



Turning the Page

TTP Newsletter

February 2010

Volume 8, Issue 2

Despite the snow, Turning the Page is as busy as ever this winter. Community Nights have been a hit this semester, as parents have enjoyed making snacks with their families and discussed raising healthy families. Author Visits are underway as well, and we look forward to the remaining Community Nights. Upcoming events include a George Washington University day for students and their families and a Parent Leadership Conference featuring presentations by parent leaders from each of our partner schools. And don't forget that Carpe Librum is just around the corner!

Carpe Librum Coming Soon

Popular used book sale to reopen in April

Whether you just found out about our [book sale](#) last fall or have been a loyal spring customer for years, we are pleased to reopen our book sale doors in April. With a bigger selection than last fall, we know you'll find countless books to enjoy.

We also need additional book drive hosts, who collect books in their offices, apartment buildings, and other locations. Contact [Chelsea Paige](#) for more information about hosting a book drive.

Leadership Group Meetings

Teacher program grows in new, collaborative, direction

In November, parents at Martin Luther King, Jr. Elementary hosted a "Math Night," leading families in fun games and math contests. This semester, teachers are building upon the momentum generated by the Home School Association as they collaborate to plan a "Reading Night" for families. Teachers have used TTP-led Leadership Group meetings as they plan "Reading Night." Parents have attended meetings to support these efforts as well. The [DC Public Library](#) will be invited to the March meeting to discuss library services that will be made available to families during the event. TTP is excited to see this visible demonstration of school communities working together to support student achievement! In fact, this level of collaboration is the new focus of TTP's teacher [Leadership Group](#) program.

During the 2009-2010 school year, Leadership Group has moved in a new direction to try to reach deeper levels of school and community engagement. Going along with this year's organizational theme of "Walking Together," these monthly meetings with teachers at each school have centered on engaging school parents and working with community partners to



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address school needs. With the new Leadership Group series, “Engaging School and Community Resources,” Turning the Page hopes to link our parent and teacher leaders in order to implement collaborative school-wide initiatives. Teachers are developing and supporting projects with parent teacher organizations as well as developing their own initiatives. Across our seven partner schools, over 85 teachers have participated in fall meetings, totaling nearly 200 hours dedicated to discussing school needs and brainstorming achievable solutions.

School Spotlight: Martin Luther King, Jr., Elementary

Parent investment and teacher ownership shine at King



Martin Luther King, Jr. Elementary School, a community of approximately 400 students in the Congress Heights neighborhood of Southeast DC, has partnered with Turning the Page for five years. The teachers, administration, and parents of King Elementary continue to embrace Turning the Page’s programs with enthusiasm. Seventy-one families attended at least one [Community Night](#) during the Fall series and, despite the cold weather during January and February, attendance has been high during this semester’s Community Nights as well. This is a testament to the investment King’s teachers, parents, and staff have put into the Turning the Page partnership.

This investment extends beyond Community Nights. On February 2nd, eight teachers—representing nearly half of King’s student body—committed their evenings to showcasing their students’ work in Turning the Page’s [Literacy Through Photography](#) program. Despite snowy weather, more than 30 families attended the exhibit and applauded as students in Ms. Kelly Emminger’s first grade class sang an original song about friendship. Additionally, for the second year in a row, sixth grade teacher Ms. h’Enri Whitseyjohnson has dedicated much of the year to guide her class through TTP’s [Community Visions](#) program. She has embraced one of the primary program goals by engaging the parents of her students in every aspect of the program—helping on homework assignments, chaperoning field trips, and supporting their children at the final exhibit opening in the spring. TTP has been gratified to see the high level of ownership of teachers participating in both of these programs.

Parents of King students show similar motivation in partnering with Turning the Page to ensure that the King educational experience is the best it can be. Five King parents attended TTP’s December [Parent Leadership Training](#), their highest attendance level ever. In addition, the Home School Association showed admirable leadership and collaboration working with parents and teachers to implement “Math Night.” “When are we going to have another math night? That was so fun!” exclaimed the lucky MLK student who won an estimation contest. Turning the Page is excited to continue working with King Elementary School and see new projects unfold!



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Child Mentor Spotlight: Angel Cordova

Devoted Child Mentor finds meaningful experiences to inspire him

Community Night after Community Night, volunteers and Federal Work-Study students from all backgrounds are brought together for the pure joy of reading and learning with children at our partner schools. Noted as one of TTP's most valued Child Mentors, Angel Cordova's work continues to be inspired. As a freshman at George Washington University and an International Affairs major with a focus in Environmental Policy, Angel's talent with children shines through at each event. At Community Nights, Angel immerses himself in and concentrates on his duties as a mentor.



Each night, children battle with one another for a spot to work in Angel's group. Aside from his compassion, it is his enthusiasm and positive energy that provide students with rewarding experiences each evening. Angel expresses, "I have noticed that most of the time the kids don't want to read because they don't have confidence in their reading skills. A simple 'nice job reading that' followed by a high five is all the kids need in order to help build the confidence they need to want to read...Nowadays, some [children] have even asked if they can read more! It's the small changes like those that make me happy."

Angel continues to motivate the children he works with, and attributes some of his growing momentum to the experiences gained from TTP. He recalls one of his most memorable experiences, "when I went to an information session for TTP and turned in my application to Song [TTP's Volunteer Coordinator] I said, 'I look forward to working for you,' she corrected me and said, 'you're not going to be working for us, you'll be working with us'...I knew that TTP was going to be a great organization even before my first day of tutoring." For Angel, it is what he refers to as the "TTP atmosphere" that provides him the strength to be passionate night after night. "Every Community Night the VISTAs are always smiling; their attitudes are highly contagious so that means even if I wasn't having the best day, I become happy that I'm surrounded by so many positive people. The VISTAs, the [other child mentors], the parents, and most importantly the kids, we all make Community Nights a success." And though it takes an entire system of support to create a successful Community Night, it is child mentors such as Angel that truly nourish the atmosphere.

To find out more information about becoming a child mentor, contact [Song Nguyen](#).