



MCIU Connection

The bi-monthly newsletter of the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit

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Online: www.mciu.org

The Anderson School Dedication Ceremony A Great Success

More than 100 guests, including community members, legislators and staff, participated in The Anderson School dedication ceremony, held on Saturday, February 2nd. The attendees, who got a chance to see first hand the many improvements for students, Anderson staff and the county's 22 school districts, were awed by the impressive new facility which doubles the school's capacity to accommodate 130 students needing academic or behavioral support.

During tours of the 22,500 square foot campus, visitors saw the many new features, including 13 classrooms, a gymnasium with weight room, cafeteria, ceramics studio, industrial arts lab and state-of-the-art computer lab. By the spring, at least five of the classrooms will be equipped with Smart boards.

"The opening of the Anderson School's new campus will be a tremendous asset to Montgomery County schools and students," said Dr. Jerry W. Shiveley, Executive Director/CEO of the MCIU23, who cut the ribbon along with MCIU Board President, Joseph Chmielewski. "The improvements we have made will enhance the excellent academic, behavioral and therapeutic programming for which Anderson is so well-respected." Dr. Shiveley and Chmielewski also unveiled a bronze dedication plaque displayed in the school's lobby.

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During a formal dedication ceremony in the Anderson gymnasium, Dr. Shiveley extended his thanks and appreciation to the many staff and project partners who made the school a reality.

MCIU Board President Joe Chmielewski provided poignant, congratulatory remarks: “And so, it is built. It’s of bricks and mortar and many other things that comprise a building. That doesn’t make it a school. It is all of you, who gather here each day, who make this place a school. We are here to dedicate a building and to recognize the dedication of those who make this building a place where lives are touched and transformed. Where students, whose needs are borne out of adversity can come to grow, to find purpose and self confidence; and to learn that self-confidence and dedication can and does change lives and ultimately, the world.”

Dr. Jeanmarie Mason, Director of Special Education Services, noted that “In dedicating this school, we dedicate ourselves to serve the needs of the students in Montgomery County. Our primary goal is to help students develop a new and purposeful direction in their lives.”

Anderson student, Elexis Borowy, spoke personally about the success of the Anderson School. “I needed a school that supported my personal needs in a way I would feel comfortable. Anderson fits this description perfectly. The staff here try their hardest to help each student, individually or as a group, demonstrating great leadership skills and patience. For this, I am truly grateful.”

Lower Providence Township Manager Joe Dunbar, State Representative Daylin Leach and Anderson Principal MaryAnn Franklin also offered praise of the impressive new facility and the accomplishments of staff and students. Two special guests included Carol and Melissa Gardner, the daughter and granddaughter of Nancy Anderson, the school’s namesake. A short video was created and shown at the ceremony, highlighting Nancy’s vision 40 years ago to develop the type of services that Anderson provides to this day.

Students who attend the Anderson School are identified and referred by their school districts as needing academic and behavioral support. Dedicated professional staff provide instruction in the general education curriculum as well as specially designed instruction for individual student needs in a small classroom setting. In addition to academic instruction, the Anderson School’s program features: diversity education, prosocial behavior training, character education, group counseling, mainstreaming with area centers for vocational training and work study partnerships with local community employers.



MCIU Executive Director/CEO Jerry W. Shiveley, Board President Joe Chmielewski (left) pose in front of the dedication plaque with Nancy Anderson’s daughter, Carol and granddaughter, Melissa. Nancy Anderson is the school’s namesake.



Tom Simek, former MCIU supervisor (left back), Bob Leiss, former MCIU Program Director, MaryAnn Franklin, Anderson Principal (left front) and Susan Wright, Norristown School District pose in front of a time capsule constructed by students in the new industrial arts lab.



Elexis Borowy, Anderson student (left), displays art work she created in the new arts lab. Dr. Jeanmarie Mason, Director of Special Education, (right) provides remarks during the ceremony.

New Communications Director On Board



Kristen Rawlings, the new Communications Director, joined the MCIU on January 14. Kristen has more than 15 years experience in marketing and public relations working in a variety of fields including education, government and healthcare. Prior to joining the IU, Kristen worked for Friends Hospital as the Marketing and Communication Director. She also worked at Camden County College, the Pennsylvania House of Representatives and as a reporter for the Star-Democrat newspaper in Maryland.

