



# The Frostig Center Focus

Exceptional Children,  
Exceptional Education

Issue 5, May 2016

## WHAT'S NEW

### Early Learners

Frostig's Consultation & Education Dept. will train early childhood educators to deal effectively with challenging behaviors. Trainings will be held two Saturdays in the fall, Sept. 17 and Oct. 8. To attend, contact Jean Peterson at [jean@frostig.org](mailto:jean@frostig.org).

### Parent Field Trips

Transitions Director Jennifer Quirina-White will be organizing parent tours of independent living programs in the area during the coming school year. To learn more, email [Jennifer@frostig.org](mailto:Jennifer@frostig.org).

### School Tours

Frostig School is accepting applications for 2016-17. To schedule a summer tour, contact Jessica Gatlin at 626-791-1255.



## FROSTIG SWIM CLUB

### Students Build Confidence One Stroke at a Time

By Joan Goulding

Every Thursday afternoon, members of the Frostig Swim Club pile into cars in the Frostig School parking lot and travel across town to the Rose Bowl Aquatic Center.

The boys and girls put on their swim suits and goggles and jump in the water, ready for a workout and a good time. They love the water, free time, the coaches and the chance to hang out with friends.

Parents love how swim club improves physical fitness, builds confidence and gives their children a chance to socialize outside of school. "It's not just about swimming," said Heather Fung, mother of a high school swimmer.

Kandis Pulliam, an instructor at the Rose Bowl Aquatic Center and head coach of



the swim club, shared how one boy has become a "different person" since joining four years ago.

"At first, he hardly did a thing in the pool," she said. "He always said he was too tired. Now when I tell him to do the butterfly for four lengths of the pool, he says, 'Sure, of course I can do that. I'm awesome.'"

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## THE SPOTLIGHT

### Frostig Grad Cherishes Motherhood and Family

As a child growing up in foster care, Sabrina Chavez longed for kindness, love and emotional support. When Sabrina was 12, she came to Frostig School and found much of what she was looking for.

"Frostig changed my life," Sabrina said. "I found my best friends there and many of the teachers were like mother figures to me.

"Feeling the love from the teachers made it much easier to learn," she said. "Whenever I felt insecure

about the way I learn, the teachers always pointed out my strengths. It made me feel confident."

Today Sabrina is confident and secure in the love of her new family. She is engaged to a young man she met at Pasadena City College and they are the proud parents of a baby boy. They live with his parents in San Gabriel.

"I feel like motherhood has put meaning in my life," Sabrina said. "I love the thought that my son needs me. I'm his mommy and it's forever."

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# Message from Executive Director Dean Conklin

When I was in charge of professional development at Walnut Valley Unified School District, I invited The Frostig Center's Consultation & Education Department to work with our teachers so they could be more effective helping students who struggle to learn.

It was the beginning of a beautiful relationship.

The C&E team returned to Walnut Valley for seven consecutive years, from 2005-2012. Teachers responded so positively to the training program conducted by Beverlee Paine and Andrea Lombardi that the district steadily expanded it to include all 12 elementary and middle schools.

When I joined Frostig in 2013, my relationship with C&E shifted from client to colleague. It has been a great privilege to work alongside C&E Director Roberta Goldberg as she and her staff connect Frostig to the wider community.




Dr. Marianne Frostig believed that we have a responsibility to share our research and expertise with the world. It's not enough to help only the 120 boys and girls lucky enough to attend Frostig School. Roberta and her team are connecting us to teachers and students far beyond the walls of The Frostig Center.

In April, Roberta and Andrea were guests of honor at Thames Academy, a residential post-secondary program in Connecticut for young adults with learning disabilities. Thames has woven the Success Attributes into every aspect of its program. Who better to speak on the subject than Roberta, who

participated in the original research study, and Andrea, who has been teaching the Success Attributes for more than 10 years?

The C&E staff also made presentations this year at the Learning Disabilities Association's national convention and the Los Angeles Catholic Archdiocese's inclusion conference for teachers. It was standing room only at the annual conference of the California Association for the Education of Young Children, where Linda Barker shared strategies for addressing challenging behaviors in our youngest learners.

The Success Attributes will be a big part of C&E's work in the coming year, as will early childhood development. Thanks to Roberta, Beverlee, Andrea and Linda, Frostig's research and teaching strategies are rippling through the community and improving the lives of children.

  
Dean Conklin, Ed.D.

## PLANNED GIVING Good for Frostig, Good for the Donor



Dr. Bennett Ross dedicated his career to helping children with learning disabilities as the longtime Executive Director of The Frostig

Center. By including Frostig in his will, Dr. Ross has ensured that his commitment to children will extend well into the future.

During his time at Frostig, Dr. Ross always understood that Frostig's success at any point in time was rooted in the generous support of people in the past.

"Planned giving is my way of saying thank you for what I was given in the

past and a way of helping people in the future," said Dr. Ross, who retired in 2013 and now serves on Frostig's Planned Giving Committee.

