



RHYTHMS

Happy New Year from the Ellington Fund! May 2009 be one of excitement, change, and hope for you, as it is for all of us.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Museum Studies Exhibit, Looking Back to Move Forward
(Exhibit closes February 27)

February 5
[Student Recital](#)

February 19
[Literary Media Coffee House](#)

February 20
[Senior Fashion Show](#)

February 24
[Piano Concert](#)

February 25
[Senior Recital](#)

March 2
[Wind Ensemble Concert](#)

March 5
[Senior Recital](#)

For a more detailed and up-to-date calendar of events, please visit
www.ellingtonschool.org
or call the Box Office at **202.337.4825**

[DONATE NOW >>](#)



BUY YOUR TICKETS NOW!

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 VIP ticket information, contact The Ellington Fund at info@ellingtonarts.org.

ELLINGTON RECEIVES TOP RATINGS FROM CHARITY NAVIGATOR!



CHARITY NAVIGATOR
Your Guide To Intelligent Giving

The Ellington Fund is delighted to announce that it has been awarded a four-star rating - the highest possible - by Charity Navigator, an independent charity evaluator that

rates the financial health of thousands of American charities.

To view our profile on Charity Navigator's website, [click here](#).

ELLINGTON KIDS SHINE AT INAUGURATION 2009!

There was plenty of opportunity to celebrate throughout Inauguration weekend 2009, and thousands had the opportunity to see and hear our Ellington students in action at high-profile events throughout the District.

Perhaps the highlight of the weekend was One Voice, the kick-off Inaugural concert at the Lincoln Memorial, featuring a host of big-name celebrities from Pete Seeger to Bono to Denzel Washington and 40 Ellington student vocalists, who sang back-up in a choir of 100 for country singer Garth Brooks.



The students braved record-low temperatures as they rehearsed the performance, but their efforts were rewarded when they shook hands with and hugged President Barack Obama back-stage. "To be out in that freezing cold, we must really love Obama," laughs Beverly Johnston, Ellington's costume instructor. While rehearsing his rendition of Shout, Garth Brooks got on his hands and knees onstage, and senior Danielle Hill, inspired by the moment, shimmied down from her place on stage and joined him. "It was so crazy," says Ronald Lee Newman, chair of the technical theater department, "but Garth loved it. He asked her to do it during the concert, too!"

Six Ellington instrumental students performed at the BET Inaugural ball at the elegant Mandarin Oriental Hotel. "The kids did a fine job," says Mr. Newman. "Everyone wanted to know where they were from and complimented their professionalism." The students played jazz standards as guests arrived throughout the cocktail hour.

Freshman Michael Fooks sang with the Washington Performing Arts Children of the Gospel Choir at the Presidential Inaugural Prayer Services at the National Cathedral. "I've probably performed at the Kennedy Center 10 times, and I've performed for President Bush, but never someone like Barack Obama," says Michael. "This was entirely different. It was exciting."



Along with some of the top visual artists in the country, a number of our visual arts students and faculty displayed their artwork at a major Inaugural art exhibit in Georgetown.

Manifest Hope: DC, sponsored by MoveOn.org, celebrated Barack Obama and attracted almost 15,000 attendees.

Ron Newman had the honor of serving as the announcer and official stage manager at the Virginia Inaugural Ball at

the new Smithsonian Air and Space Museum, where he introduced the Commodores.

Aaron Clay, an alumnus who graduated from Ellington last year and is now a jazz studies major at George Mason University, played with his jazz quartet at the Jack & Jill Inaugural Ball at the Ritz-Carlton Pentagon City. "It's great to be a part of history," reflects Aaron. "This is the first election in which I could vote, and this inauguration is very different from others."

Students and faculty alike will never forget this momentous occasion, and we thank them for representing Ellington so well.

Photos

Top right: Ellington students grin with Garth Brooks at the Inaugural kick-off concert

Lower left: The Ellington Fund's Ellen Copple admires student art at *Manifest Hope*

Box Office
*Now
Open!*



Denyce Graves at the Kennedy Center

*Concert for the Duke Ellington
School of the Arts*

**Wednesday, February 25, 2009
at 8 p.m.**

**Kennedy Center Concert Hall
Tickets \$60-\$75**

World-renowned opera singer Denyce Graves, a Duke Ellington School of the Arts alumna, takes center stage for an electrifying concert of classical, jazz, pop, R&B, and spirituals with the Duke Ellington School of the Arts Show Choir.

Tickets available at the Box Office or by phone

(202) 467-4600

TTY (202) 416-8524 | Groups (202) 416-8400
Order online at kennedy-center.org

The Kennedy Center



MORGAN LEWIS CELEBRATES TEN YEARS
OF SERVICE TO ELLINGTON



Morgan Lewis, a major DC law firm on Pennsylvania Avenue, has been providing pro bono legal advice to the Duke Ellington School for more than 10 years. While not as visible as some of our other donors, these services have amounted to millions of dollars of help to the school. Services have ranged from labor and employment issues, to intellectual property matters, to a major restructuring of the school, to help in the relationship with its partners such as George Washington University and the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, to providing free graphic design work.

Over the decade, the key person making all of this happen is Tomer Inbar, a partner at the firm who, upon receiving a phone call from an Ellington Fund board member, jumped at the opportunity to align the firm with Ellington. "I don't live far from Ellington," he says. "I knew the school, and I wanted to get involved."

Education is an issue close to Tomer's heart. He has given his time to teach classes at Ellington alongside full-time faculty. In light of the problems in DC's public school system, Tomer was keenly aware of Ellington's reputation and the training and opportunity the school provides its students. "So many DC kids can only hope for such an opportunity," he reflects. "Ellington makes it real."

Morgan Lewis's relationship with the school has included having firm lawyers participating in a clean up day at Ellington, sponsoring major events, exhibiting student art work at the firm's headquarters, and showcasing our student musicians at events.

Most importantly to Tomer, everything Morgan Lewis has done directly helps the school and the kids. "Helping Ellington has been an amazing experience," says Tomer. "The school is one of DCPS's jewels, and it serves kids from some of the poorest wards in the city. It gives them a quality education and the opportunity to experience excellent artistic training. Being part of that is an amazing experience. People initially don't realize how gratifying it is, until they meet the kids and see them perform. Then they understand."

To learn how your company can make a difference, please email info@ellingtonarts.org.

Photos:

Above: Tomer Inbar of Morgan Lewis

Right: Morgan Lewis summer associates volunteer at Ellington.



ELLINGTON FUND RECEIVES COMPASS GRANT FOR BOARD DEVELOPMENT



The Ellington Fund has received a prestigious COMPASS grant, which sends a volunteer corps of business graduates from Ivy League MBA programs to provide board development assistance to non-profits that qualify. They work in four main areas: strategic planning, fund-raising, board structure and development, and executive coaching.

Bob Horvath, president of the Ellington Fund's board of directors, notes that this partnership will lead to the next step in developing the Fund's board. "In the last several years, we've welcomed a number of new board members. Now that we've strengthened the board, we need to implement more strategic, cohesive planning for the future, which will help us meet the challenge of tough economic times ahead."

Immediate plans include a board retreat, allowing members some time away from busy, demanding schedules. There, board members will focus on the needs of the school and Ellington students, attracting additional impactful board members, and ultimately, raising much-needed funds to assist talented youth and burgeoning artists.

Photo: Nicole Cole, Ellington's COMPASS team leader and President of Phase V Consulting, LLC

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