Often at the beginning of a new school year it is as though a new day is dawning. In so many ways it now seems that way on the campus of Tennessee School for the Blind. With capital projects forcing the total evacuation of the A-Wing building complex over the summer, years of collections were removed down to the bare walls. The timing became right for the reorganization and placement of people, offices and classrooms into locations creating greater efficiency. When you glance into a room these days, the floor and arrangement of furniture is all different. You may expect to see the same familiar face, and the face you see may be familiar but not the one you expected. On the other hand, the face you see may not be that familiar at all. Along with many staff retiring over the past year and the consequent influx of new employees, a lot of new faces are now part of the school’s creative positive force. Add to this mix new educational and governmental guidelines and the implementation of improved teaching ideas and snap… the most consistent thing before your eyes looks like change! All healthy and living organisms are constantly in the state of change.

And although change often means leaving the temporary comfort of the present in order to re-adjust to the new and sometimes unknown, change is necessary in the advancement of excellence and can yield high rewards. What an exciting time to be on the campus of Tennessee School for the Blind and watch the new students enter their new world. What an exciting time to interact with all the students knowing that life altering changes are in store for them this year! Consistently working together as a team proliferates the pursuit of creating contributing participating members of society. Imagine in the midst of much change… working together to consistently be creating contributing participating members of society! That indeed is change at it’s very best.

Change Ubiquitous in Constant Pursuit of Excellence
New Kids on Campus

From Gruetli, TN (population 1,813) in Grundy County comes Levi Dykes. Although his hometown may be small Levi’s smile could not be any bigger! This year Levi is in Fran Mandrell’s MAP 1 class. He loves being outdoors and playing on the merry-go-round. When indoors he enjoys watching cartoons and spending time exploring. Levi is very friendly and has found many new playmates. He also is very helpful as he is always volunteering to pitch in with cottage chores.

Alexis Ippolito calls Chattanooga her home town and Cottage two becomes her home away from home while at school during the week. This six year old is in Laura Smith’s class. Alexis enjoys listening to music on her iPod and is especially fond of the Baby Einstein music. Alexis can be very active and loves being on the playground and in particular on the swings. Her brown bear and weighted blanket also rank high as some of her favorite things.

Lathaniel Phipps comes to TSB from Manchester, TN and is a residential student riding on the Chattanooga Bus. He is a member of Casey Sloan’s MAP2 class and like most young boys enjoys the outdoors and playground. While inside, you will find Lathaniel creatively constructing with the Lego toys. He also enjoys being with his new friends. His favorite foods are hotdogs and French fries. Lathaniel has a good level of self confidence and determination.

With her home town being Johnson City, Brianna Swindall makes the commute on the charter bus to reside at TSB in Cottage two as a residential student. This nine year old is very outgoing with a personality that is hard to miss. Brianna enjoys making new friends, playing with stuffed animal toys and listening to music. She always seems to find ways to keep herself occupied. Brianna is in Casey Sloan’s MAP2 class.

One of the new student residing on campus in Cottage six this year is Tori Harrison. Traveling each week on one of the school’s charter buses, Tori is from Green County, where she previously attended Moshiem Elementary/Middle School. Tori loves gym, wrestling, bowling, swimming and climbing trees. She has won trophies for her wrestling accomplishments. Tori is helping out with dance, and doing exercises with her friends. She is in Donna Fridgant’s class.

"Hope" Esperonza Monsalvo is a new student who is also living in Cottage six. She comes to TSB from Woodbury where she attended Woodbury Grammer School, located in Cannon County. Hope turns fourteen years of age this month and is a freshman in Christina von Reyn’s class. Hope loves art, cooking and good tasting food of all kinds. Her favorite music is pop and rock. Her cottage parent stated that "Hope is always cheerful and helpful".

Alexis Ippolito

Lathaniel Phipps

Levi Dykes

Brianna Swindall

Tori Harrison

Hope Monsalvo
With the retirement of Frank Alexander at the end of last school year, TSB has appointed Andy Joiner to fill his position as Athletic Director. No stranger to the TSB athletics, Andy has been involved with coaching for most of his sixteen years at TSB. He has taught and coached golf for fourteen years and has been the assistant swimming coach for the past two years. Over the past fifteen years Andy has coached the boys track/field team. One could say his love, desire and commitment for the students and their achievement has a proven “track record”.

