



Colonial House students (from left) Ethan Evans, Ty Mallet and Addison Hawkins

Why Colonial House?

If you ever want a quick boost to your spirits, drive by 408 Mission St. at about 2:30 p.m. on any given weekday afternoon. You will smile as you see the class of happy, active children rush out the front door of the Colonial House, and you'll hear their joyful voices as they call to their parents and care-givers to show off their newest piece of art.

In Pasadena, there are many preschool options. Colonial House sets itself apart from the others in several ways. The nurturing staff provides a play-centered curriculum in a home-like setting, with plenty of social and academic enrichment. The space itself is spotless and decorated like a kid's magazine. The children are grouped in multi-age classrooms to foster empathy and leadership, and leave the Colonial House prepared each year to be engaged at any kindergarten program of choice.

The new Colonial House location, Upper Campus, is expected to have all the warmth and creativity of the school's current location. The Colonial House is offering longer classes, with options for extended days, which will be invaluable for working parents.

Colonial House can be reached at (626) 403-7099 or www.colonialhousepreschool.com.

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PISF Ushers in Second Year; Announces Expansion

The Pasadena Independent Schools Foundation (PISF) has announced that it plans to expand the program to include more schools and significantly increase the number of students participating in the program.

PISF was launched in 2007 to address the lack of empowered philanthropic education for teenagers. As part of this program, middle to high school-aged students from six area independent schools are gaining hands-on experience on how to establish and operate a private foundation. Last year, the inaugural PISF class distributed \$48,000 to local charities.

Participating schools in the program's inaugural year were Flintridge Preparatory, Chandler, New Horizon, Westridge, Polytechnic and Mayfield Senior.

The 2009-10 PISF season will kick off Sept. 23 with a participant and parent meeting at Flintridge Prep. "This is an exciting year for PISF," said founder Jonathan Jaffrey. "Our second year students will be returning to evaluate what impact their \$48,000 of grants have

had on the community."

In addition to visiting the PISF grantees, second year students will learn more about running a private foundation. These same students will mentor the incoming class, bringing the number of PISF participants to nearly 100.

According to Stacy Mercado, PISF executive director, the foundation expects to announce grantees under consideration for this next school year in early September. "It's a privilege to work with such great non-profits in the Pasadena area," said Mercado.

After PISF completed its first year, the foundation received many inquiries from local area schools and parents about expanding the program and, according to Jaffrey, they were "overwhelmed with the support."

"The goal of the program is to give the students a comprehensive and thorough understanding of philanthropy and nonprofit operation, learn skills in critical thinking and decision-making, and develop leadership skills and learn



Jonathan Jaffrey

the benefits of volunteerism," said Jaffrey. "By giving them the opportunity to experience the fulfillment of contributing to the betterment of their community, it is ultimately PISF's hope that these students will acquire a life-long passion for giving."

The PISF board met this summer to discuss expansion and will

do so locally, according to Jaffrey. PISF will accept five to seven new schools for the 2010-11 program season, doubling the number of participants in the program from 100 to 200.

"PISF was initially founded to support Pasadena and the surrounding communities. At this time, we want to make sure we satisfy local demand and continue to solidify the program before we expand outside the community," said board member Gail Ellis.

New schools will be adopted into the program on a first-come, first-served basis. Jaffrey said that participating schools are asked to support the program by facilitating communication on their campuses with student participants, by providing meeting space, by supporting the program's financial needs and by providing a parent board representative to the PISF board of directors.

Schools (or parents) interested in learning more about becoming part of the PISF program can contact Stacy Mercado at sem@pisf.org or Jonathan Jaffrey at jj@pisf.org.

Little Gym: From Forward Roll to Honor Roll

Parents want what is best for their children — every moment of every day. They want them to succeed in the classroom and on the playground. Scientists have found that children with more highly developed motor skills demonstrate a greater level of school-readiness and fare better in kindergarten than those with less-developed motor skills.

The Little Gym has applied this research to its mission to help children develop their motor skills through a professionally developed gymnastics curriculum. Not only do children learn to enhance their movement, coordination and balance, they also develop self-confidence by participating in programs designed to be fun, interactive and non-competitive.

"We've had parents tell us that their children don't even realize they're learning because they're having so much fun," said Sarah Lowe, owner of The



Little Gyms of La Cañada and Monrovia. "At The Little Gym, children learn to listen, follow directions, interact with other children socially and develop their physical capabilities."

Since 2003 in LCF and since 2007 in Monrovia, The Little Gym offers a theme-based curriculum that engages children and teaches them new motor skills. Highly trained instructors supervise all activities which include tumbling, gross locomotor skills and beam and bar exercises.

The non-competitive environment at The Little Gym provides a level of comfort to which children immediate-

ly respond. They are not afraid to participate or try new exercises, and instructors reward their efforts with consistent, positive feedback.

"Children thrive in this type of environment," Lowe said. "The Little Gym's primary goal is to provide children with a foundation in self-confidence that they'll carry with them into adulthood."

For more information about The Little Gym and its variety of programs that include gymnastics, dance, sports skills, birthday parties, camps and Parents' Survival Nights, call (818) 249-4496 or (626) 301-0100, or visit www.TheLittleGym.com.

McGroarty Arts Center Offers Classes for Adults, Children

Often referred to as the best kept secret in town, McGroarty Arts Center has been serving the community with innovative, quality art instruction in a unique and historic location for more than a half century.

We offer a wide array of affordable visual and performing arts classes such as ceramics, drawing, painting, tap and ballet, belly dancing, creative writing, theater, piano, guitar and even yoga and tai chi.

The inviting atmosphere of the center attracts children as young as 3 years of age to senior citizens. Our highly-qualified instructors and staff take pride in creating a

multi-faceted experience for each student, beginning with a foundation of the essential elements of art while nurturing creative self-expression.

Supplementing your child's education with art instruction is vital to promoting a well-rounded and positive overall learning experience. Adults can also take advantage of many classes that encourage artistic development, physical performance or simply an opportunity to discover a hidden talent or leisurely hobby.

Classes begin Sept. 25. We look forward to seeing you this fall.

For more details regarding registration or to view the complete class schedule, call (818) 352-5285 or visit www.mcgroartyartscenter.org.



Each student is taught individually at McGroarty Arts Center.

PEF Provides Valuable Support

These are tough times for public education. California's schools are threatened yet again by state budget cuts, this time of unprecedented magnitude. The good news is that for the upcoming 2009-10 school year, federal stimulus money will fill many gaps left by state cuts. The bad news is that when federal stimulus money is gone in 2010-11, the Pasadena Unified School District, its teachers and students will be deeply affected by severe financial shortages.

That's why the Pasadena Educational Foundation matters more than ever. It was established in 1971 to increase community support for the Pasadena Unified School District, which includes all public schools in Altadena, Pasadena and Sierra Madre. It's the oldest such foundation in California. As a community-based nonprofit organization supporting the goals of the PUSD, PEF develops community partnerships, financial resources and educational opportunities that benefit all students. It also encourages greater involvement from the community.

From its modest beginnings of raising thousands of dollars a year, PEF now raises about \$8 million annually for the PUSD. These funds come from several sources. Government grant awards total approximately \$5 million per year, awards from foundations and businesses total approximately \$2 million, and gifts from individuals, including parents, grandparents and generous citizens, total about \$1 million annually. Individuals contribute in amounts ranging from \$5 to \$1 million, and donors can direct their contribution to support a particular school and/or educational program, as well as to the work of PEF.

Find out more about PEF at pasedfoundation.org.