ON THE COVER
Members of the Frederick Campus Middle School Varsity Girls’ Basketball team frolic in the snow outside of the Benson Gymnasium.

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The Maryland Bulletin does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, age, national origin, religion, or disability in matters affecting program, activities, or employment practices. Questions regarding this policy in terms of employment may be directed to Eva Staubitz, Director of Personnel (301) 360-2008. Questions regarding the school program may be directed to Dr. Deborah Clark, Director of Pupil Personnel Services (301) 360-2025. Both may be reached at the Maryland School for the Deaf, 101 Clarke Place, P.O. Box 250, Frederick, Maryland 21705.
The Personnel Services Division of the Maryland School for the Deaf (MSD) includes the Director, Ms. Eva Staubitz, Assistant Director, Ms. Terri Boyer and three Personnel Associates, Ms. Kay Spriggs, Mr. Don Hall, and Ms. Deborah Colon-Martin.

The Personnel staff serves a workforce of over 400 people on the two campuses. Ms. Staubitz, Ms. Boyer, Ms. Spriggs, Mr. Hall, and Ms. Colon-Martin provide services to both campuses; the Central Office is located on the Frederick Campus. Mr. Hall works in the Columbia Office on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, Ms. Staubitz works there on Wednesdays, and Ms. Boyer works there on Thursdays. In addition to providing services to our staff, the Personnel Services Division manages recruitment and the application process for approximately 400 prospective employees throughout the year and develops and provides reports to other State and Federal agencies to keep the School in compliance with all employment and labor laws.

The following is a brief summary of the daily Personnel Office activities:

**Recruitment:** When there are openings created by resignations, retirements, and transfers, the Personnel Office sends out hard copies of Position Vacancy Notices (PVNs) and also posts them on our website and in classified ads in local newspapers. Applications are received and screened for Frederick and Columbia Campus Interview Committees. Applicants who are recommended by the Committee and approved by the Superintendent are contacted. If they accept the job offer then the transition begins for them: from being an applicant to an employee. MSD is a State Agency and therefore, the process of becoming a State employee begins with a mountain of paperwork: tax forms, retirement forms, citizenship forms, health insurance forms, substance abuse forms, just to name a few.

In larger State agencies, the Personnel staff members usually specialize in one area of personnel work. MSD Personnel staff members are required to be generalists and deal with all aspects of running a personnel office (recruitment, health insurance, workers’ compensation, leave benefits, payroll, timekeeping, and retirement).

**Orientation:** Along with filling out all the paperwork to bring a new employee on board, the Personnel staff explains the Medical Plans the State offers and the various other insurance benefits: prescription, long-term care, life insurance, personal accident and dismemberment insurance, and dental plans. Enrolling new employees in the State Pension Plans and explaining their Leave Benefits as well as the School’s Policy regarding zero tolerance for Substance Abuse and Sexual Harassment is all part of the orientation process. Discussion of pay schedules and check distribution is the highlight of the orientation process. The MSD Employee Handbook is an important tool during this process as it contains the School’s philosophies, policies and an overview of state employees’ benefits package. Ms. Spriggs, Mr. Hall, and Ms. Colon-Martin are the primary contacts for new employees during the orientation process which includes meeting deadlines for enrolling in health insurance benefits, making sure background checks are completed and processed through the Criminal Justice Information System (CJIS), providing Central Payroll Bureau with required forms, and helping them understand MSD’s and the State’s employment policies.

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Tanja Honkanen is a seventeen-year-old girl from Finland who has had the opportunity to go to America and attend MSD as a foreign exchange student. I spent an hour with her and got to learn about her wonderful experience as a foreign exchange student in America.

Jessica Frank: How has being a foreign exchange student been for you?
Tanja Honkanen: It has been a wonderful and enriching experience for me. The experience of being a foreign exchange student has helped and taught me to grow and change in so many ways, hopefully for the better.

Jessica: What made you strive to be a foreign exchange student?
Tanja: Because I had already graduated from grade school and heard so much of what many of my friends and others who had once been a foreign exchange student had experienced, I became interested. I decided it would be a fantastic chance for me to experience something wonderful and new, and to also be a part of an entirely new culture.

Jessica: How was it when you first arrived America? Were you shocked by the culture or scared in any way?
Tanja: I arrived in America not knowing a single person; I arrived here as a complete stranger taking a huge risk. I had become fortunate enough to stay with a warm, friendly host family who helped me feel more at home. Not only this, but the host family had a daughter—a MSD graduate, Tabitha Markel who was also my age and helped me through the frightful stages of being an exchange student. However, the new culture was overwhelming. At first, I missed the old familiar aspects of Finland and immediately became homesick. The air, the environment, the food, the people and everything else were different. I had already learned how to write English, but not fluently so it was a challenge for me to adapt to a new language along the journey. I had also arrived in America with only the knowledge of sign language in Finland, so having to learn how to sign in ASL too made the journey more challenging. There were times when I wanted to go home more than anything, but I forced myself to stay and it turned out to be worth all the struggles I overcame.

Jessica: Wow, was it a challenge fitting in and making friends in MSD?
Tanja: I first arrived at MSD during the cheerleading camp, which had expressed more interest in different things, and had dissimilar opinions on certain topics. The clothes here were very unique when compared to Finland; the Finnish took more interest in dressing up and had a somewhat

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dissimilar sense of style. Not only this, but the lifestyles in Finland are more free and laid-back, unlike America, which can be very focused on having a secure lifestyle with schedules and timing. I originally had difficulty adjusting to the tighter American lifestyle because it, in a way was really the opposite of the lifestyles in Finland. However, as time passed, I learned how to adapt to the new, odd lifestyle here in America.

Jessica: You have attended schools in both Finland and America; can you explain the difference between the two educations?

Tanja: In America, students have to go through three different levels in grade school, elementary, middle school, and high school to receive their degree. In Finland, students only need to receive proper education up to middle school to obtain an actual degree. But, students in Finland are still given the choice to extend their education up to high school or college and schools of deeper education. Though I had the opportunity to go ahead and work full-time, I chose to continue my education throughout high school, and later on in college. Also, because the deaf schools in Finland did not provide the level of education I needed, I attended a public school along with some of my other deaf peers with an interpreter. Though the class work was challenging, I feel I benefited more from the classroom in America because I was surrounded with peers and teachers that understood me without needing an interpreter. Really, both educations have benefited me and taught me so much more patience. I learned how to be patient with challenges, struggles, and to overcome them along the way. I can’t believe how I went from this homesick girl in the beginning of the year to someone who isn’t looking forward to leaving America. I highly recommend anyone who wants to be a foreign exchange student, or anyone who’s reading this article, to grab the opportunity because you will not get this kind of experience anywhere else. Being a foreign exchange student has benefited me and taught me so much, and I expect it will for anyone who grabs the opportunity.

