

## From the Directors' Desks

Last week there were several headlines on the front page of *The New York Times* reporting on all of the problems and difficulties that the New York City schools are facing this year. The one that struck us the most was "New York Principals Get to Oversee Cuts in Budgets." We certainly understand all the problems that this one phrase means to the schools. Accountability has not changed. Schools will still be expected to increase students' scores in reading, math, social studies and science. But significantly fewer funds mean that they will have to accomplish this with fewer teachers and larger classes.

The impact of the budget really hit home when we began to reach out to schools to see which ones wanted to participate in our grant-funded programs. This summer we began to approach lots of schools with our exciting federally and privately funded programs. We were surprised at how many schools said that they would *love* to have LeAp programs, but that they were so badly hit that even \$3,500 for 40 sessions and a Broadway theatrical performance was beyond their budget.

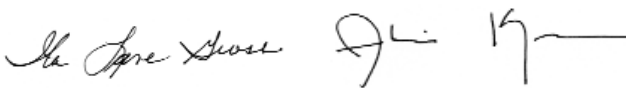
This summer we ran a seminar for kindergarten through 5th-grade teachers. They all arrived in mid-August not ready to return to school. Many dreaded the thought of having a third more students this coming year as compared with last year. They wondered how they were going to cope. We provided them with lots of exciting strategies and ideas that would work well with the expected larger classes. We helped them develop lots of exciting diversified instructional strategies so that all of

their students could be engaged on one topic, but each working at their own level. By the end of the week the teachers were really eager to try them out and couldn't wait to get back into their classrooms. We hope that this enthusiasm will last and that the reality of more students won't overwhelm them.

Not all the news has been bad. There was also some really great news late this summer. All state tests are scheduled for spring. This is a joy to teachers, as that means that they have the full year to teach and only have to deal with test preparation in the late spring. We have found that most teachers love to teach, and the joy of the moment when a student suddenly understands something is the greatest of rewards. All of the teachers we worked with this summer talked about that great moment when they saw a light go on in a child's face indicating real understanding. In fact, *that* is why we continue to work in schools and remain committed despite all of the bureaucratic roadblocks, the struggle to find funding, the fact that some of our teaching artists leave every year to find new careers or move to new cities, the changing agendas of schools, and the fact that many of our wonderful principals have retired.

LeAp is in this struggle for the long haul. We remain passionate, devoted, and determined to help all students, teachers and schools reach their full potential.

Best Wishes,



Ila Lane Gross  
Executive Director

Alice Krieger  
Associate Executive Director

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**Thank you to our generous funders:** Applebaum Family Fdn., Milton & Sally Avery Arts Fdn., Axe-Houghton Fdn., Barker Welfare Fdn., Bay and Paul Fdns., Center for Arts Education, Colgate-Palmolive, ConEdison Strategic Partnerships, Dickler Family Fdn., Richard Davoud Donchian Fdn., Epstein Teicher Philanthropies, Fidelity Investments, Bernard F. & Alva B. Gimbel Fdn., Haskell Family Fdn., HSBC Bank USA, N.A., Hyde and Watson Fdn., JPMorgan Chase Fdn., Kinder Morgan Fdn., Robert Lehman Fdn., Lemberg Fdn., Leon Lowenstein Foundation, Inc., Lewis-Feigenbaum Charitable Trust, Livable Streets Initiative, Lone Pine Fdn., Ronald McDonald House Charities of New York and New Jersey, New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, New York City Department of Youth and Community Development, New York State Council on the Arts, New York State Education Department, Laura J. Niles Fdn., Partnership for After School Education, Raymond J. & Mary C. Reisert Fdn., RGK Fdn., Richmond County Savings Fdn., The Seth Sprague Educational and Charitable Fdn., Edith Glick Shoolman Children's Fdn., The Staten Island Fdn., The After School Corporation, UPS Fdn., U.S. Department of Education, West Side Children's Fund, Upromise and many generous individuals.

# Awards & Celebrations

## LeAp's Successes Recognized with Encore Award

On May 26, the Arts & Business Council of New York presented LeAp with the Encore Award for its exemplary partnership with Fidelity Investments and the Viertel/Frankel/Baruch/Routh Group. This three-way collaboration has produced the highly successful Fidelity FutureStage program. The annually presented Encore Awards recognizes exemplary partnerships between arts organizations and businesses.

