



eConnections

May 2008

Connects students, parents and educators to career opportunities through business partnerships, training and resources.

Donor Spotlight: YOU!

MEBA's board and staff would like to take this opportunity to spotlight YOU for your continued support and involvement in furthering our mission to connect students, parents and educators to career opportunities through business partnerships, training and resources. As a non-profit, the work we do would not be possible without the generous financial contributions we received from supporters like you.



Your Picture Here!

This past year alone, MEBA has reached more than 50,000 students and more than 9,000 parents in all nine school districts of **Fairfield, Richland** and **Lexington** Counties. We have engaged more than 250 business partners to create pathways for young people to higher education and their career goals.

MEBA's Annual Fund Campaign is vital to our success and vitality. *Every contribution, no matter the amount, is significant.* If you have not already made your pledge of support for MEBA, please do so today by contacting **Holly Cummings** by phone at (803) 290-4212 or by E-mail at hcummings@mebasc.com. You may also mail your contribution directly to MEBA at PO Box 2408, Columbia, SC 29202. To those of you who have already shown your generosity, we extend our heartfelt thanks and commitment to continued achievement.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Contextual Learning Seminar

June 10, 2008
8:30 am - 3:30 pm
Midlands Technical College
Airport Campus, AC 143

Teachers in the Workplace Summer Course

June 9 - 13, 2008
Final Class: June 17, 2008
Greater Columbia
Chamber of Commerce
Palmetto Room

Executive Committee

June 13, 2008
7:45 - 9:00 am
Midlands Technical College
Beltline Campus

Education & Business Summit

June 22- 26, 2008
Carolina First Center
Greenville, SC
www.ebsummit.info

MEBA's Fall Orientation

September 5, 2008
9:30 - 11:00 am
Midlands Technical College
Northeast Campus



Faces of MEBA: Debbie Manos

Debbie Manos takes her job as work-based learning counselor for **Brookland-Cayce High School in Lexington School District Two** very seriously. A true face of MEBA, she is always first to sign up for any MEBA field study, course or event that will help her do her job better. Dedicated and committed to finding connections and facilitating opportunities, Manos is a constant learner and true champion for her students.



Debbie Manos (center) with Carol Brenner (l) and Donna Plunkett (r) of Providence Hospitals during the 2006 Teachers in the Workplace course.

Manos first came to Brookland-Cayce High School nine years ago as a job developer, charged with helping graduates not planning to immediately attend four-year colleges find meaningful and stable employment or relevant two-year technical college programs. "The typical college path is not right or feasible for every student," explains Manos. "My role then and now is to help make sure all students find the path and the opportunities that are best for them."

Following a colleague's retirement, Manos was asked to serve as Brookland-Cayce's school-to-work coordinator. The position still involved the duties of job developer, and also included such responsibilities as directing career speakers and events and coordinating shadowing, internship and co-op experiences for students. Manos' main focus is connecting what the students do in the classroom to the possibilities that await them outside the classroom. Hands-on learning activities such as a behind-the-scenes look at the business operations of the local **Wal-Mart** for the marketing class and a trip to the **McIntyre Air Field** for the school's ROTC are an important part of Manos' goal to connect curriculum to careers. An avid learner, Manos thrives on helping her students learn and embrace the importance and benefit of what they are learning in school and how it directly impacts their future.

Throughout her nine years at Brookland-Cayce High School, Manos has been very involved with MEBA, serving as a

See Manos Page 7

MEBA'S MIDLANDS MIDDLE COLLEGE CELEBRATES CLASS OF 2008

MEBA's Midlands Middle College is celebrating the end of another great year, and more importantly, the beginning of bright futures for its more than 30 graduates. This year, 33 seniors are set to graduate. Twenty seniors are enrolled in at least one course at Midlands Technical College, and some are enrolled in two. Two students will be recognized at their home high schools for having earned a B average for three consecutive semesters. Seven students are Life Scholars, and four students are Hope Scholars.

In addition, MEBA is pleased to announce the Midlands Middle College's new leadership team.

Carole Ferrington

serves as lead teacher and directs the school's daily administration.



