



Dr. Mel Levine Returns to Colorado Springs in Fall 2006

When Dr. Mel Levine, nationally renowned learning disability expert, was first invited to speak in Colorado Springs in the spring of 2004, everyone was delighted to learn of his acceptance. Once again, Dr. Levine will return to the Springs this fall to address parents, students, and educators with new ideas and learning techniques for those with learning differences.

The HillSprings Learning Center will host Dr. Levine for the one-day workshop to be held at the Cheyenne Mountain Resort in Colorado Springs on Thursday, November 16, 2006, from 8:30 am to 3:30 pm. Dr. Levine will be available for a book signing following his presentation. HillSprings Director Charlie Tye commented that, "Dr. Levine's previous presentation was well received by over 300 participants. Parents and educators came away with new ideas and lots of enthusiasm for using his strategies in the classroom."

Dr. Mel Levine is a Professor of Pediatrics at the University of North

Carolina Medical School in Chapel Hill, North Carolina and the Director of the University's Clinical Center for the Study of Development and Learning. Dr. Levine is also the co-founder of **All Kinds of Minds**, a nonprofit Institute for the study of differences in learning, and co-chairs the Institute's Board of Directors with Charles R. Schwab.

Additionally, **All Kinds of Minds** launched *The Schools Attuned Program* which offers educators new methods for recognizing, understanding, and managing students with differences in learning and helps all of the students in their class succeed. *The Schools Attuned Program* is a comprehensive yearlong professional development program for K-12 education. Dr. Levine's groundbreaking framework for understanding why children struggle in school provides a straightforward, practical system for recognizing variations in the way children learn and uses their strengths to become more successful students. Properly executed, this model can change lives by radically improv-

ing prospects for success in and out of school. Thanks to Jack Creeden, Headmaster at Fountain Valley School, HillSprings teachers have completed the *Schools Attuned Training*.

For more information or to register, please visit www.hillcenter.org or call Charlie Tye at (719) 576-3840. Registration will begin after July 15, 2006. Graduate study credit may be given for those educators in attendance.

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In the Classroom

The HillSprings Learning Center is a non-profit, half day school (with a student teacher ration of no more than 4 to 1) for K-8 students who have learning differences. In the spring of 2002, a group of Colorado Springs parents and professionals determined that a school designed to provide additional assistance to students who learn differently was desperately needed. They looked for, and found the perfect replication model – The Hill Center in Durham, NC – an innovative, research based program that has been helping children for more than 25 years. (HillCenter.org)

Instruction in reading, written language and math is provided by HillSprings in the mornings. Thereafter, students return to their regular public or private schools to participate in other classes or extracurricular activities and to maintain relationships with friends and teachers. At HillSprings, along with academic remediation, emphasis is placed on teaching compensatory strategies through a study skills curriculum which is an integral part of each class.



Charlie Tye explains new concepts.



Barb White helps graph progress.



Lori McCauley's middle schoolers at work.



Success for Alex!



Editing in the computer lab.



Barb Ray's Class enjoys a moment.

Photographs by Melani Tutt

Thank You to HillSprings Donors

We wish to thank those who have helped us to have a successful second year of operation, as well as, donors who have established a scholarship fund which will provide financial aid to new students for the 2006 – 2007 school year.

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Grant Will Benefit Pikes Peak Region

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HillSprings was recently awarded a substantial grant from The Sam Price Family Foundation to support our community outreach program. With a vision to reach out to the Pike's Peak region to

expand awareness and understanding of learning differences, HillSprings strives to provide education for parents, teachers and community members.

