



LOCAL NEWS

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Gardner Pilot Academy raises money to support school art programs

Kassmin Williams



Bergeline Halaire, a sixth grader at Gardner, writes down what art means to her on a chalk board displayed at ARCK's benefit at the SMFA last Thursday. Halaire's work was featured in the art show. (Photo: (Ashley Wood photos))

Author: (Ashley Wood photos)

Mosaics created by fifth and sixth grade students at the Gardner Pilot



The SMFA featured Arabic calligraphy drawings from fifth and sixth graders at the Gardner Pilot Academy for the ARCK on Deck benefit last Thursday.

Academy (GPA) lined one wall in the main entrance of the School of the Museum of Fine Arts (SMFA) and the student's Arabic calligraphy work lined the opposite wall.

The students' works were sold and other art pieces were auctioned to raise funds to support Art Resources Collaborative for Kids (ARCK).

The ARCK on Deck benefit — the organization's second art show — at the SMFA last Thursday attracted about 100 people including Gardner parents and staff, Josiah Quincy school parents and teachers, SMFA alumni, Boston Public School staff and Gardner sixth grader Bergaline Hilaire.

The first art show was held last April before ARCK's official founding, but is considered an ARCK event by founder Sara Mraish-Demeter and pushed her to establish the nonprofit that has a lofty goal — to provide art education to all Boston Public School students.

GPA parents and staff who attended the event were surprised to see an entire exhibit dedicated to Gardner students.

"I was amazed when I saw all of the displays of the work from the fifth and sixth graders," Gardner parent and event volunteer Jennyfer Alvarez said. "It's amazing what they can do."

Lauren Fogarty, Gardner's director of extended services, said she didn't know what to expect from ARCK when the school began its partnership with the organization.

"They came in and did such a great job with our kids and they took it to such a professional level with this event," Fogarty said.

During the event, Myran Parker-Brass, BPS executive director for the arts, spoke on the importance of art education in the learning process.

“The art allows our students to gain those what we now call 21st century skills,” Parker-Brass said. “...To be creative and critical thinkers, to be collaborators, to take risks and to be persistent. Whether they decided to become artists or not those skills will help them as they become lawyers, they become doctors or they become engineers.”

Bergaline Hilaire, 12, followed Parker-Brass and explained art has made her transition from Florida to Boston smoother and has taught her to stay true to who she is.



Author: (Ashley Wood photos)

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“I’ve been through ups and downs, but I still am who I am today,” Hilaire said.

Seeing her work on the SMFA wall and receiving feedback from attendees made Hilaire feel accomplished.

“I always support everybody and I feel happy and accomplished for everybody supporting me,” she said.

Hilaire’s mother, Jeovanne Brumaire echoed her enthusiasm.

“It makes me very proud of her, I can’t be more happy than that,” Brumaire said.

Teaching artist Christos Hamawi worked with the students on the Mosaic pieces, and said seeing the final product on the wall serves as motivation to continue teaching art and reaching out to other schools.

“I can see the creativity that invigorates in them,” Hamawi said. “It’s a different medium and I’m a painter myself. Painting and drawing is important, but I think it’s important for us to also introduce some of the more classic and ancient art forms like this and it also adds an element of history.”

Students worked on the mosaics for three sessions with Hamawi, who said the project taught students “craftsmanship, determination and perseverance.”

For ARCK, the event defined the heart of the organization.

“It was so amazing to see such a vibrant, enthusiastic crowd at ARCK on Deck at SMFA,” said ARCK program coordinator Ashley Wood. “As an SMFA alumni, I am continuously thrilled by the support and involvement of the SMFA community. That is what ARCK is about – community.”

Students’ work that wasn’t sold during the event will remain on display and for sale until July 8.

If interested in purchasing a piece contact ARCK, arckboston@gmail.com.



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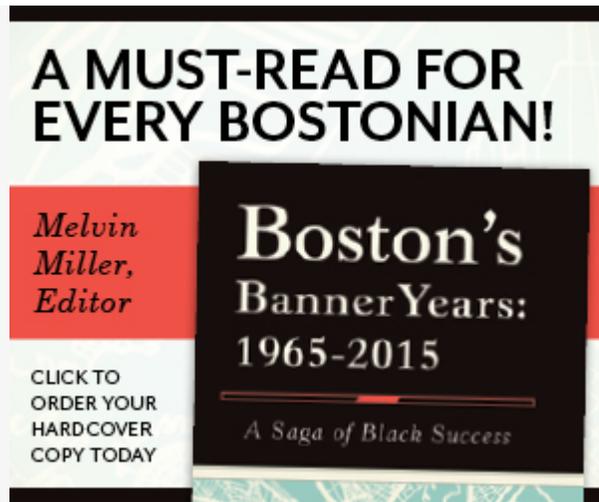
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