**Dear YA Trustees:**

Welcome to the first “First Friday Email Update” for this school year. I hope you find this a useful update on YA’s activities and initiatives. It is certainly not comprehensive but presents highlights.

**In the Field:**

* Over the summer, we conducted teacher training for our Creativity Consultant Project and for Theatre to Learn and for Dance to Learn. Residency work for those programs, which all include a significant commitment to teacher training, will occur this school year.
* Our staff and teaching artists participated in the Dodge Arts Integration Initiative that has been building steam over the last year. We also held a leadership role in designing two days of convenings for all of the arts organizations and teaching artists involved.
* Our Artist Showcases were a success. We had improved attendance in Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania and very good attendance in Summit NJ. As always the staff made it all look easy! Thank you to the Trustees who attended: Belinda, Everett and Barbara. Your in-person support is appreciated.
* The YA New York City affiliate (not national) offered us the opportunity to send 10 of our teaching artists to their training program, hosted at Columbia Teachers College, at no charge. The program is an online/in-person model and we are excited to observe and learn.

**Behind the Scenes:**

* In early September, we held an Artist Meeting for the first time in over two years, at NRG’s Innovation Lab (thank you Peter Johnson for hosting us). This was strong aspect of our effort to maintain a sense of community and collaboration amongst our artists.
* Our work in the Branding and Marketing Project, with Oxford Communications, is underway. We are in the research phase of the work; donors and school contacts will be surveyed, and we are hosting an in-person “Discovery Session” in late October.
* Our auditors have completed their work onsite collecting our reports and financial data. Debbie’s thorough preparation and detailed knowledge has made their job easy.
* We are in the “quiet” leadership phase of the 45th Anniversary major gifts campaign.
* Lastly… (and very excitedly) we are finalists in the highly competitive Impact 100 Garden State grant program, for a $141K 3-year grant. Our proposed program “United We Create” will support our developing and delivering programming that bridges the gap in understanding between Muslim children and teachers and non-Muslim children and teachers. Eleanor Horne has played a key role in developing the concepts and communicating with Impact 100. This news is not to be shared outside of our organization until Impact 100 publicizes finalists so please keep mum until then.

**Important Dates:**

* [**ChipandGus is Monday October 16th.**](http://yanjep.org/news-and-events/join-us-for-yas-45th-anniversary-kick-off-event-chipandgus-a-ping-pong-comedy/)  If you haven’t purchased your tickets, now is the time. Invite family and friends. It will be an absolute hoot and a really fun (and low cost) way to support our work. Liz Fillo’s generosity in putting this fundraiser together is so very appreciated!
* **Next Board Meeting:** Wednesday November 15th, 6pm. The optional pre-meeting orientation at 5pm will offer an overview of our artists and programs.

Looking forward to seeing you all soon and continuing our shared endeavor to bring the arts to every child, every year!