

The Alternative Education Resource Organization's 3rd Annual  
**AERO CONFERENCE**

June 29th - July 2nd, 2006 ★ Russell Sage College ★ Troy, New York

— Educational Alternatives —  
“**Finding Our Commonalities  
& Celebrating Our Differences**”

Waldorf ★ Montessori ★ Democratic  
Homeschool ★ Unschool

Open  
★  
Free  
★  
Sudbury  
★  
Holistic  
★  
Indigo



Charter  
★  
Steiner  
★  
Choice  
★  
Virtual  
★  
Magnet

Early Childhood ★ Reggio Emilia  
Krishnamurti ★ Quaker ★ Libertarian  
Public Alternative ★ Independent  
Progressive ★ Community ★ Cooperative  
...and more!

[www.EducationRevolution.org](http://www.EducationRevolution.org)

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## Conference Schedule

*All keynote talks will be held in the Bush Memorial Hall. All meals will be at the McKinstry Dining Hall. Workshop Rooms 1-5 can be accessed by way of the Buchman Pavilion. Workshop rooms 6-7 are located in the same building as the registration room. Once in each of the buildings, you will see signs directing you to each workshop room's location.*

### Thursday, June 29th

10:00am - 5:00pm-----Arrival & Registration  
5:15pm - 6:00pm-----Dinner  
6:30pm - 6:45pm-----**Opening Ceremonies (Bush Hall)**  
6:45pm - 7:45pm-----**Jerry Mintz Keynote**  
7:45pm - 10:00pm-----**John Taylor Gatto Keynote**

### Friday, June 30th

7:30am - 8:15am-----Breakfast  
8:30am - 8:45am-----Morning Meeting  
9:00am - 10:00am-----Open Workshop Space

#### Media Literacy

Location: Bush Hall

*Dave Lehman*

The average daily time spent (not all in the same day!, but averaged over time) with various media for 15-18 year olds is 3:41 (3 hours and 41 minutes) with "screen media" (TV, videos/DVDs, movies); 1:19 with radio; 1:09 with CDs/tapes/MP3s; 1:14 with various computer activities; and only 0:44 with "print media" (books, magazines, newspapers)! An overwhelming number of students - including college students- do not know how to judge the credibility of sources on the internet! Sixty-four percent of sexually active teens name themedia - not parents, friends or teachers - as their source of information about sex! In 2001, alcohol companies spent \$31 million for ads during 13 of the 15 most popular TV shows among kids ages 12-17! By the age of 5, U.S. children spend more hours watching television than any other single activity except sleep - 21-25 hours a week! In this workshop, after looking at data such as this, participants will be engaged in specific activities and will work with several resources to begin to learn how to instruct students - elementary through college - in becoming "media literate," critical users of, and not manipulated by, media in today's society.

#### Better Meeting Skills (ends at 11am)

Location: Room #1

*C.T. Lawrence Butler*

Why is it that, although meetings are necessary, they are often difficult, time-consuming and even painful experiences? Perhaps one of the reasons is that few of us take the time to learn better meeting skills. In this workshop, participants will learn skills and techniques designed to improve their experience in meetings. Exercises will be used to encourage creative conflict resolution, self-empowerment, respect for diversity, and appreciation of different perspectives and opinions. These skill-building exercises will provide experiential learning in areas of

agenda planning, facilitation techniques, small group discussion and evaluation. The beginner as well as the experienced facilitator will find this workshop stimulating and valuable. This workshop can accommodate up to 50 participants.

#### Does Montessori Prepare Children for the Real World?

Location: Room #2

*Tim Seldin*

Parents and educators not familiar with Dr. Montessori's research and the program that it inspired are often skeptical about whether or not Montessori graduates will have been adequately prepared to succeed in the real world. As Dr. John Stoops, Director of the Middle States Association for the Accreditation of Colleges and Schools writes:

"Maria Montessori's research and program have withstood the time of time, and I predict that within the next two decades the world of education will fully discover its debt to her. She was no will-of-the-wisp. She was an imaginative and rigorous student of child development who produced a vast number of original ideas and had both the enterprise and pragmatic courage to put them to work. Her gift to education is a much deeper appreciation and understanding of the child and the human potential"

Tim, who attended the Barrie School in Silver Spring, Maryland from age 2 through 12th grade will share his own memories and experience, along with the accumulated experience and insights of scores of Montessori teachers, parents, and children around the world.

#### Drawing Class, Basic Drawing Skills

Location: Room #3

*John Magnon*

*School of Living Communities Workshop Series*

*"Natural Living, Natural Learning" - Part 1/5*

Self-Portrait incorporating personal symbolology using sacred geometry color and drawing techniques. Teaches basic drawing technique using left and right brain processes. Look at this class as a self-created class exploring alternative education principles. This is a clean well lighted place for self-motivated people. Geared towards every level: beginner and on. Materials Supplied, 15 Person Maximum.

#### The Deschooling Convivium (Part 1/2)

Location: Room #4

*Charles Eisenstein*

No matter how earnestly we reject the premises of conventional schooling, the ironic fact is that in many of us, the habits and assumptions of the classroom are already so deeply ingrained as to have become "second nature". This two-part workshop describes a fabulously successful program I conducted last spring specifically designed for the "deschooling" of college students and adults. In the first hour, I will give the background of the project, its goals and future, and my experience running it. The second hour will be an actual mini-convivium where we experience some of the activities our group used in deschooling.