In its three years, LeAp's collaboration with Fidelity has helped over 1,800 middle and high school students develop a love of theater and the skills to write and act in well constructed plays.

"The most important thing I've learned is that there is no limit to creativity," said one of the young playwrights from Fordham High School for the Arts.

Students worked with LeAp teaching artists, professional dramaturges, and Broadway luminaries such as David Hyde Pierce,

Chazz Palminteri, and the cast of Billy Elliott.

This year's Fidelity FutureStage program was held at the New Imperial Theater on June 15. Queen Latifah hosted the event at which five schools presented their student plays. Ranging from JHS 383K's humorous "Path to the Throne" to Lower Manhattan Arts Academy's dramatic and artfully-directed "Culpa", the Fidelity FutureStage plays ran the gamut of topics and playwriting styles.



*LeAp Associate Executive Director Alice Krieger with the Encore Award*

## LeAp's Gala Glistened on the Hudson

The early threat of rain on May 27 turned into a glorious sunset as over 200 guests attended LeAp's "Gala on the Hudson" on a barge at Pier 66. With a stunning view of the New York City skyline, guests enjoyed jazz, cocktails, hors d'oeuvres, and student performances. The gala celebrated LeAp's 32nd year of innovative arts and hands-on programs for students throughout New York City.



*(above) Guests applauding young performers*

LeAp honored the visual artists and theater professionals that have generously participated in LeAp programs. Attending honorees included Christo and Jeanne-Claude, Tom Otterness, Dennis Oppenheim, Kenny Scharf, Tim Rollins and KOS, Jerry Zaks, and Kathleen Marshall.

Members of LeAp's remarkable staff of teaching artists and well known jazz musicians Jim Pugliese, Monique Jarvis, Jordan McLean, Chris Sullivan, Sebastian Cruz, Terence Murren, and Roberto Perez provided the music for the evening. Guests were treated to a dance-poetry performance by students of LeAp's award-winning RAVE afterschool program at JHS 22X in the Bronx.



*(above) Christo and Jeanne-Claude accept a gift created by students presented by Alexandra Leff, LeAp Deputy Director*

*(right) LeAp Board Co-Presidents—left to right—Frederica Wald and Jodi Caplan*

Contact LeAp! Call 212-769-4160 or email [info@leapnyc.org](mailto:info@leapnyc.org). Visit [www.leapnyc.org](http://www.leapnyc.org)

# Gifted & Talented Programs

## Capturing Creativity

LeAp is embarking on a new Gifted and Talented initiative. Designed to serve every type of school model, whether pulling 2nd– to 12th–grade students out of class or working directly with gifted classes, LeAp’s new Gifted and Talented initiative is dedicated to inspiring these students to excel and develop a love of learning by tapping into their creativity and piquing their curiosity.



In this program, students first work independently or in pairs to create their own board games based on a subject of interest to them, anything from sports to history. The program culminates next spring with LeAp’s Innovators and Ideas Conference – a one-day conference that connects gifted students with creative problem-solving innovators drawn from a wide variety of fields. Selected students from each participating school will have the opportunity to meet and share ideas on the creative process with these exciting professionals in fields such as medicine, engineering, law, fashion, the arts, real estate development, environmental studies and many other areas. At this event, students will find mentors to encourage them to further their intellectual curiosity.

Through this program, students’ eyes will open to the creative opportunities in many fields and come one step closer to coming up with their own ideas for solving the problems in the world around them.

To date, approximately 20 schools have requested the program. This program is open to any school interested in participating.

*Students building a home in “Architecture: From Cottages to Castles”, one of LeAp’s Gifted and Talented programs*

## LeAp Inspires Gifted Students

For over 30 years, LeAp has worked with gifted students in K–12 schools citywide as well as Hunter College Elementary School and NYC’s specialized high schools. By combining Embedded Embodied Cognitive Theory, Joseph Renzulli’s Enrichment Triad Model, Benjamin Bloom’s Taxonomy, and Howard Gardner’s Theory of Multiple Intelligences with project-based learning, LeAp engages gifted students. LeAp’s talented teaching artists are trained to utilize a variety of learning modalities to meet the needs and abilities of gifted and talented students.

