



# Crowning Moments newsletter

Brought to you by the King Street Center

King Street Center | Established 1971 | Published Tri-annually | www.kingstreetcenter.org | Issue 2



The mission of the King Street Center is to promote personal and social wellness through educational, recreational, and social programs.

## Inside this Issue

- Mentoring, Round Two** 1
- Reaching Each Student** 1
- From the Director** 2
- Mentor Moments** 2
- Mind the Music** 2
- Meet Our Youth** 3
- Final Curtain: Encore's Last King Street Benefit** 3
- Natasha Koval-Paden** 3
- The Burlington Clothes Exchange** 3
- King Street by the Numbers** 4

## Mentoring, Round Two

by Sarah Soule

I am continually asked how I, as a busy professional, find time to serve as a mentor. My response is, how could I not? Serving as a mentor has literally changed my life in ways I never dreamed possible and is, hands down, the best gift I have ever given myself.

I've been involved in the Junior/Senior Buddy program for 15 years. My first "little buddy" and I were matched when she was five years old. She is now almost 20 and is working full time as an LNA, assisting patients afflicted with Alzheimer's. Last summer she gave me 'permission' to be matched with another child, and in October, I met Makayla who just turned seven.

Emma and Makayla are two girls who have brought so much to my life. Both

are interesting, engaging, fun, silly, and have added a dimension to my life that I cannot put a value on. Seeing the look of delight on Makayla's face when we try something new together for the first time is magical. Knowing that Emma is now successfully launched in a rewarding career and making her way in the world, on her own, is reward enough.



Emma sees my new buddy, in relation to our friendship, as a triangle, and I, in turn, see it as an extraordinary three-way relationship. Emma recognizes that we will always be together,

*continued on page 3.*

## Reaching Each Student

Statistics regarding poverty and the achievement gap can be pretty alarming. Children living in poverty are six times more likely to drop out of high school than their middle-class peers. Furthermore, on average, children from low-income families score 27 points below the mean reading level score for all students.



Academics have always been a major focus in our preschool, afterschool, and teen programs. Realizing that further intervention was necessary, however, in 2007 we launched Each One Reach One, a tutoring program that provides one-on-one instruction to students in need of additional support.

Currently, a team of 19 tutors works with 34 students each week. At the beginning of each semester, tutors and students evaluate previous work, identify areas in which the student

struggles, and develop goals. Next, the tutors guide the students towards their goals, using homework assignments, literacy and math games, and direct instruction.

This past summer, King Street Center expanded Each One Reach One to tackle another statistic: that children from low-income families tend to lose 3 month's worth of reading skills each summer. Every day, a team of volunteers arrived at noon to sit and read with children for an hour. Upon returning to school in the fall, many of the children who had participated in the program either improved or maintained their current reading level.

"The Each One Reach One Program is really effective," says Peggy Curtis, Education Director at King Street. "The children are eager to meet with their tutors each week, and the confidence they gain carries over into everything they do."



# From the Director

*Vicky*



## Mentor Moments

**Nicole and Rabecca** have been matched through the Junior/Senior Buddy Mentoring Program for two years. They enjoy being active, and can frequently be seen biking on the bike path or climbing at Petra Cliffs during their weekly Friday meetings.

This fall, Nicole and Rabecca implemented a budget for their activities, which has helped teach Rabecca about the importance of finances and has encouraged the pair to expand the scope of their activities. To fund their hobbies, the pair has sold lemonade and collected bottles and cans for recycling.

Nicole says part of what drew her to mentoring was the opportunity to be an 'older sister' because that's not an experience she grew up with. Rabecca mirrors Nicole's sentiments, saying, "Nicole's really special to me because we get to do lots of things together . . . and I think of her as my big sister."

**T**oday's school children are under intense pressure to succeed—at all ages and at all levels. We all know what it takes for top students to get into elite colleges, but what is less publicized is the push by schools to improve the academic performance of low-achieving students starting at the earliest grades.

Driven by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, Burlington's schools are going to extraordinary lengths to increase the percentage of students who pass standardized tests in basic skills. To do this, low-performing students are often taken out of classes like gym, art, and music and enrolled in additional sections of core subjects, like math and reading, during the school day.

The result is that many kids are stressed out. With less "down time" during the day and fewer opportunities to release their boundless energy, low-performing children have even fewer reasons to enjoy going to school.

This is where King Street is making a real difference. Working with our schools, we are helping to extend the school day by focusing our programming on what I call "the three A's": academics, athletics, and attitude.

**Academics.** Each day we provide supervised homework time where staff and volunteers provide individual assistance. This is supplemented by our Each One Reach One program, where students in our afterschool program are matched with a volunteer tutor for one-on-one support in core subjects.

**Athletics.** Exercise is essential for both physical and mental fitness. Kids at school get phys ed twice a week; at King Street every day is gym day.

