

TOP 15 REASONS

THE LEARNING ACADEMY WORKS!



HAPPY BIRTHDAY GBTLA...
CELEBRATING 20 YEARS
OF SERVICE IN 2006!

WHY YOU SHOULD ENROLL YOUR CHILD IN THE SATURDAY SCHOOL LEARNING ACADEMY

OUR PROGRAM...

1. Is conducted in **TWELVE CENTERS** in Montgomery County Public School (MCPS) high schools that are clean, safe, and convenient to public transportation.
2. Is closely **ALIGNED WITH THE MCPS CURRICULUM**.
3. Serves **CHILDREN OF ALL AGES**, grades 1 through 12.
4. **FOCUSES ON CORE ACADEMIC SUBJECT AREAS** and basic skills.
5. Has a very **LOW TUTOR TO STUDENT RATIO** — the Learning Academy's target is one tutor for every three children.
6. **INCLUDES ALL MATERIALS** at no additional cost.
7. Is both **STRUCTURED** to ensure that students spend a maximum amount of time boosting their reading and math skills, and is **FLEXIBLE** to allow tutors to tailor their tutoring to the individual needs of the students.
8. Has a **HIGH RATE OF SUCCESS** — over 70% of our students leave the program at or above grade level in reading and math.
9. **MENTORS STUDENTS** to help them gain the self-confidence, motivation, and focus they need to succeed in school.
10. **EMPLOYS CERTIFIED, EXPERIENCED MCPS TEACHERS** who use effective instructional strategies and are trained in the MCPS curriculum.

In Her Own Words...



ERNIKA QUIMBY is a freshman at Washington University in St. Louis, majoring in Biology and Pre-med. She is a graduate of Sherwood High School.

"I have always recognized the importance of education, and have shown it by maintaining a 4.0 GPA throughout high school, as well as being a National Achievement Finalist, AP Scholar with Distinction, and a Maryland Distinguished Scholar.

Of all my extracurricular and personal activities, the one that allowed me to help younger students understand the importance of education was one of the most meaningful to me. This was my fourth year as a volunteer tutor at the George B. Thomas, Sr. Learning Academy at Sherwood High School. Since I began tutoring in the program as a freshman, I have tutored sixth graders, high school students, and first graders.

Just one day with the students, witnessing their eagerness to learn beyond the standard school time, was more than enough to make me consistently look forward to waking up early an extra day each week. When children came to me, absolutely beaming for remembering a certain math problem or vocabulary word that we went over the week before, my return smile was full of genuine pride for their accomplishments. I was proud because, after we had been together for a while, they enthusiastically repeated the program's motto, "I believe in me!"—and meant it."

"For twenty years the Learning Academy has provided a valuable service to the children and families of Montgomery County. The tutoring and mentoring program provided by the Saturday School has played an important role in motivating and encouraging students as they develop their academic potential."

Dr. Jerry D. Weast
Superintendent
Montgomery County Public Schools

THE GEORGE B. THOMAS, SR. LEARNING ACADEMY,

A tutoring and mentoring program for the children of Montgomery County, Maryland

I Believe in Me!



- 🍏 MORE HELP
- 🍏 MORE TIME
- 🍏 MORE RIGOR
- 🍏 MORE PRAC-

The George B. Thomas, Sr. Learning Academy, Inc. is a non-profit, tax-exempt section 501(c)(3) organization and a member of the United Way. To make contributions, select organization #8291.



SATURDAY SCHOOL PROGRAM
EXTENDED DAY / AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS

11. **MAINTAINS CONTACT WITH YOUR CHILD'S SCHOOL AND TEACHER** so we know exactly what help he/she requires — in terms of academic and behavioral needs.
12. **CLOSELY MONITORS YOUR CHILD'S PROGRESS** to assure that improvement is taking place.
13. **TEACHES TEST-TAKING STRATEGIES AND SKILLS** to increase students' success on standardized tests and school tests.
14. **INCLUDES FAMILIES** as a critical component to success.
15. Has been working in Montgomery County for the past 20 years and has a well-established **PARTNERSHIP WITH MCPS**.

EXECUTIVE STAFF

Dr. George B. Thomas, Sr. — President & Chairman
Mr. Michael A. Thomas — Executive Director
Ms. Cynthia A. Rattley — Director of Programs and Services
Dr. Johnnie E. Harris — Special Assistant

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PARTNERS IN THE PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE



ESTABLISHED IN 1986 BY
THE MU NU CHAPTER OF
OMEGA PSI PHI FRATERNITY, INC.

THE GEORGE B. THOMAS, SR. LEARNING ACADEMY, INC. (GBTLA)

GBTLA MISSION

To accelerate students' mastery of academics; specifically reading, language arts, and mathematics.

