



Start The Adventure In Reading



SERVING CHILDREN SINCE 1985

WINTER 2008

Volunteer Tutors and 2nd graders work together at STAIR sites

At the start of the school year's second semester, STAIR's 300+ community tutors and college students were busy teaching reading to nearly 200 second grade children from 27 schools at 22 STAIR tutoring sites throughout the New Orleans area. STAIR sites are at the following locations: **Orleans Parish:** Ben Franklin Elementary School, Berean Presbyterian Church, Capdau UNO Charter School, Carrollton Church of Christ, Dillard University, Holy Angels Congregational Center, S. J. Green Charter School, Lafayette Academy, McDonogh #15 School for the Creative Arts, Nelson UNO Charter School, Rayne Memorial United Methodist Church, St. Charles Avenue Presbyterian Church (2 sites), Tulane University-Reilly Center (2 sites), Woodland Presbyterian Church; **Jefferson Parish:** Faith Cumberland Presbyterian Church, William Hart Elementary School, Jefferson Presbyterian Church, Airline Park Elementary School, St. Paul's United Methodist Church, and Plaquemines Parish: Belle Chasse United Methodist Church.

STAIR Curriculum Evaluation and Strategic Planning Move Forward

As **Start the Adventure in Reading** enters its 23rd year, we are undertaking a formal review of our program in tandem with an educational consultant to ensure that STAIR is continuing to provide the quality children's literacy programming its founders envisioned in 1985. STAIR has received a grant from the Reilly Foundation to fund a professional evaluation of our program mission and curriculum during the current school year.

STAIR has contracted with Karen R.

Babbitt, M. Ed. to interview principals, teachers, site directors, tutors and volunteers, parents, STAIR students, and board/advisory council members; assess our current practices, curriculum, materials, and testing; and analyze the data collected. A written report will outline the evaluation and offer any necessary recommendations to ensure the STAIR program is meeting the needs of New Orleans' restructured public education system.

Additionally, a consultant from the Louisiana Association of Nonprofit Organizations (LANO) will lead a group of STAIR stakeholders in a facilitated discussion of current and emerging educational trends affecting the STAIR program. In March, STAIR's board of directors will participate in a LANO-facilitated strategic planning retreat to further chart STAIR's course for next year and beyond.



Thank You, Keating Magee! In appreciation of their pro-bono marketing services provided to STAIR during 2007, STAIR presented Keating Magee Momentum Marketing with a framed thank you card from STAIR's students. Shown (l. to r.) are Ann Wills, Dominick Teen, Lauren Schug, and Tamar Meguerditchian from Keating Magee with (at right) STAIR President Lee Adler and Executive Director Sara Woodard.

**Mark your calendar:
National Volunteer
Week April 27-May 3
STAIR Volunteer Party
at Garden District
Book Shop,
Sunday, April 20, 3-5 PM**

Thanks for giving the gift of reading.

Military Goes Back to Basic Training at STAIR

They say that military forces learn never to volunteer. Not so for 11 newly trained STAIR tutors who are stationed at the Naval Support Activity, New Orleans, the host for the Headquarters of the nation's Naval and Marine Corps Reserve forces, along with approximately 40 other commands. This historic facili-

ty spreads over both banks of the Mississippi River and comprises nearly 3,900 active-duty and 2,700 civilian personnel. Not surprisingly, the greatest number of military volunteers for STAIR are at the Belle Chasse site, where the tutors are almost exclusively sailors and marines. They are also represented at the Hart and Woodland sites on the Westbank. However, men and women in uniform are fanning out to volunteer at other STAIR sites throughout the city. Active-duty military including a Marine colonel are tutoring on Saturday mornings at the Berean and Rayne tutoring sites. As Chief Petty Officer Everett Evans who rearranged his schedule so he would be able to tutor after school at Nelson put it, "We're not in Iraq, but this gives us an opportunity to serve and to give a little something back."



The Hornets Bookmobile and player Ryan Bowen visited the STAIR site at Capdau UNO Charter School in January, 2008.

Sign Up for STAIR Info via E-mail

The STAIR e-mail list offers this newsletter and other information on what's new at STAIR. STAIR news is delivered directly to your email inbox. In order to sign up for our electronic mailing list, please visit the STAIR website at www.stairnola.org. Registration is free and you may subscribe or unsubscribe at any time.



WDSU-TV anchor Roop Raj was a celebrity reader at STAIR's Barnes & Noble Bookfair in October.

