



# MCIU CONNECTION

## Transition Team offers First Summer Work Program

Experience in a real work environment is one of the best ways to ensure students are ready for their first job. "Students really benefit from a program that is 100% work oriented --learning everything from being dressed appropriately for the

job to adopting the skills necessary for various positions," said Cheryl Wise, Supervisor of the Transition Program.

For the first time, the MCIU is providing this opportunity during a summer transition program, running from July 6 through August 5th. Six students are enrolled in the program to take advantage of

full-day work schedules that will give them experience in areas such as clerical, receiving/packaging and custodial/maintenance. The students, working throughout the MCIU, receive direct support from job coach, Catharine Miller (pictured above with student, Matt Settembrino from the School District of Cheltenham Township) and transition teacher, Jacki Lyster.

In addition to learning hands-on job skills, the students will be taught about appropriate work behaviors, how to search for jobs on the internet and newspapers, and how to complete an online application. They will also start creating a student portfolio to share with prospective employers.

Every part of the day is dedicated to learning different skills --even lunch. Last week, the students honed their organizational and independent learning skills by planning and managing the delivery of pizzas. They practiced calling a pizza shop, requested that a menu be faxed to them, figured out how much money they would need for the purchase, created a flyer advertising the lunch offerings and placed the order with the restaurant.

"That was a good lesson in teamwork, communication, making choices, creating schedules and money management," said Lyster.



## Educators Meet Lincoln

Nearly 70 educators enjoyed a trip to Gettysburg this summer --part of the Civil War Institute offered by the MCIU's Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Development Division (CIPD) from June 28 to July 1.

The trip allowed K-12 history teachers to do a team study of the Battle of Gettysburg -- a

turning point in the Civil War where the Union victory in the summer of 1863 ended General Robert E. Lee's second and most ambitious invasion of the North. Teachers toured the famous historical monuments and heard presentations from professional field guides and an Abraham Lincoln re-enactor (pictured above).

"The visit was a great opportunity for our educators to experience Gettysburg as learners. This gave many of them a fresh look at how to incorporate the use of historical sites into their instruction," said Arthur Mitchell, Assistant Director of CIPD. He noted that the trip was just one of the many activities being held during the second year of the 3-year Teaching American History Grant. This summer's Institute also included 3 workshops at the Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge, a non-profit education organization that is partnering with the MCIU to deliver the grant opportunities. Additionally, the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) presented on how to engage participants in using the Standards Aligned System (SAS) portal and incorporate learnings into the teaching tool.

During the 2010-2011 school year, the MCIU will be offering four secondary and four elementary workshops for teachers as well as four professional learning community sessions. These meetings will be integral to the work of the Social Studies Curriculum Council, which is being revitalized for the upcoming school year. "Social studies is becoming part of the Keystone Exams, so it is vital that we begin reviewing the curriculum and creating targeted work that aligns with the test documents," Mitchell said, noting that grant teachers will develop lessons to post on the SAS portal for lesson exemplars. The Council will be held several times a year beginning this fall.

Mitchell encouraged grant participants and other interested teachers to clear their calendars for next summer 2011 when the MCIU will be offering the Civil Rights Institute.





## MONTGOMERY COUNTY INTERMEDIATE UNIT

*An Educational Service Agency Supporting School Excellence*

### MCIU Connection

The bi-weekly newsletter of the  
**Montgomery County  
Intermediate Unit**

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#### Questions? Comments?

#### Story Ideas?

Contact Kristen Rawlings  
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## Talk like a Techie

Do you know the meaning of these tech terms?

**Satellite Teleconference:** When a satellite is involved, the video is down-linked from a satellite receiver and any interactivity is handled by telephone. There is no two-way video.

**Second Life:** A 3D environment that is a cross between a social networking site and an online game. The object is to create a virtual life for your character (or avatar). Second Life is a massive multi-player universe (MMU) or virtual world.

**Skype:** A specific service provider for telephone service over the Internet.  
<http://www.skype.com/>

**Spam:** Spam refers to junk email, similar to junk mail.

**Spyware:** This software spies on your computer, capturing information without your knowledge. It can be transmitted through email attachments and file downloads.

## Mental Models

A Continuing Series on Teachings from the Jorgensen Learning Center

Dr. Ray Jorgensen challenges us to be aware of our mental models, a deeply ingrained set of assumptions, generalizations or even images that influence how we understand the world and how we take action. We adopt these patterns of thinking/behaving from our experiences and unbringing. Mental models can create road-blocks to effective listening and our ability to respond and adapt to new or different ideas and ways of doing things.

#### MENTAL MODEL EXAMPLE:

**Principal:** Why do you think this student is being disruptive in class?

**Teacher:** Because he comes from a poor family. You know he isn't getting enough attention at home.

**CONCLUSION:** Mental models come from a lot of places and a lot of experiences form our mental models. The discipline is to surface our mental models and put them aside so that we can truly hear, respond to and learn from new or differing information.

## “Great Finds” by the MCIU Staff



If you happen to be in the Souderton area with an appetite, Alison Scott, Special Education Data Coordinator for the MCIU, recommends dining at the Melodia

Grill, 664 East Broad Street, Souderton. Melodia Grill, described on their website as offering “natural gourmet cuisine”, is a contemporary upscale restaurant dedicated to healthy dining. The chefs only work with 0% transfat oil and strive to use as many organic or natural ingredients as possible.

Alison shared the Steak Wellington appetizers (you get four!) - warm puff pastry stuffed with steak pieces, mushrooms and cheese (yum) and the Steak Asian Noodle Crescendo for a main course, saying the main course was nicely spicy and tender, topped with loads of vegetables. The restaurant's fare includes contemporary American cuisine, European and Asian fare. There is a selection of steaks, baby back ribs and fresh pasta dishes as well as vegetarian and wheat/gluten free entrees. Alison said the meal has to be finished off with a cup of their organic coffee and a serving of the homemade, just caramelized, creme brulee.

Alison said the atmosphere and service were exemplary. And, as an added bonus, the restaurant is a BYOB, which saves a bit of money if you're planning to enjoy wine or beer. To find out more about Melodia Grille, visit <http://melodiagrill.com>.

## Making a DIFFERENCE

*MCIU Staff Volunteer Activity Shared by  
Kristen Rawlings, Communications Director*

My neighbor shared a great volunteer activity for those who have limited time over the summer and are interested in helping children with disabilities. The Lose The Training Wheels



camp, being offered in Philadelphia for the first time, is seeking volunteers to fill shifts for the week long program, August 9-13 at St. Joseph's University. The program teaches children with disabilities to ride a two-wheel bicycle. Each volunteer shift is 75 minutes and volunteers are encouraged to sign up for either a full day or for the same shift for the whole week. Shifts are offered beginning at 8:30 am, with the last shift starting at 3:15 pm.

Volunteers act as spotters for the children --walking/jogging/running alongside a child as he/she is learning to ride a bike during the 75-minute session. They will provide encouragement and physical (balance) support, as needed. While my volunteer commitment has been to help the organization with public relations, others who volunteer for the camp will have the opportunity to assist a child with disabilities to tackle a seemingly impossible task and master it in less than a week's time. Lose the Training Wheels staff say that within days of learning to ride, many children exhibit independent behaviors for the first time ever. To volunteer, log on to <http://www.buckscountyped.com/forms.htm> or call 215.340.9555.

If you have a “Great Find” or a volunteer activity that you would like to share with other staff, email Kristen Rawlings at [krawlings@mciu.org](mailto:krawlings@mciu.org) or call x197.