From l to r: Dr. John Hudgens, Carole Ferrington, and Jim Taylor

Jim Taylor

and **Dr. John Hudgens** both serve as field representatives; Taylor working closely with local school districts and managing recruitment, and Hudgens overseeing the school's fundraising efforts.

Congratulations to the MEBA Middle College's leadership team, faculty members and students for another superb year.

MEBA Field Studies Continue to Connect

IRMO HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS TOUR LOCAL BUSINESSES

The week of April 28 through May 2, approximately 200 **Irmo High School** 9th graders participated in career "Go and SEE It" event designed to provide



Irmo High students visit Saturn of Columbia.

students with a first-hand view of traditional and non-traditional careers. The event was an offshoot of MEBA's **Lexington Richland Five** field study, which afforded more than 700 of the district's middle

and high school educators to visit local businesses and industries in order to better connect classroom and careers. According to **Lisa Call**, MEBA's Chief Operating Officer, this is exactly the result MEBA hopes to achieve through its field study series. "By exposing more educators and students to the many career opportunities that are out there and by furthering real connections, we are a giant step closer to our mission of connecting the classroom to careers," says Call.

As part of Irmo High School's event, students toured several local businesses in order to see and

RICHLAND TWO PRINCIPALS GAIN FIRSTHAND KNOWLEDGE AT SISTERS OF CHARITY PROVIDENCE HOSPITALS

On April 23, 2008, approximately 25 elementary principals from **Richland School District Two** participated in a special MEBA Educator Field Study at **Sisters of Charity Providence Hospitals**.



Robin Morreale, Electrophysiology Lab Manager

The field study was designed to showcase the many healthcare careers

available and foster a more seamless connection between curriculum and careers.

The event began with a welcome and overview of the hospital by **Felicia Blake**, Workforce Development Coordinator for Providence Hospitals,

experience both traditional and non-traditional careers firsthand. Keeping with the classes' single-gender composition, female students visited **Sisters of Charity Providence Hospitals** to learn about careers in healthcare and **Saturn of Columbia** to learn about careers in the automotive industry. Male students toured **Lexington Medical Center** and **Columbiana Chevrolet**. All students received valuable information about the many career opportunities available to them as well as direction on the types of soft skills required to succeed in the real world.



Students peer into a window of the newborn nursery at Lexington Medical Center.

Thank you to **Felicia Blake** and **Pamela Felder** of Providence Hospitals, **James Engel** of Saturn of Columbia, **Kama Staton** of Lexington Medical Center, and **Jim Mayben** of Columbiana Chevrolet for making the event a great success. Special thanks to **Allison Johnson**, Irmo High School Career Specialist, for putting together the 9th grade activity and contributing to this article.

followed by a tour of the chapel and Pastoral Care Department. In order to provide a more intimate view of the hospital, the group was divided into smaller groups. The groups then toured various departments including the Histology Lab, Electrophysiology, the Women's Heart Center and the Pharmacy. At each station, hospital professionals spoke to the principals about related careers, job responsibilities and education and training requirements. Following the tour, attendees were treated to lunch, which was sponsored by MEBA.

In addition to **Felicia Blake**, we would like to give special thanks to the following Providence health care professionals for helping to make the event a great success: **Pamela Felder** (Workforce Development Assistant), **Haley Mills** (Histology), **Robin Morreale** (Electrophysiology), and **Anita Hicks** (Women's Heart Center).

MIDLANDS REGIONAL EDUCATION CENTER UPDATE

The Midlands Regional Education Center (MREC) continues to host town hall meetings throughout the Midlands as part of its Needs Assessment and Gap Analysis project, supported by a grant from the SC Department of Education. The goal is to



*Engineering & Industrial Alliance
Town Hall Meeting*

bring together representatives from various community organizations and other key stakeholders to identify services available to students and adults throughout the

Midlands. Already, the MREC has hosted nine town hall meetings to engage partners, foster connections and generate an open dialogue about services and service gaps. Still, there is more work to be done. According to **Dr. Kaye Shaw**, MREC Coordinator, these meetings are only one step in an ongoing process of recognizing partners and bringing people together.

