



CA DEPARTMENT
OF EDUCATION
STATE
SPECIAL SCHOOLS

Braille Bites

California School for the Blind

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Superintendent's Message

By: Sharon Sacks

This has been an exciting and eventful beginning to the 2017-2018 school year. This issue of *Braille Bites* will provide you with insight into the creativity and innovation that takes place on our thriving campus. **CSB** has many new and talented staff members who bring a wealth of skill and energy to our school.

CSB plays a vital role in reaching out to school districts. Our Summer Academies and Short courses are examples of innovative programs. This summer **CSB** sponsored five summer academies including a computer technology camp, a fine arts academy, two technology academies, sports camp, and a living skills/orientation & mobility academy. Just recently, **CSB** completed its first short course, Build a Better Burger. Learn about all the great skills students acquired by attending these programs.

CSB students became investigative reporters during our 2017 Extended School Year Program. Each class researched a variety of topics and issues. They did hands-on research in the community, used the Internet to learn more about a topic of interest, interviewed businesses and companies, and published a newsletter. Read about students' experiences at NASA, the Tri Valley Voice, and Lake Elizabeth play areas.

September and October have been busy months at **CSB**. Read about the school's Homecoming Dance. Also, learn about all of our amazing activities that took

place during White Cane Day 2017 including a concert by Nova Cain, a blind rapper, and our own Donte Murphy. **CSB** Parents & Friends Association & the California School for the Blind Education Foundation raised over \$5000 for its second White Cane Day Walk-a-Thon. Thanks to all for supporting **CSB**.

Congratulations to Donte M. for taking 3rd Place in the American Printing House for the Blind Insights Art Competition. Read about Donte's art and other students who participated in the competition. Also, in this issue you will find a beautifully written essay by Athena S.. Her essay describes her strength and passion that makes her an amazing young woman.

As many of you know, I will be retiring in December. This will be my final *Braille Bites* Introduction. **CSB** has been my love and my passion. I can't think of a better place to work. Each day I learn from our students, and I value each staff member for his or her support and professionalism. As a school, we have worked hard to improve communication, increase enrollment, enhance academic achievement, and be a strong resource for every student who is blind, visually impaired, or deafblind throughout California. It has been an honor to serve as **CSB** Superintendent.

Look Who's New!!!!



**Max
Avendano**
Transition Teacher



**Ale
Bezdikian**
Education Teacher



**Kate
McGrath**
Transition Teacher



**Raquel
Gonzalez**
Teaching Assistant



**Karen
Payton**
Office Technician



**Gloria
Casillas**
Business Manager



**John
Smith**
Custodian



**Chelsea
Dimyan**
APE Teacher



**Melissa
Flushman**
MST



**Scott
Jaffray**
AT Teacher



**Maria
DiBernardo**
Education Teacher



**Laurie
Estridge**
School Psychologist

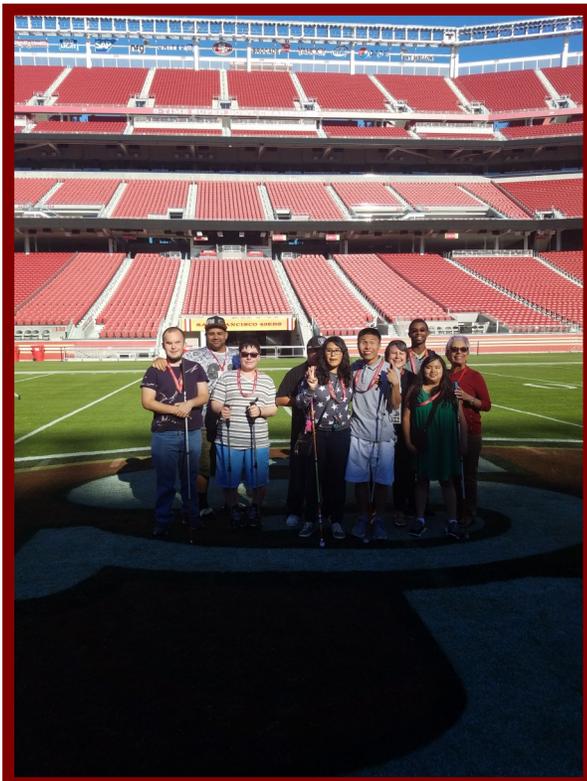
Levi's Stadium Tour

By: Christian R. & Billy L., Students

On October 23, 2017, our class traveled to Levi's Stadium, home of the San Francisco 49ers.

