

Winter 2010

An e-newsletter published by the Educational Service Center of Cuyahoga County

Educating Serving Communicating

Robert A. Mengerink

Superintendent

Jennifer Felker

Assistant Superintendent

Steve Rogaski

Director of Pupil Services

Bruce G. Basalla

Treasurer

Governing Board

Tony Miceli

President

Carol Fortlage

Vice President

Tony Hocesvar

Christine Krol

Frank Mahnic, Jr.



Educational Service Center
of Cuyahoga County

5811 Canal Road
Valley View, Ohio 44125

(216) 524-3000
Fax (216) 524-3683

www.esc-cc.org

ESC Connection

Editor: Nadine Grimm

Associate Editors:

Jennifer Dodd

Paula Kucinic

with contributions by:

ESCC Staff

Online Learning Consortium: Connecting Districts and their Students to Lincoln Interactive

By Dr. Robert A. Mengerink, Superintendent



As the Superintendent of the Educational Service Center (ESC) of Cuyahoga County, one of my goals is to continue to build partnerships and networks; specifically, ones that will allow us to provide cost effective services and programs that, otherwise for many

districts, may not have been within their reach. This January, the ESC of Cuyahoga County, in collaboration with the ESC's of Lorain County, Geauga County, and Lake County formed a consortium with Lincoln Interactive, providing districts and their students with the opportunity to connect to courses online.

The National Network of Digital Schools, that designs, develops, and delivers Lincoln Interactive courses works with a diverse group of over 200 traditional brick and mortar, public schools, charter schools, private schools, parochial schools and cyber charter schools from around the country. With over 250 courses available, Lincoln Interactive offers:

- Courses for kindergarten and first grade programs;
- Core courses in mathematics, English, science, and social studies for grades 5-12;
- Elective courses in various subjects such as world languages, fine arts, business, technology and multimedia;
- The option of either a "hybrid" or classic format.

In addition, students who are self-motivated, independent or need flexibility in their course schedules, Lincoln Interactive can provide districts with an innovative, effective educational experience while utilizing state-of-the-art technology, an interactive and engaging curriculum, all while under the guidance and support of highly-qualified, licensed instructors. Employing a unique and consistent design model, each self-paced semester Lincoln Interactive course offers students a variety of content supplemented with various activities that include web investigations, podcasts, interactive labs, PowerPoint presentations, videos, songs, and games.

Through this three-county consortium, our objective is to connect districts and their students, provide assistance and support by offering a high quality, cost effective program. If you would like further information about this consortium or Lincoln Interactive and its courses, please contact:

Paula Kucinic
Director of Professional Development
(216) 901-4244 • paula.kucinic@esc-cc.org



Gifted & Talented Consortium News

By Wayne Gibson, Coordinator of Gifted Programs

The Gifted Consortium of the ESC of Cuyahoga County includes 16 school districts from Cuyahoga County. Jim Buzzanco, Stephanie Cutlip, David Dewey, Susan Forbes, Beth Hager, and Pat Rehm, under the leadership of Wayne Gibson, provide a variety of services to area school districts in the area of Gifted Education. This includes interactive sessions for students as well as professional development for teachers and administrators.

Gifted Supervisors from the ESC provide leadership to 14 districts as required by the Ohio Department of Education. These districts receive guidance on curriculum, state compliance, student seminars, gifted student identification, and other duties as assigned by the district to which they are providing service.

Four districts (**Brooklyn, Cuyahoga Heights, Independence** and **Richmond Heights**) have teachers licensed in gifted education under the supervision of the ESC. These teachers are hired and evaluated by ESC personnel with valuable input from the contracting district. Rich classroom experiences are provided by these teachers for the districts' students.

All districts that contract through the ESC for gifted services are offered opportunities through student seminars. These seminars are designed to be experiences that cannot be offered to students by individual districts on a regular basis. A valuable component of these seminars is to allow students from the various districts to interact with each other. This year, the students have been or will be offered the chance to attend:

Equations Competition	Grades 4-8
Orienteering Experience	Grade 7
Arts at the Beck Center	Grade 7
GPS Workshop	Grade 8
Peaceful Solutions Arts	Grades 9-12
Hyland Software Shadowing	Grades 9-12
Student Leadership	Grades 9-12
Town Hall	Grades 9-12

If you have any questions regarding the offerings for students, districts or professional development by the Educational Service Center Gifted Consortium, please contact **Wayne Gibson**, ESC Coordinator of Gifted Projects, at (216) 901-4205 or wayne.gibson@esc-cc.org.

