

# Arts at the Core

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE ARTS IN EDUCATION PROGRAM FROM THE OKLAHOMA ARTS COUNCIL

## A "Musing" Success Story! - Program Profile Attucks Alternative Academy, Vinita

What do you get when you mix nine muses, a dozen or so high school students, one artist, and rusty steel? ***The Attucks Alternative Academy sculpture garden!***

A site visit to Vinita, Oklahoma, proved anything but ordinary, one blustery March day. With winds blowing high, cool March temperatures and rain clouds overhead, Artist-in-Residence, Melvin Smith, worked tirelessly, directing, instructing, orchestrating, and guiding the team of students who returned his determination with their own. The students worked with scrap steel donated by Allied Tower of Vinita, with the help of Terry Crawford, and through the effort of Larry Shoales, Art Teacher, who secured Smith to live "in residence" in Vinita for a one-week residency. After several conversations and a planning meeting and with the site for the sculpture garden selected and material source secured, the residency began. Smith met with students to introduce sculpture, his own way of working with welded steel as an artist and how they might work a theme into their own works of art.

The nine Greek muses were selected, then eagerly researched by students to determine what they represent and how to best capture them in steel. They explored Greek legend, symbolism and abstraction. Students were divided into teams, with each team selecting one muse to design and construct. Several students had prior experience in welding as a result of agriculture or vocational-technical classes and were able to handle some of the more challenging tasks, though no one thought about welding as a means to create art. They were vigilant in observing safety precautions - even warning the AIE Director, "Don't look directly into the fire - it'll damage your eyes."

Other students braced the steel while it was being welded, dug post holes for several pieces to be installed and all were involved in raising and securing final sculptures that all exceeded 6 feet in height. Two were 12 -14 feet tall! During one particularly difficult installation, a neighborhood resident, Wendel Phillips, Attucks class '49, came to the rescue and provided his expertise, advice and truck with a small crane to help hoist the largest of the nine planned pieces in place.

A footpath and benches will be added later to define the area as a sculpture park. A plaque with the names of the student-artists will be installed as well. The level of teamwork, cooperation, patience, determination and task completion was very apparent. Judy Turner, Principal of Attucks, indicated that the staff had determined they might lose one of the students completely out of the alternative education program, but he seemed to make a turnaround once the residency with Smith began.

"We saw him light up and get motivated for the first time in weeks," Turner said. "He's worked hard on this project and it may give him the incentive he needs to transfer that hard work to other areas of the curriculum."

Larry Shoales added, "We could not have done this project without the support of the Oklahoma Arts Council. We believe in the arts. It has meant a lot to our program and means a lot to our kids." You can expect to see smaller versions of their welded steel creations at the Alternative Education Day at the Capitol on April 10. ***(Can you name the nine muses?)***

## **Artists-in-Residence Roster Artists Honored**

More than 20 roster artists were honored at Showcase 2001, a showcase of the Artists-in-Residence Grant Program for their years of service to the AIR Program. Betty Price, Executive Director of the Oklahoma Arts Council, presented the artists with a certificate of appreciation and a letter from Governor Frank Keating.

"Through hundreds of residencies, these talented teaching artists have contributed to the presence of arts education in Oklahoma," Price said. "We offer them our sincerest thanks."

A red rose was also placed at each artists' table display, courtesy the Oklahoma Arts Council.

Artists recognized for 20 or more years of service include: *Rhonda Clark, Doobie Potter and DWe Williams*, theater, *Janey Carns Crain and Dennis Martin*, visual art and *Sharon McColl*, dance. Those recognized for ten to twenty years of service include: *Al Bostick, Joe Long, Oklahoma Shakespeare in the Park, Sam McMichael, Nick Sweet, Kelley Sanders-Thomas and Sondra Williams*, theater; *Linda Christy, Adrienne Day, Martha Green, Bob Hanlin, Richard Whitman*, visual art; *Brett Heitzke, Steve McLinn, D.C. and Selby Minner*, music, *Joe Rice*, traditional arts.

"These artists are considered 'master artists' in the area of school and community residencies," said Paulette Black, Arts Education Director. "They each have continued to be active professionally in their chosen artistic discipline. Most are involved in community programming and many have developed expertise in providing professional development for teachers, on various topics including the arts and curriculum integration, core knowledge curriculum, alternative education and special needs populations. Their range of experience covers pre-school through senior citizens and their professional contributions vary from directing community theater to exhibiting around the world to preserving Native American music once thought lost. They are all exemplary and dedicated artists."

For more information on these and other artists available through the AIR program, visit: [www.state.ok.us/~arts/](http://www.state.ok.us/~arts/) Artists interested in applying to the roster are encouraged to file an application by June 29, 2001. For more information or application, contact the Oklahoma Arts Council at (405) 521-2931.

**Stop by for a visit!**  
**[www.state.ok.us/~arts/](http://www.state.ok.us/~arts/)**

The newly designed Web site of the Oklahoma Arts Council features a section called Resources and Programs for Schools which includes more than 50 links in the following categories: Arts Education Resources, Advocacy, Artists-in-Residence Roster (with e-mail addresses and contact information), Model Programs, Professional Association and Arts for Kids. Grant guidelines and applications may also be found at this Web site including the School and Museum Partnership, Artists and Educator Collaborative, Arts in Alternative Education and Artists-in-Residence/Artists-in-Communities.

