

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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For more information, go to www.cpmsac.org.

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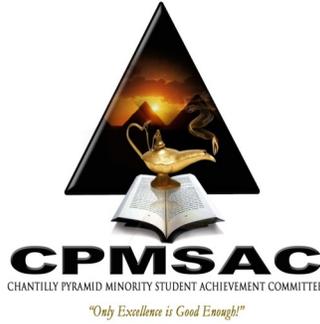
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High Expectations

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WILLIAM MORGAN-PALMER BECOMES MEMBER OF ARMY ALL-AMERICAN MARCHING BAND

By Rosalind Blunt

On October 28, 2011, Chantilly High School hosted a press conference to announce that William Morgan-Palmer, son of Bob Palmer and Pearline Morgan-Palmer, has been selected as a member of the prestigious U.S. Army All-American Marching Band, a national honor ensemble for outstanding musician-scholars. Victoria Chamberlin, Senior Manager, Strategic Relationships and Development of the National Association for Music Education (NAFME), which selects the band members, states that this is the 5th year of the U.S. Army All-American Marching Band (USAAAMB) which was established to recognize outstanding high school marching band seniors.

She says, "Thousands of students are nominated for the honor, but only 125 musicians and color guard members are selected to participate. USAAAMB members are selected after a rigorous round of auditions for their excellence in music, academic achievement, standing in the community and embodiment of the Army Core Values. Among them are leadership and selfless service."



Photo by Becky Spray, National Association for Music Education

William will join the other members of the USAAAMB in San Antonio, Texas to perform at halftime at the Alamodome during the All-American Bowl which will be broadcast on NBC on Saturday, January 7, 2012 at 1 PM ET. Victoria Chamberlin says that the band members "will rehearse for 1 week and spend about 4 to 6 hours practicing each day, with musical help from members of the U.S. Army Field Band. The program is a tremendous honor for the students who are selected and provides them with a solid musical experience and teaches them to work with others to achieve a common goal."

William, a tenor saxophone player, has been a member of his middle school and high school bands. In 2010, he was selected as drum major for the Chantilly High School Marching Band, the Mighty Marching Chargers, and served as Band Council vice president. During that year, he was also a member of the 2010 Macy's Great American Marching Band which performed in the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade. He has performed at Carnegie Hall with the Flutopia Wind Ensemble, has been a member of the 2011 All Virginia Jazz Ensemble and the 2011 District XII Wind Ensemble, and has been a recognized soloist at the Chantilly Jazz Festival. For the 2011-12 school year, William is president of the Band Council.

After being presented with a trophy and USAAAMB cap and jacket, William thanked those who had supported and helped him achieve this honor - his family, band directors, band members, school administrators, and teachers - and thanked the Army and NAFME for selecting him to be a member of the U.S. Army All-American Marching Band.

For more pictures of the press conference, see <http://www.nafme.org/news/view/2012-all-american-marching-band-member-announced-with-fanfare-at-chantilly-virginia-event>

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Dr. Rosalind Blunt
Newsletter Editor

MESSAGE FROM CPMSAC'S PRESIDENT

What is CPMSAC's theme for the 2011-2012 school year? I'm glad you asked. It is ***"The Social Media: Using It to Help Close the Academic Achievement Gap."*** Why? Consider this headline in a 2010 *Bloomberg Businessweek* publication: ***"U.S. Kids Using Media Almost 8 Hours a Day."*** These findings, among others, were based on a Kaiser Family Foundation report based on a survey of more than 2,000 American children aged 8 to 18 and released in January 2010. Of particular interest to me were the following:

- Few American parents place any rules on how much time their children spend with media. In homes where parents did set limits, children spend about three hours less consumed by media.
- Spending time with media appeared to take a toll on school performance.
- Children spend about four and one-half hours daily in front of the TV, about two and one-half hours listening to music, an hour and a half on the computer, about an hour and a quarter playing video games, and just 38 minutes reading.
- Black and Hispanic children spend more time per day with media than white children – about four and a half hours more on average.

