

The Dreamer

Exclusive news for the St. Joseph's Indian School DreamMakers



September 2024

Art and Its Past, Present and Future Impact on St. Joseph's Students

Our students may be living in modern times, but when they set out to create art, they're tapping into their past.

As you walk through the halls of St. Joseph's Indian School, you may catch a glimpse of a Lakota (Sioux) student sitting at a desk, completely engrossed in their artwork. They take time choosing the perfect colors. They focus on the precision of their lines. They examine their creations up-close and farther away.

At first glance, it may seem like a simple act of drawing on a piece of paper, but there is so much more going on behind the scenes. Art is not just a form of self-expression for the students at St. Joseph's. It is also a way for them to connect with their cultural heritage. For instance, their ancestors would have made bead and quillwork and created a winter count, which was a pictograph on a buffalo

hide to document their memorable moments over the years. As Native American children, art has a deep connection to their ancestry. Their participation in art plays a significant role in preserving and honoring those traditions.



Through the art program at St. Joseph's, students are able to explore their creativity and learn about different techniques and mediums. They are encouraged to draw inspiration from their surroundings, whether it be the beautiful landscapes near campus or the stories passed down from their elders.

As a DreamMaker, we are sure you've become
(over, please)



acquainted with the student drawings you receive each month. But it is truly because of your support that art at St. Joseph's is able to thrive and provide a creative outlet for our students. You, as one of our most generous supporters, ensure each and every student has access to the supplies and resources they need to fully explore their artistic talents.

But the impact of the art program goes beyond creating beautiful pieces of artwork. It also helps our students build confidence, develop critical thinking skills and foster a sense of pride in their culture.

“Through their art, students are able to share their unique perspectives and stories with the world,” said Hannah, art teacher at St. Joseph’s.

But creating art is not only taking place in classrooms at school. It’s also an integral part of the counseling and mental health programs.

“Art Therapy has been incredibly useful when working with children who may not have the words to express how they feel,” said Erin, a counselor at St. Joseph’s. “Art in therapy allows kids to explore ideas and practice mastery of a new skill while learning frustration tolerance and

processing experiences.”

Wóphila thánka — *many thanks* — to our monthly givers who make it possible for our students to explore their creativity and connect with their cultural heritage through art.

DID YOU KNOW?

Aktá Lakota Museum & Cultural Center is an educational outreach program of St. Joseph’s Indian School. The name “Aktá Lakota” means “to honor the people,” because the museum honors and preserves the rich culture of the Lakota people, the students at St. Joseph’s Indian School and the thousands who visit the museum each year.

The facility is more than a traditional museum; it is an experience that provides visitors with a living lesson on the American Indian way of life, both past and present.

Learn more about the museum at stjo.org/museum.



St. Joseph's Indian School
We serve and teach, we receive and learn.
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