

Executive Director's Report

Highlighted Activities

Since our last meeting, the Center has celebrated two ribbon cuttings with a third in the works.

On Dec 13th board, staff, friends and funders of the Center gathered with students, staff and administrators of the Joseph W. Catharine School to dedicate the 1st part of our three-year, three-part mural project. What was most encouraging about the opening, was watching the response of the past and future funders to the creativity of the children and the joy on each of their faces. We have no doubt, this project and projects in its mold at other Philadelphia schools will have strong support in the future.

On January 6th, staff, board, teaching artists and students of the Center came together to celebrate legacy of long-time jewelry student Marjorie Lewis in a ribbon cutting for and grand opening of the Marjorie Lewis Memorial Library and Conference Room. As you all know Marjorie made two significant bequests to the Center: her library of over 1500 volumes of art books and a monetary gift of \$187,000. In addition to that, her daughter Julia – who was in attendance for the opening – had given the center \$60,000 over the last 24 months. After the welcome she received at the opening, and due in large part to the visible presence of teaching artists and students, Julia was move to offer another gift, just north of \$10,000.

During this period we also opened two Exhibitions, Paradox, the 16th Annual Betsy Meyer Exhibition and most recently the Member's Exhibition. Once again the Meyer family, and particularly Betsy's sons Scott and Andrew, were thrilled with the exhibition. I followed up their visit to Philly with my own to New York to discuss the future of the exhibition with them. It was a very encouraging visit with a great exchange of ideas between the three of us which, I believe, will lead to some very positive and significant changes to the exhibition in the coming years. We discussed that what was most important to Betsy was constant change and I learned how important she though it was to infuse those changes not only with new ideas, but with the creative power of youth. So Paige and I will be thinking of ways to incorporate those ideas into the Exhibition in the future.

Finally, the audit is finished and will be put to a vote at this month's board meeting. Our auditor Julian has hired an assistant and Sarah did a remarkable job both with her first audit and in working with a new audit partner.

Personnel Update

- We've hired a replacement for Mike. As you should know by now, Alex Hanevich a former board member, has taken on the morning maintenance position and I have received s number of very positive comments from students and teaching artists already regarding the improved state of the Center. It is also important to note that after 7 years at the Center, Mark Sullivan also decided to resign the evening and weekend maintenance position. Sarah is working diligently to find a suitable replacement for this integral position.
- We've also hired a new Studio Manager. Please join me in welcoming Intisar Hamilton to the Center. In a very short time, Intisar has already shown her enthusiasm, creativity, and capacity for organization and inspiration. She is a wonderfully objective observer and has asked many poignant questions and offered many creative suggestions already. We are all really glad to have her here and look forward to implementing her inspirations for a long time to come.

Strategic Planning Update

- Draft plan written and reviewed in meetings with Executive Committee
- Executive Committee felt it needed some clarity and restating to make clear how the strategies were intended to move us forward. In the meantime however, the committee felt that one of the main prongs of the strategic plan, data, needs to be addressed as soon as possible. To that end Jim met with staff in a discovery

process and the rest of the committee will be meeting to review the situation to gain a deeper understanding of the current situation regarding data at the Center.

- Thomas and Joe Kluger to meet this Friday to review changes to executive summary, vision and, objective measurement and financial numbers.
- After refining, the draft will be presented to board members and other stakeholders in “road show” with Thomas and Joe Kluger

Communications Update:

- Drexel University and the Lenfest Center for Cultural Partnerships has agreed to fund another co-op student for the Summer. The student will assist the camp director and the education department with summer camp.
- Summer Camp recruitment has begun and our first camp fair is January 14th. Brochures are in and look great, be sure to pick one up!
- A new P.A.M. page on our website is in progress. We are also creating a space on the homepage to feature the P.A.M. of the month
- We’ve created a space in the Center for a Community Partnerships Spotlight to bring awareness to the work we do outside of the Center. That should be on view later this month

Education Update:

- Fall tuition goal [\$158,429] and exceeded it [\$162,456]
- YTD tuition income is \$186360 on a YTD budget of \$194,977, (making up \$12K of the \$20K gap created when the Yeshiva school realized our program was so successful that they needed to hire their own FT art teacher)
- Adult daytime enrollments are 500 of the 890 total registrations
- New kids classes in mixed media, ceramics and comics are performing beyond our expectations
- Adult evening classes have continued downward trend 114 registrations this fall vs 134 last year. Have initiated a data study to assess adult evening registration trends over the last three years
- Increased community partner programs at both Elwyn and Carelink
- Catharine School administrative logistics remain an issue effecting that program (see Thomas’ info regarding identifying good school partners above)

Development Update:

- Launched the ‘What’s Your Story’ end of year campaign. Approximately 3500 appeals went out with 130 of these hand personalized by staff.
- Raised \$6,240 in individual contributions from the ‘What’s Your Story’ campaign. The campaign received contributions from 28 individuals a decrease of nearly 50% from last year.
- It is unclear what the effect of the new tax laws are (this is the first year, based on the calendar that they may have had an effect). We will be scanning the landscape for survey results and research on this topic in the coming months and beyond.
- Increased overall giving to Member’s Exhibition awards including the naming of the new “Etta Winograd Ceramics Award”
- Using DonorSeach to screen and analyze our student and donor base for prospects.
- Received \$6K grant for CBVI from Fredericks Foundation.
- Received a \$1,730 donation from Fox & Roach Trident Charities obtained for our benefit by the efforts of Chamber Connect group member Shelly Guinnessy. Chamber Connect is a subgroup of the Main Line Chamber that meets at the Center every month.

- Submitted renewal for the organization's 'Educational Improvement Organization' status.

Exhibition Update:

- Exhibitions closed out 2019 with Paradox, the 16th Annual Betsy Meyer Exhibition.
- Received a great deal of positive feedback throughout the show
- Unfortunately ended with only one art sale.
- Over 120 middle schoolers came to see the show and sketch in the galleries.
- Member's show opened on Friday past. About 140 works exhibited and 10+ mediums represented with more 3-D work than in the past.
- After the Members Exhibition, the Lower Merion School District show will takeover in the galleries.
- The Welcome Gallery will soon become the Bob Finch Community Gallery. Stay tuned for details.

Finance and Facilities Update (Sarah Dennis):

- Tuition remains strong, at 98% of the budget goal while also making up nearly all of the loss from the Yeshiva School partnership.
- We are working to find vendors for the leak in the basement. After consultation with Jim we believe we will have to look at waterproofing contractors. We are relying on their expertise to know whether we will have to waterproof the exterior of the building, the basement itself or a combination of both.
- We have posted the nighttime and weekend maintenance position, if you know someone who might be a good fit, please let me know.