

Rhode Island Black Storytellers
Affiliate Report 2024

January 2024

RIBS hosted its 26th Annual FUNDA FEST: A Celebration of Black Storytelling from January. Over 3 weekends we had 25 performers, including 6 guest tellers: Amina Blackwood Meeks, David Gonzalez, Muriel Johnson, Teju Ologboni, April Armstrong, and Regie Gibson.

We had 65 school performances in 53 schools and 3 library programs in January-February, reaching nearly 8000 students, staff and teachers

February

RIBS presented FUNDA Story Camp, an online “camp” during February vacation week, supported by the Rhode Island Department of Education, and the All Course Network 12 students participated

April

FUNDA Story Camp was in person during vacation week. 20 elementary students participated and ended the week with a mini performance.

May

RIBS hosted internationally known storytellers, Peter Chand for an evening storytelling concert, and Masankho Banda for a workshop intensive

June

Storytellers performed at a Juneteenth event at Casey Farm

July-Aug

RIBS launched its **Legacy Academy: A Culturally Based Storytelling Program**. 13 adults between the ages of 25-65 have embarked on a 12 session storytelling training program. They meet 2x month, and will be “featured” at FUNDA FEST in January 2025. This program is funded through a prize RIBS won from its participation and pitch contest sponsored by The Social Enterprise Greenhouse’s Innovation Lab. The \$50K is for creating and implementing a pilot training program to develop new professional RIBS members. This course is in person, and is being recorded to create an online training course that can be income producing for the teacher/storytellers and the organization.

FUNDA STORY CAMP: RIBS hosted 30 children for 2 one week sessions of Story Camp. Elementary students learned storytelling and drama, African Drumming and Dance, and visual arts. Each week long session concluded with a performance/sharing for families and friends. This program was supported by ACN and RIDE. This is the last year for this funding as it was COVID related; RIDE will no longer support “enrichment programs”. RIBS will be seeking new funding for this

October

RIBS is co hosting, along with Providence Inner City Arts, Inez Aponte, a woman of Surinam-descent, and her one woman show, Oct 19.

Other news of note: our Business Manager, Pattie Horton, officially retired at the end of August. We have hired **Shavon Choct Smith** to take on the business of RIBS. She will be handling the finances and administration for the organization. We are SOOOO thrilled to have her!

We also have 2 new Board members, Lizzie Araujo-Haller, who formerly worked for the Department of Art Culture and Tourism for the City of Providence, and now is the COO of an arts camp in CT, and Delecia Forbes, who is a former arts educator and non-profit arts administrator from South Africa now living in Providence

RIBS is busy getting ready for our 27th Annual FUNDA FEST: A Celebration of Black Storytelling, January 17-26, 2025.

We hope you will consider joining us, either in person or VIRTUALLY! We have developed a great broadcast team, and will be broadcasting 8 of the public performances.

For more information: www.fundafest.org.

To find out more about RIBS: www.ribsfest.org

FUNDA Story Camp



Women at Words and Music Event: FUNDA FEST



Legacy Academy with Masankho Banda