Rather than focusing my message on what parents can do about these situations, I will focus it primarily on what students can do. Let's call it "A Call to Self-Government." So, here are four guidelines from Examville.com, LLC regarding one of the most popular media usage explosion technologies --

1. **Keep your "friend" count low.** Think about how many of your online friends you actually want or need to keep in touch with, and you may find that a certain few old friends are taking up time you could spend doing other, more important activities. Remember, "de-friending" someone doesn't mean permanently cutting off ties; you can always search for him/her later on if you want to reconnect.
2. **Disable the chat feature when you have more important things to do --** Arguably, the chat feature is the most addicting aspect of the social media sites, and the most dangerous when you have an important homework assignment to finish. Since chatting can become an activity that never ends, it is safer to simply disable the feature in the first place. Better yet, use it as an incentive; finish your assignment first, and then re-enable the chat later.
3. **Steer clear of extra games and applications that might pull you even further into the site --** Social media sites are addicting enough as it is; the last thing you need to add to your page is another distracting game! Not to mention, many Facebook applications are notorious for gathering and using your information in a way that you might feel violates your privacy. Use the site to keep in touch with people, but don't let it become a video game too!
4. **Try doing your homework in a place where you won't be tempted to check social media sites.**

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MESSAGE FROM CPMSAC'S PRESIDENT Continued

Now, let's consider some uses of social media that could be HELPFUL to students and school administrators in improving school performance. For example, social media can be used to discuss school assignments, study with peers, and conduct peer editing of a friend's writing. Note the highlights of an article written by Karl Meinhardt (see www.edsome.com) on a recent initiative called The Portland Project:

1. **Social Media is Not Going Away** – Almost three-fourths of 7th through 12th graders have at least one social media profile.
2. **When Kids Are Engaged, They Learn Better** – Kids actually enjoyed doing activities like writing a blog.
3. **Safe Social Media Tools Are Available** — And They're Free. Kidblog.org is one of many free tools that allow teachers to control an online environment while still benefiting from social media.
4. **Replace Online Procrastination with Social Education** – Between 2004 and 2009, the amount of time that kids between the ages of 2 and 11 spent online increased by 63%, according to a Nielson study.
5. **Social Media Encourages Collaboration Instead of Cliques** - Social media as a teaching tool has a natural collaborative element. Students critique and comment on each other's assignments, work in teams to create content, and can easily access each other and the teacher with questions or to start a discussion.

Also, it is well to mention the **Extra Special Homework Club**. This club is an online social media group where students can log in after-school hours and choose from a variety of assignments to do on their own time. The assignments are posted by educators and require utilizing research methods, higher level thinking strategies and collaborative learning. Students make and share their own videos, blog, quiz one another on posted articles and create public service announcements. Teachers can log on and give encouragement, as can any student who joins, but no one gives grades or extra credit. The students choose assignments that appeal to them and create assignments they think will appeal to others.

So, my message about the use of social media as it relates to school work is a matter of how it is used. Students should avoid the pitfalls and embrace the advantages of the modern day wonder of technology. If you do so, students, you will likely find yourself engaging more and more in Facebook chats with your friends with a message like: "Wow! Let me tell you exactly how I scored so high on that test."

Dr. Johnny L. Nelson, President

www.cpmasac.org

STEP: A Key Program of the Chantilly Pyramid
Minority Student Achievement Committee
501 © (3) Organization – Federal Tax ID# 54-1530496

**2011-2011 CPMSAC MEMBERSHIP
REMINDER
\$25.00 PER YEAR PER FAMILY**

Please make checks payable to: **CPMSAC** and
mail to CPMSAC, P.O. Box 221351,
Chantilly, VA 250153.

Credit Card Payment can be made online at:
www.CPMSAC.org under membership.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR COMMITMENT TO A
BRIGHTER FUTURE FOR ALL STUDENTS**

2011 S. O. Nelson Golf Tournament Honoring the Legacy of CPMSAC Founder

Reflections by Meka S. Sales

Anyone who knew my mom, Shirley O. Nelson, knew that she loved a good competition. So, the fact that the day of the 6th Annual Shirley O. Nelson Memorial Scholarship Golf Tournament was cold and rainy would not have stopped her from hitting the links, nor did it stop the over 75 golfers who came out to support a great cause. This yearly tournament was co-sponsored by CPMSAC and Chantilly Baptist Church.

