



The McCurdy Ministries Message

McCurdy Schools of Northern New Mexico is a registered nonprofit corporation.
The corporation also uses the trade name McCurdy Ministries.

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Sharing God's love through education and mission

June 2014

McCurdy Ministries makes plans to expand early childhood ministries



McCurdy Preschoolers stand at attention for the Pledge of Allegiance to the US & NM flags at their graduation.

In recent years there has been a national debate about the importance of and funding for early childhood education. Research shows that the number one indicator whether or not a child graduates from high school is early childhood education. Since January of 2000, McCurdy has provided a quality tuition based preschool with financial aid for the children of Rio Arriba County. Last fall, neighboring school districts opened up free preschools funded through the New Mexico Public Education Department. For financial reasons, families enrolled their children in the free preschools and the McCurdy Preschool enrollment dropped fifty percent.

In response, McCurdy Ministries Board of Directors asked Patricia Alvarado, executive director, to explore securing similar preschool funding for McCurdy. Ms. Alvarado and Stephanie Suggs, program director, applied for this funding. During the process we discovered there are 400 children of preschool age in the Rio Arriba County and there are preschool openings for only 39% of these preschool age children. McCurdy Preschool is currently licensed but not funded by the New Mexico Children, Youth and Family Department (CYFD) so an application was made to CYFD to open a free preschool starting the fall semester of 2014. We are pleased to announce McCurdy was recently notified we will be receiving a grant up to \$60,000 per year for three years to help fund a free four hour preschool from 8 AM to noon for four year olds. In addition, McCurdy will be offering a faith based preschool program from noon to 3 PM for an additional fee so we can continue to impact not only the educational welfare but the spiritual welfare of preschool age children in Rio

Arriba County. Financial aid will continue to be available for the faith based three hour session in the afternoon. Ms. Alvarado sums up McCurdy's commitment and the importance of early childhood education saying, "Supporting parents in their most important role in life, that of raising their children, is not just about giving children a space and a chance to play and be safe while doing so; it is about surrounding the family with support systems to educate the child, to nurture the child, and to educate parents on the importance of early childhood education and interventions so by the time the child enters kindergarten, he/she is ready for learning in a more structured environment, and if needed the child's family has been supported in recognizing any need for special interventions."

In addition, McCurdy is committed to working collegially with the other preschool programs in the county and is exploring partnerships with other nonprofits focused on early childhood development. We hope to expand our ability to impact the lives and education of our youngest children which we believe is another way of living out Jesus' words, "Let the little children come to me."



Proud McCurdy Preschool graduates line up for a final photo in their classroom.

Save the date for the McCurdy Reunion July 18–20

All McCurdy Schools of Northern New Mexico and McCurdy Ministries alumni, staff, faculty and volunteers are cordially invited to the semi-annual **McCurdy Reunion July 18–20, 2014** on the McCurdy campus. Pilling Retreat Center will be available for up to 45 guests the nights of July 19 and 20. The housing cost will be \$35 per person per night. Most rooms have two twin beds with a Jack and Jill bathroom between the adjoining rooms. Checkout will be no later than noon on Sunday, July 21. Please call Eufemia Romero to make a reservation at the dorm. Her contact information is listed at the end of this article. Participants are also welcome to make their own reservations at a hotel in the area.

Reunion events will include: **6–8 PM Registration and Ice Cream Social** at the cafeteria. **9–11 AM Saturday Brunch, McCurdy Storytelling and Fellowship Time** in the cafeteria. The storytelling will be videotaped to record this aspect of McCurdy history. **11:15 AM–1 PM Alumni vs. Staff & Volunteers Baseball Game** at the baseball fields. **Saturday Lunch will be on your own** and during this time we encourage alumni classes to arrange class reunions. **2 to 5 PM Saturday there will be work projects around campus and town** including a work day at La Loma Vista Cemetery where many of our missionaries are buried, Campbell's labels clipping for those who want a more sedentary task and maintenance projects

