



A Chance To Grow

THE GROWING TIMES

An agency dedicated to accelerating the development of children

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PROGRAMS AVAILABLE THROUGH A CHANCE TO GROW:

**New Visions Public
K-7 Charter School**

Boost-Up

**Turnquist Child
Enrichment Center –
6 weeks to 12 years**

NeuroTechnology

Vision Clinic

Auditory Clinic

**Home Health
Care Services**

**Out-Patient
Rehabilitation Clinic**

**Kretsch Family
Brain Resource Library**

**Minnesota Learning
Resource Center**

UPCOMING EVENTS:

*For information
on special events,
call Gary @ 612-706-5515*

**A Chance To Grow...
20 Years of Caring**

**New Visions School...
10 Years of Preparing**

**The Minnesota Learning
Resource Center...
5 Years of Sharing**

**The Growing Times is
published quarterly by
A Chance To Grow, Inc,
which is dedicated to
helping all children –
particularly those with
learning problems,
developmental delays and
brain injuries – reach their
highest potential.**

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Maranda and Doug's Big Adventure!

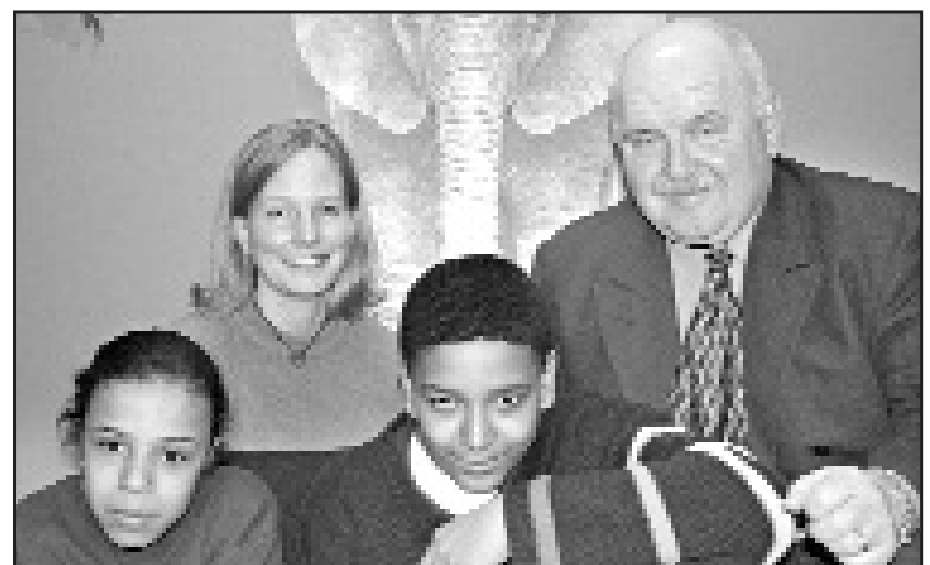


“WOW - Maranda Wilkins sites her first humpback whale!”

New Visions School (NVS) students Doug Roberts and Maranda Wilkins, along with NVS science teacher Jennifer Rosenkoetter, attended the Jane Goodall North American Youth Summit, in Mashpee, Massachusetts, this past April 30th through May 7th.

The New Visions School science curriculum follows the National Science Education Standards and focuses on the Jane Goodall “Roots and Shoots” program that teaches about the environment. Goodall has developed “Roots and Shoots” schools in over 70 countries. To qualify as a “Roots and Shoots” school, students must take part in service learning projects that better animals, the human community and the environment. New Visions is a certified “Roots and Shoots” learning center.

Using those principles, the summit introduced the attendees to the native culture of Cape Cod and its surrounding environmental communities. Students learned about plants and animals that live in the area both above and below water! They went whale watching, took nature hikes and explored Provincetown, Massachusetts. This once in a lifetime opportunity gave Maranda and Doug access to a part of nature they cannot



*The lucky adventurers from left to right, starting in the back:
Jennifer Rosenkoetter, Vernon Scott, Maranda Wilkins & Doug Roberts,*

experience in Minnesota. Doug Roberts said, “I went to the ocean when it was low tide and explored the sands. Some people were finding horseshoe crabs buried in the sand. I found a shark egg. It was exciting!” He went on to say, “I remember the whale watch. The whales were very close to the boat. More than half the people on the boat were seasick, including me. But, all in all, it was fun!”

Ms Rosenkoetter offered her thoughts on the trip, “It was so exciting watch-

ing Doug and Maranda learn new things, take part in new experiences and make new friends from all over the United States. Seeing the projects that other schools had worked on over the year was definitely inspiring! What a great opportunity for me as a teacher to learn and grow right along with my students!”

