Preschool Students Discover Nature in Their Neighborhood

Preschool students in MHP’s Play & Learn programs at Amherst Square and Great Hope Homes are taking a step out into the natural wonders of the world. MHP is partnering with the Audubon Naturalist Society to give our youngest residents a chance to experience nature and learn about the environment around them.

For six weeks, the students have been on a journey discovering small plants and animals in their surrounding neighborhood. They discovered flowers and shrubs, mushrooms, spiders, worms, butterflies, and more to help build vocabulary about nature and the environment. By the end of the program the students should be comfortable with exploring nature using their senses of observation, hearing, tactile, and smell.

The collaboration is part of MHP’s Community Life program, which provides educational opportunities and enrichment programming for young learners at MHP properties.

“I have learned that children need to be outside,” said Serenella Linares, Audubon School Program Manager. “With a simple visit outside of their classroom they engage a familiar space in a way that may not have happened before. They learn to be explorers and teach me to be a better observer.” She noted, “Many times students see details that I miss. I have learned to be flexible and allow their surroundings to be incorporated in the lessons.”

The students enjoy observing worms up-close, finding insects and arachnids, touching bird skins, and making bracelets to represent the water cycle process. The Audubon Naturalist Society’s vision is to create a larger and more diverse community of people who treasure the natural world and work to preserve it.
MHP NEWS AND NOTES

Welcome New Staff

MHP is happy to welcome new staff members: Suzanne Williamson, Asset Manager; Charlotte Garvey, Communications and Volunteer Manager; Daniel McLean, Director of Finance; Jamil Bryant, Senior Property Accountant; Chris Gillis, Director of Policy and Neighborhood Development; Fatina Coreas, Community Engagement Specialist; Jordan Leonard and Naudia Porter, AmeriCorps VISTA members in our Neighborhood department; and Julius Williams and Eric Portillo, AmeriCorps members in our Community Life department.

IN THE COMMUNITY

Return of the Apartment Assistance Program

MHP is relaunching the Apartment Assistance Program (AAP), a free service funded by the Montgomery County Department of Housing and Community Affairs (DHCA) to help small apartment (2-50 units) owners increase the quality, safety, and sustainability of their rental properties. AAP provides professional development through educational seminars and technical assistance.

Eddy Campos, MHP’s AAP Specialist, who recently hosted the Building Trade Expo, says the expo is invaluable in connecting owners with free programs and services from the county in one place. “Finding a contractor you can count on and trust can be tough. The expo’s purpose is to facilitate new relationships that will benefit these small owners and ultimately their properties. This improves the quality of life for the owner and their tenants.”

Vendors attending the Expo included Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection, WSSC, Fort Handy Man LLC., Yin Yan Clean and Property Management, GHM Janitorial Services LLC., and Montgomery County Green Bank.

Additional services available to small apartment owners through AAP include seminars, technical assistance, and assistance in preparing rehabilitation loan applications. For more information, contact MHP’s Eddy Campos at 301-812-4147 or ecampos@mhppartners.org.

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IN THE COMMUNITY

MHP Leads Long Branch Group at Community Leadership Conference

MHP’s Paul Grenier led a delegation of community and business leaders from the Long Branch neighborhood to a four-day community leadership conference in Houston.

The national NeighborWorks America organization annually hosts the Community Leadership Institute to provide training opportunities for beginner and experienced community leaders from across the United States. MHP has been collaborating with the Long Branch Business League (LBBL) for several years, working to strengthen the community and improve quality of life by addressing neighborhood challenges, including the short- and long-term impacts of Purple Line construction.

MHP’s delegation included three members of the LBBL—Ada Villatoro, owner of El Golfo Restaurant; Art Cobb, LBBL Secretary; and John Angel, LBBL VP and manager of El Gavilan Restaurant—plus Bruce Baker, President of the non-profit CHEER; and Viktoria Shalaginova, president of the non-profit arts organization Voices-DC. Baker and Shalaginova have collaborated with MHP on numerous community-building projects in Long Branch.

