

Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Jason Patera

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library
Alternatives in Education Oral History project

Interview # EA-A-L-2018-011

Jason Patera, Executive Director of the Chicago Academy for the Arts, was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's *Education is Key – Alternatives in Education* Oral History project.

Interview dates & location:

Date: Feb 22, 2018 Location: Chicago Academy for the Arts, Chicago, Illinois

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Philip Pogue, ALPL volunteer

Transcription by: _____

Edited by: _____

Total Pages: _____ Total Time: 1:26 / 1.43 hrs.

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on May 29, 2018.

The interview is archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield, Illinois.

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Interview being
processed

Abstract

Jason Patera, *Alternatives in Education*, EA-A-L-2018-011

Biographical Information/Overview of Interview: Jason Patera was born in 1976 in Stickney, Illinois and grew up there. Jason graduated from Morton West High School in Berwyn, Illinois in 1993. He became interested in the Chicago Academy for the Arts when doing an internship there while in high school. Jason graduated with a jazz piano degree from Berkeley School of Music, in Boston, Massachusetts. He returned to the Chicago Academy for the Arts in 1998 as a teacher of percussion, music theory, jazz history, and business. After six years of teaching, Jason would become the School's Executive Director.

This interview reviews the history of Chicago Academy for the Arts dating back to its creation by a group of Chicago arts enthusiasts in 1981. The Academy enrolls around 150 students, grades 9-12, who hail from all areas of northern Illinois as well as from Wisconsin and Indiana. Several international students have attended the school as well. Patera discusses the school's curriculum (academics, performing arts, and performances), its philosophy, student tuition, scholarships and building design. He discusses the challenges of being an independent school located in a city that has provided wonderful opportunities for professional growth. Other topics explored include the role of alumni, the Board of Trustees, his duties as the executive director, and the performing arts department's organization (dance, media, filmmaking, animation, creative writing, music, musical theatre, theatre, and visual).

Subject Headings/Key Words: Chicago Academy of the Arts; Chicago Academy of the Arts building; challenges for independent schools in major metropolitan cities; history of the Chicago Academy of the Arts; career opportunities for graduates

Notes to the Reader: Readers of the oral history memoir should bear in mind that this is a transcript of the spoken word, and that the interviewer, interviewee and editor sought to preserve the informal, conversational style that is inherent in such historical sources. The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library is not responsible for the factual accuracy of the memoir, nor for the views expressed therein. We leave these for the reader to judge.

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