

## Fieldwork Abroad Helps Staff Grow Their Global Competence

*EPS students benefit from teachers' new perspectives*



Edina teachers Jamie Johansen, second from left, and Kristy Arding, third from left, join fellow GCC candidates in Ecuador to work on a community project to add more lights to a town park.

### *Edina Public Schools*

For nine Edina Public School (EPS) teachers and staff members, weeks spent in other countries last summer not only taught them about the culture of the area, it caused them to view their own students with new eyes. Now, they are using their experiences to teach in new ways.

The group is part of a 15-month Global Competence Certificate (GCC) program, a collaborative masters-level curriculum. Global competence is one of the six educational competencies identified by the district as being critical to the preparation of Edina students for success in academics, career and life. The nine EPS participants were selected from among many district applicants last January, to represent a wide spectrum of grade levels, school

sites and specialized areas. Their involvement is sponsored by an Edina Education Fund grant and support from another district partner, with the idea that the group will not only learn global awareness for themselves, but also will share what they learn with their colleagues.

During the summer, they pursued the fieldwork segment of their program, travelling to countries including Uganda, Colombia and Ecuador. Their eye-opening experiences, they say, will help them open the eyes of Edina students to be more globally aware.

Bianca Suglia, a district peer coach, Katy Hammel, grade 2 teacher at Countryside, and Jason Dockter, Valley View Middle School social studies teacher, spent two weeks in Colombia, South America. They visited several schools, collaborating with teachers and working directly with students. Hammel said she was grateful to return to a classroom of 28 students compared to 45 in Bogota.

Despite the large classrooms, Hammel said she observed that Colombian teachers develop strong relationships with their students by empathizing with them. "The neighborhoods many students live in are violent places, still experiencing the effects

**Continued on Page 7**

## Beyond the Hour of Code: Integrating Computer Science into Everyday Elementary Education

*Melanie Olson and  
Cyre Beaumont  
Parkside Elementary*

There was excitement in the air last week. Over 500 Minnesota schools signed on to participate in Hour of Code activities. In classrooms all over the world, children and adults were collaborating, many huddled by computer screens, writing code and learning the fundamentals of computer science during Computer Science Education Week. With the initiation of Hour of Code, millions of students have had a chance to experience this.

We felt the excitement here, at Parkside Elementary School in Buffalo, Minnesota. In our Quest classrooms, the language of computer science has been thoughtfully woven into our curriculum throughout the school year. The Elementary Quest Program is a school-within-a-school for highly gifted children in grades 2—5.

It is the mission of Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose schools to make a difference by preparing all students for a successful future in a changing world. The goal of BHM Schools' high potential services program is to develop the unique abilities of gifted and talented students so they can be leaders in their future academic and professional pursuits.

The integration of computer science into our regular curriculum began in 2013 with the first Hour of Code organized by Code.org. Since then, students in the Quest program have



been enrolled in online Code.org courses that teach students computer science fundamentals throughout the school year. This year, we are implementing Scratch.mit.edu curriculum. Scratch is a project of the Lifelong Kindergarten Group at the MIT Media Lab and made available free of charge. We have integrated computer science vocabulary and concepts into other core subjects throughout the year.

Therefore, when Computer Science Education Week rolls around each year, it's more like the excitement one feels during Homecoming Week in high school. Just as high school students show school spirit all year long, our students are coding all year long. And much like homecoming week, our

**Continued on Page 7**

## THANK YOU TO OUR ADVERTISERS FOR YOUR GENEROUS SUPPORT!

Camp Buckskin • Groves Academy • Bellin College • Worthington Regional Economic Development Corporation  
Minnesota State College - Southeast Technical • Milwaukee School of Engineering • True Friends  
Hamline University • Bemidji State University • Lesley University • National Eagle Center  
Audubon Center of the North Woods • Trollhaugen Outdoor Recreation Area • Spirit Mountain



Helping Youth with AD/HD, Asperger's, Learning Differences or similar for more than 50 years



**Camp Buckskin** specializes in serving boys and girls ages 6–18 who have social skill or some academic needs. More specifically, the majority of our campers struggle with AD/HD, Learning Disabilities, Aspergers, or similar needs. They have a world of potential in many areas that have yet to be developed. They simply need extra support and opportunities to convert their potentials into abilities.



Buckskin provides a mix of mainly traditional camp and some academic activities. We feature a daily Personal Growth program which addresses social skill and self development. We strive to help our campers learn to build and maintain friendships, to become more self-reliant, to develop better problem solving/ coping skills, and to be more accepting of responsibility. As a result of this growth, our campers return home with more self confidence and a strengthened self concept, which makes for a happier, more successful young person.

Camper and Summer Staff Information: 763-432-9177 or visit [campbuckskin.com](http://campbuckskin.com)

# TRANSFORMING LEARNING

Serving students with learning challenges and attention disorders since 1972



Groves®  
A C A D E M Y

SCHOOL for grades 1-12

SUMMER PROGRAMS for grades 2-12

DIAGNOSTIC ASSESSMENTS

TUTORING AND CAREER COUNSELING

SPEECH AND LANGUAGE THERAPY

COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR TEACHERS

PLEASE JOIN US!

39th Annual Groves Scholarship Gala | April 9, 2016

Supporting Scholarships for Students

FOR MORE INFORMATION 952.920.6377 GROVESACADEMY.ORG

3200 Highway 100 South | St. Louis Park, MN | 55416

# TEACHING TODAY MN

PUBLISHER/EDITOR: Renee Feight  
EDITOR: Andria Reinke  
PAGE COMPOSITION: Andrew Clausen  
WEBMASTER: Scott Bayerl  
SPECIAL PROJECTS: Allie Zacharias  
Please direct articles, advertising, questions or comments to:

Teaching Today MN™  
PO Box 1704  
Eau Claire, WI 54702  
Phone/Fax 715-839-7074  
www.teachingtodaymn.com

Please direct all inquiries to:  
renee@teachingtodaymn.com

Teaching Today™ is an independent publication for educators.

The opinions expressed in Teaching Today™ are not necessarily the opinions of Teaching Today™. We reserve the right to edit any and all materials submitted due to grammar, content and space allowances. Articles, photos and artwork submitted to Teaching Today™ are assumed to be released by the submitter for publication.

Teaching Today™  
Transportation Today™  
Manufacturing Today™

## From the Teaching Today MN™ Educational Blog teachingtodaymn.wordpress.com

### Educator: How to teach trans-disciplinary skills

Students need transdisciplinary skills -- using their expertise to collaborate with professionals in other disciplines to create unique solutions -- to become 21st-century workers, educator Matt Levinson writes in this blog post. He offers steps for teaching these skills, from creating cross-curricular lessons with colleagues to organizing problem-solving projects across subject areas.

### How vulnerability gave one teacher the strength to lead

Co-leading an online learning community on a new teaching strategy -- number talks -- helped build one teacher's professional confidence as it exposed her to vulnerability and criticism, middle-school math teacher Crystal Morey explains. In this blog post, Morey shares her fears in holding this teacher-leader role and how the experience transformed her.

### Instructional methods to develop mathematical reasoning

Two math teachers profiled in this article are trying new instructional methods to help students develop mathematical reasoning. One educator uses an approach aimed at helping eighth-grade students look for patterns and develop conjecture about functions.

### Brainstorm with students on a "web wall"

Any device with a browser can be used to create "web walls," which are effective in getting students to collaborate and brainstorm, suggests Gene Tognetti, of Presentation High School in San Jose, Calif. In this blog post, he describes how he used the Padlet application to create a web wall used in his middle-school social studies classroom.

## In this Issue

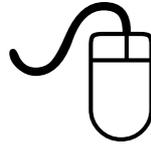
- Girls on the Run Program  
Helps Girls Build Confidence ... Page 5
- Helping Students Gain  
Career Skills and  
Workforce Experience ..... Page 6
- Hour of Code:  
Making Coding Simple ..... Page 8
- 'Hour of Code' Connects  
Students Across Grade Levels .. Page 8
- MWHS Presents 2nd Annual  
Engineering Regatta ..... Page 9
- Brown Bag Lunch ..... Page 10
- 4-Block Methodology to  
Teach Balanced Literacy ..... Page 12
- Hoover, Lincoln Elementary  
Earn 'Celebration' Status ..... Page 15
- A '#relevant' Performance  
at Cooper ..... Page 17
- Happiness Project Raises  
Spirits and Money ..... Page 18

# Who reads TEACHING TODAY MN?



More than  
**50,000**  
readers  
across the  
state!

## There's more TEACHING TODAY MN just a mouse-click away



Check out all the resources  
available to you at

[www.TeachingTodayMN.com](http://www.TeachingTodayMN.com)

CONNECT WITH TEACHING TODAY MN!



Watch for updates, contests,  
grant deadlines,  
and breaking news!



[facebook.com/TeachingTodayMN](https://facebook.com/TeachingTodayMN)

# Girls on the Run Program Helps Girls Build Confidence at University Avenue Elementary School



Anoka-Hennepin School District

Fifth-grade student Lily Thai never thought she could become a runner. And she certainly never thought she would be able to run as fast as — or even faster than — the boys in her class.

But that all changed after she joined Girls on the Run, a program implemented this fall at University Avenue Elementary School for Aerospace, Children's Engineering, and Science, located in Blaine.

"Girls on the Run has helped me be much more happy, because I never knew I could actually run. Now I can run and keep up with the boys, and maybe even get ahead of them," she said. "And that just makes me feel really good, that girls can be empowered and they can do just what boys can do."