Jessica: After being a foreign exchange student for almost a school year now, how do you feel about your experience?

Tanja: Being a foreign exchange student has been a wonderful experience for me; I have no regrets. I learned so much about new cultures, other people, and even myself. From this experience, I developed much more patience. I learned how to be patient with challenges, struggles, and to overcome them along the way. I can’t believe how I went from this homesick girl in the beginning of the year to someone who isn’t looking forward to leaving America. I highly recommend anyone who wants to be a foreign exchange student, or anyone who’s reading this article, to grab the opportunity because you will not get this kind of experience anywhere else. Being a foreign exchange student has benefited me and taught me so much, and I expect it will for anyone who grabs the opportunity.

“\textit{It has been a wonderful and enriching experience for me. The experience of being a foreign exchange student has helped and taught me to grow and change in so many ways, hopefully for the better.}”

—Tanja Honkanen

### Personnel Services

**Payroll and Timekeeping:**

Ms. Spriggs and Mr. Hall currently process the bi-weekly regular and contractual payroll reports for both campuses. Currently this entails reviewing timesheets, entering any adjustments (shift differential, overtime, accident pay, leave without pay, and activity fees) on-line to the Central Payroll Bureau, which is a division of the State Comptroller’s Office in Annapolis. They follow up with timekeeping/data entry using TESS (Time Entry and Scheduling System).

Ms. Boyer is responsible for updating MSD Employee Handbook, makes sure Faculty contracts are distributed every spring, oversees the management of the day-to-day personnel operation, reviews payroll, serves on the Health and Safety Committee, develops and maintains our data base for reporting requirements, coordinates training, and serves as a liaison with the Principals, Assistant Principals and Department Heads of both campuses to provide guidance and assistance in all aspects of personnel related work.

Ms. Staubitz, Ms. Boyer, Ms. Spriggs, Ms. Colon-Martin, and Mr. Hall are available to help MSD employees with questions and concerns regarding employee benefits, personnel regulations, recruitment efforts, payroll and timekeeping issues. Scheduled appointments are recommended and an email to personnel@msd.edu is the most efficient way to contact all Personnel Services staff.
T.A.G. — WE'RE IT!
By K.C. Russell, Transition Coordinator and Della Hager, Guidance Counselor

“T.A.G. — We’re It!” is the unofficial motto for the Maryland School for the Deaf’s Transition and Guidance (T.A.G.) Center located on the Frederick Campus. The T.A.G. Center, a unit of Student Support Services, was “born” in August of 2001 when Ms. K.C. Russell, Transition Coordinator, and Ms. Della Hager, Guidance Counselor, were able to move to a shared office suite. This expanded space, in addition to the now close proximity of their offices, enabled them to expand resources and services to students, families, and staff.

The core of the T.A.G. Center is a “self-serve” resource room located in Ely Room 113, which is open for students, parents, and MSD faculty and staff to utilize during business hours at their leisure. This Center houses agency referral forms and information brochures, articles to assist in future planning, college information files, college applications, college catalogs, resource materials, and financial aid/scholarship information. In addition, the walls are covered with posters advertising college open houses, financial aid information, college information and job seeking tips. Future plans for this resource room include the addition of a computer for students to use when seeking career, agency, or college information.

Located directly off of the T.A.G. Center Resource Room are the offices of Ms. Russell and Ms. Hager. This makes it convenient for them to assist students using the T.A.G. Center. As Transition Coordinator, Ms. Russell is an experienced staff member having worked at MSD for 15 years. She is responsible for coordinating Transition Testing (ASVAB, TCB, and GDT), developing Individual Transition Plans (ITPs) with students and their parents, coordinating the Transition Fair, providing agency referrals and advocacy, and conducting senior exit interviews.

The Guidance Program is a relatively new area, “born” in 2000 with the hiring of Ms. Hager, and it continues to develop and evolve. Under the Guidance Program, Ms. Hager teaches the Frederick County Guidance Curriculum to students in Pre-K through 12th grade. In addition, she is responsible for coordinating the PLAN (Pre-ACT) and ACT exams, preparing the monthly Scholarship Bulletin, facilitating Parenting Workshops, and providing general and college guidance. Most High School students are in the process of developing a portfolio for use for job searches and college entry. Ms. Hager coordinates portfolio activities with the portfolios being housed in her office.

Ms. Hager and Ms. Russell combine efforts to provide comprehensive services to students. Recent joint undertakings were the sponsorship of a Financial Aid Workshop with a speaker from the Northeast Technical Assistance Center, speakers from Gallaudet University and NTID, and field trips to the Workforce and Technology Center, Deaf Independent Living Association (DILA), and Gallaudet University.

The T.A.G. philosophy is that although “we’re it” in providing direction and resources, “you’re it” when it comes to accessing resources and continuing guidance and transition efforts. Parents and staff can help in these efforts by:

- Fostering “self-determination” in students. Self-determination is the ability of individuals to define goals for themselves and to take initiative in achieving these goals. The ability to self-advocate is crucial, and overprotection, low expectations and a lack of stable support systems can undermine this process.
- Attending the Transition Fair, which is held every two years, the next one being in the fall of 2003. This event includes representatives from numerous colleges and agencies.
- Reviewing the annual Testing Calendar and taking note of important testing dates.
- Paying attention to Financial Aid Resources and reviewing the Financial Aid for College brochure and monthly Scholarship Bulletin available in the TAG Center.
- Becoming familiar with students’ transition goals as described on the annual Individual Transition Plan (ITP). Support and encourage the accomplishment of these goals.
- Attending career fairs, college fairs, and college open houses.
- Bringing children to “Take your child to work day” to help with career awareness.

The Transition and Guidance Center is always open to receiving information regarding agencies, scholarships, job opportunities, and career planning. For questions or to share information, please contact Ms. Russell at russelkc@msd.edu or Ms. Hager at hagerde@msd.edu.
Veryday, teachers of Deaf and Hard of Hearing students often “digress” from their formal classroom instruction to offer background information or clarify concepts to their students. This happens because sometimes students do not have full and direct access to “incidental learning” at home and at their previous schools.

All students including Deaf and Hard of Hearing students readily absorb so much information outside of their classrooms through incidental learning. They learn about family history, pick up news bits, observe rules of life including social “dos” and “don’ts”, and “read” situations in their environment. Dr. Mervin D. Garretson, a leading educator for almost a half-century, often stressed the importance of “…the unwritten curriculum which is the 92 percent of a child’s learning life that is spent outside of the classroom”.

