

# Pushing Past Barriers...a Blueprint for 2006-07

*A word from the principal,  
Amy Wadsworth*

When we designed our curriculum map for this year, we wanted to capture the importance of a period of time that embraced some of the most dynamic changes in the western world. The 14th through 18th centuries were turbulent times that have since been labeled with such metaphorical terms as “renaissance, reformation, revolution.”

Our theme, “Pushing Past Barriers,” calls to mind the breaking out of limited thought and ways of being.

But this theme is relevant to more than just our social studies curriculum. As a school community, we can use it on a personal level. What are the barriers that traditionally separate parents from teachers? Students from other students? How can we push past communication barriers? Build better understanding of others and ourselves?

Our goals for the ‘07 school year give you an insight on how we are hoping to answer these questions.

## **FAMILY VILLAGES & PARENT FORUMS**

We want to create a greater sense of belonging for our parents and extended families. Because we come from all over the city and beyond, it’s easy to feel dis-

connected. Through family villages that are built around our students’ humanities classes, we hope to create a more intimate connection between parents and the school. Parent leaders are hosting these gatherings and serve as a link between the school and families. Our second village gatherings are scheduled for November 2 and 9. I hope that you’ll take advantage of them! Also during the year, we will be offering a number of parent forums that are aimed to provide you with greater knowledge of your middle school student. The first of these is scheduled for October 18 at 7:00 p.m. We will be looking at teen substance abuse. See the details in our monthly bulletin.

## **STUDENT LEADERSHIP**

Leadership is not a passively acquired attribute. We believe that students need to be guided and nurtured to build these skills. Leadership is also a valuable way to break down barriers between students. Our “junior and senior” students will be groomed throughout the year to reach out to other students, make constructive choices, and model exemplary behavior. Our young ladies and young gentlemen will attend workshops that address health, social, and emotional issues. All students will participate in community and school service. The 8th graders will be required to create a personal project that combines their knowledge and passions in a designated art form.

## **FOREIGN LANGUAGE**

A significant change in our school day is the decision to bring foreign language instruction into the regular curriculum. We have identified: three outcomes to develop a strong foundation in another language; to build a greater understanding of other places and people in the world; and to improve our

understanding of English. One of our consistent weak spots in standardized testing has been in language construction. One of the best ways of learning the structure of English is through the study of another language. I am very excited about the quality of learning these classes have brought to our day.

## **COMMUNICATION**

We have identified an array of communication avenues this year: parent email groups—general as well as specific to math, science, and each humanities teacher; a weekly update sent out over the parent link; a Web site where you can find up to date information and check on your students’ grades in each class; a monthly bulletin posted on the Web site; and a bi-monthly newsletter that is mailed home. Our Parent Leadership Association (PLA) is becoming stronger every year! They are providing the backbone of this communication plan. Information is one of the most important ways to push past barriers of confusion.

## **SMARTS**

As our students interact with the arts community, we are interested in making our relationships meaningful and substantive. Be sure you read Mary Craig’s article on page 2 about this exciting new program.

We have already pushed past numerous barriers in the last three years. Now that we have a wonderful space to accommodate our needs, and still remain close to many community resources, there’s no question that we are sailing into smoother waters. By the end of our 4th year in operation, we hope we will find ourselves even more united with a common belief and commitment to our school.

# Meet the Foreign Language Teachers

by Mary Craig

The 2006/2007 academic year marks the first year of school-wide instruction in foreign language at the Salt Lake Arts Academy. We would like to introduce our foreign language faculty to you.

**Ann Bauer** (Russian) grew up in Omaha, Nebraska and took up Russian as a student at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She began teaching Russian to undergraduates at UW while completing her masters degree. She's lived in Moscow for a total of three years, both before and after the collapse of the Soviet Union. In addition to teaching, Ann has used her Russian language at an agribusiness firm and as a translator for the Alaska Court System.

**Marielle Bruant-Carlson** (French) is a native of Lyon, France and received her French language certification at the Alliance Française de Paris. Marielle is also an editor of French manuscripts and previously worked in the publishing industry before moving to the United States a year ago. In her free time, she enjoys sewing.

**Mary Craig** (German) grew up in Oberlin, Ohio, where she earned a degree in voice performance at the Oberlin Conservatory of Music. Her music train-



Left to right: Ann Bauer, Carmen Chavira Jones, Pat Walker, Marielle Bruant-Carlson

ing required her to learn German, which she pursued at intensive language programs in Staufen, Germany and Salzburg, Austria, and in the German department at the University of Stuttgart. She uses German regularly with her Austrian husband's family. Mary continues to perform as a vocal soloist, often in German. Mary is also the coordinator of the SMARTS program with community arts partners.

