

‘The heart of arts education’

From lighting to makeup, to music and much more, conference gathers creatives

By Terry Date

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LAWRENCE — Lead Haitian drummer Jean Appolon began with a stirring call, a beat inviting 10 other drummers in the music room to enter the conversation.

Across the hall, below the stage in the Lawrence High Performing Arts Center’s auditorium, the new executive director of The Cabot theatre in Beverly, Brian Ridolfo, described for teachers ways to light productions — set moods and create meaning, even with limited lighting.

Meanwhile, behind the auditorium, make-up artist Holly Guitierrez of Methuen lifted a brush and put the finishing touches on a nice gash over the right eye of the art center’s manager, John Scolastico.

Earlier this month, Artistry Unleashed, the second annual arts conference at the Arts Academy of Lawrence High School, brought together artists, educators and creators from 17 school districts, more than 200 people in all.

The keynote speaker was Roberto Lugo, a Puerto Rican ceramic artist, social activist, and educator from Philadelphia whose graffiti-art brightens classical pottery as it creates a continuum of artistic

expression.

His work explores poverty and racial inequality as it uplifts and transforms those who see it.

Artistry Unleashed organizers welcomed him with a brightly painted arch at the entrance to the auditorium, the ornate overhead surrounded by pots painted in his style.

Arts Academy musical theatre students performed a montage from their upcoming production, “A Bronx Tale.”

Heather Langlois, the academy’s supervisor of visual and performing arts, told the audience the day was all about connection.

“About bringing visual artists, musicians, dancers, and theater educators under one roof to learn from each other, inspire each other and grow together,” she said at the Nov. 5 event, urging them to celebrate the magic that happens when artists come together. “You are the heart of arts education, and your work changes lives every single day.”

Painters painted. Musicians played. Weavers wove. Dancers danced. Theater people theatered.

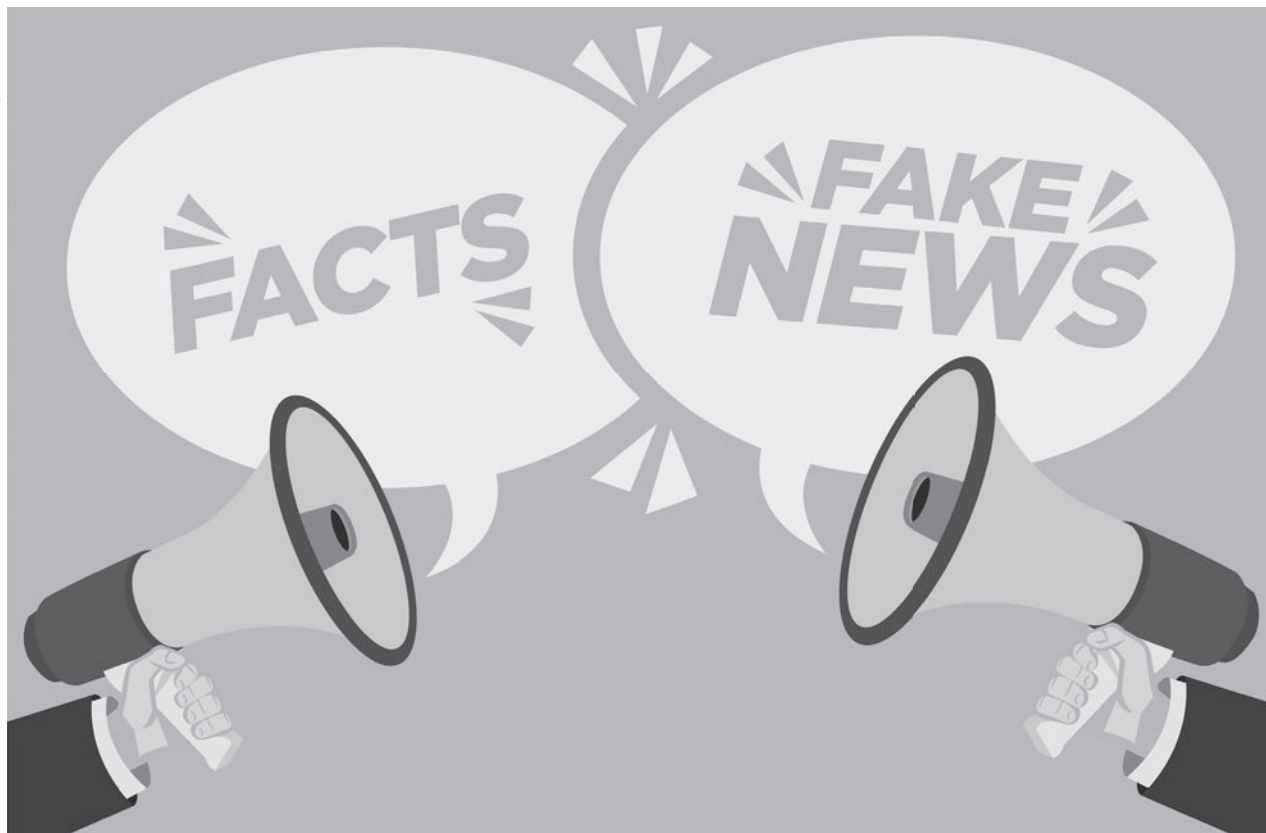
They dug into particulars of their chosen disciplines at dozens of presentations throughout the day, deepening their skills to, in turn,



