



Smaller Learning Communities Spotlight on Success

Issue 59 October 2010

The Spotlight Shines On... Braden River High School

The Spotlight is on Braden River High School (BRHS), where four proven career academies impact over 1,900 students. The smaller learning community movement strives to help large schools personalize education, improve outcomes, and connect students to the world of work. At Braden River, these four academies are working hard to do just that. BRHS is home to the following academies.

Arts and Communication Academy. Mission: The Arts and Communications Academy, while inspiring creative students of integrity to achieve greater understanding of interdisciplinary connections, empowers its charges to accomplish dreams through the determination essential to personal and professional success. *Lead teachers—Bill Ferrell and Tracie Hardwood.*

Gulf Zero

A school-wide, multi-academy integrated unit

When students connect life outside the classroom with learning inside the classroom, learning becomes authentic. When that connection happens across the curriculum, learning has the chance to become lasting and significant.

Gulf Zero is that type of project. The brainchild of BRHS engineering

Business and International Studies Academy. Mission: To prepare students for world citizenship and careers in domestic and global marketplaces by providing an exciting spectrum of experiences with languages, cultures, and business. *Lead teachers—Christy Goehring and Lori Kish.*

Engineering, Design and Leadership Academy. Mission: To prepare all students to be productive citizens and leaders in our society. *Lead teacher—Gil Burlew.*

Science Technology and Health Academy. Mission: to encourage the development of responsible, ethical leaders who will utilize effective communication skills and scientific inquiry to make a positive difference in their school, community and world. *Lead teachers—Deb Barry and Roxanne Schunicht.*

teacher Gil Burlew, **Gulf Zero** encompasses each of the smaller learning communities who will participate from their own perspective. Teachers from many disciplines met over the summer to collaborate on the project. The following are only a sampling of some of the ideas that students will study through the **Gulf Zero** project.



EdVantage Strategic Objective #1: Continually demonstrate enthusiasm for the self-directed pursuit of knowledge.

- Upcoming SLC Events**
- National Career Academy Conference**
November 7–9, 2010
[Austin, Texas](#)
 - ACTE Convention & Career Tech Expo**
December 2–4, 2010
[Las Vegas, Nevada](#)



Graphic artist and art teacher William Ferrell designed the Gulf Zero logo.

Background. The gulf oil crisis is having a dramatic impact on our environment, our economy, and our quality of life. While much has been reported and documented on this crisis, the **Gulf Zero** project will use lab modeling, simulations, extensive research, and many of the core academics to explore proactive solutions to this crisis.



Above: BRHS FFA has adopted a half mile of shoreline on Anna Maria Island and has committed to cleaning their shoreline at least three times a school year. Right: Arts and Communications students explore the power of imagery to communicate.

Gulf Zero, continued

The **Science Technology and Health Academy** is focusing on the broad topic of food this year. Agriscience students' approach to **Gulf Zero** will be to research aquatic food sources and supplies, and examine the oil spill's physical and economic affect on aquatic plant and animal life.

Commercial art students from the **Arts and Communication Academy** will examine the vast collection of information graphics reported in the media showing oil consumption, natural oil spills, and the many crisis-related maps, charts, and tables that artists have produced. "I care about the teachable moments in education," shared teacher William Ferrell. "I look at the direct, real-world impact to my students. It's about context. Students will explore, 'How does the oil spill relate to me personally' and next, 'Can I do something about it?' We use skills as an artist to change people's minds. We'll use what we learn as inspiration for our art."

For their **Gulf Zero** project, **Arts and Communications Academy** Algebra I students from Tracie Harwood's class developed Venn Diagrams to graph data on world-wide oil spills and populations. Using reasoning and data, students

learned that there was no correlation between the size of a country and the size of the oil spills. The largest oil spill was in a country that did not have the largest population.

Engineering students from the **Engineering Design and Leadership Academy** will use precision measuring, mathematics, and structural engineering principles to design 3-D models of towers which support maximum weight. Students will convert the towers to oil rigs using hydraulics and large fish tanks. Next, students will simulate two oil spills; in one tank dispersants will be added. Students will observe the effects of the oil and dispersants on live aquatic plants and fish. "Our students will see that what we do now with the oil spill will determine the future of civilization," said engineering teacher Gil Burlew.