Development Director Yuki Jimbo worked with the committee this year to establish the Frostig Heritage Society, which recognizes people who have included Frostig in their estate plans.

Planned giving can play an important part in ensuring the long-term financial health of The Frostig Center. It also offers many benefits to the donor. Depending on the type of gift chosen, planned giving can protect assets, guarantee income for life, and reduce tax burdens for the donor's heirs. Charitable gift vehicles include:

### Bequest

Retain full control and use of your assets during your lifetime and

reduce your taxable estate by including Frostig in your will or living trust.

### Charitable Remainder Trust

Create an irrevocable trust that generates income for its beneficiaries, with the remainder of the donated assets eventually going to Frostig.

### Retirement Plan

Designate Frostig as the beneficiary of your retirement account and reduce your taxable estate, or reduce your required minimum distribution by transferring any sum up to \$100,000. You must be 70½ to qualify for the latter option.

There are many more ways to include Frostig in your estate planning. Contact Ms. Jimbo at [yuki@frostig.org](mailto:yuki@frostig.org) to learn more about planned giving and the Heritage Society.



# Frostig School Presents *The Lion King*

Simba and friends sprang to life at The Frostig Center in a dazzling school production of *The Lion King*.

Lions, wildebeests, giraffes and hyenas filled the stage of Gates Hall for four performances in late April. The ambitious musical was brilliantly staged and directed by drama instructor Christina Harris, who never fails to draw out the best from her young performers.

*The Lion King* was the first musical held in the newly renovated Gates Hall. Frostig installed a new stage, lights, curtains and carpet. The project was made possible by a generous donation from The Sharon D. Lund Foundation and money raised at the 2015 benefit.

Hakuna Matata!



## Swimmers

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Frostig parent Ita Moses started the swim club in 2012 with 10 members, including her twin boys. The club, which has grown to 34 members, remains a parent-run activity that has the support of Frostig School.

The Aquatic Center, just 5 miles from Frostig, is the perfect home for the swim club. The center has beautiful facilities and an enthusiastic staff that is skilled in working with special needs children.

"The swim club is modeled much like Frostig," Ms. Moses said. "The coaches want the child to be successful, so they won't push their swimmers to do more than they are



capable of. Our coaches are well trained and very patient."

Children who can't swim start in the therapy pool to learn strokes and build stamina. When they are capable swimmers, they move up

to the main pool. There the students are divided into intermediate and advanced groups. The Frostig Swim Club does not compete, but members are welcome to swim with the Rays, the Aquatic Center's special needs team that races in meets.

Frostig School prides itself on being a close knit community that puts children first. "We are constantly having conversations with parents about what kids need at Frostig and beyond," said Executive Director Dean Conklin.

"Good ideas come from everywhere, and the swim club has proven to be a great idea that helps our kids and families in many ways. We are grateful that Ita shared her idea with us and ran with it."

The Frostig Center is dedicated to helping children with learning disabilities reach their full potential through an integrated approach of research, professional development and consultation, and the Frostig School.



The FrostigCenter

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Follow our Facebook page to keep up with the latest news at Frostig. See what our students and faculty are doing and learn about the latest developments in the field of learning differences.

## With Appreciation The Spotlight



Two longtime members of The Frostig Center staff, Beverlee Paine (left) and Helen Overstreet, will retire at the end of the school year.

Ms. Paine joined Frostig in 1991 as an elementary school teacher. She was a gifted teacher who joined Frostig's Consultation & Education Department in 2000 so she could share her expertise with other teachers through professional development.

As school librarian for 21 years, Ms. Overstreet guided countless students to books that captured their imaginations. She modernized the library to include audio and digital books and donated many books to Frostig.

Frostig also says good-bye to Gerri Raven, who is moving on after 21 years. Ms. Raven held several positions during that time, most recently as a member of the front office staff.

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Sabrina never knew her parents and spent her entire childhood in foster care. Like so many foster children, Sabrina struggled in school. When she was 12 and living in a group home, Sabrina had her first formal educational assessment. Testing revealed she had severe dyslexia. Thanks to the advocacy efforts of Learning Rights Law Center, Sabrina's home school district agreed in 2007 to send her to Frostig School.

For the first time in her life, Sabrina was surrounded by teachers who understood her disability and knew how to help her. Just as important, she found the emotional support that helped heal some of the wounds of foster care. Sabrina graduated from Frostig in 2012 with a high school diploma, a feat accomplished by only 45% of foster youth.

When she was 18, Sabrina moved in with her best friend from Frostig and her friend's mother. She attended Pasadena City College and completed more than two years of college credits.

Sabrina, 22, said she would like to work in the foster care system someday. She keeps up with friends from the group home and she is aware that many of them are not doing well.

For now, though, she's looking forward to her wedding and being a full-time mom to Nicholas.

"I am very happy and very blessed," she said. "I am finally at a point in my life where I feel 100% happy. I have a family that will never discard me, I have my baby, and I'm getting married."