Dear Parent & Guardians:

Providing a high quality arts education is not an easy task. Public school allocated budgets do not cover the entire amount of what is needed for exemplary arts education and training. Between the support of our Ellington Fund and committed parents, resources are secured so that our students are prepared for the next level of training. As one parent speaking of arts fees recently said “no investment, no return!”

Each student at the Duke Ellington School of the Arts is responsible for a $200 annual arts fee. It is preferable that all fees be paid up front, in full, during registration. Payment plan options are available, but the full amount is to be paid by March.

What do your Arts Fees go toward? 100% of the arts fees go specifically towards your child’s arts department to provide resources and experiences that are fundamental to the training of young professionals in any arts discipline. Arts fees help provide the “must haves” that include, but are not limited to:

**Dance** – Dance publications, teaching aids, and music.

**Instrumental Music** – Instrument purchases, repairs, and accessories, headphones, and sheet music.

**Literary Media & Communications** – Project licensing, field trips, publication of print projects, and computer software.

**Museum Studies** – Guest lectures, field trips, exhibition supplies and printing.

**Technical Design & Production** – Scripts, books, subscriptions to Stage Directions magazine and others, and lighting/sound software.

**Theatre** – Production Materials (i.e. sets, costumes, props, light, sound), scripts, master classes, field trips and royalties.

**Visual Arts** – Mats, paints, charcoal, canvas, and art paper.

**Vocal Music** – Musical scores, costumes, music licensing, catering for student meals, accompanists, some field trip expenses.

Failure to pay fees will result in student’s ineligibility to participate in field trips, various school activities, and a senior’s ineligibility to participate in the graduation commencement ceremony and receive school based scholarships.

Arts Fees contributions bring $100,000 worth of assistance for quality school programming which will directly benefit our students. Thank you for your contributions that help us to create the best Duke Ellington School of the Arts possible.

Respectfully and Thoughtfully,

Head of School & CEO
Duke Ellington School of the Arts
Above: Students participate in a Q&A with journalists from the White House Press Corp at the George Washington University School of Media & Public Affairs.
INTRODUCTION

WE WELCOME YOU TO THE DUKE ELLINGTON SCHOOL OF THE ARTS LITERARY MEDIA & COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT, WHERE OUR MISSION IS:

The Literary Media and Communications Department’s (LMC) goal is singular, to train its student in the different strands of communication (written, verbal and new media), considering how this translates to the marketplace. This department necessitates interdisciplinarity, including, but not limited to LMC, Theater, Museum Studies, Visual Arts, and TDP (recording studio). Our aim is to dismantle the sometimes self-indulgent, and strictly cathartic workshop model of writing and leave in its place a department that imparts to its students the notion that they are writing to work, rather than just writing to write. The department has five strands, that are product driven, products that range from performance, to print, archival, to design, research to debate, and within the strands, culminating work both within the Duke Ellington School of the Arts (copy and content for the Ellington website, developing archives of Ellington work, creating scripts in the areas of performance/performance marketing, writing copy and public service announcements, serving as viable extension/support mechanism of and for Ellington Fund, to name a few), and outside the context of the school.

THE LITERARY MEDIA & COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

Mark Williams, Chair
Chuckwunonso Dureke
Eric Easter
Oscar Jamaal
Mark Moore
Jami Ramberan

Above, from left: former LMC student Sarai Reed presents Stevie Wonder with a brail poem; LMC student showcase
DEPARTMENT STRANDS

STRAND ONE - RESEARCH - PUBLIC SPEAKING - PERFORMANCE - SPEECH & DEBATE.

Within this the formation of the R STREET COLLECTIVE.

Left: The R Street Collective prepares for a performance at the Kennedy Center. (Photo by Kelli Anderson)

STRAND TWO - DRAMATIC WRITING + THE CONSTRUCTION & UNDERSTANDING OF CHARACTER.

Within this the formation of the Annual HORWITZ Competition, the DINNER THEATER Series, the ROOM EIGHTEEN Literary Zine and the ONLINE POETRY ANTHOLOGY

Left: Students in a workshop setting.

STRAND THREE - MAGAZINE, NEWSPAPER & ONLINE.

Within this the output of the school Magazine DAISY JAMES, production of the SCHOOL YEARBOOK & the blog THE WORLD WE DON’T KNOW + serving as the magazine, print and online face of Ellington. Partner’s include the Washington Post & GW Prime Movers Program.

