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ESP GRADUATES ITS FIRST CLASS

On August 12, 2005, Emerging Scholars Program celebrated its first closing ceremony and move-up day for Class 1 students. The ceremony, attended by proud parents, families, guests, and board members was held in the Episcopal High School auditorium.

This first group of ESP graduates is now enrolled in participating independent schools.



CLASS 1 GRADUATES WITH THEIR DIPLOMAS.

Closing ceremony...continued on page 4, please.

JOHN THOMAS JOINS ESP BOARD

At its September 16 meeting, ESP Board of Directors officially inducted Mr. John Thomas onto the board.

Mr. Thomas joins the Board as the new headmaster of Flint Hill School. Most recently from Texas, Mr. Thomas is glad to return to his ties on the east coast. Mr. Thomas has embraced ESP and is excited about what its

member schools are doing to support students from diverse backgrounds.

Mr. Tom Whitworth, former headmaster of Flint Hill School, is the new head at Darlington School in Rome, GA. Mr. Whitworth, who remains on the ESP Board, says Darlington will be ready to accept an ESP graduate for ninth grade boarding.



MORT DUKEHART, JOHN THOMAS, AND ED CARR AT THE SEPTEMBER BOARD MEETING.



*"THERE IS NO TURNING BACK
ONCE YOU EXPERIENCE
ESP."*

MR. JAHAAAD

ESP acknowledges Betty Tomlinson, executive administrative assistant, for contributing to articles in this newsletter.

DINNERS BRING ESP FAMILIES TOGETHER

ESP's summer program began with its second annual Orientation Picnic on June 19 on the grounds of Episcopal High School, a founding school and host to ESP.

Families and friends from Classes 1 and 2 enjoyed a fun picnic atmosphere. This venue provided parents of new students the opportunity to interact with Class 1 parents who shared their understanding of ESP.

After a cookout feast, the new families received an orientation. Mr. Mort Dukehart, ESP Board President,

and Mr. Ed Carr, Vice President and Treasurer, introduced themselves to our parents and shared their perspectives on ESP.

Three of our Class 1 fathers, Mr. Stanley (Elizabeth, Class 1), Mr. Jahaad (Marjani, Class 1) and Mr. Sohrab (Maham, Class 1), shared how much ESP has meant to their personal growth. In the words of Mr. Jahaad, "There is no turning back once you experience ESP."

The summer ended with a potluck dinner. Held the evening prior to

closing ceremony, the gathering was a grand event. Each family brought a covered dish, with each participant's native country's cuisine represented. Special humorous awards were presented to our graduates to capture their unique personalities. Each Class 1 student presented their speech, "What ESP Has Meant To Me", to the group of parents, extended family and friends.

Please refer to the ESP web site next month if you would like to read some of these heartfelt essays.

COUNSELORS INTEGRAL TO ESP SUCCESS

If there were no student counselors and volunteers, who would make the runs to the copy machines, decorate the bulletin boards, walk the kids to the pool, give the teachers breaks, clean up after a special project and offer a special ear or kind words to the kids? ESP would like to thank those who served as counselors for summer 2005.

Joel Stanley returned to Flint Hill School where he a sophomore this

year. He was the "go-to guy" for technology during this summer's program.

Ambre Tomlinson, a junior at Hampton University, took her role as counselor very seriously and was both a tough taskmaster and warm, big sister to the scholars.

Jon-Marie French is a senior this year at Old Dominion College this fall where she majors in Communication and Psychology. Her calm

voice assured our children that they were cared for and respected as future leaders.

ESP would also like to acknowledge the contributions of the following student volunteers:

Michael Heyer
Iqra Khalid
Catherine Stanley
Yusef Wehelie



ESP PARENT SHARES HER STORY

Interview with Olga Rodriguez-Suarez, mother of Class 2 Student Pablo Rodriguez-Suarez:

This summer was Pablo's first year with ESP. Pablo came to ESP from Cameron Elementary School with a recommendation from both his school principal and his classroom teacher.

