



# MRESCUpdate

MIDDLESEX REGIONAL EDUCATIONAL SERVICES COMMISSION

Cooperative, Cost Efficient, Quality Services

## Scenes From MRESC's 2014 Graduations

(See P. 5 for List of Graduates)



## Flash Drive Replaces Paper Handouts



*Supervisor Barbara Pezzuto (L), and Director of Nonpublic School Services Nancy Armbruster, show the "MRESC Nonpublic" flash drive, containing numerous manuals, forms, and updated materials, given to administrators attending the recent Public School Directors & Nonpublic School Administrators meeting.*

Administrators attending MRESC's annual Public School Directors & Nonpublic School Administrators meeting received most of their information in a flash – literally. Participants typically receive a large binder filled with several pounds worth of manuals, updated materials and forms in preparation for the upcoming school year. In fact, the packet is so comprehensive it usually requires bringing in extra help to assemble.

So administrators were happy to receive their own "MRESC Nonpublic" labeled flash drive, complete with all the materials.

"People were really happy, and appreciated the convenience and efficiency," said Nancy Armbruster, Director of Nonpublic Services.

"They appreciated the convenience and efficiency. It will be less work next year since some materials don't change, so only updated information will be added."

Meanwhile, the meetings, offered over two days, attracted approximately 100 administrators from the five counties the Nonpublic Department provides services for. Agenda items included reviewing Child Study Team referral procedures, overviews of Title I, Title III, and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA-B), and new guidelines for Chapter 192 & 193 Services.

Administrators unable to attend the meetings can contact Mrs. Armbruster at [narmbruster@mresc.k12.nj.us](mailto:narmbruster@mresc.k12.nj.us) to receive a flash drive with the materials. •

### Fine Art Work



*Art Teacher Audrey Roderman considers Jordan Brown, a BBLC Secondary graduate, a talented artist.*

### Selling Like Hot Cakes



*MRESC Board Member Dr. Linda Madison (L), and Central Office personnel Jennie Mercado and Lisa Keefner supported BBLC's fundraiser of baked goods for Autism Awareness. BBLC Aide Janae Jefferson (R) and student Christopher Scafe managed the effort.*



### Helping Hands

Volunteers from the auditing firm of Ernst & Young enjoyed a break from spreadsheets to working with students and staff on landscaping projects at the MRESC's Piscataway Campus. •

## MRESC's 2013-14 Teachers Of The Year

The MRESC's Teachers of the Year are selected based on their professionalism, compassion, and ability to help students reach their fullest potential. Certificates were presented to the talented teaching professionals by members of MRESC's Board of Directors recently. •



The MRESC's 2013-14 Teachers of the Year, flanked by Vice President Bill Petscavage (L) and President Dale Caldwell are: (L-R) Barbara Holzhauser (Nonpublic Department), Cecelia Fisher (PRDS), Stephanie Marrone (BBLC), Rachel Beer (ALC) and Meena Pasupathy, (CLL).



### RACHEL BEER RECEIVING CERTIFICATE FROM BOARD MEMBER GARY MCCARTNEY

#### About Rachel Beer:

- Speech-Language Specialist at the ALC and Edison Collaborative since September, 2007
- Graduated from Yeshiva University in New York City with a Bachelors Degree in Speech Pathology and from Montclair State University with a Master of Arts Degree in Speech Pathology.

**Certification:** Speech-Language Specialist; holds a Certificate of Clinical Competence in Speech-Language Pathology from the American Speech-Language Hearing Association



### CECELIA FISHER RECEIVING CERTIFICATE FROM BOARD MEMBER SCOTT ROCCO

#### About Cecelia Fisher

- Speech-Language Specialist at the PRDS since March, 2003
- Graduated from Montclair State University with a BA in Communication Sciences and Disorders and completed graduate work at Rutgers University. Also completed the Graduate Speech Upgrade Project through Kean University

**Certifications:** Speech-Language Specialist, Speech Correctionist



### MEENA PASUPATHY RECEIVING CERTIFICATE FROM BOARD PRESIDENT DALE CALDWELL

#### About Meena Pasupathy:

- Teacher of Students with Disabilities, working at both the BBLC and CLL since April, 2004
- Graduated from Washington University in St. Louis with an M.A. and Ph.D. in Economics and a Master of Arts in Teaching from The College of New Jersey

**Certifications:** Teacher of Students with Disabilities; Elementary School Teacher



### STEPHANIE MARRONE RECEIVING CERTIFICATE FROM BOARD VICE PRESIDENT BILL PETSCHAVAGE

#### About Stephanie Marrone:

- Special Education Teacher at the BBLC since January, 2010
- Graduated from Georgian Court University in New Jersey with a B.A. in Education

