

About the Newsletter

High Expectations is a publication of the Chantilly Pyramid Minority Student Achievement Committee (CPMSAC). It is published and distributed quarterly as a tool to help keep members, schools, and community organizations informed, motivated, and inspired to act in positive ways to support students and our schools in closing the minority achievement gap in Fairfax County Public Schools.

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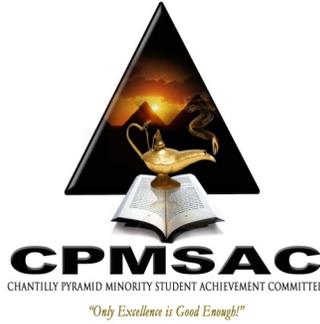
or

Chantilly Pyramid Minority Student Achievement Committee  
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For more information, go to [www.cpmsac.org](http://www.cpmsac.org).

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# High Expectations

[www.cpmsac.org](http://www.cpmsac.org)

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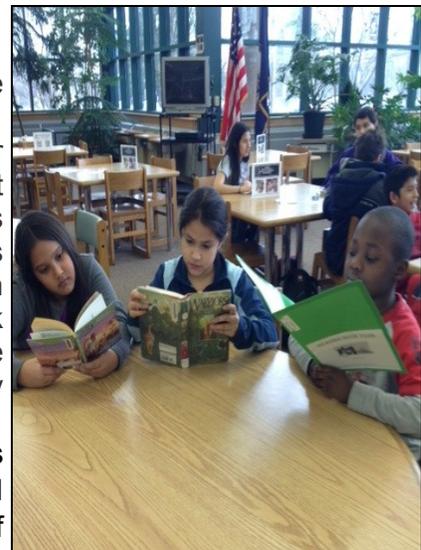
MARCH 2013

## Reading Book Club Café Promotes Reading and Writing

On May 18, 2013, STEP's Reading Book Club Café will celebrate another year of promoting reading to help students improve their reading skills. The goals of the book club are to encourage reading for fun, acquaint students with a wide knowledge base through reading, improve reading comprehension, enhance students' literacy development, enhance students' writing skills, and encourage parents to create an environment for reading at home. Once a month, all students in the club meet with Mrs. Barbara Tyler and Dr. Rosalind Blunt at Chantilly High School Media Center to participate in book talks and book reviews. During the book talks, the students also learn about the elements of fiction, such as character, plot structure, setting, and theme, to enhance their understanding of literature. With the assistance of parent volunteers, the students enjoy lunch during the session.

Students begin the oral report of their books by presenting a summary of the plot and explaining the element of the session's discussion. After each student's presentation, other students have an opportunity to ask questions about the book or give additional information, such as the book's similarity to other books that they have read.

At the end of the session, students submit a written review of the book, as well as their hand-drawn illustrations of characters and setting if they desire to utilize their artistic skills. Before the next session, students must visit their school or community library to select another book for their presentations. The sessions are helping the students to improve their reading and writing skills.



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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

### FATHERS: A Message to You

"Mind your own business? Don't get us in trouble with our wives, man." This was basically the message from fathers when a CPMSAC friend of mine responded to my idea of reaching out to fathers to encourage them to get more involved in their children's education and school activities. Well, here I go disregarding perhaps sound advice because fathers will likely raise questions or comments like these:

"Isn't it enough that my wife visits the school and gets involved in our children's education? After all, I'll be available if something serious comes up." "To what special advantage does a visit to a school by a father figure make?" "I don't really have time. I'm too busy making a living for the family. Yes, I know my wife works outside of the house, too, but that's different." "If I go to the school with my wife, she does most of the talking anyway. After all, she is more up-to-date on the situation involving our children. So, what do you want me to do?"

Thanks for asking, my friend! My simple response is for you to Commit, Plan, and Make an unaccompanied, self-decided visit to your child's school during 2013. Let's take a closer look at this.

**Commit** - This is not to be a "New Year's" resolution. This is to be something that you reach deep down inside yourself and say, "I see the value of this, and based on a personal decision and commitment, I'm going to do it."

