



# Eiko Fan Takahira

*Art and Creativity Teacher, HMS School for Children with Cerebral Palsy, Phila., PA*

Eiko Fan Takahira teaches art to students who traditionally would not have access to this subject. Some are blind, deaf, nonverbal, or have no use of any limb.

But those things don't matter to Ms. Eiko; she finds a way to help them participate, whether



by using a fingernail, a toe, a head movement, or even an eye gaze. Ms. Eiko attributes this approach to her background in multiple arts, including sculpture, performance, music, dance and film. *“I see no border between arts,”* she tells parents. *“I use all the arts to enhance a student’s art making.”*

Ms. Eiko was nominated for this award by the mother of one of her students. The mother explained how Ms. Eiko not only helped her 18-year-old son achieve accomplishments beyond their expectations, but also involved their family in his learning as no other educator had done before.

In addition to her classroom work, Ms. Eiko also created a video about her teaching methods to make the public aware of each person’s unique abilities. *“Art empowers everyone equally!”* she says, and then she makes it happen!