Kristen is looking forward to working with the MCIU divisions to promote the many valuable services provided to constituent schools. Kristen will be in charge of writing, designing and editing all internal and external communications, including the MCIU Connection, divisional publications, the annual report and the MCIU Update. She will also oversee media relations, special event planning, and other communications projects for the IU as well as for school districts and non-public schools interested in contracting for services. Kristen can be reached at ext. 197.

25 Year Employees Recognized



Dr. Jerry W. Shiveley presents Monica Caccese (left) with a dedication plaque for 25 years of service at the January Board meeting. Five other employees listed below were also honored for 25 years of service.

Monica has worked in the Special Education Division for all of her 25

years of employment with the IU. She began as a Data Entry Clerk in November 1982. In 1993, Monica became a Child Accounting Specialist, a position which she still holds today. Monica has been an integral part of the Child Count system.

Deborah Crable: Debbie began her employment with the IU as a Long Term Substitute Teacher Assistant in January, 1982 and went on to become a full-time Teacher Assistant the following school year. Debbie remained a Teacher Assistant in a number of different programs through the 1997-98 school year. Beginning September 1998 she was transferred to the position of Job Coach within the Transition Program where she continues to work today.

Lanieta Garbutt: In September 1982, Neity was hired as a part-time Interpreter in the Hearing Support Program. In September 1984, Neity was reclassified to a full-time Interpreter and has remained with the Hearing Support Program for all of her 25 years with the IU.

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Welcome New IU Staff

The following individuals joined the IU staff over the past couple of months. Welcome to the organization!

Amy Madden - Teacher, Special Education, Autistic Support

Ann White – Long Term Substitute Teacher, Special Education, Hearing Support

Katrina Landes – Job Coach , Transition Services, Special Education

Holley Moyer – Confidential Secretary, Human Resources

Sheira Solomon – Substitute Interpreter, Special Education, Hearing Support

Alicia Spatzer – Temporary Teacher Assistant, Special Education, Life Skills

Patricia Veneziale – Temporary Teacher Asst., Special Education, Autistic Support

Eileen Wysong – Temporary Teacher Asst., Special Education, Life Skills

Farewell

The MCIU staff wishes Cheryl Ranck, Early Intervention Supervisor, a very fond farewell and best wishes in her future endeavors.

Cheryl, who worked at the MCIU since December 2006 is retiring from the Special Education Division on February 15.

New Social Security Administration Publication on Retirement Benefits

The Social Security Administration has issued a new fact sheet which explains how the Administration computes Social Security retirement benefits for anyone turning 62 this year (born in 1946). If you are (or soon to be) age 62, you might find this helpful.

Please visit www.socialsecurity.gov/pubs/10070.pdf to read the fact sheet. There is more overall information on Social Security benefits at their web page www.socialsecurity.gov.

Attendance Form Reminder

Please be sure to submit completed attendance forms directly to your supervisor for signature. Forms sent directly to Human Resources must be returned which creates a processing delay. All attendance forms (illness, personal time, vacation, compensatory time, inservice, etc.) must have a supervisor's signature before they can be processed.

Upcoming MCIU Events



Valentine's Day Bakeoff

The MCIU Spirit Committee invites all staff to participate in the Valentine's Day Bakeoff & Silent Auction on Wednesday, Feb. 13. Staff who choose to bake their favorite dessert may compete for a Blue Ribbon Award judged by the Spirit Committee. Entrees should be brought to Room C3 by 11:30 that day. Staff may also bring a brown-bag lunch and join in the Silent Auction from 12 –12:45 p.m. All proceeds will benefit future Spirit Activities. For more information, contact Sandy Edling, Dawn Harrington or Nancy Saul.

Academic Competition/ Quiz Bowl

The MCIU will again serve as host for the Regional Academic Competition on February 12. Seventeen high school teams are registered for this year's event, coordinated by the Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Development Division. At the competition, a single high school team will be selected to represent Montgomery County at the Pennsylvania Academic Competition to be held in Harrisburg on April 25. Schools will send an academic team of six students, with four students competing in each round against other Montgomery County high school students. The participating high schools include: Bishop McDevitt, Cheltenham, Harriton, Hatboro-Horsham, Mt. St. Joseph Academy, Perkiomen Valley, Plymouth-Whitemarsh, Pottsgrove, Springfield, Springfield, St. Pius X, The Baldwin School, The Episcopal Academy, The Haverford School, Upper Dublin, Upper Merion, Upper Moreland and Upper Perkiomen. Each team competes in two matches and each match consists of two rounds. Questions will be drawn from Literature, American History, Contemporary Events, World History, Potpourri, and Science and will cover all time periods.

