

# Josephinum Academy

## Community Action Plan

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By: Anna Kuell, Akilah Muhammad,  
Evelyn Ashburner

# Problem Statement



Josephinum Academy has a strong academic reputation and is known for empowering young women, but local visibility and community connection is limited. Despite exceptional arts and academic programs, many families in Wicker Park and surrounding neighborhoods are unaware of the school.

**Core Challenge:** How can Josephinum build meaningful connections with the local community, showcase its unique, creative and empowering education for young women, and increase enrollment while highlighting student voices, leadership, and artistic growth?



# Defining Josephinum's Identity



## Brand Foundation

*Josephinum empowers young women to lead with heart and create with purpose — grounded in sisterhood, creativity, and community.*

## Positioning Statement

*For Chicago's next generation of female changemakers, Josephinum Academy is the school that blends academic excellence with creative self-expression, preparing girls to thrive as global citizens and local leaders.*



# Challenges Facing Josephinum



## Low Awareness

1

The Wicker Park community is unfamiliar with Josephinum's mission and impact which limits growth and visibility.

2

Girls rule! The all-girls setting builds sisterhood and leadership, but it reduces the total number of prospective applicants versus co-ed schools.

3

## Unclear Identity

Josephinum lacks cohesion with their brand and messaging making it hard to stand out among other schools.

4

## Religious Branding

Josephinum's Sacred Heart Catholic identity is an important part of its mission, but it may make some secular or interfaith families hesitant to engage.

5

## Where's the Community?

Josephinum has limited partnerships with local organizations, which weakens student opportunities and reduces external advocacy.



# Goals



## Strengthen Community Presence

Increase local awareness and support by actively engaging community members, neighborhood networks, and local businesses.

## Elevate the Arts Program

Highlight and expand Josephinum creative identity by promoting its arts initiatives, partnerships, and student showcases within the local community.

## Grow Enrollment Through Connection

Boost prospective student interest and enrollment by fostering authentic, community-driven outreach, events, and collaborations that reflect the school's mission of empowerment.



# Flow Chart



# Rationale

## Why Community & the Arts Matter When Choosing a High School



### The Surrounding Area Matters

- Research shows that place-based resources and neighborhood infrastructure can influence academic outcomes & student engagement. (National Center for Education Statistics, 2019)
- Community schools demonstrate that strong neighborhood networks support higher belonging, emotional safety, and student success. (Maryland Center for Community Schools, 2022)

### Strong Arts Programs Support Student Growth

- Arts education enhances academic performance, creativity, and critical thinking (Mierzejewski & Nielsen, 2019).
- Students engaged in the arts show better engagement, attendance, and fewer disciplinary problems (Perpich Center for Arts Education, n.d.).
- Arts programs offer emotional outlets and foster confidence, empathy, and teamwork (Mierzejewski & Nielsen, 2019).
- For at-risk or marginalized students, arts participation increases graduation rates and college readiness (Catterall et al., 2012).