**Certification:** Teacher of the Handicapped

### BARBARA HOLZHAUER RECEIVING CERTIFICATE FROM BOARD MEMBER STEPHEN GENCO

#### About Barbara Holzhauser:

- Speech Correctionist in the Nonpublic Department since September, 1986
- Graduated from William Paterson University with a B.A. in Speech

**Certification:** Speech Correctionist

## MRESC Creates New Jersey's First Shared Services Resource Guide

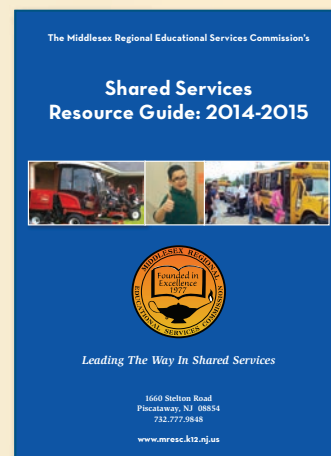
In an effort to highlight the advantages of shared services, the MRESC's *Shared Services Resource Guide: 2014-2015* is now available, the first publication of its kind in New Jersey.

Utilization of shared services by school districts and municipalities strengthen educational, support services and transportation options for students, and lower costs for purchases like office furniture, computers, security equipment, and commodities like electricity and natural gas.

"When educational organizations and municipalities enter into shared services relationships, the result is quality education and cost effective purchases which limit the tax impact on New Jersey residents," said MRESC Board President Dale Caldwell.

The MRESC's ability to coordinate shared services initiatives over the years has resulted in meetings with state officials and legislators who expressed their desire for more school districts and municipalities to engage in the practice to limit tax increases. Ultimately, the MRESC determined the most effective way to inform educational organizations and municipalities about the benefits gained from participating in shared services relationships was creating and distributing the publication and posting it on the district website.

Please call 732-777-9848 Ext. 3200 for free copies of the publication, or download it from the MRESC website at [www.mresc.k12.nj.us](http://www.mresc.k12.nj.us).



### MRESC Board Learns About "Trout In The Classroom"



*BBLC Classroom Aide Louis DeMeglio Jr., shows students how to feed trout and maintain an aquarium as part of the grant funded Trout In the Classroom Project.*

A grant funded project where students cared for brook trout eggs for several months and then released them into their natural habitat was presented to Board members by BBLC's Kimberly Schaffer and Lindsey Mederios. The project addressed several educational components including science, math, art, reading and technology.

### ERIC North Holds Mock Trial

The Honorable Judge Virginia M. Dietrich, Administrative Supervisory Judge (Division of Compensation, NJ Division of Workers' Compensation), allows Teresa Mota, of the Hillsborough Township Public Schools, to stand during testimony at a mock trial regarding workers' compensation claims. Staged at the recent Educational Risk Insurance Consortium (ERIC North) Training, the property and causality insurance purchasing group for New Jersey Public Schools, wanted its members to better understand how workers' compensation cases are tried, and past medical history used in resolving cases. The training was hosted by the MRESC.



### Correction

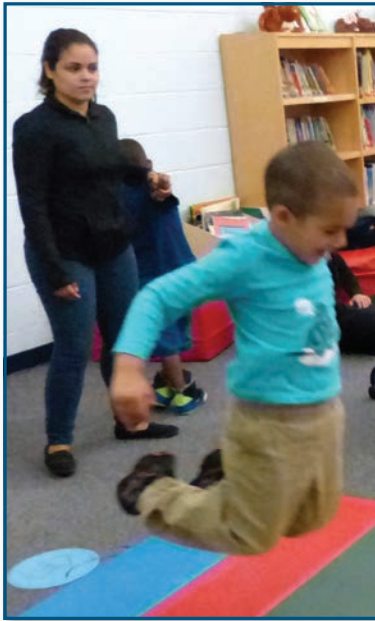
CLL's Terese Manalansan MA, CCC-SCP, discussing the Augmentative and Alternative Communication Program at a recent Board Meeting. A photo of a different presentation was inadvertently used in the previous *Update*.



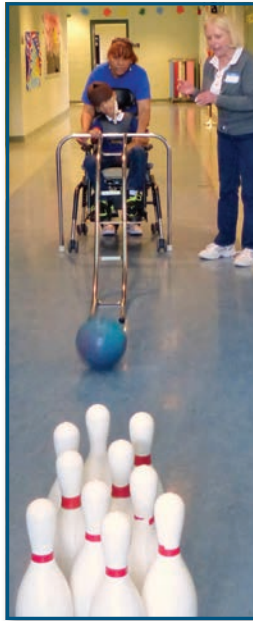
## Special Field Day At BBLC

**W**hile New Jersey successfully completed hosting the U.S. Special Olympics recently, BBLC students once again participated in their annual end of year athletic events.

With assistance from several Merck volunteers, students raced (running on a bubble wrap indoor track) bowled (using a ramp or bowling independently when possible); jumped, played beanbag toss, and even raised a parachute.



Alexi Hiraldo leaps as Aide Pricilla Bernier looks on.



Muhammad Rahman bowls assisted by BBLC Aide Corina Fernandez and a Merck volunteer.

"This is something the entire school participates in and we have enjoyed doing this for several years," said BBLC Principal Wendy Eaton.

"It's a field day where the students have a good time, however it is also designed so they can use the skills they learned over the year from working with our Adaptive Physical Education Teacher Mark Risola," she said. •



Students enjoyed raising and lowering a parachute as part of the day's events.

## Congratulations To MRESC's 2013-2014 Graduates!

### ACADEMY LEARNING CENTER

Kenneth Lefebvre  
Kristin Cosme  
Noorusehar Amjad  
Nicholas Williams  
Taylor Medlin  
Leimie Duffo  
Jahleel Harris  
Hanif Mayo  
Kathryn Mackay  
Brian Robinson  
Dentzell Olden

### BRIGHT BEGINNINGS LEARNING CENTER

Jordan William Brown  
Kevin Patrick Laano  
Tiandra Jeane Riddick

### ELEMENTARY GRADUATES

Kevin Alonzo  
Emma Balsamo  
Sheldon Brown  
Christian Bravo  
Miguel Castro

Tyler Harabin  
Mathew Hoagland  
Kamal Jackson  
Matthew Jager  
Gina Kacorri  
Saajid Mansuri  
Ali Meshal  
Anuska Nayek  
Nnamdi Nnanna  
Ede Ogbevire  
Adarsh Patel  
Gabriela Pelacz  
Ashley Popolillo  
Melissa Silva  
Kahlil Staten  
Talib Tawky  
Alexi Velasquez  
Benjamin Zakirkhojaev

### CENTER FOR LIFELONG LEARNING

Liana Bonamo  
David Helfgott  
Peter Price  
Clifford Rogers

Catlyn Rosa  
Erine Small  
Kelson Warden

### 8TH GRADE GRADUATES

Jose Bonilla  
Josue Burgos  
Branden Cashin  
Xavier Gaines  
Faith Gamrat  
Thomas Garlatti  
Julian Hernandez  
Avnish Krishna  
Emily Ma  
Isaiah Miele  
Jonathan Moreno  
Jomaar Pichardo  
Nicolas Sansotta  
Caira Scott  
Sydney Stephens  
Zachary Streimer  
Brandyn Vera  
Daniel Zayas

### MIDDLESEX COUNTY ACADEMY

Edgardo Arciniega  
Dezmen Bradley  
David Burns  
Joshua Danful  
Jorge Grijalva  
Kimberly Minnot  
Alexis  
Omowole  
Cesar Ortiz  
Sadat Taylor  
Donte Williams

### NUVIEW

Stefany Aguilar  
Jeanelle Angeles  
Dwight Carreker  
Yanira Herrera  
Donovan Shannon

### 8TH GRADE GRADUATES

Aniyah Boone  
Gustavo Camarillo  
Ivana Hercules  
Alquan McMillan

Vladyslav Rachkovsky  
Christian Reyes

### PISCATAWAY REGIONAL DAY SCHOOL

Nancy Balbuena  
Luz Caba  
Kamila Maciocha  
Juan Ernesta Martinez  
Chelsea Ramirez  
Shavez Samoo  
Guillerma Serra  
Adreanna Shephard  
Carley Watts

### RARITAN VALLEY ACADEMY

Jose Concepcion  
Anthony Dzergoski  
Dhruv Patel  
Jacob Pryce  
James Pugh  
Zachary Uriarte  
Alexes Vilchis  
Carlito Wallace  
Kurl Williams

## Better Service, Lower Costs For Over 400 Districts Goal Of Project Coordinated By MRESC

**O**ver 1200 schools, from more than 400 public school districts as well as private and non-public schools, have agreed to participate in a broadband consortia purchasing process to buy substantial amounts of Internet access for K-12 schools.

