

ARTful LEARNING

WINTER 2008 | VOLUME I | NUMBER 1

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ARTful Learning is a newsletter dedicated to promoting arts education in West Virginia public schools and to sharing news about national, regional and local arts education issues.

AEI is Moving Forward...

A Letter from the Executive Director

Welcome to the first issue of *ARTful Learning*!

I'm excited to have this new venue to keep you up-to-date on the activities of the Appalachian Education Initiative and to share information and news about the arts and arts education throughout West Virginia. As you will see in this and future issues, AEI is committed to keeping you informed about local, regional, and national issues that impact arts education in our public schools.

In this issue of *ARTful Learning*, we begin a series of articles about school and community partnerships. Our focus this time is on two partnerships and their involvement in the Kennedy Center Partners in Education Program: Greenbrier County Schools and Carnegie Hall, and Kanawha County Schools and the Clay Center.

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W.Va. Joins Prestigious Alliance Network

Research and recognition will support AEI mission

A few months ago, AEI Executive Director Lou Karas received exciting news when Barbara Shepherd, director of National Partnerships at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, called to let Karas know that AEI was named the West Virginia affiliate of the Kennedy Center Alliance for Arts Education Network.

"There aren't words to describe how excited we were to receive this news," said Karas, who had submitted the detailed application to the Kennedy Center a few months earlier. "The Alliance will provide us with so many additional resources, contacts and opportunities for recognition that it will be an invaluable tool for our arts education initiatives throughout West Virginia."

The Kennedy Center Alliance for Arts Education, or KCAAEN, is a program of the prestigious John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, DC. The KCAAEN is a coalition of 36 nonprofit state alliances that work with the Center for Performing Arts to support policies, practices, programs and partnerships that ensure the arts are an essential part of kindergarten through 12th grade education.

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The Appalachian Education Initiative is a statewide, non-profit organization whose mission is to promote students' personal development, academic performance and 21st century workforce preparation by ensuring the availability of quality arts education in West Virginia public schools.

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The Appalachian Education Initiative is the West Virginia affiliate of the Kennedy Center Alliance for Arts Education Network. The network is a coalition of 36 non-profit organizations throughout the nation that is working with the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts to support policies, practices, programs and partnerships that ensure the arts are an essential part of American kindergarten through 12th grade education.



Director's Notes



MOVING FORWARD, from page 1

Please let me know what you'd like to see in future issues of *ARTful Learning*. I welcome your suggestions for articles, questions about issues you'd like to learn more about, or news you have to share about opportunities and programs in the state.

We have accomplished quite a bit at AEI in recent months. The most exciting news for us is that AEI has been named the West Virginia affiliate of the Kennedy Center Alliance for Arts Education Network. West Virginia now joins thirty-five other states in this prestigious national network. You can read more about what this will mean in the cover story of this issue of *ARTful Learning*. This is a great honor and responsibility for AEI. I hope to take every opportunity to learn from and grow with the Alliance and to see that West Virginia benefits from AEI's participation in the Network.

AEI is moving forward on other fronts. In the near future, we will launch a new website and change our web address from www.appalachianeducationinitiative.org to www.aeiarts.org. During the month of February, AEI will also change its e-mail addresses from francisarts.org to aeiarts.org. All of the listings in this publication reflect the changes.

On behalf of AEI, thank you for your interest in and support of arts education in West Virginia!

Sincerely,



Lou Karas
Executive Director
Appalachian Education Initiative

Contact Lou at 304-225-0101 or e-mail lkaras@aeiarts.org

The Appalachian Education Initiative was founded in December 2001 as a nonprofit organization and has, since its inception, received support from many individuals and organizations. AEI takes this opportunity to thank them for their continuing support of its efforts to improve arts education across West Virginia.

Support for the *ARTful Learning* newsletter is provided, in part, by The Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation and the West Virginia Development Office Community Participation Program.

