

STEPPING Stones

November 2014

MARYLAND ASSOCIATION OF NONPUBLIC SPECIAL EDUCATION FACILITIES

THE 2ND ANNUAL SWING FOR EDUCATION GOLF CLASSIC HELD AT GREYSTONE GOLF COURSE

Fundraiser supports scholarship opportunities

The **2014 Second Annual Swing for Education Golf Classic**, held this year at Greystone Golf Course in White Hall, Maryland, was a huge success. The Maryland Association of Nonpublic Special Education Facilities (MANSEF), and the Education Foundation of Baltimore County Public Schools, Inc., joined together to host a spectacular event. Dr. Nancy Grasmick and her husband, Lou, were the distinguished honorary chairs for the October 10 event.

The beautiful autumn day started with a golf clinic for students. A special recital by **Bre'Asja from Villa Maria School** who sang the National Anthem with complete perfection and wowed the attendees, plus a beautiful musical song and dance performance by students from the **Forbush School at Glyndon**.

A special pre-event, held specifically for our sponsors, was a transformational dialogue facilitated by **Aris Melissaratos** and **Dr. Nancy Grasmick**. Audience members were captivated by their remarks linking the business community and the world of work to the educational needs of our students.

For golfers and non-golfers alike, the **Swing for Education Golf Classic** was a perfect way to end a busy work week by participating in a tournament filled with camaraderie and memorable moments while supporting

a great cause. Monies raised will support scholarship opportunities for students with a variety of needs and will enhance the lives of deserving students in our community by helping to provide them with resources to further their education and obtain the knowledge and skills needed to be globally competitive.

A special thanks goes to our sponsors, most notably Zest Social Media Solutions, for its lead contribution of \$10,000. For a full list of our sponsors please visit the MANSEF website at www.mansef.org and click on "Swing for Education".

Top to bottom: Students from the Forbush School at Glyndon perform; Dallas Dance and his foursome; Bre'Asja from Villa Maria School; and Dr. Nancy Grasmick, Aris Melissaratos, Denise Koch, Debbie Phelps and Dorie Flynn



The Katherine Thomas School commemorated their 20th academic year with a wonderful celebration on October 23 at the Gaithersburg Marriott Washingtonian Center. They were honored to host Keynote Speaker, Ron Suskind, father of KTS Alumni Owen Suskind, and Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *Life, Animated: A Story of Sidekicks, Heroes and Autism*. Guests were treated to Ron's powerful discussion about raising Owen and how their partnership with KTS had a powerful impact on the family. Current KTS students had an opportunity to share their own stories in a video shown at the event. Everyone enjoyed the walk down memory lane, as TLC's Executive Director, Dr. Patricia Ritter, shared the story of how it all began over twenty years ago. They are looking forward to serving their students and families for another extraordinary twenty years.



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Maryland Association
of Non-Public Special
Education Facilities

www.mansef.org

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A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Colleagues,

We are in the midst of new beginnings: new season, new school year, new students, and in November, new legislators. It is critical for MANSEF to be visible at the legislative level so that decision makers understand our importance as part of the educational continuum. Our greatest challenge will be in communicating our mission and worth to newly elected officials. This can only be accomplished through the engagement of all MANSEF members. We need your help in reaching out to your representatives with the MANSEF message, educating them on our issues and impressing them with our success stories.

Raising our visibility should be an ongoing initiative but is particularly critical with our changing State leadership. As the elections end, Dorie will be contacting the membership with "a call to action." She will provide ways to reach out and let our voices be heard. Please answer her call. Take the time to engage and inform. It is important for our future.

Kindest regards,

Patricia Ritter
MANSEF
President

*Rhona Schwartz,
Ron Suskind, Patricia
Ritter and Dorie
Flynn were on hand
to celebrate the 20th
academic year of the
Katherine Thomas
School on October
23, 2014. See full story
above left.*



MANSEF CELEBRATES STUDENT SUCCESS



Forbush at Oakmont Upper

The Forbush School at Oakmont Upper School has worked very hard this past year to expand vocational experiences for our students both on and off campus. We have created numerous in-school work opportunities as well as expanded our off-campus job sites. One of our hardest workers is **Mike Calixte**. Mike is currently participating in a job experience at Buffalo Wild Wings in Gaithersburg, where he works with minimal supervision. Mike has also progressed this year to the point where he has been able to successfully function without the need of a one-to-one assistant. We are very proud of Mike's accomplishments!