"This project takes collaboration between the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) and educational services agencies to a new level," said Patrick M. Moran, Business Administrator/Board Secretary of the MRESC. "Not only will districts save money, but they will be able to redirect those savings to enhance educational technology," he added, noting that the MRESC is well versed in cooperative purchasing efforts, having run the Co-Op Pricing System, the largest state approved Co-op in New Jersey, for several years.

The Educational Information and Resources Center in Mullica Hill and the Bergen County Technical Schools in Hackensack are working with MRESC and the NJDOE, along with the consulting companies Dellicker Strategies and the North Highland Company, in order to provide statewide assistance in organizing New Jersey schools for this initiative.

"This project provides a new opportunity for schools across New Jersey to cooperate on technology services they already

use ... but could now receive those same enhanced services at a lower cost," said Steve Hoffman, Business Administrator of the Educational Information and Resource Center.

Ed Hayward, Director of Technology, Bergen County Technical Schools added: "This cooperative idea for schools to combine their purchasing power to get better quality and lower prices from telecommunications providers just makes sound financial sense for all participating districts,"

More than a dozen Internet Service Providers have expressed interest in submitting proposals, which are due September 17, 2014.

"High speed Internet access is a critical tool for students in the modern classroom," said Evo Popoff, NJDOE Assistant Commissioner and Chief Innovation Officer. "The New Jersey Department of Education is pleased to help schools across the state purchase these services in the most cost effective manner possible."

A Request for Proposal (RFP) is available at [http://www.mresc.k12.nj.us/pages/Middlesex\\_Regional/Cooperative\\_Pricing/Bidding\\_Opportunities/Bidding\\_Opportunities](http://www.mresc.k12.nj.us/pages/Middlesex_Regional/Cooperative_Pricing/Bidding_Opportunities/Bidding_Opportunities). For more information, please contact Mr. Moran at 732-777-9848 Ext. 3120, or [pmoran@mresc.k12.nj.us](mailto:pmoran@mresc.k12.nj.us).

## Help With Technology Purchases

**L**ike many organizations, schools and municipalities face many complex and costly technology-related choices in an effort to remain current, yet often lack the in-house expertise to guide them in the decision-making process.

To bridge this gap, the MRESC has created Technology Consulting Services (TCS), to support New Jersey public-sector agencies assess and implement their strategic and operational technology needs. The TCS provides professional and objective support to help sift through the maze of available choices and make intelligent, cost-effective decisions.

The TCS relationship typically begins with an initial free consultation, followed by a needs assessment to determine the best use of your current technology investment while considering future priorities. The needs assessment could range from purchases for computers, security, document imaging or record management systems, to advice with vendor evaluations, or establishing technology policies and procedures.

The TCS Director is Mr. Mitch Darer, with over 25 years of experience working with New Jersey public agencies. The former Executive Director for NJIT's Center for Information Age Technology, Mr. Darer provided technology management assistance to hundreds of municipalities in all 21 county agencies, and more than a dozen state agencies.

For further information, please contact Mr. Darer at: [mdarer@mresc.k12.nj.us](mailto:mdarer@mresc.k12.nj.us) 732-777-9848 Ext. 3435, or by cell phone at 732-453-4658.

## Vendor Expo Well Attended

**T**he MRESC's 2014 Annual Vendor Expo once again drew business administrators, purchasing agents, buildings and grounds officials and Information Technology personnel from across the state.

"It is a great one stop shopping opportunity for decision makers to identify products and services they may need," said MRESC Business Administrator Mr. Patrick M. Moran.

There were also several credited educational workshops that

participants were able to attend.

MRESC's 700 co-op pricing system members, the largest in the state, helps members make purchases

at reduced costs on items ranging from natural gas and electricity, to vehicles, computers, playground equipment, and custodial supplies.

For information about participating in next year's Vendor Expo, please contact Mr. Moran at: 732-777-9848 Ext 3120. or [pmoran@mresc.k12.nj.us](mailto:pmoran@mresc.k12.nj.us).



*Mr. Vincent Marchetti from NaceCare, an MRESC Co-op Pricing System member, demonstrates a product at the 2014 Vendor Expo.*

## Aquatics & Fitness Center Meets Student And Community Needs

The foresight to include an Aquatics & Fitness Center in the Center for Lifelong Learning when drawing up the blueprints several years ago, has certainly proven to be a wise decision.

The adaptive swimming, water safety lessons, and summer camp, have been well received by students and their families. The community has embraced the many fitness and personal training programs offered, and the space has worked well for several fundraising activities.

Most recently, the Family Services Committee, a division of the New York based Autism Speaks organization, granted \$2,500 to the Aquatics & Fitness Center to provide "Adaptive Private Swim Lessons" to swimmers with autism.

