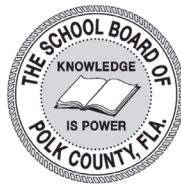






Parents, Students and Teachers Share Unforgettable
Experiences about the 21st Century Community
Learning Centers Program.



Anthology: A Collection of Works by students, parents, and staff of Polk
County Schools 21st Century Community Learning Center Program

I REMEMBER

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I REMEMBER...Parents, Students, and Staff Share Unforgettable Experiences about the 21st Century Community Learning Centers Program

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For publishing information:



Universal Write Publications LLC

PO Box 90312

Lakeland, Florida 33804

www.Universalwrite.com

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May 29, 2009

Dear 21st Century Learning Center Participants:

I am pleased to write this letter on behalf of the students, staff and administrators participating in the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program.

It is inspiring to read your stories and accounts of your experiences in the program. After school programs keep children safe and healthy, help them to achieve academically and assist working parents by giving children supervised, educational activities after the close of the school day.

The 21st Century centers provide opportunities for students to receive extra tutoring, receive homework assistant and participate in learning initiatives.

I congratulate all of you on your achievements and thank you for your participation.

Sincerely,



Gail F. McKinzie, Ph. D.
Superintendent

GAIL MCKINZIE, PH.D.

*Superintendent,
Polk County Schools
Polk County, FL*



ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Florida's 21st Century Community Learning Centers Grant Funds

Florida Department of Education
Lani Lingo, Program Director
Tiffany Herrin, State Grants Coordinator

21st CCLC Leadership Team

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Tallahassee Office

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Sandra Ricardo, Coordinator of Compliance
Francisca Torres, Senior Secretary

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

May 18, 2009

Dear Ms Kears,

On behalf of the 21st Century Community Learning Centers Advisory Council, I would like to thank you and the school leaders for your hard work and devotion to the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program. It has been my pleasure to be on the Advisory Council since the beginning of the program in 2003, and to serve as chair for the past five years. It has been my pleasure to work with you and the staff and school leaders to oversee the program.

21st Century has made a positive impact on the lives of thousands of Polk County children from elementary to high school ages. It has provided them with safe, fun, challenging after school programs, and lasting memories that will enrich their lives.

I would like to also thank the leaders and staff at each of the participating schools that worked hard and provided a program that benefited their school and their students. The positive impact they made was evident each year when we did the “Lights on After School” event.

We can be assured as the grant comes to an end in June, that the work and commitment given by all those involved in the program over the years, will not have been done in vain. Lives have been enriched and changed for the better.

Sincerely,

Claire M. McGraw

CLAIRE M. MCGRAW
21st Century Advisory Council Chair
Polk County Schools Retired Principal



ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The School Board Of Polk County

Bartow, Florida	Superintendent Gail F. McKinzie, Ph.D.
Frank O'Reilly District 1	Learning Division Associate Superintendent Sherrie Nickell, Ed.D.
Lori Cunningham District 2	School Based Operations Associate Superintendent Bruce Tonjes
Hazel Sellers District 3	Elementary Education Senior Director Charlene R. Brinson
Dick Mullenax District 4	21 st Century Community Learning Center Grant Program Program Director/Grant Writer Brenda G. Kearse
Kay Fields District 5	
Margaret Lofton District 6	Executive Assistant to Program Director Kathy McKean
Tim Harris District 7	Area Coordinator Enrique Gutierrez

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Participating Schools

Bartow Middle School

Danny Adams, *Principal*

Kara Holt & Janeane Maxwell, *Site Coordinators*

Berkley Elementary School

Randy Borland, *Principal*

Christa Buckhalter, *Site Coordinators*

Crystal Lake Elementary School

Joe Griffin, *Principal*

Lisa Tucker and Johnny Hogan, *Site Coordinators*

Gibbons Street Elementary School

Ava Brown, *Principal*

Laura Allgood & Diane Rullo, *Site Coordinators*

Snively Elementary School

Dr. JoAnn McKinney, *Principal*

Johnnie Thomas & Sharon Griffin, *Site Coordinators*

Westwood Middle School

Jose Perez, *Principal*

Nidia Cruz & Dave Werner, *Site Coordinators*

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

21st Century Community Learning Centers Program Description

The Building Bridges grant (\$960,000) provides funding for after school activities at Bartow Middle, Berkley Elem., Crystal Lake Elem., Crystal Lake Middle, Gibbons Street Elem., Snively Elem., and Westwood Middle.

These community learning centers provide academic enrichment opportunities for children, particularly students who attend high-poverty and low performing schools. The program: helps students meet state and local student standards in core academic subjects, such as reading and math; offers students a broad array of enrichment activities that can complement their regular academic programs; and offer some literacy and other educational services to the families of participating children.

According to section 4201 (b)(1) of the program statute, a community learning center offers academic, artistic, and cultural enrichment opportunities to students and their families during non-school hours (before or after-school) or periods when school is not in session (including holiday, weekends or summer recess). Community learning centers must also serve the families of participating students, e.g., through family literacy programs.

Types of activities

Each community learning center site can offer a variety of before-school and after-school activities (including those held during summer recess periods) to advance student achievement. Possible activities include:

- Remedial education activities and academic enrichment learning programs, including those which provide additional assistance to students to allow the students to improve their academic achievement;
- Mathematics and science education activities;
- Arts and music education activities;
- Entrepreneurial education programs;
- Tutoring services, including those provided by senior citizen volunteers, and mentoring programs;
- Programs that provide after-school activities for limited English proficient (LEP) students and that emphasize language skills and academic achievement;

- Recreational activities;
- Telecommunications and technology education programs;
- Expanded library service hours;
- Programs that promote parental involvement and family literacy;
- Programs that provide assistance to students who have been truant, suspended, or expelled to allow them to improve their academic achievement;
- Drug and violence prevention programs;
- Counseling programs; and
- Character education programs.

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

GOALS	OBJECTIVES	ACTIVITIES	TIMEFRAMES
1.0 Improve academic achievement	<p>1.1 At least 65% of regularly participating students (attending 30 or more operational days) will demonstrate improved reading abilities as measured by comparison of 2007-08 FCAT scores and 2008-09 FCAT scores in reading.</p> <p>1.2 At least 65% of regularly participating students will demonstrate improved science abilities as measured by comparison of 2007-08 and 2008-09 FCAT science scores.</p> <p>1.3 At least 50% of regularly participating students will demonstrate improved math abilities as measured by comparison of 2007-08 FCAT math scores and 2008-09 FCAT math scores.</p> <p>1.4 65% of participating English Language Learners (ELL) will increase English Language acquisition as measured by DIBELS.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individualized plans will be utilized for all students • Individualized plans for ESE students will be based on their IEP • Kaplan SkillVenture lesson plans will be used. • Data from DIBELS assessment will be analyzed to monitor student achievement in reading. • Students will be administered Kaplan assessments in reading, math, and science. • Students and staff will be trained on FCAT standards and test item specifications • Students will design and publish two books • Students will be administered learning style inventories 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily for entire project year • Daily for entire project year • Daily for entire project year • Three times during the project year • Three times during the project year • Twice a month for entire project year • Weekly activities throughout entire project year • Once a year

GOALS	OBJECTIVES	ACTIVITIES	TIMEFRAMES
2.0 Improve health, wellness, and physical fitness	2.1 At least 65% of regularly participating students will improve their knowledge of health, wellness, and physical fitness and their fitness levels as measured by pre/post tests and fitness assessments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will participate in a variety of recreational activities, cultural dances, and team sports. • Students will be introduced to curriculum (S.P.A.R.K. and Fitness for Life) focused on health, wellness, and physical fitness by school staff or community partners. • Site Coordinators will assist in providing curriculum and monitoring health, fitness, and wellness programs. • Some students will be exposed to interactive video games that promote physical fitness as Dance Revolution at selected sites. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100 minutes minimum weekly during the project year. • Twice weekly during project year • Twice weekly during project year • 30 minutes weekly during the project year

GOALS	OBJECTIVES	ACTIVITIES	TIMEFRAMES
<p>3.0 Promote Parent/Guardian Involvement, Family Literacy, and Educational Development</p>	<p>3.1 25% of parents of participating students will be involved in family literacy and related educational development activities as measured by sign-in sheets and check-out forms.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with day school staff to offer family involvement activities (i.e., Building Better Readers, Readers Theater, Parent Academic Fair, etc.) • LEP/ESOL parents will have the opportunity to use Sed de Sabre program to improve language acquisition. • Parents will receive newsletters with information on strategies to use at home to improve student achievement • Parents will have the opportunity to attend GED courses at selected sites. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bi-quarter meetings that will be measured by sign-in sheets and meeting agenda notes • Daily for four months • Quarterly contact measured by (flyers, phone calls, notes, school newsletters, school marquee, and 21st CCLC website) • Weekly scheduled classes that will be measured by sign-in sheets.

GOALS	OBJECTIVES	ACTIVITIES	TIMEFRAMES
<p>4.0 Enhance personal enrichment, character education, and dropout prevention</p>	<p>4.1 85% of participating students will decrease their absentee rate as measured by attendance on quarterly report cards.</p> <p>4.2 85% of participating students will decrease or maintain good discipline data in Genesis student management system.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administer interest surveys at each site to determine student interest in personal enrichment experiences (Art, Music, Dance, Drama, Chess, Civil Air Patrol, Crafts, Jr. Achievement) • Site Coordinators will assist in coordinating special program events (Lights On!, Tennis Rally, etc.) • Students will be recognized for improvements in social, ethical, and emotional behaviors. • Students will be provided opportunities to engage in Service Learning projects. • 21st CCLC Speakers bureau of volunteers will be established to speak at center/sites on personal enrichment topics. • Student attendance will be taken daily using Beyond Academix computer software. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administer once each semester • Throughout project year • Quarterly • One project per semester • Once a month during project year • Daily during project year

Building Bridges 21st Century Community Learning Centers

*School Board of Polk County
Bartow, Florida*

Data Available as of June 10, 2009 to Program Director

The Building Bridges 21st CCLC program targeted students that scored Level 1 and/or Level 2 on the prior year's Florida Comprehensive Achievement Test (FCAT) in Reading and Math.

Objective 1.5 – **65%** of participating students will achieve a grade of “C” or be on grade level or improve academic grade as measured by quarterly report card grades in reading, math, and science.

Site	Reading	Math	Science	Total
Berkley Elem.	90%	63%	59%	71%
Crystal Lake Elem.	90%	82%	88%	87%
Gibbons Street Elem.	70%	72%	77%	73%
Snively Elem.	75%	82%	84%	80%

OVERVIEW

For six years the School Board of Polk County, FL as served as the fiscal agent for the 21st Century Community Learning Centers Grant's program. Over fifteen program sites have hosted this program serving approximately 12,000 students. As the grant funded program draws to an end this year, we felt that this was an opportune time to reflect on our most memorable moments.

This anthology is a collection of thoughts from students, parents, and staff members that have been impacted by this program under the *No Child Left Behind* legislation. The stories you will read come from people who wanted to share their most joyous experiences during the time they participated in the program.

As Program Director, I am full of joy for having the opportunity to work with a great group of people. The job has afforded me the opportunity to manage up to \$2.1 million dollars of a federally funded grant. The experiences gained by working with twelve outstanding principals and their staff members can never be erased.

This program has afforded thousands of children opportunities to receive quality tutoring, personal enrichment, and health and fitness activities in a safe and orderly after school environment. The parents of the participating students were introduced to a program designed to improve their language speaking ability

using “Sed de Saber”. They were also encouraged to increase their engagement into the daily lives of their children at school.

