

AT HOME IN. HARRISON

May 2020



"Springing out of Chaos"

A publication of the life, culture and times of Harrison Neighborhood

AND REMEMBER...

1. Wash your hands
2. Ninja slide past other grocers
3. Call your grandparents



HARRISON

ATHOM

SUMMARY

- 4 NAVIGTING THE PANDEMIC
 By Keegan Xavi

- 8 AWA'S COVID WEB OF THOUGHTS
 By Awa Mally

- 10 COMMUNITY REFLECTIONS
 Ft. Atlese Robinson & Linzey Infynity

- 13 REFLECTIONS ON RONA
 By Yonci Jameson

- 15 A PHOTO STORY W/ ENDS
 By Jovan Shabazz

- 20 A BIT OF A SILVER LINING
 By E.J. EASLEY

“What does home mean now? How is it possible to be so terrified and excited at the same time?”

Navigating the Pandemic

By Keegan Xavi

It feels like a lifetime ago when I learned I had been accepted as one of the Art Space artists for the 2019-2020 cohort. We met as a group and discussed how we could use our creative talents as artists to illuminate and nurture a sense of home in the Northside community, focusing particularly on the Harrison neighborhood. It's been an absolute pleasure to work with the other artists sharing creative space together. All of this began just a year ago. And now the whole world has changed. What does home mean now? How is it possible to be so terrified and excited at the same time?

As an avid news follower, I became aware of COVID-19 sometime in late January/early February but as a spectator merely observing what was happening across the other side of the world. Sounded like a bad case of flu I never thought would eventually impact my own neighborhood. Well, well, well... we watched the news depict the spread of this virus from China to Italy... to everywhere including our own shores and neighborhoods, where Black and Brown communities are being impacted more than any other demographic. I am grateful to be in Minnesota and appreciative of the stay-at-home measures our governor set forth. I am scared about so many variables, but grateful to be where I am in North Minneapolis and confident in my community's resiliency and the way we look out for one another.





As I write this, my family has been in self-isolation for about six weeks. On some days, I delight in rest I have been unable to indulge in for years. I'm not exaggerating. It's been about 7 years since I have had any type of break whatsoever. Sleeping as much as I need to has been amazing during self-isolation. Most of my contracted work involved community engagement and art workshops in group settings so all of that work has now evaporated. I am worried about future income, but now I have time to actually do all the projects I wished I could do instead of working for others all the time. This feeling is exhilarating. I've been sewing, gardening, preparing canvases for painting. I have time to experiment with new collage and cooking techniques. There's some video editing I've been wanting to play with as well. I now have the most precious thing I have sought and worked so hard towards for years: time. Thank god.

But then, it's like when the clouds cover the sun on a hot day. A chill runs across me when I think about people I love and humanity in general being affected by COVID-19, directly or indirectly. I sometimes feel guilty for being able to find moments of joy during these uncertain times. Even if our family and loved ones remain safe from the virus, many of us have worries about paying the rent, buying food, wondering when we'll be able to hold our loved ones again. We wonder what we can actually DO to help. I'm still working on an answer for myself, but I've noticed the act of creating ALWAYS lifts my spirits and energy. Even if experiencing low energy, even the simple act of cleaning or organizing a small space or corner is transformative. The power of creativity is being used to transform a physical space from one state or configuration, into another. That's magic, baby. Another way I uplift my energy if I'm feeling down or low is to 1) feel what I feel and let it wash over and through me 2) look around me and name all of the things I am grateful for then 3) ask how I can be of service to others.

"I now have the most precious thing I have sought and worked so hard towards for years: time. Thank god."

Sewing face masks by hand has been particularly soothing to me as it's relaxing, and I enjoy making functional things. I found a video and pattern on YouTube (there's so many ways to make one) and have made enough for my entire 4-plex now. I'm also a little concerned about our food supply chain so I decided to plant my first vegetable garden this year. I know how to weed and pick veggies, but from seed to harvest is new to me. Tilling my pain in the dirt, into the earth has been very grounding and healing for me. There's nothing more satisfying than planting seeds into earth and they sprout into LIFE. Whenever I feel fear or doubt, I look around and see what I can do to nurture or create life.

I am inspired by others in my community doing what they can to help deliver food, masks, toilet paper and other necessities, checking in on elders and other vulnerable people, making music and art to keep all of our Spirits high. All of us are facing unprecedented times and circumstances. We must take care of our individual well-being; physically, mentally and spiritually and then do the same for ourselves as a community. None of us is as smart, strong or resilient as ALL OF US.



