

# A Better Way Forward

Manchester Bidwell Corporation Newsletter | Issue 5 | Autumn 2011



*Words of Wisdom*  
One of our core beliefs is “environment shapes

people’s lives.” We define environment in the broadest sense by combining the traditional meaning of physical location with both positive intellectual and emotional settings. We create a truly transformative experience for our students and community.

In this issue, you’ll read about the people who help create this unique space and those who benefit from it. You’ll discover what we are doing to sustain it and how we are growing.

With the world’s current instability, safe havens like MBC are more important than ever. Please take the time to read about what we do and who we serve. Consider a sustaining gift to our organization so we can continue beneficially shaping lives.

Sincerely,

William E. Strickland Jr.  
President and CEO

## *The importance of giving back*

When **Robert N. Peirce, Jr.**, was a law student at Duquesne University, he received an interest-free loan, “or else I couldn’t have gone to school,” he recalls. Now, heading his own law firm, Robert Peirce & Associates, P.C., and serving as a board member at Manchester Bidwell Corporation (MBC), Bob gives that same help to Duquesne University students and others.

He has also provided scholarships for students to attend Manchester Craftsmen’s Guild Youth & Arts summer programs, and gives a consistent, unrestricted gift to the Bidwell Training Center (BTC). “BTC is in the business of creating jobs—it has a good track record,” he says. “I can’t think of anything more important in this local area.”

*Continued on Page 2*

## *Got to Go Green with Bidwell Training Center*

Discover how “green” chemistry, BTC’s newest environmentally-conscious initiative, is made possible on page 3.

## *Uncommon greatness at MCG Jazz*

Get in tune with MCG Jazz’s latest technological adventure and newest staff member on page 4.

## *A new direction for MCG Youth & Arts*

See a familiar face in a new place — learn about David Deily, new director of operations for MCG Youth & Arts, on page 5.

## *NCAT is creating a healthier world!*

Discover who benefits when the MBC educational model goes into a new city on page 6.

**Continued from Page 1**

Nor is there another cause as pressing, he says. "Every year, BTC needs money for their programs. It is a need that never goes away—and the need for more jobs never goes away. It seems that anybody interested in helping people in this economy would be giving every year."

Annual gifts to all MBC programs are essential because they offer financial stability to MBC's adult career training, youth arts courses, and jazz education and concert series. Donors who support MBC annually are the backbone that holds the organization upright and on course. Consistent contributions are so important that MBC has just instituted a sustaining giving program, which allows donors to make easy, automatic monthly gifts that add up to a significant annual donation.

**The Davids**—Helaine and Rabbi Sion—know the crucial sustenance that steady support supplies to MBC. They've been traveling from Uniontown for multiple MCG Jazz shows in the Concert Hall for "way over 15 years," Helaine recalls, and have been long-standing financial supporters of MCG Jazz as well.

"We love live jazz," she explains, "and we like the fact that it [MCG's Concert Hall] is such a clean environment. It's small and cozy. It's the secret jewel of Pittsburgh."

The couple give to MCG Jazz each year, she says, because "we have to keep jazz alive, and this is a wonderful place to do it. It's world-class music. Especially now, when we seem to have lost radio stations for jazz, it's definitely important to support it."

The Davids' local school district has recently cut its music education program as a cost-saving measure, she notes. "That's a tragedy. Cultural institutions have to be supported."

**Bill and Nancy Rackoff** have also long made Manchester Bidwell programs a focus of their annual charitable donations. Nancy, an MBC board member, recalls being inspired to help CEO Bill Strickland start MBC's first annual giving campaign a few years ago.

"Bill was such a community icon, who personally committed his life's work to the community," she says. "He has such hope and vision that I was really just a great admirer of him and his accomplishments."

Today the Rackoffs are still greatly encouraged by the success of the MBC model. "Bidwell Training Center is especially important for the overall health of the community," says Bill Rackoff. "We also like Manchester Craftsmen's Guild and its programs, which bring diverse groups of youth together in an environment of light and hope."

Maintaining their support is an easy decision for the Rackoffs. "The Guild and Bidwell programs are real game-changers for nearly everyone they reach," says Nancy. "Until the rest of the world catches up with MBC's methods, the organization is going to need our help to reach as many people as possible each year. It's that simple."



Learning transferable skills in the Youth digital arts studio.



Exposing a new generation of listeners to the power of jazz.



Pennsylvania Senator Joe Scarnati celebrates the success of BTC graduate James Plowman.