Girls on the Run is a national non-profit running club aimed at building confidence in girls in third through fifth grades. The girls and

their coaches meet after school twice a week for 10 weeks to run laps around the track and learn lessons that encourage positive emotional, social, mental and physical development, according to the program. The season culminates in a 5k race on Harriet Island in St. Paul in November, which includes all 30 participating schools around the Twin Cities.

"It's kind of a physical activity-based curriculum that inspires girls to be happy and healthy, and the curriculum has lessons on really cool topics like friendship and bullying and positive self-talk, all kinds of things I thought the girls at our school would really like," said Leah Lewis, a paraprofessional who initiated the program at University Avenue after reading an article about it.

Lewis serves as head coach along with four other teachers who volunteer as coaches. The program requires a minimum of eight girls to sign up.

"We were a little nervous we wouldn't even get eight, but we ended up getting the maximum of 20, plus we have a waiting list. So it really exceeded our expectations," she said. "It was pretty amazing."

Jewel Ellis, a fifth grader at University Avenue, said she learned about the program at

the school's open house and thought it would be a fun activity for her and her friends, and her mom agreed to be her running buddy during the 5K.

Ellis likes that it's a girls-only group because it feels supportive, she said. "It makes me more confident. If it's just girls, we'll all encourage each other to run faster," she said.

Fellow fifth-grader Tina Nguyen agreed. "There aren't many activities just for girls, and I liked that, because I feel more comfortable," she said. "And we can share experiences about other people saying that we can't do stuff."

Opportunities like this are especially important at a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) school like University Avenue, said Kate Watson, curriculum integration coordinator at the school, and a running coach for the program.

"Being a magnet school, we always look at opportunity gaps that exist in our community that we can fill, and this one promotes physical fitness and self-confidence and friendship, so it epitomizes everything we want for our students," she said. "And girls are still so under-represented in the STEM jobs, that to start these

Continued on Page 14

## Do you want a career where you'll be in **HIGH** demand?



Employment is expected to **GROW 21%** for radiologic technologists and **19%** for registered nurses, from 2012 to 2022 — faster than the average for all occupations!\*

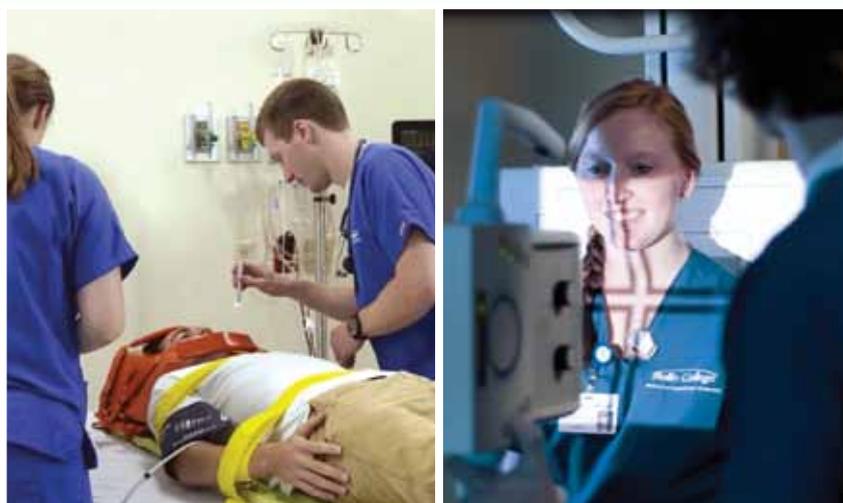
**Program Options:**

- Bachelor of Science in Nursing
- Bachelor of Science in Radiologic Sciences
- Master of Science in Nursing

### Why Bellin College?

- Earn a **bachelors degree**—making yourself more marketable when seeking employment.
- **Direct entrance** into programs of study. Once you are accepted to Bellin College, you are accepted into your program—no waiting!
- With more than 85 clinical partners, you'll get **extensive hands-on experience** across various specialties.
- **Small class sizes** and an intimate campus setting. The student to faculty ratio is 10:1.
- Newly expanded Health Resource Center with **advanced simulation labs**.
- **Exceptional results.** Bellin College consistently reports passing rates of graduates above the national average for the nursing licensure exam and has a 100% pass rate for the radiologic sciences licensing exam.

\*Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational Employment Statistics, [August, 2015] [www.bls.gov/oes/].



**Bellin College**

# Helping Students Gain Career Skills and Workforce Experience



Job Coach Amy Chappuis

By Catherine A. Durivage, Supervisor, Braille and Talking Book Library

Tucked into a campus near the Cannon River in Faribault, the Minnesota Braille and Talking Book Library offers library services to residents from across the state. Each year, it mails more than 300,000 audio, large print and braille books to more than 10,000 patrons. And during the school year, up to 15 students from Faribault and the surrounding area visit

the library, not to check out books, but to gain job experience.

The library's student workers participate in Cannon River Educational Center's Secondary Transition Education Program (STEP) and Faribault High School's Work Experience Program. Both programs are designed to help students gain employment readiness, social and work skills as they transition from school to the workforce.

In some ways, not much has changed since Sam Chavie's time here as a student worker in 1995. Then a student in the Work Experience program, he is now one of the library's circulation staff members, overseeing the distribution, sorting and organization of almost 3,000 items each and every day. Sam sets up work assignments with the needs and skills of each student in mind, with a goal of matching the right job to the right student. He

works directly with job coaches, providing training and support that ensures each student is poised to be successful in completing their work.

Student workers have a variety of regular assignments, all of which help the library make sure its collection is readily accessible to patrons. Students work independently or in teams or with job coaches to shelve library materials, sort incoming mail, address mailing containers and much more. Lisa Olson, coordinator of Faribault's program, highlights an important feature of the program: students "learn skills that cannot be taught in the classroom."

The library's welcoming work environment does not go unnoticed by the students. Sydney Malecha, who aspires to a career in education or early childhood, says that "it's the staff that make it fun," while Tristan Walsh says that they are "awesome".

Library staff also appreciates the student workers. Sam says that "We are blessed to have student workers. The students not only help us out, but they really help the entire library program. At same time, they gain valuable work experience that we hope will lead to successful future employment." Katie Morgan-Hatfield, STEP Program job coach, sees student growth -- they gain confidence and become more willing to try new tasks and ask

questions.

The library has been a work site for students in the Faribault area for decades. The students offer a great service to library patrons, while the library offers students a safe and supportive work environment so they can learn various work skills. It's a win-win."

Amy Chappuis, who assists Sydney, and Katie Morgan-Hatfield, part of STEP Program, are job coaches who appreciate the variety of tasks and flexibility the library offers to students. Students can work independently doing tasks like inserting mailing cards into containers or as part of team, when sorting incoming mail.

For more information visit the Minnesota Braille and Talking Book Library, the STEP Program, or the Work Experience Program.

*Reprinted with permission from the Minnesota Department of Education*

**The Minnesota Braille and Talking Book Library**  
[education.state.mn.us/MDE/StuSuc/Lib/MBTBL](http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/StuSuc/Lib/MBTBL)



**FEBRUARY  
IS**



**RECOGNIZING  
CLASSROOM  
INNOVATORS**

**IN MINNESOTA AND  
ACROSS THE NATION!**

**Career and Technical Education (CTE) Month** is a time to promote innovative CTE and reflect on the value of career and technical education for our students, the future workforce, and our economy. It is a time to inform students, parents, school personnel and counselors, community members, and legislators about CTE programs, student success, and the impact on future employment.



## Fieldwork Abroad Helps Staff Grow Their Global Competence

Continued from Page 1

of war,” she said. “Teachers provide students with a voice to acknowledge their fears, a safe place, a warm meal and accountability to high expectations. My students face different challenges, but they, too, benefit when I consider their life experiences beyond the walls of our school building.”

Suglia was struck by the importance of being bilingual and the common belief that language is freedom. “All my beliefs and values were reinforced by this experience,” said Suglia, who is multilingual. “Language is so empowering because it gives us access into the mentality and the culture of those we are interacting with. Knowledge of another language increases one’s ability to understand ourselves and others better as it provides another lens into the human experience we share.”

In Ecuador, Kristy Ardinger, grade 4 teacher at Concord, Jamie Johansen, Highlands continuous progress teacher, and Sophie Toner, grade 3 teacher at Normandale, participated in

some manual labor -- digging holes, pouring cement and running wires as part of a community project to add more lights to the town park.

During this work, they were able to connect with many of the local children. “Most kids in town spent the entire day in the town park, unsupervised,” said Ardinger. “We had many opportunities to play games, talk and get to know more about the kids and community.” They also toured different types of education and cultural settings and had a six-day home stay experience with a family in the Afro-Ecuadorian population. Johansen said his biggest “take away” was that Ecuador “struggles with diversity and equity issues just like we do in the states.”

The other group of three went to Uganda, Africa. Jen Baumgarten, Cornelia learning specialist, Noah Franske, EHS math teacher, and Claude Sigmund, South View social studies teacher, helped develop training around public health issues for community volunteers who

in turn used their training to share information about skin infections, hygiene and sanitation practices with neighborhood communities. They also handed out “tickets” to a health clinic. Baumgarten said the experience made her realize the cultural nuances to time and organization, that all humans want the same basic health conditions and “how powerful the concept of community can be.”

“It seems that being culturally aware has become permanent [for me],” she said. “When a student gives an example in a class discussion that doesn’t necessarily make sense to everyone, I ask for more information so the kids can better understand one another, and therefore, the world around them.” Baumgarten said she has become comfortable with slowing down the pace in her classroom in order to have “rich conversations that take a bit of time.”