**Natalie Guillory** (American Sign Language) is a native Utahn. She began learning American Sign Language at the age of thirteen and continued her studies in college, where she was actively involved with the deaf community. In addition to the courses she team teaches with Pat Walker, she has taught her own children, both of whom are fluent signers.

**Carmen Chavira Jones** (Spanish) was born and raised in Chihuahua, Mexico. She initially came to Utah as a horticulture engineer. She found her way into language teaching when she became a volunteer ESL teacher at her children's school. Soon she was offered a Spanish language teaching position with the Catholic Diocese. Carmen continues to offer ESL to

adults, serves as an on-call medical interpreter, and writes for *La Prensa Times*, a local Spanish-language newspaper.

**Pat Walker** (American Sign Language) splits the ASL instruction on an alternate day basis with Natalie Guillory. Pat grew up in Ogden, and lived in Chicago for 27 years. Her father was born deaf, and Pat started learning sign language before she learned to walk. She continues to use sign language in daily interactions with her family, including a grown deaf son and daughter-in-law, and her husband, who was also born deaf. She began teaching sign language in Chicago and has taught ever since.

## SMARTS

by  
Mary Craig

The Salt Lake Arts Academy Outreach Committee has spawned a new venture called **SMARTS**—Seasoned Mentors of the Arts. Its goal is to establish a rich web of connections with art makers and arts organizations in the Salt Lake community. As SMARTS Coordinator, I want to let the school community know about our efforts thus far.

First, we hosted two gatherings (in May and September) to bring local arts organizations into our school. Representatives toured our building while classes were in session to brainstorm meaningful ways to collaborate. These organizations included **Utah Symphony and Opera, Repertory Dance Theatre, the University of Utah, The Leonardo, Global Artways, and Bad Dog Rediscovered America**, among others.

One goal of this interaction is to design field trips and other activities around this year's academic theme, "Pushing Past Barriers: Renaissance, Reformation, and Revolution." Focusing on the theme helps us tailor a visit to an institution to our students' studies. Where possible, we seek to gain "behind the scenes" access so that students have a fuller picture of what it takes to create art.

Another goal of these relationships is to bring art makers and experts into our school to interact with students. Guests may offer presentations to individual classes or larger groups. They may also participate in an Arts Conference at the school, during which multiple workshop sessions are offered simultaneously throughout the

Continued on page 4

# The Art of Giving

by Rachel Colledge

*While I recognize the necessity for a basis of observed reality...true art lies in a reality that is felt.*

*Odilon Redon*

As a public charter school, the state funding we receive is just 85% of what a regular public school receives. We make up the difference through fundraising. Through the Annual Giving Campaign, Salt Lake Arts Academy's families, leaders and Board of Directors help to sustain the unique arts-integrated institution that is the Salt Lake Arts Academy. By fulfilling the Annual Giving Campaign goal we will ensure that this distinctive learning experience is offered to and experienced by Salt Lake Arts Academy students.

This year our overall fundraising goal is \$107,865. We will accomplish this through a three-fold effort: **(1.)** the Annual Giving Campaign, **(2.)** the Gala, and **(3.)** corporate support.

The Annual Giving Campaign occurs every fall and involves our internal community—parents, leaders, and board members. We have two goals for this campaign: to raise \$33,000 and, just as importantly, to have every family contribute, regardless of the amount. It strengthens the sense of ownership in the school when we all give. And, if we can demonstrate that all of our families support the school, outside community supporters are more willing to contribute.

Every family will be asked to support the Annual Giving Campaign. You will either receive a call from the development committee or be contacted at your **Village Meetings in early November.**

By fulfilling our fundraising goals we are able to provide our students with smaller humanities classes, foreign language instruction, new and upgraded technology, and more.

Please consider the amount that is appropriate for you to give. When we all join forces by contributing what we can, we enable our students to continue their creative, innovative, and imaginative education.

## REACHING OUT

by Jan Stucki Wilson

### Our Students in the Community



**Brighton Metz** took a digital photography class at Art Access Gallery this summer, and now she has a photograph in their show.



**Diantha Gordin** took a self-portrait class at Art Access Gallery and her portrait (her first-ever oil painting) is in the Art Access show, too. Diantha also entered photography in the Utah State Fair and won both first and second places. She's been an avid photographer ever since her first class with Shellee right here at SLAA!

Some of our students danced with the Children's Dance Theater for the grand opening of the new Children's Museum **Discovery Gateway** on September 16. They were **Katja Baranowski, Maggie Wilson, Mimi Andrews, and Dylan Proesch.**



**Tali Heiss** sings with the International Children's Choir and traveled to China last July for 18 days, where the choir competed in the International Choir Olympics. They came away with a bronze medal and had a terrific time

Part of the mission of the Salt Lake Arts Academy is to build a community of learners within the walls of our school. Another part is to encourage our students to be a part of the vibrant community in which we live. There's a world of shows, and productions, and experiences out there just waiting for us to jump in. In fact, so much is going on that we don't have room to print all the great news that we received. We'll try to print more next time. For now, take a look at what these kids have been up to:

visiting the Great Wall, the Forbidden City, pandas, and the Terracotta Warriors.

