

Approaching Local Business to Support Arts Programming

While educators may be eager to have students benefit from arts programming in their school – be it a single-day event or a longer-term residency – it is often a struggle to raise the matching funds necessary to make such programs possible.

A number of schools have succeeded in broadening their funding pool by tapping local businesses to supplement the grants available from a PTO, local cultural council, the Department of Education or the Massachusetts Cultural Council.

Making the Pitch

The first step for PTO Program Coordinator Pamela Preston in raising funds to bring a theater artist into Lee Central School was to familiarize herself with the artist's program and quality of work.

Preston asked theater artist Jack Golden for his marketing portfolio, which included details of his presentation, a list of his national awards and support letters from businesses who have contributed to his work. Information in hand, she composed a cover letter to local businesses outlining the benefits of funding the program.

"The cover letter walked a fine line. I didn't pressure them to feel like they had to give a certain amount. I just wrote on behalf of the students and school staff," she said. "I let them know parents can find money for sports events without thinking twice. But people tend to forget the arts. This program was tied into the actual classroom

curriculum and would bring something back into the community."

Her funding request package included photocopies of the artist's portfolio, data on other program sponsors and a supporting letter from her PTO. Preston said the PTO letter gave her a credibility edge over the many requests businesses receive.

Many schools broaden their funding pool by tapping businesses to supplement other grant sources.

A Thematic Approach

Preston approached businesses related to the theme of Golden's program to increase their willingness to get involved. Because Golden's program, "Garbage is My Bag," encouraged recycling and saving the environment, she contacted garbage, paper and waste management companies. She also targeted general businesses, like insurance companies, banks, grocery stores and an outlet mall.

Preston approached businesses early. This reduced the pressure, and allowed the firms to plan ahead. Making businesses aware that they may receive a tax write-off for their contributions can also increase a program's appeal.

Rowena Sullivan, Prime Outlets sales and promotion manager, was impressed by Preston's approach.

"Pamela sent me information about the artist and followed up with phone calls in case I had any questions regarding the program," said Sullivan. "She did a great selling job. She came with the argument that the program will make the children more aware of taking care of the earth."

Networking is Key

Networking is key to finding available funds within a community. Preston knew of Sullivan through a connection with a Girl Scout troop. Parents and other family members are often aware of grants available from the companies where they work. Regular reading of professional school journals and teacher/principal bulletins – from organizations such as Massachusetts Elementary School Principals Asso-

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Important Dates

- April 3, 2000**
Event & Residency Grant Deadline for Fall 2000 Programs
- June 8, 2000**
Massachusetts Alliance for Arts Education Outstanding Arts Education Ceremony
- Oct. 16, 2000**
Local Cultural Council and PASS Programs Grant Deadline



We are entering the home stretch of developing a five-year strategic plan for the MCC. Over the last 15 months, more than 2,000 artists, educators, representatives from cultural organizations, local cultural council members and others helped us shape our new plan which calls for an increasingly collaborative, productive and visible MCC. Priorities highlighted in the plan include:

- ▶ Ensuring that the arts have a role in education reform policies.
- ▶ Encouraging partnerships among schools, cultural organizations and artists.
- ▶ Building markets for the work of Massachusetts artists.
- ▶ Promoting the importance of cultural activities in building strong communities.

The MCC board will review a final draft of the plan in late March. **Thank you** to everyone who participated in this huge planning effort.

Event & Residency Evaluation Planned

Our strategic plan identifies several program areas for evaluation, including the Event & Residency Program. We would like to increase the number schools taking advantage of this type of programming. This spring, we will work with an outside evaluator to gather feedback from our constituents and examine the strengths and weaknesses of the current Event & Residency Program as well as other possible approaches.

Recognizing Excellence in Arts Education


The Massachusetts Alliance for Arts Education is seeking nominations for its 2000 arts education awards which will be presented at the Massachusetts

State House in June. Categories include: distinguished arts educator, collaborative arts program, parent advocate and community arts/cultural institution program. Awards will also be given for a school, school administration and school committee which have each shown a strong commitment to high-quality arts education programs. Finally, a legislative leadership award will honor a state legislator who has demonstrated outstanding support for arts education, education reform and statewide arts funding.

