

# the Advocate

Summer 2014

A Christ-centered resource that supports children with learning needs.

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**Save The Date!**




**BUILDING  
a BRIGHTER  
FUTURE**

September 21, 2014  
at  
Historic Trinity Lutheran  
Church in Detroit

## Wow! This Has Made All The Difference

If there is one thing that God has equipped all our of teachers with, it is passion. If you ever meet [Patti Stone](#), you'll know that she is no different!

Wow! I was recently asked to write a "Wow Story" for LSEM. It took me by surprise. It is always so much fun to read about the successes of our wonderful LSEM colleagues and now I have a chance to share a little bit about what we've been doing here in North Texas and...gosh, what can I write? As I said, "Wow!"

It occurred to me that most of these stories focus on the teacher helping the student become more productive in their area of learning difficulty. I'm going to take a different approach. **You see, I really believe that students, parents, teachers, principals, administrators, and community members working together to make learning a lifetime opportunity have all written my "Wow Story" — and that is what I want to share with you.**

Shortly after retiring in the spring of 2008 after 32 years teaching in Texas public schools, I was approached by a Crown of Life Lutheran School (Colleyville, TX) teacher and parent about an LSEM education consultant position at the PreK-8 school. Tim Walz, our principal at the time, talked with me and arranged an interview with Texas' LSEM Coordinator, Sharon Messmann. I think Sharon will agree with me when I say we hit it off instantly. Our love of teaching special needs children, especially those with reading differences, was the deal-maker.

Sharon has been a great teacher, leader, consultant, and friend. We have studied



*Patti Stone speaking to a group of LSEM teachers*

and learned new and wonderful programs together, including Lexia, which is a pretty remarkable computer program designed to help our struggling readers. "Wow", now that was quite a labor of love that we got to share! What made it so worthwhile was that we continue to see our kids grow and learn from that experience that we shared together.

The rest of the staff at the LSEM headquarters in Farmington Hills, Michigan has helped me enormously during my time here. They have worked endlessly to provide in-service opportunities, materials, and words of encouragement to help my special needs students, teachers, and parents. Their efforts are bolstered by the diligence and unselfish giving of time, talent, and treasure on the part of the Board of Trustees, donors, and other volunteers to the LSEM program.

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# The Road Calls

**T**here's no better time to hit the road than during the Summer. It's a perfect opportunity to get out and meet with people, reconnect and generate awareness to the things we're doing here at Lutheran Special Education Ministries.

Sure, I could send email and chat on the phone, but nothing is more effective than having those face-to-face conversations. So, I've been on the road spreading our news and sharing our accomplishments with the people who have supported us over the years.



It's amazing to hear what LSEM means to these people. I've shared stories and they've shared some as well. You don't really see the impact our ministry has until you really hear about it from the donors and families who support our efforts.

It's great to be able to have this opportunity to engage with our donor families and I'm looking forward to doing more

of it! Earlier in the Summer I had the opportunity to welcome several of our supporters to our annual golf outing. It was a beautiful day and I had wonderful time driving around and chatting with golfers who I may only see once a year, but I know they have LSEM on their hearts all year long.

I'm excited and energized by the enthusiasm that I see in the folks that I've been visiting. The importance of special education in our Christian schools is as great as ever. In fact, some of that enthusiasm shows in the article by one of our teachers, Patti Stone. We were blessed to have her speak at the reception following our golf outing. Her energy is contagious! Please read her story and feel some of that passion. It's an excellent example of what sets us apart at LSEM.

I hope you're having a wonderful Summer and getting out there as well and I pray that you keep LSEM in mind and consider what your donation of money or time could do for our ministry. I look forward to seeing you again very soon. In fact, it's time to leave the office and hit the road...maybe I'll see you there!

Yours in Christ,

  
Jim Krone  
President/CEO

# Ways to Help...

## Pray

Ask God for His grace and love as He works through our teachers, staff, families and children.

## Fundraising

Our golf outing and the Campbell's Labels for Education Program are some of our biggest fundraisers.

## Volunteer

Office tasks, bundling Campbell Soup labels or helping out in the classroom, there are so many ways in which you can volunteer.

**A Special Thank You ...** to Thrivent Financial for Lutheran Macomb-Points Chapter in MI for their grant support that provided funding for materials and curriculum for our "Tools for Success" program!

# Golf Outing Raises Over \$10,000

It was another gorgeous day for the LSEM Annual Golf Outing at Greystone Golf Club. Eighteen sponsors, 10 volunteers and 76 golfers helped us raise over \$10,000! One fortunate raffle winner took home a 4-day camp that was donated by Camp Arcadia.

There were many familiar faces including former executive director, Rodney Rynearson, and former board member, Rev. Wilton Fluegge. Detroit Red Wings anthem singer, Karen Newman, kicked things off with her familiar rendition of the Star Spangled Banner and Patti Stone, an LSEM teacher from Colleyville, TX and the author of the WOW! feature story in this newsletter, shared some of her thoughts and passion during the dinner reception after the outing. It was a wonderful day of golf and fellowship. We're already looking forward to next year's outing!

# Donate

**These donations are vital to the children we serve.**

There are a variety of donations given through:

- general gift
- endowment fund
- honor and memorial gifts
- matching gifts
- planned giving

To learn more, contact our development department at extension 108.

To donate, use the enclosed envelope or visit online at [www.luthsped.org](http://www.luthsped.org).

