

Our Children

ELON HOMES FOR CHILDREN

Elon Campus • 201 South O'Kelly Avenue • Elon, NC 27244 • 336/584-0091

Kennedy Campus • 1717 Sharon Road West • Charlotte, NC 28210 • 704/369-2500

On the Road to Success

Kennedy Charter Public School Graduates 9 Seniors, 12 Eighth Graders

Graduation ceremonies marked the end of another successful year for students and staff at Kennedy Charter Public School. KCPS proudly promoted 12 eighth grade students to the ninth grade and graduated nine high school seniors at commencement exercises held at the school on June 7. This was the school's fifth high school graduating class.

While the past year was filled with hard work and achievement, the future holds still more challenge for the students. Christina Vickers will be majoring in nursing at NC Central. Pleshette 'Sky' Sherrod is working full-time but hopes to attend a two or four year school in the future. Marquis Cumberbatch will be attending the Art Institute of Charlotte. Maureen Collin works at a veterinarian office and wants to attend vet tech school. Maria Swengbe will be attending Livingstone College; she is undecided on her major. Alexis Ford will be a freshman at Johnson C. Smith University, majoring in business. Tierra Lewis is working full-time. Pearlina Rorie and Brittany Lindsay are undecided on their future plans.

After all the graduates had crossed the stage and received their diplomas, a number of outstanding students were recognized during the annual awards ceremony. Certificates were also presented to Elon Homes staff, parents



*L to R: Alexis Ford, Pearlina Rorie, Maria Swengbe, Brittany Lindsay, Tierra Lewis, Christina Vickers, Maureen Collin, Pheshette 'Sky' Sherrod
Not Pictured Marquis Cumberbatch*

and community volunteers who had provided outstanding support to KCPS throughout the school year.

The faculty annually selects two exceptional students: Most Outstanding Student and Most Improved Student. Donté Clements was chosen Most Improved Student. Donté was new to KCPS and worked hard to increase his achievement levels in all his classes. He also devoted himself to being a positive role model. Frendisha 'Fendi' Davis was also new to the school and from the beginning demonstrated excellent academic achievement and behavior.

She was on the A/B honor roll all four quarters and attained a 95% average on her daily behavior points sheet. Fendi was honored as the Most Outstanding Student of the year.

Congratulations to Donté and Fendi and all the students for their hard work, achievements and contributions toward making the 2005-2006 school year a success. Elon Homes wishes the graduates success in all their future endeavors.

The school hosted a luncheon in the cafeteria for students, family, guests, faculty and Elon Homes staff following the morning program.

From Your President



Former Speaker of the House Thomas O'Neill was quoted as having said that "all politics is local." He was careful to not get too carried away with being in

Washington or on the international political stage without first and foremost serving the people who elected him to be there. In child welfare, I think we could perhaps say that 'all child care is local.' What I mean by this is that a child in our care is from a family that is 150% below the poverty level and who has been certified by the department of social services as having been abandoned, abused or neglected. This child (not by his or her choice) is therefore part of the national, state and county systems of child welfare. The funding for care, and the plans of care, for this child are partially driven by each of these three very large government systems. And, as in any bureaucracy, the systems sometimes confuse, confound and conflict both the child and the care givers like Elon Homes for Children. The constant and deepening reforms (funding cutbacks) of the systems themselves make this process even more challenging.

At a recent meeting of our board of directors we had several of the children in our care come and speak or visit with the board members. On occasions such as this one we have the opportunity for our 'global visionaries' who set agency-wide policy and deal with all the systems of child welfare (present and future) to hear from

the actual children in care. At this particular meeting we were visited by two infants and their foster parents and one teenage child in residential care and his volunteer mentor. Each of these folks is a testament to the strength and value of human life as well as the complex circumstances of the human condition. But it was a very moving and personal reminder that when we talk about child welfare we are talking about flesh and blood human beings in a very fragile and uncertain state. It was a good reminder that we need to pause and reflect that this 'business' is 'very local' and not just about funding streams and regulatory orders.

This edition of *Our Children* contains some very good news about our growth and service to more children in need. The need for what we do, and what our colleagues do across the country, is (sadly) growing in terms of children in need and for expanded services to these children. At the same time there is less and less government funding to accomplish the task. But we are well prepared to meet the challenge when we remember the call to us is to work diligently, one child at a time. Thank you, our 'local community,' for your support and assistance in this most important service to each and everyone of our children. We need you and they need you.