The site links to the e-mail addresses of AIR roster artists and eight artists with their own Web sites. On these sites, you can see their full range of offerings for residencies and other work as well as examples of other types of work as professional artists. They include: Desiree Lavigne, dance, [www.desireelavignedanceartist.com](http://www.desireelavignedanceartist.com), Brian Gorrell, music, [www.briangorrell.com](http://www.briangorrell.com), D.C. Minner and Selby, music, <http://www.dcminnerblues.com/>, Oklahoma Shakespeare in the Park, theater, <http://www.telepath.com/okshkspr>, Ralph Hutto, visual art, [www.flash.net/~rhutto/home.html](http://www.flash.net/~rhutto/home.html), Glenna McBride, visual art [www.geocities.com/SoHo/Workshop/5277](http://www.geocities.com/SoHo/Workshop/5277), Richard Ray Whitman, visual art, [www.tsoyaha.com](http://www.tsoyaha.com), David Titus, traditional art, [www.Storyteller-Wordsmith.com](http://www.Storyteller-Wordsmith.com)

## **Teacher and Artists Workshop Opportunity The Power of the Arts in Education**

A day-long workshop, The Power of the Arts in Education: Arts and Accessibility, will focus on teaching in and through the arts with special needs populations, including children with disabilities. Sponsored by VSA Arts of Oklahoma in partnership with Lawton Public Schools, sessions will be held 8:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m., Friday, June 22. The workshop, funded in part by the Oklahoma Arts Council, will be held at Crosby Park Elementary School, 1602 NW Horton in Lawton. The numerous benefits of teaching the arts across all curriculum areas will also be presented.

“The workshop promises to be an exciting adventure into an area of arts education often overlooked – special needs children. In our dedicated effort to promote arts education, we cannot leave a single student behind,” said Glen Henry, VSA Director.

VSA arts is an International organization that creates learning opportunities through the arts for people with disabilities. The organization offers arts-based programs in creative writing, dance, drama, music and the visual arts implemented primarily through a vast affiliate network in 41 states (including Oklahoma) and the District of Columbia and 86 international affiliates in 83 countries.

The workshop is designed especially for teachers and teaching artists and will feature workshop facilitators experienced in working with special needs populations. There is no registration fee, but pre-registration by June 8 is required to reserve a space, luncheon and a conference materials packet. A credit option is available through Cameron University. For more information about the workshop, contact Glen Henry, Lawton Public Schools, 580-357-6900 ext. 275.

## **Jazz Curriculum Online**

The Thelonius Monk Institute of Jazz has launched an Internet-based jazz curriculum available to all 5th, 8th and 11th grade public school students. This is the first jazz curriculum to use state-of-the-art Internet technology to be offered free of charge on a national basis. Visit [www.jazzinamerica.org](http://www.jazzinamerica.org).

## **After-School Programs**

Groups involved in arts education will find a key resource in the new U.S. Department of Education publications, “How the Arts Can Enhance After-School Programs”, which describes successful programs around the country. For free copies, call 877.433.7827.

## **Do You Listserv?**

Want to learn more about how property taxes are being used to raise revenue for school-based arts programs? Have a question about developing a community public art program? Americans for the Arts is committed to providing you with networking opportunities that help you do your job better. That's why we offer you a communication tool that is both effective and easy to use. Americans for the Arts' listservs allow you to network, share successful ideas and strategies, and ask for advice all using the immediacy and convenience of e-mail. If you are not currently signed up for a listserv, we encourage you to tap into this valuable resource. To find out more about sharing in one of our 17 discussion groups, contact Heather Rowe at [hrowe@artsusa.org](mailto:hrowe@artsusa.org) or call 202.371.2830.

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## Technology Tips for Teachers

*Web Pages Worth A Look:*

### **Afterschool.gov. U.S. Department of Education**

[www.afterschool.gov](http://www.afterschool.gov)

### **Arts as a Healing Force**

[www.artslynx.org/heal](http://www.artslynx.org/heal)

### **ArtsPlay Online – Interactive Resource**

[www.artsply.org/index.html](http://www.artsply.org/index.html)

### **ArtsPower – Business Circle for Arts Education**

[www.artspower.com](http://www.artspower.com)

### **The Arts Studio**

[www.newhorizons.org/arts\\_education.html](http://www.newhorizons.org/arts_education.html)

### **Connect for Kids**

[www.connectforkids.org/homepage1548/index.htm](http://www.connectforkids.org/homepage1548/index.htm)

### **Education World**

[www.education-world.com](http://www.education-world.com)

### **Drawbridge: An Arts Program for Homeless Children**

<http://drawbridge.org/home.2.html>

### **Gallery 37 (Youth Arts Training Program)**

<http://www.gallery37.org>

### **Music is...**

<http://pionet.net/~hub7/>

### **Wolf Trap Institute for Early Learning Through the Arts**

<http://www.wolf-trap.org/>