

The Children's Storefront 2007-2008 Highlights

Our **Technology Department** has witnessed a complete upgrade under the supervision of CIO, Steve Bergen. The department is comprised of several initiatives that all have the goal to empower students with the tools necessary to gain skills to enter college and to get jobs. We have also started an initiative called Tech Saturdays where we train students, parents and community members on computers and then give them a computer to take home. We partner with Wireless Harlem to get them free access to the web.

Every classroom has a SmartBoard and an entire class can work on laptops due to the generosity of the Joseph and Sylvia Slifka Foundation and Tequipment.

The Second Annual Science Appreciation Day where 6th, 7th and 8th graders presented 51 projects. Even our 5th graders prepared a "Wall of Fame" with photos of African American scientists and stories of their outstanding accomplishments. During the course of the day, classes from preschool through 5th grade toured and listened to the older students explain their projects via poster boards or as PowerPoint presentations. Some of the projects were: "Testing for Carbon Dioxide, Iron Ink, Short-Term Memory and How Does a Boat Float.

The Storefront has a vigorous science program generously supported by The Charles and Marjorie Holloway Foundation and the Mellam Family Foundation.

Our 2nd graders ventured forth on a thematic unit examining various habitats. Students were exposed to research and using library materials as they each selected a habitat and one of its inhabitants and embarked on a three-part program: writing a report, preparing a diorama and giving an oral presentation. They learned about the importance of protecting endangered species.

The fourth graders published a Colonial Newspaper as part of their thematic social

studies unit that investigates patterns in history. Their focus related to Colonial America and the Revolutionary War. They studied various newspapers to understand how they are constructed and learned about the differences among feature articles, interviews, editorials, etc. Students expanded their research skills using online resources and linked up with the Technology Department. They edited their work, found photos, and even drew cartoons, and wrote ads and crossword puzzles.

Black History Month is always celebrated by well-thought-out presentations. The Upper School developed an exhibit of famous African American artists, with students researching the artist and then developing an art piece using the same style. It was a valuable experience combining learning about history, art and expressing one's own voice through art. It was wonderful for the younger students to hear the presentations and view the original artists' work as well as see our students' expressions of that work.

Elected officials and Storefront students, parents and staff had the official ribbon-cutting for the opening of the **Harvest Home Youth Farmstand**. The aim of the farmstand is to educate students and families as well as others in the East Harlem community about locally grown produce. The farmstand will help to address obesity, promote healthier eating habits and food shopping choices. Students also learn about marketing and economics. The pilot program is operated by the Storefront and the Harvest Home Farmer's Market and is sponsored by Slow Food NYC with the support of Go Green East Harlem.

Sandile Ndaba came as part of a visit through NYSAIS. Educator, author and speaker from South Africa, he is Policy Director for the Independent Schools Association of southern Africa. It was a great opportunity for our students to meet a leader from Africa who could share information about contemporary African countries, schools and students. A

lively discussion broke some myths about African people and expanded our students' awareness of other countries.

The first 8th grade overnight school trip came to fruition this year when the group visited Philadelphia for three days. Highlights were the visit to the African American museum and the Liberty Bell. Students were excited to see places which they had studied in their American History classes. It was a great celebration for the class for work well done. The trip was generously supported by Trustee Emeritus, Michael Clark.

Congratulations go to our **Boy's Basketball Team** upon becoming Champions of the Harbor Invitational League. Angel Perez, the Commissioner of the League, complimented our team on their behavior, teamwork and the way they played throughout the tournament. The team was coached by Ryan Blain, our 5th grade teacher.

Men's and Women's Mentoring Programs continue to thrive. Led by a group of devoted staff and volunteers, these mentors inspire our young 7th and 8th grade students to succeed and grow in ways beyond their classroom studies. The programs include visits to museums, sports events and theater. There is a book club to encourage debate and discussion, personal development and career days wherein each student shadows a person in the professional world through a typical day.

A highlight of both programs are their art exhibits where students welcomed guests and discussed their art which gave them the occasion to enhance their confidence, poise and presentation skills. Support is gratefully received from The Irene Ritter Foundation, Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe and other friends who aid these vital programs.

The Department of Family Support Services and Academic Support Services worked closely together to expand our Family Literacy Initiative. The growth included family weekend events, additional parent meetings to support parents and ongoing literacy meetings, with topics ranging from computer, math and reading literacy.

The first **Urban Education Symposium**, hosted by The Children's Storefront, brought together almost 100 administrators and individuals from educational foundations, private, public, independent and parochial schools interested in learning about successes in teaching urban youth. The day included seven workshops with topics ranging from fundraising to gender/race issues to conflict resolution. The keynote speaker, Salome Thomas-El, a leader in education in Philadelphia, spoke about the "Adventures in Urban Education: Essentials for Success."

Opening and closing remarks were made by Kathy Egmont. The symposium team was led by Trustee, Hal Fessenden.

Trustee activity was vital to the Storefront's success. Three new Trustees joined our family. Michael Streicker came to the Storefront six years ago as a Junior Board member, Jennifer Frissora was introduced to us through the Robin Hood Foundation and Amanda Low has been a longtime volunteer.

Special Events were a major part of the school this past year. The **Texas Hold 'Em Poker Night** and **An Evening of Cocktails and Dance** brought in more than \$200,000. **The 4th Harlem Luncheon** welcomed Marian Wright Edelman as its keynote speaker. **The 4th Annual Parent Benefit** raised more than \$25,000. A group of parents banded together to select honorees from the Harlem community and had a great evening with over 200 guests attending.

The Partners, the Storefront's Junior Board, hosted several evenings of fun, which included a sunset cruise, an evening in an art gallery and a spring cocktail party.

The culmination of our fundraising year was **A Night for Changing Lives**, held at The Plaza. We recognized Rob Shafir of Credit Suisse, Jonelle Procope from the Apollo and Elizabeth Fondaras, longtime Trustee. The 8th grade class was presented and honored by Kathy Egmont. The event was the Storefront's highest fundraising event of all time, bringing in more than \$900,000 and attended by over 500 donors.