COURTESY PHOTO

Artistry Unleashed conference organizers welcomed keynote speaker Roberto Lugo, middle, to the Academy of Arts at Lawrence High School earlier this month.

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Looking to combat fake news?

Here are some resources to help you determine if what you've read is true:

» **Politifact** is the Pulitzer Prize-winning fact checking operation run by the nonprofit Poynter Institute. The site fact-checks statements by politicians and debunks myriad Facebook hoaxes.

<https://www.politifact.com/>

» **FactCheck.org**, run by Annenberg Public Policy Center, performs much of the same tasks, and also let's you ask questions of the fact checkers. An example question: Did the Supreme Court rule that it is illegal to take the oath of office with anything but the Bible? (The answer is no.)

<https://www.factcheck.org/>

» **Snopes** is the original fact-checking website. Use the site's search bar to get to the bottom of political statements, viral videos and urban myths.

<https://www.snopes.com/>

» **A Google reverse image search** is the best way to find out if that photo you saw making the rounds on Twitter or Facebook is real. This story from PC Magazine walks you through how to do it on your desktop or your phone.

<https://www.pcmag.com/article2/0,2817,2492468,00.asp>

» **Still need help?** Contact us at the Eagle-Tribune, and we'll get the answer for you, no matter the topic. Email editor Tracey Rauh at trauh@eagletribune.com.



REAL NEWS IN SCHOOLS

How the program works

Your school can have access to local, trusted journalism from The Eagle-Tribune on a daily basis. We report on news throughout the Merrimack Valley and Southern New Hampshire, covering all things local - from schools, to sports, to government, people profiles, business, entertainment and more. You get the facts - the real news - from experienced reporters, photographers and editors you can count on at no cost to your school.

Here are the basics of the program:

What is it? The Eagle-Tribune partners with local businesses to provide free digital access to our newspaper to anyone within the school at no cost to the school. This access encourages students to value the vital news coverage being produced by The Eagle-Tribune. They will build awareness and gain critical thinking skills in the process.

Who can participate?

This program will benefit teachers, students, and the broader school community.

Where does it take place?

You can access our newspaper online. Teachers can incorporate the program into their curriculums, even having reporters, photographers and editors visit your class.

When can we start benefiting? As soon as we have your commitment to participate in Real News in Schools we will go to work to find a local business who wants to sponsor you. Once we have one, we will work with your IT Department to get the program up and running.

Why is this valuable?

There's a lot of fake news out there on social media and elsewhere. The Eagle-Tribune, founded in 1868 as the Lawrence Daily Eagle and a twice Pulitzer Prize winning publication, has a long track record of fair and accurate reporting that cuts through the misinformation.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
EAGLETRIBUNE.COM/REALNEWS

Young people are ready to talk politics. Are you ready to listen?

Luke Johnson

Commentary



When adults talk about politics, most teenagers quietly tune out. It is not because we do not care. It is because most of the time, we do not feel like we are being invited into the conversation.

For many people my age, politics feels like a members-only club wherein we do not meet the age requirement. We are told to “enjoy being young” or to

“wait until you can vote,” and most of the time, we feel excluded or out of place at political meetings.

By the time we can finally vote, many of the choices that shape our education, freedoms and environment have already been made without us.

From the outside, politics looks like a shouting match. The news cycle is full of division and negativity, and every issue seems to be about choosing a side rather than solving a problem.

When you grow up watching adults tear one another apart online or on television, it is hard to believe politics is about working together to make life better. It starts

to feel toxic instead of empowering.

A lot of young people also feel like politics does not represent us. Many of the faces we see in government do not look or sound like anyone we know. The language used is complicated, full of rules and terms that feel distant from the way we actually live.

