

The Maryland School for the Blind

ACHIEVING INDEPENDENCE

2017 ANNUAL REPORT

Message from the President

Each year at this time, we look back and reflect on the past 12 months and also look ahead with anticipation to a new year. We are proud of our past accomplishments and look forward to our plans and goals for the new year and into the future.

There were many highlights in 2017, a year which marked the 164th anniversary of the founding of the school in 1853. Once again we celebrated the openings of new facilities with formal dedications and ribbon cuttings.

One of these new facilities, which opened at the start of the 2017-18 school year is the Pre-School, Early Learning and Outreach Center, which serves students ages 3-5 years old, promoting readiness for school age programs in the most integrative setting possible. It simulates a real life town complete with a bank, grocery store, library, art gallery, living room, kitchen, restaurant, science center, garden and playground.

The new Blanton Student Recreation and Career Center in Russo Hall is also now open. Students from various programs are enjoying an opportunity to socialize and integrate in the 50's style student union. It is also home to the Rock n' Roll Café, Boutique and Hip Hop Shop which provide opportunities for students in the career education program to learn social and career skills.

The "I Can, I Will, I Must" is a new playground at the center of the campus and includes innovative and accessible features for students of all abilities.

We have now completed three of the six campus improvement projects that are part of the 2020 School of the Future Campus Master Plan and broke ground on the fourth project, which includes the historic Newcomer Hall, and Case and Campbell Halls. We appreciate the support we have received to improve the learning environments for our students.

We are grateful for the support that the Maryland State Government, our community partners, donors and friends provides the school. By doing so, we can provide the best possible educational setting and programming available for our students who deserve nothing less.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Michael J. Bina, Ed.D.
President



Rob Hair, Superintendent of Student Services, and Dr. Michael Bina, MSB President, pose with student Andy Rhoads after MSB's performance of *Into the Woods*.

Message from the Chairman of the Board

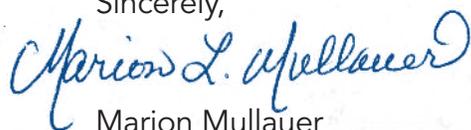
As the Maryland School for the Blind's (MSB) new Board Chair, I would like to thank Mr. Edward J. Veilleux (who retired as Board Chair on June 30, 2017) for his 16 years of service to MSB. Ed's leadership contributed greatly to the tremendous progress of the school during his 9 years as Board Chair. It is my pleasure and honor to continue this progress into the future and to serve the needs of the children of MSB.

This past October, additional results toward the 2020 School of the Future Campus Plan were celebrated with a Ribbon Cutting for the Preschool, Early Learning, and Outreach Center, the Blanton Student Recreation and Career Center and the "I Can, I Will, I Must" Playground. In addition, groundbreaking was initiated for the renovation of Newcomer, Case and Campbell Halls. The thought and creativity of the MSB leadership and staff members that went into the new centers and playground is nothing short of phenomenal. The educational and social opportunities for the student body have been greatly enhanced!

In addition to the Campus Plan, the MSB staff are constantly refining and improving existing programs and services and adding new ones. For example, parent training workshops and webinars were held; a Braille Literacy conference was held on campus; a League of Dreams Beep Baseball tournament with teams from MSB and Virginia was held on campus; and, the Extended School Year and Outreach Summer programs both saw increases in attendance.

It takes a village to serve the unique needs of the MSB children and we thank the Board of Directors, the staff, students, families, local school systems and the State of Maryland who all contribute to this esteemed goal.

Sincerely,



Marion Mullauer
Chairman of the Board



MSB students, board members and guests cut the ribbon on the new facilities.

A Warm Welcome to Learning

The warm and welcoming spirit at The Maryland School for the Blind (MSB) isn't reserved for holidays. Dominique Gilliam, whose daughter, Riley, is part of MSB's Early Learning Program experiences it on a daily basis.

"It's such a great feeling to walk into the school and have teachers I've never met call out a greeting to my daughter. For these teachers, who have so many students of their own, to know my child by name — I just think that's awesome. I couldn't ask for a better school than this."

