

ELPM BUILDING BLOCKS

Building a Future

A Quarterly publication for our partners, supporters, and friends

AN ATLANTA ICON

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On November 21, 2008, Jack Pinkerton, Volunteer Director of Construction for Early Learning Property Management, Inc., was honored by ELPM and Metro Atlanta YMCA for his years of dedication to the mission of early learning. The Chattahoochee YMCA Head Start Academy paid tribute to Mr. Pinkerton by dedicating the media



center in his honor. To continue the media center's theme of Dr. Seuss, a set of books by the popular children's author was donated to the media center in Jack's name, as well as a plaque of distinction located at the entry of the media center.

Mr. Pinkerton has always been active in local, state, regional and international affairs serving on many boards and volunteering at any level. Jack has been a volunteer with ELPM since its inception and brought a wealth of experience and expertise in the construction business. He was a co-founder and former president of The Pinkerton and Laws Company formed in 1955. At the time of Jack's retirement from Pinkerton and Laws in 1987, his construction company was in the top 200 construction companies in size in the nation.

ELPM is very grateful to Jack for his continued dedication and generous contribution of time to our mission of early childhood learning. Please join ELPM in thanking Jack for his many years of community involvement and generously giving back to Atlanta on many different levels.



NEWS AROUND THE BLOCK

Congratulations to Beacon of Hope



Humana Foundation's 2008 Atlanta Benefits \$100,000 signature grant was awarded to Beacon of Hope—Renaissance Learning Center for its recognition of doing valuable work to benefit the citizens of Atlanta.

With this grant, Beacon of Hope's Renaissance Learning Center has collaborated with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra to bring Kids with Strings (KWS) to at-risk children and families. The purpose of KWS is to sow into

the future of at-risk children and youth through an innovative, interactive, hands-on, stimulating, and engaging classical music education project. The KWS project will provide a positive and creative outlet for youth expression, talent discovery and development. The project will improve the mental, physical and social-emotional environments for this population of children, youth, families and surrounding communities. The children opened the ASO program, "What's in a Doctor's Bag" with a Chinese welcome song.

In early February, all pre-k classes celebrated the Chinese New Year (The Year of the Ox) with Chinese cooking and Mandarin classes.

www.beaconofhopeatlanta.org

THE YMCA PAULDING EXPRESS



• The Paulding Co. YMCA Childhood Development Academy had a very busy winter season. The two year old plus went on board the "Polar Express" for a trip to the North Pole and Santa's workshop. They performed scenes from the book 'Polar Express' as they climbed the mountain and slid on the ice. The children made a craft and/or gift for the parents, gift wrapped it and returned to the 'train' where a large brown awaited each child! The bears were a gift from Kohl's Dept. Store as part of their support to the local community.

• Community month for the four Pre-K classrooms ended on Jan. 30th with a visit to "Our Community", which is a simulation of our local community shops and services. The children visited the Bank, the Carpenter Shop, Barber Shop, Bookstore, the Theater (provided by two professional story tellers), a Pizza Parlor and a Bakery. The children took turns serving, being served, counted money and helped shoppers.

• Four Pre-K lead teachers have been invited to participate in a pilot program for Bright from the Start to bring Work Sampling to the Internet. This is a great honor for the Paulding center. Congratulations are in order for seven of our teachers who have met the requirements of the National CDA certification. The money for the studies was generously provided by CarMAX through a grant funding.

Continued Next Column

The YMCA Paulding Express (cont.)

• The center is active with the Self Study program for NAEYC as we move forward with the NAEYC accreditation process. We enjoy seeing Pat Simpson each month as part of our grant from GA Association for Young Children.

www.ymcaatlanta.org

BROOKVALLEY WELCOMES

NEW CENTER MANAGER



Sally Crutcher, the new Center Manager at Brookvalley Child Development Center—Easter Seals North Georgia is a native of Alabama who immigrated to Los Angeles, CA after college and remained there until 3 years ago when she move to Atlanta,

GA. Sally worked and retired from the Los Angeles Unified School District in the field of Early Childhood Education, where she served as an outstanding mentor teacher and a successful administrator. She holds a Masters Degree in Educational Administration from California State University, Carson, CA. After being retired for three years and getting acclimated to Atlanta, Sally decided to join the workforce again and pursue her passion, which is helping children, their families, and building partnerships in the academic arena.

www.northgeorgia.easterseals.com

Preschool Feedback Comes Out Positive

By Linda Hall, The Daily Record—Ohio

Excerpts from Pre-K Now e-newsletter—February 9, 2009

WOOSTER —The littlest learners have become a hot button topic among educators researching the benefits of early education.

While the educational system is being dissected by everyone from President Barack Obama to Gov. Ted Strickland, even preschool has been picked apart and evaluated in some circles. Although it is touted by many researchers as a precursor of academic success, preschool education does have its naysayers.

An August Wall Street Journal column quoted a University of Chicago economist as claiming early intervention is most effective with the disadvantaged population; and that despite rising preschool attendance in the United States, fourth-grade reading, science and math scores -- according to a cluster of National Assessment of Educational Progress statistics -- are not following suit.

