



# NEWS FROM THE CITY NEIGHBORS FOUNDATION

JUNE 2021

*An update on the work of City Neighbors Foundation, our City Neighbors schools,  
and our work to impact public education everywhere*

## City Neighbors Class of 2021



## **Congratulations to the City Neighbors High School Class of 2021.**

These students have shown the greatest determination, perseverance and resilience to meet the challenges of completing their high school careers in the middle of global pandemic.

They leave us Known, Loved, and Inspired – and ready to take on the world!



We also celebrate our graduating 8<sup>th</sup> grade classes at City Neighbors Charter School and City Neighbors Hamilton, each celebrating with outdoor ceremonies on Monday, June 14.

**Learn More about City Neighbors Foundation**



## Congratulations to our City Neighbors Teaching Fellows



The City Neighbors Teaching Fellows Program is a two-year Fellowship designed for aspiring educators, on the way to certification, who wanted to be trained in progressive, child-centered, democratic teaching. For two years, Teaching Fellows engage in in-depth professional development, coaching and classroom-based learning.

We are excited to celebrate our three graduating City Neighbors Teaching Fellows. **Sakinah Miller** (left) will be leaving our Fellowship and become our 2<sup>nd</sup> grade teacher at City Neighbors Hamilton. **Stevie Dissinger** (center) will be leaving two years in our Kindergarten to become the Art Teacher at our neighbor, Garrett Heights Elementary School. And, **Tanya Foster-Engram** (right) graduates our Fellowship to become our Career/College Planning Advisor, supporting our Guidance Counselor at City Neighbors High School. Congratulations to Sakinah, Stevie, and Tanya!

*We are seeking one additional Teaching Fellow for our next cohort, beginning fall 2021.  
Check out our [website](#) for more information.*

## City Neighbors Selected to the 1619 Project Education Network



The Pulitzer Center announced an exciting initiative: The 1619 Project Education Network, a cohort of 40 education professionals to develop a unit exploration of key questions of racial justice and other pressing issues in a community. We aim to take up the challenge of the 1619 Project and use its

multimodal resources to reframe US History as founded on slavery and understand the ongoing contemporary struggle for American Freedom.

The City Neighbors Charter School team will approach the project through an interdisciplinary study in Humanities, Art, plus an additional content-alignment for students in grades 4-8 to investigate slavery and its legacies with visits to significant sites in Baltimore. True to City Neighbors, the 1619 Project invites teachers to plan and students to experience field work, time with historians, artists, journalists, and experts, and cross-curricular data analysis as an immersion into how the legacies of our local history have been silenced, survived, and are very much alive today.

The students will benefit from having one another as an audience for their own writing, art, music composition and other products (photography, podcasts, film) that result from their investigations. They will give and get feedback from other students to revise for final exhibitions of learning for the school community and shared through our website, as well.

## The 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Progressive Education Summit – January 22, 2022



Please mark your calendars for the 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Progressive Education Summit on Saturday, January 22, 2022! We are excited to roll up our sleeves with our 2022 Summit Steering Committee to create a day of joy, challenge, and inspiration – all rooted in our shared commitment to child-centered, democratic ideals of education. On this year's Summit Steering Committee:

Amy Bopp, *Family League of Baltimore*

amalia deloney, *Deutsch Foundation*

Cristina Duncan Evans, *Baltimore Teachers Union*

Simone Gibson, *Morgan State University*

Charelle James, *Urban Teachers*

Robyn Little, *McDonogh School*

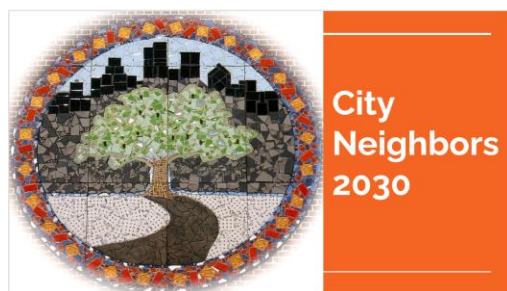
Patricia Porcarelli, *Park School of Baltimore*

Shyla Rao, *City Neighbors Hamilton*

Dawn Shirey, *Baltimore City Schools*

Stay tuned!

