

Students from Imagine Lincoln Stack Up Against LEGO Competitors

As a group of students from one Imagine Maryland school recently learned, building things with blocks is not necessarily child's play. In fact, it can be an award-winning activity.

On February 11, a half-dozen students from Imagine Lincoln participated in the first Annual LEGO Competition, sponsored by The Patriots Technology Training Center. The competition, held in the Computer Science Building on the campus of Bowie State University, featured a total of seven teams hoping to be crowned Patriots LEGO Champs.

The Imagine Lincoln team, which included Jenelle Collier, Jordan Ford, Lawrence Henson, Brandin Johnson, Shane Johnson, Shawn Samuels, along with Coach Zenani Fogg, a Grade 4 math and science teacher, earned second place in the Team Competition and also received the "Best Presentation Award."



Members of Team Imagine Lincoln demonstrate why they were awarded "Best Presentation."

Imagine Lincoln joined The Patriots Technology Training Center last fall to introduce students to and interest them in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) opportunities.

Located in Seat Pleasant, Md., the Patriots seek to increase the number of students entering a technology-based college education and career path.

Imagine Andrews Celebrates 100 Days

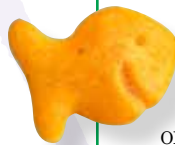
The students and staff of Imagine Andrews recently marked a major milestone in the school's brief history. On Friday, February 3, the community came together to recognize the 100th Day of School.

Children in all grades and classes celebrated the historic occasion in different ways. For example, the Kindergartners used the celebration as a way to explore the number 100, collecting and counting 100 objects for a 100th Day Project.

Children in Grade 1 showed their creativity by wearing T-shirts

they had designed with 100 items — everything from buttons, stickers and stamps to math facts, words, shapes, and more. They also made crowns with the number 100 covered with 100 stickers. The second graders wrote 100 thank-you cards to show their appreciation for "our troops and everything they do to serve and protect our country."

Other student activities included counting by fives to 100 by making 20-piece macaroni necklaces, creating "Hundred Number Charts" to find patterns, or counting by threes to 99 using snack food items, such as Goldfish and Cheerios. There was also a door-decorating contest and a parade.



Pamela McQueen, Joint Base Andrews Protestant Parish AWANA commander, serves pizza to students at Imagine Andrews in celebration of the 100th Day of School. (U.S. Air Force photo/Senior Airman Laura Turner)

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Letters From the Directors

Survey Says!: Measuring How We're Doing

I want to take this opportunity once again to thank all of you for your tireless work on behalf of the students and families we so humbly serve.

As most of you know, we are in the midst of survey season. Over the course of February and March, you have been and will be receiving surveys that we need you, your students, or their parents to complete.

In all cases, these surveys will require the efforts of everyone at your school, including administrators and teachers alike. And I know this effort isn't always easy, but your involvement will certainly make a difference as we continue to hold ourselves accountable for all that we do.

Why the surveys? Some may naturally believe that surveys are management's way of checking up on what is happening in our schools. However, the larger goal



of the surveys is to allow each of our schools to compile data that will provide the staff with the information they will need to assess themselves against our Six Measures of Excellence. For example, the family survey that is now going out to our families will allow you to determine what your parents think of your school. Data from this survey are just one of several factors that will be assessed when determining your school's parent choice grade.

The survey that was just recently completed by your students can be used by school staff to determine the quality of the school's character education program and will be used in part to determine the school's character education grade.

Another survey, the Shared Values survey, should be completed by your

entire school staff and, when graded by Dennis Bakke, will provide your school with a year-end assessment on how everyone was able to implement and live out the Joy at Work philosophy and, more specifically, our shared values of Integrity, Justice and Fun.

In addition to providing our schools with the data necessary to assess themselves, the Imagine Schools survey data also are critical for use with our authorizing district as well as our stakeholders. We know that, on a day-to-day basis, our schools and teachers do so much to educate and develop the character of our students. These surveys are an opportunity for us to show our stakeholders the merits of what we do each day to make a positive difference.

Here's a final thought: as with all surveys, the data we collect hold more value if the

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Building Our Pipeline of Future Leaders

In preparation for next year's work — the first year of implementation of our three-year Academic Strategic Plan — I will be forming the Area Instructional Leadership Team (AILT). And I would like to solicit your help.

