



The Maryland School for the Blind

ACHIEVING INDEPENDENCE

2016 ANNUAL REPORT

Message from the President

As I reflect on this past year at The Maryland School for the Blind (MSB), I think about the 163 year history of the school and how it has evolved over the years. I look around the campus which is a stunning combination of old and new buildings. Newcomer and Morrison Halls, built in 1911, boast grand architectural elements while our newest campus buildings—the Multiple Disabilities Blind and Autism Blind Learning facilities—are sleek, streamlined structures. Although constructed more than a hundred years apart, these buildings come together to create a unified, and beautiful, campus environment for our students and staff.

Like the integration of architectural styles on campus, MSB's approach to education incorporates our proud past with a continual focus on the future. We celebrate the school's many contributions, such as being an early advocate of braille, development of the family-like residential cottage plan, and helping integrate students into public schools, community colleges, and the workforce. We also celebrate the new paths we are creating in the design of state-of-the-art learning and living environments for our students. The year 2016 was an outstanding example of this momentum and we celebrated our progress with formal dedications and ribbon cuttings.

Baltimore's Ironman, Cal Ripken, Jr., joined us in April when we dedicated our new athletic complex and beep baseball field. In October, we cut the ribbon on our new Autism Blind Learning Activity Centers and Cottages. This was followed by a ground-breaking of our Preschool Early Learning and Outreach Services Center, kicking off an \$18 million renovation that will transform an existing building, constructed in the 1950s, into a miniature town square that will facilitate engaging, real-world learning experiences for our preschool students and house our Outreach program offices.

What we celebrate the most, though, are the achievements that routinely take place in these spaces. Each week, we share SOAR awards during morning announcements, recognizing student successes in the areas of independence and academic achievements. Every day, we hear how our students are preparing meals, arranging mobility transportation, honing their writing and communication skills, running one more lap around the track, sharing their musical talents, and much more. Every day, we fulfill our mission. MSB could not impact the lives it does without our hard working, dedicated staff and support of people in the community. For that, we thank you.

Sincerely,



Michael J. Bina, Ed.D.
President



Message from the Chairman of the Board

When The Maryland School for the Blind (MSB) embarked on its 2020 School of the Future Campus Plan in 2010, our mission was to create state-of-the-art learning environments that foster student independence. Today, we have passed the halfway mark, and we are seeing phenomenal results. On October 20, MSB not only held a ribbon cutting on the new Autism Blind Learning Activity Center and Cottages, but also broke ground on the new Early Learning and Outreach program facilities—a testament to the incredible progress of 2016.



The behind-the-scenes contributions of the MSB leadership team and staff members to these projects cannot go unmentioned. The Autism Blind Learning Activity Center and Cottages were specifically designed for students with autism to meet their unique needs. Many adaptations and accommodations were incorporated in the design. Special care was given to control distracting sound and light. In addition, special areas in each classroom were designed for students to take breaks to regain composure. The staff are to be commended for the thoughtful input into the design.

Progress does not happen without synergy, and we must also thank the MSB Board of Directors, students, families, local school systems, and the state of Maryland for coming together to create a campus of the future. Your continued support is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Edward J. Veilleux".

Edward J. Veilleux
Chairman of the Board





ALL IN A DAY'S WORK

At The Maryland School for the Blind (MSB), independence is at the core of every program offered to students and is especially key in the Career Education program. Students are given many opportunities to explore the world of work both on and off campus. Job exploration begins as early as age 11.

On-campus businesses and activities help students improve the “soft skills” so essential to successful employment. They learn teamwork, how to get a job done, and how to get along with co-workers and supervisors. It gives them a chance to discover their strengths and build confidence. And as students mature, they are also given the opportunity to explore off-campus internships. These opportunities provide invaluable practical experiences in the community.

Senior Brandon Solomon describes himself as a “people person.” “It gets kind of lonely when I’m working by myself. I like talking to people,” he said. His teachers describe him as someone who is kind and considerate — even protective of others. And, he’s a problem-solver. He explained, “I go towards a problem to figure it out. I don’t go away from it.”