Blessings,

Frederick G. Grosse
President

OUR MISSION

For the youth entrusted to its care, Elon Homes for Children offers

**SAFE HAVEN
LIFE SKILLS
EDUCATION**

OUR CHILDREN

Published quarterly by

Elon Homes for Children
201 South O'Kelly Avenue
Elon, NC 27244
www.elonhomes.org
Sharon Landis, Editor

Rev. Dr. Frederick G. Grosse, President

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- ❖ Kids Central of the Carolinas, LLC
- ❖ Preparation for Adult Living
- ❖ Family/Therapeutic Foster Care
- ❖ Spiritual Life

Summer RoboCamp Great Motivator for Students

In June, 18 Kennedy Campus students participated in an exciting, challenging and really fun summer camp sponsored by Hope Junction Robotics Academy. Hope Junction boasts a 10,000 sq. ft. computer lab dedicated to serving Charlotte with its quality leadership training, robotics and creative arts programs.

The academy's mission is "to empower the next generation, primarily low income and under served teens, to become productive and high-level market place participants. The Hope Junction after-school/in-school enrichment strategy emphasizes the development of critical technological, leadership and creative skills of area teens, enabling them to become essential marketplace players and community leaders."

The Robotics Camp Program employs a teamwork approach (2 campers/team) for students to (1) design and build robots (2) create a computer program; (3) program robot to react to its environment with touch, light and rotation sensors.

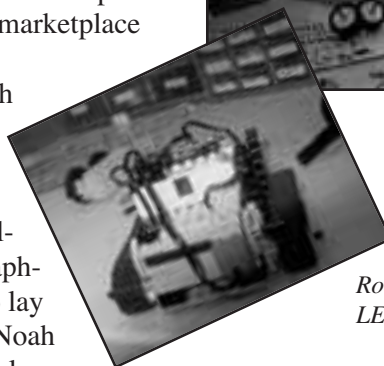
The Hope Junction mission statement also says, "teams of volunteers from the community (engineers, business managers, graphics designers etc.) and partner organizations serve as mentors to lay a foundation for success for the teens." Executive Director Dr. Noah Manyika explains that exposing young people to the program helps them to discover what is possible as they think and dream about their futures, including considering engineering as a possible career. The program has had great success in convincing campers to believe they can achieve at levels to which they had not previously aspired.

Students are also encouraged to assume leadership roles during the camp, at their schools and in their communities. Each day's session started and ended with a 30-minute leadership training program, and students were provided with life coaches to help them develop leadership skills.

Lashonna wholeheartedly agreed that the camp opened up new possibilities for her. She said, "It helps you believe in the things that you do, not just about robots but other things in life. It gives you inspiration for your life, that you really can do many things well." And every camper wholeheartedly agreed Robo Camp was a fantastic experience.



Eddie concentrates on building his robot.



Robots are constructed from LEGO Mindstorm kits.

Elon Homes Again Earns Accreditation

Elon Homes has received confirmation of its re-accreditation from the Council on Accreditation (COA), a national association that accredits public agencies and private providers of child and family services and behavioral health services.

COA promotes best practice standards, champions quality services for children, youth and families, and advocates for the value of accreditation.

The accreditation process includes a twelve month study and a review by a peer professional team. There are only 30 or so North Carolina agencies with this recognition.

"We're very proud to be re-accredited by the Council," said President and CEO Dr. Fred Grosse. "The rigorous accreditation process lets our clients, donors and financial supporters and the community know we provide the highest standard of service and are a well-managed and responsible organization."

Dr. Barbara Tapscott, chair of the board of directors, stated, "We are very pleased to again reach this level of recognition for our agency. This past few years the child

care industry has experienced rapid and significant changes in funding and focus. We have had to close some programs and expand others to meet the needs of both regulations and the children in our care. This year we have increased our service by 40% and grown our net worth to \$27 million. The COA re-accreditation affirms our decisions and our strategic planning."

Recent studies by the U.S. General Accounting Office and COA researchers found that accredited agencies and organizations enjoy significant benefits over non-accredited agencies. Accredited agencies had superior risk management, personnel evaluation and corrective action processes in place - all key requirements for delivering quality services.

Elon Homes will care for about 1,200 children this calendar year living in specialized foster care homes in five counties, in its charter/alternative school in Charlotte, in outpatient mental health assessment/treatment service in three counties and in its 42 bed residential program in Charlotte.