Creativity at Beck Center for the Arts

There were 120 seventh grade students from **Independence, Richmond Heights, Westlake, North Royalton, Fairview Park and South Euclid - Lyndhurst Schools** that attended the Beck Center for the Arts program on March 18.



Students participated in hip hop, improvisation, clay, classical voice, acting on the screen, drums, and cartooning.



Gifted & Talented Consortium News

ESC Equations Competition Draws more than 160 Students

On Tuesday, January 26, ten area schools brought more than 160 students to the ESC of Cuyahoga County's Equations competition. The event took place at the Harry E. Eastridge Professional Development Center and featured some of the brightest 8-14 year olds in our region.

Equations is a very challenging game played in classrooms around the country and teaches students the critical problem-solving abilities needed to recognize and apply fundamental concepts. It creates a rich problem-solving interaction filled with complex strategy, bluffing, and intrigue.

Wayne Gibson, ESC Coordinator of Gifted Services, said the kids always like to get together with each other and challenge other school districts in this academic competition.

When the competition concluded, first place was awarded to **Westlake City Schools**, second place was awarded to **Bedford City Schools** and there was a tie for third place between **Rocky River City Schools** and **Fairview Park City Schools**.



Westlake

Division award winners were:

4th and 5th Grade Teams

First Place: Fairview Park Team 2

Second Place: Cuyahoga Heights Team 1

6th Grade Teams

First Place: Bedford Team 3

Second Place: South Euclid-Lyndhurst Team 2

7th & 8th Grade Teams

First Place: Westlake Team 3

Second Place: Garfield Heights Team 4

Also, many individuals were recognized for individual achievements.

Participating schools included:

Bay Village City Schools

Bedford City Schools

Cuyahoga Heights Local Schools

Fairview Park City Schools

Garfield Heights City Schools

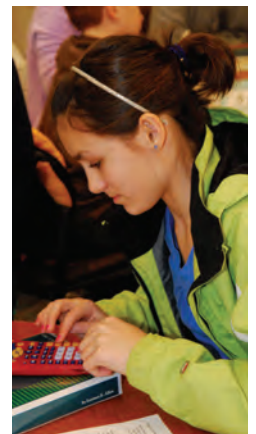
Kirtland Local Schools

Rocky River City Schools

South Euclid-Lyndhurst City Schools

Warrensville Heights City Schools

Westlake City Schools



Cuyahoga Heights



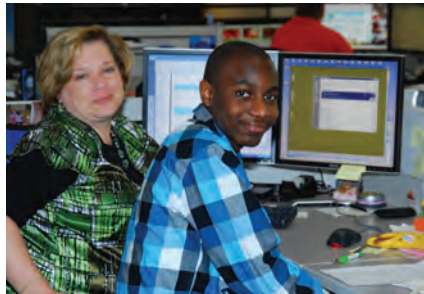
Garfield Heights



Gifted & Talented Consortium News

Hyland Software Shadowing Experience Offers Students a Glimpse into Software Development Company

High School students from **Westlake, Fairview Park, Orange, and Warrensville Heights City Schools** participated in an ESC-sponsored shadowing experience at Hyland Software, an international software company in Westlake, on November 17 and February 9. Students spent the day shadowing Hyland Software personnel and learned what makes businesses successful in today's global economy. There will be one more opportunity for students to visit Hyland Software in April.



Learning Peaceful Solutions through the Arts

More than 80 students from **Bay Village, Bedford, Cuyahoga Heights, Fairview, Rocky River, and Westlake High Schools** attended the ESC-sponsored Peaceful Solutions workshop at the Beck Center for the Arts in Lakewood this past November. Students explored a variety of cultural arts experiences in an actual arts setting and met with peers to discuss ways to get through life peacefully.



Student Leadership Conference

On November 12, high school students from **Bedford, Fairview Park, South Euclid-Lyndhurst, Warrensville Heights and Westlake City Schools** attended a Leadership Workshop at the ESC. These 30 students participated in activities designed to recognize and improve their leadership skills. Mrs. Jane Battles from the Martha Holden Jennings Foundation conducted the workshop.



