



A Time To Grow: In The Florida-Georgia District

Once again we realize God's perfect timing as Lutheran Special Education Ministries reaches out to children with special learning needs in the Florida-Georgia District.

On February 1, 2006 Rev. Dr. Gerhard C. Michael Jr., President of the Florida-Georgia District, and Dr. Roger DeMeyere, President/CEO of Lutheran Special Education Ministries, signed a Consortium Agreement that will open the doors of schools and congregations to children with special learning needs.

This agreement allows Lutheran Special Education Ministries to partner with the Florida-Georgia District in order to serve children with special learning needs in Lutheran and other Christian schools. We will work with the schools to establish and administer special education programs and services.

Lutheran Special Education Ministries will also work with pastors, directors of Christian education and volunteer Sunday school and Bible school teachers to provide resources to

assist children with special learning needs in congregations.

Our statement of ministry (*below*) will continue to be the foundation on which to serve children in the Florida-Georgia District and beyond. Founded in 1873, Lutheran Special Education Ministries has helped thousands of children to know Jesus and to lead fulfilling lives. But there are tens of thousands yet to be served.

Today one in five children has a special learning need, and that number continues to rise. Mark Brink, Executive Director for School Ministries in the Florida-Georgia District, has expressed that the need for services in the Florida-Georgia area are great, and the opportunities numerous!

For more information, or if you are interested in services, you may contact the national office at 888-488-LSEM (5736).

To God alone be the glory!

Statement of Ministry



"With the knowledge of God's love and the desire that God's love be revealed through our ministry, Lutheran Special Education Ministries serves to enable children with special learning needs to receive a Christian education."



teachers in California.

The letter beautifully captures what we pray about daily, that we might make a difference in the lives of the children we serve.

I share this letter with you that it may bless and encourage you as it has me.

I also take this opportunity to thank Michelle Finch and the hundreds of teachers who have worked for Lutheran Special Education Ministries over the years. LSEM has been incredibly blessed with teachers and staff who are exceptionally gifted. And much more. They have huge hearts for children and the Lord! I pray their joy may be complete.

*Dr. Roger DeMeyere
President/CEO*



Jessica Porter

"Without Michelle Finch I would still hate school and think I was stupid. Michelle helped me understand the ways I learn best. Because of her I am more confident in school and no longer feel like the stupid kid in class."

Beautiful Blessings!

December 20, 2005

Dear Roger DeMeyere,

I am writing this letter to let you know what a blessing Michelle Finch has been to my child Jessica Porter. Jessica was in the 7th grade at Christ Lutheran School in Palos Verdes last year when she first met Michelle Finch. I was extremely grateful when Karen Miller her 7th grade teacher identified her learning issues and gave Jessica the opportunity for some additional assistance at school. Every year I debated whether I should take her out of school because she struggled so much and fell so behind everyone else.

Every visit throughout the year with Michelle was a monumental event with my daughter. Jess was 12 at the time and struggling in school and felt very inferior to her friends who were usually "A" students. Michelle was instrumental in changing that around. She explained to us what her issues were and how special she was for the talents she did have and used those talents to work with her in learning her lessons.

Michelle found very creative ways such as when she taught Jessica sign language to help her learn her scriptures. She worked hard with her other teachers to reduce the amount of work she had that had been keeping her up past 11:00PM every night since the fifth grade. She worked with her teachers to give her verbal tests instead of the traditional written. She would usually receive a D-F on her written tests and A-B on her verbal tests. I was at wits end before Michelle and Lutheran Special Education Ministries came into our life. My daughter and I struggled nightly to get through the assignments and it was actually causing her physical illness because of stress.

Now my daughter is a very, very happy and confident child. She knows she is not stupid and clearly understands her learning issues. She is a very talented actress, singer and dancer. Some of her accomplishments last year included: First place Science Fair, second place Writing Contest, became a certified Hospice Volunteer, performed in 6 musical theatre productions with a local conservatory and performed and competed with a well known dance team. Michelle even took time out of her personal life to attend three of her productions this past year.

The only reason Jessica returned to Christ Lutheran this year was because of Michelle and the opportunity Christ Lutheran gave to Jessica. Once I was assured Michelle would be able to work with Jessica again this year it was a done deal. Her grades have improved tremendously and all of her teachers have been a blessing to work with around Jessica's learning difficulties and performance schedule.

Because of what your program has done for my child, I have decided to contribute to your ministries through payroll deduction in which my company will also match my contribution. I hope you can continue this program to help kids like Jess who are just different and need another opportunity to learn other than the standard school environment.

Thank you for doing what you do.

Sincerely,

Cheryl Porter

Gobbledygook

Imagine my surprise when I typed the word “gobbledygook” and my spell check did not pick it up. You guessed it; “gobbledygook” is a word!

According to the *Franklin Covey, Style Guide*, “gobbledygook is a language that is pompous, long-winded, and abstract that is unintelligible. Some dictionaries trace the term to the verb gobble, describing the sounds made by turkeys, and it is tempting to believe that writers of gobbledygook, resemble this Thanksgiving favorite.”

Now imagine a child with a special learning need. An education can be a difficult journey. Words are a confusing jumble of letters, and math a series of numbers that don't compute. That would seem like gobbledygook too don't you think? But we can help!