Left: The Principal, Rory Pullens, is interviewed by an LMC Student.

STRAND FOUR - FILM & NEW MEDIA.

In addition to the screenwriting and video production components, this strand serves as the archiving entity for Ellington, complementing strand three and also in conjunction with branding for the school.

Left: An LMC student films a performance by Herbie Hancock.

STRAND FIVE - INTERNSHIP PROGRAM.

Internship program for seniors, across discipline, preparation for the workplace.
ARTISTIC METHODOLOGY

“As a writer all you can do is fail, and it is within that failure that you see the possibility of success.”
- James Baldwin

“Here in Africa there is no caste system. The work is to be ordinary...and it is within that ordinariness that we find how extraordinary we can be.” - Bessie Head

The Literary Media and Communications Department utilizes the “Triangle Method”. Developed by its Chair, Mark A. Williams, this methodology is rooted in the triangle as a shape, in that all sides of a triangle are equal and equidistant. Our methodology is rooted in this because it is our contention that we need to produce students who understand that knowledge, language, and information are not privileged and that all learning can be equal if its arrival point is the whole, the equal whole and not one part. Apparati and language within our educational structure, like disciplines and disciplinarity, academics and the academy, core courses and electives all are examples of privileging a part of the development of the student which amounts to students understanding knowledge in parts as opposed to learning as a process of constructing a whole. The three fundamental tenets of the “Triangle Method” are,

1) Context – Through the consideration, examination, research on and about, political, social, historical, and economic context, the student begins to consider a world outside their own. The mechanism within this is the study of character through the prism of acting and writing where the student does not consider them as separate disciplines, but rather part of a method of learning about people who may or not resemble themselves.

2) Compassion – Within the examination of character, the student begins to examine possible and real connections to other characters, other people, other human beings outside the prism of the neighborhood, city, state, nation that the student is from, and considers within these connections how he/she is constructed him/herself and the implications as far as learning within.

3) Citizen – The student begins to consider how they through the work within the methodology are participants in learning about who they are and the world they live in, rather than observers in an educational structure that teaches them margins and center, and in so doing the student begins to examine the work community in its regional, state, country, definition, but rather an identity and attendant responsibilities as a global citizen, whose roots are in the service and servicing of their fellow human.

The idea, within the “Triangle Method” is that the student makes no decision about which tenet is more important than the other and in so doing understand that all learning is a process, an ongoing process that is lifelong which is never isolated from the examination of human relationships are their inherent complexity. In this way the method also has its roots in the examination of another triangle, the triangle slave trade which was very much about destruction, the destruction of humanity, of context, of compassion, of global citizenship, of privileging capital, manifest destiny, growth, and the development of nations, which was a glaring example of brutal morality and constructions of superiority and inferiority, and rigid definitions of margin and center. The “Triangle Method” uses the Triangle Slave Trade as a referent, as well as a reminder of why teaching and learning are so urgent in the world we live in.

MARK A. WILLIAMS, CHAIR
LITERARY MEDIA & COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT
THE ELLINGTON CREED

Members of the Ellington Community contribute to their own lives and support their community members through:

**COMMITMENT** The habit of applying your talents to a task or project

**RESPONSIBILITY** Acting in a way that acknowledges the connection and duty you have to yourself and others

**EMPOWERMENT** Recognizing the innate potential of every individual to contribute to his or her school, community, world

**EXCELLENCE** Striving to meet a standard that demonstrates mastery of an idea or technique

**DIGNITY** Conducting yourself, at all times, in a respectful manner that shows you recognize your connection to a present, past and future community
DEPARTMENT RULES & EXPECTATIONS

Students are expected to regularly attend all classes, workshops, meetings, huddles, author talks, presentations, etc. In addition, students are expected to be on time for all of the aforementioned (with appropriate materials).

Tardiness, Absences, and Sit-Outs - It is the responsibility of students to abide by attendance rules and to clear absences with individual instructors. Regular and punctual attendance to all classes is required, along with full participation. It is the student's responsibility to provide necessary written excuses from doctors and/or parents and obtain all written assignments to be made up. Three unexcused absences may result in failure. Three unexcused tardies are equal to one absence. It is possible that extended sit-outs, excessive tardiness and repeated absences may serve as grounds for transfer. If return is allowed (at the discretion of the faculty) the student may be required to repeat courses not completed.

