

Ava's CHANGE4YOUTH

Ava's Change4Youth—a program by **Pride Action Tank (PAT)**, visually raises awareness of youth experiencing homelessness in Chicago while collecting small change in donation stations to make big differences in the lives of youth. This program also promotes community building through art and advocacy efforts.

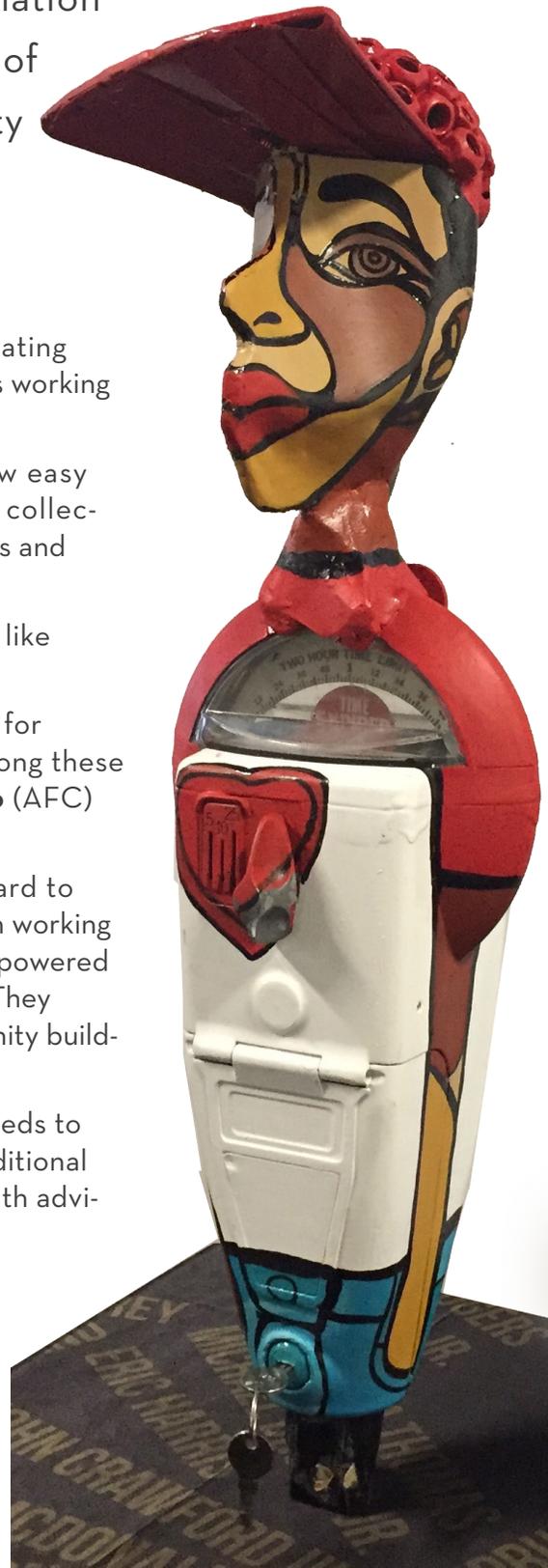
How the Program Works

- Repurposed parking meters are transformed into captivating public art pieces by prominent artists, and artist mentors working with youth to help them create a personalized meter.
- Installed in wards across the city, the donation stations allow easy access to giving opportunities. Meter installation, coin collection, and maintenance are handled by program volunteers and supervised by **PAT**.
- Additional donation boxes, painted by youth and shaped like homes, will be at retail businesses.

Proceeds benefit nonprofit groups who provide services for youth experiencing homelessness and funds are split among these groups. **PAT**, along with the **AIDS Foundation of Chicago (AFC)** facilitates the dispersal of funds.

- Youth participating in the program serve on an advisory board to help decide how funds are allocated to applicants. When working in collaboration with **PAT** on decision-making, youth are empowered because they are actively involved with solving a problem. They promote the program through sharing their stories, community building, and leadership.
- Nonprofit organizations receive a percentage of the proceeds to split evenly among themselves. Agencies can apply for additional funds to be distributed as determined by **PAT** and the youth advisory board.

