

# PRIDE & Joy Newsletter

Maryland State Department of Education  
Nancy S. Grasmick, State Superintendent of Schools

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Issue 1

## HIGHLIGHTS

Welcome to MSDE \* Academic Accolades \* Professional Affiliations \* Shining Stars

## MSDE Newsmakers

Is there a **Doctor** in the house?

At **MSDE** there is...

**-Dr. Margaret (Peggy) Carroll** in the Program Improvement and Family Support Branch (DSFSS) recently received her doctoral degree from Nova Southeastern University. Peggy's research study was "*Evaluation of a Cross-Curricular High School Reading Instruction Program.*" - submitted by A. Chafin

**-Dr. Marcie Taylor-Thoma**, Social Studies Coordinator (DOI), has earned her Ph.D. from the College of Notre Dame of Maryland. Marcie's research study was "*Investigating the Effects of Teacher Pedagogical Content Knowledge on Students Understanding of Civics/Government.*" - submitted by D. Stack

**-Alicia Mezu** (DSFSS) completed her Master's degree in Nursing with a Concentration on Education. Alicia worked diligently to complete this degree while balancing work and family responsibilities. A portion of Alicia's job is to provide leadership for the CDC HIV/AIDS Prevention Education Grant. Alicia provides exemplary leadership in HIV prevention and school health services. Alicia's advanced education enhances

her role at MSDE. - submitted by D. Mazyck

**Congratulations to these employees for their "Lifelong Learning!"**

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**-Dr. Darla Strouse**, Executive Director, Partnerships and Development (OS), was honored by *The Daily Record* as one of "2009 Maryland's Top 100 Women." Darla was cited for her work in creating and promoting teacher and school recognition programs, including the Maryland Teacher of the Year and Blue Ribbon Schools programs, as well as her efforts in assisting the community through the Kids Helping Kids Food Collections and the Phoenix Computer Donation Program. Darla received her first Top 100 Award in 2003. - submitted by G. Tucker

**-Patricia Parker** (DBS) was nominated by her supervisors, Jim Kolar and Christopher Ashe, for the annual 'Cause For Applause' Award, which recognizes exemplary leadership and hard work. Patricia was lauded for numerous reasons, including customer service, exceptional contributions that improve State government, exceeding job expectations, and displaying a very high level of initiative. - submitted by D. Carpenter

## Have you heard?



**Wanda DeWitt**, in Region III Office at DORS, is pleased to announce the recent graduation of her son, **Robert DeWitt**, from Pikesville High School. Robert, who aspires to be an attorney, will be attending Catonsville Community College in the fall.

**Donna Gunning**, in the Division of Business Services, is proud of her daughter, **Ryan Gunning**, a 2009 graduate of Archbishop Spalding High School. Ryan, who is a member of the National Honor Society, Tri-M National Music Honor Society, and the National Foreign Language Honor Society (Latin), will be attending the College of Charleston and pursuing a career in Entertainment Mgmt./Entertainment Law.

**Deneice Yarborough**, in the Office of the Superintendent (OS), is beaming with PRIDE because her son, **Denzel McCoy**, graduated from St. Frances Academy (Class of 2009). Denzel is continuing on his academic path by majoring in Business Administration at Morgan State University.



"We were born to succeed,  
not to fall." ~  
Henry David Thoreau

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## ***"PRIDE Hall of Fame"***

Let's give a 'Shout-Out!' to this quarter's Shining Stars who are profiled in the Liberty Street Lobby...

*George Albright, III; Bonita Winchester-Bey; Bob Cole; Woodrow Grant, Jr.; Linda Johnson; Eleanor Kopchick; Jayne Moore; Robert Wancowicz; Adrienne White; and Linda Worrel*

## ***MSDE's Got Talent***

### **Welcome to the MSDE Family!**

Mark Beck, DORS/DDS  
Jeanne Van-Camp, DORS/WTC  
Dawn Carroll, DORS/DDS  
Tamara Fedorchak, DBS  
Everett Johnson, DSFSS  
Pamela Clayton-Johnson, DORS/DDS  
Kunning Liu, OIT  
Cary Myers, DAA  
Regina (Jean) Satterfield, DC&A  
Elizabeth Wolf, DORS/DDS

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-March Funeral Homes has bestowed a "Good Neighbor Award" to **Vanessa Diggs**, Director of the Youth Development Branch (DSFSS), for making a significant impact in the local community, and featured her in their September posting and 2009 calendar titled "Educate to Elevate."

As the Sunday School Superintendent and Youth President of her church, Vanessa has a challenging mission due to the church's unique demographics—the majority of the church's membership is youth from low-income families who attend regularly and independent of parental presence; she is the mother of all at-risk children. Vanessa rolls up her sleeves and teaches young people in innovative ways that keep them coming back week after week. She paves the way for educational, social, and spiritual freedom for all children in the rays of her torch, and her heroism comes into being as she advocates for children. Without her mentorship and guidance, many of these children would only have the streets to teach them. - submitted by G. Tucker

-**Lisa McDonald** is being hailed as one of MSDE's greatest resources for new hires in the Division of Early Childhood Development (DECD). Lisa's knowledge and expertise in training staff in the child care department is defined as excellent, very clear, and concise. Lisa provides cutting-

edge information, and represents the true spirit of education by striving to fulfill the goals of DECD and the Office of Child Care, as well as MSDE. Lisa is working hard to improve the lives of children and the staff who protect them, on a daily basis. - submitted by K. Brydie

-**Marie Pennix**, Executive Associate (DSFSS), is "One in a Million!" Marie excels in everything she does and every task she is asked to do. It would take a volume to list her many office skills and talents. Marie takes care of any requests willingly, pleasantly, and with no sign of being hurried, although three or four people may be lined up at her desk with completely different needs. Yet, Marie exudes the disposition and patience of a saint. She understands and anticipates needs, repairs copy and fax machines, laptops, computers, etc. Marie goes beyond that "extra mile." Many in the division look forward to seeing and working with her everyday. She wears a big smile for everyone and never utters an unkind word - not to mention she has the most contagious laugh. As Jackie Gleason would have said—"She is the Greatest." As we say—"She is Unbelievable." MSDE is fortunate to have such an outstanding employee! - submitted by M. Silverman

-The volunteer work of **Dr. Mary Cross**, Specialist (DSFSS), was recently acknowledged by the Prince George's County Public Schools System. In May, Mary was awarded a 'Certificate of Recognition' as an advisory board member to the National Academy Foundations' Academy of Finance Program. The program helps students make the transition from school-to-careers and provides resources about post-secondary educational options in the financial services industry. Mary notes that by combining solid academic offerings and career-focused courses with work-related extended learning opportunities, the career academy model can increase graduation rates for diverse student populations and encourage higher education for many students. - submitted by A. Chafin

*"I long to accomplish a great and noble task; but it is my chief duty to accomplish small tasks as if they were great and noble." ~ Helen Keller*

For more information about **PRIDE** in Maryland Public Schools visit  
[www.MarylandPublicSchools.org](http://www.MarylandPublicSchools.org)