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Welcome to NALC

I am pleased to welcome you to the exciting organization we call NALC. Our 15-member Board of Trustees and Executive Director Meredith Eppel recently engaged in a strategic planning retreat that reaffirmed our mission of “transforming our nation’s schools by providing students with opportunities to learn in and through the arts.”

NALC began when a group of educators and trustees at Walnut Hill, an independent high school that offers students’ training in the arts alongside a college-preparatory academic curriculum, had a dream of transforming children’s lives more broadly through the arts by integrating the arts into schools’ curriculum. Walnut Hill Trustee Eric Oddleifson, a Boston businessman and former president of the Council on the Arts in the Basic Curriculum, co-founded NALC in 1999 with Stephanie Perrin, head of school. Trustees Wendy Wheeler and her husband had a lifetime friend in Sally Whitaker, a twenty-year veteran teacher at the Marshall Elementary School in Dorchester, Massachusetts. For years, there was talk of developing a partnership between the Marshall and Walnut Hill, and as a result of initiating NALC, this partnership is now thriving in its fourth year.

The educational model developed by NALC in support of its mission is called the Arts and Learning Collaborative (ALC). It is a partnership of three — an urban elementary school with limited arts resources, an arts rich high school, and an institution of higher learning that offers training to public school teachers in arts integrated instruction. Together, with NALC as program designer, administrator, fundraiser, and more, ALC offers arts instruction for Marshall School students given by Walnut Hill students and faculty, and arts-based teacher professional development through Lesley University. The strategy for incorporating the arts into the public schools is to engage a cohort of teachers who will then bring arts learning into their classrooms. The Marshall Arts and Learning Collaborative has been so successful that a second partnership between the Sumner Elementary School and Brimmer and May has been launched this year, with a third partnership between the Mather Elementary School and the Cambridge School of Weston planned for the fall of 2004.

I tip my hat to Eric Oddleifson, Stephanie Perrin, Steve Durning of Walnut Hill, Martha McKenna of Lesley University, Principal Teresa Harvey Jackson and Maureen O’Keefe of the Marshall School, and, of course, Meredith Eppel — our one and only Executive Director. They and our superb Board of Trustees will sustain NALC in the year ahead with the sense of mission, perseverance, and inspiration it requires.

The dreams, goals, and activities of NALC continue to expand. Please join us in our efforts by supporting NALC so that more school children are given opportunities to express their creativity, identify their talents, and envision futures with broader possibilities by making a tax-deductible contribution to NALC today. (Please note the enclosed contribution form and envelope.) Thank you in advance for your support.

Robert Wheeler, President



FEATURED TRUSTEE:

An Interview with Pat Mitchell

Pat Mitchell has been the director of the Fillmore Arts Center in Washington, D.C. for 16 years. The

Fillmore has been recognized for the excellence of its arts education program by the Rockefeller Brothers Fund Award in Arts Education, the U.S. Department of Education, and the National Endowment for the Arts as a Commended School for the Arts. She joined the NALC board in the spring of 2003.

Can you describe the experiences you bring to the NALC Board of Trustees? I've been in arts education for 27 years, which means not only have I been running the Fillmore, but I have been involved in major arts education initiatives over that period of time with the National Endowment for the Arts, the Kennedy Center, the International NETWORK of Performing and Visual Arts Schools, among others. I have been an active participant through participation in conferences, panels, as a grant reader, and advisor. I was part of the United States Department of Education's Blue Ribbon Schools program from 1988 to 2002, where I helped identify excellence in public and private schools around the country.

When the program began recognizing arts programs, I helped to write criteria for programs of excellence. I am committed to urban education — to using whatever talents and resources I have to bring to urban children opportunities that now primarily exist in suburban schools.

What about NALC interested you enough to join the Board of Trustees? NALC's attention to bringing the arts to urban school districts was my main attraction to the organization. I grew up in the Boston area and jumped at the opportunity to contribute to the Boston Public Schools through my engagement on the NALC board. Working with people who can get things done is very attractive as well, which is how I characterize the individuals involved in NALC. Being involved in NALC provides me with the opportunity to be involved with an organization that is concretely contributing to arts education, to arts-based schools, and to urban education.

How would you characterize the status of the arts in public schools, and the level of support of school

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THE BOARD AND STAFF OF NALC:

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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Mitchell *continued from previous page*

administrators, funders, and government sources?

