

STEPPING Stones

October 2011

MARYLAND ASSOCIATION OF NONPUBLIC SPECIAL EDUCATION FACILITIES

Upcoming Events

2011 CONFERENCE

Friday, November 4, 2011

Baltimore Convention Center

Keynote Speaker:

Byron Pitts of CBS News
and 60 Minutes

Registration on the MANSEF website

www.mansef.org

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School Birthdays

Harbour School: **30 Years**

Ivymount: **50 Years**

St. Elizabeth School: **50 Years**



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THE FORBUSH PRESCHOOL

The Forbush Therapeutic Preschool at Towson provides full day special education services to students aged three to eight with autism, pervasive developmental disorders, developmental delays, severe behavioral and emotional disorders, multiple learning problems, and other related disorders. A unique component of the program is its ability to tailor instruction to young children and focus on developing core skills to further their long-term learning. The program is a good fit for students that require a highly structured environment. Communication programming and training is integrated throughout the day and students are taught to communicate using a multi-modal approach.

Goals for students include the use of spontaneous functional language and the use of other alternative modes of communication, including sign language and picture exchange. Learning is structured to meet a wide variety of needs; students work in groups and 1:1 settings to achieve success. The primary focus is on early intervention using Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) in conjunction with a variety of other techniques, such as differen-



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THE FORBUSH SCHOOL AT HUNT VALLEY

The Forbush School at Hunt Valley, a program of the Sheppard Pratt Health System, Inc. (SPHS), serves students aged 5 - 21 with autism and severe behavior challenges. Each student has an individualized schedule that outlines his or her instructional day. Instructional areas may include communication skills, self-care, individualized academics, fine and gross motor skills, socialization skills, and recreation/leisure skills. The school implements the Maryland State Curriculum and the Syracuse Community Reference-Curriculum Guide for Students with Moderate and Severe Disabilities.

Our primary goal is to integrate students into less restrictive school and community settings, to the greatest extent possible, where they can access more social and academic opportunities. In school, students are taught in small group or individual settings. In order to provide appropriate social skills training, our students participate in a variety of community activities. These activities include typical community trips such as shopping, dining, going to the zoo, etc. Additionally, we have

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"Let us think of education as the means of developing our greatest abilities, because in each of us there is a private hope and dream which, fulfilled, can be translated into benefit for everyone and greater strength of the nation."

-John F. Kennedy

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



MANSEF continues to strive to inspire dreams and change lives of Maryland's neediest special education students. With the combined efforts of our member schools, community supporters, and students' families, the hopes and dreams of children across the state become fulfilled. It takes the commitment of many to create the benefits for everyone and to strengthen our communities.

Regardless of your relationship to MANSEF, you have the potential for playing a valuable role in sustaining our efforts and in generating the support of others. Share your stories to help educate others about the value of making a difference in the lives of students with disabilities.

Tell other parents how your child was able to finally learn how to read, to make a friend or to graduate from high school by attending a nonpublic school.

Tell your neighbors and acquaintances about nonpublic schools and how they help to provide individualized educational opportunities for students with physical, emotional, learning and developmental disabilities.

Tell your friends about how valuable your work is in educating students with disabilities who could not be appropriately served in the public schools.

Tell your legislators about the existence and value of MANSEF, the detrimental impact of freezing tuition rates for nonpublic schools and the importance of supporting our efforts to work in tandem with the public schools to provide an essential continuum of educational services.

If each person reading this takes the time to tell the stories of our success to just a few other people, we can develop a greater understanding of our valuable role in special education in Maryland and of how critical it is to support nonpublic special education schools through state funding.

On behalf of the MANSEF Board of Directors, I thank you in advance for joining us in supporting our efforts to develop our students' greatest abilities, to benefit everyone and to strengthen our communities.

Tania DuBeau

Tania DuBeau
President MANSEF

MANSEF CELEBRATES STUDENT SUCCESS

Chelsea School

Big things are happening at the Chelsea School this year! Under the direction of our new interim Head of School, Kate Fedalen, we're celebrating our 34th year of serving students with language-based learning differences! Some of the new programs that we've started this year include: a faculty-run Tech-Mobile that travels to our family's houses to set up assistive technology, an Advisory Bootcamp to help students understand and advocate for their learning styles, after-school PSAT, SAT, and HSA preparation classes, lots of new clubs, and a new chapter of the National Honor Society. Also, check out our revamped website at

www.chelseaschool.edu

St. Elizabeth

Alek Vinson Learns to Fly

Alek was pretty nervous. He was ready to start his first game as a player on the St. Elizabeth School basketball team. A year ago in his old school, his teachers would never have dreamed of him playing on the team.... but now, his teachers and coaches were cheering him on, pushing him to try harder. He could see his coaches and his family on the sideline, cheering at him. He knew he could do it, because they believed he could.

