

STEPPING Stones

May 2024

MARYLAND ASSOCIATION OF NONPUBLIC SPECIAL EDUCATION FACILITIES

MANSEF News

Cardin Scholarship

In honor of their achievements, forty-seven Maryland students with special needs will receive scholarship awards from the Michael Cardin Scholarship Committee of the Maryland Association of Nonpublic Special Education Facilities (MANSEF). The scholarship awards were awarded May 1, 2024.

The students -- who all attend or previously attended a MANSEF school -- are challenged by a range of physical, emotional, and learning disabilities and were nominated for the awards by their schools in recognition of their perseverance and hard work. The awards will allow the students to take part in a range of academic, training, or extracurricular activities.

"It brings great joy to our dedicated Board members to know how proud these special student scholarship winners feel, as most are being publicly recognized for the first time in their lives for receiving an award for what they have accomplished during the school year," said Alan Kanter, chair of the scholarship committee.

The scholarship fund was established in memory of Michael Cardin, son of U.S. Senator Ben Cardin of Maryland

and his wife Myrna, a former MANSEF executive director. The scholarship fund has grown annually since its inception in 1999 and has awarded more than \$500,000 to over 500 special education scholars.

"These students exemplify the achievement that is possible when students receive the proper support," said Myrna Cardin. "We are proud to reward and showcase the successes of these young people, each of whom stands out in his or her own way."

Along with the scholarships, MANSEF will present two additional awards:

Joshua Schechter, of Odenton, nominated by the Chelsea School will be presented with the *Distinguished Citizen Award*. Mr. Schechter is a special education teacher in Prince George's County Public Schools and alumnus of the Chelsea School. He currently serves on the Maryland Blueprint Special Education Workgroup. Through his efforts on the Workgroup, Joshua has advocated strongly for nonpublic schools as part of the continuum of educational services in the state of Maryland. He has been a strong

and courageous voice for nonpublic schools.

Lee-Nadine Oppenheim, of Rockville, MD was unanimously selected by the MANSEF Board to receive the *Inspiring Dreams, Changing Lives Award* for her commitment to working in the field of special education for over 27 years. Lee is the Director of Finance and Operations at the Ivymount Organization. Lee is known for many things: her kindness and generosity, her determined advocacy in Annapolis for teacher parity and her technical ability to zero in on fiscal matters at issue. Lee has been a strong and influential champion for Ivymount School and other MANSEF schools to be included in any State and federal pandemic relief grants. For many years, she has also made school safety a central focus, ensuring that MANSEF is a part of the Maryland Center for School Safety Advisory Board, devoting thousands of hours of her own time to make sure that other MANSEF members are trained on all aspects of school safety, and co-creating the Especially Safe Special Needs Guide, which has been recognized nationally.



Congratulations!



MESSAGE FROM THE President

Dear MANSEF Members,

Spring has Sprung! I hope this message finds you doing well and full of hope that the newness of spring can bring. I am delighted to share our organization's exciting updates and achievements as we strive toward excellence in special education. As we embrace the spirit of spring, it is a time for growth, renewal, and celebration of our collective efforts.

Our MANSEF scholars, I am thrilled to announce that we have awarded 48 students with the prestigious MANSEF scholarship this year. These exceptional individuals have demonstrated outstanding dedication and commitment to their education. The impact of this scholarship on their lives is immeasurable, and we are proud to be a part of their academic journey. These scholars embody the values and mission of MANSEF.

Our Collaboration Carnival! The MANSEF 2024 conference was highly anticipated and a great success. This flagship event was not just a gathering, but a true collaboration of minds, ideas, and innovations in special education. It provided an avenue for all of us to connect, communicate, and celebrate as we engaged in meaningful discussions and networked with state partners and peers who share our passion for empowering individuals with diverse learning and social needs.

Our Collaboration continues with the Maryland Center for School Safety, strengthening our commitment to creating safe and inclusive learning environments for all students. Through strategic partnerships and initiatives, we are working towards enhancing school safety measures and promoting a culture of security and well-being within our non-public educational settings.

Our Collaboration efforts helped develop a MAAPP, the teacher Maryland Approved Alternative Preparation Program. This key initiative supports aspiring special educators in completing their educator licensure. The program is dedicated to making a difference in special education through the rigor of educator preparation, nurturing talent, and fostering professional growth. We are doing our part in shaping Maryland's Future Educators.

