



The Foundation Schools Flyer

Providing a Foundation in Education Since 1975

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Staff Spotlight Keisha Johnstone Steps Up

FSMC's Health Teacher, Keisha Johnstone, is always a step ahead in integrating activities that will improve both the physical and emotional well-being of our students. Keisha has been with FSMC since 2007 and also has over a decade of experience teaching dance outside of The Foundation Schools. Last year, she eagerly accepted the opportunity to provide a dance class for the girls in the school's middle school program. This year as the staff began preparations for Black History Month, Keisha seized an ideal opportunity to connect the past to the present



and teach students about a form of African dance that has transcended generations to what is now known as "stepping." She created the FSMC Step Team in January and the group began

regular rehearsals. They were videotaped for a special assembly in March and did a captivating live performance at our annual fundraising benefit in April.

Keisha's peers recently nominated her for a Quarterly Core Value Award. In preparing for Black History Month and the Benefit, she showed tremendous leadership and epitomized work ethic by not only coordinating the group but also by performing with her students. Staff and students value her for her integrity and respect. We thank Keisha for going above and beyond!

We All Scream for Ice Cream! FSHS Celebrates Being Drug Free

Because of their emotional disabilities, the students enrolled at The Foundation Schools are at high risk for drug and alcohol use and addiction. Our Another Path Program educates students about the dangers of drug and alcohol abuse and helps students who are using to stop and find more productive ways to cope with their problems.



Students are screened for drug use each quarter and drug awareness activities are held throughout the year. This year's activities at FSHS included Red Ribbon Week, an "It's Academic"-style competition featuring questions on drug-related topics, and an end-of-the-year ice cream social and celebration. The staff and students raised money for the ice cream treats and prizes, and the celebration was open to all students who completed their 4th quarter drug screen. Students who had been drug free for the whole school year were recognized and prizes such as movie passes, gift certificates to local restaurants, and a grand prize of a \$20 gift certificate to Foot Locker were awarded when students correctly answered questions about drugs and alcohol. The students really enjoyed the warm waffles and delicious ice cream and took pleasure in using their knowledge to win prizes. It was a great way to end the school year and encourage the students to continue their healthy alcohol and drug-free habits through the summer.

FSEM Students Discover Insects are Incredible

The First through Sixth Grade students at our Largo campus got up close and personal with a variety of insects when Kay Taub of Incredible Insects visited the school in June. Ms. Taub is an entomologist and former Director of the Smithsonian Institution's Insect Zoo. Through her Incredible Insects program she provides students with a hands-on introduction to arthropods. The students were awe-struck while Ms. Taub conducted her 60-minute workshop. Students had the opportunity to hold and examine Tobacco Hornworms, Madagascar Hissing Cockroaches, Lubber Grasshoppers, and Millipedes. They were also encouraged to examine her preserved collections of exotic insects, fossils and ambers. The students asked great questions and enjoyed sharing what they had already learned in school about such things as fossils and exoskeletons. The staff and students are very grateful to Ms. Taub for bringing her spectacular program to the school and to Andre Gingles, Chairman of the Board, for covering the cost of the workshops.



President Obama Writes Back

Each year Barbara Jennai's class at FSEM writes letters to the President suggesting ways to make the world, the state, or their neighborhood a better place. The fifth grade students typed their letters on the computer and many inserted pictures they found online. They told President Obama that they are happy he was elected and think he is doing a good job. They asked him to help the poor and homeless by providing food, clothing and shelter for them. They also asked the President to help reunite foster children with their parents. They asked the President to provide college scholarships so all children could get a good education. They also requested that he create more jobs, and decrease neighborhood violence with better gun laws. Last year President Obama sent a thank you letter and a photo. This year he responded with many treasures for the students. He sent a thank you letter, a picture of him with his family and their dog, an interview with him, and a diagram of the White House. The class created a display of their letters and the response from President Obama outside of their classroom for all of the school to read and enjoy.



FSMC Seniors Cruise Toward Graduation

On June 4th, the FSMC Senior Class went on a lunch cruise on the Potomac River aboard the Spirit of Washington. Each year the senior class takes a special trip to commemorate their time and growth in the program. The seniors select where they would like to go and then must work very hard to raise enough money to fund the special outing. The students and their staff advisors held two staff jean weeks, fleece jacket sales, and pizza and donut sales throughout the school year in order to save for their trip.



Six of the seniors along with five staff chaperones enjoyed a beautiful sunny day together a few weeks before the students were scheduled to graduate and set sail for their next big adventure. The students and staff dined, danced, and took tons of photos to capture the fun memories.

Congratulations to all of our graduates!

Recent Grant Awards

The Foundation Schools would like to acknowledge the generosity of the many Foundations, Corporations and Individuals that provide their support for our programs. Without the tremendous generosity of our community we could not achieve the same level of success in accomplishing our mission of providing a specialized educational and therapeutic program for students with emotional disabilities and preparing them to be productive and successful in their future academic and career paths. We would like to publicly recognize the Dimick Foundation and the Spring Creek Designated Fund of the Community Foundation for the National Capital Region for providing grant funding during the second half of the 2009-2010 School Year.

We also rely on generous in-kind donations which provide our students with high quality and up-to-date resources while enabling us to contain costs during these especially difficult economic times. Special recognition is offered to the Association for Library Service to Children for selecting The Foundation Schools as one of three recipients of their fourth annual nationwide Bookapalooza program. The program is intended to help transform the recipient libraries' collections and create a better future for children through libraries.