Alek started at St. Elizabeth School in August of 2009. Since being at St. Elizabeth School (SES), Alek has decided to pursue a High School diploma, and is currently studying for his HSA's (he's already had some success!). Alek's mom, Claudette, beams when speaking of the difference she's seen in her son since coming to SES, especially in his confidence level, both in academics and athletics. Alek recently participated in the SES 2011 Golf Tournament, and is an avid athlete who regularly competes in Special Olympic events. Alek's artwork was recently published on the cover of the MANSEF 2011 Conference Registration Brochure. Alek's family is incredibly proud of his accomplishments, and believes that SES "finds the personality and skill strengths and finds a place for every student," which they believe has helped Alek to "fly" as a high school student.

"SES...finds a place for every student."



Arrow Center

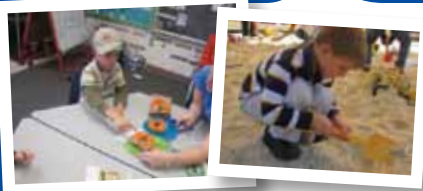
The Arrow Center for Education Fair Meadows Campus (ACE) is thrilled to announce that on August 10th, 2011, we celebrated the ground-breaking ceremony for our new greenhouse! The greenhouse came into fruition through the support of Harford United Charities and the Dresher Foundation. David Craig, Harford County Executive, attended the ceremony, as well as representatives from HCPS and other agencies. We are looking forward to further enriching our vocational programming with this wonderful new addition!

Chelsea

Da'Ron has been at the Chelsea School since 2009. He is known for his great sense of humor and stands out for being hard working, respectful, truthful, and mature. Da'Ron has also shown strong advocating and leadership skills, and is a role model for doing his work. He also coaches little league football, and has volunteered for after school service opportunities. "Da'Ron has an appreciation for the need to get an education that many teenagers do not have. He can admit to having made mistakes in the past but should be proud for a complete turn-around here at Chelsea," stated his English teacher.



SCHOOL News



Diener School

A Delightful Start for Our Early Kindergarten and Kindergarten Classes at Diener!

Students in our early k and k classes had a ball during **D** week! Throughout the week, we made many sensory **D** activities including making a **D** out of **d**iamonds, **d**ecorated a **d** with **d**ots, and wrote our letter **D** in sand. For our **D** week of language arts we wrote a **Dd** book and colored a **d**uck, **d**og and **d**inosaur. Our students looked under **d**ucks **d**ressed like **d**ogs for different letters that we are practicing. We culminated our week with a **Dd** party! For morning work, each child wrote and drew a **Dd** word to add to our word wall. Their words included "**d**owntown," "**d**rum," "**d**inosaur" and "**d**og." During the party, we had a special snack where we made **Dd** out of **D**onuts and read a book about **D**etective **D**og. We also made **d**og puppets. During speech we read about a **d**og named Clifford and discussed expected and unexpected behaviors. We went on a **d**inosaur **d**ig in science. In music we sang many songs including **d**ays of the week! Overall, it was a very busy and **Dd** filled day and week!

Forbush School

On Tuesday, September 20, 2011, The Forbush Therapeutic Preschool at Towson officially opened its brand new playground for students with a ribbon cutting ceremony. Preschool staff members were honored to have many people who contributed to the development of the playground in attendance; parents, friends of the preschool, a local school representative, and members of the Sheppard Pratt Health System philanthropy department. They watched as students climbed, ran, swung, and teeter-tottered. The playground was made possible by many donors, especially the family of Roman H. Roman's mother held a fashion show fundraiser, with all proceeds going directly to the preschool playground fund. When it came time to help the principal Diann Butler cut the ribbon, **Kaiheem D.**, who has been the longest attending student since he was 3 years old, cut the ribbon. As he cut through the bright red ribbon so his friends could pour through the gate, Kaiheem paused to flex his muscles for the photographer before chasing after his classmates to join the fun.



