Achievement Academy, Inc.

Volume 7 Issue 1

May 2007

APPLAUSE !

Official Achievement Academy Charter School Newsletter

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Save the Date!

"Chip-In for Children"

Golf Tournament

Friday, Oct 26th

at

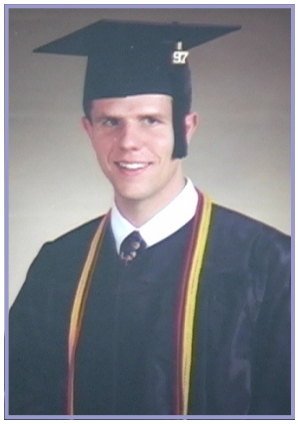
Eaglebrooke

Special Guest

Otis Birdsong

Mark Miller—A True Success Story

Mark came to the Achievement Academy, then United Cerebral Palsy, in 1975. He was not yet two years old and at that time he could not sit up, crawl or walk. Thinking back, Mark remembers a nurse would come to his house and prop him up with pillows to help him learn to sit up. Soon he began to sit up by himself, then she patterned him to crawl and from there he learned to walk. Mark made huge gains while enrolled at the Achievement Academy and graduated at the age of six. He gets tears in his eyes when he thinks back to the struggles that he has gone through. His mom, Sue, took him to be enrolled at a local public school and the principal told her that her handicapped child would never go to school there. His mother strongly believed in her son and looked at that principal and said, "Oh, yes he will and he will succeed." Mark went through school finishing high school with honors, then went on to college where he obtained his degree in English Education. Mark tells that he was never supposed to read and write. Because of the support and efforts of United Cerebral Palsy, now Achievement Academy, Mark says, "I am a miracle." Today, Mark is a Public Finance Bond Assistant I at Holland & Knight, and serves as secretary on the Board of Achievement Academy. To learn more about Mark's story, log on to our website at www.achievementacademy.com and watch the video where he tells his amazing story. Thanks Mark for all you do for the Achievement Academy. We are so proud of you!



From Paula Sullivan, Director

We came back refreshed after our Winter Break and jumped right into a very busy schedule of activities. Jack Levine, state advocate for all generations, came and toured our Lakeland school and then took the time to dialogue on other avenues of funding and services we might pursue.

The Achievement Academy had 88 students enrolled for the February FTE count which meant we were able to count all of our students for funding. A big thanks to parents and staff for making this possible.

We are excited that we have added two new members to our therapy staff. Dena Pagano, Occupational Therapist for Lakeland and one classroom in Winter Haven, joined us in August and is doing an excellent job with our students and has fit right in with our staff.

Cathy Seifer is our new Speech Therapist for Bartow and Winter Haven. She started in February and we are delighted to have her with us. Cathy brings over 15 years of pediatric speech therapy experience to the Achievement Academy.

The Junior Service League of Bartow did an outstanding job with the Annual 5-K Run on February 10th, in Bartow. 60 runners participated with some of our staff families and Achievement Academy parents participating and winning in several categories.

We participated in United Way's Publix Appreciation Day and were able to hand out Thank You stickers and personally tell the wonderful folks at the Auburndale Publix how much we appreciate their support!

We had another fun-filled weekend at our 28th Annual Tennis Tournament led by Doris Trohn. We appreciate Doris's dedication and hard work to make this tournament such a success.

Leadership Lakeland came to visit our Lakeland school on April 12th and we enjoyed their visit as they interacted so well with our students!

We completed our United Way funding and program packet and had the Investment Team's visit on April 24th.

Our 2nd Annual Pigeon Pull was very successful. Thanks to Tony Turbeville and Adam Airth for chairing this event and Mark Schreiber for hosting the event.

Graduation was Friday, June 1st. Seventeen graduates performed a program for their families called Sailing Into the Future and then received their diplomas. This was a sad, but happy occasion and we will continue to keep all of them in our hearts.