**Plan** - For what purpose should I make the visit? Whom should I see? When should I go? Here are some suggestions: 1) make the visit a "general-purpose" visit. You know, like an overall how's she/he doing visit - not just grades wise - but overall as an individual. 2) Arrange the visit with the school counselor. This person usually has access to all of your child's school records and standardized tests. The counselor might suggest inviting a teacher to join you. 3) As to when should you visit, try setting up a morning visit. Yes, take off work for a while and make the visit. Surprise those inquisitive persons at your office or other work location with your true and earnest response that there is no problem involving your child. You just decided to make the "fatherly" visit on general purposes. Will they believe you? Probably not, but do it anyway.

**Make the Visit** - You'll be glad you did and likely so will some significant others in your life.

**Well, that's it for starters. Oh, by the way, Fathers, I did mind my own business. Seriously, because you see promoting parental involvement (both Mom and Dad) is one of CPMSAC's most critical mandates.**

Dr. Johnny L. Nelson, President  
CPMSAC

## Book Club Members' Comments

Some students in the book club tell why they like reading and why they like the book club.



Hi, my name is Jacky. I have been in the book club for three years. It has helped me a lot with explaining the things that happen the story. It has also helped me with talking in front of a lot of people.

Brandon Nguyen – I like the book club because I learn new things.

Kevin Sandoval – I like telling about my book.

Madalynn Aguayo – I like listening to the people because I might like the book.

Rosselyn Lozano– I like to learn.

Dianela Moro- I like reading because it's fun to read a lot.

Jason Nguyen – I like reading because it lets you open your eyes to a different world.

Eddy Sandoval – I like to tell about the story or theme.



Thanks to Katherine Nguyen for Helping the Students

## Scholarship Opportunities

 Intermarkets, Inc., a Virginia-based independent advertising management services firm for online publishers, is offering one \$5,000 scholarship to a senior from a Virginia high school who plans to study journalism in college. The application deadline for the 2013-2014 academic school year is April 5, 2013.

<http://www.intermarkets.net/ourCompany/scholarship/index.html>



IWLA National Scholarships - Izaak Walton League of America - The purpose of the scholarship is to provide financial assistance to a deserving high school graduate who intends to continue his or her higher education studies in Environmental Sciences or a related field of study. The amount of the scholarship is \$12,000 and will be paid in equal installments over a four year period. Applications must be received by the Chapter no later than April 1, 2013

<http://www.iwla.org/index.php?ht=d/ContentDetails/i/2217>



## 2012—2013 CALENDAR OF MEETINGS AND EVENTS

**Executive Board, General Membership,  
and Minority Achievement Rep Meeting**  
May 2, 2013

**STEP Program Banquet - May 18, 2013**  
Chantilly High School

**BITS Program Banquet - TBA**

**Annual Academic Awards and Youth  
Motivation Program - Middle and High  
Schools**  
June 1, 2013  
Chantilly High School  
4201 Stringfellow Road, Chantilly, VA

**Annual Academic Awards and Youth  
Motivation Program - Elementary  
Schools**  
June 2, 2013  
Centreville Elementary School

**Strategic Planning Meeting**  
June 29, 2013

**Summer Math Institute - July 22 - August**  
(Provided Funds are Available)

**MEETINGS' TIME AND LOCATION** to be announced for Executive Board, General Membership, and Minority Achievement Representatives. We hope to rotate the locations of general membership meetings among the schools. Advance notices will be provided.

## Dr. Martin Luther King , Jr. Festival

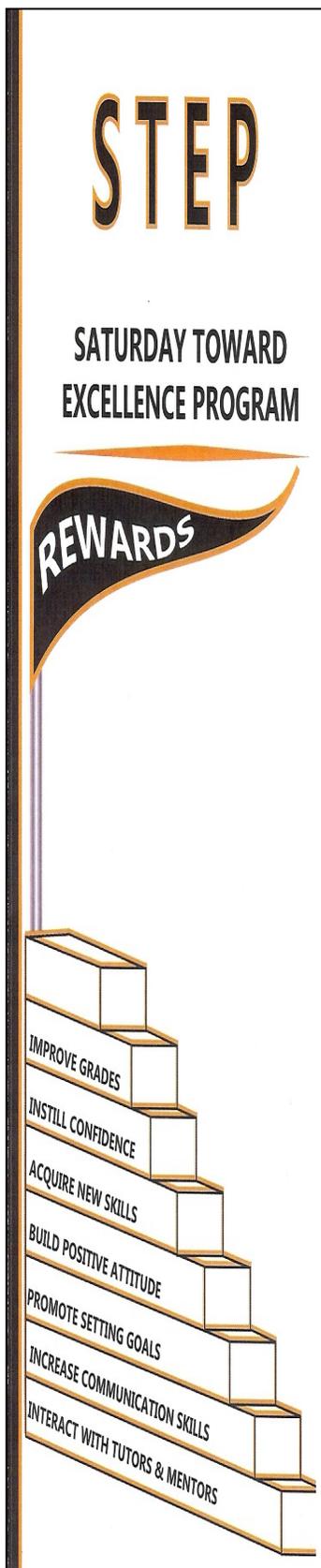
The Chantilly Pyramid Minority Student Achievement Committee (CPMSAC) 19th Annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Festival 2013, "In Celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King: Defining the Dream in an Era of Change," occurred on Sunday, January 20, 2013 in the Westfield High School auditorium from 4:00 – 6:00 PM. CPMSAC thanks all the performers, teachers, sponsors, school administrators, friends, and families who helped to celebrate Dr. King's legacy.