Creative Ticket School Awards Program

Launched in 1999 by the Kennedy Center, the Creative Ticket School Awards Program recognizes schools that do an outstanding job of making the arts essential to the education of their students. The national and state level awards provide an important opportunity to honor schools and the role they play in providing a creative learning environment for outstanding student achievement.

On the state level, the excellence award is presented to individual schools that have arts education programs that include two or more of these components:

1. *The school teaches all the arts (music, visual arts, dance and theater) as specific disciplines as well as integrates them into other subject areas.*
2. *The program uses creative approaches to learning, provides appropriate learning environments for teaching the arts and recognizes that the arts are critical and essential to education.*
3. *The program provides opportunities for parental involvement in the educational lives of their children through hands-on, creative arts-based activities.*
4. *The program provides students opportunities for learning about other cultures through the arts, enabling them to explore the differences in ways that are devoid of cultural bias.*

5. *The program provides community connections that build value and respect for the community by offering students diverse experiences beyond the classroom.*

Recipients of the West Virginia state awards are selected by criteria set by AEI, as the state alliance partner. In turn, those award winners may be nominated for the national award.

Each year, five schools from across the nation that provide teaching programs in the four basic art forms (music, visual arts, dance and theater) are selected for this national honor. Each state alliance partner may nominate up to five schools for consideration for the national level award.

Contact AEI for nomination information!



Did You Know?



SHALL I COMPARE THEE TO... Mos Def? You might not connect Shakespeare and today's hip hop musicians, but you'll find plenty of solid connections and ways to share those with students in the ArtsEdge lesson plan "The Poetics of Hip Hop." Go online at www.artsedge.kennedy-center.org and discover how the rhythm and rhymes of the Bard of Avon and these contemporary musicians will give high school students more appreciation of rhythm, form, diction and sound in poetry.

MUSIC PLUS DANCE EQUALS BETTER MATH GRADES! Michael M. Kaiser, president of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, testified before the Louisiana Legislature on the important role of arts education for a creative economy. In part, Kaiser said: "The connection between arts education and improved academic performance has been proven again and again. According to research by the Americans for the Arts, young people who participate in the arts are:

- Four times more likely to be recognized for academic achievement,
- Four times more likely to participate in a math and science fair,
- Three times more likely to be elected to a class office within their school,
- Three times more likely to win an award for school attendance, and
- Four times more likely to win an award for writing an essay or poem.

To read the complete text of Kaiser's testimony, visit www.kennedy-center.org.

Today's educators have more than ever on their teaching plates. Attention to the requirements of No Child Left Behind and 21st Learning Skills programs challenge West Virginia's teachers to focus on core subjects like mathematics, science, language arts, English and social studies. Yet, there is a growing realization that the arts – visual arts, music, dance and theater – have an important place in schools. Students who participate in arts activities are stronger critical thinkers. They are more able to link subjects together and see the relationships of their studies to their daily lives.

West Virginia's teachers strive to find ways to incorporate arts programs into everyday curricula and to make the most of every minute of a school day. In two counties, the teachers are receiving help from local performing arts centers. These special partnerships are paying dividends for the school systems, the centers and the students in ways that prove art appreciation is not some boring class anymore.

More Than Just One Performance

Greenbrier County Schools, Carnegie Hall Work Together All Year Long



Donna Ream was overwhelmed four years ago when she moved into the Greenbrier County Schools administration offices and took responsibility for coordinating the county's arts education partnership with Carnegie Hall in Lewisburg. Today, she will tell you the work is a joy and that "everything falls into place."

Rebekah Foster, education director at Carnegie Hall, can appreciate her feeling. "Carnegie Hall has a strong desire to inspire and motivate students and teachers to recognize the value of the arts in education," she said. "Our county is large and predominantly rural. The opportunities for our partnership to introduce every student to multiculturalism and arts as a part of daily life have an impact on our future leaders."

And when Foster says "every student" and "daily life," that's exactly what she means.

