

LASE

connections

Fall 2014

Overcoming Stumbling Blocks

Imagine the excitement of a 4 year old preschooler starting school. Parents and children have high expectations and hope for the future. But sometimes there are stumbling blocks that crush those dreams.



Zion 8th grader, Julian, can't stop smiling!

Julian began school at Zion Lutheran, St. Charles, when he was 4 but by the time he was in the early primary grades, things were getting tough for him academically. That didn't stop him from working hard. In Junior

High Julian got the organizational help he needed when classroom and LASE special education teachers created a Google Doc that he could use to keep his assignments in order. Study guides and modified work load all helped Julian become more successful in school. Now as an 8th grader, Julian is confident in his abilities and able to manage his work load with increased independence. He has made incredible growth academically, socially, and spiritually. Julian will be confirmed in the Spring of 2015 and was recently named the Dance Representative to Zion's Student Council. After being named Dance Representative, Julian said, "I just can't stop smiling."

I Can See Clearly Now

Picture what it's like to not be able to see clearly. Words in your book are blurry or the chalkboard seems fuzzy. That's no way to tackle the daily job of learning at school.

Thanks to the School Health Services of LASE, students in need of eye care at Grace Chapel Lutheran School, Bellefontaine Neighbors, received a visit from the Ronald McDonald Care Mobile. The eye van visited Grace Chapel on April 29, 2014, providing a free eye exam by an optometrist. Students that needed glasses were able to choose from a wide selection of frames, finding just the right fit and style. Imagine the joy the students felt now that they could see clearly again!

The school nurses of the School Health Services provide health care services for eight Lutheran schools in the St. Louis area. The nurses provide vision screenings annually for students in kindergarten to 8th grade and connect families with other resources as needed.



Students at Grace Chapel with the school nurse while visiting the Ronald McDonald Care Mobile.

LASE MISSION STATEMENT

Lutheran Association for Special Education will assist and support schools to address the cognitive, social and spiritual development of children with special needs, so they may fully enjoy their God-given potential.

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From the Executive Director

DISTINCTLY UNIQUE

Teaching and parenting students with special needs can often feel like an isolated experience. The questions are often asked, “Is anyone else going through these same experiences? Is there anyone that can help me?” LASE steps in to help by providing a distinctly unique ministry to children with special needs, their families, and to the schools we serve. LASE students benefit from a highly personalized teacher-to-teacher and teacher-to-family relationship that allows them to develop a sense of self-sufficiency and personal worth. Parents of special needs students who are enrolled in LASE schools discover Christ-centered community and support. LASE helps parents, classroom teachers, and schools form supportive networks and partnerships that offer solutions and hope.

The journey of special education can be bumpy and rough at times. But students learn tenacity and determination by facing their challenges with supportive LASE staff that help make the journey joyful. Students learn their self-worth is not determined by what they do but by whose they are – beloved children of the Heavenly Father.

Dreams Do Come True....

“And the 2014 Prom King for Lutheran High School St. Charles is Gene Wooden!” What a wonderful tribute to the student body at LHSSC that they accepted Gene’s special challenges and saw him only as a fellow classmate and leader. His mom, Kimberly, says, “Over the past 4 years, Gene has grown to become a very outgoing and productive young man. LASE Learning Center Teacher, Mrs. Sue Klobnak, along with her support team, provided Gene with an enormous amount of solution based strategies along with personal support. Gene received a solid Christian education that has helped him become the man he is. Without Mrs. Klobnak, we are not sure if Gene would have had such a positive high school experience. Thank you.” Gene has adjusted well to his

new work experience in the Vocational Rehabilitation Program and is currently placed at Children’s Hospital. He misses LHSSC, but will always remember his time there, especially his memorable prom night.



LHSSC Prom King Gene Wooden with his parents Gene and Kimberly Wooden.



LASE Executive Director, Lori Christiansen

GRANT SUPPORT

THANK YOU to the following LASE Supporters:

- ▶ Cardinals Care
- ▶ Employees Community Fund of Boeing
- ▶ Lutheran Foundation of St. Louis
- ▶ St. Louis Christmas Carols
- ▶ The Tilles Fund
- ▶ Variety – The Children’s Charity of St. Louis

What I Learned from My Students

REFLECTIONS OF A FIRST YEAR

TEACHER by Brandi Hallemeier

As a first year special education teacher at Child of God Lutheran School, I found myself flipping through my first case load's individual education plans (IEPs) thinking, "What have I gotten myself into?" I felt an overwhelming anxiousness as I tried to figure out what and how I had to teach my students. Little did I know God had an amazing learning experience waiting for ME!

It takes many hours of observation, teaching, and spending time with my students to get to know them on a personal level. They have so much more to offer than just reading sight words and reciting multiplication facts. As my first year of teaching moved along, I saw the gains my students were making but I also felt a transformation in myself. I now feel as if I see the world through my student's eyes.