GRANDMA'S GREENS

2-3 Collard Green bunches

3-4 Pieces of Smoked Meat of
Choice

8 Cups of Water

2 Chopped White Onions

1/2 Mined Jalapeño

1/2 Tablespoon Mined Garlic

1/2 Tablespoon Chicken Stock Paste

1/2 Cup Vinegar

1/4 cup Sugar

Salt

Pepper

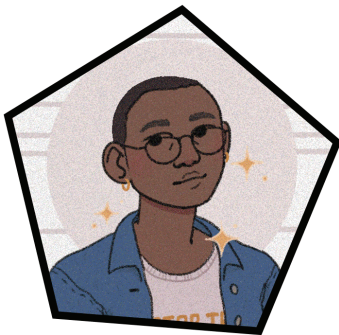
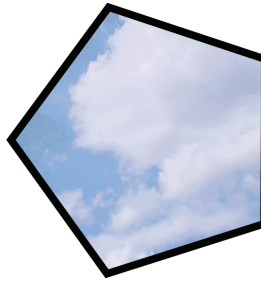
Crushed Red Pepper

Garlic Powder

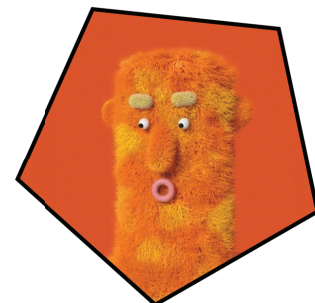
Onion Powder

**HEY MAKE SURE
YOU WASH YOUR
GREENS GOOD!**

@JohSoGoodFood



***AWA'S COVID WEB
OF THOUGHTS***



DUE TO THIS PANDEMIC I HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO DO PHOTOGRAPHY SO GIVEN THE CHANCE I DID A SHOOT WITH A FRIEND ON A ROOFTOP. IT WAS NICE BEING CREATIVE AGAIN.

I HAVE TAKING TIME LAPSE OF THE SKY IN ORDER TO DECREASE MY SCREENTIME AND SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE. ITS BEEN A GREAT AND BEAUTIFUL METHOD. SINCE I CANT RECORD AND USE MY PHONE AT THE SAME TIME.

REFLECTIONS AND NEW LEARNING:

- MONEY IS IMPORTANT (SADLY), I NEED TO SAVE UP AND BUILD MY FINANCIAL LITERACY
- I NEED A JOB THAT WILL SURVIVE IN A CRISIS
- TS IMPORTANT TO HAVE SPACES THAT MOTIVATE YOU AND BRING YOU PEACE
- WE ALL DESERVE A LIFE OF ABUNDANCE
- LEARNING TO SPEND TIME BY YOURSELF IS VALUABLE

I'VE BEEN FILLING UP TIME DOING ACTIVITIES AND CHALLENGES. I WOULD SUGGEST TAKING THIS CREATIVE TYPE TEST BY ADOBE 'MYCREATIVETYPE.COM' OR FINDING ANY CHALLENGES ON INSTAGRAM. MY FAVORITE IS THE 30 DAY SONG CHALLENGE.

EDUCATING MYSELF THROUGH IG LIVES, WEBINARS AND CONFERENCES. @HOUR.STORIES IS ONE FOR BLACK CREATIVE.

SPENDING LOTS OF TIME LISTENING TO MUSIC, ESPECIALLY FROM LOCAL ARTIST LIKE PAPA, DUA SALEH, ALEC NESS AND OTHERS. I WOULD SUGGEST SPENDING TIME TO GETTING FAMILIAR WITH LOCAL ARTIST. THE MUSIC IS GREAT.

I ASKED MY FRIENDS ABOUT THEIR EXPERIENCE AND HERES WHAT I GOT:

NEW HABITS: COOKING, BIKING, BETTER THEIR MENTAL HEALTH, JOURNALING, EXPLORE NATURE, VISIT OLD OR TRY NEW HOBBIES, RELAX, SLEEP, EXERCISE, SPEND TIME WITH FRIENDS + FAMILY, SAVE MONEY, CONNECTING WITH PEOPLE OVER THE WEB, WORK ON BUSINESS PLAN.