Hannah More School

When Students in **Ms. Reissner's Middle School Life Science classes** created a walk-in rainforest in our classroom during the 2013-2014 school year. This project-based learning project started in January and went through June. Students researched and learned about the plants, animals and ecosystems of the rainforest, adding the different pieces into the room as we learned about them. The culminating event was to lead tours for students and staff through the rainforest, detailing everything learned over the six month period. The students took great pride in their project, even dressing up for tour days!

The Harbour School

Star Golfer

Matt Snowdon, a student at The Harbour School at Annapolis, plays golf on the Annapolis High School golf team. He is the team's best male golfer with a 43.1 average. The County's best public school golfers will decide the championship at the Crofton Country Club on October 20. Matt is one of several Harbour School athletes who have played on their home public school teams. Low scores will advance to the district championship at the end of October.

Below: The Rainforest in Ms. Reissner's Middle School Life Science class; Left: Mike Calixte at Buffalo Wild Wings; Far left: Matt Snowdon and members of the Annapolis High School Golf team.



MORE!

STUDENT Success

St. Elizabeth School

A Budding Photographer in the Works

SES student photographer **Andre Kitts** has always enjoyed taking photos on his iPad, but recently, he has learned how to compose, crop, and edit photos from all kinds of school events. Anytime SES holds a fun activity, you can count on seeing Andre and his trusty iPad. After editing his photos, his one-to-one assistant Chip Morgan Riegel helps Andre put all his work on a flash drive, so that the photos can be seen from the school's website. To see Andre's work and to get an in-depth view of some of our recent events, go to http://www.stelizabeth-school.org/photo_gallery_2014_AndreKitts.html. rainforest, detailing everything learned over the six month period. The students took great pride in their project, even dressing up for four days!

Mann Residential

A Red Carpet Affair

Summer days can be fun and invigorating. The end of this summer at The Mann Residential School was especially exhilarating as students and staff unleashed their inner stardom at the First Annual Mann Residential School Fashion Show. Mr. Tom Greene and Mr. Ian Ferrara were our Masters of Ceremony and that was a show all of its own. Their humor made us laugh, their stories made us skeptical and their description of the clothing styles made us wonder how they manage to get themselves dressed each morning.

This was a red-carpet affair in which students and staff participated. They cascaded cutting-edge work attire; flaunted flattering formal wear; set the stage for crisp, sassy, "night on the town" attire, and strutted just plain everyday casual wear for all seasons. In between each set, students and staff members showed off their talents with breathtaking songs and relaxing music.

And then the grand finally... a rather indescribable, not so stylish "get-up" fashioned by our infamous school principal, Mr. Jeffrey Alperin. He dances you know. And that was a bit unique as well; although very entertaining!

This was a really fun event thanks to the hard work and diligent dedication of Ms. Lakia Cox. She puts on a great show and does this so incredibly well. We all tip our stylish hats off to you, Ms. Lakia!

Strawbridge School at the Board of Child Care

For one girl at the Board of Child Care (BCC), graduation from Strawbridge School this year meant more than receiving a handshake and diploma. It meant that her dreams for the future were finally coming true. When **Shaquan** arrived at Strawbridge in eighth grade she was lost in conflict, negative relationships, and poor choices. She didn't see the value in her education at first. Over time the academic and clinical support provided by BCC slowly built a solid platform from which she could grow. Shaquan continued to work hard on not only her academic work, but also on improving her self-esteem and confidence.

Outside the classroom Shaquan enjoys writing, dancing, and other creative activities, and dreams of becoming a nursing assistant in the future. During her message to her fellow senior class members, she advised them that, "Our success doesn't have to stop here." We cannot wait to see Shaquan put her great work ethic to use!



