



PASEtetter

issue 14
winter 2000

www.pasetetter.com

PARTNERSHIP FOR AFTER SCHOOL EDUCATION

Arts in the Afterschool Context

by Greg McCaslin

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VISUAL ARTS, MUSIC, CREATIVE WRITING, DANCE AND THEATER have long had a presence in the afterschool setting. Visit any number of community-based organizations serving youth and you will see evidence of artistic expression. Murals, photographs, fashion designs, poetry and performances of all sorts dress the walls and reverberate through the halls of The Point, Mindbuilders Creative Arts Center, the Forest Hills Community Houses, El Puente, The Door, the Jamaica Center for Learning and the Arts and the Henry Street Settlement among many, many other afterschool programs in New York City.

The arts and athletics contrast with the often passive/receptive experience of school where there are rules within which many young people have trouble situating their personal history and experiences. Success in school can be elusive and is often socially unacceptable. Even the most "progressive" school is a formal place: Subjects are pre-determined; the ratio of students to teachers is generally high; adults call the shots.

CBO's are, in many ways, less bounded than schools and, albeit with some constraints, are places for free expression. Standards



Participant in the Community-Word Project at New Settlement Apartments

often reflect the values and experience of the immediate community, the peer group and the individual. Activities are determined by the local context: a mural reflecting the history of the neighborhood, a performance on the occasion of a community celebration. The subjects resonate with a young person's immediate experiences.

An afterschool program that offers quality arts activities promotes youth development by capitalizing on the innate desire to express oneself musically, visually, and dramatically. Effective programs encourage, honor and guide this need for self-expression. Much has been written about the therapeutic value of artistic expression, both for an

individual and the community. It can heal a host of wounds. It can build a sense of coherence and autonomy. It provides tangible evidence of accomplishment. Witness the pride and eloquence of student artists when their work is exhibited. The passion and insight with which they depict the world in which they live and the worlds they imagine can be exhilarating for both audience and participant.

Effective arts programs, in school or out, build resiliency in young people by creating situations where they "exercise genuine choice, control and responsibility" (S. Zemelman, H. Daniels, and A. Hyde, 1998, p. 164) while

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P A S E

X-raying a Community's Imagination: Community-word Writing and the Afterschool Workshop

By Michele Kotler

FIVE YEARS AGO, AFTER TEACHING CREATIVE WRITING at the University of Michigan, I returned home to New York City with a mission to get young people excited about the power of the word and the power of community. I wanted young people's constructive ideas to be heard and to provide them with the opportunity to empower their community with their constant energy. In my heart, I knew that a mix of com-

munity and voice could result in positive sustainable change. I created a writing method that brings voices and visions together, culminating in a Community-Poem from which one line is transformed and integrated into a mural for all of the community to see and hear.

When I was thinking of where to do a writing residency, I imagined an environment where community is key. What better place than an afterschool program? An

afterschool program offers the freedom to create curricula and work with young people in a different capacity than the average classroom. Creative expression is welcomed. In fact, afterschool programs see the arts as a wonderful tool to develop and hone children's literacy skills. At the same time, art offers young people the opportunity to process the daily pressures of their communities and create art that addresses their concerns and hopes. Lastly, when you ask young people if they want to enhance their community's appearance, they get excited and want to begin immediately.

Every child who has participated in a Community-Word Afterschool residency knows the meaning of collaboration, the common thread that runs through everything we do. Our staff models it by team-teaching and working closely with our assistants, our lesson plans always include group work, we integrate different artistic disciplines such as writing, drama and visual arts into each session, and lastly our culminating project, a team-painted mural, features a line from a collaborative poem. The combination of collaboration, creative expression, and creative writing results in improved self-esteem and literacy/communication skills and provides a wonderful way of getting young people to enjoy the difficult task of articulating their ideas into writing. Inspiring young people to create art

Participants in the Community-Word Project at New Settlement Apartments



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The Power of the Arts: An Interview with Bill Aguado, Executive Director of the Bronx Council on the Arts

SARA: HILL: Can you talk about how to integrate art in a meaningful way in the afterschool context?

BILL AGUADO: One of the things that I discovered, it's not enough to send an artist into a site. It's also a matter of whether the artist is the right person, is the site the right site. What we've learned is that the site may have the best intentions, be really committed to using the arts in the afterschool program, but doesn't really have an appreciation for how to utilize the arts. It's as though the arts is some kind of mysterious vehicle that will all of a sudden blossom into a great program. It requires a lot of support and a lot of effort on the part of the agency.

There was one site I worked with that was very well funded, had a lot of resources, a lot of personnel, but the afterschool director had no interest in our artist. They put him in a corner, let him be used as a homework helper, which I would not allow. Eventually we had to pull him out. It should have been integrated better. The artist could have been a floater, working with each site on how to enhance what they were doing. But the senior person was not committed, and if the senior person is not committed, the staff is not committed. And if the staff's not committed there's no program.

