SUMMER 2007

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The Magazine of The Heinz Endowments

CHOOSING SIDES IN SCHOOL CHOICE

In the often bitter debate about public schools and upstart charters, the big question remains: How are students faring?

inside

The Heinz Endowments was formed from the Howard Heinz Endowment, established in 1941, and the Vira I. Heinz Endowment, established in 1986. It is the product of a deep family commitment to community and the common good that began with H.J. Heinz, and which continues to this day.

The Endowments is based in Pittsburgh, where we use our region as a laboratory for the development of solutions to challenges that are national in scope. Although the majority of our giving is concentrated within southwestern Pennsylvania, we work wherever necessary, including statewide and nationally, to fulfill our mission.

That mission is to help our region thrive as a whole community—economically, ecologically, educationally and culturally—while advancing the state of knowledge and practice in the fields in which we work. Our fields of emphasis include philanthropy in general and the disciplines represented by our five grant-making programs: Arts & Culture; Children, Youth & Families; Education; Environment; and Innovation Economy.

In life, Howard Heinz and Vira I. Heinz set high expectations for their philanthropy. Today, the Endowments is committed to doing the same. Our charge is to be diligent, thoughtful and creative in continually working to set new standards of philanthropic excellence. Recognizing that none of our work would be possible without a sound financial base, we also are committed to preserving and enhancing the Endowments' assets through prudent investment management.

h magazine is a publication of The Heinz Endowments. At the Endowments, we are committed to promoting learning in philanthropy and in the specific fields represented by our grant-making programs. As an expression of that commitment, this publication is intended to share information about significant lessons and insights we are deriving from our work.

Editorial Team Linda Bannon, Linda Braund, Donna Evans, Maxwell King, Carmen Lee, Grant Oliphant, Douglas Root. Design: Landesberg Design

About the cover This brutish joining of two different apples represents the forced process and painful experiences on all sides of the debate over whether school choice helps or hurts public education. The Endowments and other funders of public education systems and alternative schools are still dealing with unanswered questions about quality and performance.

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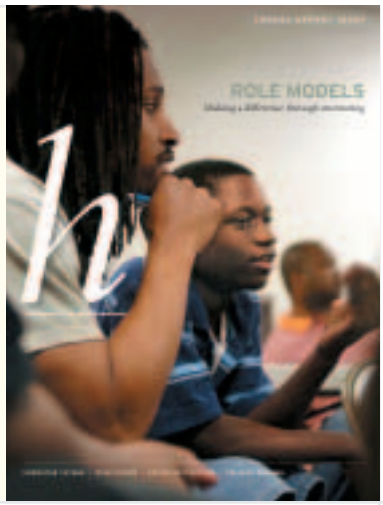
feedback



Our Spring 2007 issue examined how faith-based mentoring is building hope and expectations for young African Americans, and offering a way for adult volunteers to influence the future. We also reported on entrepreneurs and foundations in western Pennsylvania that are nurturing "Ed-tech" startups that can take tutoring services to students who need them.

One on One

Big Brothers Big Sisters staff is keenly aware of the positive influence mentoring can have on the life of a child. The statistics demonstrating this impact cited in Christine O'Toole's article "One on One" are from an extensive and widely known mentoring report conducted by the national nonprofit Public/Private Ventures for Big Brothers Big Sisters in the 1990s. This randomized, nationwide study involved more than 1,000 youth and their mentors.

As head of the organization's Pittsburgh office, I have found that our studies consistently reveal a broad range of positive outcomes in a child's attitude, academics and behavior from community-based and school/site-based mentoring. The literature continues to explore the extent and depth of these outcomes. It is clear that organizations that use identifiable and positive program practices—such as Mount Ararat Baptist Church, featured in O'Toole's article, and Big Brothers Big Sisters—regularly yield improvements among youth.

Because our organization recognizes the importance of assessing program outcomes, we use a comprehensive outcome evaluation system that demonstrates how youth are affected by the mentoring relationship. We are committed to validating the connection between short-term outcomes and long-lasting impacts. The dedicated staff and volunteers in our organization continue to feel a great sense of urgency to mentor more children and to reach our goal of serving 10 percent of the at-risk kids in our community. We understand that what we achieve has greater significance than what we do. This is part of our organization's culture. What we do is mentoring; what we achieve is changing lives.

Jan S. Glick
Chief Executive Officer
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Greater Pittsburgh

From Chalkboard to Keyboard

As the dismissal bell rings at Plum Senior High School, I stand in the hallway just mesmerized by all of the different types of sophisticated technology that pass my door: from CD players to the latest and greatest MP3 players, cell phones and portable gaming devices. Students these days are so tech savvy; those of us who are educators would be foolish not to use technology as a way to enhance our daily instruction.

Plum's high school math department embraces technology through the use of Carnegie Learning's Cognitive Tutor instructional software, which was featured in Reid Frazier's story "From Chalkboard to Keyboard." We use the program in a series of "technology enhanced" classes: Algebra I, Plane Geometry and Algebra II. These courses are designed specifically to help struggling math students understand algebra and geometry concepts by using the Cognitive Tutor software to reinforce and extend their classroom instruction. The software has been successful because it allows students to work at their own pace while providing unique problem-solving situations that support what has been taught previously. It also offers teachers a way of closely monitoring student progress.

I personally had success with Cognitive Tutor when I took my geometry students, who were not in a technology-enhanced course, to the computer lab as an experiment. It was the last nine weeks of the school year, and I decided that we would spend one day a week using the software. By the end of the grading period, I had many students say they now had a better understanding of some of the material we had discussed in classes weeks and months earlier. I also had students complain about the experience, but I feel the reason for their complaints was the fact there was no escape from thinking for themselves in the one-to-one learning environment.

Our students are growing up in a digital society, and technology is naturally motivating for them. Teachers should view technology as an enhancement, not as a replacement, for classroom instruction. Instructional software, whether it is for drill and practice, tutoring, simulation, gaming or problem solving, can provide learning opportunities for all students.

Tamar McPherson
K–12 Mathematics Department Chair
Plum Borough School District
Pittsburgh, Pa.

Comments: The staff of **h** *magazine and The Heinz Endowments welcome your comments. All print and e-mail letters must include an address with daytime phone number(s). We reserve the right to edit any submission for clarity and space. Published material also will be posted on The Heinz Endowments' Web site, which offers current and back issues of the magazine.*

message

By Teresa Heinz
Chairman, The Heinz Endowments

The Pittsburgh Public Schools ran into trouble earlier this year when the district, anxious to move beyond urban education's battered "brand" and broaden community ownership of the city schools, floated an odd proposal to drop the word "public" from its name.

Critics derided the idea as an attempt to substitute marketing for real reform. That was unfair, given that Pittsburgh's school board and leadership deserve credit for undertaking one of the most ambitious and earnest school reform efforts anywhere in the country.

Still, district officials were right to quickly drop the scheme. It was a remarkably bad idea reminiscent of the New Coke fiasco two decades ago, when executives at Coca-Cola decided their signature taste and brand had grown stale and should be jettisoned. What ensued was one of the greatest marketing flops in the annals of modern business. Consumers, it turned out, liked their Coke the old-fashioned way.

And citizens, it turns out, still like the "public" in their schools. In an era of deep ambivalence toward public institutions of all kinds, probably no institution has been more embattled in our society in recent decades than public education, represented by the plethora of public school systems whose mediocre-to-dismal performance records have shortchanged a generation of children.

Americans are rightly fed up with schools that fail to deliver on the promise of a decent education. But as the episode here in Pittsburgh seems to attest, they still appreciate the twofold nature of that promise. A good education is one essential aspect of it, but so is the idea that it be open to all, respectful of all and paid for by all.

Good public schools are not a luxury. Rather, they are the purest expression of our collective American commitment to being a land in which every citizen has a genuine opportunity to succeed. Take the public out of public schools and you lose more than a word—you lose the physical manifestation of a great national ideal.