The trip was paid for by donations from friends of New Visions School. We want to give a special thank you to Vernon Scott for his generous contribution.

New Visions Wins Funding!

New Visions School (NVS) was selected as one of only 29 schools in Minnesota to receive funding for the “Reading First” program. The federal No Child Left Behind Act funds “Reading First.” Following a lengthy competition a committee assembled by the Minnesota Department of Education awarded the grants. “This selection stands as a testament to the quality education we are giving our students here at New Visions,” said school principal Jennifer Geraghty.

Since its founding in 1992, New Visions has been committed to, and recognized for helping, its students overcome reading difficulties. Over the years, students at NVS have made average reading gains of one year and several months, regardless of race. The “Reading First” program will further enhance the curriculum, equipment and mentor the

“Reading First” Continued on back page

Thanks Lion's Club of N.E. Minneapolis!



The Lion's Club of Northeast Minneapolis generously donated \$5,000 to the A Chance To Grow Vision Clinic's Beyond 20/20 Project. The project covers the cost of eye exams and eye glass packages for students who are residents of northeast Minneapolis and who are attending public or parochial schools in northeast Minneapolis. This is the second straight year the Lion's Club has sponsored the Beyond 20/20 Project.

Bob DeBoer, Director of A Chance To Grow said, "We want to thank the members of the Lion's Club of Northeast Minneapolis for their continued support of this project. It benefits the entire northeast Minneapolis community."

The funds will be offered on a first come, first serve basis. For more information about this program please call the A Chance To Grow Vision Clinic at (612) 706 - 5540. The clinic is open to the general public and operates between the hours of 9 A.M. to 5 P.M., Monday through Friday.

In addition to the vision project, the Lions donated a scoreboard to New Visions School gymnasium. The scoreboard will help the New Visions School Saints basketball team keep track of the score as they rack up points on their opponents. The Saints have not lost a game in three years!

"The Lions Club of northeast Minneapolis is so wonderful! I can't thank the members enough for their generosity," said Jennifer Geraghty, New Visions School principal.

Visit Our New Website!

Log on to www.actg.org to see what is new at A Chance To Grow. The new site has links to New Visions School and the Minnesota Learning Resource Center. You can review our programs, volunteer for activities, fill out participation forms for our special events and much more!

Justin the Superstar!



"Within three weeks of starting Hemispheric Specific Auditory Stimulation (HSAS), Justin was able to sing all the words at his Christmas program, on beat with all the other children."



Justin doing Boost - Up activities which include creeping, crawling, spinning and log rolls.

Nine year old Justin Moore is in the fourth grade. His mother, Paula is a teacher in Frederic, Wisconsin. About three years ago she attended a SMART workshop at a Designated Learning Site in Siren, WI. The following is Justin's story, as told by his mother.

Before visiting A Chance To Grow, Justin would hesitate in the middle of words when trying to speak and was hard to understand.

In first grade he didn't know all his sounds and writing and reading were very frustrating, plus he had a hard time printing his letters. In October, during his first grade year, Justin was falling behind and began to hate school. He felt he was stupid. It brought tears to my eyes. In November of that year, I attended the SMART workshop and met Cheryl Smythe of the Minnesota Learning Resource Center (MLRC). We had his vision and auditory processing skills tested at A Chance To Grow. We learned he was below age level in much of his developmental vision. We started doing Boost - Up activities at home with him. He worked really hard on creeping, crawling, spinning and log rolls, enabling us to move onto vision therapy activities. In November, we also started him on the Hemispheric Specific Auditory Stimulation (HSAS) program to help with his auditory processing delays in November. Within three weeks of starting HSAS, Justin was able to sing all the words at his Christmas program, on beat with all the other children. Something he hadn't been able to do before. WOW! First grade was a struggle, but we made it through.

When second grade started, the school tested him at a pre-primer reading level. We continued to work on his vision and auditory issues. He showed a real strength in math. By the end of the second grade he was at a 1.7 reading level.

This was almost an improvement of two grades! WOW! By the end of his second grade school year, Justin was done with vision therapy and was put onto maintenance for the HSAS program. By this point, Justin's articulation had improved so much that many people didn't know he even had an articulation delay. It makes a difference when you can hear all the sounds!