**Attitude.** "Attitude is everything." I don't know who coined this famous phrase, but she got it right: a positive outlook on life makes all the difference. Our staff use the same proven methods as the schools to encourage positive behavior and reward individual and collective achievements.

By combining work and play in our programs every day, children get the academic support they need and the physical activity their bodies crave. The result is children who are happier, healthier, and better prepared to succeed in the classroom.

## Mind the Music

Mind the Music is a mindfulness training program run by Teal Scott. Teens meet four days a week to enjoy a meal and listen to popular music while practicing techniques for relaxation, awareness of sound, emotional sensations, and future goals.

Both teens and staff have remarked upon participants' increased concentration, positive outlook, and dedication to academics. Currently, four teens are raising money to attend a mindfulness retreat at the Kripalu Center for Yoga and Health in Massachusetts.

To learn more about Mind the Music or the retreat (which is open to the public), visit [soryuforall.budsa.org](http://soryuforall.budsa.org).



# Meet OUR Youth

**Mentoring, Part Two** continued no matter what. We continue to see each other regularly.

Mentoring, round two, has brought the same rewards, delights, and joys as it did the first time. It involves doing fun things with a child and introducing them to things that they might otherwise never experience. I've taken Makayla snowshoeing this winter and we'll go hiking this spring, two things she's not done before.

Makayla's mother plays an integral role in our mentoring relationship. She recognizes the value of her daughter having another adult in her child's life and is in complete support of our relationship. Sharing my life with these two girls is the best gift I have ever received.

*Sarah Soule of Charlotte is Director of Admissions & College Counseling at Vermont Commons School.*



## Ali age 8

**Years at King Street:** 4  
**School:** Champlain Elementary  
**King Street Activities:** Tennis, Each One Reach One, Just for Boys, Junior/Senior Buddies, and lots of drama.  
**When I grow up I'll be:** A scientist or a basketball player.  
**Why King Street is fun:** Because we play medic, Doctor Bumper Tag, and relay races.  
**What I've learned because of King Street:** You have to respect everyone.



## Mercedes age 15

**Years at King Street:** 3  
**School:** Edmunds Middle  
**King Street Activities:** Tennis, hiking, horseback riding, Girls' Group, Homework Club, Chill, Supper & Science, Kids' Cafe, & Kids' Lemonade.  
**Favorite achievement at King Street:** Making high honors thanks to Homework Club.  
**Why King Street is important to me:** You learn more about respect and the importance of schoolwork. I just like to be here.

# Old Friends



## Encore!'s 17th (and final) Cabaret for King Street

February 28th  
**FlynnSpace**  
 5:30 & 7:30pm

Cocktail & Dessert Reception  
 6:30-7:30pm

Purchase tickets by calling 86-FLYNN or at [www.flynntix.org](http://www.flynntix.org)

*After seventeen years of benefit performances for the King Street Center, Encore! will perform their final show on February 28th. Don't miss it!*

Sponsored by



## Natasha Koval-Paden: Celebrating Love, Chopin, & King Street

Join us on Valentine's Day at the McCarthy Arts Center at Saint Michael's College for an all-Chopin concert featuring acclaimed pianist Natasha Koval-Paden.

Koval-Paden grew up playing piano in the former Soviet Union. She moved to America at the age of 14 and later studied at the Eastman and Julliard Schools of Music. She has performed extensively in the U.S. and abroad, and currently teaches piano in the Burlington area and at Middlebury College.

Seating for the concert is first-come, first served, and admission is by donation. Showtime is 4 pm.

King Street Center is proud to be chosen as the beneficiary for  
**The 9th Annual Burlington Clothes Exchange**  
 Thursday, May 20th, 2010  
 The Doubletree Hotel, South Burlington



The Clothes Exchange, founded by Leslie Halperin in 2001, raises money to support Burlington area organizations that are working to improve the lives of women and girls in our community.

Through various events throughout the spring, The Clothes Exchange promotes awareness, collects upscale clothing, and raises funds, culminating in a one-day shopping event in May where local residents can make purchases of new and gently used designer clothing to benefit the King Street Center.

To volunteer, make a donation, or prepare for shopping, visit [www.theclothesexchange.org](http://www.theclothesexchange.org). Or, become a fan on Facebook to get up to the minute updates!



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**Join us on  
Monday, June 28th  
at  
Burlington  
Country Club!**

**Roxane Leopold  
Scholarship**

applications due March 5th

To apply, visit  
[www.vsac.org](http://www.vsac.org) or contact  
King Street at  
(802)862-6736



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**King Street Center, by the numbers . . .**

- Mentor hours in 2009:** 4784
- Volunteer hours in 2009:** 1802
- Meals & snacks served each month:** 1600
- Burlington area youth who participate in King Street Tennis:** 1000
- Hours of tennis in 2009:** 650
- Preschool trips to Shelburne Farms since 1994:** about 450
- Hours of homework completed by the teens in an average month:** 84
- Number of times the preschoolers sledded down the hill in January:** Probably 8,000!