Whereas we had a volunteer program with two volunteers, and had one of the most dynamic arts programs I've ever seen because they wanted it to happen. They saw it as important to them as individuals and important to the kids they were work-

ing with. And this program blossomed. It was extraordinary. And there's no secret to it. If you want it, it'll happen. But it's not going to happen by itself. It requires the artist and the staff person to come together and have a common understanding of what the others' expectations are and what's reasonable to do. And when that happens, you'll have a successful program.

SARA: How much planning do you think is important?

BILL: We like to engage the Executive Director of the agency for a brief meeting to let them know how serious we are. If they're not committed to it, there's no sense in doing it. I show up to these meetings because it's important to me. And I'm very blunt with them. "Do you want the program? What resources are you going to allocate to it? How is it going to fit into your other activities?"

SARA: So, the agency has to put up some resources as does the arts organization?

BILL: In-house resources, in-kind resources mostly,

SARA: But that could get expensive...

BILL: Yes, but it could also be money they have allocated anyway. Another question I want to get answered is how often senior staff visit the program. Do they know what it is, do they demand accountability from the staff assigned to it? You also have to have a staff liaison. The artist is not required to be a policeman. The artist is not there to disci-

pline, not there to deal with the problems. That's the staff's responsibility. If the staff thinks of it as free time, you've got a problem. More often than not, if you have a staff member who's interested in what's going on, you've got a very successful formula.

SARA: So, you have to identify who on staff is committed, and interested, and use this interest in some way, as professional development, for example.

BILL: Sure. And it depends on the art form. You might have a staff person who's intrigued by a particular kind of art. But the first thing they often say is, "I'm not an artist. I'm not creative. I don't know anything about the arts. I don't know anything about poetry. I don't know anything about murals or visual arts. I don't know anything, and you have to find a common ground. You have to find out what they want to do."

SARA: Why do you think people's first reaction is, "Oh, I'm not an artist?"

BILL: I think that art is taught in schools in ways that intimidate non-artists. You also rarely have courses on using arts activities as resources for afterschool programs. Social work schools rarely teach the arts as a social work method. But the arts is a great vehicle to reach kids, to build cultural competency and self-esteem.

SARA: Can you give an example?

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Participants in the workshop "Creating Art from Everyday Materials" led by Harriet Taub at PASE Forum on Jan. 28, 2000.

6TH ANNUAL PASE CONFERENCE AND NATIONAL SYMPOSIUM

The 6th Annual PASE Conference, *Community-based Organizations: Partners and Pathways to Success* will be held on Friday, May 5th, 2000 at Hostos Community College, 450 Grand Concourse, the Bronx. The conference will once again be a rich mix of speakers, expert panels and hands-on workshops on afterschool practices, principles and programs. A National Symposium on Afterschool Education will be held on Thursday, May 4th at the Puck Building, 295 Lafayette (corner of Houston), Manhattan. The Symposium will consist of an in-depth discussion with organizational leaders from around the nation on "Extended School Day/Afterschool Programs: Varying Models for Improving Children's Lives." Pre-registration for both the Conference and Symposium begins March 1st.

PASE FORUM (Formerly the Quarterly Meeting)

Braving the bitter cold, 138 participants attended The PASE Forum on Friday, January 28th held at the College of Insurance. The theme of the Forum was "Arts in the

Afterschool Setting." Youth from St. Nicholas Neighborhood Preservation Corporation led an opening icebreaker, followed by Bill Aguado, Executive Director Bronx Council on the Arts who talked about the power of the arts in community afterschool programs. Following the opening session, there were a variety of workshops, including "Identifying Funding in the Arts," presented by Greg McCaslin of the Center for Arts Education, Theresa Greenburg from Forest Hills Community House, and Carmen Vega-Rivera of East Harlem Tutorial Program, "Making Music in the Afterschool" presented by Andre Lubart of Artsgenesis, "Creating Art from Everyday Materials" presented by Harriet Taub of Materials for the Arts, "Bookmaking" presented by Trina Lion, "Expressing Identity through the Arts" presented by Sonali Matani. The next PASE Forum will be held on March 3rd, 2000.

MOTT FOUNDATION

PASE is collaborating with the C.S. Mott Foundation as part of a larger, national initiative that seeks to bring together a host of partners that include schools, community based organizations, parents, businesses, cultural institutions, the faith community, and technical assistance providers. PASE is conducting an analysis of training needs and opportunities available nationally for school principals, superintendents, and afterschool workers, including youth workers, volunteers, parents, project directors, and executive directors with a focus on afterschool programs implemented in the context of school-community partnerships.