In third grade, he was still struggling with writing and still behind in reading. He received Title 1 services and we worked hard at home. Justin did score 'proficient' on the Wisconsin state reading test that March. YEAH! But things didn't seem quite right. He was having a hard time following along and keeping up in the classroom. We had his ears checked again and found he had regressed on his auditory processing skills. We then had his reflexes checked by Dr. Moroz, in the A Chance To Grow Vision Clinic, and discovered he still had some primitive reflexes which were getting in the way of writing and maintaining his progress in some of his prior therapy. Within weeks of starting the reflex therapy at home, he commented how much 'easier writing was.' This past summer when given the choice to read, write or math (his favorite), he choose writing. He wrote three stories this summer. This was great for a child who at one time had a hard time writing one word!

He is in the fourth grade and still receiving help to fill in the holes for reading, but is continuing to make progress. He has started a high potential (gifted) math class and is showing great success in other areas, too. What a difference.

Thanks to the services through A Chance To Grow a smart boy has been given a chance to achieve. I am very proud of Justin's hard work despite how difficult it's been. He is a superstar! ■

The Minnesota Learning Resource Center - Better Training, Tools & Results

As schools around the state of Minnesota approached New Visions School on how to implement its programs, in 1999, New Visions requested and received an appropriation from the state legislature to create the Minnesota Learning Resource Center (MLRC). The purpose of the MLRC is to train educators, parents and professionals in the interventions developed and used by New Visions School and A Chance To Grow.

"On a scale of 1-10, with 10 being the highest, I would rate this a 9.5. Best training of its kind I've ever had!"
- Participant of a SMART workshop.

Today, the MLRC trains educators from public schools across the state and nation. Last year alone, the MLRC trained over 560 educators. By signing an agreement of expectations, a school becomes a Designated Learning Site and receives training and mentoring to implement three innovative interventions based on current brain research and designed to boost children's readiness levels and promote classroom achievement. The interventions are:

Boost-Up (also known as SMART) - A program combining physical and classroom activities that helps children build the



visual, auditory and other skills necessary for reading and academic success. This is the centerpiece program in which all New Visions' students participate for 45 minutes per day. Typically, after spending 80 hours in Boost-Up, students make average reading gains of six to eight months.

NeuroTechnology - Two computer-based programs that "train the brain" to relax, focus and attend. These interventions are particularly effective for children with attention disorders.

Hemisphere Specific Auditory Stimulation (HSAS) - A program using specially formatted music tapes or compact discs that help children build auditory processing skills. These skills are critical to a child's ability to learn and retain academic skills.

These interventions have been shown to be effective for all children, from those at risk for failing because of too little early stimu-

lation to those fully prepared for academic learning.

To ensure schools can sustain these programs long-term, the MLRC employs a three-year model. During the sites' first two years in the project, teachers and administrators attend MLRC workshops and receive monthly mentoring from MLRC professionals. During the school's third year in the project, the mentoring is provided on an alternate monthly basis and finalizes the instruction of a core group of teachers trained in the programs that can begin to mentor new teachers.

"All five students involved with the HSAS program, this past year, have gained at least one full grade level in overall reading skills." - Barbara Astry, Forest Hills Elementary
- Eden Prairie, MN

Today with help from the Minnesota legislature and the United States Department of Education the MLRC works with 65 schools in Minnesota and 90 schools in other states. Everyday thousands of school children across America take part in this program. ■

A Growing Organization...An Organization Growing...

New Visions School Wins at the Scholastic Book Sale!

In preparation for the new school year Ms Monica Caldwell, New Visions School Literacy Coordinator and Ms Susan Zondlo, one of the school's Special Education instructors, attended the Scholastic Book Sale. During the sale a Charter School Challenge was held and NVS was awarded \$500 in free books from Scholastic. Ms Caldwell and Ms Zondlo went on a shopping spree to select the free books for the school. They said, "It is always fun to shop, especially with someone else's money!"

The books they received will be used in the classrooms and the school library!

New Visions School is known as the "Reading School" because of the dramatic reading gains its students make each year. The school offers two programs to help make reading more enjoyable, "Tele-Buddies" and "Reading Buddies." The mentor/volunteer based programs bring students and "Buddy" together to read one-on-one on the telephone or at the school. (If you are interested in becoming a "Buddy" with one of our students please call Shelly Lombardi at 612-706-5583.)