**THANK YOU!**

# Honor & Memorial Gifts

Honor and Memorial cards are available in our office or in your congregation. Upon receiving your gift, we forward the card and your message to the individual(s) you are recognizing through this donation.



# Join us in "Building a Brighter Future"

In partnership with **Historic Trinity in Detroit, MI**, we are holding our first ever **Building a Brighter Future** event on Sunday, September 21, at the historic church cathedral in downtown Detroit. We're excited to team up with this congregation that has meant so much to the Lutheran community in metro Detroit for so long.

The event will be held from 1:30 p.m. until 3:30 p.m. and tickets are \$20 for adults and \$10 for children. We hope you take this opportunity to visit this historic Lutheran landmark and support LSEM! Tickets are available on our website at <https://luthsped.org/event/143>. For more information you may call our national office at **248.419.3390 x 108** or email us at [lsem@luthsped.org](mailto:lsem@luthsped.org). You may also register by mailing a check to our national office at 30415 W. Thirteen Mile Rd, Farmington Hills, MI 48334. Make sure to put "Building a Brighter Future" in the memo line.



*It was another beautiful day for the annual LSEM golf outing.*



## Volunteer of the Year: Linda Petros

Volunteers play such an important role in keeping our ministry running smoothly. We are honored to recognize a volunteer whose connection to LSEM goes back several years while she was a Lutheran School teacher.

Linda Petros was named our Volunteer of the Year at the Council of Lutheran Women's luncheon. LSEM president, Jim Krone, presented her with the award.

Her passion for teaching and education is what got her involved in LSEM after a 37-year teaching career. In addition to volunteering in the LSEM office three days a week digitizing student records and participating in other projects, Linda has also worked with students in the iCAN Summer Program at Charity Lutheran Church along with volunteer Vicki Marshall. They both attended the LWML Michigan

District Convention to help build awareness for our ministry.

We thank Linda for her continued efforts and support of LSEM. If you would like to get involved and volunteer, please contact us and we can work with you to determine where your gifts and talents may best be used to further our ministry.

*(Top) LSEM President, Jim Krone, and Volunteer of the Year, Linda Petros, at the Council of Lutheran Women's luncheon. (Below) Linda and Vicki Marshall at the LWML Michigan District Convention in Kalamazoo.*



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## Wow! This Has Made all the Difference

Once again, I have to say “Wow!”

All my career I have been given the title and referred to as “teacher.” But I also have another title — “learner.” Teachers never stop learning. My students, parents, teachers, administrators, church and community enlighten me on a daily basis. My experience with LSEM has given me the opportunity to work with and establish wonderful relationships with many professional staff members at Grapevine-Colleyville Independent School District (GCISD). Together, we have been able to expand the special services programs through Project Child Find. As education laws change frequently, I have learned to monitor and adjust in order to acquire

“I think anyone who has ever taught children will agree that the greatest learning experiences come from our students.”

services for our students at Crown of Life. GCISD has provided speech language pathologists, diagnosticians, occupational therapists, and emotional/behavior counselors for our special needs students and more.

“Wow!” Thank you, Gracious and Merciful Father, for these wonderful community members and the work they do in our school and in our community.

I think anyone who has ever taught children will agree that the greatest learning experiences come from our students. Each day we get to see our children grow and learn — from those with the

brightest minds to those whose abilities are challenged in some way. We ourselves are challenged to learn and understand how they learn and understand. We are constantly assessing whether programs and educational materials are appropriate for a given student. Along the way our students are teaching us about themselves, their likes and dislikes, talents, and families. Over the past six years at Crown of Life, I have learned more about than I ever thought possible. And again I say, “Wow”!

At an early age I realized I was very fond of working with children. I knew I wanted to be a teacher. In fact, one of my greatest influences was a very dear music teacher and choir director. He had us perform from a poem written by Robert Frost, *The Road Not Taken*. Of course, I didn't know it at the time, but I understand now how that poem speaks to us, not in the beginning of our careers, but at the end. In the poem, we get the sense that the traveler at the fork in the road sees the decision he must make at that moment to be a defining moment in his life. In reality, it is many years later that he comes to realize the importance of the decision at that fork so many years ago.

As teachers we won't always know that the road traveled will be the right road until many years later. It is when that child who struggled so much in school, now grown with children or grandchildren of their own, sees you somewhere and comes up to you just to say “thanks.” And all you can say is, “Wow”!

That, my friend, has made all the difference.



Check out our new  
iCAN video at  
<https://luthsped.org/i-can>

One small flame is capable  
of shedding so much light.

## Growing Expectations in 2013-14!

**Goal 1:** Directly serve **1,000** children.

2013-14  
**1,486**

**Goal 2:** Serve **3,000** children through evaluation and consultation services.

2013-14  
**2,037**

**Goal 3:** Provide information about special learning needs to **1,000** parents and professionals.

2013-14  
**2,183**

## Learn More and Stay Connected

Are you receiving our specialized e-newsletters?

in your  
**Profession**

in your  
**Church**

in your  
**Classroom**

in your  
**Home**

Our teachers, directors and staff are continuously writing and sharing useful content surrounding special learning needs. We currently have a number of content-rich e-newsletters that we send to parents, teachers, education professionals and churches. Be sure to check out and sign up for these valuable resources on our website at [www.luthsped.org](http://www.luthsped.org)!