Adults often tell us that politics is about experience and responsibility, but what we sometimes experience is being shut down or ignored. In my case, I am speaking about a minority of adults, but that small group can outweigh the total when their voices are the loudest.

When young people are

overlooked, it's easy for us to believe our opinions will not make a difference.

Even with all that frustration, I do not think this divide is impossible to bridge. What many of us need is not another lecture about paying attention, but a real invitation that makes us feel heard instead of dismissed.

Adults can help by talking with us, not at us. Ask what issues we care about. Explain how things work, not just whom to vote for. Encourage curiosity instead of shaming confusion. Help us see it is OK to ask questions, even about difficult topics.

Respect goes both ways.

We have to be willing to listen, but we also need adults to show they are willing to listen to us, too. Young people are paying attention, even if we do not always say it out loud. We see what is happening around us, and we think about it more than adults might realize. Sometimes we just need someone older to believe our thoughts and concerns are worth hearing.

When I first started learning about politics, social media told me this: “Adults start paying attention when young people care enough to be a part of the conversation.”

That works both ways. Young people will start

caring when adults start showing us our voices are worth hearing.

Politics is not just for adults. It is for everyone who will live with the results. The sooner all generations start listening to one another instead of talking past one another, the sooner we can begin building a future everyone can be proud of.

Luke Johnson is a high-school freshman. He attends at Tahlequah High School in Oklahoma, and writes for our sister newspaper, Tahlequah Daily Press. He plans to study political science, journalism and American history after graduation.

The real threat to local news is ‘news deserts’

Carl Gustin

Commentary

Local elections are over. Results for 2025 are mostly in. The 2026 elections are already heating up.

Nationally, the fire hose of daily political rhetoric continues to flood all forms of “news” delivery. It's a complex, confusing and anxiety-driven news environment for many people.

Fortunately, if you're reading this you probably don't live in one of the thousands of communities that have become “news deserts.” One way to keep your community from becoming a “news desert” is to support local newspapers.

You're probably interested in local government and may have followed coverage of candidates and issues in Tuesday's local elections.

If you're a parent of school-aged kids, you may follow local sports closely. If you're a shopper, you may look for supermarket bargains. If you're a business owner, or an employee, you may follow local economic news.

If you're concerned about local impacts of climate change and the environment your local newspaper is the place to turn. And if you

follow national news but want to limit subscriptions, you check your local newspaper's national news feeds. You may also appreciate professional news photos that engage readers and provide perspective.

If so, you're fortunate North of Boston Media Group, part of CNHI, is looking out for your interests. CNHI owns the North of Boston Media Group with its four daily newspapers — The Eagle-Tribune, Salem News, Gloucester Daily Times, and the Daily News of Newburyport — serving Boston's North Shore, Merrimack Valley and Southern New Hampshire, three weeklies, and multiple periodic full-color magazines.

CNHI is the nation's fifth-largest owner of daily newspapers and ninth overall including weeklies. Its focus is on “news and information that matters to you.” It does this through “meaningful stories from real people ... with impactful and responsible journalism.”

In the lead-up to Tuesday's elections, local newspapers published numerous letters endorsing candidates and opining on issues. Their journalists covered hosted events where candidates made their case to voters and often engaged in

lively, pointed give and take.

Many local papers continue to cover local impacts of the federal government shutdown, now more than month old. Nationally, 42 million people have lost funding for food stamps. The impacts are being played out for readers of local newspapers across the country.

More than 670,000 federal employees have been furloughed and some 730,000 are working without pay. Local newspapers are reaching out to some of those employees to share their stories with people in their communities, some of whom they likely know.

Unfortunately, many Americans no longer have access to local news from professional journalists. The latest report on the State of Local News from Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism finds that in the last 10 years “almost 40% of all local U.S. newspapers have vanished, leaving 50 million Americans with limited or no access to a reliable source of local news. This trend continues ...”

The newspaper industry has faced significant financial pressures for decades. The growth of social media attracted readers and advertisers and large newspaper groups consolidated. The largest was the November 2019 acquisition of Gannett by Gateway Media. Gateway took the Gannett name and is now the largest newspaper company in the country.

However, even Gannett was forced to downsize due to excessive debt. According to Axios, at year-end 2022 Gannett had cut its

workforce by some 50% following the 2019 merger.

Like most newspapers today, North of Boston and other CNHI newspapers have an online presence and remain focused on local news. However, delivering “news” still depends on professionally trained journalists who recognize news value and distinguish it from opinions in editorials, op-eds and letters to the editor.