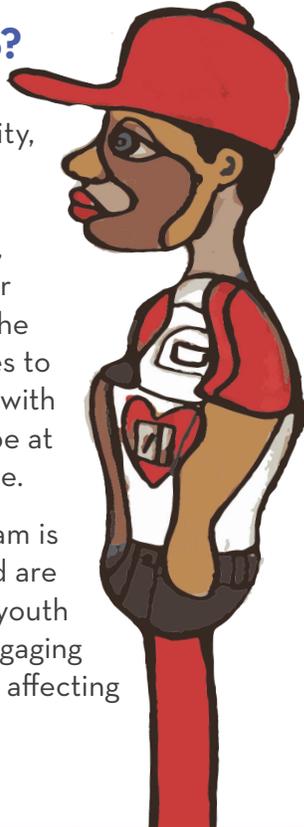
Artwork by Sam Kirk



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Why Here in Chicago?

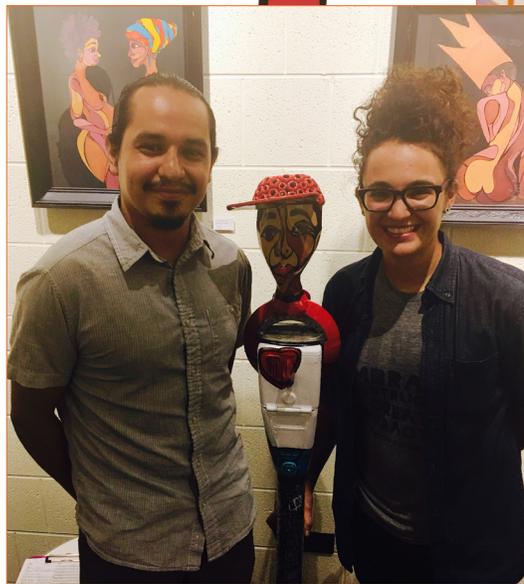
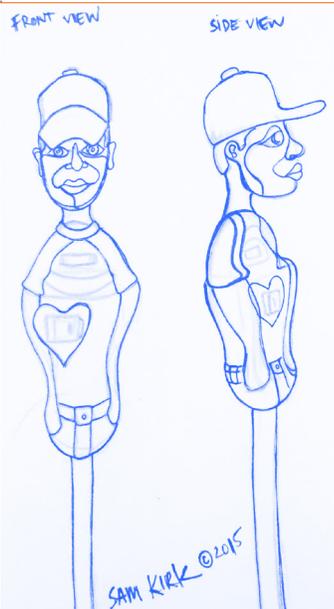
- Cities across the country—Evanston, Pasadena, Iowa City, Salt Lake City, San Antonio, Baltimore, Las Vegas, Chattanooga, St. Petersburg, and Minneapolis—host similar programs. Denver installed the meters in 2007 and continues to raise about \$100,000 a year with 80 meters. Chicago should be at the forefront on a larger scale.
- **Ava's Change4Youth** program is unique because funds raised are directed towards impacting youth specifically, while actively engaging them to help with a problem affecting their lives.



How to Be Involved

If you are:

- **an alderman**—help us pilot this program by allowing a meter(s) to be installed in prominent areas in your ward.
- **a business, group, or individual**—sponsor a donation station. Help fund the purchase, installation, and upkeep of a meter. Install one near your organization to show support for the program.
- **an artist**—donate your time to mentor a youth in the creation of a meter(s).
- **a volunteer**—contact Jackie Thaney, JThaney@aidschicago.org



Artist, Sam Kirk

Ava's CHANGE4YOUTH

Ava Santos-Volpe is an 12-year old living in Chicago. Windy City Times newspaper publisher and LGBTQ+ rights advocate, Tracy Baim spoke to Ava's class two years ago about youth experiencing homelessness in the city she lives. Tracy's stories touched Ava. She wanted to help. While on a family trip, Ava spotted a parking meter collecting coins to donate to a homeless shelter. Ava asked her mom to send Tracy a photo of the meter, asking if it would be a good way to raise money to help youth.

