



Responding to Inclusive Special Education Needs

A Newsletter of the F.A.I.T.H. Initiative

Please visit www.SacredHeartGroton.org/RISEN

Vol. I No.13 Fall 2008

R.I.S.E.N. MISSION STATEMENT

We are an inclusive educational ministry; focused on the overall development of the child with special needs, thereby maximizing their potential to the best of their ability. We believe that it is through each child's differences that we come to learn more about the purposes and philosophical meanings of life. The entire community, especially parents and school staff, support and participate in this development.

FROM THE DESK OF JANE O'FRIEL



It is hard to believe that we have reached the *eighth* academic year of providing support to children with special learning needs. We have been truly blessed on a consistent basis with the help of so many people, organizations, agencies, friends, family members, parents, guardians, teachers and the dedicated staff of *R.I.S.E.N.* and Sacred Heart School. As we were completing the academic year 2007 ó 2008, we had some changes

in the structure of *R.I.S.E.N.* and as you read this newsletter you will learn about the new faces in *R.I.S.E.N.* So take a moment to review the staff biographies. Additionally, we have a new principal, Soraya V. Betancourt-Calle, Ph. D. She comes to Sacred Heart School with a wealth of experience and you will see that she had been touched by the *R.I.S.E.N.* program since its initiation in 2001.

Our resource room has taken on a new look, now called the *R.I.S.E.N. Learning Resource Center (LRC)*. The services provided will continue to include support for students with learning disabilities, developmental disabilities, and other types of learning and social challenges. We hope to enhance enrichment for accelerated students through the COMPASS program. Paraprofessionals in the *R.I.S.E.N. LRC* will carry out plans to meet the students needs under the guidance of the Special Education Consultant, the Groton Public School System Special Education Staff, when applicable, and the referring classroom teacher.

We hope that you continue to be encouraged by the growth of the *R.I.S.E.N.* program at Sacred Heart as you peruse through our newsletter. Always, feel free to contact us should you have any concerns, ideas or suggestions. The mission and vision of *R.I.S.E.N.* has been sustained by people like you.

In the Spirit of the Feast Day of the Guardian Angels and St. Francis,
Blessings and Peace,

Jane A. O'Friel
President, R.I.S.E.N. Advisory Board

Thought for Reflection

"While you are proclaiming peace with your lips, be careful to have it even more fully in your heart"

-St. Francis of Assisi



Advisory Board

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The JOURNEY OF RISEN in FAITH

OUR NEW PRINCIPAL

We are thrilled to announce the new principal of Sacred Heart School, Dr. Soraya V. Betancourt-Calle. Dr. Calle has been a parishioner of Sacred Heart Church for the last several years. She has been involved in many parish and school activities and committees. Dr. Calle has a vast educational experience. She has been a professor of science and a lecturer at many universities and colleges. Her background includes a B.S. in biology and a M.S. in microbiology and medical zoology from the University of Puerto Rico. She also has a M.S. in immunology from the University of Michigan and a Ph.D. in cell biology and anatomy from the Medical College of Georgia.

Dr. Calle has a special relationship with R.I.S.E.N. at Sacred Heart School. During her first year in the Groton area, Dr. Calle agreed to be a paraprofessional for one of our children in the then F.A.I.T.H. Initiative. The R.I.S.E.N. Program has a very special place in her heart. She is committed to the special learning needs of all of the children at Sacred Heart School.

Three of Dr. Calle's older children are alumni of Sacred Heart School and her son, Victor is in the eighth grade. We are looking forward to an exciting year at Sacred Heart School under the guidance and support of Dr. Calle. Our sincere welcome and may God's blessings be with Dr. Calle as we continue the mission and vision of R.I.S.E.N. at Sacred Heart School.

Staff Biographies

Nan Gibeault & Kobe Powers

R.I.S.E.N. at Sacred Heart School welcomes Nan Gibeault as a paraprofessional in the R.I.S.E.N. Learning Resource Center. Mrs. Gibeault is the president of the SHS Athletic Advisory Board and has worked at Sacred Heart School for the past 13 years. She has been an Assistant in the classroom and has been a tremendous asset to the school in general. Mrs. Gibeault is an avid fan of U-Conn women's basketball and the Connecticut Sun. She resides in Groton with her husband Ray and her two children Alyssa and Kevin, both alumni of Sacred Heart School.