Memorial Gifts

April 1 - June 30, 2006

Names in bold are those being memorialized or honored. Names of contributors follow.

Robert Birney
Threshold, Inc., Durham, NC

Pauline P. Gibson
Ms. R. G. Christopher

Rebecca Murray
Damon E. Woodson

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Mr. & Mrs. Edward N. Gideon, Jr.

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Honor Gifts

April 1 - June 30, 2006

Rev. & Mrs. Andrew J. Bierkan
Elaine E. Sloan

Addie Mae Brooks
Mr. and Mrs. Howard P. Cobb

In Honor of Wedding of
Jim Davidson and Shirley Jones
Myrtle Moss

Lyn Gisclard Findley
Winifred C. Browne

Dolores H. Truitt
Mr. and Mrs. Neil M. Richie, Jr.

Grant Funds Received from Duke Endowment

Elon Homes for Children received approval in June from The Duke Endowment for \$290,000 in grant funds. The money will be used to expand the agency's foster care services in the Triad area, to expand its outpatient mental health services in Mecklenburg and surrounding counties and to scholarship children in need of shelter and education. Established in 1924 by industrialist and philanthropist James B. Duke, The Duke Endowment is one of the nation's largest private foundations. Its mission is to serve the people of North Carolina and South Carolina by supporting selected programs of higher education, health care, children's welfare, and spiritual life.

Are we correctly addressing correspondence mailed to you? Are you receiving duplicate mailings? Would you like additional copies of newsletters? Please call Brigitte McKee (704/369-2507) if you have concerns, questions, suggestions.

Kennedy Charter School Students Earn Trip to Atlanta

Reported by Dena McFadden



Kennedy Charter Public School students and staff pose for group picture to help preserve memory of trip celebrating a successful year of growth and academic progress.

In early June, KCPS took 32 students and 17 staff on the annual end-of-year trip, returning to a student favorite destination, Atlanta, Georgia. Students are selected for the trip based on behavior, grades, state test scores and their positive change in behavior and grades.

Students and staff gathered at 7:00 AM for breakfast in the campus cafeteria before boarding the charter bus to begin their trip. Students used the long ride to serenade staff and one another before arriving at Six Flags White Water where everyone enjoyed water rides including the Tornado and the Lazy River. Lunch in the park included pizza, cheeseburgers and chicken fingers.

From the park, the crowd headed for the hotel and a welcome rest. The tired group opted for Chinese dinner at the hotel before enjoying the pool, weight room or just relaxing.

The second day of the trip started bright and early with arrival at Six Flags Over Georgia just as the park opened. Everyone posed for a group picture before running to favorite rides. Many managed to enjoy most of the roller coaster rides before noon. The new roller coaster, Goliath, was a crowd favorite although some still declared the old fan pleaser, Superman, as their first choice in roller coasters. Goliath with its 200 foot drop and six zero gravity hills is a new design. The lap restraint, instead of the shoulder harness, gives riders the feeling of being out in the open. It gives a new perspective to the old adage "Look, Mom, no hands!"

Students and staff enjoyed a leisurely lunch on the park grounds. As the day at the park wrapped up, most were ready to catch a nap. Pizza was ordered in at the hotel and students and staff again enjoyed the pool or browsing at local shops.

The following day the bus was quiet on the return trip as most students slept after two days of intense activity and excitement. The question on everyone's mind: "How can we top this next year?"



Time to Relink VIC Cards & Kennedy Charter School

Harris Teeter's *Together In Education* program is a fund raising program for schools (preschool through 12). When customers purchase select Harris Teeter Brand products using their VIC card, Harris Teeter contributes a percentage of those purchase dollars to the schools of their choice

To join, simply give the cashier your VIC card and the Kennedy Charter Public School's Together in Education number (5386) before your groceries are scanned. **THIS ONE-TIME SIGN UP MUST TAKE PLACE EACH SCHOOL YEAR.**

You can also sign up on line. Go to www.harristeeter.com, click on Link to Your School and fill in information including the Kennedy Charter School's number: 5386.

Please link your VIC card to Kennedy Charter Public School and beginning August 1, 2006, Harris Teeter will make contributions to the Kennedy Charter School account.