In the last ten years the role of the arts in schools has made tremendous progress. This is evidenced through the legislated action of inclusion of the arts as a basic subject in President Bush's No Child Left Behind Act. This has raised consciousness about the role of the arts in education and supported its value. However, the field has not defined funding mechanisms in schools to ensure that the arts are part of students' curriculum.

I believe that it's not a question of having enough money to support the arts in schools, but a question of program design and the allocation of resources.

How can the value of the arts be demonstrated? The value of the arts must be demonstrated through overall student achievement especially in elementary and middle schools. At the Fillmore, through the arts, we see increases

in students' motivation to learn. We see them learning in a variety of subjects through diverse modalities. Students have an opportunity to demonstrate individual strengths, weakness, and talents. We see them develop the sense of self-discipline that arts training requires. All of these are relevant to increased student achievement. We require all of our teachers to have literacy plans for their arts curriculum. There is a vocabulary that students must learn in relation to various art forms. We encourage the development of students' literacy capacities through writing exercises and by asking them to reflect on their learning. These are essential skills for being successful in school. These are all easy things to teach in arts. Does that mean we are teaching an English class? In a sense, we are. We are giving students a base of knowledge, teaching them fluency, problem solving, and upper level thinking. All of these are elements of art making.

FEATURED NATIONAL ADVISORY BOARD MEMBER:

Katherine Damkohler

Featured National Advisory Board Member: Katherine Damkohler has served as Education through Music's (ETM) Executive Director since the fall of 1995. A long-time educator of inner-city children, she is a former teacher and school principal. As a principal she led one school to a U.S. Department of Education Blue Ribbon Award. Ms. Damkohler has spoken at arts education conferences and panel discussions around the country, addressing principals, superintendents, teachers and business and community leaders on school leadership and using the arts to help revitalize schools.

ETM promotes the sustainable integration of music into the curricula of elementary and middle schools in order to enhance students' academic performance and general development. Over the past decade, ETM has partnered with both public and private schools in the New York city area to help them use the arts to support learning. ETM's first partner school won a Blue Ribbon School of Excellence Award from the U.S. Department of Education. In 2000, one of their public partner schools was named a New York State School of Excellence. ETM serves more than 6,000 students at twelve elementary and middle schools.

NALC'S NATIONAL ADVISORY BOARD

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Jazz Musician, and Co-Director, Express Yourself, Inc.

ELLEN WINNER

Professor of Psychology; Boston College, and Senior Research Associate, Harvard Project Zero

NALC's COMMUNITY PARTNERS

A number of organizations within the greater Boston community are part of NALC's family of supporters.

Financial partners include:

Eastern Enterprises Foundation
Fund for Nonprofit Partnerships in
Boston Public Schools
Grantham, Mayo, van Otterloo, LLC
Keyspan Energy Delivery
Marjorie H. Reynolds Foundation
Massachusetts Cultural Council
Public Welfare Foundation
Robbins-de Beaumont Foundation
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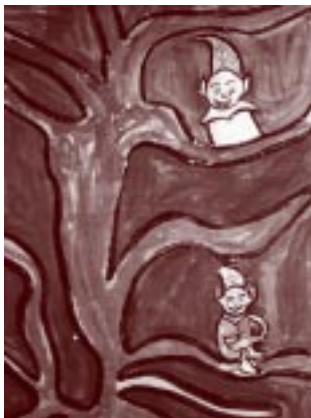
In-kind partners include:

Brimmer and May School, Chestnut Hill
Foley Hoag LLP, Boston
Lesley University, Cambridge
Walnut Hill School, Natick

NALC'S MISSION:

NALC is dedicated to transforming our nation's schools by providing students with opportunities to learn in and through the arts in schools. NALC develops, implements, and evaluates model programs incorporating the arts into urban school districts where the needs are greatest. This includes promoting the development of community partnerships among schools, artists, arts and cultural organizations, businesses, and institutions of higher education. NALC is committed to sustaining these efforts through broad community

involvement and support, establishing the arts as part of the core curriculum, committing to long term collaborations, and developing the leadership capabilities of teachers and school administrators through professional development and support.



Left and right, artwork by students at Marshall Elementary School in Dorchester.