HARDSHIPS: BEING ISOLATED, LACK OF HUMAN TOUCH, RENT, WORKING FROM HOME, UNEMPLOYMENT, NOT BEING ABLE TO ENJOY THE LAST OF THINGS,

Reflections from our Community Members

UNTITLED

I would be a bald face lie if I said COVID-19 and the subsequent stay at home order didn't affect me negatively at all. I was anticipating a trip to Chicago at the end of March, was set to enter rehearsals for EDGES by Ashawnti Ford and for Ambiance's production of One Too Many Eulogies written and performed by Eshay Brantley.

So yeah, The Rona got me salty as fuck actually.

But like other troubling times, I know adapting is the best way to handle the new territory.

Being the genuine #Virgo that I am it's easy for me to find something to do with my time. I love learning so I've spent time learning to do knotless box braids. I've been baking, dancing in my room, and connecting with the people I love. Filling time is the easy part for me.

I'm most challenged financially. Not being able to get up and get out and hustle like I usually do is uncomfortable as fuck. It's too uncertain for my plan-it-down-to-the-detail mindset.

So I started job hunting only to be told by most companies they not hiring amid the stay at home order.

So what I do? I panicked.

Then I said: you know what. I am a creator. I am blessed with the ability to create a path that doesn't already exist.

So I decided to start Storytellers' Soiree. I knew the best I could do right now is use my passion to bring people together, impart some knowledge, and be inspired and challenged by a group of writers.

Since starting the class and beginning a 21 day abundance meditation I've applied to fellowships and started writing for joy again. I cry when I need to and laugh harder than I have in awhile. Some days I'm productive, other days sleep in all day. I

let myself be. And then I gotta phone call telling me I will be the recipient of a huge blessing.

Now I can offer my class for free and I'm able to keep investing in my dream and my theatre company.

The quarantine has truly turned out to be a blessing. My soul is grounded again. I'm creating because I can, not because I think I have to, or to attempt to stay "relevant."

The best thing this time has shown me is that my purpose will always save me and my passion will open doors I don't even have to knock on. All I gotta do is stay connected to my source and keep moving forward, not matter what.

By Atlese Robinson

(Atlese 'LeLe' Robinson is a writer from Saint Paul, MN by way of Chicago, IL. Raised in a household that emphasized literature, LeLe can write anything her inspiration and imagination leads her to. Her current genres of specialty include poetry and playwriting.)

Reflections cont'd

On Self Love:

By Linzey Infynity

We're all (mostly) really fucked up about LOVE.

Loving ourselves, loving each other. Illusions, attachments, de-tachments.

It's incredibly complicated. Just know that and proceed.

Celebrate yourself. No matter what — your beautiful, luminous, powerful, magnificent, righteous, sacred...self.

That same self who may fuck up tomorrow, but will still be made of LOVE.

THAT self. LOVE.

(Linzey Infynity is an artist, queer activist and Pilates instructor based in Southern California.)

REFLECTIONS ON RONA

by Yonci Jameson

As of April 30th, Minnesota will have spent 44 days under Governor Tim Walz' Stay at Home Order, with an additional two weeks added ([Star Tribune](#)). Declared on March 16th 2020, the initial order has forced Minneapolis residents to work from home and engage their kids in distance learning, figuring out how to safely navigate the city's now empty streets to get groceries and other essential items. For houseless folks, there is nowhere to "shelter in place", and social distancing is difficult if not impossible. While COVID-19 has disrupted our daily lives, it's also blatantly exposed the race and class inequities deeply embedded in our system. **Every day is a journey in adjusting to our movement being limited. What has that looked like for our most vulnerable communities?** As you read, think about the questions posed and what they mean for you and the communities you inhabit.

The transition to distance learning is already proving to be a hurdle, as many families and students are struggling with the routine and technicalities of online education. In addition, families who relied on school to feed their children are tasked with making up the lost meals. With the closure of all public beaches and the cancellation of all summer park programming, the next few months of lockdown will prove to be a challenge for families with children. Already there is tension between letting children play at the park in their free time. The potential for increased policing and surveillance in order to ensure folks are following the rules is a worrisome aspect. We know that the relationship between law enforcement and communities of color is already unstable, and that police are prone to abuse of power. **What additional safety mechanisms could be implemented to ensure we are keeping each other safe under lockdown?**

The title of "essential worker" is not one held lightly. The majority of essential workers are Black women and women of color, working in large-load, low-wage positions ([vox.com](#)) Those behind the counters at grocery stores, hospitals and other care facilities are at highest risk of catching the virus. Though advocates have been fighting for a \$15 per hour minimum wage, now more than ever it seems like an even higher minimum wage along with hazard pay is needed to compensate for the work and risk. Currently Minneapolis's Minimum wage is \$11.25 per hour.

