

BEAR CREEK ACADEMY

Fall 2015



Celebrating 7 Years of Excellence in Therapeutic Education

EXPERIENCING VIRGINIA'S HISTORY



In the Spring, Bear Creek's English classes took a field trip to Montpelier, the home of James Madison. The students toured his home and learned a variety of information about his family, personal, and political life. While exploring the grounds of the estate, the students met and spoke with a team of archeologists who were digging at a site in the backyard, off to the side of the slave quarters. The students also explored the trails of the grounds and learned about the conservation efforts to preserve the many types of trees and other plant species found there.

In September, the 7th and 8th grade U.S. History classes took a trip to Appomattox Court House to explore the place where the nation was reunited after the Civil War. They went on several interesting tours and heard informative ranger talks that gave new insight and knowledge about the events that took place in April of 1865. Students thoroughly enjoyed the History Alive talk, in which an African American woman acted as if it was still 1865. During the trip everyone involved enjoyed themselves and learned a wealth of new information about the events that ended the Civil War.



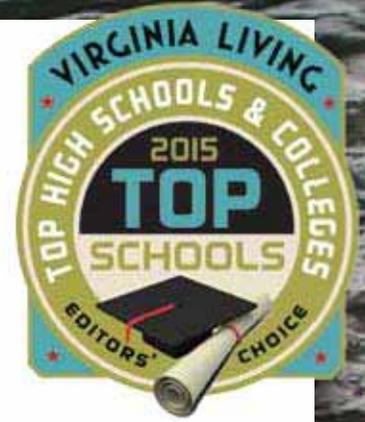
SHARING OUR MISSION WITH THE FIRST FAMILY

Bear Creek Academy staff had the pleasure of enjoying dinner with Governor McAuliffe and his wife Dorothy during their visit to Bear Creek Lake State Park in August. During the dinner Mr. Montano gave a brief presentation and slide show that emphasized Bear Creek Academy's long-standing relationship with the Park and the mission and history of the BCA Conservation Corps program. Also in attendance were Molly Ward, Secretary of Natural Resources, and Craig Seaver, Virginia State Parks Director, both of whom have helped support Bear Creek Academy's work with our local state parks. Pictured above are Molly Ward, Ben Montano (Director of Therapeutic Services), First Lady Dorothy McAuliffe, Governor Terry McAuliffe, Jordan Whiley (Administrator), and Cainan Townsend (Therapeutic Advocate).



2015 VIRGINIA LIVING TOP SCHOOL

Bear Creek Academy is proud to announce that it has been selected by *Virginia Living* magazine as one of its Top High Schools for 2015. *Virginia Living* recognized BCA for its excellence and innovation in the category of Special Needs. After thorough review of each school's programs and accomplishments, the magazine's editors selected schools that have instituted programs or recently begun capital improvements aimed at strengthening students' experiences in and beyond the classroom.



PROMOTING RESPECT FOR OUR COMMUNITY

An integral part of Bear Creek Academy's educational philosophy is promoting a healthy spirit of volunteerism in our students by engaging in a variety of community projects. Last semester, in conjunction with our biweekly transition program, a group of students volunteered at

the local Cumberland Animal Shelter. The

students fed, walked, and played with the dogs, and learned about opportunities to help at the shelter in other ways.



On September 11, 2015 Bear Creek Academy students joined with Chief Ranger Tom Kneipp to honor victims of the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center. After a brief reflection about remembering the lives that were lost that day the group took a moment of silence at the entrance sign to the park. One boy remarked that he was just a baby when it happened and what a terrible day it must have been.

Ranger Tom explained that this is why we are going to give remem-

brance to those lives by creating a lasting flower bed by the sign that will give life and beauty to the environment. As the boys carried heavy landscaping timbers and broke dirt to properly square the corners of the new bed, all were focused on the idea of construction, working together, and the beautiful Fall day that they had been given.



NURTURING CREATIVE EXPRESSION

We continue to encourage students to engage in positive self-expression and learn valuable career and technical skills through a variety of elective courses and special events. Recent courses include fine art, music appreciation, information technology, and food service. Special events such as our Halloween celebration and spirit week allow students to be creative and enjoy themselves!



BEAR CREEK ACADEMY
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Our Staff

THE FOUNDERS

Jason Lake, Director of Experiential Education - 19 years educational experience
Master's Degree in College and Community Counseling, Longwood University
Professional experience as a counselor and Regional Director of Experiential Education (VA, NC, MD, IN) .
Professional service with the Association for Challenge Course Technicians and Alpine Towers International.
Certified Facilitator for Satori Alternatives to Managing Aggression and certified ARC First Aid/CPR Instructor.

Benjamin Montano, Director of Therapeutic Services - 22 years educational experience
Master's Degree in College and Community Counseling, Longwood University
Professional experience as a counselor, program director, administrator, and in-home therapist (Attachment and Trauma issues).
Professional service with the Virginia Department of Education, the Virginia Association of Independent Specialized Education Facilities, and the National Association of Therapeutic Schools.

Jason Paulin, Director of Education - 19 years educational experience
Master's Degree in Special Education, James Madison University
Professional experience as a counselor, teacher, special education teacher, Director of Experiential Education, Program Director, and public school case manager.

Jordan Whiley, Administrator - 21 years educational experience
Master's Degree in Teaching, University of Virginia
Professional experience as a counselor, Lead Special Education Teacher, entrepreneur, and administrator.
Licensed USA Cycling Level 2 Coach, certified ServSafe Food Protection Manager

TEACHING STAFF

Mary Quinn Ferguson, Special Education Teacher
Master's Degree in Special Education, University of Virginia
Professional experience as a lead teacher, behavioral specialist, and mentor for new teachers
Extensive experience developing curricula for teaching social thinking to students with emotional and behavioral disabilities

Jarrod Lisker, Mathematics Teacher - 18 years educational experience
Bachelor's degree in Mathematics Education, Indiana University of Pennsylvania
Professional experience as Supervisor for Math program at Powhatan county schools.

Kourtney Nichols, Special Education Teacher
Master's Degree in Liberal Studies: Special Education with a Certificate in Autism, Longwood University
Professional experience teaching in schools, camp, and therapeutic programs for Autism using ABA (Applied Behavior Analysis).
Professional certification in middle school English and history.

Melissa Sims, Art Teacher
Bachelor of Science in Fine Arts (photography), James Madison University
Professional Licensure for PK-12th grade
Professional experience as a teacher and lead teacher.
Volunteer service in children's programs, both domestic and international.

Joshua Vaden, History Teacher
Master's Degree in Curriculum and Instruction, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
Professional experience as a teacher and wrestling coach

SUPPORT STAFF

Wyaneka Brown, Office Manager
Masters of Business Administration w/concentration in Information Systems, Strayer University (December 2014)
Professional experience as a teaching assistant.
Professional Training as a Child Associate with Primary Project and the Washington, D.C. Department of Mental Health.

Cainan Townsend, Therapeutic Advocate
Bachelor of Science in Liberal Studies, minor in Leadership Studies
Professional experience as a soccer coach, tutor and mentor for children and youth

Carrie Boswell, Support Staff
Bachelor of Arts in Psychology, certificate in Leadership Studies, Hollins University
Professional and volunteer experience working with children and youth in educational and recreational capacities