PASE welcomes everyone to participate in our survey which can be found on the PASE website, www.pasesetter.com (there are even prizes for those who submit one!). We would like to know what you think are priority professional development needs for the afterschool field, what has worked, what barriers

you commonly encounter, and most important, what you think should be available. (To receive a paper version of the survey, please contact our office and we'll be glad to send you a copy).

PASE is also hosting a series of Round Table discussions in New York City during the month of February, in collaboration with the Bank Street College of Education. The Round Tables are an opportunity to discuss the key issues in forming genuine school - community collaborations, the training needs of in-school and out-of-school educators, and to explore values and concepts shared across constituency groups. Round Tables will also be held in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Washington D.C., Chicago, and a number of additional cities. Please call Jason Schwartzman at 212 571-2664 if you would like additional information.

PASE/DEVELOPMENTAL STUDIES CENTER AFTER SCHOOL LITERATURE PROJECT

Energy and excitement continue to surround the After-School Literature (ASL) Project as we move into the middle of our second year of implementation. PASE held a Series II training for the second-year sites in February. We are also pleased to announce that through the generous support of the Taconic Foundation, we are accepting applications for Phase 3 training and implementation to begin in June 2000. Applications are due March 20, 2000. For an application, call 212 571-2664.

PARENT LEADERSHIP AND ORGANIZING INITIATIVE

The Parent Leadership and Organizing Initiative, in collaboration with NYU Institute for Education and Social Policy, works with parents and community residents at CBOs to affect local school change and



Workshop on "Creating Art from Everyday Materials" led by Harriet Taub at PASE Forum on January 28, 2000.

improve the educational experiences of youth. The second year of the Parent Leadership and Organizing Initiative has been funded through the generosity of the Greentree Foundation. An application was mailed to the PASE mailing list, and four programs were selected. These programs include:

- ▲ Highbridge Community Life Center
- ▲ Rheedlen Centers for Children & Families
- ▲ East Harlem Tutorial Program
- ▲ Coalition for Hispanic Family Services

PASE congratulates the new programs and looks forward to a second year of successful collaboration with Eric Zachary and Richard Grey of NYU's Institute for Education and Social Policy.

TASC (The After School Corporation)

PASE is in the midst of its second year of providing staff development and training for TASC-Funded Sites. PASE continues to focus its training along two paths: 1) full-time coordinators; 2) line staff.

In addition to supporting Round III coordinators with the many issues attendant with program start-up, PASE has focused its efforts on creating a menu of professional development opportunities for site coordinators. These offerings are grouped under three broad topic areas: management,

programmatic, and interpersonal communication.

PASE has developed a variety of training venues for the staff of TASC-Funded programs. All adult staff, excluding Board of Education teachers, attend one of the three day-long Core Knowledge Trainings. The Core Knowledge Training is oriented around Child/Centered Practices and those in attendance choose from workshops in conflict resolution, classroom management, and developmentally-appropriate practice. PASE also offers half-day training in Core Elements—Arts and Academics. Workshops offered on these days touch upon literacy, math, science, drama, music, and visual arts.

PASE extends its thanks to all the fabulous trainers it has worked with in this venture. Additional thanks to The Valley, Grand St. Settlement, and Community Counseling and Mediation Center.

PASE LEARNING LAB

The PASE Learning Lab opened its doors at The Community School, a public middle school in Red Hook, Brooklyn, on January 10, 2000 with 82 middle school students enrolled. The first cycle will expose the students ages 10 - 14, to the arts, expeditionary and service learning, and literacy based activities, delivered by practitioners from the afterschool field. See box on page 9 for a complete description of activities and Ribbon Cutting Ceremony.

Excerpts from New Settlement Apartment's 1998 Community-Poem:

A World of Confusion Spinning

A heart is the beating soul of a child.
 A heart is a terrible thing to damage.
 A heart is power.
 When I close my eyes
 my only hope is to open them again.

When I close my eyes I see a fierce illusion of darkness.
 When I close my eyes I can feel the world crouching down in pain.

When I close my eyes I imagine being closed in
 by water and not being rescued.

A heart without love is death.
 The force of confusion.
 I am surrounded by dreams.

I am surrounded by the possibilities from inquisitive minds.
 I am surrounded by insanity.

A world of confusion spinning.

An illusion is a little girl that says 'I can't do this'.
 An illusion smiles.

When I close my eyes the possibilities of hope are never ending
 but when I open them all possibilities disappear.

An illusion of justice.
 An illusion that blinds you from the truth.

Time is a girl in fear.

Time is that girl's sister, brother, mother, father, cousin,
 schoolmate, teacher, aunt, uncle, mayor, president and everyone
 else who breaths in fear.

Time is a window of inspiration, peace and granted wishes.

When I close my eyes my only hope is to open them again.