The Heinz Endowments was guided and inspired by that ideal when we began supporting charter schooling a decade ago as part of a broader agenda to provide lower-income parents in disadvantaged communities with educational choices for their children. Charters offered the opportunity to promote innovation and competition as mechanisms to encourage school systems to better deliver on the educational aspect of their mission.

At the same time, as public institutions, charters operated within the context of the public education system. They were a different way of committing to public education, but they were still very much public.

They were not without risks, however. Chief among the potential pitfalls was that charters might underperform, or that even if they performed well, they might simply drain resources away from existing schools and weaken the overall system rather than help it.

Our cover story for this issue examines how the promise and risks of charters have begun to play out in our community. There is reason to be guardedly optimistic, but no one reading this story can be cavalier about whether Pittsburgh's and Pennsylvania's experiment with charters will succeed. For the Endowments, the only pertinent barometer of success ultimately must be whether charters do in fact support and catalyze change in the larger public systems to which they belong.

Sometimes it is only by trying new ideas and new approaches that we rediscover what matters most to us.

We recognize the risks inherent not only in that effort but in all our work to improve schools and the educational success of children. They are risks familiar to any foundation that takes an aggressive, strategic approach to philanthropy. Here, as in every other arena in which we work, we know that change comes not from avoiding risk but from embracing it—thoughtfully and intelligently, of course, but also robustly.

After the New Coke debacle, sales of Coca-Cola Classic surged so dramatically that an urban legend arose alleging the company's executives had craftily engineered the whole episode. Noting that there were sound strategic reasons for introducing the new product and even better ones for abandoning it, the company's CEO at the time commented, "We are not that dumb, and we are not that smart."

There could be worse mantras for those of us involved in social-change work. Executives at the Pittsburgh Public Schools hoped to reignite public ownership of the schools, and although it didn't happen in quite the way they intended, it did happen. People vigorously embraced the idea of the schools as theirs, as the community's, as "public."

Sometimes it is only by trying new ideas and new approaches that we rediscover what matters most to us. Americans are always at our best when we are daring to innovate on behalf of the things we cherish most. That practical yet ever-aspiring spirit is one the Endowments is proud to support. *h*

As a child, Denise Graham was an avid book borrower at the Carnegie Library's Homewood branch. Now, as manager, she has presided over a $3.5 million makeover that preserves the character of the nearly century-old institution. The design by Pfaffmann + Associates also provides such fresh features as more daylight, a more open floor plan and a new auditorium to make the local library an inviting community living room.

THE NEXT CHAPTER

NEW AND RENOVATED LIBRARIES IN PITTSBURGH ARE ADDING VITALITY TO THEIR NEIGHBORHOODS NOW AND OFFERING HOPE FOR EDUCATIONAL AND ECONOMIC GAINS IN THE FUTURE.

BY THOMAS BUELL, JR.
PHOTOGRAPHY BY DENNIS MARSICO

Denise Graham strikes you as a natural fit for her job running the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh's Homewood branch.

She grew up in the neighborhood back in the '60s and '70s and remembers many happy hours spent in the library as a girl, checking out books, reading and passing the time with friends. She also worked in the branch while she was in library school.

"I've grown up in this library, really," she says, raising her eyes to the familiar high ceilings and varnished woodwork. "I came from a family of readers, and I spent a lot of time here."

Named branch manager in 2004, Graham lives a 10-minute walk away, and many times during that brief pedestrian commute in the morning or evening, neighborhood kids will see her, wave and say, "Hi, Library Lady."

Still, nothing quite prepared her for that moment when she climbed the grand steps, walked through the stone archway of the 97-year-old Homewood

library and saw the results of a $3.5 million renovation for the first time. "My first impression was, 'I could live here.'"

"It was a beautiful library before, but the renovations brought out a lot of hidden gems," she says. "A lot of people say the library is so homey now. They like to come in and just sit."

But Graham's also a member of a generation of librarians described as tech-savvy, culturally literate and perpetually curious in a recent New York Times article, "A Hipper Crowd of Shushers." So she's enthusiastic that the library offers more than a comfortable place to relax.

"I was going to say that we have a little bit of everything, but we have a *lot* of everything, and it's not just books. We have CDs and DVDs, and books on tape and Internet access, and so much more."

In the past five years, Homewood and six other libraries in the 19-branch Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh system have undergone major renovations as part of a capital campaign to raise $55 million by the end of next year—the first such fundraising effort in the library's history. The ambitious effort has received the support of The Heinz Endowments, other local philanthropies and the state of Pennsylvania.

Each refurbishing has its own character, often reflecting the neighborhood in which the library is located. In most cases, the updates not only have increased the buildings' aesthetic appeal but also have helped attract more visitors to the libraries and provided an emotional lift—with a potential economic boost—to their communities.

The Endowments' recent two-year grant of $2 million is intended to buttress a third area, education, by helping fund construction or renovation projects at three libraries expected to be important partners with nearby "accelerated learning academies." The redesigned schools are a major part of the Pittsburgh Public Schools' reform efforts.

And the library system's track record with branch improvements so far has been encouraging.

The Homewood branch, for example, re-opened in 2003 after an eight-month upgrade that included restoration of the building's original high, multi-paned windows and leaded-glass skylight. The woodwork, which looks like oak but some historic preservationists say could be chestnut, was polished to a glassy shine. The renovations were designed to enhance the library's classic look of stately mansion and provide needed structural upgrades, such as a new roof, an elevator, handicapped-accessible restrooms and an updated 300-person auditorium.

"I really, really like that they took the balcony down over the stacks on the first floor because it blocked off the natural light," says Graham. "The building didn't gain an inch of square footage, but that made the library look so much bigger."

The improvements also included touches reflecting the unique character of the Homewood community. One example is an almond-shaped table with an African zebra wood frame and a light fixture inspired by the trunk-swollen baobab tree that sits in the center of the expanded African-American section. That collection contains more than 12,000 popular and historical items.

The library stands out as an anchor of stability in a neighborhood that has witnessed a slow and steady decline since the days when it was home to

millionaires. (Andrew Carnegie himself once lived in Homewood.) Over the course of a month, it hosts dozens of groups and clubs: teen reading programs, homework clubs, book discussion groups, crafting groups, story time for preschoolers and music workshops. In the summer, there's a jazz concert on the front steps every Wednesday night, and local groups have staged plays, musicals and concert performances in the auditorium.

"The community has come back to this library in amazing numbers because people saw that the [Carnegie Library] administration was committed to keeping the library in this location and restoring it to its former glory," Graham says.

Another updated branch is in Pittsburgh's Brookline neighborhood, where $2.9 million was spent to reflect community desires for an open, inviting space for children, teens, seniors and other neighborhood groups. The 1950s-era building was given a new look by moving a separate tanning salon business out of the second floor and creating a two-story open gallery at the front of the building. Large, exterior windows on both levels, and comfortable couches and chairs, create the feel of an expansive, contemporary living room. The welcoming atmosphere draws neighborhood residents for book discussion groups, computer classes and the more social "Craft and Chat" program.

Sporting an even more modern, almost "urban-chic" appearance is the Squirrel Hill branch that sits atop a real estate office and a parking garage on the bustling corner of Murray and Forbes avenues in the heart of the neighborhood business district. Its $4.3 million upgrade includes a 30-foot glass cube entrance at street level, a glass-encased elevator and glass exterior walls at the front and one side of the library that allow natural light to pour in. Beneath exposed ductwork and I-beams, the bright, bold colors of the lightweight, movable furniture and carpeted sections further generate a sense of vibrancy. Visitors flock to the library for activities such as parent–child reading groups, yoga classes and a knitting workshop.

Library officials cite the renovations as the reason for sharp increases in library usage in the past several years. Circulation rose system-wide by an average of 28 percent between 2002 and 2005, according to a study by Carnegie Mellon University's Center for Economic Development. At the Homewood branch, it has jumped more than 80 percent since its renovation, while at the Brookline and Squirrel Hill branches, the circulation increases have been 16 percent and 13 percent, respectively.

Jessica Clark, manager of the Brookline branch, which has been credited with helping shore up that neighborhood's central business district, notes that, in addition to programs for families and children, the library is attracting more and more of the city's immigrant population.

