



# Connection

Missouri School for the Blind

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## **MSB SUPPORTS**



## **MSB Welcomes New Superintendent**

Hello MSB Families and Friends,

I am extremely excited to have been selected as the Superintendent for the Missouri School for the Blind. It is truly a dream come true and I am enjoying every minute that I have had working at this school. It is a wonderful place to be. I thought I would introduce myself to you all with a quick resume. I have been in education for sixteen years. I started out teaching Spanish, biology, and student leadership. I have been a school administrator for ten of those years. I have served in various administrative jobs including middle school principal, high school principal, and Area Director for the Missouri Schools for the Severely Disabled. I have earned my undergraduate degree in biology, my master's degree in educational administration, and my specialist degree with a superintendent emphasis. I have been married to my wonderful wife Tassa for 18 years and we have five children of our own (two girls and three boys) ranging from 5 to 17 years old. I love being an educator and especially serving the students here at MSB.

I also wanted to share some exciting

news about projects that are underway at our school. We are upgrading the front of the school. We will be replacing the sign as well as adding a new covering to the front windows that will show our students in action. It will be amazing! We are also installing bleachers for our track and replacing the basketball hoops that have seen better days. We will also add a new structure to the elementary playground that will allow many students to experience a safe ride up and down like on a long snake. We are renovating our Family and Consumer Science room from floor to ceiling. In the gyms and wrestling room, we are installing mats in our school colors along the long walls to help protect our athletes from injury as well as proclaim our pride with large letters saying "Home of the Mules."

It is going to be a great year. Thank you for sending your students who are so eager to learn and grow. We gladly accept the responsibility to help them achieve their dreams by giving them the best education we can provide. Please don't hesitate to contact me with ideas, concerns, or accolades. Working together we will help our students succeed.

## MSB WELCOMES STUDENTS FOR SUMMER PROGRAMS

Students from across the state enjoyed the STEM programs hosted by MSB this past summer. During the



first session, Fantasy Baseball and Real-Life Mathematics, students learned the fundamentals of Beepball. They also learned how to create and maintain Excel spreadsheets to manage a fantasy baseball team. Students calculated batting averages, RBIs, slugging percentage and on-base percentage.



Students also enjoyed tours of T.R. Hughes Ballpark in O'Fallon, MO and Busch Stadium in downtown St. Louis — where they were able to get on the field and touch the grass.

During the second session, Earth Journey, students hiked through the Shaw Nature Reserve, Babler State Park, Powder Valley and Tower Grove Park. Students collected samples and conducted experiments on water acidity and air pollution and used state-of-the-art, handheld, Vernier Sensors in the science lab. Participants studied how carbon dioxide changes the acidity in water and increases the effects of global warming. Students also collected specimens and materials to make tray gardens.



## CONGRATULATIONS MIGHTY MULES!

Congratulations to the MSB Track & Field team who ended the season strong! On September 17, the Mighty Mules traveled to Illinois to compete in the Eberhardt Track Triangular, named after the beloved MSB coach, Al Eberhardt. Earning a combined 193 points, MSB beat out Wisconsin and Illinois for the first place win. The following weekend, athletes traveled to Nashville, TN for the 2014 North Central Association of Schools for the Blind Track and Field Conference Championships. MSB competed against 10 other schools, coming in just behind Tennessee for a second place win. Way to go Mighty Mules!

## WHITE CANE SAFETY DAY 2014

In 1964, Congress designated October 15 of each year as White Cane Safety Day, also known as Blind Americans Equality Day. This day celebrates the contributions of those who are blind and visually impaired, as well as the white cane, an important symbol of blindness and a tool of independence. Though the weather was cool and rainy this year, students participated in several activities to raise awareness. “Stop For White Canes. It’s the Law,” is the message students brought to the streets. While some students stayed on campus to make signs, other students participated in an awareness walk down Grand Avenue. Another group of students went to Fox 2 News to spread awareness through a segment aired on TV. Everyone had a great time raising awareness for the equality and safety of persons who are blind or visually impaired.



## GRIFFIN GOES TO SCHOOL

Earlier this year, students enjoyed a visit from Griffin, a handsome Golden Retriever who is also a certified therapy dog through Therapy Dogs International (TDI). Different than certified service, assistance or guide dogs, the primary objective of a TDI dog and handler is to provide comfort and companionship to others in a way that increases emotional well-being, elevates moods, promotes healing and improves quality of life. Griffin and his handler, MSB teacher Melissa Moore, brought many smiles to students and staff during their visit!



## STUDENTS OVER THE MOON

The beginning of fall buzzes with excitement at MSB. One reason is because some students soar off to the highly-anticipated space camp in Huntsville, AL. Held at the U.S. Space and Rocket Center, space camp is coordinated by teachers of students who are visually impaired. This year, Lighthouse for the Blind sponsored five MSB students for space camp.

During camp, students are trained on real astronautic technology that has been modified for those who are visually impaired, and participate in two simulated space missions. In addition, trainees experience walking on the moon in the 1/6th gravity chair, navigate a tumble-spin on the Multi-Axis Trainer, climb the tallest mountain on the red planet with the Mars Climbing Wall and experience four times the gravity of earth with the liftoff force of the Space Shot (TM) simulator. Students have a blast every year!

## ALUMNI NEWS

Congratulations to MSB alumnus and teacher, Adnan Gutic '05. This past summer, he traveled to Colorado Springs, CO and participated in the Judo World Championships for the Blind and Visually Impaired held at the United States Olympic Training Center. In October, Adnan competed against sighted athletes at the Gateway Invitational Judo Tournament. He took first in his weight class and placed second in the open division. Adnan has competed in more than 10 international judo competitions since 2009. Currently, he is ranked as the number one visually-impaired judo competitor in the nation and 15th in the world. Adnan aspires to compete in the Paralympics in Rio in 2016. To qualify, he must be ranked in the top 12 worldwide. Congratulations on all of your success Adnan, and good luck!

### MARK YOUR CALENDARS

The date for "Knights in Shining Armor," Lions' Night 2015 has been announced! Mark your calendars for Sunday, April 12. All Lions Club members and their families are welcome!

OCTOBER	
28	First Quarter Ends
30	1st Quarter Achievement Assembly/Quiz Bowl
NOVEMBER	
7-9	Goalball Conference @ Indiana
11	Veteran's Day Assembly - 10:00a
14	Technology Awareness Day
24-26	Professional Development - NO SCHOOL
27-28	Thanksgiving Holiday - NO SCHOOL
DECEMBER	
4-6	Junior Beta Convention
5-7	NCASB Wrestling/Cheerleading Meet @ TN
17	NCASB Wrestling Practice/Cheerleading Meet @ IL
18	Christmas Extravaganza
22-23	Professional Development - NO SCHOOL
12/24/14-1/2/15	Winter Break - NO SCHOOL



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