## City Neighbors 2030: The Path Forward



City Neighbors is looking into the future – ready to design and plan, looking ahead to 2030 and beyond.

Our first City Neighbors school was founded in 2005. In our nearly two decades as an organization, we have grown to include three schools and our City Neighbors Foundation. With three thriving schools and work in the educational community like our Progressive Education Summit, City Neighbors continues to take a stand for child-centered, authentic, community-driven schools. We are ready to look forward!

In February and March of this year, a group consisting of parents, teachers, Board members, students, alumni, and school leaders met with teams of consultants from across the country. After seven weeks and countless meetings, interviews, and deliberations, the team unanimously recommended Star Cypress Partners to work with us over the next fourteen to eighteen months to design City Neighbors 2030. In March, the City Neighbors Foundation Council unanimously approved the recommendation.



Star Cypress was selected for many reasons, including its commitment to true grass-roots decision-making, its work centered in diversity, equity and inclusion, and its extensive experience in organizational planning locally, nationally, and internationally. We are excited to welcome Heidi Everett, Samantha Murray, Margaret Graves and Zach Huebschman from Star Cypress Partners to the City Neighbors family, and are excited for all of us to work with them on this journey.

We will be working as a community – with the support of partner consultants - over the next year to consider how to be even stronger and more sustainable organization, how to ensure that our robust equity work is centered in our design and work, and how to be a stronger voice for child-centered, democratic schools here in Baltimore and beyond.

Look out for ways to help us dream, imagine and create our future together!

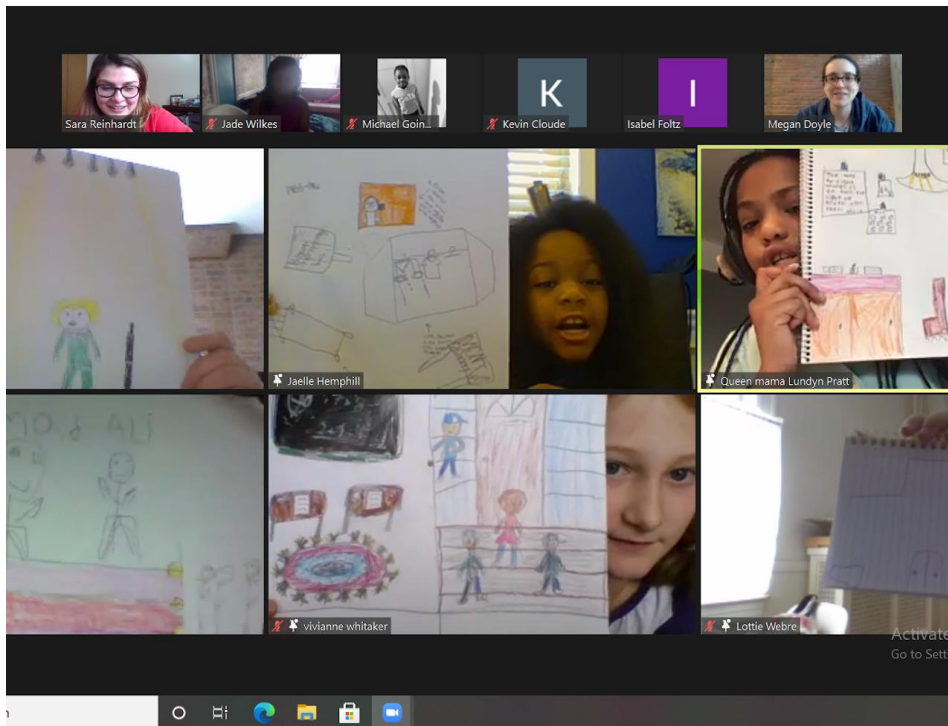
# Project-Based Learning and Arts Integration Thriving – Even in Pandemic!

