



# Hand Talk



## FCD Students Rock Academic Bowl Regionals

The Pinellas County District (FCD) Academic Bowl Team returned to Largo on February 25th fresh off the heels of a third place finish at the Gallaudet Academic Bowl Southeast Regional competition in Jackson, MS.

Juniors Vipin Suren and Aayliah Thomas, Sophomore Tyna Kim, and Freshman RJ Brooks placed higher than 16 other teams in the competition and will travel, for the second consecutive year, to Washington DC for the National Competition April 11-15.

The team was accompanied by coaches Franklin Smith and Tracy Kasch as well as FCD

Board President Noel Cherasaro representing Pinellas County Schools, who sponsored the team.

In addition to placing third in the regionals, the students also won the prestigious Sportsmanship Award, given to the team coaches believed

best displayed sportsmanship throughout the competition, regardless of their win-loss record.

Vipin Suren also was one of six students presented with the All Star Player award for outstanding performance.

Most importantly, the students worked well together, demonstrated team work and had a great time.



## Silent Sweetheart Breakfast a Success

The 3<sup>rd</sup> annual FCD Silent Sweetheart Breakfast was held on Saturday, February 9<sup>th</sup>, at Applebees in Clearwater and was a great success! More than 230 tickets were sold to the event. FCD Teen Scene participants worked as



hosts, servers, and bus boys/girls.

The net profit from the breakfast event was over \$1,000, which will go to FCD summer programs. A big "thank you" goes out to all the participants, volunteers, and teens for working with us.

### Mission Statement

The **FAMILY CENTER on DEAFNESS** empowers Pinellas County's Deaf Community to meet its full potential by providing opportunities to enhance communication, education and independence.

### FREE AMPLIFIED PHONES



CALL FCD AT  
727-399-9983  
FOR DETAILS

### CONTACT US:

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Check our website  
for latest news and  
announcements!



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# REACH

## Raising Expectations & Achievement of Children with Hearing Loss

The students at REACH celebrated the year of the Pig last month, welcoming Chinese New Year on February 6th. The children learned about different Chinese myths and the reason behind several Chinese traditions on New Years. After hearing the story of the Jade Emperor and the animals who competed to be the new year's namesake, the kids enjoyed authentic Chinese cuisine and treats. Then each student took a turn hunting for lucky money. The kids ended their celebration by making sun-catchers in the shape of a Chinese lantern and Chinese fans.

The students were also head over heels in LOVE with our REACH Valentine's Day party. On February 13, the children shared cards, treats

and trinkets with their friends at REACH. Students also made Valentines mailboxes that were a delight. The group divided up into teams to compete in "minute to win it" challenges that included a marshmallow toss, conversation heart tower building contest, color cup stack



challenge, and a candy transfer involving chop sticks. Afterwards, students had fruit, cupcakes, cookies and chips donated by our parents (please see our Thank You page).

In March the students at REACH will follow the Alaskan Sled Dog race called the Iditarod. The kids have already

begun picking their mushers and making their sleds. The children look forward to following the race on the Iditarod website. The top three finishers will win a prize.

On March 6th REACH will learn about the origins of St.

Patrick's Day and have a party with Irish crafts, food and games. On March 20th REACH has planned a field trip to Razzle Dazzle Doughnuts in Dunedin. Afterwards students will play at Edgewater Park in Dunedin. If you would like to pick up your child by 4:20 pm that

day from Edgewater park, please make plans with Jennifer to do so.

SUMMER WILL BE HERE BEFORE YOU KNOW IT.... look for announcements regarding Don't Sweat, Get Wet and Sleep Away camp soon!

