



ST. ELIZABETH SCHOOL

Specializing in Success One Student at a Time

801 Argonne Drive ♦ Baltimore, MD 21218-1998

Contact:

Linda Coveleskie

Phone: 410-889-5054, ext. 1152

FAX: 410-889-2356

E-mail> lcoveleskie@stelizabeth-school.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA RELEASE

Graduation Celebration at St. Elizabeth School

BALTIMORE, MD, June 4, 2009 ó Twelve very special students graduated from St. Elizabeth School on Thursday, June 4, amidst tears of joy and sadness as faculty members shared the successes, triumphs, and future plans of each graduate. Parents and guardians, teachers and staff, current and future employers, representatives of Baltimore City, Baltimore County, Anne Arundel County, and Carroll County Public School Systems that had referred members of the Class of 2009, invited guests, and fellow students cheered as the graduates were presented either a High School Diploma or a Certificate of Completion.

The graduation ceremony began with a õSenior Montageö prepared by staff member, Mr. James Manni. After the traditional processional, Dr. Christine Manlove, Executive Director of St. Elizabeth School, and graduate Andrew Carberry, welcomed families, students, and guests. Mrs. Sarah Calhoun, Assistive Technology Specialist, sang “*The Prayer*” as the Invocation. Mr. Andy Parsley, Principal, presented the Williard & Eileen Wright Award, an annual cash award to every graduate, made possible through the Wright’s generous bequest to launch them on their journeys after graduation. Mr. T. Reid Buedel was recognized as the Class Valedictorian. Ms. Laura Pearl, Vice-Chair of the SES Board of

Trustees, introduced each graduate and the staff person each had selected to speak on his or her behalf. After loving and gracious speeches, Dr. Manlove presented each graduate with a diploma or certificate.

Mrs. Veronica Washington, recently retired special education administrator from Baltimore City Public Schools, was the commencement speaker. She shared the story from the 1950s of a little girl and a boy with disabilities named Gregory. The little boy did not go to school, had no friends, no toys, and never got to go anywhere. She was the little girl in the story, and Gregory inspired her journey into special education. She contrasted little Gregory's situation to the many opportunities today for students with disabilities. She marveled at the experiences, accomplishments, and expectations of the SES graduates, and complimented St. Elizabeth School for implementing its mission for its students.

St. Elizabeth School prepares graduates for adult living and responsible citizenship. All members of the graduating class have in place jobs, job placements through agencies, or further vocational training opportunities as they leave SES.

St. Elizabeth School, established in 1961 by the Franciscan Sisters of Baltimore, is a ministry sponsored today by the Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi. St. Elizabeth School graduates students who are successful at home, in the workforce, and in the community. By maximizing each student's unique abilities, we enhance the quality of life for middle and high school students with cognitive and other disabilities. Our program focuses on the realization of personal potential by integrating academic growth, social/emotional development, functional life skills, and vocational training.

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