Forbush School @ Glyndon

Our school was recognized as a **Model MD Green School** last spring 2011 by the Maryland Association for Environmental & Outdoor Education (MAEOE). The Forbush School has been a "Green School" since the inception of the program in 1999. We strive to teach and employ best management practices in all that we do on our campus. Our Green School committee is growing with various community partners and together we are improving current green initiatives and developing new ones. To learn more about the Green School program, visit maeoe.org or contact John Sandkuhler at 410.517.5456.



The Foundation School

Shanazia is currently an 8th grade student at The Foundation School. Staff describes her as kind, caring, and helpful. During her time here she has worked hard on anger management and conflict resolution. Her ability to utilize staff supports when needed has helped her improve her relationships with others and make academic strides in the classroom. Most recently, Shanazia volunteered to be a part of The Foundation Schools Student Ambassador Program.

Formerly focused on new student admissions, The Foundation School's Student Ambassador's Program has been redesigned to celebrate students such as Shanazia. Students now meet with adult guests and share their experience at The Foundation School. Shanazia has willingly shared her story, her insights and her poetry with members of the professional community who visit The Foundation Schools. The poem that follows is one that she recently shared.



Pain and Sorrow

She sits there pain filling heart, sorrow filling her veins

She watches the kids play outside and wonders why
why hasn't anyone come to her door and asked to play

Pain runs through her veins through her blood

Sorrow can fill her heart like oxygen

She walks down the halls in school

In a matter of five minutes gets called every name in the book

She realizes one day that she is her own person

She doesn't need anyone to make her happy or tell her she is a good person

She realizes that she stands on her own and only alone

I guess her pain and sorrow does have a happy ending.

Original Poem by **Shanazia T.**, Aspiring Poet, Grade 8
The Foundation School

Hannah More School Holds First Science/Math Fair

In June Hannah More School held its first Science/Math fair, with close to 70 students participating. During the weeks leading up to the fair, middle and high school science classes were busy conducting experiments and math students interpreted the data from the experiments. First, second, and third place prizes were awarded in three categories. Congratulations to all of the winners!



Congratulations to Student Scholarship Recipients

Bria Griffith received the Stephen W. McNierney Scholarship to help fund her education at Harford Community College this fall. **Leah Bantem Gibson** received the Martin Smith Academic Scholarship and also plans to attend Harford Community College. **Matthew Oberholtzer** received the Arthur Kauffman Scholarship which will enable him to pursue a vocational training program.

Sixth grader **Ta'von Baker** and seventh grader **Daniel Graham** shared the Martin Smith Summer Athletic Scholarship to help them attend two athletic camps this past summer.

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Hannah More School

Students Provided Access to Kindle Ebook Readers

The Hannah More School Media Center recently acquired five Kindles for use by students or staff. Each Kindle is loaded with 50 classic titles but has room for more than 1,500 titles. The Kindle enables students to easily carry reading material, use an electronic dictionary, and adjust font size for easier reading, among other options. Hannah More is one of only a handful of schools lending these devices.

Hannah More School Culinary Arts Students to Participate in Reisterstown/Owings Mills/Glyndon Chamber of Commerce "Taste of the Town" Event

Students in our Culinary Arts program, under the direction of instructor Pearline Holland, will participate in the Chamber's annual "Taste of the Town" fundraiser in October. The event features restaurants and caterers from around the area, who provide a sample of their offerings to attendees. Participating in this event will give students an opportunity to showcase their own prepared dishes and gain valuable experience working alongside other food service providers. The Culinary Arts program has received the ProStart designation. ProStart is the Maryland Hospitality Education Foundation's School-to-Career program, in partnership with the National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation and supported by the Restaurant Association of Maryland. ProStart prepares students for careers in the food service industry.

Student Art on Display at Susquehanna Bank Offices

A group of Hannah More School student artists were selected to display their works at the offices of Susquehanna Bank in Hunt Valley, MD. The artwork lines the walls of the bank's reception area, and is part of a rotating exhibit featuring artwork from organizations around Baltimore.



SCHOOL News

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Harbour School

Harbour Touches the World

Dr. Jacobs was invited to present at the International Association of Special Education in Namibia. Harbour students learned that Namibia is one of the poorest countries in Africa and each child must provide his school supplies. Students also learned that a plain ballpoint pen could cost as much as \$3 U.S. dollars. THS students were determined to help and set a goal to collect 10,000 pens. It was truly an act of Harbour Magic as our students, friends and families came together. The Harbour school exceeded everyone's goals and collected and shipped 34,000 ballpoint pens to give to the children of Namibia. The pens were delivered to excited students in several Namibian schools and carried by school directors to several other African countries.