In Greenbrier County, artists visit classrooms, students visit the art center, teachers enjoy specialized training, and everyone appreciates the arts through the extraordinary partnership between the Greenbrier County Schools and Carnegie Hall.

Carnegie Hall had a long-standing partnership with schools in the county, but the program expanded in 1997. That's when the Kennedy Center Partners in Education program accepted Carnegie Hall into its organization. With that, the arts center formalized its partnership

with Greenbrier County Schools and began building the foundation of a program that brings arts into the school day for the more than 5,500 public, private and home-schooled students in the county.

Ream, director of Elementary Education for Greenbrier County Schools, and Foster work together with Lynn Creamer, Carnegie Hall's artistic director, to offer innovative and interesting programs that allow students and teachers to develop new skills and learn more about how the arts fit into their every day lives.

"Students need the creative thinking skills that they learn through the arts," Ream said. "What they learn in school about creative design or music will translate into stronger critical thinking skills in math and reading and, later, in how they handle themselves as adults."

Four programs form the basis for the arts activities in Greenbrier County Schools. Those are Creative Classrooms and Teach SmART, Spotlight on Schools, Communities Link Up, and Star Lab. Each program focuses on different arts activities and provides connections between students, artists and the arts community.

"Our programs are not static," Foster said. "We strive to get the local artists, the teachers and the students together in activities that show how fundamental arts are to every class and to every part of our daily lives."

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"Carnegie Hall has a strong desire to inspire and motivate students and teachers to recognize the value of the arts in education."

Rebekah Foster | Carnegie Hall



Arts Bring A New Dimension To Classes

Kanawha County Schools, The Clay Center Make it Happen!

Even before the doors of The Clay Center for the Performing Arts opened to the public, they were open to teachers.

Lakin Cook, director of Performing Arts, began working at the Clay Center in 1998 as Education manager. In 2000, she attended one of Carnegie Hall's summer institutes for teachers. She knew that the connection between arts education and the Clay Center would be an invaluable partnership for everyone involved.

In 2001, two years before the Charleston arts center was opened to the public, The Clay Center entered into a partnership with Kanawha County Schools as one of the Kennedy Center's Partners in Education programs.

Fonda Lockhart, curriculum specialist for the arts at the school system, says that Cook was right. "This partnership is invaluable to us," Lockhart said. "It creates an excitement for arts education among our teachers and adds a special dimension to coursework development in every subject – math, science, English and social studies – as well as music, dance, drama and visual arts."

Together, Cook and Lockhart have developed a professional development and enrichment program that is opening the doors for teachers, students and local artists.

"This partnership is special in many ways," Lockhart said. "We work together to develop programs, we share expenses and we all benefit from what we are learning." Lockhart credits Cook and the Clay Center for the cooperative atmosphere and generous spirit that keep the partnership exciting.

"When I get started talking about how wonderful this program is, I can't stop," she said. "We have a high quality program that promotes so much that is important for our students, such as the educational opportunities for general education teachers as well as arts teachers and the connections that teachers are making with the arts community."

"The intensity of our workshops at the Clay Center and the continuing opportunities for teachers to meet, share ideas and interact with artists is energizing."

Fonda Lockhart | Kanawha County Schools

Cook agrees. "We see the impact of this partnership in many ways," she said. "Our challenge is to keep it growing and to provide resources not just for Kanawha County schools, but for teachers around the state."

To that end, the programs offered through the partnership have included a mix of national and local artists who have worked with the Clay Center and Kanawha County Schools.

Since the partnership began in 2001, more than 1,254 teachers have participated in professional development programs. Curriculum specialists for science, English, language arts and social studies have received educational tools that they share with classroom teachers to motivate students to learn more about how the arts connect with their classes and their lives. Teachers who participate in the programs acquire skills to integrate arts education with other classroom subjects.

An important element of the program is the interaction between the teaching community and the arts community.