I remember very well a story my father told my mother when I was maybe five or six years old. At the dinner table, he talked about getting stuck in traffic on his way home from work. After a few minutes, he drove by a motorcycle lying on the road that was involved in an accident. An ambulance was at the scene and a group of medical personnel were administering to the motorcycle rider who was in pain. I had full and direct access to this story because my father was using American Sign Language. Later, this incidental learning probably has helped me predict scenes when I encountered texts about vehicle accidents. I would then anticipate seeing words like “traffic”, “accident”, “ambulance”, “pain”, and so forth. This incidental learning outside of the classroom has helped my reading comprehension.

I also remember one signed conversation between my High School Social Studies teacher and another teacher a few minutes before the start of my class. My teacher was explaining how he was tired from staying up all night mopping up his basement floor that was flooded. I sat in my desk on the opposite side of the classroom but was following the signed conversation freely and without effort. Because of my access to this incidental learning, I now knew that my teacher was tired and I along with my classmates should be understanding and tolerant if he was not in top form that day. I also learned that basements sometimes get flooded and it sometimes takes hours to clean up the mess.

Advocates of full inclusion or placement of all special education students in public school classrooms often write about the great value of incidental learning. Their assumption is that incidental learning is of a higher quality in public school classrooms than found in special schools. This may be true for students with certain disabilities, but for students who are Deaf, this is far from the truth. For Deaf students, the issue of full and direct access to language and incidental learning always comes before the issue of the quality of that incidental learning. In other words, high quality incidental learning is greatly compromised if a child cannot fully understand his environment or is forced to process information through an interpreter filter.

Students enrolled at center schools for Deaf and Hard of Hearing students, like the Maryland School for the Deaf, have full and direct access to their language environment. They can either participate in conversations with members of the school community or observe conversations from near or afar. Their full and direct access experience rarely can be duplicated in public school environments.

By and large, the field of Deaf Education recognizes and values incidental learning and encourages parents and teachers to ensure that all Deaf and Hard of Hearing students have full, clear, and direct access to everyday incidental learning. This means that parents and teachers need to be constantly mindful that they need to sign at all times when Deaf children are around them. Deaf students like all children are naturally curious and want to learn about the world around them. Like all children, Deaf children have their amazing antennas and scope their environments. They jump in and out of conversations at ease, only if they have full access to the language used in their environments.

MSD uses a public school curriculum and this curriculum assumes that all students bring a certain amount of incidental world knowledge to the classrooms. Parents as well as teachers have this enormous task of ensuring that their children/students have the necessary language and knowledge base when the students tackle new academic concepts. Much of this language and knowledge base is acquired through incidental learning.
Community Outreach Program (C.O.P.)

The first two weeks in March have become a special time for the 6th graders. Once again, a deputy from the Frederick County Sheriff’s Department came to MSD to teach the students about different categories of drugs, what drugs do to the body, and the negative effects of using drugs. The students learn about legal and illegal drugs and Deputy Duman shared stories about cases he handled involving drugs. The students enjoy spending most of the time asking questions and watching videos about gateway drugs. Tobacco, alcohol, and marijuana as well as inhalants seem to lead people to try other more dangerous and illegal drugs. The risks involved in using drugs are serious and frightening.

Deputy Duman brought special goggles on the last day. When the students put on the goggles, they experience vision problems that occur when they use drugs to get high or drink alcohol to get drunk. While wearing the goggles, each person tried to throw a tennis ball into a trashcan. Out of about 32 people who tried, only one got the ball into the trashcan. Can you believe some people still try to drive when they drunk and have blurry vision?

At the end of the two-week instruction, everyone received a C.O.P. T-shirt in MSD’s school colors. Students wear the shirts to send a message that they want their MSD community to be drug-free!

Students appreciate Deputy Duman’s time to work with them. His stories will help them remember to make wise choices about using or not using drugs.

Students look forward to a visit from one of the Frederick City drug dogs before school is over for the summer.

—Charlene Anderson, Health Teacher, FC

I learned a lot about drugs. Ms. Anderson interpreted for a policeman named Deputy Duman. Deputy Duman has been a policeman for four years. He had a lot of things to show us and we watched several movies about drugs. The movies were good and educational. I learned many things about marijuana, cigarettes, beer, wine, and inhalants. I enjoyed our C.O.P. class.

—Clayton Grossinger, 6th Grade - FC

Deputy Duman for the teaching and Ms. Anderson too. It was fun when I tried on the “drunk” goggles and missed shooting the tennis ball into the trashcan. Everyone enjoyed that activity.

—Jessica Israel, 6th Grade, FC

C.O.P. means Community Outreach Program. It is about drugs – telling people not to drink, smoke and do drugs. I learned a lot from C.O.P. and I will never drink or do drugs in my whole life. Drugs are really bad for people.

—Danielle Berrigan, 6th Grade, FC

Deputy Duman and members of the 6th grade class watch as another student attempts to throw a tennis ball into the trashcan while wearing the “Drunk Goggles.”
The second graders at the Maryland School for the Deaf learned the true meaning of the holidays this year. To reinforce the importance of having good character, the 2nd grade class chose 2 children from the “Salvation Army Angel Tree”. They picked an 8-year-old girl and a 9-year-old boy that were in need of gifts for the holidays. The elementary students and staff showed that they cared by donating money to the project. Together students and staff earned over $200! They went to Target department store and became bargain shoppers. Finding good sale prices helped them to buy more things for the girl and boy. The manager at Target donated a gift card so they were able to buy even more clothes! The students had a great time picking out clothing that they thought the boy and girl would like. The excitement on their faces showed them all that it really is better to give than to receive!

—Stacey Farone and Nancy Barish, Elementary Teachers, FC

[Image of students and staff at Target]

C.O.P. Shirts and Certificates: Ms. Charlene Anderson’s 6th grade Life Skills class wear their C.O.P shirts and display their certificates on the last day of class. The class is taught by Deputy Duman from the Frederick County Sheriff’s Department.

[Images of students in COP class]

2003 Community Outreach Program Class

True Meaning of the Holidays

Inside Target Department Store: Front row: (l to r) Cody Simmons, Austin Cerasoli, Dalton Kramer, Alton Jake Markel, Taran Taylor, Lauren Goldberg, and Kali Doubledee. Back row: (l to r) DanJohn Kerchner, Ethan Sonnenstrahl, Dakota Daniels, Sierra McConville, Tarja Lewis, Katie Millios, Mia Goldberg, and Noelle Robinson.
MSD-CC student Miesha Rahman was pleasantly surprised to learn Potomac Technology chose her winter design for the front of their company’s holiday card.

