

**2011 MCCE@SU
Awards Ceremony
Thursday, October 6, 2011**

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR:
MCCE@SU Awards Ceremony
Thursday, October 6, 2011
Stevenson University, Owings Mills Campus,
Rockland Center
JUST A REMINDER!**

**Maryland Center for Character Education
at Stevenson University**

Application/Nomination Forms are due by June 30, 2011.

For More Information contact Linda Muska at
MCCEcharacter@aol.com or visit our website at
www.mdctrcharacter.org; click on Best Practices Application

ALSO,

The Maryland Center for Character Education at Stevenson University will again be presenting one award to a Maryland School System that is making the most significant difference in the quality of character education in their county or region in the state of Maryland. Last year Queen Anne's County Public Schools received the 2009—2010 School System of the Year Award and Somerset County Public Schools received an Honorable Mention Award.

Applications are due by August 3, 2011.

For More Information contact Mark Beck, at
MB4833@aol.com or at 410-822-6481

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**Have a Safe
and
Happy Summer!**

**Best Practice for the Month of June
Oakdale Middle School—Frederick County**

BEST CHARACTER EDUCATION PRACTICES

School: Oakdale Middle School
Address: 9840 Old National Pike
Ijamsville, MD 21754
Phone: 240-236-5500
Contact: Neal Case, Principal
Email - neal.case@fcps.org



Character Ed. Contact: Sherry Beach
Email - sherry.beach@fcps.org

Title of Best Practice: “Hey You...Think About It!!!”

Primary Principles Emphasized: 2 and 7

Principal 2: Defines character comprehensively to include thinking, feeling and behavior.

Objectives: To encourage students to continue to practice behaviors of good character as the student makes the transition from child to teenager by allowing them ownership of the Character Counts program within the school.

Description: By the time students enter the middle school they have been exposed to Character Counts education for at least six years, as character education begins at the elementary level in Frederick County. Unfortunately, but understandably, middle school students begin to tire of the familiar lessons and titles that come with character education. They begin to tune out the lessons and show visible signs of apathy. Instead of trudging ahead with the old familiar, we listened to the students and allowed them to own character education at the middle school level.

Best Practice for the Month of June Continued

In early fall of this school year, the students came to us and gave honest input on their feelings of Character Counts. They shared that they were tired of Character Counts and felt that they knew all about good character. So we left it up to the students. They came up with a new title, one that they could connect with personally. They requested tidbits (not lessons) that could make them think and perhaps act on through the course of the day. After a collaboration of the adult and teenage mind, we came up with a better attention grabber, "Hey You...Think About It!!!" Instead of complete lessons, we came up with morning announcement "tidbits." They were simply 30-45 seconds ads that encouraged good character from a teenage perspective. The students announced them as part of their morning announcement. This year, character education staff created the ads and making many interactive to encourage best practice. Each month 5 ads were created, incorporating one of the pillars in a way best suited for the teenager. Next year, we are encouraging that the ads be created by the students for the students. (see attached examples)

Principal 7: Strives to foster students' self-motivation.

Objective: To acknowledge and recognize students who willingly and without prompting demonstrate the qualities of good character.

Description: It is always questionable as to the extent that middle school students want to be recognized as doing the "right thing" in front of their peers. It has been a concern of our Character Education program for several years, but this year we chose a recognition process that appeared appreciated and accepted by the students, families and staff.

This year we kept the recognition title, "Student of the Month," recognizing both a male and female in each grade (6th, 7th, and 8th) as well as our Fine and Practical Arts and Learning for Life program. Hence, we recognized a total of 10 students a month! A letter from the principal was sent home to the family of each student celebrating and recognizing the student as one of outstanding character. Students were publicly recognized by fellow students through the morning announcements and at lunch the students were again recognized through presentation of a certificate and bag of goodies which included coupons for free stuff from our Businesses in Partnership with OMS. Finally, the community was made aware of our students of character through the school newsletter. The newsletter was an outlet for this announcement as well as the "Hey You...Think About It!!!" tidbit of the month.