FUNDER PROFILE:

The Fund for Nonprofit Partnerships (FNP)

The Fund for Nonprofit Partnerships (FNP) in the Boston Public Schools is a collaborative fund supporting nonprofit organizations in working effectively with Boston Public Schools in partnerships that enable schools and teachers to achieve their instructional goals. Since 1997, FNP has awarded grants totaling over \$3 million to more than 60 nonprofit agencies working with the Boston Public Schools. Fund participants include: The Boston Globe Foundation, Fleet Asset Management, Harold Whitworth Pierce Charitable Trust, Jessie B. Cox Charitable Trust, Simon Brothers Family Foundation, Trefler Foundation, among others.

NALC received a substantial grant from FNP for 2003-04 school year to further develop the Arts & Learning Collaborative (ALC) model that brings community and arts education organizations together with public and independent schools and institutions of higher education to support an instructional focus of learning in and through the arts. The grant will enable the Marshall Elementary School in Dorchester to: (1) explore the possibility of becoming an arts and multiple intelligences pilot school; (2) provide 3rd – 5th grade students with an after school arts mentorship program in partnership with Walnut Hill, a highly resourced arts-based independent high school; (3) enable Marshall teachers to share best practices through the creation and dissemination of a learning in and through the arts curriculum resource guide; (4) provide Marshall teachers and administrators with professional development opportunities provided by Lesley University to develop skills in utilizing the arts as a teaching tool, identifying special talents, and working with special populations of students; and ultimately, (5) enhance student learning in the arts and other subjects through the implementation of arts integrated curriculum in the school day.



OPINIONS:

On the Successes of the Walnut Hill – Marshall Partnership

By Stephanie Perrin, Head of Walnut Hill

Four years ago Walnut Hill School formed a partnership with the John Marshall School, a nearby inner city public elementary school. Walnut Hill students are privileged young artists who come from all over the world to study music, dance, visual arts, writing, or acting, as well as college preparatory academics. The School has a surfeit of riches in terms of arts teachers and resources. Most of the 800 families at the Marshall live below the poverty line and, like so many urban school districts, their arts programs have been virtually wiped out in the last twenty years.

The premise of the partnership is simple. The primary goal for Walnut Hill is to share what we have with the students at the Marshall by having Walnut Hill students teach them in a weekly after school program. In so doing, Walnut Hill seeks to fulfill its obligation as an educational institution to engage with and support public education — and fulfill it with joy, receiving as many “gifts” of understanding and delight as do the children at the Marshall. This partnership is not about noblesse oblige because it has been clear from the start that the students at Walnut Hill gain as much as the Marshall students in terms of self-awareness, skills, and, significant and immediate widening of their world views based on personal experience and relationship. Walnut Hill gets every bit as much as it gives.

A critical element of the program’s success is the use of peer teachers, of older students teaching younger. This paradigm has been well established as an effective teaching model because younger children relate to and identify with older children much more easily than even the most kindly adult. The director of the program has called the difference between the response of the Marshall students to him alone (polite and welcoming) to that of the Walnut Hill student teachers (thrilled and excited): “the delirium factor!”

In considering what each half of the partnership gets from this program, it is clear that much more than arts training is involved. Marshall students get exposure to new ideas and to young people whose lives and experiences are different

than theirs. They get an after school program which offers them an opportunity to engage in different modes of learning that call on skills and talents they often do not even know they have. They get to work together in a structured and positive environment and have fun doing something they like. They get to think about how they feel and how to express those feelings in a structured way. They get to imagine and create. Research has demonstrated that after school arts programs, as compared to other after school programs, have a greater positive impact on students in terms of sociability, increased self esteem (based on real work) and active learning because of the positive nature of peer relationships involved in making art together.



Stephanie Perrin, Head of Walnut Hill, and Teresa Harvey Jackson, Marshall School Principal

The students at Walnut Hill get to experience what it means to teach well and to appreciate what a challenge that can be. They see how the arts operate in terms of enriching a school culture and offering new ideas and vision for students, including themselves. A young Walnut Hill musician was astonished to find that no one in her 5th grade class had ever seen a cello or knew what one was. Walnut Hill students come to understand from direct experience the power of the arts to awaken the imagination. And they get the deep pleasure of doing meaningful work in an area of life they know a lot about, of sharing their passion for the arts in a new way.