2013 MLK Committee  
Brenda Johnson, Wanda Tanks-Gregory,  
Deneen Vaughn, and Kim Graham

## Summer Opportunities for Students

*Now is the time to apply for a summer learning experience. Study a new subject, explore a career, earn college credit, or live and study as a college student on a college campus. To learn about summer programs, visit the following website.*

[http://www.enrichmentalley.com/  
programs/alphabetical](http://www.enrichmentalley.com/programs/alphabetical)



## STEP IS ON THE MOVE

By Barbara Tyler

2012-2013 School Year

STEP is still reaching out to students and their parents working in partnership to achieve help students reach their dream to become better students by improving their grades. The formula is working, and students are very proud to share with us that STEP is helping them.

STEP has been providing tutoring service to students in third through twelfth grades for over 25 years at Chantilly High School to help students seeking improvement in various subjects. Presently, 82 students who are recommended by their counselors and teachers are enrolled in STEP. We have 50 tutors who have given their time and commitment teaching the students. Just recently, STEP recruited 10 tutors from Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology National Honor Society to join our team.

- **Project BEST** is still presenting STEM education, and the students are excited to learn new skills. Now they can participate in their school's science fair.
- **Summer Math Institute** is in the planning stage, and we hope to get information to all the schools about this wonderful program offered during the summer to give 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders a head start with algebra and geometry.
- **Motivational Speakers Bureau** is used to bring speakers in to share their experiences in education and careers. We are recruiting school officials, representatives from corporations, and parents to come to share their stories with the group.
- **College Round-Up** was held on January 5, 2013. First year students were invited to share their experiences being away from home and adjusting to college life. They represented the following colleges and universities: George Washington University, University of Virginia, Cornell University, and Christopher Newport University.
- **Book Club Café** is growing with 26 students currently enrolled. In the fall, Dr. Blunt will take students for a presentation at Chantilly Public Library.
- **Spelling Bee Contest** is offered to encourage students to learn how to spell. The contest will be held in May. The winner will receive a trophy.
- **American History Contest** will be held in May. Middle and high school students will compete for the prize. The winner will get a plaque.
- **STEP Annual Banquet** The annual STEP Banquet will be held on May 18<sup>th</sup> to celebrate our student's accomplishments and to thank our tutors.

Community involvement; collaboration with the schools, counselors, teachers, and parents; and personal connections will help students meet their educational goals. "YES, WE DO MAKE A DIFFERENCE."

