

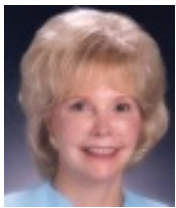
MARYLAND

Education Bulletin

News from the Maryland State Department of Education

October 14, 2009

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**A few words
from State
Superintendent
of Schools
Nancy S.
Grasmick**

Maryland public schools last week took part in "Learn and Serve Challenge Week," a special celebration of service-learning.

Challenge Week, which ran October 5-12, was sponsored by National Service Learning Partnership. It was a concentrated week of special events and community outreach activities designed to raise awareness and build support for service-learning.

Maryland was a partner in Learn and Serve Challenge Week. Maryland remains the only State in the nation with service learning as a graduation requirement. Every student must complete 75 service-learning hours en route to a Maryland high school diploma. The 59,000 students in the Class of 2008 completed over four million hours of service.

Service-learning has literally changed the lives of some of our students. In addition to reading and arithmetic, Maryland students have learned a little bit about their role in the community and in the State.

Maryland Gov. Martin O'Malley issued a proclamation designating last week as Learn and Serve Challenge Week throughout Maryland. Schools were involved in a variety of activities to celebrate the week. For example:

GARRETT COUNTY'S RANKIN NAMED 2010 TEACHER OF THE YEAR

Jennifer Burdock Rankin, an 8th-grade language arts, pre-algebra, algebra teacher known for her willingness to collaborate with teachers to improve instruction and integrate technology into content areas at Northern Middle School in Garrett County, has been named the 2010 Maryland Teacher of the Year.



2010 Teacher of the Year Jennifer Rankin, center, is flanked by two of her Frostburg University professors: Dr. Mary Kay Finan (also a member of the State Board), and Dr. Kenneth Whitmer, dean of the College of Education.

Sarbanes, State Comptroller Peter Franchot, Chancellor William Kirwan, State Board President James DeGraffenreidt, members of the State Board of Education, and hundreds of educators, parents, business, and community leaders.

Maryland State Superintendent of Schools Nancy S. Grasmick made the surprise announcement at an evening gala this month that included Congressmen John Sarbanes and Frank Kratovil, Congresswoman Donna Edwards, U. S. Senator Paul S.

- Students at DuVal High School in Prince George's County took part in a beautification and organic gardening project.
- Students at Rising Sun Middle School in Cecil County worked on a single-stream recycling program, spotlighting the correct way to recycle used items.
- St. Mary's County Public School students became involved in a Harvest for the Hungry food drive.
- Ridge Ruxton School students in Baltimore County collected cans from other schools and organizations in the community and brought them to the school to clean, crush, bag, and deliver to a local recycling center.

All 24 local school systems have developed individualized service-learning implementation plans that map out how students are engaged in service-learning experiences. To varying degrees, service learning activities can be found across grades kindergarten through 12 and have been incorporated into virtually every content area.

For more information on service-learning across the State, see: www.mdservice-learning.org.

* * *

Are you ready for the flu? U.S. Education Secretary Arne Duncan and Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius joined Gov. Martin O'Malley last week at Dodge Park Elementary School in Prince George's County to spotlight the need for vaccinations for H1N1 (swine) flu.

We continue to track the flu closely, and are working with the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene to help schools deal with the outbreak. For more information, see the DHMH website.

Ms. Rankin, a graduate of Frostburg State University and West Virginia University, holds a bachelor's degree in Education with a minor in Spanish, a master's degree in Education in Special Education, and a master's degree in Administration and Supervision. She is currently working on her doctoral dissertation in the area of educational leadership, which she expects to complete this year. Ms. Rankin has also achieved her National Board Certification in Early Adolescent Mathematics. She said that having a mother as a kindergarten instructional assistant was a major factor for pursuing teaching as a profession. Ms. Rankin said she learned from an early age that the key to teaching is finding innovative ways to motivate each and every student.

"Jennifer is the teacher all parents want their children to experience," said William Carlson, Northern Middle School Principal. "She raises teaching to an art form and has the ability and skills to engage her students, making them feel loved as they are drawn into the magic of learning."

"Choosing Maryland's Teacher of the Year is never an easy task, and this year's nominees were certainly some of the strongest candidates we've seen," said Dr. Grasmick. "Jennifer Rankin exudes the true spirit of teaching through her desire to not only motivate her students to achieve academic success, but also through her desire to collaborate with other teachers on innovative programs and new technology to help them motivate their students and encourage learning. Her natural ability to inspire students and teachers around her is certainly reason to bestow her with this honor."

"My greatest accomplishment in education is making sure that what I am doing every day, not only follows curriculum, but also motivates and inspires students to learn," said Ms. Rankin. "The same experiences that would encourage people to get involved in education, whether through tutoring programs, volunteering in the community, or in their own child's education, one thing

Calendar

October 14 – Lights On Afterschool Event, Frances-Merrick Performing Arts Center: The Hippodrome Theater

October 27 – State Board Meeting, Baltimore

November is International Education Month

In the News

Local Teacher Named Best in Maryland

WHAG – Hagerstown

Parent Spotlight

The Baltimore Sun

More Transferring from Private to Public School

The Washington Post

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is certain - we can all make a difference.”

As the Maryland Teacher of the Year, Ms. Rankin will receive numerous prizes including, \$9,000 in cash awards, a week at National Space Camp, a 4-day trip to the Teacher of the Year Conference in Dallas, Texas, a SmartBoard and supporting materials from SMARTer Kids Foundation valued at \$16,000, and a \$28,000 Nissan Altima from the Maryland Automobile Dealers Association. She also will be honored by the President at the White House in April 2010. Ms. Rankin will now go on to the National Teacher of the Year competition, which will be announced next April.

Presenting sponsors for the Maryland Teacher of the Year program are the Maryland Automobile Dealers Association, McDonald’s® Family of Greater Baltimore, Comcast, and Northrop Grumman Electronic Systems. Platinum sponsors include: Bank of America, Lockheed Martin, Verizon-Maryland, and Whiting-Turner Contracting Company. Gold sponsors include: The Baltimore Sun, Joe Corbi’s Pizza, M & T Bank, Maryland State Education Association, and State Farm Insurance Company.

Please click on this [link](#) for more information about the 2010 Maryland Teacher of the Year.

OCTOBER IS CELEBRATED AS PARENT INVOLVEMENT MONTH

Nearly 300 educators, parents, and community leaders gathered in Columbia early this month to spotlight the importance of parental involvement in schools.

State
Superintendent of
Schools Nancy S.
Grasmick, Maryland
PTA President
Debbie Ritchie, and



Students at Talbott Springs Elementary helped celebrate the launch of October at Parent Involvement Month

Susan Shaffer, executive director of the Maryland Parental Information Resources Center, announced the celebration at Talbott Springs Elementary School.

Dr. Grasmick noted that while school is important in the life of the child, more than 90 percent of a child's time is spent outside the school walls from birth to 18. MSDE has emphasized the importance of parent involvement for a number of years, including the launch of the Comcast/Parent Involvement Matters Awards program in 2008. But, Dr. Grasmick said, parent involvement is more than a single celebration or awards ceremony - it must be year-round.

Maryland Gov. Martin O'Malley signed a proclamation designating October as Parent Involvement Month. The month will be dedicated to raising awareness on the various types of involvement at schools across Maryland in preparation for parent involvement day, Nov. 19.

The Maryland Education Bulletin is Published by:

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A Publication of the Office of Academic Policy

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MSDE Videos: <http://www.MarylandPublicSchools.org/MSDE/newsroom/videos>

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