



REDWOOD THEATRE COMPANY  
**SOL Community Arts Program**  
MEDIA KIT



**ADELE DAVALOS MITCHELL**  
**CARMEN MARIA MITCHELL**

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[www.solcommunityarts.com](http://www.solcommunityarts.com)

[www.redwoodtheatrecompany.com](http://www.redwoodtheatrecompany.com)



# SOL Club Community Arts Program

Prepared by  
Carmen Maria Mitchell

PROJECT PROPOSAL 2022

## SOL ARTS PROGRAM MISSION

- Honoring cultural heritage, strengthening community collaboration and providing arts opportunities to create positive social change.

## PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

- Intentional Outreach
- Nurturing creativity
- Teaching new visual and performance art skills
- Promoting friendship, art & community
- Providing alternative activities for vulnerable underserved youth of color
- Encourage potential lifelong interests in the arts

## SOL CLUB HISTORY

- Adele Davalos Mitchell was the founding teacher of the SOL Club at Lawrence Cook Junior High School in 1994. SOL originated as a way of resolving gang violence and successfully ended the gang fighting on campus by students focusing on art, cultural pride and giving back to their community.

## Violence Prevention through Art!





# YOUTH WORKSHOPS

SOL COMUNITY ARTS PROGRAM

## WORKSHOP OUTLINE

- Each workshop will be approximately one to two hours long.
- Each workshop will have at least two instructors
- The young artists will then learn basic performance and/or visual art skills from professional artists and educators.

## AGE RANGE

- Middle School & High school

## LOCATION

- We hope to offer workshops and art classes in a designated space to create a feeling of "belonging".

## ART WORKSHOP OFFERINGS

- Hip Hop Dance
- Latin Dance
- Singing & Music
- Acting & Improv
- Painting & Other Visual Arts
- Poetry & Spoken Word
- Inspirational Guest Speakers
- Drumming
- Fashion Design / Sewing
- Photography
- Film Production
- Culinary arts
- Lowrider Bike Shows
- Mentorship Programs

## INSTRUCTORS

- The SOL Club is committed to hiring qualified professional artists and strong leaders in the community to instruct the art workshops.







# SOL CLUB HISTORY

SOL COMUNITY ARTS PROGRAM

## COOK JUNIOR HIGH

At Lawrence Cook Junior High School, in the Roseland neighborhood of Santa Rosa, SOL was a club that originated on campus as a way of resolving gang violence that had emerged in 1994. SOL club combined honoring cultural heritage, community collaboration and visual art projects to create positive social change.

## MRS. MITCHELL

Adele Davalos Mitchell was the founding teacher of SOL Club (Socially Organized Latinos)

## VIOLENCE PREVENTION

SOL Club provided a space for creativity, leadership, advocacy and support.

The values of the club were simple... "we make art and we don't fight".

SOL became a family. The club was committed to promoting harmony and honoring Latino culture.



Cook Junior High students listen to a motivational speaker during their lunch break.

students said they worried a fight was inevitable. Instead, they united to form SOL, fueled by newly found clout that helped elect three Latino students to

"Here we're in charge. This is



Photo by Denise Holley  
Art instructor Adele Davalos Mitchell talks with aspiring artists at the Latino Youth Leadership Conference held May 14 at Sonoma State University.

in preserving its history, the St. Rose restaurant is a notable success story.

### Can we get along?

When the Santa Rosa Board of Education last year confronted the issue of how to divide the city's high school students between four, and eventually five, schools, the board took the path of least resistance.

Faced with strong parental protests of more ambitious plans, the board adopted one that guaranteed the new Third Alton High School will have more minority students than the district's other schools.

Since that decision was made, there have been heartening signs that the first crop of Alton High students, many of whom now are attending Cook Junior High, are trying to turn that distinction into a positive one.

