



SHARP FOCUS

Literacy, Inc. 

VOLUME 8 | 2007-2008

SHARP Students Read and Write

What is SHARP Literacy, Inc.?

SHARP Literacy is a unique program that promotes literacy through the power of art. SHARP is an acronym for **Student Historical Art Resource Program**. Formerly known as Creative SHARP Presentations, Inc., the organization increased the literacy skills of second through fifth grade students and their teachers in 30 Milwaukee area schools in 2006-2007 by 50-80%.

- 88 educators attended the Teacher In-service at the Milwaukee Art Museum
- 5,200 Student Workbooks and Teacher Guides were distributed
- 560 presentations were made in SHARP schools
- 5,784 books were distributed for the *A Book in Every Child's Hands* initiative
- 306 creative writing books were distributed to classrooms
- 4,553 children, teachers, and parents/guardians took part in SHARP Literacy tours of the Milwaukee Art Museum
- 87% responded to our Year-end Writing Challenge
- 2,067 attended the Family Achievement Recognition events

Highlights of the year included:

- 54 attendees participated in a two-day Teacher Summer Workshop

Two SHARP students placed beads on a section of the "Circle of Life" Mural Project. Read more about this project on page 2.



The Eight Building Blocks of SHARP 2006-2007 Accomplishments

Twelve SHARP teachers enrolled in **"The SHARP Eight Building Blocks"** course at Cardinal Stritch University, where the class is offered as a 3-credit graduate level experience. The class explores SHARP's innovative concepts and teaching strategies and is offered at a special reduced tuition price to encourage and support SHARP teachers.

- Full fourth grade lesson plans were reviewed and discussed.

The 2006 Teacher Summer Workshop was generously underwritten in part by the **Greater Milwaukee Foundation's Annette J. Roberts and Joan R. Robertson Fund for World Peace, World Law, and Peace Education.**

To complete the day, teachers received docent-led tours of the Milwaukee Art Museum specially designed for SHARP and specifically tailored to each grade level during which docents provided information about artwork relevant to the vocabulary and required curriculum for each grade level.

All workbook pages meet the Milwaukee Targets and conform to Wisconsin Model Academic Standards for required curriculum in Language Arts, Science, Social Studies, and auxiliary standards such as Information and Technology Literacy, and Art and Design Education.

2006 Teacher Summer Workshop

Our two-day Teacher Summer Workshop, held at the Woman's Club of Wisconsin on June 20 and 21, 2006, was attended by 54 educators. The following ten schools participated: Blessed Sacrament School, The Business and Economics Academy of Milwaukee, Dr. Benjamin Carson Academy, Emmaus Lutheran School, Forest Home Avenue School, Neeskara Elementary School, St. Anthony School of Milwaukee, Steffen Middle School and Urban Day 12th and 24th Street Schools.

2006 Teacher In-Service

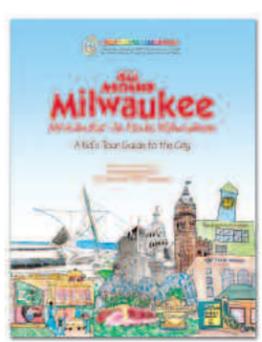
On September 26, 2006, 88 educators from 28 SHARP schools attended the Teacher In-Service held at the Milwaukee Art Museum.

The 2006 Teacher In-Service was generously underwritten in part by the **Helen Bader Foundation.**

In-School Presentations

Approximately 560 presentations were given in all 28 SHARP schools. First semester presentations prepared students for their upcoming Milwaukee Art Museum curriculum tour by viewing slides and discussing how the artwork relates to the required curriculum for their grade level. Oral practice and flashcards were used to reinforce vocabulary words related to the required curriculum and art appreciation.

- *The United Nations Classroom Charter Project* was developed for each grade.
- The release of *All Around Milwaukee* was discussed.
- Student Workbooks and Teacher Guides were updated with the help of Linda Sonnenberg and Joan LoPresti, leaders in the field of creative writing and reading instruction.
- Three exciting 2006-2007 enrichment projects were introduced.



The day began with a special sneak preview of the latest *We Love to Learn* book, *All Around Milwaukee*. SHARP Board Member

Patricia A. Ellis, Ed.D., Vice President of University Outreach at Cardinal Stritch University, informed teachers of the new SHARP graduate course offered at Cardinal Stritch University. Joan LoPresti and Linda Sonnenberg shared their successful "Reading and Writing Strategies in Non-Fiction."