around the campus. The McCurdy Gift Shop and Historical Room will also be open for business and tours. **6 PM Saturday Dinner** in the cafeteria we will enjoy dinner, a good old fashioned sing-a-long and a presentation on **Future Directions for McCurdy Ministries**. The reunion will close with a **9 AM Sunday Continental Breakfast and 10 AM Sunday Worship** at Santa Cruz United Methodist Church with special guest preacher and special music from Patricia Alvarado. For more information on Reunion activities please contact Eufemia Romero by email at eromero@mccurdy.org or call her at 505-753-7221, ext. 210.

50th Reunion set by Class of '64

The McCurdy Class of 1964 is celebrating its 50th anniversary on Friday, July 18, 2014, in Santa Fe, NM. The event is set to precede the McCurdy Reunion so participants may enjoy both events. For more detailed information contact David & Judy (Kelly) Duran by email at dadclassof64@gmail.com or by phone at 505-797-4776. Mavis Esparza, Clifford Miller, David & Judy Duran look forward to hearing from you.

Notes from the McCurdy Ministries executive director



Patricia Alvarado
Executive Director

As this year draws to an end our staff is hard at work visioning, planning, budgeting and strategizing to continue our mission of providing program that helps students and families succeed in school and in life. We fulfill that mission by educating our very young through McCurdy Preschool, caring for students through After School Care, enriching student science, technology, engineering and math experiences through Camp Stars, providing for students mental health through Project Cariño, insuring that no child is hungry at McCurdy by being the vendor for the Breakfast and Lunch Program and collaborating with community partners to roll out new community initiatives in the fall of 2014.

I am happy to share that our GALA was, again, a successful event, enabling us to provide another year of support for McCurdy Charter School athletic programs and McCurdy Ministries therapeutic work done by our Project Cariño counselors. The After School Program once again served up to 30 students. Capacity was limited only by the space available.

Recently, the McCurdy board and I attended the McCurdy Preschool Graduation. For me the beautiful and excited faces of our preschool graduates reaffirmed the reasons we strive to serve families in the Española Valley. The bright eyes, smiling faces, and boisterous voices as they prayed, sang, and showed off what they had learned this past year was like a bright ray of hope and a boost of faith demonstrating that God is always present. I thank our preschool staff for their nurturing way of inviting these young children to experiment, experience and learn

about the world they live in. I especially appreciate our preschool staff's dedication to teaching our children about the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. I also thank our extended staff including cafeteria, maintenance, administration, and Project Cariño for all they do behind the scenes to help create the "village" that helps raise the child. We cannot leave out our thankfulness for the many volunteers, locally, and from across the country, who support us in prayer and resources to carry out our vision and mission.

We also continue to plan and implement the next steps in building a new facility to rent to McCurdy Charter School (MCS) to house their student body. On the back page you can find an article by MCS Director Janette Archuleta, about the charter school's accomplishments this school year.

Finally, I want to share with you my personal experience as I participated in this year's United Methodist Women's Assembly in Louisville, KY. Never having attended before, I could not imagine the emotional and spiritual impact and the empowerment I walked away with. Witnessing over 6,000 UMW participants coming together in faith, love, and action; inviting and challenging all of us to go forward and do the same for others was one of the most powerful opportunities and blessings I have had in my life. The spiritual connection and the energy that was present was witness to the presence of the Holy Spirit. I came away with a new resolve to continue and strengthen the work we do here at McCurdy Ministries.