The entire reading curriculum at New Visions School is a hit with the children. Testimonials from some of the students follow:

"Reading the words feeds my brain." and



Ms Monica Caldwell, New Visions School Literacy Coordinator, showcasing the books bought with the awarded \$500 credit

"You read so you know the words." – Kindergarten students

"Reading helps me to know words and remember. I learn to read faster." and "I learn more words. I learn to sound out words." – First graders

"Learning how to read makes me smarter. Reading over and over again makes me

better at reading." and "It helps me read better and sound out words myself. I read faster and learn more words." – Second graders

"I like reading. It helps my brain read and think better. Good readers always reread." and "You can learn words and know what it's all about." – Third graders ■

A Special Thanks to Our S.T.A.R. Program Volunteers



LEFT: Volunteer (right), Madison Gallagher reading with Philip Shoemaker

BOTTOM LEFT: Earl Rose reading to third graders

BOTTOM RIGHT: Al Durtsche reads to a kindergarten class

The 2004 - '05 school year is proving to be an exciting time for the S.T.A.R.S. (Supporting, Tutoring, Assisting, Role-modeling, Students and clients) Volunteer Program. National Young Reader's Day was celebrated on November 9th, with 15 volunteers reading books to classes at New Visions School. Current ACTG/NVS volunteers, along with members from the Kiwanis Club of Northeast Minneapolis, the Lions Club of Northeast Minneapolis and East Minneapolis Exchange Club helped NVS qualify for a \$1,000 drawing for books. It was a fun way to potentially raise additional money for the NVS library!

In addition to the 15 volunteers helping on National Young Reader's Day, there are over 40 volunteers donating an average of 50 hours a week to A Chance To Grow and New Visions School. Volunteers are generously giving time as Reading Buddies, Tele-Buddies, classroom and library helpers, and accounting assistants. However, there is always a need for additional help. If you are interested in opportunities, please contact Shelly Lombardi, volunteer and resources coordinator, at 612-706-5583 or slombardi actg.org. ■

Special Events Recap:

14th Annual A Chance To Grow Golf Classic sponsored by National Camera Exchange & Video

A field of 148 golfers enjoyed a wonderful day of golf under perfect conditions at the Wilds Golf Club, on Monday, July 26th. A silent auction and awards dinner, with over 175 guests, capped off the event. The record turnout and incredible auction prizes combined to make this year's tournament the most successful ever. Next year the 15th Annual Golf Classic will again be held at the Wilds Golf Club on Monday, July 25, 2005.

A Chance To Grow's Annual Race for the Children sponsored by Ames Construction

Over 200 thoroughbred racing fans attended this year's event. The largest attendance in the history of the event helped make it the most profitable "Race for the Children" ever. A Hawaiian luau theme added even more fun to the day. Special guest "Wally the Beer Man" lent his golden voice and personal touch to the "free" raffle drawing.

New Visions School 4th Annual Walk & Roll sponsored by Northeast Bank

TC Bear, the mascot of the Minnesota Twins baseball team, started this year's Walk & Roll with a style all his own. The walk route took over 230 children, members of their families and NVS staff past the Minneapolis Fire & Rescue Station on 13th Avenue NE. The station is home to Engine Company 2 and Ladder Company 4. The halfway point found the kids at Northeast Bank, where members of the bank staff gave them goodie bags. The participants continued on to Sentryz Supermarket for a Popsicle break before returning to New Visions School where a bag lunch was served. All in all, it was a great day and the kids had a blast! This year's Walk & Roll helped kick off New Visions School fall fundraising campaign.

Donate to A Chance To Grow through the United Way Donor Choice Program:

Attention United Way "Donor Choice Program" employees! Did you know you could designate and support A Chance To Grow through your workplace United Way campaigns? A Chance To Grow is not a United Way agency; however, we do receive funding from the donor choice programs of the United Way.

If you would like to donate to A Chance To Grow just write in A Chance To Grow and our address (1800 Second Street NE, Minneapolis, MN 55418) under "Other" on your pledge card. If you have any questions please contact Gary Parker at 612-706-5515. Thank you for supporting the programs of A Chance To Grow!





A Chance To Grow's "Wish List"...

A Chance To Grow and New Visions School make up a huge agency with many needs. Due to this, we have created the ACTG/NVS – WISH LIST. The list will include items we can always use to help our clients and students.

NEW VISIONS SCHOOL

- Children's magazine subscriptions for the library
- Physical education equipment: basketballs, kick balls, volleyballs, volleyball nets, mats, new athletic shoes (all sizes) and climbing ropes
- Classroom supplies: calculators, maps, rugs for classrooms, large rolls of paper, construction paper, large bulletin boards and assorted school supplies
- Instruments for music program
- Frequent flyer miles can be used to raise money at auctions
- Monetary donations to help offset the cost of basketball uniforms, cheerlead-

ing uniforms, school uniforms, coats, back packs, shoes and socks plus, transportation for parents and families are welcome and appreciated.