Government students from the **Business and International Studies Academy** will examine the government's role and response to the oil spill. Science students in this academy will study the qualities and effects of dispersants. During the academy's fourth quarter theme of *adversity*, business and economics students will examine how our economy has been affected by the oil spill.

English students from several academies will write a persuasive letter to an editor or to a congressional representative that identifies the issues behind a conflict of global importance and analyzes what we, as individuals, can do to end it. Students will first examine the repercussions of the Gulf Coast oil spill to identify and build elements of rhetoric. Students will determine the importance of using credible sources by examining fact vs. opinion in the media.

With several other disciplines exploring their subject matter in the context of **Gulf Zero**, the smaller learning communities at Braden River High School have come together to demonstrate the power of cohesive learning.

More Connections

How SLCs integrate learning with living, working, achieving, and giving back

The science of food

The **Science Technology and Health Academy** is focusing on the broad subject of food this year. Students will explore organic vs. traditionally grown food, trends in home gardening, nutrition, genetics and its role in food, and will enjoy a culminating activity at the end of the year with an academy-wide festival focusing on food.

Art and community

Arts and Communication Academy students will work towards an academy-wide Festival of the Arts. Students in various disciplines will present their works, including those from TV production, commercial art,

orchestra, band, jazz, and dance. During the festivities, the senior art show will be judged by artists from the Ringling School of Art and Design.

Working and earning

Manufacturing students from the **Engineering Design and Leadership Academy** will plan and implement an income-producing manufacturing enterprise. Students will design, create, and sell laser engravings, quote notes, and treasure chests.



A prototype of the treasure boxes that Manufacturing students can create and sell.

Practicing their business skills, engineering students will conduct a market survey, identify the target audience, and determine price points.

Respecting, caring and serving

Sharon Itts' science students enhance science skills while learning how to preserve their community. The *Nurture to Nature* project, funded through generous donations and Sharon's grant-writing efforts, involves finding injured or abandoned animals that rely on the waterways and their surrounding ecosystem for survival. The students—acting on the class theme of *respect*—will nurture living creatures; if the creatures are strong enough and the habitat is safe, the animals will be returned to nature. The on-going project involves students, families, and their community. Plans include a visit to the South Florida Museum for a real-life example of how the community helps protect, nurture, and release manatees back to their natural habitats.

Exploring the world of work

This year the Senior Project requires all seniors to choose a topic and explain how it relates to their academy. In addition, each senior will select an academy advisor to serve as a liaison with the business community. Once students have selected a topic and an advisor, they will choose and implement a job shadowing or volunteering opportunity tying them all together.

Discovering good citizenship

Over the summer, several **Business and International Studies Academy** teachers worked together creating integrated lessons with a new theme for each quarter. Students throughout the academy have worked on the first quarter academy theme of Constitutional Foundations. Several academy classes discussed the formation of the United States Government with a strong emphasis on the U.S. Constitution. Mrs. Kish's Government classes, Mr. Gaynor's

Entrepreneurship Classes, Dr. Thompson's advanced classes, and Mrs. Goehring's Computing for College and Careers classes celebrated Constitution Day on September 17. Mrs. Kish's classes created mini-posters promoting the various amendments added to the Constitution, which are displayed in the hallway outside her room. Students created reports and PowerPoint presentations outlining the various aspects of the Constitution and the civil liberties it provides.

Giving back



Did you know that you can help Shriners Hospitals for Children every time you enjoy the canned beverage of your choice? Simply save the aluminum tabs from the top of your cans and give them to participating **Business and International Studies Academy** students and teachers. The tabs will be recycled for cash and donated to help support Shriners Hospitals. This community service fundraiser has a personal touch, as teacher Christy Goehring's young daughter is a patient at Shriners.

Reading comes to life

Dr. Mary Thompson, **Business and International Studies Academy** teacher, is participating in a pilot study for the Florida Department of Education to implement reading strategies infused into her business courses, to improve students' reading skills. Her Computing for College and Careers students, along with Agriscience students, are reading *A Land Remembered*, a historical novel about early settlers to Florida. Dr. Thompson's students are taking on the role of a movie director, then using software, digital photos, and audio recordings of the text to create a movie of the main ideas of the book. Students in the pilot class will experience a field trip to Duette Preserve to observe the land, cattle raising, and cattle rustlers as described in the book, and will take video and still photos to use in students' productions.

