

The Advocate

"Enabling children with special learning needs to receive a Christian education since 1873."

Spring-Summer 2001

Lutheran Special Education Ministries

Volume 70, Number 2

Success: One Child at a Time

Editor's Note: As the school year draws to a close, Lutheran Special Education Ministries teachers are sharing some of their success stories. The words and pictures presented here feature the achievements of just a few of the more than 3,000 children the ministry has served during the 2000-01 school year. We have been asked to protect the identity of some students, so, in those cases, we have not used their real names.

By Karen Anspach, St. Peter Lutheran School, Macomb, Michigan

A young second grader, we'll call her Andrea, seemed to have difficulty with word recognition and decoding. Although she was a very cooperative student, she struggled in this area and needed additional help and support. She began working with the Lutheran Special Education Ministries resource room teacher.

Andrea began receiving instruction in spelling, English and reading, and slowly her decoding skills improved. By the following year, her spelling skills improved enough so that she was able to reduce the time she spent in the resource room.

Over the next year, her skills in reading



Lutheran Special Education Ministries teacher Cheryl Saiki works on a classroom project with Zachary, a student at Pilgrim Lutheran School in Chicago, Ill.

and English also improved, and soon she was coming to the resource room only for homework support.

Andrea is in fourth grade now, and has made such progress that she no longer needs special help in the resource room. Her teachers and her family are very proud of her growth and progress.

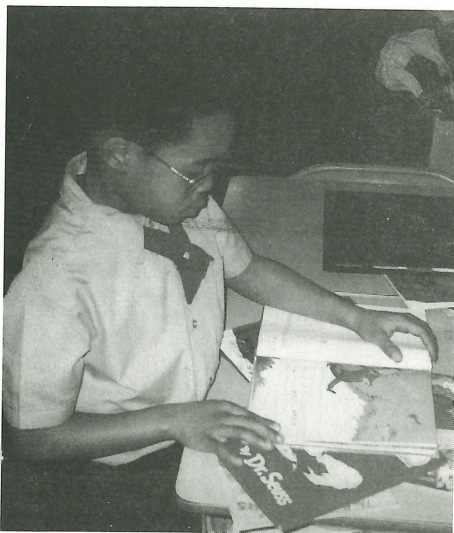
By Cindy Lincoln, St. Paul Lutheran School, Farmington Hills, Michigan

An intelligent, introspective nine-year-old, Donnie is in the third grade. A year ago, when he started classes in the resource room, he could not read at all. Words were

confusing to him. When he would try to sound out words, the ending sound would come first and maybe even last. Many of the sounds were unknown to him; Donnie had very little idea of what the vowels were and their various sounds.

Today, as Donnie nears fourth grade, he is sounding out words, spelling many words with the rest of his class and reading short chapter books. He likes to read sitting under the desk in the resource room – although now it is becoming a tight squeeze.

We praise the Master Teacher for Donnie's success.



Pepper, a Lutheran Special Education Ministries student in Chicago, reads a book during class.



Lutheran Special Education Ministries teacher Michelle Bauer works with Marty, a student at Bethlehem Lutheran School in Chicago, Ill.

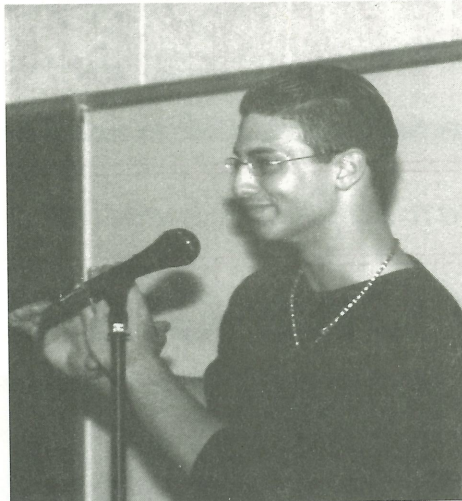
Another Year of Blessings

Reaching out to several thousand children with special learning needs. A balanced budget. Spreading the joy of Jesus Christ.

Put them all together and you have a description of a year full of blessings for Lutheran Special Education Ministries, as presented at the annual meeting on May 9.

Delegates and ministry staff members gathered at Cornerstone Schools in Detroit to learn about the state of the ministry. They also heard a special presentation from a recent high school graduate about how he has benefited from Lutheran Special Education Ministries programs since elementary school.

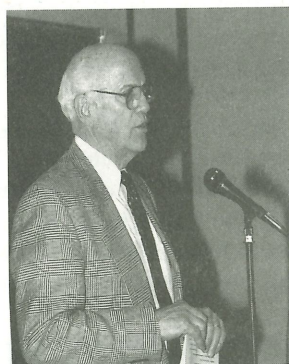
Board of Directors Vice Chairman Rev.



Alessandro "Alex" Morelli, a graduate of Martin Luther High School in New York and a Lutheran Special Education Ministries student since elementary school, tells the annual meeting attendees how important his resource room classes have been to him.

children to date. We are thankful to be able to serve so many, but we know there are so many more children with special learning needs who need our programs. We have had inquiries about establishing programs in Texas, Florida, Oregon and Colorado, so there are many possibilities for the future of this ministry.