It was hard for Riley's parents to come to terms with their

daughter's visual impairment at first. "It took some time for us to grasp reality, but once we did, we dealt with it firmly. When we first started this journey, we were still learning about her disability," Ms. Gilliam said. "She had a little hearing loss at birth, but that got better. As she got a little older, she would hold things very close to her face to see more clearly." When Riley was one year old, her parents enrolled her in MSB's Infant and Toddler Program. The home visits offered training, resources, and support to both parents and child.

Riley began wearing glasses at the age of two. "When she was little, she didn't have an issue with wearing them. But when she turned three, she started having lots of opinions," Ms. Gilliam said. "Sometimes I let her choose whether she wants to wear them or not. I want her to be independent and be able to identify when she needs to let her eyes rest. Right now, she doesn't know. She'll push and push: 'I can see it! I can do it!' I want her to be able to know when to say: 'I need to use braille' or 'I want to use a magnifying glass.' Her teachers are helping her with that."

It's also important for children, especially those with disabilities, to develop good social skills, and Ms. Gilliam gives MSB high marks emphasizing this. Karen Frank is the principal of the Early Learning Program at MSB. She credits Riley's parents for giving Riley the support she needs to develop confidence and self-esteem. "We've had the honor and privilege to work with Riley and her family since she was an infant, and it's been such a pleasure to see her bloom. She's spunky, bright, energetic, curious, and absorbing everything around her like a sponge."



"It is an attitude that we want to instill in all of our students," she continued. "We want them to fully experience the joy of discovery. We want them to become life-long learners, and know they can be successful no matter what path they take in life."

Riley began kindergarten in the Fall 2017 at MSB's newly renovated Preschool, Early Learning, and Outreach Center. "It will be very different from a regular classroom," Ms. Frank explains. "We know that early in life, children learn through what they pick up in their natural environment." A child with vision will learn a lot from watching a parent at a grocery store, for example. But a child who is blind or visually impaired may not have the opportunity to understand the underlying concepts.

The new Center has learning areas that resemble real life. There is a bank, grocery store, library, art gallery, living room, kitchen, restaurant, science center, and garden, among other things. Architects designed the areas to look real, and the layout to assist



students in building their spatial and orientation skills. "The students can learn about money at the bank. Learn colors and weights of items in our grocery area. Make food in the kitchen, and check out books in the library. The dining area has tables, chairs, booths, and counters — just as one would encounter in real life," Ms. Frank said. Learning is transferred to real-world experiences. "The next time a family member takes them to the post office to mail a package, they'll have an understanding of what's going on. They'll know what questions to ask to advocate for their needs. It will help them participate more fully."

Research has shown that the first five years of a child's life can determine their future success. It is a critical window of opportunity that parents and teachers can use for the greatest impact. "We wanted our daughter to have a solid foundation, and MSB was the best choice for us," Ms. Gilliam said. "I couldn't be happier."



Class of 2017 Graduates



Carson Allen, III

HOMETOWN: Baltimore, Maryland

MSB MEMORIES: CJ's 18 years at MSB greatly increased his socialization and communication skills. Working hard to use his adapted head switch for communication allowed him to successfully interact with his environment. His best memories include music therapy and cooking classes, but his favorite memory was the field trip to Lillian Holt Nature Center.

SENIOR SUPERLATIVE: Voted Super Smile

POST-GRADUATION PLANS: Returning home to a self-directed plan of community involvement through the Pathway Waiver.



Kevin Anderson

HOMETOWN: Ellicott City, Maryland

MSB MEMORIES: His favorite memory was going on off-campus field trips, especially to the Walters Art Museum. In only 3 years at MSB, Kevin developed an array of interests, including: math and sciences, cooking, going to the gym, library, which allowed him to make strides toward independence and learn how to express himself.

SENIOR SUPERLATIVE: Voted Most Improved

POST-GRADUATION PLANS: Living at home with his family, attending a day program in Howard County and getting a job.



Vincent Butler, Jr. (Vinnie)

HOMETOWN: Kingsville, Maryland

MSB MEMORIES: Vinnie attended MSB for 17 years and loved social activities, such as the field trip to Amped Up and playing basketball with friends. His campus paper recycling job taught him a great work ethic and allowed him practice with his voice output device and to significantly improve his communication, technology, and vocational skills.