### **School Starters Workshop Series (Part 1/5)**

Location: Room #6 (KQ Lounge)

*Jerry Mintz*

Introduction and Overview

10:00am - 11:00am-----Open Workshop Space

### **A Picture History of the Ferrer Modern Schools**

Location: Bush Hall

*Jon Thoreau Scott*

Modern Schools were founded in the United States and many countries after Francisco Ferrer, founder of the Escuela Moderna in Spain, was executed in 1909. The Modern School philosophy was freedom in education that was not different from the idea of free schools of today. Modern Schools in the U.S. lasted from 1911 to 1958. My presentation is intended to capture for you, in pictures, what went on at the Modern Schools, first founded in New York City by Emma Goldman, Alexander Berkman and other anarchists that was later moved to Stelton, NJ. I will discuss the principles used by the teachers and my own experience at the school that I attended from 1934 to 1946. I will leave copies of forms to invite all of you to the 34th reunion of the Friends of the Modern School that will take place at Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ on Sept. 16, 2006.

### **The 4th R in Learning**

Location: Room #2

Sharyl Allen & Elaheh Sari with Virtues Village

This workshop provides hands-on activities for the participants and brings with it Speaking the Language of Virtues. When teachers are able to expand the 4th R into their teaching and utilize Virtues in building students authentic esteem, learning explodes. The 4th R takes an interactive approach to learning. The participants will be provided with 4 key strategies that will make them better teachers, better parents, better human beings.

What participants will Receive:

- Learn what children, especially teenagers need in order to find success
- Unlock the power of the Language of Virtues
- Identify the Power of Thought and How It Affects Learning
- Increase the amount of Laughter in Your Life.

### **Using Sound Therapy to Make Learning and Development Change Naturally**

Location: Room #3

*Dorinne Davis*

There are 5 scientific principles that demonstrate a connection between the voice, the ear, and the brain. Sound therapy repatterns, establishes, and/or enlivens these connections so that the body receives the information more clearly, thereby allowing learning and general developmental functioning to develop along a natural continuum. As a result, listening improves, thinking becomes clearer, processing is enhanced, reading is easier and better understood, movement and coordination skills improve, language becomes more meaningful, and attention and focus improves. The neuroplasticity of the brain supports the

changes and overall learning and development can improve.

Ms. Davis, the leading sound therapy expert in the world, will review the science behind how sound therapy supports positive change and will review some of the methods currently available, including a few that can be done independently in a learning center.

### **The Deschooling Convivium (Part 2/2)**

Location: Room #4

*Charles Eisenstein*

### **School Starters Workshop Series (Part 2/5)**

Location: Room #6 (KQ Lounge)

*Jerry Mintz with Tim Seldin & Alan Berger*

Nonprofit vs. Proprietary

### **Cheap Ways to Live Green**

Location: Room #7 (Kellas Hall, 2nd Floor Lounge)

*Jules Harrell, M.S., PMP*

*School of Living Communities Workshop Series*

*"Natural Living, Natural Learning" - Part 2/5*

Living green doesn't have to cost you an arm and a leg. There are many ways to eat healthy and keep your house clean without purchasing toxic cleaner or bug spray. Some of my favorite recipes for cleaning and getting rid of bug problems include cheap dishwashing liquid, found at the Dollar Store. Here's a few of the things we'll cover in Cheap Ways to Live Green:

What to do if you have a bug infestation in your yard or garden.

How to keep the ants out of your house; Cleaning your bathroom with dishwashing liquid; Shopping for healthy foods; Taking care of your animals naturally; and Recycling your waste.

Once you have a system, you will always have the healthy foods you want on hand, and never have to worry about dealing with toxic chemicals again. You'll be fairly self sufficient in taking care of your pets, and discover it's just not that hard to live green cheaply.

11:00am - 12:00pm-**AERO Fund Raising Auction (Bush Hall)**

12:00pm - 12:45pm-----Lunch

1:00pm - 2:00pm-----Open Workshop Space

### **Authentic, Secure, Worldwide Intranet Education**

Location: Bush Hall

*Aleia Schaum*

Discover how to connect your students with other students all over the world through a secure free Intranet site. You and your students have the opportunity to communicate, collaborate, and share with peers on all 6 populated continents. Students have the opportunity to embrace their differences and diversity in an authentic long term interaction. Come learn more about this program offered by the international non-profit, 6 Friends. Presented by Aleia Schaum, Director of Education, 6 Friends.



### **The Child in the World of Nature**

Location: Room #1

*Tim Seldin*

Drawn from over 30 years of experience both in Montessori schools and summer programs, Tim will introduce the rationale for why outdoor education—gardening, observation of wildlife, field botany, and even early camping experiences—should be a key element in our programs for children from the infant-toddler years through upper school. He will suggest loads of resources and fascinating year-round activities, and tackle practical concerns that often keep us from developing a strong nature program.

### **When Kids Get The Say: Decision Making by Consensus**

Location: Room #2

*The New School (Maine) & The School Around Us*

Do you wish your democratic school was more efficient or effective? Do you want to know how to begin a meaningful decision making process with your students? Do you want to exchange ideas with other schools that give students access to important decision making? This workshop will provide the opportunity. The New School (9-12) and The School Around Us (K-8) are both democratic schools. They have developed some effective tools for consensus decision making and for processes that support high level student decision making. Students at The School Around Us have been making consensus decisions since 1970. Students at The New School have been engaged at EVERY level of decision making in the school for the past 6 years. Students will be part of this presentation.

