

# New Children's Book Showcases the Arts of Dayton



Dayton has sparked the careers of some of the most celebrated artists in U.S. history. More importantly, the city continues to support the arts as a way for children to learn the skills necessary for them to enjoy a bright future. Since 2001, Children's Historical Publishing (CHPS) has fulfilled their mission of enriching the lives of children through the arts by publishing fifteen learning-activity books. The latest publication, *The Amazing Arts of Dayton*, spotlights the arts to the youth of the Miami Valley.

"For decades, Dayton has raised some of the brightest stars in every field of the arts," says Joyce Reid Kasprzak, Executive Director of CHPS. "From jazz great Billy Strayhorn to world-renowned author Paul Laurence Dunbar to legendary actor Martin Sheen, the city has cultivated a community that values art and the artist."

Kasprzak points out that the true value of the arts for children lies in their ability to inspire integrity and creative thinking. "The arts involve deep emotional and mental reflection as well as investigation, which are essential abilities children need to advance their capacity to learn." CHPS' new learning-activity book serves both purposes by developing children's reading ability while nurturing self-expression.

*The Amazing Arts of Dayton* tells the story of two children, Halie and Shawm, who recently moved to Dayton. Their neighbors, Mr. and Mrs. Tolson, welcome the kids by taking them on a fun adventure to discover the amazing arts of Dayton. Along the journey, the children come to realize their artistic dreams in the

Gem City. Jean Crowley, a former teacher who returned to her hometown of Dayton after living in the Northeast for several years, conceived the story.

Former State Senator Tom Roberts suggested to Kasprzak that she collaborate with Dayton native and Broadway virtuoso, Bruce Anthony Davis, who spent years performing on Broadway and around the world. Davis was happy to provide the introduction to the book.

*The Amazing Arts* explores Dayton's art attractions and performing arts venues while revealing the outstanding resources they provide for children. The Muse Machine has created accompanying Teacher Guides for the books to enhance classroom skill development and help kids integrate academic knowledge with their imagination.

**"The book works as a tool to improve the literacy and academic performance of children, plus help them develop positive self-esteem and good character."**

*-Joyce Reid Kasprzak*

Funding from the Iddings Foundation, and Montgomery County Arts and Cultural District will help provide 7,000 books to public school systems in the Miami Valley. To date, Children's Historical Publishing has donated over 350,000 books to the children of the Miami Valley.

To order *The Amazing Arts of Dayton*, call Culture Works at (937) 222-2787. Culture Works will receive partial proceeds from books purchased directly through the organization. Discounts are also available for youth groups and schools.