Shaping the future

Distributive Career Technology (DCT) students focused on how summer or first jobs can shape one's future educational preparation and career success. Students listened to famous and regular people's stories of their first or summer jobs via interviews from National Public Radio and the Today Show. Each student interviewed five adults about the role of work in their lives and reported survey results to the class. Finally, students told their own summer job stories about lessons learned, people they met, and unexpected results of their employment, which continues throughout the year through on-the-job training experiences.



Seniors research a topic, meet with an Academy Advisor, and participate in a related job shadowing experience.



Business and International Studies lead teachers Christy Goehring and Lori Kish display student posters for Constitution Day.

Looking beyond our borders



Spanish teacher Audrey Irias and teachers from the Business and International Studies Academy have launched a new Spanish Club. Spanish students mingle with those who speak Spanish fluently at home, and will discover how learning a new language can introduce them to new ideas, people, traditions, places, and cultures. Students may enjoy learning different types of dance from different countries; experience different genres of Hispanic music; make traditional arts and crafts; visit restaurants; and visit the Salvador Dalí museum.



Science Technology & Health Academy teachers helped facilitate a training for the 2010 SLC Summer Institute.

Now presenting

Science Technology and Health Academy

teachers will be presenting at the Florida Career Pathways Network in October and again at the National Career Academy Coalition in Austin, Texas in November.

Industry certification success story

BRHS is on the map because of its progress in earning industry certifications. The school not only serves as a Certiport Testing Center, but as one of the largest success stories in the country. Dan Crumpler, John Frank, Richard Platt, Gil Burlew, Bill Gaynor, Christy Goehring, Mary Thompson, Abby Toole, Bill Ferrell, and others have all contributed to this achievement.

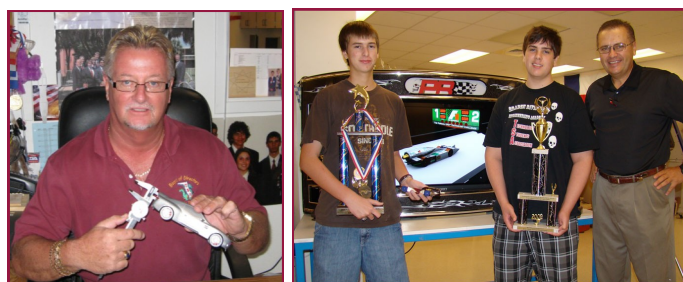
JROTC leads well

Attention! The outstanding leadership, service, and discipline exhibited by the JROTC students at BRHS has resulted in state and national awards.

A world-class, winning operation

Congratulations to Engineering teacher Mr. Platt, senior Jeremy Petty, senior Brandon Demers, and Braden River alumni Ahmad Hares who represented the United States in the F1 in Schools World Competition in Singapore in September, finishing in the top eight. The team from Braden River combined with six students from an academic high school in Munich, Germany. Mr. Platt and the team spent eleven days in historic Munich working on the F1 in Schools Team project before heading to Singapore.

In this exciting competition, the combined team has worked for 18 months preparing for this event, building world class CO² powered cars. The last 3D design and 3D manufactured F1 cars were 200th of a second from exceeding the world record. Teammate Ahmad Hares in 2009 beat the CO² Dragster national record. Congratulations also to the Southeast High School team who took first place!



Left: Engineering teacher Gil Burlew demonstrates precision measuring on the top-performing CO² car. Right: Engineering teacher Richard Platt and his students head to Singapore!



Smaller Learning Communities

Spotlight on Success

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Braden River High School is lead by these fearless Pirates:

Principal Jim Pauley and Assistant Principals Don French, Jennifer Gilray, and Dr. David Marshall

The Smaller Learning Communities programs are under the direction of the **Adult, Career and Technical Education (ACT) Department** of the School District of Manatee County.

Doug Wagner, Director—Adult, Career and Technical Education

Angie Grasberger, SLC Project Manager and Vice President, National Career Academy Coalition

Around the District

Watch for all of the publications keeping you informed about what's happening around the District in the Adult, Career & Technical Education department.



Career Pathways, Take Stock Times, Careers in Action, Education Today/Career Tomorrow, Transition Times, ACT Update, Spotlight on Success, and Technical Education Today.