



U.S. DREAM ACADEMY LEARNING CENTER AT PIMLICO ELEMENTARY/MIDDLE



www.usdreamacademy.org/dream_cities/baltimore

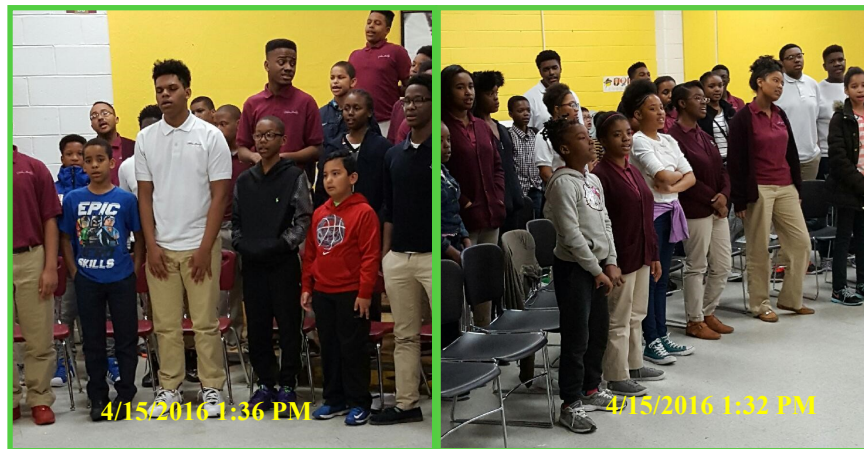
April 2016

Annual Gala Preparation



The Dream Kids had a wonderful time on April 15th rehearsing at Takoma Academy, for next month's annual gala celebration. The Baltimore kids brought their "A" game for music mentor day. They had a great time working with the students who were part of Takoma Academy's choir. The children practiced their spoken word performances, *DREAM* mantra, as well as singing along to "He's Got the Whole World in His Hands"! The dream

kids worked diligently and extremely hard to prepare for the annual gala event. We are expecting a fantastic turnout on May 3rd, and look forward to an inspiring and fun-filled occasion.



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SKILL—BUILDING



Enrichment Activities aka “Paying the Piper” (ongoing)

The “Paying the Piper” activities are aligned with BCPSS curriculum and Common Core Standards in math and literacy (grades 3-6). Students get the opportunity daily to practice/reinforce studied skills learned during the school day. This is accomplished through the collaboration between teachers and the Dream Staff, using shared teacher-made materials, study sheets, and assignments as a guide to generate additional enrichment materials/assignments.

Phase 1: Ordinarily, the students will perform at least two Achieve 3000 lessons. Due to the limited number of computers, students take turn until each student has had the opportunity to complete the Achieve 3000 lessons. Students will be alternating the use of computers.

Phase 2: While some students are working with Achieve 3000, other students will be completing home assignments. Instructors/Aides will circulate the room assisting, troubleshooting, and answering questions.

Phase 3: This third phase of academic activities is known as “Paying the Piper.” The students will perform two math word problems. First, they will read the problem. Then they will explain how it should be solved. (*The students will complete a paragraph explaining the process of solving the problems.*) By doing this, students will learn the logical sequence to addressing word problems, and it will be easier to identify and address whatever difficulty they are experiencing by giving them proven academic strategies. After which, the students will review vocabulary terms from the Word Wall. The students will review spelling and definitions. Then they will perform an activity giving them practice in using the terms.

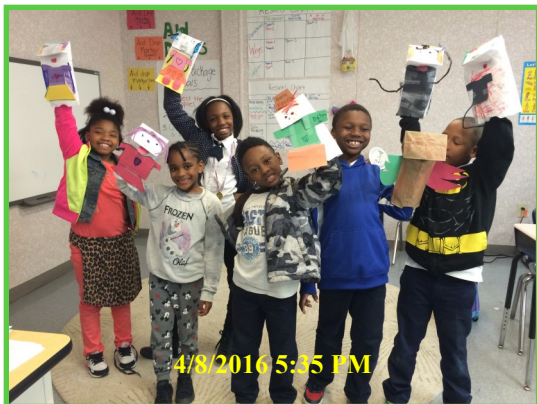
Special Accolades – Most Improved

During the middle of the second quarter, one of our Dream Kids’ parents came to Ms. Callender, soliciting the assistance of the Dream Team to help her son in both mathematics and literacy skills. This young man showed perseverance and self-motivated diligence as he worked with the team. Third quarter report cards revealed the product of our efforts. Not only did this Dream Kid raise his academic scores in Math and Language Arts thirty (30) points, but he also received the “Most Improved Student” certificate. Congratulations to Vashawn Richardson, and thank you for proving the worth of collaboration!