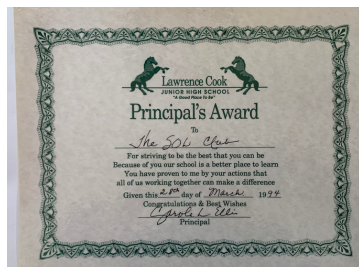
A Sunday article by Press Democrat staff writer Tina Adams told of how gang members at Cook have been deterred by the formation of a new student group, Socially Organized Latinos. Members have acted as representatives to municipal government, and have worked to promote pride in their neighborhood.

Since the club was formed in January, students say there have been no gang-related fights on campus.

Members of the club say they hope to continue their efforts to promote Latino cultural pride at Alton High next year.

No matter what happens next year, the board's decision not to draw lines that do a better job of promoting ethnic balance in the city's high schools will be open to question.

But, if the spirit of SOL prevails, the new school should provide some interesting insight about how our city's young people will have to learn to get along in the ever more diverse California of the future.







# SOL CLUB HISTORY

SOL COMUNITY ARTS PROGRAM

## THE PAINTED CHAIRS

It all started one day with a group art project in Adele's art class.

She asked her students to "paint their culture" on some old wooden chairs that had been sitting around in the back of the room.

In a time filled with gang violence and resentment, this Latina art teacher tried to bring her students together with a fun painting exercise.

What began as a creative classroom experiment, soon turned into a thriving community of friendship and collaboration!



## SOL CLUB

SOL activities included weekly guest speakers from the community, participation in art festivals, canned food drives, student speakers sharing the SOL club experience with other schools, lowrider bike shows, Cinco de Mayo celebrations and art creations throughout the school.







# SOL CLUB HISTORY

SOL COMMUNITY ARTS PROGRAM



California, Tuesday, May 17, 1994



## Face

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**Do you want to co**  
Teen Life is a weekly paper  
and interests of teens. If you  
essays — 500 words or less  
please write us at Teen Life  
Box 569, Santa Rosa 95402,  
(408) 875-9050, or send us  
discuss your ideas.

**Who:** Alicia Reyes, 14, School: Ninth Grader, Lawrence Cook Junior High.  
**Personal:** Lives in Santa Rosa with her parents, Rebecca and Ray Reyes, and her sister, Veronica, 10, a fifth grader at Kawana School. Claims to hate "I rap." I've been rapping for almost four years. My rapping is basically positive. I went through a phase with gangs and drugs and experienced the violence and harshness of all that. I learned that wasn't what I wanted. I started rapping and it got me out of the gang environment. It gave me something else to do. It started me to think. My first rap consisted of everything I had seen and ways I could change it. It made me go a whole other direction. I do my rap at schools and stuff. I've also done it in San Francisco and at American Indian events. My father is Mexican and Native American and my mother is Spanish, so I have

with SAY, Social Advocates for Youth, working with kids who were in gangs and stuff. I was also involved in T-4, Teen Teaching Through Theater, for over a year.  
**Other activities:** "I'm really well known for my art, which consists of anything I feel, from my Spanish background to the way I dress. It ranges from Ruan, my people, to my hip-hop style of graffiti and that sort of thing. Right now I'm painting a school mural at Cook and my part of it consists of my Hispanic background."  
**Hobbies:** "Dancing, poetry, writing. The teens know me by my dancing. I go to all the dances I can."  
**Goals:** "I definitely want to finish high school and go to college and then be in the entertainment industry. I'd like to become a rap artist or an actor."  
**Hereses:** "Martin Luther King was a big inspiration. Also, Cesar Chavez. Two of my teachers, Mrs. Mitchell and Mr. Zuzina — they definitely like my art."  
**One thing a lot of people don't know about me is:** "I try to put up a front and be there for everyone, be the strong one so everyone can come to me when they need help. But, what they don't know is sometimes I need someone to be there for me and provide support for me."

