

Summer Dawn

(legal name: Summer Dawn Reyes)

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Summary

Arts educator specializing in theater, writing, directing and theatrical production
Background in creative writing, communications, event coordination and hospitality management
Founder and Director of In Full Color, an award-winning arts organization empowering BIPOC creators

Professional Profile

- Received two commendations from NJ State Assembly plus the inaugural Jersey City Arts Council Award in Performing Arts recognizing In Full Color's artistic and social impact
- Won two Governor's Awards in Arts Education including Arts United Award for antiracism work
- Presenter at NYC Face 2 Face Education Conference 2023, NJEA Conference 2024
- Served on National Endowment for the Arts theater grants panel, Performing Arts Committee for the Jersey City Arts Council, Steering Committee for New Jersey Arts & Culture Administrators of Color Network
- ~20 years of production experience in multiple areas including education, arts, theater and hospitality. Sold ~\$200K in hospitality events at venue grossing ~\$600K annually and planned 135 total events in one year
- Award-winning arts and culture journalist and former communications professional
- Bilingual in English, Ilonggo and Spanish (C1). Emerging Brazilian Portuguese learner
- Highly proficient with web design, social media, graphic design and technology overall
- Cleared to work with children in New Jersey, Pennsylvania and New York

Experience

ARTS ADMINISTRATION AND PRODUCTION

In Full Color (Fiscally Sponsored Arts & Education Organization) Jersey City, N.J. December 2014 –
Founder and Director

In Full Color empowers women of color and other marginalized BIPOC through education and the arts, primarily across North America. Our 350+ artists have performed for numerous universities, corporations, governmental institutions and other venues. Duties include all administration; business strategy; content development; educational development; sales; curation and artistic direction; artist management & support; finance management; fundraising; advocacy and community building; communications and marketing; graphic and web design – I'm a (mostly) one-woman show!

Since 2020, we've created ~\$66K in paid work for artists. We offer a range of opportunities from our annual mainstage theatrical show to smaller events including concerts, a comedy series, an educational musical for grades K to 5 and more. I also develop all our merchandise including our bestselling coloring book, "Girls Who Colored Outside the Lines," which shows kids of all genders and colors what amazing women of color can do! We've received two commendations from the NJ State Assembly and the inaugural Performing Arts Award from the Jersey City Arts Council in 2018.

Young Audiences of NJ & Eastern PA (Arts Education Nonprofit) Princeton, N.J. October 2019 –
Artist Services Manager – also, Teaching Artist, Arts Liberate Lead Artist

Young Audiences is an arts organization that brings arts workshops, residencies and other programming created in collaboration with teaching artists in various art forms to schools in diverse neighborhoods throughout N.J. and P.A.

As Artist Services Manager, I recruit, support and collaborate with our diverse roster of 85+ artists and ensembles across the region, covering various art forms. My work is critical for bringing engaging artists into schools for assemblies and workshops that educate young students about art, social-emotional skills, diversity and belonging, and other key life lessons. Duties include administration, product development, DEIA advocacy, relationship management and more.

I am also a lead artist for our antiracist programming, developing an Arts as Activism workshop for Grade 5+ and antiracism training for educators/admin. I also lead introductory courses on antiracism, anti-oppression and Black

artistry, in coordination with a Black teaching artist. As a theater and literary arts teaching artist, I write and execute workshops, residencies and professional learning for grades Pre-K-6 that include SEL and DEIA learning.

YANJEP and the State of New Jersey recognized me for my culturally responsive and antiracist teaching artistry with the Arts United Governor's Award in Arts Education in 2023.

New Jersey Theatre Alliance (Arts Nonprofit/Service Organization) Allenhurst, N.J. October 2022 to Sept. 2023
Administrative Coordinator, NJACAC Steering Committee Member

The Alliance serves and uplifts 40 professional theaters throughout New Jersey in 21 of its counties. I managed our database of donors, supporters and theater professionals through Salesforce; wrote checks and managed records through QuickBooks; helped plan events and provided other administrative support. I was part of the executive committee for the New Jersey Arts & Culture Administrators of Color through the Alliance, contributing my expertise in communications, strategy, antiracism and pro-BIPOC advocacy; I am still a proud NJACAC Steering Committee Member.

EDUCATION

See Young Audiences of New Jersey listing above

Lincoln Center Theater (Arts Education Nonprofit) New York City October 2022 –
Teaching Artist

Lincoln Center Theater has multiple educational programs including HIGH, which helps NYC high schoolers connect with contemporary productions at the famed venue, learning about theater through theater (for example, acting out or studying real scenes from current shows) and building critical thinking skills; SHAX, which helps students find joy and engagement in Shakespearean text; and LEAD, which helps multilingual learners enhance their speaking skills through dramatic performance. I am a part of a cohort of teaching artists that collaborates to quickly create, test and improve curricula before executing lessons for all three programs with students grades 6 to 12.

