



**VOX ATL**  
2015-16  
IMPACT  
REPORT

**VOX is where teens speak  
and Atlanta listens.**

## from Executive Director Jeff Romig



Digital publishing. It's at the core of what VOX does every day. That wasn't the case before the 2015-16 school year.

Yes, we had a website and social media accounts.

Yes, VOX teens created content and that content was uploaded and shared digitally.

But, until the summer of 2015, our editorial process and our publishing culture were still centered around creating the VOX Teen Newspaper.

Last year, we implemented the program redesign that was developed by teens and adults during the Spring of 2015.

New programs were put in place through VOX Investigates and Atlanta Teen Voices, and Atlanta Word Works merged with VOX to bring the outlet of spoken word poetry to the teens at VOX.

Our goal for last school year was 10,000 unique digital readers on VOXATL.com.

We tripled that.

Our teens are loving this new digital approach, setting the goal of publishing an average of a story per day and sharing those stories through VOX's social media channels.

Through Atlanta Teen Voices, we know that the sky's the limit to share teen voices throughout the Atlanta community.

As we move into the third year of our strategic plan, we know there is so much room for growth.

We're proud of what we've accomplished with our programs and for our teens.

And we're proud that our budget continues to grow while we continue to finish the fiscal year in the black with net income to reinvest in VOX's growth.

Thank you for your support as we grow and work to create more impact for teens in metro Atlanta, ensuring that they're prepared, valued and connected as the head into life after high school.



## from VOXer Catherine Boyd

Dear Future VOXer, Be it me or another little Alien,

This is VOX. Your voice matters. And your voice will be heard. Whether you're writing poetry or an article or opinion piece or whatever.

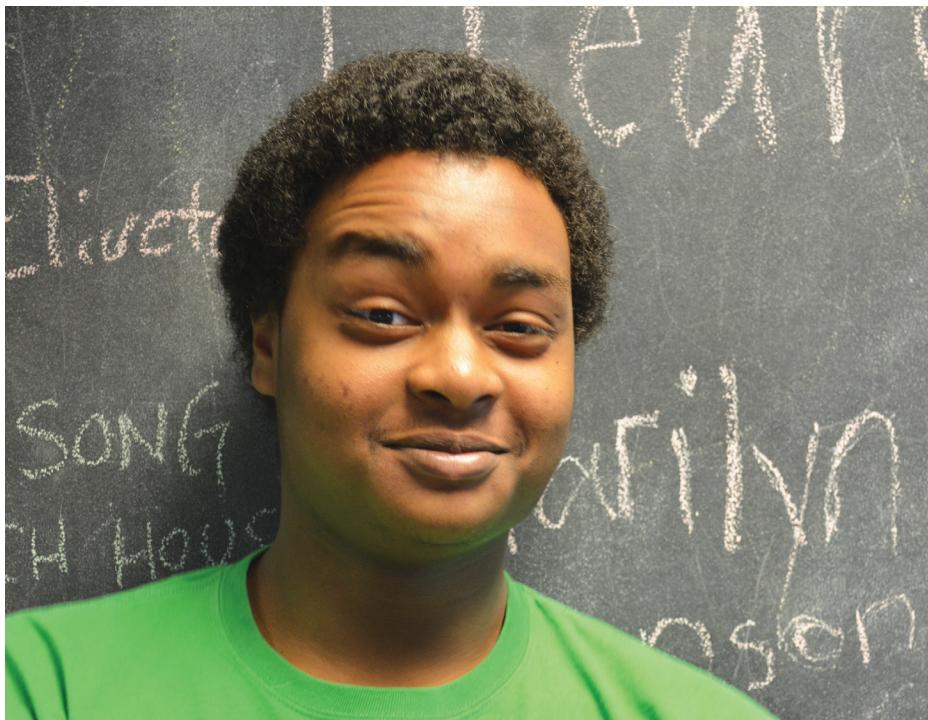
The world is essentially your oyster. And there are good people here, too. They feed you And give you support.

Breathe in.  
Breathe out.

It's yours, remember?

Love, Catherine Boyd  
"Cat Dream"

VOX's afterschool program serves 50 teens on our teen staff and up to 100 teens on our contributor roster from across the metro Atlanta region. VOX prepares teens for future success—graduating from high school, pursuing post-secondary education and exploring career opportunities. As VOX deepens our focus on digital publishing to increase our impact, we continue to emphasize leadership development, skill building and intentional community in our free afterschool programming.