The group continues their GCC work with online and collaborative coursework. But halfway through their program, they are already

seeing changes in their own view of the world and, in turn, changing their classrooms. Suglia said her experiences in Colombia reinforced the importance of “using my own culture and history as the key to understanding my relationship to others.” “My hope is to help my students learn and engage with the world and to help them reflect on context and meaning of our lives in relation to something bigger,” said Ardinger. Johansen said that while exposing students to global cultures and ideas, there is also a need to personalize learning. “I need to make sure each one of my students sees themselves at the center of the design of each school day,” he said.

[edinaschools.org](http://edinaschools.org)  
(952) 848-3900



## Integrating Computer Science into Everyday Elementary Education

Continued from Page 1

students felt a heightened level of excitement throughout computer science week.

Doug Paulson, STEM Specialist and Linda Hildebrandt joined our classrooms during Computer Science Week to see the excitement first-hand. They witnessed our second and third graders working as 1-1 tutors with Denise Casey’s Kindergarten class. This was one of many times that a Quest classroom has paired with a younger group of students to help provide a hands-on guided experience for students who may be new to computer science. For a primary teacher, it’s priceless to be able to provide students with an opportunity to have 1-1 technology support.

We have taught our Quest students to work as navigators, while the younger students work as the driver of the programming experience. The students use thoughtful questioning to guide students to solve programming problems, rather than showing or doing it for them. They use positive reinforcement and encouragement when students work through a productive struggle. Our students love sharing their passion for computer science with others. They know from experience that it often takes critical thinking, creativity, and perseverance to solve difficult tasks. They also know how it feels to conquer such challenges. It’s extremely rewarding for them to help others achieve this feeling. The room was filled with smiles, high fives, and cheers as students solved puzzle after puzzle.

Our guests watched small groups of third grade students with two years of computer science experience take an unplugged activity to the next level. My Robotic Friends is an activity that was created by Thinkersmith and

Traveling Circuits and adapted for Computer Science Education Week 2013 and distributed by Code.org.

Our experienced third graders took the idea of this activity and were given the challenge to write their own program for a robot using their own symbols. The students could have the robot do any task they like and use whatever symbols they chose. This allowed them to take complete ownership of the program they were writing. They excitedly communicated their ideas and collaborated to narrow the possible choices down to a given task. They then used their knowledge of procedural writing and the importance of concise specific language to write their program. They excitedly tested and improved their program a number of times, imagining how great it would be to see another group of student “robots” carry out the program.

Doug and Linda then visited with some of our fourth and fifth grade students, some of which are in their third year of computer science education. There, they observed students working through Khan Academy’s Hour of Drawing with Code, the Scratch.mit.edu curriculum, as well as unplugged activities.

In Khan Academy, students were using JavaScript programming language as they viewed video tutorials and worked through the challenges they were directed to complete. These students started out using Blockly in Code.org and are now graduating into a more advanced form of coding. Those working in Scratch were using the free curriculum to finish and write reflections for projects they had started earlier this year. Although on their own devices, at times these students were engaged

in collaborative problem solving as they encountered bumps in the road and looked to their peers for help.

In the unplugged activities, students were focused on developing the explicit and specific language needed for successful coding. There was a “programmer” and a “computer” in each pair. The first activity was called Marching Orders - Programming Languages from CSunplugged.org. In this activity, the “programmer” drew a picture in a small box. Then, without looking, they gave verbal directions for the “computer” to replicate that drawing. The two compared their drawings and talked about what worked and what could be improved upon.

The second unplugged activity was an extension to the Graph Paper Programming activity from Code.org. In the second activity, students colored a 5x5 grid to make a mosaic. They then wrote the code for their mosaic using slightly modified JavaScript language. After their code was written, partners would exchange codes and become the computers that read the code and replicated the mosaic. Again, they compared and debugged as needed.

While coding is at the center of these activities, some of the biggest benefits come



from the reflection and sharing that happens afterward. Through collaboration and teamwork, they experience coding through an open-sourced lens, where ideas multiply.

We thank the Minnesota Department of Education, Doug Paulson, and Linda Hildebrandt for letting us share our passion for computer science education with others. We cannot wait to see how this foundation translates into their future—into our future.

*Reprinted with permission from the Minnesota Department of Education*

[bhmschools.org/schools/parkside](http://bhmschools.org/schools/parkside)  
(763) 682-8700



# Hour of Code: Making Coding Simple



Carissa Hopkins-Hoel  
St. Cloud Area School District

Kindergartners at Westwood Elementary are huddled around the smart board, anxiously waiting to hear what Ms. (Angie) Kalthoff is going to say about the Hour of Code. They know they are learning something new, but are not sure what it is.

The Hour of Code is a global movement reaching millions of students in over one hundred eighty countries to teach them about computer science and technology.

“We’re going to learn a new word today. Algorithm,” begins Kalthoff, who is a technology integrationist for the St. Cloud Area School District.

“An algorithm is a list of steps you can follow to finish a task,” says Kalthoff. “Can all of you tell me how I can get to the sink?”

The students shout out directions like “take a right”, “go left”, “back up”, “move forward” and so forth. Kalthoff eventually gets to the sink and points out that they were giving her directions, and by doing so, were writing an algorithm.

She continues, “Do we sometimes have to put things in order though? Otherwise they may not make sense.”

The lesson plan: getting ready in the morning. There are several things listed on the board such as: get out of bed, eat breakfast, make your bed, get dressed, brush your teeth and get on the bus. The kids have to arrange the order in which each task must be complete. She demonstrates that you can’t eat breakfast before getting out of bed.

After the students figure out the order of getting ready in the morning, they are paired and given the task of arranging arrows on a paper to show which direction “Flurb”(a furry looking creature) goes to get to the fruit. In essence, they are writing an algorithm and programming with paper and glue sticks.

“We keep the coding as basic as we can for the students to start. They learn the basic concepts on paper before we move them to

iPads or Chromebooks,” says Kalthoff.

It’s not just kindergartners that start with paper. Fourth graders from Oak Hill Community School take what they learn about algorithms and create programs.

“Today we are going to build a paper airplane using an algorithm,” states Kalthoff.

Kalthoff explains that the students will pair up because today’s real-world computer programming is done in pairs, called pair programming. It’s used at major corporations such as Google and Firefox as well as gaming companies.

The pairs will arrange the images of folded paper in the correct order to create their airplane. The proof that the algorithm is a success is that the airplane will fly when complete.

Alexis Clark, an Oak Hill student, raises her hand and asks, “Should you lay them in order to try it first, before you glue them down on the paper?”

“That’s a great strategy to work out with your partner. You may need to try a different order for it to work,” replies Kalthoff.

While working on their algorithm Julia Christman, asks her partner Allie Gulstrand, “Are we going to know if that is for sure right?”

**Continued on Page 10**

## ‘Hour of Code’ connects students across grade levels



Edina Public Schools

On Thursday and Friday, Edina High School (EHS) computer science students took their skills to the elementary and middle schools to teach kids computer programming.

The visits were part of a global initiative called Hour of Code, which is held annually during Computer Science Education Week and aims to give students around the world an opportunity to learn about computer science. According to the Hour of Code website, “[Computer science] helps nurture problem-solving skills, logic and creativity. By starting early, students will have a foundation for success in any 21st-century career path.”

Edina Public Schools students have participated in some way since the initiative’s inception three years ago. However each year,

it has expanded to include more students and build relationships between grade levels. In the first year, EHS celebrated by devoting an hour to coding in all of its math classes. Last year, high school students shared their knowledge with students from South View and Valley View middle schools. This year, 70 students from EHS ventured out to both middle schools and all six elementary schools to code with their younger peers.

During their visits, EHS students assisted with solve problems in creative ways using code with themed games, which included Star Wars: Build a Galaxy, Code Avengers, Mine-craft, Code with Anna and Elsa, and more.

“Computer science is an essential skill for future jobs,” said EHS junior Nico Iskos, who joined students at South View on Thursday with their Hour of Code activities. “It’s important that younger generations start coding. It helps develop problem-solving skills and logic.”

[edinaschools.org](http://edinaschools.org)  
(952) 848-3900

Don't miss the

12th Annual

**WORTHINGTON BIO CONFERENCE**

April 7th & 8th Worthington Event Center

**Attention:** Farmers, farm and energy cooperatives, researchers, teachers and students, human and animal health professionals, vaccine producers/developers, veterinary medicine practitioners, financial institutions, policy makers, business and economic development professionals!

“The Global Center for the Advancement of Sustainable Animal Agriculture”

**The Worthington Regional Bio Conference (WRBC)**

is an annual gathering that highlights the deep roots of bio-science as it relates to farming and animal health. Worthington’s bio-science based businesses have a story to tell, and are actively seeking partners for parts of the story that are yet to be told.

Hosted by:  **Worthington Regional Economic Development Corporation**

1121 Third Avenue • Worthington, MN 56187 • (507) 372-5515

Register or learn more at: [www.Worthington-Minnesota.com](http://www.Worthington-Minnesota.com) | [Grow@Worthington-Minnesota.com](mailto:Grow@Worthington-Minnesota.com)

## The Good, The Bad and The Soggy—

# MWHS Presents Second Annual Engineering Regatta

By Becca Neuger  
Westonka Public Schools

Some came to witness creative feats of engineering. Some came to cheer on their friends in a race to the finish. Others came hoping to see a shipwreck or two.

No matter the reason, students, parents and staff packed the Mound Westonka High School pool viewing gallery Jan. 12 to watch Project Lead the Way students compete in the Second Annual Engineering Regatta.

Following instructor Dale Kimball's strict construction guidelines, 14 teams of young engineers (and one team of professionals) had one week to design, document and build boats that could carry at least two people from one end of the high school pool to the other. Boats were made prior to the race using only broken-down cardboard boxes and each using a single roll of duct tape. The vessels had to fit within a cube measuring 7 feet on each side in order to qualify for competition.