A high point of the conference was the Dorothy Richardson awards banquet, which honored six individuals selected for meritorious service in their home communities. Members of the Long Branch delegation also attended seminars on topics that included “Using Art as a Community Building Tool” and “Working with Faith-Based Institutions in Community Development.”

In years past, delegations received $2,000 grants from NeighborWorks after formulating and submitting a community-improvement action plan. This year the award has been doubled to $4,000. The team spent time in Houston brainstorming about how best to leverage those funds for community-building in Long Branch.

Discover Long Branch 5K

More than 70 runners and walkers came out to enjoy a crisp fall day, get some exercise, and support youth and family programming in the Long Branch neighborhood through the Discover Long Branch 5K run/walk. The event is a joint activity led by the Long Branch Business League and MHP. Participants included Takoma Park Mayor Kate Stewart and Montgomery County Councilmember Tom Hucker. Proceeds will support extended arts and recreation programs. The race is part of larger community-building efforts underway in Long Branch by the business league and MHP.

Glenville Road Fall Festival

MHP’s annual Glenville Road Fall Festival is a community-building celebration to welcome the fall season. This year, residents enjoyed food, music, a moon bounce, games, dancing, and arts and crafts. The event also provides an opportunity to highlight MHP community partnerships. A representative of Manna Food Center provided residents with information about the help Manna offers for those struggling with food insecurity.
**THANK YOU TO 2017-2018 MHP DONORS**  
(as of November 2018)

We couldn’t have done it without you. Thank you for your partnership!

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**Norman Christeller Golf Classic Sponsors, continued:**
UPCOMING EVENTS

Making Children Smile

MHP is dedicated to nurturing and affirming the young people who live in our properties. Before the school year started, more than 400 children received backpacks filled with school supplies. In the months ahead, with your support, we hope to provide children with gifts to celebrate the joy of the holiday season.

From pencils and sharpeners to notebooks and folders, the tools provided through the backpack program helped equip young students with what they need to learn and achieve in the school year.

The program would not be possible without all the supporters and donors who helped bring smiles to our children’s faces. We especially would like to thank Gail Scott-Parizer, Lucy Freeman, Montgomery County Department of Housing and Community Affairs (DHCA), Judy Center, Meltzer/NFP, Torti Gallas, Calvary Lutheran Church, Wheaton-Silver Spring Kiwanis, Colombo Bank, EYA, Enterprise Community Partners, NeighborWorks, and CohnReznick for making it possible.

MHP will continue to play an active role in our children’s development with the launch of the 20th Annual Angels for Children Toy Drive. In partnership with the Wheaton & Kensington Chamber of Commerce and the Wheaton Volunteer Rescue Squad, MHP will help those who are less fortunate in Montgomery County experience the joy of Christmas. We hope you can join us!

All toy donations can be dropped off at Montgomery Housing Partnership, 12200 Tech Road, Suite 250; Silver Spring, MD 20904. Gifts needed include:

- NEW toys, unwrapped. Board games, sports equipment, dolls, trucks, craft kits, books.
- While we get many toys for children ages 4-11, we do not receive many gifts for infants and babies (under 3) and for older kids/teens 12-18. Here are some guidelines for those age groups:
  - For teens, we need gift cards, bath and lotion baskets, jewelry, purses, hat/glove/scarves, small electronic gifts, footballs, basketballs, soccer balls, books/journals, and age-appropriate science and craft kits.
  - For infants, we need age-appropriate toys and books.

- NOTE: No toy guns or weapons can be accepted.

Monetary donations will be used to purchase gifts and supplies and can be sent to Wheaton & Kensington Chamber of Commerce, 2401 Blue Ridge Ave., Suite 101, Wheaton, MD 20902. We also need volunteers to help wrap and sort the gifts, and deliver the toys with Santa on Christmas Eve at 6 p.m. You can sign up to volunteer here: http://bit.ly/Volunteer2018Angels

Please contact Charlotte Garvey, (301) 812-4138, cgarvey@mhpartners.org, to help.