This self-knowledge is crucial to finding a job or career path that is a good fit. Brandon has learned these things about himself after exploring several jobs both on and off campus. For the past four years, he’s worked at a local Friendly’s Restaurant preparing food in the kitchen. MSB’s Career Education Department initially set up the internship and Brandon’s on-site job coach offered guidance. He received a stipend to help him practice money management. As his skills improved, he began to work more independently and Friendly’s has now hired him to work weekends.

“Outside companies aren’t organized for people with disabilities,” explained Daren Barrios, Assistant Principal for the Career Education Program.

“Accommodations aren’t necessarily difficult. For example, Brandon has useable vision. But rather than standing in a freezer trying to read the sides of all the boxes, it is so much easier and faster for him to grab a color-coded basket and know that it contains peas.”

Communication and self-advocacy are key in these situations. Ms. Barrios encourages her students to speak up for themselves. “Sometimes they will sit and



wait for someone to give them more material rather than ask," she said. "We set up scenarios so they will run out of work and have to ask for help. I remind Brandon, for instance, to ask 'What do you mean?' when he doesn't understand fully. It can be hard for them to remember to do that."

Brandon has a number of opportunities in which to hone these skills. In addition to his restaurant job, he picks up print cartridges from local hospitals for a recycling company and, with a few other MSB students, provides the cleaning service for Time Out for Sports, a community sports apparel store.

With the support of the community, our students are working in various fields, including daycare, cleaning, food service, meal delivery, and retail.

Wayne Gopshes has a passion for radio-controlled cars. He can take them completely apart and put them back together. This led to a unique opportunity and partnership with a local hobby shop which created an internship for Wayne. "I'd never seen him be so motivated," Ms. Barrios said. "He knows these cars inside and out. He was even teaching some of the people who work there some things about the cars. The job is a perfect match."

Wayne is still a little shy around some of the people, but his job coach is working with him on becoming more confident. "But the store owner and employees absolutely adore Wayne," Ms. Barrios said. In fact, Wayne brought in a jig he made at home to hold a car steady while it's being worked on. The owner may help him develop it into a product.

"All of the employers we work with will tell you that our students are some of the best employees they have," she continued.

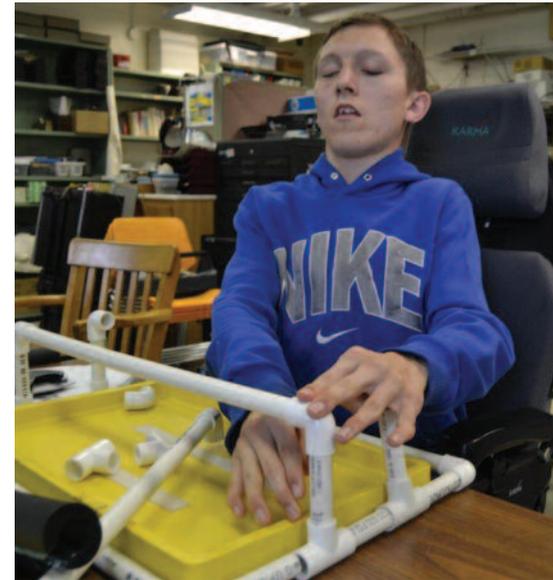
"They show up. They work. They don't goof around. That's how we train our students, and it shows."

"We encourage job shadowing on campus, and have a number of campus businesses," Dareen said.

"We try to find things the students are naturally interested in. But sometimes, we have to manage their expectations. They may be interested in technology, but their skills aren't yet developed enough to put them in a job-shadowing environment. We work up to that. We have them research the skills and qualifications needed for a specific career path."