We now pass the baton on to many community-based, faith-based, and government entities that will apply for the opportunity to serve the students and families of Polk County. President Barack Obama in one of his famous speeches stated, “It is time now to develop a global consciousness, teach for global competitiveness, and change who we are as a country.” As parents and educators striving to fulfill this vision, we must continue to focus our efforts to always do better for our children.

I want to thank all the teachers, parents, students, principals, district staff, and community partners who participated over the years by supporting our efforts to bring new and exciting opportunities to the program. You believed that we had a charge to keep on behalf of our children for this charge is the key to our future as a globally complete country. I take this charge seriously and I promise to continue to advocate on behalf of our children, to continue to look for inventive and creative means of teaching, and to continue to see our children for the genius that is born within them.

When they succeed, we all succeed,

Brenda Graham Kears

BRENDA KEARSE
Project Director / Grant Writer



I REMEMBER

I have so many wonderful memories of the Building Bridges 21st CCLC after school program. Some are near and dear to my heart; some have taught me lessons and helped me to grow as I have helped the program grow. When I first started as Secretary III, I thought I would just be keeping track of student attendance, purchase orders, payroll, and general office duties. To my surprise it was a bit more cumbersome, intense and educational that I could have ever imagined. As the months passed, we developed ways to track the progress of students using FCAT results, report card grades, Kaplan benchmark assessments and data found in the IDEAS program.

Entering this data gave me a new view of what it takes to progress monitor this project. Working side by side with the project director, troubleshooting administrative and teacher issues, helping parents understand and get involved with their students learning, and seeing the results at events, advisory board meetings, idea development and program growth, were the highlight of my time here. We developed ways to help the teachers improve their instructional practices and in the identification of appropriate resource materials. Looking at data and helping the program director Brenda Kearse evaluate the different reports and keeping

up with our budget was a great learning experience for me. I have learned more about the data that is also requested by the Florida DOE 21st CCLC Grant's team. We have developed forms and spread sheets for all the data requested by the state grant team. The education that comes from working with the 21st CCLC program comes with a price of passion for children and their future. The investment is far more than processes and paperwork.

I learned so many things by working with the Area Managers of the Polk County School Board Transportation Department. Learning how routes are developed and all the safety issues involved in getting students at home in the evening was mind boggling and indicative of the outpouring of caring that is exemplified through the Polk County School District.

I feel a sense of growth and excitement through all that I have learned. Seeing the students' progress in their academic achievement of Math, Reading, Writing, and Language Arts made this all worthwhile.

It was my pleasure to meet so many wonderful people who had the student's best interest at heart. It is with great sadness to see the end of such a greatly needed program. Hopefully, Polk County will receive more funds to continue this 21st Century Community Learning Centers grant program.

KATHY MCKEAN
Executive Assistant / Evaluator



IN LINE

with Education

Excerpts from www.change.gov

The Obama-Biden Plan

Our country faces its most serious economic crisis since the great depression. Working families, who saw their incomes decline by \$2,000 in the economic “expansion” from 2000 to 2007, now face even deeper income losses. Retirement savings accounts have lost \$2 trillion. Markets have fallen 40% in less than a year. Millions of homeowners who played by the rules can’t meet their mortgage payments and face foreclosure as the value of their homes have plummeted. With credit markets nearly frozen, businesses large and small cannot access the credit they need to meet payroll and create jobs.

Barack Obama and Joe Biden have a plan to revitalize the economy.

Work-Family Balance

Expand high-quality afterschool opportunities: Obama and Biden will double funding for the main federal support for afterschool programs, the 21st Century Learning Centers program, to serve a million more children. Obama and Biden will include measures to maximize performance and effectiveness across grantees nationwide.

“Today we begin in earnest the work of making sure that the world we leave our children is just a little better than the one we inhabit today.”

PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: The writers' original words are presented here as written in order to preserve their sincerity and uniqueness.

CHAPTER I

Bartow Middle School

I [had] never experienced anything like the 21st Century Building Bridges after school program. The program has really helped me to improve my grades. Before I knew the after school program existed, I was not completing my homework. At the after school program, though, I was able to go to Homework Help to do my homework, and after that my grades really started going up, especially in reading and math. Those two subjects are very hard for me, and I was not doing my homework because I could not understand it. Now that I use Homework Help, it has really helped me improve my grades.

Before I started going to the after school program, I would just go home, sit around being bored and watching TV. Being part of the after school [program] has been a privilege. It is fun to go to all the different classes and move around, instead of being bored at home with nothing to do. Sometimes we even get to play games.

The teachers that helped me were Mrs. Williams, Miss Felger,

and Miss Holt. They all helped [us] to get along with others and bond with our peers. These teachers work with you, helping you to get your grade up by learning more and getting extra help for you when you need it. Between you and me, I once had a 1.6 G.P.A. but now I am happily moving up. They help you learn to respect others, and they even take their time to show you whatever you need help doing. I have made so many friends in this program. I could have never imagined making the friends that I made this year and working as hard as I do now to bring my grades up. I have so many great memories about the after school program that I will never forget. I am just hoping that they are going to have the summer program because I am really looking forward to it.

- Zantrice Washington, Grade: 8

In the after school program, we do different activities. We have modeling, fieldtrips, steps, outside, baking, and more. Besides the field trips, I love step, modeling, and being outside.

My favorite teacher is Ms. Maxwell. She does step and modeling. We went to her church to step and had a great time. We practiced really hard for weeks before we performed. It was really great to be a part of a team and have a chance to work with other people that I do not usually work with. The congregation really enjoyed seeing us perform, and it was fun to be on stage having people watch us perform at something we worked so hard at. Ms. Maxwell will do anything for any students. She has a great ear, and that is why I love her.

All the teachers are great, though. They help us with our homework if we have any. They will sit with us and help us when

we do not understand something, which has helped many of us bring up our grades.

I made a lot of friends there. Now we are all close, and I love talking and playing with them every day. Jamelia is one of the good friends that I have met in the after school program. Jamelia is in the sixth grade. I met her during step and helped to teach her how to step. We were able to become very good friends while she was able to learn something new.

One of the best memories I have from the after school program this year is playing kick ball because even the teachers joined in the fun! My team ended up kicking twenty homeruns during one of the games. It was a blast; everyone had so much fun, and it really meant a lot when the teachers joined us!

I am really looking forward to this summer. Last summer we went to Wonder Works and had so much fun with all of our friends. I am looking forward to having a fashion show during the after school program for one of [the] end of the year activities.

- Mercedes Foster , Grade: 7

My experience in the after school program was tremendous. I had the best time. I made so many new friends in the after school program. Most of the teachers are nice, like Miss Holt, Mrs. Williams a.k.a Miss Maxwell, Miss Felger, and Miss Fine. When it is time to go outside, my friends and I get a basketball, go to the court, and start playing a game. I love basketball; it is my favorite sport. But if all the basketballs are taken, my friends and I get the football and start throwing it back and forth. Sometimes we will

watch the boys play football or basketball. It is funny when they play because they like to travel and double dribble, in basketball. When we play against the boys, they only get the ball taken away sometimes. They do not travel, but they do double dribble, and when they do, we call it, and we get the ball. The only bad thing is that if we call them for traveling, the boys will call us girls for traveling. It is a lot of fun, though.

Here are some of the things we do in the after school program. We get snacks and sign in. Then we go to a room and work on our class work. In Miss Felger's room, we would get to watch movies and do assignments about the movie. We watched *Akleah and the Bee*, and looked up the words that she spelled throughout the movie. I was able to find out about a lot of words I did not know before. In Miss Fine's room, we had a chance to act out plays and dress up like our characters.

My favorite part of the after school program, though, is when we get to go outside. When we go outside, we have so much fun. We chase each other and play basketball with the boys and football. When we get called for the buses, we all head out front and go home for the night!

- **Brooke Walker, Grade: 7**

The afterschool program is a great and fun place this year. I made many friends, joined the step team, and went on a field trip to the LB Brown House.

I have made so many friends. I met Jammelia, Janique, Zantrice, Demetrio, and many more. My best friend out of all of them

is Demetrio. Usually when we leave the after school program, we will talk and text one another at night. Sometimes we will even get together on the weekend and go shopping. Without the after school program, I would not have been able to become as close as I have with these friends, since I do not really get to see them during the school day.

We also had a step team. We worked very hard and practiced a lot to prepare our dance. We performed at Ms. Maxwell's church after several week of practicing together. After we performed, we all went out to eat together as a team. It was really great to be a part of team and show off what we learned in front of an audience.

Finally we went to the LB Brown house in Bartow. We learned how they would wash their clothes and how they ironed their clothes before electricity, washers, and dryers. It was really interesting to see how they were able to do this. I would really not like living like that, though.

In conclusion, I love the after school program. I have made many great friends, had the opportunity to be part of a team, and go on field trips. I am going to miss it when I go to high school.

-LaQuill Mason, Grade: 7

I remember meeting my friend Riekki at the After School Program. She is kind of funny, but sometimes she can get on my nerves. She always tells me what to do, but she is still my friend. Riekki is fun to be with. She makes me laugh all the time. She was the main reason I started coming to the after school program. Then I found out it was a really great place to go. I would be

doing absolutely nothing without Riekki. Riekki makes my time after school fun. Right now I would be sitting in my room doing nothing if I did not start coming to the after school program.

The after school program gives me something to do after school. I enjoy being around all the teachers, too. Even though they sometimes make me do work, which I do not usually want to do after school, they work hard to find a way to make it fun. This is why I still enjoy them. Mrs. Holt makes all the great arrangements, which is why I really like her.

I have had many great memories during the after school program, but being able to hang out with Riekki, and having something to do after school rather than sitting in my room alone, are by far the best things of the after school program this year.

-Zykkorrya Medler, Grade: 8

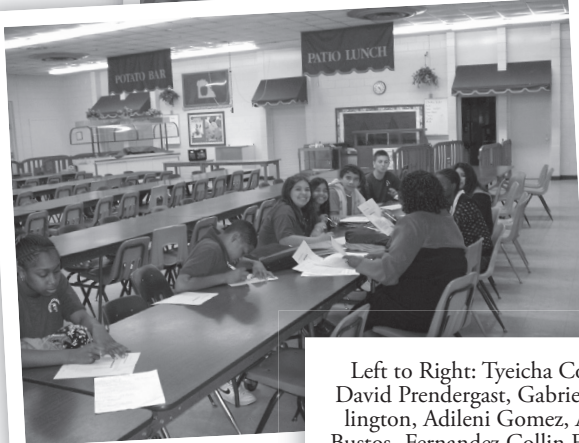
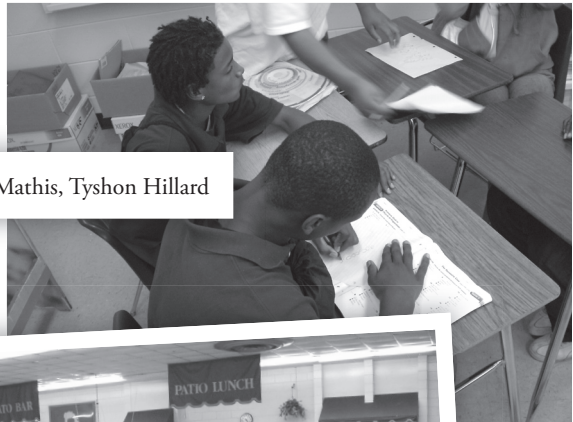
The luminous joys we share,
The embedded memories that reminds us who cares.
Every day is an essential lesson learned,
Oh, how we focused, oh how we yearned.
A feeling of fulfillment embraces me every day,
Knowing that I did the best that I could, honestly, in every way.