In the second semester, several staff members felt the need to encourage our more at risk students. These were students who were demonstrating tremendous improved efforts, but not quite meeting all the requirements of "Student of the Month." For these students a letter of "Improved Efforts" was sent home to the family and a certificate of "Improved Efforts" with a small goody bag was shared with the student. We found that those students being recognized in this manner demonstrated improved behavior and willingness to do better in school.

**Best Practice for the Month of June
Continued**

May 1, 2010

To the family of Jane Doe,

Jane has been recognized by the 8th grade team as Oakdale Middle School's, "Character Counts, Student of the Month" for April.

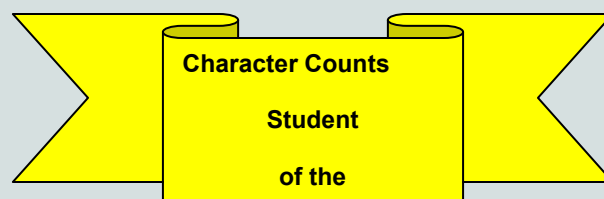
Your daughter displays excellent character habits that are evident throughout the school day. The team recognized Jane because she is not only willing to demonstrate these habits to promote her own personal academic and social growth, but she is also willing to share these excellent character traits to help others.

We are very please to have Jane at Oakdale Middle School. It is wonderful knowing that we have students like her who understand and are willing to share good character.

Jane will be recognized on OMS morning announcements and in our OMS Newsletter.

Congratulations, Jane!

Neal Case



Best Practice for the Month of June Continued

March 1, 2010

To the family of Sam Smee,

Sam has been recognized by the 8th Grade team as “A Student Demonstrating Improved Effort” at Oakdale Middle School.

Although grades continue to be in need of improvement, many of Sam’s teachers have recognized that he is making better decisions in class and is improving efforts to move away from potential situations that could impact his progress. Mr. Mills has especially recognized this improved effort in science, commenting that Sam not only advocates moving to an area where he can concentrate, but also questions the accuracy of the work he has completed. This is a tremendous improvement!

We are very pleased to see this progress in Sam and will continue to encourage this improved attitude and effort in all areas of his academics. Grades as well as positive attitude will lead Sam toward the path of success.

Continue the Improved Effort, Sam!

Neal Case
8th Grade Team



MARYLAND'S 2011 NATIONAL TEACHER OF THE YEAR



Maryland High School Chemistry Teacher Named 2011 Teacher of the Year

In a special White House ceremony on May 3, President Barack Obama honored Frederick County Public Schools teacher Michelle Shearer as the 2011 National Teacher of the Year

The Urbana High School Advanced Placement (AP) chemistry teacher moved up in the competition from FCPS Teacher of the Year to Maryland Teacher of the Year last October to one of four national finalists in January. She is the country's 61st National Teacher of the Year, the second from Maryland and the first from Frederick County.



Read more about Michelle Shearer at Frederick County Public School's website:

<http://fcps.schoolwires.com/fcps/site/default.asp>

President Obama honored Michelle Shearer as the 2011 National Teacher of the Year during a White House Rose Garden ceremony, which also honored the 2011 state teachers of the year. Shearer, a Princeton graduate, teaches advanced placement chemistry at Urbana High School in Maryland's Frederick County Public Schools. Previously, she taught high school chemistry and mathematics at the Maryland School for the Deaf.

Shearer not only embraces technological innovation in the classroom, but also emphasizes the importance of teacher-student interaction. In her award application she wrote, "I base my teaching philosophy on the belief that an educator's strong, positive connection with students is essential to their academic success."

Shearer advocates for science, technology, engineering, and math education for all K-12 students and successfully reaches those who are traditionally underrepresented in scientific fields, including female students, students with special needs, and those from diverse racial and socioeconomic backgrounds. She also emphasizes real-life applications of scientific concepts, which she demonstrates by incorporating a lab activity or experiment into every class period.

MARYLAND'S 2011 NATIONAL TEACHER OF THE YEAR



In his remarks, President Obama affirmed teachers' importance to students' personal lives and the future strength of our nation as a whole. He also quipped that he wanted to send Shearer to Congress to "give them a pep talk," hinting that Congress needs to progress more quickly on efforts to fix the No Child Left Behind Act.