Brandon, for example, would love to follow in his father's footsteps. His dad is a CPA. Brandon is good in math and with computers, and enjoys dressing in a suit and tie. He's exploring other fields that use similar skills. "We're looking at a placement in the hospitality field, perhaps working at a hotel front desk, where he could use all of these skills. He'd be great at greeting people and giving them the information they need."

"I love Career Education," Ms. Barrios said. "I love seeing students be successful at jobs. It doesn't matter what a student's disability is — everyone is capable of working in some capacity. Career Education gets them where they need to be and it's such a nice feeling when they succeed."



Class of 2016 Graduates



Jamal Collazo

HOMETOWN: Rosedale, Maryland

MSB MEMORIES: Working on the computer at the Instructional Resource Center; learning to self-advocate and put himself in the best academic position possible; participating on the athletic teams

SENIOR SUPERLATIVE: Voted Most Original

POST-GRADUATION PLANS: Attending the Community College of Baltimore County



Malcolm Crawford

HOMETOWN: Baltimore, Maryland

MSB MEMORIES: Taking on the slopes on the ski trips at WISP; learning job skills, good manners, how to dress for interviews, and following directions in Career Ed; being voted Class Secretary

SENIOR SUPERLATIVE: Voted Best Dressed

POST-GRADUATION PLANS: Finding a job through The Arc Baltimore; becoming a groundskeeper



John Frye

HOMETOWN: Monkton, Maryland

MSB MEMORIES: Going on Orientation and Mobility trips into the community and ordering food using assistive technology; receiving his power wheelchair; learning social skills during speech group sessions

SENIOR SUPERLATIVE: Voted Best Smile

POST-GRADUATION PLANS: Living at home with his family and enjoying their beach house



Keon Hoaney

HOMETOWN: Bowie, Maryland

MSB MEMORIES: Spelling words with magnetic letters; working on job tasks such as sorting and shredding paper; spending leisure time on the swing; going on Orientation and Mobility lessons

Senior Superlative: Voted Most Improved

POST-GRADUATION PLANS: Transitioning to a residential placement with Dominion Resources



Jaison Johny

HOMETOWN: Germantown, Maryland

MSB MEMORIES: Going on field trips; swimming, bowling, music and gym class; greeting the staff during his campus recycling job; using the ceiling lift sling to walk throughout his classroom; attending the concerts, plays, dances, and other special activities at MSB

Senior Superlative: Voted Biggest Flirt

POST-GRADUATION PLANS: Attending the Gallagher Center's day and residential programs



Timothy Jones

HOMETOWN: Accokeek, Maryland

MSB MEMORIES: Learning and remembering everyone's birthday over his 13 years at MSB; participating in the school plays; playing bass guitar and singing in the Blue Duffs; being on the cheerleading, swimming and track teams; serving as Class President

Senior Superlative: Voted Most Likely to be on a Reality TV Show

POST-GRADUATION PLANS: Staying at home with his family and working with a job agency such as New Horizons



Devonte Lowery

HOMETOWN: Windsor Mill, Maryland

MSB MEMORIES: Playing Bill Sykes in MSB's production of *Oliver*; performing and singing in concerts and musical productions, especially in *The Wiz* at Parkville High School; participating in the Savage Race mud run and on MSB athletic teams; being voted Prom King

Senior Superlative: Voted Most Athletic

POST-GRADUATION PLANS: Moving to Michigan, attending a community college and then transferring to a university to study psychology



Benjamin Major

HOMETOWN: Frederick, Maryland

MSB MEMORIES: Competing in the Savage Race mud run with his peers and teachers; participating in sports and the annual play; speaking at the sports banquet; teaching students at other schools about goalball; singing solos at concerts; delivering mail on campus; receiving the B. Frank Newcomer Award and the Maryland Scholastic Award at graduation

Senior Superlative: Voted Best Singer

POST-GRADUATION PLANS: Attending the Frederick Community College and then transferring to a four year college; continue singing



Deshawn McKnight

HOMETOWN: Baltimore, Maryland

MSB MEMORIES: Going roller skating after school with the recreation staff; playing video games; following routines, learning patience and accountability by working at his on-campus job through the Career Education program

