



NEWS

Fall 2010

Wagner JHS 167M

After talking about collaborating for nearly one year, IDEAS successfully implemented a Sociodrama residency with four classes of special education students late in the spring. Teaching artists Ana Holly and Clark Jackson guided the students to explore themes of respect, hygiene, peer pressure and bullying through improvisation and scene analysis. This program was partially funded by the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council. Plans to return to the school this year have been stalled due to lack of funding. We have not given up on providing these students and their terrific teachers creative ways to explore behavior and relationships, so we continue to look for funding sources.

“I’ve learned the value of acting out different ways of handling situations as a means of understanding behavior and changing behavior habits.”
Teacher, Wagner Junior High School 167

PS 636K

After teaching artist Twinkle Burke completed both a Creative Drama and Sociodrama residency last year, the After School Corporation has asked IDEAS to return again for another year of drama activities at PS 636 in Brooklyn. The after-school program is facilitated by University Settlement and the students are inner-city youth at-risk for dropping out or worse.

Brooklyn Public Library

Our longstanding relationship with several branches of the Brooklyn Public Library continues. Last year teaching artists Romy Nordlinger and Twinkle Burke completed Creative Drama residencies at the Greenpoint, Cypress Hills, Leonard and Stone Avenue branches. We hope to add to that list this year.

Heartshare Beacon

Teaching Artists Michael R. Piazza working together with teaching artists Ana Holly and Kevin Ray successfully implemented an after-school Sociodrama residency at the Heartshare Beacon in Coney Island. The culminating showcase had not yet happened when our last newsletter came out. It was an outdoor performance combined with a celebration of all of the after-school activities the Beacon offers the community.

Periwinkle Theatre for Youth

We are happy to embark on a collaboration with Periwinkle Theatre for Youth (PTY).

Merging our theatrical forces, we are working together to provide year-long afterschool drama programming to five schools in Manhattan, Queens and the Bronx. We are honored that Periwinkle Theatre for Youth chose IDEAS to collaborate with and



welcome PTY teaching artists Aimee Reigel and Cherish Duke into the IDEAS fold as IDEAS teaching artist Tim Connell joins this after-school program. Thanks to Scott Laughead for spearheading this collaboration.



Photo by Mitch Falk

IDEAS has been named one of the top arts nonprofits in New York
Read the reviews online at
www.greatnonprofits.org

The Carl Roye Jr. Column



In memory of Carl Roye Jr., one of IDEAS' first student participants who passed on too young. Look here for inspiring stories of how IDEAS programs touch students' lives and how students touch our lives.

For several years IDEAS Sociodrama was brought to alternative school programs. The students were in these programs because a traditional school setting just wasn't right for them. Some reasons: backgrounds of substance abuse, domestic violence, teen pregnancy, legal detention, or being openly gay. We were in one such program for 3 months. The youth were between the ages of 16-19. We were able to make connections between what was asked of them on the writing portions of the GED test - reading and then writing in response to what was read, and the drama - improvising real-life scenarios and discussing what they saw, felt and heard. Some students were active in the discussions, several were not, like LaTonya. After focusing on the drama and discussion we allotted time to incorporate writing. Periodically, they were assigned to write letters to the characters from the improv or an essay on the theme or a reaction to the scene. The classroom teacher would collect them and then choose a few to read aloud. Not wanting to make the students self-conscious she would always ask if the students would identify their writing, but they rarely did. She read them aloud, not revealing the author. Much of the writing prompted more in-depth discussion that the class continued even after our staff left for the day. On one of our last days LaTonya raised her hand to identify the essay she wrote, and offered to read it, much to everyone's surprise. LaTonya was one of the more quiet students who never participated in the improvs and only participated in the discussions when directly called upon. According to the teacher, for her to get up and read aloud was a true breakthrough. She wasn't just quiet in drama, she was withdrawn and quiet most of the time, throughout the school year to that point. LaTonya proudly walked to the front of the room and in a quiet voice read what she wrote. The class was silent and attentive. The content was just as moving as her action that day. We were so happy that we had given her an outlet to find her voice. On the last day she quietly approached us as we packed up our supplies, thanked us and very maturely outstretched her hand for a goodbye handshake. I honestly don't know who was more touched. Clearly we had made an impact on this quiet teen with a troubled past, and she touched us with her ability to take a chance.

Lisa Dennett

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Welcome Deborah Roman to the Board of Directors. Deborah is the Senior Brand Manager for the Girl Scouts of the USA. She comes to us with a wealth of experience in marketing, event management, and organizational development.

We thank Julia Cohen who is stepping down from the IDEAS Board to move on to other worthy commitments. We appreciate all you have done for IDEAS in the time you served on the Board.

IDEAS is actively recruiting members for the Board of Directors.

Are you ready to give back to your community?

Do you have what it takes to move IDEAS forward?

Beliefs required: the arts have a valuable place in the development and education of disabled and disadvantaged youth.

Skills desired: public relations, fundraising, strategic planning.

PLEASE INQUIRE.

Info@IDEASDrama.org
718-387-5055

"I learned how to express myself easily, how to work together and learn from each other." Student

Educational Theatre Association & the NY State Theatre Association

Executive Director Lisa Dennett will be presenting a workshop to theater teachers and teaching artists at the annual professional conference *The Heart of it All* held this year in New York City. A long standing member of NYSTEA, Lisa will present a workshop presentation called *Differentiated Drama*, demonstrating variations in teaching drama for students who learn differently and at different paces.

Very special thanks to all who assist making our programs possible:

The NY State Council on the Arts (NYSCA), a state agency,
The NYC Department of Cultural Affairs,
Numerous individuals like yourself.

Additional thanks to our supporters who donate goods and services:



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