"We have a teen volunteer program that's so popular that we already have a waiting list for the new school year," she adds. "I'm amazed."

Among those making the cut was 13-year-old Stephanie Cato, who enjoys the Brookline library "because it has a lot of cool things" such as a teen section with beanbag chairs and copies of the Japanese

Tom Buell is a Pittsburgh-based writing and communications consultant who often writes on financial issues. His most recent story for h, *in last year's Annual Report issue, reported on new trends in career education programs.*

With mat in hand, Heidi Norman of Point Breeze heads to a yoga class at the Squirrel Hill branch of Pittsburgh's Carnegie Library system. The $4.7 million renovation by Lubetz Architects enables a range of community uses. A 30-foot glass cube at the entrance tells visitors they're in for much more than book browsing.

SQUIRREL HILL

comic book "Manga." Her attraction to the library's appealing environment inspired her to volunteer, and, since January, the eighth-grader has spent several hours each week helping to shelve books and pick up toys in the children's department.

But even branches that have yet to be updated report higher circulations, a trend that Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh Director Barbara K. Mistick attributes to a growing awareness of the Carnegie Library's many offerings.

Libraries are vital to the many people who still do not own personal computers, says Holly McCullough, manager of the Squirrel Hill branch. And it's getting harder and harder to get along without Internet access in today's world.

"If you want to apply for a job at the University of Pittsburgh, you have to do it online, and if you want an appointment to apply for U.S. citizenship, you have to do it online," Clark adds. "It's happening more and more, and they're all telling people that if they don't have a computer, then they should go to their local library."

According to Carnegie Library records, the system last year provided more than 385,000 hours of free computer access through its branches. Efforts to keep the Internet a safe place for its young users got a boost from the Verizon Foundation, which donated $25,000 to fund child safety programs in the library system.

As a whole, the Carnegie Library plays an important but often overlooked role in the region.

More than 6,100 people use the library system every day—about 2.2 million people a year. Carnegie Mellon University's Center for Economic Development ranked the library system higher in attendance numbers than the Pittsburgh Zoo, any of the city's museums, the Steelers, the Pirates and the Penguins during the course of the year. More than two-thirds of city residents between the ages of 13 and 36 have a library card.

The popularity of the library system was cited in a 2004 University of Wisconsin study as one of the primary factors for Pittsburgh's ranking as the third most literate U.S. city, and the fourth highest for its library resources. And library usage is one of the measures employed by the Places Rated Almanac, which in April ranked Pittsburgh as America's "Most Livable City" for the second time.

Surveys like those offer a reminder of the importance of public libraries in the city's educational programs. More than 9,000 young people participate in Carnegie Library's summer reading programs, which have been shown to beat out summer school as the best way to produce vocabulary gains and give students an advantage over their fellow students who don't read over the summer.

"We know quantitatively that early literacy makes a big difference in terms of later success," says Mistick. "The schools are only open 180 days per year. The libraries do serve a critical need when it comes to education."

That educational component is one of the big reasons the Endowments joined other charitable organizations such as the Buhl Foundation, the FISA Foundation and the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation in supporting the Carnegie Library system over the years.

The Endowments' recent grant helps fund capital projects in three city neighborhoods. New libraries will be built in the Hill District and the North Side, and the East Liberty branch will undergo major renovations in the next few years. The new Hill District branch will be across the street from one of the Pittsburgh School District's accelerated learning academies, while the North Side library will be within walking distance of another. The East Liberty branch is a bus ride away from two of the schools.

Working with a renovation budget of about $3 million, architects Loysen + Kreuthmeier created a space in the Carnegie Library's Brookline branch that has attracted teenagers back to the stacks, a group that the staff feared was lost for good. Stephanie Cato, 13, far right, and her sister, Madison, 11, both home-schooled in the Knoxville neighborhood of the city, work as volunteers and help plan programs for teens and children.

BROOKLINE

Joe Dominic, director of the Endowments Education Program, says that in addition to strengthening connections with nearby learning academies, he wouldn't mind if the foundation's library grant serves as a wake-up call to the larger community that the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh not only is worth supporting, but also is in need of support.

Contrary to what many library users might believe, the Carnegie libraries are not well funded by Andrew Carnegie's financial legacy. The steel magnate did launch a library building program in 1895 that would make Donald Trump envious—he paid for construction of more than 2,500 libraries in the English-speaking world—but he left only a small amount of money for day-to-day operations. In fact, library officials say that the cash Carnegie set aside to actually run the libraries would keep the doors open for about six days per year.

Carnegie's stated vision was that he would pay for the buildings and the first shipments of books, but that the communities enjoying the libraries' benefits would have to pull together to manage—and pay for—the neighborhood institutions that bore his name.

Today, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh officials report annual expenses of $26.2 million. The library receives $16 million per year—more than any other single recipient—from the Allegheny Regional Asset District, which allocates sales tax revenue funding to area cultural and civic programs in the county. Other contributors include: foundations, trusts, corporations and individuals, $6.5 million; the state of Pennsylvania, $6 million; and other government sources, about $482,550. Included in that last category is $49,208 from the City of Pittsburgh, which is about the same amount that city officials pledged to Andrew Carnegie as their annual contribution back in 1895.

And the local support the Pittsburgh library system receives—which is about 62 percent with the sales tax revenue included—lags far behind the national average of 81 percent. In fact, Pennsylvania ranks 43rd in local government support to library systems, though it is fifth in the amount of state funding given to libraries.

"This places unfair pressure on Pittsburgh foundations and other private funders to fill in the gaps, especially since so many other cities our size provide more public money for their library systems," says Endowments President Maxwell King.

In summing up the value of the library system's importance to local communities—especially when adapting to new social and economic issues—Carnegie Mellon researchers wrote:

"In all of the puzzling about how we reach the next generation, we never realized that Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh had already reached them… . There are many challenges that our region will face in the coming decades. While the library will not be immune to these challenges, it may hold the key to overcoming them."

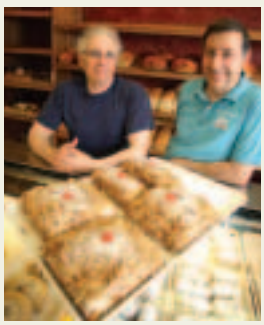
Homewood branch manager Graham understands libraries' important role. She knew she wanted to make a difference in the world, and switched at the last minute from law school to library school on the advice of a mentor.

"I wanted to defend the downtrodden," she recalls. "Now I love it when kids show me their report cards, or when parents come in with their kids. I know those are the things that really make a difference." *h*

IN DOLLARS AND CENTS

Behind the counter at the Party Cake Shop on Brookline Boulevard, owner George Dolan sees a slow but steady stream of customers carrying a book or two, stopping into his bakery after a visit to the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh branch next door.

"It's moms and their kids coming in for a cookie, or maybe someone comes in for a cake, and I know they're from the library," says Dolan, shown at right with his brother Jack, displaying their signature burnt-almond torte. "Obviously anything like that is an asset to the community. I'm glad they're here."



Rene Rosensteel

The Party Cake Shop, which employs 17 people, is just one of hundreds of city businesses located near Carnegie Library branches. Many of those businesses benefit in one way or another from the presence of a library in their community.

A study by Carnegie Mellon University's Center for Economic Development found that every Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh patron spends an average of $9.54 per visit at local shops and businesses.

"I talk to a lot of the business owners around here, and they're always saying to me how important the library is to them," says Holly McCullough, manager of the Squirrel Hill branch. "How could 400,000 people who come through my doors not have a positive impact on the local businesses?"

Pennsylvania Gov. Ed Rendell, in announcing the state's $7.5 million contribution to the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh's ongoing capital campaign, expressed his belief that libraries play a vital role in a community's economic well-being.

"They serve not only as a source of knowledge and information," he said, "but they are also economic drivers because they support local businesses and draw visitors to the area."

The renovated Carnegie libraries "will create vibrant, accessible, contemporary institutions that will play an important role in future community revitalization and learning for residents," Rendell said.