As we embark on this new season filled with promise and possibilities, I am incredibly grateful to each and every one of you for your contributions. On behalf of the Board of Directors, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to each community member for your unwavering support, dedication, and passion for advancing special education in Maryland. Your efforts are what make MANSEF thrive. Together, we will continue Inspiring Dreams and Changing Lives of individuals with special education needs.

Warm regards,

Gina James,
Board President MANSEF

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SCHOOL News

Arrow Center for Education Hunt Valley

On March 13, 2024, Arrow Child & Family Ministries launched its Grand Opening of the Arrow Center for Education Hunt Valley School and its new Maryland Headquarters. ACE Hunt Valley School is located in Hunt Valley and houses not only the school but our training facility, while the Maryland Headquarters is located right around the corner and houses members of our state leadership and the Community Services, and Treatment Foster Care teams. The Grand Opening featured a Baltimore County Executive Citation presented by Carmen Christiana from the County Executive's office for Arrow's service in the Baltimore County area. We look forward to the future and our growth in Maryland.

The Children's Guild Schools

Maryland's Governor Wes Moore Helps to Dedicate New Sensory Playground at The Children's Guild Transformation Academy In Baltimore

Governor Wes Moore attended the dedication ceremony of the brand-new Orokawa Foundation Playground at The Children's Guild - Transformation Academy, a 12-month, non-public day school based in Baltimore, for students ages 5-21, whose primary diagnosis is autism. The new outdoor sensory playground features 25 inclusive elements that use both standard and customized components for students and caregivers to experience together and was built through a state grant and the support of the Orokawa Foundation.

"This new playground will set the standard for our state and our country in what a fully inclusive playground looks like," said Gov. Moore (pictured here pushing 10-year-old student Faaris Mian). "Today, we don't just take a step toward inclusivity - we take a step toward the Maryland we all want to build: one that is loving, caring, and thriving. This is about making sure that every Maryland child is seen and supported, regardless of ability."



The Children's Guild School of Baltimore is now offering their students a multi-sensory room which serves as a supportive environment where students can engage with calming sensory experiences. The room includes a sound bowl, aroma therapy (natural oils in a diffuser), plants, led lights, and yoga mats. Students and teachers practice deep breathing techniques such as coping skills, learn yoga terminology and how it relates to everyday life in gratitude, as well as practice yoga moves. A multi-sensory room has been found to support stress reduction, improve attention and focus, regulate emotions, increase self-awareness, enhance executive functioning, cultivate resilience, and promote social skills especially for students with learning disabilities.

MANSEF 2024 Cardin

(continued from page 1)

The following 47 students were selected for exemplifying perseverance in the face of adversity and embodying the spirit that everyone can succeed with hard work and support.

Koby Ampoma-Mensah, a previous Cardin Scholar from Baltimore City Public Schools, attending the St. Elizabeth School, will use his scholarship to attend Camp Penwood.

Daniel Arter, a previous Cardin Scholar from Baltimore City Public Schools, attending the St. Elizabeth School, will use his scholarship to attend Spartan Boys Basketball Camp.

Morgan Butler, a previous Cardin Scholar from Charles County Public Schools, attending the Kennedy Krieger LEAP Program, will use her scholarship for Camp Co-op Swim School.

Samuel Byrne, a student from Baltimore County Public Schools, attending Kennedy Krieger High School, will use his scholarship to attend The League Camp Greentop.

Tristen Canada, a previous Cardin Scholar attending the Chelsea School, will use his scholarship to attend Camp Shule.

Cameron Carroll, a student from Baltimore City Public Schools, attending the Villa Maria School will use his scholarship to attend Countywide All-Star Basketball Camp.

Katie Chen, a student from Howard County Public Schools, attending the Baltimore Lab School will use her scholarship to take driver's education and attend Frontier Town Girls Camp.

Tallen Clark, a student from Prince George's County Public Schools attending The Auburn School will use his scholarship to attend Camp Aristotle.

Wyatt Cook, a previous Cardin Scholar, will use his scholarship to attend the summer program at Baltimore Lab School.

Nyah Coston, a previous Cardin Scholar from Montgomery County Public Schools attending Chelsea School will use her scholarship to attend YMCA Camp Letts.

Elijah Cotton, a previous Cardin Scholar from Prince George's County Public Schools who attended The Pathways School – Re-Entry at DuVal, will use his scholarship to attend Towson University to pursue a Bachelor of Arts in Art and Design.

