

Stephen Apkon

Westchester Undergraduate Ceremony: Friday, May 11, 2012, 11:00 a.m.

Stephen Apkon, Founder and Executive Director of the Jacob Burns Film Center

Doctor of Doctor of Humane Letters



Stephen Apkon is the Founder and Executive Director of the Jacob Burns Film Center. Mr. Apkon has brought vision, direction, and leadership to this burgeoning arts organization whose mission is to bring a diversity of film and educational programs to Westchester County and its surrounding communities. To further support research and innovation in education, JBFC opened a state of the art 27,000 square foot Media Arts Lab facility in Pleasantville, NY, in August 2008.

Mr. Apkon is a social entrepreneur who has combined his passion and knowledge of film and contemporary media to re-imagine K-12 education, incorporating 21st Century digital literacy into curriculum reform. Since its doors opened in 2001, JBFC education programs, combining NYS Learning Standards with 21st Century digital literacy skills and competencies, have reached more than 85,000 children, of which more than fifty percent attend schools in underserved schools within Westchester County.

Mr. Apkon frequently speaks to a wide variety of groups about his perspective on education. He has been a participant in the 21st Century Literacy Summit, a presenter at the UNESCO World Conference on Arts Education in Lisbon, Portugal, and most recently a keynote presenter at the Sundance Art House Convergence Conference.

In addition to his position as Founder and Executive Director of the Jacob Burns Film Center, Mr. Apkon serves on the board of the World Cinema Foundation, Advancing Human Rights, and is a member of the Sundance Art House Convergence Leadership Team and the Creative Coalition Entertainment Industry's Blue Ribbon Task Force on Education. He is an Advisory Board member of Teatown Lake Reservation and World Hunger Year. Mr. Apkon is also the author of the upcoming book *The Age of the Image: A Call to Redefine Literacy in a Visually Driven World* to be published by Farrar, Strauss & Giroux in 2012.

From 1992 to 1999, he was a General Partner in Crossroads Partners, LLC, a private merchant banking partnership based in Westchester. From 1988 to 1992, he was a Principal at Odyssey Partners, LP, a private Manhattan-based investment partnership primarily involved in management buyouts in industries as diverse as technology and retailing. From 1986 to 1988, he was an Associate in Merger and Acquisitions Department of Goldman Sachs & Co. in Manhattan. In 1998, he formed the Friends of the Rome Theater, now known as the Jacob Burns Film Center.

Stephen Apkon is a graduate of Georgetown University and Harvard Business School. He resides in Pleasantville, New York with his wife and three children.

