



News From the City Neighbors Foundation

March 2017 Springtime at City Neighbors

Just a week or so ago, we celebrated the first day of Spring and took an extra moment to celebrate the life around us.

And there is so much life on our campuses these days: friends playing on the playground and books being read in hallways, students concentrating on math tests and science experiments, family events and parent conferences, presentations of learning and year-long projects underway, debates, self-portraits, galleries, Step shows, and so much more. Soon, we will be welcoming German students from Leipzig and sending our students to New Orleans for in-depth field work. Teachers are working hard and with great collaboration and care.

Life happens outside of our campuses for our 850 students, 100 teachers, and each of our many families. And this year, more than ever, school and community life overlapped. While we faced hardships together, we discovered that we are not alone but part of a community that is connected and broad and filled with compassion and generosity. There is no way to fully capture life in our schools. It's too beautiful, too complex, and too messy. But we notice it, appreciate it, and are grateful to be part of it.

Since we can't capture every story here, we will share just a few to highlight the work happening here at City Neighbors.



We hope you enjoy this newsletter!
Happy Spring, everyone!

The Malone Memorial Playground

JP Morgan Chase to Donate Land to City Neighbors Charter School

For almost three years our community has worked to address a vacant property that sits adjacent to our play space and that had turned into a site for squatters. Our families and staff have helped keep the lot clean while continually reaching out to work with Baltimore's leadership and city agencies to find a pathway to resolution. These efforts contributed to an extraordinary end result - one that will make an impact for our students and community for many years to come.

We are delighted to share with you that JP Morgan/Chase has agreed to donate the land at 4310 Raspe Avenue to City Neighbors. Last Thursday they began to raze the house on that property, and next they will deed the land to our school for the creation of The Malone Memorial Playground, a memorial play space in honor of the six Malone children lost in the tragic fire of January 11: Bridgette, Amelia, Zoe, Amanda, Billy, and Daniel.

This generous donation will allow us to create a place of beauty that represents hope, love, and community. Together with the Malone family, our community is imagining a new pocket playground, a place for children and families to gather beneath a grove of trees that carry the breeze and offer a place to contemplate what is good in the world.

Advocacy Teams are in Action!

We are proud to have joined organizations like the Baltimore Education Coalition, Downtown Baltimore Family Alliance, Baltimoreans United in Leadership Development (BUILD) and Baltimoreans for Educational Equity (BEE) to take a stand for equitable funding for Baltimore City Schools.

This year, each City Neighbors school has an Advocacy Team working hard doing grassroots organizing and communicating with our families. With those efforts, we were able to turn out almost 200 City Neighbors students, teachers, staff, and families to the big Baltimore Education Coalition rally in Annapolis, and dozens more to subsequent rallies at City Hall and the Inner Harbor.

Through the anticipated restoration of funds to City Schools from the State and anticipated additional funds from the City, Baltimore City Schools is anticipating between \$40 and \$60 million dollars of additional funding to schools next year.

This restoration of funding is a direct result of strong partnerships across Baltimore City and coordinated and powerful advocacy efforts. Thank you to the community and all the families, teachers, and students from across the city for responding to the call to action!

BUILDING LEARNING COMMUNITIES

2nd Annual Progressive Ed Summit South



Two years ago, a small progressive school in New Orleans googled three concepts: project-based learning, arts integration, and Reggio Emilia. That's how they found City Neighbors. Since then, we have partnered with the Homer A. Plessy Community School to take a stand for what urban education could look like, sound like, and feel like.

As part of this partnership, The Homer A. Plessy Community School and City Neighbors Foundation co-sponsor the annual Progressive Education Summit South. Modeled after our Progressive Education Summit here in Baltimore, this event brings together a strong community of schools dedicated to progressive practices in the New Orleans region.

This year, the 2nd annual Progressive Ed Summit South welcomed keynote, Steve Seidel, co-founder of Project Zero at Harvard University, and the 2015 keynote speaker at the 5th annual Progressive Education Summit in Baltimore. In addition, City Neighbors educators, **Tracy Pendred** and **Nadiyah Herrera**, traveled to New Orleans, spent a day onsite working with teachers and presenting workshops at the Summit.



Congratulations to Homer A. Plessy on a successful Summit, where attendance increased by 25% from last year. We are grateful for our partnership and for their stand for children, teachers, and families in New Orleans.

Calvin Rodwell Elementary and Mary Moss at J. Albert Adams Academy

We are grateful to continue our consultancy with **Calvin Rodwell Elementary School**, where we currently have two cohorts of teachers engaged in professional development. This year, we launch a pilot program that works with five teachers to transform and connect their physical environments with their teaching practice, using the physical environment as "The Third Teacher." Thanks to a grant from the Goldseker Foundation, we are also continuing our work in the creation and implementation of a project-based learning afterschool program to support students who benefit from additional learning opportunities in their day.

