



hms school
for Children with Cerebral Palsy

Annual Report 2008–2009

HMS School for Children with Cerebral Palsy

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Leadership Message

Dear Friend,

For HMS students, success typically comes in tiny steps. But children often accomplish more than their families could have imagined. Every day our students—with multiple disabilities and complex medical conditions—strive to communicate, move from place to place and control their environment. Our expert staff builds on each student's strengths, helping every child to grow, to learn and to achieve.

Assistive Technology—state-of-the-art equipment and adaptations of everyday items—is essential in helping each student to experience the world. HMS's large inventory of specialized and adapted equipment is a big plus. It is through our staff's extensive knowledge, creativity and determination that this equipment truly empowers our students. Staff members work tirelessly to devise ways for each youngster to access equipment best suited to their individual needs and to master life-changing skills.

Because Assistive Technology (AT) is so important at HMS, this annual report focuses on ways in which AT expands students' experiences. One student controls his power wheelchair by moving his head to activate a switch. Another presses a BigMack switch to start a computer program. Still another uses her finger to make selections on her communication device.

As you review this report, notice how HMS students use both sophisticated electronics and modified, simple tools to communicate and learn, move around, make music and art and enjoy recreational activities.

Watching our students move through their busy days, full of activity and small but significant successes, we are grateful to our many supporters who help to make these achievements possible. Thank you for your friendship and interest in HMS School.



Anne P. Wilmerding
President, Board of Trustees



Diane L. Gallagher, Ph.D.
Executive Director



Assistive Technology: Opening up the world

Assistive Technology (AT) incorporates any object or service that helps a child to access and interact with his environment, from low-tech modifications of off-the-shelf items to sophisticated electronics like computers and communication devices.

At HMS, training in the use of AT equipment is part of each student's daily program. Our full-time assistive technologist works with colleagues across the disciplines to maximize AT's impact. This report highlights several forms of AT that are particularly important for HMS students.



Video Conferencing: Shall we Skype?

Students in HMS's 5-day or 7-day residential program love to call home. With video-conferencing technology, they call via computer and see their family members as well as hear their conversation—exciting for all parties! Visual cues help students to pick up the conversation's meaning, and the technology gives them greater independence in communicating. Parents are reassured to see their youngster in HMS's home-away-from-home environment.



Communication Devices: Let's talk

HMS's speech/language therapists are determined to give each student a voice. As augmentative communication specialists, they are expert in assessing a student's needs, selecting the ideal combination of equipment and software and training the student in their use. Therapists custom-build the device's vocabulary and page design for maximum efficiency, giving students the greatest possible result for their effort.



Power Mobility: License to drive

Moving oneself through space is a compelling experience and a significant avenue to independence for students who learn to drive. Even for youngsters who won't become independent drivers, power mobility is an exciting motivator toward acquiring other skills. The power wheelchair is an example of AT. Helping a student access and drive the chair adds another AT layer. And if the student accesses her communication device through her power chair, the AT is even more complex.



Computer Access: Are you online?

HMS students do a lot of learning and creating through computers, so finding ways for them to access this technology is essential. In today's Internet-driven world, we're also connecting the child to an important part of our culture. Depending on his abilities, the student may use a joystick, a single switch, an adapted keyboard or switches on a head array. More sophisticated technology involves scanning, mouse emulation or eye gaze.

Environmental Controls: Change the channel!

HMS strives to give students the greatest possible control over their environment now and in preparation for life post-21. Whether it's turning on the TV and choosing a favorite channel, operating a blender or a microwave or turning on the lights, we find a way for the student to access the controls and operate the equipment.





Low-Tech AT: It works!

While less dramatic than state-of-the-art electronics, low-tech adaptations of everyday objects and equipment enable students to access a broad range of educational and leisure activities. HMS maintains a large collection of off-the-shelf toys, art and music materials and learning devices that we modify for students. We also utilize a range of techniques that make everyday items and activities more accessible, thus empowering students to independently participate in classroom, recreational and daily-life activities.