Class Participation - All students are required to fully participate in all class exercises and activities. Students will be regularly called upon to critique the work of other students and to read aloud from their own work. While a student has the right not to participate on occasion (infrequently) they may not opt out on a regular basis. Regular oral participation is required and is a part of a student's graded assessment.

Conduct - In the classroom, hallways, master classes, rehearsals/performances, visits from guest writers, on field trips, etc. students are expected to conduct themselves with professionalism, self-discipline, decorum and restraint at all times. Sleeping is not allowed unless the student has note from the nurse.

Conflict Resolution - Situations that require faculty or administrative intervention should be brought to the attention of the department chairperson who will take the matter through the proper channels until the matter is resolved.

Dress Code - Students are not allowed to wear any of the following:
Belly (midriff revealing) tops - cleavage-revealing tops or dresses - Transparent clothing - Short-shorts
Mini-skirts without leggings or tights - Hats - Underwear-revealing clothing (either male or female) - T-shirts with inappropriate statements

Required Materials (students must bring the following required materials to classes at all times)
Assignment Book - Students must have this at all times in each class and they must use it. Students are responsible for knowing what his/her assignment is in each class and when it is due. If a student is absent they are still required to complete the assignment on the given due date unless an extension has been granted by the teacher.

Pens, Paper - students must always have something to write with and on.

Journals- will be given to students by some teachers and must remain in that teacher's possession, unless otherwise stated. In addition, students are expected to keep their own separate journals on a regular basis and may be asked to produce such at any time for any teacher. Journals aid writing students in their own/home "practice" of writing. Writers must practice in the same way musicians, dancers, etc. must practice their craft. Please consult course syllabi for

Notebooks- (one-inch, three-ring, loose-leaf/college ruled paper) are required in most classes. Please consult course syllabi.

*A Word About Cell Phones - Cell phones must be turned off at all times in the classroom and may not be answered, even if the caller is a parent. (Parents must call the school office if there is an emergency.) If a cell phone rings during class time, the student will first be issued a warning. Thereafter the phone will be confiscated and turned into the front office for parental pickup. The same applies to cell phones being used for text-messaging purposes or to discern what time it is. Cell phones may not be displayed by students unless the teacher has announced a class break.

Every Literary student must stay informed of department productions and activities. If there is any confusion or uncertainty about anything, students should always check with a teacher.
Grade Point Average - Students are required to maintain at least a Grade Point Average of “B” in all of their Arts classes and at least a “C” in their Academic classes.

Student Presentations - At the end of the first and third advisories (subject to Chair’s discretion), all students must do individual presentations before the entire department. (Students may invite family and friends to their presentation if so desired.) Students have 20 minutes each during which they must read from at least two pieces of their writing (must be different genres), discuss how they came to write the pieces and discuss their writing career at Ellington. This latter discussion must include their genesis as a writer, their writing process, how they discovered their writing talent and how they have honed it to date, what authors they read, what they have learned in the department, what their writing goals are for the remainder of their time at Ellington and beyond.

Senior Presentation - Each senior must complete the same process as outlined above although their presentation must include work from each year s/he has spent in the department. Seniors have 30 minutes for their presentations.

Probation - Students not meeting minimum department requirements may be asked to transfer or be placed on probation. Students may be placed on probation for many reasons. Among them are: (1) not completing creative and/or production work satisfactorily; (2) not progressing toward the completion of requirements at an appropriate rate; (3) not sustaining satisfactory progress in course work and creative work; (4) poor behavior.

All students must maintain a “B” average in their Literary Media classes. A student who fails to meet departmental expectations may have the following actions taken against him/her: probationary status, conduct contract, exclusion from extra-curricular activities, recommended transfer to neighborhood school, or any combination thereof. A panel that may include the department chairperson, the head of school, the dean of arts, the dean of students, a counselor, and a parent/guardian, will be the final arbiter.

