

October 2010

Florida's Charter Schools News

Mater Academy East Charter Elementary Named a 2010 Blue Ribbon School Recipient



*Congratulations to **Mater Academy East Charter Elementary** for being recognized by U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan as one of the 2010 National Blue Ribbon Schools. Mater Academy East Charter Elementary School is located at 450 SW 4th Street in Little Havana.*

The award honors public and private elementary, middle and high schools whose students achieve at very high levels or have made significant progress and helped close gaps in achievement, especially among disadvantaged and minority students.

For more than ten years, Mater Academy East, a public charter school, has been dedicated to helping students make academic gains and close the achievement gap between minority and non-minority students. In 2010, Mater Academy East – a Title 1 school – earned an “A” on the Florida state exam for the 6th consecutive year and also achieved AYP yearly. In 2008, Mater Academy East was ranked the 5th highest-performing public elementary school in Miami-Dade County (based on the points received under the State of Florida Accountability Program) and its students earned the highest Science score in the entire school district, with Writing coming in 3rd among the entire public school district. The school has received a “School Recognition Award” from the State of Florida and the “Superintendent’s Platinum Award” for its achievements.

“We are honored to be a recipient of the Blue Ribbon Award,” said Betty Riera, Principal. “This award is a tribute to all of our teachers and administrators who are never complacent and always finding innovative ways to reach and teach our students. It is also a testament to our students and parents who have been our partners on the road to academic success.”

“Our nation has a responsibility to help all children realize their full potential,” Secretary Duncan said at the announcement. “Schools honored with the Blue Ribbon Schools award are committed to achievement and to ensuring that students learn and succeed. Their work reflects the conviction that every child has promise and must receive a quality education.”

The Blue Ribbon Awards ceremony is scheduled to take place on November 15-16 in Washington, D.C. Each year since 1982, the U.S. Department of Education has sought out schools where students attain and maintain high academic goals, including those that beat the odds. A complete list of 2010 Blue Ribbon Schools is available at <http://www.ed.gov/programs/nclbbrs/awards.html>.

*Submitted by media contact: Lynn Norman-Teck
Florida Consortium of Charter Schools
305-216-6208*

Congratulations!!

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FLORIDA'S
CHARTER
Schools

2010 CHARTER SCHOOL CONFERENCE



Mark your calendar for
November 8-10
to attend the
**2010
Florida
Charter
School
Conference**

Register online at
www.charterschoolconference.com
by **October 22** to receive
the discount rate of \$195.



Florida Charter School Conference
www.charterschoolconference.com

The fourteenth annual Florida Charter School Conference (FCSC) is just weeks away, November 8-10, 2010. Take a look at <http://www.charterschoolconference.com/2010/> to view the presentations being offered and the companies filling the largest FCSC exhibit hall to date.

New this year are pre-conference workshops being held on Monday, November 8. The following workshops are being offered for free, but do require seat reservations.

- Town Hall Meeting
- Digital Story-telling: Powerful Stories in Two Minutes or Less
- How to Start a Charter School in Florida: An Overview
- Five Habits of Successful School Administrators
- Principals' Networking
- Authorizing 101 for District Staff

Go to http://www.charterschoolconference.com/2010/aux_events.php for more details and to reserve your seat in any of these workshops.

Also on Monday, November 8, the exhibit hall will be open from 4:00-6:00 p.m. followed by the Welcome Reception and the showing of *The Lottery* at 7:30 p.m.

Register for the conference at <http://www.charterschoolconference.com/registration/> by October 22 to receive the \$195 rate. After that date, only onsite registrations will be accepted at the higher \$250 rate.

See you at the conference!

RIVER CITY SCIENCE ACADEMY WINS GRANT TO HELP THE COMMUNITY AND MEET NOBLE PEACE PRIZE LAUREATE

River City Science Academy in Jacksonville, has received a Florida Learn & Serve grant of \$10,000 that will allow students to apply their classroom lessons and knowledge to help local students with peer tutoring, anti-violent strategies and will attend a conference with a Noble Peace Prize Laureate. More than 100 students will participate. This is the third year in a row that River City Science Academy has received the service learning grant.