DREAM—BUILDING



In an effort to further understand and acknowledge our students' passions, this month our Dream Kids created Dream Maps. This is a variation of the Dream Maps used at the DALC in Indianapolis. Students reflected on their strengths and difficulties in school (skill building), behavior (character building), and their long term goals or dreams (dream building). This exercise will allow Dream Staff to plan events to further explore the dreams of our kids! Following a week spent perfecting Dream Maps, the Little Dreamers participated in a Fun Friday event where they created their own puppets with all of the positive characteristics from their Dream Maps!



CHARACTER—BUILDING



Preparing for the Gala

Desiderata

"... I am a child of the universe,
No less than the trees and stars.
I have a right to be here ..."

This mantra is chanted each day by the Dream Kids prior to entering the facilities. This is how they begin their afternoons with us. Of late, this mantra has grown in significance because it has become part of the theme for the U. S. Dream Academy Gala 2016. This gives even greater significance to each kid's daily chant.

The journal writing continues with renewed excitement. There is anticipation in what is expected, in what will be seen, and in how each of us will be viewed. The Dream Kids are experiencing a sense of recognition. The excitement builds as they ventured to Tacoma Park, Maryland to rehearse with DALC. In the mist of the dram, drudgery of daily existence, "we" are being recognized as if part of a *dream*.

For Baltimore, it has been quite a challenging year. We are truly moving forward. This is proven by each of our Dream Kids. Through all the chaos and unrest, through the rebuilding and the rethinking, they dream on and proudly proclaim: "I am a child of the universe ... I **have** the right to be here!"

DREAM—BUILDING



A special thanks goes to Textron Systems which hosted a field trip for our middle school participants to learn more about the engineering career field. Dream Kids received a tour of the facility and learned about the products Textron manufactures (such as unmanned aircrafts, ground control stations, and Wankle engines). Throughout the day trip, Dream Kids were very much engaged and asked several questions pertaining to product design as well as the educational track employees took to get to where they are today!



SKILL—BUILDING



Achieve 3000 Accolades

As of Friday, April 22, 2016, fifty-five (55) students have Achieve 3000 accounts and are actively engaged in the lessons according to their lexile levels. Students continue to be engaged with Achieve 3000 lessons at a minimum of twice a week—in our quest for each student to achieve forty lessons having the qualifying scores. Therefore, students are encouraged to logon during their leisure time. Dream Kids with regular attendance who initiated their Achieve 3000 activities on the date of its availability should have completed at least thirty (30) lesson (*although qualifying were not achieved*), but there are students who have performed beyond expectation.

*Ayana C.: 38/30, Mytara H.: 34/23,
Kayla J.: 39/15, George L.: 36/10,
Michael L.: 43/16, Naomi M.: 35/27,
Anirya R.: 35/10, Vashawn R.: 57/35,
Krrish S.: 45/31, J'El S.: 45/22,
Tamora U.: 37/8, Travis U.: 111/35,
Troy U.: 43/41, Antionette V.: 34/29,
Stephan Y.: 61/34*

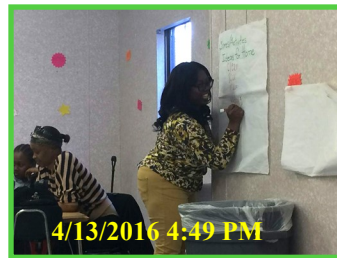
We commend these students for their tenacity—for not giving up. We encourage them to continue their efforts.

CHARACTER—BUILDING



Youth Violence Prevention Week

Middle school participants worked alongside Stevenson University intern, Rachael Wiley, to create a short film pertaining to youth violence prevention. U.S. Dream Academy hosted a screening for parents, community members, and Dream Kids to view the film during Youth Violence Prevention Week (April 4th – April 8th). In the film, middle school participants discussed their personal take on youth violence and what they would do to help prevent youth violence in the future.

