

# GUILD NOTES

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GUILD**  
OF COMMUNITY  
SCHOOLS OF THE ARTS

FALL 2008

## GUILD NEWS

### Biennial Field Survey Scheduled for November

This November, the Guild will launch its next Survey of Member Schools; the report will be released in February 2009. The field survey report provides quantitative data on faculty pay rates, instructional fees, administrative staffing and salaries, financial aid, enrollment demographics, program offerings, faculty pay rates, organizational finances, and more. It is an essential tool for community arts education providers engaged in program- and organizational planning, and useful to those negotiating employment contracts, setting tuition fees and seeking benchmarking data

Members who participate in the survey receive a complimentary copy of the published report. The regular member price is \$75. Watch for your invitation to participate in November!

### Coming Soon! *A Guide to Assessing Your Community Arts School*

The Guild will release its latest publication, *A Guide to Assessing Your Community Arts School: Basic Questions for Internal Review and Reflection*, at the 2008 Conference for Community Arts Education. Jointly developed with the Accrediting Commission for Community and Precollegiate Arts Schools (ACCPAS), the *Guide* is designed to assist community arts school leaders with the important task of organizational assessment and to make the ACCPAS accreditation process more user-friendly. Containing questions derived from ACCPAS accreditation standards, the *Guide* addresses a wide range of issues from mission to finances, governance, staffing, facilities, evaluation, planning, and more. Organizations that may not want to take the assessment process all the way to accreditation will find the *Guide* useful for their own internal review. Those interested in pursuing accreditation will find it a helpful preparatory resource. The *Guide* will be available to members free-of-charge through the members-only Online Resource Center at [www.nationalguild.org](http://www.nationalguild.org).

### Spanish Language Version of *Creativity Matters* Now Available

The National Guild, in partnership with the National Center for Creative Aging and New Jersey Performing Arts Center, recently released *La Creatividad Importa: Guía de Recursos para las Artes y el Envejecimiento*, the Spanish language version of *Creativity Matters: The Arts and Aging Toolkit*. The printed edition is available to members for \$30; the non-member price is \$35. To purchase, go to [www.nationalguild.org](http://www.nationalguild.org) or call the Guild office at (212) 268-3337 ext. 16. An interactive web version in both English and Spanish is available at [www.artsandaging.org](http://www.artsandaging.org).

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Christina Cultural Arts Center (Wilmington, DE) will perform at the 2008 Conference for Community Arts Education

## GUILD NEWS (cont'd)

### Guild Contributes to AFTA's latest Monograph on Arts & Aging

The health and wellness benefits of participatory arts programs for older adults are the subject of Americans for the Arts' (AFTA) latest *Monograph*, "Creativity Matters: Arts & Aging in America" (August 2008). The Guild contributed best practices information and examples of exemplary arts and aging programs in the community arts education field. We are pleased to announce that several Guild members are featured in the publication: [Concord Community Music School](#) (Concord, NH), [Levine School of Music](#) (Washington, DC), [University of Connecticut Community School of the Arts](#) (Storrs, CT), and [Winchester Community Music School](#) (Winchester, MA).

AFTA's *Monograph* series is a collection of issue papers published several times each year. The publication is a practical guide for arts agencies, public- and private-sector advocates, policymakers, and arts researchers on arts programming, funding, and policy topics. To order, visit the Americans for the Arts online store.

## GUILDNOTES

### NATIONAL GUILD OF COMMUNITY SCHOOLS OF THE ARTS

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The National Guild aims to make high quality arts education available to every interested child and adult in the United States.

The Guild's national network encompasses community arts education organizations, professionals, volunteers and philanthropic supporters. In concert with this network, the Guild researches and promotes best practices, provides opportunities for professional development and dialogue, and advocates for broad access.

For information regarding Guild membership and programs visit [www.nationalguild.org](http://www.nationalguild.org) or email [guildinfo@nationalguild.org](mailto:guildinfo@nationalguild.org).

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The Guild encourages submissions of editorial content. Email submissions to [editor@nationalguild.org](mailto:editor@nationalguild.org).

To advertise in GUILDNOTES please contact Heather Stickeler, [heatherstickeler@nationalguild.org](mailto:heatherstickeler@nationalguild.org).

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### Guild Staff Changes



Samios

The Guild is pleased to welcome **Jennifer "Jay" House Samios** as our new program manager.

Before to coming to the Guild, Jay managed arts and business programs at Americans for the Arts, including the MetLife Foundation National Arts Forums Series, the Business Volunteers for the Arts program, and various aspects of the National Arts Marketing Project. She also served as the manager

of programs and outreach at The Field, an artist service organization where she coordinated more than 50 training sessions a year, facilitated management workshops and artists' residencies, and was part of the team that initiated the Artists' Congress. She has worked as membership manager at Advertising Women of New York and in marketing positions at the *Wall Street Journal* and *Cybergrrl.com*. In 2007, she completed the United Way of New York City and Baruch College's Nonprofit Leadership Development Program as a Junior Fellow; She recently accepted a position as Co-Chair of their alumni committee. Jay is active in New York City's Greek/Greek-American community, as an avid folk-dancer and curator for Queens Theatre in the Park's Greek Performing Arts Festival. She also has served as producer, company manager, stage manager, and costumer for several artists in NYC and volunteered as a workshop leader and strategic planning committee member for the New York Writers Coalition. Her own writing has been published in *Pitchfork*, *Long Island Quarterly*, and *LCD*, the magazine of WFMU radio. Jay graduated from Hampshire College with a B.A. in American cultural studies.

Ms. Samios replaces former program associate, **Kelly McHugh**, who has accepted a position as children's program coordinator at Hui No'eau, a visual arts center in Makawao, Hawaii. As program associate, Kelly was instrumental in coordinating our 2007 Conference for Community Arts Education and managing the MetLife Partners in Arts Education Grant Program. During her tenure, she also greatly increased participation and engagement among our 11 regional chapters, helping to spearhead the Guild's new chapter project grant program and produce a series of successful regional training events. We are very grateful that Kelly has agreed to stay on to coordinate the 2008 Conference for Community Arts Education and wish her the best of luck in her future pursuits!

### Mid-Atlantic Chapter Members Represent Guild at AARP Expo

The National Guild was delighted to participate for a second year as a co-exhibitor in the NAMM Pavilion at AARP's 2008 National Event and Expo in Washington, DC. Two Guild members from the Mid-Atlantic Chapter—[Levine School of Music](#) (DC) and [Settlement Music School](#) (Philadelphia, PA)—represented the Guild to promote the benefits of professionally led, participatory music programs for older adults and encourage delegates to participate in music education opportunities at Guild member organizations across the country. Hats off to Levine and Settlement for a job well done! Our participation would not have been possible without them.