Rules for the race were just as stringent. Propulsion had to be provided only by hands and cardboard. Once a boat reached the far end of the pool, one member had to exit the boat and climb back in. If, at any point, a boat capsized, both members had to return to the boat before they could continue.

Students added a bit more pizzazz to their cardboard cruisers in the second annual regatta. Boats with names like "The Ugly Duckling" and "The Santa Maria" lined up poolside, waiting to make a splash. Juniors Austin Peterson, Ben Holbert and Samuel Carty dressed as high seas swashbucklers to race a boat adorned with cardboard sails, a crow's nest and a paper mache dinosaur.

In the first heat of the day, only two teams of engineers successfully completed the task at hand. Propulsion proved problematic for the pirates of Boat 4, which spun in circles in the shallow end of the pool. Despite all odds, the boxy Boat 12, engineered by juniors Ian Rostis and Dylan Roth and seniors Mason Elliott and Wilson Strong, survived the journey with little damage in a time of 1:21. Theirs would prove to be the second-best time of the day. The "8 is Great" team was also able to finish in 1:48 but was left with a very soggy ship.

In the second heat, three teams finished the race in over three minutes, while the other two foundered along the way. Senior Jack Reinhardt was barely visible on the starboard side of Boat 11 as it began to take on water halfway through the first leg. His paddling partner, senior Sydney Wagner, could do little to help as the boat sank farther below the surface. Things were going

swimmingly for the cute canoe engineered by senior Kyrie Maloney and sophomores Amy Howarth and Megan Heins until it tipped at the turn.

In the third (and final) race, competition was stiff. The helmsmen of pancake-flat Boat 10, dressed in Hawaiian leis, would have won the heat if not for a team of professional engineers. Special guests Bob Chilson, a structural engineer at Meyer Borgman Johnson, and John Hensley, an industrial engineer at General Dynamics AIS, proved their scientific prowess as they flew past their competitors on a streamlined raft with an inflatable dragon figurehead. Chilson and Hensley paddled their way to ultimate victory with a time of 1:06. Coming in at 1:38, juniors Hunter Bacon, Austin Peterson and Sean Engelhart, sophomore Elijah Berscheid and senior Brayden Weinzierl of Boat 10 took third place overall.

Whether their boats survived their maiden



voyages or met a soggy end, the engineering students learned important lessons about trial, error and the scientific method. And for the underclassmen, there's always a chance for redemption at next year's regatta!

[westonka.k12.mn.us](http://westonka.k12.mn.us)

(952) 491-8000



KQED

# MindShift

How we will learn.

GAMES AND LEARNING

TEACHING STRATEGIES

CHILDREN AND MEDIA

BIG IDEAS

MindShift explores the future of learning in all its dimensions, covering cultural and technology trends, innovations in education, groundbreaking research, education policy, and more.

EXPLORE THE  
FUTURE OF LEARNING

[blogs.kqed.org/mindshift](http://blogs.kqed.org/mindshift)

MINNESOTA STATE COLLEGE  
SOUTHEAST  
TECHNICAL

## EDUCATION TO EMPLOYMENT

Technical education is more important than ever. Get hired in a high demand career in two years or less!

### OFFERINGS AVAILABLE IN:

Business, Office and IT  
Health and Human Services  
Liberal Arts & Sciences  
Musical Instrument Repair  
Sales and Management  
Technical, Trade and Industrial

*Education to employment!*

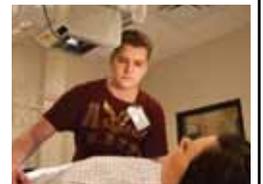
Red Wing  
Winona

[www.southeastmn.edu](http://www.southeastmn.edu)

877.853.8324



A member of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities System.



## Brown Bag Lunch



By Dana Trouth  
STEAM Curriculum Integration Coordinator  
Brooklyn Middle STEAM School

Over 50 students participated in a BROWN BAG Lunch on Friday November 20th and were treated to caramel rolls and milk or pizza and soda. What is a “BROWN BAG lunch” you ask? A BROWN BAG lunch is where Dana Trouth, STEAM Curriculum Coordinator, brings in various speakers from

the community that represents various industries and careers.

The theme of the school is *Engineering a Global Perspective* so we focus on various modes of engineering at these gatherings. We aim to have two BROWN BAG Lunches a month featuring many types of engineering fields.

Speakers come out and share about their careers and how they got to be at this point

through the education pathways taken. Students flock to the opportunities to experience real life applications and interacting with professionals in the field. The slots fill up quickly and we try to reach as many students as possible throughout the year.

We try to engage speakers with similar backgrounds and demographics to match our schools.

Most of the speakers do a short interactive and engaging activity with the students and sit down with them for Q and A afterwards. Various field trips are set up with engineering as a theme. BROWN BAG LUNCH and field trip opportunities are announced during students Science or English classes and also featured on the hallway TV monitors.

Friday’s BROWN BAG LUNCH highlighted Dr. Ellen Prager a noted author, marine scientist and author and formerly the chief scientist at the world’s only undersea research station in the Florida Keys. With her ability to make science fun and understandable for people of all ages, she has built a national reputation as a spokesperson on earth and ocean science issues.

Dr. Prager has participated in research expeditions to locations such as the Galapagos Islands, Papua New Guinea, Fiji, and throughout the Caribbean. She now acts as the science advisor to the cruise ship Xpedition in the

Galapagos. She lives in Miami, Florida, where she spends her time writing, consulting, and spending as much time on and in the ocean.

Dr. Prager’s newest book *The Shark Whisperer*, published in May 2014 by Scarletta Press, is the first book in a middle grade fiction series that combines humor and adventure with learning about the ocean, marine life, and ocean issues. Sylvia Earle calls it “an under-water Harry Potter”. After the interactive presentation, she did a book signing with our students.

Some of the speakers brought in this year covered topics including:

- Research and Development
- Computer programming
- Architects and Civil Engineering
- Medical Product design
- Computer Web Design

This has been a wonderful undertaking and continues to grow.

[schools.district279.org/bms](http://schools.district279.org/bms)  
(763) 569-7700

## Making Coding Simple

Continued from Page 8

Gulstrand replies, “Let’s try it!”

The product is a plane that successfully flies across the room.

The same concept is used when creating games. Middle school students at Riverwoods are creating a bird game on iPads. But first, they must learn to debug their program.

Debugging (finding and fixing problems) is a term that comes from a computer malfunction back in 1940. When the computer was taken apart, the technician found a dead moth. Once it was removed, the computer functioned perfectly. Hence, the term debug.

Again, using paper, the students have to debug the blocks in their programs. The catch-the paired students aren’t allowed to speak to one another.

When finished, Kalthoff asks, “What would you have changed about how you did this exercise?”

The kids reply, “We’d talk to each other!”

“We’re going to take what we’ve learned so far and apply it to our iPads,” says Kalthoff. “In your pairs, each of you will be a navigator or a driver and will switch rolls often.”

Drivers and navigators are terms computer programmers use in pair programming. The driver is the person in control of the computer, using the mousepad and keyboard. The navigator is the person giving directions to the

driver for coding. They switch roles frequently to catch mistakes and enhance creativity.

Students quickly learn that communicating with each other is the key to creating the game and to debug any mistakes along the way. They engage with each other while creating the game- figuring out how to get the bird’s wings to fly, how to move the bird up and down, play sounds and change the speed.

“This is awesome! Do we get to do this at home too?” asks Eli Reinhart.

Kalthoff assures each student that they’ve been given an ID code. They can log on and continue coding on the website whenever they like. The goal is to get as many kids interested and wanting to learn more about computer science as possible.

Reinhart, along with many other enthusiastic students, will continue coding and perhaps become our next generation of imaginative coders.

[isd742.org](http://isd742.org)  
(320) 253-9333

# SUMMER CAMP WITH A FUTURE!



**Encourage your students to join hundreds of other high school students this summer at MSOE for week-long, resident programs, all in July. Activities are project based and participants experience what it would be like to be an engineer, business person or health care provider and what real college life is like.**

**Milwaukee School of Engineering**  
(800) 332-6763 • [msoe.edu/summer](http://msoe.edu/summer)

**Discover the Possibilities in Engineering**  
Several week-long programs relating to architectural, civil, mechanical, industrial, electrical, computer, software, biomedical, biomolecular engineering or bioinformatics.

**Focus on Business**  
Run your own business for a week!

**Focus on Nursing**  
Experience being a nurse in our state-of-the-art simulation nursing complex.





# Groves Academy Announces Expanded Community Education Services



Groves Academy, Minnesota's leading educational institution for students with learning disabilities and attention disorders, recently announced the launch of The Learning Center at Groves Academy. The Learning Center brings together existing Groves services including diagnostic assessments, tutoring, speech and language therapy, career counseling, assistive technology training, and summer programs, and allows families from the community to access them.

"We are excited to offer these specialized services to the larger community," said John Alexander, Head of School. "There is great need for the work we're doing here at Groves Academy,

and by creating The Learning Center, we can now serve significantly more children with learning and attention disorders. Many families don't know where to turn if they suspect their child has a learning disability, and we're now better able to help them identify their child's problem areas and work toward remediation."