Arts in the Afterschool Context

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challenging them to do their best as members of a group. In negotiating the sometimes competing values of individual expression, high artistic expectations and group interests, a young person can experience true pride of achievement. This achievement is often accompanied by peer and community recognition that may be lacking in other contexts. Having earned such recognition, a young person is better able to rebound from setbacks at home, at school, or at work. Some who may have been “acting out” become leaders in the course of performing in a play or musical group. Some who are timid or reserved find their voices.

In 1994, recognizing that government support for afterschool programs was decreasing at a time when the challenges of growing up healthy were escalating, the President’s Committee on the Arts and Humanities created Coming Up Taller, a national initiative highlighting a wide range of exemplary out-of-school arts and humanities programs for young people. This initiative seeks in part to stimulate private sector support for afterschool arts and humanities programs that provide high quality experiences.

According to the *Coming Up Taller* report, exemplary out-of-school arts and humanities programs:

- Create safe places for children and youth where they can develop constructive relationships with their peers;
- Offer small classes with opportunities for youth to develop close, interactive relationships;

- Place a premium on giving youth a chance to succeed as a way to build their sense of worth and achievement;
- Use innovative teaching strategies such as hands-on learning, apprenticeships and technology, often giving youth concrete job skills;
- Emphasize excellence and expose children to quality staff and programming;
- Build on what youth value and understand and encourage voluntary participation;
- Establish clear expectations and reward progress;
- Maintain sustained, regular programs upon which children can count and provide youth with opportunities to be valued community members.

As a multitude of testimonies by youth and practitioners illustrate, some of which can be found in the pages of this PASEsetter, positive creative experiences inspire young people to transcend the most challenging of personal and community circumstances. Clearly the arts are alive in the afterschool setting reflecting the visions, values and vitality of young people and the communities in which they live.

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Greg McCaslin is Director of Programs, the Center for Arts Education: The NYC Annenberg Challenge for Arts Education. He is also a member of the PASE Program Council.

The Power of the Arts

continued from page 3

BILL: There was a kid, Chino, in our Writers Corp Program, where groups of kids work with professional writers.

SARA: How did he get involved? Was he interested in writing?

BILL: No, he was, “I don’t want none of this. I’m not a poet, I’m not a writer. I don’t want none of this shit. I’m not gonna do this.” You always have one or two kids that follow the group, and Chino came because his friends were in the program. At the same time, Borders Bookstore underwrote a poetry slam, which is a competition. At the first poetry reading, our expectations weren’t very high, but we wanted to get the kids down there to practice. And it was also important to take the kids out of the South Bronx, to take them to Borders at 57th Street and Park Avenue. They’re entitled to be there. They’re entitled to go into a book store, look at books. It’s not an alien environment. These are simple things that we take for granted, but young people think, once you get south of 96th street it’s alien territory. And before we got started with the slam, there was a great community relations person, Carol Hoenig, from Borders who showed the kids where all the different sections were, told them to feel free to browse, and they did. They had never been allowed to browse before. All of a sudden they were looking at books, they were exposed to books in a way that was not threatening, it didn’t require a book report, a test in a couple of days...

continued on next page

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THIS INITIATIVE, AND TO DOWNLOAD A COPY OF COMING UP TALLER, VISIT THE WEBSITE: www.pcah.gov

OR WRITE :

President’s Committee on the Arts and the Humanities, 1100 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Suite 526, Washington, DC 20506

SARA: So Chino got up there, at the first slam, what was it like for him, what did you observe?

BILL: Well, I had to give him an “A” for effort. And I thought to myself, “Well, not everyone’s meant to be a poet.”

SARA: What was Chino like as a person?

BILL: Very shy, withdrawn in a public way, not with his friends. But even with his friends he wasn’t a kid of many words. And he read the first poem, and I thought, “luckily we have a lot of other kids from other sites.” And I worried that Borders would be disappointed. But they weren’t. They really liked it.

SARA: What happened next?

Bill: Well, three or four weeks go by, and Chino comes back. He’s reading awkwardly, he stammers. But you feel an inkling of comfort. Not much, you get the sense that he would rather be playing ball, watching t.v. or doing video games. And every time I saw him I would think to myself, “Oh boy, here we go again.” By the third session he’d gotten stronger, more confident.

SARA: Had he been writing all that time?

BILL: Writing, re-writing. The poet who’s working with him, John Rodriguez, has gotten him reading fiction, explaining vocabulary. They’re also getting a lot of training on how to communicate publicly and not to be intimidated. Now, the fourth poetry slam was a celebrity slam. Chino is no longer reading, he’s committed his work to memory. He’s gone through this training with different artists that we brought in, and now he is very comfortable in front of the microphone. It was a confidence where he had realized, “I’m entitled to this.” And his work has gotten better, it’s more profound, he’s found that inner voice that no

one has listened to and he was afraid to bring out.

SARA: Do you think he had also appropriated what it means to be a poet, an identity as a poet?