5386

Organization Number

**Don't forget to link our
Together in Education Number to
your Harris Teeter VIC Card and
help us raise funds the easy way!**

A DREAM that came true.....

Reported by Deborah Onqué, Supervisor of Sibling Houses 1 & 2

In November 2004, Elon Homes for Children admitted three frightened and broken children, Jonathan, Angel and Troy. (All names have been changed to protect identities.) The children, now ages 9 to 12, had shared so much of life that the staff at Elon Homes and Mecklenburg Department of Social Services thought they should remain together while in foster care. The children were moved into one of the Sibling House cottages. Elon Homes provides the county's only residential care program that allows siblings to live under one roof. This approach, where siblings share counseling and structured programming promoting emotional, spiritual and mental healing, makes sense to us.

The children had come from a home full of love and commitment and then their father, upon encountering significant difficulties, loss and stress, made some poor decisions that affected his three lovely children.

William, a single father, had successfully raised his children on his own for many years. Now he would temporarily lose his parental rights. His main objective from the outset was to do whatever was needed to get his children back home. This proved more difficult than he imagined. Old patterns die hard and garnering healthy new relationships and community required to effectively make a new life was not easy. With the support of friends, family and Elon Homes staff, William continued to persevere.

While the children were in care they experienced setbacks, disappointments and heartbreaks. Elon Homes provided them with therapeutic groups such as recreational, individual and group therapy. These services offered them the support and guidance they needed to help them cope with the separation, grief and heartache they experienced while waiting to be reunited with their dad.

William began receiving individual therapy to address his personal battles and help him conquer his substance abuse issues. Elon Homes provided him the encouragement he needed and helped him develop more effective

parenting skills. In May 2006, Jonathan, Angel and Troy began their journey home and Elon Homes supported them throughout the process. To help the transition go as smoothly as possible, staff transported the children for weekend visits and provided guidance and tools for William in structuring the children's new environment.

Elon Homes also provided beds, linens and comforters to demonstrate our belief that the family truly had a new beginning. These were gifts of love from the agency, made possible by contributions to a family that would not have had this joyful reunion without the help of Elon's compassionate honors. Please remember this family, this organization when you make your next charitable contribution.

Be sure to RSVP to the August 17th lunch where real, life-changing stories like William's will be shared at noon at the Kennedy Campus in Charlotte. RSVP to Elon's Development Director at 704.369.2500 x 512 or Kathy.larson@elonhomes.org

Volunteer Painters Take a Breather on the Sibling House #1 Porch



This team of high schoolers and leaders finished painting the interior of Sibling House #1. A second team finished up the interior of Sibling House #2. Twenty-eight volunteers made up the two teams from the First Presbyterian Church, Allentown, PA. Earlier, a crew of 24 youth and leaders from First Presbyterian Church of Raleigh, NC, had begun the challenging task of giving a fresh coat of paint to the interiors of the Elon Homes sibling homes. The sibling homes, which opened in early 2004, have been continuously occupied providing care for numerous sibling groups and were understandably ready for fresh paint. The CROSS program, a ministry of Myers Park Presbyterian Church in Charlotte, organized the volunteer projects to benefit Elon Homes. The CROSS program, under the direction of April Cranford, hosts groups at the church and plans missionary experiences for them in Charlotte. Elon Homes is grateful to the CROSS program and all the wonderful young people and dedicated leaders who share the love of Christ in this very helpful and most welcome way.

Kids Central Extends Service Through Partnership

Kids Central of the Carolinas, an Elon Homes for Children program, is committed to bringing a wide array of quality psychological services to a desperately under-served at-risk youth population in the Carolinas. Kids Central provides individualized service to at-risk youth and is involved in partnerships across the region including collaboration with the Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (DJJDP). Kids Central Psychologist Becky Smith, Ph.D. details her work at DJJDP:



Becky Smith, Ph.D

I am working in a full-time position in the office of the DJJDP which is located adjacent to the Mecklenburg County Courts. My position is funded by a grant through the Mecklenburg County Juvenile Crime Prevention Council with goals that include the support of community-based alternatives to incarceration and the implementation of strategies aimed at delinquency prevention. Similarly, the primary goal of the DJJDP is to reduce and prevent juvenile crime.