Andy recently released the list of coaches for the 2013-2014 TSB Tiger teams and was excited about the great possibilities facing the students this year. The coaches are as follows:

- Girls Track/Field Coach - Christina vonReyn
- Boys Track/Field Coach - Andy Joiner
- Goal Ball Head Coach - Allison Nannemann
- (asst. coach) - Patrick Hector
- Wrestling Head Coach - Tim Taylor
- (asst. coach) - Ann Frensylvania
- Cheerleading Head Coach - Susan Yarbrough
- (asst. coach) - Teresa Buntin
- Swimming Head Coach - Robin Bush
- (asst. coach) - Andy Joiner
- Forensics Coaches - Dr. Marta Whittington and Carla Wall

In addition, the TSB Mockingbird Yearbook will again be produced by Ken Johns, and the TSB Student Council will be the responsibilities of Dr. Tonja Dandy.

The TSB Tiger Track Team began practice the first week of school. Coach Joiner was excited about the number of students out to compete and advance their skills this year. The students participating are:

- Girls: Alyssa Loggins, Elizabeth Harden, Taylor Grenier, Corgan Waters, Shelby West, Lauri Richardson, Brittany Wolfe, Kayla Heinicke, Tori Harrison, and Demi Richards
- Boys: Cody Spicer, Brooks Gardner, George Guerrero, Mohammed Kalakhi, Jacob Mitchell, Michael Ward, Tim Jones, Nick Heggie, Garrett Meeks, Derrick Manning, Carlos Medrano, Logan Cox, Chris Cook, Jeffrey Springfield and Sean Weinheimer

The team will face its first school to school competition on Thursday September fifth in Indianapolis Indiana.

Staff Recognized for Years of Service

On Monday, August 12th Tennessee School for the Blind recognized sixteen members of the faculty and staff for their years of service to the state. The recognition, part of the State Service Awards Program honors employees in five year increments throughout their lifetime of state employment. Recognized this year was: Five Years – Debra Ponder, Casey Sloan, and Allison Nannemann

- Ten Years – Connie Morgan, Shari Scott, James Bassham, and Angela Rixham
- Fifteen Years – Monica Leister, Joseph Gregory, Margie Stafford, and Tammie Murphy
- Twenty Years – Charlotte Christian and Parneice Johnson
- Thirty Years – Gregory Smith and Tim Jack
- Thirty-five Years – Regina Harris

Each recipient was able to pick out an award from those in the designated category as a token of the state’s appreciation. In addition, those receiving recognition for thirty or more years received a plaque from the governor celebrating their accomplishment. Other staff members will also be recognized later in the year.

Dr. Walker thanks Casey Sloan for 5 years of service.
Additions to Staff Enrich Possibilities for Students

Eight new staff members have joined the team on the campus of TSB by the beginning of the new school year. They are as follows:

Diana Baumgardner

- Originally from Kentucky, Diana Baumgardner moved to Nashville in 1984. Married with two sons and three granddaughters, she can be found spending time with family and friends, reading, or participating in church activities. Diana has a B.S. in English with a minor in French from Murray State University and an M.A. in Counseling Psychology from Trevecca Nazarene University. She is a Licensed Psychological Examiner and a Licensed School Counselor for grades K-12. In addition, Diana is a Certified Mediator. For twenty-two of the last twenty-four years she has taught in both public and private schools. As a teacher, Diana has had many leadership roles and served on many committees and leadership teams. In addition she worked in the capacity of Psychological Examiner for the Department for the Intellectually and Developmentally Disabled where she successfully handled a plethora of assignments. Here at TSB, Diana is teaching English and French. Additional duties will include counseling and assessing students as needed and collaborating with the school counseling staff to create and implement programs for the students and staff of TSB.

Amanda Black

- Amanda Black joins the Instructional staff teaching Assistive Technology to the high school students. She attended the University of Michigan and Trevecca Nazarene University. Amanda has certification in Special Education with Visual Impairments, Music and English as a Second Language. She is the mother of teenage triplets. Amanda and her son are no strangers to TSB as Christian has been a student here for the past nine years. Moving to Tennessee after teaching music for nine years in Michigan, Amanda taught at St. Rose School in Murfreesboro TN for eight years. She loves Michigan Football and being with her family.