Shaden Crites, a student from Allegany County Public Schools, who attends the Villa Maria School will use her scholarship to attend the Irvine Nature Center program.

Angel Crowder, a previous Cardin Scholar from Baltimore County Public Schools who attends the St. Elizabeth School, will use her scholarship to attend The Center at Summit.

Amani Day, a student from Prince George's County Public Schools, who attends The Foundation School will use her scholarship to attend Greg's Driving School.

Alphe Dede, a previous Cardin Scholar from Montgomery County Public Schools attending The Children's Guild School of Prince George's County, will use his scholarship for Kids After Hours adventure summer camp.

Samuel Denney, a student from Baltimore County Public Schools, who attends Baltimore Lab School will use his scholarship to attend Summer's Best Two Weeks camp.

Christopher Dingle, a previous Cardin Scholar, from Prince George's County Public Schools attending Chelsea School, will use his scholarship to attend the Performing Arts Preparatory School for drum lessons.

Jocelyn Dorrycott, a previous Cardin Scholar from Carroll County Public Schools attending the Villa Maria School will use her scholarship to take art lessons at The Painting Workshop.

Gabriela England, a previous Cardin Scholar from Anne Arundel County Public Schools, attending Baltimore Lab School, will use her scholarship for sailing lessons at Brendan Sailing School.

Julius Foster, a previous Cardin Scholar from Baltimore County Public Schools, attending the Villa Maria School, will use his scholarship to attend The Painting Workshop.

Veronica Funderbunk, a student from Baltimore City Public Schools, attending the Villa Maria School will use her scholarship to take art lessons at The Painting Workshop.

Evan Graceyalny, a student from Baltimore County Public Schools, attending the Sheppard Pratt School in Glyndon, will use his scholarship to attend Baltimore Clayworks.

Jasper Grady, a student from Howard County Public Schools, attending the Kennedy Krieger School, will use his scholarship to attend Overtime Athletics Pickleball Camp.

Quadus Green, a student from Montgomery County Public Schools, attending the Foundation School of Montgomery County, will use his scholarship to attend You Reach I Teach Basketball Camp.

Scholarship Winners

(continued from page 4)

Blake Griffith, a student from Prince George's County Public Schools, attending the Foundation Learning Center, will use his scholarship to attend Club Sci Kidz.

William Hammel, a student from Baltimore County Public Schools, attending The Pathways School – Catonsville will use his scholarship to attend the ID Tech Camps.

Amelia Hardy, a student from Baltimore County Public Schools, attending the Villa Maria School, will use her scholarship to attend the Irvine Nature Center.

James Hawkins, a student from Prince George's County Public Schools, attending the High Road Academy of Prince George's County, will use his scholarship to attend Engineering with Vex Tech Camp.

Yael Humphrey, a student from Prince George's County Public Schools, attending Baltimore Lab School, will use her scholarship to attend Camp Under the Stars.

Lucas Khelawan, a *previous Cardin Scholar* from Prince George's County Public Schools attending The Chelsea School, will use his scholarship for driving lessons and Bowie Sport Crushers tennis camp.

Skylar King, a student from Calvert County Public Schools, attending Kennedy Krieger LEAP School, will use her scholarship to participate in adaptive swimming lessons.

Gabriel Levy, a student from Baltimore County Public Schools, attending the Villa Maria School, will use his scholarship to attend The Painting Workshop.

William Lucas, a student from Prince George's County Public Schools, attending the Foundation Learning Center, will use his scholarship to attend Prince George's County Owl Scholars Enrichment Camp.

Shoshana Mako, a student from Baltimore City Public Schools, attending Baltimore Lab School will use her scholarship to attend the Maayan Midwest Girls Classic Camp.

Nathan Matheson, a *previous Cardin Scholar* from Montgomery County Public Schools who attended The Frost School, will continue to use his scholarship to pursue an associate of arts degree in automotive technology from Montgomery College.

Melia Moates, a student from the District of Columbia Public Schools, attending the Foundation School, will use her scholarship to attend Aparnaz Lash and Brow Studio.

Braylon Moore, a student from Prince George's County Public Schools, attending the High Road Lower School of Prince George's County, will use his scholarship to attend the ID Tech Camp.

Greg Mora, a student from Dorchester County Public Schools, attending the Villa Maria School, will use his scholarship to attend the Irvine Nature Center.

