

E.L. HAYNES

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E.L. Haynes Hosts Second Annual Wellness Day

On June 18, E.L. Haynes High School hummed with an energy not often felt in the last days before summer vacation. Thirty students and faculty laid on yoga mats while Shira Oz-Sinai of iRest Yoga Nidra guided them in a meditation: “There is nothing to do here and no way to do it wrong.” In a neighboring classroom, three students pulled apart a cooked chicken while seven more assembled apples, yogurt, and mustard for a Greek chicken salad. Nearby, students crowded around a display that compared two real lungs – a healthy pink lung and a smoker’s black lung.

Now in its second year, the E.L. Haynes High School Wellness Day convened 23 community service providers presenting 46 workshops ranging from Zumba and Capoeira to meditation and tips for grocery shopping on a budget. An exhibit hall featured 13 local community agencies engaging with participants and sharing resources. The community event was such a success, our Wellness Team hopes to expand this model to the elementary and middle schools next year.

For Oz-Sinai, who has led workshops for students and faculty at E.L. Haynes and Next Step Public Charter School for years, meditation practice enhances academic performance as it builds concentration, sharpens attention, and manages stress. “Many students arrive to class stressed or in pain,” she explains, continuing, “Meditation provides a safe place to meet those sensations, cope with distractions, and refocus attention on learning.”

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According to Tia Brumsted, Assistant Director of Student Wellness and founding social worker at E.L. Haynes High School, Wellness Day is about access and exposure to services that many of our students rarely experience, even though most of the participating agencies are within ten miles of campus. She asserts: “There is great power in seeing positive role models of healthy and happy living, especially within communities of color. And when students feel better and more confident, that carries over into their studies and their relationships.”

Eleventh grader Kamal was especially moved by the lung display. As a non-smoker, he knew about the health risks of smoking, but seeing the black lung was an eye-opening experience. “I know a lot of smokers and brought some of them over to the table,” he says. He reflects: “Now when I see one of my friends smoking, I’ll be sure to tell them about that black lung. A couple of my friends have already promised to quit. That’s what today was about for me.”

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E.L. Haynes Wins Prestigious Breakthrough Schools Award

This spring, a coalition of local and national philanthropists – including CityBridge Foundation, Next Generation Learning Challenges, The Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation, and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation – awarded E.L. Haynes a Breakthrough Schools Award. Six award winners, chosen from 23 applicants, will receive \$100,000 each to develop proposals this summer that encourage blended learning in Washington, DC, before applying for additional funds to help launch their programs in 2015.

CityBridge Foundation President Katherine Bradley says of the award: “Schools need to reach a very high bar for performance . . . We have high hopes that these Breakthrough Schools winners are creating plans and demonstrating capabilities that should get them there.”

E.L. Haynes will use the funds to redesign the high school from the ground up, making structural changes to the school calendar, teaching talent, and space for learning. This reimagining is critical to serving E.L. Haynes’ diverse student body, from students who perform above grade level to 50% of our new students who arrive more than two grade levels behind their peers. At both ends of the high school experience, E.L. Haynes will guarantee college readiness, regardless of incoming skills.



Upon entry, students who arrive at E.L. Haynes High School without foundational math and reading skills will enroll in a special academy to accelerate and build their skill set. Once they master these foundational skills, they will move through a rigorous academic program that utilizes both standards-based and blended learning instruction. Then, all 12th grade students will enroll in a college access academy to develop core academic, self-regulation, advocacy, and time management skills. A transparent, self-paced, mastery-based curriculum for all students, coupled with professional development for teachers, underpins the model.

High School Principal Caroline Hill believes this approach will level the playing field for students who have not had the preparation, personalized instruction, and mentoring that pave the way for success in school and life. “No matter where students are in their high school journey, we must have the expertise, passion, and grit to get them where they need to go,” she says.

Green Living from Garden to Table

"This is so yummy! May I have seconds?" asked a fourth-grade student, eager for a second serving of an unlikely snack: salad. But this wasn't any ordinary salad. Students handpicked the lettuce from E.L. Haynes' own gardens, washed and spun the leaves, chopped the vegetables, mixed the dressing, and tossed the greens. Then they devoured every bite. Several students asked for the recipe so they could make more at home.