SCHOOL News



Forbush at Glyndon

On October 10, 2014, five students from the Forbush School @ Glyndon participated in the opening ceremony for the 16th Annual

MANSEF Charity Golf Tournament, which benefits the Michael Cardin Scholarship Fund. **Dineen, Oona, Demonte, Jahmal, and Dawon** sang, "Brave" by Sara Bareilles. The students' voices resonated throughout the room as they sang a spirited rendition of "Brave" to a very captivated audience. In less than two weeks, these students learned the lyrics to the song, mastered the dance steps, and learned sign language, which was incorporated in their performance. This event was held at Greystone Golf Course in White Hall, Maryland.

High Road School

Learning is Magical

The High Road School of Southern Maryland (La Plata) participated in the 9th Annual Festival of Scarecrows, sponsored by the Charles County Chamber of Commerce. The event required it's entrants to assemble a scarecrow that depicted one of four categories: scary, career, sports, and fictional characters. Collectively, our school chose to build a fictional character that displayed an educational theme



and chose a famous fictional teacher- Professor Dumbledore from Harry Potter. We are so proud that our display took 1st place. Our scarecrow will be on display and is located on the corner of Centennial Street and St. Mary's Avenue in La Plata.

At the start of the 2014-2015 school year High Road Schools and Worcester County Public Schools began



an exciting partnership, High Road School at Snow Hill Middle, to serve middle school students in need of increased behavioral support. Senior Director, Susan Dean shared "WCPS staff has been wonderful to work with at all levels. We are excited to be part of this dedicated and collaborative team." HRS staff participated in the "Big Bash" back to school event for the Snow Hill School community on 8/27/2014.

Pathways School

New school site at Pathways encourages a community for learning



This August, the students of The Pathways School-Northwood walked into a new school setting designed to encourage learning, personal growth, creativity, cooperation, and responsibility. The site looks like a typical school, so students can avoid the self-consciousness that sometimes accompanies being in a "different" educational setting. Morale was high from the very first day.

The new school site, located on Powder Mill Road adjacent to TESST College of Technology in Beltsville, is a supportive backdrop for fostering positive behavior in which an emphasis is placed on every student becoming a contributing member of the learning community. One way this is done is by having each student take responsibility for a job of their choice that fills a real need of the school: clerk of the school store, for example, or photographer for school occasions and events.

There have been positive comments about the new environment and atmosphere from parents, public school representatives, and teachers, as well as students. People like the look of the building, its spaciousness, rooms for therapy and sensory work, and the access to a field for exercise and recreation.



MORE!

SCHOOL News

Harbour School

Harbour School wins the Baltimore County Community Involvement Award

The Baltimore County Commission on Disabilities has selected The Harbour School as its 2014 winner of the Community Involvement Award for the school's participation in the Lead to Feed program sponsored by the Yum Foundation. The Harbour School was a national winner of the award and earned a \$25,000 check for the local Meals on Wheels program. Deborah Weiner, Master of Ceremonies and Baltimore County Executive Kevin Kamenetz presented the award to Dr. Jacobs on October 15, 2014.

Dr. Linda Jacobs honored for disability leadership

The Anne Arundel County Commission on Disability Issues recognized Dr. Linda Jacobs for her exceptional work with individuals with special needs in an educational venue. The County Executive, Laura Neuman, presented the award on Disability Awareness Day, October 25, 2014.



New Programs

Another reason to be excited this year is the launch of our Career Centers' fifth vocational area, Broadcasting. Mr. Leslie Hendricks, the Broadcasting instructor at Annapolis, has consulted and advised Morgan State University staff on use of digital media in the classroom. He has strong photographic and video graphic skills and solid knowledge of a wide range of digital editing software. Mr. Hendricks also owns and operates a video production company, Visual Effects Video Productions.

Steven Mitchell, the Broadcasting instructor at Baltimore, is currently completing a program in digital cinematography, has attended the Academy of Art in San Francisco majoring in film and television production, and the Art Institute of New York City majoring in Video Production and graphic design. Mr. Mitchell's experience in film and television will give our students a real-world look at video production and broadcasting as a career option.

