An unprecedented partnership between the State of Maryland, Prince George’s County, and the University of Maryland resulted in the construction of The Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center, a major academic and community resource. To assure that the County’s interests were served, the Maryland National Park and Planning Commission was designated by the County as its representative in planning the Center and representing county residents after the completion of construction. As part of that agreement, the Center set aside $50,000 a year as a “rent credit” for organizations resident in Prince George’s that use the Center’s facilities. In addition to access to the performance venues, the county was also provided a multipurpose room for county activities and a fully equipped suite of offices. The Director of Arts and Cultural Heritage represents the County’s interests and serves as a member of the Center’s policy making body.

With this foundation, the Center moved forward to plan its service to county residents. Approximately 30% of the Center’s audience for performances reside in Prince George’s County. The development of the Center’s community engagement has been influenced by our developing understanding of who we are and how best to fulfill our mission and the personnel dedicated to implementing that mission. Soon after opening, the Center added a full-time position of Community Engagement Manager the sole purpose of which is to develop relationships with County organizations to provide programs and services. The Center stated early on that Prince George’s County is the priority for all off campus programs and has turned down a number of requests from Montgomery County and the District of Columbia for joint programs. The amount of the rent credit has increased each year.

Responding to research in the performing arts, the Center decided that it would choose to invest in longer term relationships with a smaller number of community partners, rather than try to reach a larger population with one-time programs of minimal impact. We continue to add to the number of groups and schools and communities served and to develop and expand programs among University of Maryland students, visiting artists and the students, artists, and residents of Prince George’s County. For instance, in 2004-05, choreographer/dancer Mark Haim visited “Mother” Jones charter school 3 times in one week with a company of ten UM dancers. The first visit they performed; for the other two, they interacted with two classes of second graders. Subsequently, the ten UM dancers have requested that they continue working with these same children through the spring semester. These deepening relationships which empower participants and evolve naturally are the direction in which community engagement is moving.

In addition to bringing high-quality performances to the Center, residency programs serve adults and children. Long term work with a number of local schools has benefited numerous students and artists. School residencies empower both teachers as well as students. They allow teachers to see their students in a new way, add to the teachers’ skill sets, support them in the quality work they are doing, and often allow the teacher to
grow artistically through the challenges of collaboration. We are developing a series of models of visiting artist/university artist/school collaborations. Three successful established paradigms include:

**Chamber Music Connections** with **Mount Rainier Elementary School** brings together University of Maryland music students with third and fourth graders to learn about music and instruments. The program is enhanced by visiting artists (‘05-‘06: Cypress String Quartet, ’04-’05: Huntington Brass, ’03-’04: Imani Winds, ‘01-’02: Cavani String Quartet) who mentor and model pedagogy and technique for UM students through coaching, master classes and school performance. Three groups of UM chamber music ensembles (a string quartet and brass and wind quintets, 14 students in all) visit the school, each of the three groups working with 40 students. This program expanded in the ‘05-‘06 season to include visits to **Hollywood Elementary**, engaging an additional 120 students.

**Playwrights of the Future** is a deepening relationship with **Hyattsville Middle School**. Originally taught by an actor from Olney Theatre resulting in the middle school students’ written work being performed by Olney actors, the program has developed into a 12 session residency, taught by UM theatre doctoral and undergraduate students with additional acting training which results in the young writers also performing their own work. The culminating event is a performance at the Center by the young artists. The ‘05-’06 presentation is scheduled for February 8, 2006. In addition to the three UM students and the Hyattsville Middle School teacher, 28 young artists have been involved.

**The Eric Reed Trio** worked with students at Suitland High School during the spring of 2005 on a program featuring the work of Thomas Dorsey and following his career from a blues keyboard player to a great gospel composer and performer. Eric Reed worked with the choir of Suitland High School for several weeks prior to the performance and then invited the choir to perform with him at the Center. In the process, he came across a wonderful young pianist and worked him into the performance as well. The performance was attended by many proud parents as well as community members and all were hosted at a reception following the performance.

Another level of our programming facilitates student organizations who want to serve the community and develop their own skills. An example is our relationship with **MENC** (Music Educators National Conference, a national organization that supports K-12 music education) that present a series of **Instrument Petting Zoos**. Lasting two to 5 hours, these students set up public ‘interactions’ with families of instruments, allowing children to familiarize themselves with instruments and the fun of making music. There are three Petting Zoos scheduled for spring 2006: at community partner **Joe’s Movement Emporium**, for a wider audience at **Prince George’s Plaza**, and for the thousands of people who attend **Maryland Day**.
The following is a representative sample of school programs for the past several years;

Northwestern High School
700 Adelphi Road, Hyattsville, MD 20782-1497

- Universes Residency (9/27-28/05). Workshops: English Department: Writing Poetry from Experience. 12-20 students
- Three year Composer-in-Residence project with Christopher Patton leading to development of three original works (2004/5, 2005/4, 2004/3)
- Robert Maggio, The December First Project, Lecture in support of 2003-2004 Patton residency (12/01/03)
- Terence Blanchard and film director, Kasi Lemmons, Discussion of Jazz Score and Film Clips at Center (2/9/2003)
- Danny Hoch, Theatre Lecture/Demo (3/14/2002)
- Bobby Sanabria, Jazz Lecture/Demo at Center (4/10/2002)
- Gonzalo Rubalcaba Trio, Workshop for Spanish speaking music students (10/25/2001)
- Cyrus Chestnut Trio, Jazz Performance(2/25/2002)

