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BY STUDENTS

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The mission of Emerging Scholars Program (ESP) is to provide an academic and social enrichment program for a diverse group of students who, without financial assistance, could not consider an independent school education. Established by a consortium of Northern Virginia independent schools, ESP's program includes academic, social, and emotional support to prepare students for success in independent schools and beyond.



HOW DO YOU SPEND YOUR FREE TIME? FOR ESP STUDENT IT IS ALL ABOUT AN ODYSSEY

Tamika Alexander, age 11, ESP Cohort 5, spent her hours participating in the highly acclaimed Odyssey of the Mind competition. After winning first place in the regional and state competitions, Tamika and her six teammates from Bailey Elementary School in Falls Church, VA are on their way to Iowa State University to compete in the 2009 World Finals! In addition to the competition, Tamika has been helping to raise funds to cover expenses for the trip to World Finals.



Tamika, left kneeling, and her teammates take a break from fundraising for their trip to the 2009 Odyssey of the Mind World Finals in Iowa.

Following are excerpts from a conversation with Tamika:

Our project, Teach Yer Creature, was to create a humorous performance about a mechanical creature that acts like a real one. We

created a pet named Mo and taught him to walk, talk, paint and poop. Our team then put together an 8-minute skit with Mo. There is also a second part which is a spontaneous problem-solving question.

Our team has been working on OM since September 2008. As a team we met Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays, occasionally Mondays, and whenever there was free time. *(Continued on back page)*

ESP STUDENTS HOST YOUNG AUTHORS DAY

ESP scholar Taylor Lucas says that writing "Buggie's Bad Day" (Buggie is a fly!) made her feel independent because there was no right or wrong and she felt special because not many children have the opportunity to write their own book. But at ESP, all Cohort 5 students including Taylor and her classmates spent over two months working on their own publications.



"Writing 'Buggie's Bad Day' made me feel independent because there was no right or wrong and I felt special because not many children have the opportunity to write their own books." Taylor Lucas, age 11, will graduate from ESP in August and attend sixth grade at Flint Hill School in September.

The ambitious project climaxed with Young Authors Tea in April. Emceed by Lionel Jackson and Taylor Lucas, each student read

from the book he or she had created, written, and illustrated. During the lemonade, tea, and cookies reception, the books were displayed and promoted to the guests. *(Continued on back page)*

ESP VOLUNTEER TUTOR IMPRESSED BY STUDENTS' DESIRE TO LEARN AND CHALLENGE SELVES

I have been tutoring ESP students in mathematics the past two years and have thoroughly enjoyed the experience. What stands out the most about the students is their enthusiasm for learning and positive attitudes in the classroom. We often work on extra problems and when the students have successfully completed a problem they invariably ask for another, more difficult problem to solve! Several times I have assigned a difficult take home extra credit problem and virtually all of the students have attempted to solve these problems, which regularly stump their parents and other adults. Discipline is never a problem and it has been very rewarding working

with bright students with great attitudes who are so eager to learn new concepts.

As a tutor, my experience has been rewarding because I love helping students learn math and working with children who really want to learn.

*Submitted by Ross Little
ESP Volunteer*

You, too, can be an ESP volunteer!

ESP is seeking tutors, office assistance, and help with special events. Please call the ESP office at 703-584-2300 for information.



Volunteer Ross Little spends Saturday afternoons with ESP students. He works to challenge the young scholars on practical, real world mathematics problems that push them to think creatively while applying what they are studying in class. When not at ESP, Mr. Little tutors MBA candidates in his free time.



"YOU ARE PUSHED TO YOUR VERY LIMIT. IT MIGHT SEEM HARD AT FIRST, BUT ESP WILL CHANGE YOUR LIFE."

*LIONEL JACKSON
AGE 10
ESP COHORT 5
ST. ANDREW'S EPISCOPAL
FALL 2009*

ESP STUDENTS AMONG FAVORITES ON CAMPUS ACCORDING TO BURGUNDY FARM COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL HEADMASTER

Let me say it plainly and economically: ESP graduates at Burgundy are among my favorite students on campus! Our current three students, one each in 6th, 7th, and 8th grade, are warm, universally well liked, well adjusted, and thriving. Each works hard and is successful in school, makes friends easily, and is involved in extracurricular activities. And their parents are committed to their children's educations. Whenever I see DJ, Dasia or Anthony, they are smiling and engaged. A casual observer would not be able to say that these students had joined our close-knit JK-8 community only as 6th graders. I can speak in broad strokes because these comments apply equally well to each of our ESP students.

I have worked extensively with less advantaged school populations and with organizations with missions similar to ESP's. ESP possesses a staff who comprehends the promise and the needs of the children they recruit. I have worked extensively with less advantaged school populations and with organizations with missions similar to ESP's.

