



LEF Grant Brings Young Author to Lexington



PHOTOS LEFT TO RIGHT: Author Yaa Gyasi with Samantha St. Lawrence, LHS English teacher and LEF grant recipient. Volunteers Joey Cacciatore, Nick Orf, and Ricky Munjaya pose on stage before the event. Yaa Gyasi stands before the LHS case containing artwork created by the students for the event. Addie Metzger and Hamish Swanson man the reception table.



Yaa Gyasi's visit to Lexington was envisioned by the sophomore English department teachers at LHS. The teachers applied to LEF and received a grant to create a shared curriculum unit focusing on a non-Western modern work of fiction, in order to introduce students to contemporary voices and concerns and better represent LHS students' diverse backgrounds. To enrich the experience, the department also asked for funding to support an interactive discussion with Yaa Gyasi, author of *Homegoing*.

Her book, *Homegoing* follows the paths

of two half-sisters and their descendants through eight generations—from the Gold Coast to the plantations of Mississippi, from the American Civil War to Jazz Age Harlem. Yaa Gyasi's debut novel explores the legacy of slavery both for those who were taken and those who stayed—and shows how the memory of captivity has been inscribed on the soul of our nation.

Young author Yaa Gyasi was born in Ghana and raised in Huntsville, Alabama. She holds a BA in English from Stanford University and an MFA from the Iowa Writers' Workshop, where she held a Dean's Graduate Research Fellowship. She lives in New York City.

An interactive panel was organized at LHS and all sophomores attended during the day after having studied *Homegoing*. A selection of student representatives asked the author questions in an informal Q and A session.

English teacher Karen Russell says, "Students' written responses to the event reflect how meaningful it was to read a text that addresses the most difficult parts of our history through the power of great storytelling... Being able to connect with this young author of 27 was an opportunity students felt grateful to have experienced. Yaa Gyasi's responses deepened the nature of class discussions and reinforced

students' enthusiasm for and analytical observations of the text."

In the evening over 400 attended from Lexington and surrounding communities in an event co-sponsored by Lexington Community Education introduced by LCE head Craig Hall. Samantha St. Lawrence, LHS English teacher and LEF grant recipient, conducted a wide-ranging interview about the author's work and its place in the classroom. Questions from the audience ranged from inquiring about the writing process to the importance of documenting the effects of the African diaspora.

NEW SEASON, NEW MENUS, FABULOUS CUISINE



BREAKFAST - LUNCH - DINNER - BRUNCH

Back by popular demand, we are offering a la carte breakfast and brunch menus.

Breakfast: Monday-Friday & Sunday 7:00am-10:30am;
Saturday 7:00am-11:00am;

Brunch: Sunday 11:00am-2:00pm

Reservations are recommended, but walk-ins are always welcomed.

ARTISTRY
ON THE GREEN
at THE INN AT HASTINGS PARK

Afternoon Tea at The Inn

Saturdays, 1:00pm - 3:00pm

We are happy to offer the delightful tradition of Afternoon Tea. Come enjoy traditional tea sandwiches as well as savory and sweet treats, the perfect alternative to lunch.

Make a date to indulge with family and friends.

Saturdays 1:00pm - 3:00pm

\$35.00 per person; \$45.00 with Champagne

Call to make reservations 781-301-6655

2027 Massachusetts Ave. Lexington, MA 02421 Rooms: (781) 301-6660
Artistry on the Green: (781) 301-6655 www.innathastingspark.com