

Seminar Works to Break Down Barriers Between Poverty and Academic Achievement

Studies indicate a correlation between low socioeconomic status and low education achievement, and with today's economic challenges we must seek to understand and combat the barriers poverty can raise against academic and personal achievement.



Dr. Rita F. Pierson

In the spirit of helping all children succeed, the **Midlands Focus on Poverty Seminar**, hosted by **MEBA**, the **Midlands Regional Education Center** and **Midlands Technical College**, provided tips, strategies and resources necessary for working with children and parents of poverty.

Approximately 200 educators and community members attended the two-day seminar held on March 16 and 17 and based on the widely acclaimed "Framework for Understanding Poverty" model by Dr. Ruby K. Payne.

Rita F. Pierson, Ed.D., a nationally recognized consultant with aha! Process, Inc., and associate of Dr. Payne, served as the seminar's featured presenter. With her disarming and engaging humor, personal anecdotes and real-world solutions, Pierson captivated participants, informing and empowering them to make a difference.

Other presenters include **Lorraine Faulds** of the SC Employment Security Commission and the OneStops; **Dr. John Lane**, EEDA educational associate for Personal Pathways to Success, At Risk Youth at the SC Department of Education; **Sharon Harriott**, director of the TRIO and Community Support Programs at Midlands Technical College; **Melissa Mathis**, a child protective and preventive services consultant with the SC Department of Social Services; and **Rania Jamis**, director of marketing and development with Bible Way Church of Atlas Road. ■

UPCOMING EVENTS

Educators Exploring Career Clusters: Manufacturing Course begins
May 18, 2009

Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics Alliance
May 19, 2009, 11:30 am - 1:00 pm
MTC Airport Campus, Academic Center 139

Health Sciences Alliance
May 20, 2009, 11:30 am - 1:00 pm
MTC Airport Campus, Academic Center 115

MEBA Board of Directors Meeting
May 21, 2009, 11:30 am - 1:00 pm
300 Canal and Senate, Magnolia Room
300 Senate Street, Columbia

Focus on the Futures Art Series
May 22, 2009, 10:00 am - 12:00 noon
Columbia Museum of Art

Manufacturing Alliance
May 28, 2009, 11:30 am - 1:00 pm
MTC Northeast Campus, Room 328

MEBA's Midlands Middle College Task Force
May 28, 2009, 1:00 - 3:00 pm
MTC Airport Campus, Academic Center 139

Contextual Teaching & Learning Workshop
June 17, 2009, 8:30 am - 3:30 pm
MTC Airport Campus, Academic Center 143

2009 Education & Business Summit
"Innovation for Education & Business in South Carolina"
June 21 - 25, 2009
Carolina First Center, Greenville

NUCOR'S NUCAREERS

In early March, 22 **Swansea High School** students had the opportunity to participate in NuCareers, a brand-new program



Swansea High School students watch a demonstration as part of NUCOR's NuCareers program.

that shows the direct correlation between the math they learn in the classroom and the exciting and lucrative career opportunities available at one Midlands business. **NUCOR Building Systems** in Swansea realizes the importance of education and business working together and

developed the interactive, two-day course to help students transition successfully from high school to post-secondary education or the workforce.

A team of NUCOR representatives, including the detailing supervisor and detailing development facilitator, designed the curriculum to show the job skills needed and career opportunities related to computer-aided design (CAD), welding and engineering. This exposure to various careers, skill requirements and related responsibilities allows students to make informed and thoughtful decisions about their future.

For Swansea High School course participants, the first day included a meeting with math teacher Kurt Wyndham to review the basic concepts and mathematical calculations of both geometry and trigonometry. Students worked in groups to calculate the needed measurements on a blueprint for a small-scale project created by the NUCOR team.