"We are thrilled to learn more about the Midlands Education Center and its partners," said **Vicky Horne** of Lexington Richland School District Five who attended the meeting for adult education leaders. "We are grateful for the resources and access it provides for our students and faculty and look forward to continuing this connection."

The MREC will host five additional town hall meetings during May and June. To find out how you can get involved or for more information, please contact Dr. Kaye Shaw at 822-3306 or kshaw@scpathways.org.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Help us collect information to better connect students and adults to the career services they need. Please take a minute to visit our website and complete the following surveys:

Needs Assessment Survey

Help us identify organizations and agencies that provide services in support of the EEDA. To participate in the Needs Assessment Survey, please visit <http://personalpathways.sc.gov/midlands/> and click on "Surveys" in the left navigation panel.

Soft Skills Survey

Today's employers need employees who are honest, punctual, responsible and are team players. These "soft skills" are key to a productive workforce. Help us identify the soft skills needed in today's workplace. To participate in the Soft Skills Survey, please visit <http://personalpathways.sc.gov/midlands/> and click on "Surveys" in the left navigation panel.

Check it Out!

The MEBA Photo Gallery is now available online at our website. Please visit www.mebasc.com/photogallery to see photos from recent MEBA events and activities.

Your Child Is Job # 1: Soft Skills Savvy

Throughout the past several months MEBA's **Kay Barlow**, Community and Parent Education Director, has made several presentations to groups including the **City of Columbia Fire Department, Career Development Facilitators (CDF) course participants** and parents in **Fairfield County** on the importance of "soft skills." Soft skills are those skills related to a person's personality, social traits and personal habits, such as honesty, punctuality, and leadership.

The need for and significance of soft skills was first brought to Barlow's attention by the business community. As she traveled around the Midlands community, Barlow constantly heard industry and business professionals stress the importance of employees possessing such qualities and characteristics as responsibility, dedication and being a team player. She learned that while education and experience are important, soft skills have also become crucial to employment and retention.

Barlow helps parents and caregivers understand soft skills, how they can be cultivated in our children and the vital role they play in the workplace.

Your Child Is Job # 1 in Numbers:

- 48 City of Columbia employees
- 2000 Fairfield County parents
- 45 Providence Hospital employees
- 95 Ben Arnold employees
- 13 Career Development Facilitators course participants

March - May 2008 Total: 2201 people reached!

Top Ten Skills in Demand by Area Employers

- Integrity/Honesty
- Team Player
- Listening Skills
- Responsibility
- Knowing How to Learn
- Self-Esteem
- Reading Skills
- Social Skills
- Reasoning Skills
- Ability to Allocate Time

CAREER CORNER

*Updates for Career
Development Facilitators*

The new Career Development Facilitator CDF course began on April 24, 2008. Nineteen educators and business partners are participating in the course, being taught by **Stacey Westberry**, MEBA's Professional Development Director and Regional Career Specialist. At the conclusion of the course, participants will be eligible for Global Career Development Facilitator certification.

The fall CDF course will begin in late September. If you are interested in participating, please contact Stacey Westberry by phone at 739-8833 or E-mail at swestberry@mebasc.com.

A workshop for career specialists will be held on November 14, 2008. More details will soon be available and posted at www.mebasc.com.



A special salute to members City of Columbia Fire Department for their dedicated participation in MEBA's Your Child Is Job # 1 program.

MIDLANDS EDUCATION AND BUSINESS ALLIANCE, MIDLANDS REGIONAL EDUCATION CENTER, AND MIDLANDS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD HOLD JOINT MEETING



Secretary of Commerce Joe Taylor addresses meeting attendees.

On April 29, 2008, the boards of **Midlands Education and Business Alliance (MEBA)**, **Midlands Regional Education Center** and **Midlands Workforce Development Board** held a joint meeting featuring keynote speaker, **Mr. Joe Taylor, Secretary of Commerce for the State of**

South Carolina. Taylor spoke to the group about the importance of making students aware of the value of not only a traditional four-year college education but also a technical college education. "The technical college system in South Carolina is one of our state's greatest assets," said Taylor. "A four-year bachelor's degree is not for everyone, and we need to make sure our students know the many great opportunities in terms of success and compensation that are available as a result of a technical degree."

