx festival musicians gave 6 residencies for 548 6-12th grade public school students in Springfield and Holyoke:



"[The resident artist] treated us as friends and equals, which helped everyone achieve their best for our performance for the school. I now feel more confident collaborating with classmates." ~Student

- 62 Holyoke High School students, **87% Puerto Rican or Afro-Puerto-Rican**, learned to play **traditional Puerto Rican musical styles**, studied their meaning in a 9-hour residency, and played one the resident artist composed for them.

- 35 Springfield Conservatory for the Arts singers, instrumentalists, dancers, and visual artists in grades 7-12, **74% Puerto Rican**, learned about **Puerto Rican folk music, arts as a tool for social change, and arts as a career**. In the 9- hour residency, they also composed a plena song together and their own decima songs individually, then learned bomba and plena steps to dance to the songs. After, they performed their music and dances for their 350 classmates.

- 136 students at Holyoke High, Springfield Central High, Springfield Honors Academy, and the Hope Center for the Arts afterschool program spent 1-2.5 hours learning about the **cultural roots of jazz and African diasporic music, their themes, and their connections with South Africa**.



"I feel more inspired to try more jazz... That jazz can be anything, all it takes is some hopes and dreams."

~ Student

The Legacy Education Project

- Helped **correct white-centric education and make school more enjoyable.**
- Included **filming sessions** with all of the artists **to make an online version** of the program that will **increase access** for teachers and students



"I deeply enjoyed Nduduzo's visit and learned a lot about black culture from him." ~ Student



She really inspired me.
~ Student

"This was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for our students to learn from a master Hispanic artist. Her knowledge and musicianship were the highlights of the entire school year, and the impact on every student and faculty member from grades 6-12 was beyond words."

~Teacher



"It inspired me to look deeper into meanings behind music I perform"
~ Student



Arts for Racial & Climate Justice 2nd Film Project – Puerto Rican Climate Justice Resilience Documentary

Our second documentary film, now in development, is about the **large Springfield & Holyoke Puerto Rican community's resilience in the face of climate injustice** in Puerto Rico and MA. It will be about 30 minutes long.

4 of our 6 film team members are Springfield and Holyoke Puerto Ricans, including a filmmaker, an expert advisor, and two community advisors.

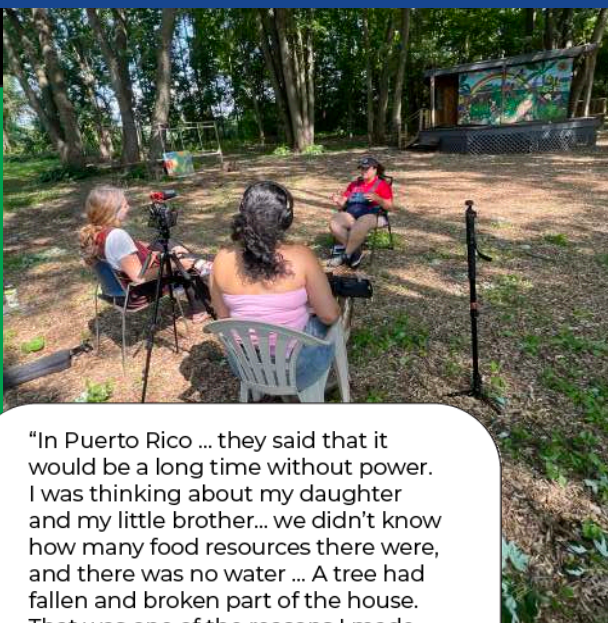


So Far, We Have:

- Interviewed 19 community members
- Filmed 6 in-depth interviews
- Had interviewees help edit their sections
- Hosted a rough cut screening to gather input from 12 community members

"To teach about culture, where we come from, to just plant little seeds in every location that we go to... That's what bomba is."

~Brendaliz Cepeda, Springfield & Holyoke bomba dancer



"In Puerto Rico ... they said that it would be a long time without power. I was thinking about my daughter and my little brother... we didn't know how many food resources there were, and there was no water ... A tree had fallen and broken part of the house. That was one of the reasons I made the decision to leave."

~Camelia Garcia, Holyoke resident

"We couldn't help thousands and thousands of people, but the amount that we helped made me feel like I gave my piece of bread – or like mi granito de arroz – for Puerto Rico."

"We have to overcome trauma. After you experience a hurricane ... it's something that you might see that you will never recover. But you know, it's like I tell people: stay strong. Be positive. Never lose hope."

"I just hope that the younger generation see us – what we're doing in the community – and redo it, copy it... Always have that heart and be kind and never forget to be united and put aside politics... it's just coming as one, as humans."
"Just go out there and work hard, and we can rebuild."

~Priscilla Rivera, Holyoke resident