Devin Murray, a student from Prince George's County Public Schools, attending the Children's Guild of Prince George's County, will use his scholarship to attend Melwood Camp Accomplish.

Nnena Onwujiuba, a student from Baltimore County Public Schools, attending the Kennedy Krieger LEAP Program, will use her scholarship to participate in a Six Flags family program.

Da'Lyiah Reese, a *previous Cardin Scholar* from Baltimore City Public Schools, attending the Villa Maria School, will use her scholarship to attend The Painting Workshop.

Jeremiah Smith, a student from Baltimore City Public Schools, attending Baltimore Lab School, will use his scholarship to attend ID Tech Camp.

Max Speckhardt, a student from Frederick County Public Schools, attending the Sheppard Pratt School in Rockville, will use his scholarship to attend Greg's Driving School.

Lamont Tyler-Ward, a student from Baltimore City Public Schools, attending the Villa Maria School, will use his scholarship to attend the Countywide All-Star Basketball Camp.

Ramon Velazquez, a *previous Cardin Scholar* from Howard County Public Schools, attending the Sheppard Pratt School – Glyndon, will use his scholarship for music lessons at Bach to Rock America's Music School.

Logan Wright, a student from Howard County Public Schools, attending the High Road Academy of Howard County, will use her scholarship to attend the Baltimore Chef Shop for cooking classes.

Lily Zuby, a student from Harford County Public Schools, attending Baltimore Lab School, will use her scholarship to attend the Summer Aerial Yoga, Rage Box Dance Center in Forest Hill.

Check out our newly revamped website and follow us on Facebook!



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The children's Guild Schools

The Children's Guild Senior Leaders Present Our People Matter: The Power of Employee Engagement at NatCon 24 In St. Louis

Jenny Livelli, M.Ed., President & CEO and Elizabeth Garcia, LCSW-C, MSSA, MNO, Chief People Officer of The Children's Guild, based in Washington, DC, presented Our People Matter: The Power of Employee Engagement at the 2024 National Council for Mental Wellbeing conference (NatCon) in April in St. Louis, MO. The presentation addressed successful retention strategies to combat the growing issue of staff shortages in programs that specialize in mental health and wellbeing by understanding the power of employee engagement.

"Our People Matter is not just an organization tenet; our backgrounds and experience directly influence the unique value we bring to our work and the communities we serve. It is crucial to create a safe space where employees feel valued. We implement successful listening practices including research-based energy checks and programmatic listening tours to amplify staff choices," explained Jenny Livelli.

Check Out the 2024 Cardin Scholarship Winners! Pages 4 & 5

Children's Guild - Transformation Academy

Students from The Children's Guild - Transformation Academy take weekly trips to First Fruits Farm in Freeland, MD. First Fruits Farm is a great place for students to learn about agriculture, sustainability, and community service giving students from Transformation Academy, many who have autism, the opportunity to engage with nature, understand the importance of farming, and learn about food production firsthand.

In addition to the time at First Fruits Farm, students also visited Rita's Italian Ices in Baltimore to get students acclimated with work out of the classroom on budgeting, ordering skills, etc. These field trips provide real-world experiences, sensory stimulation, social skills development, community integration, promotion of independence and educational opportunities.

More! SCHOOL

The Children's Guild School of Prince George's County celebration of Autism!!!!

Staff and students at the Prince George's Campus celebrated the uniqueness and individuality of individuals with Autism through their own creativity. Each classroom team created their own posters, songs, poems, and other engaging activities to help create Autism Awareness and Empowerment to the surrounding community. With the support of staff, students marched through the Chillum neighborhood spreading cheer and sharing kind thoughts about their own disabilities and the disabilities of others.



News

Foundation School

High school students with emotional disabilities at The Foundation School in Largo have begun a new pilot program with

Bowie State University, fostering STEM skills with a pathway to college. During the eight-week program, students will visit the college campus once a week to receive hands-on instruction on forensic science from STEM professors. Students will learn techniques such as fingerprint identification, DNA typing, blood detection, biological fluid examination, and more. By the end of the program, students will present what they've learned in front of their professors and be recognized at a program completion ceremony. Having programs like these for students who are exposed to high crime environments encourages them to begin thinking about higher education and careers in forensics or STEM-related fields, as well as exposing them to life on a college campus.



Check Out Our Page and Give Us a Follow!