One action people, businesses and organizations can take in communities fortunate to have local newspapers is to support them through subscriptions and advertising.

If local news matters to you — whether your interest is politics, sports, social well-being, climate change and the environment, the economy, or your community's heritage and its culture — there is no substitute for serious local news coverage.

The success of your community is closely tied to the health of local news outlets, many of which have been around for more than 100 years and remain just as relevant today.

Carl Gustin of Gloucester is an independent columnist and retired corporate and government communication executive and consultant.

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Goal scorers unite in Salem

Brazil, Portugal natives key scoring punch

By Jamie Pote

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SALEM, N.H. – Two years ago, things were difficult for Levi Leite. A freshman on the Salem High boys' soccer team who had moved to the United States from Brazil the year before, he barely spoke English, didn't have many friends and was part of a struggling program that won just three games.

In the fall of 2024, everything changed for him ... and for the entire Salem Blue Devils program.

He met two new teammates – Mateus Pinto and Kingston Freitas – whose families also originated from afar in Brazil and Portugal, and who speak the same Portuguese language.

From that moment on, Leite became comfortable in his new surroundings, while all three of them have become legitimate goal scorers, who not only have put Salem on the Granite State high school soccer map, but have formed a close friendship off the field as well.

"I wasn't sure I would like to come here, but I love it here," said Leite. "I thought I was going to come here and have no friends, but I have been able to make some friends like these two



CARL RUSSO/Staff photo

Salem High soccer players whose families moved to America from other countries are leading the way on and off the field for the Blue Devils. From left are, Kingston Freitas, whose parents are both from Portugal, Levi Leite, who moved from Brazil three years ago, and Mateus Pinto, whose mother is from Brazil and his father's family is from Portugal.

guys."

Pinto and Freitas had previously played club soccer, before deciding to join the Blue Devils. Since then, the program's numbers have more than doubled and so have the wins.

"For Levi to come here and find

Mateus and other Portuguese and Brazilian speaking kids have really helped him," said Salem head coach Ian Valcich. "To get these three kids together as friends and see how great they play together on the field, has been awesome to see."

Pinto, a senior, and Leite and Freitas juniors, form a triangle on the field with Freitas as the center-midfielder, who initiates a lot of the offense, and the other two are up top on the wings.

Last year the trio combined to score 22 goals with 14 assists and helped push the Blue Devils to the playoffs.

This year as of Oct. 10, they had combined to score 14 goals with 8 assists – including Leite recently netting a hat trick in the first half against Spaulding – while guiding Salem (5-3-2) to a five-game winning streak after a slow start. That number has only continued to grow.

"(Levi and Mateus) are amazing and are always there ready for the ball," said Freitas, who was an Eagle-Tribune All-Star last year after netting 14 goals. "I know if I give them the ball, they are going to do some type of move or get us forward. They are always there for the passes, so we can read each other's

minds."

"Levi is more of a finesse player," noted Freitas. "He likes to take guys on and likes to shoot a lot. Mateus takes the ball down the line and schools a couple kids."

Freitas' parents were born in Portugal. His father Lewis moved to the United States when he was young, before graduating from Lawrence High and later played on various Portuguese club soccer teams in the city.

"I beat him all the time," cracked Freitas.

That trait of beating other players on the fields is a daily occurrence for Freitas.

"Kingston can take anyone on and beat them," said Valcich. "He's a natural goal scorer. He's also tall, strong and physical. He's our muscle guy."

Pinto's mother is from São Paulo, Brazil. His father was born in the states, but Mateus' grandparents originated from Aveiro, Portugal.

"Obviously, Brazil is big into soccer and that's where I get my love for the game. I started playing when I like two or three years old," said Pinto. "My grandfather and all my uncles played in Brazil. I have heard lots of stories from them saying how players in Brazil are better than the

The only choices

With the 2026 FIFs World Cup coming to Mexico, Canada and the United States next summer, Mateus Pinto said it's very easy to know already which teams are the clear frontrunners.

"Either Brazil or Portugal is going to win it," he said. "I don't think any other country can win it. Portugal is the best team in Europe right now and Brazil is the best team in South America. I think it'll be one of those teams and I'm saying that unbiased." "If either of those teams win, I win," Pinto added, knowing that his mother's family is from Brazil and his father's family is from Portugal.

players here in the states."

Leite, Pinto and Freitas have created their own stories in the 1.5 years playing together.

"Their chemistry has been a big factor in the team's success," said Valcich. "They've brought a new energy and culture to Salem soccer, and their impact has been especially clear over the past two seasons compared to prior years."