### 2008–2009 MetLife Partners in Arts Education Grantees Announced:

On behalf of MetLife Foundation, the National Guild has awarded 15 grants totaling \$215,000 to the following members to support exemplary arts education partnerships with public schools during the 2008-2009 school year:

**Arts Council for Long Beach** (CA) and the Luther Burbank Elementary School's *Eye on Design* program engages 120 third grade students in a sequential visual arts program during which they will plan, produce, and present artwork, the same process an artist follows when designing and creating a site-specific public artwork.

**Brooklyn-Queens Conservatory of Music** (Brooklyn, NY) will provide long-term, sequential music education to 1,760 students in grades K–7 at six Queens/ Brooklyn public schools.

**Center of Creative Arts** (St. Louis, MO) engages underserved St. Louis Public Schools students in multidisciplinary, sequential arts curricula that enhance existing arts and academic curricula and address specific school goals identified by faculty and administrators. This grant will help sustain and expand *Urban Arts School Time* and after-school programming, serving a total of 834 K–6 students in three public schools.

**City Lore** (New York, NY) and Queens P.S. 11's *Telling Stories* program trains 175 third grade students in the art of storytelling through oral language, traditional dances of China and India, and dance-theater inspired by the students' own investigations of the Chinese and Indian communities in Queens and Manhattan.

**Community Music Center of Boston** (MA) partners with 19 K–12 Boston public schools to provide high-quality music instruction and arts participation opportunities and capacity-building activities schools need to ensure that programming can be successfully administered and sustained. The 2008-2009 program will serve a total of 4,046 students, 19 principals, nine teaching artists, 345 classroom teachers, and 7,608 parents/volunteers.

**Fleisher Art Memorial** (Philadelphia, PA) provides high-quality, in-depth artist residencies and visual arts instruction to youth in two public schools in South Philadelphia for 278 students in grades one through four.

**Hubbard Street Dance Chicago** (IL) will teach a sequential, Laban-based creative dance curriculum to a total of 1,440 K–6 students in two public schools. Through annual research and assessment of the program, HSDC will create a process model for partnership and create inquiry-based dance education programs with school partners.

**Ifetayo Cultural Arts** (Brooklyn, NY) provides sequential in-school arts training to 384 kindergarten through third grade students at PS 249 and PS 361, while providing professional development for teachers and teaching artists and engaging parents in hands-on programs that enable them to contribute to their children's arts experiences.

**Lucy Moses School/ Kaufman Cultural Center** (New York, NY) provides in-depth instruction in drama and music for 479 K–6 students at Manhattan School for Children (MSC), as well as staff development for MSC teachers.

**Luna Kids Dance** (Berkeley, CA) offers sustained, sequential dance instruction to 615 K–8 students in five Oakland schools, aiming to educate and shift perception of what dance education can be in the public school system and overcome current obstacles to full-scale implementation.

**MacPhail Center for Music** (Minneapolis, MN) offers an innovative, sequential music enrichment program to 375 K–12 students in two partner schools. Assessments have shown improvement in retention, satisfaction of the program, increased math scores and overall grades, and higher interest in the school and in learning for participating students.

**New Orleans Ballet Association** (LA) offers a sequential program to 95 students in grades three through five at Mary Bethune Elementary in New Orleans Parish. The program will implement NOBA's nationally recognized arts integration curriculum in dance, which includes a 30-week residency; professional development opportunities for classroom teachers and arts educators, publishing and distribution of the comprehensive curriculum to schools throughout the region through partnerships, and professional development opportunities.

**Phoenix Conservatory of Music** (Phoenix, AZ) provides sequential, process-based arts learning to 130 students in grades one through six through its *Rhythms of the Heart: A Celebration of Latin Music!* program. The program will culminate with the creation of a new work that includes original and traditional music that celebrates the heritage, culture, and soul of the Latin people.

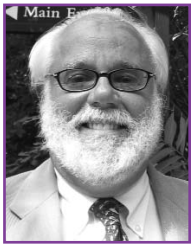
**Street-Level Youth Media** (Chicago, IL) will partner with Higgins Community Academy, the Mark Sheridan Math and Science Academy and the Chicago Children's Museum to provide 112 students from the 7th and 8th grades with media arts integration workshops in video and audio production. Students will create original group media art work for the Chicago Children's Museum's permanent exhibit "My Community Matters."

**Young Audiences New York** (NY) will engage 150 students at the International Arts and Business School in an in-depth arts learning curriculum focusing on digital media, music and literary arts as they relate to business and career education.

The **GUILD** encourages members to provide us with news of their activities.

**GUILD**NOTES submissions should be sent to [editor@nationalguild.org](mailto:editor@nationalguild.org).

## PEOPLE AND SCHOOLS



Fox

### The Passing of Alan Fox

**Alan Fox**, former Guild trustee and executive director of [Brooklyn-Queens Conservatory of Music](#) (Flushing, NY), passed away in on July 23, 2008. He was the founder of the Music School of Providence (which later merged with the Rhode Island Philharmonic) and also served as Executive Director of the [Music and Arts Center for Humanity](#) in Bridgeport, CT. He will be remembered as a most passionate and dedicated educator and music enthusiast.

The Brooklyn-Queens Conservatory of Music has appointed Aaron Felder as interim executive director for the institution. Mr. Felder has served as Managing Director for the Conservatory since September of last year.



Ochoa

### Ochoa Appointed Executive Director of New Chicago Arts High School

**Jose Ochoa**, Guild trustee and former superintendent of cultural arts at [Metro Parks and Recreation](#) (Nashville, TN), has been appointed executive director of the new Chicago High School for the Arts.

Scheduled to open Fall 2009, [Chicago High School for the Arts](#) developed out of a discussion with leading arts organizations about lack of diversity in the arts community in Chicago. The school is designed to serve the most talented students as well as represent the city's socio-economic and racial diversity. More than 90 arts organizations in Chicago including the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Lyric Opera, Joffrey Ballet, Steppenwolf Theatre and the Art Institute of Chicago have been involved in developing the school's curriculum.



Schwartz

### Schwartz Appointed Board Chairman of Cleveland Music School Settlement

The [Cleveland Music School Settlement](#) appointed **Dennis F. Schwartz** as Board Chairman in August. Schwartz, who is First Vice President-Investments of The Wealth Care Group of Raymond Jones and Associates, Inc., joined the board in 2000 and served as 2nd Vice Chair and Development Chair during the 2007-2008 term. Schwartz attended [Third Street Music School Settlement](#) and has received classical musical training in piano, saxophone, clarinet and music theory.

