



# RHYTHMS

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**September 11:**

[Museum Studies Exhibit: Remembering Not to Forget](#)  
(runs through November 7)

**October 7:**

[Vocal Honors Recital](#)

**October 10:**

[Student Recital](#)

**October 16:**

[Museum Studies Art Talks](#)

**October 17:**

[New Washingtonians Jazz Orchestra Concert](#)

*For a more detailed and up-to-date calendar of events, please visit  
[www.ellingtonschool.org](http://www.ellingtonschool.org)  
or call the Box Office at **202.337.4825***



## **SAVE THE DATE!**

Denyce Graves is performing at the Kennedy Center on February 25th, 2009, at a fundraiser benefiting The Duke Ellington School of the Arts!

For sponsorship and ticket information, contact The Ellington Fund at [info@ellingtonarts.org](mailto:info@ellingtonarts.org).

## *STUDENT LIFE-LINE FUND: SAVING ELLINGTON'S AT-RISK STUDENTS*



As young artists, many Ellington students arrive with quirky personalities, heightened sensitivities and many other social challenges-- often accompanied by economic hardship. Sometimes students need extra Metro or bus fares to tide them over through a rough spot. Sometimes they need meal funds until struggling parents get back on their feet. Socially and psychologically, our children need significant support to get through high school at all. The Student Life-Line Fund provides these critical funds to ensure that our at-risk kids get the support and attention they need to become whole and productive individuals.

Currently, the school provides only a skeletal program to meet this challenge, but to provide what these kids need, we must have:

- Four dedicated staff members
- Early identification of at-risk students
- Tutoring and teaching
- Mentoring
- Counseling
- College application and scholarship assistance

To fully fund the program, Ellington needs \$350,000 a year, and we're hoping the Ellington community sees this as an endeavor worth supporting.

***If you can help, please call 202.333.2555 ext. 2101 or email [info@ellingtonarts.org](mailto:info@ellingtonarts.org).***

*DC COMMISSION FOR THE ARTS AND HUMANITIES  
PROVIDES SCHOLARSHIPS FOR ELLINGTON'S  
JOURNEYS! SUMMER ARTS CAMP*

For four weeks, children aged 10-14 met daily for summer fun-- and hard work-- in preparation for the final performance. They studied African American, Latin American, and Native American cultures, and elements of each were applied in the final show. They learned new songs, dance moves, and acting skills, and created their own sets and costumes, sometimes working well beyond camp hours.



Parents commended the camp for offering campers a taste of the hard work show biz entails. "I am used to the 'Ellington way,' so I knew what to expect," gushed one parent. "Even after so many years, Ellington still thrives and delivers the greatest."

In addition to intensive rehearsals, the campers ventured out to experience the city's rich cultural resources. They took field trips to the historic Lincoln Theatre, the National Museum of the American Indian, and Imagination Stage, ate lunch at Ghana Café, and learned about the diverse influences that shaped Adams Morgan. They also had the chance to just be kids, splashing in the Georgetown Pool.

"Journeys was established to compete with the best private arts camps in the area," says Ellen Copley, Executive Director of the Ellington Fund, "but we also need to remember Ellington's mission to provide arts education to those who would not otherwise have the opportunity. We are thankful to the D.C. Commission for providing additional funds for scholarships for some of these young people."

***If you'd like to make summer arts camp possible for less fortunate kids or register your own children, email [info@ellingtonarts.org](mailto:info@ellingtonarts.org).***

## ELLINGTON'S SUMMER BRIDGE PROGRAM EASES TRANSITION

The transition from middle school to high school is a challenge: incoming first-year students can be daunted by the raised expectations and increased academic and social pressures of high school life. For the past ten years, Ellington has mandated a Summer Bridge program to ease the adjustment and help students and teachers gain a head start on the school year.



The seven-week academic program offers classes in math, science, reading, social studies, counseling, time management, and safety. The schedule also includes an arts class once a week, taught by Ellington upperclassmen. This year, 85 students attended classes daily from 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

"Starting high school can be scary," says Donna Hollis, who coordinates the program. "The Summer Bridge Program tackles the critical tasks of introducing students to study skills and

helping them to brush up on their academics."

Ronald Merritt, who teaches the English segment of the Summer Bridge Program, thinks it's a great opportunity to assess his incoming students. Their backgrounds and skill levels run the gamut, with some displaying high levels of proficiency and others struggling to keep up.

Larry Davis is charged with reviewing fundamental mathematical concepts and basic arithmetic. "It's an opportunity to offer students some consistency. It's proven that kids who don't practice between June and September lose skills," says Davis.

The Summer Bridge program is instrumental in ensuring students' social comfort and academic success, but once they get to Ellington there is a critical shortage of teachers. Many students come from under-performing middle schools and arrive with third- and fourth-grade math and reading skills. The challenge to catch them up is a serious strain on teachers and resources. Still other students arrive with college-level abilities, and they need special attention as well.

*To offer your support to Ellington's Teacher Fund, please email [info@ellingtonarts.org](mailto:info@ellingtonarts.org).*

## SUMMER CONSTRUCTION MAKES A DENT



*A school-wide clean-up with Morgan Lewis kicked off Ellington's summer beautification initiative.*

Our Georgetown neighbors are abuzz with delight at Ellington's repainted exterior, but the school's face-lift merely scratches the surface of improvements made to the school this summer.

The November '06 Washington Post article celebrated Ellington's student talent but lamented the deplorable conditions in which they worked. Since then, significant progress has been made because of the generosity of many local corporations, such as Davis Construction; Envision; Monarc; Flooring Solutions; Lees Carpets; and Bloom Construction, who donated upgrades, a newly painted and carpeted lobby and gallery, construction on our new recording studio, painting and construction on our new media center.

This summer, the school participated in the Mayor's Buff and Scrub program, working with the Associated Builders and Contractors and The George Washington University. Additionally, Ellington participated in the Summer Blitz, a DCPS program, which upgraded restrooms, dropped ceilings, added lighting, repainted classrooms and much more. These changes inarguably represent significant progress. But of course, it's a small dent in the

magnitude of repair that the 120-year-old building needs. "When you know what the kids need, we can't help but be passionate," says Father John Payne, Ellington's Dean of Operations, explaining why we still seek additional repairs.

But while all of the facilities work is under way, young artists need to be trained, academics need to be strengthened, a science lab needs to be built, and there are many other un-met needs. "That's why private donations are so critical," says Ellen Copley, Executive Director of The Ellington Fund. "They help us fill in the gaps so that we can deliver a top flight arts and academic school."

**Advertise:**  
Ellington's  
playbill is  
now  
soliciting  
ad sales

Business need a boost? Show your support of youth and the arts and purchase ad space in Ellington-Presents, a playbill for Ellington performances. For more information, please email [jbrickman@ellingtonarts.org](mailto:jbrickman@ellingtonarts.org) or call 202.333.2555 ext. 2107.

**Deadline for Commitments and Submitting Layout is October 15, 2008!**

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