The 14-year classroom veteran described her award as "an incredible opportunity for me to advocate for students, represent teachers, and draw positive attention to our collective efforts in public education."

In his remarks, President Obama affirmed teachers' importance to students' personal lives and the future strength of our nation as a whole. He also quipped that he wanted to send Shearer to Congress to "give them a pep talk," hinting that Congress needs to progress more quickly on efforts to fix the No Child Left Behind Act.

A committee of representatives from 14 national education organizations, including ASCD, chose the 2011 National Teacher of the Year from among the 2011 state teachers of the year.

- Read President Obama's and Michelle Shearer's full remarks from the ceremony.

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/05/03/remarks-president-honoring-2011-national-and-state-teachers-year>

- Learn more about the National Teacher of the Year program.

<http://www.ccsso.org/ntoy.html>

Congratulations!

Michelle Shearer

2011 National Teacher of the Year

National and State Schools of Character (NSOC / SSOC) Award Programs



2011 National Schools of Character Winners & Finalists

Check it out:

<http://www.character.org/2011nsoc>

Please Note:
This will be out last newsletter
until August 2011.



If you have any questions about the
Maryland Center for Character Education at Stevenson University
"School of the Year" Application
Contact Linda Muska at MCCEcharacter@aol.com

HAVE A SAFE AND FUN SUMMER

**MARYLAND CENTER FOR CHARACTER EDUCATION
APPLICATION/NOMINATION FORM**

Please use the criteria from **the Character Education Partnership's 11 principles of Effective Character Education** to demonstrate your excellence as a leader in character education.

Please return the following information by June 30, 2011:

SCHOOL SYSTEM _____

SCHOOL TO BE RECOGNIZED _____

SCHOOL PRINCIPAL _____ EMAIL _____

CHARACTER ED. CONTACT _____ EMAIL _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE NUMBER _____ FAX NUMBER _____

This school meets the following character education criteria (check at least three):

Principle 1 Promotes core ethical values as the basis of good character.

Principle 2 Defines "character" comprehensively to include thinking, feeling, and behavior.

Principle 3 Uses a comprehensive, intentional, proactive, and effective approach to character development.

Principle 4 Creates a caring school community.

Principle 5 Provides students with opportunities for moral action.

Principle 6 Includes a meaningful and challenging academic curriculum that respects all learners, develops their character, and helps them to succeed.

Principle 7 Strives to foster students self-motivation.

Principle 8 Engages the school staff as a learning and moral community that shares responsibility for character education and attempts to adhere to the same core values that guide the education of students.

Principle 9 Fosters shared moral leadership and long range support of the character education initiative.

Principle 10 Engages families and community members as partners in the character-building effort.

Principle 11 Evaluates the character of the school, the school staff's functioning as character educators, and the extent to which students manifest good character.

**MARYLAND CENTER FOR CHARACTER EDUCATION
APPLICATION/NOMINATION FORM**

**Best Practices Template can be found on our website: www.mdctrcharacter.org
under**

BEST PRACTICES APPLICATION

BEST CHARACTER EDUCATION PRACTICES – due June 30, 2011

School:			
Address:			
Principal:			
Title of Best Practice:			
Primary Principles Emphasized:			
Objective(s):			

Brief Description (including such items as materials needed, persons responsible, sequence of activities, observable results, references, etc). Feel free to use additional space to more clearly demonstrate/exhibit your character education initiative.

Write a paragraph or more describing the evidence that explains how your school addresses each of the identified principles. Optional: Attach any photos or electronic artifacts as examples to support your initiative. Please e-mail supporting materials that are indicative of the quality character education program of the school along with the BEST PRACTICES template so that your school's best practice can be included in the annual book of Best Practices.

This template can be found on our website, www.mdctrcharacter.org under BEST PRACTICES APPLICATION. **It is therefore essential that you forward your completed Best Practices template with attachments (if applicable) via e-mail to mccecharacter@aol.com.**

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School of Education
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Stevenson, MD 21153

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Linda Muska
E-mail: MCCEcharacter@aol.com

The Maryland Center for
Character Education at
Stevenson University



Flag Day

June 14

Father's Day

June 19

First Day of Summer

June 21

"It is today we must create the world of the future."

— Eleanor Roosevelt