BLACK HOUSTON CREATIVES NETWORK AIMS TO SUSTAIN 15,000-SUPPLY IMPACT AS DREAM IN COLOR RETURNS

After collecting more than 15,000 art supplies in its inaugural year, BHCN returns with a goal of collecting another 15,000 for community-nominated organizations serving Houston youth.

HOUSTON, TEXAS — September 1, 2026 — After Houston residents helped Black Houston Creatives Network collect more than 15,000 new and gently used art supplies for local youth during its inaugural Dream in Color campaign, BHCN is returning for a second year with a goal centered on sustainability: mobilize the community to do it again.

Dream in Color will run November 1 through December 12, with a goal of collecting another 15,000 new and gently used art supplies for community-nominated organizations serving Houston youth.

Rather than focusing solely on growing the number of supplies collected each year, BHCN is working to establish Dream in Color as a sustainable annual community initiative capable of consistently expanding access to creative resources.

“Sometimes a child does not need a program or a perfect plan. They just need access,” said **Denise N. Upshaw**, Founder and CEO of Black Houston Creatives Network. “A box of crayons, a sketchbook, or a paintbrush can be the first step toward discovering something they did not know was inside them.”

This year, BHCN is asking Houstonians to begin at home by looking through closets, drawers, boxes, and storage spaces for new or gently used art supplies that could be placed into the hands of a young person.

At the center of Dream in Color is one question:

What could a child create if given the tools to bring their dreams to life?

For **Chukwunonso Ofili**, a Dream in Color Ambassador and caricature artist, the answer began with a box of crayons.

“My parents saw my love for visual art and bought me a Crayola 64-count box of crayons,” Ofili said. “Growing up in Nigeria, I had never seen that many colors in one box before, and that moment changed my life. It boosted my imagination and showed me a whole new world of creative possibilities.”

Today, Ofili makes his living through creativity.

“I’m a caricature artist now, but back in the day, I remember hating markers because they would run out so fast,” Ofili said. “Now, 30 years later, it’s crazy to think that these same markers are part of how I make a living and feed my family.”

Dream in Color is built around the idea that access to creativity can influence more than artistic ability.

Dr. Cashuna “Shun” Huddleston, a psychologist supporting the campaign, said creative expression can help children communicate, process experiences, and develop confidence.

“Children do not always have the words to explain what they are thinking or feeling, and creative expression can give them another way to communicate and process those experiences,” Huddleston said. “Art can also provide a sense of accomplishment, build confidence, and create a safe space for children to explore their emotions and develop their own voice.”

Huddleston said investments in creative resources can support children emotionally, socially, and cognitively.

The 2026 Dream in Color campaign will include community donations, volunteer experiences, storytelling, and partnerships designed to mobilize Houston around investing in the next generation of creatives.

Organizations serving Houston youth will have an opportunity to be nominated by the community to receive supplies collected through the campaign.

Dream in Color Ambassador **Armand Kincade** said people should not underestimate the impact of participating.

“You don’t have to write the biggest check,” Kincade said. “You can donate supplies, volunteer your time, share your expertise, or simply spread the word. Houston has so many talented young people, and investing in their creativity today can help shape who they become tomorrow.”

The primary community ask is simple:

Before buying something new, look around your home.

An unopened box of markers, extra paintbrushes, a sketchbook, colored pencils, canvases, or creative supplies sitting in storage could become some of the first tools a young person uses to discover what they can create.

Dream in Color runs November 1 through December 12, 2026.

To donate art supplies, volunteer, nominate an organization, or learn more about participating in Dream in Color, visit www.blackcreativesnetwork.com/dream-in-color **.**

ABOUT DREAM IN COLOR

Dream in Color is Black Houston Creatives Network's annual art supply campaign focused on expanding access to creative resources for Houston youth.

Through art supply donations, volunteerism, storytelling, and community partnerships, the campaign mobilizes Houston residents, creatives, and businesses to invest in the next generation of creatives.

In its inaugural year, Dream in Color collected more than 15,000 new and gently used art supplies. In 2026, BHCN aims to sustain that impact by collecting another 15,000 supplies for community-nominated organizations serving Houston youth.

ABOUT BLACK HOUSTON CREATIVES NETWORK

Black Houston Creatives Network is a professional association and media platform working to increase access, visibility, economic opportunity, and sustainability for Black creatives across Houston.

BHCN's work is guided by its CREATIVES Framework: Community, Resources, Economic Opportunities, Access, Technology, Impact, Visibility, Education, and Sustainability.

Through strategic partnerships, media, professional programming, community initiatives, and curated experiences, BHCN works to strengthen Houston's creative economy while creating opportunities for creatives to connect, collaborate, and collectively elevate.

Learn more at www.blackcreativesnetwork.com/dream-in-color
Email us at Black Houston Creatives Network

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