In November of 2002, Potomac Technologies contacted MSD about an art contest open to all students. The idea was to submit original artwork containing a winter or holiday theme. Incorporating the winter/holiday idea into art class made it possible for many students to attempt a “theme” drawing. Finished drawings, fitting the guidelines of the contest, were mailed to Potomac Technologies for consideration. After collecting the entries, Potomac Technologies picked the one design they wanted for the front of their annual holiday card. This card was then sent to customers and businesses throughout the country.

MSD-CC received $50 for participating in the contest. Each student with work submitted received a certificate of participation and a McDonald coupon.

On February 26, 2003, the Junior Black Deaf Advocates (Jr. BDA) celebrated their first Mardi Gras Party at MSD-Frederick. Three staff members Michael Chappelle, Florence Pratt, and Donna Brandt helped students plan the Mardi Gras Party using the same concept as New Orleans’ Mardi Gras where the participants celebrate the French Holiday on the banks of Mississippi River for 47 days before Easter Sunday.

About 70 students participated in the Mardi Gras event at Checkers. The students enjoyed the Wild Rappers’ (the Washington, D.C.-based Deaf Musical Group) performance. Michael Chappelle was dressed as Jester, throwing beads to students. Some students wore masks, beads, and clothes in purple, gold, and green at the party. In 1872, Rex, the King of Carnival, chose these colors to symbolize the following: purple stands for justice, green stands for faith, and gold stands for power.

The Jr. BDA members, sponsors, and staff worked together to decorate the party room. The students chatted, danced, and played several games. Donna Brandt baked king cakes. The king cakes were so delicious that students ate all of them during the party. Students had a wonderful time because it was their first time to understand and experience the purpose of Mardi Gras.

—Donna Brandt, Student Life Counselor, FC

(Miesha Rahman proudly displays her holiday card that she designed.)

By having her design chosen, Miesha Rahman received a box of her own cards to use, a pack of McDonald coupons, and a certificate of participation.

—William Pond, Art Teacher, CC
On Tuesday, November 26, 2002, six boys and two adults from Troop 258 went to the White House to watch President George W. Bush pardon the turkey from becoming his Thanksgiving dinner. While waiting outside the gate, they saw two turkeys brought in through the gates. At 12:30 P.M., the visitors were permitted onto the White House grounds and through security checkpoints to a room where they waited to be led into the Rose Garden.

Once the whole group of visitors was assembled, they were escorted over to the Rose Garden where they waited for President Bush to come out of the Oval Office. He came out and gave a short speech, then proceeded over to the table where Katie, the turkey, waited patiently to be pardoned. Then he asked all the children present to gather around for a photo. As they gathered around the President and the turkey, MSD boys got the opportunity to stand alongside the President in the back. Once the pictures were taken, the children were dismissed back to their seats. As the group dispersed, Adam Baker, Jared Kingsford, and Bruce Persons shook the President’s hand.

After President Bush went back inside the White House, a reporter from the University of Maryland asked the boys some questions about their experience. Bobby Harris said that he did not like the turkey because he was afraid it would bite him. A picture of Bobby Harris and a Cub Scout from Washington, D.C. was taken with the turkey and was displayed on the opening page of CNN’s web site on Thanksgiving Day.

The turkey pardon and picture-taking session were on several national news programs that Tuesday evening. Adam Baker, Jared Kingsford, Bruce Persons, and Andrew Weidig were easily spotted, as they were the same height as the President. Alex Larson and Bobby Harris were off to the side and were shown in a quick scan of the President with the “group of children”.

Jane Redding, Career and Technology Education Teacher, FC

Above: Troop 258’s Scouts join other children from the D.C. area for a photo with President George W. Bush after he “pardoned” the turkey” on November 26, 2002. Starting on the left is Bobby Harris (keeping his eye on the turkey so she does not get any closer). Continuing right along the back row are Bruce Persons, Jared Kingsford, Adam Baker, and President George W. Bush.

Front row: (l to r) Alex Larson and Bobby Harris. Back row: (l to r) Scoutmaster Jane Redding, Senior Patrol Leader Andrew Weidig, Jared Kingsford, Bruce Persons, and Adam Baker.
On January 15, 2003, several students from Frederick and Columbia campuses traveled to Annapolis to witness Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr.’s inauguration.

Bruce Persons, Jeffrey Ralls, and I were thrilled to represent the high school department by attending the inauguration. We never witnessed a real-life inauguration before. In the morning of the inauguration, we rode in the school van and stopped by the Columbia campus to pick up three more students. When MSD-CC students hopped in the van, I saw them saying to each other, “You think, we will see the governor clearly?” I knew for sure that it would be a great experience for all of us.

When we arrived Annapolis to witness the inauguration, we had a nice view of the Governor, an interpreter, legislators, and other high-ranking politicians.

Once our newest 60th governor of Maryland, Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr. walked down the steps, waving to well wishers, we had goose bumps. Governor Ehrlich’s speech was terrific and powerful, although it was short. He spoke about how he wanted the citizens to help him fulfill his expectations such as providing the finest education opportunities to all children in Maryland.

Most of us enjoyed every minute of our association with important people in Annapolis. It’s the inauguration that we will never forget, especially when we saw the governor and the well wishers.

—Priscilla Biskupiak, 11th Grade, FC

My Home — Ethiopia

My family and I used to live in Addis Ababa, the capital city of Ethiopia. We moved to America in 2001.

My father works at a parking ramp as an attendant. My mother works as an accounting auditor. My brother and I are fraternal twins. I have two other brothers. All of them have jobs. All of my grandparents still live in Ethiopia.

When I was 11 years old, I used to pet a lion in a big cage at the zoo. I am not sure if there is any school for the Deaf in Ethiopia. I went to a public school that has three special classes for the deaf.

I was on a soccer team for 3 years. I had to stop playing soccer because of my injured knee. Soccer is a very popular sport in the country.

I had some friends with whom I talked orally. My hearing aid helped me a little bit. I had not seen anyone who signed or used fingerspelling in Ethiopia.

Foods in Ethiopia are very different. Ethiopians eat meats for 2 months per year. Coca Cola and Sprite are more popular than Pepsi and 7-Up.

The temperature there is the same all the year, but it rains a lot for about 2 months.

White woven cotton shawls are very popular and lots of visitors from other countries buy them.

In Ethiopia, people celebrate Christmas and New Year. Our calendar year is 2002 while it is 1995 in Ethiopia (7 years behind).

Now I am happy to live in America. Also I am happy to be a student at the Maryland School for the Deaf.