-Janeane Maxwell Washington, Co-Site Coordinator

Left to Right: Rico Mathis, Tyshon Hillard, Joshua Jones, Marissa Haggins, Michael Walker



Left to Right: Rico Mathis, Tyshon Hillard



Left to Right: Tyeicha Cooper, David Prendergast, Gabriella Bullington, Adileni Gomez, Adrian Bustos- Fernandez, Collin Fleming, Karelys Delgado, Ambrielle Greene, Mrs. Gladys Davis

Left to Right: Laquill Mason, No-keem Williams, Brandon Murray, Joshua Jones, Zantrice Washington, Justice Lawton, Ashlee Luna, Ocia Madison, Terrell Mathis. Victor Leon



Let to Right: Mrs. Kara Holt, Rodrick Williams, Leiland Rabb, Keshawn Roberson, Brenton Rudolph, Tamara Wright, Devonte White, Diantrah Walker, Sarah Simpson, Sarah Tilley

NOTE: The writers' original words are presented here as written in order to preserve their sincerity and uniqueness.

CHAPTER 2

Berkley Elementary School

My most unforgettable experience was working on math with one of my lowest students. I pulled her aside and taught her basic counting tricks using manipulatives, such as blocks, dots, and buttons. Instead of refusing to do her work, something clicked. She enjoyed herself for the first time, and [for me] to see that was very rewarding. I feel like helping her in that way has opened up new doors for her to become self-motivated.

-Bekki Brewer, College Intern

I like the people in tutoring. They are nice people. I like that we get to learn on the computer. That is why I love tutoring.

-Colby Watkins, Grade: 2

I remember many memorable things about the Building Bridges Program. The memory that sticks out in [my] mind and makes me smile each time I think about it is when report card time came and the kids in the program came rushing into snack to show me their grades. They were so excited that they had passing grades that they were beaming from ear to ear. It warmed my heart to see them successful and made me feel that my time spent after school was well worth it. I have been the site coordinator at my school for the entire 5 years of our grant. I saw MANY of those successes. The 21st grant was a wonderful opportunity for the students in my school and [for] Polk County to have a chance at success.

**-Christa Buckhalter,
Site Coordinator & Kindergarten Teacher**

The best day in tutoring was when we got to play outside at Miss B's playground with my best buddies Shane and Deshawn, and we played tag and hide go seek. And it is challenging because Deshawn is fast and always catches Shane, and I tried so hard to win the game. Also what I like about tutoring is that Miss. B lets us get on the computer and play educational games like Fun School

and Primary Games, because we did our work practice in the story and questions, and it was hard. And finally we could go on all kinds of games like Dune Buggy Trials 2. It is really fun.

-Jason Schiff, Grade: 3

I remember the time we got to play multiplication.com before we had to do our homework, and my favorite teachers in tutoring are Mrs. Hammac and Mrs. Butler. They were so nice and helpful to me when I needed help. I love tutoring so much because the teachers are so nice and helpful, and I could always count on them if I needed help. The best time in tutoring that I have had was when we all did homework together and played games on the computer. I will NEVER forget the time when we all went outside and played together. It was the best time ever!!!

-Karlie Strickland, Grade: 3

The funniest thing in this period of the week is Mrs. Lovelace as she rapidly does her eyes like a hawk looking for food. Do you know what else she can do? Well buckle your seat; it is going to be a bumpy ride. That crazy mind power can do a full tumble/back flip in the air. This is so funny, this could even make a clown cry. This whole day which is like a made up story?

Now we go into the dumpster to go diving, the most exiting day of my school life is when we got to play Primary Games on the new

computers--how exciting. We also got to color comic book pictures. We also even got to eat slamming butter. This year has flown by slow and by fast too. I will be so proud if this school will have another year like this again. This was a great help out to me and maybe some other kids. The kids [next year] will really need this program as much as we kids did, too. The overall resolution of this program is 100% good. There are many reasons to love but none to hate.

-Lacey Cox, Grade:5

It is difficult to write of a single unforgettable experience during my time working with the 21st CCLC program. It was a very dynamic year since I tutored 5th grade, but teach 3rd. My first impression of the 5th graders was that they were ‘too cool’ to learn and uninterested in impressing me. They loved to say ‘I already know how to do this!’ when they really didn’t. They loved to pretend like they were too mature for learning games and rewards.

As the year went [by], I saw an incredible change take place. Little by little, they shed this layer of protection and began to prove themselves a lot softer than they seemed. I first noticed it when a 5th grade student who was not in tutoring and whom I did not know, stopped me at recess and said, “Can I be in tutoring! Everyone is always talking about how much they like it!” I was shocked. The act had worked, and the students had me convinced that all my efforts to make after school learning fun and interesting weren’t working at all.

Before long, it became ‘cool’ to be in tutoring. My tutoring students would wave to me from their lines whenever passing me

during the day. They began to stop by my room any morning they were going to be missing an afternoon or leaving early. Some of them even began to stop by my room in the mornings to ask things like, “How did that math trick go again?”

I watched minds develop and relationships blossom. I found tender sides to students who preferred to be ‘the tough guy’. But I knew I had really made a difference the day six of my tutoring students chased me down at recess to tell me they got the first 100% on their spelling tests the whole year. I hadn’t done anything special...I had just called out their words to them while waiting for their parents to pick them up. I called them out over and over and over, and made them write the words over and over and over until I knew they had it. It was amazing to see the kids finally start to believe in themselves.

It wasn’t always easy, and I didn’t always think I had the energy left to make it each day, but it was definitely worth it. While I am proud to see the students make it on to 6th grade, I will certainly miss seeing their smiles and hearing their encouraging voices singing my name on campus.

-Erin Lovelace, 3rd Grade Teacher

I remember when Mrs. Lovelace’s tutoring class was small, and she let us go on Primary Games if we worked hard and were quiet. So we worked harder than we did any day, and were extremely quiet so she would let us play on Primary Games. I remember in tutoring I was working on my math problems, and I was doing well. Then the next day I was getting my math prob-

lems right on the money! That made me want to come to tutoring everyday. So now I come to tutoring everyday.

PS: Stay away from drugs.

-Nicolas Dailey, Grade: 5

The thing that I like about tutoring is that I made new friends. We are smart, and we got to go play on computers. I also like the teachers that are teaching tutoring. They are nice to us.

Stacia Williams' Grade: 2

My favorite memory of tutoring was my dad getting somebody's shoe out of a tree. When a girl was shaking her shoe up and down, thinking it was a wand, it suddenly slipped out of her hands, landed and got stuck in a tree. My dad is six foot six. He could reach higher than Mrs. Lovelace. Then he reached up and got [the] shoe out of the tree and gave it to the little girl. Next it slipped out of her hand again and almost landed in the drain, but it got caught by my dad. Finally the girl ran to her mom and told her about the shoe hero, my dad.

-William True, Grade: 5

I really enjoy the excitement that flows around the room when students are excited about learning and eager to show other students how to solve problems. I also enjoy the support from supportive parents among our school community. This program has helped advance my teaching style and understanding about multiple intelligences, while [I was] implementing Kagan structures. Building Bridges has also given me the opportunity to create portfolios to pinpoint strengths and weaknesses among our students to help make gains among our bottom 25%. Thank you for the opportunity.

-Mr. Adams, 2nd Grade Teacher

Some memories I had at Berkley are going outside and playing jungle tag. We had to work hard to earn the privilege, but it was always worth it. Once I got to write with a 3/4 inch crayon on Mrs. Lovelace's Smartboard. She would pick up the red marker when we weren't looking, so that it seemed like the giant crayon was writing by itself. Also, if we worked hard after tutoring and finished our homework, we would get on the computer and play approved games. Some other memories I had are all of the fun we had with the cool teachers. We usually had Mrs. Lovelace and Ms. Juarez, but on Tuesdays and Thursdays we would go over to Ms. Lewis' room. I will [miss] them all.

-Dylan Harris, Grade: 5

I remember when... I first came to tutoring. We had to go to Mrs. Lovelace's room to help the 5th graders with their math homework. I liked when we went to Mrs. Buckhalter's class to play some games, we would play with Playdoh, and we would play on Primary Games.com. I liked when we had to play Compass Odyssey. Tutoring helped me because on my last math test I made a 100%, and I usually make U's. I liked when we got to go outside to play with the basketball, and some people got in trouble they didn't listen to Mrs. Hammac.

-Janiah McIntosh, Grade: 3

Berkley has greatly benefited from the Building Bridges Program. It's been a blessing and [an] awesome opportunity for children who need that extra boost! Mrs. Buckhalter has done a wonderful job running such a complex program.

-Jerrilyn Stover, Kindergarten Teacher

My favorite experience is with the use of our Smart Board during tutoring. The kindergarteners love it. You would wonder if after being in school all day, how they can still focus for tutoring? However, they love it. They always ask if we can learn with the Smart Board activities and games. It becomes their time to shine. They love feeling like a teacher by being called to the Smart Board. My experience with tutoring has been great, and the

kids actually look forward to it. All my students in the program have made tremendous gains.

-Kristi Slagel, Kindergarten Teacher

The most unforgettable experience involving the 21st Century Community Learning Center program was when one of my tutoring students finally decided that I cared enough about him to make better grades. This particular student was new to our school, and he had been retained before, so he was older than the other kids. He became the class clown and trouble maker to try to make friends at the school. I am not his homeroom teacher, so I only saw him during tutoring and for the most part he participated, and I never had a behavior problem. However, his parents and homeroom teacher was not seeing eye to eye because the parents were receiving one story from their son and one from his teacher. Things started getting complicated between adults, and this student loved it, until he tried to pull his tactics on me. He started coming to tutoring and complaining about how he did not understand things because he was not taught it. This was false because his homeroom teacher and I worked hand and hand, so I knew exactly what she was teaching. He would come in and work fine for about 15 minutes and then get stuck, so he would give up or just start making up answers. For example, I asked him how many little cubes made up a hundred block, he replied, “25, 101, and 98.” When he did this, it would make me so upset because I knew he knew the correct answers. When he got in these moods, I would make him sit there until he got the answer correct, even if

his parents came, and they supported me because they also knew he knew the correct answers. Finally, one day he was in one of his giving-up moods, and I could not take another day of it, so I sat him down to have a good talk with him. I asked him how did he feel about himself? He said, "I feel dumb." I explained to him that everything in life is not going to be easy, and that if he tried instead of giving up, he would feel much better when he got the answer correct. I told him he needed to start feeling better about himself first before he could deal with feeling better about his academics. This student, who is taller than me and most students, began to tear up, and I knew he saw the light. It made me feel good because finally he got the point of learning and practicing. This child became a different person after that day.

-LaToya Lewis, 4th Grade Teacher

I like tutoring because we get to play cool games on the computer. I also like tutoring because we go to Miss B's room, and I get to play with my friends on the playground outside. I like tutoring because we do activities like BINGO because if you get BINGO, you win.

-Nathaniel Marshall, Grade: 2

When I was in tutoring, I loved it the first time when I went there. We had to learn math and language arts.

We learned lots of math, and we played lots of games to help us learn everything we were studying. I loved math the most because it's fun!

I remember when one day, we got to hold chicks! Another day Lacey and I played Mouse Trap after we finished our work. She always yelled out loud when she hit the marble in the trap. I love tutoring so much, I want to go back again.

I like when we ran and had lots of exercise, played on Primary Games, and all the other fun things we did during the year together. Mrs. Lovelace is very easy to get along with. I loved how we got lots of prizes for good behavior and hard work.

Mrs. Lovelace is a very amazing teacher. She is very nice! I will definitely miss her.