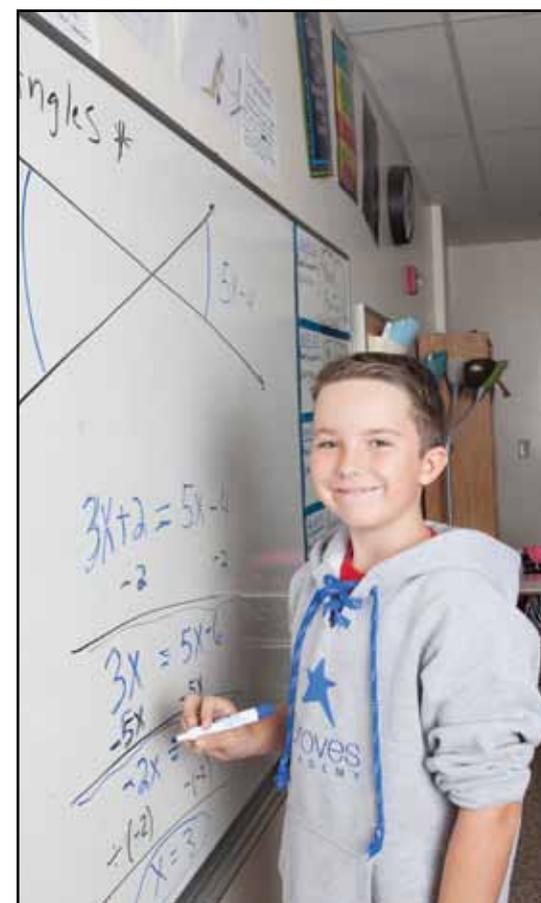
"We have been offering many of these services for years, and our team of psychologists, tutors, and other staff are leaders in their fields," added Jim Meinen, Senior Director of Business Operations. "Now we can help seamlessly determine why a child is struggling in school, design an individualized learning profile and then, if the family chooses, engage our specialists to support that child in the areas of need to help them be more successful in their current school."

During the summer, Groves offer children from the community the same tailored, high-quality education that they provide to their full-time students during the school year. "Children love our summer programs," commented Curtis Olufson, Director of Summer Programs. "They realize right away that we approach education differently and that

other children learn like they do, and when that happens, they feel understood, perhaps for the first time." The summer school classes are taught by Groves teachers using the school's proven philosophy of remediating academic weaknesses and developing strengths and talents. Both academic and enrichment classes are offered for children entering grades 2–12.

Established in 1972 by parents, the mission of Groves is to build confidence, success, and purpose through transformative learning experiences through three program areas: the school, community outreach, and teacher professional development programs. "Our vision is to redefine the way our nation is taught, one student, one teacher and one school at a time," Alexander stated. "That's how we want to improve education in our community."

Groves Academy  
(952) 920-6377  
grovesacademy.org



## What are the Indicators of Learning Disabilities?

Many children have difficulty with reading, writing, or other learning-related tasks at some point, but this does not mean they have learning disabilities. A child with a learning disability often has several related signs, and these persist over time. The signs of learning disabilities vary from person to person. Common signs that a person may have learning disabilities include the following:

- Difficulty with reading and/or writing
- Problems with math skills
- Difficulty remembering
- Problems paying attention
- Trouble following directions
- Poor coordination
- Difficulty with concepts related to time
- Problems staying organized

A child with a learning disability also may exhibit one or more of the following:

- Impetuous behavior
- Inappropriate responses in school or social situations
- Difficulty staying on task (easily distracted)
- Difficulty finding the right way to say something
- Inconsistent school performance
- Immature way of speaking
- Difficulty listening well

- Problems dealing with new things in life
- Problems understanding words or concepts

These signs alone are not enough to determine that a person has a learning disability. A professional assessment is necessary to diagnose a learning disability.

Each learning disability has its own signs. Also, not every person with a particular disability will have all of the signs of that disability.

Children being taught in a second language that they are learning sometimes act in ways that are similar to the behaviors of someone with a learning disability. For this reason, learning disability assessment must take into account whether a student is bilingual or a second language learner.

Below are some common learning disabilities and the signs associated with them:

### Dyslexia

People with dyslexia usually have trouble making the connections between letters and sounds and with spelling and recognizing words.

People with dyslexia often show other signs of the condition. These may include:

- Failure to fully understand what others are saying
- Difficulty organizing written and spoken

language

- Delayed ability to speak
- Poor self-expression (for example, saying "thing" or "stuff" for words not recalled)
- Difficulty learning new vocabulary, either through reading or hearing
- Trouble learning foreign languages
- Slowness in learning songs and rhymes
- Slow reading as well as giving up on longer reading tasks
- Difficulty understanding questions and following directions
- Poor spelling
- Difficulty recalling numbers in sequence (for example, telephone numbers and addresses)
- Trouble distinguishing left from right

### Dysgraphia

Dysgraphia is characterized by problems with writing. This disorder may cause a child to be tense and awkward when holding a pen or pencil, even to the extent of contorting his or her body. A child with very poor handwriting that he or she does not outgrow may have dysgraphia.

Other signs of this condition may include:

- A strong dislike of writing and/or drawing
- Problems with grammar

- Trouble writing down ideas
- A quick loss of energy and interest while writing
- Trouble writing down thoughts in a logical sequence
- Saying words out loud while writing
- Leaving words unfinished or omitting them when writing sentences

### Dyscalculia

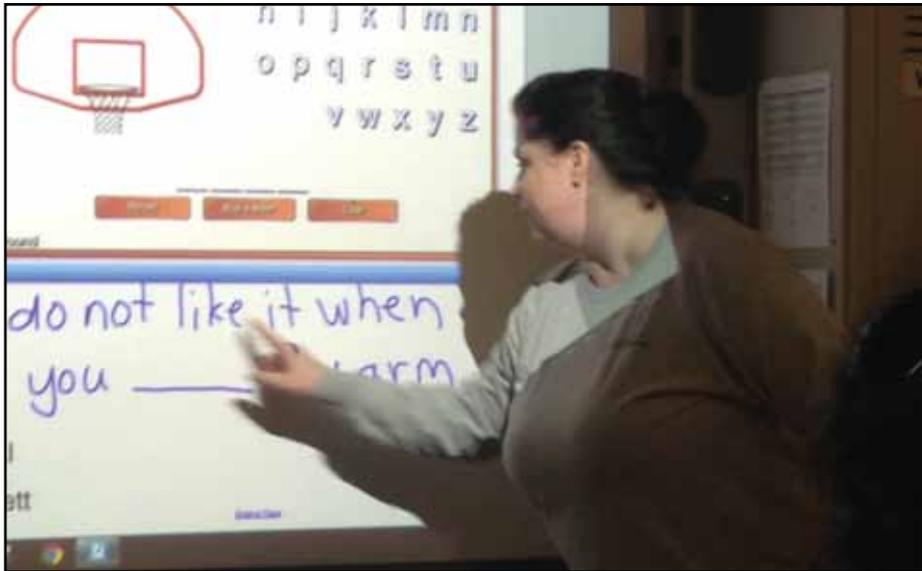
Signs of this disability include problems understanding basic arithmetic concepts, such as fractions, number lines, and positive and negative numbers.

Other symptoms may include:

- Difficulty with math-related word problems
- Trouble making change in cash transactions
- Messiness in putting math problems on paper
- Trouble recognizing logical information sequences (for example, steps in math problems)
- Trouble with understanding the time sequence of events
- Difficulty with verbally describing math processes

*Reprinted from the National Institutes of Health (NIH)*

# 4-Block Methodology used to Teach Balanced Literacy



*Sandy Strand, Ed.S., Program Manager  
South Campus Secondary Program/Northeast  
Metro Intermediate District 916*

South Campus Secondary Program, a special education program within Northeast Metro Intermediate District 916 has adopted the 4-Block Methodology to teaching balanced literacy as part of the district's standard's based instruction and literacy initiatives. South Campus Secondary Program serves students in 6th through 12th grade plus transition aged students with moderate to severe developmental and cognitive disabilities and autism spectrum disorders.

The 4-Block Approach, developed by Cunningham, Hall, and Sigmon (1999) provides a multi-method, multi-level framework, balanced literacy approach around four basic blocks: Guided Reading, Writing, Working with Words, and Self-Selected Reading. The end goal is to teach learners to be independent readers with comprehension. Balanced literacy programs have permeated schools across our nation as research supports this comprehensive approach to teaching students literacy skills. Prior to this initiative, literacy at South Campus Secondary Program was addressed, but in very specific and functional ways including a limited focus on comprehension and fluency and a primary focus on phonetics and sight word recognition.

As the team of educators and the administration began considering how to deliver a balanced literacy approach to this population, they found that the research really did not address this population at all in terms of good literacy instruction. What they discovered was evidence that between 1975 and the early 2000's, only 19 research studies actually focused on reading instruction for students with significant cognitive disabilities (Roberts, Leko, & Wilkerson, 2013) and that most literacy programs for this population lacked the comprehensiveness necessary for teaching effective reading skills (Browder, et.al 2006 and Kliever, 1996 in Roberts, Leko, Wilkerson, 2013).

Research done since this time suggests that this population of students benefit from the same comprehensive approach to literacy instruction as their typically developing peers (Erickson, Hatch, & Clarendon, 2010). Unfortunately, the research also suggests that up until recently literacy instruction for this population has focused on emergent literacy as the end goal rather than a starting place, that is, practitioners have been quicker to accept emergent literacy and non-conventional performance (use of symbols) than to consider how to move the student on to conventional reading and writing" (Koppenhaver, 2000). Knowing that the population of students served in this program have likely been a product of special education programs throughout their elementary careers that fostered practice aligned with a more non-comprehensive approach, the literacy team at South Campus decided to change their practice.