According to the Carnegie Mellon study, the Carnegie Library system generated an annual economic impact of $63 million in the community, including direct spending and the ripple effect of money spent by the library branches and their customers.

"Libraries partner in community revitalization projects that depend on the library to provide support and advocacy for the neighborhood," the Carnegie Mellon researchers wrote. "The influence of an experienced library staff, the civic presence in the core of a community, and active and engaged community outreach all contribute to a stable neighborhood."

Some other highlights of the study include:

- Every dollar invested in the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh returns about $6 of value to local taxpayers.
- Every Allegheny County resident receives an average of $75 in benefits from the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh each year.
- The Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh supports more than 700 local jobs, either directly or indirectly. Another 200 jobs are created by library construction projects.
- If library patrons purchased the books they borrow from the library, they would pay about $27 million.
- The Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh provides free access to several online databases that would cost as much as $12 million if purchased by individual users.
- If library patrons paid to rent the DVDs and videos they borrow from the Carnegie libraries in the city, they would spend about $2 million.

MAKING CHOICES

A GROWING NUMBER OF FAMILIES IN PENNSYLVANIA AND ACROSS THE NATION ARE CHOOSING NEW SCHOOL OPTIONS AND REMOVING THEIR CHILDREN FROM TRADITIONAL PUBLIC CLASSROOMS. WHILE SCHOOL DISTRICT OFFICIALS FIGHT BACK, PHILANTHROPIES ARE SUPPORTING EDUCATION INNOVATION WHEREVER THEY CAN FIND IT.

BY CHRISTINE O'TOOLE PHOTOGRAPHY BY LISA KYLE

On a bend above the wide Beaver River in western Pennsylvania, a small monument to public education has endured since 1844. • Ten generations of students passed beneath the bell mounted over the doorway of the Little Red Schoolhouse in Brighton Township. Sharing primers and desks in a single classroom, a fortunate few stayed until eighth grade, learning to read, write and cipher—the skills needed in a rural farming community. • The schoolhouse survives, but the education model that worked for 106 years in Beaver County is long gone: It's been systematically scrutinized, stratified, shaken up and wired. • In the decade since Pennsylvania allowed new charter and cyber schools a share of property tax dollars, students have steadily migrated to these new public schools. Meanwhile, local districts grapple simultaneously with population loss, tough new performance standards and a technological revolution that can deliver instruction worldwide. • Debates continue to erupt about the real value this type of "school choice" offers in helping students learn. Public school leaders locally and across the country question whether the new crop of schools prepare students any better than more traditional educational methods. Choice supporters fill their arsenals with anecdotal examples of academic improvements, heightened student self-esteem and increased parental involvement.

Photo by Robert E. Dourm

MY PARENTS WANT ME TO GET EVERYTHING I CAN OUT OF HIGH SCHOOL, SO THIS WORKS WELL FOR ME.

ERIN BURRY RIVERSIDE HIGH SCHOOL CLASS OF 2008

And research findings vary from state to state, says Gary Miron, an education professor with The Evaluation Center at Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo. The center has looked at the impact of school choice in nine states, including studies in Pennsylvania from 1999 to 2002, and found that charter schools perform better in some places than others. But a recurring pattern has been that during the early years of many charter schools, their students' academic achievement lags behind that of youngsters in traditional public schools with similar demographics. Then the scores catch up, only to level off in the end.

"In traditional schools, you have successes and failures, and in charter schools, you have successes and failures," says Miron. "I'm interested in looking at the question of whether charter schools generate more examples of [successful] innovation than traditional public schools."

Rather than rush to any conclusions, some philanthropies in western Pennsylvania carefully balance their support of charter, private, alternative and conventional public schools.

Joe Dominic, director of The Heinz Endowments' Education Program, notes that the Endowments and the Grable and Richard King Mellon foundations have been longtime partners in their support of education reform efforts. On one hand, they selectively fund a range of school choice options, which include a mix of alternative, parochial, private and charter schools that serve African-American children. On the other, they award grants to spur promising improvements within mainstream public education systems. Another recent education funder, the DSF Charitable Foundation, takes a similar approach.

The Education Program has approved a total of $130.2 million in grants in the 11-year period that it has been funding the school-choice agenda. About 13 percent has gone to alternative and charter schools, but a significant part of the foundation's grant making for public education has come from the Pathways to Educational Excellence agenda, a new strategic alliance of several program areas supporting the academic-reform plan for the Pittsburgh Public Schools. Another $7.2 million has been approved through Pathways in the past two years. Marge Petruska, senior director of the Endowments' Children, Youth & Families Program who also heads the Pathways team, says about $1.8 million has gone to provide programs and services to support a key part of the plan, eight accelerated learning academies that serve some of the neediest families in the district. "The Endowments is making a huge commitment to public education reform in partnership with other local foundations. We're all working very hard to make sure that with all the additional choice, basic support for academic reform isn't lost," she says.

Nationally, philanthropy's decade-long experiment in supporting educational choice includes the Seattle-based Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, which recently announced a $10 million gift to support charters in Houston. As part of a strategy to improve and reinvigorate large urban school districts, the Broad Foundation, headquartered in Los Angeles, awards grants to charter management firms and traditional public schools, supporting each group to varying degrees depending on the city.

But Miron notes that the federal No Child Left Behind Act, which sets national education goals and standards, is placing pressure on all schools to be more accountable for student performance.

"The biggest factor affecting schools is No Child Left Behind, and it's not making them more innovative," he contends. "It's forcing traditional and charter schools … to teach to the [standardized] test."

OTHER OPTIONS

But just as schools resist standardization, so do their students.

Erin Burry, a senior at rural Riverside High School, has big goals. She wants to combine her passion for sports and writing in a future career as a sports broadcaster, and she's in a hurry to get

Christine O'Toole is a Pittsburgh-based freelance writer. Her last story for h, *published in the Annual Report issue, reported on the success of faith-based mentoring in reaching African-American youth.*

started. The 18-year-old athlete is one of the first students to take advantage of Beaver County's new Regional Choice Initiative, which offers high school students the option of enrolling at other county high schools for courses not available at their own. Each day at 12:30 p.m., she slips out of choir class ten minutes early and drives down the road to Ellwood City High School for her dream class: Advanced Placement Composition.

"The course wasn't offered at Riverside, and Ellwood City had an open seat," she explains. By 1:40 p.m., she's back at Riverside, where she ends the day at varsity soccer practice. Friday nights are spent at local high school football games; Erin has volunteered to write reports on the games for a local online news site. She expects the AP course to sharpen her skills. "My parents want me to get everything I can out of high school," she says earnestly. "So this works well for me."

The Regional Choice Initiative evolved in response to a Beaver County dilemma. Fifteen small school districts in this low-growth county share two problems: Their tax bases and traditional school enrollments are shrinking.

At the same time, Pennsylvania's 120 charter schools are the fastest-growing in the Northeast, enrolling more than 60,000 students. One million students now attend 3,500 charter schools nationwide. The generally smaller schools offer different educational models, but they are bound by the same regulations and performance standards as traditional schools and are open to all. Cyber charter schools, delivering instruction to students at home via the Internet, can enroll students hundreds of miles away.

In fact, the largest school in Beaver County is the Pennsylvania Cyber Charter School in Midland, with 6,000 students from across the state. Local school districts—with some help from the state—are paying tuition for their students to a school they don't control.

"This past year in Beaver County, 700 students chose charter schools, for [a cost of] $7 million. That gets our attention," says Ronald Sofo, Freedom Area School District's superintendent.

Dan Katzir understands: In the world of school choice, money talks. The managing director of the Broad Foundation sees a pattern emerging in response to the national charter movement.

"Districts that have a large or growing charter would have several business models," he notes. "They ignore charters. They claim victim status—which is generally not true. They complain that charters are taking money away—and that's true, that's the whole point! Or, they can embrace them."

Beaver County chose to embrace choice.