-Sarah Curby, Grade: 5

I remember when I was in tutoring and we played outside. It was very fun. We had races, and we played learning games, too. I also remember when another class that had little baby chicks came to visit. The chicks were so cute. I really like the times that I got to play Mouse Trap and the time that I got to play Math Bingo. My tutoring class was always fun. I also got some new friends from tutoring class. I also really loved my tutoring teacher Mrs. Lovelace. I really loved the year and learned a lot too!

-Summer Nichols, Grade: 5

One of my favorite moments was when I threw basketball and hit my head [and] when I spilled milk on myself. When I spilled a kid's meal on myself. I spilled juice on my pants. When I got a jellybean from Mrs. Lovelace, I spilled my food on me. We learned that you need to know multiplication and practice often.

-Zachary Watkins, Grade: 3

Tutoring for Berkley's 21st Century Tutoring Program has provided me with wonderful experiences. As the principal I have plenty of opportunities to coach teachers but very few to coach or teach kids. These past three years I've tutored kindergarten, fourth grade and this year first grade. The bonding that occurs between the student and teacher is so rewarding. It may be a little frustrating in the beginning of the year because they struggle with understanding a concept. But the teacher in me tells me it is because my strategies are not effective. It motivates and challenges me to seek strategies that work. I want to know how they learn!

I can remember my experience with kindergarten students that could not master their letters and sounds. After many days of diversified instruction, I still had four children that were not successful. I remember adding music and rhythm with my daily lessons. I observed those four students having so much fun while they were learning. After a few days the light bulb came on! They were making connections through rhythmical lessons. 100% mastery, how refreshing for a tutor!

Another wonderful tutoring experience was with my 21 fourth graders. Again, I faced frustration in the beginning of the year. My students did not comprehend what they read. I focused on fluency using a voice recognition software program. After closely monitoring and making adjustments with each individual student I began to see some success. When I set goals with each child and had them chart their success I began to see the competitive spirit in each child and their progress soared. Still, their weekly FCAT assessments were not to my expectations. After reflecting on why, I realized that this group was like a team that had experienced many losses the past few years. Their confidence was very low. It was time for me to let them know how much I believed in them. Believing in them was not enough. I had to make them know I believed in them. I began to do this daily. They worked so hard for me. End result: 90% of them made gains in reading!

-Randy Borland Principal, Berkley Elementary Charter

NOTE: The writers' original words are presented here as written in order to preserve their sincerity and uniqueness.

CHAPTER 3

Crystal Lake Elementary School

Ms. Copeland is the language arts teacher, and she is fun. I also have a lot of fun with Mrs. Betty. We play games, and I get to see my friends.

-Taliyah Gore, (Squirrels)

Ms. Copeland is the best teacher that I have ever been with. I also like Fun Fitness. I like being with my friends at Building Bridges, especially my best friend, Jazzmine.

-Raven Oner, (Squirrels)

Mrs. Copeland is my favorite teacher at Building Bridges. She teaches me language arts. Mrs. Berry is a nice teacher too. We get to play at Fun Fitness. They are the best teachers at Building Bridges.

-Ingrid, (Squirrels)

I like Building Bridges because the people are nice, especially Ms. Copeland

-Kiara, (Bees)

My favorite part of Building Bridges is going with Ms. Copeland on Thursday. I like reading the books with her in our class.

-Ashley, (Bees)

My most unforgettable experience at Building was at Fun Fitness when I played Mr. Anderson in *Dance, Dance, Revolution* and won by 1,000 points. I also won against Mark, Aaliyah, and Mr. Giffin.

-Phinaud, (Piranhas)

My most unforgettable experience at Building Bridges was when I would go to Ms. Copeland, and we would play the market game. We had to remember what the other person said and what letter of the alphabet they had. If a person did not remember, they would be out of the game. In Fun Fitness, we had the most fun because we played tennis and dance.

-Gabriela, (Piranhas)

The best experience I had at Building Bridges was playing *Dance, Dance, Revolution* and spending time with my friends. Once I beat almost everyone! I also love Miss Copeland because she is so cool. She is the most awesome teacher in Building Bridges. I also like how the teachers teach us different things because when you move to the next grade, you might remember how they taught you. When I am with Miss Copeland, I love playing the market game. When we are with Mrs. Meeks, she teaches us that if anybody messes with you, just run to someone's house. Mrs. Pershon teaches us about yoga, and I like when Coach Bonney says, "Mrs. Betty!" I will never forget the teachers at Building Bridges!

-Aaliyah Patterson, (Piranhas)

What I like most about Building Bridges is Fun Fitness. That is my favorite part because you can play all sorts of games and play on the Wii. You can also bring a game of your

own from home. I remember we played a wrestling game, and I beat Phinaud's brother. At first I thought I was going to lose, but I pulled through and won. I was excited that I beat a 14 year old at a video game! That is what I like most about Building Bridges

-Mark, (Piranhas)

I like going to the computer lab and playing *Dance, Dance, Revolution*. I also like going outside for P.E. and, of course, snack time.

-Omari Jenkins, (Spiders)

My favorite time and Building Bridges was doing Language Arts with Miss Copeland.

-Brittney Crawn, (Tigers)

My most unforgettable times at Building Bridges were the days we went with Ms. Copeland because she is a funny teacher and helps me when I need help. She has long hair and is cute. She is crazy!

-Vonzetta, (Tigers)

My most unforgettable experience was with Miss Copeland, Coach Bonney, Miss Berger, and Miss Betty. They are my most favorite teachers at Building Bridges. I like them because they are nice, and we do fun activities. They are the most fun teachers at Building Bridges!

-Desarae Prather, (Tigers)

My most favorite experience at Building Bridges was being with Coach Bonney because we got to play the Wii and *Dance, Dance, Revolution*. I also like Coach Bonney because he is fun, and sometimes we get to play against him in baseball on the Wii. I like Coach because we get to play with our friends and run around as well.

-Harley MacDonald, (Tigers)

My most unforgettable experience in Building Bridges was making Mother's Day cards and bath salts. That stuff was incredible! My mother loved her card and gift. YOU ARE THE BEST MOM EVER WAH-HOO! One thing that I would add to the program is swimming. We need to add a program on Fridays for fun stuff only.

-Dawson Harper, (Lions)

My most unforgettable experience was spending time with Mrs. Betty in art. I'll never forget this because we did a Mother's Day card and Easter card. Mrs. Betty would bring stickers and glitter glue for my cards to make. She also gave us treats if we behaved. When I gave my mom the card she loved it. Every time I go to Building Bridges I enjoy it. One of the activities that I like but we do not have is fun fitness. I like jump roping and hoola hoop and all those other good sports. I like to run outside or play soccer or basketball. Everyone on Friday could go outside and play on the P.E field. I really enjoyed Building Bridges.

-Vidalia Vergara

My unforgettable experience is spending time with my friends because we hang out playing the Wii sports. We have fun playing outside. I like playing Wii because it helps me exercise and I build muscles. It helps me think. My mind is clearer and I can concentrate. My grades in Reading have improved. I have met my goal. It helps me focus and finish reading and if you have a fever and you are sick, just playing the Wii sports helps sweat out the sickness and that's why I always play the Wii sports. One way to improve the program would be to add X-Box. The controllers are different and more challenging.

-Cyle Levan, (Lions)

I like it when we play games like the WII and the dance mat. I like these games because it is fun to play the WII baseball, tennis and

bowling. THE dance mat lets you show off your skills and you can pick the song you want to dance to. I like to dance to “Move It Move It” because you have to dance and press arrows to earn points.

-Romario, (Lions)

My most unforgettable experience in Building Bridges was spending time with my friends. If I did not have this program, I would have to go home alone with no company. I really enjoyed Computer Lab because my laptop is very slow and I could not play the games that are on the school’s computer. My writing test and Reading test scores have improved because the Compass Odyssey Programs gave me extra time to practice.

-Zarina Brown, (Lions)

My most unforgettable experience in Building Bridges was May 6, 2009. I made a card for my mom. I also made bath salts with food coloring and Epsom salts. The front of my card said “I love you because...” Fun Fitness was great because I used a lot of muscles that I don’t usually use. I think we need to add singing to make this the best afterschool program ever! We have a lot of talent in our school.

-Cassandra Rivera

My most unforgettable experience was PE. I love to play Dance Revolution. I am a great dancer and I was able to follow the arrows and kept time with the music.

-Brisa Carmona

My most unforgettable experience was Fun Fitness and computer lab. I learned new things in math. I was able to finish my homework and get extra help.

-Josstin Espinoza

My most unforgettable experience was the Wii. I like bowling and baseball. I played with my friends and scored higher than everyone in the group. I was allowed to practice to improve my scores. I hope we add Play Station and Midnight Club to make it more fun.

-Raymond Morris

My most unforgettable experience was making bath salts for Mother's Day. I enjoyed choosing a scent that I thought my mother would enjoy. I chose her favorite color and my Mom thought this was a wonderful present.

-Tammy Flores

My most unforgettable experience was playing virtual baseball and basketball. We then did cartwheels and golf. Sometimes we had running exercises. I really enjoyed choosing what I wanted to play. I do not have many school friends who live near me. This was the only chance that I had to be with them.

-Alexsya Ardoin

My most unforgettable experience in Building Bridges was spending time with my best friends. I will never forget this because they treated me well and made me happy. I wish

that they were my brothers and sisters. I got extra help with homework and learned some cool art stuff. F-CAT Explorer helped me with my Reading and Math grades. I now know how to do long division. I can now solve word problems without help from the computer or the teacher. Miss Betty is the nicest teacher I have ever had. I love this program.

-Shanelle Maldonado

My most memorable experience in Building Bridges was playing computer games in Cool Math. I am really good at most of the math games. We made bath salts for Mothers'

Day. I never made anything like that before.

-Jirom Fernandez

My most unforgettable experience was playing Cool Math and primary games after we did Compass Odyssey. I wish we had a swimming pool so that we could swim. I wish we had this program every day. I want to have the same program next year.

-Deniasha Jordan

My most unforgettable experience in Building Bridges was Compass Odyssey. My grades went up and I got extra help with homework. PE was fun because we played virtual games. I wish we had the program every day after school.

-Joviana McKenzie

My most unforgettable experience in Building Bridges was to be with my friends. I loved being in Miss Weekes class. She was nice to me. She gave us candy and we pretended that we were in a restaurant and she was our waitress. We had to describe the food that we wanted to order. I really enjoyed May 6, 2009 when we made gifts and cards for our mothers. I made bath salts out of Epsom salts and food coloring. I also enjoyed doing homework with my friends. Coach Bonny is cool because he showed us how to play Dance Revolution. My most unforgettable experience in Building Bridges was PE. I played virtual games with my best friends. I played GEORGE

of the JUNGLE and scored 23 points. I had a lot of fun.

-Alexus Greenwood

My most unforgettable experience was Dance Revolution. You stand on a mat and step on the arrows when they are on the screen. I wanted to have more time on the computer, but we only had one day. It took a long time to finish Compass Odyssey and I did not get to play a game for more than ten minutes. I would have liked to spend less time reading and learning in Language Arts. I wanted more time to play with my friends.

-Diamond Hannah

My most unforgettable experience was spending time with my friends and talking to them all day. If I went home, it would be so boring and I would wish I had company. I can get help with homework and everything. When I didn't have enough time to finish my schoolwork, Miss Weekes helped me with the assignment. I got a better math grade after I got extra time on the computer. I learned how to play a new game on Cool Math.

-Evelin Cruz

My most unforgettable experience in Building Bridges was PE and virtual games. I never played games like this before. I like the Wii basketball game and I played with Raymond. I couldn't beat him. The remote is a stick and you wear a wristband. You shoot at the basket and try to earn points. I liked Art with Miss Betty.

