



News from Sound Connections® in The Ponte Vedra Area Schools Ocean Palms, Ponte Vedra/Palm Valley, Valley Ridge Academy

The 2018-2019 school year marked a shift in our North End schools. Pre-K students from Valley Ridge and PV/PV were moved to Ocean Palms. Shifted students were glad see a familiar face and continue music therapy. Elementary students enjoyed having peers participate in music therapy group sessions.

Although pre-k students moved from Valley Ridge Academy, music therapy continued for the elementary students. The highlight of the year was a therapeutic performance coupled with Mother's Day Tea, during which we shared music and showed off their progress. The intimate setting provided an opportunity to connect with parents and answer questions.



PV/PV students also had a successful year. They enjoyed having an intern from Nease High school who is interested in becoming a music therapist. Students were motivated to engage in music therapy interventions with him as he modeled appropriate social interactions and participation. This mutually beneficial experience led to his acceptance into Florida Gulf Coast's music therapy program. We look forward to his return as a music therapist after graduation.





Students at PVPV Actively Engaged with Music Therapist Candice Sirak

News From Sound Connections® at Cunningham Creek Elementary Music Makers Choir Performs in the Community

Cunningham Creek's Music Makers Choir is a performing group formed in 2008. The group is comprised of elementary students. The goals include to increase sign-language vocabulary, support language development, gain social skills, promote the abilities of children with special needs, and dispel stigma.



The choir added 20 third graders from general education classes through an initiative called "Birds of a Feather" with the goal of creating peer relationships within a diverse group. This group of 66 students, performed in the community three times this year: at the St. Johns County School Board, at River Garden Senior Services, and at "Child Life and Healing Therapies: Navigating the Path to Wellness through Music, Arts, Pets, and Play" a workshop held at the Jacksonville Jewish Center.

All stakeholders at Cunningham Creek Elementary, including the music teacher, teachers, and Principal Edie Jarrell, feel that the outcomes were so positive that the "Birds of a Feather" Music Makers program will continue in the coming school year. There are plans to formally track the impact of this initiative in the fall.





Music Makers Perform at River Garden Senior Services Led by Music Therapist Minda Gordon

Sound Connections® Music Therapy is Expanding to Webster Elementary



Donna Guzzo, Executive Director of CCPVB and Minda Gordon, Music Therapist and Sound Connections Coordinator, Receive The State of The Arts Grant from The St. Augustine Cultural Council.

We are very excited to announce that Sound Connections® will begin providing music therapy services at Webster Elementary in the fall of 2019. This expansion comes due to two generous grants from local agencies, The United Way of St. Johns County and The St. Johns Cultural Council State of the Art Grant. Seventy-six Webster students will receive music therapy services through group and one-to-one sessions to support their academic, cognitive, communication, motor skills, and social skills growth. Principal Bethany Groves is delighted that her students will receive these services.

We are continuing to look for grants and donors to support this expansion. Please, contact Donna Guzzo or Catherine Tatem if you or someone you know is able to donate to this important program.



Welcome From Donna Guzzo, Executive Director

The Sound Connections® Music Therapy program has been funded for 12 years by the Cultural Center at Ponte Vedra Beach thanks to donors like you! Music therapy has a strong track record helping children with special needs. Children make progress in communication and social skills. Nationally board-certified music therapists teach by stimulating the senses in a controlled setting. Music impacts; music inspires; music is reinforcing; music motivates us. We see year after year how music therapy has improved children's speech, communication, emotions, and behavior.

Annually we raise \$100,000 to be able to fund the program. This year we are expanding to Webster Elementary in St. Augustine, a Title 1 School. Minda Gordon, Sound Connections Coordinator and National Board-Certified Music Therapist, secured a grant to make this possible. Gordon oversees the program, makes classroom observations, and makes sure the children are receiving powerful benefits.

This newsletter will help you to understand more about music therapy for children with special needs. Please, sit back, read, learn, and enjoy! Let Sound Connections take you into the world of magic that comes from working with these precious children.

To learn more about music therapy or to make a donation, please visit www.ccpvb.org

Thank you,
Donna Guzzo, CNE, CDE, CNC
Executive Director



The Cultural Center at Ponte Vedra Beach is a 501 (c)(3) tax-exempt organization, with tax ID number 59-3238148. Our mission is to bring the arts into the life of the community through Arts Education, Exhibitions, and Outreach, and by honoring a Donor-Driven Philosophy.

50 Executive Way, Ponte Vedra Beach, FL 32082
904-280-0614 | www.ccpvb.org

A COPY OF THE OFFICIAL REGISTRATION AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE DIVISION OF CONSUMER SERVICES BY CALLING TOLL-FREE (800.435.7352) WITHIN THE STATE OR VISITING WWW.800HELPPFL.COM. REGISTRATION DOES NOT IMPLY ENDORSEMENT, APPROVAL, OR RECOMMENDATION BY THE STATE.

STAY CONNECTED