Last year, Sofo proposed that Freedom open its own charter school. He received grants from the Endowments and the Grable Foundation for planning and development. "I bet on our faculty to provide outstanding instruction," he says. While that proposal was rejected as too radical, it opened a discussion on how districts could create more choice.

From left to right, Keith Pennington, Romeo York and Najire Taylor look on as Amera Neal receives her "Say No to Drugs" button from police officer George Palumbo in Ramona McIver's (in background) kindergarten class at Imani Christian Academy.

"Choice was killing our high school and the others. There was fear all over the county," says Sofo. "We used that as a lever to get people to come to the table, and having the cyber school in the county tipped the scale enough that people were willing to accept regional choice."

Last month, Beaver County school officials won a $1.4 million federal grant to develop the countywide initiative. It was the only rural area among 14 selected from across the nation.

Sofo envisions a four-stage experiment, beginning with the open-seat program that enables students to take classes in different districts. It will eventually allow county districts to share cyber instruction, provide college-level instruction to larger groups of secondary students at a central setting and connect schools through a wide-area fiber network and videoconferencing.

Still, Dominic has a terse, two-word description for the philanthropic commitment to promoting a range of school choice options: "high risk."

"No Child Left Behind impels us to move quickly. We have to try a variety of solutions [to improve education]," he says.

In Pittsburgh, the Endowments, along with other foundations, has supported city school officials' creation of eight intensive "accelerated learning academies," made planning grants to help the district overhaul its high school curricula, and funded other projects to address student achievement and the racial achievement gap.

Some of those endeavors apply ideas generated in charter schools. For example, a performance bonus for learning academy principals, who also hire their school's teachers, mimics a common charter school practice of giving school administrators greater autonomy and performance-based compensation.

As the Pittsburgh School District moves into high school reform, it is "trying to foster more choice," says Lisa Fischetti, chief of staff for the superintendent's office. "The vision is to move away from feeder-pattern–based schools to offer high schools that people will choose to go to."

Jeremy Resnick, the CEO of Propel Schools, asserts that school districts are acting differently in response to parents having choices. His charter school management company opened its fourth

Eleventh graders at City Charter High in downtown Pittsburgh, Daniel Bethea of Point Breeze, left, and Matt Lodovico of Lawrenceville, measure water in Angela Musto's science class. The students used various hands-on methods to gain an understanding about the principles of mass and volume.

"In traditional schools, you have successes and failures, and in charter schools, you have successes and failures. I'm interested in looking at the question of whether charter schools generate more examples of [successful] innovation than traditional public schools."

GARY MIRON, Education Professor
The Evaluation Center at Western Michigan University

"THE VISION IS TO MOVE AWAY FROM FEEDER-PATTERN–BASED SCHOOLS TO OFFER HIGH SCHOOLS THAT PEOPLE WILL CHOOSE TO GO TO."

LISA FISCHETTI, Chief of Staff, Superintendent's Office, Pittsburgh Public Schools

"Nineteen million dollars last year for six charters and about another $6 million for cybers—what did [Pittsburgh taxpayers] get for that money? That's a fair question, especially because the choice schools are not providing the achievement that we were promised they would."

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"THE PITTSBURGH SCHOOLS ARE HEMORRHAGING. FORTY YEARS AGO, IT HAD 70,000 KIDS; NOW, IT HAS UNDER 28,000."

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"No Child Left Behind impels us to move quickly. We have to try a variety of solutions [to improve education]."

JOE DOMINIC, Education Program Director
The Heinz Endowments

"The Regional Choice Initiative in Beaver County would never have happened without the groundwork of the charter school movement."

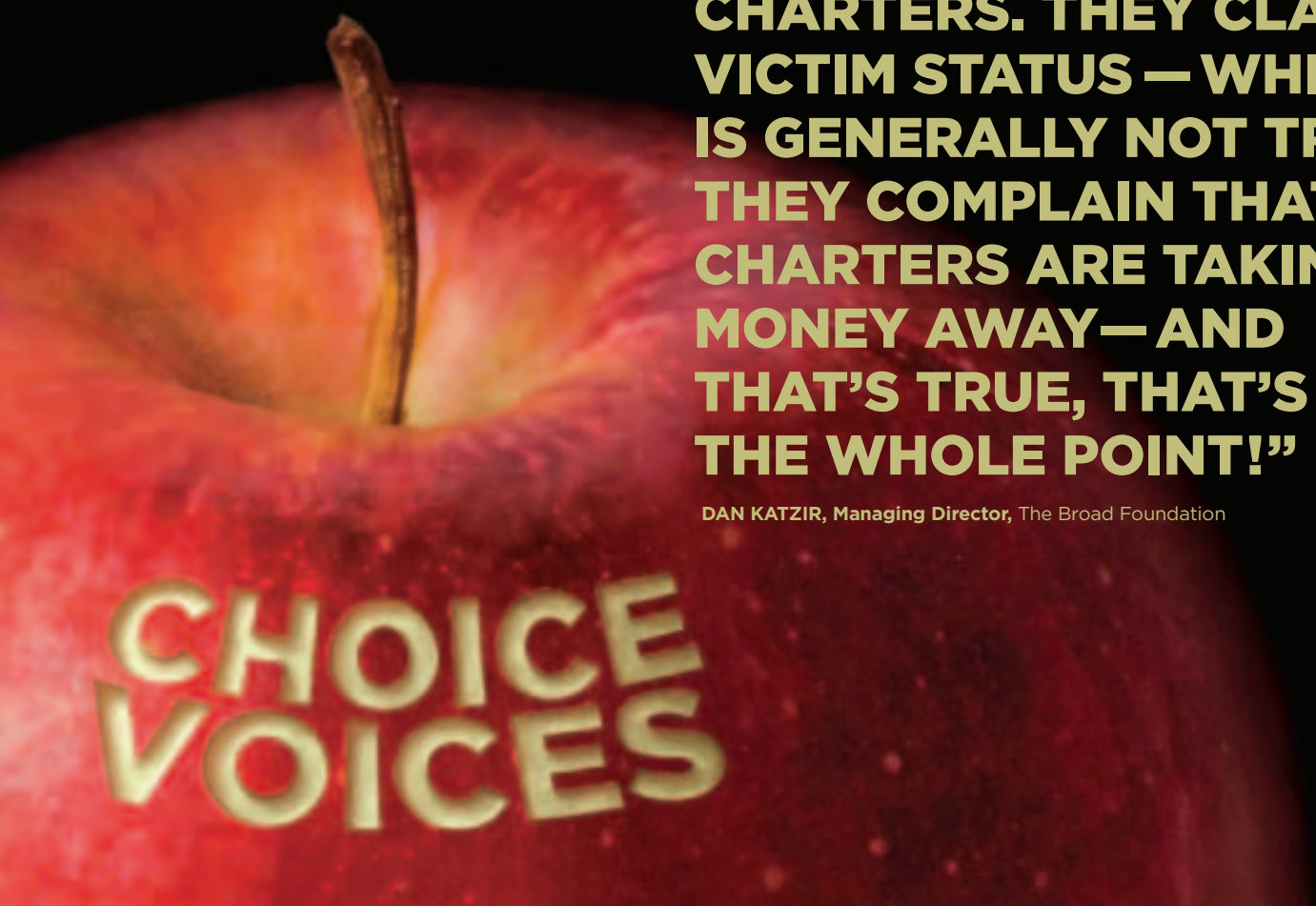
JEREMY RESNICK, CEO, Propel Schools

"Our children were African American in a school district that lacks diversity, and moving was not an option. We have elderly parents we couldn't leave."

LEE ANN MUNGER, parent of two children in Propel's Montour schools

"Choice was killing our high school and the others. There was fear all over the county. We used that as a lever to get people to come to the table, and having the cyber school in the county tipped the scale enough that people were willing to accept regional choice."

RONALD SOFO, Superintendent, Freedom Area School District



"(DISTRICTS) IGNORE CHARTERS. THEY CLAIM VICTIM STATUS—WHICH IS GENERALLY NOT TRUE. THEY COMPLAIN THAT CHARTERS ARE TAKING MONEY AWAY—AND THAT'S TRUE, THAT'S THE WHOLE POINT!"