SENIOR SUPERLATIVE: Voted Most Dependable

POST-GRADUATION PLANS: Attending the Gallagher Center with fellow MSB alumni.



Eric Clarke

HOMETOWN: Parkville, Maryland

MSB MEMORIES: Eric formed lasting friendships during his 6 years at MSB. His most notable accomplishment was learning job training skills and working both on and off campus. His interest in math and science, provided him with valuable tools and concepts which will be a great asset as he seeks employment in the restaurant industry. His favorite trip was to the Maryland Science Center.

Senior Superlative: Employee of the Year

POST-GRADUATION PLANS: Attending a day program close to his hometown and enjoying evenings with his family.



Matthew Fields

HOMETOWN: Salisbury, Maryland

MSB MEMORIES: Matthew's favorite times in his 15 years at MSB involved the residential program and taking trips in the car to attend community outings. He also excelled at his instructional program where he learned to use his voice output device to communicate needs, requests, and engage in socializing with staff and peers.

Senior Superlative: Most Likely to Survive the Zombie Apocalypse

POST-GRADUATION PLANS: Attending the adult day program at Dove Pointe in his hometown of Salisbury, Maryland and continuing to advance his communication and engagement skills.



Ania Harris

HOMETOWN: Frederick, Maryland

MSB MEMORIES: Ania enjoyed participating in MSB Athletics and attending tournaments during her 3 years at MSB. She was focused on academics and worked hard to improve her writing skills for college preparation. Ania's time at MSB also helped her to mature and become more independent. She was voted Senior Class Secretary.

Senior Superlative: Voted Most Dramatic

POST-GRADUATION PLANS: Studying Social Work at Frederick Community College and then transferring to a four-year university in Baltimore.



Marcus Harris

HOMETOWN: Parkville, Maryland

MSB MEMORIES: Marcus enjoyed his 2 ½ years at MSB, especially interacting with students and staff during his campus delivery and recycling job. While traveling around campus, he was able to begin propelling his own wheelchair and independently navigate familiar routes, along with improving his social and conversational skills. He also learned self-advocacy, interpersonal and job skills.

Senior Superlative: Voted Biggest Flirt

POST-GRADUATION PLANS: Continuing to build mobility skills with the support of his family and explore adult program options.



Zachery Hastings

HOMETOWN: Keedysville, Maryland

MSB MEMORIES: Zachery's most memorable time during his 14 years at MSB was living in the Independent Rancher with his roommates. He enjoyed the residential programs which provided a variety of on-and off-campus activities. He also learned invaluable job skills through the career education program, specifically in food service, where he worked in the Rock and Roll Café. He received the Staff Commendation Award at graduation.

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

POST-GRADUATION PLANS: Working at the Arc of Frederick County and looking for employment in the food service industry... hopefully at Meals on Wheels!



Laurel Kirby

HOMETOWN: Westminster, Maryland

MSB MEMORIES: Laurel enjoyed living in the dorms on campus and learning independent living skills including: cooking, cleaning, and other household responsibilities. During her 8 years at MSB, she also improved her independent travel skills through Orientation and Mobility lessons. She was a member of the Blue Duff's Jazz Ensemble and was voted Senior Class Treasurer. Laurel received the B. Franklin Newcomer award at graduation.

Senior Superlative: Voted Best Singer (Most Likely to be on The Voice)

POST-GRADUATION PLANS: Attending Carroll Community College for 2 years and transferring to a 4 year college to major in Special Education to teach braille.



Benjamin Lopez

HOMETOWN: Potomac, Maryland

MSB MEMORIES: While at MSB for 6 years, Ben enjoyed theater, including his participation in the school play, *Oliver*. Through the career education program, he also learned community etiquette and interpersonal skills to help build his job-readiness. Ben received the MSB Alumni award at graduation.

Senior Superlative: Voted Life of the Party

POST-GRADUATION PLANS: Attending a day program close to his hometown and enjoying evenings with his family.



Steven Lowe, Jr.

