



Summer 2018

# MULE EXPRESS

## MISSOURI SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND

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### MSB hosts Summer Exploration Programs

This summer MSB hosted Exploration Programs that covered a variety of topics and ranged in length from one to four weeks. MSB's Summer Exploration Programs are designed to give students the opportunity to have fun while exploring the Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC) for the Blind and Visually Impaired.

A total of seven programs were available to students. MSB students who needed additional academic or ancillary services throughout the summer enrolled in the Extended School Year (ESY) programs while others enrolled in one or more enrichment programs: Explorations in Accessible Travel, Explorations in Performing Arts, Explorations in STEM, Explorations in College and Career Planning, and Explorations in Independent Living. These programs were open to any Missouri student with a visual impairment. Thanks to funding from United States Association of Blind Athletes (USABA), Camp Abilities St. Louis was open to any student with a visual impairment regardless of where they live or attend school.

Each of these programs will be explained further in the following pages. MSB would like to thank the students, staff, families and community members who made our Summer Exploration Programs fun and successful. To view pictures of our Summer Exploration Programs, check out our photo albums at Facebook.com/MSBMules.



*Above: Lucius practices braille skills in ESY*



*Above: Robert receives therapy services in ESY*



*Above: Kadence enjoys audio books in ESY leisure recreation*



*Above: Nishaad practices communication skills in ESY*

## Explorations in College and Career Planning

MSB's newest summer program Explorations in College and Career Planning is designed for students grades 9-12 who want to explore the possibilities of university education and careers after high school. Students spent two weeks working with MSB's Careers and Transition staff to learn about current and emerging career fields and discover the skills and knowledge required to be successful.

Throughout the program, several guest speakers share their experiences with the program participants. First, Patrick Egan from Rehabilitation Services for the Blind (RSB) spoke on how RSB can be involved with the students' current and future plans for school and work. The other guest speakers are all people with visual impairments who pursued college and careers. Elton Thomas, production supervisor at Lighthouse for the Blind (LHB) Saint Louis discussed the importance of job skills and workplace challenges. David Hertweck, senior principle software engineer at Bausch + Lomb, discussed his education and work life as an engineer. Wilma Chestnut of Missouri Council of the Blind spoke about her life since she lost her vision, her education, and her accomplishments including starting Camp Abilities St. Louis, another MSB summer session that is detailed on page 4. Finally, human resources manager for healthcare company Centene Corporation Tony Selvaggio discussed how he coped with losing his eyesight as a teenager, his transition from school to work, and what his life is like now.

Participants went on several field trips. First, they visited Forest Park Community College for a campus tour and visited the Access Office, which assists students who have disabilities. The next trip was to Saint Louis University to visit with three professors who are either visually impaired or work in the Disabilities in Higher Education department. The professors talked about succeeding in college and the importance of a fulfilling career. Participants also visited three government buildings with workers from RSB's Business Enterprise Program (BEP). BEP trains and employs individuals who are visually impaired to work in convenience stores, cafeterias, and vending machine maintenance. The program's final visit was to LHB Saint Louis with the Independent Living program participants for a factory tour.

Finally, participants created guidelines for career success, put together packets of information on the places they visited, practiced interview skills in mock interviews, and took home a copy of their resumes to use in the future.



*Above: Participants speak with Elton Thomas*



*Above: Participants create resumes with help of MSB staff*



*Above: Participants speak with Tony Selvaggio*

## Explorations in Independent Living

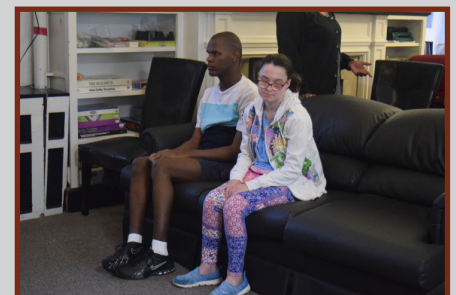
This summer, Explorations in Independent Living participants spent four weeks living in the MSB Suites or LIFE (Learning Independence From Experience) apartment and had daily structured, supported sessions covering academic skills, activities of daily living (ADL), employment skills development, and leisure recreation. Students were introduced to vision impairment-friendly methods of meal planning and preparation, shopping for groceries on a budget, and maintaining their clothing and living space.

Participants developed academic skills by practicing functional academic skills in the work place, home and community. Students were challenged to connect what they learn in school with the world they experience by using math in banking, living on a budget, and reading and organizing meal recipes. Students also learned about personal care, clothing management, personal food preparation, household care and management in activities designed to develop the skills necessary to live as independently as possible.

Summer LIFE students all worked on developing job skills including communication, time management, managing the workplace social environment, maintaining a production rate and the use of adaptive equipment and assistive technology for the workplace. Students also worked with Job Coaches to develop workplace readiness skills and get experience by working, with some students even going off-campus to work at LHB Saint Louis.

Finally, the Summer LIFE students explored a variety of community activities, games, and relaxing activities. Staff advisors helped students explore, plan and participate in recreational and leisure activities both independently and as part of the community. Students explored music, sports and exercise, and had the opportunity to go out into the community for fun activities. MSB's LIFE program teaches students the skills to live, work and play in the community beyond K-12 education and is available under the full-time placement options at MSB.

***Below: LIFE & College & Career Participants tour LHB factory***



***Above: Kiwan brailles a shopping list***

***Above: Kwian & Sirria relax in LIFE***

## Camp Abilities - St. Louis

Now in its third year, the MSB-hosted Camp Abilities St. Louis once again helped children who are visually impaired, blind, or deafblind access sports and recreation and empower them to know what modifications to make so that they can do athletics at home. Camp Abilities was started at State University of New York College at Brockport in 1996 by Dr. Lauren Lieberman, with local visually-impaired athlete and advocate Wilma Chestnut founding the St. Louis camp in 2015.

Every day during Camp Abilities St. Louis, participants were instructed in sports and athletic activities including beep baseball (beepball), track and field, goalball, bowling, swimming, weight lifting, and dance and tumbling. After receiving instruction, participants practiced and improved the skills they were taught by coaches and even had friendly competitions against each other to see who had improved the most. On the last full day of camp, participants put on exhibition competitions for friends, family, and MSB staff to watch and enjoy.

In addition to athletics, participants enjoyed other fun activities as well. On the first night of camp, Gateway LEGO Users Group hosted a presentation and building activity for all summer session 1 participants. There was also a movie night, cycling, a “water day” event with several of MSB’s inflatable water slides and obstacle courses, and a wood working exercise with visually impaired carpenter Darryl Vickers.

Camp Abilities St. Louis is also a great opportunity for volunteers, as well. The coaches and athletes of St. Louis Blues Track Club assisted with track and field, while other volunteers included Kenyon Klousin of Gateway Science Academy, Chayka Fromowitz of St. Louis Public Schools, and Illinois educator Jake Petri. If you are interested in volunteering at Camp Abilities St. Louis in the future, contact MSB at 314-776-4320.

Each Camp Abilities is a separate entity with its own director, insurance, and organizational support. For more information about Camp Abilities St. Louis, you may visit their Web site at [www.CampAbilities-StLouis.org](http://www.CampAbilities-StLouis.org).

*Below: Veri takes a swing in beepball*



Below: Participants in swim lessons



Above: Neil, Brennah, Thomas & Logan line up on the track for a race

## Explorations in Accessible Travel: Exploring St. Louis II

Students interesting in experiencing St. Louis enrolled in Explorations in Accessible Travel: Exploring St. Louis II. During the program, students practiced safe travel skills while traveling to destinations to learn about the history and unique culture of St. Louis. While exploring the city and touring popular tourist sights, students examined the accessibility of each location, made personal observations, and spoke with employees to determine just how accessible each location is for a traveler who is blind or visually impaired.

Day one took students to the Scott Joplin House State Historic Site, home of “King of Ragtime” composer Scott Joplin. The home gaslight-lit home includes museum exhibits that interpret Joplin’s life and is furnished as it would have been in 1902, when Joplin composed the songs that would make him a national phenomenon. Next, participants had lunch at landmark restaurant and music club Blueberry Hill, where rock and roll music pioneer Chuck Berry performed monthly until 2014. The day ended with a tour of the National Blues Museum.

Day two took students on a journey of tastes and smells of St. Louis with a factory tour of Chocolate Chocolate Chocolate Company, lunch at Mission Taco, and an afternoon tour at Herbaria Soap Factory. Likely the most exciting day of the program for most students, day three was spent entirely at Six Flags St. Louis riding rides and enjoying all the amusement park has to offer!

Students returned to St. Louis city on day four with a visit to the Gateway Arch National Park. Students spent the morning exploring the ground-floor museum before riding a tram to the top of the Arch. Next, students enjoyed lunch on a scenic riverboat cruise before returning to the Arch for a viewing of the film *Monument to the Dream* in the museum theater.

Students rated and reviewed the accessibility of each destination and compiled those reviews into the second edition of the *St. Louis Travel Guide For Individuals with Blindness and Visual Impairment*, which can be found on the MSB Web site at [msb.dese.mo.gov/documents/MulesAccessibleGuide2018](http://msb.dese.mo.gov/documents/MulesAccessibleGuide2018).

