

Westchester Martin Luther King, Jr. Institute for Nonviolence

250 Bryant Avenue, White Plains, NY 10605 (914) 949-6555
info@mlkwestchester.org www.mlkwestchester.org

February 13, 2013

Erica Itzkowitz, Managing Director
Hannah Fox, Artistic Director
Big Apple Playback Theatre
50 Poplar Place
New Rochelle, NY 10805



Dear Erica and Hannah,

What an extraordinary group BAPT is, and what a wonderful dimension you added to our "Moving Forward" conference at Manhattanville on February 2. Thank you and all the BAPT participants very, very much for your part in the success of our day.

We believe that we did take another little step forward on the long road to opening communications between young people and law enforcement officials. We are hoping to follow up this annual event with smaller workshops through the year.

On our evaluation sheet, we asked the question, "Did you like the Playback Theatre? Why or why not?"

Here are a couple of the many comments from young people:

- Yes, they were the best part of this—they're amazing.
- Yes, because it showed us what people experience in life.
- Yes and no, some parts were scary, some were funny.
- Yes. It is a good way to bond because people are enacting their feelings.

From law enforcement officers:

- It reinforced the issues we discussed.
- All the actors portrayed emotion and I felt the stories better.

From other adults:

- Absolutely—they humanized the situations, got us into a heart mode, not just a head mode, and added lightness and joy.
- Yes, they are thoughtful, spontaneous, and really work hard to capture the essence of a story.
- Relevant, energetic expressions!

It is a joy to work with you. We very much appreciate the interest and flexibility we experience from you two and from all BAPT participants. Your deep listening and your creativity inspire us. We are eager to work with you again.

With much admiration and appreciation,

Julie Davis Carran, Co-Chair

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June 4, 2012

Dear Big Apple Playback Theatre,

The members of the Westchester Youth Councils would like to express our sincere gratitude for your exciting and moving theatre performances at the 2012 Youth Action Convention. Your generosity in offering such top-notch, unique performances greatly enhanced the quality of the event. You helped reach and inspire approximately 200 middle school and high school youth from all over Westchester County. In some of the feedback we received, participants wrote that they learned that, "It's ok to speak up and take charge, even doing a little something can make a difference" and "A few people can make a change and using YOUR voice will make a change." Thank you for contributing to those valuable experiences.

The Big Apple Playback Theatre performances were truly interactive, relevant, and truly inspiring! Thank you so much for being a part of the 2012 Youth Action Convention!

With gratitude,

Alma Reyes Evans, MSW
Program Coordinator of Westchester County Youth Councils
Family Services of Westchester
1 Summit Avenue
White Plains, NY 10606
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March 12, 2012

Dear Big Apple Playback Theatre,

On behalf of our team and our students, we would like to extend our sincerest gratitude for coming to our school on February 29, 2012 and helping our students to promote non-violence. Our students were very engaged and excited, and truly enjoyed the interactive performance. When asked "Did you learn something about anti-bullying?" a fifth grader responded with, "Yes, I learned that even if you aren't tough enough to stop a bully, people around you will be there to help you." Another question asked was, "What was your favorite part of the show?" a third grader responded, "Seeing my bully experience acted out."

As part of the service-learning component of our City Year after-school program over the past few weeks, students have been engaged in lessons around the theme, "Peace in the Community". In covering this topic, students have learned about resolving conflict, different types of conflict--like discrimination--and peace ambassadors throughout history. The Big Apple Playback performance allowed the students to physically interact with the content that they are learning about to gain a deeper understanding of what it means to promote peace in their community. City Year has taken pleasure in informing the rest of the school and community of the performance through our bulletin board and news letters.

After the performance students were inspired to create their own pledges to help actively achieve peace in their community.

These pledge cards will be incorporated into anti-bullying artwork to be displayed within the school. It is a terrific opportunity for this year's students to leave a positive mark on their school.