Over 500 new books and audio books were donated to our schools by the Bookapalooza program. These books, including picture books, early readers, and young adult level books, were all published in 2009 by leading publishers. They are mostly hardbacks and will last for a long time. Our current library collections are small and outdated, and the influx of so many wonderful items will entice our students to increase both their academic and recreational use of the libraries, aiding in their overall success.



On June 18th, The Foundation School of Montgomery County Library & Media Center held a lunch party to welcome the elementary and middle school students to the new books in the library. The students had the opportunity



to browse the books after enjoying a lunch of pizza and homemade cookies. Sara Phang, the librarian, and teachers Resha Sakowski and Megan Guyer organized the party, with help from Administrative Assistant Taqwa Pope. The party was a great success and many students checked out books. Students at our Largo campus will have access to their half of the new materials later this summer after they are entered into the library catalog and put into circulation.

Help and Healing Through Art and Play

Our therapists have long recognized the value of incorporating play therapy when working with our younger students. Children naturally communicate their experiences and knowledge through play, and our therapists use these sessions to progress the students toward healing and growth. While our Largo campus has always had a play room, they wanted to make it a more inviting and therapeutic place for the students. Teacher and artist, Sean Murphy, was asked to lead the school's art club in painting a mural for the play room. Sean drew the mural's design on a 1 inch by 1 inch square grid and then had the students draw a 1 foot by 1 foot square grid on the wall. Multiple students were then able to copy the drawing onto the wall one square at a time. After the entire drawing was done, the students mixed paint colors and transformed the wall into a colorful animal-themed mural. Therapist Tameka Parker then went to work organizing the room with toys, animals and games which were donated by staff from the school and the administrative office. The response to the new room has been very enthusiastic. The students are excited about using it to express themselves more freely, and they love the new toys and games. Kudos to the many students and staff members who embodied the spirit of Teamwork in bringing this project to fruition.



Dollar-for-Dollar Matching Funds Available to Support our School Lunch Program!

Our students crave the sweet taste of success that comes from learning and accomplishing their academic and social/emotional goals. Over the years we noticed that our students arrived at school not only hungry for knowledge, but simply hungry. Most of us have experienced at one time or another how difficult it is to concentrate and perform our best when we have not had enough to eat. Perhaps we didn't eat a good breakfast before heading off to work, or our morning meeting ran over and into our normal lunch time. Now, imagine how a child who doesn't have breakfast and doesn't have enough to eat for lunch is going to perform in school. Compound that hunger with severe emotional and behavioral problems. Compound it again with learning differences and learning disabilities. These are the very special students we serve at The Foundation Schools. Think how much harder is it for these children to succeed academically and socially.



We must ensure the basic physical needs of our students are being adequately met in order to begin satisfying their hunger for knowledge. Over 80% of the students in our Largo campus are living in low-income households or are being cared for in group homes or foster care. Providing nutritious, filling meals is a real challenge for these families and caregivers, especially during these difficult economic times. Our School Lunch Program is a critical intervention and promotes success in the classroom by enabling our students to be physically ready for learning.

The School Lunch Program falls outside the purview of our budget from the Maryland State Department of Education, and unfortunately the funding we receive from the National School Lunch Program covers less than half of the expenses of feeding our students. Grants and private donations are essential in enabling us to provide this vital service for our students.

The Foundation Schools is excited to announce that The Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation will again provide matching funds for the School Lunch Program. They will match dollar-for-dollar up to \$20,000 in contributions for the program during the 2010-2011 School Year. We deeply appreciate the Foundation's continued generosity. **Please consider "stepping up to the plate" and making a donation so we can take full advantage of the matching funds and provide nutritious meals for our students.**

I would like to take advantage of the Matching Grant Program by making my tax-deductible contribution to help provide lunches for low-income students.

Enclosed is my donation of \$_____ (please make your check payable to "The Foundation Schools") or
Please charge my (Circle One) Master Card/Visa/American Express for my donation of \$_____
Credit Card Number: _____ Exp. Date: _____
Security Code (3 or 4 digits on the back of the card to prevent against fraud): _____
Signature _____

Please return this completed form to: The Foundation Schools, Attn: Development Office
6000 Executive Blvd., Ste. 605, Rockville, MD 20852

Donations may also be made online at www.foundationsschools.org. Thank you!



The Foundation Schools

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The Foundation Schools was chartered in 1975 as an independent, 501(c)(3) nonprofit psychoeducational services organization. For 35 years our mission has been to provide a specialized educational and therapeutic program for students with emotional disabilities and prepare them to be productive and successful in their future academic and career paths. For more information visit our website at www.foundationsschools.org.

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Our Video Has Won a 2010 Telly Award!



We were thrilled when local consulting firm, RAFFA, P.C., selected us to receive one of five "Take 25" video production grants to help us tell our story. Esteban Escobar and his team at 5:00 Films & Media spent countless hours working with our staff, students and alumni to create **The Most Courageous Kids** video. The video recently took a Bronze award at the 31st annual Telly Awards, which receives over 13,000 entries annually. The Telly Awards honor outstanding work in the video and film industry.

If you have not yet seen our short video, please take a moment to log onto www.foundationsschools.org and press play!

The Foundation Schools Flyer is produced by the Development Office. Erin Ryan, Editor; Contributors - Rachel Babiskin, Brooke Brody, Sheila Graham, Precious Hart, Gina James, Barbara Jennai, Tracy Jensen, Keisha Johnstone, Kelli Kunert, Sean Murphy, Monica Nicolas, Sara Phang, Taqwa Pope, Rayvon Scott, Stacey Thomas, and Tori Wilson.