

The Crucible

FIRING UP WEST OAKLAND'S YOUTH

The Crucible uses a unique approach to achieve its mission of fostering arts, industry and community: It provides West Oakland youth with fire, metal, glass and light arts. In the process, the nonprofit group also demonstrates success in a neighborhood plagued with social inequities.

The Crucible's Bike Fix-A-Thon and the Earn-A-Bike programs address a vital need in West Oakland, a community where a bike is often the primary form of transportation for youth and their families. Both programs promote bike maintenance while introducing the industrial art of welding to youth and the greater community.



"The Crucible is seen as a community resource for bike repair, as well as viable summer and after-school programs for young people who may not be exposed to these arts in school," explains Kristy Alfieri, youth and community manager.

Another youth workshop allows middle school girls to sculpt metal self-portraits. Blacksmithing, jewelry and glass flame-working workshops also inspire youth from neighboring schools.

The Annual Fire Arts Festival sparks youth interest and increases the demand for the Crucible's unique industrial and fine art workshops. Says Alfieri: "Through the support of our friends like Clorox, we've offered over \$30,000 in scholarships and distributed 600 free event tickets to Oakland youth, families and community partners."