During the summer of 2015, two teachers from the South Campus Secondary Program attended a Literacy Camp, which is sponsored by the department of education and co-facilitated by researchers from University of North Carolina, Karen Erickson and David Koppenhaver. Literacy Camp is an intense week long experience where professionals learn strategies in the 4-Block Methodology when working with students with significant disabilities. Upon their return, these teachers along with instructional coaches from other 916 district programs already implementing 4-block worked to train all South Campus teachers how to address literacy using this method. This team dedicated their workshop days to developing skill around unpacking standards and lesson planning within the 4-Block Approach to teaching literacy.

The results have been amazing! South Campus has discovered students who were complete non-readers with zero word recognition at the beginning of the school year who have made 2 years' worth of gains in 4 months. South Campus has discovered

students who prior to instruction using this method did not pick up a pencil. Now they are writing complete sentences. Students who lacked the ability to write legibly at all, who with the proper assistive technology began crafting stories about their lives. Students who once hated school and did not engage academically, reflect on the many challenges and trials of being an individual with a disability. The students at South Campus Secondary Program are responding extremely well to this method of instruction and receive on average of 120 minutes daily of structured instruction in literacy (30 minutes a block). The professional learning communities work collaboratively to develop and deliver lessons and to subsequently do common assessments to measure the impact of their work. The teachers are finding that approximately 65% of students are mastering benchmarks at their literacy level and continue to make gains.

The students are more engaged in learning and therefore, behavioral incidents are down. Most recently, South Campus Secondary Program and Intermediate District 916 have partnered with the University of Minnesota to collaborate on a national grant through the Institute for Education Sciences. The focus of the grant is Low cost, short duration evalu-

ation of educational interventions. With this grant, South Campus and the University will study the efficacy of the use of the 4-block Literacy Method with secondary students with moderate to severe developmental and cognitive disabilities including autism.

As the journey continues, the staff at South Campus Secondary Program should be commended for their tireless work and their willingness to embrace a different way of thinking academically about this population. This group of professionals know that our students CAN do more and that they CAN achieve when given the opportunity through appropriate and structured comprehensive instruction. The ability to read and understand text is the bedrock of membership into our society. South Campus knows they are making an impact on their students . . . they see it every day! Their goal is to set the standard for special education programs throughout our state and our country and to improve the lives of those they serve by providing them the gift of literacy.

[nometro.k12.mn.us](http://nometro.k12.mn.us)

(651) 415-5659

## TEACHING TODAY MN

**We are here for you,  
and because of you!**

Schools across the state of Minnesota all benefit from the participation of readers like you. By sharing your teaching tips and program ideas, you provide a positive contribution to educational community in the state.

Send your ideas, articles, and  
teaching tips to:  
[andria@teachingtodaymn.com](mailto:andria@teachingtodaymn.com)

*Thank you, to all our past, present and  
future contributors!*



EXPERIENCES & ADVENTURES FOR ALL ABILITIES

- SPECIAL NEEDS SUMMER CAMP
- DAY & WINTER CAMP
  - RESPITE
  - THERAPY HORSES



**Camp Courage**  
MAPLE LAKE

**Camp Friendship**  
ANNANDALE

**Camp Eden Wood**  
EDEN PRAIRIE

**Camp Courage North**  
LAKE GEORGE

800.450.8376

[info@truefriends.org](mailto:info@truefriends.org)

[truefriends.org](http://truefriends.org)

## AWAKEN YOUR POTENTIAL, IMPACT THE WORLD

Take a break from the traditional field trip with a Team Quest experience. Our team building and leadership programs enable students and teachers to achieve more than ever before.

**TEAM QUEST**  
— Building Leaders —



- TEAM BUILDING
  - HIGH & LOW ROPES COURSES
  - YOUTH/ADULT LEADERSHIP PROGRAMS
  - STAFF DEVELOPMENT
- AT OUR SITE OR YOURS!

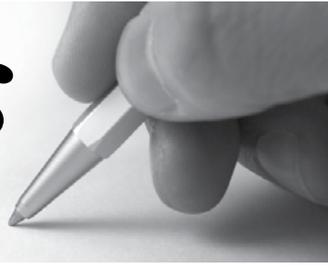


952.852.0103

[info@team-quest.org](mailto:info@team-quest.org)

[team-quest.org](http://team-quest.org)

# Grants



Continued from Page 4

## Roads to Reading Initiative Grants

The Roads to Reading Initiative (RTRI) provides grants of new children's books as educational resources to schools, child-care centers, and nonprofit organizations serving children in need from birth to age 16. Donated books must be used for on-site literacy programs that target underserved communities and are administered by the applicant organization.

**Deadline:** Applications are accepted from April 1 through September 25, annually.

**Website:** [pwirtr.org/register/](http://pwirtr.org/register/)

## Academic Enrichment Grants

The McCarthy Dressman Education Foundation offers Academic Enrichment Grants designed to develop classroom and extracurricular programs that improve student learning. The foundation considers proposals that foster understanding, deepen students' knowledge, and provide opportunities to expand awareness of the world around them.

Grants up to \$10,000 are awarded.

**Deadline:** Online applications are accepted January 15 through April 15, annually.

**Website:** [mccarthydressman.org/academic-enrichment-grants](http://mccarthydressman.org/academic-enrichment-grants)

## Air Force Junior ROTC Grants

The Air Force Association Junior ROTC (AFJROTC) grant program was established to promote aerospace education throughout classrooms and units. Applications will be judged by the importance and the impact the selected aerospace activity will have on students. Funds may be used for any aerospace education related activity from purchasing textbooks or videotapes, to going on a field trip to an aerospace museum, Air Force base, or other aerospace facility.

Grants up to \$250 are awarded.

**Deadline:** Applications are due February 10 and October 10, annually.

**Website:** [www.afa.org/afa/informationfor/teachers/k12grants/airforcejuniorrotcgrant](http://www.afa.org/afa/informationfor/teachers/k12grants/airforcejuniorrotcgrant)

## EcoTech Grants

The Captain Planet Foundation, Inc. (CPF) is offering grants through a competitive program for schools and nonprofit organizations. Seventeen grants will be awarded to support inquiry-based projects in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields that engage students in using innovation, biomimicry and nature-based design, or new applications of technology to address environmental problems in their communities.

Seventeen grants of \$2,500 each are awarded.

**Deadline:** Applications are due March 15, 2016.

**Website:** [captainplanetfoundation.org/ecotech-grants](http://captainplanetfoundation.org/ecotech-grants)

## Gerald C. Corcoran Education Grant

The North American Native Fishes Association (NANFA) supports projects to educate the general public about native North American fishes and their environment. Project categories include: producing and distributing educational materials such as books, brochures, posters, displays, video, and internet resources; stream surveys with public education as a primary goal; public lectures; nature center displays; school materials and displays; field and laboratory supplies; and teacher training workshops.

Grants up to \$1,000 are awarded.

**Deadline:** Applications are due March 31, annually.

**Website:** [nanfa.org/corcoran.shtml](http://nanfa.org/corcoran.shtml)

## GRO1000 Grassroots Grants

ScottsMiracle-Gro provides GRO1000 Grassroots Grants to help foster community spirit and public service. Grassroots Grants are awarded to local communities to help bring edible gardens, flower gardens, and public green spaces to neighborhoods across the United States.

Grants up to \$1,500 are awarded.

**Deadline:** Applications are accepted February 1 through February 19, 2016.

**Website:** [scottsmiraclegro.com/corporate-responsibility/gro1000](http://scottsmiraclegro.com/corporate-responsibility/gro1000)

## Mission Nutrition: Fruit and Veggie Grants for Schools

The Chef Ann Foundation and Skoop have teamed up to help schools increase access to fresh fruits and vegetables for children and youth, and nutrition education in schools. The purpose of Mission Nutrition is to create planned lunchroom activities and educate school children about healthy nutrition. Proposed projects must be planned with the intention of offering activities to all students in the school building. Lunchtime-based projects are preferred because they offer access to all students.

Grants of \$2,500 are awarded.

**Deadline:** Applications are accepted February 1, 2015, and until funding is exhausted.

**Website:** [www.chefannfoundation.org/programs/mission-nutrition](http://www.chefannfoundation.org/programs/mission-nutrition)

## Instrumental Music Grants

The Fender Music Foundation awards instruments and equipment to eligible music instruction programs that are part of US public schools or qualified nonprofit organizations. The instruments and equipment are lightly used, blemished, or otherwise imperfect and have been collected from manufacturers and retailers. The foundation provides information on specific imperfections to programs that are selected to receive instruments.

**Deadline:** Applications are accepted year-round.

**Website:** [www.fendermusicfoundation.org/grants/grants-info/](http://www.fendermusicfoundation.org/grants/grants-info/)

## Mary Lou Anderson Reflections Arts Enhancement Grants

The National Parent Teacher Association (PTA) Mary Lou Anderson Reflections Arts Enhancement Grants provide matching grants to local PTAs to support in-school and after-school arts enhancement programs. Grants may be used to establish or enhance arts programs in one or more of the following categories: dance choreography, film production, literature, music composition, photography and visual arts, and special artist.

Grants up to \$1,000 are awarded.

**Deadline:** Applications are accepted January 4 through March 11, 2016.

**Website:** [www.pta.org/members/content.cfm?ItemNumber=3101](http://www.pta.org/members/content.cfm?ItemNumber=3101)

## Ezra Jack Keats Mini-Grants

The Ezra Jack Keats Foundation is accepting applications from public schools and public libraries for \$500 mini-grants to fund projects that foster creative expression, working together and interaction with a diverse community. Programs funded in the past have included:

- Ongoing pen-pal projects bringing disparate communities together
- Multi-cultural portrait projects
- Art projects culminating in art shows, murals, or quilts
- Bookmaking
- Creation and performance of puppet shows
- Inter-generational journals

These are example programs; the Foundation welcomes new ideas. Funds may not be used for general operating costs, administrative costs, transportation, or the purchase of books, tapes, software, or equipment unrelated to a specific program described.