**My favorite childhood memory is:** "My first time performing. I was in fourth grade, maybe nine years old, at Monroe School. I performed a dance in a talent show. I had performed in church and sang in front of people before. But, this time everyone was screaming for me and made me want to be out there performing. The energy I got from them was such a high. Being on stage and hearing a crowd scream for you is everything."  
**Words that best describe me:** "Outgoing, confident, loud, happy."  
**Advice to teens:** "You can amount to something. You shouldn't feel like you can't do anything. All you need is love for yourself and you can accomplish anything. All you have to do is look for it within yourself. Find it and use it to your advantage and then you won't have to use drugs or be in gangs."  
**SHERI GRAVES**  
Do you know a teen who deserves to be a Face? Tell us about him or her in 100 words or less, including name, address and phone number. Write to: Face of Teen Life, The Press Democrat, P.O. Box 569, Santa Rosa 95402. Include your own name and telephone number.

## WHAT'S UP

**Music concert**  
Popular hits from the Roaring

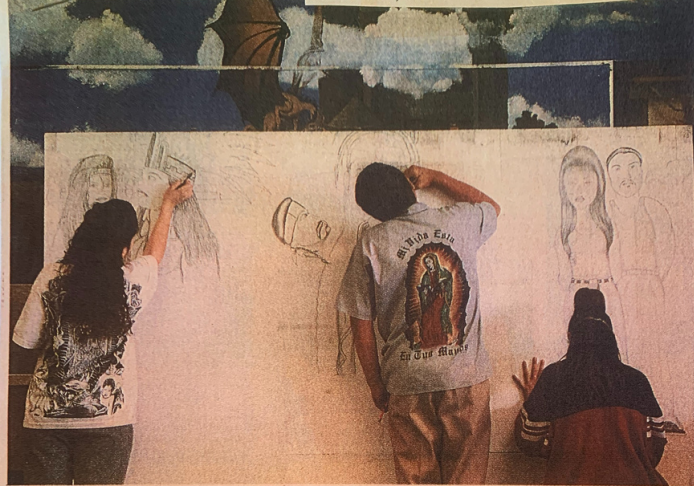
cial Advocates for Youth are recipients of recognition awards from Santa Rosa Optimist Club. They are

dreds of young people about drugs, alcohol, and tobacco. She's also a peer counselor and has participated on numerous occasions

for young men and women interested in being considered for appointment to a service academy.

## PEACE THROUGH PRIDE

Santa Rosa, California, Sunday, March 27, 1994



From left, Lorena Suarez, 15, Gustavo Mendoca, 14, and Alicia Reyes, 14, work on a mural during their lunch break. The mural depicts Mexican culture.

## Cook's Latinos find better way

Students unite, and avoid fight

By TINA ANIMA  
Staff Writer  
Alicia Reyes was tired of coming to school and watching her friends square off into lines of blue and red — colors of rival gangs at Cook Junior High.



Cook Junior High students listen to a motivational speaker during their lunch break.

During lunch, students would stare each other down, waiting for someone to make a move to start a fight. Almost every day last autumn, Reyes and her friends feared any tensions would erupt

finding new political power, peace and pride in a new student group. Socially Organized Latinos. Gang members have called a truce to join the SOL club, and for the first time, the bulk of school's student body officers are Latino. Students say they hope to carry their cultural pride to the new Elsie Allen High, which will have 41 percent minority students when it opens this fall — more than any school in the city.  
"Here we're in charge. This is what makes us happy — to not be fighting. This is what keeps us out of it," Reyes said.  
Club officers like Reyes and Omar Medina say the 80 or so students said they worried a fight was inevitable. Instead, they united to form SOL, fueled by newly found clout that helped elect three Latino students to