BILL: That was part of it. He had a lot of admiration for the poet who was working with him. He realized that being sensitive doesn’t mean that you’re weak, that being creative doesn’t mean that you’re second class. It’s all part of the human experience. By the fourth performance he was incredible. This kid was good. Bronx-Net, a cable station, interviewed him, and they want to give him his own five minute poets corner for kids. And this was a kid who was no longer intimidated by the mike, no longer intimidated by people, by white people...

SARA: You mean that in the course of the whole poetry series, he had to interact with a much wider spectrum of people, and his social skills got better...

BILL: His expectations got higher, his fears were reduced. You can’t imagine what it’s like for a kid not to be exposed to the mainstream world and then all of a sudden getting this exposure. It’s frightening. But for a fifteen year old who’s reading and writing skills were below grade level, it’s terrifying.

SARA: So what happened, did he get his own show?

BILL: No, he didn’t want it. He wanted to be with his friends, in the neighborhood. The poetry was fine, but that wasn’t the priority of his life. But he had a confidence about him, a swagger, not an egotistical swagger, but it was a swagger about learning something new. Doing something you’ve never done before. This year he participates a little bit, not as much as he used to. He fell in love. So, now he wants to do love poems.

SARA: How’s he doing in school?

BILL: He’s going to a better school, he’s a slightly above average student. This experience, I think, jump-started him. At the last slam that he did in June, his mother came. He read a poem he’d written about her. And she had heard about it, and she wrote a poem for him.

SARA: Did she read it?

BILL: Yeah.

SARA: That must have been powerful.

BILL: It was. He wrote the poem about his older brother being in jail, and how he missed him, but he also acknowledged that his mother was there, his mother loved him. I’m just paraphrasing, but that was a breakthrough in his poetry writing. He’d found the voice to tell his mother.

SARA: And what was the mother’s poem to him?

BILL: An appreciation. Telling him how proud she was of him. It doesn’t get much better than that. No matter what he does, he’ll never be the same. There’ll come a time when there’ll be a fork in the road, and that experience will allow him to stop and help him make a choice. And that’s all we can do. And right there, that’s the power of the arts in community settings.

Bill Aguado was born and raised in New York City. He has a Masters Degree from Fordham University and a B.A. from Hunter College. For the last 21 years he has been the Executive Director of Bronx Council of the Arts.

Sara Hill, the interviewer, works at PASE and is the editor of the PASEsetter.



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In-Sites: INTERFAITH NEIGHBORS

STAND IN THE MAIN ROOM OF INTERFAITH NEIGHBORS, and you're standing in the heart of the organization. The walls are awash with the art and writings of hundreds of young people. Each piece, a testimony to the creativity and experiences of Interfaith's children, is, at the same time, a window to the multiple programs and services of the overall agency.

A vivid mosaic covers one entire wall. On close inspection, you realize that this is the Memorial Wall of the *Children's Bereavement Project*. Participants in Interfaith's bereavement groups hand-painted each tile to memorialize a loved one. Your heart may skip a beat as you read the messages—"Mommy, I miss you," "I love you Uncle," "Papi, Te Amor." The vivid colors and children's handiwork display more wisdom and sadness than it seems any junior high school student should know. Some tiles tell entire stories. One child painted a bright, orange sunset with the dates "1990 - 1997" and "We still miss you." Small wooden ledges provide a resting place for notes and flowers that children leave. For some children, the Memorial Wall is the only place where their loved one is remembered, and which they can visit on a regular basis.

On the opposite wall, a brilliantly colored twenty-foot mural features life "Under the Sea." Every variety of fish swims in and around coral reefs, swaying seaweed, and sunken ships. Peering out of the oval windows of a cruising submarine are the twelve faces of the artists and researchers themselves—twelve sixth grade boys and girls. "Under the Sea" was their final project in the program Adventures in Learning where children

explore their own interests and become researchers in the process. If you follow your nose, past a trail of masks, book covers, and block prints, you find yourself in the Interfaith library. A colorful collage depicting the universe covers one entire wall. A NYC subway map provides a backdrop for the spread of continents around the world. In one section you can view a cityscape replete with high rises, brownstones, stores and flower shops. Children, the artists themselves, are travelling around the earth—on busses, a flying magic carpet, planes, and bicycles. All these attest to projects by which children use books to transport them to new places and experiences.

Interfaith Neighbors is a non-profit, non-religious community agency, founded in 1954 by members of community houses of worship. Interfaith's work focuses exclusively on meeting the educational and developmental needs of children and young adolescents (ages 5-16) living or going to school in East Harlem and Yorkville. Interfaith's mission is to enable children to flourish as individuals and to become responsible members of the community. To achieve these goals, Interfaith helps youngsters to stay in school, understand and confront complex social challenges, minimize their high-risk behavior, and maximize learning, social competence and healthy development. Rejuvenating the vulnerable child—who has experienced trauma, loss or chronic failure—is Interfaith's special interest and distinctive competence. Interfaith's work is defined by a central commitment to address the personal and concrete problems often at the root of a child's learning and developmental difficulties. With a

comprehensive focus on children's needs, Interfaith Neighbors provides counseling, education and recreation services to nearly 800 young people each year.