The day began early at 7:00 AM with volunteers organizing breakfast, placing sponsor signs at each of the 18 holes, setting up the registration table, selling mulligans and wheeling out the automobile and motorcycle special hole-in-one prizes provided by Sterling BMW and Fairfax Patriot Harley-Davidson. As golfers began to arrive, some headed to the driving range to get in a few practice swings. Others, like me, a self-proclaimed casual golfer, remained in the warm and dry club house and fellowshiped with my church family and others I hadn't seen since my last visit. I watched as my dad greeted just about everyone by name with a hug or a handshake and thanked him/her for being there. Each encounter was so sincere – and not just because it was cloudy and threatening to rain, but because of what their presence meant to him and our family.

My mom was a visionary and a tireless activist who loved children. Her passion for closing the academic achievement gap birthed CPMSAC in 1984 when I was just twelve years old. Mom was always innovating so it wasn't such an unusual occurrence that she was creating an organization that would go on to serve thousands of children and families in Fairfax County – but the fact that the organization still lives on is truly remarkable. It lives on because of the people that make up this all volunteer organization and their connection to its founder. Each year when I arrive at the tournament, I see the love in everyone's eyes, and we all share in boastful pride to be a part of such a meaningful and impactful event.

Over the past six years, the tournament has awarded \$25,000 to help students from Fairfax County, Virginia and Chambers County, Alabama (my mom's home county) to attend college. But more than that, CPMSAC represents a "village" of academic and advocacy support for minority students and families in the Fairfax County Public School System. In 1984, one can imagine how extremely necessary this was when the school system was not as diverse as it is today. But even today, with the multiples of languages being spoken in the hallways of Fairfax County Public Schools, minority students still lag behind on standardized tests, and their families need to be supported in helping their kids achieve and compete in this new era. Mom's vision lives on and continues to excel beyond what any of us could have imagined. But, I bet anything that she's not surprised at the success of CPMSAC and what the organization has achieved. She laid the groundwork, and as she would say, "Only excellence is good enough." And excellence survives the test of time.



Johnny Nelson, Meka Nelson Sales, and Mark Nelson



Golfers at the Tournament

UP-COMING CPMSAC EVENTS

2011-2012 Calendar of Meetings and Events

**CPMSAC Academic Achievers Recognition
(1st & 2nd School Qtrs.) - November 2011**

**Annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Festival
January 15, 2012 - Westfield High School
January 22, 2012 - Alternate Date**

**Executive Board, General Membership, and
Minority Achievement Rep Meeting
February 2, 2012**

**Annual Youth Enrichment Teach-in
March 9, 2012
March 16, 2012 - Alternate Date**

**Executive Board, General Membership and
Minority Achievement Rep Meeting
May 10, 2012**

**STEP Program Banquet
May 19, 2012
Chantilly High School**

BITS Program Banquet - TBA

**Annual Academic Awards and Youth
Motivation Program - Middle and High Schools
June 2, 2012**

**Chantilly High School
4201 Stringfellow Road, Chantilly, VA**

**Annual Academic Awards and Youth
Motivation Program - Elementary Schools
June 3, 2012
Location TBA**

**Strategic Planning Meeting
June 23, 2012**

**Summer Math Institute
July 23– August 3, 2012
(Provided Funds are Available)**

Mark Your Calendars!

**Chantilly Pyramid Minority Student
Achievement Committee (CPMSAC)
18th Annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.**

**Festival
“Journey to the Mountaintop: Embracing a
Stone of Hope”**

By Kim Graham

The 18th Annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Festival will take place on Sunday, January 15, 2012, in the Westfield High School auditorium. The program will be from 4:00 – 6:00 PM. The snow make-up date will be on Sunday, January 22nd. The Festival is a blend of entertainment and education to display our students' array of talents as we honor the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. legacy. The participants are students from the Chantilly, Westfield, and Oakton Pyramids, along with friends from the surrounding communities. The audience is sure to be inspired through words, music, and song. The program is open to the public, and the admission is free.