Ribbon Cutting for Harbour House

The Harbour School Foundation is pleased to announce that the Harbour House opened in August with 2 residents (and capacity for 5). Peter Franchot, State Comptroller, performed the ribbon cutting honors on October 14, 2011. Mr. Franchot commented on the importance of providing residential housing options for every member of the community in his remarks. Harbour House is located in Catonsville, Maryland.



STEM Labs Installed

The Harbour School is continuing its STEM initiative for the 2011-12 school year. This year's improvements consist of renovating lab space to include separate wet and dry labs, fume hoods, ice machines and power projecting microscopes. Additional technology upgrades include installing WiFi throughout both campuses and purchasing 60 iPads. An iPad for every two students will be purchased before the end of the 11/12 school year. The updated science labs and equipment will support a more comprehensive STEM curriculum designed to ensure that each student has access to the skills he/she needs for future school success and the job market of the 21st century.

Harbour School Celebrates 30 Years

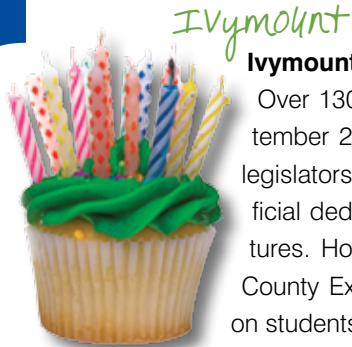
Harbour kicked off its 30th anniversary celebration of The Harbour School and Dr. Jacobs' 50th year in special education with a gathering of students, alumni, families and staff at the Columbia Sports Complex. Over 250 students, alumni, family and friends gathered for a wonderful afternoon of great food, activities and memories. The celebration will continue for the entire 2011-2012 school year and culminate in the publishing of an updated edition of Harbour Magic.



Happy
30th
to Harbour School!

SCHOOL News

*Happy
50th
to Ivymount!*



Ivymount Turns 50!

Over 130 guests gathered to mark Ivymount's 50th anniversary on September 22, 2011. In addition to celebrating this achievement, Maryland legislators, Ivymount alumni, families and supporters participated in the official dedication of the Ivymount Young Adult Center for Independent Futures. Honorary speaker Chuck Short, Special Assistant to Montgomery County Executive Ike Leggett, spoke eloquently about Ivymount's impact on students and families and used the word "perseverance" to describe Ivymount's stability and creativity in leadership, staff and community supporters.

Ivymount Lecture - Life On and Slightly to the Right of the Autism Spectrum

On Wednesday, November 2nd at 7:00pm at The Ivymount School, Dr. Stephen Shore, professor and author of *Beyond the Wall: Personal Experiences with Autism and Asperger Syndrome*, will share his autobiographical experiences, which include his childhood nonverbal days and his many challenges as an adult on the Autism Spectrum. The session will end with a short audience activity demonstrating what it feels like to have autism and to struggle through some of the challenges surrounding communication and socialization. To register for this lecture, please visit: www.ivymount.org/lecture.

Katherine Thomas School

The Katherine Thomas School welcomes Cathleen M. Burgess, M. Ed., CCC-SLP as the new Director for the KTS Lower/Middle School Programs. Burgess comes to KTS from The George Washington University, where she was Autism Clinical Supervisor and Adjunct Professor. She served as a Task Force member of The George Washington University Autism Research Center Initiative.

Ms. Burgess holds a Master of Education in Speech Pathology from Northeastern University in Boston. She is a licensed SLP in Washington, D.C. and Maine, has served as a professional speech-language delegate to Australia, New Zealand and Honduras, and consulted with rural health programs and schools in El Salvador.



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St. Elizabeth School

Going the Distance in New Ways

St. Elizabeth School (SES), celebrating its 50th anniversary this year, is looking well situated for another 50 years of outstanding service to the special education community with three new program initiatives. First, the school, which until recently served students ages 11 to 21, grades 6 to 12, was accredited for elementary grades, and is now serving students ages 6 to 21, in grades 1 to 12! The staff of St. Elizabeth School is excited to teach younger students, as this will allow for even greater educational continuity and smoother transitions for students between elementary and middle school.



**Happy
50th**
to St. Elizabeth
School!

Second, the school has added a self-contained classroom, established especially for students who need a great deal of structure throughout the day without the stress of changing classrooms. Finally, the school has expanded its services further into the community to include outreach services tailored to meet the needs of nontraditional students (coined "Mobile SES"), at the request of several local school systems. With an auspicious start to its 50th year of service to Central Maryland, SES continues to change with the needs of its students firmly at heart. The future certainly looks bright!