**Teen Profile:** **Mikael Trench, 18**, has been on teen staff for four years. He has grown as a leader, serving as a summer intern in 2016 and currently working as VOX's teen Multi-Media Editor for the 2016-17 school year. Listen to what he values about VOX:

“

**I love the energy here. It's so positive, and my words are valued and appreciated. Almost every day I come around here, I make a new memory. I can't say that about a lot of places. I love coming to a place where I'm wanted and needed by other people. My opinions matter here, and my abilities are able to be used.**

”

#### Prepared:

**100% of seniors** on our teen staff graduated on time from high school in May 2016.

**100% of teen staff** reported increased self-efficacy, self-esteem and confidence in their abilities to navigate life's demands.

**87% of teen staff** demonstrated increased academic achievement and attitudes towards school.

#### Connected:

**The 73 teens** on VOX's staff and contributor roster represented 47 different schools across the metro Atlanta region.

**Six teens** participated in one-on-one job shadows over spring break in careers ranging from filmmaking to professor of English.

**33 VOX teens** facilitated workshops and community events for 200 peers.

#### Valued:

**19 teens** served in leadership positions at VOX

- **Six teens** served on the Board of Directors

- **Two teens** served as co-editors-in-chief

- **Two teens** served as VOX Investigates interns

- **Two teens** served as Girls Group leaders

- **Seven teens** served as summer interns

**Volunteers** supported VOX programming with over 500 hours of story-coaching, mentorship, skill-building, and event support.



Mikael Trench, teen Multi-Media Editor and Bartram Nason, VOX board member and volunteer, facilitate a hands-on workshop for fellow VOXers.

## VOX in the community

### **Prepared:**

This year, we published a number of pieces from the writers' group at Elizabeth Andrews High School. We also digitally hosted youthSpark's stART2end Art Contest featuring works by teens addressing the sex trafficking of minors. VOX continues to bring our proven self-expression workshops to teens at Atlanta-area nonprofits and schools, using hands-on activities that are adult- and peer-led to help teens raise their voices about the issues that matter to them most. This past year, we led workshops for Kate's Club, Planned Parenthood Southeast, the Center for Black Women's Wellness, Westlake High School and GUIDE.

**69% of teen participants** in VOX community workshops reported that they were going to do something positive or something different in their community after their workshop participation.

### **Connected:**

In January 2016, VOX merged with Atlanta Word Works, a teen-led spoken-word poetry program founded by VOX alumna and poet Natalie Cook. We were proud that the team representing Atlanta at the Brave New Voices competition – coming in third overall – was convened right here at VOX. We're looking forward to continuing to foster opportunities for teens to creatively raise their voices with Atlanta Word Works!

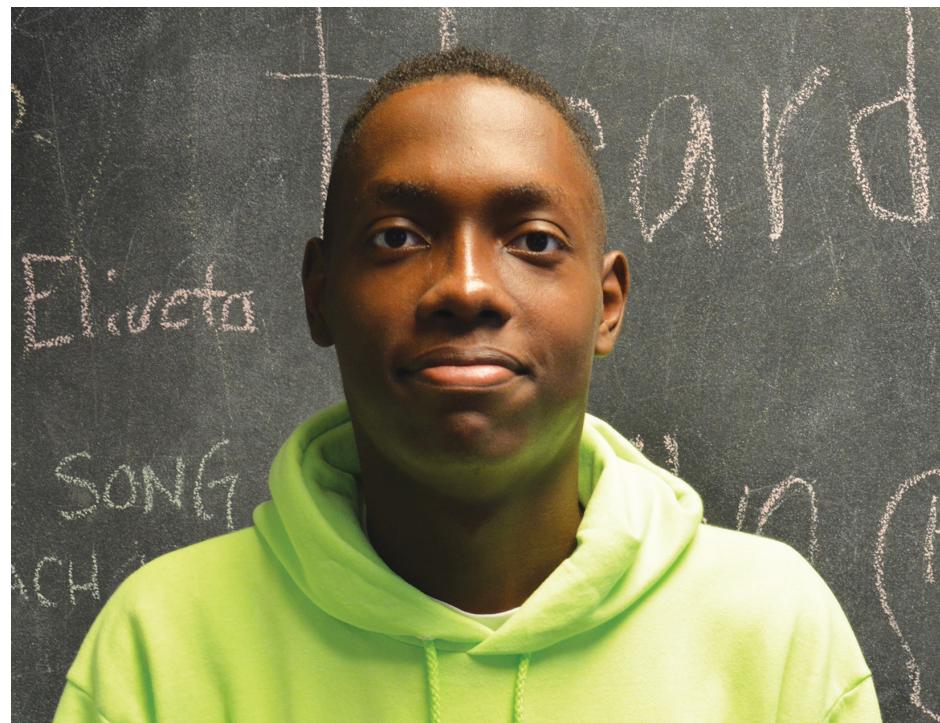
**76% of teen participants** in VOX community workshops and events reported that they would share new resources and information with their peers as a result of their workshop participation.