Storytelling Arts Inc. (Arts Education Nonprofit) Stockton, N.J. November 2021 –
Untold Stories Program Director; Teaching Artist

Storytelling Arts is a nonprofit community of storytellers, story writers, and teaching artists who share the ancient art of storytelling with contemporary audiences. I create and execute student-centered storytelling curricula for grades 6 to 12 in underserved communities. I am also the Program Director for their Untold Stories of Storied People series empowering underserved storytellers, currently serving an all-Black cohort performing all over NJ. I facilitate monthly Story Labs that help each storyteller hone their skills, develop their voice and connect with other creators.

Art House Productions (Arts Nonprofit) Jersey City, N.J. 2007 to 2017
Director, Production Manager, Actor, Children's Drama Teacher

Art House Productions is one of North Jersey's largest arts nonprofits. I oversaw all production aspects of youth musicals (working with children ages 8 to 17) and traditional plays which meant facilitating crew communication; scheduling and running meetings; keeping team members on schedule and on budget; and overseeing interdepartmental communication. I also oversaw legal and safety code compliance and aided with conflict management, backstage coordination and day-of operations. I've also worked as a performer, director and youth drama teacher (ages 4 to 11) for this organization. I was also on its Access Committee, which focuses on ADA-compliance.

EVENTS PRODUCTION AND PRODUCTION MANAGEMENT

LITM (Restaurant, Bar & Art Gallery) Jersey City, N.J. 2015 to 2019
Events Director, Manager, Bartender

LITM was a pioneer in the Jersey City restaurant scene, offering food, cocktails and an art space for local events. I oversaw all aspects of private and promotional event planning. Duties include event conceptualization; recruitment of liquor sponsors, clients, vendors, entertainment, promoters; project management; drafting contracts; managing events staff; managing catering orders; invoicing clients; graphic design; decoration and fabrication; cocktail creation; social media management and promotion; and more. Sold \$200K in event sales in 2018, accounting for one-third of all sales.

TEDxJerseyCity (Nonprofit, local TED Talks franchise) Jersey City, N.J. 2015 to 2018

Production Manager

TEDxJerseyCity is an annual conference highlighting innovators, including speakers with “ideas worth sharing” to performers and product developers. For this seasonal role, I ran all production aspects of major yearly conferences and general operations, which meant overseeing all administrative and crew management duties including keeping all departments on schedule and on budget. I also negotiated with our venue, drafted rental contracts, helped with conflict management and maintained our master event day schedule.

Personal Artistry

Actor and Director

I am a non-union actor specializing in monologues, comedic work and Shakespeare. My acting work has greatly informed my direction. I am also a mezzo-soprano singer and have worked in theater, film and TV since 2006. As a singer-songwriter and musician, I perform pop R&B under the name Vero Verano.

Highlights:

- Emotional, multilingual role in “Killing Myself,” second place overall at Apple Box Short Film Festival 2022
- Directed “Stormé,” musical play about Stonewall Rebellion icon
- Acted at Luna Stage in “The 88” by Tony- and Grammy- nominated writer Reg E. Gaines
- Acted in Fringe NYC: “Little Stories” by Cornerstone Theatrical
- Performed at United Women in Faith’s 150th Assembly with 5,000+ attendees
- Completed two successful one-woman shows including Kookspeak, featured at multiple festivals
- Was highlighted performer for three TEDx conferences including TEDxJerseyCity
- Wrote and directed “Secrets; Love” for Downtown Urban Arts Festival in 2010

Education

Theater/Film: Shakespeare (Sara Solberg), Acting Beyond Marginalization (Peter J. Kuo), Acting on Camera 1 & 2 (Magaly Colimon), Alexander Technique (Martha Bernard), Actuar en Español (Reza Salazar), Hip Hop Dance (Porshia Derival)

Cambridge University/Teaching House: CELTA, Pass B (above standard)

Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages. Classes were hybrid (virtual and in-person) with pre-intermediate and upper intermediate student focus.

Rising Tide Capital, Community Business Academy, 2020

University of Phoenix, AA in Communications. GPA: 4.0

Harvard University, English. No degree. Virtual. GPA: 4.0

Professional Development

I am continuously growing and expanding my skills. Here are some of my favorite topics to learn or educate about:

- Intersectional Feminism and Activism
- Advocating for Underprivileged, BIPOC and LGBTQ Students & Communities
- Culturally Responsive Arts Education (CRAE)
- Using Arts to Engage English Language Learners
- Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)
- Accessibility and Inclusion for Disabled Students & Communities
- Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and the Arts
- Trauma-Informed Care in Arts Education
- Entrepreneurship
- Spanish-Language Theater