High Road Academy of Howard County

Students at High Road Academy of Howard County commemorated Earth Day 2024 by participating in a nature-themed sustainability scavenger hunt. While searching for items such as a blooming flower, a feather, a bird's nest and an ant, the students in the 6th-grade class learned about environmental conservation from their teachers. The importance of picking up litter along the roadway and in the grassy areas was also conveyed. Students were excited to pick up various items that they found along their way and collected a trash bag full of litter, making the local animals' habitat cleaner and safer.

During the 8th-grade class' scavenger hunt, which focused on ecological consciousness and renewability, the students scoured the landscape to locate items such as plants native to Maryland, permeable surfaces, perennial plants, and items that reduce outdoor water use. The students were actively engaged in locating each item on the list and learning how to be sustainability superheroes.



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More! SCHOOL News

High Road Academy of Prince George's County

On May 18th, the drama department at High Road Academy presented "Finding Her Way to The Wiz," an enchanting journey through the World of Oz. For our students, the stage wasn't just a platform to perform—it was a space where they discovered their strengths, confronted their fears, and found their voices. In the heart of this production was a group of remarkable individuals, each with their own story to tell. For these students, the road to "Finding Her Way to The Wiz" wasn't easy. But through it all, they've prevailed, fueled by a passion and a determination to succeed.

The success of "Finding Her Way to The Wiz" wasn't just measured in applause, it was measured in the journey of each student, the growth they've experienced, and the bonds they've forged along the way. So as the curtains rose and the spotlight fell on our talented cast, we celebrated not just the performance, but the triumph of these incredible young men and women who dared to dream, dared to believe, and dared to find their way to The Wiz. ▼



High Road Lower School of Prince George's County

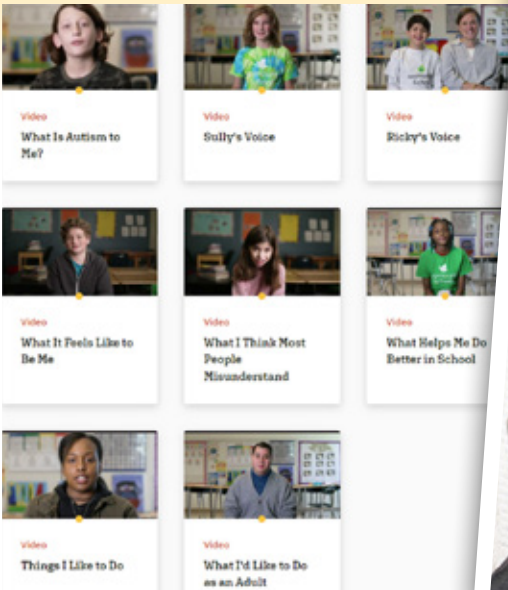
In April, students and staff alike stepped outside to ► admire the wonders of space and view the solar eclipse - from behind the safety of glasses of course! Students experienced firsthand the marvel of the moon passing between the sun and the earth. Teachers showcased their joy with commemorative t-shirts, because if you didn't get a t-shirt did the eclipse really happen??

High Road Lower School of Prince George's County ► recently begun implementing a weekly Schoolwide Enrichment Model (SEM) program which allows students an opportunity to foster individualized passions.



Check out our newly revamped website and follow us on Facebook!





More!
SCHOOL
News

Ivymount

Ivymount School students have expressed their neurodiverse voices and viewpoints in high profile ways. Numerous students are among the stars of an online video series called “Voices of Autism” published by AdLit, a division of WETA. “They say no two people with autism are the same, but in truth no two people at all are the same,” said one of the students. Their thoughtful and proud voices command the screen in eight short videos found here: <https://www.adlit.org/voices-autism> For an Autism Acceptance Month project by the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, several students recorded safety and boarding announcements that played through the entire Metrorail system during the month of April.



Student Ethan advocated for the importance of non-public special education schools at the MANSEF Advocacy Day at the legislature in Annapolis.

Ivymount School’s Aspire High School Program re-introduced a career fair for students, inviting 17 professionals representing fields such as banking, barbering, data science, healthcare, pet care, photography, podcasting and more. Staff helped students prepare by discussing different careers and creating question lists students could use to interview the professionals.



Cross-discipline collaboration continues to enhance programming and instruction. Through an applied research collaboration with George Mason University, students participated in the “Be Ready, Be Well” pilot program focusing on self-advocacy and goal setting in transition to adulthood. Speech language pathologists in the elementary/middle classes initiated a co-taught social learning class - “Secrets of Friendship” - and teams expanded use of the Elevatus Sexuality Health Curriculum across Ivymount School.