Taylor also commended the three organizations for working together to provide more opportunities for students and adults, more connections to businesses and a better prepared workforce. "Partnerships are key," said Taylor. "Our state is moving in a good direction, and we applaud the work you do every day to help us get there."

Meeting attendees also took time to recognize two retiring educators -- **Dr. Frank Vail**, Superintendent of **Lexington School**

District Four, and **Mr. Barry Bolen**, Superintendent of **Lexington School District Two**. The group thanked Vail and Bolen for their outstanding service and commitment to connecting education and business.



From l to r: Kay Barlow, Dr. Frank Vail, Dr. Kaye Shaw

MEBA Salutes National Career Poetry and Poster Contest Winners

Two Midlands students were recognized at MEBA's April 29th meeting for outstanding achievement in the **National Career Poetry and Poster Contest**. Certificates were presented to the students and their sponsoring teachers by **Stacey Westberry**, MEBA's Professional Development Director and Regional Career Specialist.

The contest is part of the **National Career Development Association's (NCDA)** National Career Development Month, where career development professionals are encouraged to celebrate with career related activities throughout the month of November.

Brianna Garrett of Lake Murray Elementary School in **Lexington School**



From l to r: Jennifer Adams, Brianna Garrett, and Stacey Westberry

District One won Third Place in the Intermediate School Poetry contest. Garrett's school sponsor was **Jennifer Adams**.

Daniel Ott of **CrossRoads Middle School** in Lexington

Richland School District Five won Second Place in the Middle School Mixed Media Poster C2 contest.

Ott was sponsored by **Brandi Canfield**, career specialist at CrossRoads Middle.



From l to r: Brandi Canfield, Daniel Ott, Stacey Westberry

Quick Bytes

- ▶ MEBA's 2008 **Teachers in the Workplace** summer course will be held June 9 - 13. Teachers will join various local businesses and industries to learn first-hand about the world of work.
- ▶ Congratulations to **Lindsey Culley** of **Brookland-Cayce High School** for being named the 2008 **Midlands Education and Business Alliance 2008 Technology Champion**. Culley was nominated by **Debbie Manos**, Brookland-Cayce High School's work-based learning coordinator. Culley currently works for **Loxreen Metalsource** in West Columbia and credits the experience with helping her to develop skills in communication, organization and communication. She plans to attend the **University of South Carolina** in the fall.
- ▶ Learn and practice the Spanish language while you explore breathtaking Spain! Join **Fred Gonzalez** of **Midlands Technical College** on this 10-day immersion program to beautiful Spain as you fly into Madrid, tour the weekend, then attend five days of Spanish classes at the Mester School. Students will enjoy scenic guided tours to Toledo, Salamanca, Segovia and Avila. The cost is \$2499 (plus airfare) and includes all transfers, classes, lodging and excursions, plus nine breakfasts, seven dinners and five lunches. Please call 732-5256 for more information or 732-0432 to register. All participants will be awarded Continuing Education credit.

The staff of MEBA wish you a safe and happy summer. Please look for a special edition of eConnections spotlighting our Teachers in the Workplace summer course in June. We will resume our regular eConnections publication schedule in August.

From Manos Page 2

member of the **Career Connections** committee and as its chair during 2005-2006, and participating in MEBA field studies and the **Teachers in the Workplace** summer course. "Since **Dr. Venus Holland** recommended MEBA to me when I first began my educational career, I have constantly reaped the benefits of the connections and professional development it provides," explains Manos. "With each field study I discover new career opportunities, learn about new companies and meet industry professionals who are truly committed to education and want to draw students to their respective fields. These connections are invaluable to my students, and I am grateful to MEBA for fostering them."

Faces of MEBA is a monthly feature designed to highlight those individuals who exemplify MEBA's mission. If you know of someone you think should be profiled, please e-mail Ashley Thomas at ashleythomas@mebasc.com.



Midlands Education and Business Alliance does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex or disability in its programs and activities.

eConnections is an electronic publication of Midlands Education and Business Alliance. For more information, please contact Ashley Thomas at ashleythomas@mebasc.com.