Senior Superlative: Voted Most Laid Back

POST-GRADUATION PLANS: Entering the employment field



Trayvon Morrison

HOMETOWN: Baltimore, Maryland

MSB MEMORIES: Participating in the musical productions and especially singing the song, "Food, Glorious Food" in the play, *Oliver*; listening to preferred music selections with his headphones; enjoying the classroom rocking chair during leisure time; learning daily living skills and following the order of daily routines

Senior Superlative: Voted Life of the Party

POST-GRADUATION PLANS: Residing with his grandmother and attending Intervals at The Chimes day program



Andrew Newsome

HOMETOWN: Catonsville, Maryland

MSB MEMORIES: Taking a summer program software engineering class his first year at MSB which helped him develop an interest in technology and software design

Senior Superlative: Voted Class Clown

POST-GRADUATION PLANS: Attending Frostburg State University to major in computer science



Colin Prettyman

HOMETOWN: Red Lion, Pennsylvania

MSB MEMORIES: Holding great conversations with MSB teachers and staff; learning O&M skills, such as the use of public transportation and the navigation of metropolitan areas; receiving the Maryland Scholastic Award at graduation; scoring a perfect 800 on the verbal SAT's

Senior Superlative: Voted Best Friend

POST-GRADUATION PLANS: Attending Harrisburg Area Community College for a year and then transferring to a four year college



Trevor Rice

HOMETOWN: Catonsville, Maryland

MSB MEMORIES: Building relationships with students and staff over his 17 years at MSB, especially with his best friend, Hannah; going off campus on field trips with his classmates, especially the trip to a fitness center to take a Zumba lesson; dancing in his gait trainer to his favorite music; socializing and going for walks outside

Senior Superlative: Voted Best Dancer

POST-GRADUATION PLANS: Attending The Chimes day program in Baltimore County and living at home with his family



Nasim Shagri

HOMETOWN: Laurel, Maryland (Born in Copenhagen, Denmark)

MSB MEMORIES: Working in various jobs at school, including the Clothes Pole, Meals on Wheels and the café where he showed off his cooking skills; participating in PE activities including swimming, soccer, basketball, wrestling, and track and field; going on the ski trip to Deep Creek Lake; being voted Class Treasurer

Senior Superlative: Voted Most Dramatic

POST-GRADUATION PLANS: Continuing his education to study psychology



Brandon Solomon

HOMETOWN: Nottingham, Maryland

MSB MEMORIES: Dressing in professional clothing and carrying his briefcase to school every day; working in the community through his career education jobs; being a cheerleader and student ambassador; assisting with graduation practice; spending time with Dr. Frank; serving as Class Vice-President

Senior Superlative: Voted Employee of the Year

POST-GRADUATION PLANS: Working as an intern at Union Memorial Hospital through The Arc Baltimore; continuing his job at Friendly's restaurant



Jesse Taormino

HOMETOWN: Baltimore, Maryland

MSB MEMORIES: Taking field trips with his class, especially visiting the sports stadiums in Baltimore where he had the opportunity to run on the field at Ravens Stadium and take pictures with the statues in front of Camden Yards.

Senior Superlative: Voted Most Easy Going

POST-GRADUATION PLANS: Living at home with his family and attending a day placement program



Jermaya Taylor

HOMETOWN: Salisbury, Maryland

MSB MEMORIES: Receiving the alumni award for most improved student in her junior year; receiving the 2015 Eastern Athletic Association of the Blind Outstanding cheerleader award; being voted Prom Queen; participating on the athletic teams and in the school plays; receiving the 2016 NFB Scholarship

Senior Superlative: Voted Energizer Bunny

POST-GRADUATION PLANS: Attending the Community College of Baltimore County, Owings Mills and then transferring to Towson University to pursue a degree in Kinesiology