### **Learning as a Social Experience: How New Technologies Support Sustainable Learning Communities**

Location: Room #3

*Stephen Wilmarth*

Anytime two people have a conversation, learning occurs. Three people having a conversation creates a learning web. Learning webs are the basis for creating sustainable learning communities in the 21st century. This workshop focuses on the tools and practices that can provide caring, local, intimate learning communities with opportunities to explore the world, engage and exchange creative energies, comprehend and contribute to cultural diversity, develop and spread democratic ideals, and reflect on the new media interactions that empower the voices of an emerging civil, ethical, democratic society in the third millennium. Workshop participants will be provided with an engaging tour of the future of learning - through ubiquitous communication, collaboration, and community building regardless of time or place. The workshop will demonstrate tools and present best practices that explode a 20th century education model that relies on "bricks and mortar," GPA's, test scores, classroom management, contrived standards, isolated disciplines, and fixed, immutable schedules that disregard the learner's "state of readiness."

Workshop participants will come away with concrete examples of learning communities that demonstrate that:

-Learning is social, ethical, natural, ecological, messy, compassionate, shared, open, visual, verbal, kinesthetic, and performing.

-Innovation in education is at the edges, not at the core. The core is vested entirely in the status quo.

-The "open source" model is the future of education. Apprenticeship, learning-by-doing, participatory "guilds" – all are inherent in the open source model and all are core, sustaining precepts for a 21st century model of education.

### **An Alternative PUBLIC School**

Location: Room #4

*Kathynn Natkie & Ridge and Valley Charter School*

The founders of Ridge and Valley Charter School, in Blirstown, NJ, considered many possibilities- from a Homeschool Cooperative to a private school and, finally, adopted a mission goal of a public school which any child in the state of New Jersey can enter- funded by the taxes of their hometown. The school then faced not only the challenge of finding parents and students who wanted a different type of education but a also a political system that did not want change. Seven years later NJ had it's first rural Charter School. One based on a child's potential, rather than accelerated statewide test scores.

2:00pm - 3:00pm-----Open Workshop Space

### **Carmel's Student Academic Management System**

Location: Bush Hall

*SAMS*

Upon entry into our school, a student's academic level and their goals for achievement are determined through entry testing, prior standardized testing, and through student work samples and portfolio. Once student level and achievement has been mapped, then an individualized plan is written with each student. In the plan, prescriptive objectives are developed to establish any missing components or gaps in a student's education. This plan, which is a student's scope and sequence, is documented and managed through a newly developed plan sheet called a Matrix. It shows the scope and sequence per grade level, and the teacher fills in assignments, special additional work, learning style, and direct teaching notes. This plan sheet documents and manages the academic standards, computer based instruction, assignments, field trips, extracurricular activities, special needs, projects, teacher grading, notes, essential questions, and multiple intelligences. Students maintain their own program and the teacher manages a master copy.

To implement this individualized program in a classroom setting, a workgroup program is employed. This program allows us to coordinate differentiated, cooperative, project-based instruction and integrate Technology, Workplace, and the Arts into all other subject areas. This provides students many avenues for mastering their individualized plan. These methodologies offer immediate feedback to the student allowing for adjustments. A CD or DVD multiyear record is available of the

child's education whenever the student applies to another school, or the teacher wants to review previous work.

### **Rockaway College Project Reception**

Location: Buchman Pavilion

*Leo Fahey*

Share ideas, stories, and advice on alternative practices for Emotionally Disturbed Learning Disabled youngsters, effective ways to secure local community support for private alternative school start-ups, and on school funding strategies ensuring inclusion of all regardless of ability to pay while sharing Rockaway College Project's wine, juice, and other refreshments.

### **Educating for Human Greatness - School Reform from the Bottom Up (Part 1/3)**

Location: Room #1

*Lynn Stoddard*

In this session we explore what happens when teachers take creative control of their own professional lives. We show how to start a revolution by fostering this purpose for education: help students develop their amazing potential to be contributors – not burdens – to society. Parents and teachers unite to help students grow in five dimensions of human greatness, Identity, Inquiry, Interaction, Imagination and Integrity. With these goals teachers and parents unite and use curriculum as a tool – not as a goal – to help students grow in greatness. Instead of standardizing students, they value and nurture positive human diversity (phd).

### **How Technology Will Eventually Revolutionize Learning**

Location: Room #2

*Edward Davis*

Today's reality—technology is being used primarily to re-create industrial model forms of education. In the hands of those who do not understand its potential, it is a regressive tool. Look at the current world of distance learning and you can see the problem.

The Promise—Back to the prime directive, learning as play, visceral involvement, the world of learning objects--constructivism on steroids, liberation from time and space, saving billions on the cost of education, bringing back Socrates.

### **School Starters Workshop Series (Part 3/5)**

Location: Room #3

*Jerry Mintz with Arnold Greenberg, Chris Mercogliano, & Tim Seldin*

Financing (incl. tuition, fundraising)

### **It Takes the Whole Damn Village**

Location: Room #4

*Sandra Barnhouse*

The burgeoning homeschooling phenomenon is our nation's desperate cry for help. Yet the education enterprisers continue their voracious grab for funds, defending the monopoly of public school, assuming there's no other course except to continue. They are threatened by the homeschoolers because they don't

want to lose their jobs and funding.

