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Music opens fresh new worlds

By Patty Brant

Children learn through experience. The more varied the experiences, the more well rounded their education, understanding of the world and, ultimately, themselves and each other.

So, when kids from Immokalee have a chance to meet and interact with an award-winning jazz educator like Hayes Greenfield, it has the potential to open up a new world for them.

According to Jane Ruprecht, instructor at the Phoenix Program at Bethune Education Center and a Teacher of Distinction this year, this type of program introduces Immokalee students to different influences.

"He was very patient," she said, "hoping to make students aware of jazz, and perhaps of looking at the world differently. In addition to interacting with the students he exposed them to some jazz history."

Hayes was in Immokalee last year, too and next year he may even bring a jazz ensemble with him, to cover more musical instruments and sounds, Ms. Ruprecht said.

She was pleased that Mr. Greenfield was so willing to work with the kids and that he even stayed a little longer than scheduled.

In addition to the musical experience, she said, they used the opportunity to set up a table with proper service settings and gave the students a lesson in etiquette. This was a lesson which many did not see as important but she explained that knowing things like which utensil to use at a formal dinner could save them some embarrassment one day.

Hayes Greenfield was artist-in-residence at schools in Naples



Eighth grader Jerry Austile gets a little musical one-on-one with jazz educator Hayes Greenfield. Submitted photos/Dr. Jane Ruprecht



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and Immokalee from Jan. 29 - Feb. 2, performing and leading master classes at Miracle Enrichment Project schools. In addition to the Phoenix Program, he took his mixture of jazz and education to several other schools in Immokalee: Lake Trafford Elementary, Immokalee Middle and High Schools and Pinecrest Elementary School.

Based in New York City, Mr. Hayes is a saxophonist, composer and visiting artist at schools around the country. His improvisational approach to music making helps students explore their creativity as they learn about the history of jazz. In his small-group classes, he stresses the art of listening as well as playing.

Jazz great Herbie Hancock says of Mr. Greenfield, "Here is a guy who cares about our youth and therefore our future. You can really hear it in his playing and he performs with such heart."

He touches students at all levels of musical ability. Last year, a student in the Phoenix Program alternative school in Immokalee, wrote a report on Greenfield's visit, saying, "Mr. Hayes Greenfield inspired me on Jazz music and now it is a part of music to me."

The residency was organized by the United Arts Council of Collier County, which coordinates arts education for the Miracle Enrichment Project. The Miracle Project is supported by grants from the Florida Department of Education. Additional funding for the jazz residency was provided by the Florida Division of Cultural Affairs and the Martin Foundation.

The Miracle Enrichment Project operates after-school programs serving students at low-performing, high-poverty public schools in Collier County, supported in part by three state grants. In addition to the United Arts Council, partners include Collier County Public Schools, Boys & Girls Club of Collier County, Southwest Florida Workforce Development Board and the Community Foundation of Collier County. These community collaborations help produce effective, high-quality after-school programs that serve a total of 1,650 elementary and middle school children.

Students enrolled in Miracle programs are ethnically diverse (60 percent Hispanic, 13 percent Black, 13 percent White, 12 percent Haitian, 2 percent other). Nearly one-half take ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) classes at their schools. Many receive free or reduced-price lunches.

Immokalee schools participating in the Miracle Enrichment Project are: Highlands Elementary, Lake Trafford Elementary, Pinecrest Elementary, Village Oaks Elementary, RCMA Immokalee Community School, Immokalee Middle. Miracle

students are selected for participation because they are at risk for school failure. Miracle students receive an additional 12 hours per week of instruction after school. Services are provided at no charge. Tutoring in reading, mathematics and science is provided by trained, certified teachers. Technology, sports, recreation, and character education are also taught.

Miracle Arts

Enrichment

Arts enrichment is coordinated by the United Arts Council. Miracle students have access to a full program of dance, theatre, music and visual arts classes taught by well-qualified artists and art educators. The United Arts Council also arranges visits by performing artists who provide concerts, poetry recitations, dance recitals and touring plays for the students. Arts classes and activities frequently integrate "stealth learning" components related to math, science, social studies, reading and writing. The United Arts Council believes that disadvantaged students in particular benefit from an arts-rich learning environment. Cultural enrichment enhances student learning in core academic subjects and it helps keep students motivated.

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