The R-Street Collective performs at the Fridge Art Gallery.
Students will be expected to consider the form, content, style, analysis, construct, and construction of a play. The arrival point of this class is for students to write, and mount a staged reading of a full-length, one act play. Students will also be expected to submit work from class to at least one of LMC’s “Coffeehouses” The class is broken down into the following, primary areas:

-First Advisory – Character/Character Development, Six Elements of Aristotle, as well as Aristotle’s, “Poetics”, Compelling Characters, and Primacy of Plot/Action vs. Character
-Second Advisory – Monologue/Dialogue, Voice, Tone, Mood Setting, Action, Language, and Rhythm
-Third Advisory – Ten Minute, and Twenty Minutes
-Fourth Advisory – One act, and Staged Reading

MEDIA (FILM STUDIES, FILMMAKING & SCRIPTWRITING)

Media I is an introductory course for second year high school students wanting to learn and acquire the tools and elements necessary for designing a screenplay for the motion picture. The student will be introduced to the scriptwriting software Final Draft, its interface, and will come to understand the screenplay’s function to serve as a vital blueprint in the motion picture process. Students who are enrolled in Media I will be charged with governing the scriptwriting aspect of a collaborative final project with students in Media II. Micro-production companies (3 to 4 students) are formed, for the purpose of generating two, 3 - 5 minute motion picture with sound narrative works.

Media II is an elaborative, thinking course, designed for third year students to explore the many facets of film and cinema. Through critical analysis, they will learn how to deconstruct images portrayed onscreen. Through ongoing class discussions, the student will come to know the ecology of film, how that comprises film culture, and what it means to read a film. Students who are enrolled in Media II will control and oversee the production process of a collaborative final project with students in Media I.
JOURNALISM

The aim of the Journalism course is to introduce students to some of the fundamental aspects of journalism and encourage students to engage in the news, the business of news and current affairs. Students look at the principles of writing the news, while considering the history of journalism and the state of journalism today in the information age. Students learn what makes a news story newsworthy, what motivates people to pick up newspapers, news agenda and the news markets.

FILM

Instruction will focus on the filmmaking process, from development, preproduction and production through post-production and exhibition. Students will expand their theoretical and practical knowledge of basic film and video production. Emphasis will be placed on the aesthetic, intellectual, and ethical considerations involved in the respective mediums. Writing, form, style and structure will be stressed, however students may explore new and creative forms of storytelling for their final projects.

NEW MEDIA

The classes challenge students to think creatively about the potential of web video, and connect the dots between open technology, creative expression, and media democracy. Students gain practical experience in online video publishing through work on the LMCTV YouTube video channel and LMCTV Tumblr blog. Exploring principles of multimedia production, online storytelling tools, social media and content management, students learn to populate a reported site, promote it and maintain it beyond class.

CREATIVE WRITING

The Creative Writing unit of the course introduces students to the elements that go into creating strong fiction, memoir and creative non-fiction. Students look at areas such as dialogue, exposition and characterisation, as well as the crucial aspects of plot, emotion and imagery, as they learn how these elements are weaved together in order to convey themes.

Above, from top: 11th grader Asia Alston questions Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, live on NPR Radio; students rehearse for a forthcoming poetry performance; a still from the online marketing campaign for the school’s production of Dreamgirls; a copy of the school’s literary zine “Room Eighteen”.

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THE WORLD WE DON’T KNOW

A tumblr blog produced by 9th grade students that seeks to interrogate the international world through the eyes of teenagers. The blog explores random topics ranging from sports to new methods of transport, international foods and current affairs. The website can be found at: http://worldwedontknow.tumblr.com

VOICES FROM THE LMC

Voices from the LMC is a digital poetry anthology that represents the students in the Literary Media and Communications Department at Duke Ellington School of the Arts.

The online anthology derived its name from the famed print anthology Aloud: Voices from the Nuyorican Poets Cafe.

http://literarymedia.wordpress.com
DOCUMENTARY PROJECTS

Why Ellington? Why Not Western?

The Student documentary explored the history of Western High School and its evolution into Duke Ellington School of the Arts. The documentary premiered at the Literary Media and Communications Coffeehouse, in addition to this, it was screened at the Arts Club of Washington, the School of Media & Public Affairs at George Washington University and the Edmund Burke Student Film Festival, where it collected an award.

The Dream Working

The Dream Working explored how “the dream”, created by the founders of Duke Ellington School of the Arts over 30 years ago, has grown to encompass the creative media that defines the 21st century artist. Technology, film, and language fuse together to form a modern narrative of dreams and dreaming and the working process of achievement in the global community.

R STREET SPEAKS: SPEAKERS SERIES

The Literary Media & Communication Department invited renowned educator, poet, writer and activist Sonia Sanchez to speak as our inaugural guest of the R Street Speaks, Speaker Series. The theme of her visit was "The Greatest Civil Rights Issue Facing the United States is Public Education" and featured a rigorous examination of this issue, starting with the premise that every person, regardless of race, religion, class, is born with the right to receive an education. Ms Sanchez spent the entire day at the school, participating in a school-wide assembly in the morning before giving an intimate reading and question and answer session to the Literary Media & Communications Department.