This workshop presents a plan that should not threaten the education industry, once they understand it. Getting to that understanding requires a fantasy of the world without school, broad-based consciousness raising, and a major paradigm shift. The revolution can't happen until we set the kids free and abolish child apartheid. Learn about this fantasy, an educational scenario that allows children to participate in a world where the majority of their time is spent with adults in larger numbers, allowing totally individualized, self-actualizing curriculum, with plenty of guidance from trackers, pathfinders and beacons. All we need to do is abandon the classroom and go this other way. This workshop is *not* about home schooling; it's a global view of our larger society.

### **Wild Food and Herb Walk**

Location: Room #5

*Stephen Hoog*

*School of Living Communities Workshop Series  
"Natural Living, Natural Learning" - Part 3/5*

Nature supplies mankind with an abundance of plants that can be used for food and natural medicine. Stephen Hoog, Director of Living Potentials and Board member of the School of Living, will show us some things that are growing in the local environment that are useful for health and eating. Each season and each micro-climate are different and everything is always changing so this will be an introduction to the myriad possibilities that are available. Books and literature will be available to read and handouts will be provided. Stephen has been giving wild food workshops since 1975 in numerous states in the Northeast as well as Missouri and North Dakota. He has published numerous articles on the beneficial uses of plants.

3:00pm - 4:00pm-----Open Workshop Space

### **Democratic Schools: A Film About the Desire to Learn**

Location: Bush Hall

*A Film by Jan Gabbert*

At democratic schools pupils themselves can decide, what and how they want to learn. There are no curricula, no censorship, and examinations are voluntary. Pupils and teachers have the same rights and organize their schools together. Everyone has a voice in the decisions. Can that be done well

### **EMF and Learning - An Unprecedented Danger**

Location: Room #1

*Kathy Conners and BIOPRO*

According to the Safe Wireless Initiative, there are currently 30,000-50,000 new cases of brain & eye tumors a year caused by cell phones. Due to rapid cell growth and decreased skull density, the danger to our children is even greater than for adults. And it's not just from cell towers and phones. EMF radiation also comes from computers, cordless phones, the wires in our walls, and many other electrical devices. EMF is an aggressive toxin that has been proven to damage DNA. It can negatively effect our decision making capabilities, and our ability to

concentrate. The effects of EMF exposure are cumulative, and make us more susceptible to fatigue, attention deficit disorders and a myriad of health problems.

Please join us as we work to educate our communities about the very real dangers of EMF (electropollution). Come see for yourself the growing body of evidence and the new, cutting edge technologies available to help keep us safer! Learn how to protect our children and ourselves from this unprecedented danger.

### School Starters Workshop Series (Part 4/5)

Location: Room #3

*Jerry Mintz with Tim Seldin, Arnold Greenberg, & Alan Berger*  
Legal Issues (incl. zoning, insurance)

4:00pm - 4:10pm---Student Essay Contest Winners (Bush Hall)

4:10pm - 5:00pm-----**Keynote Student Panel Discussion**

5:15pm - 6:00pm-----Dinner

6:30pm - 8:30pm-----**Mimsy Sadofsky Keynote**

8:30pm - 10:00pm-----Student Film Festival (Bush Hall)



Miles Joris-Peyrafitte & Madison Harrison present the AERO conference's first ever student film festival!

This will be the second time Miles & Madison have presented the student film

festival. During their first festival held at the Albany Free School this past year, they had a packed house of nearly two hundred in attendance to view these hilarious, dramatic, inspiring, and simply amazing films!

10:00pm - 11:00pm-----**60x60 Project** (Bush Hall)

### *A Special Music Presentation by Vox Novus & Gisela Gamper*

The mission of the 60x60 project and its presenter, Vox Novus, is to expose the greatest number of composers and their works to the largest audience possible. 60x60 combines grassroots ideology with cutting-edge methods of presentation and distribution. Each year the project collaborates with multimedia artists to expand its artistic scope and reach alternate audiences. In 2005 the 60x60 project collaborated with the video artist Gisela Gamper.

## Saturday, July 1st

7:30am - 8:15am-----Breakfast

8:30am - 8:45am-----Morning Meeting

9:00am - 10:00am-----**Susan Ohanian Keynote**

10:00am - 11:00am-----Open Workshop Space

### **SelfDesign: The Art and Science of Creating a Human Being by Being Human**

Location: Bush Hall

*Brent Cameron*

The epistemology of being human, is the how of what it is that we do when we think, feel, understand, learn, believe and wonder. Our culture and our education system perpetuate shared hallucinations about human identity and what is worth knowing. This workshop will introduce some of the latest experiments and discoveries from systems theory, perennial philosophy, cognitive-neuroscience etc. as experiences to test some of our very first assumptions about who we are and how we work. Unless we go back and check the foundation upon which we design our entire lives we can not be sure that we are building an authentic system of understanding. The startling breakthroughs of this work of SelfDesign will introduce you to an entirely new way of seeing yourself and your world, and offer a new basis for understanding what we are in common and how our differences make life fascinating.

Drawn from the recently published book, SelfDesign: Nurturing Genius Through Natural Learning, Brent Cameron will present a multimedia presentation outlining the past 23 years of research and development into the work of SelfDesign. He will introduce several experiments that will allow participants to glimpse into a new paradigm of understanding and a chance to develop a new epistemology of experience.

