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Mrs. Nancy Bolden
Chair of the Frank E. Bolden
Scholarship Committee

Preparing to Meet the Educational Needs of Special Needs Children

Lauren Barnes is the most recent recipient of the Frank E. Bolden Scholarship. She is a Junior at the Duquesne University School of Education. Her major is Early Childhood Education. Because of the restrictions placed on in-person gathering due to the Coronavirus, the presentation on February 10, 2021 was virtual. The article "**Special Education Programs And Services: What Are They**" was presented in an earlier issue of this newsletter. The article indicated that Special Education includes 10 disabilities. The last issue of the Bolden Scholarship Newsletter included an article about the "Hearing Impaired, including Deafness". This issue includes an article by a Life Skills Teacher. This is a program that provides services to a wide range of disabilities in school related or "life" skills. The author is Jason Bribdza a Life Skills teacher at Quaker Valley High School. Again, we wish to thank those of you whose contributions have helped grow this scholarship. The Scholarship was established at Poise Foundation in 1998 with an initial contribution of \$7,745.00. Twenty-three years later it has grown to over \$73,000.00 and in addition 19 scholarships have been awarded. The first scholarship was \$1,000.00. This year, the scholarship recipient will receive \$3,000.00 because it is our desire that the scholarship retain its value and it is increased periodically.



**Now, More
Than Ever!**

By Karris Jackson
Chief Operating Officer
POISE Foundation

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted everyone. Whether you are a frontline worker, senior citizen, or K-12 student learning remotely; this past year has changed the way you live your life. COVID-19 has also impacted our nation's postsecondary students. According to the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center, college enrollment immediately following high school declined by 22% from Fall 2019 to Fall 2020. Furthermore, community college enrollment dropped the most, by 30.3%. In addition, findings from the Understanding America Survey indicated that 23% of postsecondary-enrolled respondents reported increased family care responsibilities due to COVID-19 and 28% reported an increased desire to be close to home. It is clear from this data that postsecondary students have many obstacles to overcome in continuing their educational pursuits during the pandemic. This is why postsecondary scholarships are so important. Students need the financial support of scholarships, such as the Frank E. Bolden Scholarship, to help them meet the financial burden of paying for their education. It is critical that we continue to support our students as they seek to reach their academic goals during this difficult time. Supporting scholarships like the Frank E. Bolden Scholarship is one way to help. Your support is needed. **Now, More Than Ever.**

Special Education Programs and Services: What Are They?



Photo by Katerina Holmes

Life Skills Support Programs instruct students with a wide range of disabilities in school-related or “life” skills. Students present a wide range of disabilities, but the most common ones are intellectual and developmental disabilities, autism, and multiple disabilities. The students receive instruction due to the need for “life skills” their typically developing peers may naturally learn in school or at home. Students receive support from the program. Their Individual Education Plan (IEP) determines their goals, needs, strengths, and the type of supports they are to receive throughout the school year.

Life skills teachers are responsible for teaching students both academic, community, independent living, transition, and work skills all the while handling the administrative and reporting responsibilities of the job. Students may receive instruction on bathroom skills in elementary school, cooking in middle school, and job training as high schoolers. The range of skills varies, but the foundation of the goals resides in preparing the student to be as independent as possible. In order to make the general education curriculum more accessible in school, students are provided such supports as one-to-one educational paraprofessional or personal care assistance, nursing services, adapted materials, task analysis, breakdowns of simple or complex tasks, educational instruction in smaller groups or one-on-one, and other adaptations or modifications.

A student begins the process with evaluations performed by the school district to determine the appropriate placement, programs, and begin IEP goals. Student’s progress is closely monitored to make sure the correct placement and methods are incorporated into the student’s plan. Students receive instruction in the regular education classroom, resource setting, and in the community. Life Skills Support Programs may be located at special schools or within the student’s regular neighborhood school. Students often receive special transportation that provides extra support and easily-accessible locations for drop-off and pickup.

This is a general description of the foundation of the Life Skills Program. There are differences between elementary, middle and high school. There are also differences in such related services as speech, occupational, vision, hearing, physical, and mobility therapies. Life Skills Programs are highly individualized; therefore, the experience and expertise of teachers and other professionals are developed through experience and advanced academic degrees.

By Jason Brindza

Learning Support/Life Skills Teacher
Quaker Valley School District

The Bolden Scholars since 2001



Njeri Branch—2001



Eric Jankowski—2002



Lidsay Mielecki – 2003



Andrea Coleman Betts 2005



Kevin Scott –2005



Adriane LaRusso—2006



Elizabeth Suwala -2007



Suzannah Cannon -2009



Lauren Skrasztus -2011



Anay Pope—2011



Naomi Canon -2012



Brittany Olcharka—2014



Ciarra Lewis – 2014



Dana Denson –2015



Chelse Aston -2017



Jessica Murslov – 2017



Elizabeth LaCarte- 2018



Ashley Pope 2019

Scholarship Eligibility Criteria

1. Be an undergraduate or graduate education student pursuing a Special Education or Early Childhood teaching certification in the state of Pennsylvania.
2. Provide evidence of community service work with children.
3. Intend to pursue a career focusing on the education and development of special needs children.
4. Attend a college or university within the 18-county Western Pennsylvania area that offers a teachers' certification program in Special Education or Early Childhood Education/Development

The Frank E. Bolden Scholarship Fund Advisory Committee

- Nancy Travis Bolden, Chair
- Ilene Kurfeerst, PhD
- Sylvia Robinson
- Clarence Curry
- Kenneth Love
- Lee Nicklos
- Barbara McNutty Love, MD
- Christopher Moore



Lauren Barnes
2020 Bolden Scholarship Recipient
Junior at Duquesne University SoE
Major: Early Childhood Education



A view of the 2020 Frank E. Bolden scholarship virtual award event

Help Is On The Way!

Nationwide, child care providers have been among the hardest hit by the restrictions born out of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. Childcare facilities had had to close either temporarily or permanently. In order to meet Covid-19 standards, the ones that were able to reopen and remain open, have had to make drastic adjustments in the way they operate. Additionally, they were offered and have begun to receive State and federal financial assistance. For example, in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Governor Tom Wolf recently released a plan to allocated over \$300 million from the Federal Government's Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2021 (CRRSAA) earmarked for child care providers. This funding is currently being rolled out as follows:

- \$140.7 million in support of child care facilities experiencing a decline of approximately 32 percent in enrollment as a result of the Covid pandemic.
- \$64.6 million to help offset increased operating costs
- \$87.17 million to balance higher, regionalized-base payment rates for facilities participating in subsidized child care programs.
- \$3 million to add up to 5,000 child care professionals to those receiving pandemic relief awards. Pandemic relief awards are cash "awards" meant to support employees currently working directly with children.

I am convinced that this much-needed lifeline will sustain child care providers and most importantly, support child care professionals including teachers and educators. I even venture to predict that most child care providers won't just withstand this crisis but will come out of it thriving, stronger and ever more determined to provide the best care to all children. Source: OCDEL (2021)



Tchetchet G. Digbohou
Scholarship Manager
POISE Foundation

List of Contributors to The Frank E. Bolden Scholarship Fund in 2020

- | | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| ▪ Catherine Adams | ▪ Valerie Kinloch |
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| ▪ Ilene L.S. Kurfeerst | ▪ Johanna Crawford |
| ▪ Kenneth & Barbara Love Household | ▪ And many other anonymous donors! |

**Thank You For Your
Generous Donations !!!**

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www.poisefoundation.org/frank-e-bolden-scholarship-fund