While we were at the stadium we took a class and got a tour of the stadium. During the class we were able to feel and try on the different equipment used in today's football games. We came up with ideas on how to improve football equipment for the weather and for player safety. We

got to compare and contrast the difference between football helmets today versus those used in the 1930s. The football helmets used in the 1930s were made of leather and didn't offer much protection.



During our tour we visited the sustainable garden at the top of the stadium which was such a shock. Only big corporations are able to rent the garden during a football game. We went to the very bottom level of the stadium and entered one of the club restaurants and it led to the outside sidelines on the field. Coach Matt told us he had a surprise for us and that was we were actually able to walk onto the football field! We took a group picture at the 50-yard line and then we walked towards the end zone and celebrated as if we actually scored a touchdown. We traveled back to **CSB** all tired and worn out.

White Cane Day 2017

By: Kylie Bennett, O&M Instructor

This year's White Cane Safety Day celebration was a two-day event. Festivities kicked-off with an evening concert by NovaCain, a blind rapper, with **CSB**'s very own Donte Murphy and Wayne Siligo opening the show. The next day, October 18th, NovaCain imparted wisdom about succeeding as a visually impaired individual to **CSB** students and visitors from local school districts. Students then rotated through hands-on stations focusing on the history of the white cane and white cane law, self-advocacy, and art/cane decorating. Students then walked or danced their way down the red carpet during the decorated cane fashion show. A special BBQ lunch was served outside and then the whole school headed to Lake Elizabeth for our 3rd annual Walk-a-thon! Students were cheered on by volunteers as they walked or ran around the course (or a little bit of both). Water aid stations were set up around the course, and Erin Ingenthron photographed the event. The mayor of Fremont, Lily Mei, showed up to show her support! Thank you for all the parents and families that showed up to participate, and thank you to everyone who helped make White Cane Day a success!!



2017 APH Insights Art Competition

By: Minda Tayam, Art Teacher

Donte M. has won a 3rd place award in the 2017 Insights Art Competition, held by the American Printing House for the Blind. More than 370 pieces were entered this year. Works are chosen “on the basis of originality of concept, expressive use of media, and artistic excellence”. His ceramic sculpture, titled “Donte Watching Cleveland vs. Warriors Basketball”, depicts Donte seated in a chair facing a flat screen TV. Beside him is a small table with a TV remote and a bowl of snacks (painted orange for hot Cheetos). The ceramic pieces are arranged on a white pedestal. Donte’s artwork was recently purchased and displayed in the annual APH exhibition in Louisville, Kentucky. Congratulations, Donte!



CSB Visits NASA Ames Research Center

By: Jose D-P, Student

This is Jose D-P. reporting on NASA's visit to **CSB**, and **CSB**'s visit to NASA. NASA stands for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. It is a government agency that was created by Congress in 1958. NASA's mission is to explore space and aeronautics, or flight research. NASA is also responsible for making sure that the United States space program is conducted for peaceful purposes that can help mankind. The head of NASA has to be approved by the government. The president can give NASA directions, like when NASA was first instructed to land on the moon or build a space shuttle.

I learned that planets have different weight masses. I also learned that Earth, the Moon and Mars have craters. The craters were made by asteroids from space. NASA told **CSB** that on the 21st of August there is going to be a solar eclipse. In the Bay area, people will see a partial eclipse that starts at about 9:00 a.m. and lasts until around 11:30 a.m.

I got to feel a space suit at the Ames Research Center, and it felt like leather. It also felt very heavy. I got to look at different things in the gift shop, and I got to explore different types of keychains. There was also clothes, space candy and there were space rocks. They felt rough. At the end of the visit they allowed us to take some astronaut food home as a souvenir. It was freeze dried ice cream. It was good.

I enjoyed this trip because I met the people that work there and they are so nice. I highly recommend this as a future field trip. You will learn a lot of interesting stuff. This concludes my report on NASA.



Summer Academies at CSB

By: Scott Smith, Teacher

This past June, **CSB** offered six Summer Academy programs for students age 8 through high school. Almost 60 students came from around California to participate in one or more fun-filled weeks, focusing on aspects of the expanded core curriculum. Courses included emergency preparedness, sports and fitness, use of technology, programming skills, music, and drama. This February we will announce our upcoming courses for Summer Academies 2018. Watch our website for descriptions of those courses and how to begin registration. For more information, please contact our Short Course Coordinator, Scott Smith at ssmith@csb-cde.ca.gov or (510) 936-5527.

