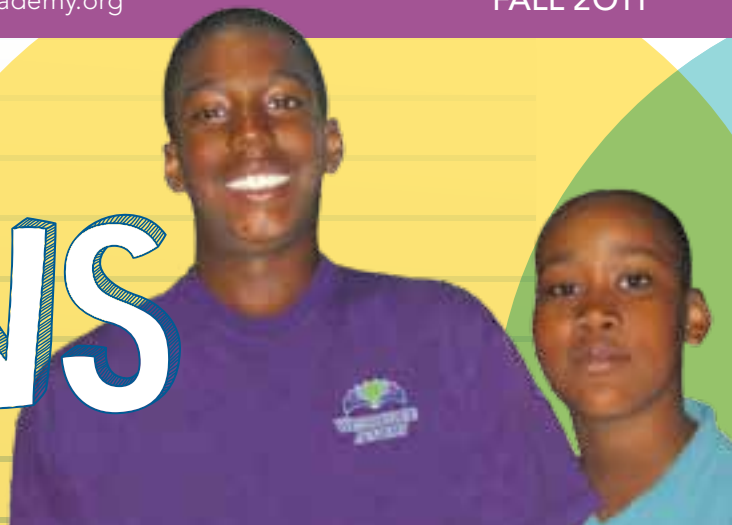




# NEWS



## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP

### Educators Learn Classroom Management at Westbridge Academy Seminar

**T**he Response to Intervention (RTI) model is a powerful and effective system designed to assist school staff and students when behavior causes disruption in the classroom. In a professional development workshop hosted by Westbridge Academy this past April, principals, teachers and Child Study Teams (CSTs) were invited to learn all about RTI from Ernie Brattstrom, the Executive Director of Learning Tree Educational Consultants.

Forty educators received Continuing Education Credits by attending the workshop where they learned how best to implement RTI as a school-wide initiative. The RTI framework consists of several integrated components including a multi-level prevention system, screening, and progress monitoring.

As a preventive measure RTI divides classroom disturbances into three tiers depending on their degree of intensity. Each tier requires teachers to respond to the situation with specific strategies so that the child can be supported in the appropriate manner. Screening methods help identify students who are at risk for poor behavioral or academic outcomes while progress monitoring



Ernie Brattstrom leads a seminar on the Response to Intervention model at Westbridge Academy.

assessments ensure that the students are working towards constructive social and scholastic goals. Screening and progress monitoring results are then used by educators to make data-based decisions regarding curriculum content, instruction styles, and intervention methods for mitigating classroom disturbances.

The seminar was the first of its kind sponsored by the Outreach Department at Westbridge Academy. It was hailed as a great success with positive responses from all those who attended. ■

Let us know what topics you'd like to learn about in future seminars:  
[info@westbridgeacademy.org](mailto:info@westbridgeacademy.org)

## WHAT'S NEW

### Westbridge Academy Student is 1 of 3 in State to Win Scholarship



A well-deserved congratulations goes to Awot G. who was one of three statewide scholarship

award recipients honored during an event at the Westin Princeton in Forrestal Village sponsored by the NJ School Boards Association and ASAH, a non-profit organization of New Jersey private schools and agencies serving students with disabilities. The event was held in conjunction with Special Education Week in New Jersey. Governor Christie issued a proclamation designating May 8-14 as Special Education Week in New Jersey to recognize the achievements of the state's special education students and the contributions of their parents and teachers. A Class of 2011 graduate, Awot will be attending Essex County College beginning this fall.

### Westbridge Academy Represented by Four Students at Conference



Each year more than 2,000 students and educators attend the annual Dare to Dream Student Leadership

Conference. This year, four students represented Westbridge Academy and taught others about self-advocacy through a jeopardy-style interactive game. The students were selected based on interest, good behavior and leadership skills.

## Westbridge Academy Gives Back to the Community



This year Westbridge Academy students and staff contributed to the ongoing efforts of the Bloomfield Fire Department to support the vital work of the Saint Barnabas Burn Center. Through a wonderful program called Aluminum Cans for Burned Children, community residents are encouraged to accumulate recyclable cans and drop them off at the Bloomfield Fire Department where they are collected and taken to a nearby recycling center.

All of the funds raised are donated directly to the burn center, which uses them to support patients, fire safety programs, educational programs for professionals and medical equipment. Over time, this fundraising activity has generated thousands of dollars in donations to a worthy cause.



To find out how to turn your aluminum cans into a donation, call 973.322.4344.

## WHAT'S NEW AT WESTBRIDGE ACADEMY?

Stay informed about Westbridge Academy news, programs, events, and tips.



Sign up for our email newsletter: [info@westbridgeacademy.org](mailto:info@westbridgeacademy.org)

## Variety Show Unites Student Body, Entertainment Ensues



Westbridge Academy students participate in a range of activities, including our annual talent show.

Where can you go to be serenaded by musical numbers, share some laughs with your friends, and gasp in awe of magic acts? The annual talent show at Westbridge Academy! The student performances this spring boasted an impressive range of talent and was the product of the hard work, focused dedication, and creative effort of nearly the entire student body.