The Artist as Educators program is a Kennedy Center program in which eleven West Virginia artists/educators were trained in Kennedy Center techniques for presenting effective arts' education workshops for other teachers. Three of these artist/educators have developed workshops that the Clay Center and Kanawha County Schools use in their ongoing workshops.

Colleen Anderson of Charleston developed a workshop that uses songwriting to help teach history. Nanette Seligman of Parkersburg helps teachers find ways to use visual arts to teach social studies. Michelle Legg of Charleston trains teachers in the use of movement to teach English.

National artists have had an impact through this partnership as well. Sean Layne, a Kennedy Center artist, has presented three of the partnership workshops. He shows

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Education

KENNEDY CENTER, from page 1

"We are delighted to have AEI join the KCAAEN," said Shepherd. "AEI has already demonstrated its leadership role in West Virginia. We will look to that organization to share its expertise with the other 35 State Alliances for Arts Education and in turn, the Kennedy Center will support the work of AEI through professional development, technical assistance, and by providing resources and services."

The mission of the Alliance is to promote learning through the arts for all students. KCAAEN brings together educators, school administrators, parents, cultural leaders and citizens from across the nation to advance the quality of education through the inclusion of the arts in the curriculum. The Kennedy Center, in turn, supports this with professional development, grant support and other resources.

Five initiatives receive priority attention from the Alliance and its members:

- 1. Building collaborations:** *Developing and supporting innovative collaborations among schools, community partners and cultural institutions that sustain arts education.*
- 2. Positioning the arts:** *Speaking out on behalf of arts education to citizens, policy makers, state agencies and others about the value and benefits of arts education.*
- 3. Generating resources:** *Developing, publishing and disseminating resources for arts practitioners and arts education leaders.*
- 4. Providing professional development:** *Implementing professional development through educational programs, training and resources.*
- 5. Recognizing innovation and achievement:** *Providing awards and acknowledgements to individuals, organizations and schools that demonstrate outstanding support for arts education.*

"West Virginia will be able to participate in the activities and receive the benefit of all of the research and resources that KCAAEN offers its partners," Karas said. "Already the state has access to a wealth of reports and studies that really reach to the heart of our work at the Appalachian Education Initiative."

For instance, KCAAEN offers some general community reports such as *The Arts beyond the School Day*, *A Community Audit for Arts Education: Better Schools, Better Skills, Better Communities* and an arts education leadership kit. All of these materials can be used to assess and develop programs related to arts education.

For state alliance members, KCAAEN offers an assessment kit that provides the partners with a way to determine how their operations and activities focus on the primary goal of advancing arts education.

Another tool, the leadership kit, can help a member strengthen its organization, board and leadership skills.

"But more than materials and guidelines, this organization offers exceptional networking and discussion opportunities that open new doors to help AEI do its work," Karas said.

"Looking ahead, AEI will take the tools and resource materials to use them for communications, education and project development," she said. "In fact, AEI will move ahead with an exciting awards program that will help us to showcase the work that is being done in the state right now." (See Creative Ticket, Page 3)

The Creative Ticket School Award program provides a way to recognize the role that individual schools play in providing a creative learning environment for outstanding student achievement.

"We're offering the information regarding the award in this issue of the newsletter and hope that schools and school boards will look at the criteria to begin thinking about entering the program," Karas said. More information on the entry deadline and contest will be included in upcoming issues of the newsletter. ■



www.kennedy-center.org/education/kcaaen/home.html



To learn more about Carnegie Hall,
visit them online:

www.carnegiehallwv.com



CARNEGIE HALL, from page 4

Consider the Creative Classrooms program. Each year, teaching artists go to Greenbrier County elementary schools. Working with classroom teachers, these artists bring their art – whether its music, painting or dance – into a classroom for a two-hour class. The artists show the students how that art form fits into every aspect of their classroom programs. The teachers incorporate the art into their lesson plans and the artists work with the children to bring that concept to life.

