

THE COUNCIL & THE ARTS

Council frequently uses the arts to engage kids while teaching its curriculum.

We know our world's greatest resource is not its technological or financial capacity but the spirit that yearns to soar and creatively link with others in building healthy communities. It is this spirit that we celebrate and support.

GALE V. BARRETT
Chairman Emeritus
Council for Unity, Inc.

DRAMA

We have a very powerful docu-drama called a "Lifting of Hands" which accompanies our curriculum as well. A series of dramas were written and performed during the CFU Renaissance at John Dewey High School.

FILM

In 2002 students at the Membership Advantages Center (MAC) wrote, produced, and acted in a film based on Council's history showing the importance of *building bridges* between diverse groups. Others include "Young People Building Bridges to a Safer World" and "A Cause for Celebration."

DANCE

MAC's (Membership Advantages Center) Step Team of 40 kids has performed across New York City and featured at numerous city-wide events. Kids created a ballet acting out the storyline of the Dragon Slayer myth.

Champions for Children Awards Dinner "This is Me" Dance Company created an original theatre performance piece using words and movement with professional director and performer Nicholas Rodriguez. Rehearsals took the kids to the Baryshnikov Performing Arts Center.

POETRY

In December 2007 the first in a new series of books was released, **This is Me**, Voices of Urban Youth, a compilation of poems written by Council for Unity (CFU) members, ages 8 to 18. Poems were developed through a Council-sponsored project in elementary, intermediate and high school chapters. Kids were asked to use their "voices" to express the impact Council has had on their lives. Over 200 poems were submitted over eight weeks. A group of independent reviewers selected 62 for publishing in **This is Me**, Voices of Urban Youth. This poetry became the source for Council's first Public Service Announcement.

The second in the series, Prison Songs, Reflections of Hope and Despair from Behind the Wall, will be released summer 2008. It will feature poetry, narratives and art from men in correctional facilities' Council Chapters.

The third in the series is projected for fall 2008.

DRAWINGS

In 2007 a group of elementary school kids tested their creative skills and communication as part of Council curriculum. They drew self portraits – which later provided a backdrop display at Council's 2007 Champions for Children Gala and today hang in the Council's Office in New York City.

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THE DRAGON SLAYER

Council's Dragon Slayer Curriculum is a valuable creative outlet for kids. Numerous artistic executions include:

Six-Foot Dragon Slayer Panels – kids used the innovative Dragon Slayer Curriculum to express their struggle and triumph over their symbolic forces that confine them and confront them every day – using art, diminishing the size and scope of the dragon, while increasing and building themselves as their dragons are slain.

Thanks to the efforts of Marissa Provenzano, Director of our Elementary and Junior High School network, kids at IS 128 David A. Boody School's CFU Chapter created over 40 papier mache dragons which beautifully performed as table centerpieces at our April 2008 Champions for Children Awards Gala.

To see some of their work, visit www.councilforunity.org –

- What We Do: Our Programs, Products and Services/The Dragon Gallery
- What's New: video link, Truth, This is Me Dance
- What's New: video link, PSA