**Deadline:** Applications due March 31, 2016.

**Website:** [www.ezra-jack-keats.org/section/ezra-jack-keats-mini-grant-program-for-public-libraries-public-schools](http://www.ezra-jack-keats.org/section/ezra-jack-keats-mini-grant-program-for-public-libraries-public-schools)

## Girls on the Run Continued from Page 5

confidence-building things young is important."

Watson said she herself started running with an all-women's group about five years ago, and wouldn't have started running if that hadn't been an option. Drawing upon her own experience, she said she developed some of her best friendships through that group, through trying something new and taking a risk.

"The fact that there is something like that for girls at this age is monumental," she said. "And taking those risks and trying something new is huge. It's something we promote with all of our learners."

The girls have really embraced the program, Watson said. During one practice session, the girls each got a bead for every lap they completed. The next day, many of the girls had turned their beads into jewelry that they wore to remind them of their accomplishment.

Teacher and coach Theresa Hubert said she has watched the girls encourage each other, even returning to the track after completing their laps to run alongside girls that were struggling.

"It's wonderful to see the way they've come together. It's beautiful," she said. "I wish there had been a program like this when I was growing up."

Ellis said the program has given her more confidence about not only her running abilities, but it has also helped her gain a new perspective on heavy topics like bullying.

"We did this game where if someone said something bad you'd take a step back, and if someone said something good you'd step forward. And I said 'Bullies don't step forward, they step back,' and just thinking about that made me feel better, because I know if someone's bullying me they're not stepping forward, like I would be, they're stepping back," she said. "They're not getting more happy, they're getting more sad."

The coaches have been amazed at how well the girls have been able to articulate their thoughts on some pretty deep topics, things that they have either started to encounter or will encounter in the future, Watson said.

"We as coaches have been blown away every practice by the responses and the discussion that these girls in third, fourth and fifth grade are having about those topics, like positive self-talk and how to stand up against bullies," she said. "Even though we are all getting healthier and realizing we love running in our own ways, I think that more than anything it has helped with their personal growth and confidence."

[www.anoka.k12.mn.us](http://www.anoka.k12.mn.us)  
(763) 506-1000



## Hoover, Lincoln Elementary Schools Earn 'Celebration' Status from MDE



*Anoka-Hennepin School District*

The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) named two Anoka-Hennepin schools as Celebration schools on Dec. 29.

Hoover Elementary School in Coon Rapids and Lincoln Elementary School for the Arts in Anoka earned the honor, which recognizes schools for their efforts to increase student achievement, and is the second level of recognition in the state's accountability

system.

Dr. Mary Wolverton, associate superintendent for elementary education, said she and the rest of the district administration is proud of the achievement of the schools. "The consistent success in increasing student academic performance while reducing the achievement gap is testimony to our focus on yielding great results for our students," she said.

The official naming of Celebration

schools comes just a few months after the MDE announced the state's Reward schools, which is highest designation the MDE offers. Anoka-Hennepin had three Reward schools: Adams and Eisenhower elementary schools in Coon Rapids; and Madison Elementary School in Blaine. Schools need to be among the top 15 percent of ranking-eligible schools in Minnesota to be labeled as Reward Schools.

When those schools were named, a secondary list of Celebration eligible schools were also named, and eligible to submit applications to the MDE to be among the top 10 percent selected for recognition later in the year as Celebration schools. Hoover and Lincoln made that cut.

Only 22 schools in the state earned Celebration status. Anoka-Hennepin was one of two districts in the state with more than one school to earn Celebration status; the Brainerd Public School District was the other.

"I offer my congratulations to the teachers, school administrators, parents, and students who have worked together to make tremendous improvements in our schools," said Governor Mark Dayton of the Celebration schools. "We must build on their successes, and continue working to ensure a strong start for every student in Minnesota."

The rankings are part of the state's Multiple Measurements Ranking (MMR), which

measures schools that receive Title I funding from the federal government. The funds are used to provide help and resources in math and reading for students attending schools with high percentages of poverty. In Anoka-Hennepin, all Title I funding is directed to elementary schools so no middle or high schools are eligible.

Every Title I school in the state is rated based on MMR points. The MMR ratings points are earned on the basis of four measures:

- Proficiency on the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA) students take each year.
- Growth of individual students on MCA from one year to the next.
- Reduction of the achievement gap between lower-performing subgroups and higher-performing subgroups.
- Graduation rate of high schools.

[www.anoka.k12.mn.us](http://www.anoka.k12.mn.us)

(763) 506-1000



# BEMIDJI STATE UNIVERSITY



## Graduate Programs in Education and Special Education

- Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) with emphasis areas in Online Teaching Certificate, Reading Certificate, Special Learning Disabilities (SLD), Emotional Behavioral Disorders (EBD), Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) - **NEW Fall 2015!**, Health and many others.
- SLD, EBD, or ASD licensures lead to Master of Special Education with three additional classes.
- Affordable degrees you may complete in 2-4 years!
- Certificate of Camp Nursing **NEW Fall 2015!**
- Know someone who wants to be a MN elementary or high school teacher? If so, go to:  
Elementary: [www.bemidjistate.edu/academics/dlite/](http://www.bemidjistate.edu/academics/dlite/)  
\*High School: [www.bemidjistate.edu/academics/fastrack/](http://www.bemidjistate.edu/academics/fastrack/)

\*Standards of Effective Practice courses may be used toward the MAT.

218-755-2027 or 1-888-386-8464 | [grad@bemidjistate.edu](mailto:grad@bemidjistate.edu)  
[www.bemidjistate.edu/academics/graduate\\_studies/](http://www.bemidjistate.edu/academics/graduate_studies/)

100% Online!

For every step of  
your journey...



Alice Franco MA-Teaching '16

## Hamline School of Education has the broadest array of graduate education programs in the region.

- **Doctorate of Education**
- **Administrative licensure:** principal, superintendent, director of special education
- **Master's degrees:** education, English as a second language (ESL), literacy education, natural science and environmental education, teaching, and teaching English to speakers of other languages
- **Fifteen additional licenses and 13 certificates** in areas such as autism spectrum disorders (ASD), bullying prevention, ESL, and reading
- **Continuing studies courses:** choose from more than fifty courses each term
- **Summer institutes:** ASD and literacy education

Programs offered  
year round on campus  
and online

Learn more at [hamline.edu/teachtoday](https://hamline.edu/teachtoday)



**HAMLIN**  
**UNIVERSITY**

School of Education

# A '#relevant' Performance at Cooper

Student-written production explores modern pitfalls



By Joe Bowen

Instead of another rendition of reliable-but-predictable stalwarts like “A Midsummer Night’s Dream” or “Our Town,” student-actors at Robbinsdale Cooper have created a fall play all their own.

Called “#relevant,” the production is the first in several years to be written entirely by members of the student body and, as its title suggests, depicts pitfalls encountered by modern high schoolers instead of another dance battle between Sharks and Jets.

The play is set in a prestigious private school populated by jocks, geeks, bullies, and other cliques. It explores themes like stress from parents, stress from testing, peer pressure, image, bullying, racial issues, and feminism, explained senior actor Emma Shine.

One scene, Shine said, shows two students discussing their relationships with their parents in separate school counselors’ offices.

“One is struggling with the fact that their parents don’t put enough pressure on them, and they don’t feel like they’re being driven or that their parents really care as much,” she said. “The other one

has the opposite issue, where their parents care too much because of an older sibling and they’re being expected to be just as good as this older sibling.”

At a Nov. 11 rehearsal, students practiced a minimalist rap about strong female role models and worked on the play’s opening scene: a “Who Wants to be a Millionaire”-style application process wherein one prospective student answered softball questions with the help of his butler and Donald Trump (a good pal) and another was more or less ignored while tackling tough, in-depth questions about Kantian ethics. Another, more abstract, scene features the fictional school’s students as puppets and their parents and another authority figures manipulating them like puppeteers.

Students spent their first few rehearsals figuring out which topics they wanted to tackle and split into groups to write a scene for each topic. Shine was part of a group that wrote an ensemble scene dealing with “image”: body image, self-image, self-esteem, and so on.

“It was a lot of talking about what we

thought when we hear the word ‘image.’ What our own personal issues are, and then we discussed how we could portray it,” Shine said. “It begins with spoken word involving all the students. It’s written as one giant monologue, but everybody says different lines at different times or at the same time so it all flows together, showing that we all have image issues.”

“This is a really, in my opinion, an introspective, intelligent group of students who have a lot to say and are pretty passionate about what we’re talking about,” said Gretchen Wurzer-Palm, the show’s faculty supervisor and director. “I felt that this core group of actors could a) handle it and b) give credence to what the topic is.”

Reprinted with permission from the Sun Post

chs.rdale.org  
(763) 504-8500

## Student Contests and Awards

### World of 7 Billion Student Video Contest

Population Education is sponsoring a video contest open to all middle and high school students in grades 6 through 12. Contest entrants create a short video of 60 seconds or less that illustrates the connection between population growth and one of the three following global challenges. All videos must include how population growth impacts the issue and provide at least one idea for a sustainable solution.

**Deadline:** Entries are due February 25, 2016, at 5:00 p.m. (EST).

**Website:** [www.worldof7billion.org/student-video-contest/](http://www.worldof7billion.org/student-video-contest/)

### American Association of Physics Teachers High School Physics Photo Contest

Photos may be entered in one of two categories: (1) natural photos are those that involve everyday situations that may demonstrate a variety of physics concepts; and (2) contrived photos are those that are set up to show a particular physics concept or related set of concepts. Photos with multiple images or other computer manipulation will be placed in a separate category. They may be displayed

at the national meeting and judged for special recognition ribbons, but not for prizes.

