



League School student, Cha-Cha Francois, busy at work at the Big Y, being filmed by a Chronicle cameraman for his show segment.

A Star Is Born

Last month, a League School student, Richard “Cha-Cha” Francois, was featured on a segment of WCVB’s newsmagazine television series, *Chronicle*. The subject of Chronicle that night was “Living With Autism.” It featured a number of different stories on individuals at different levels of the autism scale who were excelling in their lives.

The segment on Cha-Cha focused on his participation in League School’s vocational program. Under the careful guidance of Maureen Pratt, Cha-Cha works in the bakery department at the nearby Big Y in Walpole. The store has always been tremendously supportive of the school, providing vocational opportunities to our students for a number of years now.

The segment featured an interview with Cha-Cha who discussed the challenges he faces daily, but also commented that “working at his job fills him with confidence, letting him know that when the time comes, he will be able to stand on his own two feet.” Cha-Cha finished by offering an inspiring message to all viewers, stating “we try to live every day lives, contributing to society in any way that we can - we are who we are.”

The segment also included League School’s Executive Director, Dr. Frank Gagliardi, articulating the challenges faced by students once they turn 22 and can no longer receive financial support from the state. A link to the show can be found on the homepage of our website under the “In the News” section. Congratulations again to Cha-Cha for his “star turn” on television - you made us all very proud.

In This Issue

A Star is Born.....	1
A Day at the Zoo.....	1
Building Program Update - Becoming a Part of League School History.....	2
League School Employees of the Month.....	3
A Special Reflection From a Teacher.....	3
Unruly Art - Fun With Art.....	4
Upcoming Events.....	4

A Day at the Zoo

Earlier this summer, Classroom 213’s letter of the week was “Z.” The students practiced tracing the letter “Z” and identifying pictures of items that start with the letter “Z.” They also talked about the zoo and what kind of animals we might see if we went to the zoo.

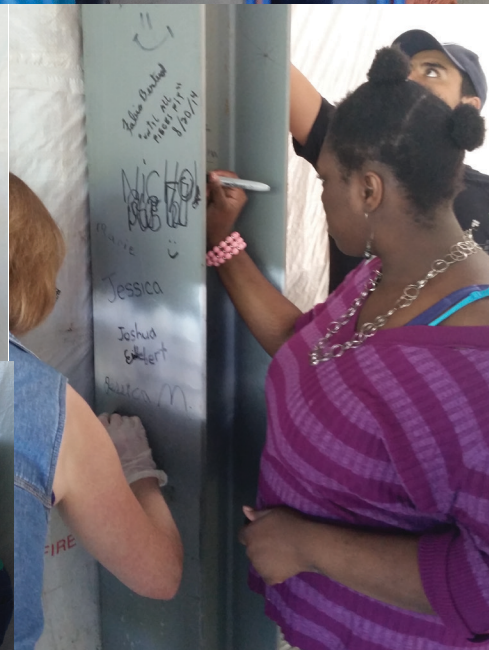
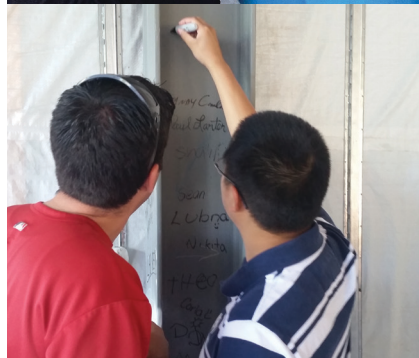
The next week, the class took a trip to Capron Park Zoo in North Attleboro where it went on an animal scavenger hunt to find a lion, fish, and goats. After walking around the zoo and looking at all of the animals, the students and staff played in the splash pad that they have there. The water was cold but everyone had fun anyway! Once they were finished in the splash pad, everyone dried off and had a picnic lunch. The students and staff of 213 had a great experience at Capron Park and will return again next summer!



Building Update - Turning the Construction of Our School Addition Into a Memorable Moment for Both Students and Staff

Cooperative weather has enabled steady progress to be made on the construction of the addition to our main building here at League School. Last month, students and staff took time out to celebrate the completion of one portion of the building's exo-structure.