CCC America History Exhibits Enhance Classroom Teaching and Learning

by Nadine Grimm, Program Manager

Constructing, Consuming and Conserving America teachers have begun using their personalized digital history exhibits to engage their students' interest in learning about America history. During the summer, working individually or in teams, participants in this three-year professional development conducted research on primary resources and artifacts at the Western Reserve Historical Society and in the Cleveland Press Collection at Cleveland State University.

They digitized photographs, census data, maps, advertisements, and other primary resources to create on-line exhibits and poster images on topics of particular interest for their classroom use. Topics connect national historical themes to local history. Such local connections make the larger national themes relevant to students' lives in Northeast Ohio. For example, teacher Gail Greenberg recently presented her online history exhibit at the eTech Ohio Conference. Her exhibit *What's for Lunch?*—demonstrates the history of the food industry in Northeast Ohio using historical resources—photographs, documents and letters, company logos, advertising jingles—about a topic that students relate to every day. Browse the entire collection of exhibits at <http://csudigitalhumanities.org/exhibits/exhibits>.

The ESC is actively recruiting teachers from public schools in northeast Ohio to join the second year of CCC America. Benefits include participant stipends, books and educational materials, membership to the Western Reserve Historical Society, field trips for students, summer institutes, and reimbursement to school districts for substitute teachers. Teachers engage in a variety of hands on activities and interact with historians of national reputation to improve their own knowledge of American history, to acquire historical thinking skills, and to create new teaching materials for student teaching and learning. For information, contact **Nadine Grimm**, at (216) 901-4243 or nadine.grimm@esc-cc.org.

Creating Cultural Connections Collaborations Continue

by Nadine Grimm, Program Manager

This professional development project to enhance cultural awareness and increase international-mindedness engaged local and international teachers in a series of projects during spring through fall 2009. A collaboration between the Educational Service Center of Cuyahoga County and Kent State University's Gerald H. Read Center for International and Intercultural Studies, the program received support from The Martha Holden Jennings Foundation.

In spring, 35 local teachers participated in a workshop with 16 international teachers from 12 countries, as well as an online book discussion of *The Saffron Kitchen*. Teachers conducted International School Walks, created lesson plans or events with an international theme, and took an Intercultural Development Inventory. In the summertime, teachers met for a film viewing and discussion of *The Kite Runner*, a story of two boys growing up in Afghanistan (note correction from Fall 2009 newsletter).

During fall, a book discussion of *Three Cups of Tea*, the story of Greg Mortenson's mission to build schools in Pakistan and Afghanistan, prompted some teachers to use the youth version in language arts and social studies classes. During November's International Education Week, teachers implemented lesson plans that they had developed earlier in the year. Schools held cultural events, book discussions, created ethnic displays, and made school announcements in different languages. The fall program concluded with post-International School walks and final projects for graduate credit.

Some teachers who participated in the project continue to interact with their international teacher collaborators for global classroom exchanges. As Ohio revises its standards to infuse international content across the curriculum, educators expressed their interest in future professional development focused on international topics, and the importance of opportunities to meet and collaborate with teachers from other countries.



Grants

Picturing America in Northeast Ohio

by Nadine Grimm, Program Manager

The ESC of Cuyahoga County has applied for a *Picturing America* K-12 Schools Collaboration grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. The images of American masterworks in the *Picturing America* gallery are “windows to the past” that reflect traditional themes of freedom and equality, yet challenge typical stereotypes.

If awarded, the ESC proposes to coordinate professional development for schools in our region that have participated in *Picturing America* during the past two years. During 2010-2011, through a two-day summer conference, technology and art training workshops, and field trips and memberships to regional art museums, educators will interact with humanities scholars and art experts to learn new and meaningful ways of using these primary resources. Teachers will learn methods of observation and inquiry to enhance critical thinking and analysis of art works and artifacts, and then develop digitized exhibits and lesson plans to share with students in the classroom and across the disciplines. Participants may earn graduate credit.

The National Endowment for the Humanities will announce awards in April. Please check the ESC website for information updates, or contact **Nadine Grimm**, at (216) 901-4243 or nadine.grimm@esc-cc.org.

Sounds of History Grant Completes Its Final Year

By Jim Luteran, Program Manager

The “Sounds” project was designed to teach teachers to develop lessons using audio files, primary documents and web resources. During the grant, teachers have developed hundreds of lessons that can be accessed at <http://www.csusocialhistory.org/>. The lessons are correlated with Ohio standards.