"Here we're in charge. This is





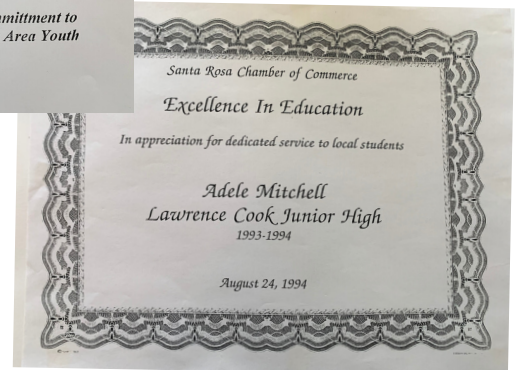


# SOL CLUB HISTORY

SOL COMUNITY ARTS PROGRAM

## AWARD WINNING PROGRAM

Adele was awarded the California State Senate Award for *Outstanding Commitment to Southwest Santa Rosa Youth*, recognition at a *Congressional Forum on Education* hosted by United States Representative, Lynn Woolsey and the *Excellence in Education Award* presented by the Santa Rosa Chamber of Commerce.



## THE NEXT GERNERATION

Two student leaders of the original SOL Club are now local community leaders. Omar Medina is a Santa Rosa City Schools Trustee and Gustavo Mendoza is the Outreach Specialist for the City of Santa Rosa.





# PROGRAM DIRECTOR

SOL COMMUNITY ARTS PROGRAM



## ADELE DAVALOS MITCHELL

### Founder & Director

[adele@thepaintedchairs.com](mailto:adele@thepaintedchairs.com)

Adele has been an educator for over thirty years. She has taught visual art, dance, physical education and film studies. Adele has worked with generations of students at *Montgomery High School*, *Lawrence Cook Junior High School*, *Santa Rosa Junior College* and was a founding faculty member at *Maria Carrillo High School*.

Her awards include the *California State Senate Award for Outstanding Commitment to Southwest Santa Rosa Youth*, recognition at a *Congressional Forum on Education* hosted by United States Representative, Lynn Woolsey and the *Excellence in Education Award* presented by the Santa Rosa Chamber of Commerce.

At Lawrence Cook Junior High School, Adele was the founding teacher of *SOL Club (Socially Organized Latinos)*. *SOL* was a club that originated on campus as a way of resolving gang violence that had emerged in 1994. *SOL* club combined honoring cultural heritage, community collaboration and visual art projects to create positive social change. *SOL* activities included weekly guest speakers from the community, participation in art festivals, canned food drives, student speakers sharing the *SOL* club experience with other schools, lowrider bike shows, Cinco de Mayo celebrations and art creations throughout the school.

*SOL* successfully ended the gang fighting on campus with students focusing on cultural pride and giving back to their community. Two student leaders of the original *SOL* club are now local community leaders. Omar Medina is a Santa Rosa City Schools Trustee and Gustavo Mendoza is the Outreach Specialist for the City of Santa Rosa.

Adele was also the founder and executive director of Santa Rosa Dance Theater for over fourteen years, providing professional dance training and performance opportunities for hundreds of young artists.

Adele continues to be an advocate for underserved youth by helping to promote art as a way of self expression and resilience. [>>> LEARN MORE : www.thepaintedchairs.com](http://www.thepaintedchairs.com)





# PROGRAM DIRECTOR

SOL COMMUNITY ARTS PROGRAM



## CARMEN MARIA MITCHELL

### Co-Founder & Director (she/her)

[carmen@redwoodtheatrecompany.com](mailto:carmen@redwoodtheatrecompany.com)

Carmen is one of Adele's two daughters. She is a professional performing artist, working in both California & New York City. Carmen grew up as a competitive figure skater and ballet dancer. She now works as a professional singer, actor and professional figure skater.

Her body of artistic work includes many leading roles in musicals, short films, commercials and professional ice skating shows. Carmen performed as a principal skater on a National Tour of Disney on Ice where she debuted the role of the “Live Host”.

Carmen is the Founder and Executive Director of the (non-profit) Redwood Theatre Company & Redwood Ice Theatre. RTC is the proud home to the SOL Community Arts outreach program providing art opportunities to marginalized youth of color to create positive social change.