The second day, NUCOR representatives gave a presentation about the company, available careers, benefits as well as the importance of safety, teamwork, accountability, honesty and work ethic. The culminating activity was a welding demonstration using AutoCAD and the students' calculations to create a 3-D model cut-out of the Swansea High School tiger paw. NUCOR's structural group leader was onsite with a portable welding unit to assemble the 3-D model during the class. From concept to completion, students were directly involved in a process that brought learning to life. ■

*Special thanks to **Lisa Halter**, CATE director and transition specialist at Swansea High School, for contributing to this article.*

*You've Got Mail!
Please donate today!*

Letters requesting contributions to MEBA's Annual Fund have been mailed. Please check your mailbox for yours and consider making a financial contribution to MEBA. We realize that now more than ever, you must be thoughtful and diligent with your donations and financial commitments. We are grateful for your involvement, and we pledge to be good stewards of your investment, with every dollar donated going to support connections and programs that will help improve our schools, workforce and community.

All donations to MEBA are tax-deductible. Please contact MEBA's Samantha Turner at (803) 732-5359 or by e-mail at sturner@mebasc.com. Donations can also be mailed directly to MEBA, Attn: Samantha Turner, PO Box 2408, Columbia, SC 29202.

SAVE THE DATE! STUDENT CAREER DAYS

MEBA will host two student career days for 8th grade students this fall.

The "**Your Blue Print for the Future**" career day will be held on October 12, 2009, and will feature careers, job skills and educational pathways for the Architecture & Construction, Information Technology, Manufacturing and Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics career clusters.

The "**Career Checkup**" Healthcare and Human Services career day will be held on October 13, 2009.

Both events are for 8th grade students only and will be held from 9:00 am until 1:00 pm at Midlands Technical College Airport Campus. Check MEBA's Web site at www.mebasc.com for more information.

MEBA Staff and Board Members Report to the Principal's Office

Richland One's Principal For A Day Initiative

On April 16, 2009, several MEBA staff and board members recently left the familiarity and comfort of their normal work routines to report to the principal's office. Not because of bad behavior but to serve as **Principals For A Day** at several **Richland One** schools.

A highly successful community engagement initiative with programs in several cities and school districts across



MEBA board member Steve Benjamin talks with students as AC Flora's Principal For A Day.

the country, "Principal For A Day" was introduced at Richland One this year and sponsored by Richland One and the Together We Can partnership. MEBA representatives

were among a group of fifty business, civic and community leaders who participated in the event, shadowing school principals, assisting with various administrative duties and interacting with students, teachers and parents.

After school dismissal, program participants gathered for a recognition reception at the Challenge Learning Center where they shared their experiences.

"It was an amazing experience," said **Lisa Call**, MEBA's chief operating office and Principal For A Day



Lisa Call as Pine Grove Elementary's "Principal For A Day."

at Pine Grove Elementary. "and a valuable opportunity for business and community leaders to interact directly with schools, educators and students and a fun way to strengthen the connection between learning and earning."

Check out more Principal For A Day photos on MEBA's online photo gallery by visiting www.mebase.com/photos/.



MEBA's Kay Barlow works with students as Burnside Elementary's "Principal For A Day."

Special thanks to the following MEBA staff and board members for participating in Richland One's Principal For A Day initiative:

Kay Barlow, Burnside Elementary

Steve Benjamin, AC Flora High

Lisa Call, Pine Grove Elementary

Val Richardson, Heyward Career & Technology Center

Dr. Jasper Salmond, Sandel Elementary

Martha Scott Smith, Greenview Elementary

Dr. Les Sternberg, Hopkins Elementary

Dr. Marshall (Sonny) White, WJ Keenan High

Your Child Is Job #1: Summer Learning

Studies show that all students experience learning losses when they do not engage in educational activities during the summer. So, what can parents do to make sure their students stay mentally engaged and sharp during the long, lazy days of summer? **Kay Barlow**, MEBA's parent and community education director, has some tips for making summer fun and educational. Barlow encourages parents to spend as much time with your child as possible and to remember that you are your child's greatest teacher. Below are a few tips from Barlow to help you make the most of this summer.

✓ **READ.** Make certain your student has a library card and visits the library weekly. Reading is fun and can help broaden your child's interests and mind.

✓ **EXPLORE CAREERS.** Summer is a great time to take your student to work. Talk to your child about your career and educational pathway, and share your job responsibilities and daily activities.

✓ **FOLLOW RULES.** Reviewing summer safety rules is a great way to teach your child the importance of following school, home and community rules.

