



The Advocate

for Students with Special Learning Needs

Summer 1998

FOUNDED 1873 • Formerly Lutheran School for the Deaf

Volume 67, Issue 3

Editor's note: In celebration of our 125th Anniversary, we're offering a special three-part series in The Advocate, "Lutheran Special Education Ministries: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow." This is the second installment.

In this issue, we'll explore what happened to change Lutheran School for the Deaf into Lutheran Special Education Ministries; we'll see again how God uses events to lead His people into a broader mission.

“Beyond Lutheran School for the Deaf”

by Sandra Eggers

The Lutheran School for the Deaf celebrated a century of God's grace and blessings. During the 1973 celebration, the centennial capital campaign raised \$1 million in funds to further support the school.

However, only two years later, the Deaf School was about to drastically change.

In 1975, President Gerald Ford signed into law a bill mandating that all school districts provide a “free and appropriate education” for all children, no matter their handicap. There was also a movement in education to mainstream handicapped children into the regular classroom. In addition, since fewer and fewer children were being born deaf because of advances in immunization, the school's enrollment dropped 61.4% from previous years, to 44 students. Through these challenges, God was again leading His people in another direction.

In 1976, Lutheran School for the Deaf opened enrollment to hearing children with learning disabilities



LEFT: Lutheran School for the Deaf, c. 1970.

Notice the large, box-like hearing aids. You can easily tell they are deaf.

Below: Lutheran Special Education Ministries, 1997. Students with special learning needs at St. Stephen's Lutheran School in Waterford, MI. Their special needs are hidden ones.

(also called “special learning needs.”) By 1979, the school had begun its first satellite program for these children, at Holy Cross Lutheran School in Detroit.

Then in 1984 another first: in-school programs were expanded outside Michigan, into northern Illinois. Also that year the school expanded its help to congregations, by establishing a program called the Ephphatha Institute (now Ephphatha Center.)

While the ministry had changed, the name had not. So in May 1990, at the annual meeting of the Association of Congregations,



delegates voted to change the corporate name from “Lutheran School for the Deaf” to “Lutheran Special Education Ministries.”

The next year the ministry
(Continued next page)

May We Help You?

If you know of a child who seems to be struggling in school or Sunday school, we can help you:

- Find Christian educational resources to help this child.
- By answering questions you may have about special learning needs.
- By offering you an opportunity to help us help a child with special learning needs.

Just call or write:

Lutheran Special
Education Ministries
6861 E. Nevada Ave.
Detroit, MI 48234
Voice: 313-368-1220
Fax: 313-368-0159

Would You Help Us?

One thing that we need above all else is prayer - for our ministry; for all the children we serve and for all the children we have yet to serve. Won't you be our partners in ministry by praying for us?

Thank you. And may our Lord Jesus Christ continue to strengthen and to preserve you from this day forward. Thank you. For celebrating with us, for celebrating 125 years of serving one child at a time.

Did You Know?

We serve children whose needs include: mental impairments (retardation); hearing impairments (deaf); attention deficit disorders; emotional impairments; cerebral palsy; traumatic brain injuries; and being slow learners.

The Hidden Disability

Special learning needs have sometimes been called the "hidden disability." Unlike blindness, deafness or a physical disability, you can't look at a child and see a special learning need.

However, just because you can't see it doesn't make it less real.

Through research, there is new evidence that suggests some special learning needs - like dyslexia - may

be caused by an abnormality that triggers the brain's electrical impulses to fire differently than they do in a brain of a non-dyslexic.

There is still so much to understand about special learning needs . . . and so many children to help. Through God's grace - and your partnership - we will continue to "enable children with special learning needs to receive a Christian education."

"Beyond Lutheran School for the Deaf"

(Continued from front page)

established in-school programs in New York.

Now no longer a residential school, Lutheran Special Education Ministries didn't need its vast building complex of 90,000 square feet resting within 20 wooded acres in the heart of Detroit. It was time to sell.

After several years of prayerful searching, President Roger DeMeyere and the board of directors found a buyer: Cornerstone Schools. This organization provides a Christ-centered education to children living in Detroit, many of whom are from disadvantaged backgrounds. Demand for this education was so great that all three of their schools were full, with even more students waiting to enroll.

To meet the needs of these children, the leaders of Cornerstone knew they needed a place that would not only provide classrooms, but also provide playground space. The ministry's Detroit campus met their needs just perfectly. And the ministry's needs were met perfectly,

too. Lutheran Special Education Ministries would still have offices in the building and - most important - the original vision of the ministry's founders was kept intact, that Christ Jesus be served through serving His little lambs.

On February 10, 1997, Lutheran Special Education Ministries sold the Detroit campus to Cornerstone Schools. Later that year Lutheran Special Education Ministries expanded its in-school programs yet again, into Indiana.

Now in 1998, we celebrate 125 years of God's grace and blessings. As we touch our past, we remember how God has sustained us for 125 years. As we embrace the future, we walk in faithful confidence that our God will continue to care for this ministry, as we care for His special young lambs.

In the next issue of The Advocate, we'll share with you our vision for the future, where and how we will serve these children in the 21st Century, God willing. Don't miss this exciting installment.