At the beginning of this partnership when the Marshall School Principal was asked what she wanted for this enterprise she did not say, as expected, teachers and resources. She said she wanted her students to have the same vision and work ethic she saw in Walnut Hill’s young artists. She is an experienced practitioner and knows the value of literacy and numeracy, but also knows that without vision, imagination and the work ethic to support that vision, the lives of her students will not change. What this partnership is about on one level is experience in the arts. On another level the partnership seeks to do nothing less than to offer an

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Partnership *continued from previous page*

opportunity for all the children involved seeing themselves and their world differently.

Walnut Hill believes every private school should have a public purpose, some way of contributing actively to public education. In the end what this program demonstrates is the power of the arts to engage children of all ages and cultures in active learning, providing opportunities for learning not only about the arts but also about imagination,

hard work, the excitement of making, and pride in performance no matter what the level. All students should have access to these opportunities and to the larger vision of themselves and their world that they create because it is from that larger vision of self and community that change will come. The arts have a unique power to engage and motivate and we need to use that to make schools, as Ted Sizer famously remarked, “Places of learning, places of joy.”

Connections Between the Arts and Sciences

By Eric Oddleifson

NALC Board Treasurer Eric Oddleifson responds to *Wall Street Journal* Science Writer Sharon Begley. In her column dated November 7th, 2003, Begley indicated that with positive expectations students’ learning and academic performance can increase by as much as 30 percent.

There is a fascinating, growing connection between the arts and the sciences. Some want to keep them separate, like the late Stephen Jay Gould, others suggest we should redefine what we mean by science. Scientist Stephan Wolfram, for example, proposes a new approach to science — seen as general perception, not specifics. As a layman, I sense that scientists are beginning to understand that intentionality in perception actually influences the physical world. The arts have been called organized perception. Stephan Edelglass indicates that, “training perception is, for me, the ground of science education. Inner experience can be included within what is known scientifically.”

Art is also linked to science through the exercise of the imagination, and the development of intuition and insight. It is these attributes on which advances in science depend. We find that many of the best scientists are also practicing artists. Perhaps the notion of imagining something so that one can make it happen is actually true! I have found that learning an art — in my case as an active clarinet player — not only gives satisfaction and opportunity for expression, but in some strange way, power — power over circumstance, perhaps.

It is this I wish for every student in our schools. I want to move beyond simple arts appreciation, or exposure to the arts, or even integrating the arts into the curriculum to promote enhanced academic learning, to the arts taught as

discrete disciplines in the core curriculum. Only in this way will students learn the constructive habits of discipline and mind to which Cognitive Psychologist Howard Gardner refers to in his book, *The Disciplined Mind*.

Ron Berger, a sixth grade teacher in Shutesbury, MA, argues that the arts can form the basis of school norms and standards for work that is incredibly powerful. They provide a structure for creating, critiquing, and sharing academic work within an aesthetic model. He writes, “In the teaching approach I embrace, art is at the core of standards. The infusion of art has had a profound effect on student understanding, investment, and standards. As a whole, students not only do well on standardized testing measures, but importantly and demonstrably do well in real life measures of learning. They are capable and confident readers, writers, and users of math; they are strong thinkers and workers, they treat others well.”

What more do we want from our educational enterprise upon which we spend as a nation \$470 billion each year? I believe that if we could find a way to flow significant resources to teaching the arts in schools, we could literally transform education — and achieve the results of which Ron speaks — particularly in our inner city schools, which by all accounts continue to experience difficulty in performing up to certain standards.

ACTIVITIES OF THE NATIONAL ARTS & LEARNING COLLABORATIVE:

About the Quality of the ALC Program:

“A benefit of the program for our students is they get exposed to art and culture they wouldn’t be exposed to in everyday life at the Marshall School or in Dorchester. They get to use art materials they wouldn’t normally have access to. They go to visit Walnut Hill and see an atmosphere that’s so different from their own... They get to talk to, work with, and interact with students from different races, religions, and ethnic backgrounds.”

— MARSHALL SCHOOL TEACHER

“How will students make choices about life if they haven’t been exposed to many of life’s possibilities? We have lots of troubled students and their behavior has changed since the partnership began, which spills over to their class work and homework.”

