Community Heroes
Primary Content Area: Art, Language Arts and Theater

Introduction
Students will write, perform and produce local stories of heroism and success brought to the community through a multi media live performance. The mission is to use media technology and multiple art forms to celebrate the best of humanity to empower people of all ages to realize their own potential to effect positive change in the world.

Project Goals
- Students will be able to arrive at a thoughtful understanding of the word hero.
- Students will be able to identify heroes in their community and families.
- Students will be exposed theatrical performances of oral histories.
- Students will develop communication skills by interviewing and writing about an unsung community hero.
- Students will be able to document and perform the life of their chosen hero in the form of a monologue or other artistic representation.
- Students will reflect on their experiences.

Procedure/Project Sequence
1. Students will define what it means to be a hero through
   - Describe the characteristics of a hero through a Socratic seminar.
   - Recognize the hero in a story.
   - Name heroes in their lives and express why those people are heroes to them.
   - Use a computer to access the Internet, find and read stories on the MY HERO (http://myhero.com/go/home.asp) website.
   - Distinguish between a hero and a celebrity.

2. Students will identify heroes in their community and family. (My hero categories include angels, animals, artists, business people, children, community activists, earth keepers, explorers, leaders of faith, lifesavers, parents, peacemakers, poets, scientists, athletes, teachers, and writers. Whatever the category, students are looking for people they feel have made positive contributions to humanity.)
   - Teacher will set up guest visits from activists and other community workers/partners.
   - Students create questions for community workers based on the class definition of heroism.
   - Students will write a paragraph about family members who are heroes and why.
   - Students will determine which hero they would like to focus on for their project and invite that hero (if alive) or representative for a Luncheon/Interview which will be documented through video recording.
   - Students will write a monologue based on their heroes story.
   - Students create a work of art in honor of their hero.
   - Create a MyHero Gallery
   - Students evaluate peer writing and determine which monologues will be used for a performance.
   - Students will invite community heroes to return to the school for final presentations.
   - Student reflection and self critique.
Community Partners
The following list can help get your class started on the kinds of groups where heroes are developed.

Between Friends
www.betweenfriendschicago.org 773.274-5232
Imagine Englewood If...
www.imagineenglewoodif.org 773.488-6704
Chicago Abused Women's Coalition
www.cawc.org 773.278-4110
Cease Fire
www.ceasefirechicago.org 312.996-8775
Blocks Together
Ana Mercado
www.btchicago.org 773.278-2184
West Side Health Authority
www.healthauthority.org 773.378-1878

Resources
- www.Myhero.com
- http://www2.facinghistory.org/campus/BeTheChange.nsf/home?openform
- The Black List – movie/documentary
- www.peacejam.org

Addendum
Standards
CCSS W.9-10.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
CCSS W.9-10.5 Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.

Duration
This project can be completed in as little as 3 class periods (3 hours) or can be extended to include a large research paper or presentation (5-10 hours).

Preparation: Create a definition for heroes and locate them within the community (2-4 hours)
Action: Interview community heroes and share their triumphs with the community through performance and art (8-10 hours)
Reflection: Student evaluation and essay response to the question: What is a hero? (1-2 hours)

Cross-Curricular Connections
This project has many connections with English (Greek Mythology), History, Art, Theater

Assessment
Reflection essay and hero stories write up.