I thank the Lord for the blessing of serving the children and families of the beautiful Española Valley. I wish all of you a safe and blessed summer, filled with re-energizing and faith building experiences, and new opportunities to serve our Father. *Patricia A. Alvarado*



Rev. Diana Loomis,
director of development/
church relations

McCurdy stories that inspire

Recently I heard an interview of Diane Sawyer on a TV show called Master Class. I was struck by several powerful quotes from Diane. She said, "You see all these kids that dream the dreams their neighbors five miles away dream. They absolutely have the same intelligence, the same imagination and what they can bring to the world. If the doors start closing on them instead of opening it is a crime against nature." A little later in the interview she said, "Doing something in the poorest places in America is another way of doing something about hope and possibility." Diane expressed exactly how I feel about the difference McCurdy makes and has made in the Española Valley for a 102 years! In a few days I will celebrate my third anniversary in ministry at McCurdy. I am grateful for the opportunity to make God's difference in the Espanola Valley and am blessed to have a job whose principal function is sharing the difference McCurdy makes in so many lives. To celebrate I wanted to share a few of my favorite stories about the difference McCurdy makes with you.

Recently, Project Cariño worked with a student who had experienced a death in the family. The student was afraid to sleep and afraid of life. This fear was affecting every aspect of life. Our counselor worked with the student and they talked about death. She gave the student a chance to express the fear, listened, talked with the student and together they created a new framework for the child to think about life and death. In no time at all the student began sleeping well and classwork improved. All because someone cared enough to listen to a child's fears.

A senior experienced a sudden death in his family. The next day that student was at school and when one of our staff said, "I am surprised to see you today." The senior answered, "Where else would I be? McCurdy is my home." For some of our students we become more than school, more than family, we become home and what a privilege it is to be their home!

One day the preschoolers were learning about Jesus saying, "Let the little children come to me." They heard the story and were told that each of them is important to Jesus. Then they were given invitations to a party thrown by Jesus for each of them. Later in the day the preschoolers went on to another project which was drawing self portraits. One of the preschoolers said, "Your picture is ugly." The second preschooler responded, "No it isn't and I know that because I know Jesus loves me!"

During Camp Stars last summer one of our campers was late. Our executive director saw him grab his backpack and scramble out of the car and head for class. His dad called out to him, "Hijo, you forgot some things." Quick as a flash, the student turned around, put his hands on his hips and said, "Couldn't you be a Good Samaritan and bring me that stuff?" That week they had been studying the Parable of the Good Samaritan.

At McCurdy we never know when a kind word will boost self esteem, help to solve a crisis, give a child the tools to stand up for him or herself or unlock the key to an educational problem.

**Have you remembered
McCurdy in your will?
Please consider these creative ways
to support McCurdy Ministries.**

In Española the need is great. U.S. Census Bureau 2010 statistics say 25% of adults over 25 have not graduated from high school and 24% of the population lives below the poverty line. In addition, Rio Arriba County has the highest death by heroin overdose rate in the United States and our local Walgreens is the number one purveyor of Anheuser Busch products west of the Mississippi River. McCurdy Ministries needs your support to continue our ministries. We make God's difference through McCurdy Preschool, Project Cariño, After School Care, Volunteers in Mission, and Camp Stars. We are also the landlord for McCurdy Charter School (MCS), the vendor for the MCS breakfast and lunch program and through the McCurdy Gala support MCS student athletics and Project Cariño. Your donations of time, talent and funds help us keep our aging buildings and 44 acres in shape for 543 MCS students and for McCurdy Ministries programs. Here are ways to support our ministry: **Donate and encourage others to donate regularly to McCurdy.** Make a donation of cash, stocks, land or an appreciated asset. **Send us Campbell's Labels for McCurdy Ministries and Box Tops for Education for McCurdy Charter School.** Donate a gift annuity to earn income during your life and bless McCurdy with a donation after your death. **Organize a Volunteers in Mission Team from your church and come enjoy Northern New Mexico.** Remember McCurdy Ministries in your will. **Set up an endowed fund in the McCurdy Foundation.** If you purchase a new car, donate your old one to McCurdy for a tax deduction. **Make McCurdy a beneficiary of a life insurance policy.** Remember McCurdy in your estate trust. **Invite the McCurdy church relations team to your church program, dinner or worship event.** Donate to McCurdy through Advance #581479. **Pray for the school daily!** For information contact Rev. Diana Loomis, director of development/church relations at 505-753-7221, ext. 352, email her at dloomis@mccurdy.org or write her at 261 S. McCurdy Road, Española, NM 87532.