## Our apologies!

We'd like to apologize to the following donors who were not listed or listed incorrectly in the Spring 2011 newsletter:

Jenny Bain in honor of Paul Wolsk  
Sandy and Patti Berman

Don Linzer  
Schneider Downs Wealth Management

John Thoubboron



### *From down-and-out to up-and-coming*

**Matthew Miller** came to Bidwell Training Center after being laid off from his job as a corporate trainer, where he had over six years of experience in the field. Frustrated by a lack of employment opportunities and battling patches of mild depression, he decided to pursue his long-held passion for cooking. He enrolled at BTC, where he excelled, was inducted in the Alpha Beta Kappa National Honor Society

and became a member of the American Culinary Federation. Matt was hired by Eat'n Park as part of a management trainee program, and based on his performance as a student and involvement as a BTC alumnus, we expect he will be an exceptional manager. Matt's long-term goal is to utilize his diverse skills in business, culinary arts and management to open his own restaurant.

**James Plowman** felt stuck in dead-end jobs and lacked the ambition and confidence to pursue a career. He was laid off and began investigating options, which led him to BTC. When he saw the Chemistry Lab, he began to visualize a new future. The major required hard work, but he was committed—for himself and his young son. Upon graduating, he gained a sense of pride and accomplishment in achieving his goals. Now, Jim enjoys his job as a lab technician at Cronimet and says that he is able to provide his son with a stable environment and an improved quality of life. Jim reports that his son is happier, interested in school and earning excellent grades. We have no doubt that it's inspired by his father's work ethic and success.



**BTC graduate Matt Miller shares his story during commencement.**

*Save the Date!*

**Celebrate our graduates' achievements at the 2012 Commencement Ceremony on Saturday, April 14 at Rodef Shalom Congregation.**



### *Going green through chemistry*

At Bidwell Training Center, going green is more than what's happening in Horticulture Technology; it's a school-wide initiative to be environmentally responsible. Recently, the Chemical Laboratory Technician major implemented a form of "green chemistry" through the use of Microscale Kits. As defined by the United States Environmental Protection Agency, green chemistry, or sustainable chemistry, is a concept that reduces or eliminates the use or generation of hazardous substances.

A Microscale Kit looks like a briefcase full of lab equipment which allows students to use smaller quantities of chemical materials to produce reactions. Fewer chemicals used during experiments means less waste once experiments are completed.

"Grants from partners like PPG and Industrial Scientific Foundation have allowed us to purchase these micro organic kits," said **Karen Johnson**, director of the

chemical laboratory technician major. "These kits allow us to generate less waste and improve the safety of the experiments while still giving students the opportunity to learn valuable techniques."

Like many green products, Microscale Kits offer a win-win for Bidwell Training Center. The kits make it easy for BTC to be a good steward of the environment and use our financial and material resources responsibly!



## *The Jazz Commons swings into being*

MCG Jazz is excited to spearhead a project bringing together jazz presenters, artists and jazz fans in an innovative Web-based database called the Jazz Commons. The first phase connects presenters by archiving performance data, displaying audience trends and marketing and sales data. Presenters can analyze this information to make informed decisions about artist programming and marketing and sales campaigns. Artists can connect to presenters and fans by posting their concert schedules, blogs and bios in the Jazz Commons.

The next phase of the project focuses on the jazz audience and is complete with concert listings, photos, videos, set lists and educational materials. Fans can pick their favorite artists and—equipped with knowledge about the artists—purchase tickets and music, plus learn about jazz history. Fans can search for events in their neighborhood or across the United States, pick shows, participate in post-concert chats with other fans, enter reviews and post set lists. Fans become part of jazz history and preserve and share their own knowledge in a site built just for them.

Support the Jazz Commons with a gift to the Jazz is Life® fund. The Jazz is Life fund allows MCG Jazz to create connections between organizations and individuals to expand and sustain the MCG Jazz brand and mission. MCG Jazz will develop new opportunities for live jazz by strengthening the jazz community, developing new audiences and creating a body of work to serve as a legacy. Be the first to learn about developments with the Jazz Commons by signing up for our e-list. Visit [www.mcgjazz.org](http://www.mcgjazz.org) today.

## *MCG Jazz's tuned-in new addition*

**Kahmeela Friedson**, new administrative assistant of MCG Jazz, takes on many challenges in her day-to-day support of the jazz program. She's a reserved pop-culture genius who is always in search of artistic challenges. Originally from Toledo, Ohio, Kahmeela studied Communications Broadcasting and Photography at the University of Toledo. She later transferred to The Art Institute of Pittsburgh to study film and video production.

Kahmeela began working at Manchester Craftsman Guild (MCG Jazz) on a part-time basis in November of 2010. She has since come on full-time—archiving press, assisting in collecting data for the new Jazz Commons, assembling sheet music for MCG Jazz's various recording and presenting projects, and cataloging photos for a commemorative photo collage in celebration of the joint

25th anniversaries of **BNY Mellon Jazz Festival** and MCG Jazz. The exhibit will be on display in the MCG Kerr Gallery and North Lobby Gallery this fall. She has also been digitally scanning and archiving film negatives and press clippings to document MCG Jazz's impact both regionally and nationally.

Before arriving at our doors, Kahmeela began producing **The 48 Hour Film Project** for Pittsburgh. This challenge requires filmmakers to produce, edit and submit a film in 48 hours or less. The contestants draw a genre from a hat, then are given a line of dialogue, a prop and a character. This contest is in its 10th year world-wide and its 5th year here in Pittsburgh. For the past three years, Kahmeela has been co-producing it with Nina Gibbs, her best friend from the Art Institute.



**The Manhattan Transfer in concert at MCG Jazz.**



**Kahmeela Friedson in front of her Inspiring Makers exhibition piece, "Calm Before the Storm," on display in the Kerr Gallery.**

*Connecting through clay*

The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) has awarded a significant grant to the consortium of Manchester Craftsmen's Guild and West Virginia University. The project, entitled **Clay Connections**, will take place over the course of 2011 and 2012 with the stated goal of bridging high school and higher education through regional and global art.



For more about teacups by **Yoko Sekino-Bové** and other **Clay Connections** information, visit [www.ceramixpittsburgh.org](http://www.ceramixpittsburgh.org).

**Clay Connections** will also incorporate a strong multicultural education aspect as the project focuses on the ceramic art and culture of East Asia. In studying the ceramic traditions of countries such as China, it becomes evident that the ancient art of ceramics has had a continuous influence on our society. Even in this modern age, artistry and craftsmanship are universally appreciated.

The NEA grant will facilitate year-round exhibitions, residencies, workshops and experiential learning opportunities. One of the project's highlights will be **Yoko Sekino-Bové's** 10-week residency at MCG. Yoko is an award-winning ceramic artist whose work has been featured in countless national and international exhi-

bitions. She currently teaches at Waynesburg University and looks forward to sharing her vast ceramics knowledge with the staff and students at MCG.

**Clay Connections** will be celebrated by two high-profile events. WVU's symposium **Shared Visions II** will focus on Chinese approaches to ceramic art. It will include both regional presenters and Asian artists visiting from China. Additionally, MBC's own Bill Strickland will be a featured lecturer.

The project will culminate at MCG with the 2012 Table of Elements exhibition. Slated for early spring, the exhibition will feature ceramic works from regional and national artists.

*Directing the future of youth*

MCG Youth & Arts is proud to announce that **David Deily** has been promoted to director of operations. He replaces Joshua Green, who after more than 25 years of service, has left Manchester Craftsmen's Guild to become the executive director of the National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts.

David Deily earned a BFA in ceramics from Alfred University. In addition to working as a studio artist, specializing in functional vessel forms, he has applied his vast knowledge of ceramic raw materials and chemistry in the world of architectural restoration, manufacturing and technology. He held the position of master mold-maker at Sherle Wagner International, and facilitated the production of ceramic components for fuel cell technology at Siemens Westinghouse.

Deily's pedagogical experience dates back to 2002, when he began teaching collegiate ceramics courses as well as private lessons for school-age students. He has led classes and workshops at community arts organizations and has served as a teaching artist and youth mentor at MCG Youth & Arts for the last nine years.

In addition to his role as a teaching artist, Deily has served as manager of studio operations for the entire MCG Youth & Arts program, with duties ranging from programmatic planning and implementation, development of external partnerships, overseeing staff and coordinating all studio operations.



**David Deily, director of operations for MCG Youth & Arts. Photographed by teaching artist Germaine Watkins.**

# Replicating Light Around the World



NATIONAL CENTER FOR ARTS & TECHNOLOGY

## Proof of concept



**Brockway students show off their *Discovering the Genius Within* projects.**

Brockway is a struggling community in central Pennsylvania in need of hope and inspiration. To show the value of MBC's educational model, NCAT staff collaborated with an English teacher from Brockway High School to create the *Discovering the Genius Within* project.