As of March 16th, 584,340 people have filed for unemployment in Minnesota ([mn.gov](#)). For those who lost work due the virus, Minnesota unemployment is providing a much-needed stipend of \$600 a week. Essentially, that \$600 is compensation for 40hrs of work per week, paying \$15 an hour. **What's stopping our government from implementing \$15 or more as our regular minimum wage?**

It seems as if North Minneapolis is in a constant struggle to achieve a fully booming business economy. As reported in [North News](#), most restaurants have made the switch to delivery and take out only, though profit is lacking. Owners are currently weighing the risks of applying for competitive and limited Small Business assistance, which primarily comes in the form of loans, meaning more debt. As for businesses like nail shops, hair salons and other retail, compete closure means no income. The path to recovery does not yet seem clear. However, continued support of local businesses that are open is proving to be crucial. **What could relief look like for small business owners who aren't looking to be straddled with more debt?**

Despite mounting challenges, the way communities and organizations have come together in response to this virus is unprecedented. We are getting to witness the power of organized communities and mutual aid. **What would it look like to exist in a world that is always pooling resources and prioritizing our most vulnerable communities in the way we are doing right now?** That our governments are able

to drop \$300 million out of the blue on financial aid during a crisis speaks to how much money is actually available to support people, at any time. **Why must we wait until a global pandemic to come together and support each other?**

Below is an assortment of community resources available in the Twin Cities, accessible primarily by internet use.

[*Community-Development Twin Cities Resource Guide*](#)

[*City of Minneapolis Aid*](#)

[*UofM compiled resource for Twin Cities and beyond*](#)

A PHOTO STORY WITH ENDS

by Jovan Shabazz



WHEN THE SNOW CLEARS, THIS NEIGHBORHOOD CONVENIENT MARKETS NORMALLY START TO SEE MORE ITS REGULARS FROM THE HARRISON COMMUNITY BUT IN LATE MARCH MINNESOTA'S GOVERNOR ANNOUNCED A STAY HOME ORDER AN ACT TO COUNTER THE RECENT COVID-19 EPIDEMIC THAT WAS SWEEPING THE COUNTRY. MANY LOCAL BUSINESSES THAT WERE NON-ESSENTIAL WAS FORCED TO CLOSE. OTHER BUSINESSES THAT WERE ESSENTIAL STAYED OPEN UNDER NEW REGULATIONS SUCH AS 5 PEOPLE LIMIT IN-STORE AND 6 FEET SOCIAL DISTANCE.





MORGAN + GLENWOOD, A WELL-KNOWN SECTION IN HARRISON COMMUNITY. NORMALLY, YOU COULD CATCH A CAR OR NEIGHBORHOOD STROLLING BY THIS SOMEWHAT BUSY INTERSECTION. SURROUNDED BY ART MURALS DEPICTING THE ENRICHED AND DIVERSE CULTURE OF THE HARRISON NEIGHBORHOOD. SHOWCASING THE HISTORY OF THE COMMUNITY USING THE BEAUTIFUL STORYTELLING OF ART. THIS PARTICULAR AREA HAS NOT SEEN THE SAME FOOT TRAFFIC SINCE THE GOVERNMENT-MANDATED THE STAY AT HOME ORDER TO COUNTERACT THE SPREAD OF THE COVID-19.



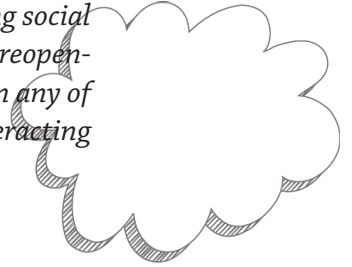
A TERM IN 2020 WE'RE ALL NOW FAMILIAR WITH IS AN ESSENTIAL WORKER. STORE CLERKS LIKE THE ONES AT THE SKYLINE MARKET, SERVING THE COMMUNITY DURING A TIME A NEED AND DESPERATION. MANY BUSINESSES CLOSED DUE TO THEM NOT FALLING UNDER THE ESSENTIAL BUSINESS CATEGORY CREATED BY THE GOVERNMENT. WHICH MANY STORE OWNERS FELT WAS SUBJECTIVE, BUT IN A SENSE STILL ALLOWED CONVENIENCE STORE OWNERS TO REMAIN OPEN. SKYLINE MARKET, LOCATED ON GLENWOOD IN THE HARRISON COMMUNITY REMAINED OPEN TO HELP SERVE THEIR NEIGHBORS IN THE COMMUNITY.