Many of the lessons contain audio files and links that bring history to life in the classroom. A presentation by Marc Silverstone from the Miller Center about the presidential tapes led to a lesson designed by Mark Soeder, a “Sounds” teacher. It includes excellent examples of how sounds can be used to enrich the teaching of American History. It focuses on the Civil Right movement and the Mississippi Burning. The entire lesson can be downloaded at <http://sounds.clevelandhistory.org/2009/12/08/excellent-lesson-plan-on-civil-rights/>. To access the presidential tapes resource that is linked in the lesson, go to <http://whitehousetapes.net/>.

Teachers in the project have also edited and added over 100 audio clips from the Cleveland City Club and the Western Reserve Historical Society to a web site maintained by ideastream (WVIZ/PBS), one of our partners. These audio files can be accessed at <http://sounds.ideastream.org/>.

Grant Support for Cuyahoga County School Districts

By Jennifer Dodd, Research and Development Specialist

In addition to offering opportunities for districts to participate in grant programs at the ESC, we are also working to support districts on developing their own initiatives. This support may include helping districts locate potential grants to meet an identified need or guiding districts in the development of a grant

proposal. If you have any questions about funding sources or would like additional assistance in preparing a proposal, please contact **Jennifer Dodd**, Research and Development Specialist, at (216) 901-4240 or jennifer.dodd@esc-cc.org.

Meet Our ESC Staff



Rena Wertheim

Director, North Coast Academy
Special Education Supervisor
Vision Program

Rena began working for the ESC of Cuyahoga County in 1987 as the work study coordinator for Cuyahoga East Vocational Education

Consortium and Shaker Heights City Schools, serving in that capacity for over 10 years. She went on to be a special education supervisor in Bedford, Maple Heights, and Westlake City Schools, and at Berea Alternative and Eleanor Gerson Schools, with additional duties as the supervisor of the ESC's physical therapists.

Rena has spent the last 10 years as the Director of North Coast Academy (NCA), an alternative school for at-risk high school students. She has been instrumental in developing the program and has seen it grow from 10 students to a capacity of 100. The program has graduated over 300 students. Rena works closely with the Simon Youth Foundation, a partner of the ESC and NCA. Concurrent with her duties as director of NCA, Rena has also supervised the ESC's Department for Vision Services. Under her guidance, the program expanded from serving ten west side school districts to most of Cuyahoga County and has expanded from two full time teachers, a braillist and an orientation and mobility instructor to an additional six teachers, two clerical aides and a rehabilitation specialist.

Rena has been married to Steve for 26 years, and they reside in University Heights. They have two children—Max, a junior at Ohio State University, and Judith, who is completing a “gap year” in Israel enjoying college classes and teaching English to Israeli children and Dafuri refugees. The Wertheims visited Judith in Israel over winter vacation. Rena loves to cook and read.



Jennifer Dodd

Research & Development
Specialist

Prior to working at the ESC of Cuyahoga County, Jennifer worked as a special education teacher in Independence Schools. Jennifer has a Bachelor's in Psychology and

a Master's in Early Childhood Special Education from Cleveland State University and currently holds an Early Intervention license and K-9 Principal's license. She is working on her Ph.D in Urban Education at Cleveland State University with a dissertation on the laws and policies around the education of students in foster care.

Jennifer's primary responsibility is researching, preparing and coordinating grant programs for the ESC from federal, state and private funding sources. These grants provide professional development for teachers, enhance services for students and create county-wide partnerships to improve collaborations between schools, higher education institutions and community organizations. She also coordinates the Supplemental Education Tutoring Services for eligible districts in the county and serves on the Local Professional Development Committee, the Public Relations Committee and the Technology Planning Committee at the ESC, as well as represents the ESC on Help Me Grow's Early Childhood Collaborative and Cuyahoga County's Universal Pre-K Initiative.

Jennifer lives in Willoughby with her three children, Samantha, Alexandra and Nathan. They spend most of their spare time relaxing at home or visiting the library. Jennifer and the girls are big fans of musical theater and Nathan is quickly following in their footsteps, so a lot of time is spent singing in the car—and pretty much anywhere else. During the summer, fairs and festivals are a favorite pastime, as well as traveling anywhere the car can take them.

Meet Our ESC Staff



Pat Rehm, Ph. D.