"We pray that we can continue to reach out to children not only in established areas,



Lutheran Special Education Ministries board member Rev. Lawrence Kinne prepares to offer the annual meeting closing prayer.

but also in new regions. I believe that one day in the future, God willing, this ministry will reach far beyond where it is today and it will serve children throughout the United States and beyond."

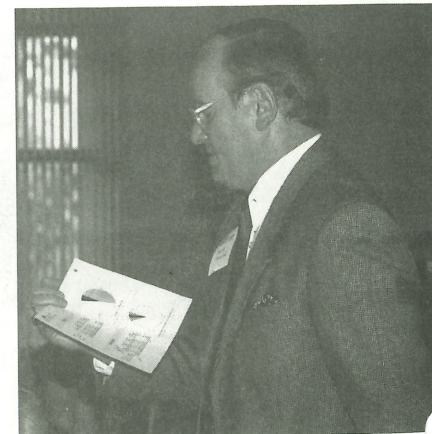
DeMeyere also announced the promotion of Susan Lewis to director of ministry programs for the Midwest Region. She has been with Lutheran Special Education Ministries for 10 years, and served as interim director of the Midwest Region during the 2000-01 school year.

For many delegates, a highlight of the evening was getting to know Alessandro "Alex" Morelli, a graduating senior and resource room student at Martin Luther High School in Maspeth, Queens, N.Y.

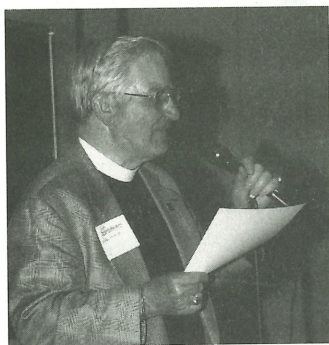
Morelli was introduced to the gathering by Northeast Region Director Paula Rosen, who has known him since he was in elementary school and entered the Lutheran Special Education Ministries program.

"Alex has a tremendous desire to learn and is a wonderful success story for our programs," Rosen said. "He has a very supportive mother, who has worked very hard to see that Alex received the help he needed early on in his schooling. It's no surprise to me that, in spite of his learning challenges, he is graduating from high school and will be starting college this fall."

A personable, confident young man with a winning smile, Morelli praised Rosen and Lutheran Special Education Ministries for playing an important role in his education. "I have a problem called dyslexia," he explained, "and if it were not for people like Mrs. Rosen and the other Lutheran Special Education Ministries teachers I've had during my education, I don't think I would have learned to overcome my problem, and I don't think I would be enrolled to start college after high school. I want all of you to know that what you are doing for students like me is more appreciated than I can say. I want to thank you for everything Lutheran Special Education Ministries has done for me."



Board treasurer Ernest C. Fackler presents the Lutheran Special Education Ministries budget.



Lutheran Special Education Ministries Vice Chairman Rev. Wilton H. Fluegge conducts the 2001 annual meeting.

Wilton H. Fluegge conducted the meeting, during which three incumbent board members — Donald Rutter, Karen Russell and Terry Davis — were elected to new terms.

Board of Directors Treasurer Ernest C. Fackler presented the budget for 2001-02. A balanced budget of \$4,013,000 was proposed to the delegates, who approved it unanimously. Fackler noted that the ministry's income for program fees now is 48 percent of the budget, indicating that the number of programs has risen significantly enough during the past several years to make fees the largest portion of income for the ministry.

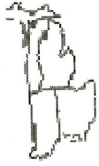
Lutheran Special Education Ministries President and Chief Executive Officer Roger DeMeyere spoke about the state of the ministry, indicating that income for 2000-01 is lower than projected. "The year could end at a deficit," he explained, "because investment income is less than expected due to current market conditions. ... Timely, large checks have resulted in budget surpluses for the past three out of four years. With God's help, perhaps it will be four out of five."

Turning to ministry programs, DeMeyere said, "We have served well over 3,000

Around the Ministry

Great Lakes Region

By Kathy Krause, Director



As the school year draws to a close, we look with joy at all the Lord has accomplished in the Great Lakes Region.

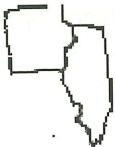
Programs at partnership schools both in Indiana and Michigan increased and flourished under the watchful eyes of our most capable teaching, support and administrative staff. The children truly have been blessed!

We are especially thankful for the initiation of early intervention programs, which are designed to assist young children who are at risk for reading difficulties. This first year has shown a real sense of commitment from our regular education counterparts and a desire for us to work with them to impact the reading of all children.

We thank God and give Him the praise for all the progress. We pray for His continued vigilance as we do His will...in His way...in His kingdom.

Midwest Region

By Susan Lewis, Director



Just as the seasons change in the Midwest, so we, too, experience change within the school year. Ecclesiastes reminds us that there is a season for every purpose under heaven.

This is the time when teachers look at implemented plans and measure the progress students have made during the school year. Based upon their growth, plans for the students' educational needs are made for next year.