Grad Study Results

Each year The Harbour School contacts each of its 366 high school graduates since 1991. The school was able to reach 304 graduates, either through mail or follow-up phone calls. The wonderful news is that 94% of the grads reached are either in post-secondary education, vocational training or competitively employed. The Graduate Outcome Survey showed that our graduates are employed in many different areas, including law enforcement, clerical, active military, education, air traffic control and technology. The full survey report including all employers and higher education facilities can be found on the school's website: www.harbourschool.org.

Powering Up with Technology Conference

Stephanie Gentry, technology coordinator at our Annapolis campus is presenting at the Powering Up With Technology Conference again this year, on Saturday, November 8.

This year, her presentation will be about using apps and websites to support and enhance individualized instruction. She is going to focus on using Padlet, Tellagami, Thinglink, and Google Drive Forms together. The presentation will show teachers not only how to use devices to create lessons, but to teach their students to use them as assessment tools.

Decorating at the Broadneck Library

Our students are given a reading list to help keep up to speed in reading during our August break. This year our students made posters about what they read. The posters were so good, the Broadneck public library decided to display them.

Reisterstown Parade

The Harbour School at Baltimore joined the Reisterstown Festival Parade on September 6. It was the first time the Baltimore campus participated. Students, parents and staff followed The Harbour School bus. Candi and Snap, the School's cocker spaniels, were there as well. The THS Matrix brought up the rear of the contingent. Harbour won a trophy on its first try.



St. Elizabeth School

SES Gets the Gold (Again!)

St. Elizabeth School is proud to be receiving its tenth consecutive PBIS Gold Medal Award from the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE). PBIS stands for Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports—a nationally-recognized systematic framework that supports a proactive and positive method of dealing with behavior. Nano Kolls, MSW, LCSW-C, BCBA, Behavior Support Services Director at St. Elizabeth School, recently passed the Board Certified Behavior Analyst Exam to become a Certified Behavior Analyst. Her team's work with PBIS has helped SES successfully maintain the school's elite status for 10 straight years!



Villa Maria School

The Villa Maria Students Donate to Favorite Charities

At Villa Maria School at Pot Spring, one of our priorities is to help our children to express compassion and empathy. Our students were studying the impact of natural disasters when Typhoon Haiyan blasted the Philippines in late 2013. They learned that Haiyan, the strongest storm in history to ever make landfall, a Category 5 with sustained winds of 145-195 miles per hour, killed 6300 people and impacted over 11 million people on the islands, many of whom were left homeless.

"What can we do to help?" Our students wanted to do something that would make a difference. They began crafting small gifts to sell at the Villa Maria Arts Festival scheduled for December. They raised \$91.00.

Inspired by the response to this event, the children held a car wash in July. The kids had a lot of fun and did a great job working together to wash the staff cars that came to support the effort.

This summer in group therapy, our students learned about helping others (both people and animals). When therapist Jesse Fask asked the students what they wanted to do with the \$121.00 that they had raised, they chose BARCS, the Baltimore Animal Rescue and Care Shelter, because that they wanted to do something for abused pets. They learned that BARCS had increased adoptions from 90 to 3200 over four years, helping cats and dogs who would have been put to sleep. They were told how BARCS provided foster care for sick and abused animals and were also helping homeless animals.

This October at our Back to School Luncheon, students presented checks to BARCS representative Mary Helfrick who was accompanied by her rescue cat Percy. The check for the Philippines was given to the Red Cross and accepted by the Villa Maria Volunteer Coordinator Maria Busko.



Strawbridge School at the Board of Child Care

Board of Child Care welcomed **Laurie Anne Spagnola** as our new President on July 1, 2014. Laurie Anne is just the fourth president in the Board of Child Care's 140-year history. A seasoned nonprofit executive, she spent the last twelve years leading the Children's Home of York, PA. Welcome Laurie Anne!





Maryland Association
of Non-Public Special
Education Facilities

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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.

SAVE THE DATE

*Keep checking the MANSEF website
at www.mansef.org for more details*

2015 CONFERENCE

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2015
BALTIMORE CONVENTION CENTER



Maryland Association
of Non-Public Special
Education Facilities