HOMETOWN: Ft. Washington, Maryland

MSB MEMORIES: Steven enjoyed swimming at the pool with friends, and going on field trips, including his favorite weekly trips to the grocery store. During his 13 years at MSB, he excelled in independent living and household skills, completing chores, preparing snacks and learning self-care and advocacy skills.

Senior Superlative: Voted Most Laid Back

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



Hannah Norman

HOMETOWN: Rising Sun, Maryland

MSB MEMORIES: In her spare time, Hannah loved to listen to 80s music! She also enjoyed yoga during PE class and walks on the MSB track. Her favorite field trip was learning to fish off of a pier. Hannah also improved her independence with self-feeding and use of her iPad during her 17 years at MSB.

Senior Superlative: Voted Energizer Bunny

POST-GRADUATION PLANS: Attending Chesapeake CARE Resources in North East, Maryland.



Pratap Parajuli

HOMETOWN: Cockeysville, Maryland

MSB MEMORIES: Pratap only spoke Nepali when he arrived at MSB, but in 4 years, he learned both the English language and braille. His favorite subject was math and he also liked to cook. He put these skills to good use in his job at the Rock and Roll Café. He also learned to play the piano and enjoyed singing in the MSB concerts and dancing on occasion.

Senior Superlative: Voted Best Dressed

POST-GRADUATION PLANS: Attending college to study accounting with the ambition to work at a bank.



Breanna Pumphrey

HOMETOWN: Baltimore, Maryland

MSB MEMORIES: In her 4 years at MSB, the most valuable lesson she learned was to love herself and accept her disability. Breanna came out of her shell and grew as a person. As a residential student, she enjoyed leisure time with friends and participating in MSB sports including Goalball and Cheerleading. She won the 2017 Eastern Athletic Association of the Blind's Outstanding Cheerleader. Breanna was voted Senior Class Vice President and Prom Queen.

Senior Superlative: Voted Most Creative

POST-GRADUATION PLANS: Attending the Community College of Baltimore County to study Media Arts and Graphic Design.



Veronica Ricci

HOMETOWN: Bel Air, Maryland

MSB MEMORIES: Veronica is very close with her family and especially loved when they would join her on field trips or holiday parties at MSB. Her favorite activities were cooking or helping to paint. Throughout her 18 years at MSB, she learned to use her switch to read stories and activate sensory devices, and increased her independence.

Senior Superlative: Voted Most Likely to be a Good Friend

POST-GRADUATION PLANS: Considering the Harford Center day habilitation program part-time.



Jeremy Russell

HOMETOWN: Abingdon, Maryland

MSB MEMORIES: In the 10 years Jeremy attended MSB, he really enjoyed participating in social activities, particularly, being on the athletic teams and attending tournaments. He also enjoyed meeting new people. Academically, Jeremy excelled in learning time management skills to help him after graduation.

Senior Superlative: Voted Most Original

POST-GRADUATION PLANS: Attending a day program near his hometown with the hope of getting a job at a hospital.



Raven Shaikh

HOMETOWN: Baltimore, Maryland

MSB MEMORIES: Raven made life-long friends in his 10 years at MSB. He also enjoyed the work training skills he developed through the career education program. He learned front office skills, including answering the phone and customer service skills in the Rock and Roll Café. He was a member of the swimming and track and field teams. Raven was voted the 2017 Prom King.

Senior Superlative: Voted Most Athletic

POST-GRADUATION PLANS: Looking for employment at either the National Federation for the Blind or the Arc Baltimore and being a DJ on the weekends.



Kameron Shiflett

HOMETOWN: Baltimore, Maryland

MSB MEMORIES: As a MSB student for 18 years, Kameron successfully learned both instructional and daily skills. He learned how to follow self-care routines such as, dressing, hand washing, mealtime and showering. Kameron was very social and enjoyed participating in the residential program parties and dances with his friends. He also enjoyed creating art.

Senior Superlative: Voted Wittiest

POST-GRADUATION PLANS: Attending Caring Hands adult day program in his hometown and residing with his family.



Keri Stanowski

HOMETOWN: Perry Hall, Maryland

MSB MEMORIES: As a youth, Keri enjoyed the beeping Easter Egg Hunts. During her 19 years at MSB, she transitioned to work training skills. Keri was able to increase her independence with activities of daily living including transferring items, packaging materials and operating small appliances. She loved listening to music and dancing in her wheelchair.