In retrospect, this school year has been a fruitful one. More than 1,200 students in our region have been helped with special learning needs in their Christian school setting. What a blessing to be a part of it!

God continues to bless our ink jet cartridge recycling efforts during its inaugural year. About 70 organizations and individuals across the country help us in this endeavor. It's a good feeling to know that we are taking care of God's earth while supporting the children in our classrooms. Join us as we praise and thank God for the opportunity He has provided to Lutheran Special Education Ministries this school

year to further His kingdom for His special children.

Northeast Region

By Paula M. Rosen, Director



It's an exciting time. We have five seniors in our program at Martin Luther High School who are graduating in June. All five have been part of our resource room for the last four years. One of the students, Alex Morelli, was a speaker at the Lutheran Special Education Ministries annual meeting in Detroit.

Our teachers have been administering mandatory state assessment tests in the elementary schools. These tests create great stress for our students, and our wonderful, kind and sensitive Lutheran Special Education Ministries teachers are great gifts to these children.

Paula Rosen presented a workshop entitled, "All God's Children Are Special" to five groups of teachers and administrators at the Lutheran Schools Association Early Childhood Conferences in New York and New Jersey. Paula also led a parenting session called "Win the War, Lose the Battles" for parents from Trinity Lutheran Church and School.

Angela Lucas joined our faculty in March as the resource room teacher at Holy Trinity Lutheran School, Hollis.

Northcentral Region

By Dennis Senne, Director



The time and effort devoted to "planting seeds" and developing relationships since Lutheran Special Education Ministries was established in the

Northcentral Region has led to many blessings. We have had partnerships with two schools during the current school year. Through these programs we serve eight students on a daily basis, and 44 other students benefit from consultations.

We have two new schools signed on for next year - Concordia Academy High School, Roseville, Minn., and St John's Lutheran School, Maple Grove.

The need for a special education programs in this region is clear. We have made 12 presentations to parent-teacher league meetings this year, and 14 education-related presentations.

It continues to be a joy to participate in a program that provides so many challenges, opportunities and blessings every day.

Southwest Region

By Laura Sauer, Director



The words of the common doxology, "Praise God from whom all blessings flow," ring true in our region. They speak so beautifully of Lutheran Special Education Ministries' first year in the Southwest Region.

Some of His blessings are: three dedicated teachers; more than 55 students served through consultation or direct teaching; three workshops presented at two district teacher conferences; six teacher in-service presentations given to aid general education teachers; five current partnership schools, and three new partnership schools for the 2001-2002 school year; sharing the good news of forgiveness every day in children's lives.

As we begin our second year of ministry in this region, we are seeking more teachers. Please pray that God would direct us to find workers to continue serving His children.



Four of the Lutheran Special Education Ministries regional directors attended the recent annual meeting. From left are Paula M. Rosen, Susan Lewis, Laura Sauer and Dennis Senne. Kathy Krause was unable to attend the annual meeting due to the birth of her first grandchild, Abby Grace.

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Honors for Northeast Region

The Lutheran Special Education Ministries northeast region director and a northeast region partnership school recently received some noteworthy honors.



Northeast Region Director Paula Rosen has been named this year's recipient of the Distinguished Service Award from the Lutheran Schools Association (LSA) of the Metropolitan New York Area "for her continuing support of Lutheran education and for the many lives she has touched in a positive way." Rosen has been on the Lutheran Special Education Ministries staff since 1991, and is an active member of the association.

During the presentation ceremony in May, Rosen was hailed as an advocate for children and parents, "often guiding them

through the bureaucracy of the Committee on Special Education. ... Her genuine concern and dedication to children with special learning needs permeates all that she does."

Throughout her tenure with Lutheran Special Education Ministries, Rosen has presented many workshops and in-service programs for education professionals. Most recently she was invited by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Non-Public Education to be part of a panel discussion in Washington, D.C., at the National Summit on Shared Implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. The presentation, "Consideration for Students with Disabilities in Non-Public School Settings," will be in June.

Martin Luther High School in Maspeth, N.Y., a Lutheran Special Education Ministries partnership school, was one of five Lutheran High Schools to receive the

prestigious Christus Award from the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LCMS) Congregational Services - School Ministry. The award is presented annually to recognize excellence in Christian education. Dr. Ross Stueber, LCMS school ministry interim director, presented the award at the annual Martin Luther High School auction on April 28.

The outstanding feature that set Martin Luther above other Lutheran high schools vying for the award was the Lutheran Special Education Ministries resource room for 20 students with special learning needs.

Credit Card Program Ends

Due to cost constraints, Lutheran Special Education Ministries no longer is accepting donations by credit card. The ministry began subscribing to MasterCard and Visa to provide an easy method of for contributors to make their gifts. However, due to the low number of supporters choosing to make donations by credit card and the administrative cost involved, Lutheran Special Education Ministries has ended its association with the credit card companies.

The ministry staff regrets any inconvenience this may cause those donors who preferred to donate via credit card, but believes that this is the most cost-effective decision and the best way to be good stewards of the resources God provides through the generosity of its supporters.

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