## Kindergarten, 1<sup>st</sup>, and 2<sup>nd</sup> graders: Our Cicada Plays

Artists in Kindergarten, First, and Second grade worked with teaching artist Khaleshia Thorpe Price to create plays about cicadas. *(Teachers: Vicki Almon, Kellie Monroe, Jessie Sherman)*



## 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Biographies



Third grade artists were tasked with creating visual biographies about someone who has “taken a stand.” When artists make biographies they think about the important parts of that person’s life and identity. Artists give us clues about who the subject is and the important things they have done through details included on the subject and in the background. *(Teachers: Megan Doyle, Sharon Jackson)*

## Puppetry and the Human Body: 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Science

As a culminating project of their studies of the human body, sixth graders worked closely with Michael Lamason from The Black Cherry Puppet to write, construct, and record a puppet performance of a song or short play about a body system. *(Teacher: Annie Rouse)*



*Attack of General Vironius, Finn*



*Liyah and Cyber, Jaliah*



*The Lungs, Zuri*

## Photography Residency with Josh Slowe: High School



*Portrait by Josh Slowe*



*Portrait by CNHS Student, Lydia McGuire*

I will share an artist residency with you who was really cool! An alumnus, Josh Slowe, who is now a working photographer in Baltimore, spoke with my classes about his post high school journey into the art world. Josh has worked with some prestigious Baltimore photographers, including Devin Allen. *(Teacher: Jess Thompson)*

## Jazz Music in 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade

At CNH, students in grades K-2 did a project focusing on different aspects of music. Second graders learned about the lives, contributions, and music of famous Black Jazz Musicians. They practiced scat singing like Ella Fitzgerald, improvised music like Louis Armstrong, and learned about how Billie Holiday used her music to speak out against racial injustice. Students selected a Black jazz artist to research, then used collage to create visual biographies inspired by the notorious jazz album covers of Blue Note Records. The class shared their work in a virtual museum on Padlet. *(Teacher: Clara Walter)*



## The Chemistry Fashion Show: 10<sup>th</sup> Grade Chemistry

### Project Runway Chemistry Edition

Get ready to walk to the *CNHS Runway*! Designers, you are to create an outfit that truly represents the element of your choice. You may use any materials to create your ensemble. **Designs must be wearable, visible in your FlipGrid video, and express your creativity, while also staying true to the nature of your element.**

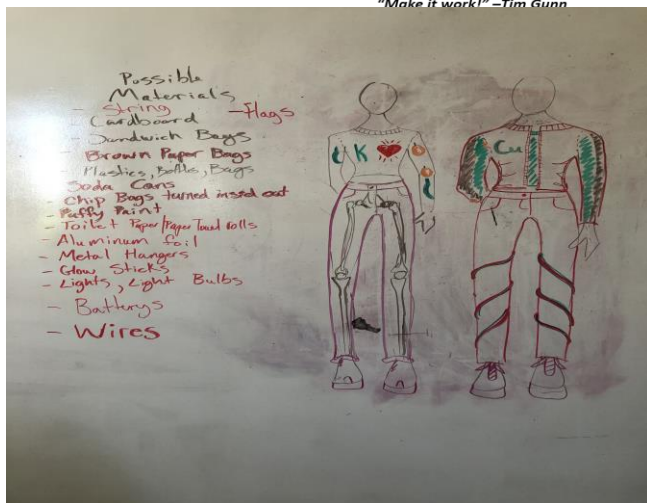
On the day of the fashion show, your FlipGrid will be played to show the world your final creation. Be prepared because the competition will be fierce! Judges will evaluate your creation in a number of categories that include: creativity, originality, scientific accuracy, and fashion sense. This is a head to toe costume so hair, make up, shoes, accessories, and props should all be considered.