But to make it work, a lot goes on beforehand. Carnegie Hall asks artists to submit proposals about how they will present their art and about how it fits into an educational program. Some artists, according to Foster, have been with the program for about 12 years. New artists are given training and paired with an experienced artist who mentors them as they develop their programs. Teachers are invited to Carnegie Hall on curriculum instruction days to learn more about how to best incorporate the arts into their lesson plans.

“We are seeing our vision for the Creative Classrooms program become reality,” Foster said. “It is becoming more than a one-day artist visit to a classroom.”

What this means, she explains, is that teachers are not taking time out of their schedules for art, but are making art part of the way they teach the students. “As teachers infuse their day-to-day curriculum with arts concepts, they are seeing that they don’t have to take time out of other course work for art because it blends into every other lesson,” Foster said.

Ream said this can happen because the artists provide teachers with lesson plans and suggestions for activities that they can use before the artist visits and after the artist is gone.

Consider the example of Paul Taylor who brought aboriginal musical instruments to kindergarten through third grade classes. The students listened to and were able to see instruments made from animal horns and tree bark. They talked to Taylor about the music

and the people who play it. In his lesson plans, Taylor provided teachers with information about doing murals that would explain daily life as the aborigines do.

“This took the lesson to another level,” Ream said. “It brings the message of multiculturalism to life and fits very well into the 21st Century Learning concept of projects based education.”

Teach SmART expands the teachers’ resources for this program, according to Foster and Ream. In this program, teachers receive professional development opportunities to learn more about different art forms by working with the artists. It helps teachers find creative ways to integrate art into math, science and reading curricula.

Spotlight on Schools is a collaborative program in which every student has an opportunity to see at least one live art performance every year. Greenbrier County Schools applies for funding through the West Virginia Committee for the Arts grant program and Carnegie Hall schedules the programs. Some performances are done at the schools, others at the hall.

“The exciting thing about this program is that we have students who will see the school-sponsored performance and decide to come to Carnegie Hall for the artist’s main stage programs here,” Foster said. “These students see a performer, enjoy the program and take advantage of our special student rates to see more.”

The performances for middle and high school students generally come to the schools. The elementary school children visit Carnegie Hall for their performance programs.

“This is a special treat for these younger children to visit the performance hall and gives them a taste of what it’s like to attend a concert or play in a theater,” Ream said. “It’s not just professional performances that make this program innovative. There are

programs that allow the students to shine.

The Communities Link Up program does just that. Each year, every fourth grade student in Greenbrier County public schools participates in a program sponsored by Carnegie Hall in New York City. In this program, the students receive recorders and learn to play a musical piece. At the end of the program, these students perform on stage at Carnegie Hall in Lewisburg with a professional symphony orchestra. This year, students will perform with the James Madison University student symphony.

In addition to learning the melody, the students learn about their instruments, they learn about the musician and the history of the music they are learning.

In March during Art in Schools month, Carnegie Hall hosts a juried exhibit of art by students in Greenbrier County. Students of every age are encouraged to submit their best works.

The Star Lab at Carnegie Hall provides another venue for students to discover what happens at the art institute. Under the direction of Greenbrier County teacher Dan Green, third grade teachers receive professional development programs in astronomy. Then, students in their classes have the opportunity to visit the Star Lab and learn more as well.

Programs for home-schooled students assure that they, too, receive opportunities for arts education, Foster said. And students who want more have plenty of opportunities throughout the year, including summer, to learn about the arts at Carnegie Hall.

“We’re always doing something or getting ready for the next program,” said Foster, who believes that the diversity of programs being offered in Greenbrier County truly fosters in these students the ability to apply creative learning processes to everything they do. ■

CLAY CENTER, from page 5

teachers how to use acting and storytelling in English, language arts and social studies. According to Lockhart, teachers who are using his techniques have developed curricula in which students use theater skills in all three classes to develop a tableau, write a play and act it out. "It's great to see the students get involved in learning using all of these skills," she said.