THE STORIES OF SONG PROJECT

The National Black Programming Consortium worked with Literary Media and Communications students to harness the spirit of traditional songs of protest in a modern context, incorporating a medium that has now become ubiquitous and connects more directly with the youth of today through short-form digital video. Stories of Song was a digital literacy video training experience; after a 3-hour intensive video training session using the Flip video camera, involving instruction on both storytelling and the ethics of information sharing in a digital age, students were tasked with creating a one-take video inspired by a civil rights song and/or using a civil rights song in the public domain.

Songs of Protest Flip Video Competition Sponsored by The National Black Programming Consortium, Self Destruction: Self Destruction by Public Enemy
DAISY JAMES

The Literary Media & Communication Department produces DAISY JAMES an Arts & Lifestyle Magazine that extends to a wider market beyond the schools walls, reflecting not just the department, but the school and youth culture in general.

The magazine is a colourful cosmopolitan journal that's bright, vibrant and reflective of DCs young heterogeneous communities. Its focus is on style, trends, music, literature, film, art, criticism, review, technology, culture plus more.

ROOM EIGHTEEN

ROOM EIGHTEEN is a Literary “Zine” produced by students in the Literary Media & Communications Department. A pseudo-digital throwback to the “lo-fi” years of producing publications in your bedroom with paper, scissors and glue. ROOM EIGHTEEN exists not just as an outlet for LMC students to showcase their fiction and creative work, but also as a vehicle in which to experiment with form. Students are encouraged to push the boundaries in consideration of the limitations placed on the written word and use the likes of graphic illustration, satire and concept art to convey their messages.

THE SIDS AWARENESS PROJECT

LMC has partnered with Children's Hospital and George Washington University in the development of several educational video shorts, and the development of appropriate messaging via text messaging, email, and other social media venues, to create campaign/mobilizing applications, with the goal of initiating and maintaining a dialogue amongst medical professionals and the clients they serve, particularly young people. The project highlights issues ranging from SIDS to Birth Control/STD Awareness, Drug and Alcohol Awareness and AIDS/HIV awareness to name a few.

THE HORWITZ FAMILY FUND

LMC has a vibrant partnership with the Horwitz Family Fund in developing and growing LMC’s Playwriting component. The partnership allows not only for developing student plays but also working with a professional theater in developing the work, creating a school-wide competition culminating in a significant scholarship for the winner of the competition, and a staged reading of the winning submission, mounted by theater professionals.

From left to right: Mark A. Williams, Chair of the department with the finalists of the 2011/12 Horwitz Playwriting Competition, Idia Leigh - winner of the competition with the runner-ups Sara Phillips and Cara Racin.
DEPARTMENT GRADING CRITERIA

Generally:
A: indicates superior work
B: indicates good work
C: indicates that the student barely passed the course. Such work is normally not acceptable in a student’s primary area of concentration. A student who receives such a grade may be put on formal or informal academic probation.
D: indicates work that does not meet departmental requirements. Students who receive a D must repeat the course or an approved substitute.
F: indicates the student has failed the course.

How Grades are Earned:

A grade of “A” will be earned by the student who:
• Completes his/her class work and assignments thoroughly and in a timely fashion.
• Displays outstanding behavior during classes, workshops, performances, lectures, etc.
• Is always prepared for class and performances with appropriate materials and attitude.
• Assists others, participates in discussions, and works well with peers and teachers.
• Often goes beyond what is expected or required of him/her.

A grade of “B” will be earned by the student who:
• Completes his/her class work and assignments in a timely fashion.
• Displays good behavior during classes, workshops, performances, lectures, etc.
• Is usually prepared for class and performances with appropriate materials and attitude.
• Usually assists others, participates in discussions, and works well with peers and teachers.

A grade of “C” will be earned by a student who:
• Often completes work with nonchalant attitude, and/or in an untimely fashion and/or with bare minimum requirements met.
• Often displays nonchalant attitude and/or discourteous behavior by sleeping, talking, etc. during classes, workshops, performances, lectures, etc.
• Is frequently tardy or absent and/or is generally unprepared for class and performances and/or usually does not have appropriate materials and attitude.
• Often does not participate in discussions and/or is often combative and unable to work well with others.

