



WORKING TOGETHER!

The 2011 project enabled the Fairfield Museum to team the two schools that had previously developed student exhibitions in an urban-suburban partnership that promoted cross-cultural understanding.



Head of the Unquowa School, Sharon Lauer on the right, listens to the students' ideas.



The students are introduced to each other through photography.



Jay Misencik discussing the photographs.



Charles Brilvitch, on the left. Photo by Jay Misencik.



After the Walking Tour, students met together at the New Beginnings school in Bridgeport.

I. THE CHALLENGE: Design and plan a proposal for the empty lots and abandoned buildings on Bridgeport's Main Street that would benefit the people of Bridgeport.

II. GETTING TO KNOW YOU: At the Fairfield Museum, the students were introduced to the project and to each other. They explored the question, *What is a Sustainable City?* and learned about Bridgeport's goals to develop sustainable and green initiatives.

III. LEARNING TO LOOK: Craig Norton taught the students how to use a camera, capture moments in time and place and artistically compose a shot. He shared tips and techniques about how to explore architecture through photography and to look for color, texture and pattern.

Jay Misencik and Geralene Valentine gave a tour of their photography exhibit *Inside Bridgeport's Theatres*. The artists discussed the challenges of documenting Bridgeport's Poli and Majestic Theatres, grand structures on Main Street that are now boarded-up.

III. PHOTOGRAPHY EXPEDITION: Bridgeport historian Charles Brilvitch led students on a walking tour along upper Main Street starting at the Poli and Majestic theatres. As they learned about Bridgeport's architectural and social history, the students, teachers and teaching artists took out their digital cameras and documented how Bridgeport looks today.

IV. TEAMWORK: In visits to each other's schools, the students developed their designs. Working independently and in teams, students wrote poetry and created collaborative proposals outlining their ideas. The Bridgeport students created colorful watercolors of their plans for these locations and Unquowa School students demonstrated how to render their designs in 3D using Google Sketchup.

IV. THE COMPLETED PROJECT: The students have given the City of Bridgeport an array of inspiring, ambitious proposals benefitting the well being and livelihood of people from all walks of life. Their efforts underscore the students' collective understanding of the importance of historic preservation and neighborhood revitalization as well as linking the heritage of the past with the community needs of the present.



New Beginnings Family Academy