Thank you,

Esteban Wong
PS/MS 57 Corps Member
EWong@cityyear.org

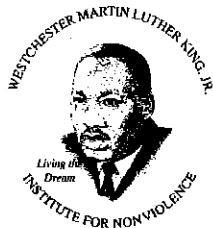


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info@mlkwestchester.org www.mlkwestchester.org

February 15, 2012

Erica Itzkowitz, Managing Director
Big Apple Playback Theatre



Dear Erica,

We are writing to thank you and Big Apple Playback Theatre very, very much for your part in the success of our "Accountability" conference on Saturday morning, February 4 at Manhattanville College. We got excellent feedback about the morning, and we believe that we did take a step forward in opening communications among young people, law enforcement officials and other adults.

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We appreciate deeply that we were able to work with you because you allowed us to bring BAPT for just \$500. We are thrilled about our collaboration. Your sensitivity and talent, and that of the actors and musician, made for an experience that moved us deeply and moved us forward in our mission too. In addition, Erica, it was a pleasure to work with you and with Hannah throughout the planning process.

Eight-one people attended the conference. Of those, 47 filled out evaluation sheets at the end of the morning. Everyone single person had enthusiastic and positive things to say about BAPT. I am attaching the transcript of the evaluations, for your information. I hope you and your colleagues will bask in the comments. For our own purposes I've bolded the comments that indicate what we need to improve in the future. As you'll see, nearly all can be explained by our time constraints; you had predicted that.

We at the MLK Institute are exploring how to move forward during the year, taking those comments seriously and building on our successful day. We look forward to calling on BAPT again.

With much appreciation,

Julie Davis Carran, Co-Chair
On behalf of the Board of Directors



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 PRINCIPAL

JEFFREY KOROSTOFF, Ed.D.
 ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT

MELISSA PASSARELLI
 ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

November 22, 2011



Dear Erica,

You and the entire Big Apple Playback Theater troupe provided our fifth graders with three amazing presentations, based on the concepts in the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program.

You addressed the main ideas of bullying, bystanding/witnessing, and being a victim. You provided visual vignettes drawn from your own stories and the students' own stories. In addition, you provided a model for our teachers as they continue to hold Olweus class meetings, conduct lessons, highlight various themes and skills. You provided a very strong reference for the rest of the year.

As Magnet Facilitator in an arts and humanities magnet school, I appreciate your use of theater as an entry point for the themes of bullying. It is a powerful vehicle to engage our students. I recognize the skills (empathy, compassion, experience) with which you approach mature themes, providing clarity and closure in every case.

The teachers and parents in the presentations gave very positive feedback. I am disappointed that neither our principal nor our assistant principal was able to attend; perhaps that will happen when we schedule sessions for our fourth graders later in the year.

Thank you for scheduling with our school as part of your grant. We appreciate the generosity of this gift.

Sincerely,
 Pat Ketcham
 Magnet Facilitator

Daniel Webster Magnet School
WE EDUCATE THE WHOLE CHILD



November 14, 2011

Dear Ms. Fox and Ms. Itzkowitz and the Big Apple Playback players:

We would like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation and gratitude for all the hard work and effort you expended to bring our initial C²¹ Interclerkship Intensive/Intersession to fruition. Without your commitment to excellence the Interclerkship Intensive/Intersession effort would not have been a success.

Attached is a letter detailing your contribution to this educational endeavor. Please upload this document to your professional portfolio when it can be used to document all your professional activities.

On behalf of the Office of Medical Education we thank you for participating in this C²¹ curricular initiative and we look forward to your future engagement in C²¹.

Best,

Mel Rosenfeld, Ph.D.
Associate Dean for Medical Education

Vicky Harnik, Ph.D.
Assistant Dean for Curriculum

Mary Ann Hopkins, M.D.
Director of Education in the Clinical Sciences

Melanie Jay, M.D.
Director of Interclerkship Intensive/Intersession



TO: Hannah K. Fox, Artistic Director, Erica Itzkowitz, Managing Director and Big Apple Playback players

FROM: Mel Rosenfeld, Ph.D., Associate Dean for Medical Education
Vicky Harnik, Ph.D., Assistant Dean for Curriculum
Mary Ann Hopkins, M.D., Director of Education in the Clinical Sciences
Melanie Jay, M.D., M.S., Assistant Professor, Division of General Internal Medicine

SUBJECT: Recognition of your contribution to the September, 2011 Interclerkship Intensive

DATE: November 14, 2011

Last September, we launched the New York University Langone School of Medicine's first Interclerkship Intensive, **CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES RELATED TO MALNUTRITION AND OBESITY — TWO GLOBAL PUBLIC HEALTH CRISES**.