Reading Olympics

Mark your calendars for this year's events. Volunteer forms will coming soon. All events are 5:30-8:30 pm.

March 25, 2008 -Norristown High School
 March 27, 2008 -Indian Valley Middle School, Souderton*
 April 14, 2008 Hatboro-Horsham High School
 April 15, 2008 -Cheltenham High School *
 April 16, 2008 -Wissahickon Middle and High Schools
 April 21, 2008 -Colonial Middle School
 April 22, 2008 -Welsh Valley MS, Lower Merion
 May 13, 2008 -Pottstown MS
 * Expansion locations only

Holidays for Administrative & Support Staff-2008-2009 (12-month employees)



<u>Date</u>	<u>Holidays</u>
July 4, 2008	Independence Day
September 1, 2008	Labor Day
November 27-28, 2008	Thanksgiving Break
December 25, 26, 2008 & January 1, 2, 2009	Winter Break
January 19, 2009	Martin Luther King Jr. Day
February 16, 2009	Presidents' Day
April 10, 2009	Spring Break

Educational Resources to be Connected Statewide



The MCIU was authorized this January to serve as the fiscal agent and billing entity for the PAIU Net Contracts, an initiative that will

establish a statewide educational network backbone. Gail Kennedy, Director of Technology and Information Services, said this will enable all participating intermediate units, school districts and other educational entities across the state to share educational content over a virtual private broadband network.

The initiative is made possible through an Act 183 E-Fund Grant awarded to the PAIU in the amount of \$4.5 million. The MCIU will be reimbursed for actual costs plus 5% for the services that it provides for this project.

The MCIU was also approved for a \$1,022,047 Act 183 E-Fund grant to connect educational entities in Montgomery County that are currently not a part of the MCIU regional network. Montgomery was one of only two counties in the state that does not have its educational entities connected.

“Resource sharing across the state of Pennsylvania will provide incredible learning opportunities for our teachers and students. For example, a Montgomery County school will be able to do a video conference with a school in Pittsburgh or participate in a seminar that is taking place in State College,” said Kennedy. “The Opportunities really are limitless.”

Nominations open for 2nd Annual Voices of Inspiration Awards



Nominations are now being accepted for the 2008 Voices of Inspiration Award for Teaching Excellence. The award, created by Freedom Credit Union in partnership with the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit, honors and celebrates the contributions of exemplary educators in the Montgomery County School District. 2008 marks the second year that this award will honor exceptional educators and the commitment they make to students, families, and the community as a whole. Freedom hopes the encouragement and enthusiasm of the schools and communities in Montgomery County will continue to build a strong foundation for the Voices of Inspiration Award so that we may pay tribute to great teachers for years to come. For more information, program guidelines, or to submit an online nomination, please visit freedomcu.org or mciu.org.

Twenty-three finalists, one teacher from each of the 21 Montgomery County public school districts, one teacher from the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit and one teacher from a Montgomery County non-public school, will be chosen from the nominations and will be recognized at the Voices of Inspiration Awards banquet, being held this spring, and each will receive \$500. From these 23 finalists, three winners (one high school, one middle school and one elementary school teacher) will be awarded with the Voices of Inspiration Award and an additional \$1500. Nominations, based on an individual's contributions or performance during that school year, or for cumulative efforts over many years, may be submitted by any of the following people: students, parents, co-workers, administrators, or school employees.

The nominee should clearly demonstrate an extraordinary dedication to teaching young people while exhibiting the qualities that represent a truly inspirational educator. Nominations are open now through March 10, 2008.

For inquiries contact Cyndi Cohen, Marketing Coordinator, by email at voiawards@freedomcu.org or by phone at 215-612-5931.

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Cynthia Hafner: The supervisor of the Multidisabled Support Program probably did not realize what a dedicated employee he/she was getting when Cindy was hired. She has worked with the same population for all of her 25 years as a Teacher Assistant.

Gail Katch: Gail began her teaching career at the IU as a Long Term Substitute Teacher in 1982 in the Special Education Division. She taught in the Mentally Retarded and Life Skills Programs until September 2006 at which time she became a Training and Consulting Specialist where she continues to work.

William Soldano: Bill started as a part-time clerk in the Graphics Center in 1982 and was quickly reclassified to full-time in 1983. Bill was made the Manager of the Graphics Center in January 1986, the position which he has held since that time.