## CPMSAC Academic Achievement Awards

By Mark Richardson

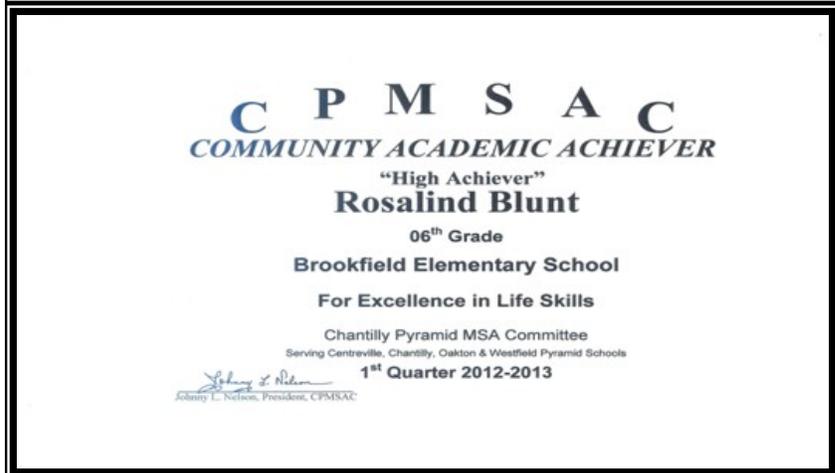
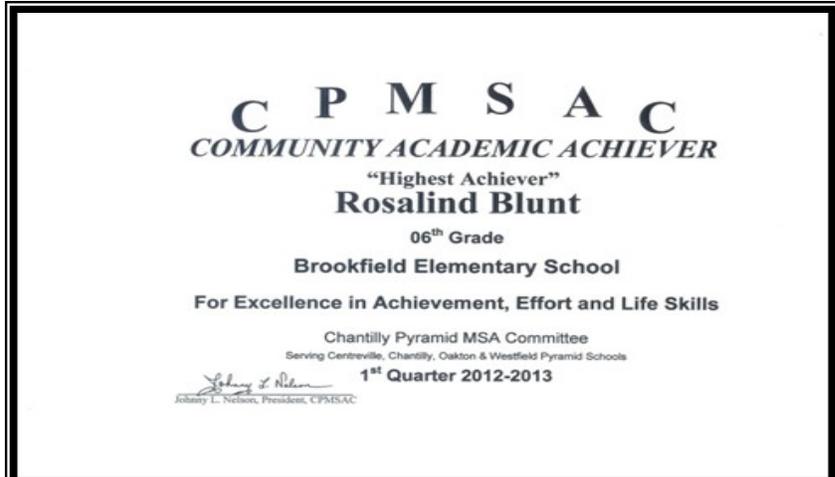
CPMSAC ([www.cpmsac.org](http://www.cpmsac.org)) strives to assist minority students in achieving academic excellence through a number of educational programs and activities throughout the school year. One way in which the Pyramid attempts to motivate minority students is to reward them for their academic achievements throughout the course of the school year. CPMSAC issues quarterly Academic Achievement certificates to elementary, middle and high school students who obtain a minimum of a B average in grades 7-12 during the first and second quarters of the school year.

The elementary school system has adopted a new grading system, and accordingly, CPMSAC has worked with the FCPS to identify a new equitable system for identifying and rewarding elementary level students who achieve under the new grading system. There are new categories under the new grading system for elementary students. Under the new grading system, there are no longer grades of A-F. Students are issued grades from 1-4 in different categories. The categories cover both achievement

and life skills. The intent of the new grading system is to assist FCPS teachers and administrators in better assessing the holistic progression of elementary students as they prepare for higher level education. CPMSAC agrees with this new holistic approach and as a result has revamped its quarterly achievement awards for elementary level students to adapt to the new grading system while still rewarding students for accomplishing high levels of achievement.

There are two basic categories under the new grading system for elementary students, namely, achievement skills and life skills. More detailed information on the new grading system for elementary students can be found at the FCPS website. I have attached a link for reference. CPMSAC encourages all parents to visit this website to become more familiar with the new grading system in place for elementary students in FCPS. <http://www.fcps.edu/is/schoolcounseling/documents/ElementaryGradingandReportingHandbookparents.pdf>

CPMSAC has created two new categories for quarterly awards under the new grading system. The first category is designed to reward those students who have excelled in both categories under the new grading system. Those students who achieved grades of 3 and 4 under both achievement and life skills categories are rewarded with the highest level award. We also recognize students may not have reached this level for the category of achievement, but have accomplished high levels of achievement under the category of life skills. As such, CPMSAC has created a second category of awards that is issued to students who achieved grades of 3 and 4 under the life skills category.



## **\*SAVE THE DATE\***

**FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2013**



**Left to Right: J. Nelson and Syl Daughtry -Tournament Co-Chairpersons**

### **8<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL SHIRLEY O. NELSON MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP GOLF TOURNAMENT**

**Over \$35,000 in student scholarships awarded to date**



**Ladies and Gentlemen, grab your clubs and lend  
your support this year!**

WWW.CPMSAC.ORG - "WHEEL" OF SCHOOL & COMMUNITY SERVICES