We continue to look for property in the Lakeland area and have found several, but they were either too expensive or the location was not good for us. If you know of any centrally located land that is at least 6 acres in Lakeland, please let us know.

As you see it has been a busy year and we are ready to slow down for the summer — maybe!

Thanks to Special People

Volume Information

Volume 7, Issue 2 May

Executive Director: Paula Sullivan

Marketing Manager/ Editor: Stacy Williams

Thank you Kingham Software for donating our amazing new website. www.achievementacademy.com

Many thanks to Mosaic for donating our video. View it on the website!

Special thanks to Cliff Coleman and Southern Glass for the materials and construction of a sensory room for one of our classrooms.

Junior Service League of Bartow for sponsoring the 5K Run

Donation from Knights of Columbus in WH

Clark, Nikdel, Powell Design Communications for donating the Birth to Three brochures

Donation from Knights of Columbus in Auburndale

Donation from North Lakeland Kiwanis Club and for reading to our children each week

Tommy Harris and friends for sponsoring the Fishing Derby

Congratulations!

On April 10, 2007 the Polk Association of Charter Schools recognized all the winners of Teacher of the Year and the Non-Instructional employees of the year for the 23 individual charter schools in Polk County. Representing Achievement Academy was **Jean Waters**, teacher in Lakeland and **Destiny Wimberley**, paraprofessional in Lakeland.

A wonderful evening of music and food was made even more special by the announcement that our very own **Destiny was the overall winner of the Non-Instructional employee of the year** for all the charter schools in Polk County. A well deserved honor for a hard-working staff member. **We're proud of you, Destiny!!**

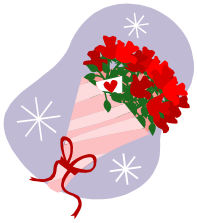
In the three years that PACS has been honoring charter school employees in Polk County, our nominated staff members have consistently placed in the top 3! We know we have great staff; this just proves it!!

Willah Cockrell retires after 20 years of dedication

Willah Cockrell worked at Achievement Academy from 1987-2007.

Willah came to work at Achievement Academy in 1987. Her daughter, Jan, a teacher at the Lakeland school asked her to chaperone a field trip to Cypress Gardens. She enjoyed it so much she came to work as a paraprofessional in her daughter's classroom. Willah and Jan worked together for about three years. What Willah enjoys most about working here is the children and staff. "This is home", states Willah with tears in her eyes. When asked what made her stay for twenty years, she replied "miracle after miracle". She said she saw so many children blossom and make remarkable achievements. This has been the most rewarding place to work. There was never a day she woke up and didn't want to come to work. There were, in fact, days she wanted to come to work and was told not to because of health problems she had. Willah looks forward to spending time with her family when she retires but she admits she will volunteer and visit with the children and staff who have touched her life so dearly. We will miss you Willah!

Thank you for your dedication and commitment you gave to the Achievement Academy for the past twenty years.



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A Commitment To Brighter Futures

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United Way

Birth to Three Program

If you have a child who is birth through three years of age and have a question regarding their development, give us a call, we can help. One of our five early interventionists will come to your home and show you activities and techniques that will enhance your child's development. There is no cost to the parent as this program is funded by United Way and people who care. If your child is between the ages of two and three we have "Mommy & Me" playgroups throughout Polk County that are designed to help your child increase social skills and overall development.

Congratulations!

We would like to welcome new board member:

Chris Mier

We also would like to welcome new employees:

Susanne Jones,
Early Interventionist

Cathy Siefer,
Speech Therapist

Britney Ammerman,
Paraprofessional

Dates to Remember:

School starts back for staff:
Wednesday, August 1, 2007

Orientation for students:
Friday, August 3, 2007
11:00-3:00pm
(all three schools)

School starts back for students:
Monday, August 8, 2007

Executive Committee Meeting:
Wednesday, August 15, 2007

Board Meeting:
Tuesday, August 21, 2007