It depends on which statistics are used, according to Mary Shumar, coordinator of Success by 6, who said comparisons made are often flawed to begin with -- not apples to apples. Shumar compared the Wall Street Journal column's reference to a 2006 Education Week analysis pointing to Georgia as one of the 10 states making the least progress on NAEP, and in fact, losing ground, despite having "embraced universal preschool."

Shumar's perusal of the data showed a change in categories -- five to 13 -- of information assessed. Not all the children tested had even attended preschool, she said. "A lot of variables can have an impact on results," Shumar said, such as a child's sociological and economical risk factors. To come up with a fair analysis, they must be taken into consideration.

While standing behind the benefits of preschool for all children, Shumar corroborates the boost it gives at-risk children.

Problems at home are among the factors not necessarily taken into account when the academic benefits of preschool are studied, Shumar said. The best preschool in the world can't overcome domestic risk factors, such as hunger, she said.

Referring to the Head Start program and all it offers for a student with a variety of issues, "Where would (they) have been without Head Start support?" "I know (disadvantaged students who attend preschool) are more prepared than they would have been and have a better chance of success than they would have had," Shumar said.

According to Pre-K Now, an organization promoting high-quality preschool programs, benefits of early education include lower rates of grade repetition and special education and higher rates of high school graduation.

The very fact discussion of preschool is on the table points to its overall value in Shumar's opinion. If there weren't evidence-based research supporting it, "Why would (government officials) be talking about preschool?" Shumar asked. "Why would the government be spending time and money (on early education) if it weren't beneficial?" Strickland's State of the State address called for full-day kindergarten to be mandated.

In the arena of early education opportunities, "that's huge," she said.

What Happens in Preschool..... Beyond their letters and numbers, preschoolers learn to:

- Engage in classroom activities
- Follow and give directions
- Relate to nonfamily adults
- Play and work in groups
- Organize toys and materials





2008 ANNUAL BUS TRIP ACROSS GEORGIA



The D. Scott Hudgens Early Learning Center, located on the Gwinnett Technical College Campus, was selected by the Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education (GPEE) as a stop on the **16th Annual Bus Trip Across Georgia**. The north route, conducted Oct. 28 - 30, provided a close look at seven schools and special programs making successful contributions along the route from Pre-K to high school. The theme for the 2008 tour was "Strengthening the Pipeline to Graduation." Tour schools consider their selection an outstanding achievement and recognition for the hard work administrators, teachers, students, parents and other community members have performed. Participants see schools in action and often take the good news stories and lessons learned back to their own community schools. Not only is the annual event a celebration of achievement but it is also a chance to share best practices across Georgia.

Dr. Stephen Dolinger, president of the Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education, says, "The Hudgens Center is a prime example of what can be done when it comes to providing a strong learning foundation for children." He explains the school represents a true partnership between the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning – Bright from the Start – and the Technical College System of Georgia that brings together quality early learning and teacher training. Dolinger adds that the Hudgens Center - Gwinnett Tech visit, as well as the other 2008 bus trip schools, represented what is right in Georgia's public education system. "In the case of this stop, our bus trip participants saw a dynamic program that will pay long-lasting dividends as these children progress through their learning careers."

For more information, tour photos and reflection comments posted by tour riders, please visit www.gpee.org

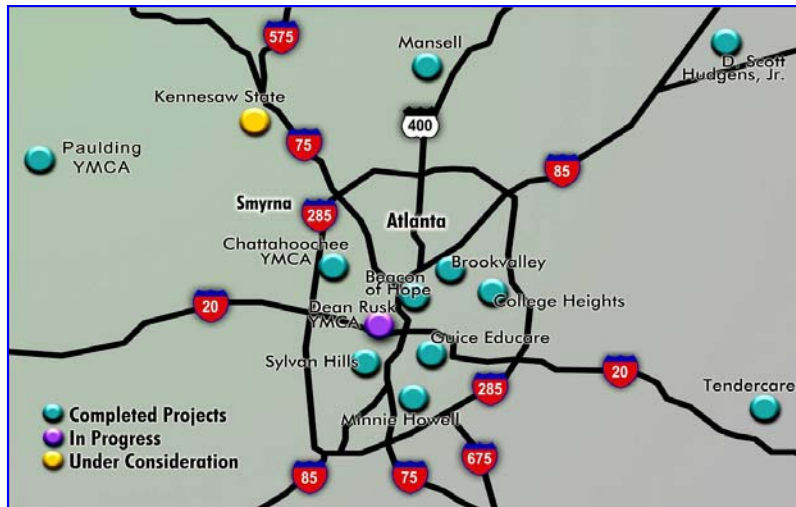
For more information on the D. Scott Hudgens Early Learning Center, please visit www.gwinnettech.edu

ELPM CENTER LOCATIONS

For ELPM center program information, please visit www.elpm.org

Mission Statement

To support and promote early childhood learning and development by providing safe and adequate facilities where early learning programs and activities can be conducted.



Early
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Property
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TO: