



Dear Friends of Greenbrier,

Happy New Year! Greenbrier Learning Center's staff, students, and families are ringing in 2009 with lots of activities and accomplishments. We are pleased to announce that we have begun providing English Language Instruction two evenings a week for adults at the VA Gardens site, in addition to serving about 60 children each day afterschool across our two sites, and providing topic-based workshops to 40 parents. Report cards are in and program staff are working closely with students to identify areas to focus on through the end of the year; we congratulate our students on a job well done!

GBLC also extends many thanks to those who have contributed to our Annual Giving Campaign. With your help, we have just about reached the halfway mark. Please consider helping us meet our goal of raising \$40,000 this year! As you may know, it costs GBLC \$3,000 to provide 10 months of daily afterschool tutoring and enrichment to a child. This means that for every child whose family pays the full tuition (a modest \$25/week), GBLC must raise an additional \$2,000. About 40% of our students receive some form of a scholarship, and your support in the Annual Giving Campaign allows this to happen. To participate in the Campaign, please visit our website at: [www.gbhc.org](http://www.gbhc.org) – and, again, thanks to our many supporters!

In partnership,

Courtney C. Reeve  
Executive Director

### **Learning ROCKS! Afterschool Program**

With report cards collected, it is clear that our Learning ROCKS! students are growing leaps and bounds. Over 20 students at Greenbrier and Virginia Gardens have improved their homework grades!

Along with our academic achievements, GBLC's after-school program has never been more exciting! Learning ROCKS! has hit the perfect note at Virginia Gardens and Greenbrier with its heart warming activities for these cold winter months. Working on bright, fun, paper mache masks for three sessions has allowed students to flex their creative muscles while being cooped up inside. Be sure to look for them hanging on our walls soon!

New cultural cooking activities have brought us to the countries of El Salvador, Bolivia, Honduras, Eritrea, Morocco, and Ethiopia. We have tried so many delicious dishes! Thank you to the parents for making cultural cooking a favorite of both the students and staff alike!

The rest of the month we have spent celebrating Black History month, Presidents Day, and Lincoln's birthday with educational and interesting activities that honor the heroes of past and present. Upcoming events include trips to Pentagon Row Ice Rink and the National Aquarium.

### **Volunteer Spotlight**

This month's volunteer spotlight is shining on Julia Stefanelli. Julia has been volunteering with us at Virginia Gardens since August and has been a huge help to both Erin Garnett, our Program Coordinator, and her students.

Julia is extraordinarily patient and understanding. The students (especially Alexi who has given her his own nickname) are always excited to see her. She leads the "Lolo and Red Legs" reading group and has been said to have "the best reading voice EVER," making the book come alive. Another one of her magical gifts is an ability to clear the Barcroft



soccer field of adult players so the students can have it all to themselves. Erin says, "If she isn't there, we can't get the field. She must have the magic words!"

As a homework helping all-star, Julia is patient and gives valuable one on one attention to the students at Virginia Gardens. She is always talking about the students and their "wonderful, creative energy".

Thank you, Julia, for all of your hard work and dedication!

### **Parent Connection Program**



This year Parent Connection was jump started with a Zumba class, which combines aerobics and Latin dance. It got parents ready for an exciting set of "charlas," or chats, at both Virginia Gardens and Greenbrier. In response to our parents interests we will be learning about all kinds of topics including stress management and positive parenting. Some of our other workshops already planned for this year include: teen alcohol abuse prevention with Ben Harris, information about the Arlington Career Center, and financial literacy with the Virginia Federal Credit Union.

Also, in partnership with Escuela Bolivia, our first adult English language class was February 2nd and it was a total success! Ten students will be working hard for the next twelve weeks attending classes every Monday

and Wednesday night from 6:30-8pm.

**We are proud of all our families and the great strides they are making!**

Thank you for your continuous support and making all of this possible!