This spring event marked the fruition of two grant programs designed to instill in students a passion for incorporating vegetables into their diets and their lives.

In 2011, E.L. Haynes received a seed grant from OSSE to develop a school garden program in partnership with City Blossoms, a local non-profit organization dedicated to kid-driven, community engaging, creative green spaces. Now in year three of the grant, educators have used funds to support supplies such as a composter, shed, tools, and plants. City Blossoms helps teachers integrate the gardens into the curriculum and provides hands-on workshops for students. Students travel to local farms to see the origins of their food before it hits their plate.



For second grade teacher Benjamin Byrd, gardening links strongly to the classroom: "Working the garden provides our students with invaluable contextualizing experiences as we learn about plants and gardening in our class science expedition. As students pass by the garden every day they observe plant growth and the literal fruits of their labor."

From garden to table, Chefs in Schools is a program supported by the Culinary Trust and local professional chef Kari Kramer. Over the past two years, Kramer and E.L. Haynes' Institutional Giving Manager Alex Alderman have collaborated to lead culinary workshops for students and families across both campuses. Whenever possible, recipes incorporate seasonal vegetables from E.L. Haynes' own gardens.

For Alderman, who also teaches cooking classes when not raising money for E.L. Haynes, this project is a natural fit. She reflects: "Food is a wonderful unifier. It is so inspiring to see kids of different ages and backgrounds working to create a meal together. Students' focus, intensity, and pride show through in their cooking." She adds: "And I've never seen fourth graders eat so much salad!"



Barrie Moorman Wins DC History Teacher of the Year Award

Congratulations to E.L. Haynes U.S. History Teacher Barrie Moorman for winning the Office of State Superintendent for Education's History Teacher of the Year Award. Additionally, Moorman is a finalist for the National History Teacher of the Year Award and the National Teaching Tolerance Teacher of the Year Award.

Founder and Head of School Jennie Niles lauds, "Barrie's work in furthering our students' understanding of race and equity, along with her work with faculty, have been profound."



U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan Visits E.L. Haynes

In May, E.L. Haynes was honored to host a special event which brought U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan to the school. Secretary Duncan provided an enlightening and engaging discussion on the state of education in the United States, interviewed by biographer and President of the Aspen Institute Walter Isaacson.



Thank You for Toasting with Us

E.L. Haynes' third annual Toast to Transformation event was a huge success, thanks to the support of so many individuals like you who share our commitment to DC's children.

On Wednesday, May 14, more than 300 guests celebrated E.L. Haynes while moving to the rhythms of our Latin Dance Club, enjoying the work of our student artists, and absorbing the moving words of Class of 2015 student speaker Elijah Walker. At the event, Founder and Head of School Jennie Niles honored S. Joseph Bruno, President of Building Hope, a nonprofit that has supported more than \$430 million in educational facilities projects across the country.

Thanks to our generous donors, the event raised nearly \$90,000 in support of E.L. Haynes' work. We are grateful to our event sponsors and host committee members as well as to each and every person who attended the event or made a donation in lieu of attending. We could not do this work without you, and we look forward to toasting transformation with you in 2015!

My Life, My E.L. Haynes

- ▶ **My name is** Myron Long.
- ▶ **This morning for breakfast** I had a vegan sausage sandwich and orange juice.
- ▶ **A perfect day is** when I am able to listen to good music; think about race, equity, and education; and hear thoughts from friends, family, colleagues, and students.
- ▶ **The book that inspires me the most is** The Autobiography of Malcolm X.
- ▶ **I dream of having lunch with** Frantz Fanon, Maya Angelou, Che Guevara, the Buddha, and Angela Davis.
- ▶ **My greatest impact will be** ensuring that all our middle school scholars have the will and skill needed to reshape the world by challenging injustice and promoting equity for all beings.



*Myron Long,
Principal of E.L. Haynes
Middle School*