



DIOCESE OF EVANSVILLE

www.evansville-diocese.org

P.O. Box 4169 • Evansville, IN 47724-0169 • 812-424-5536 • 800-637-1731

Williamson to be honored for ‘Serving all God’s Children’

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Beverly Williamson, Director of Marian Educational Outreach, will receive the Edward M. Shaughnessy III “Serving All God’s Children Award” on July 16, 2011 at the Education Law Symposium in Louisville, Ky.

This award is given annually to a Catholic school administrator or educator who has made an outstanding contribution to furthering inclusive Catholic education for all, especially those children with special needs.

The Education Law Institute at St. Catharine College in Springfield, Ky., and the National Catholic Education Association (NCEA) co-sponsor the Law Symposium.

In 1995, Williamson began her career as Director of Marian Day School (MDS) which was located at St. Theresa School in Evansville. MDS was developed by the Benedictine Sisters at Ferdinand, Ind., in response to parents who desperately wanted to keep their children with special needs in Catholic schools.

Williamson worked with parents and board members to expand the program and eventually fund special education teachers at both Reitz Memorial High School and Mater Dei High School. Dr. Marie Williams who nominated Williamson for the award, said that “Beverly’s dreams went far beyond the 30-40 students being served at St. Theresa and the two high schools.”

Around 2001, Beverly began a strategic planning process with her board to expand the program throughout the Diocese. The goal was to assist the 28 Catholic schools to become more inclusive by providing staff and professional development opportunities to enable children with special needs to stay in their home parish schools. At the present time the two high schools’ programs serve over 100 students. Fifty percent of the teachers in the diocese have been trained in Differentiated Instruction to better serve all students.

In order to make this possible, Williamson knew it would be necessary to expand her fundraising and development efforts. She sought the training and assistance needed to launch an annual fund, and she began serious grant writing. In the past five years she has been successful in securing over \$200,000 in grants and another \$150,000 in anonymous donations. The annual fund has produced over \$400,000 and is raising approximately \$100,000 each year. There was a name change in 2001 to more closely describe the program’s mission.

— more —

As Director of Marian Educational Outreach (MEO), Williamson said that she feels immense gratitude to the parents, administrators, teachers and supporters who contribute their time, love, and talents to the inclusion efforts which she has been fortunate enough to lead.

“Without them” said Williamson, “MEO could never have made the fantastic progress in serving students with diverse learning needs.” Williamson states: “It puts a smile on my face every time I see a child walking down the halls of Mater Dei and Memorial high schools who could not have been served there 10 years ago.”

In May, 2011, Williamson received a note from a grandparent expressing her sincere appreciation for the Resource Program at Memorial High School. She said she was so grateful that her granddaughter had the opportunities provided to her at Memorial.

MEO's mission statement,

Marian Educational Outreach is a ministry of the Catholic Diocese of Evansville committed to providing opportunities for all students with unique learning needs to reach their highest potential while remaining in the Catholic school system.

Beverly Williamson, Director
Marian Educational Outreach
520 S. Bennighof
Evansville, IN 47714
812-760-4115

bwilliamson@evdio.org