"Our numbers have drastically improved over the years," continued the coach. "These three kids have recruited their friends and have made it a lot of fun. Having them has really elevated our game."

Hillies' Papanikolaou slays Concord with late gadget-play greatness

Hector Longo

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George Papanikolaou

Haverhill coach Rob Pike sent his Hillies "Googling" when he named a special play in his offensive arsenal.

"The play is called 'Tebow,'" said junior George Papanikolaou, the trigger man when Pike chose to unveil his "fake QB

dive/tight end pop pass late in the second half against Concord last month. "Of course, I know who Tim Tebow is. I

just had never run it before, but he put me in there, and I did it."

Heisman Trophy winner Tebow made the pass famous at the University of Florida (from 2006-09) before some of these Hillies were born, running into the line on a keeper then leaping up to hit the tight end on a quick pass.

His successful two-point pass was one of two huge gadget plays involving the receiver/safety Papanikolaou in the Haverhill victory.

Minutes later, midway through the fourth, the junior took a reverse toss and threw what proved to be the game-winning 36-yard TD pass to the same pass-catcher, Riley Faulkner.



DAN RYAN/Staff photo

All eyes were on Haverhill's Georgios Papanikolaou (1) when he came up with some huge plays in a win over Concord, N.H.

Talk about nuts. Papanikolaou has no throwing background to speak of. He's never played quarterback and

"It was a risky play, no way they expected it," said Papanikolaou. "My right tackle (Austin Palmisano) sealed the defensive end. Once I saw that and the defensive back come up to make the play, I knew it would be a touchdown. I knew Riley would be open somewhere. I just chucked it up."

It capped a rock-solid night for Papanikolaou, who is bursting onto the scene after missing his sophomore year with a fractured back.

He caught six passes for 79 yards, but probably stuck out more for his work on the defensive side in the second half when Haverhill, trailing 21-14 at the break, shut Concord down.

"He's just a great football player," said Pike. "He's fast, can catch the ball and does a great job of blocking in the run game."

Papanikolaou said the momentum was the key, beginning with another gutsy call from Pike, an onside kick to open the third quarter.

Leo Butcher Gonzalez squibbed the kick perfectly to the right sideline, where Jayden Berube scooped up the nice hop, almost in stride. "That really shifted the momentum," said Papanikolaou.

"We knew we could have played better. We came out at halftime, and made sure to do that."

» Artistry

Continued from Page 1

deepen their students' skills.

The five sessions, from 9 a.m. to 2:50 p.m., included 47 presentations.

They varied widely.

Holly Johnston presented on how to write a jingle, the Art of Writing a Catchy Tune.

Janna Silvia presented Puppet Palooza, on making puppets.

Vanessa Noesi showed her group how to create a digital character.

Zoe Kamil and Laurie Donlan presented on how to build a close-knit ensemble through storytelling.

Much of the learning was hands-on.

In the make-up room, Gutierrez, of her company Beauty by Holly, explained what she was doing as she moved in for finishing touches on Scolatico's wound.

"We're gonna put thick blood in the middle, and we're gonna add sutures," she said.

Middle school drama teachers at make-up stations around the room were creating their own wounds.

They said the training will come in handy for performances including "Beetle-juice" and "Thriller."

The Jean Appolon Expressions presentation, "Rhythm of Haiti: The Healing Power of Dance and Drumming," engaged in an hour-long conversation of drum beats and dance steps.

The rhythms livened up the room, concluding with a final "Bap" on the drumming bringing the conversation to a close.

The drummers, however, took the experience with them as they left the room as did the rest of the attendees at the other presentations at Artistry Unleashed.



BY TERRY DATE — TDATE@EAGLETRIBUNE.COM

Heather Langlois, supervisor of visual and performing arts at Lawrence High's Arts Academy, poses between the arms of a piece event organizers made to welcome keynote speaker Roberto Lugo to the Artistry Unleashed conference earlier this month.



COURTESY OF HEATHER LANGLOIS

Visual artists sharpened their skills at the Artistry Unleashed conference the Academy of Arts at Lawrence High School.



COURTESY OF HEATHER LANGLOIS

Make-up artist Holly Gutierrez of Methuen works on creating a scar at the Artistry Unleashed conference at Lawrence High School.



BY TERRY DATE — TDATE@EAGLETRIBUNE.COM

Jean Appolon Expressions brought Haitian rhythms and dance to teachers at an art conference during the event at the Academy of Arts at Lawrence High School.

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