### CMS Springfield Opens Preschool of the Arts

This September, the [Community Music School of Springfield](#) (Springfield, MA) opened its doors to 39 children enrolled in the school's new Prelude Preschool of the Arts, a full-day arts-based preschool with part-time and extended day options. The preschool will be the first of its kind in Massachusetts and one of only three in the Northeast. The opening of the school is part of a \$3.1 million renovation project that also includes twelve new teaching studios and a performance hall.



Prelude Preschool for the Arts

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FESTIVAL  
Brass Chamber Ensemble Competitions & Composition Contest

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ANNOUNCE . . .

### Brass Chamber Music Composition/Ensemble Contests for Young Composers, Brass Quintets/Chamber Ensembles (18 years and younger)

Ensemble competitions will be held at the **International Brass Chamber Music Festival** on October 10 -13, 2009, East Carolina University School of Music, Greenville, NC. Winning composers, and composers attending this event will have live performances/premieres of their music.

BrassChamberMusic.com offers programs and short residencies to assist community organizations in developing brass chamber music instructional programs and activities. Please contact us directly for more information – [www.BrassChamberMusic.com](http://www.BrassChamberMusic.com).

*(Contest categories also include competitions for college undergraduates and graduate students and professionals – all information can be found at [BrassChamberMusic.com](http://BrassChamberMusic.com))*

## PEOPLE AND SCHOOLS (cont'd)

### Three MacPhail Leaders Promoted

This July, [MacPhail Center for Music](#) (Minneapolis, MN) promoted three of its top staff members: **David O'Fallon** has been promoted to Chief Executive Officer; **Paul Babcock** is now the President and Chief Operating Officer; and **Brian Braden** has been named the Vice President and Chief Financial Officer. All three played instrumental roles in the development of MacPhail's new flagship facility in downtown Minneapolis and two suburban sites.

### Herberger Joins City-Wide Arts Learning Partnership

The [Herberger College Community School of the Arts](#) (Tempe, AZ), formerly Herberger College at Large & for Kids, has entered into a major partnership with the Arizona Department of Education, the City of Phoenix, and the Arizona State Library System to provide arts programming in Phoenix area elementary, middle and high school after-school programs. Participating schools will be current sites that receive funding through 21st Century Community Learning Center federal grants.

### NOBA Performs at the Kennedy Center

This summer, [New Orleans Ballet Association](#) (NOBA) students in the NORD/NOBA Center for Dance Company performed on the Millennium Stage at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. The Center for Dance, a partnership between the New Orleans Recreation Department and NOBA, offers year-round, tuition-free after-school and Saturday dance classes for youth in Orleans Parish. This was the dance company's second national tour.

### Neighborhood Music School Receives Major State Grant

[Neighborhood Music School](#) (New Haven, CT) has received a major grant from the State of Connecticut to support general operations. With an award of \$90,692, the school came in 7th out of 131 organizations and is the only school or music organization in the top seven. "Connecticut Commission on Culture & Tourism (CCT) grant review panels, comprising professionals in the field, have consistently rated NMS exceptional in its quality of programming, community involvement and management practices," writes Karen J. Senich, Executive Director, CCT. "We are proud to support the work of this fine organization." NMS has been a recipient of state funds earmarked for general operating support for the past six years.

### Suburban Community Music Center Celebrates Its New Facility with a New Name

In honor of its founder, the [Suburban Community Music Center](#) (Berkeley Heights, NJ) has been renamed, the Judith G. Wharton Music Center. Judith Wharton founded the school in 1985, offering classes at the Madison Area YMCA. With the help of numerous professional and volunteer advisors and a dedicated board of trustees, the Music Center developed a full program for students from preschool age to senior citizens and expanded to various locations. In August 2008, the Center moved into its own facility at 60 Locust Avenue in Berkeley Heights, NJ. The new building offers 11,000+ square-feet, affording new and continuing students modern studios, classrooms, a multi-purpose performance space, music-technology lab, parent lounge, study room, and offices.

### Hochstein Scholarship Quartet on National Radio Show

The Compass Quartet, [Hochstein School of Music & Dance's](#) (Rochester, NY) high school string ensemble for young men, was recently showcased on National Public Radio's "From the Top" program. The program features America's best pre-college classical soloists and small chamber groups. The quartet was coached by Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra violinist Patricia Sunwoo, who submitted the quartet's application to get her "boy band" their deserved recognition.



The Compass Quartet

## ENGAGING PARENTS AS LEARNERS AND ADVOCATES

Interview with Gigi Antoni, President/CEO, Big Thought, Dallas, TX

By Heather Stickeler

Involving parents as learners and advocates in community arts education can enhance student participation, cultivate greater demand for the arts, and increase community support for arts learning. In September, we spoke with **Gigi Antoni**, President/CEO of **Big Thought** (Dallas, TX), about her organization's efforts to empower and unite children and their communities through education, arts and cultural partnerships that engage parents as key assets. In addition to providing arts learning experiences, Big Thought is a managing partner of Thriving Minds (formerly the Dallas Arts Learning Initiative), a groundbreaking systemic endeavor which provides children and families with an extensive web of creative learning opportunities. Through Big Thought, parents take lessons and classes, participate actively in program planning and implementation, and lead advocacy efforts. In this interview, Ms. Antoni discusses how parent engagement is central to community arts education, explains her own successes and challenges, and offers advice for how other community arts education providers can motivate parents to get involved on multiple levels in a sustainable way.

**Heather Stickeler:** How does parent engagement align with Big Thought's mission and vision?

**GA:** Our mission is to make imagination a part of everyday learning and we do that in a number of ways. We manage national models that provide direct services to kids (e.g. Young Audiences, Wolf Trap Education) and we provide our own arts education programs to the community. But at our heart, we are about coordinating complex public-private partnerships to provide high quality arts education services for kids across the city. We work with institutions like the school district, parks and recreation department, library system, community and cultural centers, and sixty to seventy other arts and cultural agencies in the city to coordinate and leverage cultural resources in the community.

We've been doing this work for twenty years and only in the last five years has it become clear to us that parent/family engagement is an essential piece of meeting our goals. Parents are not only children's first and lifelong teachers, but also their gatekeepers to the cultural community. They also are our most powerful advocates for making the case for the value of arts education. They're important on a programmatic/instructional level, planning and implementation level, and advocacy level because they, as a group, are committed to making sure their children have access to high quality arts instruction.

**HS:** What opportunities do parents and families have to get involved on the programmatic/instructional, planning and implementation, and advocacy levels?

**GA:** On the programmatic level, we are finding that we, as the city's cultural community, need to change the way we deliver programs in the community. Parents are telling us that they want to participate in child's arts education, not simply drop them off for a lesson. They want ways to interact and to be a part of the experience, as well as support it. So Big Thought

finds ways to actively involve them by offering multi-age and multi-generational classes, teaching them how to access resources in the community, and organizing field trips for whole neighborhoods to experience the Dallas' great cultural institutions.