**Any and all materials can be used to create your final fashions.** Students will have access to basic materials in class, such as paints, hot glue, markers, scissors, etc. Any specific materials may be brought into class and used to assemble the outfit here or at home. You will be given flex time in class from **May 17<sup>th</sup> - May 26<sup>th</sup>** to work on your outfit.

**\*In addition to your fashion creation, you will be responsible for creating a PowerPoint slide with a short introduction for your element!**

*"Make it work!" -Tim Gunn*



Every year, chemistry students at CNHS participate in a fashion show where they create costumes that represent various aspects of an element of their choosing. This year was a little bit different with it being our first virtual fashion show! Students conducted a great deal of research about their element, finding out information about the different properties, uses, chemical reactions, biological impacts, and more aspects of their element. After APA citing their sources, students then engaged in a creative writing activity, where they were instructed to personify the research of their element because we learned that story-telling is an effective way to internalize and recall information. Finally, they sketched out their costume designs with Sdhari Braxton, a fashion designer and CNHS alumna, before creating their costumes and presenting their research and personified elements! The winner won a \$50 gift card and ALL of the bragging rights! (Teacher: Taj Singh)

## Creating Math Apps: 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Algebra

Here are a some links to math apps created by my 9th grade students. They have worked on coding, solving equations, and area models for multiplying binomials. These projects demonstrate their understanding of both the mathematical concepts and coding plus they have added their own artistic flair. All of these apps work on a web browser but even better they can be shared to a phone and added to a home screen just like a normal app. (Teacher: Paul Atkinson)

[https://studio.code.org/projects/applab/mhuXshBN7BtX96\\_Bek\\_CqhJki8mIHWmpICc8VmuJQUI](https://studio.code.org/projects/applab/mhuXshBN7BtX96_Bek_CqhJki8mIHWmpICc8VmuJQUI)

[https://studio.code.org/projects/applab/0kw68vZcB\\_PX7A6WvRXMsukKbi\\_R645sc7C2BkVu2\\_M](https://studio.code.org/projects/applab/0kw68vZcB_PX7A6WvRXMsukKbi_R645sc7C2BkVu2_M)

[https://studio.code.org/projects/applab/UGqWrbq2-md-sGhE\\_oh1f2ToDeE\\_3p31eOG7YqxEtcc](https://studio.code.org/projects/applab/UGqWrbq2-md-sGhE_oh1f2ToDeE_3p31eOG7YqxEtcc)

[https://studio.code.org/projects/applab/2OLZPFgl8b\\_MrGkj60dDtELcMWo5TtEFBgrhZFjaBA0](https://studio.code.org/projects/applab/2OLZPFgl8b_MrGkj60dDtELcMWo5TtEFBgrhZFjaBA0)

<https://studio.code.org/projects/applab/rcpC0K3tqmhZvIkbl7MvEKpjVg35wVqCElBradEtv-g>



## Shakespeare and Spoken Word: 10<sup>th</sup> Grade English

To prepare for the reading of Shakespeare's Othello and to gain confidence with Shakespearean language, students learned about the sonnet form. Students read and analyzed sonnets and worked with spoken word artist, [Jacob Mayberry](#) aka Black Chakra. Mr. Mayberry worked with students to teach them about finding effective rhymes and creating rhythm using iambic pentameter. He helped students see the connection between poetry and music and encouraged students to find their voice even in a form that required them to follow very specific rules. *(Teacher: Jenni Williams)*

You never feel true love until it's gone.  
The feeling you have when it isn't there.  
You and that person do not have a bond.  
The feeling of losing them makes you drop tears.

You try and forget them but it is really hard.  
It constantly feels like you're losing yourself.  
Everytime you see them you feel your heart scared.  
Then you think of why you hid on a shelf.

It never made sense when they left you solo.  
The days that went by when you were just one.  
Even though you're still hurting you still gotta flow.  
Even though you wanna go back you got to run.

