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## **WHEN I GROW UP**

### **Arlington Elementary School**

### **Baltimore, Maryland**

Career Week 2001 at Arlington Elementary School increased students' interest in and knowledge of a diverse array of career options. The event was an innovative way to improve the relationships with business partners and collaborate with the neighboring communities.

The Career Week Committee, consisting of teachers and parents, worked diligently to locate and invite professionals from a variety of different occupations. Through letters, phone calls, and personal contacts, the committee secured the following speakers: an architect, a dentist, a police officer, a beautician, a computer programmer, a caterer, a CPA, an occupational therapist, a MTA bus driver, a photojournalist, a mortician, an engineer, a pediatrician, a social worker, and representatives from other areas of employment.

Once the guest speakers were confirmed, the committee assigned them to classrooms based upon the students' interests. To prepare for the guest speaker's presentation, many of the students researched the occupation and generated questions for the speaker. After the presentations, students extended their learning by writing essays about what occupation they wanted to pursue. They also wrote thank you notes to the Career Week visitors.

Funds from the school paid for Career Week. The guests enjoyed a continental breakfast each morning. Guests also received gift packs with an Arlington agenda, an Arlington pen, and a certificate of participation.

The students, teachers, and parents of Arlington were pleased with the visitors and the wealth of information and insights that they shared. A number of participants volunteered to serve as mentors to those students who expressed an interest in his/her particular field. Many of the career professionals enjoyed the experience so much that they readily agreed to come back next year for Career Week 2002!

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