**Maggie Hale and Darby Dustman** entered the sewing competition at

the Utah State Fair this year. Maggie won 1st and 3rd place ribbons, and Darby won a 1st place ribbon.

**David Moran** went to Honduras this summer for almost a month to visit relatives. He was moved by the struggle for survival he saw there and has a greater understanding of why people will do whatever it takes to come here.



**Nadja Redd and Lucia Smith** took a class with artist Fahima-Amiri where she wrote and illustrated a story. Her book is on display at the main branch of The City Library.

**Kiefer Nunley** didn't even own a mitt when he tried out for a baseball team last spring. But after a summer of dedicated practice, he made it to the All Stars in his very first season.

# Take Me To Your Leader: The Arts Academy Goes Village

by Heather Bennett, parent and co-leader of Baylesopolis, a 5/6 village



**vil-lage** \vil-ij\ n. [ME, fr. MF, fr. OF] 1: a settlement larger than a hamlet and smaller than a town 2: something suggesting a village, esp. an aggregation of burrows or nests 3: a territorial area having the status of a village, esp. as a unit of local government

Which of these Webster's entries defines your humanities village? If you haven't a clue, perhaps you missed the first village meeting in late August or early September. Never fear. At the Salt Lake Arts Academy, there is always another chance.

The second family village gatherings are scheduled for **November 2 and 9, 6:00–7:00 p.m.** You are a citizen of the village in which your child attends his or her "humanities block" (language arts/social studies/physical education).

Save these dates as necessary:

## November 2

Ms. Arch's 5/6	Mrs. Jewell's 5/6 a.m.
Ms. Bayles' 5/6	Mrs. Walsh's 5/6
Ms. Buys' 7/8 a.m.	

## November 9

Ms. Arch's 7/8	Mrs. Jewell's 5/6 p.m.
Ms. Bayles' 7/8	Mrs. Walsh's 7/8
Ms. Buys' 7/8 p.m.	

We will begin the evening in our individual village classrooms for networking and presentation of the annual campaign, then dismiss for a group math "workshop." Teachers will describe our math programs, Everyday Math and College Preparatory

Math (CPM); go over parent resources; and share ideas on how to support student learning. Come prepared for problem solving.

The village concept is simple. Beginning in the 2005–06 school year, students were encouraged to make a village of each humanities classroom. They created a name, a flag, and a set of shared standards. This process helped strengthen the sense of community, both within each class and in the larger school.

This year we've drawn a village circle big enough to include parents. We want families to get to know each other, to work together in support of the teachers, and to help each other and the school as needed throughout the year.

Our initial gatherings introduced the village concept and gave the humanities teachers a chance to share their curriculum and teaching philosophy. Village leaders also provided treats and introductions.

In January, we'll talk about the arts and science programs and the Gala. In late April, we'll focus on reviewing the year, making future improvements, and planning culminating activities.

Perhaps by the end of May, all Salt Lake Arts families will share a new understanding of the term: **vil-lage** (adj. 1: conducted on a human scale:) "This school is completely village."

## SAVE THE DATE!!

### Evening of Art and Music by Students

December 18 • 6-8:30 p.m.

### Salt Lake Arts Academy Annual Gala

Thursday, March 15 and Friday, March 16, 2007  
Rose Wagner Performing Arts Center

Opportunity Prizes and Mysteries so far include

- House with ocean view in Cabo San Lucas!
- One-week stay in St. George in your own condo!
- A private star party at the Clark Planetarium!

Stay tuned for more updates and get involved!

Please call MaryBeth Clark at [mbjc@aspengrove.com](mailto:mbjc@aspengrove.com) to volunteer.

For more information visit our Web site at [www.slarts.org](http://www.slarts.org).

*Continued from page 2*

building, and students attend what they choose. The first Arts Conference is set for Friday, January 19, 2007. A second is tentatively scheduled for Friday, May 4, 2007.

The SMARTS program offers our community the chance to come together to make this initiative a success. For example, students may be able to provide service to the arts community as a part of their learning. More particularly, the Arts Conferences in January and May of 2007 will require a number of parent volunteers in order to run smoothly. Stay tuned for further information as the time approaches!

I'm eager to get to know others in our community who can be resources in this exciting program. If you have expertise in the arts, contacts in the art world, or suggestions for programming, please contact me at [mary@slarts.org](mailto:mary@slarts.org).