His influence has been lasting, Cook said. One elementary school teacher in Buffalo continues to use techniques in her math classes that Layne recommended several years ago.

The Clay Center offers two other programs through its partnership program to teachers around the state: the Ambassador Program and the Teacher Cadre Program.

The Ambassador Program reaches out to school systems across the state, according to Cook.

"We asked each school system to assign an ambassador educator to the center as a contact person," she said. "We work with these ambassadors to find more ways to make educational trips to Clay Center performances and the museum relevant on as many education levels as possible."

To do this, the Clay Center team schedules eight arts events throughout the school year that include daytime performances or activities. Then, under the Teacher Cadre program, teachers are contracted to write curricula for elementary, middle and high school classes that meet the needs of math, social sciences, science, and English class work and, of course, the arts. Those lesson plans, along with study guides, organizational tools and resource materials are on the Clay Center Web site, available for all teachers to access.

"We are seeing an impact from this effort," Cook said.

Lockhart says that programs like this one take the partnership beyond a once-a-year training program. "The intensity of our workshops at the Clay Center and the continuing opportunities for teachers to meet, share ideas and interact with artists is energizing," she said. "The teachers are rejuvenated by the workshops and they go back into the classrooms and share that enthusiasm with their students."

Both Lockhart and Cook speak enthusiastically about a teacher workshop that used distance learning and was held at the Clay Center in 2006. Teachers at the Clay Center and at Glenville State College participated in a workshop with Colleen Anderson. Learning to use songwriting techniques for teaching history, the teachers wrote a song about the Sago mining accident.

"We're learning every time we try something new," Cook said. "But this was a great way to bring teachers together with an artist. We'll definitely use this distance learning technique again."

"This partnership continues to get better," Lockhart said. "We have a program that encourages teachers to set and accomplish goals and that makes it easier and fun to make certain that our students are getting the arts skills they need to be critical thinkers and creative adults in the 21st Century." ■



HOW TO BE A PARTNER

The Partners in Education Program of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts is designed to assist arts and cultural organizations throughout the nation develop and/or expand educational partnerships with their local school systems. The purpose of the partnerships is the establishment or expansion of professional development programs in the arts for all teachers.

The program, established in 1991, is based on the belief that educating teachers is an essential component of any effort designed to increase the artistic literacy of young people. The Kennedy Center's extensive experience with its local professional development program for teachers provides the basis for this national program.

Partnership teams consist of a member of an arts organization and a senior level administrator of a neighboring school system. The team participates in an institute that provides models and planning strategies for establishing or expanding professional development programs in the arts for all teachers, follow-up consultation, and annual meetings to assist teams in their continued development.

The next Partners in Education Institute will be held in May 2010. Applications will be available in July 2009.

Read more about the application process and associated costs related to participation in the Partners in Education program at:

www.kennedy-center.org/education/partners/home.html.

LOOKING AHEAD

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AEI Partners with the Collaborative for Teaching and Learning

Promoting and advocating for arts education initiatives in West Virginia schools are challenges that AEI is committed to meeting. Lou Karas, executive director, believes that one of the best ways to succeed will be to work with other organizations that are focusing on the same issues. With that in mind, AEI is working with the Kentucky-based Collaborative for Teaching & Learning (CTL) on projects that will help the West Virginia organization with its strategic initiatives.

"CTL has a strong background in program development that focuses on arts education and arts education initiatives," Karas said. "I worked with the organization when I served as education director for the Pittsburgh Center for the Arts and I found their programs designed to assist teachers with arts education were invaluable. As we move forward with our programs, we can build on programs that CTL has made successful."

CTL and AEI are reviewing program concepts and activities that AEI might design or expand over the next three years. One such project is the new West Virginia study on the status of arts education in all of the state's public schools. Other projects include the development of a parent advocacy toolkit, training programs for teaching artists on how to support their work in school settings, and the design of an arts education framework to help school administrators diagnose their current arts education programs and develop action steps to improve those programs.