—Tewodros Assefa, 11th Grade, FC
The start of the 2002-2003 basketball season found new head coach Danny Biskupiak eagerly beginning each practice to mold the team into champions to carry on the success of the previous two seasons.

Returning veterans included Seniors Jenica vonGarrel and Sheena Lyles, Juniors Priscilla Biskupiak and Krystle Berrigan, Sophomores Ursa Rewolinski and Shanna Lehmann, and three new players, Sophomores Lisa Monroe and Diana Berrigan and Freshman Amanda Biskupiak. Two junior varsity players that also played with the team were Masha Lahun and Frances Sorrentino.

The highlights of the season were winning the Clerc Classic for the second straight year, winning the Eastern Schools for the Deaf Athletic Association (ESDAA) tournament for the third straight year and being selected by the FRAT as National Prep Champions for the third straight year.

The Clerc Classic in early December started MSD on its road to success as the players found a way to win over rival Indiana School for the Deaf pulling out a last second victory by one point. Sheena Lyles and Priscilla Biskupiak were named to the All-Tournament team. The game went back and forth but MSD found a way to win a thrilling 49-46 victory when Baltimore Catholic could not get off a last shot to tie.

On February 4, 2003 against Highland View Academy, Priscilla Biskupiak scored her 1,000 career point. This was a thrilling moment for her and her family. Former head coach Lorraine Stoltz honored her with a ball that had “1,000” painted on it.

MSD won the ESDAA Tournament by defeating the Marie Katzenback School for the Deaf for the championship at Western Pennsylvania School for the Deaf. Sheena Lyles, Priscilla Biskupiak, and Ursa Rewolinski were named to the All-Tournament team. Ursa won the hotshot competition and MSD won team lay-up competition.

Priscilla Biskupiak was named FRAT National Player of the Year. Sheena Lyles also joined Priscilla on the FRAT All American First Team. In addition, the Frederick News Post named Priscilla to the All-County 2nd team and Sheena was listed as an honorable mention.

Coach Danny Biskupiak would like to thank assistants Sherry Bradley-Koo and Monica Lee for their dedication. Also, a word of thanks should be expressed to the parents and fans for their support.

—Daniel Biskupiak, Head Coach, Girls’ Varsity Basketball, FC
With the addition of transfers Rob Sims and Joshua Doudt and the experience the sophomore players gained from last year, the team won both the Central States Schools for the Deaf tournament and the Eastern Schools for the Deaf Athletic Association tournament.

MSD started off the season with a record of 6 wins and 5 losses. MSD’s final season record was 18-6, closing out with 12 wins in the last 13 games.

MSD came in third place at the Clerc Classic at the California School for the Deaf, Fremont (CSDF) in early December. MSD beat the California School for the Deaf, Riverside in the opening game, lost to the Model Secondary School for the Deaf (MSSD) in the semi-finals, and then beat CSDF in a hard fought game, 59-55, for third place.

MSD’s best moment took place at the Central States Schools for the Deaf tournament in Columbus, Ohio. Trailing by a point with 4 seconds left, Rob Simms shot a buzzer-beater to give MSD the championship over the Indiana School for the Deaf. Rob Sims, Martise Colston, and Davon Cook were selected to the All-Tournament team.

Other thrillers were beating New Life Christian and Hancock in overtime games. Hancock had not lost to MSD since 1994!

MSD won the championship at the Eastern Schools for the Deaf tournament in Trenton, New Jersey. MSD defeated teams from Pennsylvania School for the Deaf, the Lexington School for the Deaf, and the Western Pennsylvania School for the Deaf. Rob Sims, Martise Colston, and Davon Cook were again named to the All-Tournament team.

Additional honors include Rob Sims who was named to All-County (Frederick) - second team with 20.7 points per game. Martise Colston and Davon Cook were recognized as honorable mentions.

The FRAT named Rob Sims and Martise Colston as Deaf All-Americans on the first team while Davon Cook was selected for the second team.

The FRAT ranked MSD as number two in the nation behind the Model Secondary School for the Deaf.

Coach Vance Rewolinski would like to thank his assistants Eric Mansfield, James Bingham, and Mathis Hediger for their positive contributions and Norma Clapp for her volunteer work as MSD’s scorekeeper.

—Vance Rewolinski, Head Coach, Varsity Boys’ Basketball, FC

Front row: (l to r) Andre Watley, Davon Cook, Joshua Doudt, Rob Sims, Martise Colston, and Derrick Williams. Back row: (l to r) Statistician Mathis Hediger, Head Coach Vance Rewolinski, Markels Dobbins, Carey Heisey, Francis Steele, Jonathan McMillan, Neil Thompson, Flave Dupree, Assistant Coach James Bingham, and Assistant Coach Eric Mansfield.
High School Varsity Wrestling

This year, the MSD wrestlers did a great job even though the team lost 7 seniors from last year to graduation. Andrew Weidig as this year’s only senior displayed incredible leadership skills in leading MSD’s young wrestlers throughout this rebuilding season. He was selected as first team All-American.

MSD grapplers wrestled very well at the 2003 Eastern Schools for the Deaf Athletic Association (ESDAA) Open Wrestling Tournament, hosted by the American School for the Deaf (CT). MSD finished second and it made Coach Jeff White realize his teams have not placed below second since 1992!

The Florida School for the Deaf won the ESDAA Championship and was later selected as the 2003 Team of the Year by the FRAT. FRAT selected Gabriel Sanchez (103 lbs), Daniel Katz-Hernandez (112 lbs), Chris Peters (119 lbs), Ryan Curry (125 lbs), and Calvin Doudt (189 lbs) as second team All-Americans.

One of the “toughest” wrestlers this year was Calvin Doudt who wrestled with a broken wrist at the ESDAA for 3rd place and WON!

Coach White would like to thank his assistants, Chris vonGarrell, Craig VanWinkle, and Wayne Monroe for their dedication in building boys into men.

Coach White quotes General Douglas MacArthur by saying that he has nearly all his wrestlers returning next year. MSD grapplers looks forward to wrestling in its new wrestling room, The Pit, which will be painted and outfitted with new black wall mats over the summer.

—Jeff White, Varsity Wrestling
Head Coach, FC
High School Cheerleaders

There were quite a few highlights for this year’s winter cheerleaders and the coaches, Ms. Emily Simmons and Ms. Trudy Morita. The cheerleaders participated in three tournaments with the first being the Clerc Classic in Fremont, California followed by the Central States Schools for the Deaf in Columbus, Ohio and the Grand Finale, the Eastern Schools for the Deaf Athletic Association hosted by Marie Katzenback School for the Deaf in Trenton, New Jersey.

The Clerc Tournament in early December found MSD cheerleaders flying a day late due to the snowstorm (first of many)! The cheerleaders performed a flawless dance routine only to realize they forgot to do the stunt. Finishing in 5th place was disheartening.

The trip to the Central States Schools for the Deaf was also a bummer due to several girls being sick with colds, flu, and even sinusitis. The girls pulled their best together and came in 4th place. This only motivated them to work harder to prepare for the most important tournament of all, the Eastern Schools for the Deaf Athletic Association (ESDAA).

For the ESDAA, the team overhauled the choreographed dance and put three cheers together between stunts. Faye Garcia did a great job as the “flyer” and Jessica Tanner had the pleasure of drumming some of the routines during the tournament. She did an incredible job in keeping up with the rhythm of the routines. When the ESDAA winners were announced, the girls could not believe their eyes when they finished in 2nd place! They sat there until their MSD fans had to summon them to the center of the court to receive the award.

Throughout the season, the cheerleader’s parents contributed their support, understanding and were their best fans. The coaches enjoyed this season very much and want to thank this great group of cheerleaders that made it possible!

—Emily Simmons, Head Cheerleading Coach, FC

Junior Girls’ Varsity Basketball

Front row: (l to r) Brittany Williams, Head Coach Sherry Bradley-Koo, Assistant Coach Monica Lee, and Monique Cottman. Second row: (l to r) Amanda Amati and Frances Sorrentino. Third row: (l to r) Kara Andrade, Anne Greener-Hage, and Jennifer Simmons. Back row: (l to r) Masha Lahun and Marijuana Suric.

Junior Boys’ Varsity Basketball

During the weekend of February 20-22, 2003 the 9th Annual Mid-Atlantic Junior Classic basketball tournament was held at the Maryland School for the Deaf. Participating teams were the Indiana School for the Deaf, the Kendall Demonstration Elementary School (DC), Metro Deaf School (MN), Lake Drive School (NJ), the Marie Katzenbach School for the Deaf (NJ), the Pennsylvania School for the Deaf, MSD-Columbia, MSD-Frederick and MSD-Frederick (U12).

The games were very competitive and some games were not decided until the very last second. In the boys division, MSD-Frederick won the championship over Lake Drive School, 49-26, and in the girls division MSD-Frederick won the championship over the Indiana School for the Deaf, 36-20.

The tournament organizers had a wonderful committee that worked very hard to make this tournament a successful one. Terry Berrigan and Jerry Mabashov were the tournament co-chairpersons. MSD was very fortunate to have some companies that made donations for its tournament. The contributors were Deafbuy.com, Turner & Associates, Carroll Independent Fuel Co., CSD of Frederick, Palmer and Associates, MSD Booster Club, Jerry’s Trophies, Automotive Industrial, Inc., Omar Mahmassani, D.D.S., Geiser Distributing Co., Inc., Insty-Prints (Ricky Newman), Dr. Steven L. Rattner, Uncle Ralph’s Cookies, Kramer Financial, and Frederick Brick Works, Inc.

—Andy Bonheyo,
Extramural Sports Coordinator, FC

**Boys Tournament Results**

1st
MSD-Frederick

2nd
Lake Drive (NJ)

3rd
Metro Deaf School (MN)

4th
MSD U12

5th
Marie Katzenbach (NJ)

6th
MSD-Columbia

7th
Kendall (DC)

8th
Pennsylvania

**Girls Tournament Results**

1st
MSD-Frederick

2nd
Indiana

3rd
Lake Drive (NJ)

4th
Kendall (DC)

5th
Metro Deaf School (MN)

6th
MSD U12

7th
Pennsylvania

8th
Marie Katzenbach (NJ)
Sportscope

Middle School Boys’ Basketball


Middle School Girls’ Basketball

Front row: (l to r) Coach Jerry Mabashov, Lauren Benedict, and Sherry Bevan. Middle row: (l to r) Andrea Amati, Sabrina Roult, Brittany Frank, Michelin Barron, Jessica Feldman, and Amelia Unger. Back row: (l to r) Misella Tomita, Phyllis Steele, Rachel Benedict, and Malibu Barron.

Elementary Wrestling

Boys Under-10 MD1 Front row: (l to r) Derek Cerasoli, Ethan Kramer, and Todd Rewolinski. Back row: (l to r) Head Coach James E. Tucker, Assistant Coach Cheryl Morris, Ashley More, Racquel Roult, Christy Hediger, and Assistant Coach Paul Roult.


Boys Under-10 MD1 Front row: (l to r) Derek Cerasoli, Ethan Kramer, and Todd Rewolinski. Back row: (l to r) Head Coach Lee Kramer, Todd Bonheyo, Shawn Harrington, Eric Setzer, Jon Clapp, and Assistant Coach Robert Harrington.


Boys Under-10 MD2 Front row: (l to r) James Steingieser, Kyle Bingham, Chad Unger, and J.R. McConville. Back row: (l to r) Assistant Coach Jeff Lewis, Myles Goldberg, Jesse Steingieser, Dan Mabashov, Tyler Lewis, and Head Coach Andy Unger.

Boys Under-10 MD3 Front row: (l to r) Andrew Biskupiak, Cody Simmons, Zack Barron, and Michael Stamper. Back row: (l to r) Assistant Coach Danny Frank, Asher Kirschbaum, Zachary Israel, D.J. Kerchner, Derek Frank, and Head Coach Jerome Kerchner.
The Athletic Department is proud to announce the arrival of 29 attractive, comfortable, black court chairs with 4” thick chair seat padding! The chairs will be used by MSD athletes on volleyball, basketball, and wrestling teams beginning with middle school teams through high school.

As of April 10th, MSD has sold 22 of the 29 chairs with a few school organizations expected to purchase one any day. MSD will begin the Fall of 2003 season with a handsome plaque (listing each family, individual, or organization that has sponsored a chair) hanging in the Benson Gym Hallway for all to see. Or MSD may affix the name of each sponsor on a gold plate and attach this to a chair.

The chairs are tax deductible and at a cost of $105.00 for the chairs and a sturdy transport cart, they are sure to last a long time. If you would like to see a chair first before you make a decision, please stop by the gym and see Mr. Scott Morrison, Athletic Director at the Frederick Campus. If you wish to sponsor a chair, please make your check payable to MSD Athletic Booster Club, Inc. and mail it to Scott Morrison, Maryland School for the Deaf, P.O. Box 250, 101 Clarke Place, Frederick, Maryland 21705-0250.