DAN KATZIR, Managing Director, The Broad Foundation

THE STATE PERFORMANCE TESTS REQUIRED UNDER NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND PROMISE CLEAR BENCHMARKS FOR SCHOOL AND STUDENT PERFORMANCE. BUT ON THE CRITICAL QUESTION OF WHETHER CHARTER STUDENTS OUTPERFORM THOSE IN TRADITIONAL PUBLIC SCHOOLS, THE ANSWERS ARE MURKY.

kindergarten-through-eighth-grade school in Allegheny County this month.

"The Regional Choice Initiative in Beaver County would never have happened," he says, "without the groundwork of the charter school movement."

ENROLLMENT AND PERFORMANCE

Resnick's sentiments are common among charter school leaders, acknowledges Miron, who has seen examples of school districts starting all-day kindergartens and special language programs in apparent response to similar offerings at charter schools.

But Miron adds that school district officials insist that many of the changes that they make are to improve performance results rather than to match charter school programs. In fact, he says traditional school districts may be even better equipped to offer innovative programs because they have experienced teachers who know how to write curricula. In many cases, charter school organizers may have innovative ideas, but they don't have the mature teachers to carry them out.

Still, as charter school enrollments increase, Miron says districts studied by the Western Michigan center have been spending more money on marketing tactics such as billboards and public service announcements to draw and keep students.

Contributing to charters' rapid growth are low-income city neighborhoods that have become fertile recruiting grounds. Well-publicized failure to meet national performance standards in large urban school districts has pushed families toward choice. In the District of Columbia, 25 percent of students now attend public charters. Philadelphia now has 19 secondary charters, with 5,000 students on waiting lists. In Pittsburgh, with just six charters overall, the impact of charter enrollment is just beginning to be felt, but the arguments about their academic achievement has raged for years.

The state performance tests required under No Child Left Behind promise clear benchmarks for school and student performance. But on the critical question of whether charter students outperform those in traditional public schools, the answers are murky.

The National Assessment of Education Progress, analyzing 2003 scores, found no difference in math or reading performance between charter and traditional students of similar racial and ethnic backgrounds.

John Tarka, president of the Pittsburgh Federation of Teachers, is a charter school skeptic. "Nineteen million dollars last year for six charters and about another $6 million for cybers—what did [Pittsburgh taxpayers] get for that money? That's a fair question, especially because the choice schools are not providing the achievement that we were promised they would," he argues.

Charter advocates counter that students transferring from traditional schools often start below grade level, requiring more attention to reach proficiency. Tarka is unmoved by that argument. "As some charter school founders have realized, it's tough," he says. "They say, 'We don't have achievement because it's difficult.' Well, of course it is."

The union chief contends that the dramatic collaboration envisioned between charters and public schools locally has not come to fruition. "An opportunity's been lost," he contends.

While suggesting that charters could work more closely with the district, he offers no specifics on how that might occur.

Rick Wertheimer, co-founder and education manager of City Charter High School in downtown Pittsburgh, says his school's high-tech teaching style—where every student receives a laptop computer— could provide a model for other Pittsburgh district schools. "No one [in the district] wants to hear about it," he laments. "There's a real obstinacy in western Pennsylvania about change."

By measures like attendance and graduation rates, some charters are

posting respectable results. City Charter High School posted a 93 percent attendance rate for the past school year and 91 percent of the Class of 2006 graduated. Within all 11 city district high schools, the average attendance was 86.2 percent. School officials say they don't have a current graduation rate yet, but a Rand Corp. study released last year calculated that the city district's average rate was about 64 percent.

And Resnick's small Propel schools serve challenging elementary students: 22 percent of Propel's students have an identified disability, while 78 percent qualify for free or reduced-price lunches. But Resnick points to assessments by Johns Hopkins University researchers that showed that the number of Propel students proficient in reading grew from 34 to 65 percent over the course of the past year. Gains in math were even larger: 24 percent to 69 percent.

"At the same time," observes Dominic, "while good scores on achievement tests are important indicators of school success, they are not the only ones." He says other essential elements include creating a culture of high expectations for success and offering a variety of ways to support students when they encounter difficulty. He believes Pittsburgh's newer private schools such as Imani Christian Academy and Neighborhood Academy, both of which focus on African-American students, try to do everything possible to produce gains on several levels.

Imani has made considerable progress in attracting and keeping youngsters who face overwhelming challenges to succeeding in school and life. Without the academy, many kids simply would not complete basic schooling, Dominic says. With a recent Endowments grant of $200,000, Imani hired a professional firm to develop a business plan and a comprehensive funding strategy. Neighborhood Academy, a smaller school than Imani, received a similar Endowments grant and has shown more academic improvement.

MORE OPPORTUNITIES

The promise of success has lured parents like Lee Ann Munger. She waited three years for Propel to open a charter school with kindergarten through sixth grade near her home in Montour, west of Pittsburgh. During that time, Munger and her partner drove their sons, Henry and Owen Smith, 40 minutes each way to Propel's school in Homestead, another town outside of the city.

"Our children were African American in a school district that lacks diversity, and moving was not an option. We have elderly parents we couldn't leave," explains Munger, a 45-year-old nonprofit executive. After Propel's Montour charter application was rejected by the local school district, the company appealed the decision to the state.

"It was a real civics lesson to see the number of hurdles that were thrown up," she notes drily. If the state had blocked the Montour school, she says she would have continued the Homestead commute "without a moment of regret."

"The blossoming that every parent wants for their kids has happened. We are fortunate," she says cheerfully. "Other families only wish they could drive across town for a better opportunity."

Resnick claims Pittsburgh families are doing just that. Of the 280 students registered at Propel's new Montour school, a majority come from the nearby Pittsburgh and Sto-Rox districts. Only seven or eight will transfer from the local district's schools.

"The Pittsburgh schools are hemorrhaging," says City High's Wertheimer. "Forty years ago, it had 70,000 kids; now, it has under 28,000."

The city district closed 22 schools last year. Those brick-and-mortar classrooms may never be re-activated, and, as cyber schools demonstrate, students no longer need to go to large buildings to learn.

This year, Propel will begin to explore a way to blend charters and cyber schools in "pod schooling," where a handful of students and an adult meet regularly at one location, says Resnick. The newfangled concept sounds a lot like the 19th-century Little Red Schoolhouse—a small but diverse group of learners in one room. But Resnick rejects that suggestion, arguing that pod schooling might offer students the broadest possible window on the world.

"Back then, the only information source in the room was the adult," he says. "Now we have continuous information from multiple sources. We can coach kids to access knowledge of the wider world. We can turn school inside out." *h*

THROUGH THE LOOK

THE FOUNDATIONS–SUPPORTED "PITTSBURGH CELEBRATES GLASS!" SHOWS CLEARLY WHY BIG-EVENT CULTURAL PACKAGING IS NOW ALL THE RAGE IN CITIES AROUND THE WORLD.

BY DOUGLAS ROOT
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JOSHUA FRANZOS

omewhere along the long, winding road of our cultural evolution (or devolution, as some critics would opine), a trip to the venerable city art museum to look at some nice paintings or an exhibit of other artwork became no longer enough.

Art, for its own sake, in a world replete with Hollywood blockbuster movies, sports extravaganzas on the order of the Super Bowl and television cable networks drawing scores of millions to reality shows, had left museum visitors feeling, well, rather minimalist.

How would a traditional exhibition of French Impressionist painters fare, for example, against an art form with a lot more muscle and magic behind it—the phenomenon known as Big-Event Packaging? Unimpressively, *bien sûr*.

That's why cities around the world are now tripping over one another to host packaged art-and-culture–themed projects on the level of the other Big Events that compete for our leisure time and our dollars.

