



P.O. Box 462 Summit, New Jersey 07902

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July 15, 2018

Dear parents, guardians and friends of the performing arts,

SPARC turned 21 this past season and celebrated by hosting its second “Meet the Performing Arts Coaches” for rising 6<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grade families, this year held in the high school library. We had a great turnout with an overwhelming positive vibe throughout the evening. We heard from the middle school and high school coaches and from 13 students – 11 from the high school and 2 from the middle school.

As we look back on the 2017-2018 school year, we have an incredible story to share of the journey of our actors, directors, debaters, orators, dancers, and steppers across all 7 of the schools in the district. Once again we were entertained while our students developed character, problem solving skills and built friendships through teamwork. And you, the parents and donors, played a significant role in it all – you gave of your time, talents and treasure every step of the way!

The highlights of this past year include:

- At the elementary level, we were entertained by Brayton’s **Winnie the Pooh**, Franklin’s **Beauty & The Beast**, L-H’s **The Wizard of Oz**, Jefferson’s **Hydragean Albright: Comedy or Tragedy?**, and Washington’s **Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day**.
- LCJSMS’s **“The Government Inspector”** - Montclair Theater Awards winner of Outstanding Production of a Middle School Play.
- At LCJSMS, students brought the tale of the “princess and the pea” to life **“Once Upon a Mattress”** dazzling the audience with impressive sets, and exhilarating song and dance.
- SHS’s fall play – a classic – Shakespeare’s **“Love’s Labour’s Lost”** received 10 nominations from Montclair Theater Awards including Best Classical Play and Best Overall Production – winning for Outstanding Achievement by an Actor in a Classical Play and Outstanding Achievement by an Actress in a Classical Play and Outstanding Achievement in costumes.
- SHS received 6 Paper Mill Playhouse Rising Star Nominations for **“Legally Blonde”** - winner of the Educational Impact Award and the Costume Crew received the Student Achievement Award.
- SHS students treated us to an evening of Broadway tunes at the annual **Cabaret** and the Advanced Theater students brought us 6 one-act plays at the annual **Director’s Showcase**.
- The Genesis STEP Team was awarded First Place in the STEP Battle and Second Place overall at the Columbia High School competition in May.
- The Summit High School Speech & Debate team had another award filled year culminating the year with the school’s first ever forensics national champion for Dramatic Interpretation at the National Speech & Debate Association (NSDA) Tournament in Ft. Lauderdale. SHS also won a School of Excellence in Speech award ranking in the top 20 out of 1,000 schools competing in the national tournament. The team qualified 7 students for NSDA this year and 14 for the Tournament of Champions which was held in Kentucky.

- LCJSMS's TEDx Program culminated the year at a June 1 event where 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grade students walked onto an official TEDx stage to deliver their 10 minute speeches covering a variety of topics, challenging the audience, through the unique lens of adolescence. SPARC's support for the *Own the Room* workshop is an investment in these orators.
- SPARC awarded scholarships to 12 SHS seniors, many whom will be pursuing the arts in college

Your generosity and support both financially and through numerous volunteer hours made a tremendous difference in our schools. Your funds provided grants, totaling \$50,870, as follows:

- \$14,105 for Elementary School Productions, Jefferson 5<sup>th</sup> Grade trip to Broadway & spotlights
- \$11,916 for LCJSMS including scrim curtain, lighting equipment, TedX student workshop, technical and drama student workshops, Genesis STEP Team competition fees
- \$25,770 for SHS including student workshops for Cabaret, Advanced Theater students, and Forensics students; *"Legally Blonde"* play rights; director's showcase coaches; Forensics National Tournament fees/local transportation, and a total upgrade to the stage lighting equipment
- \$7,840 in recognition for SHS students including Awards of Excellence program; Senior Salute – a celebration of Seniors & Faculty in the performing arts & Senior Scholarships

Fundraising is always a challenge as many of us are asked to give to multiple organizations. The SPARC board understands the demand and the challenge. We are looking for alternative fundraising efforts that offer more opportunity to mingle with friends, be entertained and lessen the demand on volunteer hours. As we look to 2018-2019, we hope to address some additional capital requests made by the elementary schools and to address some other ongoing requests from the middle and high school.

Thank you to all the friends of the performing arts who are helping to keep our students involved in activities that foster collaboration, creativity and confidence. A special thanks and best wishes for a happy healthy retirement to our own Ron Wells. As a founding member of SPARC, a teacher at Franklin and then an inspirational drama teacher and director at the middle school, Mr. Wells gave many years of excellent guidance and commitment to our students and to the performing arts. We are all very grateful to Mr. Wells.

We wish you a great summer and look forward to seeing you in September!

Sincerely,



Gloria M Ron-Fornes

SPARC, President

[www.SPARCsummit.org](http://www.SPARCsummit.org)

*SPARC is a non-profit charitable corporation with 501(c)(3) tax exempt status in the United States. Our address is PO Box 462, Summit, NJ 07902 U.S. tax-exempt number: 36-4579175*