In the afternoon, teachers divided into breakout sessions for each grade level.

Student Workbooks and Teacher Guides

At the beginning of the 2006-2007 school year, 4,900 grade level specific workbooks were printed and distributed along with approximately 300 corresponding teacher guides.



Second semester presentations explored the subject matter in greater detail with a new selection of artwork and prepared students to demonstrate what they learned using their new vocabulary to complete a creative writing piece for the Year-End Writing Challenge.

SHARP Literacy Kicks Off 2007-2008 Annual Campaign with Campaign Co-Chairs, Curt Culver and Russ Darrow

SHARP Literacy, Inc. is proud to announce the kick-off of its second annual giving campaign. The 2007-2008 SHARP Literacy Annual Campaign is being chaired by Curt Culver and Russ Darrow.



Curt S. Culver is Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of MGIC Investment Corporation and its principal subsidiary, Mortgage Guaranty Insurance Corporation (MGIC). Mr. Culver's career spans more than 25 years in the PrivateMI business. He joins SHARP Literacy on our 2007-2008 Annual Campaign, co-chairing with immediate-past campaign chair, Russ Darrow.

Russ Darrow serves as chairman and chief executive officer of Russ Darrow Group, Inc., a holding company that owns 23 automobile dealerships, 31 franchises, and a nationwide fleet department. Additionally, Mr. Darrow's corporate stable includes a finance company and a lease company.



We are extremely thankful to Curt and Russ for agreeing to co-chair our campaign. For more information about the SHARP Literacy Annual Campaign, please contact the SHARP Literacy office at (414) 270-3388, or visit www.creativesharp.org.

The SHARP Literacy Community

A Novel Event Set For October 2

SHARP Literacy's *A Novel Event* will feature Milwaukee's own award-winning children's book author **Lois Ehlert** as the featured speaker at the benefit luncheon, 11:00 a.m. on Tuesday, October 2, at the Pfister Hotel. A reception and chance auction will precede the luncheon.



Milwaukee's **Rockwell Automation** will be recognized for encouraging and supporting the efforts of SHARP Literacy. Rockwell Automation has played a key role in helping SHARP to achieve a 29% increase in the total number of students served, as well as for supplying the financial support needed to help improve the literacy skills of bilingual students in several near south side schools.

All About Wisconsin will also make its debut at the event! The book was written and illustrated by fourth grade students participating in *The Wisconsin Book Project*. (See page 3 for more information about this book project.)

For more information, contact Anne Gardner at 414-270-3388.

SHARP Helps Fight Bullying

Eight Milwaukee schools are joining hands with SHARP Literacy to produce a book to help students address the problem of bullying. First proposed by Principal Sara Marquez of Forest Home

Avenue School, the book project recognizes that many students are in personal circumstances that leave them isolated from the world and support systems around them, making them highly susceptible to bullying.

Using the voices of children, SHARP is creating a unique book that addresses both victims and aggressors. Several schools already have expressed interest in using the book, when completed, as part of an after-school program to help parents/guardians understand the reality of what our children face today.

We are very grateful to our major sponsors, the **Elizabeth A. Brinn Foundation** and **The Halbert and Alice Kadish Foundation**, as well as **Children's Hospital and Health Systems, Inc.** and **The Janus Foundation**, for making this project possible.

Circle of Life Mural Project Helps Students See Their Heritage

A diverse group of students came together in the *Milwaukee Circle of Life Mural Project* in 2007, a project that helped them learn about other cultures, as well as to examine their



"Circle of Life" is installed in the Marquette University Alumni Memorial Union.

own heritage and recognize our community's commitment towards eradicating racism.

More than 600 students came together at Marquette University for a campus tour and a special dedication ceremony in May. One of our grandest goals came true as eyes were opened and many children considered for the first time the possibility of pursuing higher education.

Now installed in Marquette's Alumni Memorial Union, the completed mural provides the students who participated in its creation with a sense that they are not only part of a diverse community, but may also have an important future on a college campus!

This project has been generously funded by the **Forest County Potawatomi Community Foundation** and the **Wisconsin Arts Board**. The campus tour, Dedication Ceremony and lunch for 600 attendees was generously sponsored by **Marquette University**.