At the planning and implementation level, we involve parents in a process of determining what kinds of programs are relevant to their children and neighborhoods. To begin, we ask them to define quality instruction. Often we find that what we think is relevant and high quality isn't always the same as what parents think their children need. So then we ask parents and families to help us map the community's existing assets and determine what is needed to make arts education programs more relevant, attractive and useful for kids and families. And from this data, they literally create and implement a cultural learning plan for their neighborhood.

**HS:** Could you explain what it means to "map assets" in a community and "create a cultural learning plan"?

**GA:** When we map assets, we work in concert with parents and families to determine what arts programs and services are currently available, attended and accessible to children at different developmental levels within a neighborhood (or geographic area) and identify any gaps in creative learning services. Through this process, we are trying to line up interest and demand with what is relevant to the kids in a particular neighborhood. Programs and services have to be customized at the neighborhood level because not all things are relevant in the same way to all children and families. Once we understand what is being offered and what the community is looking for, we can develop cultural learning plans to leverage existing arts resources to fill in the gaps and/or enhance existing programs. It's about taking a systematic approach to delivering arts education in a community.

**HS:** How do you involve parents/families as advocates?

**GA:** A subset of parents who are involved on a programmatic/instructional level get involved in planning and implementation. And a subset of those parents are mobilized to talk to the city council, school board, etc., to ask for policy changes and greater financial resources to support creative learning in a neighborhood and the city as a whole. We think of parental involvement as a continuum from participation to education to local involvement/planning to advocacy.

**HS:** How do you mentor parents along that continuum and keep them engaged?

**GA:** When you first provide parents a personal experience with the arts, you also have to contextualize that experience for them and make the benefits explicit. Their experience allows them to see how an arts education rounds out their child's education and feeds their soul. These parents start to see themselves as "creative parents" and bond around that identity. We next try to position them to mobilize and mentor other parents to get their families involved. At the planning level, they work alongside multiple stakeholders (e.g. researchers, teachers, artists) and

their sense of creative community continues to grow. Eventually we say to these parents, “If you believe this is important for your family and your neighborhood, would you help us take this case to the next level?” If parents are interested in getting involved in advocacy, we give them the tools to communicate with decision-makers successfully.

### HS: How do you measure the impact of engaging parents and families?

GA: Engaging parents is a slow process. Still, one of our measures is the number of parents and families engaged in this work. We also assess if we have neighborhood cultural learning plans that are filling gaps and are sustainable. And we measure what kinds of arts education experiences parents are asking for over time. Are they higher and higher quality? Are our neighborhood creative learning plans becoming stronger and more complete? Early on, we found parents couldn’t always tell us what kinds of quality arts learning experiences they wanted for their children because they weren’t aware of all the choices. So part of our job is to raise awareness of the variety of creative learning experiences that are available and/or possible in their neighborhoods. We want parents to be able to look at an arts education program and ask, “Is this program giving my child creative choice, the opportunity to solve problems, a cooperative learning environment, and a chance to imagine, invent and create new work?”

### HS: What challenges does Big Thought face when engaging parents?

GA: In the beginning, Big Thought engaged parents mainly through classes and advocacy work. We’ve only been working on developing neighborhood leadership teams and developing Big Thought as a hub for a collaborative, system-wide approach to arts education for about 18 months. For the first 12 months, our impulse was to fill the programmatic gaps ourselves after the neighborhood leadership teams had identified them. But we quickly learned that if we didn’t empower the community, we would never be able to increase our scale. So in the last six months, we developed a process that enables our neighborhood leadership teams to plan their own summer programming and implement their own cultural learning plans. We support these plans by providing information and financial resources, connecting the teams to providers who can help them accomplish their goals, facilitating initial planning meetings, and leading teams through an evaluation process. We are learning a lot, but we certainly don’t have it all figured out yet. Engaging parents is a process, not an event.

### HS: What advice would you give to other community arts education providers looking to engage parents/families or develop similar programs in a sustainable way?

GA: Empower parents/families to work with you to design experiences that are going to be relevant and meaningful to them. When you allow parents to make choices and be a part of the architecture of what’s going to happen in their neighborhood or with their child’s learning, they truly engage and take ownership of the program. Ask a group of parents to take a look at your program plan or to experience a class, and then evaluate what they liked or didn’t like about it. Use this information to help build the program and make it stronger. Getting parents involved in program design helps you spend your time and money more wisely. If what you are doing is meaningful to parents and gives them ownership, they’re more apt to become your advocates in the community.

It’s important to designate a portion of someone’s job to thinking about and nurturing parent/family engagement because it is about building relationships. You need consistency—

the same face, the same messenger, the same representative. In the beginning, we didn’t have a full time staff person working with parents so we partnered with other community development and arts agencies to help us conduct our planning sessions and family programs.

It’s also important to *go to them*. Hold your meetings and conversations in places that community members hang out in anyway, where they’re comfortable and are able to walk to easily. In some neighborhoods, you might think the logical place to hold a meeting would be the school. Except in many neighborhoods, the school is not considered an inviting place, unfortunately. In some neighborhoods, the place where parents feel most open and comfortable is a church, restaurant or a coffee shop. Every neighborhood is different. You have to understand a community and its issues and then develop specific strategies to engage people.

You might start by putting together a task force in a neighborhood of seven or eight parents. Approach these parents by saying, “We want to work with you to build a relationship with our institution or our school or our community around creative learning. We want you to help us to figure out how you do that.” Feed everyone a meal and arrange for a teaching artist to work with children during the meeting. You have to be sensitive to people’s time and family obligations.

Engaging parents and families is slow work but when you start to build momentum, it can contribute to huge change in a community. Ultimately, I think creating ownership at the neighborhood level is the only viable sustainability strategy for arts education. ■

“When you allow parents to make choices and be a part of the architecture of what’s going to happen in their neighborhood or with their child’s learning, they truly engage and take ownership of the program.”

As a follow-up to our interview with Gigi Antoni, President/CEO of Big Thought (Dallas, TX) in *Critical Perspectives* this issue, we polled Guild members to learn how other community arts education providers are involving parents and families as learners and advocates and to identify some of their challenges and strategies for success.

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**GUILDNotes:** In what ways do you involve parents/families as learners, supporters and/or advocates?

**Dorothy:** At Thurnauer, we believe that family involvement is inherent in the very idea of a community music school. Parents regularly sit in on lessons and are encouraged to attend classes. They also volunteer, in particular with helping to plan and staff the annual benefit concert. Most importantly, the majority of members of our Music School Committee (de facto board) are parents. All are active participants in helping the School run more smoothly, not only providing insights into their own needs but actively working on budget planning and website development. Most recently, a 25th Anniversary Parent Appeal group was formed to establish a Family Music School Endowment to be funded entirely by parents and extended family members who will be solicited by one another. In just two months, they have made great strides, already having combined resources to make the Endowment a reality.