The deadline for submissions is April 1. For more information and a nomination form, see the MAAE's web site at www.massartsed.org.

Arts Education Month

The U.S. Senate has designated March 2000 as Arts Education Month. The measure was introduced by Sen. Thad Cochran (R-MS) and passed by unanimous consent. It encourages schools and communities to engage in activities that spotlight the positive impact of the arts, build community involvement and support for sequential arts learning for all students, and honor individual student, class and school accomplishments in the arts. Why not take this opportunity to celebrate what is happening in your own community in the arts?


As part of local efforts in support of Arts Education Month, the Massachusetts Alliance for Arts Education has introduced a campaign designed to promote public awareness of the importance of arts education. To find out more about their "StrongArts = StrongSchools" campaign, visit www.massartsed.org. 

Ed Reform Update

Discipline-Specific Content Institutes Available for Teachers

As part of its ongoing efforts to promote effective teaching practices, the Massachusetts Department of Education will again sponsor discipline-specific content institutes for teachers. Designed to support implementation of the curriculum frameworks, each institute will include summer sessions as well as follow-up workshops during the 2000-2001 school year. Opportunities in each of the seven core subjects will be available. A complete listing is posted at www.doe.mass.edu.

The DOE will also fund new summer institutes for administrators on the supervision and evaluation of beginning teachers. As more and more beginning teachers enter Massachusetts classrooms, it is essential that school administrators establish support systems to provide new teachers with the knowledge and skills to meet high educational expectations. Institutes will focus on the development of comprehensive plans for beginning teacher support programs that include ongoing assessment and mentoring. Participants will also have opportunities to strengthen their evaluation skills.

In February, the Board of Education conditionally endorsed a new draft of the revised mathematics curriculum framework. The DOE will work with a new committee of math educators to further refine the document and create vignettes that outline model teaching practices, check for mathematical accuracy and ensure that Massachusetts standards are compatible with the new national mathematics standards, which are due out in April. 

Artist Residency Animates Human Anatomy Curriculum in Dorchester

Sixth grade students at the **Harbor School** in Dorchester recently made their research of the human body come to life through animation techniques learned from media artist **Pell Osborne**. The five-month residency highlighted the importance of good health and culminated in a public service announcement created by the students.

Drawing from their science curriculum, students focused on the exchange of oxygen and carbon dioxide, types of bones and joints, the valves in the heart and the digestive system.

"To understand how a body part moves you draw the movement. Once a student does 20 drawings of the small intestine processing food, they really understand the process," said Osborne.

The animation process developed through several stages. The artist and students created a storyboard to outline the sequence of images. Osborne then guided the students through exercises to help them think like animators – analyzing motion and timing, and using style, color and movement to affect their audience. Students drew a series of rough sketches on 4 x 6 cards. Using lightboards, they colored, cleaned up and refined the drawings to make them camera-ready. Producing a 90-second PSA required the students to draw a total of 875 cards, with 10 drawings making up one second of animation time.

Students were encouraged to become "active critics" of their work. In addition to monthly critiques, students also examined the animation of Warner Brothers or Disney once a week. They gauged what constituted a high-quality work versus the simpler animation on television.


"The students become aware that a lot more goes into animation than what you

realize from watching a show like *The Simpsons*. It becomes apparent what type of animation required a lot of work, and what was done to save time and money. That deeper looking makes the students a lot more critical," said Osborne.

The different stages of the project accommodated a wide range of artistic abilities. Students who were more skilled at drawing created key poses in the animation sequence. Others contributed by creating titles or transition drawings to make the animation flow smoothly.

Using a digital camera, Osborne put the drawings into a computer, edited the material and transferred the images onto video to create the public service announcement. The final product was shown at the school's annual winter exhibition of student work, as well as in the science classes and community meetings.

"The kids were really proud. It's a very cool way for kids to understand that at the heart of every complex process is a simple starting point," said Osborne.

"After this program, I hope they'll look at other complexities – whether it's the vastness of the federal government or the intricacies of society – and see that there are basic processes from which these systems are built." 

Congratulations to the following artists and organizations which are listed in the Massachusetts Cultural Council's *Event & Residency Program Roster*.