Most children served by the DJJDP are between the ages of 12 and 16 with a small number between 6 and 12. These children come into contact with the agency after being arrested or receiving legal charges. Charges can range from less severe, such as fighting at school or making threatening statements to a teacher, to more severe charges, such as car theft or murder. The more severe charges are presented before a judge to decide sentencing. Less serious charges

or those committed by very young children are considered for prevention-type plans in which children are referred to agencies offering educational programs, community service and therapy.

The DJJDP employs juvenile count counselors who work to assess new charges, refer children for intervention services, monitor children on probation and represent the agency during juvenile court proceedings.

There are several goals for my position as court psychologist: consultation, assessment, referral for services and training. I am available for consultation with court counselors which typically consists of meeting to discuss challenging cases and identify possible interventions for the child. If the counselor or the court finds it helpful, I am available to conduct psychological evaluations. This could include assessment of intellectual or personality functioning as well as the determination of the mental health diagnosis of the child. A written report is prepared for the counselor and the court and includes various therapeutic recommendations. Through these assessments and consultations, efforts are made to refer children to appropriate services available from community-based therapeutic agencies. Finally, I provide training to DJJDP staff around mental-health related issues.

My experiences thus far at DJJDP have been challenging and rewarding, and it is encouraging to see Elon's services extended to a population of children who are often the victims of abuse and neglect themselves and who might not otherwise be diagnosed or referred for treatment services.

Becky Smith, Ph.D.



School Notes

In early June The Elon School held its first public informational meeting for parents interested in the new school scheduled to open in the fall of 2007 with grades 9 and 10. The event was hosted at the Alamance Country Club by Shawn and Brad Smith, Virginia and Hugh Cummings and Janie and David Sellers. Mrs. Smith stated, "As a parent I am excited about this new alternative educational opportunity for our children. The most important thing a parent can do is to match the right educational environment for each child's needs. I'm excited about the unique approach to a complete secondary school education that The Elon School plans to offer for our children."

During the program, which followed a summer buffet, President Fred Grosse introduced Dr. Ned Fox and Jay Lasley to the prospective parents. Dr. Fox, former head of school at Charlotte Latin, will be head of school during the upcoming planning year and assist with the search for the permanent head of school. Lasley, a Burlington native, is a well known and respected educator and successful athletic director and coach. He will be Director of Admissions with responsibility for recruitment and retention of students among other duties. Jay earned a bachelors degree in history from UNC-Chapel Hill and a secondary teaching certificate from Elon University. Both men have begun work on the Elon campus and will be involved in all facets of the start up of the school.

www.theelonschool.org

The Power of Philanthropy



Jane Grosse, VP
Institutional
Advancement

Charitable Gift Annuity Promotes Responsible Philanthropy

The charitable gift annuity is a wonderful way to make meaningful gifts while enjoying income and tax benefits that can also help enhance your future financial well-being. The gift annuity can be a very attractive way to make a charitable gift while supplementing retirement needs over time.

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Tax Benefits Because a portion of your gift annuity will be used for charitable purposes, you are entitled to an income tax deduction in the year of your gift. In addition, for a period of time, a portion of each payment may be free of income tax or taxed at capital gains tax rates that are lower than tax rates on other income. The amount used to fund your gift annuity may also be free of gift and estate taxes. You enjoy income and tax benefits *today* for a gift that you might otherwise have planned to make in the future through your will or other long-range plans.

Increase Your Income In times of lower investment returns, gift annuity payments can be a way for you to generate more usable income. In addition to earnings on annuity funds, gift annuity payments include a return over time of a portion of the amount used to fund your annuity, thereby resulting in higher payments than you might otherwise enjoy.

Consider the effect of a person funding a series of gift annuities with \$10,000 each year for five years:

Year	Annuity	Payment	Tax Free*
1	\$10,000	\$660	\$425
2	\$10,000	\$670	\$435
3	\$10,000	\$680	\$450
4	\$10,000	\$690	\$460
5	\$10,000	\$710	\$480

*May vary with age and other factors.

After five years, the total of \$50,000 in gift annuities will return total annual payments of \$3,410. A large portion of the amount given each year is tax deductible and approximately half of the payments are received tax free for a period of time equal to the life expectancy of the annuitant.

If a charitable gift annuity is of interest to you, we would be happy to provide further information to you and your advisors.



Elon Homes for Children

Jane Grosse, VP Institutional Advancement

- Please send me your complimentary booklet about ways to give and retain lifetime payments, tax savings and other benefits.

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- I understand tax savings and payment rates are based on the age(s) of the person(s) receiving payments.

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