Amanda Gonzales
Project Cariño director

Project Cariño news & updates

Each newsletter we encourage our Project Cariño counselors to give our supporters a glimpse into the therapeutic work they do with students of all ages on our campus. Names and circumstances are always changed to protect privacy. We invite you to be in prayer for our counselors, their clients and their families. We know that prayer and your faithful support helps to encourage miracles of healing on our campus.

One of the fundamental concepts of Depth Psychology is that healing naturally springs forth from the imagination. Play therapy is a process through which the different aspects of each of us and our world are expressed symbolically through various modalities such as role play, sand tray, art, music, story and movement. From its inception over 28 years ago, Project Cariño has based much of the therapeutic work on Play Therapy. Play Therapy is highly adaptable and can be used with a range of participants from young children up to adults. Play therapy is especially effective with children because they are not developmentally able to verbalize and comprehend concepts that adolescents and adults can. Play therapy helps these children to “work out” issues in their world in helpful ways that lead to improved moods and positive behavior changes.

To illustrate the power and effectiveness of play therapy, here are a couple of stories from this school year.

An elementary student was having difficulty navigating boundaries with her peers. Her situation included frequent verbal and physical fights. When in therapy, she would focus on the sand tray. Her sand tray scenes always included dinosaurs. One day we talked about how she was like the dinosaurs. As we began exploring the symbolism, the student discovered that her “armor” (the ways she acted defensive when feeling challenged or afraid) was like the scales and plates on the dinosaurs’ bodies. She also noticed that sometimes she felt she had to act “big and scary” to send a message to others that said, “Don’t mess with me!” Finally, this student discovered how being like a dinosaur could be destructive, when she broke things or hurt others, for example.

As therapy progressed, this student began to act out different scenes with the dinos in the sand tray. Over time, her dinos began helping each other, as well as using their

strength and size to move big obstacles and build things. It was at this point that we began talking about how she was like the dinosaurs in positive ways. The girl pointed out that she felt big and strong and could help her team win at games during recess. She also said she likes to help others when they are in need. This student began to see how being like a dinosaur could be awesome and helpful, versus troublesome. Her challenge became to be a helpful dino and become more aware of when she is behaving like a destructive dino. The student began to think of her “dino skills” as a “super power” that she wanted to use for good! Because of these discoveries her parents and teachers noticed the improvement in her behavior, social skills and relationships with her peers!

Another story that exemplifies the power of play therapy is about a young boy experiencing the break-up of his family due to divorce. The child chose play therapy to process his fear that his father no longer loved him and that he would never see his father again. Over the course of several therapy sessions, this young boy allowed his therapist to witness “his story” told through symbolic play. Action sequences as well as the child’s affect were reflected verbally by the therapist, allowing her to convey to the child she understood what he was going through. The counselor was able to establish a strong working alliance with the child. With time and much care, the reality that both parents would remain active in their son’s life was interjected into the play. Parents were incorporated into therapy and were able to reassure their son that his fears would not happen. With therapeutic guidance, they were able to help him through this huge transition by talking with him reassuringly and describing what he can expect now that parents each have a house with a room for him. The boy’s behavioral issues subsided, as did the nightmares; and the parents continue to seek out the therapist for advice on how to help their son with other transitions in his life.

Project Cariño including individual and family therapy along with the Big Buddy/Little Buddy and Peer Conflict Mediation Programs makes a dramatic difference in the lives and education success of our students.



Michelle Esquibel,
Project Cariño Counselor



Box Tops & Campbell’s labels make a big difference!

Every day McCurdy Ministries receives Box Tops and Campbell’s labels in the mail from around the country. Currently we have over 1,600,000 labels which we will use to order a new 2015 seven passenger van for McCurdy Ministries in September! We are grateful for your support and excited about reaching our goal for a new van. In addition, McCurdy Ministries prepares and submits all Box Tops received on behalf of McCurdy Charter School. Box Top funds make possible field trips, special projects and fun events like pizza parties for charter school classes.