**Mary:** We are attempting to integrate parents and siblings into everything we do. Within the Music School we have initiated "Coffee Conversations" three times of year, which are free presentations by faculty and staff held every evening during our workshop weeks. Topics have included: how to motivate your child to practice, the ABC's of instrument care and maintenance, conquering performance anxiety, and others. Also during these weeks, we have provided open mic forums for parents and held intergenerational workshops in which parents and siblings can participate in a variety of musical experiences. This fall, we will offer an Intergenerational Marimba Orchestra, designed to bring together ages 8 through adult and promote family music making.

**Ruth A.:** Our "Friends of Hoff-Barthelson" program is made up mostly of parents who volunteer their time to help with fundraising activities and special events. Every year in March, we host Family Recitals in which parents, siblings, grandparents, and other extended family members perform. And increasingly, parents of school-aged children are opting to take private lessons.

**Carol:** We've put together a parent committee to assist with special projects at times but we have not organized our parents beyond these single events/causes. One of my advisory council members is very much in favor of formalizing a parent group that can assist with our fundraising and advocacy efforts. Another council member feels volunteer group initiatives don't always support the school's administrative efforts and can be an inefficient use of staff time. We've put the idea on the back burner for now.

**Joyce:** We have a work study program that allows the parents to volunteer hours to receive tuition assistance for their children. This program has created a core group of dedicated parents. We just started a parent organization last year and are still in the process of formalizing it. Our hope is that this organization becomes a support system for our communication, marketing, and advocacy efforts.

**Marti:** We have a parent board with their own treasury. Parents pay dues along with tuition. Parents also make up a small percentage of the Music Academy Foundation Board whose role is to support the mission and the vision of the Music Academy of Rockford College.

**Pamela:** We ask parents to help with set design and costume construction and to volunteer as rehearsal monitors for our Yuma Youth Theater productions.

**Barbara:** We have a lot of trouble engaging parents/families as supporters and advocates. Their time, energy and money are put into private schools, band boosters, sports, etc. We need to develop new strategies for keeping our constituency informed about the importance of supporting the music school. Financially, many people don't want to give more money to a school to which they are paying tuition. It's a bit like supporting public television: you know (or think you know) that it will always be there and someone else will take care of it.

**Nancy:** Our “Moving Parents and Children Together” program is for families in the child welfare system. Parents and children take dance classes together. We also offer free family dance classes to the entire community four to five times a year, and parent/child dance classes at local schools.

**GN: How do you recruit and mobilize parents/families in these capacities?**

**Marti:** We require parents to attend classes. Our financial aid and scholarships are linked to their participation. We also dedicate 25% of our quarterly newsletter to parent education.

**Julia:** We include information in our monthly newsletter that teaches parents more about the art form their child is studying. We also open the viewing windows to our studios for the first full week of each month so parents can observe their child’s progress.

**Suzanne:** We survey parents annually to gauge their interest in, and appreciation for, the arts and our programs. Because our programs are free, we expect parents to volunteer and be engaged.

**Jim:** Parents sign contracts that stipulate job descriptions (ie, props, costumes, box office, etc.) for the term or they can “buy out” of their duties.

**Linda:** We ask parents to give discount coupons to their friends and family members. Families who successfully recruit other students also receive a discount.

**Nancy:** Our “Moving Parents and Children Together” classes are taught at places where families are already taking advantage of services, such as libraries and community centers. This program and our family dance classes are free to the public and promoted through local newspapers, social service agencies and local radio stations.

**Ruth A.:** Our greatest recruiters are parents who find new members for our parent groups by reaching out to others in the community.

**GN: What value do you see in engaging parents/families in community arts education?**

**Alexander:** Involving parents fosters a greater understanding of, and commitment to, arts education and helps build a community that cares about each other.

**Linda:** Parents can be wonderful ambassadors for our programs, publicly recognizing the value and benefits of arts education based on their own and their children’s experiences.

**Dorothy:** When parents see the impact of serious music study on their children, not only through the acquisition of skills but in terms of their social and academic development, they become advocates for arts education.

**Ruth A.:** Parents are a necessary part of the education process at Hoff-Barthelson. They encourage their children, practice with them, and participate with them in school events. A school is a community and we are a community school.

**Ruth H:** Students, parents (or guardians) and instructors all play essential roles in student participation in the arts. If one leg of the stool is missing or weak, the arts learning experience is not solid.

**Julia:** It never ceases to amaze me how many of our parents never had arts experiences in their lives growing up. They learn to love, appreciate, and support art through the love their child has for it.

**Mary:** Involving parents and families in arts education promotes the growth of a true community, encourages feedback and ownership of the programs we offer, and reinforces our mission of “arts for all.” ■



*Ballet Nouveau Colorado  
(Broomfield, CO);  
Guild member since 1999*

# TOOLKIT CREATING AN ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

By Stephanie Golden

Community arts education (CAE) organizations looking for creative development strategies should not overlook a major resource they already possess: their alumni. Alumni associations have long provided educational institutions (universities, private schools, even summer camps) with valuable support, ranging from donations to mentoring of students to advocating publicly and privately for the institution and its mission. Many institutions strategize to develop long-term relationships not simply with students, but with entire families over generations. Development staff works to deepen these connections and pass them on within the institution.

Guild members can realize tremendous benefits from cultivating alumni. While some have had alumni programs for years, others are just beginning to develop them. In the process, each institution customizes the standard alumni association model to suit its own character and needs.

## INITIAL QUESTIONS

CAE providers confront certain challenges. First is defining who is an alumnus. "Is it someone who took one class, or who stayed for a long time?" asks **Michael Ibrahim**, Director of Development at **All Newton Music School** in West Newton, MA. "It's not like a university graduating class. You don't want to cut people off."

Another challenge, notes **Robert Capanna**, Executive Director of **Settlement Music School** in Philadelphia (SMS), is that CAE organizations serve primarily school-age children, and "people don't put their elementary school in their bio." They need to be encouraged to identify as former students. And, since they recollect the school in very personal terms—a piano teacher they saw once a week—it's important to connect this individual experience with a broader picture, so they see the school as a large institution that needs their help.

In addition, many people's association with the organization is not abruptly terminated by graduation. CAE providers may still be serving people in their 80s who started taking lessons when they were nine. Since the school remains part of the fabric of life, it tends to be invisible. "The challenge," says Capanna, "is to highlight that experience so they can identify it as valuable."

**Claudia Haydon**, Director of Development and Marketing at **Community Music Center of Boston** (CMCB), raises the question of how to adapt an alumni organization to her school's mission of serving underserved populations: "I'm more likely to write a grant to pay for alumni activities than ask them for a penny." Though some alumni do donate, in general Haydon sees alumni more as advocates than as a source of funds.