**Right: Students pose at the Scott Joplin House**



**Right: Students celebrate at Six Flags St. Louis**



**Left: Students at Chocolate Chocolate Chocolate**



**Left: Students smile at the top of the Arch**

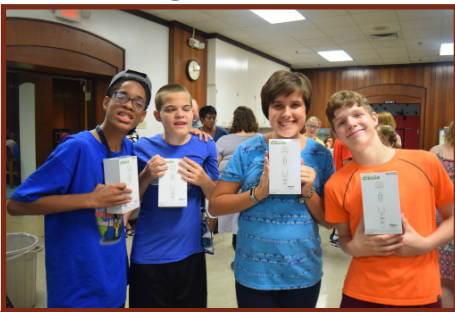


## Explorations in STEM: Invention Convention

Explorations in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM): Invention Convention was an exciting, interactive opportunity for students to work with MSB staff to develop skills in teamwork and problem-solving. During Invention Convention, students were introduced to basic concepts in physical science, mechanics and collaboration which they then used to create their own problem-solving inventions. In addition to learning mechanical and physical science concepts, participants learned about patents, inventors throughout history, brainstorming and computer coding. Also, a guest speaker from the St. Louis Science Center had students build a Rube Goldberg machine, a device designed to perform a simple task in an indirect and overly-complicated way, to turn on a fan.

Throughout the week, students built devices to carry a marble from one point to another without going in a straight line, a seed spreader to hold seeds before spreading them across several feet of lawn, and examples of simple machines. For their final invention, students split into groups of two and created inventions that perform tasks. Groups developed a motor-driven pet-cage opener, a device to "tie" shoes using magnets, a child's cereal dispenser, a knife washer for people with visual impairments, and a remote-controlled floor cleaning device.

Students showcased these devices on the last day of the session in the Final Inventor's Challenge and Reception. Inventions were assessed by a panel of judges and scored, and two teams had a first-place tie: Neil and Ji'reh with their Safety Knife Washer and Bethany and Austin with their Lazy Feeder. They won 3D pens for their work. Congratulations, Inventors!



***Above: Ji'reh, Austin, Bethany & Nei with their 3D pen prizes***



***Above: Aryana & Nikki present the No Trippy-Trip shoe tying device***



***Above: Lorne and the Automatic Floor Cleaner device***



***Above: Johnathan builds simple machines with K'Nex***



***Above: Mary with the Automated Kitty Kennel Power Door device***



***Above: Damon builds simple machines with K'Nex***

## Explorations in Performing Arts: Broadway the MSB Way

This summer, Explorations in Performing Arts focused on putting on a Broadway-style musical performance of "School House Rock Live, Jr." Students learned songs by matching pitches and reading lyrics in braille and large print, and practiced moving their bodies to music through simple choreography. The Independent Living students joined the Performing Arts participants every afternoon as chorus members, worked on scenery, and performed in three songs during the musical.

MSB Music teacher Mr. Mueller directed the musical and kept the cast and crew on schedule. Art teacher Mr. McKeown instructed and supervised as students built the set by assembling pre-cut pieces of scenery using drills, screws, and glue. They were given the chance to express their creativity by painting props of planets. The students read, interpreted and memorized their individual lines with the help of English teacher Mrs. Goodsite, who also helped students change costumes and enter and leave the stage at the correct times during the musical.

Paraprofessional Abby Mueller instructed the students in costume design and construction, and they helped create costumes by cutting and ironing fabric. Costumes included outfits from several international cultures, 1950s clothing like poodle skirts, and retrofuturistic space suits. Miss Mueller also developed the musical's choreography and blocking (where performers stand, enter, leave and act on stage).

It wasn't all work, though. Students went to see "Annie" at the St. Louis Municipal Opera Theatre, commonly called "The Muny," and took part in a hands-on improv clinic with the Saint Louis University High School (SLUHS) drama department faculty. Everyone had a lot of fun!

Thanks to everyone's hard work, "School House Rock Live, Jr." went very successfully! Students performed it for their families and friends at a showcase performance in MSB's Samuel Green Auditorium, with an Artists' Reception following. You can watch their performance at [Facebook.com/pg/MSBMules/videos](https://www.facebook.com/pg/MSBMules/videos).

*Right: LIFE & Performing Arts students perform School House Rock Live, Jr.*



*Right: Students in improv workshop with SLUHS drama faculty*



*Right: Allen, Mr. McKeown, Anastasia & Shianne decorate props*



*Right: Ravin, Gage, Isaac, Chloe, Anastasia & Shianne practice lines*



**Superintendent:**  
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**Outreach Services:**  
Jane Herder

**Business Operations:**  
William Runzo

**Human Resources:**  
Karen Burkhead

**Community Relations:**  
Carlie Lee

### MSB Calendar of Events

September	
3	Labor Day - No School
14-15	Track Meet @ Tennessee
20	Eberhardt Track Meet @ MSB
28-29	Track Conference Meet @ Ohio
29	Lighthouse Space Camp-Travel Day
October	
1-5	Lighthouse Space Camp
8	Columbus Day - No School
11	Goalball Meet @ Illinois
15	Blind Americans Equality Day/White Cane Day
22	1st Quarter Ends
23	2nd Quarter Begins
24	10 AM 1st Quarter Awards, QuizBowl Finals
26-27	Goalball Meet @ Tennessee



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