

## Teri's October 2007 Update

In October 2005 we opened our doors to drop-in tutoring, stepping over the rubble of the Greenwood Space Travel Supply Co. as it was then: a construction project. Plastic covered the windows, and we had 4-5 students on a busy night with twice the number of tutors. We wondered if maybe we'd made a mistake.

Now it's October 2007, two years later, and we were recently informed that 826 Seattle will be one of the recipients of a Golden Apple Award this year. This is an award given annually to people or programs across the State of Washington that offer innovative educational opportunities for young people. I believe they will make a small video of our program, which will be played often on KCTS; there will be a reception, which will be a great excuse for me to buy a new dress; and I think we will get a trophy. I like to think it will be the first of many trophies in the years to come for 826 Seattle. Maybe we should put a trophy case on our wish list, although I guess if we have a big honkin' trophy case and we only have one trophy in it, it might look sparse. We will wait until we have two trophies.

School has started again.

- An average of twenty-five young people a day show up for drop-in tutoring these days. Their families come from Ethiopia, Cuba, Korea, Greece, and Russia. They represent gifted children destined for easy success and others that are struggling to pass the school year.
- We are ramping up for our third book project with students from John Marshall Alternative School...young people who may well represent the most at-risk population of kids in the city. Their WASL scores stink, but the heart that they put into writing their own stories is off the charts. Every year the district threatens to close this school, but we will be there until they do.
- Field trips, lots of field trips. We invite teachers to bring their classes to our Greenwood facility for a two-hour theatrical romp through the world of writing. All the students leave with a book they have written under their arm. This year we decided to wait until mid-August to allow teachers to sign up. We were essentially full before school even started.
- This year we have begun a very exciting two-year project at Hamilton Middle School, thanks to the Anne V. Farrell Leadership

Award and the Seattle Foundation. We have this idea that if young people learn to write the most important stories in their lives well, they will naturally be more confident and will naturally become better leaders. We are blessed to get this funding, which will allow us to work for two years with the same students, opening up doors to really be able to look at what happens when young people get this kind of one-on-one attention.

With Hamilton and John Marshall and our field trips and our drop-in tutoring, and don't forget the writing workshops we offer Saturdays and evenings, we anticipate impacting the writing lives of over 2,400 young people by the end of this school year. Not bad.

And all done from a wacky building in Greenwood with wobbly toilets and blinking lights and one phone line and our very own space travel supply store.

It's hard to imagine we've only been around for two years.

Other news:

In the spring of 2006, I got a letter from the Heinz Foundation telling me about their annual awards to people who do great work and how Dave Eggers was nominated for his philanthropic work with the 826 world, as well as his work in Sudan, etc. They wished me to write a letter of recommendation and to keep it a big secret, even if he didn't get the award that year. In my letter I wrote about his best qualities, as I saw them, but pointed out that the real reason I wanted him to win the award was because I knew him to be an enormously generous person and I thought it would translate into money for 826 Seattle. This is what happens when people are executive directors. All they think about is money. This year, 2007, Dave was named one of the seven recipients of the Heinz Foundation Awards, at 37 years of age he is the youngest person to ever receive this \$250,000 pile of money... ahem....no strings attached. And just like I predicted, Dave split it amongst the seven 826 chapters around the country.

This is the same Dave who will be at our People Talking and Singing in November. He will not be singing, as far as I know, although I always greatly enjoy his talking. Other people will be singing. To get tickets, go to [brownpapertickets.com/event/19130](http://brownpapertickets.com/event/19130).

Last piece of news: Gigantic thanks to those of you who sponsored one of our mustache growers this year in our second annual Mustache-

athon. I am happy to report that we met our goal of \$15,000 (\$15,200 at this writing and donations still coming in) -- which happens to be \$5,000 more than we raised last year, which says something very positive I'm sure about the state of mustache-growing in the State of Washington and the State of Generosity amongst our donors.

Congratulations to our top winner, Jon Allred, who won Best Mustache and will be wearing the 'Stash Sash for a proud year. Watch for his picture on our web site! (and yes, he is Alex's husband, but she only got one vote like everyone else at the final party).

Enjoy the fall!

Teri

PS: Late breaking news! Today was our second annual fundraising breakfast – an early morning gala affair, held this year at the Bell Harbour Conference Center. At this count we raised \$45,000! Yippee!