We are most grateful for your important contributions on behalf of our students to create anew, a learning experience that pushed the boundaries of medical education.

A part of the new C21 curriculum, the Interclerkship Intensive is a one-week block in between clerkships designed to:

- Cover longitudinal clinical content areas (e.g., health care systems/business of medicine, geriatrics/palliative care, pharmacology/toxicology, global health, nutrition, medical informatics)
- Reinforce the basic sciences and integrate them with clinical concepts through thematic pillar content
- Further develop clinical reasoning skills
- Consolidate information learned in the preceding twelve-week clerkship block, as well as provide preparation for the upcoming one

The overall goal of **CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES RELATED TO MALNUTRITION AND OBESITY — TWO GLOBAL PUBLIC HEALTH CRISES** was to use multiple teaching modalities to provide the students with a global health perspective of issues related to obesity and malnutrition, including an awareness of the basic science and physiologic effects of these conditions and the clinical knowledge and skills needed to address both epidemics.

An undertaking of this scope and complexity would have been impossible without your willingness to develop an innovative instructional strategy. You took time out of your busy schedules to create a performance workshop which covered issues of body image, stereotyping, and the transition from students' basic science to their clinical years. More than 100 students attended. This experience

provided the students with an opportunity to tell stories from their clerkship experience and to have them acted out by a talented group of professional actors.

JFK Airport, Building 77
Jamaica, NY 11430



**U.S. Customs and
Border Protection**

August 9, 2011

Ms. Hannah Fox
Artistic Director
Big Apple Playback Theatre
580 6th Ave #4
Pelham, NY 10803

Dear Ms. Fox:

On behalf of the employees at John F. Kennedy International Airport, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security, I would like to extend our gratitude for your presentation in the John F. Kennedy International Airport, Family Heritage and Diversity Program held on Tuesday, August 9, 2011.

I believe the event was a great success due to Big Apple Playback Theatre creativity and spontaneity.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brian Humphrey", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Brian Humphrey
Port Director
John F. Kennedy International Airport
U.S. Customs and Border Protection
Department of Homeland Security



give a year.
change the world.

May 27, 2011

To whom it may concern,

I am writing on behalf of City Year New York, part of the AmeriCorps network. City Year, now in its 8th year of service to the New York Metropolitan Area, is a non-profit organization that unites a diverse group of 17-24 year olds, or Corps Members, for a powerful year of community service and leadership development. Corps Members make a positive difference in the lives of young people throughout New York City by providing one-on-one and small group tutoring, literacy programs, after-school support and mentorship to youth. Corps Members also lead transformative service projects in the community in which they serve.

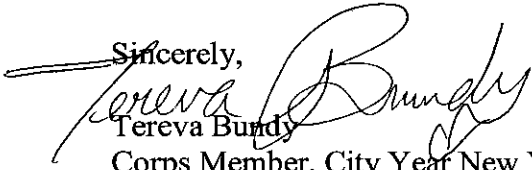
At P.S. 154 in the South Bronx, our after school program is called Starfish. The program is based on City Years' belief that you are never too young to serve, and the path to becoming a citizen leader should begin at a young age. Students meet every Monday and Wednesday; they explore issues in their community and plan ways that they can help stop or change these issues. So far this year, we have taught our students about self-awareness, the environment, healthy choices, and peace in the community. For the Peace in the Community Unit, our after school has been focusing on bullying and conflict resolution because unfortunately bullying is something the students experience often throughout the school day and during after school.

For one of our lessons we were fortunate to get the Big Apple Playback Theater to come and perform their anti-bullying skits. Their improvisation was incredible; they took the student's real life bullying experiences and re-enacted them. Also, during the course of two 45-minute performances the Big Apple Playback Theater allowed the students to act along side of them in the skits. Through the skits the students saw that bullying is hurtful, they also learned strategies that will help them stop bullies in the future.