Senior Superlative: Voted Best Dancer

POST-GRADUATION PLANS: Living with her supportive family and looking into at-home services.



Rachael Tippett

HOMETOWN: Crofton, Maryland

MSB MEMORIES: Rachael's favorite memory in her 4 years at MSB was socializing with her friends and dancing at the Sock-Hops! While at MSB, she was also trained in the use of a variety of technologies. Rachael looks forward to taking this knowledge and applying it to college after graduation. She was honored to receive the MSB Alumni award in 2016.

Senior Superlative: Voted Most Likely to Win on Jeopardy

POST-GRADUATION PLANS: Applying to Wright State University in Ohio, to further her education.



Ramya Weddington

HOMETOWN: Baltimore, Maryland

MSB MEMORIES: Ramya's favorite memories involved social time with her friends and the residential staff! She was very fond of English class where she learned powerful writing skills to improve her papers and essays. In her 6 years at MSB, she also enjoyed participating in the athletic program and was very competitive in Goalball. Ramya was voted Class President.

Senior Superlative: Voted Class Clown

POST-GRADUATION PLANS: Enrolling at the Baltimore School of Massage certification program, followed by attending a four-year college to obtain a business degree.

Senior Class Officers:

President: Ramya Weddington

Secretary: Ania Harris

Vice President: Breanna Pumphrey

Treasurer: Laurel Kirby

Class Colors: Black and Gold

Class Flower: Sunflower

Class Motto: "We Dreamed, Believed, Achieved! We're the Class of 2017!"



2017 MSB Staff Awards



Dr. Joshua Irzyk, Principal of the General Academic Program, received the 2017 Claire Loder McGough Professional Achievement Award for outstanding professional achievement in the advancement of

knowledge related to the education of children who are blind or visually impaired.

Robert Hair, Superintendent of Student Services, received the 2017 Council of Schools for the Blind (COSB) Outstanding Director of Programs Leadership Award.



Annually COSB recognizes the contributions of remarkable individuals nationally who work with students who are blind or visually impaired. Hair is responsible for the leadership of MSB's on-campus and outreach

programs and services, which serves over 1,000 students throughout all 24 Maryland jurisdictions.



Matthew Mescall, Adapted Physical Education Instructor and Athletic Coach, was named the 2017 Maryland Association of Health, Physical Education Recreation and Dance (MAHPERD) Adapted

Physical Education Teacher of the Year for serving as a positive role model epitomizing personal health and fitness, enjoyment of activity, sportsmanship and sensitivity to the needs of students and utilizing various teaching methodologies and innovative learning experiences.

Class of 2017 MSB Student Awards



Zachery Hastings
Staff Commendation
Award



Laurel Kirby
B. Franklin Newcomer
Award

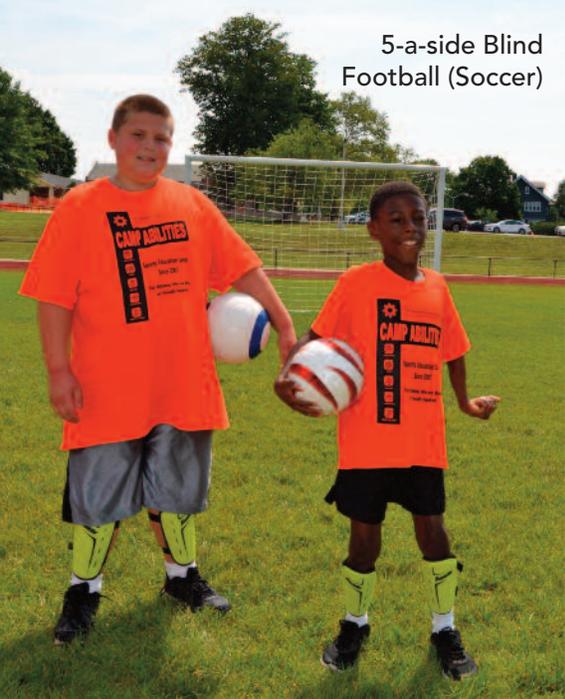


Benjamin Lopez
MSB Alumni
Award



Breanna Pumphrey
2017 Eastern Athletic
Association of the
Blind (EAAB)
Outstanding
Cheerleader