-Cristian Arriaga

The most unforgettable experience in Building Bridges was playing Dune Buggy after I finished my Compass Odyssey work. We made bracelets and cool stuff. I got extra help with my book report. I also enjoyed Dance Revolution in PE. I had a lot of fun in this program. I hope we have it next year.

-Obari Jenkins

My most unforgettable experience in Building Bridges was going to computer lab and PE. The most fun was Fun Brain. I enjoyed having fun with my best friends. The teachers are very nice and they helped me with Reading and Math.

-Anayely Benturo

I remember my first day at the Crystal Lake Elementary, Building Bridges program. I met the SHARKS and I knew that I would have the *challenge of a lifetime!* This group was definitely ready for Middle School and had the ability to be Ambassadors for the school. I enjoyed helping them with word problems and fractions in Compass Odyssey Math. They were eager to try new things and were not afraid to make mistakes. Haiku was a blast!

I hope that I get the opportunity to work with 21st CCLC again. Mr. Hogan and Mrs. Tucker are great site administrators who keep things lively and interesting.

-Debra L. Weekes, Teacher

I remember when the kids would come in and were always eager to know what was going to be done on that day. I remember the kids sharing stories of how their day went and what they did during the weekend with their families and friends. I remember the look on their faces when they received their awards at the award ceremony for their accomplishments throughout the Building Bridges program. Thanks for the opportunity

-Mrs. McDonald, Science and Reading Teacher

I remember while working in Building Bridges, the positive connections made with students, parents, and staff. Students in my classes enjoyed hands on math lessons. As I worked as coordinator,

I was able to greet parents in the afternoons and learn more about students' family environment. I worked with staff to organize and further develop the program. I hope those relationships will work to improve Crystal Lake Elementary and community attitudes of our school.

**-Sherry Pittman, Building Bridges Coordinator and
Math Tutor**

Building Bridges has been a special part of my educational experience as a teacher in Polk County. I have had the opportunity to work with a wonderful group of students over the past few years. I have met and seen these students grow both physically and academically as they continue to flourish in their early years of schooling. I have also met and worked with a fine staff at Crystal Lake Elementary. As a high school teacher it is refreshing to work with younger students and assist in math and other critical thinking areas that are challenges to each and every building bridges student. I am saddened that this program must end as the advantages to these students were vast and hopefully eventful and will be remembered by them for years to come.

-Marcia Berger, MS, M.B.A.

Working with these students after school is all about building relationships. The students in my groups continue to

greet me as we pass in the halls. A week ago, a car rode by me as I was putting things into my vehicle. A student from the program in the passenger seat, rolled down his window and greeted me. Even students that I have had to chide for behavior feel a positive connection. One student who has had behavior problems generally, always asks me to walk her to the car rider pick up when the program is over the days that I work.

-Homer Spencer, Chess Club Instructor

What I remember most about the Building Bridges Program is seeing the social skills development of students. At the beginning of the year there were students that were timid and reluctant to mingle with other students. It is amazing how the student's confidence and personality enhances through this program by the end of the year.

-Keith Bonney, Fun Fitness Instructor

I remember how the children made it fun to come back and find new activities to teach them. I found it easier to create more in depth and creative projects for them based on their activity levels.

-Pam Decent, Language Arts and Science Instructor

I remember students groaning when I told them we would be doing yoga in my class. A few weeks into the course, they were correctly doing yoga poses on their own and naming them as they went. Some of the serious doubters began requesting yoga when other fitness activities were an option. I even heard students saying things like, “I’ve been doing yoga at home after school” and “I do the volcano pose when I get angry and it helps.”

-Lindsay Persohn, Yoga and Physical Fitness Instructor

I remember that every day when I would show up to Building Bridges, I would be exhausted and drained from a full day at work that had already been completed. But, as I walked up to the courtyard area, and immediately became flooded with hugs from my students, it made the extra work all worth it. I will miss hearing them laugh when we came across a comedic part in a story, or watching their eyes grow wide when they learned something interesting, or seeing the excitement in their eyes when they got a question correct and they were starting to truly understand a concept. Those memories will certainly last a lifetime.

-Denay Copeland, Language Arts Instructor

I remember how the students enjoyed using the black markers to work ASL sign games. They also loved to sing and sign the alphabet and other songs in front of their classmates. Signing

their names to each other was another favorite activity.

-Carol Wisemen, American Sign Language Instructor

There are many amazing things about the Building Bridges program that captured our students' hearts this year. They had the opportunity to receive the additional support in math and reading, both instructional and with technology. Also, they learned the use of sign language, the strategy of Chess, and the discipline of Yoga; however, the students were intrigued when they had the opportunity to practice their multiplication facts using the Smart Pen. We decided to use the pens with lower grade students, and on the very first day they had a blast! Their little eyes gleamed with enthusiasm as they worked non-stop on their math facts. I feel the Smart Pen will do great wonders in assisting our students in learning their math facts.

-Johnny. Hogan, Co-site Coordinator

I remember one of my most unforgettable moments at Building Bridges was teaching 2nd through 5th grade students Math and Sign Language. In the math class I was able to teach the students how to use Smart board Senteos to take a quiz after a smart board activity. The clickers would allow the students to see if they got the correct answers. It was great to watch all the high fives and "Oh Yeah, I got it right" celebrations after each and every ques-

tion. During sign language class the students were eager to learn the signs to different words. They would practice during the day when I saw them they would sign to me “How are you?” I would answer back in sign I am fine.

-Lisa Tucker, Co-site Coordinator

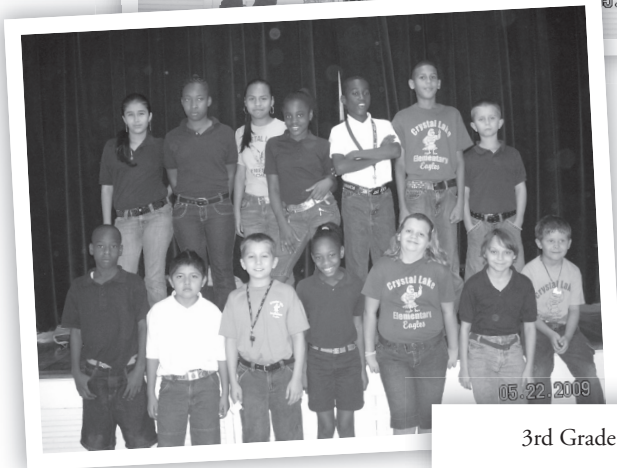


5th Grade



4th Grade

5.22.2009



05.22.2009

3rd Grade

2nd Grade



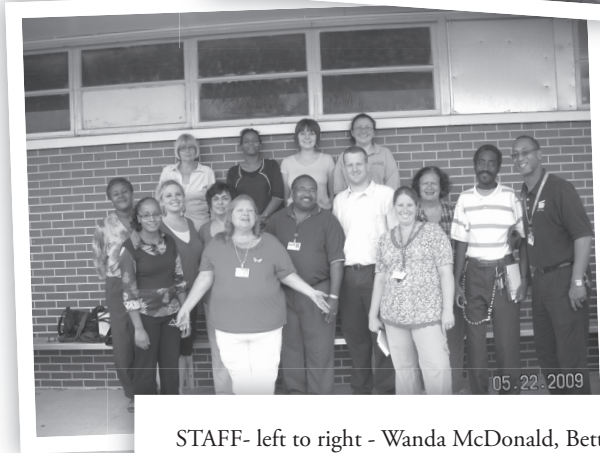
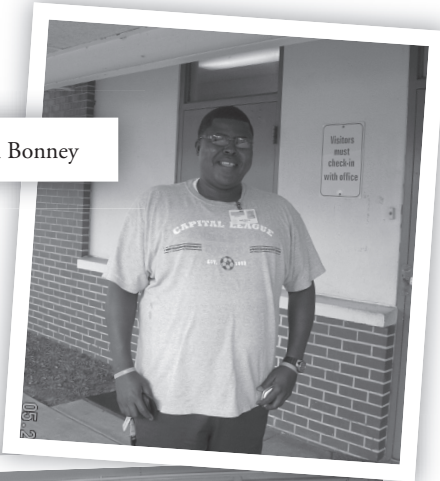
1st Grade



Principal Joe Griffin



Coach Keith Bonney



STAFF- left to right - Wanda McDonald, Betty Woolard, Genae Davis, Anwar Wilkerson, Principal Joe Griffin 2nd row - Debra Weekes, Denay Copeland, Lisa Tucker, Johnny Hogan, Phil Anderson, Marcia Berger 3rd row - Kathleen Woodington, Nicole Rolls, Lindsey Pershon, Barbara Fischer. Not shown, Sherry Pittman, Joan Jones, Pamela Decent, Homer Spencer, and Catherine Gaetz

NOTE: The writers' original words are presented here as written in order to preserve their sincerity and uniqueness.

CHAPTER 4

Gibbons Street Elementary School

I like going to Building Bridges because we go to Fun Fitness, and I really like sports and the outdoors. Another reason I like Building Bridges is because we have board games sometimes. I love to play board games. It's one of my favorite subjects. [It] is why I like building bridges. The last reason that I like Building Bridges is because we have computer time. It is so fun to visit these three web sites: funschool.com, brain bashers, and coolmath4kids. These websites help me a lot and teach me skills I need in Math, Reading, and Science. All of these are my favorite memories during Building Bridges.

-Kiara Stanton

Ever since I was in the 21st Century, I have learned a lot. My most rememberal experience in Building Bridges was making zip bag omelets. We first put two eggs in the bag with cheese. Then we put the bag in boiling water for ten minutes, then eat it. By doing this project, I learned how to make omelets, so if my parents asked me if I knew how to make any food, I would say I know how to make an omelet. I would say yes I do.

-Blake Allbritton

I like Building Bridges because we get to do a lot of hands on activities in Building Bridges, such as science projects, gardening, going online to do research on some stuff. It's really cool if you just get into it. Building Bridges also helps me with my homework, meeting new friends and hanging out with my old friends. I like the different subjects that they have. They have many educational web sites that we use. Building Bridges is really fun. Since I have been coming to Building Bridges, my grades has been a lot better, especially in Math and Science. My teachers are very friendly and nice. They [were] always willing to help me when I need help. Sometimes Mr. White gives me Hints. I love playing Board games when we are finished with our work. Building Bridges has taught me a lot, such as being yourself and respecting myself. It has motivated me to strive after my goal and work very hard at whatever I do.

My favorite memory I have of being in Building Bridges is getting on the computer on something fun. When we [have] done what we have to do on the computer, Mr. White says to get on

something fun, that's like Fun School, Fun Brain, the Kidz page, cool math 4kids, and more. It is so fun at Building Bridges. If you're at my school, you should come to Building Bridges

-Asia Daughtry

I remember when we ate brownies at building bridges. Then we read a story about a seahorse. She also let us get on the computers and I played Starfall reading.

-Shateriona Edwards, Kindergarten







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CHAPTER 5

Snively Elementary School of Choice

This is my first year as a Building Bridges teacher. There have been many experiences of the past months that I cherish. One happened just yesterday. I teach Kindergarten during Building Bridges. One of my students is very bright but sometimes has a problem staying on task and listening. Yesterday, he did an awesome job listening and following directions, and I praised him. He politely asked me to write a smiley face and a note in his agenda! I let him choose a star to put in his agenda instead. He was very proud of his green “star sticker” and showed it off to everyone.