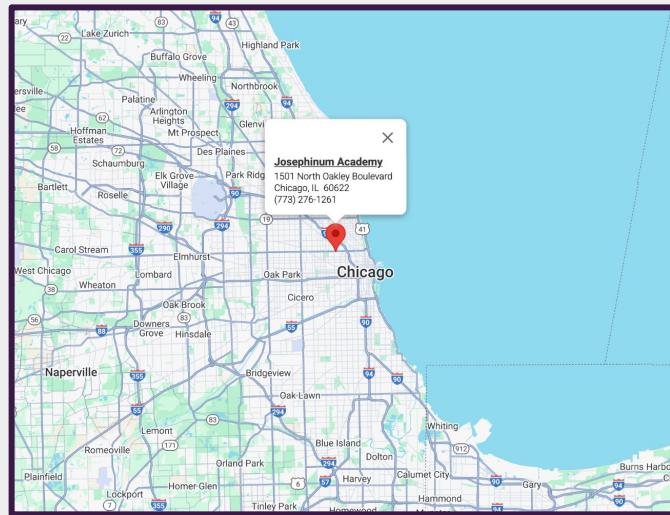
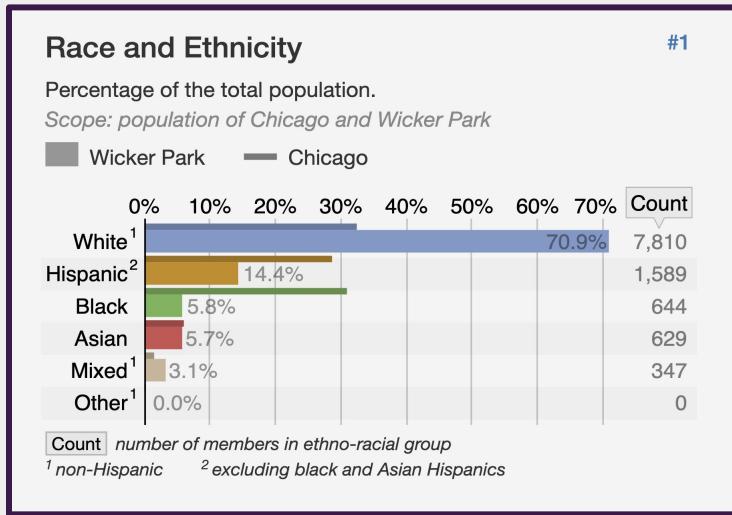
### Why These Factors Should Guide High School Choice

- A school's success is shaped by both its internal programs *and* the community it is located in.
- *Neighborhood resources + strong arts offerings = a well-rounded, supportive, and inspiring environment for students.*

# *Wicker Park*

## Population Demographics

- **Race:** 70.9% of the population are White, 14.4% are Hispanic, and 5.8% are Black.  
(Statistical Atlas, n.d.)
- **Population:** 24,281
- **Median age:** 32
- **Average individual income:** \$102,454 (Niche, n.d.)



(Statistical Atlas, n.d.)

# ***Value Proposition***



## **Why Wicker Park Should Value Josephinum:**

### **Pipeline for Future Local Leaders:**

Students graduate ready to contribute to the neighborhood through service, arts, and civic engagement.

### **Historic Anchor in the Neighborhood:**

Josephinum has served Wicker Park girls for 130+ years, preserving identity and continuity.

### **Mission Driven by Service & Connection:**

Josephinum's values align with Wicker Park's identity; diverse, creative, community-minded, and forward-looking.

### **Hub for Creativity & Culture:**

With creative arts programming, Josephinum will continue Chicago's rich art history and culture.

### **Inclusive Space for Girls' Empowerment:**

Provides a safe, affirming environment where young women develop confidence and purpose.





# Recommendatio n Flow





# *Three-Pronged Approach*



**Community  
Activation**

**Creative  
Collaboration**

**Student  
Mobilization**

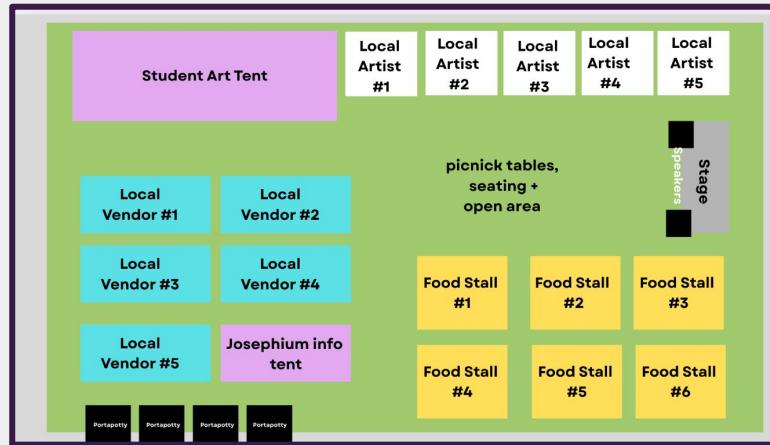
# Community Activation: SacredART in the Park



