



ALL STARS PROJECT OF DALLAS HOLDS TALENT SHOW TO GIVE KIDS A CREATIVE OUTLET

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By Lynnanne Nguyen

A youth program in Dallas is bringing different neighborhoods across the city together to bridge the gap.

The **All Stars Project of Dallas** hosted their annual talent show on Saturday.

Organizers say it gives kids in the poorest neighborhoods of Dallas a creative outlet to showcase their talent.

“That audience applause changes how they see themselves. They’re like, ‘I’m appreciated. I am somebody in this world,’ and it just changes everything,” said Antoine Joyce with **All Stars Project of Dallas**.

Joyce has been running the **All Stars Project of Dallas** since 2013, after being inspired to get involved following a talent show when he was just 12 years old.

“It was the first time I felt like I was in an environment where I belonged,” Joyce recalled.

Joyce said the experience encouraged him to volunteer, and kept him from joining a gang at a young age.

He hopes to spread that same inspiration to other kids who get involved in the **All Stars Talent Show**, whether it’s through performing or working backstage.

“It gives them the freedom to say, ‘If I can perform as a stage manager or as an usher, what else can I perform as in the world?’” Joyce added.

The program works with kids from at-risk neighborhoods of Dallas, by giving them a creative outlet.



“When I’m on stage, it’s an amazing feeling. I kind of lose myself a little bit and go into a different realm,” participant Ruby Lucas said. “It’s amazing because I’m speaking to people about my dreams, my goals, and sharing it with them.”

The program also partners with Dallas PD’s Police Activities League, a unit of five officers who go into neighborhoods encouraging kids to get involved, with the officers even performing with them.

“Bridging the gap between the community and the police department. That’s what we do. We get out, we’re just regular people. We have fun, do silly things, and do all the different skits and everything with them when we get out,” said Devalln Lee-Arkansas, who is a member of Dallas PD’s Police Activities League.

Inspiring kids to get involved in other activities.

“The singing and the rapping. Just being able to perform, that helps keep them motivated to do different things and not be out in the streets,” Lee-Arkansas added.

The **All Stars Project** is in five other cities, along with Dallas, including New York City, Chicago, and San Francisco.