As Serena Selkin Assistant Director, Grants for Autism Speaks put it: "It is an honor to include your organization as a recipient in our first round of the Autism Speaks Swimming & Water Safety Scholarship Program. We truly appreciate your dedication and ability to increase the services available to those with an autism spectrum disorder and their families."

The funding covers approximately 40 students, however, additional families expressed an interest in having their children participate. As a result, Business Administrator Patrick M. Moran placed a motion before the MRESC Board of Directors for matching funds of \$2,500 to accommodate additional students, which the board unanimously approved.

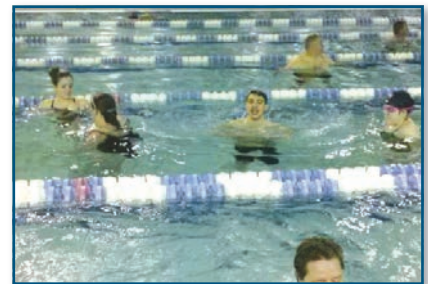
Katelyn Dauphinee, MRESC's Aquatics & Program Coordinator, who learned about the scholarship from swimming instructor Johanna Safranski said: "The benefits of this program are immeasurable for students and we were thrilled to receive the funding."

Swimming instructors for the program include Ms. Safranski, Ms. Julie Sakowicz (BBLC Teacher), and Ms. Allie Heitner (BBLC Aide).



*Students from ALC enjoyed their time in the Aquatics & Fitness Center.*

- The Aquatics & Fitness Center also worked out well for the NJ Waves, using it to practice from January – June in preparation for the 2014 Special Olympics USA Games. The team includes 10 athletes on the autism spectrum. The opportunity to connect with the Aquatics & Fitness Center was particularly gratifying to NJ Waves Local Training Program Coordinator Michelle Ciano. "The MRESC is near and dear to my family, as my son attended BBLC from 2005-2012," said Mrs. Ciano. "Our first year at CLL was a huge success. The staff was amazing and we are extremely grateful for the opportunity to utilize the facility," she added. •



*Members of the NJ Waves practice for the 2014 Special Olympics USA Games.*

## Hollywood Themed Prom For BBLC



About 15 BBLC Secondary students enjoyed a Hollywood themed program recently. Students made their way from their cars by walking on a red carpet leading to the school's entrance before dancing the night away, munching on pizza, sandwiches, chips and desserts. A Disc Jockey, Piscataway High School seniors, and members of a Rutgers sorority all donated their services. Lindsey Medeiros, head chairperson, along with Alison Berkovits, Chana Blau Marsha Flood, Alina Gulak, Jenny Kogan, Kiyoe Parker, Jodi Robinson, and Kim Schaffer coordinated the prom. •

## Former Board VP Rosemary Walsh: A Guiding Light For MRESC

**T**he entire MRESC family was saddened by the passing on June 9th of Rosemary Walsh. Mrs. Walsh served for 20 years, including 11 as Vice President, prior to stepping off the Board of Directors in December 2012.

In a feature story in the MRESC Update commending Mrs. Walsh for two decades of service, Board President Dale Caldwell described her as "a board member with only one agenda – quality education for students."

Superintendent Mark J. Finkelstein, characterized Mrs. Walsh as "a guiding light, whose intelligence, compassion and dedication will definitely be missed."

Not surprisingly, Mrs. Walsh declared: "There is no organization in this state that does as good a job with the special needs population as the MRESC."

A tireless and never-ending supporter of the MRESC, Mrs. Walsh will be missed by all. •



*Former Board VP Rosemary Walsh: August 13, 1929 - June 9, 2014*

## Bulbs Planted By Students Spring To Life

**L**ast autumn, Laurie Fusco, a teacher for Raritan Valley Academy's INNOVATIONS program, taught students about the life cycle of flowering bulbs. Mrs. Fusco followed up the in-class instruction with a hands-on, outdoor experience, having students roll up their sleeves and plant hundreds of daffodil, tulips, and hyacinth bulbs.

"The students were delighted when the bulbs came to life in the spring," said Mrs. Fusco, adding:

"Students and staff can enjoy the fruits of their labor now and for many years to come." •



*Visitors attending a workshop at MRESC take a moment to admire the flowers planted by INNOVATIONS students*



### Middlesex Regional Educational Services Commission

1660 Stelton Road  
Piscataway, New Jersey 08854  
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Cindy Borell, Supervisor, BBLC  
Toba Knobel, Principal, Regional Day School

Phyllis DeLucia, Vice Principal, Regional Day School  
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