Gifted Coordinator

Life is an adventure. Pat's adventure began in a tiny Michigan town in 1941. Today, her adventure continues in the Cleveland area. Along the way between then and now she became a mother,

grandmother and educator. Her passions are children and learning. Her philosophy toward life is to appreciate what is and to cultivate kindness. Priorities in life are family/friends, profession and other.

Pat sometimes wonders if she is addicted to learning and new experiences. Because of her desire to learn and embrace new experiences, she has, among other things, driven on the left in Ireland, eaten chicken feet and cow stomach, attempted hang gliding, stood at the top of a

mountain in the French Alps, day dreamed in Carthage, and completed a doctorate degree in education. Pat's educator experiences stretch from Michigan to Ohio, to Tennessee, and back to Ohio. She has worked with kindergarten students through senior citizens in both public and private settings. Standing in a phone booth along a Massachusetts interstate during the summer of 1990, Pat learned she was about to embark on a new adventure working as a Gifted Education Supervisor for the Cuyahoga County Board of Education (later to become the ESC of Cuyahoga County). Over the years Pat has provided Gifted Education services to a variety of districts in the consortium. Each district has been an opportunity to learn and embrace new experiences. Currently, Pat is Gifted Supervisor two days per week in Fairview Park. She believes she has the best of both worlds in her semi-retirement.

North Coast Educational Media Center (NCEMC)

By Roni Staimpel, NCEMC Office Manager

The Ohio Area Instructional Media Centers (OAIMC) were formed in 1972 when the Ohio Department of Education initiated a plan that transferred the centralized state film library to a system of Area Media Centers. The AMCs exist to provide quality services and support instructional improvement in the state system of schools. These services encourage the use of appropriate instructional resources in the classroom and provide learning experiences that lead to greater student conceptual understanding and achievement.

The North Coast Educational Media Center (NCEMC), a project of the ESC of Cuyahoga County, provides video, DVD, books on tape and has the distinction of being

the only Media Center in the State of Ohio to provide electronic educational databases to its subscribing schools.

Improvements in technology command that soon much of the information our schools access will be conducted electronically. To that end, the NCEMC, as part of the OAIMC, also supplies all Ohio K-12 schools with free access to almost 400 digital titles available for streaming or downloading. The NCEMC also provides discounted pricing for streaming services with Discovery Education and LEARN360. Both of these companies make available to our teachers and students digital resources and the tools to use them successfully in the classroom.

For more information on the NCEMC, please contact the director, **Roni Staimpel**, at (216) 642-8523 or roni.staimpel@esc-cc.org.

Thacker Makes a Difference in Educational Community

In the two years Tom Thacker was a Governing Board member of the ESC of Cuyahoga County, Tom was instrumental in the hiring of a new treasurer and superintendent. He also played a key role in setting many new policies for the betterment of the organization.

ESC Superintendent Dr. Robert Mengerink said, "Tom was an excellent board member. He was particularly helpful to me as I took on the role of superintendent. His insights about the ESC and understanding of how large organizations work, made him a productive board member. Tom's main desire was to serve the public and help educate children. From my perspective he did that very well."

Tom also encouraged the ESC to become more involved in the community, especially connecting the ESC with the local businesses through membership in the Cuyahoga Valley Chamber of Commerce. ESC now sponsors students from the local school districts to attend the chamber's monthly luncheons. "This is an opportunity for the students to network with local employers and learn about various business topics," said Thacker. The ESC also hosted the chamber's breakfast last April at the Harry E. Eastridge Professional Development Center that featured County Treasurer Jim Rokakis and attracted more than 90 people.



Creating more efficient outbound communication through newsletters and e-communication was another one of Tom's accomplishments on the board. The ESC published its first printed newsletter that was mailed to residents in the local communities. The ESC also began an e-newsletter to district superintendents and administrators.

Upgrading the ESC buildings and facilities, as well as maintaining security of the employees and visitors, was of utmost importance to Tom. There is now a state-of-the-art security system in the buildings and the interior and exterior of the buildings have been updated, including the construction of a welcome center in the main building.

"In the past two years, our organization has gone through significant positive changes and I am proud to have been a part of this growth at ESC," concluded Tom.

ESC Welcomes Dr. Christine Krol as New Board Member



On January 6, Dr. Christine A. Krol became a new Governing Board member of the ESC of Cuyahoga County. Dr. Krol has 36 years experience in education and administration: 18 years in elementary education as a teacher and as a principal, 11 years as a professor, and 7 years as Dean of Education at Malone University from which she retired. She earned her Bachelor of Science in Education degree from St. John College, her Masters of Education from John Carroll University and her Doctoral degree from Kent State University.