The "Pittsburgh Celebrates Glass!" extravaganza that you will experience through the vivid photography of Pittsburgher Josh Franzos on these pages includes scenes from the anchor exhibit, "Gardens and Glass," which features internationally renowned artist Dale Chihuly's glass sculptures embedded in the flora of Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens, an event that has tripled attendance at the institution. There also are visual perspectives from several of many partnering institutions doing programming—the Carnegie Museum of Art, The Pittsburgh Glass Center, Pittsburgh Center for the Arts and the Sen. John Heinz History Center.

The entire package is the high-level result from two decades of the art-and-culture world catching up in the marketing

IN GLASS

The illuminated “Desert Gold Star,” a chandelier made of yellow glass icicles, provides a striking contrast against the night sky seen through windows of the Desert Room at Pittsburgh’s Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens. The sculpture is one of more than 40 elaborate blown-glass creations set among plants in the conservatory greenhouses. The exhibition, “Chihuly at Phipps: Gardens & Glass” by West Coast glass artist Dale Chihuly, is the centerpiece of this year’s “Pittsburgh Celebrates Glass!” celebration. Phipps Executive Director Richard Piacentini and his staff brought Chihuly to Pittsburgh after being amazed by the artist’s work displayed in a 2002 exhibit at a Chicago conservatory.

department — ratcheting up technique and, in the language of event planners, "promoting quality content" to bring in tourist dollars and raise the region's profile.

Most museum marketers and tourism promoters cite the 1978–1981 traveling exhibit of Egyptian King Tutankhamen's tomb as the signature event that proved art-and-culture offerings could earn blockbuster status. "That was the first one; it's the one that went down in history," Eileen Harakal, former vice president for audience development and public affairs at the Art Institute of Chicago, told the New York Times. An updated version of the Tut exhibit now at the Franklin Institute in Philadelphia sold 400,000 tickets before the show even opened in February.

Since the original Tut exhibit, major museums have been the center points for a series of blockbuster offerings ranging from groupings of tried-and-true 18th- and 19th-century painters to such provocative shows as the "Body Worlds" exhibit, in which actual human cadavers preserved by a technique known as plastination are on display in a variety of lifelike poses. That traveling exhibition brought in an average 10,000 patrons each weekend during its six-month run this year at the Museum of Nature and Science in Dallas. A similar exhibit in Pittsburgh is expected to do at least as well when it comes to the Carnegie Science Center in October, despite criticism over the provenance of the corpses.

But in recent years, the one-hit wonder has been replaced by a more sophisticated effort to create an overarching theme that is translated in myriad settings and unfolds over a year or more.

Given that these events have significant promotional resources, organizers walk a fine line between courting the masses and overwhelming them. The "Pittsburgh Celebrates Glass!" campaign had some tongue-in-cheek push-back this summer with a North Side gallery, moxie DaDA, offering "No Glass!," an exhibit of indoor and outdoor works made of anything but glass. "You can see glass just about anywhere you look for the duration of 2007," curator Grant Bobitski lamented in the Pittsburgh Tribune-Review. "How about the Year of Peat Moss?"

Despite the dangers of over-saturation, the big-themed extravaganza is seen to offer real value by those concerned with improving quality of life in the region.

"Many communities mount a blockbuster museum show, but developing a series of related events that draw on facets of community life over a period of time seems more worthwhile," says Janet Sarbaugh, senior director of The Heinz Endowments' Arts & Culture Program. The critical questions that funders have been asking, she says, have to do with planning and organization. "What is the structure that will give these events the best chance of success?" For the Endowments, the answer is important, since the foundation has awarded about $2.2 million in grants for arts-and-culture packaged projects in the past decade.

Pittsburgh glass artist Kathleen Mulcahy, whom many cite along with artist–husband Ron Desmett as the generators of the glass theme that dozens of other organizations joined in on, says planning is everything.

"You can't have successful tourism in the arts area if it isn't seen by the public as something special and of the highest quality."

Marguerite Marks, executive director of "Pittsburgh Celebrates Glass!," ticks off the statistics that define the success of the project in marketing and promotional terms: admissions at the Phipps up 206 percent; scores of mentions in traditional media; penetration on major search-engine Web sites; 1 million hits to the pittsburghcelebrates.org Web site; 25,000 of the site's visitors opting to receive weekly emails on events; and the estimated economic impact for the Chihuly exhibition alone is $20 million–$33 million. "You don't get results like these without strong, coordinated teamwork," she says. What's interesting about that, she adds, is that "teamwork often produces the very best glass art. The artists have to work together to realize the vision — and the community does too." *h*

Doug Root is the communications director at The Heinz Endowments. His last work for h *was a remembrance after the death of Endowments board member and regional leader William Rea in the spring of 2006.*

PHIPPS

The Chihuly sculptures lend an imaginative variety of shapes, sizes and colors to the rooms at Phipps Conservatory while complementing the equally varied plant life. Above, glass reeds in different shades of pink and purple add warmth to the verdant coolness in one section of the conservatory. Below left, multi-colored glass balls that look like oversized marbles sit in a wooden boat on a man-made pond. Below right, giant glass flowers called “macchias,” which means “spotted” in Italian, are grouped together to create their own “Macchia Forest” at the conservatory.

Variations in texture as well as color add a unique dimension to the glass sculptures at the Pittsburgh Center for the Arts. Above right, three -dimensional glass castings of animal and human mummies personify death as they lie in a row as part of the “Totem and Taboo” installation by Pittsburgh artist Judi Charlson. Below, Julie Glaubach of Beechview admires the blocks of tinted glass fitted within the totem, or “Wall of the Journey of Life.” The images within the 98 kiln-cast negative relief panels represent objects, figures and experiences that have been lost, found, forgotten or remembered from life. They show the commonality and individuality of humanity.

PITTSBURGH CENTER FOR THE ARTS

CARNEGIE MUSEUM

Spencer Hurst, 6, of Manhattan Beach, Calif., counts the legs of a purple glass octopus inside a web of glass at Pittsburgh's Carnegie Museum. The sculpture, "Senza Una Meta," was created by artists Pino Signoretto and Mauro Bonaventura.

HISTORY CENTER

Before Pittsburgh was known for steel, it was a major producer of glass for everything from tableware to tiles in New York City tunnels. The Senator John Heinz History Center captures that era in its exhibit "Glass: Shattering Notions," which showcases 200 years of glassmaking in western Pennsylvania. Here, green glass is displayed on a conveyor belt to show mass production of glass bottles and to mark the transition in the early 1900s from blown or hand-formed glass to that made by automated machines. And the difference in cost was considerable: A blown bottle cost a penny, while a machine could make 15 bottles for the same price.

PITTSBURGH GLASS CENTER

Glass appears to take flight at the Pittsburgh Glass Center with the creation of eagles, shown above, for an installation at American Eagle Outfitters. Below left, New York City artist Dan Spitzer, center, helps Kathleen Mulcahy and Ron Desmett, co-founders of the Glass Center, form the glass birds. Below right is a glass and metal fabrication by Dan LaDonne titled “Screen Series Angles.”

here&there

Jonathan Greene for *Pop City*

FLEXCAR

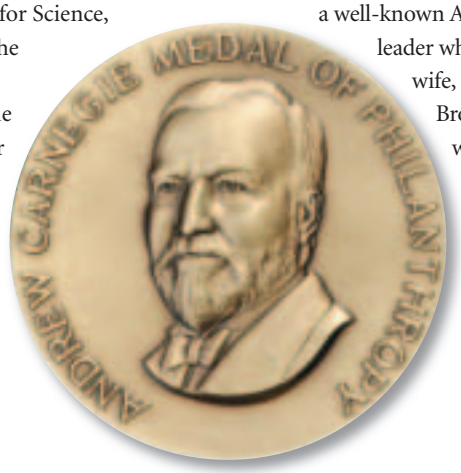
Flexcar, a Seattle-based car-sharing service, rolled into Pittsburgh this spring, offering people who live or work downtown or in the adjacent Oakland neighborhood the chance to conserve gas and avoid some of the hassles of car maintenance. Under the program, members rent vehicles for a fee that starts at $10 per hour and includes gas, insurance, 150 free miles per day, parking, maintenance and emergency service. Twenty fuel-efficient vehicles are available through the service, including hybrids, minivans and sporty cars. The vehicles are picked up at designated locations and returned to the parking spots at the end of the reserved time. The Endowments is a charter member of Flexcar, which was promoted by the Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership as part of its efforts to revitalize the city center.