### **Valued:**

**65% of teen participants** in VOX community workshops reported that after the workshops, they felt that their voice matters.

We are looking forward to building on the work of Atlanta Teen Voices and see this vital program as the future of VOX living into our vision of being the place where teens speak and Atlanta listens. This year, we hired Sarah Garnitz as the Director of Atlanta Teen Voices to guide our work, grow our presence in the community and deepen our reach through this program.

VOX knows that to be the place where teens speak and Atlanta listens, we need a deep community presence, offering teens throughout Atlanta dynamic ways to engage with our work and amplify their voices. Our unique community programming, Atlanta Teen Voices, continues to grow and develop. Keep reading for more on all that is to come!



**Teen Profile: Kaleb Anderson, 18,** joined VOX in 2014 and has trained as a facilitator for workshops in the community for his peers. Kaleb also served on our Board of Directors for two years and has this to say about the value of VOX's presence in the community:



Our 2016 summer family at VOX, including our Atlanta Word Works team, teen interns and adult supporters!



**VOX shepherds a megaphone of teen voices that you wouldn't normally hear because the system we live in doesn't want to hear our voices.**



In July 2015, we launched VOXATL.com, our new website and digital platform for original content created by and for teens. Every program at VOX has a focus on publishing, offering teens at VOX and in the community a platform to express their unique perspectives. And the ripple effect is there—we also offer teens across our city resources to inform their lives and their futures.



**Teen Profile:** **Mac Rowe, 18,** has been a part of VOX since the summer before his 8th grade year. He most recently finished a three-year term of service on our Board of Directors. Here is what he has to say about his time at VOX:

“

**I wouldn't be the person I am today without VOX. I think a lot of teens can agree with me that they've spent their happiest times here. It's a place where everyone wants to be. Without that support, teens won't feel like they have a voice.**

”

### Prepared

**VOX teens published** 257 digital articles and resources for their peers in topics ranging from media representation in popular television to how to maximize a college tour.

**71% of respondents** to our Atlanta Teen Survey who read VOX answered that “reading VOX has helped me learn how to get help for a problem or avoid a risky or dangerous behavior (such as drug, alcohol or tobacco use, criminal activity and having more/or unprotected sex).

### Connected

**In 2015-16,** VOXATL.com received 29,138 unique visitors, a 260% increase over 11,128 in 2014.

### VOX teens led two special VOX

**Investigates projects**, taking a deep-dive look at important issues that impact the community. The team reported on HIV/AIDS in the fall and on teen dating violence and healthy relationships in the spring. Our teens worked with adult mentors from CNN, Atlanta magazine, WABE and Georgia Public Broadcasting to create digital content through video, audio, art and written storytelling. Each project culminated in a special print publication and 29,750 copies were distributed to 292 schools and youth-serving organizations around metro Atlanta.

### Valued

**VOX partners** with other media outlets such as WABE and ArtsATL.com to amplify the voices of teens in Atlanta and their unique perspectives on our community. WABE republished VOX teens' writing on recent Black Lives Matter protests and ArtsATL.com collaborated with VOX teen reporters on arts-focused journalism this summer.



Teens at VOX lead every step of the way. This is our Spring 2016 VOX Investigates team brainstorming stories and ideas they wanted to bring to life.