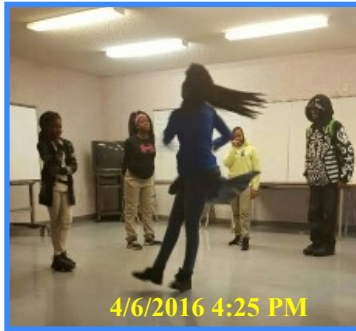


This month's family engagement night was really informative. The topics discussed were *Promoting Excellence in The Home & High*

Performance Has a Practice! (**Dr. Sheffield Series Workshops #2 and #3**). The families in attendance learned valuable techniques to use at home when implementing tasks to their children. Families were also provided with information pertaining to the importance of promoting positive behaviors in the home when asked to perform a task, as well as understanding the preparation for tasks at home by creating pre-checklists and creating a post-task checklist to help the child's brain process things that have been learned while performing specific tasks in the home. Parents enjoyed the *Star Chart* activity that was implemented to help them measure their child's behavior. It is wonderful to help families *Dream, Aspire, Reach, and Excel* when strengthening healthy family relationships! (**D.A.R.E. rap -Dr. Sheffield**)



CHARACTER—BUILDING



April has been a busy month at the center thanks to our community partners! In early April, middle school participants wrapped up their

Mindfulness sessions with Kindred Wellness. Through these weekly sessions, our Dream Kids learned how to channel their energy through breathing exercises and body movement.

Volunteers from Definition of a Tiger Service Organization at Towson University had fun with our middle schoolers as they created tie-dye shirts! Participants were able to choose the colors they desired as they discussed school, social affairs, and future career pursuits.



SKILL—BUILDING



Through Beth Tifiloh, our Dream Kids in grades K-5 have the opportunity to participate in weekly Zumba class! Students learn the importance of physical health and eating well as well as get their heart pumping as they exercise through rhythmic dance!



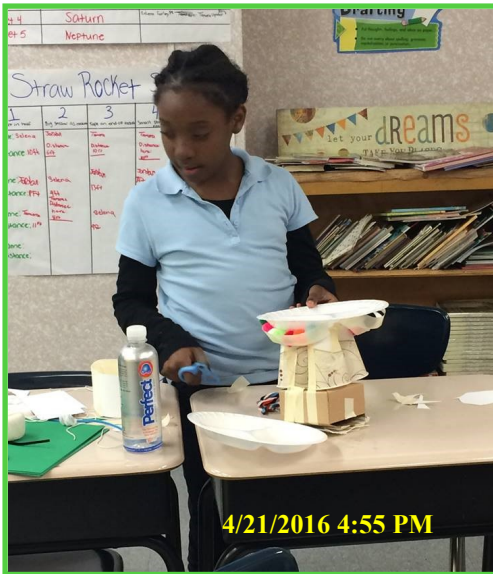
Jewish Volunteer Connection engages our Dream Kids through music also! Participants in grades 3-5 have the opportunity to make musical instruments and play fun musical games!





It takes a community to raise an engineer.

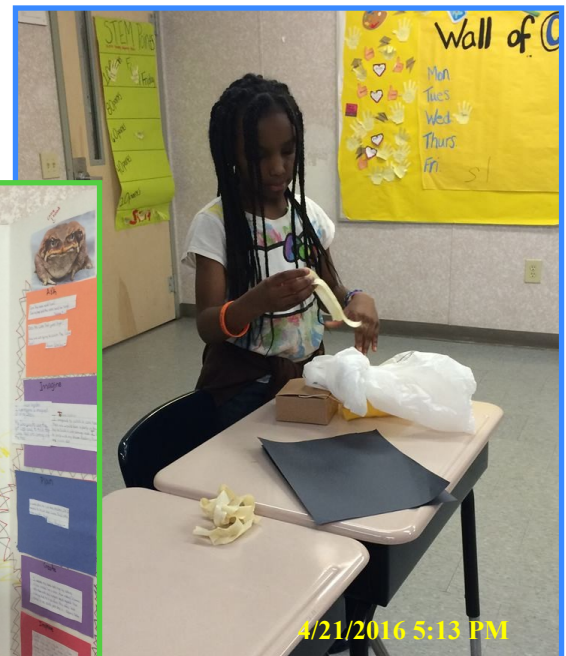
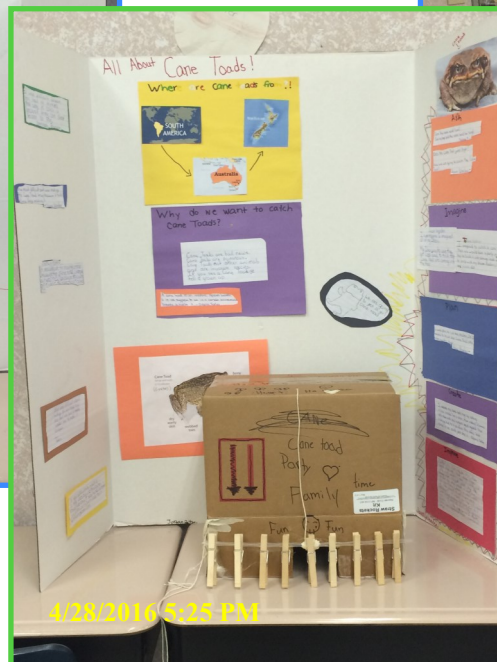
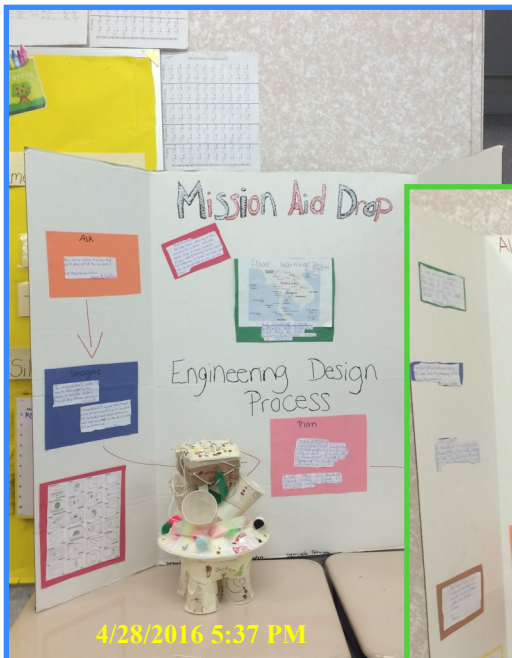
SABES Highlights