"We must do the research to know where we stand so that we can decide where we want to go," Karas said about the West Virginia schools arts study. "In addition, we need to look for innovative ways to help parents, school officials and teachers incorporate arts education into curricula that exists. Working with CTL gives AEI a good foundation of research and resources to help us move forward." ■

AEI Invites Student Musicians to Apply for Institute

The West Virginia Alliance for Arts Education and the Appalachian Education Initiative hope to send one exceptional music student from the Mountain State to the prestigious Kennedy Center/National Symphony Orchestra's (NSO) Summer Music Institute in 2008. The Summer Music Institute is an annual four-week residency with the National Symphony Orchestra. It is open to serious music students ages 15-20.

"No one from West Virginia has attended this institute in the past," Melanie Skeen Gregory, AEI's director of community relations, said. "This year, we hope to receive some strong applications so that a student from our state can have the opportunity to participate through an all-expenses paid scholarship."

The institute will be held at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C., June 30 to July 28, 2008. Students will receive private lessons and chamber music coaching from National Symphony Orchestra members. The students also will attend master classes, seminars, rehearsals and performances conducted by National Symphony Orchestra members. Students will perform throughout the Washington DC area.

AEI will accept applications and audition materials from Jan. 1 through Feb. 8, 2008. A panel of five West Virginia music professionals will meet to select five student finalists whose names will be submitted to the National Symphony Orchestra for final consideration.

The symphony is interested in students who play violin, viola, cello, string bass, flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, French horn, trumpet, trombone, tuba and harp. Musicians who play guitar, saxophone, percussion or piano are not eligible.

Applicants must submit an application letter with a letter of recommendation and audition materials (CD, DVD, audiocassette and/or videotape) with a prepared solo performance not to exceed 20 minutes in length. The solo performance must show contrasting musical elements such as fast and slow tempos and musical dynamics. Application forms and auditions tips are available at: www.kennedy-center.org/nso/nsoed/smi/.

For questions regarding applications and auditions, contact Melanie Skeen Gregory at 304-225-0101 or mskeen@aeiarts.org. ■

Imagination



“It’s kind of fun to do the impossible,” said Walt Disney, who was born in Chicago, Illinois on Dec. 5, 1901. Winter was a great time for the man who made a mouse famous. November 13, 1940, was the premiere of his innovative film “Fantasia” and December 21, 1937, was the premiere date for “Snow White” – the world’s first feature-length animated film.

ARTful LEARNING

E-mail or Regular Mail? It’s Your Choice!

ARTful Learning is the AEI newsletter designed to keep our friends and contributors up to date with the organization’s activities. We hope that you will continue to keep up with us by signing up to receive the newsletter in the future.

If you prefer receiving the newsletter in this printed format and your address and contact information are correct, you don’t need to contact AEI. However, if you prefer to receive the newsletter by e-mail, need to add names and addresses (for e-mail or print mail), then send us a note online at www.aeiarts.org or via the U.S. Postal Service at:

AEI • III High Street • Morgantown WV 26505



Arts Assembly Sets Spring Date

Circle May 18 through May 20 on your calendar and plan to attend the 2008 Arts Assembly sponsored by Arts Advocacy West Virginia. Agenda and registration information is being finalized now. The conference theme is *The Arts Mean Business in West Virginia*.

The Arts Assembly provides state artists, arts organizations and businesses with a two-day conference during which participants and speakers discuss a broad range of issues important to continuing and improving the arts community in West Virginia.

Arts Advocacy West Virginia is a nonprofit organization established in 1985 to provide a unified voice for the arts community. It educates state legislators and policy makers on the need for educational, artistic and culture support of the arts in West Virginia because this is an important investment in the state’s future.



What Would You Like to Know?