A word from Stephanie Suggs McCurdy’s program director



For the Spring semester, I read to the Preschool children every Friday. One of the books we read was *The Great Paper Caper* by Oliver Jeffers, in which the animals are baffled that branches and trees keep disappearing from their forest home. It turns out that Bear is the culprit, and he is taking the trees for his papermaking machine, so he can practice his paper airplane folding technique for a big contest. As a papermaker, Jeffers’ illustration of Bear’s papermaking machine made me laugh. It’s a big metal box with an intake chute for branches and logs on one end, and a conveyor belt that drops fresh, dry sheets into a stack on the other end. Of course, the children wanted to know why I found that page so funny. I explained to them how I make paper and an art project was born.

After recruiting help from the staff, I put together the equipment needed. The preschoolers collected junk mail and scrap paper, and we spent time tearing up and sorting all the paper. We soaked the paper in water overnight, and the next morning I blended it into pulp. A few of the children were shy about putting their hands into the pulp buckets, but they soon got the hang of the process and were begging to make more. We used the pour-mould method with tin cans from the cafeteria, so the resulting paper was a nice round shape they used to make Mother’s Day gifts.

In addition to making individual rounds, I poured a white base directly onto one of the drying screens, and the children poured some rounds on top of the base. They watched me pour the base and soon decided they wanted to pour color the same way, instead of using the moulds. The result was fantastic! We now have a collaborative paper art piece that will go in the Gala auction next year. Two weeks later, I set up a papermaking station on the playground at After School Care. While outside playing, the children had the choice to come and make a sheet of paper. I was surprised that every child came and made at least one sheet, most of them made two, and a handful just kept going until all the pulp was gone. What a fun project! **Stephanie Suggs**

2,3,4,1 You can support Stephanie’s work as program director through the McCurdy Ministries General Fund Advance Number which is 581479. Please designate your donations to Suggs Salary Support. The Advance link is at www.umcmmission.org/Give-to-Mission/Search-for-Projects/Projects/581479. You can send your salary support to McCurdy at 261 S. McCurdy Road, Española, NM 87532 and designate your gift for Suggs Salary Support.

McCurdy Charter School news



Congratulations to all! McCurdy Charter School (MCS) is nearing the completion of our second year.

Here are just a few of the highlights from the last two years:

Our student enrollment increased from 503 students to 543 students this year. Next year we anticipate a starting enrollment of 566 students.

In addition to our state funding of \$4.1 million, MCS has secured additional funding of approximately \$400,000.00 that directly targets academic intervention, special education services, professional development, and behavioral health services. This additional funding has greatly benefitted our students.

The MCS graduation rate for 2012–13 was 94%, with 96% of our 2013–14 Senior Class graduating on May 31st.

MCS received a school grade of “B” for the 2012–13 school year from the NM Public Education Department. Our school grade for the 2013–14 school year will be published this summer.

We have expanded our Advanced Placement (AP) course offerings from 3 courses to 11 courses.

MCS and the MCS Governance Board have approved 25 policies, and completed the Student & Family Handbook, the Employee Handbook, and the Athletic Handbook.

MCS received a 100% compliance determination from the NMPED for our Special Education Program for the 2012–13 school year.

MCS submitted an Impact Aid Grant Application to the U.S. Department of Education for FY13, FY14 and FY15. Once approved, this grant will provide up to \$200,000.00 in additional funding for MCS each year.

Looking forward:

MCS will expand the Dual Credit program to include 9th and 10th grade students.

MCS plans to expand the number of secondary elective courses and add additional Humanities courses.

Our community garden and learning space will be flourishing!

Many thanks to everyone who has supported McCurdy Charter School. We truly believe that our school is a significant contribution to the quality of life in the Española Valley. *Janette Archuleta, McCurdy Charter School director*



After School Care students enjoy the playground equipment.