Paddle boating at Lake Elizabeth

By: Ms. Hody's class

Our class went paddle boating at Lake Elizabeth on July 19, 2017. We rented the boats and reviewed the safety rules at the Visitors Center. The staff was very friendly. They helped us put on our life jackets and got us into the boats from the docks. The life jackets are for safety just in case someone falls out of the boat into the water. Life jackets keep you afloat. Four people can fit in a boat; one person must be 16 or older. When reflecting on his paddle boat experience, Riley said, "What was very interesting for me was when we were getting in the boat the dock moved. Maybe some little waves were under the dock. I was surprised that I could touch the water from the boat."

Xavier reports, "I liked it very much. You pedal the boat like a bike, and that's what makes it go. It was hard for me to reach the pedals, but I still love you, Paddle Boat!" Tony really liked paddle boating too, "It's an awesome activity to do with a friend. Without teamwork it would be more difficult to pedal."

The class agreed that paddle boating is good exercise. If you work out hard enough you can even enjoy some ice cream at the snack bar afterwards, just like we did!



Preparing your best burger - Short Course

By: Scott Smith, Teacher

Almost invariably, the applications students submit to attend short courses, indicate 'cooking skills' as an area of need. During the week of October 23rd, five high school students were at **CSB** cooking up a good time in the short course, Preparing Your Best Burger. This course went way beyond preparing some frozen hamburger patty. A few culinary highlights: The students created their own patties by first grinding meat from a chuck steak; by cutting the steak into sections and feeding them into the grinder. They cooked up their own barbeque sauce. They prepared hamburger buns from scratch. All while learning safe techniques with kitchen tools and how to safely use an oven.

We contrasted our own cooking with a field trip to a local McDonalds where they received an idea for what it's like working in the fast food industry. During the week they also studied from an online course to complete their Food Handlers Certificate (FHC). The FHC is the national requirement for anyone working in the food industry. It is the same certificate that our own **CSB** students earn in order to work in the Rocket Shop.

Yum. That was a tasty short course.



7 Keys to Success

By: Athena S., Student

Wanna know the secrets to success? Can't tell you unless you read this essay!

In order to have a professional career, you first have to become a professional student. To me, a professional student is someone who is not only a student of school, but a student of life. They are willing to let life experiences shape them as well as academic ones. To help people develop qualities that will make them most successful in life, psychologists came up with a list of traits I like to call, the "Seven Keys to Success." These traits include; optimism, curiosity, and social intelligence. While I agree that all of these qualities are important to our society, I believe the trait that will get me the farthest in life is grit.

Grit is the ability to work hard and persevere, even if it seems like all odds are against you. For example, two years ago when I was struggling, it was grit that helped me be successful on the swim team. I also use this trait in academic situations. For instance, I often struggle when I study, so it takes a lot of perseverance to complete my homework. Grit has gotten me through many tough situations in my life, and I hope this information will help you get through one of your own.

As a student who embodies ambition, I hope to achieve my goal of becoming a psychologist. I have always been interested in how the mind works, so I thought psychology would be a good career option to look into. The main purpose of a psychologist is to help people resolve problems or conflicts that they may be going through. However, this is a tough profession to get into. To become a licensed clinical psychologist takes 5 years of college for your undergraduate degree, plus another 4 to 7 years of graduate school for your doctorate degree in psychology. I will have to work harder than ever to both achieve my goal, and earn a scholarship to college. The average annual salary of a psychologist is \$84,328. But I'm not just in it for the money. I want to work hard for a good cause, to help others around me.

Ever since I was a little girl music has been a big part of my life. One artist that really inspires now is Alessia Cara. In her empowering song titled "Scars to your Beautiful", she talks about how everyone is beautiful and how you should always be proud of who you are. This song was written with the intention of breaking down old ideas that you have to look a certain way to impress society. That brings me to the trait I would like to work on which is social intelligence. A large part of social intelligence is being self-confident in social situations. You should be able express yourself and be who you are no matter who you're talking to! People like other people who stay true to themselves. Social intelligence is a very important trait to possess. You can't go through life without knowing how to behave around other people. But I am often quite shy, and don't talk to people I don't know. As I go through High School I hope to develop a better understanding of self-confidence and social intelligence.

Even though there are "Seven Keys to Success", I believe that grit will get me the farthest in life. If you have grit, you can succeed in anything you put your mind to; you can become a professional student. Everyone had to start somewhere. Becoming a professional student leads to a professional career. Our society is made up of thousands of people all over the world who have professional careers. By working hard and becoming the best person you can be, you will become an important part of our society.

WHAT'S COMING UP AT CSB?

November: 20th - 24th - Thanksgiving Break

December: 13th - Winter Concert Matinee 1:30 pm

14th - Winter Concert 7:30 pm

22nd - January 5th - Winter Break

January: 15th - Martin Luther King Jr Holiday

17th - Winter Ball



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