—Scott Morrison, Athletic Director, FC

Girls Under-12 MD1 Front row: (l to r) Alyssa Romano, Tandy Lewis, Jessica Israel, Danielle Berrigan, and A.J. Weiner. Back row: (l to r) Head Coach Jeff Lewis and Assistant Coach Tammy Kerchner. Absent: Lauren Wahl, Reina Bravo, and Rachella Shephard.


Boys Under-12 MD1 Front row: (l to r) Ty Heisey, Clayton McMillan, Mike Mabashov, and Flynn Rosko. Back row: (l to r) Head Coach Garrett Wooten, Clayton Grossinger, Nick Harrington, Ryan Bonheyo, and Assistant Coach Lindsey Heisey.

Boys Under-12 MD2 Front row: (l to r) Head Coach Garrett Wooten, Jack Green, Roy Barron, Alex Larson, Jarvis Grindstaff, Maxwell Latin, and Micah Traurig. Absent: Michael Tota.
Alumni

A. Lewis Longfellow, 87, ’34, died on January 13, 2003, at the John B. Parsons Home in Salisbury, Maryland. Born on July 14, 1915, in Denton, Maryland, he was the son of the late Arlington T. Longfellow and Hannah Dunham Longfellow. He was preceded in death by his wife, Edith. He worked as an auto body repairman for Cavanaugh Ford and Culver Oldsmobile. He graduated from the Maryland School for the Deaf in Frederick, Maryland in 1934 where he attained the rank of Eagle Scout. He is survived by his son, Alyne Longfellow and his wife, Sharon; two daughters, Amanda Longfellow, with whom he lived, and Moyean L. Schroeder and her husband, Dennis Schroeder, of Prince Frederick, Maryland; and four grandchildren, Aaron and Alex Longfellow of Salisbury, Alea Schroeder of Orlando, Florida and Gail Schroeder, a student at Townsend, Maryland. He was preceded in death by two brothers, Jonathan Longfellow and Kennard Longfellow, and a sister, Virginia Schappert. A graveside service officiated by the Rev. John Moore was conducted on January 17, 2003 at Springhill Memory Gardens near Hebron. The visitation was at Messick Funeral Home.

Alton Boyer, ’43, who was born on July 4, 1924 passed away on December 12, 2002. He was a loving husband of Bernice T. Boyer of 49 years; beloved father of Norma Switala, Joyce Boyer, and Donna Francis. His five grandchildren, two great-grandchildren, and his sister, Laura Boyer, also survived him. He was preceded in death by his parents, Elva and Ivan Boyer, brothers, Raymond and Roland Boyer and one grandchild, Rebecca Francis. The funeral ceremony was held on December 16, 2002 in the chapel of Singleton Funeral Home in Glen Burnie, Maryland. He was buried in the Glen Haven Memorial Park. Memorials in his name may be made to the Alzheimer’s Association, 1850 York Road, Suite D, Timonium, Maryland 21093-5142 or to Fulton-Saviors Memorial/Christ United Methodist Church of the Deaf, 1040 S. Beechfield Ave., Baltimore, Maryland 21229.

Charles David Cox, ’67 died on September 21, 2002. He is survived by his mother, Janet S. Cox, and his sister, Janet Johnson. He was preceded in death by his father, David C. Cox. Visitation took place on September 23, 2002 at the Hines-Rinaldi Funeral Home in Silver Spring, Maryland where service was held on September 24, 2002. The interment was private.

Sherri Lisa Ross, ’90 announces the birth of her son, Jonathan Ari Ross. He was born on April 13, 2002 at 6:26 a.m. at Holy Cross Hospital in Silver Spring, Maryland. He weighed 7 lbs. 2 oz. and measured 20 inches long. Being a full-time mother, Sherri and Jonathan live in College Park, Maryland.

Christina Liddle Feil, ’96 and her husband, Michael, married since February 28, 1998, became parents of their first child and daughter, Morgan Crissa, on December 26, 2002 at 10:34 a.m. She was born at Christiana Hospital in Wilmington, Delaware. Her weight was 6 lbs. 4 oz. and her length was 19 ½ inches. The family resides in North Wilmington, Delaware where she is employed at Delaware School for the Deaf as a paraeducator and varsity volleyball assistant coach.

MSD Alumni Association announced the Year of 2003 inductees to the MSD Sports Hall of Fame on March 8, 2003.

Milton Sahm, ’49
Basketball and Track and Field

Paula Ammons, ’68
Swimming

Jimmy Eckenrode, ’84
Football and Basketball

Tiffany Williams Granfors, ’85
Track and Field

Please send news of marriages, births, deaths, anniversaries, awards, and special occasions to:
Mary Sue Boxer
Editor, Alumni and Community News
Maryland School for the Deaf, 101 Clarke Place, PO. Box 250, Frederick, MD 21705.

CONGRATULATIONS!!!
The Maryland School for the Deaf, Columbia Campus lost a very dear friend, Molly S. McWee on Friday, January 24th. Molly came to MSD in the fall of 1974 and worked as a student life counselor until she retired in 2001.

She began working with the girls in the dorm and then worked for several years with the boys. Molly even worked several years as an overnight counselor. Molly would often bring in special snacks for the students or go out of her way to toast the pop tarts because the students preferred them that way!

Molly always knew how to keep the students busy. She was very talented in arts and crafts and was the sponsor of the arts and crafts activities for the After School Program for many years. MSD always depended on her leadership when planning our annual Spring Event, as she always had wonderful ideas for decorations and activities.

Molly was a friendly, caring person with a wonderful smile. She worked closely with the teachers to support the academic needs of the students. She provided a comfortable and secure environment for her students in the dorm. Many of her former students came to honor her at her memorial service. The service was held at the McCully-Polyniak Funeral Home in Pasadena. She was buried in Meadowridge Memorial Park.

She was a beloved wife of Harry P. McWee; devoted mother of Jim M. McWee and Susan M. Walters; dear sister of Toni Brooks and Gene Merritt; and loving grandmother of Rebecca, Kristi, Joshua, and Carlie.

In April, the Columbia Campus will invite her family to a memorial service in the dorm. A bookshelf with books on arts and crafts will be dedicated in Molly’s name.

Beverly Ann James, 51, of Frederick, Maryland, died on February 7, 2003 at Frederick Memorial Hospital. She was the wife of Pastor Otis James. Born on August 30, 1951, in Frederick, she was a daughter of Hattie G. Wars of Frederick, and the late William F. Wars. She graduated from Frederick High School in 1969 where she was on the honor roll and was a member of the high school band and the field hockey team. After her graduation, she worked for Giant Food, as a bookkeeper for Hechinger’s, Frederick Memorial Hospital and most recently as a line server at Maryland School for the Deaf, Frederick. She also held a part-time job at Walmart.