First Annual Campaign is a Great Success!

Our first ever Annual Campaign has come to a close, and we wish to thank **Campaign Chair Russ Darrow** for his generous leadership, which has helped us surpass our goals!

Thank you to everyone who helped with our first Annual Campaign. We are especially grateful to **Helen and Ned Bechthold**, the **Anthony and Andrea Bryant Family Fund**, **Mr. and Mrs. Alexander J. Costigan** and the **Suzanne and Richard Pieper Family Foundation** for becoming our primary lead donors.

2006-2007 Accomplishments (continued from page 1)

SHARP Literacy Tours at the Milwaukee Art Museum

Docents versed in the SHARP program led SHARP Literacy Tours of the Milwaukee Art Museum, allowing 4,108 students, along with 445 teachers and chaperones, to see the actual pieces they viewed as slides in their first semester presentation. Discussions about how the works related to their curriculum were lively as students demonstrated



their knowledge of the topic, vocabulary words, and basic concepts of art interpretation and appreciation.

Year-End Writing Challenge

87% of SHARP classrooms participated in the Year-End Writing Challenge—the largest number of responses to date! These stories, poems and essays were published in Creative Writing Books for each grade level and distributed to the classrooms. The opportunity to see their work in print helps students build confidence in their writing abilities and

encourages them to read and compare their peers' submissions.

Family Achievement Recognition Events

Every school year, SHARP extends students' families a special invitation to celebrate their child's achievements. These Family Achievement Recognition Events are a celebration of literacy as students present their written essays demonstrating what they have learned during the school year. This year, students received a SHARP notebook with a matching pen to write down their thoughts, stories and poems.

To mark the accomplishments of their first year in SHARP, the Second Grade Family Achievement Recognition Event was held at Serb Hall. Students each

invited one parent/guardian to enjoy a formal dinner. A highlight of the event was when one second grade student from Urban Day School got up on stage all by himself in front of an audience of over 700 people to perform the presentation he had worked on with his whole class after discovering he was the only one of his classmates to attend the event.



5th Grade Students Salute Uncle Sam

The Third and Fourth Grade Family Achievement Recognition Events were combined into a Family Night at the Milwaukee Art Museum. Attendance exceeded our expectation—over 900 people joined together to make the night one to remember! Presentations were difficult to hear in Windhover Hall yet SHARP students gathered in an informal "theater in the round" to cheer on their peers. The Milwaukee Art Museum galleries were teaming with enthusiastic students who were earning a prize by showing their families what they learned as they located artwork related to their curriculum and answered questions about each piece.



3rd Grade Students Perform a Traditional Dance

In addition, we are very grateful to Dr. Patricia Ellis for returning to lead our 2nd Annual Poetry Writing Contest. Our first place winner delighted the volunteers with a special "encore" performance of his poem!

To cap their four-year experience with SHARP, fifth grade students invited one parent/guardian to a formal dinner served at Serb Hall for the Fifth Grade Family Achievement Recognition Event. Students at Lloyd Street Global Elementary School shared a film project they created for their presentation, which featured a

musical skit the students created (complete with period costumes) about the living conditions and political outlooks of slaves during the Revolutionary War.

The 2006-2007 Family Recognition Events were sponsored by **Helen and Ned Bechthold**, **The Greater Milwaukee Foundation's Anthony and Andrea Bryant Fund**, **Sue and Russ Darrow**, **Mr. and Mrs. William Huffman**, and the **Susan and Richard Pieper Family Foundation**.

Comparison of 2006-2007 Pre-Test and Post-Test Scores

Once again, a sample comparison of pre- and post-test results indicated that SHARP students increased their vocabulary and writing skills 40%-70%!

Thank you, Thank You, **THANK YOU!**

SHARP Literacy is able to offer a visual, creative approach to learning the core skills of researching, reading, writing and presenting ideas because of generous individual, corporate and foundation support. The following gifts were received between July 1, 2006 and June 30, 2007.

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We would like to thank the following schools that have made a financial contribution to SHARP Literacy, Inc.:
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Eighty-First Street Elementary School
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Milwaukee College Preparatory School
Poplar Creek Elementary School
St. Anthony School of Milwaukee
St. Rose Catholic Urban Academy
Ceria M. Travis Academy
Urban Day 12th Street School
Urban Day 24th Street School

Marlene Doerr To Receive Prestigious Award

SHARP Literacy's Executive Director, **Marlene M. Doerr**, has been named to receive the prestigious **2007 Kairos Award** presented by the Patrick and Bernice Haggerty Museum of Art. The award will be presented at the museum's 23rd Annual Gala on Saturday, September 29, 2007, by Rev. Robert A. Wild, S.J., president of Marquette University.