The 2012 MLK Committee: Kim Graham, Brenda Johnson, Wanda Tanks-Gregory, and Deneen Vaughn

S.O.N.-Light Student Enrichment Program

By Ella Thomas

The S.O.N.-Light Student Enrichment Program will be held on Friday, March 9, 2012 at Chantilly High School in the gymnasium. This annual early evening program will include sessions for all 6th through 12th grade students and a separate session for parents focused on strategies to promote high expectations for student success. Previous programs included workshops on Etiquette and Civility, Preparing for College, Preparing and Positioning for Career and Financial Success, and much more. We look forward to this year's program and appreciate any suggestions, volunteers, sponsors, and donations so that more can benefit from this incredible program. If interested, please contact us through visiting www.cpmisac.

STEP PROGRAMS

By Barbara Tyler

2010-2011 School Year

The STEP Tutoring Program ended the 2010-2011 school year on May 21, 2011 with a “bang” at the annual banquet celebration. We celebrated students’ participation and their successes. Tutors were also recognized for their time and commitment for helping our students to succeed and improve their academic goals. We had a large gathering of parents, students, tutors, special guests and the community. Mr. Shawn Frank, sub-school principal, and Len Litton, Chantilly PTSA president, were presenters. Dr. Johnny Nelson, president of the Chantilly Pyramid Minority Student Achievement Committee (CPMSAC), greeted the students and their parents and acknowledged students’ improvement of their grades.



Students at STEP Orientation

2011-2012 School Year

STEP kicked off this school year on September 24th with its Orientation and Registration Program. Over ninety people were in attendance. Ms. Teresa Johnson, newly appointed principal, was on hand to welcome and give remarks and encouragement to students to work toward their educational goals. Dr. Johnny Nelson, CPMSAC president, also gave his remarks on the history of the organization and its mission to help students achieve academically. Ms. Robyn Spero from Chantilly PTSA brought greetings and talked about the organization’s commitment and support to STEP. Mr. Amos Simms-Smith from Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology was on hand to share information and to invite students and parents to the school’s “Open House” on October 1, 2011. Several workshops were also offered on this day to parents, students, tutors, and community parent representatives.

A study skills workshop for students was facilitated by Mrs. Andria Shoates, counselor from Northern Virginia Community College. The Path of Learning for Parents Workshop was facilitated by Dr. Larry Bussey from Fairfax County Public Schools. Our tutors also participated in the Tutors Training Workshop, and finally the Community Parent Representatives also had a training session.



Dr. Larry Bussey in Parent Session

STEP PROGRAMS

By Barbara Tyler

STEP IS ON THE MOVE

As of November 19, 2011, 98 students have enrolled in the program. We have a great team of 45 tutors on the roster, and it is growing each week. Besides the tutoring sessions, we offer many exciting enrichment programs, activities, workshops, and motivational speakers. If students climb STEP's stairs, there will be a lot of changes in their lives. These experiences help students to acquire new skills, build confidence, develop a positive attitude, and learn to set goals. Tutoring sessions take place (3) three Saturdays per month at Chantilly High School Media Center. The time is 8:30 a.m. -11:00 a.m. See schedule below. Contact your counselors for more information or email at btyler@fcps.edu.

Chantilly High School - STEP Schedule 2011 /2012

Sat. Dec 03, 2011	8:30 – 11:00 AM	North Wing
Sat. Dec 10, 2011	8:30 – 11:00 AM	Media Center
Sat. Dec 17, 2011	8:30 – 11:00 AM	Media Center
12/23/2011 thru 1/2/12 Winter Break		
Sat. Jan 07, 2012	8:30 – 11:00 AM	Lecture Hall – Study Skills WS (College Round-up)
Sat. Jan 14, 2012	8:30 – 11:00 AM	Media Center
Sat. Jan 21, 2012	8:30 – 11:00 AM	North Wing
Sat. Feb 04, 2012	8:30 – 11:00 AM	Media Center
Sat. Feb 11, 2012	8:30 – 11:00 AM	Media Center
Sat. Feb 18, 2012	8:30 – 11:00 AM	Media Center
Sat. Mar 03, 2012	8:30 – 11:00 AM	Media Center
Sat. Mar 10, 2012	8:30 – 11:00 AM	North Wing
Sat. Mar 17, 2012	8:30 - 11:00 AM	North Wing
4/2/2012 thru 4/6/2012 Spring Break		
Sat. Apr 14, 2012	8:30 - 11:00 AM	Media Center
Sat. Apr 21, 2012	8:30 – 11:00 AM	Media Center
Sat. Apr 28, 2012	8:30 – 11:00 AM	Media Center
Sat. May 05, 2012	8:30 – 11:00 AM	North Wing
Sat. May 12, 2012	8:30 – 11:00 AM	Media Center
Sat. May 19, 2012	8:30 – 11:00 AM	Cafeteria - Banquet