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More!

SCHOOL

Sheppard Pratt Schools

Kathy Flannery named Vice President & Chief of Sheppard Pratt Schools

Sheppard Pratt is pleased to announce the recent promotion of Kathy Flannery, MEd, who will now serve as the vice president and chief of Sheppard Pratt schools. In this role, Kathy will apply nearly 24 years of institutional knowledge and expertise to manage academics and operations for Sheppard Pratt's 11 nonpublic special education schools located throughout Maryland. Congratulations, Kathy!



MSDE Pays Special Visit to the Sheppard Pratt School in Glyndon

On January 22, Antoine Hickman, Ed.D., Assistant State Superintendent, and Sheila Phillip, JD, section chief, Nonpublic Special Education, Division of Early Intervention and Special Education Services, visited the Sheppard Pratt School in Glyndon. Sheppard Pratt Education Directors, Kathy Ourand and Kevin Iacoboni, guided the MSDE representatives through the school, highlighting their staff's efforts in providing specialized instruction and therapeutic education to the students.

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Advocacy in Annapolis

Employees, students, and families from Sheppard Pratt Schools joined MANSEF in Annapolis on February 2 to speak to elected officials on the many benefits and opportunities that nonpublic special education schools provide.

Max G., a current student at the Sheppard Pratt School in Rockville, along with her mother, spoke directly with legislators on how Sheppard Pratt's nonpublic special education schools have helped their family.



News

CELEBRATING Creativity



Showcasing Uniqueness

Staff at the Sheppard Pratt School in Glyndon recently held two events to highlight students' creativity and celebrate their passions. On January 25, the Fashion Club held a fashion show for students and staff to showcase their unique senses of style. Then, on February 16, staff held a mixed matinee where students showcased their talents and abilities.



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Best Bubbles Soap Store is Best in Business!

Thanks to the hard work and dedication of our students, the Sheppard Pratt School in Gaithersburg recently opened a "Best Bubbles" soap store! Student entrepreneurs were involved in every aspect of the business, from naming the store and choosing soap molds to voting on the store's logo. This new business venture provides students with practical business skills and serves as an invaluable transition tool, helping them to prepare students for life after graduation.



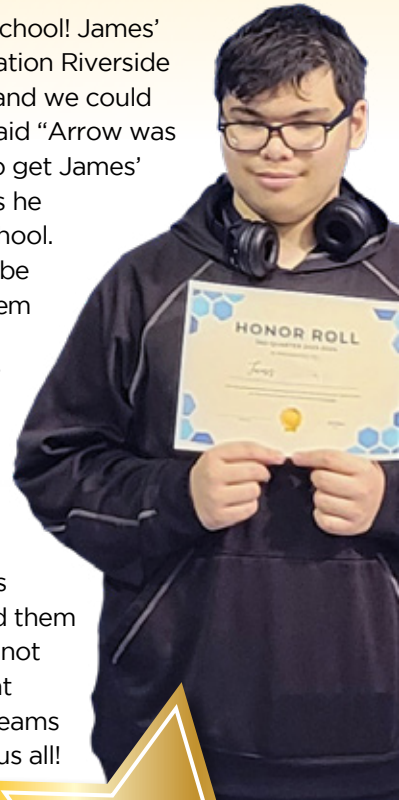
student SUCCESS



Arrow Center for Education - Riverside

James is headed back to public school! James' last day with Arrow Center Education Riverside School was Friday April 12, 2024 and we could not be prouder! James' mother said "Arrow was as motivated as our family was to get James' to know and understand the skills he needed to go back into public school. I am so proud of him!" James will be returning to the public school system as an 11th grader. The Riverside team was excited for the reminder of why we do what we do, and seeing James obtain the skills he needed to rise up!

On one of James' last days at Riverside, he gave a speech to his peers. In his speech, he reminded them of the value of working hard and not wasting time. He encourages that nothing is forever broken, and dreams can be achieved—wise words to us all!



Arrow Center for Education - Tangram

Arrow Center for Education Tangram School is excited to share the success story of Max! Max was placed with ACE Tangram School due to high intensity needs. His needs interfered with Max's ability to access his education and impacted the family's home life. The team at ACE Tangram School worked to help Max learn strategies for managing his time in school and community. Max has been making huge gains! The biggest win for Max and his family is that Max auditioned and got the part in the community play version of Annie by Talent Machine and The Penguin Project! Max's Mom Jodi stated "I thought Max would never be able to build relationships with his siblings, but he has. He was interested in what his brother and sister were doing in the play and was able to get apart! Thank you for all that you do." The staff at ACE are so proud of Max.