-Mrs. Karlowa, Kindergarten Teacher

We worked on a special project this year to receive donations for our year-end celebration. This involved figur-

ing the cost of supplies and estimating a profit from donations from their homemade flower pens. The fourth graders showed great enthusiasm when making the flowers, posters, creating commercials for the ITV show, and offering their flower pens to their fellow students. The flower pens were very successful, and we were out of flowers in record time and made more of a profit than was expected. Overall, it was a resounding success and taught the leadership of the K-Kids a lesson in economics. The flower pens were a Mother's Day project.

-Jenny Cramatte, Fourth Grade Teacher

The most rewarding experiences for me have been my third grade class from 2006-07 and this year. Both classes exhibited a strong desire to exceed in math. They both looked forward to "extra" math problems that challenged their abilities. The look of accomplishment in their eyes when they solved the given problem will always be remembered.

-Ron Kalisz, Third Grade Teacher

I guess the most unforgettable experience I've had is having watched a young girl over the last three years. When I initially had her, she could barely read and write her name. In the last three years, I've seen her really improve herself tremendously as she worked very hard to improve her ability to read and compre-

hend the material she read. I noticed how hard she worked to get to the point she's at today. I would watch her as she would sound out words she had difficulty with and learn how to correctly pronounce them. She did this often in the early days, but I am very proud of the fact she never gave up, but rather kept on striving until she was successful. She has achieved a lot of success since that time, and I am glad the program was here to assist her.

-James Wiggs, Fifth Grade Teacher

I , Viola Frazier had the opportunity to work in the Building Bridges Program here at Snively Elementary under the supervision of Mrs. Thomas and Mrs. Griffin for the past five years. I have witnessed many positive events going on in the program because of the BB administrators; it was children first.

In reflecting back over the five years, it's very difficult for me to narrow down the most unforgettable moment working in the program, but I chose my favorite one. Let me explain why I chose this particular event. We teach the children how to be good losers in playing sports especially in competitive events; let's be honest, we want them to win, but when they lose at something, we want them to congratulate their opponents. Well, we attended a tennis tournament competing with different schools, and it was SUPER! We really gave it all we had; we looked at our strongest players and used them to show off Snively's tennis skills. Well, one student in particular took his tennis playing very serious and forgot about good sportsmanship and shouted proudly every time he scored, and guess what? So did I.

It was an awesome Saturday, and we were on cloud nine about our victory in tennis. So that is why I will never forget this particular event. We had our own professional tennis shirts, and we wore them proudly. Building Bridges, to me, is more than a program; it is a program that met the needs of all our children in sports, academics, social, and mentally.

-Viola Frazier, Third Grade Teacher

The most unforgettable experience that I had at Building Bridges was Karate. In the class I learned how to protect myself. I learned how to kick and punch. It taught me how to keep myself safe. Most importantly, I had fun.

-Ingris, Grade: 4

My favorite thing that I like about Building Bridges was the math games.

-Alfredo, Grade: 4

The most unforgettable experience I had at Building Brides was being apart of the Pride Team. I would play different games and dance as I learned about being drug-free. Learning

the different moves was important to explain what it means to really say No! I enjoyed.

-Jashirah, Grade: 4

I like to play with the play dough.

-Cameron, Kindergarten

My favorite thing in Building Bridges is the Centers.

-Beatriz, Kindergarten

I like the fun thing that I do on the computer.

-Jason, Kindergarten

I like Building Bridges because I like to play the games during fitness.

-Jacob, Grade: 1

I remember having fun playing math games and going to the game room.

-Lilianna, Grade: 1

As the Site Coordinator of the after school program, I have had numerous wonderful experiences to remember here at Snively. The joy of meeting the simple needs of children can bring so much joy and fulfillment. The sincerity that is observed upon the face of a child is more precious than gold. I have experienced true satisfaction as I worked with the kindergarten through fifth grade over the last five years. The 21st Century Program has not only brought academic satisfaction, but the character development and self worth of our students.

I truly believe that it does take “a village to raise a child,” and I have much admiration for our parents, teachers, the administration for their commitment and dedication to all our students. I sincerely believe that we as educators have a responsibility to all our students; to encourage them to reach and achieve their highest goal and believe that the impossible is a reality as long as they are willing to do “whatever it takes.” [All] students should and are able to reach for their star no matter how far the distance. I thank the students, parents, and all the educators for a job well done! I salute the 21st Century Program for the awesome impact that we have had and will continue to sound out loud in the lives of children.

-Johnnie Thomas, 21st Century Site Coordinator

As I reminisce on how much this program has meant to me, I think about the need that existed 6 years ago. Many of our students had nowhere to go once day school was out. Students who needed the extra reinforcement were at a disadvantage because of the lack of available facilities, and parents could not afford expensive after-school programs for their children. At best there was the Eloise Community Redevelopment Agency (ECRA), which has done an exemplary job and has been a wonderful resource for our students in this community. Moreover, with limited space and personnel, the ECRA could only accommodate a certain amount of students, not the 150-200 we ran on a daily basis through 21st Century, and what about the students who did not live in this community, what were their options? When I was given the unique opportunity to participate in the 21st Century Program, Building Bridges as it is now called, my heart was overwhelmed. I knew our students would be given the extra help they needed in math, reading, science, writing and the enrichment opportunities they needed in order to be successful. Not only has the 21st Century Program helped our students, but it has also provided services for the community as well. Many of our Spanish-speaking parents enrolled in the ESOL classes and participated faithfully, while babysitting was provided to their younger children.

I will never forget how the 21st Century Program has taken our students to a new dimension of learning as we partnered together to prepare them for the 21st century.

-Dr. JoAnn B. McKinney, Principal

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CHAPTER 6

Westwood Middle School

I will never forget spending time with the teachers and doing my homework. I'll remember having fun, going outside to play, and acting crazy, spending time with my teachers, and knowing I can count on them when I need help. That's what I'll never forget.

I think tutoring helped me a lot with improving my grades. Tutoring helped me get all A's all through the school year. I had teachers helping me keep my grades up and making sure I did all of my homework. When interim reports came out and I got a bad grade, they told me to ask my regular teachers why I had received a bad grade.

I remember having fun when I went outside to play and acting crazy. The kinds of activities we did were amazing. We played football, had races, we ran, we also got to joke around and act crazy. I enjoyed spending time with my teachers and knowing I can count on them whenever I needed help. I will always remem-

ber laughter of my teachers. I will also remember being together as a group and learning from our mistakes. These are the things I will never forget.

- Chykemea R. Townsend, Grade: 6

The most unforgettable experience I had at Building Bridges happened to me two summers ago when they took us to Fantasy of Flight. That was my first year here at Westwood and at Building Bridges. Fantasy of Flight was exciting because some planes had different designs, and there were some old war planes. Once we were there, the tour guides took us inside a huge plane that was in pretty good shape. We also went into another smaller plane which had noise from a war, like bombs being deployed or bullets being fired. Fantasy of Flight was my most unforgettable experience.

- Leandro Campos, Grade: 8

I liked playing chess and hanging out with Amber. I was in Civil Air Patrol. I also had Fun Fitness with Coach Powell. We did weight lifting. The whole program was nice, but when we had to leave was bad. My favorite part was doing the movements in Civil Air Patrol.

- Samuel Smith, Grade: 6

I liked when we went to Lights On After School at Lake Region High School. We had fun. They had candy and drinks. We also had a chance to play with different people. We ate hotdogs in the lunchroom, then we went around the room and saw brochures from different departments like the police, and the clowns (where we went outside to play). I also ate cotton candy and slushies. We also went out to the dunk tanks.

I played soccer in Building Bridges from 3:34 – 6:15 pm.

My favorite classes were computer labs. My grades got better. I made friends like Shane, Mike, [and] Monica. My favorite teachers were Mrs. Davis, Mrs. Cruz, and Mr. Sitek.

- Suavae McArthur, Grade: 8

This was my first year at Building Bridges, and I'm in the WNN video production class. I do the broadcasting show with two anchors. We work on lunch menus, birthday announcements, national news, and commercial breaks. We use the sound check to make sure every sound is right. We then record our show. We edit in Final Cut Pro to add any special effects. We are then ready to air the show. In WNN we also learn about computers and cameras. It is a fun class!

- Morgan Ferguson, Grade: 6

I like the Building Bridges program because I have been learn-

ing math, science, and other things. I am also getting help using the FCAT Explorer so that I can learn other things I didn't know, like doing division and how to read for math, science, geography, and physics. The Odyssey program teaches me math also, and I'm also learning how to take care of our planet. I like FCAT Explorer the most because it has math, and I like math, and it has other activities.

- Ariana Ocampo, Grade: 6

Going to Epcot with Building Bridges was fun and exciting. We rode the ferry six times in a row. I love Civil Air Patrol. It was fun learning all the movements. Tutoring helped me the most with my grades by making me do my homework and practicing writing.

- Ruby Stepp, Grade: 6

The thing I like the most about Building Bridges is FCAT Explorer. I like the games, and I get to answer questions that help me learn. I also like Fast Forward because I learn English. It helps me a lot. Building Bridges helps me a lot because I can also learn English with the Odyssey program. I can also play games on it. Building Bridges has helped me with my grades and homework; they taught me many new words. I've learned more English and I've made more friends.

- Diana Ocampo, Grade: 6

I like the Building Bridges program because I get help with reading and math. I like the Fast Forward, Odyssey, and FCAT Explorer programs. I also learn to respect my elders. They help me pass my tests and I enjoy myself a lot. I like Mrs. Cruz, Mrs. Davis, and Mr. Sitek because they nice to me when I started Building Bridges. They helped me understand more English. I was in Building Bridges for one year.

- Rene Ocampo, Grade: 7

The Fast Forward program helped me learn how to read. In the Odyssey Lab, I learned math with Algebra 1. I also played football at Team Sports. I really liked playing football in teams whether I won or lost. In Team Sports I learned how to pass the football and how to run and catch.

I made more friends in Building Bridges than in my regular classes. I joined Building Bridges because I wanted to learn to work on the computer to do research. I also wanted to play football. I remember playing basketball in the summer. Working on the computer and playing sports were my favorite parts of Building Bridges.

- Luderson Pierre Louis, Grade: 8

I like Building Bridges because it is an after school program that has P.E. I got to go outside and play different games like

basketball, kickball, volleyball, and soccer. In my other class, I went to the computer lab and used the Fast Forward, Odyssey, and the FCAT Explorer programs.

- David Quintana, Grade: 7

I learned new movements in the drills in Civil Air Patrol and how to fold the American flag properly. My favorite memory was when First Major Trimpey taught us Character Development once a month. She used problems based on real situations. She also used problem solving strategies called F.A.P.S. (Facts, Assumptions, Problems, Solution).

Major Trimpey makes it fun to learn. She uses hands-on activities. Another memory was my C.O. Aliceyn Powell, who is in the seventh grade. She has been in Civil Air Patrol for two years. Sometimes she was crabby but she's a strong, powerful leader. Our other commanding officers were Lisa Griffin and Leandro Campos. They stepped in when Aliceyn was absent. When Aliceyn is gone, Lisa and Leandro do a very good job of keeping us in order. They took over giving us drills and walking the floor.

- Zaria Williams, Grade: 6

My experience with the Building Bridges program was going to Fun Fitness. I worked out there. I also went to Team Sports where I played ball games. I had to check the carts and keep track of the balls as part of my job, and I liked that.

- Mauricio Ruiz, Grade: 8

The most unforgettable experience I had in Building Bridges was going to the back of the locker room and working out and trying to build muscles so I could be bigger and stronger. I liked helping other people do their workouts. Doing that is just unforgettable to me because I was helping myself and others do something good to help ourselves.

I was working on my leadership skills when I helped others because they were following what I did.