ESP possesses a staff who compre-

hends the promise and the needs of the children they recruit. They teach and place their students well, and therefore ESP is spectacularly successful.

ESP prepares students for the academic work and the overall expectations and culture of top-tier independent schools. ESP students are grounded in the habits and study skills that lead to success. They are serious about their educations and need no reminding. They enjoy learning!

Independent schools desire the economic as well as religious, ethnic, and racial diversity that a program like ESP provides. But I know from first-hand experience that often schools investing in anything like a full-tuition scholarship are understandably wary, even cautious and prepared for disappointment. With ESP kids, the investment of significant to full financial aid is a winning one because the ESP students have been groomed for success in a program that knows and provides for its scholars what the next stage of the journey will require.

*Written by Jeff Sindler, Headmaster
Burgundy Farm Country Day School*

WINTER AND SPRING 2009 SCRAPBOOK



"WE HAVE MATH DEMONS IN THIS CLASS...SERIOUSLY!"

*MRS. OSUJI
ESP MATH TEACHER*

EMERGING
SCHOLARS
PROGRAM



"ESP IS GREAT. I'VE BEEN LEARNING LIFE SKILLS AND ACADEMIC SKILLS. IT SOMETIMES GETS REALLY HARD BUT I KNOW IT WILL PAY OFF AND WILL PREPARE ME FOR NEXT YEAR."

RAAD KHAN
AGE 11

ESP COHORT 5
CONGRESSIONAL SCHOOL
FALL 2009

ESP...

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Shaping lives,
Preparing leaders**

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ODYSSEY...CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

So far the team has raised \$3,000 of the \$5,000 needed for the team trip in late May. We have worked at school events selling items - Bingo Night, Family Night, and going door to door.

OM has been a positive experience for me because even though we started in September and had very little time, our goal was always to be positive because we knew we were more than capable of winning.

When asked what she learned about herself from this competition, Tamika replied, "I learned that there is no 'I' in team and we all have to help in everything, and we all respected each other's opinions. I would focus on a practice competition: Never back down... and as a team we never did."

According to their web site, teams advancing to the 2009 World Finals represent the

best of all the creativity throughout the 2 million students, parents, and teachers around the world who participate in OM. NASA is a major sponsor. Please contact ESP if you would like to help to support Tamika and her teammates on their odyssey!

After graduating from ESP in August, Tamika will join ESP partner school Flint Hill School in September as a sixth grader. Congratulations, Tamika!

CONGRATULATIONS TO ESP GRADUATES AND ALUMNI WHO HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED AT THE FOLLOWING INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS FOR FALL 2009

Grade 6:

Alexandria Country Day School
Browne Academy
Burgundy Farm Country Day School
Congressional School
Flint Hill School
Highland School
Green Hedges School
St. Andrew's Episcopal Day School
St. Patrick's Episcopal Day School
St. Stephen's and St. Agnes School
Wakefield School

Grade 9:

Edmund Burke School
Flint Hill School
Kent School
The Madeira School
St. Andrew's Episcopal Day School
St. Stephen's and St. Agnes School

YOUNG AUTHORS...CON'T. FROM PAGE 1

Sally Williams, ESP's language arts teacher, is retired from Fairfax County public schools where she taught a middle school gifted and talented class. Ms. Williams had done this activity with her students and knew it would be perfect for ESP. While developing their stories, students sometimes collaborated with classmates on illustrations and ideas. Reading excerpts from their final products and presenting their publications to the guests was exercise in public speaking which some found easier to do than others.

ESP Director of Education Ruth Heath was exhilarated by the experience that she says is the most comprehensive language arts project the students have undertaken, engaging both imagination and attention to structure. The children are proud of their accomplishments and anxious to share with any willing listener!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

A special thank you to:

- The Claude Moore Foundation for their very generous grant of \$25,000. This is the third consecutive year that this Northern Virginia based foundation has supported ESP's work.
- The Madeira School, ESP's newest partner, for offering ten full scholarships to ESP graduates to their Camp Greenway this summer.
- ESP's committed benefactors without whom this program would not be possible.
- ESP volunteers who provide the little, (and big!) extras which make the program special.

As always, please consider an ESP student if you have items to give away: Suggestions include school supplies, backpacks, new or gently used adolescent reading books, movie passes, laptops, etc....your generosity will be appreciated by all!

Save-the-Date: ESP Graduation Friday, August 7

ESP welcomes visitors and students love to learn about what others do professionally, their interests, and how they spend their time. If you would like to share your story, please join at morning meeting any day Monday through Friday!

To ensure that you receive this newsletter and other updates electronically, **please add emergingscholarsprogram.net to your approved email list.**