5-a-side Blind Football (Soccer)



Winter Concert



Into the Woods Musical



Track & Field Meet



Students perform the National Anthem at home goalball tournament





In 2017 MSB students were visited by not one, but two Paralympic athletes and medalists from the 2016 Rio games. Rebecca Meyers, a six-time medalist and world champion swimmer, and Andy Jenks, a silver medalist from the men's goalball team, met with students and staff to share their experiences as world class athletes with visual impairments. They inspired our students to work hard, set goals and reach for their dreams.

We were honored to have Rebecca return to speak to the Class of 2017 at their graduation ceremony.



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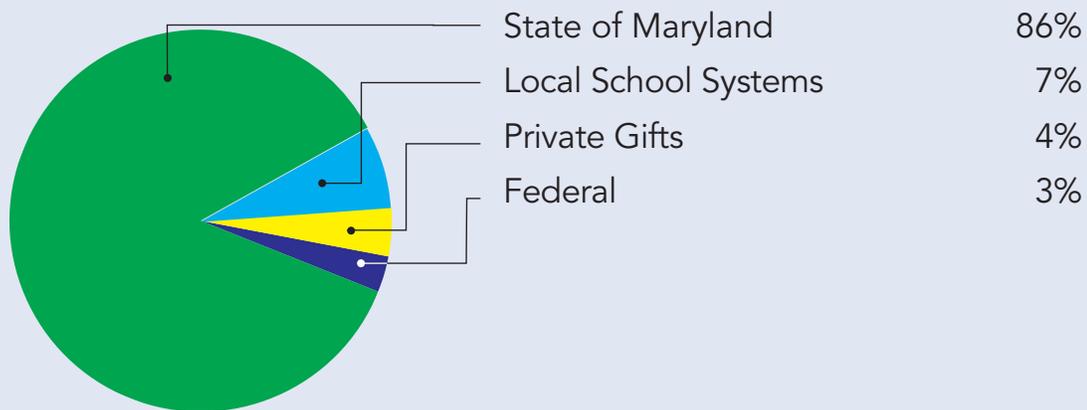
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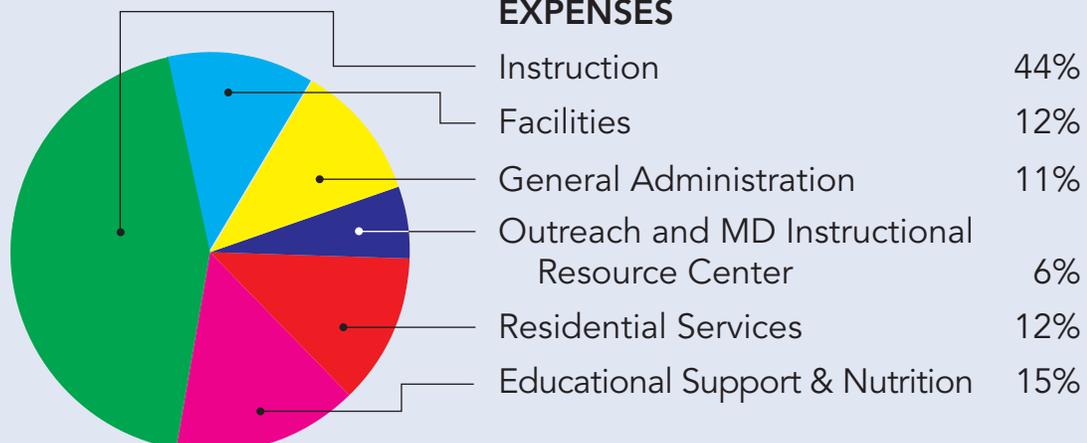
2017 Financials

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



EXPENSES





The Maryland School for the Blind

ACHIEVING INDEPENDENCE

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PHOTOGRAPHY: DOTTY RAYNOR

Isaia "soaring" at iFLY
indoor skydiving.