



**PRESS RELEASE**    <http://www.americanmusicpioneers.com>

Contact: Larry Jaffee, [lsjaffee@gmail.com](mailto:lsjaffee@gmail.com) 917-291-2488  
Glenn Bucalo, [glenn@tmdesign.net](mailto:glenn@tmdesign.net) 516-383-3269

**Jazz Students at the Frank Sinatra School in Astoria, NY, Mesmerized by Card Pack  
1<sup>st</sup> School in Tony Bennett's 'Exploring The Arts' to Adopt American Music Pioneers**

Astoria, NY – About 20 high school students in the Jazz Studies class the Frank Sinatra School here this past June studied closely the 35 jazz greats depicted on Mars-Beat's educational pack of cards.

The class marked the first usage of the jazz cards in an academic setting, and were made possible through the auspices of Tony Bennett's Exploring the Arts foundation, designed to enrich the arts in public schools.

Bill Stevens, the Sinatra School's Assistant Principal – Administration, Supervisor of Performing, Arts, Fine Art and Film, and Director of Jazz Studies, included the cards as part of his curriculum focused on history and listening.

"I can see how teachers may use the cards can spark an interest in jazz with students in a classroom setting," says Stevens, an educator and musician himself.

Stevens gave the students an in-class assignment to come up with 5 other musicians who play their instruments they believe should be included in the next series of cards. After the class was over, students were seen in the halls still buzzing and talking about the cards.

**About American Music Pioneers**

American Music Pioneers (AMP) is the brainchild of brothers Glenn and Ron Bucalo, principals of Mars-Beat Studios, the publisher of the hand-illustrated cards. Ron, who drew the cards while Glenn designed them, said he came up with the idea for the project partly because he "wanted to carry a Thelonius Monk card in my wallet." *Volume 1: Jazz* portrays 35 outstanding musical legends that have shaped and continue to inspire America's rich jazz tradition: from Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington, and Billie Holiday to Miles Davis and Wynton Marsalis. The second volume, coming soon, will focus on blues. More information about AMP is at <http://www.americanmusicpioneers.com>

**About the Frank Sinatra School of the Arts**

The Frank Sinatra School of the Arts in Astoria, NY, provides the opportunity for all students to achieve their fullest academic and artistic potential. This is accomplished through a rigorous educational program, which includes a challenging academic program, pre-conservatory studio work, experiences with cultural institutions, and intensive participation in community

service. The school was founded by Tony Bennett and his wife Susan Benedetto to honor Tony's late friend and colleague, Frank Sinatra. At Mr. Bennett's encouragement, students are offered the opportunity to gain real world experience in the arts through internships and apprenticeships.

### **About Exploring The Arts**

Exploring The Arts (ETA) was founded in 1999 by American singer Tony Bennett and his wife Susan Benedetto, a former public school teacher. The mission of Exploring the Arts is to transform the lives of young people through arts education. ETA works collaboratively with public high schools throughout New York City and Los Angeles to help them build high-quality, school-day arts programs and to provide additional, out-of-school arts opportunities for their students. At the heart of ETA's work is a vision to provide more equitable access and opportunity in the arts to underserved youth.