**Deadline:** Entries are accepted annually from March 1 to May 15.

**Website:** [aapt.org/Programs/contests/photo-contest.cfm](http://aapt.org/Programs/contests/photo-contest.cfm)

### The DuPont Challenge Science Writing Competition: Elementary Division

The DuPont Challenge Elementary Division is designed to help teachers motivate students to become tomorrow’s science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) innovators. This Science Writing Competition provides classrooms with challenges specifically geared toward students at each level kindergarten through grade 5.

**Deadline:** Entries are accepted November 1, 2015, through March 1, 2016.

**Website:** [thechallenge.dupont.com/elementary](http://thechallenge.dupont.com/elementary)

### Young Scientist Challenge

Discovery Education and 3M invite students in grades 5 through 8 to participate in the Young Scientist Challenge. Entrants must create a one- to two-minute video describing a new, innovative solution that solves an every-

day problem.

Ten finalists will each receive \$1,000. The grand-prize winner will receive \$25,000.

**Deadline:** Entries are due on April 20, 2016.

**Website:** [www.youngscientistchallenge.com/about](http://www.youngscientistchallenge.com/about)

### Gloria Barron Prize for Young Heroes

The Gloria Barron Prize for Young Heroes celebrates inspiring, public-spirited young people from diverse backgrounds all across North America. Each year, the Barron Prize honors 25 outstanding young leaders ages 8 to 18 who have made a significant positive difference to people and the environment.

**Deadline:** Applications must be completed and submitted online by 5:00 p.m. MST on April 15.

**Website:** [barronprize.org/apply](http://barronprize.org/apply)

### InvenTeams

InvenTeams is a national grants initiative of the Lemelson-MIT program that is designed to excite high school students to cultivate their creativity and experience invention. InvenTeam students rely on inquiry hands-on problem solving as they integrate lessons from science, technology, engineering,

and mathematics (STEM) to develop invention prototypes. InvenTeams are composed of high school students, teachers, and industry mentors. Working collaboratively, InvenTeams identify a problem to be solved, conduct research on the problem, and develop a prototype invention.

Initial applications are due March 7, 2016. If selected to continue to the next step, final applications are due September 6, 2016.

**Website:** [lemelson.mit.edu/inventeams](http://lemelson.mit.edu/inventeams)

### Poetry Out Loud National Recitation Contest

The National Poetry Out Loud Competition invites high school students in grades 9 through 12, as well as eighth graders that participate in high school-level classes, to compete in local, state, and national finals in the recitation of poetry. Prizes are awarded to winning students and their schools at the state and national levels.

Schools must register their competitions with the state arts agency to count toward the state finals.

Minnesota State Arts Board c/o The Loft Literary Center; Kathryn Savage; 612-215-2590; [ksavage@loft.org](mailto:ksavage@loft.org)

**Website:** [www.poetryoutloud.org/about](http://www.poetryoutloud.org/about)

# Happiness Project Raises Spirits and Money



## Stillwater Area Public Schools

What is the key to happiness? Students and staff at Oak-Land Junior High may have found the answer to that elusive question. Throughout the month of December the school participated in the Happiness Project during advisory. The weekly initiative focused on strategies to promote positive mental health.

Students first learned about an attitude of gratitude, writing thank you notes to

someone important in their life. Next, they focused on exercise and wellness. Students learned about the connection between health and mood and got a chance to be active in a fun way. They also did some work to retrain their brains to remember good things. Students learned to focus on “Three Good Things” that happen in their lives every day instead of dwelling on the negative.

In addition, ninth grade members of the National Junior Honor Society and student

Ambassador Program sponsored a community service project. The fundraiser called “Live, Give, Love” raised money for the school, local community and world.

“It brought our whole school together,” said Kate Raddatz.

Sydney Wallace agreed saying, “It brought out the best in everyone. It felt like we were connecting on a different level.”

Advisories worked together to collect money to support their choice of three charitable causes: adopt an Oak-Land family in need, donate a holiday meal for a family in our community (partnering with Valley Outreach), and/or provide drinking water for a village in Tanzania.

Lola Wallace said the lesson taught her not to take anything for granted.

“These people don’t have very many things and we have so much,” she said. “So it kind of makes you realize.”

For each \$10 raised, a smiley face was hung on the wall when you enter the school. Students said the visual helped make the impact of the Happiness Project hit home.

“It showed how much happiness we created,” said Anna Weirtz. “All those smiley faces did that for somebody.”

Students said the happiness became contagious.

“We motivated each other on different

levels to keep giving and supporting,” said Sydney Wallace.

“It showed that just a little idea can grow into something big,” added Mikayla Cousineau.

In the end, \$2,800 was raised for the three charities. The student leaders were surprised by how much they collected.

“We first thought this might not work,” said Nikhil Kumaran, “but as we went on we got support for students, teachers, all sorts of staff and it was pretty amazing.”

The ninth graders plan to spread more happiness when they go to Stillwater Area High School next year and they hope other schools in the district take on the Happiness Project as well.

“Your happiness can affect people on so many levels,” said Sydney Wallace. “We were spreading actual happiness.”

[www.stillwater.k12.mn.us](http://www.stillwater.k12.mn.us)  
(651) 351-8340



## TEACHING ISN'T JUST A CAREER, IT'S A CALLING.

Answer the call with an online degree from Lesley University. We have been training teachers for more than 100 years. **Now, it's your turn.**

Online classes starting soon for master's and certificate programs. Visit [online.lesley.edu/TeachingTodayMN](http://online.lesley.edu/TeachingTodayMN) to learn more.

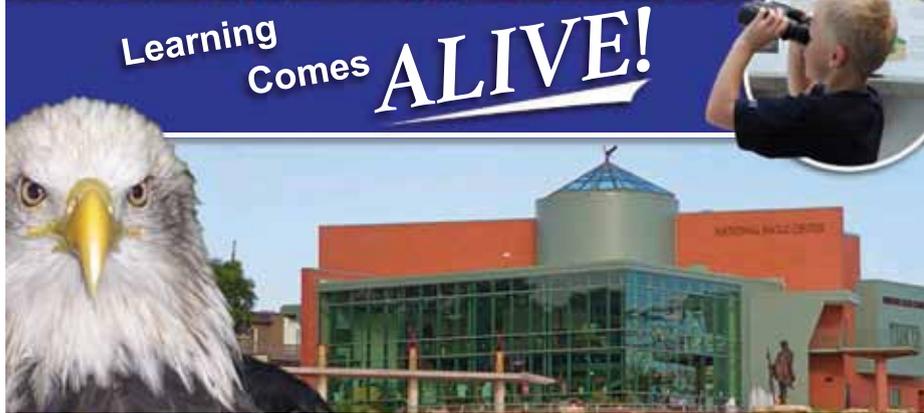


29 Everett Street, Cambridge, MA 02138  
877.4LESLEY  
[online.lesley.edu/TeachingTodayMN](http://online.lesley.edu/TeachingTodayMN)

**NEW**  
K-12 Lesson  
Plans  
Online!



Learning Comes **ALIVE!**





To schedule your field trip or school program call us  
 or email [programs@nationaleaglecenter.org](mailto:programs@nationaleaglecenter.org)

W a b a s h a , M N

Tel: 651.565.4989

[nationaleaglecenter.org](http://nationaleaglecenter.org)

Environmental Education Center and Retreat & Conference Facility



## Audubon Center of the North Woods

Located 5 miles west of Sandstone, MN on the east side of Grindstone Lake

- Only 70 miles north of the Twin Cities
- One day to multi-day overnight options
- Beautiful 535-acre lakeside setting
- Classes aligned with MN academic standards
- Year-round programming, lodging, dining & meeting facilities for 160+

Your best choice for nature-focused learning experiences for your students

Experience Your Environment

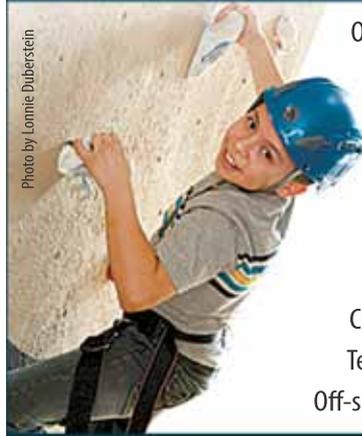


Photo by Lonnie Duberstein

- Outdoor Skills
- Wildlife
- Energy
- Ecology
- Archery
- Canoeing
- High Ropes
- Climbing Wall
- Team-building
- Off-site programs



Check out our website to learn more about our school programs and field trip opportunities

888-404-7743    [info@audubon-center.org](mailto:info@audubon-center.org)

www.audubon-center.org

## WINTER FUN



TROLLS KNOW GROUPS!



TOBING PARTIES



READY FOR LESSONS

## SUMMER ADVENTURES



AERIAL ADVENTURE PARK

112 Element Challenge Course

GREAT PROGRAMS FOR:

TEAM BUILDING

FUN S.T.E.M. INTEGRATION

COMMUNICATION & TRUST

3000 ft of Zip lines



TROLLS!

# Trollhaugen



OUTDOOR RECREATION AREA

A SHORT RIDE NORTH OF THE TWIN CITIES

Dresser \* Wisconsin \* 715.755.2955 \* [Trollhaugen.com](http://Trollhaugen.com)



# *Not Your Ordinary Classroom*

*Field Trips - Incentive Awards - After School Programs*



*Duluth, MN*

*[www.SpiritMt.com](http://www.SpiritMt.com)*