Since the implementation of the No Child Left Behind Act, LeAp has identified an increased need for gifted programs in public schools. While No Child Left Behind promotes accountability for students’ success, it also emphasizes standardized test scores and encourages teachers teach to the test. As a result, many gifted students are left feeling unchallenged and bored.



Almost every program in the LeAp catalog can be adapted to the interests of gifted and talented students. LeAp’s open-ended approach addresses the inquisitive nature of gifted students. From industrial design to starting a classroom business, LeAp’s extensive array of programs can meet the needs of all gifted and talented students.

LeAp conducted residencies with gifted students at PS 383K and Mark Twain High School in playwriting and play production as part of the Fidelity FutureStage program. At PS 144Q, LeAp conducted science residencies as an enrichment program. The 4th and 5th grade students at PS 12Q combined photography with the study of Andy Warhol to create works of art on display at the executive offices of HSBC Bank USA, N.A..

*Two Warhol-inspired projects by students of PS 12Q*

# New Federal Grants

## Bronx Charter Schools, Columbia Univ., and LeAp Collaborate

LeAp is collaborating with Columbia University's History Department and the Carl C. Icahn Charter School on a five-year Fundamentals of American History Project grant funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Teaching American History program. This collaboration is part of LeAp's American History Comes Alive program. The project will improve the instruction of American history by training teachers and increasing student achievement outcomes.



*Students working on an archaeological dig*

Professional development lectures will be given by Columbia University history professors Eric Foner, Natasha Lightfoot, Elizabeth Blackmar, Herbert Sloan, and Evan Haefeli and related innovative workshops and classroom modeling will be conducted by LeAp's Executive Director Ila Lane Gross, Dr. Deborah Everett-Lane, and LeAp teaching artists. The entire program includes lectures, educational strategy workshops, in-class modeling, summer seminars, panel discussions, and historical site visits. This project will introduce teachers to new approaches to teaching American history with topics ranging from Native Americans to the various presidential eras and the causes of the Civil War.

This grant builds on the successful strategies that LeAp developed with funding from Project Save, a two year, federal grant in American History for 7th and 8th grade that linked social studies with literacy. PS/IS 188M and JHS 162X both reported dramatic increases on the statewide ELA tests. For example, prior to our program, only 45% of 7th grade student at PS/IS 188M tested on or above grade level. By the end, 60% of the 7th grade tested on or above grade level. At JHS 162X, on or above grade level test scores for 8th graders rose from 34% to 52%. All the lessons that produced these fabulous results are available through LeAp.

As Project Save made significant improvements in teaching and learning at the participating schools, this new federally-funded collaborative project seeks to do so as well!

## LeAp is One of Two Arts Agencies to Win Federal Grant

This year LeAp received a 21st Century grant, one of only two arts education organizations in NYC to do so. LeAp will provide engaging hands-on activities linked to the academic programs at PS 84 and PS 19 in Williamsburg. The competition for the grant was more challenging this year than in past years due to the increased number of applicants and the limited amount of funding to go around. Of the nearly 400 applications, only 60 were funded.



*Students participating in LeAp's mural and African drumming afterschool residencies*

The federally-funded 21st Century program supports the creation of community learning centers that operate programs during after-school hours for students, particularly for those in disadvantaged communities, and their families. 21st Century grants provide academic enrichment activities along with youth development opportunities and parent literacy/outreach workshops to complement students' in-school programs. These afterschool programs help

students achieve high test scores as well. Some of the programs LeAp will provide include chess, fashion design, musical productions, puppetry, and dance. Parent workshops will include ELL, GED, literacy, stress management, and more.

LeAp will also provide these engaging programs to students in 13 other schools through 21st Century funds given directly to school districts.

# Past & Future Successes

## New ALLL 3-5 Initiative Really Scores

The results from LeAp's early childhood and elementary school literacy programs – which use visual arts, music, dance, and more to teach writing and reading comprehension – are in, and it's all aces!

Students participating in LeAp's federally-funded Arts Learning Leads to Literacy for grades 3 – 5 (ALLL 3-5), significantly outperformed their peers.