Join A Building Dreams Tour

Have you seen the murals painted by MHP residents or heard about how MHP is making a positive impact on individuals, families, and the communities we serve? Bring a friend and join us for a Building Dreams Tour.

The one-hour tour includes visiting one of our apartments, learning about the community spaces and services we provide, hearing inspiring stories from residents, and finding out about ways to get involved.

Contact Jaimee Goodman at jaimee@mhpartners.org or 301-812-4120 for more information. We are glad to customize a tour for a small group or come to your office.
Girl Scout Helps GATOR Students Explore Science

Senior Girl Scout Beyer Bullard brought engaging science activities to Great Achievement Towards Outstanding Results (GATOR) students at Arcola Elementary School and Pembridge and Amherst Square apartments.

Her goal was to encourage students to pursue careers in science by giving them the opportunity to engage in interactive activities in all branches of science.

The GATOR program is MHP’s innovative afterschool enrichment program provided at MHP’s Pembridge Apartments and Arcola Elementary School in Wheaton for students ages 6-12 years old. The program focuses on strengthening students’ skills in math, reading, and science.

GATOR students at Arcola Elementary learned about how fossils are created and how scientists use fossils to discover how old objects are. The students made fossil molds with sea shells and plaster to take home. They also learned about gravity and air resistance by making air-resistant twirling toys with paper and paper clips. At the end of the session the students learned about science careers in paleontology, geology, and archaeology, with the majority deciding that would like to be archaeologists when they grow up.

At Pembridge, the GATOR students solved a marker mystery using a cup of water, filter paper, one permanent black marker, and one Crayola black marker. In the mystery, they discovered that the filter paper marked with both markers absorbed water, but the Crayola black marker bled several colors such as green, blue, purple, and yellow. They then learned the

MHP Golf Clinic for Youth

At the annual Norman Christeller Golf Classic, MHP hosted a clinic to give young residents at MHP properties the opportunity to explore the sport of golf. Golf professionals taught basic golf techniques and let them swing away on the driving range. For most, this was the first time they ever had played golf, and they enjoyed the sport. “Where I’m from, kids mostly play basketball, soccer, or football. Golf never crossed my mind. It’s really fun,” one participant said. “It’s cool that we got this experience because I’m not sure where else we could’ve learned how to play,” he added.

At its inception 29 years ago, the Norman Christeller Golf Classic provided seed money to start MHP, and today it continues to raise critical funding for our Community Life programs that serve low-income children in Montgomery County. More than 120 business leaders and philanthropists joined MHP to play golf, network, and raise funds to help us continue to support programs that encourage young people to grow up as our future leaders.

MHP thanks all our sponsors for supporting the golf tournament and hopes to continue bringing new experiences to all the children in our communities.

...Continued on page 8
Leaving A Legacy

Honoring the memory and legacy of his late wife Rita, John Morgan, a long-time MHP supporter, recently donated $25,000 to Montgomery Housing Partnership from the Rita Morgan Charitable Trust. Rita and John Morgan raised their five children in Montgomery County. During her life, Rita Morgan was an activist for fair and equal treatment of all citizens. The Morgans were some of the earliest supporters of MHP. Ms. Morgan advocated on behalf of equal housing rights in Montgomery County, and served on the Montgomery County Council Zoning Board of Appeals. She also served as President of Suburban Maryland Fair Housing, a volunteer organization, was chairperson of the Dollars for Democrats Drive, and was a member of the Women’s Political Caucus.

We are grateful to the Morgan family for their long-standing generosity and support.

Girl Scout...from page 7

color black is created using a combination of several colors, and permanent black markers are made with extra chemicals to not bleed.

The students also used a microscope to discover organisms living in a nearby pond. They learned that although the pond water may not seem to have visible animals in it, it is home to many tiny organisms such as Microcystis, Dictyosphaerium, and Cryptomonas that can only be seen under a microscope. While reflecting on their session, the GATOR students discussed science careers. The students left the session aspiring to become scientists and solve problems through science.