A Bit of a Silver Lining

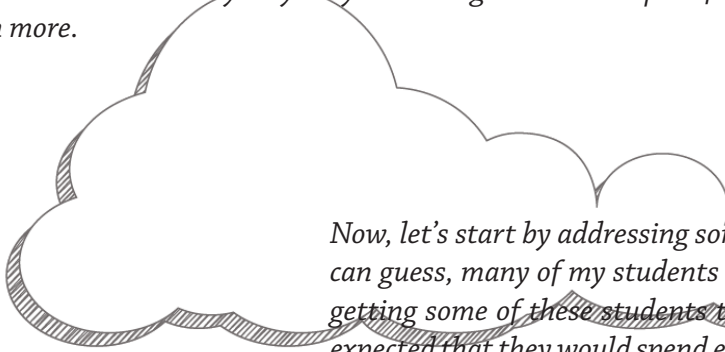
Elijah Easley

Covid-19 has casted a dark shadow over the world. It seems like whenever we get an update it is more bad news. Social media timelines are filled with stories of protests and people defying social distancing, or elected officials offering up their cities and states as sacrificial lambs to test reopening businesses. With all of this death chaos and confusion it is hard to find a silver lining in any of it. I, however, have found a silver lining and that is the new way in which our youth are interacting with technology.



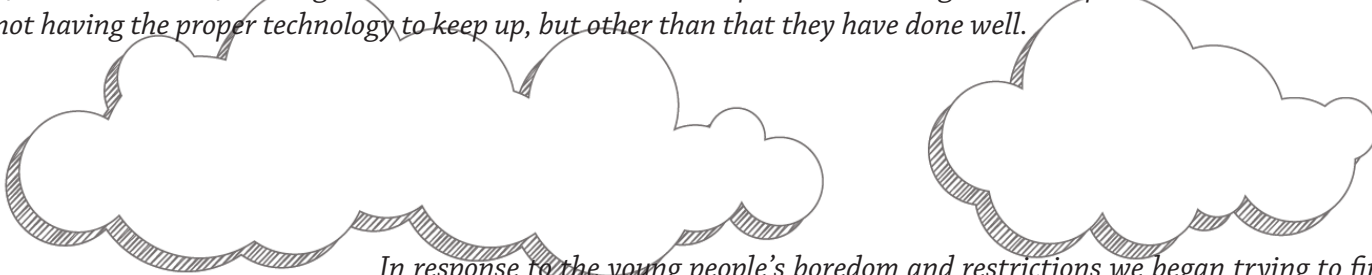
Let me start by saying outside of my work with the cohort I work at a community center in north Minneapolis in the after school program. Since social distancing has taken affect we have stayed in contact with our students. We have provided homework help and moral support. It is through the conversation with my students and coworkers that I am basing my opinion. Okay, lets continue.

Complaining about young people and technology probably goes all the way back to the stone ages when the first Caveman child picked up a rock. And since then children and young adults have had to hear about how their attachment to their devices is waiting their life away. But, like with any tool, technology today isn't inherently good or bad, it's about how it is applied. Now it can be argued that the way it's being used now leans towards the negative, but to be fair that is not the fault of the young people. I have always believed that young people only interact with technology the way they do because it is the only way they were taught and these past few months have lead me to believe it even more.