### **Educating for Human Greatness - School Reform from the Bottom Up (Part 2/3)**

Location: Room #1

*Lynn Stoddard*

In this session we review the education-for-greatness philosophy and discuss the implications of nurturing positive diversity. We share the Great Brain Project, Shining Stars Talent Development and other strategies that were invented to nurture the development of individual potential. We generate questions for the final session.

### **Gaia University – A New Choice in Higher Education**

Location: Room #2

*Karen Stupski & Abe Karl-Gruszewitz*

Learn about Gaia University's unique Action Learning process offering accredited degrees in integrated ecological and social design. Gaia University offers students, called Associates, access to Bachelors degrees, Masters degrees, and Graduate Diplomas while the Associate is actively engaged in self and planetary transformation. With Gaia University, Associates link their ideals with self-directed, individualized, and practical experience, acting for world regeneration by working for ecological sustainability, social advocacy, and peace.

Our Action Learning methodology enables Associates to study where they choose, in their own language, supported by Gaia University Regional Organizers, a global network of Mentors, Specialist Advisors, and fellow Associates. Our Mid-Atlantic region of Gaia University is cooperatively run by staff and Associates alike using consensus decision-making.



### **School Starters Workshop Series (Part 5/5)**

Location: Room #3

*Jerry Mintz with Arnold Greenberg, Chris Mercogliano, & Tim Seldin*

Smorgasbord (incl. student recruitment, publicity, additional questions)

### **The Community As Classroom**

Location: Room #4

*The New School (Maine) & The School Around Us*

The School Around Us (K-8) means exactly what its name implies. The New School tag line says "A Community-Centered Secondary School." The experiences of these two schools provides a focus for a participant dialogue on the community as classroom. Teachers and students from these two schools will present their experiences with science field studies for local organizations, recording stories of elders, community greenhouse, partnership with local historical societies, and many more approaches to learning outside a school building and bringing the town to the school.

### **Teachers' Experiences with Design Conversation in the Context of School Change**

Location: Room #5

*Helga Stokes*

The purpose of the study is to explore design conversation as it is lived out in the communication processes amongst stakeholders involved in school change. School reform efforts in various countries look for increased participation in design and decision-making at the local level. Design conversation, embedded in the theoretical framework of systems thinking and systems design has, to date, not been researched as a theoretical construct. Experiences and perceptions form the core of the data, and therefore a phenomenological research approach was chosen. Data were gathered at three internationally dispersed sites in the Czech Republic, Germany, and the United States of America. The results indicate that teachers do value the process, describe changing mindsets, designing visions, concrete strategies, equitable participation, trust, and risk taking. The study hopes to lead those interested in school change to increased use and evaluation of design conversation in educational systems design.

11:00am - 12:00pm-----**Tim Seldin Keynote**

12:00pm - 12:45pm-----Lunch

1:00pm - 2:00pm-----Open Workshop Space

### **Values Go to School: Exploring Ethics with Children**

Location: Bush Hall

*Margery Franklin & Child Development Institute at Sarah Lawrence College*

The third video in the Learning Child Series, Values Go to School: Exploring Ethics with Children, will be screened at the conference, and air on public television stations this year. Produced by Jonathan Diamond Associates in association with the Child Development Institute at Sarah Lawrence College, the program documents how values emerge and take shape in the

school context, and how teachers can encourage children's understanding and expression of the ethical questions that permeate our everyday lives.

The new documentary suggests that ethical issues are inseparable from the life of the classroom and the school. What kinds of values do we want to uphold and foster? How are ethical values communicated to children? What role should schools play in facilitating children's understanding of ethical questions? Awareness of how values are communicated in the school context enables teachers and administrators to make informed decisions about curriculum and educational process.

Values Go to School documents the ways in which schools can play a central role in the development of reflective consciousness about ethical questions and provide the context for encouraging genuinely humanistic values.

### **Class Struggle in the Classroom**

Location: Room #1

*David Kristjanson-Gural*

Education plays an important part in how our capitalist economy reproduces itself. By challenging how education happens, like it or not, we threaten the basis of capitalist reproduction. At the same time, we lay the groundwork for alternative economic relationships to emerge. In this workshop, I will present a simple but profound way to think about how our capitalist economy works and how traditional education fits in. I will then challenge participants to identify ways in which alternative education interrupts and contests how capitalism shapes education. This exercise will provide a helpful context in which to discuss the difficulties we face in working for educational alternatives as well as the many opportunities that we are presented with for transforming the economic system much for the better.

### **Introduction to Formal Consensus Decisionmaking (ends at 2:45pm)**

Location: Room #2

*C.T. Lawrence Butler*

In this workshop, participants will learn to organize, facilitate, and participate in meetings based on Formal Consensus. We will focus on the theory and principles of Formal Consensus and how it is different from both majority rule voting and other versions of consensus. The beginner as well as the experienced consensus practitioner will find this workshop opens up a whole new set of possibilities for cooperative, democratic group dynamics. This workshop can accommodate up to 50 participants and is based upon C.T. Lawrence Butler's book On Conflict and Consensus.

### **How to Develop a Successful Summer Program for Your School**

Location: Room #3

*Tim Seldin*

If you're not running a summer program, your school is missing the boat! A well run summer day camp can \* produce significant additional income \* allow you to expand your

educational program in areas where time doesn't allow during the school year \* better meet the needs of working families \* and introduce new families to your school. We will consider program design, equipment, staffing, facilities, safety, recruitment, and administrative issues.