After School Care news

The McCurdy After School Care staff and volunteers dedicate their time to making the children in our care feel welcome and safe. The children range from four to 13 years old and feel comfortable enough to be themselves and create bonds with each other and the staff. Their time at After School Care includes inside and outside games, a snack, homework assistance, educational computer programs, arts and crafts projects. With the help of Stephanie Suggs, they recently learned the art of paper making. The children really enjoyed the whole process that went into it and it was a great experience for them to learn how to create something they use everyday. The After School Care Program is all about the children and helping them to succeed. I enjoyed being a part of the team! *Alicia Cardenas, After School Care lead teacher*

Camp Stars news

Camp Stars will launch its second year on June 9 on the McCurdy campus and will include 50 students from kindergarten to 6th grade in STEM education and VBS fun for six weeks. The Montei Foundation has donated \$25,000 for Camp Stars for the second year and McCurdy is very grateful to this family foundation for making Camp Stars affordable for our participants.



2013 Camp Stars students in a drama

Words of hope and appreciation from our volunteer manager, Vickie Luviano

Every year many volunteers are the face of Christ's love at McCurdy Ministries. These volunteers are truly the hands of Christ as they serve as tutors, cooks, data entry clerks, dishwashers, bed-makers, shoppers, maintenance workers, ditch diggers, mowers, UPC and Box Top trimmers and so much more! I have to share with you what all you volunteers mean to me, personally... A few years ago, we were being vandalized regularly, including the arson of our first grade classroom. It was an extremely emotional time here. The final straw was the breaking of all the windows in the cafeteria building. I honestly felt that personally, I could not handle another heartbreak. I sort of had a come-to-Jesus meeting with my Heavenly Father, telling him what he already knew. I said, “Father, it’s your school, your campus, and you should be taking better care of it. I’m tired.” That afternoon, I had three work teams coming. The first team got here, and we were unloading their van at the dorm. The team leader was Rev. Jane Vaughan, who had been the Director of Church Relations when I started working at McCurdy. She knew me well. She asked in her beautiful Georgia accent, “Oh, honey, what’s the matter?” I burst into tears, because my heart was absolutely broken over the damages done to McCurdy. It was all doubly hard because we knew it was going to be our last year as a private mission school. I couldn’t explain the hurt to Jane, so I said, “Let’s just unload your van and get your team settled.” When we went to the van, I looked up, and saw the rest of the Alpine, TX, group coming up the road, in their RVs. You could almost hear the music, and I felt in my heart that the cavalry was coming. It was a direct message for me from God, that He ALWAYS sends help. He KNOWS what we need. HE WILL PROVIDE! I realized that what I felt at that moment; the security, the being taken care of, is what I feel EVERY TIME I welcome a volunteer to this campus!! For all of you that have answered the call, or will answer the call soon: THANK YOU! You bring much more than the love of Christ to us. You bring hope.

We have a few slots open for this summer. Sometimes teams sign up and then can’t make the trip. I also get calls from last-minute groups who want to serve at a mission in the United States. We’ve had teams as small as 4 people and as large as 50 people. I hope to see you soon! *Vickie Luviano, volunteer manager*

Is God calling you to make a difference by volunteering at McCurdy?

Then contact Eufemia Romero to schedule a VIM group at 505-753-7221, ext. 210, or email her at eromero@mccurdy.org or Vickie Luviano to volunteer as an individual at 505-753-7221, ext. 268 or email her at vickie@mccurdy.org. McCurdy welcomes individual volunteers during the school year and group volunteers all year long. Acting as the hands of Christ by working with our students, families, community and staff is a wonderful way to serve God. For more information on our VIM program go to <http://www.mccurdy.org/volunteer.html> and for our VIM Team Leader Packet go to <http://www.mccurdy.org/documents/VIM%20Team%20Leader%20Packet.pdf>.