The purpose of AILT is to 1) build the capacity of our teacher leaders to the point that they can help support and lead the work at their respective campuses; 2) transition from a "train-the-trainer model" to a "teaming model" that is more inclusive and provides meaningful opportunities for our most promising teachers to participate in making significant academic decisions; and 3) build a pipeline of future leaders for our schools.

Ideally, each of our future Academic Facilitators and/or Principals will be selected from the AILT. If chosen to participate, each member of the AILT will be required to make an ongoing commitment to and participate in after-hours professional development, undertake some minor travel, and assist in delivering several professional development opportunities throughout the rest of the 2012 and the 2013 school years.

If you are a hard-working, passionate educator who is committed to excellence and seeking a leadership opportunity that builds upon your current knowledge base and expertise — while simultaneously preparing you for relevant leadership



opportunities in the near future — please join us for the AILT Information Session on March 7 at 4:30 pm in the Prince George's County Imagine Schools Area Office, located at Imagine Lincoln, in Temple Hills. Your future, and ours, may depend on your participation.

As always, I salute you for your work and commitment to our students and families, and thank you for your continued support.

William Hill
Executive Director
PG County Imagine Schools

Campus Kiosk: Brief Notices from the Imagine Maryland Public Charter Schools



Character Development

Imagine Foundations: Two fundraisers held on campus in January not only showcased the artistic side of our student body but they also demonstrated the children's ability to support a good cause. In mid January, the Student Council sponsored its first Talent Show. The evening event featured a variety of performances, including students who could sing and dance or play piano and guitar, and raised more than \$1,000 for the school. Later in the month, the Imagine Foundations Drama Club held its first presentation, "Aladdin Jr." Also a Student Council-sponsored event, the show served as a fundraiser for the PTO.

Imagine Discovery: On February 10, Dishibem (which is pronounced "dee-shee-bem" and means "writing peace"), a dance and drumming troupe from West Africa, performed for all students at two assemblies. The troupe consists of three members — Kwame Opore, Mahiri Keita and Amandou Kouyate — who come together to demonstrate the power of song, dance and drumming as a tool of communication and connection.



Imagine Andrews: Members of our newly formed Student Council, along with Michelle Carter, Reading/Social Studies teacher for Grade 2, worked with the Base Chapel, the PTO, and members of the entire school community to plan the Imagine Andrews 100th Day Celebration, which was held on February 3 and featured a door-decorating contest. (See the cover story for more details.)

Imagine Foundations: During our monthly character assembly, in honor of the character trait "fairness," we presented certificates to those students who were nominated by their classmates for exhibiting the monthly trait. Also, students gave various performances during the assembly, including reading poems and doing some role-playing about what "fairness" means to them.

Imagine Foundations II: In January we focused our Character Development efforts around "respect." The curriculum our teachers provided centered on being respectful, speaking with students about the meaning and importance of respect, whom should they respect, and how they could show respect to all the people around them. Additionally, we emphasized following the Golden Rule, being tolerant and accepting of differences, using good manners, refraining from bad language and insults, being considerate of the feelings of others, dealing peacefully with anger, and avoiding disagreements.

Parent Choice

Imagine Foundations: On January 19, we held the first of three new Open House events for the 2012-2013 school year. More than 75 family members showed up for the evening program, which was open to the public and featured a brief presentation in the Science and Technology Building about the school and a tour of the campus.

Imagine Foundations II:

In February, our PTO organized the creation and delivery of "Candy Grams" as a fundraiser. Children were encouraged to "share a message" — a lollipop candy gram — with their siblings, classmates and teachers. Proceeds from the lollipop candy grams, which sold for \$1 each and were delivered on Valentine's Day, benefitted the PTO.



Imagine Andrews: On January 12, a number of our parents walked in "the shoes" of their children when they attended the First Annual Parent Learning Night. This event provided adults with an opportunity to engage, as students themselves, in the learning tasks their children experience on a daily basis. Each of the participants completed tasks from instructional programs, such as "Math Meeting" from the Saxon Math program and "Review the Deck" from the Saxon Phonics & Spelling program. Our hope is that, through this experience, parents gained a better understanding of the knowledge and skills that students need to be successful at Imagine Andrews and how they can better support their children at home.

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Imagine the possibilities

campus Kiosk continued from page 3

Imagine Foundations: In mid-January, we held our annual “Muffins with Moms” event. With more than 250 moms, grandmothers, and aunts in attendance, this morning treat, held in the cafeteria, proved to be a sweet success once again. The popular event featured plenty of the eponymous breakfast food, along with drinks, and a presentation by the children to the special female figures in their lives.



Academic Achievement

Imagine Foundations: On January 24, the Grade 3 staff held an “MSA Family Night.” The purpose was to prepare parents and students for the upcoming Maryland School Assessment (MSA), which is required for students in Grades 3-8 and is scheduled to take place on March 13-14 for reading and March 20-21 for math. Teachers presented an overview of the MSA and then helped students and parents work together to complete sample problems. Teachers from the other grades planned to hold their “Nights” in early to mid February.

Imagine Foundations II: We recently celebrated the achievements of all our outstanding students. In January, all scholars who earned “Student of the Month” status, from September - December 2011 — a total of 42 students! — together with their parents, were recognized by Principal McGuire at a dinner reception in the school’s multi-purpose room. A second



quarter “Recognition Rally,” honoring our students in different categories, was held in February. Congrats to all our honorees!

Economic Sustainability

Imagine Foundations: We recently instituted an Economic Sustainability Task Force. The new chairperson, Stephan Sereda, will present the budget to the staff at our monthly professional development meetings.



Sereda

Staff Spotlight

For their perfect attendance in either or both of the first two quarters of the year, each of the following staffers at Imagine Foundations received a Starbucks gift card: **Melissa Grove, Ms. Gustus, Angie McPhaul, Tracey Mills, John Rainey, Kelly Sereda, Victor Otalle, Jarvis Garay, Stephan Sereda, and Cheneé Dwarté.**



Otalle



Rainey

Imagine Foundations II would like to welcome **Dana Barnhart**, who recently joined as the new Grade 1 Language Arts teacher. Barnhart received her Master’s in Elementary Teacher Education from University of Phoenix in December 2009. Prior to coming to Imagine Foundations II, she was the director of a large

MSDE-approved preschool and has been teaching children in some manner for the last 20 years.

Congratulations to **M.A. Ciecło Deocares**, a

Grade 1 Reading, Language Arts & Social Studies teacher at Imagine Foundations II, who earned a Master’s Degree in Education (with a major in Curriculum and Instruction) in February from the American College of Education.



Deocares



McPhaul



Mills



Kudos & Commendations

In January, Imagine Foundations Principal Cheneé Dwarte awarded trophies to the following teachers whose efforts during the previous month exemplified one of the Six Measures of Excellence:

- Carol Holding-Smith: Academic Achievement, for the highest Stanford 10 learning gains
- Ernestra McBurrows: Economic Sustainability, for her major role in coordinating the Harvest Festival and Talent Show fundraisers
- Erica Daves: Character Education, for the counselor who leads the character education task force
- Alexis Pike: Parent Choice, for having so many parents express how they couldn't wait for her to return from maternity leave
- Melissa Grove: Shared Values, for demonstrating integrity, justice and fun in her class and with her parents

From now on, at each monthly staff meeting the winning teachers will present trophies to another group of teachers who exhibit these traits.



Holding-Smith



McBurrows



Daves



Grove



Kaveti



McIlmail

Dr. Marquis Dwarte, principal of Imagine Andrews, offers a hearty “thanks!” to Gautham Kaveti, Paula McIlmail, and Valerie Hicks, Reading/Social Studies teachers in Grade 4, Grade 3, and Kindergarten, respectively, for their hard work and dedication to supporting student achievement. They have created and implemented a rigorous and differentiated literacy club/intervention program to improve student achievement. Through their program, which includes a balanced approach to literacy, students receive small group instruction in the areas of phonics, phonic awareness, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. As a result, says Principal Dwarte, students involved in this program have witnessed remarkable achievement gains reflected in recent benchmark data.