### **Songwriting Workshop**

Location: Room #4

*Deb Cavanaugh*

*School of Living Communities Workshop Series  
"Natural Living, Natural Learning" - Part 4/5*

Work alone or in groups to write lyrics for an original song. We'll start with word games and fun exercises in creativity to get you started. Learn the recipe for a memorable song, including basic meter (the rhythm of words) and rhyme. Everyone is a musician. Everyone is a songwriter. You just don't know it yet. Come discover your muse and have fun doing it!

### **Ecovillages as "Campuses" for Sustainability Education**

Location: Room #5

*Daniel Greenberg & Living Routes*

Ecovillages are communities striving to model sustainable development - ecologically, socially, culturally, and spiritually. From appropriate technologies to holistic health; from sustainable agriculture to group facilitation, ecovillages are integrating solutions within human-scale communities and creating new cultures and "stories" in which we can live well and lightly. This workshop will provide an introduction to the growing ecovillage movement worldwide (e.g., Findhorn, Scotland; Auroville, India; and Sirius, MA) and explore the possibilities and challenges of using these communities as sites for education and social change.

2:00pm - 3:00pm-----Open Workshop Space

### **The First 5 Years: The Roots of Democracy**

Location: Bush Hall

*Tim Graves*

Many of the dispositions needed for participation in democratic environments begin to be learned at birth and continue to be refined throughout the preschool years. Discussion will focus on how families and other caring adults can nurture the skills and dispositions needed for participation in democracy during this early period of children's development.

### **Rockaway College Project Reception**

Location: Buchman Pavilion

*Leo Fahey*

Share ideas, stories, and advice on alternative practices for Emotionally Disturbed Learning Disabled youngsters, effective ways to secure local community support for private alternative school start-ups, and on school funding strategies ensuring inclusion of all regardless of ability to pay while sharing Rockaway College Project's wine, juice, and other refreshments.

### **SelfDesign Paragon: A Look At the Process of Learning From Eight Different Vantage Points**

Location: Room #1

*Brent Cameron*

In the industrialization of schooling we have seen the transformation of learning into an appropriate response to instruction. Teaching and instruction of content and curriculum and the measurable results of instruction are what education has become in our schooling systems. Our greatest asset as human beings is our ability to learn, and yet in schooling our array of at least eight different modes of learning is reduced to just one. This model will look at the variety of learning that emerges in our living and outlines strategies for each one. The shift from content to process brings learning from content to experience, from outside to inside. Learning is within the domain of human experience and only within the context of neurological events can our observations of human behavior begin to reveal the dimensions of learning.

### **Between School and Community: Making Bridges Instead of Walls**

Location: Room #2

*Rajeev Sharma*

Schools are expected to provide education to children so that they grow up to be responsible and happy members of society. However, of late, schools are increasingly being questioned for what they teach, how they teach, and most importantly what children learn about relating to each other in school and outside. Incidence of indiscipline, indecent behaviour, violence has risen substantially in schools. As a consequence schools are becoming target of criticism from parents and society.

On the other hand, schools have been holding parents responsible for providing inadequate care, attention and support to children at home, an essential condition for learning in schools. Principals and teachers opine, that parents are abdicating their responsibility of nurturing children, thereby not contributing in their learning. When this results in undesirable outcome, schools are blamed. Thus between the two of them each is blaming the other. However, what is true is that family and schools, two extremely important institutions responsible for nurturing future citizens are under severe pressure due to fast paced, radical and unexpected changes in society. Both the institutions are experiencing the pressure and groping for the ways to cope. Parents who should be natural 'stakeholders' in the process of education of their children, are becoming mere 'consumers' of the service called 'education'. Schools, instead of welcoming parents as partners, create barriers and restrictions to avoid them. Between the two, where there would have been a natural bridge to reach higher goals, there exist an ever increasing wall; thwarting the progress of both. The workshop will aim to examine some of the issues associated with this, with an objective to identify the process of dismantling the 'wall' and replacing it with a 'bridge'

Based on the inputs from participants and experience of the facilitator, factors which contribute towards this state will be identified. Subsequently, based on actual experience from several schools, conditions which facilitate a co-operative spirit



between school, parents and community will be shared. Workshop will conclude with possible directions and strategies for constructive initiatives in this direction.

### **The School of Living – An Educational Network**

Location: Room #3

*Karen Stupski*

*School of Living Communities Workshop Series*

*"Natural Living, Natural Learning" - Part 5/5*

The School of Living is a non-profit organization that is actively engaged in community land trust, intentional community, permaculture, appropriate technology, alternative education, consensus decision making, non-exploitive banking, and alternative currencies. It holds six pieces of land, located in Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia, in its community land trust. Each piece of land is home to an intentional community that seeks to demonstrate and share the principles of sustainable living. School of Living also sponsors AERO and advocates for alternative education. Learn about the history of School of Living and the educational resources that it offers.

### **Nonviolent Communication**

Location: Room #4

*Larry Hutchinson*

Nonviolent Communication (NVC) is a method of connecting with others in a way that is in tune with our empathic, compassionate side of being human. Marshall Rosenberg has developed a language and a sequence of conflict resolution through checking to see if we are listening with "giraffe ears".