One of my students, Lakota, taught me a few valuable life lessons: *Continue to be curious. Do not give up. Be a caring and loving friend. Be thankful to God. Do everything for and through Jesus Christ.*

I am honored to be a small part of Lakota's success story; however, her drive to learn, love for Jesus, and perseverance is really what will lead her to a successful and purposeful life. I will take what Lakota and my other students have taught me to make myself a better teacher for years to come.

Lakota and her teacher, Mrs. Brandi Hallemeier



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

October 7, 2014 (Tuesday)

LASE Insight Series Workshops – Insights into Executive Functioning in the Classroom

Complimentary for ALL Lutheran teachers.

Speaker: Jennifer Fletcher, MS, CCC-SLP, Lutheran Association for Special Education

4:00 – 4:15 pm Registration, Snacks and Beverages

4:15 – 5:45 pm Workshop

Salem Lutheran School

5025 Lakewood

St. Louis, MO 63123

RSVP by emailing rsvp.laseinsightseries@gmail.com

November 15, 2014 (Saturday)

Herald the Holidays

Frontenac Hilton, St. Louis, MO

Note the new weekend date!

Luncheon, Silent Auction and Style Show

Featuring Fashions from Ann Taylor, Leopard and more

Doors open at 9:30am

Tickets: \$55 per person – May reserve tables of ten

February 20, 2015 (Friday)

Let's Get Purse-onal

Shrewsbury Community Center

Silent Auction of new and gently used purses

Appetizers, wine/beverages and dessert buffet

Tickets: \$25 per person – Reserved tables of eight

Donations of new and gently used purses are welcome!

For information or registration for events, visit

www.lutheranspecialed.org or call 314.268.1234

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Lutheran Association for Special Education admits students of any race, color, and national or ethnic origin.

How Can We Get Others Involved in Supporting the Children of LASE?

The connection between LASE and Tom and Chris James is a lovable daughter with an irresistible smile - her name was Meghan. The Jameses fought hard to provide her with the comfort of a loving home, faith in Christ, and a Christian education in spite of her many disabilities. They sought out the services and loving staff of LASE to find strategies to help her learn and grow. After Meghan's death, Tom and Chris continued that partnership with LASE to keep her legacy alive as an example and inspiration for parents and children challenged with special needs. Chris founded Herald the Holidays Fashion Show to honor Meghan and continues her support as an active member on the planning committee. She also serves as a member of the LASE Advisory Board. Tom shows support by volunteering for mailings and assisting with events. And they always continue to ask, "How can we get others involved in supporting the children of LASE?" Thank you, Tom and Chris.



Avid LASE supporters
Tom and Chris James

ADHD Workshop Educates and Encourages Teachers

An enthusiastic crowd of 170 Lutheran educators from around the St. Louis area participated in the LASE Insight Series Workshop on August 8, 2014. Presenter Amy Maus, MSW, LCSW, from West County Psychological, captivated the crowd with timely information on the topic of "Understanding and Responding to Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder." Ms. Maus shared strategies and ideas for working with children with ADHD including the importance of a professional evaluation, educating parents and teachers, the impact of medication, and accommodations for the classroom.



Atonement Lutheran School teachers enjoy the LASE workshop.

One workshop participant had this to say: "Amy did such a thorough and informative presentation."

Her suggestions were encouraging on how to work with families whose children have ADHD."

LASE Insight Series Workshops are just one way LASE partners with Lutheran educators to solve student problems and find fulfillment in their ministry to reach and teach every child.

Gifts that Change Lives

Your resources are important to you. You want to invest them wisely. When you give, you want to know that your gift changes lives.

A gift to LASE makes a difference for hundreds of children every year. The special education ministry that you support helps change adversity to achievement and helplessness to hopefulness. You help us walk side by side with parents, educators and students to overcome obstacles.

You can give to LASE in a variety of ways:

- General gifts
- Endowment fund gifts
- Company matching gifts
- Tribute and memorial gifts
- Bequest and planned gifts
- Thrivent Choice: designate LASE as your agency of choice for your Thrivent Choice Dollars

Thanks for believing in children who are challenged by learning. Your gifts help children become productive citizens who live out their faith in Jesus by serving others.

Golf Tournament Raises \$90,000



Golfers "tee it up" for the kids.

Sponsors, donors and golfers "aced" the LASE 32nd Annual Golf Tournament, raising \$90,000 to join in the mission to assist students with special education needs. Golf Committee Chairs, Dean Eggerding and Tom Dankenbring,

led a dedicated effort to engage

several generations of golfers to show their commitment to children in our Lutheran schools.

Thanks to everyone who helped us "tee it up for the kids."