Dr. Krol has made presentations at international, national and state/local conferences and has several publications. She has engaged in numerous leadership and service roles on educational association boards, committees, and grants.

She also volunteers for various church, community and civic organizations. Dr. Krol lives in Independence with her husband David Sagerser.

Recognition Awards & Honors



Bruce G. Basalla Becomes New ESC Treasurer

The Governing Board of the ESC of Cuyahoga County has selected Bruce G. Basalla as the new Treasurer. After an extensive search process, his appointment was made official on December 16 during a Governing Board meeting. He officially became the Treasurer of ESC on January 20.

Prior to joining the ESC, Basalla was the treasurer of the Parma City Schools for seven years. He also has been treasurer of Fairview Park City Schools and assistant treasurer of Bedford and Strongsville City Schools. He began his career as an auditor supervisor/assistant auditor for the Auditor of State.

"Mr. Basalla is a tremendous individual with great accomplishments and experience," said Governing Board member Frank Mahnic, Jr. "He is respected and admired by his peers and will be a great addition to the ESC of Cuyahoga County."

"I am looking forward to Mr. Basalla joining our team of great employees. With his skills and personality we will be able to expand and improve the services we offer to the educational institutions in Cuyahoga County," said ESC Superintendent Dr. Robert Mengerink.

Basalla received his Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration from Cleveland State University.

ESC Board Member Tony Hocevar Appointed to National School Board Association Federal Relations Network

Tony Hocevar, Governing Board member of the ESC of Cuyahoga County, has been appointed to the National School Board Association Federal Relations Network (FRN). This committee involves local school board members from every congressional district in the country who are committed to grassroots advocacy for public education.

Hocevar attended the state level conference this past January where he was able to meet with Congressman Steven LaTourette of District 14, Congresswoman Marcia Fudge of District 11, and Congressman Jim Jordan of District 4.

Among his discussions with these members of Congress included the FRN's priority issues for the 111th Congress including: No Child Left Behind Act, Federal Funding for Education, Teacher Quality, Early Education, Medicaid, School Vouchers, Education Technology, Special Education, and School Nutrition. Joining Hocevar was Reno Contipelli, board member for the **Cuyahoga Heights Local Schools**, a district served by the ESC.

"FRN representatives know that education is important and that the education system needs to do better," said Hocevar. "I look forward to working with my colleagues to make a difference for all of our students."



Reno Contipelli, Board President, Cuyahoga Heights Board of Education, Congresswoman Marcia Fudge, Freda Levenson, Board Member, Shaker Heights Schools, and Tony Hocevar, ESC Governing Board Member.

Tribute Article to Marcy Unick

By Diana Paluscsak, Administrative Assistant

Marcy Unick recently retired from her position as Production Clerk for the ESC of Cuyahoga County after 30 years of conscientious and dedicated service! It has been my honor to be Marcy's friend and co-worker for that entire time. Today, as when we first met, I continue to marvel at her knowledge and enthusiasm for life. I admire her compassion for others who are faced with physical challenges. Marcy always maintained the highest ideals in her work ethic, taking pride in performing her duties at record speed and with enjoyment and pride in her accomplishments.

Marcy graduated in 1978 from the South Dakota School for the Deaf and began her position in 1980 in the Resource Materials Library of the Cuyahoga Special Education Service Center assisting with the yearly inventory. She went on to her new assignment in the Xerox Room providing copies and educational materials for the many professional development workshops offered at the Center. Additionally, she worked closely with staff to prepare the CSESC monthly newsletter,

FOCUS, doing all of the detail work for layout, copying, and hand-labeling for a circulation of over 4500 copies. In all of the years I have known Marcy, there has not been a duplicating task that stumped her. All of us in the ESC and SST-3 marveled at Marcy's energy and enthusiasm as she kept a fast pace completing duplicating requests, figuring complex math calculations for copying projects, and producing an impeccable finished product ahead of schedule. She constantly inspired us all to strive for higher achievements despite any challenges we might face during our lifetimes.

Marcy lives at home with her parents and brother in Maple Heights. She is a devoted sports fan and proudly wears team t-shirts for the Cleveland Browns, Indians and Cavaliers.

We all wish Marcy a wonderful retirement as she embarks on yet another stage of her life! Best wishes, Marcy.