Around the Ministry

Illinois

by **Jim Krone, Director**
Illinois Programs

As the 1997-98 school year comes to a close and we look forward to the new school year, I think of all the possible opportunities God will give Lutheran Special Education Ministries. To prepare for these opportunities, we are:

- Hiring new teachers.
- Exploring new geographical areas.
- Educating and enabling schools and congregations to support our mission of guiding children who have special needs to Christ.
- Acquiring needed resources for our professional staff.
- Training our teachers in up-to-date strategies and techniques.
- Staying up-to-date with state and federal guidelines.
- Hiring more support staff to ensure proper organization and communication with teachers, principals, parents, pastors, schools, and congregations.

Even as we strive to grow, we recognize what truly matters is the children whom we can lead to Christ and our continuing to do God's work in God's way.

Have a blessed summer.

Indiana

by **Valerie Hughes, Director**
Indiana Programs

There are now three "I's" in "Indiana." Yes, that's right, three, *tres, drei, 3*.

Now, before you think I'm an awful speller, let me explain.

The three "I's" in Indiana that I'm talking about are: Initiative, Impact and Identity. These three "I's" have shown up in abundance in our Indiana programs.

INITIATIVE. Our LSEM-Indiana

teachers aren't afraid to take the initiative and to advocate for the special children they serve.

IMPACT. In the 1997-98 school year we served more than 300 students; conducted more than 10 workshops and expanded five programs.

IDENTITY. Our names are Dana, Diana, Teri, Jan and Valerie. We are all Christians who desire to faithfully use our unique gifts so that Indiana children with special learning needs receive a Christian education. Although this is reward in itself, every once in awhile we'll even get a hug from a principal or a thank-you from a parent.

As we prepare for the next academic year, please pray that God continue to empower us so that even more Indiana children with special learning needs will receive a Christian education.

Michigan

by **Kathy Krause, Director**
Michigan Programs

As another academic year draws to a close, Lutheran Special Education Ministries celebrates with those students at life's crossroads. Some students are moving into a high school setting, like Jason and Nathan; some are traveling on to college, like Kristin; and some will be placing their hats in the employment arena.

We are thankful for the opportunity to be a part of their lives, helping each individual to grow academically while in the loving arms of a Christian school. Although we often speak of educational adaptations, techniques, and strategies, our ultimate goal is to equip these children with the saving knowledge of their Lord Jesus for a lifetime of living.

So to these many students and especially to Kristin, Jason and Nathan, we pray that educational lessons have been well-learned . . . but pray even more fervently that spiritual strength is solid within your heart and will remain with you forever.

New York

by **Paula Rosen, Director**
New York Programs

The good news of Lutheran Special Education Ministries is out! In May I met with two groups of Lutheran school administrators. One in Baltimore, MD and one in Buffalo, NY. Both groups were interested in how we can help their schools "enable children with special learning needs to receive a Christian education." These sensitive and caring Christian educators are already trying to serve children with a wide variety of needs. (During the trip to the Buffalo area, I also made a presentation on ADHD (Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder) to about 20 teachers and administrators.)

May the summer be a renewal of God's wonderful bounty: the fragrance of the flowers; the endless array of colors covering the landscape; the sweetness of the fruits and vegetables and the warmth of God's love on your face and heart.

Ephphatha Center

by **Lisa Krenz, Resource Specialist**

Here are two books that I have found to be excellent resources and would highly recommend for personal or professional libraries. They are both available from Free Spirit Publishing (800/735-7323.)

Parenting A Child with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder by Nancy S. Boyles, M.Ed. & Darlene Contadino, M.S.W. This book is a very positive look at the complicated task of parenting a child with ADHD. It gives many practical strategies for dealing with a variety of issues ranging from dealing with school professionals to discipline to helping your child identify their own strengths. The authors are both educational professionals as well as parents of children with ADHD.

Teaching Kids with Learning Difficulties in the Regular Classroom: Strategies and Techniques Every Teacher Can Use to Challenge and Motivate Struggling Students by Susan Windebrenner. This book delivers exactly what it promises. A great source of practical strategies backed up by proven research and academic theory. Regular educators or special educators would both find a wealth of ideas in this comprehensive volume.

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Address corrections requested

Their Future is Bright – Because of YOU

by Gregg Braun, Development Director

Children who have special learning needs are now getting a Christian education – because of you. Through your prayers and your gifts, you have given them a real chance to know Jesus as their Savior and to lead productive lives. So thank you – very, very much.

But what happens to them when God calls you home? Will there be other friends to take your place to support these kids?

Possibly. But it's not a sure thing – unless you help make it one.

How, you might ask.

By remembering Lutheran Special Education Ministries as you plan your estate.

When you include LSEM in your estate, you know that you'll be helping children with special learning needs to receive a Christian education. You will be equipping them for a lifetime and

for an eternity. That's a very satisfying feeling.

And you know something else? When it comes to charitable



deductions for estate and gift taxes, there are no restrictions on the percentage of your gift. This frees you to be the best steward of all of God's gifts to you, even after you're called home.

As you decide how your estate will be distributed, why not consider dividing it equally among your heirs and LSEM? (Just a little note: There are many other ways to specify how your net assets will be distributed. Please consult your tax advisor for

information that fits your situation.)

To find out how you can include LSEM in your estate plan, just write to me or give me a call:

Gregg Braun
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Lutheran Special
Education Ministries
6861 E. Nevada
Detroit, MI 48234
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I'll be glad to help you make sure that these kids will continue having a bright future in Christ.

The **ADVOCATE** for Students with
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—USPS 150-480

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