The Forbush Preschool, continued from front cover

tial instruction, discrete trial, visually cued instruction, sensory integration, TEACCH, and errorless learning. Individual programs are created that educate and assist students in learning academics, social skills, communication, and basic life skills. Students are also provided the opportunity to learn through structured play and movement. Community based instruction is included in order to allow students to practice language as well as learn social skills and increase appropriate behaviors in real world situations.

A primary focus is to reduce undesired behaviors and increase functional skills

that will ensure students' long-term success. The preschool's instructional program adheres to the Maryland State Curriculum. Parents are considered a part of their child's treatment team and are encouraged to participate in decisions regarding programming for their child. Classroom sizes are small with an average of 6-7 students per class, with a high staff to student ratio, 2:1. The school is located on the main campus of Sheppard Pratt Hospital in Towson. Most recently, the Forbush Preschool celebrated the opening of their new playground with a ribbon cutting ceremony (see page 4 for more on this event).



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Villa Maria School

A Penny Saved Will Help a Life in Japan

The Blue Room class at Villa Maria School at St Vincent's, taught by Lucy Mwai, was watching current events on CNN when the catastrophe in Japan caught our interest. The class started a discussion about the earthquake and tsunami disasters and brainstormed ways in which we could help. We decided we had to do something meaningful for disaster relief in Japan. The students had many suggestions for fundraising, for example; a car wash, a pennies drive, a bake sale, etc. The class unanimously decided that "A Penny Saved Will Help a Life in Japan" would be our motto. We set a goal to raise \$500 by collecting pennies and holding a bake sale.

We reached out to the Villa Maria School family in an effort to reach the goal. Our sister schools, Villa Maria at Timonium and Harford County, along with the St. Vincent's staff, provided tremendous support. Thanks to the generosity of students, parents and staff, together we raised \$620, surpassing our goal by \$120. The funds raised will be donated to the Red Cross Society. On August 5th, 2011, Ms. Susan L. Morseth, the Major Gifts Manager of American Red Cross of Central Maryland, attended a student awards ceremony during which our students in the blue room presented a check to the Red Cross.

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SCHOOL News

Youth In Transition School

Youth In Transition School Introduces New Automotive Program

The Youth In Transition School (YIT) is pleased to announce the introduction of an Automotive Program to strengthen its vocational curriculum. The YIT Automotive Program trains and educates students on basic automotive repair skills such as oil change and tire repair and changes.

Instruction will take place at YIT's brand new state-of-the-art automotive training center, which includes:

- A classroom with computer based training for 10 students
- One lubrication bay with basement pit
- One inspection bay with two-post lift for tire services
- Latest automotive equipment
- A customer service center

The Automotive Program encompasses the following core components:

- Train and educate students in basic automotive repair skills
- Job readiness and life management skills
- Internship and employment opportunities at a national automotive lubrication center

The inaugural class began in September 2011 with 13 students from different school districts enrolled in the class.





"Students have the opportunity to learn new skills, improve existing skills and interact with people in the community."

The Forbush School at Hunt Valley, continued from front cover

had the opportunity to participate in special activities that include Special Olympics swimming and field games, therapeutic horseback riding and The Towson University Wellness program. These last two activities were made possible through grants provided by the "Care for Kids" program from Sheppard Pratt. The Wellness program is a unique opportunity for a group of our secondary students to attend programs at the University. Forbush students attend fitness classes with Towson students and participate in social skills groups with Towson students from the speech therapy and occupational therapy departments. Forbush students also have the opportunity to dine at the Towson University cafeteria. This provides a great opportunity for additional socialization as well as lessons in nutrition and food choices.

Our secondary students have weekly "work" trips in the community that are related to the particular vocational cluster in which they are participating. One group from our "Hospitality" work cluster goes to the Pulse Fitness Center in Hunt Valley. There, students help clean the equipment and have the opportunity to interact with gym members. Students also have the opportunity to exercise on the equipment and enjoy a healthy shake when their work is completed. These and other community trips provide our students with opportunities outside the school to learn new skills, improve existing skills and interact with people in the community.



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Artwork designed by
Alek Vinson, student at
St. Elizabeth School

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MANSEF is committed to creating optimum educational opportunities in the least restrictive environment for all Maryland children with disabilities through: **ADVOCACY, NETWORKING, COLLABORATION** and **INFORMATION/RESOURCES**.



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