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CCAP Expands Arts Integration Program – Project AIM – to Include Math
Only Program in Midwest to Receive Federal Funding

CHICAGO, IL – November 14, 2008 – The Center for Community Arts Partnerships (CCAP) at Columbia College Chicago was recently awarded a \$1.1 million, four-year grant from the United States Department of Education, Office of Innovation and Improvement. The funds, awarded under the Arts in Education Model Development and Dissemination (AEMDD) Grant Program, will enhance and expand CCAP's existing arts integration mentorship program, Project AIM.

This new initiative – *Translations: Multi-Directional Learning in the Arts, Literacy and Math* – will continue the arts integration model developed and implemented at CCAP over the past seven years. Federal funding for Project AIM has been ongoing through a three-year AEMDD grant that just ended, and a four-year U.S. Department of Education FIPSE (Funds to Improve Post Secondary Education) award. CCAP's grant was one of 15 awarded to a range of school districts and non-profit arts organizations in nine states.

“As the only grant recipient in the Midwest, we are honored to receive another AEMDD grant to fund Project AIM. Chicago is doing exemplary work in arts integration, and this grant will enable CCAP to continue its leadership in the field by adding a new focus on math literacy,” said David Flatley, executive director of CCAP. “At a time when America's students are lagging behind in math and science, it becomes even more imperative that we look at new ways to improve student learning.”

Translations will take a closer look at the impact on student learning when concepts and principles are taught and translated across the arts, literacy and math. By using Project AIM's existing arts and literacy model, teams of teachers and artists will develop *big ideas in the arts*; an overarching concept that will help shape an entire arts integrated unit of study and make connections to the core subject areas being taught. Some examples of big ideas that might be developed include *Democracy, Coming of Age, Identity, Community, Survival, Relationships, Transformation* and *Time*. These ideas will be explored through multiple art forms – dance, drama, music, media and the visual arts – and used to generate inquiry and deepen learning across the curriculum.

“By using math, literacy and art to enhance student learning, we are improving students' critical thinking and problem solving skills, as well as their artistic expression. When students are asked to translate ideas across curricular areas, they gain a deeper understanding of the subjects being taught,” said Cynthia Weiss, director of Project AIM. “Most importantly, we'll be making math come alive for students in a new way that gives them access to otherwise abstract mathematical ideas.”



Translations will work with more than 25 classroom teachers and specialists, 20 teaching artists, and 1,000 public school students in grades 4-8. It will be implemented in two Evanston and three Chicago public schools, including Dr. Bessie Rhodes Magnet School (Evanston), Crown Community Academy, King Lab Magnet School (Evanston), Marshall Middle School, and Pulaski Fine Arts Academy.

At Crown Community Academy, poet Amanda Leigh Lichtenstein and math teacher Luke Albrecht looked at the idea “Coming of Age in the Age of AIDS.” They translated this idea across art, literacy and math in a variety of ways. Students studied statistics of AIDS in both their neighborhood of North Lawndale and South Africa. They then used basic math principals, poetry and visual art to represent AIDS growth and to share their views on the issue.

“Teaching math through arts integration is an amazing and effective way for students to learn. It addresses math in a social context that kids can really relate to,” said Albrecht.

This new initiative will also address how professional development and action research translates into better student and teacher learning. The new action research component will engage teachers and artists more deeply in research, documentation and assessment. Teachers will identify questions for their classroom that address what arts bring to cognition.

“I’m excited that *Translations* will allow teachers to create their own questions for action research around arts integration. This is a terrific way for staff to develop professionally using the content areas and the arts, while focusing on a real-world problem to solve in their own classrooms. This grant will expand and improve arts instruction at Pulaski, as well as support math and literacy instruction for our students, using an innovative and creative approach,” said Leonor Karl, principal of Pulaski Fine Arts Academy.

CCAP’s arts integration program, Project AIM, uses a unique teaching practice that weaves the visual, media, performing and literary arts into classrooms to engage students in their own learning. It partners teaching artists from Columbia College and community-based art organizations with public school teachers in Chicago and Evanston. Together, artists and teachers infuse the classroom with creativity and experiential learning that connect personal experiences to the core curriculum, and engage students in a powerful learning cycle in and through the arts. CCAP recently published *AIMprint: New Relationships in the Arts and Learning*. Co-edited by Cynthia Weiss and Amanda Leigh Lichtenstein, this dynamic teaching tool provides teachers and teaching artists nationwide with the resources needed to effectively weave arts integration into the classroom. For more information, visit www.colum.edu/aimprint.

CCAP is proud to be celebrating its 10 year anniversary. Since 1998, CCAP has been transforming the lives of thousands of Chicago’s young people through its unique approach to college-community partnership building. Founded on a mission to link the academic departments of Columbia College with diverse communities throughout the city, CCAP brings the concepts of community-based learning, arts-integrated curricula and reciprocal partnerships into the spotlight. It unites artists, educators, students, corporations, schools and community-based organizations to form meaningful, sustainable partnerships in the arts. For more information, visit www.colum.edu/ccap.

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