Rehearsing teaches students crucial skills in cooperation, team building and time management

This year's show, titled "WB Action News," featured Westbridge Academy students as television news anchors who introduced each new act as a segment of the evening news program. Student performances included comedy skits, songs, magic acts and dance pieces and instrumental ensembles. The show also spotlighted the crowd-pleaser Hoops Drumline, a group of students who created complex percussion rhythms by dribbling basketballs in choreographed patterns on the stage.

Rich, the Westbridge Academy music teacher and one of the show's writers, emphasizes the processes leading up to the performance as important for the students not only as individuals, but also as a united school community. Rehearsals start in February and the show is held in June, giving students and staff about five months of preparation time. Rehearsing for the show allows students to explore their creative interests and also teaches them crucial skills in cooperation, team building, and time management.

Students who dance, act and sing in the show are rewarded with immense pride in their personal contributions to the event — the applause of an enthusiastic audience providing a well-deserved boost in self-esteem. Those who aren't interested in the limelight are encouraged to participate in the show as art assistants creating the scenery or as stage crew assistants managing the curtain, the props and the action backstage.

All together, this year's delightful show involved the collaborative efforts of almost 30 performers and many members of the school staff. It's all part of the way in which Westbridge Academy fosters growth in all areas of our students' lives. ■



# Westbridge Academy's Summer Program Puts Kids on the Map

## Field Trip Teaches Navigation Skills and Important Lessons

Research indicates that young people experience a sharp decline in their academic ability during the summertime, but Westbridge Academy has a solution. The school offers the opportunity to participate in the Extended School Year (ESY) program which launched its inaugural season this July.



**T**he ESY program was available for children K-12 from Westbridge Academy, as well as other schools. About 30 students attended the four 4-day week sessions held from 8:45 am-1:15 pm. The summer program combines academics, music, art, gym, and social skills with fun field trips designed to reinforce lessons learned in the classroom. It also created an opportunity for high school students who needed to earn additional credits towards graduation.

The theme of the program was “being on the map” and students took part in scavenger hunts which developed their knowledge and understanding of navigation and map-reading while also teaching them crucial skills in cooperation and teamwork.

Field trips included visiting the local bowling alley where students studied a map of the community and practiced math skills, going to Turtle Back Zoo where they studied a map of the state and learned about animals, and swimming in the pool at the YMCA, where they learned about bodies of water. The students also built a map to show all the places they traveled to as part of the program.

The ESY field trips provide students with invaluable experience in practicing important social skills in public venues. Students learn to be considerate of the people around them, to maintain good behavior in crowded settings, and to follow teachers’ directions. An especially exciting highlight of the summer was a trip to an ice skating rink

where the lesson focused on simulating the cold, dark depths of the solar system and outer space. Additional adventures included watching a baseball game, visiting the post office to learn how it operates, and touring the local fire and police departments.

In the classroom a smaller student body makes for a great student to teacher ratio and allows instructors to maximize the amount of attention given to individual members of the class. Teachers were happy to report that the students in the ESY program displayed excellent behavior and that there were fewer disruptive incidents than during the school year. Overall, the first year of the ESY program successfully met all of the objectives set by the Westbridge Academy staff. ■



Students cool off at the YMCA while learning about bodies of water.



An ice skating rink trip focused on simulating the cold, dark depths of outer space.



At the library, students engage in art projects focusing on places.



# WESTBRIDGE ACADEMY

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Have a question, want to refer a student or visit the school? We'd love to hear from you.

Dr. Viviana Litovsky  
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# ABOUT WESTBRIDGE ACADEMY

## FAST FACTS

**STUDENT PROFILE:** Students in grades K-12 with emotional, behavioral and learning challenges from northern and central New Jersey

**APPROACH:** Combining individualized academics with therapeutic support

**PROGRAMS:**

- Elementary, Middle and High School
- Community Based Instruction and Transition Services
- Extended School Year (ESY)

**STUDENT/TEACHER RATIO:** 6:1

**AREAS SERVED:** Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Middlesex, Morris, Passaic, Somerset, Union Counties

## STAFF HIGHLIGHT



### Bob Rodenbaugh, Principal Creating a Premier Therapeutic School

Mr. Rodenbaugh has been a part of Westbridge Academy since July 2001. As Principal, Mr. Rodenbaugh has had the opportunity to work with a wonderful staff that has been able to fully utilize his leadership skills and experience. The successful teacher mentoring program has served to decrease teacher turnover and produce a staff that is team oriented, focused on the benefits of the whole school and not just the individual classroom.

His body of experience with the Juvenile Justice Commission's educational programs as well as Newark's Gateway Academy and Twilight, as well as the additional skills gained as Principal of Westbridge Academy are the basis for his innovative brand of leadership. His aim is to realistically integrate the needs of both the students and staff while creating an environment that is as least restrictive as possible. Together, they have brought Westbridge Academy into the 21st century as a premier therapeutic school.

 Visit us online: [www.westbridgeacademy.org](http://www.westbridgeacademy.org)

 Refer a student: 973.429.8110

 Ask a question: [info@westbridgeacademy.org](mailto:info@westbridgeacademy.org)