## Students Practice for Middle School Math Competition



Practices began at FCD last month for the NTID Middle School Math Competition at Rochester Institute for the Deaf in Rochester, NY, April 5-7. This is the first year FCD has entered a team in the national competition. The math wizards on the team include (clockwise from upper left) Nayeli Cruz, Heath Ivey and Taryn Anderson, Coach Rebecca Robert, a D/hh middle school teacher and Coach Addie Osmar, FCD Youth and Family Specialist. Go PCD team! (not pictured Drew Hornyak)



**March 5, 6, 7, 19, 20, 21, 26, 27, 28**



**March 5, 19, 21, 26, 28**



**March 1 and 29**



**SPRING BREAK—NO PROGRAMS  
MARCH 11-15**



#### **Financial Donations**

Cindy & Peter Hebbeler  
Sara Lucas

#### **In Kind Donations**

Josh Barber  
Cindy & Peter Hebbeler  
Kristy Mullins  
Chelsey & Chris Riley  
Whitney Shim  
Sharon Wildenstein  
Daphne Woodham

#### **Volunteers**

Katie Killebrew  
Bridget Phelan  
Denis Sofr  
Rene Vojnovic  
Ben Wallis  
Zoe Schonmann  
Amanda Keene  
Sirrenna Petty  
Kelly Barrie  
Erika Cook  
Victoria McManning  
Brianna Green  
Mikail Baptiste  
Andrew Estima

Leo Checnicki  
Chip Lofton  
Rachel Lawes  
Tara Pray  
Sara Richie  
Madison Scott  
Henry Toquero

### **Celebrating Friendship**

The FCD Girl Squad celebrated the sweet month of February with a “Galentines Day” party. The girls dipped strawberries in chocolate, played Bingo using Hershey Kisses, watched a movie together, and socialized. The emphasis for the month was on appreciating each other and the friendships they have formed at FCD.



#### **Family Center on Deafness Staff**

**Julie Church** Executive Director  
**Kathy Kemp** Office Manager  
**Jennifer Boggess** Lead Youth/Family Sup. Specialist  
**Franklin Smith** Youth/Family Support Specialist  
**Addie Osmar** Youth/Family Support Specialist  
**Caitlyn Dollar** Youth /Family Support Assistant  
**Dana Cechnicki** Parent Support Specialist  
**Sally Shortz** Program Support Specialist  
**Dawn Varner** Youth/Family Support Specialist  
**Gwen Sand** FTRI Supervisor  
**Lisa Kingston** FTRI Distribution/Outreach Specialist  
**Tracy Kasch** Program Support Specialist

### **Fundraising for FCD**

Holding on –line fundraisers using “Go Fund Me” and “Facebook” are great ways to raise money for agencies including FCD. We so appreciate that many of you are using these tools for your birthday and other occasions to benefit the Family Center on Deafness.

Unfortunately, when we get the check in the mail it does not identify who organized the fundraiser or identify donors. We really want to be able to thank you for helping us, but we can’t unless you let us know! Contact FCD at 727-501-2323 or [info@fcdpinellas.org](mailto:info@fcdpinellas.org).



## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Teen Scene Sky Zone Trip

On March 23rd Teens will be going to Sky Zone Trampoline Park from 12–5pm. The cost is \$10 including food and drinks. Teens MUST RSVP to get discounted tickets. RSVP to Addie@fcdpinellas.org or Franklin@fcdpinellas.org.

### Playgroup for Kids 0-5

Join us for a new playgroup at FCD's Dunedin office, 410 Main Street, on Monday, March 25th from 10-11:30 a.m.

All Deaf/hard of hearing children, sibling and CODAs are welcome. RSVP: dana@fcdpinellas.org. Refreshments will be provided.

### Sign Language Classes

Two new six-week beginning sign language classes begin on Wed., March 20th, 6:30-7:30 p.m.

St. Petersburg—Lakeview Presbyterian Church 1310 22nd Avenue N.

Largo—12445 62nd St. N. #303

RSVP: dana@fcdpinellas.org



## FCD Spring Family Picnic Saturday, April 27th 2:00-5:30pm John S. Taylor Park Shelter #2 1100 8th Ave S. W. Largo

Join us for a spring picnic with an Easter egg hunt, crafts, field games and ASL stories. FCD will be providing hamburgers and hotdogs. Please bring a side dish, drinks, or dessert to share. Please RSVP by April 24th to dana@fcdpinellas.org or (727)403-0553 with the number of people and the side dish you will provide.

## REACH Kids Enjoy Playing Kickball



*One of the favorite activities for the elementary school students at REACH is to play kickball when the weather is nice. Recently the whole gang enjoyed an afternoon of outside activity and had a lot of fun!*

