

**December 1, 2017**  
**First Friday Update**

**Dear YA Trustees:**

Welcome to the December edition of the "First Friday Email Update." I hope you all had a wonderful Thanksgiving holiday, filled with all the good stuff!

**THANK YOU!**

Thank you all for working on the annual appeal. Research shows that handwritten notes make a big difference for donors, so thank you for doing that. And for those of you who came to the office and stuffed envelopes, thank you even more.

You should have received an email from us with a survey to complete. This is part of our branding analysis. Please complete it at your earliest convenience. Thank you in advance!

**Next Week:**

At the public meeting of the New Jersey State Council on the Arts (NJSCA), Arts Education Committee Chair Gary Blackman will highlight Young Audiences professional development programs during his report. A YA teaching artist who many of you know and love, Laura Marchese, will be in attendance and get a "shout out" from Gary. We're thrilled! The meeting is open to the public: Tuesday December 5, 12:00, Two River Theatre, 21 Bridge Ave, Red Bank, NJ 07701. I'll be attending and leaving from YA @ 10:30 if you'd like to join me.

**In the Field:**

During the month of November, our artists completed over 300 programs in schools. That's in a month where schools are closed 4-7 days! Know that everything you do as Trustees helps make it possible for us to bring children these valuable experiences:

- 73 performances including programs that celebrated Native American history and culture, address bullying and address science and math concepts.
- 27 professional Development sessions, mostly in Paterson, as part of the Creativity Consultant Project, helping teachers use arts integration strategies.
- Over 200 hands-on workshops ranging from Afro Cuban Percussion to Graphic Novels, to Latin Dance to Theatre to Learn and AIE long-term residencies in the visual arts.

Kudos as always to our Programming Staff, Donna and Carol and our Education Staff, Liz, Michelle Marigliano and Jackie who make it all happen.

**Behind the Scenes:**

- Great news! Today we received an unexpected \$25,000 grant from the Burke Foundation for our general operating support. While they undergo their own strategic planning, we are grateful for their generosity.

- On November 8<sup>th</sup> Eleanor made a brilliant presentation to the 200+ members of [Impact 100 Garden State](#), to pitch our project United We Create. I couldn't be more proud of her and the team (lead by Ann) of Alexa, Liz and Queen Nur who worked on this so beautifully. The project's goal is to increase understanding and empathy between non-Muslims and Muslims, to reduce bullying and negative effects of isolation and stereotypes which are prevalent for Muslim schoolchildren. Unfortunately we were not selected to receive a grant. We are however, making the most of the opportunity and have already received an unsolicited donation from an Impact 100 member who thought we should have won. Silver linings! And, most importantly we continue to seek funding for this critically important program.

#### **45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Campaign Update:**

- Total raised: \$165,000 of the \$450,000 goal from 7 donors. Our campaign video is complete: <https://youtu.be/0MAH02kxWNg> (It is currently being used privately for solicitations, please don't share on social media. After Dazzle, we will share it more broadly. Our case statement goes to print next week.

#### **Noteworthy News:**

- Former YA Executive Director Kristin Wenger is retiring from her role as Co-Director of ArtsEdNJ (formerly called the Arts Education Partnership). Kris was ED of YA from 1986-2005 and made an incredible impact on the arts education field. Kris will be moving to the Woodstock NY area to enjoy retirement with her husband Ken, who is also retiring. If you'd like to reach out to Kris, her email is [kris@artsednj.org](mailto:kris@artsednj.org).

#### **Important Dates:**

- **Next Board Meeting:** Wednesday January 17, 2018 **Please RSVP to me**
- **Board/Staff Retreat:** Saturday February 24, 2018, 8:30-3:00 Location TBD (Princeton area) **Please RSVP to Denyce**
- **Dazzle Dancer Meet and Greet:** Thursday January 25, 5:00-7:00 Fred Astaire Dance, Princeton. This is a really fun free event where we show our support and appreciation for our dancers as they begin their Dazzle training.
- **FYI:** We will be closed for the holidays starting December 25<sup>th</sup>. We reopen January 2<sup>nd</sup>.

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