Calvin Thomas

HOMETOWN: Laurel, Maryland

MSB MEMORIES: Impressing the older students at Towson University at a public speaking engagement about disabilities; learning sign language in class; participating in the Savage Race mud run and jumping off the twenty foot ledge into the muddy lake and finally crossing the finish line; working in the computer lab and teaching younger students, which enabled him to discover his strengths and future profession

Senior Superlative: Voted Most Creative

POST-GRADUATION PLANS: Applying to college to become a teacher of the visually impaired for a decade, then going back to school to fulfill his true dream of becoming a marine biologist or a famous rock cellist; and striving to be the first blind man to enter the Mariana Trench and study its secrets

Senior Class Officers:

President: Timothy Jones

Vice President: Brandon Solomon

Secretary: Malcolm Crawford

Treasurer: Nasim Shagri

Class Colors: Blue and White

Class Flower: White Rose

Class Motto: “We’re loud, we’re proud, we’ll live the dream. We’re the class of 2016!”

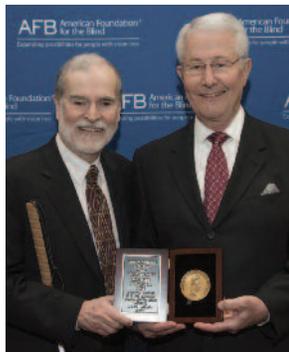


2016 MSB Staff Award Recipients

Congratulations to the following staff who received professional honors in 2016:

Dr. Michael Bina, MSB President, received the 2016 American Foundation of the Blind's (AFB) Migel Medal award, the highest honor in the blindness field.

The Migel Medal award was established in 1937 by the late M.C. Migel, AFB's first chairman, to honor professionals and volunteers whose dedication and achievements improve the lives of people who are blind or visually impaired. Past recipients include Helen Keller. Dr. Bina's distinguished career spans fifty years and includes leadership positions at schools for the blind throughout the country, including MSB where he has served as President since 2008.



Dr. Bina was also chosen to represent the United States Association of Blind Athletes (USABA) at the 2016 Paralympics in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Dr. Bina serves on the board of directors of the USABA and was chosen because of his commitment to USABA's mission and their athletes. Dr. Bina attended the games and the closing ceremonies in September 2016 and wrote a blog about his experiences, titled Rio Pride USA Blind Athletes, that was nominated for the 2016 *Baltimore Sun* Mobbies awards.

Kathleen Johnston, MSB Residential Curriculum and Staff Development Specialist, received the 2016 *Inspiring Dreams, Changing Lives* Award from the Maryland Association of Non-Public Special Education

Facilities (MANSEF) for her work in the field of special education for the past 30 years.

Kathleen has been on the staff at MSB for the last 22 years, providing leadership and guidance to the staff and students. Her most important role has been as an advocate for students with special needs. Her "Back to Basics" program has guided staff and students using the most basic of routines to a bigger end – student independence. She has helped lead the charge for student independence and the belief that "independence is a student's right."



Abigail du Pont, an instructor in the Infant & Toddler Early Learning program at MSB, was named the Distinguished Educator of Blind Children by the

National Federation of the Blind (NFB), Maryland Chapter. Abi was nominated for the prestigious award by parents of children who are blind or visually impaired, for her effective teaching strategies that enable students to reach their fullest potential, her diligence in promoting braille literacy skills, and her dedication to her students. Throughout her 14 years of service at MSB, Abi has been a strong advocate for quality education and early intervention. She routinely gives of herself and her time, often going above and beyond, to ensure that her students and their families receive the support they need during this key stage of their development.