HMS School Serves Students from Philadelphia and Beyond

HMS School's specialized resources for children with cerebral palsy have been recognized by families and school districts from a wide geographic area. In 2008-2009 students came to HMS from the following communities in Pennsylvania, California, New Jersey, New York, and West Virginia.

Aston	Lansdale
Bensalem	Maple Glen
Bethlehem	Merion
Blue Bell	Morton
Bristol	Nuremberg
Bryn Mawr	Palmyra
Cheltenham	Philadelphia
Churchville	Plymouth Meeting
Collingdale	Pottstown
Conshohocken	Roslyn
Curwensville	Rydal
Downingtown	Secane
East Greenville	Upper Darby
Elkins Park	Wallingford
Fort Washington	Wayne
Glen Mills	Mountain Ranch, CA
Harleysville	Mauricetown, NJ
Hatboro	Westampton, NJ
Havertown	Brooklyn, NY
Hazleton	Summersville, WV
King of Prussia	
Langhorne	

Internships

HMS is committed to preparing the next generation of practitioners in special education and the therapeutic disciplines. Every year staff members accept the responsibilities of supervising interns for clinical experience with HMS students. We were pleased to work with 39 students from the following colleges and universities in 2008-2009:

Chestnut Hill College

Special Education - 2

Community College of Philadelphia

Special Education - 1

Drexel University, Hahnemann

Dance/Movement Therapy - 4

Earlham College, Philadelphia Center

Therapeutic Recreation - 1

Pennsylvania State University

Speech/Language Therapy - 1

St. Joseph's University

Special Education - 13

Temple University

Music Therapy - 2

Therapeutic Recreation - 3

Speech/Language Therapy - 1

Thomas Jefferson University

Occupational Therapy - 4

University of Mary

Occupational Therapy - 1

University of the Sciences in Philadelphia

Occupational Therapy - 3

Physical Therapy - 1

Widener University

Physical Therapy - 2

Thank You Volunteers!

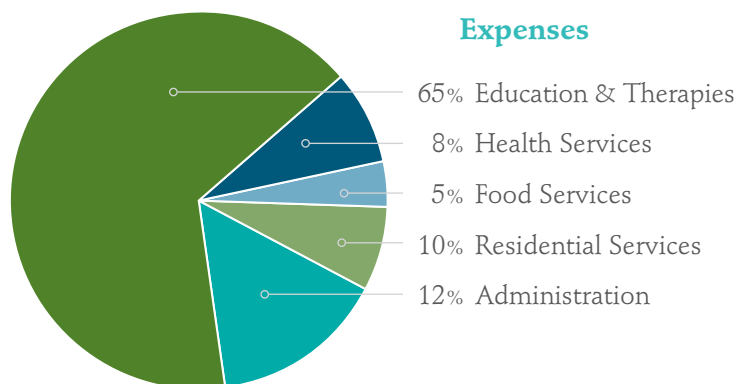
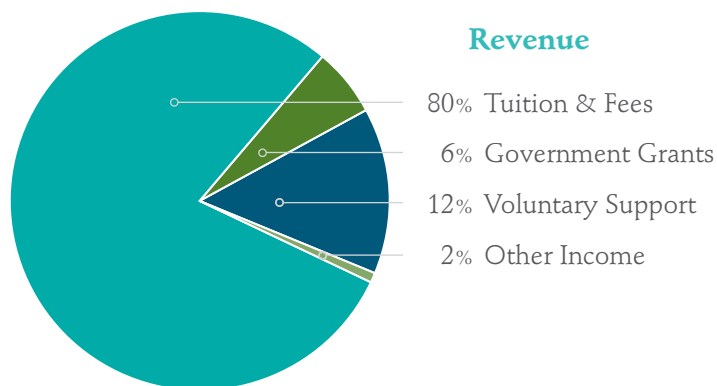
Volunteers are a welcome addition to the HMS family. This year numerous individuals gave their time and talents to HMS. Whether reading to our students, playing board games, assisting with the dance or drama programs, helping at performances, making wreaths or tie-dying tee shirts, judging our annual Art Show, hosting a holiday party, helping with the Book Fair, creating costumes, or organizing and running fund-raising events, volunteers enrich all areas of school life. We would like to thank the many staff who volunteer their time to help with special events and activities and offer our thanks to the volunteers listed below for their commitment to HMS:

Betty Blickley	Morris Lowitz-Coia
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Revenue and Expenditures

In 2008-2009 HMS School for Children with Cerebral Palsy had an operating budget of approximately \$7.7 million and, as in past years, had a balanced budget.