## CONCEPTUALIZING STRUCTURE, ALLOCATING RESOURCES

Determining the structure of the alumni association depends on specific goals, on institutional culture, and on resources available. Some CAE organizations plan formal alumni associations on the university model; others invent new

models. Over its 115-year history, **Third Street Music School Settlement** in New York City has sometimes had a strong alumni association, with elected officers and events throughout the year, says Executive Director **Lee Koonce**. The formal association no longer exists (although many alumni remain connected to the school and its faculty), but Third Street is working to reactivate it.

As part of the buildup to centennials in 2011 and 2010, respectively, All Newton and CMCB are also creating formal associations, although the final structures are still undetermined. All Newton intends to develop a planned alumni giving program separate from the regular annual giving fund. CMCB plans to let the structure develop organically. "We need to see who we recruit, what genres they're in, and what ages are represented," Haydon explains, before deciding whether to organize the association by decade or by instrument, for example. Ideally alumni volunteers would act as captains of these groups.

Instead of a formal organization, SMS developed an "alumni effort" as part of celebrating its centennial in 2008. Since a significant percentage of both board members and regular donors were either former students, parents of current students, or children of students, "forming a separate organization seemed redundant," says Capanna. Instead SMS focused on encouraging people to identify themselves as former students and contribute their stories. There is also a "booster group" of people under 40 called Young Friends of Settlement, whose function is fundraising and getting people engaged with school activities.

**Ifetayo Cultural Arts**, an organization in Brooklyn, NY, that supports youth and families of African descent, is based on an African model in which alumni are expected to remain engaged with the organization and the community after completing the program. "Although it's not perceived as formal, it's extremely formal, because they carry this expectation, and their voice is extremely valuable," says President and CEO **Kwayera Archer-Cunningham**.

An earlier attempt at a formal association failed because it was not an organic extension of Ifetayo's community. So Ifetayo took on the challenge to "dare to create strategy around your own organizational culture," as Archer-Cunningham puts it. The alumni maintain a strong community among themselves, which feeds their connectedness to the organization and the larger community. This level of commitment is built through Ifetayo's arts programming, which moves children through rites of passage from adolescence into adulthood as they learn specific dances, songs, and rhythms that reinforce core values about the meaning of community.

At SMS, alumni relations is a major focus of the communications department. CMCB Program Associate Harlo Holmes allocates 10 hours a week to finding alumni and creating a database, but Haydon foresees this evolving into a two-thirds or full-time position. Ibrahim is the only development staff member at All Newton, but he believes that, given some staff oversight and board involvement,

alumni relations can lend itself to volunteer work. Haydon, by contrast, feels that volunteers can be challenging: "We get a lot of requests from would-be volunteers, but we don't have the resources to manage them at present."

## REACHING OUT TO ALUMNI

Finding and contacting "lost" alumni means going through old registration records, contacting everyone on email or print newsletter lists, and talking to staff, faculty, and board members. Long-time staff and faculty are invaluable, since they generally remain in touch with many students over the years. Board members too may maintain extensive alumni connections.

Contacting older alumni may require a postcard to the last known address or a phone call. Younger alumni tend to be connected online and may be found through social networking sites like Facebook and MySpace. Holmes created a badge for CMCB alumni to put on their profile that signals their school connection and enables them to find other alumni. A special alumni section of CMCB's website connects alumni with faculty and fellow ensemble members and tells them how to volunteer and support the school.

Major initiatives offer excellent opportunities to find and cultivate alumni. Building up for a capital campaign, All Newton planned a dinner recognizing top-tier donors at a country club, followed by a performance at the school. To create some buzz around the school's history, local alumni (discovered through faculty who were still in contact with them) were also invited. "We invited faculty, so the alumni would know someone else there. And teachers introduced their students to each other. They told stories about the teacher, and had some laughs," Ibrahim recalls.

In connection with its centennial, SMS created a "Settlement 100" campaign, asking alumni to identify themselves as former SMS students and tell their stories. Many people wrote in about themselves or people they knew at the school. From these SMS created a list of 100 interesting, unexpected people, mostly alumni but also former faculty and board members. Publicizing the list, which included well-known names like Kevin Bacon and Chubby Checker, brought considerable press coverage. The result: more donors identified themselves as alumni and gifts increased dramatically. Everyone who responded to the campaign went into the database and mailing list.

Third Street borrowed the Settlement 100 idea and through its newsletter invited alumni to reconnect with the school and share their stories about it. This fall, Third Street will team up with StoryCorps, the national oral history project, to interview alumni and record their stories—a project offering great opportunities for publicity and engaging still more alumni.

## MAINTAINING THE CONNECTION

Print and email newsletters, websites, and social networking offer ways to stay in touch. Ifetayo has a password-protected social community on its website for alumni. CMCB developed website and email surveys asking alumni what level of involvement they preferred, ranging from "keep me updated" to attending alumni concerts and organizing parties. Sifting through the responses allows the school to identify a core group of active alumni. Current students are future alumni, and Facebook, MySpace, and blogs are tools to cultivate relationships with them that continue into the future.

Alumni serve on boards and advisory committees; they are volunteers, donors, supporters, faculty, and performers. Haydon of CMCB plans a phone-a-thon with alumni calling other alumni, saying, "Let's support the school's capital campaign during this anniversary." She foresees bringing alumni to lunch or to the State House to talk to donors and funders. Ifetayo alumni self-select into set roles: teachers, assistant teachers, board members, and "core members," long-term members "tasked with keeping our mission as a living energy throughout the organization," explains Archer-Cunningham. SMS hosts a distinguished alumni recital series, open to the public, with an associated master class, and a lecture series that includes alumni lecturers.

## SUSTAINING THE PROGRAM

Finally, organizations must provide what Haydon calls "spiritual sustenance" to keep alumni engaged after the excitement of the big initiative fades. What's essential, says Capanna, is to give everyone who has benefited from the school the chance to express this. "It's logical to focus on famous people, but it can put off regular people. You want a way for most students to say, 'I went there too.'" Adds Koonce, "Their lives were changed by their experiences at a community arts school, and many are extremely willing to participate in the life of the school—if we just ask them." ■

## About the Author

**Stephanie Golden** writes grants, reports, and other copy for nonprofits, especially in the field of arts and education. She can be reached at [stephanie@stephaniegolden.net](mailto:stephanie@stephaniegolden.net).

According to Jan Masaoka of Compasspoint, “the Board of Directors of a nonprofit organization is its legal, governing body. In contrast, an Advisory Council does not have any legal, formal responsibilities. Rather, an advisory council is convened by the organization to give advice and support.” For community arts education providers, advisory councils exist typically to serve any of three core purposes: 1) fundraising; 2) program-related advice; and/or 3) advocacy.