Pablo was born in Costa Rica to single mother Olga Rodriguez-Suarez. He was a quiet child in pre-school but the teaching staff at his school recognized that Pablo had untapped talent which his current school could not challenge. The principal of the pre-school he attended asked his mother to take Pablo to a friend who was a doctor to be tested. The doctor did extensive testing, free of charge,

and confirmed that Pablo was extremely bright but needed stimulation. He suggested that the United States would offer the schools and programs needed to stimulate Pablo's great potential. Olga's father and family were in Canada. Olga considered going there with Pablo, but, instead, decided to move to the US. In the second grade in Fairfax County, Pablo earned high marks in a nationwide test and was then selected to attend a "Key School", Cameron Elementary. When Mr. LeCesne, ESP Executive Director, visited Cameron to recruit students for ESP, Pablo was mentioned as a good candidate. He applied and was ultimately selected to join Class 2.

Olga states, "In my heart I knew there would be some-

thing better for Pablo in the United States, so I abandoned my life and career in Costa Rica to look for a better education for my son." Olga, a human resources specialist in Costa Rica, "left everything to come here and start from scratch". In spite of their family in Canada, she and Pablo came to the US to live "the American dream". Although she works, Olga is always willing to do whatever she can, carpooling, potluck dinners, etc., to help the ESP effort. Olga shared that her family has always put God first in their lives and with His help and Pablo's determination to learn, Pablo will be one of ESP's future success stories.

*"I abandoned my life and career in Costa Rica to look for a better education for my son."
Olga Rodriguez-Suarez*

CONGRATULATIONS, GRADUATES!

ESP is proud to present its first class of graduates:

Marjani Addison
Karen Gutierrez
James Akinsanya
Ahmed Ibrahim
Cristhian Canals
Reginald Padgett
Gilannie Diaz
Elizabeth Stanley
Mohammed Elchehabi
Summer Thomas
Sierra Evans
Brandon Wilkins
Sulaman Choudhry
Maham Sohrab

Students are now enrolled in the following participating independent schools:

St. Andrew's Episcopal School
Alexandria Country Day School
Burgundy Farm Country Day School
Browne Academy
The Congressional Schools of Virginia
Flint Hill School
Green Hedges School
St. Patrick's Episcopal Day School
Highland School



**EMERGING
SCHOLARS
PROGRAM**

FUNDING UPDATE

To date, ESP has raised nearly \$500,000 in cash and pledges to benefit the program. Contributions include foundations, corporate and individual gifts.

ESP would like to thank those who have held special events to benefit ESP and those who have con-

tributed in-kind gifts such as software, supplies, space, testing for the students, and web site design. In addition, ESP placement schools are providing in excess of \$230,000 in financial aid to ESP graduates.

ESP revenue needs for 2006 and 2007 will be

\$360,000 per year, or \$30,000 per month.

The current focus is to raise the funds to meet the 2005 and 2006 budgets. If you would like to support this effort, please call the ESP office or refer to the ESP web site for additional information.

CLOSING CEREMONY...CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1:

Closing ceremony included the presentation of individual awards to the following students: Mathematics – Sulaman Choudhry, Computer Science – Sierra Evans, Language Arts - Maham Sohrab, Leadership – Cristhian Canales, and Valedictorian - Maham Sohrab.

Three very special guests addressed the students. Lewis Forrest, Rhina Ascencio, and Veronica Covarrbias are affiliated with a program similar to ESP. Early Identification Program, based at George Mason University, identifies students from families who are first generation to the US and, as does ESP, empowers them to succeed. The speakers were inspirational to all as they shared their stories about how EIP changed their lives. ESP is appreciative of their comments and plans to develop areas in the future where these organizations can work together.

ESP would also like to acknowledge the faculty who gave so much of themselves over this past summer and winter. In the next newsletter, ESP will introduce you to this group of dedicated individuals. Without their tireless work with all of the students, ESP would not be the success that it is.

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