The workshop is an introduction to NVC. References will be made to: "Nonviolent Communication; A Language of Life" by Marshall B. Rosenberg, Ph.D. and "Nonviolent Communication; Companion Workbook" by Lucy Leu. Search: Marshall B. Rosenberg, for more info. P.s. Bring your acting skills.

3:00pm - 5:00pm-----**Keynote Panel Discussion**

The educational alternatives keynote panel discussion will take the conference theme of "Finding Our Commonalities & Celebrating Our Differences" and bring it to life with representatives from a wide variety of backgrounds within the spectrum of educational alternatives who will be ready to answer your questions and discuss the theme. The panel will be moderated by AERO director, Jerry Mintz, and feature the following panelists: Edward Davis, Pat Farenga, Tim Graves, Arnold Greenberg, Melanie Jago Hiner, Ron Miller, Patricia Novak, Shannon O'Conner, Tim Seldin, and Diane Walters.

5:15pm - 6:00pm-----Dinner

5:15pm - 6:00pm-----Special Workshop Over Dinner

### **Bringing It Home: Creating AERO chapters in Your Area**

Location: Picnic Tables Outside McKinstry Dining Hall

*Abram Karl-Gruswitz*

After a 3 days of some great discussions and workshops with each other, how can we bring back what the work we've done in

"Finding Our Commonalities & Celebrating Our Differences" back to our communities? Can we create the same cooperative environment with the alternative schools and homeschooling families in our area? This workshop will focus on how to create local and regional chapters of AERO. We will explore such questions as: What would a regional chapter of AERO look like? What work can we do at a local level that is difficult to do nationally or internationally? How can local alternative schools and homeschooling families cooperate together? What can we learn from each other?

Hopefully, out of this workshop we will create a team of individuals who are going to work together at creating these chapters in their areas.

6:30pm - 10:30pm-----Entertainment Evening (Bush Hall)

## **Sunday, July 2nd**

7:30am - 8:15am-----Breakfast

8:30am - 8:45am-----Morning Meeting

9:00am - 10:00am-----Open Workshop Space

### **Sheltered Risks Inc: Kamp KESSA's Reconstructive Vision**

Location: Bush Hall

*Anthony and Thecla Helmbrecht Howard*

Anthony and Thecla Helmbrecht Howard will share with you how they started their program and how they came to their reconstructive vision. The journey goes from thinking about being able to "consult" with and advocate for youth still in the "mainstream" to alternatives to public education to a consideration of a mass of answers provided by like minded folks for us to consider. We have come up with a localized position in the margins between education and treatment where community is paramount and all of creation is "special". We are challenging ourselves as well as our local, state, and national communities to deconstruct and reconstruct an educational and therapeutic vision for the future. We have created a community using the natural world as a catalyst in bringing about inevitable results and reconsideration of the dogmatic teaching of our "systems", on our journey towards health and wellness.

### **Educating for Human Greatness - School Reform from the Bottom Up (Part 3/3)**

Location: Room #1

*Lynn Stoddard*

3rd Session We examine the possibilities of conveying to every child that s/he has the super-intelligence, and beyond-genius potential for making a unique contribution to the world. We discuss questions that were generated in other sessions and invite participants to make a difference in their communities with the counsel of Margaret Mead: "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world."

### **Living with Indigo Energy - Uniquely Perceptive People**

Location: Room #2

*Lisa Bellini*

This exciting program that will help anyone who is or has been

touched by children with ADD/ADHD, Special Educational needs, Adults going through an Awakening Period - Parents / Teachers / Administrators and health care professionals. From her own powerful life experiences, Lisa will explain how these children think, how sensitive they are, how their minds raise, why they have such a hard time communicating and why they can get so angry and then simply shut down. And then as they get older, why some will turn to drugs and alcohol, In addition, the global awakening period, so many adults are currently going through an awakening period, they find themselves feeling lonely, feeling anxious and some even have panic attacks, this is what the adults have been feeling for a number of years. How it is affecting them. While the children are being put on Ritalin or Adderall the adults are being put on anti depressants. A lecture that can truly benefit the entire family.

### **The Freedom To Learn Alternative Education Forum**

Location: Room #3

*Dylan Trott*

"The Freedom To Learn" is an online forum that centers on alternative ways of learning and teaching. This workshop is primarily for publicizing the forum. And to gather peoples thoughts and ideas on how to make it better!

10:00am - 12:00pm-----**Ron Miller Keynote**  
12:00pm - 12:45pm-----Lunch  
1:00pm - 2:00pm-----Closing Ceremonies (Bush Hall)  
2:00pm - 4:00pm-----**Pat Farenga Keynote**  
4:00pm - 5:00pm-----Check Out & Departure

### **Pre-Keynote Body/Brain Energizers**

Celebrate key elements of learning through spirited, rhyming movement sequences put to music. Watch or participate as we shake, rattle n' show how the body/brain works best, creating ideal mindbody, social-emotional states that maximize learning prior to each keynote. Led by body/brain Boogie person, Jeff Haebig, Ph.D. from BrainBoogie.com.

## **Open Workshop Space**

What is open workshop space? Open workshop space is time designated throughout the conference where attendees are able to suggest and lead their own workshops and presentations. After the workshops are suggested, the conference director will help you pick the best location to hold it and help you schedule it. A large schedule of these workshops will be posted in a common area so everyone can see the new workshop options!

In the past we've had dozens of very successful and highly requested workshops that have been held in this manner.