**VOX Teen Communications  
Profit and Loss  
July 2015 - June 2016\***

**Income**

**CONTRIBUTIONS**

|                               |                     |
|-------------------------------|---------------------|
| Corporate                     | \$98,772.82         |
| Grants                        | \$217,577.09        |
| Individuals                   | \$114,433.45        |
| Program-Based & Earned Income | \$17,629.15         |
| In-Kind                       | \$6,611.00          |
| Miscellaneous Income          | \$451.11            |
| <b>Total Income</b>           | <b>\$455,474.62</b> |

**Expenses**

|                           |                     |
|---------------------------|---------------------|
| Office-Related Costs      | \$119,833.37        |
| Fundraising-Related Costs | \$20,354.81         |
| Staff-Related Costs       | \$202,064.02        |
| Program-Related Costs     | \$101,885.34        |
| <b>Total Expenses</b>     | <b>\$444,137.54</b> |

**Net Income**

**\$11,337.08**

\*The financials presented above are preliminary, unaudited figures for fy16.  
For VOX's full financial information, please visit [voxatl.org/about/financials](http://voxatl.org/about/financials).

We are so grateful for our community of support. Because of our dedicated volunteers, alumni, donors and board members, VOX can continue to live into our vision of being the place where teens speak and Atlanta listens.

**Sustainers**

(donors who support our work with monthly gifts)

Alyssa Lasseter  
Arlena McClenton\*

**\$500-\$999**

Sunny Ashman  
Erin Campbell  
Peter Canfield  
Edith Cofrin  
Ann Cramer  
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Katy McConnell  
Jeff Romig  
Lorrie Rowe  
Katie Vesser Strangis  
Rachel Alterman Wallack  
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**\$1000-\$2499**

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Jessica & Sam Casey  
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Andrea Sarvady  
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Jones Day  
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Karen Twait & Ashley Watson  
Arby's Foundation  
Mary Allen Lindsey Branan Foundation  
City of Atlanta, Mayor's Office of Cultural Affairs  
The Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta  
Cox Enterprises  
Fulton County Arts & Culture  
Kilpatrick Townsend

**\$10000-\$19999**

AEC Trust  
Atlanta Foundation  
Bloomberg  
Google  
Ida A. Ryan Charitable Trust  
MailChimp  
Nordson Corporation Foundation

**\$20000-\$50000**

Fulton County Board of Commissioners, Community Services Program  
Turner Voices  
United Way of Greater Atlanta  
The Zeist Foundation



**Teen Profile:** On her first day at VOX, **Alexandria Wilson, 18**, got lost on her way to our downtown newsroom and was late for her meeting. She recalls this day as her favorite memory from VOX because everyone was so welcoming – they cared more about her being there than about her being late. It was a community from the beginning.

**“It’s really powerful to see how your voice, your opinion, your perspective counts. Having a place ... to create a map of where I am and where I want to end up over the next few years is incredibly important. VOX has become a second home to me.”**

#### Follow the Fun:



instagram: [instagram.com/voxroxatl/](https://www.instagram.com/voxroxatl/)



twitter: [twitter.com/voxroxatl](https://twitter.com/voxroxatl)



youtube: [bit.ly/voxatlvideo](https://bit.ly/voxatlvideo)



facebook: [facebook.com/voxrox](https://facebook.com/voxrox)



tumblr: [voxatl.tumblr.com](https://voxatl.tumblr.com)

**VOX Teen Communications**  
**229 Peachtree St. NE, Suite 725, Atlanta, GA 30303**  
**404-614-0040**

#### VOX Board of Directors, 2015-16:

- Lindsey Knox, CNN, VOX Board Chair
- Jessica Casey, Jones Day, VOX Board Vice Chair
- Alcide Honore, Honore Law, LLC, VOX Board Secretary
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- Marc Rice, Southern Company
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- Simit Shah, Georgia Institute of Technology

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- Susan Landrum, MSW, Associate Director
- Allison Hood, MSW, Development Director
- Sarah Garnitz, Director, Atlanta Teen Voices
- Natalie Cook, Director, Atlanta Word Works
- Richard Eldredge, Senior Editor
- Josie Footmon-Smith, MSW, Program Manager

#### How to Connect with VOX:

- Teen Content:** VOXATL.com
- About VOX:** VOXATL.org