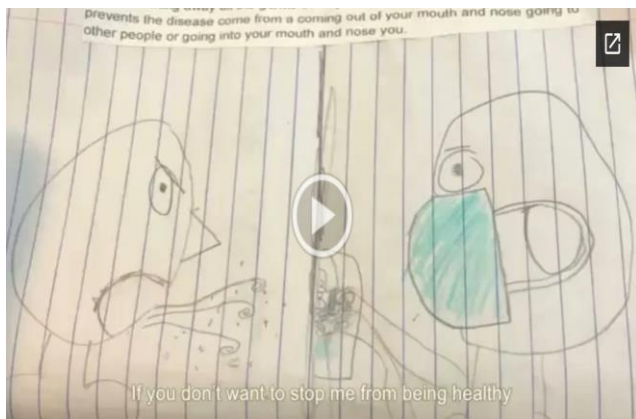
It might be hard as a rock moving away.  
But at the end of the day find a way.

--Kam Hall

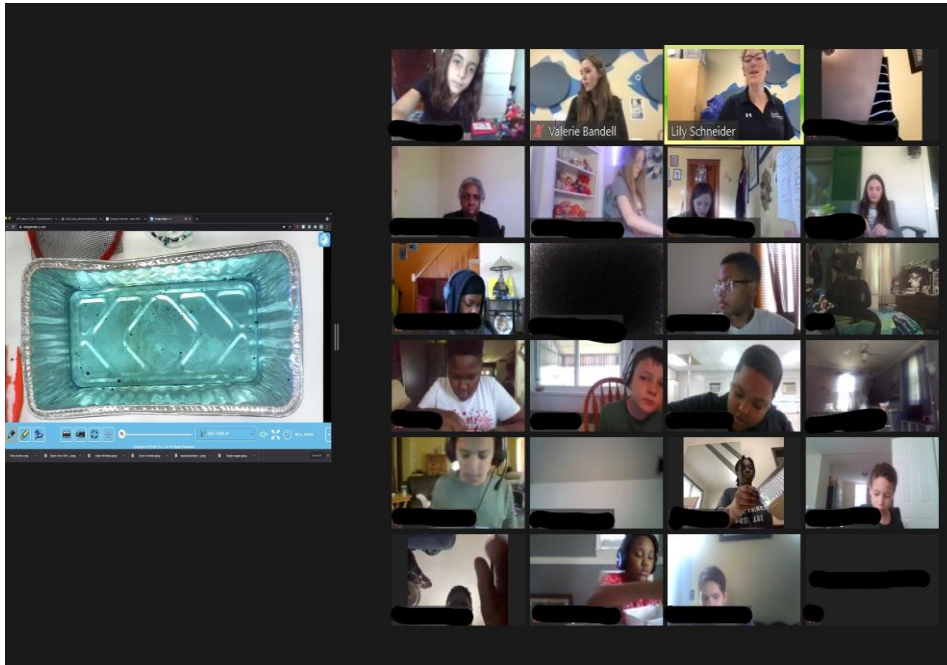
## Parodies: Integrating Science and Music in 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Grade

Fourth and Fifth graders worked with teaching artist, Alden Phelps, to create parodies of popular songs using information they learned in science class about germs, viruses, and bacteria.