She is also the Co-Founder for FTA Productions (For The Art) working alongside bold brands and artists to create cutting edge media content.

Carmen has a passion for social justice work and full inclusion projects. Her companies include opportunities for artists with developmental disabilities and outreach art workshops for underserved youth in the community. She is the director of the FTA Social Justice Art Series: creating social awareness through art.



**FTA**  
PRODUCTIONS



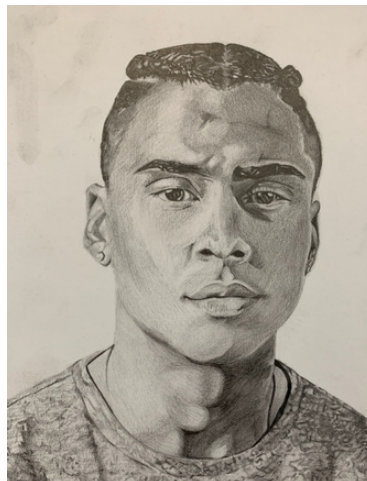
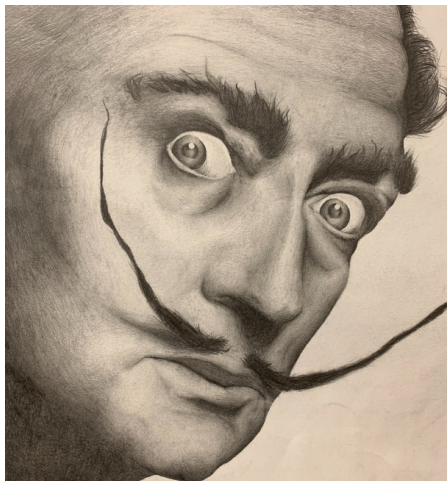
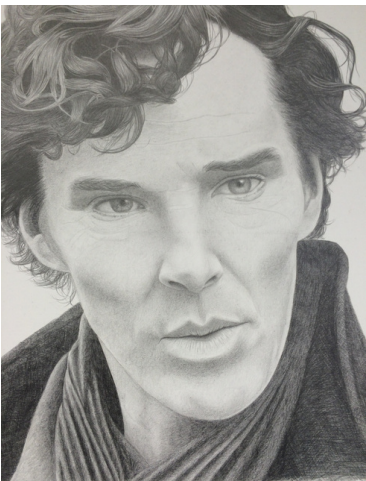
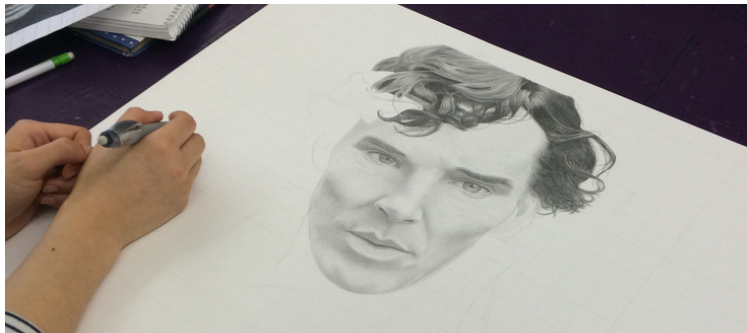
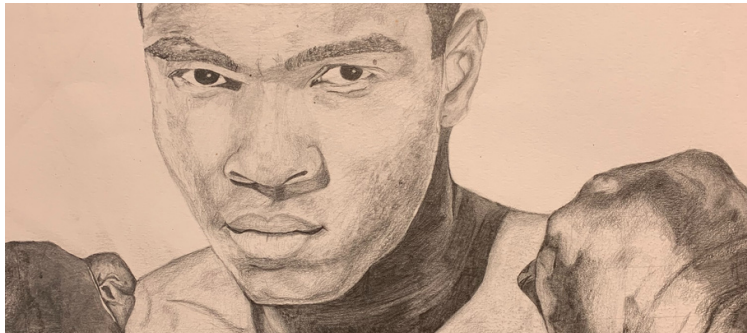
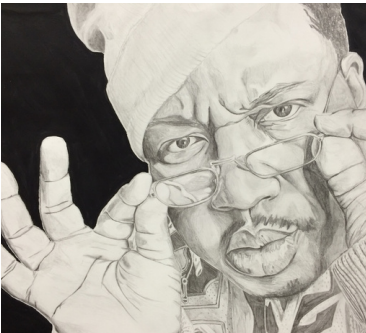
>> [LEARN MORE : www.forthartproductions.com](http://www.forthartproductions.com)