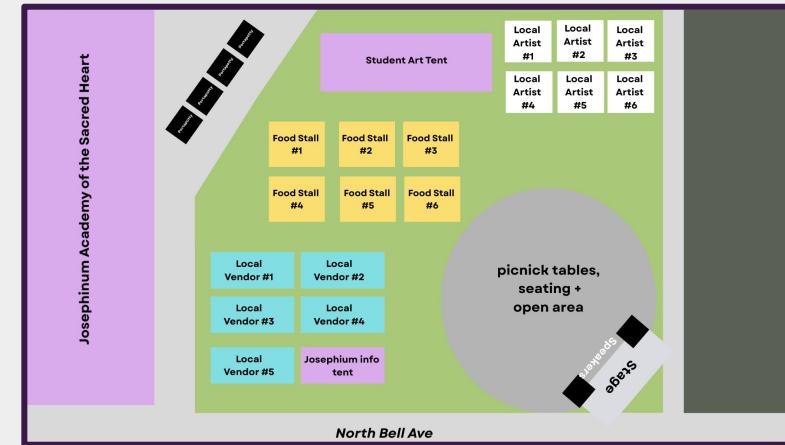
**SacredART in the Park** is a community fair hosted annually on Josephinum field or in a nearby park. The event showcases student artwork nominated by their instructors, celebrating creativity, empowerment, and the school's arts program. Local artists, vendors, and community organizations are invited to participate by hosting booths for a small entry fee. Proceeds directly support Josephinum arts initiatives.

- Strengthens local partnerships with artists, businesses, and community groups.
- Raises awareness of Josephinum's arts program and mission.
- Positions the school as a hub of creativity, leadership, and community connection.

## Off Campus:



## On Josephinum Property:



# Creative Collaboration: Jo Creates



**Goal:** Jo Creates is a collection of after-school and Summer arts programs hosted by Josephinum faculty staff, in collaboration with local. In weekly rotations, artists will come in and lead after-school art workshops, programs, classes or programs to engage incoming and current Josephinum students.

## High School Age Participants

- Provide relief for parents who may need additional time after the school day due to work hours, childcare etc.
- Included in tuition for current students
- Open to students from other schools in the area, outside students can attend programming for a fee of \$50 per semester



[Monica J. Brown](#)



[Kennedy Free](#)

## Middle School Age Students

- Open to prospective middle school students for a Fee of \$50
- Discounted program rate for students coming from sister Middle schools/other sacred heart schools
- Allows prospective students to enjoy and experience what high school life and programs are at Josephinum, leading to increase enrollment.



[Carron Little](#)



[Tara Levy](#)



[Caitlin Howe](#)

# Student Mobilization: The Pride Times



**Concept :** Student run magazine/newspaper that students can write and curate. Final product is published once a semester and distributed into local coffee shops/businesses that consent.

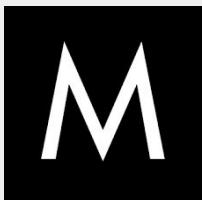
## Awareness and Community

### Impact

- Generates awareness in the wider Wicker Park community
- Visualizes and advertises what student life and engagement is like for prospective students
- Could be sponsored by local businesses and partners in the community for printing costs

## Student Impact

- Provides a learning opportunity and creative experience for enrolled students
- Easily Integrated with any sort of pre-existing journalism curriculum at Josephinum
- Media and writing published can be used by students in future portfolios, writing samples, examples of published work.



**Case Study:** Mouth of the River

# Budget Ranges



Initiative	Estimated Cost Ranges	Key Costs
Community Art Event	\$1200-\$1500	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Basic art supplies (paint, brushes, canvases, paper, aprons)</li><li>- Light refreshments (snacks, beverages) → <i>see next slide for further info</i></li></ul>
Jo Community Newsletter	\$0-\$300/month	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Free or low-cost email platform (Mailchimp/Substack)</li></ul>
Ads & Awareness Campaign	\$1,000-\$2,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-Modest social media ad spend (Facebook, Instagram, Google)</li><li>-CTA ad</li></ul>
Total est. (one time/monthly mix)	\$1,800-\$3,800	

# SacredART in the Park: *BUDGET*



**Total Estimated Expenses:** \$1,200–\$1,500

## Key Expense Categories:

- Event Permits / Park Fees: \$150
- Tables, Chairs & Tents: \$300
- Printing & Signage: \$150
- Marketing (Digital + Paid Social): \$100
- Art Supplies / Display Materials: \$200
- Volunteer Refreshments: \$75
- Music / Entertainment: \$100
- Contingency Fund: \$125