After having taught for fifteen years in Metro Nashville and Williamson County Schools as a Reading Specialist and Special Educator, Teresa Buntin joins the TSB team. Teresa is teaching the MAP 4 students. In addition to her work in the Metro Nashville and Williamson County Schools, Teresa also taught for five years in the Traumatic Brain Injury Program at Tennessee Rehabilitation Center. She and her family live in Nashville, but are originally from Lebanon, TN in Wilson County. Teresa and her husband Mike are newlyweds having just married eleven months ago in October of last year. Teresa states: “I am very excited to be teaching at Tennessee School for the Blind!”

Joseph Morton

- Joseph Morton began working at the Resource Center here on the TSB campus in July. His smile and great attitude are contagious. He lives in the Nashville area with his wife and two children. Joseph enjoys working out at the YMCA and keeping in good physical condition. Among Joseph’s likes are traveling and exploring new areas. He also is in the right location, that being Music City, in order to enjoy another love of his life music.
Additions to Staff Enrich Possibilities for Students (cont.)

After working last year at TSB as a student companion and substitute teacher, Cathy Summers joins the staff this year as an Educational Assistant in Physical Education. Cathy is also a certified lifeguard and enjoys swimming. Having moved to Nashville two years ago from Southern California, she is happy to be working with the students at TSB. When not here, Cathy also enjoys engaging the Nashville Music Scene and time spending with her husband and two children.

Born and raised, across the Delaware River from the City of Brotherly Love, in Haddon Heights, NJ; Tim Taylor has been working with children and adults with disabilities for about six years. He studied at Gloucester County College gaining his Associate Degree in Health and Physical Education. While there Tim also participated in sports being on both the wrestling and track teams. In his freshman year, the wrestling team won a national championship. Moving on to West Chester University of Pennsylvania for completion of his undergraduate work, he again studied Health & Physical Education. In addition, Tim minored in Health and Adapted Physical Education. After graduation, Tim gained a Masters Degree from Slippery Rock University of Pennsylvania in the area of Adapted Physical Activity. This past summer he worked with The Hope Network which works through HealthSouth Harmerville Rehabilitation Hospital. Tim has participated in Special Olympics, Paralympics, teaching Health and PE, and has worked in a rehab hospital. Tim is also the Co-Facilities Director of Camp Abilities PA which is a developmental sports camp for children who are blind or visually impaired. He is glad to be at TSB and looks forward to starting a similar camp here in the future.

Christy Williams is the newest faculty member in the “STEM Academy” here at TSB. This is her 7th year of teaching. Her educational career has included employment with Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools, serving as a faculty member of both Whites Creek and Hillwood High School. During her time at Whites Creek High School, she served time as the science department chair, a member of the leadership team, co-lead teacher for the Academy of Community Health, assistant volleyball coach, freshmen cheerleading coach and interim Varsity cheerleading coach. Ms. Williams has earned a B.S. in Biology at Delta State University and a M.A. in Teaching 7-12 at Trevecca Nazarene University. Her educational philosophy is that “the purpose of education is to provide a wide range of rich and diverse learning experiences so that every child has the opportunity to achieve educational success”.

Jane Wilson-Moses first came to Tennessee from Eugene, Oregon in 2003 as a member of AmeriCorps. She moved to Nashville to reside in 2009. Before obtaining her license Jane was a paraprofessional at TSB. She now returns as a first-year teacher and is very excited about being part of the community. Jane will be teaching Lifeskills 3. When not lesson planning, she enjoys playing Ultimate Frisbee, thinking about applied behavior analysis, and tending to the basil plants on her balcony. Other loves in Jane’s life include early childhood special education and being in Oregon in the high desert with her family.
Parental Involvement: Essential to Student Success

Children... what an unparalleled, tremendous expression of life! Parenting... what an unparalleled, tremendous responsibility for life! And wow, what a privilege to live in a country where the importance of educating the youth promotes excellent methods and resources for parents in responsibility, ensuring the young lives within their care. In May of 2004 The Tennessee Legislature passed and Governor Phil Bredesen signed a bill containing a plan for improving parent participation in schools. This plan was designed to improve parent and teacher cooperation in such areas as homework, attendance, and discipline. It gave procedures by which parents may learn about the course of study for their children and have access to all learning materials. Subsequently in April, 2009, the house passed and the governor signed into law a bill requiring The Department of Education to develop standards for parental involvement in public schools. The Tennessee Parental Involvement Standards listed below are based on the PTA’s National Standards for Family-School Partnerships. Standards by definition are a level of quality or excellence that is accepted as the norm or by which actual attainments are judged. These standards were adopted by The State Board of Education in July, 2010 and are as follows:

**Standard 1: Welcoming All Families into the School Community**
Families are active participants in the life of the school, and feel welcomed, valued, and connected to each other, to school staff, and to what students are learning and doing in class.