“ It is rewarding to see a child for the first time and be able to see the progress made at the end of the program. It is heartwarming to see the smiles on their little faces when they get more and more familiar with the words and are reading better. ”

– STAIR Tutor

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Start The Adventure In Reading
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STAIR Offers Family Reading Workshops & Literacy Bags

As part of its continuing series of family reading workshops, STAIR is partnering with parent educators from Children's Hospital's Parenting Center to provide workshops at 8 STAIR sites during the 2007-08 school year. This year's workshop theme is **"Bringing Out the Best: Encouraging Your Child's Positive Behavior."** The discussion with parents and guardians covers such topics as promoting your child's inner strength and self-esteem, encouraging positive behavior, and building relationships as the cornerstone to strong and responsible parenting. **STAIR** and The Parenting Center are providing family members with take home materials, including new books and literacy resources. While the adults attend the parenting session, the children are entertained by special visitors, including the Reading to Rover program, the Hornets Bookmobile and Radio Disney, depending on the site.

In the fall the workshops were held at STAIR's sites at Berean Presbyterian Church (serving S. Williams, Harney and McDonogh #42 Elementary Schools), Carrollton Church of Christ (serving Esperanza



STAIR Literacy Bags offer children both books and resources.

Charter School), and Jefferson Presbyterian Church (serving Jefferson Elementary School). In 2008, five other sites are offering the workshops including the STAIR sites at Rayne Memorial United Methodist Church (serving Bauduit Elementary and Wilson Charter Schools), Holy Angels Congregational Center (serving Drew Elementary School), Faith Cumberland Presbyterian Church (serving Alexander Elementary School), Lafayette Academy, and St. Paul's United Methodist Church (serving Harahan Elementary School).

are 27 different topics ranging from **Animals Big and Small** and **Sports** to **Monsters & Dragons** and **Stars, Planets, and Outer Space**. Similar to each site's library, Literacy Bag books will have reading levels of varied difficulty. This will allow students to practice reading skills while also creating an educational family activity that affords parents, guardians, and family members the opportunity to model STAIR's mission of having children associate

reading with pleasure.

Students, tutors, parents, and family members will be introduced to the Literacy Bags through STAIR's Parent Newsletter and at the sites where tutors will explain the concept of lending the bags to STAIR students. The Literacy Bags will be labeled by topic and contain the following: instructions and suggestions on how to use the bag, books pertaining to the topic, a journal folder with activity suggestions, a toy, game or puzzle that pertains to the topic, a bookmark, and writing and drawing materials.



Enjoying the November 16 CityBusiness Women of the Year Luncheon are (l. to r.) Tina Brockmann, Anne Fuselier, Mary Lee Carver, Sara Woodard (one of 50 honorees), Sidney Thornton and Bridget Carter.

"Reading is my Bag"

Beginning in January of 2008, every tutoring site will be offering **STAIR Literacy Bags** to students on a weekly lending library basis. The Literacy Bags are designed to encourage shared reading at home by providing one week of exploration of a particular children's topic. There



STAIR Advisory Council member Ruth Bilbe enjoyed reading Mean Soup at the Family Reading Workshop held at Carrollton Church of Christ.



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WINTER 2008

YOU'RE INVITED...

to be a Friend of STAIR. Just complete this form and mail it to the STAIR office, or visit our website at www.stairnola.org to make your gift online. It's just that easy! Your contribution to STAIR will give a child the gift of reading. As a Friend of STAIR you will be listed in our annual report and on our website. Please consider a gift today!

YES, I would like to be a Friend of STAIR!

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City/State/Zip: _____

 Phone: _____
 Email: _____

Please charge \$ _____ to my credit card.
 VISA MasterCard Exp. Date: _____
 Card No.: _____
 Name as on card: _____
 Signature: _____

My company will match gift (match form enclosed).
 I am interested in volunteering. Contact me.

\$1,000	STAIR Major Supporter
\$750	to Sponsor-A-Student for a year
\$500	to Sponsor a Family Reading Workshop
\$250	to Help provide Bus Transportation
\$150	to Recruit and Train a Tutor
\$100	to Provide Literacy Bags for one tutoring site
\$50	for curriculum materials for 10 students
\$ _____	Any size gift is greatly appreciated.

Please make checks payable to Start The Adventure In Reading (STAIR)
STAIR, 1545 STATE STREET, NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA 70118

THANK YOU FOR GIVING THE GIFT OF READING!