



A Letter From The Director and President

Dear friends:

First things first: a great big PYA THANK YOU to all of you who contributed to our winter appeal. The campaign warmed our hearts in the coldest months, as we were showered with support by a community that cares deeply about the work we do on behalf of the children who count on PYA each day. (If you missed the winter appeal, please remember that you can donate online anytime at www.princetonyoungachievers.org.)

Winter was renovation season at PYA – thanks to the efforts of our ever-fabulous program committee (see bios to right) and volunteer corps, led by the able hands (and tools!) of volunteer carpenter, Gil Kunz as well as the Yedlin Construction Co.! With the sawdust swept away, we're now "springing" into our new and improved learning spaces with great gusto... Sprucing up our spaces at PYA has meant tossing old, incomplete games, organizing so many books so lovingly donated, fixing broken shelving and coat-hooks, adding 'study lounge' lamps, and testing out some brand new classroom furniture compliments of the Rider University Education Dept. Even our Valley Road office has been refreshed, courtesy of Princeton Area Boy Scout Troop # 88. We urge you to come visit the busy places where children learn, grown and achieve, at PYA!

Pamela Elmi
Executive Director

Clayton Marsh
Board President

PYA Calendar:

June 6th- 'Creative Fridays' Art Show at Pannell 5pm

June 12th- Last Day of PYA classes this year

September 8th- PYA classes start for new term

Fall Fundraiser Concert TBA!!!

October 16th- National "Lights On!" After School Day

Volunteer Spotlight

Please allow us to shine some much-deserved light and recognition upon three of our amazing Program Committee Members:

Suzanne Gespass, current Chair of our Program Committee, who has been a PYA supporter since the get-go, comes to us from the Department of Teacher Education at Rider. Much to the advantage of PYA staff and students, Susan is a seasoned teacher, and her research focuses on emergent literacy, teachers' personal reading habits, and the use of literature circles and in teacher education. Suzanne holds a BA from Sarah Lawrence and her M.Ed. and Ph.D. from The University of Arizona.

Bob Ginsberg, principal of Johnson Park School, has been a Princeton educator for nearly 20 years. Bob guided the re-opening of Littlebrook School in 1988, and served as assistant superintendent of Princeton Regional Schools, before requesting a return to JP, where he has remained, ably and happily, since. In 1994, Bob served on the committee that recommended the creation of PYA. In addition to his tireless efforts on behalf of PYA, Bob is also the Princeton Public Library's second longest-serving trustee. Bob earned his bachelors and masters degrees from Brooklyn College, and a Ph.D. from Cornell.

Rick Ellis has been involved in the fields of early childhood and elementary education for 33 years. Trained at, and now active as a consultant to Bank Street College and Rider University, he also has served in leadership with the East Coast Migrant Head Start Project, and has experience with The Responsive Classroom, The Coalition of Essential Schools, The Courage to Teach, and Reggio Emilia schools. We are fortunate to have Rick's plethora of knowledge and experience with developmentally appropriate practice.

SPRING-SUMMER 2008



Our Pannell staff team at the spring break field trip to the Princeton University Art Museum

Policy Update RE: Homework!

At PYA we know for sure that it takes “a village” to ensure success for our children. We are all pleased that PYA policies have been clarified by our program committee, so that the expectations are crystal clear between PYA staff, parents, students and daytime classroom teachers. In the interest of providing authentic (meaningful for the child) reading and writing experiences, the following **Homework Policy** is now in place:

1. P.Y.A. personnel are participants' tutors, not their teachers. P.Y.A. tutors are most comfortable helping youngsters with work that represents practice of skills that the children's school-based teachers have already taught the children or that represents tasks that are speculative or open-ended in nature.
2. P.Y.A. tutors will support pupils in preparation for quizzes, tests, or oral presentations.
3. P.Y.A. tutors will notify a youngsters' school-based teachers if the youngsters are unable to do the homework- the task seems way over the youngsters' heads- or complete their assignments in a reasonable amount of time.
4. P.Y.A. tutors inform the parents that they've notified the children's teachers, per guideline No.3, above.
5. P.Y.A. officials will encourage school-based teachers to notify P.Y.A. tutors as well as pupils' parents if pupils aren't completing their homework assignments.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

Anyone interested in becoming a volunteer or making a donation may contact:

Princeton Young Achievers
25 Valley Road

Princeton, N.J. 08540

For more information, call (609) 806-4216 or visit www.princetonyoungachievers.org

Pamela Elmi, Executive Director

SPECIAL THANKS ...

to our volunteer website/newsletter team:

Jessica Deutsch
Sarah Lewis Smith
Cameron Manning
Caroline Quinones
Vidhya Ramesh

PROGRAM NEWS: Marching To Our Own Drumbeats

Our new Drumming Program ran this spring and we couldn't be more excited! Our drumming specialists, **Mauri Tyler** and **Ed Hynes**, led the way to health, relaxation, rhythm, imagination, and fun with a drum! This is a state grant funded partnership with the Princeton Senior Resource-Center. This very dynamic activity is based on FitRhythms, a non-competitive program that fosters community, creativity and mind/body wellness through the process of group music making and movement. FitRhythms™ is approved by the American Council on Exercise.

15 Years Of Young Achievers!

We are proud to announce that Princeton Young Achievers is now in its 15th year of service to the children and families who count on what we do and they way we do it. The kids keep raising the bar on what they can achieve, which inspires all of us, as a community, to want to do the same. We look forward to your ongoing support and involvement in sustaining our amazing places where children can learn, grow, and achieve.

PYA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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