Milton Andino, a 3rd grader from our after school group continues to use these strategies in school during the day and during after school he reminds the other after school participants of these strategies daily. Just minutes before the Big Apple Playback Theater's performance, there was an incident with a group of 3rd grade boys. Two of the 3rd grade boys were teasing another student, who is always getting in trouble for picking on others. After the anti-bullying skits, they both decided to apologize to the student.

The performances were remarkable and exceeded every expectation. Not only did the students enjoy the lessons, but they also learned valuable lessons about bullying that will remain with them throughout life. Thank you so much Big Apple Playback Theater for coming to P.S. 154X and making a difference in the lives of our students.

Sincerely,


Tereva Bundy

Corps Member, City Year New York at P.S.154X



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Subj: Performance at ACS office 1274 Bedford Avenue BK, NY
Date: 12/18/2009 5:02:14 P.M. Eastern Standard Time
From: Kyla.Ali@dfa.state.ny.us
To: EricaBAPT@aol.com

Good Morning,

I am glad that Ms. Brown asked us for our feedback. Your performance was incredible and I am still talking about it with my other colleagues, family and friends. I thought your recall was amazing and your ability to gauge and portray the storyteller's emotions and feelings was awesome. I was one of the storytellers and I was so moved at how you were able to really capture what I felt at that time in my life. Thanks for your giving spirits and I hope that you will continue to lift up the masses with your gift.

Sincerely,

Kyla Ali
Child Protective Specialist
1274 Bedford Avenue
Brooklyn, NY 11216 *cc 12/11/09 show*

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NYC Administration for Children's Services is the City's child welfare agency dedicated to protecting children and promoting their education, health and safety. For more information, visit [http://nyc.gov/acs](#).

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ACS EVENTS

Bridging the Gap Between Parents and Foster Parents

Collaboration between parents and foster families to ensure better outcomes for children and families was the main theme of a forum on June 10th sponsored by the Children's Services Office of Advocacy, Parent Advisory Work Group (PAWG). Entitled "Making Your Life Easier- How Positive Relationships between Parents and Foster Parents make Case Planning and the Foster Care experience Easier for Everyone," the forum focused on ways to build and support collaboration between foster parents and birth parents working in the best interest of the child.



Two resource parents exchange ideas.

In his remarks, Children's Services Commissioner John Mattingly said the Agency is working toward a system that best serves the interest of children and families, while acknowledging that certain practices had become institutionalized and would require time to change. Commissioner Mattingly said the groundwork for change has been laid, with the employment of over 3,000 new caseworkers in the past 3 years, improved supports for foster parents and birth parents, and holding agencies accountable for providing better services for children, foster parents and birth parents. Commissioner Mattingly said the introduction of programs such as Family Team Conference meant parents, foster parents, families and the community can now participate more fully in the decision-making process for children in care.



(L) Big Apple Playback Theater gives their interpretation of a participant's experience with the foster care system.

(R) Family therapist Ester Harding, North Brooklyn Health Network talks about some the services they provide children and families.

These and other changes made in ACS practices will result in a much better child welfare system in the years to come, the commissioner said. "But we need you to let us know when we are doing something wrong." Many in the audience had been in foster care or had children in care and later become parent advocates who can guide other parents with children currently in care.

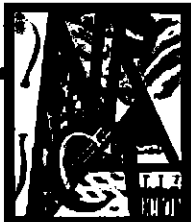
Big Apple Playback, an interactive improv group, used unscripted performances to portray stories told by members of the audience of their experience with the foster care system. When asked about their hopes for the future of the foster care system, one foster care agency worker said, "I hope we work ourselves out of a job. If we can provide services to these families before they are in crisis, we can stop many children from coming into care."

The ACS PAWG was established in 2000. Its mission is to explore and address the issues faced by parents and caregivers when dealing with the child welfare system, and to effect positive changes by working in partnership with ACS staff. PAWG comprises parents and primary caregivers whose families were served by ACS and ACS' contract agencies, and who have successfully reunified with their children.

The group worked closely with ACS Office of Advocacy Director Dana Guyet to coordinate the efforts of advocates, parents and foster parents. Workshop topics included topics such as Parent to Parent (P2P) Meeting; Building Bonds -Relationships between Parents and Foster Parents and Shared Parenting Plan. The forum also received support from the Annie E. Casey Foundation and Rise Magazine, a non-profit organization that trains parents to write about their experiences with the child welfare system to guide policymakers to be more responsive to the families and communities they serve.