MEET AND GREET

S T E P Tutoring Program's Annual "MEET AND GREET" was held on November 19, 2011 from 8:30 a.m. to 9:15 a.m. This was a time to promote unity and spread the "Spirit of Joy and Love." This was also another opportunity to meet our tutors and join in our partnership with them. Seventy-four students, tutors, and parents attended this reception. Special thanks to all the volunteers who provided food and served on this committee.

CPMSAC'S PROGRAMS

By Barbara Tyler

SUMMER MATH INSTITUTE

The third annual Summer Math Institute was offered on July 24th through August 4, 2011 at Chantilly High School, and it was a big success. The goals were to give students a head start when they start the new school year, to help students lose their fear of math and acclimate themselves successfully to a new course, and to assist in closing the achievement gap. Forty-nine students from 7th -11th grades attended classes in Algebra I or Geometry. The institute was offered for two weeks, three evenings per week from 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Presently, we are searching for grants to sponsor next year's Summer Math Institute. See the article in *Connection* at <http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/article.asp?article=353525&paper=81&cat=104>.

THE ANNUAL PRINCIPALS' RECEPTION

The Annual Principals' Reception was held on October 20, 2011 at Sully Station Community Center. This reception focused on the strong working partnership with Fairfax County Public Schools for the betterment of minority and other students. Guest presenters included Shawn Frank of Chantilly H.S.; Tim Thomas of Westfield H.S.; Tanisha Holland, Director of Admissions, Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology; Amos Simms-Smith, admissions outreach specialist for Thomas



Parent Representatives: Elizabeth Ogbonna, Addy Perez Mau, and Wanda Tanks-Gregory

Jefferson High School for Science and Technology; parent representative Addy Perez Mau; and STEP tutors, David Howlett, John Mail, Ravi Varadan, and Jasmine Geddiis. CPMSAC President Johnny Nelson presented a gift to all persons in attendance and thanked them for their support of CPMSAC's numerous programs.

SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Gates Millennium Undergraduate Scholars Program

For: Outstanding minority students (African American, American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian Pacific Islander American and Hispanic American students) with significant financial need, a minimum GPA of 3.3, and demonstrated leadership skills. Scholarship funds cost of education by covering unmet need.

Deadline: January 11, 2012

To apply, visit <http://www.gmsp.org>

RMHC®/African-American Future Achievers - <http://rmhc.org/what-we-do/rmhc-u-s-scholarships>

For: Currently enrolled high school seniors who have at least one parent of African American or Black Caribbean heritage and who are eligible to enroll and attend an institution of higher education or vocational/technical school with a complete course of study in the year immediately following graduation.

Deadline: January 27, 2012

Black Male Teachers needed. Do you know any Black Males who are seniors in high school who want to go to college out of state for FREE? The CALL ME MISTER program is offered by 4 historically black colleges in South Carolina, Benedict College, Chafin University, Morris College and South Carolina State University. Visit

www.callmemister.clemson.edu/index.html for online application or call 1.800.640.2657

Harvard University is offering free tuition to families of HONOR STUDENTS and their income is less than \$125,000 per year. Visit www.fao.fas.harvard.edu <<http://www.fao.fas.harvard.edu>>

Syracuse University School of Architecture is desperately seeking young women and men of color interested in pursuing a 5 yr. professional degree in Architecture. Contact: Mark Robbins, Dean School of Architecture, 201 Slocum Hall, Syracuse, NY 13244-1250

(315) 443-256 www.soa.syr.edu/index.php

See www.uncf.org/forstudents/scholarship.asp

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