Funded by the Corporation for National and Community Service as part of the national service program that also funds AmeriCorps, VISTA, RSVP, and Foster Grandparents, the Learn & Serve grant will provide funds for transportation, substitutes, and materials to allow 6th - 10th grade students to create an anti-bullying campaign for local Title 1 elementary schools and create a peer tutoring, peer mentoring and peer mediating program within their own school.

Lead teacher Leah Rose is excited about the program, and says this program will engage elementary, middle, and high school students in service-learning activities that address and apply age-appropriate objectives, standards, and curricula. Tenth grade students in a service-learning elective class integrate service into their academic curriculum by creating and implementing service projects as a council. The council oversees mini-grants, including allocation of funds to teachers for service-learning projects. Students create, promote and conduct mini-grant workshops, select winners, and provide implementation assistance; they also create evaluation tools to review the projects' impacts. The Council provides one-on-one tutoring to middle school students during an after-school program in the school Learning Lab. Council students prepare by studying learning styles and techniques, then create lesson plans to complete their peer tutoring. Students in service-learning classes also participate in the PeaceJam curriculum, attend the program conference, and design and implement a Global Call to Action plan; students create and present a "Junior PeaceJam" to students at five local Title 1 elementary schools. The student-led workshops address bullying/violence, drugs and alcohol, how to be a successful student, and service-learning. Activities include PowerPoint presentations, graphics, displays and handouts on leadership.

River City Science Academy is one of 66 Florida schools or school districts to receive a Florida Learn & Serve grant. More information about Florida Learn & Serve is available at <http://learnandserve.hhp.ufl.edu>.



Submitted by Dr. Dogan Tozoglu, Principal, River City Science Academy

G-Star School Named #1 Film High School in the World

The G-Star School of the Arts for Motion Pictures and Broadcasting has been named the *Number One High School for Film in the World* by the Raindance Film Festival in London, UK. The Award took place at the Apollo Theater in Piccadilly Circus in London's prestigious West End theater district. The Raindance Film Festival is the largest independent film festival in Europe; it also owns the British Independent Film Awards and Raindance TV. While handing the Award to Greg Hauptner, the school's Founder, at the Awards Ceremony, Raindance Founder Elliot Grove stated, "We are truly excited to give this honor as the *Number One High School for Film in the World* to the G-Star School of the Arts. Your representation here this year at Raindance with

the highest quality film shorts and your school's feature-length film is the testament proving that your school is indeed worthy of this honor."

This is the first high school ever so designated by one of the leading film festivals in the world. Beau Rogers, Executive Producer of the Academy Award winning film *Gods and Monsters*, plus 41 other feature films, made the nomination to the Raindance Film Festival on behalf of the G-Star School of the Arts. "I've known Greg's school has been worthy of this award for years. I am proud to introduce the world to G-Star," says Rogers.

"Exciting isn't the word," says Hauptner. "With nine shorts, one music video, one

short feature and one full-length feature film appearing in the Festival, hundreds of our students can now say their work premiered at one of the largest and most famous film festivals in the world – with accolades."

*For more information contact:
Greg Hauptner, 561-386-6275
hauptn@aol.com*

Congratulations!

Academy of Arts & Minds Charter High School ~ On the Plaza

Coconut Grove's *Arts & Minds* (A&M) opened its doors to 2010-2011 at maximum capacity with 462 highly talented 9th-12th graders ready for action. Registrar **Sandii Sellers** is maintaining an impressive waiting list of students throughout the Greater Miami Area who hope a coveted spot will become available during the year. After a busy summer on the plaza with numerous camp experiences from music to SAT/ACT preparation, A&M students and faculty are ready to work to achieve the goal of becoming the number one charter high school in Miami-Dade.

The stakes are high as **Director William Machado** enters his third year at the academy. Master Teachers are in place to work with ESOL students as well as those needing special tutoring in small groups and one-on-one help. Under the guidance of A&M new parent **Mily Lopez** and her company *Grant Me Green Inc.*, faculty and staff are being encouraged to submit grant applications in their particular disciplines. She is busy writing grants to gain more tech equipment and general resources. To cover the staggering costs for fieldtrips, teachers are busy applying for Target grants. If others charter schools in the state are interested, go to <https://targetfieldtripgrants.target.com/>. In addition, Mrs. Lopez wrote a grant to help the school "go green." All large glass windows have been covered with a film material to allow for a more efficient use of the air conditioning system.