# STUDENT ART

PORTRAITS

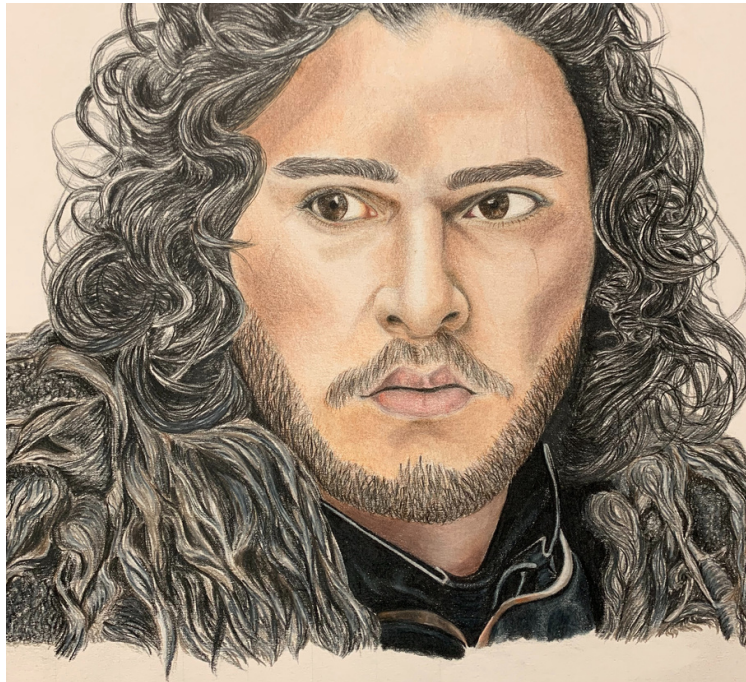






# STUDENT ART

PORTRAITS & STUDIES

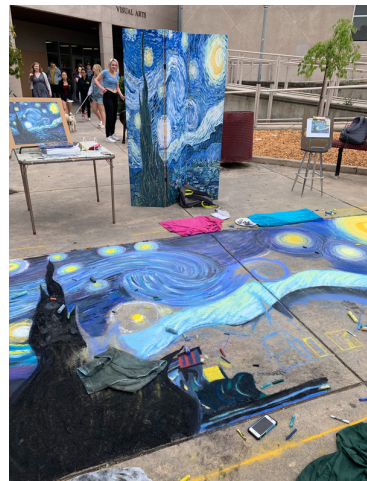






# STUDENT ART

MURALS







# ABOUT THE COMPANY

Redwood Theatre Company is the proud home to the SOL Community Arts Program. RTC is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization providing professional productions and education programs to Sonoma County. Our mission is to make performance & art more accessible to the youth in the underserved communities.

“  
NURTURING  
CREATIVITY,  
COMMUNITY  
& CULTURE  
THROUGH ART  
”



# ABOUT THE PROJECT

Our goal is to create intentional outreach programs by providing resources and education opportunities to vulnerable, underserved youth of color in our community, in the hopes to inspire lifelong interests in the arts.

The SOL Club project promotes social harmony and violence prevention through art & cultural pride.