In addition to our work with Calvin Rodwell Elementary, we are finishing a year-long consultancy with the **Mary Moss at J. Albert Academy** in Anne Arundel County. We are supporting a powerful cohort of teachers there to create a school-wide tool and process for the successful implementation of project-based learning across disciplines and cohorts. And, currently, every teacher is in the midst of launching a project-study.

Will You Support the Work of City Neighbors?

[Get Your TICKETS HERE.](#)

NIGHT IN THE FAB LAB!

[Please join us, bring a friend! Get your tickets here.](#)

7th Annual Progressive Education Summit January 27, 2018!

The Progressive Education Summit is heading back to blizzard season!

We are returning to our roots and moving the Summit back to the winter. We know it's cold and we know there is a chance it could be snowed out. But something about huddling together on a cold Saturday and connecting with amazing colleagues, invigorating our practice, and pushing ourselves forward just feels right.

If you have any ideas or suggestions for the Progressive Education Summit, please reach out to our Summit Coordinator, Gwendolyn Unoko at gunoko@cityneighbors.org

The Annual City Neighbors Mind Fair April 6, 6 - 7:30 PM

Building a Telescope
Experimental Film
Special Effects Make-up
Graffiti
Starting A Bakery
Skateboarding
African Colonization
Robots
Origami
Irish History
Lasers
Chernobyl
Ballet
Brown vs. Board of Education
Crooners
Philosophy
Colonial Living
Chess
Masks
Making A Horror Movie
Service Dogs
And so much more...

Each year, every City Neighbors middle-school student selects a topic of their choosing and pursues a year-long project of interest on that topic. All students go through a rigorous process, including presenting a project proposal and presenting to two different project panels over the course of the year.

You are invited to the culmination of their work! If you are interested in attending, contact Bobbi at bmacdonald@cityneighbors.org.

AEMS MAIN Event at City Neighbors

We were so pleased to host the Arts Education in Maryland Schools Alliance's (AEMS) first Maryland Arts Integration Network (MAIN) event of 2017, The Arts and MakerSpaces, where art teachers from across the State gathered to explore how MakerSpaces enhance arts-integrated instruction and learning in schools. The event took place in the City Neighbors Fab Lab and included workshops and hands-on experiences, with our own Fab Lab Guru, Justin Eames, as a presenter.

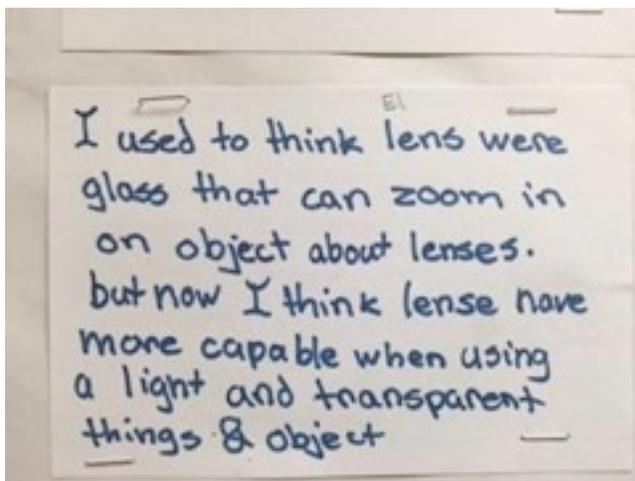
HIGHLIGHT: DOCUMENTATION How Do We Show What We Value at City Neighbors?

Documentation is the practice of creating public displays of student work, thinking, and process.



Inspired by the [Reggio Emilia Approach](#), the hallways of City Neighbors are filled with Documentation panels. Very different than the traditional "A" paper bulletin boards, documentation captures the thinking that went into a project, the questions and the thoughts of the students, and exemplars of the work in all stages of a process. Documentation challenges teachers to reflect on the most important elements of a project and also serves as a chance to educate families, visitors, and each other about the work in our classrooms and school.

If you are interested in learning more, please let us know. We would love to show you the Documentation at City Neighbors and get your input as we continue to grow and learn at City Neighbors.



Want To Become a Learning Partner?

Our Learning Partners initiative is a chance for educators from different schools to come together as a cohort and do a deep dive into an area of pedagogy and practice. Writing, Project-Based Learning, and Physical Environment are all examples of the types of study that Learning Partners might explore together. Currently, in our cohort with Hamilton Elementary/Middle School and St. Francis of Assisi, our teachers are looking closely at teaching nonfiction writing. The cohort meets quarterly at a participating school site to delve into what it takes to support the learning and development of young writers in the classrooms of our schools.

We are dedicated to building a learning community, and the Learning Partners model is an exciting way to connect between schools.

Let us know if you are interested in becoming a Learning Partner school!