A&M's PTSA is diligently pursuing a PTSA membership drive this month to encourage parents - as stakeholders in their child's education - to join. Likewise, each homeroom is currently competing in the *Battle of the Strands* to see which one of the seven (visual arts, instrumental music, chorus, drama, creative writing, graphic arts/photography and dance) will have the highest number of PTSA members and win a special prize. The PTSA officers for this year include: **Carlos Deupi**, President, **Jimmy Morales**, VP for Organization, **Sherri Myers**, VP for Membership, **Lourdes Garcia**, VP for Marketing, **Sonia Alfonso**, VP for Hospitality, **Sandra Avila**, Recording Secretary, and **Loly Mastrapa**, Treasurer.

Summer Camp On the Plaza 101 introducing incoming A&M students to Coconut Grove's rich pioneer history -- all within walking distance of the A&M campus.



Summer camp participants



Summer camp participants



SAT/ACT Summer Camp Group with Master Teacher **Adhar B. Mohamed**



Second day of school and the rain poured and came under the doors in a science room on the plaza. **Director William Machado** grabbed the mop and began a very busy day! Biology continued without interruption.



First day of school and A&M Counselor **Caryn L. Zusman** helping students locate their first period rooms

ACES BUILDS PEACE THROUGH LEADERSHIP

AVENTURA, FLORIDA — September 21, 2010. Aventura City of Excellence School, (ACES) 2010 Peace Day Program “Building Peace Through Leadership - Developing Tomorrow’s Leaders” was a remarkable experience that joined the Aventura community together at the new Aventura Arts and Cultural Center (AACC).

Upon arrival, visitors were graciously greeted by patrols who led them through a beautiful gallery exhibit displaying K-8th grade students’ artistic expressions of “Peace and Leadership.”

Fourth and 6th grade students, staff, parents, the community and members of the Living Values Program united to celebrate ACES and the City of Aventura’s 7th Annual Peace Day event. Mayor Susan Gottlieb, commissioners, and the city manager were on hand to deliver the official proclamation.

ACES Principal, Ms. Alm began the ceremony by stating that, “The city of Aventura is committed to building peace through their leadership. As a testament to this commitment, the city has proclaimed today a day of peace in the city.”



Students sang, danced, and presented winning Peace Day artwork, essays, and poetry projects that were celebrated in front of a crowd of 325 people. The program featured ACES new National Junior Honor Society, a keynote presentation by the Anti-Defamation League, the Middle School Dance Troupe and a spectacular DVD production created by the Nicolella family.



Continued on next page

ACES continued



Proud to announce its prestigious new partnership with the National Junior Honor Society (NJHS), ACES recognized its first group of distinguished students on stage with a candle light induction ceremony. Honor Society students recited the organization's national pledge and motto, "light is the symbol of truth." Ms. Eizenbaum, NJHS Advisory Chair stated, "Peace cannot be achieved anywhere without good, strong leaders. Creating these leaders for our future is one of our goals!"

Vice Principal, Mr. Sandberg said, "ACES promotes peace through leadership in so many ways. Today's powerful presentations reinforced that the leaders of tomorrow are being recognized as substantial citizens today who will lead the way through their achievements coupled with their commitment to community service."

Keynote guest, the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) held a special banner ceremony to award ACES for being a "[No Place for Hate School®](#)." ADL developed No Place for Hate® as part of a national campaign to organize schools to work together through projects that promote diversity and reduce prejudice and bullying. ADL gratefully acknowledges the Harriet and Jack Rosenfeld Foundation and the Aventura Hospital and Medical Center for underwriting ADL's Cyber Bully program.

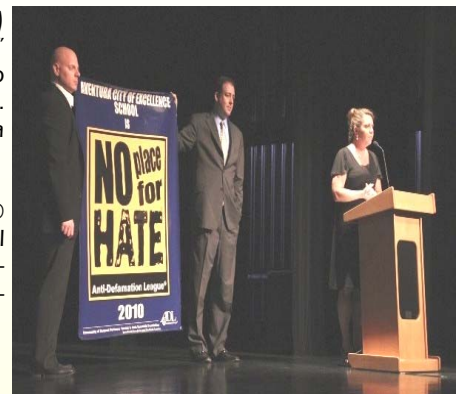
"ADL is proud to designate Aventura City of Excellence School as a No Place for Hate® School. Students and teachers work together to foster a bias-free environment in a school that embraces diversity and teaches the next generation how to build bridges of understanding and respect for differences," stated Andrew Rosenkranz, ADL Florida Regional Director.