Advisory councils can be a valuable and dynamic part of a community arts education organization, or an underused commodity. Whether you already have an advisory council or are considering establishing one, contemplate these five questions: 1) do we need one; 2) do we want one; 3) what do we do with one; 4) what does one do with us; and 5) how can we make it effective?

### **Do we need an advisory council?**

Indulge in introspection and truly assess the status of your organization. Are you reveling in past accomplishments or are you on the cusp of innovative breakthroughs? Is your organization suffering from stagnation and in desperate need of new ideas, or are you expanding rapidly and in need of direction and guidance? Maybe your organization seeks to broaden its community base through a network of ambassadors, champions, and fundraisers. Or perhaps your organization wants to complement its board of directors and seeks input from a trusted source to better monitor its operations and progress. Reasons for forming an advisory council can be many and varied or singularly specific, but whatever your reasons consider this companion question:

### **Do we want an Advisory Council?**

A carefully selected advisory council, with a true understanding of its purpose and function, can benefit an organization by offering fresh perspectives and insights and enhancing the expertise, knowledge and skills of your governing board and staff. Advisory council members can introduce new concepts, and investigate issues of importance and relevance. And with sincere give-and-take, they can also contribute to your strategic planning process. Organizations should consider whether they have the capacity to support an advisory council. If not, maybe it's not a good idea right now. I would also think that organizations in transition or crisis might not be good candidates.

Before moving forward, consider what it will take to support the work of an advisory council. To be effective, the council will need administrative support to coordinate its activities and communications. Will the cost of supporting the advisory council be repaid by the contributions of expertise, credibility and connections it will make to your organization?

### **Why would anyone want to join our advisory council?**

Advisory councils provide altruistic citizens who believe in arts education an opportunity to serve and make a contribution, usually without having to meet the challenges and time and financial commitments typically required of the board of directors. Most advisory councils meet only a few times throughout the year, and some simply via conference call. Advisory councils may be the perfect way for altruistic but time-challenged individuals to get involved. Alternately, some advisory council members may see their participation as a stepping stone to board participation. An advisory council member may take advantage of her tenure to demonstrate responsibility and dedication to your organization and its mission. Lastly, consider the “what’s in it for me” factor as a motivator. Although altruism is ideal, sometimes terrific advisory council candidates can be enticed to join by dangling the carrots of networking, professional development, and the ever-popular resume enhancement. A little ego-feeding can go a long way in recruiting and retaining an effective advisory council.

The best place to locate potential advisory council members is the community your organization serves. Parents and school alumni have a vested interest in seeing the school thrive in order to provide the next generation (or two!) with the same high quality experience that they and their children have enjoyed. Leaders of allied organizations may want to support your organization because doing so will further their work in a parallel field. Finally, faculty members often want to offer support outside of the studio or classroom. Prior to talking with advisory council prospects, develop a “job description” that outlines expectations (e.g., the number of meetings, if any, one is expected to attend) and other duties (e.g., fundraising, committee participation, advocacy, etc).

### **What’s the “glue” that keeps the advisory council intimately linked to our community arts education organization?**

In a word—communication. There’s no reason to limit your communication with advisory council members to meetings. Keep members in the loop by sending them staff updates, pertinent articles, organization and field-related news, and other relevant materials. Send agendas two weeks before the scheduled meeting so council members can ask questions ahead of time and come prepared to share ideas and make suggestions. And get to know your advisory council members as individuals to better understand (and utilize) their strengths and areas of expertise. Not all contributions need to be made en masse; perhaps a single council member possesses the exact skills and knowledge required for a particular task. Take advantage of their knowledge (they said you could when they agreed to serve)!

## How can we make the advisory council “work” (in more ways than one)?

Remember why you wanted the advisory council in the first place. If you wanted community champions then present council members with ways to act as ambassadors for and representatives of your organization. If you wanted to enhance your organization’s skills and knowledge base then provide opportunities for council members to demonstrate their skills and impart their knowledge. If you wanted fresh ideas and suggestions then listen to council members

without criticism, negativity, pooh-poohing, or nay-saying. If you wanted their advice—and you do because you established an advisory council—then take it. At least consider it. Modify it, if need be. But always respect it and appreciate it, as well as the people from whom it came.

Whether you are revitalizing an existing advisory council or starting a new one, use these five questions to stimulate discussions with your staff and board of directors. By recruiting and developing an effective advisory council, you ultimately develop a more successful organization. ■

## About the Author

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## NEWS FROM THE FIELD: RESEARCH AND CONVERSATION

### Arts Education Plays Vital Role in Cultivating Demand for the Arts

Public demand for high quality arts experiences is critical to health of the nonprofit cultural sector, a new RAND report argues, and can be stimulated by providing direct and comprehensive instruction in the arts to people of all ages.

Commissioned by The Wallace Foundation, *Cultivating Demand for the Arts: Arts Learning, Arts Engagement, and State Arts Policy*, examines what it means to cultivate demand for the arts, why it is important to do so and what state arts agencies and other policymakers in both the arts and education can do to make it happen. State arts policies that support increased supply of and access to arts works are not sufficient for cultivating demand, the report proposes. Demand is stimulated when people are given "the skills and knowledge they need to have encounters with works of art that are rich enough to keep them coming back for more."

This report is the third in a series by RAND on the evolving role of state arts agencies in building arts participation. It concludes with suggestions for how policy makers and other stakeholder can advocate for stronger infrastructures in schools and communities that support more intensive and comprehensive arts learning experiences for all Americans.

[www.wallacefoundation.org/KnowledgeCenter/KnowledgeTopics/CurrentAreasofFocus/ArtsParticipation/CultivatingDemandfortheArtsArtsLearningArtsEngagementandStateArtsPolicy.htm](http://www.wallacefoundation.org/KnowledgeCenter/KnowledgeTopics/CurrentAreasofFocus/ArtsParticipation/CultivatingDemandfortheArtsArtsLearningArtsEngagementandStateArtsPolicy.htm)

### Training the Next Generation of Community Cultural Development Leaders

The community cultural development (CCD) field is in a stage of research and development with rapid growth in writing and documentation, formal academic programs, and work bridging culture, community development and social change. A new report sponsored by Imagining America suggests that CCD programs in higher education depend on three key elements to meet the field's demands: a balance of community engagement, training in artistic craft and scholarship focusing on the field's history and animating ideas, reports Imagining America.

With support from the Nathan Cummings Foundation, *The Curriculum Project Report: Culture and Community Development in Higher Education*, examines current CCD training programs in higher education and shares ideas on what is needed to further advance the field and make CCD education sustainable. The report draws from 28 interviews with CCD educators, community artists and scholars in the United States and 231 online survey responses. It also contains a glossary of key terms and an extensive sample of current courses and programs at higher education institutions across the country.