HillSprings Students Learn to Persevere

During the school year HillSprings' students learn personal characteristics, attitudes and behaviors that will lead to successful life outcomes. This is an important part of our curriculum because a learning disability is a life-long condition that affects many spheres of our students' lives. Students learned the benefits of persistence and the consequences of giving up as well as developing strategies for dealing with obstacles, setbacks and adjusting to change. They recognized that passion and desire will keep them moving in the face of adversity. Here are some excerpts from their writing:

My attitude was amazing....I wanted to learn (math), to comprehend, to do my best, and to get through a difficult problem." *Adam*

"Probably, with time and hard work, I could be like other kids who can read"
Sam

"Even though writing is hard for me, I work at it." *Daniel*

"To keep myself going, I practiced even if I did not want to...." *Julian*

"Persistence to me means sticking with something no matter how difficult it gets..."
TaNeil

"When I saw other kids at a higher level than me, I felt I wasn't as smart as they were....now I know that I am as smart, just in a different way because I have learned to never, never give up!" *Hannah*

"I want people to enjoy me and play with me so I have learned to follow the rules.....and be flexible." *Alex*

"I work everyday.....I read books into tapes so I can hear myself read." *Chris*

"... doing it over and over helps, but I don't like it!" *Michael*

"Since I can't avoid spelling, I will just have to keep persisting." *Barron*

"If you do not keep trying, you will not get what you want..... you can tell yourself, 'I can do it!'" *Lucas*

"Even if school is hard and frustrating, you still have to work at it..." *Tanner*

"Persistence means if I am stuck, I don't stop but move on to the next question."
Jessica

"If one strategy doesn't work, try another strategy that might work even better."
Blake

"The thing I learned about myself was that I could be a successful learner if I did not give up." *Jax*

"I would tell other people with learning disabilities to.....take your time doing your work, check your work, and practice." *Rachael*

"It is hard for me to learn to read..... but I break words into little parts to read them." *Kevin*

"I felt like a dumb kid because I couldn't even read a picture book....as I got better, it turned out that reading is my favorite subject!" *Vance*

"I did not give up. I knew I could overcome my difficulty with learning. Now I can do stuff I thought I never could do." *Drew*

Parents can also foster perseverance in their children by sharing inspirational stories of people (personal accounts, books, movies) who have persisted in the face of adversity. Remember also, to praise children for persistent behavior and attitude when playing games, learning new skills (sports, music, art etc.), or doing unpopular chores.

Persevere: to persist in a state, enterprise, or undertaking in spite of counter influences, opposition, or discouragement; steadfastness.

Hope: to long for with expectation of obtainment; to expect with desire:
SYN: Trust

A Parent's Perspective

As of late, many of us have seen the human interest stories of the severely injured war veterans bravely testing out their new prosthetic limbs and get a sense of how much perseverance it must take to go through that grueling rehabilitation day after day. We are wowed, moved and grateful for their sacrifices. They deserve our gratitude and to have their stories told and praises sung.

I have also had the pleasure of witnessing a group of our youngest soldiers persevering every day. They are the students of HillSprings Learning Center. They are not struggling with rehabilitation of injuries from a war, but with learning disabilities. These children, day in and day out, battle with a variety of issues from the obvious difficulties of reading, or writing, or math, or attention deficits to [for some] the more perplexing difficulties with social interactions. They too, deserve to have their praises sung. As a parent of a child with a learning disability, every day I am wowed by how much perseverance it takes for our son to just get through some days. I am amazed that he can 'persist in an undertaking' (writing) 'in spite of opposition' (his neurologically different brain). Not unlike the brave war veterans, many of whom march on in spite of their physical disabilities.

But I have also come to recognize that I too, have more perseverance than I ever dreamed possible. Anyone who has helped a child with a learning disability with their homework or, who has advocated for an IEP or 504 to be implemented when a school district disagreed, knows the meaning of perseverance.

However, I also believe that you cannot have perseverance without hope. Haven't we all heard "without hope, all is lost"? I know that my son 'expects with desire' that he will succeed in his academic career. We have the same hope for him. Without hope, we would not be able to persevere in helping him to succeed. HillSprings has given us that hope. We trusted that HillSprings would give our son that foundation that he needed for classroom success. They haven't let us down. He now knows he is starting to achieve what he once found impossible. Our teacher at HillSprings has given us the hope for our child's future and that, is priceless.

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The HillSprings Learning Center admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and other school-administered programs.

visit our website at <http://www.hillsprings.org> and view our video!

The **HillSprings**
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