Our STEM Wizards have been working around the clock all month to prepare for the upcoming STEM Showcase at Coppin! Students have practiced and created science boards of their vision of past projects they participated in. Using the Engineering Design Process, STEM Wizards worked in groups to help perfect their upcoming presentations.

Come see our students present on May 4, 2016 at the Physical Education Complex (PEC Rooms 108 & 109) at Coppin State University (2523 Gwynns Falls Parkway,

Baltimore, MD 21216). Free parking is available in Lot H.



Mentoring Highlights



Recently we hosted Mr. Vernon Simms, Chief of Staff for Congressman Elijah Cummings and Ms. Kenyatta Moon, Owner of Nsoroma Learning Center who spoke with male and female participants in grades 5-8 on character, values, self-esteem, and the way they view their environment. After the male-only/female-only sessions took place, the participants gathered together to form a focus group and provided their opinions regarding the school they attend and the upcoming plans for relocation. Below is a generous letter DALC received from Mr. Vernon Simms following the visit.

Dear Executive Director Diane Wallace-Booker,

Thank you for my opportunity visit your Pimlico Center and talk with U.S. Dream Academy students last Friday. Based on my visit, I appreciate the U.S. Dream Academy more than ever. My visit allowed me to see first-hand so many young people's faith, hope, trust, and development, as a result of educational and training services provided by the U.S. Dream Academy. The confidence, intellect and creativity displayed by U.S. Dream Academy students - in those transitional trailers- was refreshing and uplifting. I can only imagine the despair and devastation that would occur in these children's lives if there was no U.S. Dream Academy.

I wanted to take this moment to applaud you, and your staff, for all that you do to break down our nation's vicious cycles of pathways to prison, as a "normal and routine experience" for far too many young Americans. Thank you again.

Sincerely,

Vernon Simms
Chief of Staff
Congressman Elijah E. Cummings



To get involved, or engage your organization or business in the work that U.S. Dream Academy does in Baltimore, please contact Mentor Coordinator, Zuri Battle at zbattle@usdreamacademy.org!



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**Tanya Calendar
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**www.usdreamacademy.org
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Since 1998, our innovative national afterschool and mentoring program has helped thousands of at-risk youth, especially children of incarcerated parents, realize their dreams. Please visit us at www.usdreamacademy.org

Upcoming Events

May 3rd— Annual Gala

May 4th— STEM Showcase at Coppin State

May 6th— Field Trip to Johns Hopkins University

May 11th— Family Engagement Night

Pimlico School Events

*** May 13th –** Muffins with Moms

*** May 17th –** Donuts with Dads

**A chance to have breakfast with your student, speak with the Principal, get updates and find out how you can be involved! 7:45AM in the auditorium. Pimlico is looking for more parent volunteers, to volunteer your time please email kjohnson@phrmd.org*

U.S. Dream Academy—National News

Actors and Producers Laz Alonso and Tamara Tunie will be co-hosting the 15th Annual Power of a Dream Gala: Growing Dreams on May 3rd in at the Renaissance Hotel in DC.