The Curriculum Project was launched 2007 by veteran community arts educators and activists Jan Cohen-Cruz, Dudley Cocke and Arlene Goldbard.

[www.curriculumproject.net/report.html](http://www.curriculumproject.net/report.html)

## THE GUILD IS PLEASED TO WELCOME THESE NEW EDUCATION AFFILIATE MEMBERS

### EDUCATION AFFILIATE

- **Contemporary Arts Center**, New Orleans, LA. The Contemporary Arts Center offers classes in theater, music, visual arts, and dance to youth ages 6-14.
- **Cultural Alliance of York County: stARTSomething**, York, PA. stART Something is dedicated to bringing artist residencies to schools and community organizations in Adams, Franklin, and York counties.
- **Lifetime Arts**, Pelham, NY. Lifetime Arts serves organizations and individuals in the arts and aging fields by promoting the creation, expansion and sustainability of professionally conducted arts programs for older adults.
- **Music Access Group**, Dedham, MA. Music Access Group provides affordable and accessible music instruction to residents of all ages.
- **New Jersey Performing Arts Center**, Newark, NJ. NJPAC's Arts Education Department, the fourth largest in the nation, consists of several divisions which provide programs for children (ages 3-18), families and schools.
- **Portside Arts Center**, Philadelphia, PA. Portside Arts Center's creative programs provide the community with an appreciation for one's own inner creativity, sense of color, design and imagination.

## THE GUILD IS PLEASED TO WELCOME THESE NEW FULL MEMBERS

### FULL MEMBERS

- **Abington Art Center**, Jenkintown, PA. Abington Art Center provides opportunities for all ages to experience, appreciate and participate in the arts through its sculpture park and gallery exhibitions, studio art classes, and public programs.
- **Arlington Arts Center**, Arlington, VA. Arlington Arts Center, a contemporary visual arts center, offers exhibitions, educational programs, and subsidized studio spaces, serving as a bridge between Mid-Atlantic artists and the public.
- **The Arts Council of Erie**, Erie, PA. The Arts Council of Erie nurtures the arts and enriches the lives of everyone in Northwest Pennsylvania through leadership, financial support, education and advocacy.
- **Beck Center for the Arts**, Lakewood, OH. The Beck Center for the Arts is a non-profit, performing arts and arts education organization dedicated to enriching the quality of life for Northeastern Ohioans.
- **Bowery Arts and Science, LTD.**, New York, NY. Bowery seek to preserve and enhance the oral tradition of poetry through programs like The Alzheimer's Poetry Project and the Summer Institute of Social Justice and Applied Poetics, a collaboration with Urban Word NYC.
- **Children's Chorus of Maryland & School of Music**, Towson, MD. Offering childhood music education programs beginning at age four, the CCM program is comprised of 10 graded levels of musicianship classes and four choirs.
- **The Clay Studio**, Philadelphia, PA. Founded in 1974, The Clay Studio supports the ceramic arts through its artist residencies, gallery and studio space, school, educational and outreach programs, and permanent collection.
- **Dancewave, Inc.**, New York, NY. Dancewave, Inc. is a nonprofit arts organization that actively promotes the joyous experience of dance for people of all ages.
- **Emmanuel Arts Academy**, Franklin Springs, GA. Emmanuel Arts Academy offers quality arts instruction to the Northeast Georgia community.
- **Interstate Firehouse Cultural Center**, Portland, OR. IFCC is a multidisciplinary art center in North Portland offering classes in dance, theatre, visual arts, folk arts, clowning and circus arts, television production, and more.
- **The Jacksonville Center for the Arts**, Floyd, VA. The Jacksonville Center for the Arts offers a wide variety of arts & cultural activities, including contemporary & folk art exhibits and educational programs for kids and adults.
- **Katie Stauffer Memorial Arts & Cultural Center**, Quakertown, PA. The Katie Stauffer Arts Center provides opportunities for self-expression through the arts in Upper Bucks County and its surrounding communities.
- **Lubeznik Center for the Arts**, Michigan City, IN. The Lubeznik Center is a contemporary arts center that interweaves educational programming, collaborative community outreach, art exhibitions and performing arts to enrich the arts experience within the region.
- **Mansfield Fine Arts Center**, Mansfield, OH. Since 1945, the Mansfield Fine Arts Center has provided quality visual arts instruction to youth and adults.
- **Milan Village Arts School**, Milan, MN. The Milan Village Arts School engages people in the practice of traditional, contemporary and folk arts, fostering prosperity, community and culture in the region.
- **Park Place Child Life Center**, Norfolk, VA. Park Place Child Life Center offers arts classes to children who live in the Park Place area of Norfolk, Virginia.
- **People's Light & Theatre Company**, Malvern, PA. People's Light & Theatre Company is a non-profit, professional theatre that offers a year-round Theatre School for both young people and adults, as well as in-school residencies.
- **The Philadelphia Orchestra, Department of Education & Community Partnerships**, Philadelphia, PA. The Philadelphia Orchestra's Education and Community Partnerships Department has something for everyone, from three year olds to seniors, from novices to amateur musicians.
- **Philadelphia Theatre Company**, Philadelphia, PA. Philadelphia Theatre Company's Education Division provides drama instruction through its summer camp, community programs, school programs and career development initiative.
- **Pomerene Center for the Arts**, Coshocton OH. Founded in 1985, Pomerene Center for the Arts promotes community involvement in the arts by providing visual arts classes, exhibits and concerts for all ages.
- **Potomac Academy/George Mason University**, Fairfax, VA. Potomac Academy offers year-round classes for all ages in music, dance, and visual through the College of Visual and Performing Arts at George Mason University.
- **Pratt Fine Arts Center**, Seattle, WA. Pratt is an arts education and resource center dedicated to promoting creative development and artistic engagement to the local and global community.
- **St. Cecilia Music Center**, Grand Rapids, MI. The St. Cecilia Music Center School of Music is a community music school offering programs for students in kindergarten through high school as well as adults of all ages and level of experience.
- **Thomas H. Bowlus Fine Arts & Cultural Center**, Iola, KS. The Bowlus is the designated arts agency for Allen County, Kansas and offers year-round classes in art, drama, and music for the children and citizens of Allen County.
- **University City Arts League**, Philadelphia, PA. The University City Arts League offers classes in painting, drawing, photography, sculpture, quilting, pottery, music, dance, screen writing, and other disciplines for all ages.
- **Upper Valley Music Center**, Lebanon, NH. Founded in 1995, The Upper Valley Music Center provides orchestra, chamber ensemble, and chorus education and performance opportunities for the region.



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