Benedictine School

The Benedictine School will celebrate our graduates on June 6th with a special ceremony. One of our graduates, Elya, will be exiting a little early to move into her adult home. She wrote and shared a speech with her classmates, staff, and Board of Directors. We couldn't be prouder of Elya in all of her progress and success; and especially in how she is able to share her story with others.



Good Morning Benedictine! Many of you probably know that my last day here will be on April 24th. I wanted to give a farewell speech before I leave. I started at Benedictine when I was 15 years old in 2018. I have been here for 6 years. Throughout my 6 years here, I have had ups and downs but over the past few years I have done so much better! Over the years, I have been working hard with my staff to now be able to go on off campus visits with my dad, community outings with staff, and work off campus. I am really going to miss everyone. You all are so special to me. Thank you to all of the staff and students for helping me be who I am today. This isn't goodbye. I hope to see you all on graduation and possibly at other future events.

Sincerely, Elya

Stories

Foundation School

Seeing our students' progress in school and after graduation is always a pleasure. From The Foundation School of Montgomery County, alumna Atiya is continuing her education at the University of Maryland Eastern Shore. Building upon the social-emotional skills she learned in high school, Atiya is completing a dual Social Work and Sociology program, earning academic honors on the Dean's list this semester! Atiya reflects on her time at The Foundation Schools, saying "One of the most significant lessons I learned at The Foundation Schools was the importance of self-advocacy. I developed the confidence and assertiveness to address challenges head-on and advocate for my needs effectively with the time I spent there." She is an excellent reminder of how our work as educators remains with our students throughout their lives.



Ivymount

Ivymount School student Sara C was recently celebrated by staff at the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) for how much she has grown professionally during her internship this school year. PAHO Strategic Fund staff applauded Sara for "immersing herself in new skills such as video editing and data entry, far exceeding her expectations." Sara said she overcame some initial apprehensions about working at a desk for hours. "I have learned I can do things I didn't think I could do. I can add computer skills to my resume and know I can do those tasks at my next job."



Spending two full days a week at PAHO this school year, Sara is among the latest students to participate in the Ivymount-PAHO partnership, which started in 2015. Ivymount school staff provide coaching on a variety of skills such as self-advocacy, professionalism, and workplace etiquette. "Sara demonstrated impressive growth and a consistently positive attitude during her internship," said her PAHO supervisor, Christopher Lim. "She will be a great asset to add to any team in the future." Graduating in June, Sara has been accepted to an internship at a coffee/chocolate shop, which, along with her current job at an ice cream shop, will allow her to pursue her interest in working in the food industry.



High Road Lower School of Prince George's County

Future chef Noah is showcasing his love of cooking by making delicious French Toast topped with berries! Yum! Noah has shown so much growth during his time at High Road Lower School of Prince George's County that he is planning to return to his least restrictive environment in the fall to attend his local High School for 9th grade. Congratulations, Noah!

student SUCCESS Stories

continued!

Katherine Thomas School

The Katherine Thomas School Triumphs in Special Olympics Maryland Basketball. This year at Katherine Thomas School, seven of our middle school students had the incredible opportunity to participate in the Special Olympics Maryland 3v3 Middle School Basketball league. Guided by KTS faculty Teddy Mavros and Janie Hammond, these students trained diligently as a team, meeting twice a week at Katherine Thomas School.



Throughout the season, our students competed in four tournaments at various locations across Maryland, showcasing their skills against teams from all over the state. We are proud to announce that our team emerged victorious in every game, culminating in a state championship win at the University of Maryland.

Beyond their success on the basketball court, our students gained invaluable life lessons from this experience. They learned the importance of teamwork, fostering strong bonds with each other through constant encouragement, support, and dedication. They also felt a profound sense of belonging within both the KTS community and the broader community. Most importantly, they created cherished memories together that will last a lifetime.

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Sheppard Pratt Schools

The high school program at Sheppard Pratt School in Glyndon held their prom on Friday, May 3. The cafeteria was transformed with blue and silver decorations to showcase the theme of Shine Bright Like a Diamond. Senior students chose the theme and selected the menu of fresh fruit, pizza, wings and Italian Ice or ice cream sundaes. DJ Jazzy G, otherwise known as music teacher Ms. Gunter, provided the music. About forty students and guests attended. The students shined in their prom finery and a good time was had by all.