HEINZ FAMILY RECEIVES AWARD

Andrew Carnegie believed in using philanthropy to generate changes that advance society. A prestigious award that bears his name, the Andrew Carnegie Medal of Philanthropy, is given every two years to individuals and families who have committed their private wealth to public good in ways reflecting Carnegie's ideals. The Heinz family is among the four recipients of this year's award, and were cited for their support of the environment, the arts, education, economic development, technology and human services. Among the work highlighted was the $20 million donated in 1995 to establish the Washington, D.C.–based H. John Heinz III Center for Science, Economics and the Environment. The grant was one of the largest ever to benefit the environment.

Teresa Heinz, chairman of The Heinz Endowments and the Heinz Family Philanthropies, will accept the medal at an Oct. 17 awards ceremony in Pittsburgh's Carnegie Music Hall. Two days of celebration around the event will include a review of the impact of Carnegie's philanthropy on the Pittsburgh region.

Other medal recipients this year are the Mellon family, the Tata family of India, and Eli and Edythe Broad. The Mellon family's extensive philanthropy includes the Pittsburgh-based Richard King Mellon Foundation. The Tata family supports a range of social and scientific causes in India, and Eli Broad is a well-known American business leader who, along with his wife, founded The Broad Foundations, which focus on leadership in education, science and the arts.



THIEMAN LEAVES ENDOWMENTS BOARD Fred Thieman has been named the new president of the Buhl Foundation and is stepping down from the Endowments board after 10 years of service. Under his leadership of the Governance Committee, Endowments staff and board members devoted a significant amount of time in the last year to updating the foundation's documents and procedures to be in accord with national best practices. Thieman also served on the Investment Management Committee and contributed significantly to the Endowments' strategic and program deliberations. Thieman will become the sixth president of the Buhl Foundation, which focuses its grant making in the Pittsburgh metropolitan area. He succeeds Doreen Boyce, who served as Buhl's president for 25 years.

Joshua Franzos

BOARD TOUR OF CHILDREN'S MUSEUM

From left, Endowments Communications Officer Carmen Lee, Arts & Culture Senior Program Director Janet Sarbaugh, and board members Franco Harris and Judith Davenport overlook their business attire to dip their hands in emulsified clay and water "mud" in "The Backyard" at the Children's Museum of Pittsburgh. The after-hours tour in May had Endowments board and staff members indulging in "children's activities."

The museum also delighted a jury of architects, government officials and community development experts who honored it with this year's top Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence. The museum's $28 million expansion, completed in 2004, was selected from among 90 projects across the country vying for the prestigious $50,000 Gold Medal Award. The prize recognizes urban development projects distinguished by quality design and their social, economic and contextual contributions to their surroundings. The Endowments contributed $3 million to the expansion project.

STAFF NEWS

The process to select a replacement for Heinz Endowments President Maxwell King is under way, and Russell Reynolds Associates of Washington, D.C., has been hired as the national search firm to seek candidates for the position. A job description also has been posted on the Endowments' Web site, www.heinz.org. King announced in June that he will retire as president in the spring after nearly a decade of service to the foundation. King and his wife, Peggy, plan to stay in southwestern Pennsylvania, and he intends to remain involved in the community in other ways. He already has served on the boards of many local and national organizations, including chairing the national Council on Foundations board, a term that ends next May.

The latest addition to the Endowments staff is Bomani M. Howze, below, who will join the foundation this month as an Innovation Economy program officer. He replaces Suzanne Walsh, who left the foundation earlier this year to become a program director with the Indianapolis-based Lumina Foundation for Education.

Brian Cohen for *Pop City*

Howze is a Pittsburgh community leader who most recently served as vice president of the Mental Health Association of Allegheny County. He began his professional career as a public school teacher in a low-income urban neighborhood in Norfolk, Va., where he helped implement reforms that dramatically improved student achievement. He introduced some of the same initiatives in the Pittsburgh Public Schools, where he later worked as a schoolteacher.

Howze has a Master of Business Administration from Point Park University, and has owned a landscaping business that collaborated with YouthBuild, a community and workforce development organization, to hire young fathers needing employment. His extensive knowledge of the Pittsburgh community and his experience in business and education will support Innovation Economy's work to stimulate economic growth and broaden economic opportunity in southwestern Pennsylvania.

In other staff news, several Endowments staff members have been recognized this year for their expertise in their fields or for other significant contributions they have made to the community. Environment Program Officer Ellen Dorsey has been named chair of the Amnesty International USA board. The grass-roots activist organization focuses on ending and preventing social, physical, environmental and other abuses around the world.

Pennsylvania Gov. Ed Rendell named Caren Glotfelty, director of the Endowments' Environment Program, as co-chair of a state Outdoor Conference Task Force. The 17-member committee is charged with developing recommendations for improving Pennsylvanians' connections with the outdoors and the state's natural resources. Glotfelty also was appointed to the board of the Great Lakes Protection Fund, a private, nonprofit corporation that supports efforts to improve the health of the Great Lakes ecosystem.

And Children, Youth & Families Senior Director Marge Petruska received a Work Life Legacy Award from the New York City–based Families and Work Institute. The award honors individuals who have helped transform the American workplace by aiding employees in managing their work, personal and family responsibilities.

THE HEINZ ENDOWMENTS

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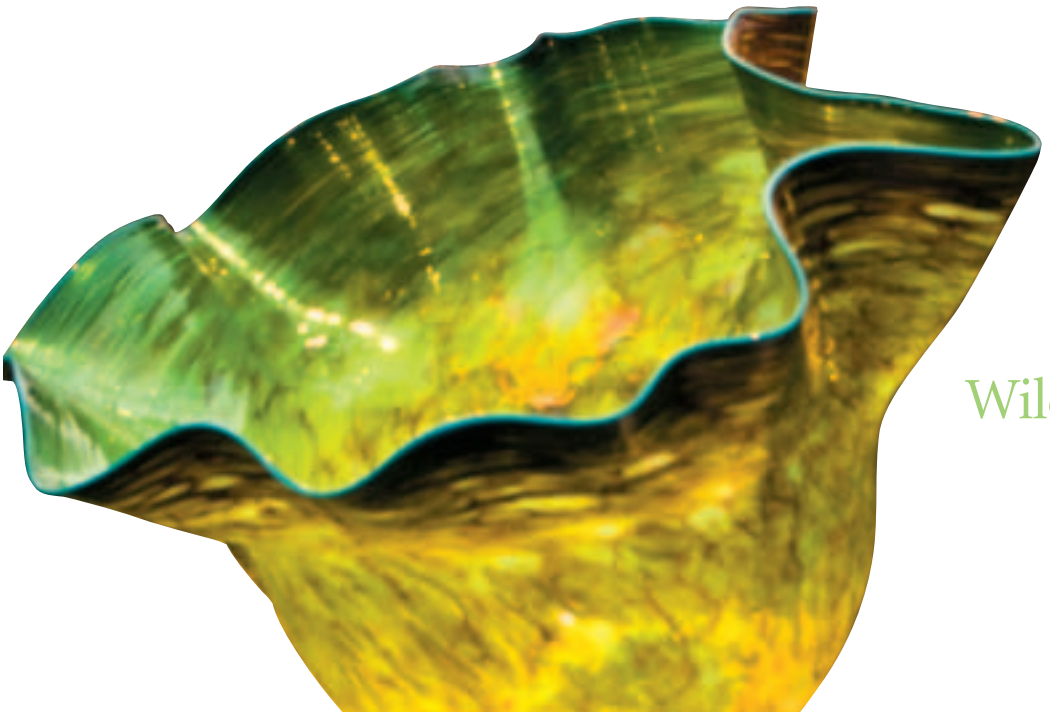

Wild flowers PAGE 20

h is printed on recycled paper using soy-based inks.