✓ **TEACH SOFT SKILLS.** Model and teach your child skills such as good decision-making, organization, planning and time management. Help your child learn these skills by allowing him or her to help plan schedules and summer activities. Chores and summer jobs such as babysitting and lawn care can teach responsibility, punctuality and wise money management.

✓ **VOLUNTEER.** We all have something to give. Show your child, even the youngest, that his or her individual talent is important to your family and to others. Through volunteering, students will learn about sharing, helping and caring about others. Volunteering teaches children the great reward of giving of themselves. ■



Personal Pathways to success™
MIDLANDS
REGIONAL EDUCATION CENTER

UPDATE

**Become a Part of the
Connect 2 Business Solution:**
Enroll Today!

The **Midlands Regional Education Center** of **Personal Pathways to Success** is proud to introduce a new and **FREE** career development Web site. **Connect 2 Business (C2B)** links businesses with thousands of adults and students through educational and career planning resources to ensure a skilled and educated workforce for a more stable economy and a brighter future for South Carolina citizens.

A true win-win, C2B effectively connects education and business and enables employers to promote extended learning opportunities, post job openings, generate awareness about the company and give back to the community. Shouldn't you be a part of the C2B solution? Enrolling is easy and quick, just follow these simple steps:

- 1** Go to www.scpathways.org
- 2** Click on the "Businesses" tab at the top
- 3** Click the "New Users" link on the right side of the page
- 4** Answer a few simple questions and create your company profile

4 simple steps. 15 minutes or less. Invaluable results. For more information, please contact **Bill Barlow**, senior state representative for Kuder Connect 2 Business for South Carolina at (515) 326-1229 or barlowb@kuder.com. You also may contact **Dr. Kaye Shaw**, coordinator of the Midlands Regional Education Center, at (803) 822-3306 or kshaw@scpathways.org. ■

Career Corner

Although the 2008-2009 school year is coming to a close, many career development activities are lined up for the summer. This issue's "Career Corner" offers a quick look at some.

- MEBA's new "Educators Exploring Career Clusters - Manufacturing" course begins this week! The course will be held on May 18, June 15, July 6, July 13, July 20 and August 3 and will include visits to the following worksites: **Square D, Michelin, FN Manufacturing, NUCOR** and **PBR**. The course is designed to support the **Personal Pathways to Success** initiative of the state's Education and Economic Development Act (EEDA) by providing educators the opportunity for in-depth exploration of one of the sixteen career clusters. This summer's course will focus on the manufacturing career cluster. Through site visits and shadowing experiences, educators will develop methods to prepare students to transition successfully into this career path. For more information, visit MEBA's Web site at www.mebasc.com/educators/development.php
- The **Contextual Teaching Midlands Workshop** will be held on June 17, 2009, from 8:30 am until 3:30 pm in Room 143 of the Academic Center at Midlands Technical College Airport Campus. The workshop is FREE and will provide examples of interactive activities from Midlands business partners and SCETV. It is open to educators of all middle and high school curriculum content. For more information or to register, please visit MEBA's Web site at www.mebasc.com/educators/development.php
- MEBA's next **Career Development Facilitator (CDF) course** will begin on August 24, 2009. Please contact MEBA's **Stacey Westberry** at 739-8833 for more information. ■

Midlands Student Wins 1st Place in National Poetry and Poster Contest

Summer Rogers, a fourth grade student at **Lake Murray Elementary School in Lexington One**, won first place in the poetry intermediate division of the **National Career Development Association's Poetry and Poster Contest**. Congratulations also to Rogers' teacher, **Mrs. Tarlton**, and sponsoring school coordinator, **Jennifer Adams**. Well done!

To read Summer Rogers' winning poem, "Teachers," visit the National Career Development Association's Web site at http://associationdatabase.com/aws/NCDA/p/t/sp/ncdmonth_2009_winners. ■



Summer Rogers, National Poster and Poetry Contest winner.



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



MEBA Wraps Up Successful Year of Educator Field Studies

Another successful year of MEBA's Educator Field Studies Series came to a close with three final events.