Across the board, test scores went way up. What was surprising was that ALLL 3-5 was particularly effective with both gifted students and students who started the program well below grade level. Unlike below grade level students in the control group, the ALLL 3-5 under-performing students ended the year on grade level and the gifted students dramatically out-performed the gifted students in the control classes. In addition, ALLL 3-5 effectively



*Elementary school teachers at an ALLL Summer Seminar*

closed the verbal gender gap between boys and girls. Boys went from a half year behind to nearly equal. When it came to non-English speaking students and English Language Learners, the ALLL 3-5 instruction was very helpful in bringing them up to grade level with the other students, again out-performing their peers in control classes.

In 2008-09, LeAp held seven professional staff development workshops at New York University training teachers in its effective methods. An evaluation of the seven workshops this year showed that 91% of teachers learned to apply alternative approaches to teaching higher level thinking and basic skills and 94% were able to repeat the literacy projects with their classes. This training significantly contributed to the success of the first year of this four-year grant.

## LeAp Brings Issues to the Table in Union Square Park

At Union Square Park on May 28, crowds and press gathered for the presentation for the second year of the largest student

exhibition in the history of NYC parks. "A View from the Lunchroom: Students Bringing Issues to the Table", the culminating event in LeAp's Public Art Program is designed to empower students to express themselves on community issues through beautiful, expressive art, using a lunchroom table as their canvas.

As catalysts for social change, middle school students addressed issues including gangs, violence, drugs, environment, and the economy in this 10-park summer exhibition. Among the tables displayed, IS 347K's "Economy Gone Mad" was installed at Green Central Knoll Park (Brooklyn) and IS 61R's "Project Peace-Making Positive Change" was displayed in Silver Lake Park (Staten Island).



*Students from IS 61R present their Public Art table*

As part of the program, students met with internationally-known artists Christo and Jeanne-Claude, Tom Otterness, Kenny Scharf, Dennis Oppenheim, Vito Acconci, Tim Rollins and KOS, Leo Villareal, and Betty Woodman, among many others. Guest speakers at the exhibition's launch included Deputy Mayor Dennis M. Walcott, NYSCA Executive Director Heather Hitchens, Deputy Parks Commissioner Kevin Jeffrey, NYCDOE Visual Arts

Coordinator Karen Rosner, and artist Tom Otterness.

The exhibition was developed in cooperation with NYC Parks & Recreation, and with support from HSBC Bank USA, NA, NYC Dept of Cultural Affairs, Surroundart, Richmond County Savings Fdn., Kinder Morgan Fdn., The Seth Sprague Educational and Charitable Fdn., and The Compleat Sculptor.

Middle schools interested in the 09-10 year, please contact LeAp at (212) 769-4160 x 6.

## LeAp Students on Broadway

Building on last year's success, LeAp is proud to launch the 2nd Annual New York City August Wilson Monologue Competition! High school students from six schools will study playwright August Wilson's work, learn monologue techniques, and ultimately perform a Wilson monologue for celebrity judges and a live audience in school and citywide competitions.

"The goal of the competition is to create educational materials about August Wilson that allow students to connect these important theatre works with educational curricula like history, social studies and literature," said Todd Kreidler, Associate Director of True Colors Theatre Company in Atlanta, the organization LeAp teamed up with for the first year of the program. "This monologue competition offers students of all races the opportunity to inhabit the lives and speak the words of these vital, lively characters."

The three winners from the New York City competition will compete in a national competition with students from several other cities at the August Wilson Theater on Broadway.

As part of the program, students will also attend a performance on Broadway and meet with a professional actor, director or dramatist who has worked on an August Wilson play.

LEARNING THROUGH AN EXPANDED ARTS PROGRAM, INC.  
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## LeAp's Summer of Fun

Typically, students use the summer time to hang out with their friends, play video games, and avoid thinking about anything regarding school. However, the students at PS 33X and PS 182Q are anything but typical, taking part in LeAp Summer Camp Program where they learn art skills and have fun!

Whether putting their bodies to work with cheerleading or putting their ears to use with music theory, these students took part in all sorts of activities. LeAp's students mastered tricky Brazilian songs, yoga inspired dances that pay homage to a healthy earth, traditional West African drum rhythms that speak a unique language, and mixed-media art projects that require critical thinking.

*A student in the LeAp Summer Camp Program at PS 33X works on a mixed-media art project*



LeAp's mission is to improve the quality of public education through a hands-on, integrated arts approach to learning. Leap empowers students to reach their full potential.