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NEW ROCHELLE COUNCIL ON THE ARTS

City Hall 515 North Avenue New Rochelle, NY 10801 www.newrochellearts.org

December 1, 2009

Erica Eigenberg
Big Apple Playback Theatre
50 Poplar Place
New Rochelle, NY 10805

Dear Erica,

On behalf of the New Rochelle Council on the Arts, I wish to thank you for providing an incredible experience for our annual member's party at the Top of the Roc, Avalon East. The amazing creativity of the entire group of performers made the evening not only enjoyable, but allowed council members to have a chance to peek into each other's lives. The way the skits were able to capture and engage the entire group gave us all an opportunity to get to know each other a little better.

I have heard from so many of the people who attended the evening all expressing how very much they enjoyed the dramatizations. Many had said they had not known what to expect and were thrilled about how personal the performances were.

Thank you for your generosity and sharing your insightful and provocative talents with the Council.

Sincerely yours


Judith Weber

Vice President, New Rochelle Council on the Arts

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A Project of the Fund for the City of New York

Erica Eigenberg
Big Apple Playback Theatre
50 Poplar Place
New Rochelle, NY 10805

April 14, 2005

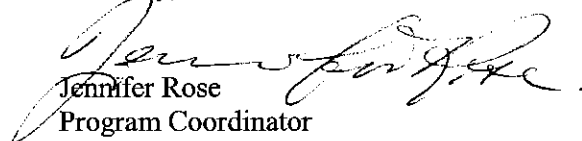
Dear Big Apple Playback Theatre,

I just wanted to thank all of you one more time for the spectacular morning of theatre you put on for us during our program orientation. The pair and small group exercises that Hannah and Erica led before the performance were a great way to warm up the group because they gave our new participants an opportunity to meet and interact with one another in a fun and innovative way. The approach was respectful, warm, and completely welcoming to the diversity of our group.

The second part of the morning, the performance, was listed as the number one highlight for our two week training. During the performance portion I actually watched the group meld together as the Big Apple actors performed our stories. Every single person in the room was not only totally entertained by the show, but more importantly, engaged and brought together by watching and relating to one another's experiences; people pulled me aside all afternoon and the following day to express their excitement and appreciation for the morning with Big Apple Playback Theatre. This sense of community and shared experience carried us through two weeks of training, and I trust, will act as a sounding wall for our upcoming year of community work.

Thank you so much!

Sincerely,


Jennifer Rose
Program Coordinator
New York City Public Safety Corps

520 Eighth Avenue
New York, New York 10018
212.397.3050 fax 212.397.0985
www.courtinnovation.org

Greg Berman, director

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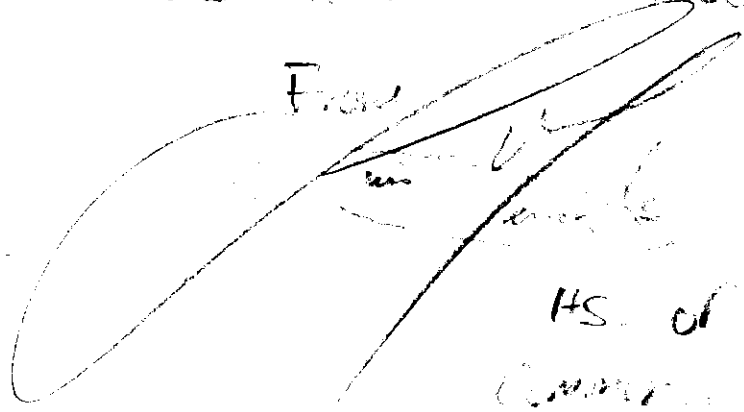
MAY 2007

DEAR

Bio Access Playhouse Theater,

Thank you guys really for us
take a little bit of time to do
You performances were wonderful. I really
liked how you guys interacted with us.
You let us perform with you and really
interpreted our feelings in an incredible
way. This is an experience that I will
treasure for the rest of my life. Keep
up the good work and keep helping kids
throughout New York City. It was
great being able to visualize our words in
your dramatic News Groceries.

From



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