HOME BASED SERVICES (Home Health Care)

- Antibacterial soft soap in a pump dispenser
- 1 oz. hand lotions that are individually wrapped – no scent
- zip lock sandwich bags • band aids
- paper towels • disposable wipes
- disposable pillow cases
- alcohol swabs • insulin syringes

THE TURNQUIST CHILD ENRICHMENT CENTER

(Child care 6 weeks to 12 years)

- classical CD's • CD/Tape players
 - walkie-talkies • a scanner
 - video camera • digital camera
 - small footballs • basketballs
 - large play balls • jump ropes
 - infant plush toys • infant bouncy seats
 - diapers • outdoor equipment
 - stereo system in each room with mounted speakers
 - mounted TVs with DVD players
 - coats (size 1-6) • snow pants (size 2-6)
 - shoes and boots (size 1-10)
- PLEASE NOTE: All clothing must be clean and all shoes must be new.

Thanks New Vision's School Community Partners...

All of us at New Visions School extend our heartfelt gratitude to our community partners! You helped make our 4th Annual Walk & Roll a success. All of the funds our partners gave us will help pay for classroom activities and field trips! The students and staff of New Visions School thank our sponsors!

We encourage our families and clients to patronize the businesses that support us!

SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR TITLE SPONSOR:

- Northeast Bank

EVENT SPONSORS :

- Sentry Supermarket
- Minneapolis Fire & Rescue
- Engine Company 2
- Ladder Company 4

COMMUNITY PARTNERS:

- American Iron
- Ben Kressel
- C&C Gift Baskets
- Emma B. Howe Northeast Family YMCA
- Kozlak Radulovich Funeral Chapel
- Siwek Lumber & Millwork
 - Flaire Print
- Elsie's Bowling Center
- Erté the Restaurant
 - RDQ Design
 - Roger Franke
- Charles & Rosemary Parker
- Sheet Metal Connectors, Inc.
 - Sterling Auto Care, Inc.
 - The East Minneapolis Exchange Club
 - The Kretsch Family
- The Lions Club of NE Minneapolis
 - The Northeast Minneapolis Chamber of Commerce
- The Northeast Minneapolis Kiwanis
 - The Salvation Army
 - Marshall Concrete
- LaMere Concrete and Masonry
 - Messinger, Ojile, Pierce & Pomeroy, PLLP

"Reading First" continued from front page

teachers at New Visions. New Visions is a kindergarten through seventh grade public charter school, which serves approximately 200 students.

Based on the findings of the National Reading Panel, "Reading First" is centered on scientifically based reading research (SBRR). Professional development of the teaching staff is ongoing. Teachers meet in cross-grade, study groups weekly to review effective practice of reading instruction based on SBRR. "The result is we have more active lessons being taught that are more engaging to our students," said Monica Caldwell, New Visions School Literacy Coordinator. She went on to say, "We do a lot more reading, followed by discussion, which leads to better comprehension, better vocabu-

lary and improved reading fluency." The program incorporates a mentor from the University of Minnesota. The mentor works with NVS staff to remind them of the importance of modeling and coaching. These practices are incorporated into daily instruction in the classroom.

There are five key elements we focus on with the student:

Phonemic awareness or sounds associated with the spoken language. An example would be the word Cat. There are three sounds in the word C – A – T.

Word recognition is decoding and reading a word by using phonics, word recognition strategies and by associating a word with a similar word. An example would be the words Look and Book.

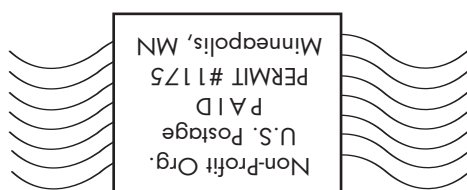
Vocabulary or the words children know. A student's vocabulary is increased the more he or she reads.

Comprehension is understanding what is read. Students attain a high level of reading comprehension by connecting text to background knowledge, other text and themselves.

Reading Fluency is the rate at which words are read at a grade level. Ms. Caldwell said, "According to studies, there is a strong correlation to reading fluency in the third grade and being able to pass the Basic Skills Test (BST) in the eighth grade. We use a curriculum-based measurement to monitor and direct the instruction at grade level to improve fluency. The result is we are able to provide better instruction and proper reading leveled

books for each student in the classroom." Teachers give informal tests to make sure the child is reading at the proper level. This helps them insure the children are enjoying the task and are motivated to read independently, which leads to the students wanting to read even more.

The mission of New Visions School is to help each child identify and cultivate his or her greatest potential and to provide a curriculum that will foster the skills, knowledge and attitudes necessary to live a successful, healthy, fulfilling and informed life. If you would like more information about New Visions School, please call Shannon Swanson-Jarosak at 612-706-5560. ■



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