

A letter from Anne Ostholthoff **Founder/Executive Director Creating Pride, Inc.**

Dear friends of Mythic Journeys,

I am writing to express my joy at being introduced recently to Michael Karlin and several others at the Mythic Imagination Institute and to share our plans for collaboration in the area of teacher development. We have great respect for the goals of Mythic Imagination as they seek to connect people to their original and personal life stories, reflecting on what has brought us thus far – and in doing so, to help us to realize that many of our stories are similar, many of our paths overlap and that our journeys on this earth are not to be in opposition to each other, but instead pursued with a spirit of deep respect for the sanctity of life itself. This sense of empathy is critical to successful work in any field – but particularly in the area of education.

Our non-profit organization, Creating Pride, Inc. (www.creatingpride.org) was founded to meet a specific set of needs in our communities, with a mission to ignite the creativity of others through artmaking. We focus our efforts primarily in school communities inspiring teachers to create engaging work for students so our children succeed socially and academically.

We focus on developing leaders from among teachers. Our work relies on a series of workshops with Art Specialists and school volunteers who then return to use the arts as a vehicle for change throughout their school community. After twelve years of working with teachers, we know that when we succeed in motivating one of them to think like a leader, it is a result of connecting to their heart

and soul in some very real way. Whether through collage, painting exercises, story telling, experience with water, or a dragon fly dance – somehow we have finally rekindled their own heart’s passion to teach, which translates to better learning for our children. These are the teachers who rally their entire school community to teach more creatively in the classroom using arts integrated teaching strategies to accomplish the real academic rigor of Georgia Learning Performance Standards.

This is where our work with Mythic Imagination (MI) will overlap as MI’s teachers will soon begin collaborating with our teacher resource team to infuse new storytelling and personal history writing activities and artistic exercises into our workshops. As we begin to work together in this way, we are anticipating additional overlapping areas of expertise and creativity that would build into more education “products” ultimately connecting teachers with their own creativity.

As a former advertising executive, I know first hand the powerful role the arts can play in rekindling passion in a life. While we each have a different story of our connection to this passion, my personal story is one where God used the act of painting to re-connect me with Jesus Christ. It was His tender voice I heard one cold evening in Albuquerque, NM to which I responded, and that glorious song in my heart that remains the driving force behind my leadership of all that we do in the communities we serve.

We look forward to this journey and are so very glad to be walking through life with this very creative and ingenious group of people who are determined to help us all find a new narrative of hope. Join us in making the arts a priority in children’s lives, by making the arts a very real part of your own original life story!

All the best,

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