MANSEF Conference - a MANSEF Mission Moment

Friday, May 3, 2024, at the Marriott Owings Mills Metro Centre was a Collaboration Carnival – a time to Connect, Communicate and Celebrate. Byron Pitts, Co-Anchor ABC News Nightline, and Gerry Brooks, veteran educator, both delivered inspiring remarks receiving standing ovations. Their encouraging words left an indelible impression from tears to laughter. Attendees described our keynote sessions as “absolutely moving” and “powerful.”

Lt. Governor, Aruna Miller, motivated and galvanized the over 600 attendees with her family story and very moving remarks to a room filled with special educators and staff devoted to the field of special education. Her uplifting remarks filled the room with joy and instilled a sense of enthusiasm. MANSEF extends our warmest thanks to Secretary Carol Beatty who continues to extend her kindness and support to the many organizations around Maryland supporting those with special needs.

This one day of professional development provided an excellent opportunity for special educators, administrators, direct care staff, parents and advocates working with children with special needs to gain valuable training and spend time with colleagues in the field. We express our thanks to the Maryland State Department of Education, notably to Dr. Antoine Hickman, Assistant State Superintendent, and our local public school colleagues who partner with us to advance our mission and help support the day’s festivities.

No event is successful without commitment and hard work. Thank you to our co-chairs Alyson Tilles (Katherine Thomas School) and Stephanie Franklin (Benedictine School), and the conference committee who did an amazing job of selecting the presenters, organizing the student art show, coordinating the basket raffle and the photo booths. Not to mention our fabulous student performers from Kennedy Krieger and Baltimore Lab schools who hit it out of the park with the musical numbers. Simply put – it was a positively infectious day.



Become a MSDE-Licensed Teacher with the MAAPP@CCBC

If you have at least a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university, you can earn your full MSDE license to teach, all while continuing to work full-time at your MANSEF-member school.

WHAT: Earn your MSDE Standard Professional License in as few as six semesters.

WHO: Instruction-focused employees in MANSEF-member schools who have earned at least a bachelor's degree are eligible to participate. This includes teachers, paraprofessionals, teaching assistants and community support assistants.

WHERE:

- Stay in your current position within your MANSEF school/setting.
- Study mostly online, when and where it's most convenient for you.

WHEN: Currently accepting applications for fall 2024 and beyond. The program has rolling admission and participants may start in fall, spring or summer.

WHY:

- On-site/in-school mentor
- Hands-on support from a non-evaluative clinical supervisor
- Individualized program; complete in three to six years.

HOW: Apply using this link or QR code: forms.office.com/r/WLFD0x48J

QUESTIONS: Jessica Brown-Shott, MAAPP@CCBC program coordinator
jbrownst@ccbc.md.edu

The MAAPP@CCBC is approved by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) as a Maryland Approved Alternative Preparation Program. It was created through a collaborative partnership between the Maryland Association of Teachers' Union (MATU), the Maryland Association of Special Education (MASE), and the Community College of Baltimore County (CCBC).

MANSEF and CCBC Establish a MAAPP

MANSEF is pleased and proud to partner with the Community College of Baltimore County (CCBC) in establishing a Maryland Approved Alternative Preparation Program pathway for teacher licensure. This new program, the first of its kind in Maryland, will train conditionally licensed special education teachers within our member schools who are new to the field of education. This is an ideal option for staff working at a MANSEF school who are looking to make a career change.



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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.**

Maryland Center for School Safety

The Maryland Center for School Safety (MCSS), established in 2013, serves as an independent unit of the State government that provides grants, training, and support to public, non-public special education, and private schools throughout Maryland.



MCSS promotes collaboration among students, parents, educators, mental health practitioners, law enforcement, and crime prevention practitioners, with a particular focus on the physical and emotional well-being of Maryland students. In concert with MCSS, Maryland public, non-public special education, and private schools are committed to fostering collaboration and

effective communication among school staff, students, and law enforcement. Shared efforts serve as a foundation for Maryland's diverse schools to identify better identify and address the needs and concerns of our students. Through collaboration, MCSS continuously works to create inclusive educational environments free from fear, harm, trauma, and unnecessary hardship.



Check out our newly revamped website and follow us on Facebook!