Art is a central part of the Interfaith community. Through art, members of the community can display their accomplishments, express their feelings and beliefs, be creative, play, have fun, and, interpret and represent the very strains of life—all of life. Art serves many different ends at Interfaith. It speaks volumes about the values and beliefs of the organization. People of all ages who visit Interfaith's sites recognize immediately that each young person is encouraged to express and develop his or her individual voice. Art also attests to the norms of Interfaith. For example, the Memorial Wall communicates that it's okay to talk about losses, death and other painful experiences. The fact that the Memorial Wall stands in the most public of places—in a place where children have fun—communicates staff's capacity to listen to any kind of problem, and to support children no matter what.

Interfaith views art, whether it is a group or individual effort, as simultaneously a window to the soul, a means of self-expression, and a problem-solving mechanism. As they create art, children's talents, vulnerabilities, learning styles and interests manifest themselves. Sometimes, at Interfaith, art and children seem to blend together as one in a vital collage of life and growth, every curve and color representing community and individuality, choice and freedom, with a beauty and life all its own.

PASE Learning Lab

The PASE Learning Lab, located at Community School District 15 in Red Hook, Brooklyn, is the first of a series of model afterschool sites designed to showcase the best of afterschool practices. This first Learning Lab, which serves middle-school youth, acts as a laboratory where visiting youth workers, school-based educators, organizational leaders and funders can observe successful afterschool activities of various kinds and discuss programs with staff. PASE recruits practitioners and technical assistance providers to demonstrate a wide variety of practice, and also model how schools and community-based organizations can collaborate. These practitioners are brought in on a rotating basis, allowing us to showcase a multitude of practices and programs annually.

The PASE Learning Lab held its official opening ceremony on January 28th, 2000 before a crowd of public officials, Board of Education administrators and educators, funders, and community based organizations. Among those present included Carolyn Temlock, Deputy Commissioner of the New York City Department of Youth and Community Development, Andrew Fischer and Carol van Atten of the Charles Hayden Foundation, Fenella Rouse of the Emily Davie and Joseph S. Kornfeld Foundation, Wilfredo LaBoy, Assistant Superintendent of Community School District 15 of the New York Board of Education, and Larry Woodbridge, Co-Director of the Community School. Carolyn Temlock presented a letter from Mayor Giuliani, in which he wrote, "I am delighted to extend warm greetings to everyone attending the opening ceremony of the PASE Learning Lab...Please accept my best wishes for an enjoyable afternoon and for continued success in all of your future endeavors."

The Learning Lab had opened its doors for students on January 10, 2000 with 82 middle school students enrolled. The program at the Learning Lab exposes the students, ages 10 – 14, to the arts, experiential and service learning, and literacy based activities. Activities are currently presented by three outside organizations, The NYU Creative Arts Team, The Children's Creative Writing Campaign, and The Valley. These groups applied through an



RFP process and were selected to demonstrate their unique work with children and youth.

- 1) **The Valley** is a multi-service agency that works with families, particularly young people, in addressing serious issues that impact their everyday lives. The goal is to give youth the skills and opportunities needed to become active participants in their lives, schools, and communities.
- 2) **The NYU Creative Arts Team (CAT)** is a professional educational theatre company at New York University's Gallatin School. The youth theatre provides a forum for students to create theatre from their own ideas and experiences, while developing skills, including critical thinking, cooperation, decision-making, and conflict resolution
- 3) **The Children's Creative Writing Campaign (CCWC)** provides writing based literacy enrichment programs for children K through 12 grades, which draw upon visual and performing art—including illustration, photography, graphic design, playwriting, cartooning and animation.

The PASE Learning Lab will regularly host Informational sessions which will be an opportunity for youth practitioners, funders and others to observe programs in action, and see youth involved in activities that are challenging, stimulating and creative. In addition, visitors will have the opportunity to talk with other practitioners and administrators about program design, learn about staff development and training and receive guidance on how to engage in collaborative practices. The first Informational Session will take place the early part of March. For more information please call Lissette Resto Brooks at (917) 783-9836 or visit our web site at www.pasesetter.com.



Top: Ribbon-cutting at the opening of the PASE Learning Lab at the Community School on January 28th.

Middle: Andrew Fisher of The Charles Hayden Foundation at PASE Learning Lab ceremony on January 28th, 2000

Bottom: PASE Learning Lab opening Day Ceremony at the Community School.

X-raying a Community's Imagination: Community-word Writing and the Afterschool Workshop

continued from page 2

together in their own community meets many goals at once.

