

MLK Recreation Center Updates

By Meka Perez



Enrichment Camp 2014 Trips

This year, Martin Luther King Recreation Center embarked on a summer full of non-conventional camp field trips. The most awaited trip was the “[Ride the Ducks African-American Tour](#).” On July 18, student scholars were reintroduced to their city with newly gained knowledge about various historical places in Philadelphia and our ties to the African-American community. The students enjoyed hearing stories of bankers, architects and inventors. The day culminated with a sit-down lunch at the Hard Rock Café in Center City.

The scholars of M.L.K. also had the chance to enjoy the Delaware River in a brand new way by **Kayaking with Terri Kerwawich**. The students were exposed to kayaking and large-scale swans used to paddle around the area in the water. Through this encounter with the river, they saw how close New Jersey really is. The children also spent time in the [Independence Seaport Museum](#), where they gained knowledge of ships, and enjoyed lunch at [Spruce Street Harbor Park](#). At the park, the scholars sat in the hammocks and enjoyed the large-scale board games while running to various fountains, getting their feet wet. With a trip-ending photo at the Big Red Chair, the students found a new love for their city and all of its new attractions.

City-wide PYN Project Awarded to MLK’s Summer 2014 Group

This summer, the M.L. King Center hosted over 20 [Philadelphia Youth Network](#) (PYN) workers, who were split between its basketball and enrichment camps. It is the City’s expectation that each PYN group produce a project at the end of the summer. MLK’s PYN corps organized its group rather quickly, tackling the requirements and forming its own essential ideas. Soon, the project turned into a real life experiment: The youth developed a smartphone application that would allow youth and others to know about what was going on at their local recreation centers. The youth felt this idea spoke to the generational gap at most recreation centers in the city. MLK’s PYN group walked away with first place and the pride of knowing their hard work and dedication paid off. We are very proud of our PYN’s and their contribution to our center this summer. Many will be returning this fall on a volunteer basis to tutor MLK students in our afterschool program.



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Performing Arts Room

In May of 2014, Sharon Battle of the [Children of the Arts Foundation](#) (COTA) approached us about using our facilities at MLK Rec Center for the new school year. With all of our successes this year at MLK, we realized there was a need to add a performing arts component that would speak to both our children's and community's needs. COTA seemed to be a perfect fit. Since January of 2010, COTA has been offering theatre, chorus, acting and mentoring classes. These now have been made available to our MLK community.

In addition to this program, COTA donated over \$2,000 to help complete a new Performing Arts Room at the recreation center. Please feel free to stop by and see this glorious room in person for yourself, and if you know of a student in the area interested in the arts, send them our way!

Performing Arts Room Sponsor: COTA/Ms. Sharon Battle

Vision & Design: Meka Perez

Muralists: Leroy Musa & Dominique Williams

[View more pictures of the MLK Rec Center Performing Arts Room](#)



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