Held on February 25, 2009, **MEBA's Hospitality & Tourism Field Study** included site visits at the **Hilton Garden Inn, Liberty Taproom, the University of South Carolina's McCutchen House, Columbia Metropolitan Convention Center, Colonial Life**



Educators tour Colonial Life Arena.

Arena and Embassy Suites Hotel as well as a presentation by the **SC Hospitality Association**.

MEBA's Manufacturing Field Study was held on March 5, 2009, and began with a tour of the **Precision Machining Facility** at **Midlands Technical College Beltline Campus** led by **Dr. Alan Grier**. Participants

toured **NUCOR Building Systems** and met with members of the company's leadership including **Al Bahr**, general manager and **Barry Williams**, detailing supervisor. The day concluded with a tour of **PBR** led by **Anthony White**.



Educators visit Midlands Technical College's Precision Machining Facility.

The 2008-2009 Field Study Series closed with the **Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics Field Study** held on March 31, 2009. Beginning with a welcome and tour of **SCANA** led by **Charles Ambos**, SCANA's workforce development specialist, the day included a tour of the **University of South Carolina's computer science and engineering department** led by **Dr. Duncan Buell**, as well as a tour of **Midlands Technical College's engineering department** led by **Michelle Eargle**, MTC's outreach coordinator.

Look for information about the 2009-2010 Educator Field Study Series to be posted later this summer on MEBA's Web site at www.mebasc.com. ■

"The Hospitality & Tourism Field Study was absolutely awesome...the most educational experience I've ever received within the industry. The business partners were very knowledgeable with their expertise, and the information shared was invaluable...real, up close and personal! Excellent job, MEBA!"

Kama Staton
Career Specialist
Dutch Fork Middle School

We want to hear from you, too! How has MEBA made a difference for you? Please take a moment to share how MEBA has helped you as an educator, student, parent, business or community member. What are we doing right and what can we do better? Please help us celebrate our successes and improve our services. E-mail your comments to us at ashleythomas@mebasc.com.

Quick Bytes

- Congratulations to **Joyce Simons**, a career specialist at **Dent Middle School** in **Richland School District Two** for recently being selected as one of the "**Yescarolina's Entrepreneurship Teachers of the Year**"! The prestigious award recognizes Simons efforts in bringing entrepreneurship to students in her area. Youth Entrepreneurship South Carolina (**YEScarolina**), a program partner of the **National Foundation for Teaching Entrepreneurship (NFTE)**, is a nonprofit organization created to offer South Carolina educators the opportunity to utilize curriculum written by acclaimed business teacher **Steve Mariotti**, founder of NFTE. YEScarolina has trained more than 380 NFTE Certified Entrepreneurship Teachers who have in turn touched thousands of young South Carolinians with this wonderful and innovative curriculum.
- Do you have training needs but no training budget? **Incumbent Worker Training Funds** are now available for eligible employers! **Midlands Technical College**, your partner in training, is also your partner in locating training funds and in helping you get them. You may qualify for funding and training in many specialty areas including employee development, supervision, computers, human resources, manufacturing, languages and much more! For more information or to start your application, contact a Midlands Technical College business solutions manager: **Amy Scully** at scullya@midlandstech.edu or 691-3880; **Becky Garnett** at garnettb@midlandstech.edu or 691-3881; or **Ed Koehne** at koehne@midlandstech.edu or 691-3865.
- Congratulations to several Midlands students who earned top honors in the recent **Skills USA** state competition, including seventeen-year-old **Jennifer Lynn Nix**, a student at **Irmo High School** and the first female winner of the auto collision competition in state history. Other Midlands winners include **Jordan Bowers**, **Jan Chodl**, **Ronair Jasper Felder**, **Stacey Leas**, **Christine Hsieh**, **Sam Edward**, **Lisa Shao**, **Brenton Davis**, **Allen Davis** and **Josh Best**, all of Irmo High School; **Nick Murray** and **Taylor Morris** of **Chapin High School**; and **Felipe Camarena Figueroa** and **Chase Suggs** of **Dutch Fork High School**. ■

MEBA IN ACTION



MEBA's Kay Barlow participates in a recent "Open House" event at Midlands Technical College.



Students attend a MEBA Public Services Career Event sponsored by the SC Army National Guard.



www.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.