THE PROCESS

Community-Word's first murals were created by youth at New Settlement Apartment's (NSA) afterschool program. We worked with four groups of afterschool participants for a total of 28 weeks. We began by writing a Community-Poem by first defining the terms "collaboration" and "community," breaking into groups of three and making up drama skits that acted out positive situations of working and living together. Then we created a Community-Word Crazy Board, a kind of web chart that features one or two words at the center. The group generates words that are added to the central words, written in different ways and directions to form a non-linear creative space.

We put the words "HOPE" and "FEAR" in the center of the Crazy Board. We took turns adding words to the chart over the course of four sessions. In doing so, we generated our own vocabulary, verbal images of what we wanted for our community. From words on the Community-Word Crazy Board we created line beginnings; phrases that we used as writing prompts. NSA youth were excited to make up their own sentence starters, and were quick to point out that in school their teachers gave them the prompts but it was more fun to create their own. Their enthusiasm led us to a discussion of ownership and these discussions

were key to our project. Like any group of artists setting their sights on a creative goal, we needed to agree on how we would treat one another and what ways we would work together so that we each could feel we were a part of the process. That discussion led us to the creation of four line beginnings; "My imagination..."; "With my eyes closed..."; "I'm scared..."; and "Illusions..."

Once we completed our group-created line beginnings, we began to build verbal images. We tried many language experiments to stretch our creativity. One participant took the line beginning "My imagination," and used it at the end of the line instead of the beginning. She wrote, "With my immortal imagination, my eyes see." The group was challenged to write sixteen lines, four for each line beginning. From these lines, they chose four favorites, and worked together to help revise each other's writing.

A Community-Word Mural Team was chosen. The team chose four lines that they transformed into murals. With the remaining lines we created a twelve page Community-Poem called A World of Confusion Spinning (see excerpt p. 5). Working alongside a visual artist, the Mural Team collaborated on how each line would be integrated into a verbal-vision. They brainstormed and drew sketches until they had created an imaginative illustration of the text, and these images included words from the original lines. It took the team four weeks to conceive and

create two 4" by 6" indoor and two 4" by 6" outdoor murals. The murals were hung in the community on outdoor fences, two inside NSA's community center.

The young people of NSA requested the Community-Poem project again and the murals became a tradition. We re-invented the project and created only indoor murals (due to their ability to be easily transported) that are currently travelling the country. This traveling show is giving New York City youth the opportunity to engage America in a colorful dialogue through portraits of their community's hopes and fears. Last year, we chose to integrate photography into the process. We mixed our words with photographs we took of the community to create a Community-Word Photo Mural.

As a poet and founder of The Community-Word Project, I receive immense pleasure working with afterschool programs because I am able to be as creative as possible and develop inspiring on-going relationships with both the staff and participants. Arts and afterschool programs are an incredible match, one that has enabled me to grow both as an artist and a person who deeply believes in the power of community. It has also given me the opportunity to play an active role in the growth of young people who have the energy and ability to make their environment a beautiful, amazing place.

After receiving her M.F.A. in creative writing and poetry, Ms. Kotler founded and currently directs The Community-Word Project, a New York based arts-in-education literacy program that uses collaborative creative writing methods to develop and expand young people's literacy and foster their self-esteem.

PASE in a Nutshell.

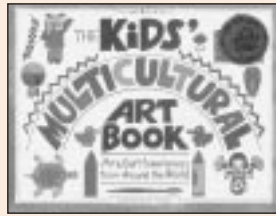
A New York City association of youth practitioners, funders and technical assistance providers to youth programs. PASE's goals are to strengthen the identity and visibility of the afterschool profession, articulate concepts to guide programming, provide staff development, program exchange and networking opportunities, and advocate for funds and resources.



Off the Shelves BOOKS ABOUT DOING ART

Alexandra M. Terzian (1993)

The kids' multicultural art book. Art & craft experiences from around the world. Charlotte, Vermont: Williamson Publishing



One of the best ways to understand and appreciate another culture is by creating its arts and crafts. The arts and crafts shown in this book are from many different cultures and traditions around the world, including Hispanic, African, Asian as well as the United States and Canada. Kids can start the journey of exploring other cultures and have fun by creating its arts and crafts simply by using paper, glue, markers, and odds and ends found around most homes.



Lisa Bany-Winters (1997)

On stage. Theater games and activities for kids. Chicago, Illinois: Chicago Review Press, Incorporated

Acting and theater games help people of all ages focus and concentrate their energies and improve their writing and

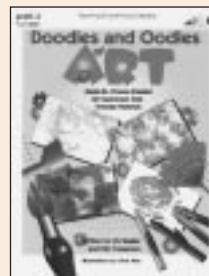
communication skills. *On stage* is a book designed to help children learn by doing. They can expand their imaginations, free the way they think, talk, and move. They will learn how to express themselves with their voice and their bodies in addition to learning to interact socially and gain confidence through public expression.