HISTORY / BACKGROUND

The GBTLA was established in 1986 by members of the Mu Nu Chapter of the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity as the Olney Saturday School. Recognizing a growing need in the community, the founders of the program focused on helping youngsters who needed additional academic support in order to be successful in school. The first GBTLA site, that operated from 1986 to 1994, began with 21 students and 19 volunteer tutors who met on Saturday mornings at the day care center at the Housing Opportunities Commission in Olney, Maryland. The program celebrates its 20th year of operation in 2006 and is expected to serve approximately 3,600 students at the twelve sites throughout Montgomery County.



PARTNERS

- Montgomery County Public Schools
- Montgomery County Government
- Inter-Agency Coordinating Board (ICB)
- Higher Education Institutions
 - Bowie State University
 - Montgomery College
 - Towson State University
 - University of Maryland Shady Grove
 - University of Maryland College Park

- Housing Opportunities Commission (HOC)
- Mu Nu Chapter, Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc.
- Montgomery County Public Schools Retired Association
- Montgomery County Business Roundtable for Education
- Montgomery County Education Association (MCEA)
- Asian American LEAD
- Project CHANGE (AmeriCorps)
- Tennis Education and Mentoring Tennis Program
- NAACP
- Faith-Based Organizations
 - Zion Baptist Church

The Learning Academy is appreciative of the funding and support from the County Government and the Montgomery County Public Schools, and also from the foundations, corporations, and individual donors who contribute to the work of the

THE SATURDAY SCHOOL PROGRAM

The tutoring and mentoring support provided by the GBTLA Saturday School Program helps students build a strong academic foundation and positive self-esteem. The students' increased confidence and heightened awareness of "what is possible" encourages them to reach for higher goals and to accomplish more than they ever thought possible. The low student to tutor ratio and the constant encouragement and reinforcement provided by the Saturday School give students the boost they need to succeed.

On Saturday mornings, lead tutors (certified teachers) and volunteer tutors, work with students on core academic subjects and teach successful learning / study strategies. Lead tutors are staffed at a ratio of one lead tutor for every twelve students. Lead tutors serve as teaching models to the volunteer tutors to assure consistency in the delivery of the academic assistance to students. Because the lead tutors are familiar with the curriculum of the Montgomery County Public Schools, they help volunteer tutors gain an understanding of the curriculum so that all tutoring is in alignment with what is being taught in the classroom.

The GBTLA insists on consistency among the Saturday School centers. At every site, the program opens with a 30-minute motivational session, including both students and parents, to prepare children for learning. After this, students break into small, grade-level groups and go with their tutors for 45 minutes of academic support in reading/language arts and 45 minutes in math. In addition, test-taking skills are incorporated throughout the tutoring session. Because the needs of high school students are usually more specific than those of the younger students, they work with tutors on specific concepts or courses for the entire 90 minutes.



Interested in being a volunteer with the GBTLA? Please call 301.320.6545 for more information.

CURRENT SATURDAY SCHOOL CENTER LOCATIONS

- Sherwood High School (1994)
- Springbrook High School (1996)
- Paint Branch High School (2000)
- John F. Kennedy High School (2001)
- Northwest High School (2002)
- Montgomery Blair High School (2002)
- Gaithersburg High School (2002)
- Wheaton High School (2002)
- Albert Einstein High School (2004)
- Watkins Mill High School (2004)
- Magruder High School (2005)
- Rockville High School (2005)

EXTENDED DAY / AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS

The GBTLA Extended Day / After School Programs focus on improving students' mastery in core academic areas: math, English, science, and social studies. The programs are designed to address the needs of students at the secondary level by providing academic support that helps students prepare for the **High School Assessments (HSAs)**, SATs, and the Maryland State Assessments. The goals of the Extended Day / After School Programs are aligned with the MCPS secondary school improvement targets: completion of Algebra by grade 9, enrollment in at least one Honors/AP Course, completion of Geometry by grade 10, and increasing the graduation rate.

The program is also designed to help students advance towards higher academic achievement in Honors and AP Courses and encourage them to apply to higher education pursuits. After school programs, held during the school week and focused on middle and high school students, will be more appealing to this age group and provide them with the opportunity for general academic, SAT, and HSA support.



Research shows that high quality after-school programs have a positive impact in encouraging children and youth to make responsible and constructive decisions. Without structured, supervised after-school activities, children are more likely to engage in inappropriate behaviors. This program will help to constructively fill the after-school hours for participating students.

The GBTLA is pleased to have Verizon Maryland as its partner in providing scholarships to deserving senior student tutors.



GBTLA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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