A moving Peace Day DVD presentation featured students, staff and administration sharing their beliefs on how peace is built through leadership at ACES and in the world.

As a school-wide service learning project, the entire ACES community prepared and collected over 560 Peace Day Gift Boxes filled with essential items for needy children destined for international distribution through the Good Samaritan program led by parent Rosane Alves-Garcia.

The ceremony was taped and broadcast to the entire school the following day.

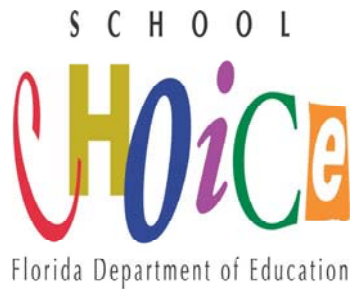
City Manager, Eric Soroka said, "The city is proud of ACES administration, teachers and staff's commitment to lead by example. Students are taught to care about others at school, in the community and in the world. Our students have valuable lessons to share with today's leaders."



About ACES:

Aventura City of Excellence School (ACES), established in 2003, serves over 950 students grades Kindergarten through the eighth grade as the first municipal-sponsored school in Miami-Dade County. ACES leads the way in "Educational Best Practices" focusing on "whole child" development and excelling academically. ACES has achieved an A status for the past six years ranking among the top high performing combination schools (i.e. Elementary and Middle School) in the state and in the district. ACES maintains a low student-teacher ratio, state of the art facilities, advanced technology, a safe environment for students to learn, Character Education and a variety of programs to meet the needs of all students including programs for Gifted Students, Exceptional Student Education (ESE), and English as a Second Language (ESOL). In addition, ACES curriculum offers even more choices for students and families including: Special Interest Clubs, Before and After School Care, After School Sports, Art and Drama Programs, Parenting Workshops, an Authors Series and a Middle School Leadership Speakers Series featuring leading entrepreneurs who discuss their career path and the values that have led to their successes. ACES won the "Best Fairchild Garden" for two years, a State Innovation Award, and 12 State and National Awards for its Character Education Initiatives. For more information, visit ACES school Web Site at www.aventuracharter.org or call 305-466-1499.

Submitted by Leslie Loewenthal, ACES Special Projects/Events



**Office of Independent
Education and Parental
Choice**

Phone: 850-245-0502
Fax: 850-245-0875

School Choice Hotline:
1-800-447-1636

www.floridaschoolchoice.org



Verify Your Information

Each charter school is encouraged to update its contact information on the charter school database as soon as changes occur. Paperless communication is our way of getting pertinent information to you in a timely fashion. Please help us to help you in keeping abreast of events and information vital to the success of each charter school. You can access the Web site at https://www.floridaschoolchoice.org/login/login_charter_school.asp.

Technical Assistance is Available

Charter school staff is available to provide technical assistance or assist with any questions you may have. If you need assistance, please contact staff via telephone at 850-245-

Conferences/Workshops

Date(s)	Conference/ Workshop	Location	Contact Information
Oct. 18-21, 2010	2010 NACSA Leadership Conference	Scottsdale Resort & Conference Center, 7700 E. McCormick Parkway Scottsdale, AZ 85258	http://www.charterschoolcenter.org/event/2010-nacsa-leadership-conference
Oct. 27-29, 2010	Working with the Experts for Occupational and Physical Therapists	Miami, Orlando and Gainesville, FL	Peg Sullivan at msulliva@fgcu.edu or (239) 590-7748 or Sheryl Sandvoss at sheryl.sandvoss@fldoe.org or (850) 245-0478
Oct. 31—Nov. 3, 2010	First Annual STEMtech Conference	Walt Disney World Swan and Dolphin Resort, Orlando, FL	http://www.league.org/stemtech
November 8-10, 2010 Important Dates: October 22 - Attendee Registration	The 2010 Florida Charter School Conference * The theme for this year is "Florida's Charter Schools: Rising to the Challenge." <ul style="list-style-type: none">Required for CSP Grant Recipients	DoubleTree Hotel at the Entrance to Universal Orlando Orlando, FL	http://www.charterschoolconference.com/