**To schedule a workshop,  
visit the registration room!**

**To view new additions to the schedule,  
visit the registration room!**

## **Free Child Care**

**Free child care for children ages 2-11**  
*(free for under twos with approval before conference)*



Children in this program will likely have more fun than you at the conference as we have four wonderful staff members who will be providing lots of games and activities ranging from arts and crafts to monster ball to anything your child can think up!

We'll have plenty of art supplies, outdoor toys, indoor games available, but do feel free to bring anything that may enhance your child's experience. We have wonderfully large air-conditioned space available for the child care with the very little ones having their own private, safe space within it.

We encourage you to show up early during the registration time on the 29th so that you and your children can meet and become familiar with the staff. Children will have to be signed in and out, but those with older children will have the option of allowing them to come and go freely. Below are the hours throughout the conference that the free child care will take place. We ask that you pick up your children promptly according to the hours as the staff will need their breaks. There will be a charge for those more than 15 minutes late and those late by more than 10 minutes twice. Parents who are late by more than 10 minutes three times may be asked to remove their children from the free child care. We're not trying to be militant, but with the hours being so extensive as is, we need to take care of the health of our staff!

### **Thursday, June 29th**

6:30pm - 9:30pm

### **Friday, June 30th**

9:00am - 12:00pm  
1:00pm - 5:00pm  
6:30pm - 8:30pm

### **Saturday, July 1st**

9:00am - 12:00pm  
1:00pm - 5:00pm

### **Sunday, July 2nd**

9:00am - 12:00pm  
1:00pm - 5:00pm



Contact [isaacgraves@gmail.com](mailto:isaacgraves@gmail.com) for any and all questions!

## Plenty of Entertainment for All

Saturday, July 1st Starting at 6:30pm

### Broadcast Live



Broadcast Live is a project born in Albany, NY's anarchist activist community. The group's objective is to promote social change through music, and to speak truth to power.

The music is a union of revolutionary ideals and many styles, ranging from hip-hop and rock, to reggae and folk. The band uses a wide array of live instruments as well as beats, and is known for its bombastic live performances.

Find out more about the band at [www.broadcastlive.org](http://www.broadcastlive.org)

### Cavanaugh and Kavanaugh

Much of the traditional music this duo performs is in the Irish and Southern Old Time tradition. They also perform original songs and tunes. Life partners, as well as musical partners, who coincidentally share the same last name, they enjoy performing together and sharing their stories and songs with an audience. A subtle blend of ethnicity, humor and more, they bring their varied experiences to life on the stage. This duo works well with teachers and students, bringing fun and excitement to every lesson.



Find out more about the duo at [www.cavandkav.com](http://www.cavandkav.com)

### Jesus and the Holy Lions

Jesus and the Holy Lions are Nicole Richmond (vocals and guitar), Allison Welch (viola), and Jessica Graves (djembe). The trio formed at Hiram College and have been playing together for a year and a half. Primarily a tribute band, Jesus and the Holy Lions rework songs by the Rolling Stones, Hank Williams, and Tom Waits, as well as covering more contemporary artists like the Indigo Girls and They Might Be Giants. The group infuses new life into the old combo of a little country and a little bit rock n' roll; with a classic orchestra instrument taking the place of a lead guitarist and a small African drum filling in for a full set with symbols. Their first cd, "Born Again Blasphemers," recently released on SwampThing Records, captures their backporch, homegrown sound, and lets listeners hear how much fun they have when they play.



### Talent Show

The title is self descriptive, but for those that have not participated in an AERO conference talent show before you'll be in for quite a treat.



The last night of the conference is always an entertainment evening, which you'll find is much needed after every last muscle in your brain has been tapped!

Attendees have brought the house down with applause after sharing some of their talents and even brought tears to folks eyes after comedic performances in the past, but don't be shy! Come to this event to remember!

## Conference Sponsors

***Life Learning Magazine***  
[www.lifelearningmagazine.com](http://www.lifelearningmagazine.com)

***School of Living***  
[www.schoolofliving.org](http://www.schoolofliving.org)

***The Montessori Foundation &  
The International Montessori Council***  
[www.montessori.org](http://www.montessori.org)

***Association of Waldorf  
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[www.awsna.org](http://www.awsna.org)

***Students Against Testing***  
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[www.democratic-edu.org](http://www.democratic-edu.org)

***International Association of  
Learning Alternatives***  
[www.learningalternatives.net](http://www.learningalternatives.net)

***The Center for Liberty and Community***  
[www.libertyandcommunity.org](http://www.libertyandcommunity.org)





- 1 = Registration, Rooms, and Book Store
- 2 = Buchman Pavillion (Workshops & Vendors)
- 2 = Suggested Entrance to Bush Hall
- 3 = Bush Hall (Keynotes & Workshops)
- 4 = McKinstry Dining Hall
- 5 = Entrance to Registration, Rooms, & Dining Hall
- 6 = Child Care Facilities
- 7 = Free Parking!

### Contact Information

*Conference Director Isaac Graves can be reached at 516-637-0411 during the conference.  
 AERO Director Jerry Mintz can be reached at 516-978-7812 during the conference.*

**Alternative Education Resource Organization**  
 417 Roslyn Road  
 Roslyn Heights, NY 11577-2620

(800) 769-4171 (toll-free) and (516) 621-2195

[www.EducationRevolution.org](http://www.EducationRevolution.org)

**Save the Date!**

**June 28th - July 1st, 2007**

**4th Annual AERO Conference**