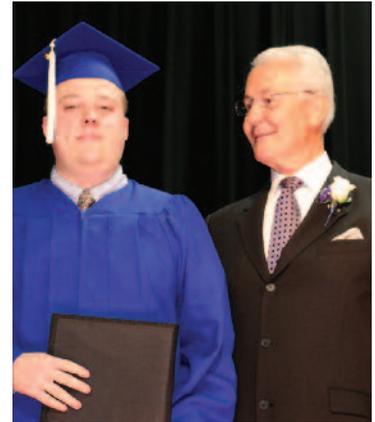
2016 MSB Student Awards and Honors



Benjamin Major
Maryland State Merit
Scholarship Award
Recipient and
B. Franklin Newcomer
Award Recipient



Rachael Tippett
2016 MSB Alumni
Award Recipient



Colin Prettyman
Maryland State Merit
Scholarship Award
Recipient



Kaiah Hertel
Artwork chosen for
the Celebrating
Through Art: The
First Lady's Mental
Health Awareness
Youth Art Display
and displayed in the
Maryland House of
Delegates building



Jermaya Taylor
2016 John T. McGraw
Scholarship Award
from the National
Federation of the
Blind



Meredith Day,
MSB Outreach
Student
2016 National Braille
Challenge 1st place
winner, Apprentice
Level



MSB Braille Challenge Participants



BOARD OF DIRECTORS FY 2016 (as of July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016)

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 1st Vice-President
 Paul Schroeder, Esq.,
 2nd Vice-President
 Marion Mullauer,
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 Lorraine Costella, Ph.D.,
 Secretary
 Michael J. Bina, Ed.D.
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 Stephen Bender
 Craig Borne
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Advisory Director:

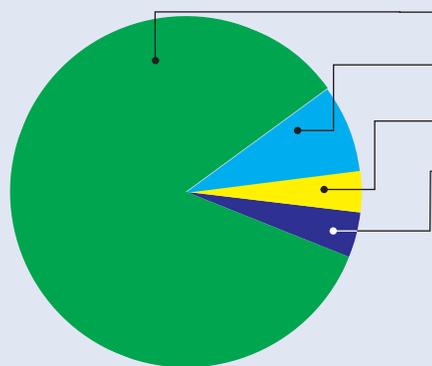
Glenn DiChiera

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Raleigh Brent
 James Datovech

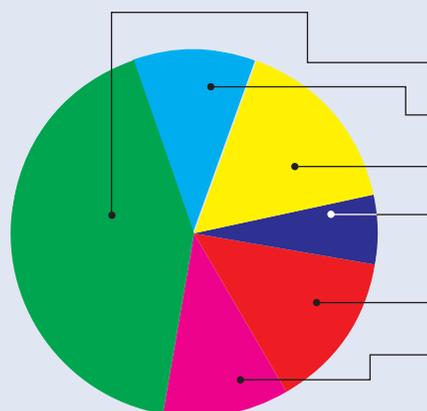
2016 Financials

The Maryland School for the Blind is a private, 501(c)(3) school under Internal Revenue Service regulations. The School's fiscal year ends June 30th. Funding is provided primarily through grants from the Maryland State Department of Education and payments from local school districts. Contributions are received from individuals, corporations, foundations, and community groups. Total expenses approximated \$30.1 million.



REVENUES

State of Maryland	84%
Local School Systems	8%
Private Gifts	4%
Federal	4%



EXPENSES

Instruction	42%
Facilities	11%
General Administration	16%
Outreach and MD Instructional Resource Center	6%
Residential Services	14%
Educational Support & Nutrition	11%



(Top Photo) Tyler Tate (Lewis Contractors), Dr. Nancy Grasmick (MSB Board of Directors), Dr. Michael Bina (MSB President), Glenn DiChiera (MSB Alumni Association), Cal Ripken, Jr., Mark Butler and Steve Salem (Cal Ripken Sr. Foundation) are pictured at the ribbon cutting for the MSB Athletic Sports Complex on April 7, 2016.

(Bottom Photo) MSB staff join hands around the new athletic track and beep baseball, soccer, and basketball fields.







The Maryland School for the Blind

ACHIEVING INDEPENDENCE

3501 TAYLOR AVENUE • BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21236
410-444-5000 • www.marylandschoolfortheblind.org



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