Transition Resident Educator Program

By Michele Shrefler, Coordinator of Teacher Transition Programs

The Transition Resident Educator Program at the ESC of Cuyahoga County currently provides 142 beginning teachers and their mentors from 15 districts and 13 community/charter schools in Cuyahoga County with assistance in satisfying licensure requirements for the beginning teacher. This program also provides professional development on topics related to teaching and learning. Teachers meet together at the Harry E. Eastridge Professional Development Center five times a year to work collaboratively through the formative assessment tools provided through the Ohio Department of Education and the New Teacher Center. Also included in this program are instructional training and support for the mentors working with these beginning teachers.

The state's Instructional Mentor trainings for Lorain, Cuyahoga, Lake and Geauga Counties have been coordinated through the Teacher Transition Department at the ESC as well. To date, approximately 700 of the almost 4,000 mentors trained statewide have attended

one of the ESC's training sessions co-facilitated by Michele Shrefler, Coordinator of Teacher Transition Programs at the ESC, and Sharon Jones, Director of Staff Development for the **Parma City Schools**. Michele and Sharon were chosen with 16 other state trainers to lead the efforts to conduct regional trainings for all those mentoring beginning teachers this year. Teachers from various public districts, charter/community schools, state-sponsored schools, and non-public schools have attended these trainings. Feedback on these regional trainings has been overwhelmingly positive and mentors have appreciated the time to not only learn about and use the new formative assessment tools provided by the Ohio Department of Education and the New Teacher Center but also to have the opportunity to share effective mentoring practices and strategies. Training will resume in Spring 2010 with sessions also being offered at the ESC for individuals from teacher education programs at area colleges and universities.

Ohio Secondary Transition Improvement Grant (OSTIG)

by Ed Flegel, SST3 Consultant

The Ohio Secondary Transition Improvement Grant was awarded to the Ohio Rehabilitation Services Commission in partnership with the Ohio Department of Education/Office for Exceptional Children in 2007. The intent of the \$2.2 million, five-year grant is to promote rehabilitation and educational results through state, regional, and local collaboration. Five main goals are proposed: 1) develop transition quality indicators (TQIs) used to assess district practices; 2) build regional capacity for training and technical assistance in the area of secondary transition; 3) create regional teams; 4) assess individualized education programs (IEPs) and individualized plans for employment (IPEs) for effect; and, 5) spread best practices state-wide.

The ESC of Cuyahoga County received the Northeast Ohio transition coordinator position in the spring of 2008. This fulltime coordinator was responsible for coordinating secondary transition activities through the State Support Teams (SST) in regions 3, 4, 5, 8, and 9 representing 12 Northeast Ohio counties. For the third year of the grant, this position has been revised to a part-

time position and assigned to the current SST 3 transition consultant.

Activities in the northeast region include the establishment and sustainability of Regional Transition Councils (RTC) in each SST region. These councils represent local education agencies, community and charter schools, institutions of higher education, community agencies, business, parents, and other interested stakeholders. The RTC mission is to foster collaboration and communication, strategic planning, and dissemination of transition information and best practices.

By providing a "system change" for Ohio, the grant proposes to make secondary transition quality improvements systematic, promote positive post-school engagement for students with disabilities, and provide resources and training at the district and regional level. Although the grant ends in August 2012, it is expected that the activities will continue.

Rose-Mary Center School Graduates Student

Walking into the Rose-Mary Center gymnasium, wearing a robe and mortar board with tassels hanging down, Raymond J. Canda, III experienced one of the most momentous days of his life. As family, fellow students, teachers, and ESC administration looked on with pride, Ray graduated from the Rose-Mary Center on February 11 at the age of 22.

The Rose-Mary Center School is operated by the ESC of Cuyahoga County. The school currently serves 40 students from 21 Ohio school districts. Each of the six classrooms at the school can have up to eight students with a minimum of one teacher and two assistants. A work-study coordinator, physical education teacher, art therapist, one-on-one attendants and a full time nurse provide additional needed services. Occupational, physical and speech and language therapists work with students, education staff, and families to facilitate services.

"The dedicated staff at the Rose-Mary Center should be commended on making today's commencement ceremony both a success and memorable event for everyone," said Dr. Mengerink.

At the ceremony, Special Education Supervisor Lisa Adler spoke eloquently about Ray, his life and future. A slide show was played showing Ray's life that gave significance to the celebration.