Media artist **Robbie Leppzer** is currently producing field segments for CNN's *World Beat*, which is devoted to world music and broadcast in 210 countries.

Josée Vachon of **Chanterelle** was recently awarded the *National Culture Through the Arts Award* from the New York State Association of Foreign Language Teachers for her knowledge and appreciation of foreign languages through the arts.

Author **Carole G. Vogel's** latest book *Legends of Landforms: Native American Lore and the Geology of the Land* (Millbrook Press, 1999) was named a Notable Social Studies Trade Book for Young People for 2000 by the National Council for Social Studies and the Children's Book Council.

Visual artist **Ival Stratford-Kovner** is exhibiting her third prize-winning watercolor at the Duxbury Art Complex Museum through April.

Author **Irene Smalls** received the Children's Media Award for Most Outstanding Children's Book in 1999, entitled *Kevin and His Dad*, published by Little Brown and Co.

A Work of Heart, the latest CD release by Harry Skoler, the clarinetist with **Adventures With Jazz**, made the Gavin's Jazz Chart Top 50, which is based on national airplay. It is available from Brownstone Records.

An excerpt from **Magdalena Gomez's** play *Islands of Civility* has been selected for inclusion in *Still More Monologues for Women by Women*, to be published this year by Heinemann Books, edited by Tori-Haring Smith.

ciation – also increases the awareness of local and statewide grants.

It is also vital to work within the parent-teacher community to increase a school's chance to tap funding sources.

"It is important to work closely with the teams of teachers and parents to make sure we are not going to the same source and competing internally for the same grant," said Laurie Farkas, assistant principal at Great Falls Middle School.


Don't Forget the Thank You's

After Preston received the funds, she sent personalized thank-you cards to the donors. She also contacted local media to publicize the program and to publicly thank the businesses that supported it.

The process involved in getting businesses to support arts programming can be long and cumbersome, Preston acknowledged.

"(However), the bottom line is, not only are children receiving an educational and entertaining program, but they are going to carry what they've learned into the future."

Additional Resources

- ▶ For more on the MCC's education programs and services, visit www.massculturalcouncil.org.
- ▶ The Mass. DOE provides arts education grants and deadline information (www.doe.mass.edu/doedocs/tgfas1.html).
- ▶ Arts Action! lists studies illustrating the importance of arts education (<http://members.tripod.com/~wvmea/>). 



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Opportunities & Resources

National Gallery of Arts 2000 Teacher Institute

American Art of the 1950s and 1960s will be the topic of the National Gallery of Arts 2000 Teacher Institute, repeated in three sessions: July 10-15, July 24-29 and Aug. 7-12. Held in Washington D. C., the Teacher Institute is open to administrators and educators of all subjects, K-12. It features lectures, tours, teaching methodology, and connections to literature, language arts, history, music and film. Enrollment is \$200. Applications, available at www.nga.gov, must be postmarked by April 3. Contact: Brooke Williams at b-williams@nga.gov.

BSO Offers Education Resource Center for Teachers

The newest venture for the Boston Symphony Orchestra is its Education Resource Center for teachers, which offers a library and media/technology center, curriculum resource "kits" to enhance classroom activities, professional development seminars and a planning facility for administrators and teachers. The BSO invites all teachers to visit the Center, located at the Boston Arts Academy at 174 Ipswich St. in Boston, Tuesday-Friday from 3-7 p.m. and Saturdays from 9 a.m.-12 p.m. to get ideas for using curriculum frameworks, to research curriculum ideas and to network with teachers from other communities.

Art Education Reform Sourcebook Released

The National Art Education Association released a sourcebook, *Readings in Disci-*

pline-based Art Education: A Literature of Educational Reform, which offers a selection of writings about art education reform, including discussions of artistic growth, curriculum planning, professional development and museum education. To order, contact 800-299-8321, or www.naea-reston.org.

Fundraising and Granting Opportunities from Target

Target stores provide support for educational programs through a charge card school fundraising program and direct grants and scholarships to schools, students and teachers. Two of their grant areas are arts education and teacher professional development. For more information on their *Take Charge of Education* program, pick up a grants guidelines brochure at your local Target store, or visit <http://target.com/schools>.

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