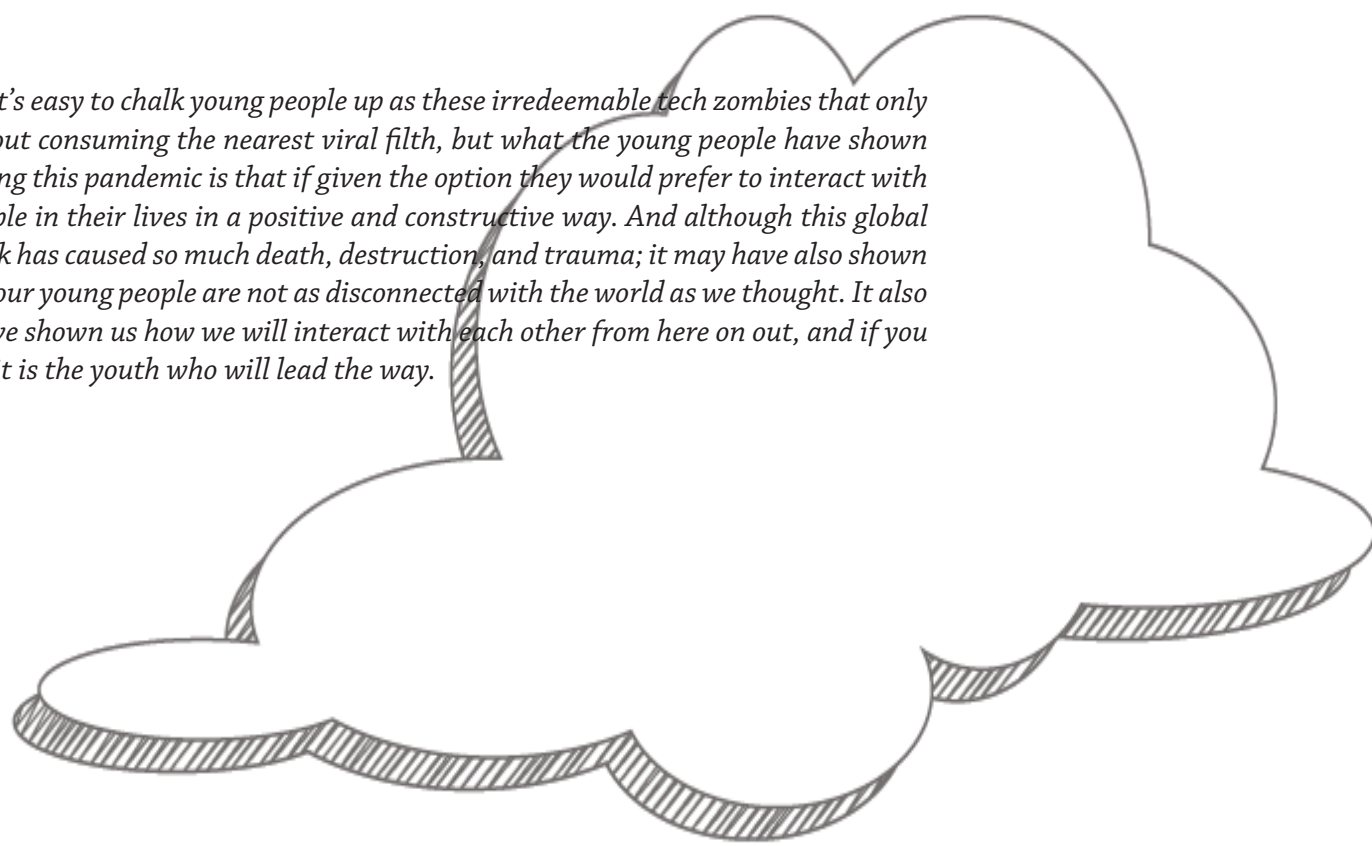


Now, let's start by addressing some assumptions I had going in that others may share. As you can guess, many of my students love gaming, tik-tok and the like. It was a constant struggle getting some of these students to leave their devices alone during lesson times. Naturally, I expected that they would spend every possible moment doing these activities; and some did for a short while. What surprised me, however, was how quickly they got tired of these things they loved so much. Within two weeks of social distancing they were all searching for something to do.

Another assumption I had was that it would be difficult motivating them to do their school work. This hasn't been the case in my experience either. Most of the students who already did their work were still getting it done. Even the ones who struggled to find motivation were getting their work done out of sheer boredom if nothing else. There have been issues with parents not being able to help; or them not having the proper technology to keep up, but other than that they have done well.



In response to the young people's boredom and restrictions we began trying to find new ways to engage them. Platforms like zoom have allowed us to do some of the things we did in person, and the children have taken it upon themselves to apply that to their relationships with their friends outside of the program and the change of attitude is inspiring. The students who consistently participate have gone from few exiting things to report to fun-filled stories about conversations and games they have played with friends and loved ones. For me, it's like I can see their minds opening up to new ways to apply this thing that they have always had, but never really knew how to use.



I think it's easy to chalk young people up as these irredeemable tech zombies that only care about consuming the nearest viral filth, but what the young people have shown me during this pandemic is that if given the option they would prefer to interact with the people in their lives in a positive and constructive way. And although this global outbreak has caused so much death, destruction, and trauma; it may have also shown us that our young people are not as disconnected with the world as we thought. It also may have shown us how we will interact with each other from here on out, and if you ask me it is the youth who will lead the way.

We send our gratitude to the funders and leaders of ArtPlace America, and Redeemer Center for Life for being stewards of Harrison neighborhood, and to all our readers who digest our creative produce.



HOME
A