*(Teacher: Kim Spears)*



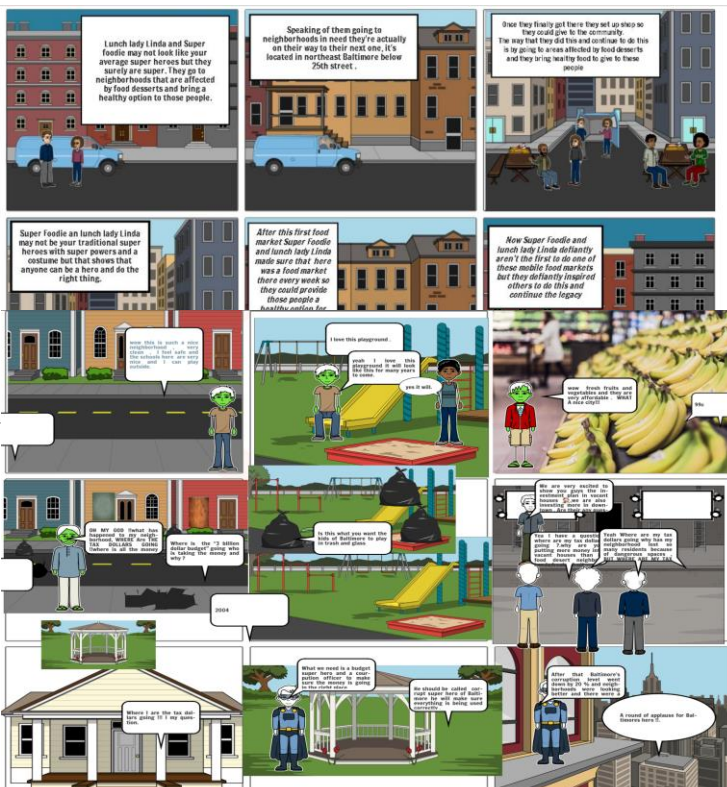
## Exploring the Watershed in 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Grade



Here are some screenshots of the virtual field trip that fourth and fifth graders at City Neighbors Hamilton participated in this May. The program was run by two guests from Masonville Cove Education Center, and each student was provided a drawstring back pack of materials for the hands-on activities and experiments. Over the course of the two-hour experience, students

made and discussed the definition of a watershed, and engaged in activity to see how water flows in a watershed. They also worked through an experiment to remove "pollution" from a body of water, understand pervious and impervious surfaces and how they impact runoff, and to design their own miniature water filtration system. (Teacher: Bridget Murphy)

## Middle School Students and the Baltimore City Budget



Middle school students at CNH analyzed the Baltimore City budget to answer the question "How does Baltimore City make and spend money?" The results led us to the thought, "How can we use the budget to address issues in our city?" Students raised concerns over a host of problems: human trafficking, littering/pollution, police brutality, crime, drugs, school funding, neighborhood inequities, food apartheid, healthcare costs, homelessness, police (de)funding, gender equity, vacant/unsafe housing, and corruption. The proposed solutions to these problems ranged from very practical to paradigm-shifting, and some problems seemed like they were too big to tackle in a lifetime. (Teacher: Randy Johnson)

## Working with Partners across the City

Through a grant from the Maryland State Department of Education, the City Neighbors Foundation had the honor of working with four schools across our region. This one-year professional development consultation partners teachers and leaders at City Neighbors with teachers and leaders at participating schools to deepen and root a particular child-centered, democratic practice of teaching and learning.

We were honored to work with dynamic and powerful educators and learn from our partners at Creative City Public Charter School in play-based education, Belmont Elementary School in Engagement-Based Learning, Watershed Public Charter School in Project-Based Learning, and Calvin Rodwell Elementary/Middle School in Engagement-Based Learning.



If your school is interested in working with City Neighbors, please contact Gwendolyn Unoko, Director of Community Programs, at [gunoko@cityneighbors.org](mailto:gunoko@cityneighbors.org) or check our [website for more information](#).

## City Neighbors Communities of Practice

This spring, City Neighbors Foundation launched a new effort to build communities of practitioners striving toward a truly child-centered, democratic ideal of education. City Neighbors Foundation launched two communities of practice:

- Innovative, Powerful Teaching, facilitated by CNHS Teacher Elainia Ross-Jones
- Anti-Racist, Culturally-Relevant Pedagogy, facilitated by CNH Teacher Charlene Butcher

Communities of Practice held their first meetings this spring and will culminate at the 11th Annual Progressive Education Summit in January 2022!

*Participation in the Community of Practice is free, sponsored by City Neighbors Foundation*