

“Marwen’s
Career Fair
changed my life.
I just graduated
from Depaul
with my BFA!”

—Marwen Student

Information is a summary and does not include
to present Marwen’s entire financial condi-

Marwen

IMPACT REPORT • 2023

As I look back at 2023—on the young people and their families, the teaching artists and staff, the donors and supporters—I am filled with joy at the ambitious work we accomplished together.

This past year, we reflected, took action, and focused on our mission to inspire young people to nurture their growth and build their futures through art and community. Let's explore the key steps we took in 2023 towards a sustainable and vibrant future for young people, for our community, and for the organization.

Enrollment & Engagement: In 2023, Marwen worked to restore class enrollments to pre-pandemic levels by optimizing both in-person and virtual offerings and analyzing trends to meet scheduling and subject preferences. We reinforced our dedication to engagement by increasing outreach to schools throughout the city, including hosting over 500 new students in onsite workshops and dozens more participating in activities like resource fairs, museum events, and park programs. We aim to fill every seat and impact every corner of Chicago.

Community Commitment: Parents understand the vital role Marwen plays in their child's life. In 2023, we enhanced our efforts to meet families where they are by linking them with ride-sharing services, providing online registration and virtual orientations, and accommodating scheduling needs. One Marwen mom collects her youngest from the South Side at 2 pm and her eldest from the North Side at 3 pm, all to ensure they arrive at Marwen by 4 pm. This parent, like many others in our community, deeply appreciates the sense of belonging and the creative haven that Marwen offers her child. Likewise, we value that young person and family. That's our mission at work.

Equitable Practices: Last year saw the implementation of our pay equity work. Comprising salary transparency, consistent pay across departments and positions, well-defined job roles, and increases to teaching artist pay, this focus ensured our employees are treated respectfully and paid equitably. We believe in investing in the creative workforce while also attracting and retaining great talent to strengthen commitment to our mission.

Marwen's Emerging Teaching Artist Program (META): In 2023, the META program marked its first full pilot year. META supports new teaching artists with training, hands-on experience, and a network of peers and mentors. It's particularly special that many META participants are Marwen alumni, returning to enrich the community that once supported them. A unique program in Chicago—and perhaps the only one in the nation—META showcases our commitment to nurturing talent and trying new things!

Fundraising and Development: Arts funding faces ongoing challenges, including shifting donor preferences, economic fluctuations, event landscape ROI, and changes in funder strategies. Marwen certainly has not escaped these challenges. However, we have adapted by embracing our longstanding supporters while nurturing new ones; securing targeted sponsorships; hosting strategic third-party fundraisers; and organizing smaller, more focused events. Your continued support is crucial to our success.

The concept of free art education sounds simple, but its transformative impact echoes through the lives of young people forever. With your help, we'll continue to inspire Chicago's youth and build their futures for years to come while also launching our ambitious plans for the years to come. We're grateful for your unwavering partnership.

With Gratitude,



Akilah Halley, Executive Director

Highlights from Our Year

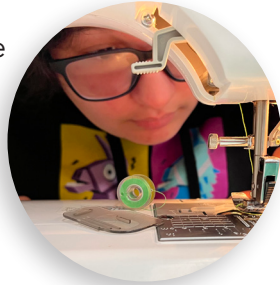


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Enrollment & Engagement

- We analyzed course data—age-groups, topics, times, online vs. in-person—and adjusted programming accordingly.
- Class offerings were rebalanced to meet growing demand from middle schoolers.
- Additional internships were sought to fulfill the need for paid opportunities for high school students.
- We prioritized full enrollment over expanded course numbers to improve student experience and operational efficiency.



Equitable Practices

- 2023 saw the implementation of our year-long pay equity work.
- The project achieved salary transparency, consistent pay across departments and positions, well-defined job roles, as well as increases in pay for teaching artists.
- Our long term outcomes include strengthened organizational health and an improved ability to attract and retain employees.



META *Marwen’s Emerging Teaching Artists*

- Marwen’s Emerging Teaching Artist program celebrated its first full year in 2023.
- Supporting new teachers (some of whom are Marwen alumni) in arts education, it features training, hands-on experience, and a supportive network of peers and mentors.
- META is the only program of its kind in Chicago, possibly in the nation, and represents Marwen’s commitment to young people, career opportunities, and a thriving community.



Fundraising & Development

- Like many nonprofits, Marwen experienced significant shifts in donor behavior and the economic landscape.
- Our response included creative initiatives such as third-party fundraisers and more targeted campaigns.
- Our year end appeal, Fall fundraiser, and Art Fair, were reimaged.
- We increased our grant outreach and broadened our sponsorship base.



Marwen 2023 Financial Statements

ASSETS

Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 524,022
Accounts receivable and prepaid expenses	19,695
Contributions receivable, net	653,310
Investments	11,179,644
Other assets, net	77,690
Property and equipment, net	7,456,061
Total assets	\$ 19,910,422

LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS

LIABILITIES

Accounts payable	\$ 31,626
Other liabilities, net	111,118
Bonds payable	3,708,822
Total liabilities	\$ 3,851,566

NET ASSETS

Without donor restrictions	15,392,055
With donor restrictions	666,801
Total net assets	16,058,856

Total liabilities and net assets **\$ 19,910,422**

The financial information presented above is derived from Marwen's 2023 audited financial statements. This information is a summary and does not include all disclosures required by accounting principles accepted in the United States. As a result, it does not purport to present Marwen's entire financial conditions or results of operations.