A grade of “D” or “F” will be earned by the student who:
• Does not complete assigned work in a timely fashion.
• Makes excuses as to why s/he is unable to study, participate or work.
• Skips class, part of class, or leaves early.
• Displays discourteous behavior by sleeping, talking, or not paying attention in performances, lectures, or workshops.
• Does not work well with other students or teachers and/or does not participate in discussions.
• Has limited pride in his/her work.

Failed Courses in Literary Media Department Policy If a student fails a course in Literary Media, the student is required to take the course again during the following school year or be unable to move on to the next grade level. Failure to pass all courses in the Literary Media & Communications department will prevent the student from receiving the arts certificate upon graduation.

Grading in ASPEN Grades will be reported prior to progress report and by the end of advisory, however if questions arise anytime during the advisory, please communicate with with assigned teacher.
LMC CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY

In the Literary Media & Communications Department we believe in holding our students to a very high standard of conduct. It is our belief that an early understanding of how you are expected to carry yourself in the working world will instil a valuable set of tools; soft skills that will serve you well for years to come. In light of this we have created a simple code of conduct and grievance procedure that will enable both faculty and students alike to maintain a professional learning environment.

We expect students, faculty and guests:

- To be respectful of one another, and to carry themselves with both intelligence and humility.

We expect students:

- To dress appropriately.
- To hand in completed assignments on time. Late and incomplete work is unacceptable.
- Absence and tardiness will not be tolerated.
- Disruptive behavior will not be tolerated.
- Poor participation will not be tolerated.
- To respect the individual classroom rules of all teachers, both arts and academics (For example, no food and drink around the computer equipment in the lab).

Students who fail to comply with the above will be subject to a penalty scoring system:

**Five-Point Penalty System**

There will be two soft warning before a student accumulates their first penalty point.

1pt: Mediation and possible detention.
2pts: Parent contacted.
3pts: Parent/Teacher conference with Chair.
4pts: Student placed on probation list.
5pts: Student is placed on Transfer list.
GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

We believe that students are entitled to a voice and want to give them that space to air any concerns they might have. However we believe it’s important that students express their grievances in the correct manner, to ensure that there is no conflict and that their complaints are both heard and handled appropriately.

We believe that this formal procedure will help create a healthy environment in which to learn, as well as eliminate any potential conflict and miscommunication.

Complaint with Member of Staff

If a student believes they have a concern or complaint with a member of staff, we ask that students not confront that person but rather, in the first instance, seek out another member of staff in the department. That member of staff will act as a mediator to resolve any dispute.

If they feel as if their grievance has not been resolved at that first stage, students have the recourse to then put their complaint into writing and discuss the issue with the department Chair.

We do believe we can resolve most disputes internally in a professional manner and will work hard to achieve this, however if students still feel as if the matter has not been tackled to their satisfaction, it is within their right to:

- Request a parent / teacher conference with Chair present
- Put their concerns into writing to the Dean of Arts / Dean of Students
- Put their concerns into writing to the Principal.

Complaint with Fellow Student

If a student believes they have a concern or complaint with a fellow student, again, we ask that you do not confront that student. You should seek out a member of staff who will in the first instance attempt to mediate on your behalf. If the complaint cannot be resolved at this stage, students have the right to follow the same steps they would take with a staff grievance.

Left: Students gather in the green screen studio at the Washington Post building as part of their eight-week Fast Forward Program.
PARENTS please consider volunteering for one of the following jobs for the upcoming school year. This structure will allow parents to serve in areas most suited to their talent, skills and desires. We also encourage you to step into roles that you might not have considered:

President of Parent Group  Secretary of Parent Group
Communications Team – Our Communications Team, next to the Fundraising Team, faculty, is one of the most crucial teams for the department. You will be in direct communication with parents, the department chair, faculty members, as well as school administration.

Specific ways that you could contribute on this team include participation is sub-teams:

Advertising -- Help with preparation of flyers, signage -- Send press releases to local media and your community
Printing and Publishing -- Department newsletter (for a broader audience, including alumni & patrons) -- Regular communications to current department families
Department/Administration Liaison -- Plan department participation in school-wide functions (Fall Festival, student orientation/registration sessions, school-wide production, etc.) Membership -- Maintaining family/student contact information (spreadsheet or database) -- Phone tree -- Alumni outreach and information
Historical Records -- Taking minutes at meetings (especially beneficial to parents who are not able to make a meeting)
-- Production related media: photographs, press releases, programs
Support Team – This team supports the department’s school-year Coffeehouse productions and end-of-the-year events. You will be coordinating with publicity, advertising, tech week meals, concession stand, etc.
Fundraising Team – This is, without a doubt, one of the most critical teams for any department, and the Fundraising Team consists of all parents. Under a Team Leader, parents are invited to formulate individual fundraisers as well as participate in the department’s fundraising activities. The department fundraisers have included the annual yearend-letter to solicit private donations, which has traditionally garnered tremendous financial support for the department. Also, ticket sales, playbill ad sales, raffles, lunchtime pizza sales, tee shirts, concession stand, etc. have been sources of revenue for the department.