Colours Arts in Education Performing Group, District wide, but headquartered at Northwestern High School

- performed: Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center Dedication Ceremony(9/30/2001)
  - Read Across American Day (2/2/2002)
  - Prince George’s Plaza (Feb 2003)
  - Maryland Day (each year 2002-2006)
  - College Park Scholars retreat (6/17/2002)
- Footworks/Step Afrika! Two Master Classes.
- Opera Lafayette 17th Century Dance Workshop (1/7-9/2002) invited to dress rehearsal (1/10/2002)
- New York Baroque Dance Company, Workshops at NWHS and Center (1/13/2002)
- Civicus: several workshops, Performance (May 2002)
- Hugo and Ines. Performance at Center(10/18/2002)
- Footworks with Tim O’Brien. Two Master Classes (11/2/2002)

Suitland High School Visual and Performing Arts Program
5200 Silver Hill Road, Forestville, MD 20747

- Music Technology Workshops (10/11-18/2005). Advanced Music Theory Info Sessions. MIDI Lab, Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center
• The Ying Quartet (11/13/2004) Orchestra, chamber music class, performance
• Princely Players Residency (2/1-3/2005) Workshops for chamber choir, jazz band. music students, teachers, with Thomas G. Pullen Arts Focus
• School Choir resulting in group concert (2/3/2005)
• Suitland Visual and Performing Arts Performance and Art Exhibit at the Center (3/8/2004)
• Eric Reed Trio Residency (5/10-13/2005). Orchestra, student choir rehearsals resulting in co-performance at Center of Thomas Dorsey songs (5/13/2005)

Hyattsville Middle, Focus School for the Arts and Humanities
6001 42nd Street, Hyattsville, Maryland 20781

• On-going for five years: Playwrights of the Future—current residency is a twelve to fifteen session writing, acting, directing workshop with UM
  o Theatre Phd candidates and undergrad teachers resulting in audition and performance at the Center.
• Dan Kamin, two performances (9/15/2004)
• Charlotte Blake Alston Residency with College Park Scholars (9/28-30/2004), Performing your Writing.
  o Seventh and Eighth Graders. Five student incorporated into her performance (10/31/2004)
• Ensemle Galilei Residency, two month project facilitated by College Park Scholars, Poetry and Performance workshop based of the Hubbell photos.
  o Rehearsal and Performance with Ensemble at the Howard B. Owens Science Center Planetarium (11/21/2003)

Mary Harris "Mother" Jones Elementary School
2405 Tecumseh Street, Adelphi, Maryland 20783

• Mark Haim(Residency) with 12 UM Dance Students (10/31,11/2,4/2005). Third Graders: Presentation and Interactive Workshops
• Dan Kamin, Performance (9/15/2004)
• David Gonzales Residency, Performance (10/6/2004). Third Graders: Eight Sessions--Spanish/English Storytelling Workshops (10/7 to 12/1), culminating performance for 2nd and 4th grade and parents(12/1/2004)
• David Gonzalez, Introductory Performance (10/3/2003)
• MENC Instrument Petting Zoo (3/11/2004)

Mt. Rainier Elementary
4011 32nd Street, Mt. Rainier, Maryland 20712

• On going: Chamber Music Connection with UM School of Music residency and visiting artist performances: School of Music artists adopt classes and teach instrument families. Visiting ensemblers (Cypress String Quartet (10/14/2005), Huntington Brass Quintet (10/22/2004), Imani Winds (10/10/2003), Cavani String Quartet (10/16/2001)) also perform
Engagement with adult performers and audiences

The Center has a strong interdependent relationship with M-NCPPC. There are several established programs including the yearly Choreographers’ Showcase, but we are also seeking to deepen our relationship with the Commission and, through them, to the county. Our latest effort is a multi-year project (begun in 2005) between the Center, M-NCPPC and civil rights activist and performer, John O’Neal and Junebug Productions. The Color Line Project is a multi-year initiative to collect and record Prince George’s County residents’ stories of their participation in the civil rights movement through the use of story circles. Planning meetings in December resulted in an initial training of resident story gatherers by John O’Neal. Next year story gathering will begin and the results will be documented and stored in the Prince George’s County and at the Amistad Center at Tulane University for use by educators, artists and activist. Activities will be based initially in Community Centers around the county.

We have also developed mutually satisfying relationships with community partners with which we develop programs for artists and the public. The following is a list of some of those partners and the programs we have initiated.

Community partners

Joe’s Movement Emporium and World Arts Focus

- Bebe Miller. Master Dance Class, Professional Development (9/2005)
- MENC Petting Zoo(2/4/06)
- Eiko and Koma Master Class, Professional Development(3/2006)
- Pat Graney Company Master Class, Professional Development(2/11/2004)
- MENC Instrument Petting Zoo (2/2004)
- Sara Pearson/Patrik Windig, Master Class, Dance and Text (4/5/2005)
- Children of Uganda, Performance, workshop, lunch interactive with Joe’s children’s troupe at Center (1/29/2004)
- Professional Development Residency at Center: Four Sessions (8/21/2002-6/14/2003)

LAFI (Latin American Folk Institute)

- Peru Negro. Partner for Master Class at Center (3/17/2006)
- Danilo Perez, Jazz Lecture/Demo/Jam (9/14/2004)
- David Gonzalez, Demo, Q & A (11/30/2004)
- Bobby Sanabria, Lecture-Demo (4/10/2002)