- Jasmanic Gomez, Grade: 7

The thing I liked most was one time when I was lifting weights in Coach Powell's class, I lifted the most weights. I practiced every day at home and after school for Building Bridges. The coaches and I was proud of me.

- Alex Englehart, Grade: 6

I enjoyed being in P.E. It's fun, and it helped me learn new sports. First, I liked P.E. because sometimes we played basketball with other kids, and its basketball Coach Stacy's way. Second, my basketball is my favorite game, and it usually took me a lot of shots to make the goal, and I sometimes got a lot of shots tin, more than the other kids. Three point shots were not easy. These are my unforgettable times at Building Bridges.

- Andy Blanchard, Grade: 8

I liked to play basketball because it helped me with my dream career. That's why I liked playing basketball all the time. We all had fun, and it helped when we went outside because I got to do something that I love, and I didn't want to leave the court. Playing basketball helped me decide what I want to do with my life. I hope [we] have this every year. I hope they have Building Bridges in high school because I could learn and play. When I go to high school, I will ask about it and really hope they have Building Bridges in high school.

- Ojambert Lamour, Grade: 8

The thing that I will never forget about Building Bridges was that I made a lot of new friends. They also had good teachers that taught you, and you had lots of fun in Building Bridges.

- Cendi Cortez, Grade: 6

My most unforgettable experience in Building Bridges was when we were acting out doing Reader's Theater. It was fun because we were trying to visualize how the characters reacted. We were laughing simultaneously. It was very funny when Ms. Bowers was getting into character.

- Eric Brown, Grade: 6

My most unforgettable experience in Building Bridges was when I moved out all the machines in the weight room. I was working so hard, and I finally accomplished my goal. Now I am teaching all the little kids what to do on every machine. Now they have a basic background on what to do, and that makes me feel good. I've grown stronger physically and mentally in Building Bridges.

-Jonathan Guzman, Grade: 8

The best thing that happened in Building Bridges was when my teachers would give us free time when we got done with all of our work. We got to spend time with our friends and work on the computer. I made a lot of nice, playful friends in Building Bridges. I worked on math and history homework, and if I didn't know what to do, the Building Bridges teachers knew. My grades have improved because of doing my work in Building Bridges. I used the Odyssey program in the computer lab. When we worked together as a team, the job got done faster. In tutoring I learned

how to do a lot of things, and it helped bring my grades up. In Reader's Theater I learned how to read loud and clear.

- Reginald Allums, Grade: 8

My most unforgettable experience during the Building Bridges program was the teachers involving themselves in the activities. They helped me with my homework and with my projects. They also taught me new things. I learned about computers, Odyssey Lab, Reader's Theater, and Soliloquy.

- Odina Dureland, Grade: 7

It was my first year in Building Bridges. I had WNN Video Production and Civil Air Patrol. I also had Reader's Theater. I loved Video Production because I could accomplish a lot and increase my knowledge in technology. It has been fun to be able to hang around with friends and work on scripts, recording funny pictures, scary stories, and a lot more. Civil Air Patrol is a good leadership program. In Reader's Theater we did plays, and in Civil Air Patrol we did drills. Well, I didn't have any tutoring classes, but it has helped me associate with my friends. I learned voice projection and obedience.

- Victoria French, Grade: 6

This was my first time in the Building Bridges program. We got to play a big part in the WNN class by recording our own shows, making sound checks, and much more for a 3 minute show. It takes a lot of work. Recently we had not recorded as much because we had an assignment to make a music video, and it would air on Friday. Building Bridges was fun because we made a lot of friends. I learned a lot about technology, got a whole lot of help with my homework, and I got extra credit. I really enjoyed the Building Bridges program, and I'm looking forward to another year in the Building Bridges program.

- Donté Davis, Grade: 6

What I got out of being in Building Bridges was that I learned a lot from Building Bridges. It's been a fun place, and I would like to keep coming here. It is fun, and you learn so much from being here. You learn how to read from Mrs. Turner, and you also learn science, math, and history from Mrs. Johnson. That's why I love it here at Building Bridges. I have enjoyed being here everyday

- Keosha Cox, Grade: 8

It has been great working with Building Bridges students. I taught Reader's Theater and was impressed with their involvement in performing different skits/ plays that were presented to them. When

they did perform, they played the parts using effective skills to bring it to life. Their enthusiasm brought their skits/ plays to life.

**- Dwann Bowers, Sixth Grade
and Reader's Theater Teacher**

I remember when Coach Stacy made us play volleyball. My best sport was kickball because we got to kick the ball. I liked Soliloquy because you got to have free time. I learned how to read and improve in my reading.

- Sophony Rondil, Grade: 7

My most unforgettable experience involving the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program is that I met teachers that I never had. If you asked adults to help you, they would. I met high school kids that helped me with my projects, and I will know these people when I get to high school.

- Tawanda Allums, Grade: 7

When I played football in Coach Stacy's class, it was fun. We were winning 14-0. Then they put me as a quarterback, and I didn't want to do that, but my team wanted me to, so I just did it. When I was a quarterback, I threw about 3 interceptions,

and then we were losing 14-21. There was almost a fight because a boy caught a ball and someone got tackled, but we broke it up. Finally, we lost the game 28-35, but it was a good game, and I liked it. It's going to prepare me for high school football at Lake Region. I also participated in weight lifting so I could get stronger. Being in Building Bridges helped me with math and language arts, and I learned things on the computer. Team sports helped me to communicate with my team, and this skill will help me when I become an official team member so our team can be better.

- Marquis Bowen, Grade: 8

I'll never forget getting help with my homework when I needed it and making friends and playing after school in Mrs. Turner's classroom. Snacks were fun to eat.

- Miranda Long, Grade: 7

I enjoyed every minute of Building Bridges because when I met my friends, I was happy because I didn't have any friends. Now I have a lot of friends that I can trust. The teachers helped me bring up my grades by helping me with my homework and projects. They taught me new stuff.

- Brandon Garcia, Grade: 6

I came here because I like to be with my friends and I like to be with Mr. Sitek. In the summer, I went to EPCOT, and I rode the Planet Earth ride. It was fun, and it made me scared because it felt like things were coming right in front of me.

- Tarana Milorme, Grade: 7

The best thing that happened at Building Bridges was that the teachers helped me with my homework. Building Bridges helped me get passing grades. Team Sports with Coach Stacy was my favorite class.

- Alex Pierre Louis, Grade: 7

My most unforgettable experience was when I helped out people with the movements in Civil Air Patrol, or when I got to be in charge and do the commands. I also liked how we learned to be civil and have leadership skills. We learned to be nice towards each other and how to care and help others, even when you don't like them. We did projects and made stuff. We also learned how to play chess. These are my unforgettable moments.

- Lisa Griffin, Grade: 7

I liked going to the computer lab because we had fun while we were learning. It was not just some boring test. In Odyssey you have fun, and it explains how to do something. If you don't understand something, you can have it replay again. FCAT Explorer was too boring. I also received homework help. It helped me with my grades. Reader's Theater helped me read better.

- Caitlin Haslem, Grade: 6

My unforgettable moments were at the computer lab because when I did stuff in Fast Forward and Odyssey. [They] helped me a lot. Sometimes I got help with my homework. Mrs. Davis or Mr. Sitek would help me. Team Sports helped with different sports, and it was fun.

Civil Air Patrol taught us how Marines were taught to be Marines. In Fun Fitness, you did all kinds of exercise activities, like lifting weights and running on treadmills.

- George Marfo, Grade: 7

I remember in Ms. Ehlendt's class, when she showed us the mosquito on the microscope, it looked like a giant fly. She also showed the suckers on the paralyzer, so when it lands on you, you do not feel it when it starts sucking. She also showed us dead frogs. I started poking it. We learned it was fun being in the after school program. I was also in tutoring and computer classes. I got help

with my grades and anger problems. I got help getting straight A's and got smart. In tutoring class, I had fun and played around.

- Shane Bailey, Grade: 6

I think that Building Bridges is great for kids because they get to learn, plus they are having a field trip this summer. There are lots of activities to learn about. My favorite one is Fun Fitness because you get to lift weights.

- Mike St. Phard, Grade: 6

I remember the first time I came to Building Bridges. I thought it would be boring, but learning turned out to be fun in Mrs. Turner's class. I had to do math, and in the summer I learned how to multiply.

- Briaheim Jean Baptist, Grade: 6

I participate in Odyssey and Science classes. I put a lot of work into science because I want to be a UFO expert; I want to study about aliens and different kinds of people that I can meet. Odyssey Lab helped me learn more. It helped get my grades up. It got me out of trouble sometimes.

- Stevie Scott, Grade: 6

The best thing that happened in Building Bridges was playing in Fun Fitness, and then I realized that I can have fun and work hard at the same time. Even though I still had to study, I enjoyed it, and my grades improved.

- Paris Whitehead, Grade: 6

Some of my favorite memories are of meeting students that I would not otherwise have in my classroom and developing relationships with them .Having a chance to teach one on one with these students and see them not only get a concept, but retain it after numerous days of working with them to ensure that they know it. Sharing in their excitement when their hard work is reflected in their grade and helping them navigate through middle school ups and down. The tutoring program is so much more than just tutoring

**- Joan Turner, Language Arts Teacher
and Reading Tutor**

Throughout the five years with the 21st Century, Building Bridges after school program, I have had many pleasant experiences and memorable moments. The most precious include the Hall children who came to Westwood and taught all us what being truly sincere and thirsty for knowledge were all about. These four exceptional education students were role models for their

peers in their behavior and attitude towards school. Their enthusiasm and willingness for learning were admirable. Though learning did not always come easy, they never seemed discouraged and celebrated even the smallest of successes. The Hall girls, in particular, were part of the Best You Can Be class, and they seemed to look forward to every lesson and were active participants.

Several of the students who were failing in their regular academic classes were able to attend tutoring and build a positive relationship with their teachers. As a result, these students avoided retention, and some made it to the honor roll for the first time in their lives, this is a testament to the dedication of their teachers. The coaches helped promote character and team spirit, as well as sports skills and health education. Some of the basketball players improved their skills because they were able to get one-on-one help with the coach that was not available during the regular school day. Our computer classes taught the students how to properly take care of and maintain a computer and how to trouble-shoot when they encountered problems. These students were able to teach their peers during the day and served as tutors to new students on computer care.

Major Trimpey and Mr. McNeal led the Civil Air Patrol class where the students were introduced to patriotism and a sense of pride in themselves, their country, and their community. Our limited English speakers were able to get extra help in reading and speaking through the Soliloquy and Reader's Theater. Some of the students who were in the piano class had an opportunity to make their debut in the school music concerts. Our video production students were instrumental in helping to produce some of the programs aired in school.

The summer activities allowed the students an opportunity to experience several classes and attend field trips. It was during the summer session that incoming sixth graders were able to become accustomed to the Westwood campus, staff, and other students. The field trip that the students seemed most enthusiastic about was the Fantasy of Flight tour. They were able to learn about vintage airplanes and their use during WWII. It felt like a walk back in time.

The after school program not only provided the students with extra needed help academically, in character development and with health and fitness skills, it also afforded the students and staff a time to get to know each other and build a closer connection than they would receive during the school day. The teachers provided a positive role models and were very supportive of the students. The students provided an opportunity to work with diverse grade levels and backgrounds. The parents seemed grateful for the homework help as well as having a safe environment for their children to spend time after school until they were able to get home from work. It is a testament to how effective and productive an after school program could be and why we need to continue to move in the direction of providing these type of services for our schools and our community.