She was a member of Asbury United Methodist Church where she sang with the Souls on Fire Gospel Choir, a lay speaker, an active volunteer for Vacation Bible School, a member of the Administrative Council, a member of the Disciple Bible Study program, a member of the United Methodist Women, a member of the Young People’s Ministry, and chairman for the 185th Anniversary Committee. Surviving in addition to her husband and mother are two daughters, Sheila Walker and husband Bruce, and Christina Perry; three sisters, Goldie Bowins, Alice Butler, Mary Long; two brothers, Lewis Eugene Hopkins and Wayne Wars who is a custodian at MSD, Frederick; two uncles; five grandchildren, Deon, Ricky, Jordan, Antonne and Bradley; numerous nieces, nephews, and cousins. The funeral services were held on February 12, 2003 with interment in Fairview Cemetery in Frederick, Maryland.
Adam Baker, MSD ‘02 Awarded Eagle Rank

On Sunday, November 24, 2002, Adam Patrick Baker was awarded his Boy Scout Eagle Rank. Adam is the first Boy Scout from Troop 258 to earn the rank of Eagle in over 30 years. Adam’s Eagle project was planting ivy along 132 feet of chain link fence between the pre-school playground and Clarke Place at Frederick Campus. The ivy will grow to create a barrier, which will keep car exhaust fumes out of the playground. Adam planned, secured donated funds, coordinated and executed the project, with the assistance of the scouts, adult leaders, parents and siblings of Troop 258.

Adam is an active member of Boy Scout Troop 258 sponsored by the Maryland School for the Deaf in Frederick, Maryland.

Pictured from left: Paul Baker - Adam’s father and Troop Committee Member; Lynda Baker - Adam’s mother; Adam Baker - Eagle Scout; and Jane Redding - Troop 258 Scoutmaster and teacher at MSD.

Adam is a 2002 graduate of MSD and is currently attending the National Technical Institute for the Deaf at the Rochester Institute of Technology in Rochester, New York. Adam is majoring in Computer Graphics and Computer Assisted Drafting.

—Paul Baker, Troop Committee Member, FC

ExxonMobil Presents a Check to MSD

A local EXXON gas station contacted the Maryland School for the Deaf and expressed an interest in providing monetary support in some way to the Maryland School for the Deaf program. After a short discussion between Mr. Ashwini Kaushik from the station and Stanley C. Baker, Frederick Campus Principal, it was agreed to develop a justification for a TTY.

This grant was accepted by the ExxonMobil Alliance and a check was presented to MSD for $500. This money will be used to provide a TTY to a student who would otherwise not be able to afford one.

MSD is very appreciative of their support and looks forward to developing future grants with the local station.

—Stanley C. Baker, Assistant Superintendent/Principal - FC

James E. Tucker, MSD Superintendent (l) receives a certificate of monetary support from EXXON representatives Michael Weston and Ashwini Kaushik. Standing at the right is Stanley C. Baker, Assistant Superintendent/Principal.
Terrence Leroy Dixon, better known as Leroy, came to this world on October 13, 1961 in Baltimore, Maryland. His deafness was caused by meningitis when he was two years old. He grew up in Baltimore. His family consisted of his mother, Ms. Hattie Ingram, and his four siblings – three brothers and one sister. Leroy’s mother worked very hard to raise her five children. Leroy thinks so highly of his mother as a wonderful person as his siblings all have their families of their own. She will be retiring in a few months from the nursing home where she works as a nurse.

Leroy attended William Baer Elementary School and then Garrison Junior High School in Baltimore. He transferred to the Maryland School for the Deaf in the fall of 1976. His first teachers were Mr. Charles Day and Ms. Rita Spencer when he was in the Intermediate (now Middle School) Department. He participated in the Pee Wee NAD and the Teenage Club.

When Leroy was a new student at MSD, he met Mr. Dean Buck. Mr. Buck would say many things about him such as being too small for his age, too thin for his size, and too short. He weighed about 98 pounds and 5 feet tall when he was 14 years old. Mr. Buck encouraged him to gain weight and to become stronger. A year later, he gained about 20 – 30 pounds and grew up to 5 feet 7 inches. He thanked him for his encouragement to be a strong person and have more confidence. Mr. Buck is like Leroy’s big brother and buddy.

Sports played an important part in Leroy’s high school life. He participated in football, basketball, and track and field throughout his high school years. He remembers fondly about his team winning the Eastern Schools for the Deaf Athletic Association (ESDAA) basketball championship for the first time in 1981, the same year he won the decathlon at state track and field championships.

His coaches Ms. Vicki White, Mr. Richard Jones, Mr. Al Keil, and Mr. Day all encouraged Leroy to tryout for the Deaf Olympics in Missouri in 1980. Ms. White and Mr. Day felt that Leroy was the right choice to do the decathlon. He did not understand what decathlon meant and thought it was all running and jumping. When he found out what it was all about, he protested that it was too much for him to participate. He was later amazed when he made the Deaf Olympics team. He was very excited but was scared to fly over the ocean when he and his team traveled to Koln, West Germany for the Deaf Olympics. There he had a great experience meeting different people from all over the world and he learned to communicate with them using body language and gestures. He found that there was not a communication barrier after all. The best thing about the Deaf Olympics was that he brought home a gold medal when he defeated his two Russian opponents and placed his name in the world record book for the decathlon event.

Upon his graduation from the Maryland School for the Deaf in 1981, Leroy was offered a track and field scholarship at Catonsville Community College near Baltimore. He took the advantage of the scholarship by attending Catonsville Community College. However, he later left college when he found a good job.

Leroy got a job with the U. S. Postal Service and has been working there for 16 years and still counting. His position at the U. S. Postal Service is a clerk. His job responsibilities are to punch the keys to code numbers on the packages and to sort the packages to be sent off.

For his leisure activities, Leroy enjoys playing softball and basketball. He participates in many recreational leagues.

He is engaged to Dolores von Garrel and is a proud father of his three daughters, Tabria, 16; Devenna, 9; and TeJaria, 7. They live in Catonsville, Maryland.

Leroy’s words of wisdom to MSD students are summed up in two words: education and sports. It is very important to study hard and complete high school. It will benefit you greatly if you plan to go to college but if not, a job requires good education. In sports, choose the one you enjoy the most, listen and cooperate with the coaches. Your skills will improve, and apply them to your future when you go to college and maybe the Deaf Olympics. Last but not least, Leroy wishes to express his gratitude to all members of the MSD faculty and staff for the valuable education he received when he was a student at the Maryland School for the Deaf.