Currently Lutheran Special Education Ministries services 72 partnership schools across the country which serves approximately 1,025 students with a variety of special learning needs.



LSEM Teacher, Jill Lubbers, pictured here working with one of her former students, Jordon Closson on long and short vowels. This teaching technique reinforces Jordan's learning by blowing into the tube for a long vowel, making the tube long, and not blowing in the tube for a short vowel keeping the tube short.

education” has developed a negative connotation over the years and he thought that it would be easier for kids (both those coming to the Resource Room and other kids who are wondering what the Resource Room is for) if they changed the name to *Lutheran Extra Educational Support* instead. I like that name because that is exactly what the LSEM Resource Room is all about! It provides extra support for students who need it for a variety of reasons.

Recent research show that more and more students could benefit from a measure of extra support early in their schooling. Children may struggle with learning due to many factors including immaturity, early childhood illnesses (especially chronic ear infections), lack of experiences, emotional trauma (death, divorce or abuse), in addition to

Our current **Programs and Services** include the following service options:

- 📖 **Monthly Consultation Support Services**
- 📖 **Consulting Supervision**
- 📖 **Integrated Teacher/Consultant**
- 📖 **Instructional Consultant**
- 📖 **Resource Support Services**
- 📖 **Self-Contained Special Education Classroom**
- 📖 **Resource Room**

LSEM also has available a brochure series entitled “*Learning Differences in the Church.*” This series was made possible by a generous gift from LWML to support congregations and families in helping children with special learning needs.

For more information on LSEM Programs and Services, please contact one of our Programs and Services Directors:

Kathleen Hodges
888-488-LSEM

Sue Lewis
708-209-3344



Together we can enable children with special learning needs to receive a Christian education, and that's not “gobbledygook”!

Grace Lorano
Administrative Assistant

Connected

By: Jill Lubbers, Trinity Lutheran School, St. Joseph, MI

One of my students recently suggested that LSEM (Lutheran Special Education Ministries) should change their name.

The words “special

physical or academic difficulties. Researchers indicate that if a child is a poor reader at the end of 1st grade, and is not given adequate assistance, the probability that they will remain a poor reader by the end of 4th grade is 88%. In another study it was noted that 74% of children who are poor readers in 3rd grade remain poor readers in 9th grade.

Early intervention is critical and effective because there is less to “catch up” in the early grades than later as the gap becomes wider and wider. According to the NICHD Branch of the National Institutes of Health, it takes 4 times as long to positively intervene in 4th grade (2 hours per day) as it does to intervene in late Kindergarten (30 minutes per day).

LSEM is concerned with the needs of all children. There are currently programs that are being developed that would reach many students (those with or without a “disability”) through short term early intervention. LSEM will continue to be committed to serving students who need long term support to be successful.

Thank you for your continued prayer and financial support. You are God's hands and feet to these children.



† Making an Impact

how long Lutheran Special Education Ministries (LSEM) has been impacting the lives of children.

Last year, I had the opportunity to attend a convention. While I was manning my booth, I observed a man staring at the presentation board. I could tell he was trying to figure out who we were. So I approached him and simply said, "Lutheran School for the Deaf"; and his eyes lit up and he responded, "That's it." He then proceeded to share a story with me of how he was in the military some 60

years ago and was traveling from Lincoln, Neb. to Detroit, Mich., when a group of very young men who were hearing impaired, joined him on the bus in Chicago, Ill. He shared that he was able to communicate with them and learned that the young men were returning to the Lutheran School for the Deaf following their Christmas break. The storyteller continued, "Even though the students were leaving their families, they were very excited and happy to be going back to school in Detroit."

The gentleman truly enjoyed sharing this story with me and declared that he has never forgotten the experience and the impact the children had on his life. I then proceeded to share the story of Lutheran Special Education Ministries' growth and transition to where we are today.

Time does pass, but we keep on "Making an Impact" in the lives of children, parents, and just ordinary people traveling from one place to another, but perhaps in planes today rather than buses. That is the reason LSEM continues to provide opportunities for individuals and organizations to partner for LSEM's growth. Without your ongoing support, we would not be the only national Christian special education program existing in the United States today!

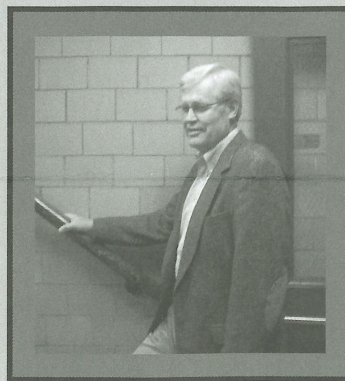
So when you receive information from us asking that you prayerfully consider a financial gift, we ask that you remember what your gift does and please know your gifts and prayers are definitely "Making an Impact".

Gene Kuebler
Vice President, Development

WELCOME



Christina Erban
Development Counselor
Chicago, IL



Dennis Senne
Development Counselor
Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN

Please *welcome* our newest members of the LSEM development ministry team. Christina and Dennis are excited about their new positions and having the opportunity to meet with you - our ministry friends. Dennis has worked with LSEM since 1999 as Regional Director in MN, and Christina began in 2005 as support staff in IL. May God bless their service to children with special learning needs.

Vision...

Reach
Serve
Enable



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