## Offsetting Costs / Revenue:

- Booth Fees: \$25 × 15 vendors → \$375 revenue
- Sponsorships / Donations: Local businesses (target \$200–\$500)
- Volunteer Labor: Student volunteers for setup, social media, and event operations (in-kind contribution) – resume builders / volunteer hours for students
- **Net Estimated Cost After Offsets:** ~\$525–\$900



# Sample Execution



## JO CREATES!

AFTER SCHOOL ARTS PROGRAM

- Take classes with Wicker Park Artists and Josephinum Faculty
- Explore new mediums of art every week!
- Open to ALL local students Grades 5-12
- No experience required!

SIGN UP ONLINE TODAY!

JOSEPHINUM ACADEMY  
OF THE SACRED HEART



JOIN US FOR  
**SACREDART  
IN THE  
PARK**

STUDENT ART SHOWCASE! FOOD!

SATURDAY JUNE 27  
9AM - 2PM | THE JO FEILD

LOCAL VENDORS! [WWW.SACREDART.COM](http://WWW.SACREDART.COM) LIVE MUSIC!

ALL PROCEEDS SUPPORT JOSEPHINUM'S ARTS INITIATIVES AND STUDENT PROGRAMS.

# Practical Media Plan

**Goal:** Boost community presence and drive attendance for campaigns



## Additional Media

- **Weekly newsletter** updating students, parents, faculty and staff on community engagement opportunities
- **Targeted media posts**- focus on local Facebook communities and neighborhood groups

## PHASE 1 — Awareness (May)

- Launch event webpage (QR code directly links) + vendor sign-ups
- Weekly IG/FB posts: student spotlights + countdowns
- Boosted social for vendor recruitment

## PHASE 2 — Engagement (June)

- Reels of students creating ar
- Artist-of-the-week features (students & local artists) on Jo's website
- Community partner reposts (local businesses + organizations)

## PHASE 3 — Event Push (July)

- Daily countdown + event map/schedule on socials (Facebook, Instagram)
- Final press release + day-of media alerts
- Geo-targeted social ads (1-mile radius)
- Feature story pitches to local press (Block Club Chicago)

## PHASE 4 — Event Day + Follow-Up (July 30–Aug 5)

- Live coverage + on-site interviews
- Photo/video recap posts, thank-yous

**View here:** [90 Day Media Calendar](#) + [Segment Directory](#)

# Prospective Student Sample Execution



## Meet Josie Pride

Josie is a 13-year-old from Pilsen, living with her parents, grandmother, and two younger siblings. A creative and motivated student, she attended Ambrose Plamondon School for K–8 but often found its extracurricular offerings limiting.

This past summer, Josie attended *SacredArt in the Park* with her family, an experience that sparked her excitement for art and community events. She's drawn to opportunities where she can explore creativity, collaborate with others, and engage with her neighborhood. Programs like Josephinum's *Jo Creates* and student-led initiatives such as *The Pride Times* aligned perfectly with her interests, offering hands-on artistic experiences and a chance to contribute to real projects while connecting with peers and local artists.

*That's why Josie chose Josephinum—a school where her creativity, voice, and leadership can flourish while she participates in a vibrant community that celebrates art, collaboration, and empowerment.*

1

### Awareness

Josie hears about Josephinum through community events, social media or local outreach.

2

### Interest

Josie explores Josephinum's website & social media.

3

### Engagement/Exploration

Josie participates in Jo Creates workshops or afterschool programs.

4

### Commitment/Application

Josie decides Josephinum is the right fit for her creative & academic goals.

5

### Onboarding/1st Year Experience

Josie joins the school community and participates in creative programs and student leadership initiatives.

# Contact & Questions



Evelyn Ashburner  
[eashburn@depaul.edu](mailto:eashburn@depaul.edu)

Akilah Muhammad  
[amuham28@depaul.edu](mailto:amuham28@depaul.edu)

Braylyn Brown  
[bbrown67@depaul.edu](mailto:bbrown67@depaul.edu)

Anna Kuell  
[akuell@depaul.edu](mailto:akuell@depaul.edu)

# THANK YOU!

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