We’d like this newsletter to be more than news about AEI activities. We want to highlight our state’s great art teachers, outstanding students and generous art education supporters. We’d also like to provide you with news and information that will help you be stronger advocates for arts education and partnerships. If you have suggestions for newsletter features, send a note to Caryn Gresham at caryn.gresham@verizon.net.

TOUGH CHOICES OR TOUGH TIMES

The Report of the New Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce

According to this Fall 2007 report from the National Center on Education and the Economy, the future “depends on a deep vein of creativity that is constantly renewing itself, and on a myriad of people who can imagine how people can use things that have never been available before, create ingenious marketing and sales campaigns, write books, build furniture, make movies, and imagine new kinds of software that will capture people’s imagination and become indispensable to millions. This is a world in which a very high level of preparation in reading, writing, speaking, mathematics, science, literature, history, and the arts will be an indispensable foundation for everything that comes after for most members of the workforce.”

Learn more at skillscommission.org/executive.htm

“The real purpose of arts education is to create complete human beings capable of leading successful and productive lives in a free society.”

-Dana Gioia, National Endowment for the Arts

KEEP ARTS IN SCHOOLS WEBSITE

The Keep Arts in Schools website highlights the efforts of arts education organizations throughout the country, using the power of the web to make tools and resources available to anyone seeking to make the arts a top priority in public schools and communities at-large. It functions as a hub with links to major arts-based school reform initiatives in several cities, research on the arts in schools and communities, and other arts education information.

March is Arts Education Month and Keep Arts in Schools has developed a planning toolkit featuring talking points for a variety of audiences as well as *3 Things You Can Do During Arts Education Month*.

Visit the website at www.keepartsinschools.org/index.php

“The importance of the arts in education can’t be overstated. Exploration of the arts in schools isn’t about uncovering America’s next great talent – it’s about the healthy development of our children. The arts inspire us with their beauty and introduce us to new cultures and concepts – but they also build students’ self-esteem, teach problem solving, and give children an unfettered avenue of expression.”

-Jan Harp-Domene, PTA National President

Contributions Welcome!



Photo courtesy Carnegie Hall

If you would like to contribute to the Appalachian Education Initiative and support its efforts to promote and improve arts education in West Virginia public schools, please contact Lou Karas, executive director, at 304-225-0101 or send tax deductible contributions to Appalachian Education Initiative at 111 High Street, Morgantown WV 26505. Donations can also be made online at www.aeiarts.org

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Grant Opportunities

CLASSICS FOR KIDS FOUNDATION helps schools and nonprofit community organizations secure high quality violins, violas and cellos for students in the third through twelfth grades. Classics for Kids Foundation awards a 50 percent matching grant for complete stringed instrument outfits, including case, bow and customer setup by authorized instrument providers. Grants have ranged from \$1,500 to \$30,000. Deadlines for applications are March 15 and June 15 and applicants are notified by letter of an award within 30 days. For additional information, check the Web site, www.classicsforkids.org, or contact Classics for Kids Foundation at cfkids@classicsforkids.org or 406-587-8183.

THE AIRBORNE TEACHER TRUST FUND invites elementary and middle school teachers from public and private schools throughout the United States to submit proposals for art and music programs that their schools are unable to fund. A panel of judges reviews the proposals quarterly and selects recipients based on educational program elements, the teacher's desire and passion for the program, the program's anticipated results and the budget request. The awards range from \$200 to \$10,000 and are announced monthly. Application information is available at the Web site, www.airbornetrust.com.

THE SOUTHERN POVERTY LAW CENTER offers grants for pre-K to 12 classrooms for teachers' projects designed to reduce prejudice among youth, improve group relationships in schools and support educator professional development in these areas. Generally, the grant program funds projects that focus on character and moral education, conflict resolution, multiculturalism, community service and other aspects of tolerance education. Requests may be submitted at any time. Visit the Web site, www.tolerance.org/teach/grants/guide.jsp to download an application form.