Another addition to R.I.S.E.N. at Sacred Heart School as a paraprofessional is Kobe Powers. Mrs. Powers acquired her Associates degree from the University of Maryland University College, Asia Division. She has several years experience as a paraprofessional in special education. Mrs. Powers has been a Girl Scout Troop co-leader and President of the USS Ford Support Group. She resides in Groton with her husband Eric and her two children Eric, Jr. and Kaitlyn.



"I can do all things in Him who strengthens me"

-Philippians 4:13

R.I.S.E.N. STAFF

Penny Sutter
Special Education Consultant

Nan Gibeault
*Paraprofessional, R.I.S.E.N. Learning
Resource Center*

Jane O'Friel
President

Kobe Powers
Paraprofessional

Tracey Davies
*Paraprofessional, R.I.S.E.N. Learning Resource
Center*

Kim Shepardson
Consultant



The Third Annual R.I.S.E.N. Golf Tournament June 13, 2008

THANK YOU TO ALL OUR SUPPORTERS WHO
MADE THIS
EVENT A TREMENDOUS SUCCESS!!!

TOURNAMENT SPONSORS:

The Sacred Heart School Parent Guild
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Dill, Joyce & Thresher Insurance

PARTNERS:

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The Tramontozzi family
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Phone Store



UPCOMING EVENTS

The Theme for Catholic Schools Week 2009 is: *Catholic Schools*

Celebrate Service, January 25 ó 31, 2009. The full catholic schools week 2009 Press Kit will be available in December 2008. Check out the WEB site: www.catholicsschoolsweek.org

23rd Annual Connecticut Down Syndrome Congress Convention - Saturday, October 25th, 2008; **"Imagine the Possibilities"** Crowne Plaza Hotel in Cromwell, CT – **Special Guest will be Karen Gaffney**. In addition, there will be twenty educational sessions Birth to Three; IDEA; LRE and educational inclusion; issues facing adults with Down Syndrome; and other special topics.

National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA) Special Needs Conference ó January 18 ó 20, 2009; check ncea.org for more information.

Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) 2009 Convention & Expo April 1 ó 4, 2009, Seattle, Washington; keynote speaker, Marlee Matlin; sessions on teaching strategies, special education legislation, exhibits and products.

FUNDRAISING

HOLY BEARS

A limited number of Holy Bears are available at this time for purchase in the Sacred Heart Parish Gift Shop. Each bear has a spiritual theme. You can visit the WEB site www.SacredHeartGroton.org/RISEN and click the Holy Bears link to see what they look like before you purchase them. We will be ordering additional Holy Bears based on request for the Christmas Holiday.



4th ANNUAL CHARACTER BREAKFAST

Back by popular demand.... We will be sponsoring the Character Breakfast at the advent of Catholic Schools Week on **January 25th, 2009**.



VEHICLE DONATIONS

We continue to accept vehicle donations! If you have a vehicle that you would like to donate please contact us. One simple phone call and we will take care of the rest.



RESOURCES



www.specialneedsalliance.org

The Special Needs Alliance

is a national, non-profit organization committed to helping individuals with disabilities and their families and the professionals who represent them.

www.Specialneeds.com

This WEB page is a resource for disability information; a special needs project and a unique disability bookstore which has resource books, videos, dvd's and related items.

www.nagc.org

National Association for Gifted Children

Trains teachers, encourages parents and educates administrators and policymakers on how to develop and support gifted children.

OUR SUPPORTERS

Listed below are some of the foundations and organizations that have supported our mission and vision since 2001!

- Campaign for Human Development
- Church of the Holy Family, Hebron
- The Society of St. Edmund
- The Catholic Foundation, Diocese of Norwich
- The Doug Flutie Foundation for Autism, Inc.
- The Groton Education Fund
- The Ruth Sanger Conant Trust
- The Dime Bank Foundation Fund
- The Sullivan Foundation
- The Blessing Fund, Dominican Sisters of Ohio
- The Intensive Education Academy
- Middletown ARC
- The Knights of Columbus Council #1943
- The Knights of Columbus, Conn. State Council
- The Knights of Columbus, Our Lady of the Lakes Council and Our Lady's Shrine Council
- Wal-Mart
- Pfizer Volunteer Grant
- Sacred Heart School Parent Guild

NEWSLETTER/CONTRIBUTIONS

(Please Circle)

Name: _____

Company: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

E-Mail: _____

Amount: _____

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