



annual report

organizational updates

Palos Campus Improvements

The summer of 2004 was spent busily transforming Elim's Palos Heights campus to make it safer and more functional for Elim staff, students and clients, and visitors. Now Elim provides a safer traffic system for buses and increased parking for staff, families, and visitors.

The building project had many components. Curbs, lighting, asphalt, and designated parking areas were added to create a safer, larger bus unloading area. The bridge across Tinley Creek will be permanently closed to traffic and a drop-off area was created in front of the main Elim parking lot to accommodate parents and visitors.

While a number of beautiful mature trees and surrounding open green space were removed in order to accommodate the new parking lot and drop-off areas, steps are being taken to preserve the beauty of Elim's campus. All of this was done to ensure the safety of Elim's students. Facilities Manager Frank Bensema explains, "Everything is being driven with our children and adults in mind. With the growth of Elim's clientele, we'll always be looking for better ways to serve our students and staff."

'Facilities' continued on back ▶

life-impact updates

Your Partnership Changes Lives 365 Days a Year

Elim Opens New Autism Classrooms

In order to better serve its students, with autism, Elim has opened two new classrooms for the 2004-2005 school year. Elim's principal, Mike Otte, explains, "We believe there are some Elim students with autism who can benefit from specific training and methods of teaching that are designed specifically for children with autism. Currently, we have over a dozen children with autism who are integrated into our other classrooms. We're not sure we're reaching them in the Elim mainstream classroom. We feel that opening these new classrooms will help them reach their potential."

This decision led to some big changes around Elim, including new teachers and an increased focus on training current teachers and aides.

Many hours of research have gone into the new program. Before designing the program, Elim school staff Kim Vanwhite and Carol Runge visited other schools to evaluate their autism programs. Vanwhite feels the new classrooms will serve Elim's



Adam is just one Elim student who will benefit from Elim's new autism-focused classrooms

students well. "Visiting other programs enabled us to see what strategies were and weren't working. We built our program around the methods that were working best. I'm excited about the new classrooms because the program will be more specialized – we'll really be able to target the students with autism. It's a definite need."

The indications are that this need won't disappear any time soon. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, two to six of every one thousand individuals have autism. Recent studies show there are ten times as many individuals with autism spectrum disorders than there were ten years ago.

Otte said that Elim has also been affected by this increase. "Each year we are enrolling more and more students with

autism. We also receive more applications from autistic students each year. We want to prepare these students academically, socially, behaviorally, and emotionally for their future. We hope that these new classrooms will help fill this need."

New Comprehensive Curriculum

For the first time, Elim staff members have a comprehensive curriculum plan to follow when designing their classroom plans. In order to provide its clients with the best education possible and comply with new state regulations, a committee of Elim staff members, headed by vice-principal Sharon Duncan, created a written outline for staff to follow.

The new curriculum encompasses two parts: academic skills and life application skills. The curriculum was developed with input from Christian schools, private schools, and state laws. The curriculum goals were written to enable teachers to



A view of the new parking lot and traffic system shows just how much safe space was created.

'Facilities' continued on back ▶

write measurable outcome goals (what each student will be able to do or comprehend) for each student based on the curriculum. Even with the individual goals, the curriculum will adhere to the Illinois Learning Standards.

Duncan believes that the new curriculum will have a positive effect on the education Elim offers its clients. "We feel that it is important to teach our students more than just academics. The new curriculum will provide a definite plan for our staff to follow while still being able to tailor it for each individual student. This curriculum allows each student to learn as much academically as possible while still learning life skills to teach them independence. The curriculum also is designed to help students during their transition from school to vocational life. We realize that the children and educational methods are always changing. This curriculum will always be evolving and improving as well."

Elim Students Learn While Helping Others

Elim students are learning in a whole new way – by providing service to those in need. High school students at Elim, working with Trinity Christian College professor Patti Powell's special education students, participated in a variety of service projects during the 2003-2004 school year.

One of the classes wrote letters of encouragement to servicemen in Iraq. Another class reached out to their community by hosting a luncheon for the elderly. Powell said, "The students gained a lot. By shopping for the food, they practiced important math skills. By preparing the food, the students learned vital

life-application skills.

Eleven Elim students, accompanied by chaperones, flexed their muscles and dirtied their hands to benefit Rehoboth Christian School this summer. The students spent a week painting, landscaping, and finishing up a lot of the inside and outside projects that the Rehoboth staff



Elim students learned to 'give as God had given' while serving on a summer missions trip in Rehoboth. Other Elim students also participated in Service Learning projects.

did not have time to complete following Rehoboth's major building project this past year.

Service-learning is a valuable concept being incorporated more and more into Elim's curriculum. Patti Powell, a former Elim staff member, recently completed her doctoral dissertation on service-learning and feels strongly about its benefits for Elim students. "My research has shown the power of service-learning with physically and cognitively disabled students. It not only is shown to boost their self-esteem, but it's also a way for them to learn, grow, and feel great about what they are doing."

According to Powell, disabled students are often perceived as only able to receive acts of service. This new concept helps disabled students focus on others' needs. In the process, students' self-worth, social skills, and intellectual abilities skyrocket.

Adult Services Dream Books

"I want to be an astronaut!"
You might not expect to hear

those words from a client in Elim's Adult Services program. However, a new Elim program encourages adults to shoot for the stars.