Throughout the day, a parade of League students and staff members made their way to a corner of the new addition and added their names to the building's steel beams, creating a time capsule of signatures to commemorate the occasion. Everyone had a wonderful time, capitalizing upon the opportunity to become a small part of League School history.





Marie Canisi, Culinary Arts Teacher

Meet Our League School Employees of the Month: For August - Marie Canisi

Marie is League's Culinary Arts Teacher. She is always looking for fun and nutritious cooking activities for students. Marie encourages students to try new and healthy options to eat. She is aware of students' dietary needs and restrictions and incorporates these needs into cooking activities. She teaches valuable life skills with patience and creativity. She taught students how to make a healthy, breakfast smoothie with strawberries and spinach. The students enjoyed the smoothie and that was impressive. Marie is a super teacher and the students love going to cooking class. Awesome job, Marie!

For September - Joanne Garcon

Joanne is a classroom assistant in the Transition program. She is kind, patient and always upbeat. Students love Joanne. She has a great attitude, does everything with a smile and never complains. She is always open to trying new/different things to better the lives of her students and she does her very best to bring smiles to all the students in the school. Her positive energy brings out the very best in her students. Great job, Joanne!



Joanne Garcon, Transition Program Assistant

What Teaching at League School Means to Me

As a regular feature in upcoming issues of *Update*, we will be having staff members reflect on their teaching experiences at League School, sharing some of their most memorable moments in the classroom with us. The goal is to enable our readers to better understand the special opportunities that both students and teachers alike enjoy by being a part of the League School family. Here is one such reflection from Paul Larter who teaches in our Vocational Center:

In the Vocational Center, students complete a variety of tasks to create materials for use by staff and students throughout the building. We address photocopying, stapling, hole-punching, binding, die-cutting, mail prep, and laminating. I'm always trying to have the students make fewer errors when completing the work to reduce waste and conserve supplies. In a single gesture, a student taught me that I was perhaps overprotective of my equipment and materials as well as being clearly at fault for over prompting.

When one of our current students was still new to the school, I was having him participate in laminating for the first time. The materials were arranged for easy access. I demonstrated how to open the laminating pouch, position the pieces of paper, how to close the pouch to keep the items in place, where to feed the sheet into the laminator and where to retrieve the completed work. I stood by his side and closely monitored the second sheet while providing point cues to indicate the steps in the procedure. As the student began the third sheet and my overactive finger was poised ready to provide another instructive cue, he held up his hand between us and moved on with his work. Without words, his one simple movement said "Relax. I've got this. I know what I need to do. Watch if you want, but give me some space." As I did just that, I realized our new student was a natural at laminating. He had amazing precision and would self correct to improve the positioning of items. Each of his movements was on point and as he placed his finished work in a pile, he did so with a little extra flourish as if to say, "See this. I did it myself."

I've learned that I can learn a lot from our students by watching. Give them enough instruction to make the expectation clear, step back and see how it goes. Mistakes happen, but when they do they can be fixed. Finding students' hidden (or just yet to be noticed) strengths and giving them an opportunity to apply them to real work situations is the highlight of my job.

Unruly Art - League School Students Experience Wonderful New Ways of Being Creative

A few weeks ago, League School students got a chance to participate in Unruly Art, an art program coordinated by educators from MIT.

In conjunction with our art teacher, Judy Smith, they had activities involving painting without brushes on heavy duty canvas and using spray bottles of water-based paints on watercolor paper to create abstract patterns. The results were rich, varied and eye-catching. The MIT students fulfilled their goal of making high quality art materials available to special needs students. They were gentle in their approach, encouraging all students to try new materials and to enjoy the sensory process.

It was a terrific experience that brought smiles to the faces of all participants (staff and students alike) and produced a number of engaging designs that currently adorn the walls of the art room. Plans are in the works for an exhibition at MIT.



Upcoming Events at League School:

- Wednesday, October 1st - half day for students
- Wednesday, October 15th - half day for students
- Thursday, October 16th - Parent/teacher conferences in the evening

Please check the school calendar on the school website, leagueschool.com, for the latest announcements about upcoming events at the school.