Mary Ann F. Kohl & Kim Solga (1996)

Discovering great artists. Hands-on art for children in the styles of the great masters. Bellingham, WA: Bright Ring Publishing, Inc.



Discovering Great Artists encourages children to expand their knowledge and offers them hands-on activities to explore the styles and techniques of the world's greatest artists. Brief biographies and portraits of each artist included in this book adds depth and interest to art projects, and will inspire children to read books, visit museums, and go to libraries to collect more information. The book encourages kids to learn by doing, and helps them explore new art ideas and techniques. The activities in this book work well for all ages and abilities, from the most basic skill level to the most challenging.



Iris Siegler & Kim Torgerson (1994)

Doodles and oodles of art. Hands-on, process-oriented art experiences from everyday materials. Carthage, IL: Teaching & Learning Company

The process of creating is often more important for children, not the product. The authors of this book are advocates of this idea, and in this book, present more than 100 unique hands-on, process-oriented art projects which use easy-to-find and inexpensive materials. Even though directions are given for each project, the authors believe that there is no right or wrong way to do art activities. Art should be fun and exciting. So, set free your imagination and creativity, and have fun with your kids!

A Jobless Summer for the City's Youth? YOU CAN HELP

For years, thousands of New York's teenagers gained their first job experiences through the federal Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP). Last year, 80,000 youth applied for 40,000 summer jobs. Now that number of jobs may be drastically reduced. A new federal law, the Workforce Investment Act, has eliminated the Summer Youth Employment Program. The new law says that summer jobs are just one of 10 youth employment activities that should be offered by cities and states, and does not require that as many jobs be provided as in the past, and includes a number of regulations that limit the dollars available to fund summer jobs

this year.

The loss of thousands of summer jobs will be a tremendous blow to the city's teens and their families—as well as the broader community. Youth ages 13-21 from low income families benefited from the summer jobs program, getting workplace experience and the opportunity to earn wages that help pay for clothes, school supplies and other expenses. Many of the jobs were in local community organizations, including summer day camps. Without a sufficient number of counselors from the summer jobs programs, camps will likely have to be scaled back or closed down. Working parents will have fewer options for safe

and structured activities for their young children during the summer. And older youth will have nothing to do.

New York City must make summer jobs a priority. City officials must plan to maximize the use of federal dollars to support summer jobs. The city and state also must quickly make funds available to fill the remaining gap and ensure that at least as many jobs are available for teens as last summer. Time is critical—the youth start applying for jobs in March.

To find out more about what you can do to preserve summer jobs for youth, contact Sandino Sanchez or Michelle Yanche at CAMPAIGN FOR SUMMER JOBS, (212) 965-1829 ext. 203.

FUNDING ALERT!

Bulletin Board

The Partnership for After School Education has space available for sublease in their new offices at 120 Broadway, 30th floor between Pine and Cedar Streets, accessible to all public transportation. 3 large window offices, totaling approximately 600 square feet of usable space, which may be rented as single offices or in combination. Available now. Use of shared services can be arranged including but not limited to possible use of receptionist, kitchen, conference room, fax and copier. For more information, please call Marcia Smith, 212 571-2664.

Harlem Overheard, New York City's fastest growing

youth-produced publication, is currently accepting applications for writers, web designers, artists and volunteers. Published by Rheedlen Centers for Children and Families, Harlem Overhead is a quarterly newsmagazine with a city-wide circulation of 25,000. For more information please call 212-663-0555.

Citywide Poster Contest on the theme of teen relationship abuse. Any student attending public or private school in New York City in grades 9-12 during the year 1999-2000 is eligible. Entries must be received by 5 p.m., May 5th, 2000. Grand prize winner will receive a laptop computer. Maximum size is 11x17. For more information

and to receive an entry form, call 212 219-5566 and ask for Rachel or Carla.

Prime Time with PJ. is a children's literacy program on WNYE 91.5 FM, Mondays from 3:30 to 4:00 p.m. or Fridays from 4:00 to 4:30.

This new, exciting show includes materials to run children's book clubs. For more information, call 1-800-pj-04087 or go to website at www.primetimewithpj.org.

Tenth Annual Latino College Expo will be held on Saturday, April 8, 2000 at Pace University, Manhattan campus. More than 100 colleges and universities will speak to Latino high school students and provide immediate and informative

answers to questions regarding academic programs, admissions, scholarships and athletics. For more information call Antonio Aponte at (718) 768-0778 or visit the web site www.latinocollegeexpo.org.

Workshops are being offered through ISACC and the Child Care Council of Westchester from February through May. Topics include "Conducting Staff Evaluations" and "Understanding and Working with Children with Special Needs." For more information call (914) 761-3456 ext. 510.

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