**Standard 2: Communicating Effectively**
Families and school staff engage in regular, two-way, meaningful communication about student learning.

**Standard 3: Supporting Student Success**
Families and school staff continuously collaborate to support students’ learning and healthy development both at home and at school, and have regular opportunities to strengthen their knowledge and gain skills to do so effectively.

**Standard 4: Speaking Up for Every Child**
Families are empowered to be advocates for their own and other children, to ensure that students are treated fairly and have access to learning opportunities that will support their success.

**Standard 5: Sharing Power**
Families and school staff are equal partners in decisions that affect children and families, together inform, influence, and create policies, practices, and programs.

**Standard 6: Collaborating with Community**
Families and school staff collaborate with community members to connect students, families, and staff to expanded learning opportunities, community services, and civic participation. These six standards described above will be the subject of a series of ongoing articles coming in the future editions of The Roar of the Tiger Newsletters. Additional information on these standards can be found by visiting: http://www.tn.gov/education/fedprog/fpinvolveeducators.shtml
With the carpets and old tile flooring throughout the offices and classrooms in the A wing building in great need of replacement, work began immediately after graduation so the task would have time to be completed before the students returned in the fall. The administrative parking lot became a staging ground for forty PODS (portable on demand storage) to house furniture and contents that needed to be moved from the rooms so removal of the old floors could begin. Boxes were assembled and filled. Furniture was wrapped and moved. PODS were organized and filled. Staff from all departments of the school worked together to complete this enormous undertaking. Within days, the contractors were ripping out old tile and carpets and repairing the floors. New coverings were installed, inspected, cleaned and waxed as needed. As the staff began arriving for the fall semester, the first order of business became to again populate and arrange the school with its contents. In addition to the classrooms and offices in the A-Wing building being recovered, the carpets in the B-Wing classrooms and classroom offices, and the carpet in the Play Atrium was replaced. Other Capitol project currently in the works at TSB include the expansion of the Blue Roof Parking Area, additional expansion of the geothermal complex and installation of an Emergency Notification System. The parking lot expansion, due to be completed in October, will double the current parking spaces available.
Tennessee School for the Blind is a state special school established in 1844 to meet the unique needs of visually impaired students living in the state of Tennessee. The school provides academic and professional services tailored to benefit students placed in its care through the Local Education Agencies across the state. Beyond a tradition of academics, TSB specializes in the instruction of expanded core-curricular areas such as Braille, Mobility, Technology, Career Education, and Independent Living Skills. Students at the school also enjoy the opportunity to participate in team sports, campus clubs, organizations and many leisure-time activities. In addition the school provides outreach services to visually challenged students, their parents, teachers, schools and other agencies assisting the visually challenged.

Summer Camps

Three weeks of camp were held at TSB during the summer. The first two weeks of July eighteen high school students were on campus. During the third week of July, thirty-five students from the elementary and life skills groups came together for the learning and camp experience.

Person of Character Named

TSB’s Person of Character award for the first issue of the Roar of the Tiger recognizes Mike Stewart. “Mikey” was recommended by Milly Adams, the school’s Media Center Director. This honor is given to students who demonstrate behavior that exemplifies following school rules: Being Safe, Respectful and Responsible. Milly Adams stated that Mikey found a BookPort+ tech device in the closet of his cottage during the first week of school after moving into his new cottage room. He demonstrated great responsibility by bringing it to his teacher, Ms. Masters. This was a device that has been lost for the past year. Mikey showed responsibility and concern for items belonging to TSB. A TSB dog tag is given to each recipient to wear and they are reminded that as they wear it, they are to be demonstrating the good character for which they were awarded, including speaking and behaving as a student who has been honored with this award. TSB staff are encouraged to recognize these students and ask them why they were honored.