All departments depend upon the support of parents to stay alive and to thrive.
Mark A. Williams, Chair, is a playwright, whose recent works, "Junkanoo" and "Patience Wept" have been performed at the Lincoln Theater and the Duke Ellington School of the Arts, and his latest play, "Zulu Nation" had its initial staging at the Bethesda Writers Center and a full production will be mounted in 2012. He has received the "Mayor's Award for Outstanding Contribution to Arts Education", the "Surdna Arts Fellowship for Arts Educators", and has been named in "Who's Who Among American Educators". He is also working on a book, "3/5's of History", a trans-narrative rendering of the training for the 21st Century Writer which has been optioned.

Chuckwunonso Dureke is a first-generation Nigerian-American narrative storyteller, writer, director at current student at Howard University MFA Film program. She specializes in creating new worlds that examine old truths by enthusiastically producing unique colorful culturally based experiences. As a narrative writer and director, her life's goal is to capture and create non-conventional stories that will connect, empower and inspire humanity, like the stories she was raised with. Chuckwunonso believes that film is supposed to be a mirror, reflect, and challenge humanity. Her extensive experience in film and mass-communications focusing on cultural identity and cultural representation gives her an innovative approach to storytelling, especially as it relates to the communities from the Diaspora. She is very passionate about creating content that helps to shed light the issues related to the human experience locally and globally that goes unseen. Ultimately, Chuckwunonso believes that life may not always be understood but it must always be felt through storytelling.

Eric Easter is a media executive, producer and writer. He is CEO of BlackBox Digital, which produces non-fiction films and series, and chairman of the board of Black Public Media, which funds, develops and distributes films and other media for PBS and public radio. The former CEO streaming channel Black Heritage Network, he also served as the head of digital and entertainment for Johnson Publishing Company, where he launched Ebony.com.

Oscar Jamaal is a digital artist and native of Washington, DC. Characters in his personal narratives are culturally juxtaposed due to his experiences living across the DMV. His writing is heavily influenced by music. Beats, rhymes, and life motivate the stories he tells. As a content creator and digital arts educator, Jamaal's desire to help students meet high academic standards through film and digital media. He has 20 years of experience working with urban youth in community centers, classrooms, and recreational facilities in the metro DC area. With a Bachelor of Arts in Film and Video Production, he brings his skills and experience as a digital artist to the classroom, combining a love of media with a passion for teaching. Film and digital media production are introduced as tools to empower social activism, create political awareness, and build solid character.

Mark Moore is a editor and motion graphics artist. He is a DMV native with a love for the artistry of filmmaking. Mark is a graduate of Bowie State University, where he received a BS in Broadcast Journalism, as well as an alum of Howard University where he earned his MFA in Film Production. Mark is an industry professional with over 10 years of media experience. With experience at CBS Radio and NBC, today he is freelance video editor who specializes in motion graphics and has edited award winning short films & web series. He is a comic reader, sports lover, video game player, sci-fi enthusiast, and all-around appreciator of all art forms.

Jami Ramberan is a filmmaker and scholar. She holds a BA in English from Seton Hall University, a MA in Media Studies from The New School and a MFA in Film Production from Howard University, where she also teaches in the Film and Television Concentration. She has written, directed and produced films, music videos, commercials and documentaries that have been screened on television, at film festivals and on digital platforms. Jami is very active in the DC media and film community and as a result, volunteers as the Program Director for Parallel Film Collective, a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting global images that transcend limiting racial, cultural and gender identities found in mainstream media. Jami seeks to work on projects that inject a message of social change into the center of popular consciousness. Her latest award winning short film Silent Brave, focuses on the psychological effects of military sexual trauma on an individual when the act is not reported. Currently, Jami is currently in post-production for her film Everlasting which explores how people cope with death through social media.
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