- Nidia Cruz, Site Coordinator

I remember the group of ESOL students who tried and tried to access the Soliloquy Reading Program, a computer-based reading program that we used here at Westwood Middle School,

but [they] had great difficulty making the voice connect due to the language barrier. They tried and tried but would not give up, even after several failed attempts to connect to the program. They were trying to repeat the sentences as they were stated by the computer. Eventually the two younger students were able to access the program and to start the reading activities. The greatest thrill occurred on the day that the older sister finally made a voice print and was able to read into the computer and participate in the activity. There was the biggest smile that you would ever want to see. Even though she started at the lowest reading level you would have thought that she had struck gold.

- Bessie Davis, Teacher of Exceptional Students

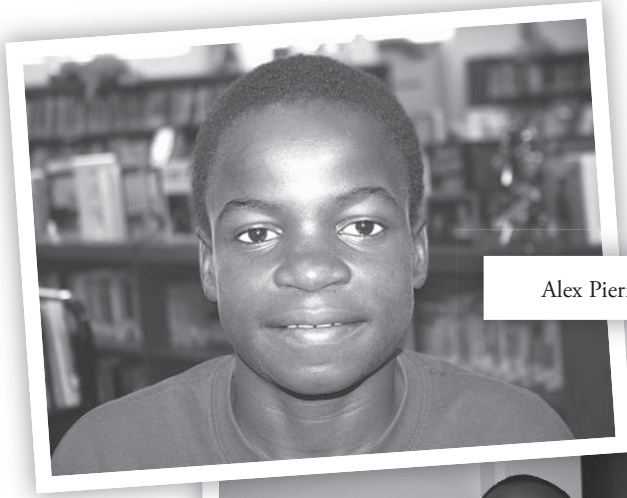
Here at Westwood we have a WONDERFUL batch of students. In My participation in the Building Bridges Program, I look back fondly on the students who remained dedicated, involved and responsive to the work that I have put into making fun, hands-on Science lessons.

What I enjoyed the most was to see my students understand science better. They are thinkers; asking questions out loud and sometimes coming up with a different conclusion. Like the time when my students and I made a gooey substance-- first with water and cornstarch, then with glue and borax. The cornstarch would turn solid and liquid at the same time and the borax and glue got rubbery.

I remember one of the students decided to bounce the borax/glue mixture, and it bounced back pretty well!!!

Most of all, I remember the helpfulness of the students: cleaning up, putting materials together and being kind and respectful to one another.

- Cassandra Ehlerdt, Science Teacher



Alex Pierre Louis



Andy Blanchard



Ariana O'Campo



Bessie Davis



Brandon Garcia



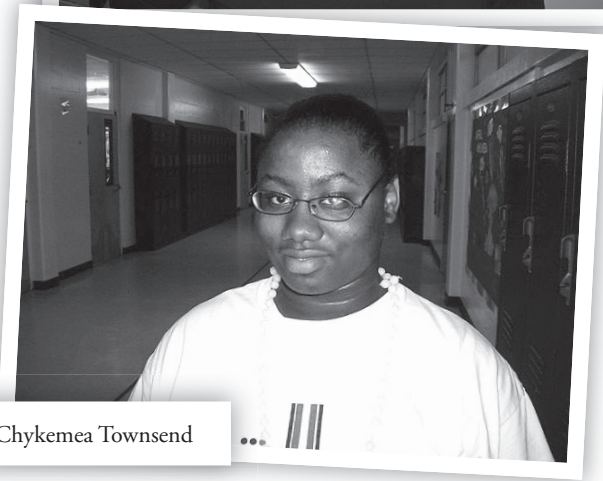
Briaheim Jean-Baptiste



Caitlin Haslem



Cassandra Ehlerdt



Chykemea Townsend



David Qunitana



Diana O'Campo



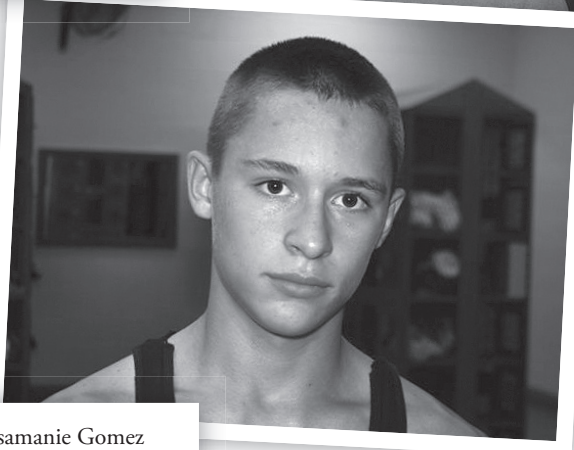
Donte Davis



Dwann Bowers



George Marfo



Jasamanie Gomez



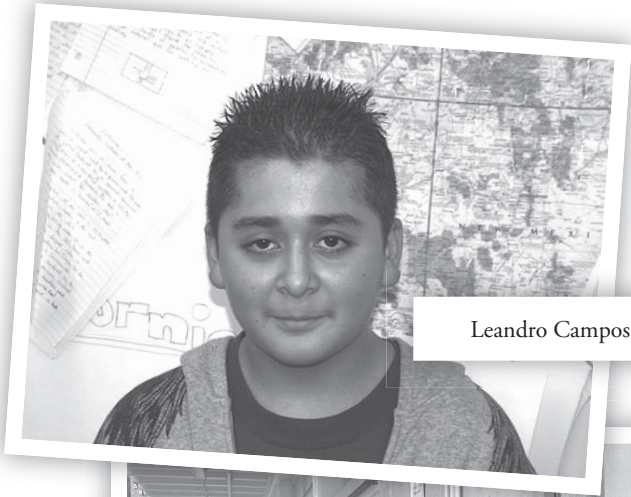
Joan Turner



Jonathan Guzman



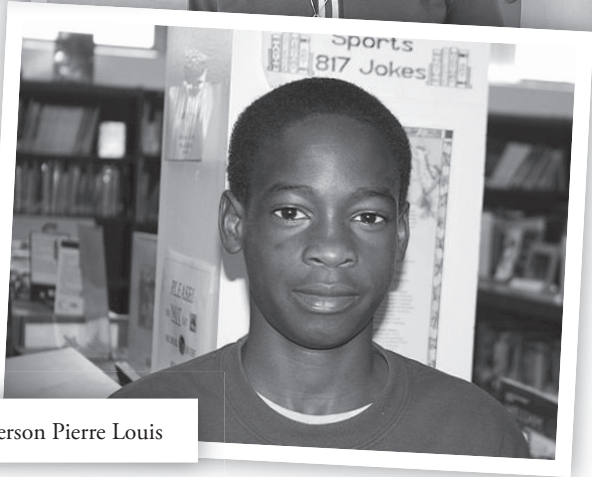
Keosha Cox



Leandro Campos



Lisa Griffin



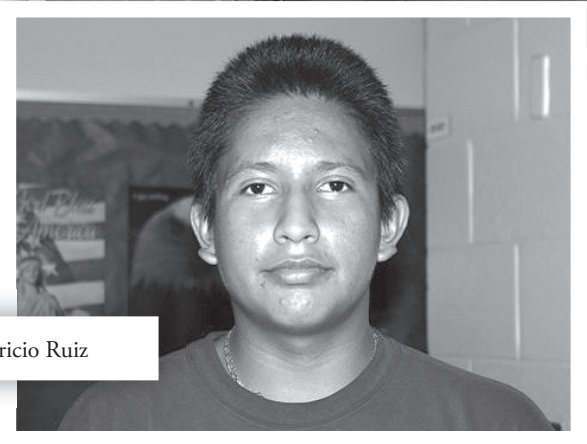
Luderson Pierre Louis



Mariah Barber



Marcus Bowen



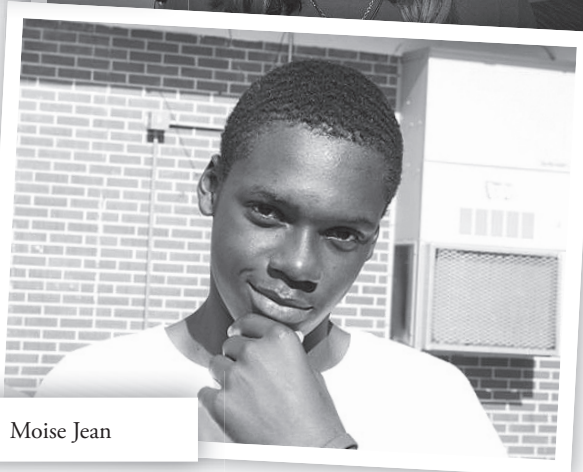
Mauricio Ruiz



Mike St Phard



Miranda Long



Moise Jean



Monica Gaytan



Morgan Ferguson



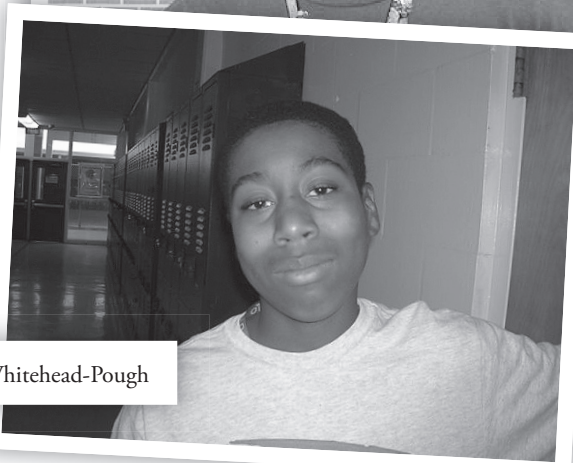
Nidia Cruz



Odina Dureland



Ojambert Lamour



Paris Whitehead-Pough



Reginald Allums



Rene O'Campo



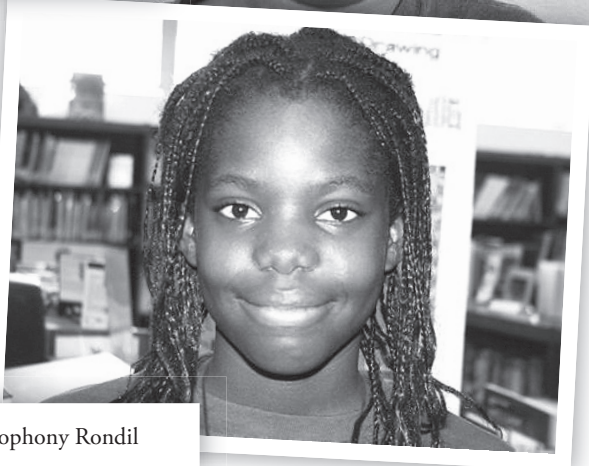
Ruby Stepp



Samuel Smith



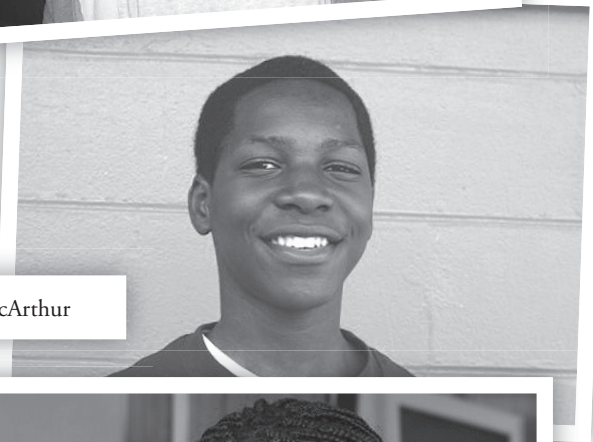
Shane Bailey



Sophony Rondil



Stevie Scott



Suavae McArthur



Tarana Milorme



Tawanda Allums



Victoria French



Zaria Williams