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## A foundation in the arts that builds on success

A familial atmosphere, a legacy of dedicated employees, and a focus on students has led to ongoing success for the Avenue Road Arts School, and an appreciative multi-generational student base has led to a gold-level recognition in the Readers' Choice awards in the Arts School/Instruction category.



One of the things that's so appealing about arts education is that it gives students a variety of skills they can apply to any profession -- not just to careers in the arts.

"What more people need to understand is that training in the arts is helpful in equipping young people with the very qualities that they will need for the workplace of the future," explained Lola Rasminsky, the school's founder. "The key competencies they will need are adaptability, problem-solving skills, the ability to think with imagination, and the capacity to collaborate. These are all qualities of mind which children and adults develop when they study one of the arts in depth at the Avenue Road Arts School.

"What I see us doing is helping to put kids on a road to success, whatever path they choose in life."

"Making an arts school into a viable business is certainly a difficult task and we have sustained the test of time, being around for over 25 years," explained Liana Del Mastro, Director of the Avenue Road Arts School.

"I feel that we must be doing something right. We are now seeing second-generation students coming to classes; we even see grandparents taking classes along with their grandchildren."

The school offers classes in a Victorian mansion -- a decidedly non-institutional environment for the studies. That's an extension of the school's origins, which began in Rasminsky's basement in Forest Hill. She consciously chose to recreate that homey atmosphere, focusing on small, intimately sized classes that allow students to get individualized attention from the instructors -- all of whom are professional artists.

"Many of our faculty members have been with us since day one -- we don't see a high turnover rate within our faculty and, as such, there is a real sense of family and belonging, to what is already a magical environment," Del Mastro added.