Marlene and SHARP students.

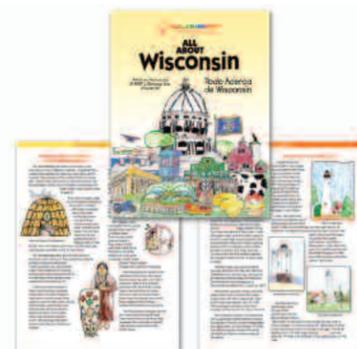
the fine arts at the University through the Haggerty Museum and through work in other arts-related activities in the community.

Congratulations, Marlene!

The Wisconsin Book Project

The Wisconsin Book Project challenged fourth grade students studying Wisconsin as part of their required social studies curriculum to share what they learned about our state. The scope and caliber of this project really pushed SHARP students to develop their research and literacy skills.

Students researched, read, wrote and illustrated essays about one of the state-mandated "Nine Big Ideas": Wisconsin Native Americans, Government, Economics, Geography, Environment, Famous Places, Famous People, the Underground Railroad and Immigration. Through their hard work, students improved both their researching and reading skills.



Like All Around Milwaukee, All About Wisconsin will be published in both English and Spanish. Participating students can be very proud knowing they created a book written specifically for their grade level, a publication which will serve to help future students learn about our state. It will make its debut at *A Novel Event* on October 2.

The Fleck Foundation was a major sponsor of this effort. We also thank the Culver's

VIP Foundation, the Green Bay Packers Foundation, the Dorothy W. Inbusch Foundation, the Nicholas Family Foundation and Rockwell Automation for helping make this project possible.

BLESSED SACRAMENT SCHOOL

FORWARD IN FAITH WITH HONOR, RESPECT & RESPONSIBILITY

I feel compelled to share with you once again how appreciative we are of the SHARP Literacy program. I remember when you first came to Blessed Sacrament School. I was the fifth grade teacher at the time and the program was first introduced. This goes back almost ten years. Since then, I have moved to the administrative position at the school and still promote this excellent program.

I believe SHARP Literacy has great educational value at a time when schools need to enhance composition, vocabulary, creative writing, learning world cultures and fine arts. This program encompasses all of the above and more.

I have witnessed great professional growth in my staff as they become active in the program and passionate about presenting the topics to the students which brings energy to the lessons. The guest presentations by the Art Museum docents and the workbooks available for all students are priceless gifts.

Our student enrollment has so many different backgrounds and needs which SHARP Literacy allows our teachers to meet at various levels. This individual creativity is met without lowering the standards of the program.

One of the greatest highlights that I have missed due to time is the wonderful dinner presentations. This allows students, schools, and staff the culmination of the lessons. Each sees the finished product, feels special and gives meaning to the learning process. This process is imperative when understanding the outcome benchmarks that are placed upon our students to achieve high academic success.

As a school that, like most are facing a financial creative challenge, I am extremely grateful for the foundations, corporations and individuals who assist us with the funding of this worthwhile program. Gracious gift giving from these donors is priceless and will only enhance our future and the future of Milwaukee Education.

I encourage you to contact me about SHARP Literacy and thank you for letting us grow with you. I can be reached at 414-649-4730.



Kathleen Kannenberg
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2007-2008 SHARP Schools:

Atlas Preparatory Academy
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Neeskara Elementary School

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St. Marcus Lutheran School

St. Martini Lutheran School

St. Rose Catholic Urban Academy

Trowbridge Elementary School

Urban Day 12th Street School

Urban Day 24th Street School

Victory School for the Gifted and Talented

Vieau Elementary School

WE Indians Program

Westside Academy I

Westside Academy II

2007-2008 Promises to be an Enriching Year!

The coming year will provide numerous opportunities for enrichment and enlightenment for children and their teachers through SHARP Literacy. Coming up are:

- The American Dream Book Project
- The Milwaukee Circle of Life Book Project
- Artist in Residence Program, featuring the Community of the Arts mural project