An audited financial statement is available on request.



We Recognize Our Contributors

We are most grateful to these individuals and organizations whose gifts have enabled us to enrich our programs and activities, expand and renovate our facilities and build for the future.

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Gifts-in-Kind

We are grateful for gifts-in-kind such as equipment, office furniture, books, DVDs, services and tickets to events. Our thanks to the donors listed below who have enriched our programs and enhanced the lives of our students and staff.

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Gifts in Honor of People and Events

HMS School is deeply honored to receive gifts in honor of specific individuals and special occasions. They serve to remind us of the importance of HMS in the lives of friends and families. In 2008-2009 we received gifts in honor of the following individuals and occasions:

John Bailey
Becky Bradbeer
Bernard Brewstein's 90th
 Birthday
The Bur Family
Luke Bynon
Mr. & Mrs. Frank Carey
Class of 2009
Natalie Clemens's Graduation
Kyle DeLeon
Peter Deon
Phyllis Dupuis
Taylor Fina's Continued
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Sean Hanlon's 11th Birthday
Nancy Harris
HMS Faculty and Staff
Patrick McGovern
Carolyn Miller
Emma Muirne Smith
Something Magical Project
Christopher Stein
Carla Talarek
Juliet Vadas
Jordana Warmflash
Anne Wilmerding
Melea Wise's Graduation



Gifts in Memoriam

Gifts to honor the memory of a friend or family member have a very special meaning. They provide a significant memorial to the individual and continued support for HMS School. We are grateful for the gifts received in memory of the following individuals:

Manuel Album, DDS
 Regina Arentzen
 Eric Axberg
 Nicholas Bracaglia
 Elsie B. Craft
 Lorraine Davis
 Jami Fiel

Demeetris Fife
 Lucille V. Jenks
 Solveig Jelmert Jorgensen
 Peter LaMorgia
 Minnie P. McCulloh
 Don Meeks
 Richard Mullen
 Lorine Vogt
 Carol Weaver-Silva
 Lily Winkel

HMS School for Children with Cerebral Palsy Celebrating 126 years of excellence

HMS School, located in the University City neighborhood of Philadelphia, specializes in working with children and young adults through age 21 who have severe, multiple disabilities resulting from cerebral palsy. As experts in the field, HMS provides specialized education and therapy programs for day and resident students that maximize the possible and empower achievement. In HMS's loving, respectful environment every child flourishes.

Founded in 1882 as Home of the Merciful Saviour for Crippled Children, it was the first institution of its kind in the nation. In its early decades, HMS cared for children with all types of physically disabling conditions, such as tuberculosis of the bone, which are rare today. From the 1920's through the late 1950's, HMS primarily helped children through the convalescent stage of polio until the Salk vaccine virtually eliminated this crisis. Since 1958 HMS has focused on the needs of children with cerebral palsy.

Over the decades, even as HMS has evolved and responded to children's changing health, educational and social challenges, its mission remains very much the same as in 1882: to provide the special education, individualized therapy and loving attention that empowers children and young adults with physical disabilities to reach their maximum potential.

Originally an Episcopal charitable agency, HMS today is not affiliated with any religious organization, receives no church funds, and is nonsectarian. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania subsidizes a substantial portion of the educational costs of children who are Pennsylvania residents and are approved for enrollment by their local school districts and the state.

HMS is licensed both as an approved private school and a private academic school by the Department of Education, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. It is nonsectarian, admitting children from any locality without regard to race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status or country of national origin.



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