The students visited MBC in Pittsburgh and, while here, learned how to capture digital images, express their family identity through photography, and assemble the final product into frames. Our staff taught them the importance of subject matter, lighting, and composition among other photographic fundamentals.

Each student completed a one-page, reflective writing component documenting their experience in Pittsburgh. They created identity photograms—using magazine images—representing their hopes and aspirations for the future along with their photo image and writing sample. Their creations were on exhibit at MCG during *All City Arts Showcase 2011* and Brockway High School.

## Healthier career opportunities in Cleveland

A year ago **Shakiir Jordan** was making an hourly wage in a restaurant. **Destiny Ramos** worked nights as an aide in a nursing home. Today, thanks to the NewBridge Cleveland Center for Arts & Technology, Shakiir and Destiny are studying to become phlebotomy technicians. Phlebotomy technicians primarily draw patients' blood for testing and can be gainfully employed at hospitals, clinics, private practices, diagnostic laboratories and blood banks.

NewBridge provides career training for unemployed and underemployed adults, as well as after-school, arts-based programs for urban high school students focused on digital arts, photography, music recording and production, and ceramics. Recognizing the need to create meaningful jobs and target high-demand healthcare professions, university hospitals and other partners identified careers, such as phlebotomy technicians and pharmacy technicians, for the adult training program and supported NewBridge with operational funding.

Students like Shakiir and Destiny attend classes for six hours a day, five days a week in anatomy, physiology, specimen collection and processing techniques and computer skills. They learn how to apply for jobs and interview successfully. After four months of study and a four-week hospital internship, they're ready to go to work.



**Destiny Ramos and Shakiir Jordan have new leases on life thanks to NewBridge's Phlebotomy major.**

For Shakiir, 28, NewBridge promises a solid future and more. "I'm learning skills so I'll be prepared to walk into a job," says Shakiir, who hopes someday to do autopsies at the county morgue. "With this, I can be more. I want to learn more," he says, then quietly adds he earned a 4.0 GPA in his NewBridge classes.

Destiny, too, sees a brighter future for herself and her 2-year-old son. "NewBridge helped me realize my dream of becoming a registered nurse could now become a reality."

To learn more about NewBridge, visit to [www.newbridgecleveland.org](http://www.newbridgecleveland.org).

# Other Opportunities

## A simple way to sustain hope

MBC is pleased to introduce sustaining giving, a new and convenient method to provide ongoing support for MBC and its affiliates. Simply complete a sustaining giving pledge form to set up a regularly occurring monthly deduction from your credit card or banking account.

Sustaining giving is a great option for individuals who want to spread their giving over time to provide an extended, reliable stream of funding for MBC. Additionally, sustaining giving is a good choice for individuals who prefer to budget incremental versus lump-sum gifts. For example, by signing up for a sustaining monthly gift of just \$25, your gift could provide clay for 90 ceramics students in the MCG Youth & Arts program.

To sign up for a sustaining gift, visit [www.manchesterbidwell.org](http://www.manchesterbidwell.org) and click on Donate Online today!



## Giving Back

# Make a Donation and Change Lives

### I would like to contribute at the following level:

- \$50+ *Enthusiast*   
  \$100+ *Apprentice*   
  \$250+ *Mentor*   
  \$500+ *Master*   
  \$1,000+ *Patron*  
 Other: \$ \_\_\_\_\_   
  Please list me as an anonymous donor.   
  My employer will match this gift (forms enclosed).

Enclosed is my gift of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ in support of MBC.

- I would like my gift to be a **sustaining gift**.  
 Sustaining donors provide the steady, reliable stream of funding to ensure a bright future for MBC.  
**Amount deducted monthly \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (\$5 min.).**  
 Charge this amount to my **credit card** each month.  
 Continue these charges until I contact you in writing to cancel or change the amount of the monthly gift.  
  
 Deduct this amount from my **checking account** each month  
**(voided check enclosed).**  
 Continue these deductions until I contact you in writing to cancel or change the amount of the monthly gift.

**Donate online!**  
[www.manchesterbidwell.org](http://www.manchesterbidwell.org)  
**Questions about donating?**  
 Call 1-412-323-4000 Ext. 261

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*Do You Believe in Growing Toward a Better Tomorrow?*



*Discover how you can help us blossom like our poinsettia will!*