— TERESA HARVEY JACKSON,
MARSHALL SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

The Arts & Learning Collaborative Model in the Boston Public Schools

Over the last four years, NALC has been working with the Marshall Elementary School in Dorchester to develop an Arts and Learning Collaborative (ALC) to help the school fulfill its educational goals of strengthening and prioritizing the role of the arts in the curriculum to facilitate broader student learning and success. The ALC partners include the Marshall School, Lesley University for teacher training to create arts integrated curriculum in an effort to bring the arts into the classroom, Walnut Hill for an after school arts mentor program, and the Performance Evaluation Research Group for program evaluation. The program is currently funded by the Fund for Nonprofit Partners, the Robbins deBeaumont Foundation, the Public Welfare Foundation, and the Massachusetts Cultural Council. NALC has assisted the Marshall School with acquiring a Pilot Planning grant from The Boston Foundation to explore becoming an arts and multiple intelligences pilot school. Additionally, NALC helped the school attain a \$25,000 VH1 Save the Music Foundation grant of musical instruments and provided seed money

for a faculty position to reinstate the school’s instrumental program. NALC has developed two new ALC partnerships to offer after school arts mentor programs — at the Sumner Elementary School in Roslindale in partnership with Brimmer and May School, and at the Mather Elementary School in Dorchester in partnership with the Cambridge School of Weston.

About NALC’s professional development offerings for teachers:

“The Professional Development gave me an insight of how you can take simple materials to create new ideas that you never thought of.”

“The creative techniques will be so useful. I can’t wait to do a project with my students.”

“The bookmaking activities lend themselves to numerous cross-curricular lessons.”

About NALC conferences:

“The conference was rejuvenating! I was brainstorming new and improved models for my school.”

“The conference was an incredible experience on many levels. The school where I teach is extremely strong on integrated units and the children have many opportunities to express learning through the arts. But, until yesterday I do not think that [the school’s principal] had any idea how much the arts are embedded in all that we do. I also know that he had not realized how much the arts and learning community has to offer in terms of energy and ideas. It was a powerful day. I know that we made connections that are going to keep expanding what we know and what we can do.”

Passion and Industry Workshops and Conference Series

In addition to the development of the ALC model, over the last few years NALC has convened arts education conferences independently and with partners such as the Massachusetts Cultural Council, Lesley University, and the Massachusetts Alliance for Arts Education for the benefit of educators, school administrators, artists, arts organizations, and funders of arts in education programs.

Upcoming Passion And Industry Workshop Series And Conference

In March 2004, NALC will begin a workshop and conference series in partnership with Jessica Davis of the Arts in Education Program at Harvard University, the Massachusetts Cultural Council, Harvard University, and the International NETWORK of Performing and Visual Arts Schools. The events will be geared to individuals involved in schools that focus on the arts or those that are striving towards that end. The **Passion and Industry** research on the unique qualities and common characteristics of arts-focused schools conducted by Professor Davis will provide a foundation for the workshops. Three workshops will offer those involved in developing and sustaining such schools the opportunity to reflect on goals and

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ACTIVITIES OF THE NATIONAL ARTS & LEARNING COLLABORATIVE *cont.*



practices, to discuss challenges and share ideas, and to develop a network of colleagues to support such work. Representatives from schools that were subject of the Passion and Industry research (Walnut Hill, Boston Arts Academy, and the Conservatory Lab Charter School) will discuss issues relevant to sustaining their programs. Workshops will be held on March 5th, March 19th, and April 16th at the NALC office on the campus of Walnut Hill School in Natick. Workshop registration deadline is February 18th.

A conference will follow on April 30th that will feature presentations by Ellen Winner and Lois Hetland of Harvard Project Zero who are conducting research on student learning in the visual arts, Jessica Davis of Harvard University on the **Passion and Industry** research, and a panel of representatives from Massachusetts Cultural Council's Creative Schools programs, including the Cambridgeport School Visual Arts Initiative, the Worcester Arts Magnet School, the Fitchburg Museum School, and Revere Public Schools. Conference registration deadline is April 1st.

For more information contact Meredith Eppel at (508) 650-5044, or meredith@artslearning.org.

Passion and Industry Research on Schools that Focus on the Arts

The **Passion & Industry** research, funded by NALC, was conducted by Dr. Jessica Hoffmann Davis, director of the Arts in Education program at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. The study investigated three schools in the Boston area that focus on learning in the arts to identify their distinguishing features and common characteristics. The publication features portraits, or ethnographic case studies, of the Boston Arts Academy (a pilot high school), the Conservatory Lab School (a charter elementary school), and Walnut Hill (an independent, residential high school).

To order a copy of this publication, go to: www.artslearning.org/PIOrderForm.html



NALC

NATIONAL ARTS & LEARNING COLLABORATIVE AT WALNUT HILL

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