Hicks

Bobby Edenfield, a Grade 1 Math & Science teacher at Imagine Foundations II, was featured in an article by the *Business Insider*. [Click here](#) to read the article, “The Toughest Job I’ve Ever Had,” in full.



Edenfield



Imagine the possibilities

Imagine Discovery Student Artwork on Display at Woodlawn Library



Still-life paintings created by students from the intermediate grades at Imagine Discovery — Grades 3, 4 and 5 — were recently featured in a month-long exhibit at the Woodlawn Branch of the Baltimore County Public Library. Titled “The Art of Imagine Discovery,” the exhibit included about 80 pieces and was on display throughout February.

According to Virginia Ellis, an art teacher at Imagine Discovery, last fall the children studied still-life paintings from the 18th and 19th centuries. Then they set out to emulate what they had seen, with an emphasis on learning observation skills to capture a sense of proportion and depth. Using arrangements of everyday objects (flowers, fruit, etc.) set up around the classroom, students first made sketches with colored pencils then used various watercolor techniques for the final rendering.

An additional 70 paintings and drawings from the collection, which was subtitled “What Happiness Means at Imagine Discovery,” were put on display around the school.

Great Idea!

The PTO for Imagine Foundations and Imagine Foundations II have updated their respective schools’ websites by adding a few new “features.” Both Foundations sites now offer a new “School Events Calendar,” which can be found alongside each school’s existing calendar, that will be managed by the PTO for use by the entire school community. The Foundations PTO also created an online “Monday Folder” to store important documents that the school staff creates to help communicate with parents regarding important school information and events.



Hoop Dreams

On January 12, it was Imagine v. Imagine under the backboards as the Foundations girls basketball team (the Lady Eagles) hosted the Lincoln girls team (the Lady Lynx) for the first time. The teams were made up of students in Grades 6-8. The score may soon be forgotten (although — ahem! — Lincoln won), but the memories made playing this historic game will be cherished forever. Way to go, girls!



The Lady Eagles Cheerleaders pose before the big game.

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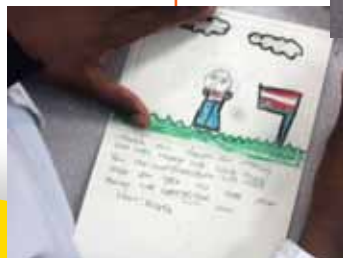
Adults participated in the festivities, as well. Many parents donated supplies or volunteered their time, helping to assemble costumes and decorations. And the chaplain and members of the

Joint Base Andrews Protestant Parish organized a lunchtime party, supplying 85 pizzas, juice, cupcakes, and party favors.



Children in Grade I (above) showed their creativity by making and wearing paper crowns emblazoned with the number 100.

Second graders (right) wrote 100 thank-you cards to show their appreciation for the troops who “serve and protect our country.”



Calendar of Events

FEBRUARY

- 2 Open House, Imagine Foundations II
- 9 Open House, Imagine Andrews
- 21 Open House, Imagine Foundations II
- 23 Open House, Imagine Andrews

MARCH

- 6 PTA Meeting, Imagine Discovery
- 8 Open House, Imagine Andrews
- 13 Open House, Imagine Foundations
- 13-14 Maryland School Assessment for Reading
- 19 Open House, Imagine Foundations II
- 20-21 Maryland School Assessment for Math
- 30 School Closed, Grading/Teacher Planning Day
- 30 Last Day for PTA Membership Drive, Imagine Discovery

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response rate of our surveys represents a large percentage of those completing it. Therefore, we ask each of you to assist in this effort. Our goal this year is to show a 100% completion rate on all of the Imagine Schools surveys. Such a completion rate will show that the level of commitment that all of our

schools are making in self-assessing their performance on the Six Measures of Excellence is equal to the level of effort we put forth on behalf of our students and families. Keep up the great work!

Pat Crain
Maryland Regional Director



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ImagiNation, published monthly by the Imagine Maryland Regional Office, offers facts and features about our faculty and staff, and shares information about our schools and organization. Each edition is sent via email to all staff of Imagine Andrews, Imagine Discovery, Imagine Foundations and Imagine Foundations II, and Imagine Lincoln.

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