Clients in Adult Services are being encouraged to examine their true interests and life goals by creating Dream Books. The books will later be used in designing each student's goals and curriculum. Class time will be dedicated to helping students ponder their favorite foods, ideal place to live, and perfect job. All of this "dreaming" can have valuable results, according to Brad Johnson, director of Elim Adult Services. "Just like anyone else, examining their true goals and interests helps them find fulfillment and self-esteem. We're realizing that people with disabilities can accomplish a lot more than many people previously thought. Identifying what's really important to them helps to motivate them as well."

The books serve another valuable purpose – they help students think for themselves, not just give answers that they feel family and staff would like to hear.

The Dream Books program was launched in July 2004 and will soon be introduced in Elim's high school classes as well. Students will create their dream books while in high school and continue to modify and expand them throughout the coming years.



Karen is just one of the 185 adult clients who will reach for her dreams in Elim's Adult Services and Oasis Enterprises.

updates...continued

Campus Master Plan

With the Board of Trustees' endorsement, a master plan is being developed for Elim's Palos Heights campus. Any modifications to the current campus will be designed with future educational and expansion needs in mind.

Elim's president, Bill Lodewyk, explains, "We want the campus to be a base of operations for years to come. This will ensure that we are able to meet future needs and take advantage of important opportunities. Ideally, we'd like the campus to be a physical embodiment of an oasis. Elim's campus should feel like an oasis to students and visitors who are traveling through the desert of disability." The master plan should be completed in early 2005.

Constitutional Revisions

The huge evolution of Elim's ministry, since its founding almost 60 years ago, has created a need to update its organizational constitution. Lodewyk explains, "Elim's constitution reflects a local school more than a comprehensive social services ministry. It's virtually impossible to provide the quality of care that we desire for our clients when the constitution and Elim's current ministry lack congruity."

Elim's Board of Trustees has appointed a task force to recommend changes to the organizational constitution. The task force members include Dr. Fred Wezeman (chairperson), George Groen, Henry Kamp, Arnie Koldenhoven, Rev. Joel Nederhood, and Rev. Dennis Mulder.

Before any constitutional changes are finalized, the Executive Committee, the Board of Trustees, and, finally, the supporters of this unique ministry, will have the opportunity to vote to approve these changes.



Operating Fund Details 2003-2004

Operating Fund Balance as of July 1, 2003\$9,480,552

Revenues

Public Fees	\$10,279,202
Private Fees.....	\$529,741
Partnership.....	\$412,450
Sales	\$302,274
Gifts.....	\$1,383,250
Other Support	\$68,539
Elim Foundation.....	\$360,300
Total Revenue	\$13,335,756

Expenditures

Wages & Employees	\$10,751,960
Occupancy	\$804,390
Consumables.....	\$435,657
Transportation.....	\$243,431
Other.....	\$1,083,438
Total Expenditures.....	\$13,318,876

Transfer of Buildings to Building Fund(\$6,942,525)

Operating Fund Balance as of June 30, 2004\$2,554,907

Operating Fund Projections 2004-2005

Operating Fund Balance as of July 1, 2004.....\$2,554,907

Revenues

Public Fees.....	\$11,340,700
Private Fees.....	\$369,200
Partnership.....	\$473,200
Sales	\$433,000
Gifts.....	\$1,600,000
Other Support	\$69,000
Elim Foundation.....	\$420,000
Total Revenue	\$14,705,100

Expenditures

Wages & Employees	\$11,464,100
Occupancy	\$784,100
Consumables.....	\$493,100
Transportation.....	\$365,000
Other.....	\$1,085,900
Total Expenditures.....	\$14,192,200

Operating Fund Balance as of June 30, 2004\$3,067,807

Foundation Performance 2003-2004

Foundation Balance as of July 1, 2003\$7,417,579

Gift Revenues

Trusts & Estates	\$328,651
Endowments	\$10,830
Other Gift Revenue	\$10,133
Other Revenue	\$7,752
Total Gift Revenue.....	\$357,366

Investment Revenue

Interests & Dividends.....	\$84,422
Unrealized Gain on Securities.....	\$898,646
Total Investment Revenue	\$983,068

Total Revenues

\$1,340,434

Expenditures

Investment Fees.....	\$42,729
Promotion	\$15,454
Other.....	\$4,459
Realized Losses on Sale of Securities	\$17,566
Distribution to Elim Operating Fund	\$360,300
Endowment Distributions	\$59,374
Total Expenditures.....	\$499,882

Foundation Fund Balance as of June 30, 2004\$8,258,131

Life-Impact Fiscal Projections, FY 2004-2005

How many kids need financial support to attend Elim's school.....	16
How much is the need per child?	\$23,712
What's the total need for the school program?	\$379,391
How many kids need financial support to reside in Kamp Cottage?.....	37
How much does it cost per child?	\$9,644
What's the total need for the Residential Program?	\$356,830
How many adults need financial support for Adult Services?	179
How much is the need per adult?	\$5,838
What's the total need for the Adult Services program?	\$1,044,948
How many children are served through the Discovery program?	430
How much do Discovery services cost per child?.....	\$572
What's the total need for the Discovery program?.....	\$245,846