Can We Help Your School to Grow?

If there is any way that our lessons learned, our work, or our approach could help your school to grow, please reach out and let us know. School visits, consultancies, and workshops are all available as we work to support our colleagues in schools everywhere. Check out www.cityneighborsfoundation.org.

Thank You to the Family League School Climate Collaborative

City Neighbors received a \$1,000 grant from the Family League to support our work in developing a strong 9th grade experience, rooted in progressive education practices that would help our new students assimilate into the culture and climate of City Neighbors High School.

This represents new support from the Family League, and we are grateful to be participating in the effort to create and capture strong practices for school culture and climate here in Baltimore City.

Thank You to the Wright Family Foundation

City Neighbors received a \$20,000 grant from the Wright Family Foundation to support our model literacy approach that includes literacy-rich instruction, family workshops, professional development and more - creating a strong culture of literacy and a love of learning! We couldn't do this work without your support. Thank you!

TEACHING AND LEARNING

How Do We Put Justice In Our System?



How do we put justice in our system? Tenth graders have been hard at work over many weeks trying to answer just that question.

Tenth grade teachers at CNHS--Christina Ross, Jessica Thompson, and Jenni Williams collaborated to create this powerful exploration. In government, students explored the issue of mass incarceration and created proposals with a solution to a problem that contributes to the issue. In an effort to humanize those who have been incarcerated, they also created a book inspired by Humans of New York.

In art, students created a social justice piece inspired by artist Faith Ringgold. In English, students studied protest music as poetry and created their own protest music, which was then scored by the music class.

As an outgrowth of this project study focused on Mass Incarceration, many City Neighbors High School students became strong advocates for the rights and recognition of people in our society.

Our students had the opportunity to hold panels and conduct interviews and, on March 21, their study culminated with presenting their work and learning to an authentic audience from outside the school. We extend our thanks to so many community members who supported this work.

Third Grade Inclusive Bookstore Makes the News!

Incensed by a series of children's books that promoted stereotypes of boys and girls, our third graders went about the task of creating their own Inclusive Bookstore, filled only with books that broke down stereotypes and promoted inclusion.

Before they opened their bookstore, 3rd graders researched what it took to open a bookstore, including field work to local bookstores. Each student wrote their own inclusive book, and their books, as well as others endorsed by the 3rd grade class, were sold at this two-day event in January, which also included an open mic and snacks. [Here they are on the news.](#)

City Neighbors Fab Lab of Inspiration

The City Neighbors Fabrication Lab is up and running with student work that includes 3D printing, laser engraving, vinyl cutting, sewing, welding, woodworking, robotics, electronics, photography, and computer design. Students from grades 1t through 12 are taking advantage of our design and maker's studio.

There is evidence of prototypes, lanterns, book jackets made of wood (that somehow bend), 3D chess sets, mathematical equations on cubes, virtual realities, games, signs, and so much more.

Our Fab Lab Manager, Justin Eames, works with teachers from all three schools, helping to integrate the Fab Lab into classroom projects. He also works with individuals and groups of students doing project work. Justin has designed and held four Family Maker Nights this year for parents and students.

We invite you to come see our Fabrication Lab in action! Reach out to Justin Eames at jeames@cityneighborshighschool.org.



City Neighbors High School and The Park School of Baltimore

The Interview Project

We continue our partnership with The Park School of Baltimore. Through a grant from the EE Ford Foundation, City Neighbors High School teachers and Park School teachers are creating professional development opportunities designed by teams working together.

As an outgrowth of that work, check out the Interview Project conducted by teachers and students from both schools. Shout out to Sean Martin at CNHS and Patricia Porcarelli at Park for their collaborative work on this project. Here is just a small sample of the work: [What Happens When You Listen to a Stranger?](#)

Check Out Our Project Cards

In an effort to capture the ongoing project studies and arts-integration work at our schools, we are slowly building a portfolio of project and art "cards" that can be seen on our website.

Check out this one on City Neighbors Hamilton's 4th and 5th grade project, [Will the Inner Harbor Be Fishable or Swimmable by 2020?](#) from 2016. Want to see more examples? Check them all out at www.cityneighborsfoundation.org.

Are You Interested in Becoming a Teacher at City Neighbors in 2017-2018?

City Neighbors is always looking for passionate, dedicated teachers who want to teach in an arts-integrated, project-based learning approach and be part of creating the future of City Neighbors. If you are interested in joining City Neighbors for 2017-2018, please email Mike Chalupa, Academic Director, with your resume and cover letter to mchalupa@cityneighbors.org.

While we are looking for teachers in every grade and subject area (K-12), we are especially seeking High School Special Educators, 6-12 Math Teachers, and a High School Foreign Language teacher.



*Wildflowers Tradition for Opening Day at
City Neighbors High School*

cityneighborsfoundation.org