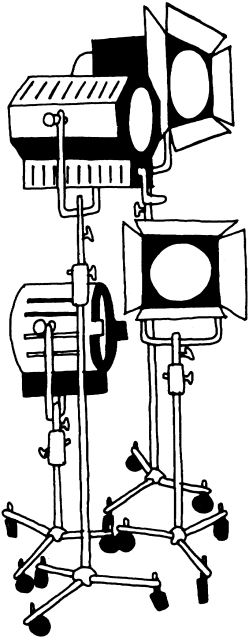


Spotlight on tutoring and tutor training



Did you know that the Lab School tutors more than 450 students each year from public and private schools in Maryland, Virginia, and DC? We offer this service to the greater community using our highly trained specialists and our very successful methodologies to teach students from other schools. Only a few of our own Lab students (or members of their families) receive tutoring. A corps of 100 tutors supports this comprehensive program.

The Lab School's outstanding Tutoring Service provides highly individualized diagnostic-prescriptive teaching, tailored to meet each student's needs ranging from teaching reading readiness skills to helping a student prepare for the SAT and GRE examinations. Students can receive remediation in all academic areas—reading, spelling, composition, math, geography, history, science, computer literacy—as well as assistance in learning study skills and modes of organization so that they can effectively complete academic work. The Tutoring Service caters to all age groups, from kindergarten to adults.

Tutors are highly trained, carefully monitored, and supervised by Leila Kramer, M.S.W., M.A., Director of Tutoring. Our tutors come from many sources: Lab School teachers who have Master's Degrees in Special Education: Learning Disabilities or graduate students working toward this degree at American University; tutors who have been specially trained during a nine-month course at The Lab School (see the next column); or specialists of the content areas needed (e.g. calculus, history, geometry).

The tutors are required to maintain five continuing education units each year, which they can receive from attending conferences and workshops, either at The Lab School, American University, or other institutions. The Tutor Library, for the exclusive use of Lab tutors, was updated over the past summer and is now bulging with books—math, reading, reading comprehension, phonics, SAT prep, writing—and all kinds of games. The tutors also develop their own very personalized tools for their students.

The Tutoring Program is organized and efficient. The Director meets with an inquiring family and finds out the strengths and weaknesses of the student. Because she knows her tutors very well, she can usually make a match and place the student within a week. The student is normally tutored twice a week for the school year. Most students make gains in their academic programs, improve their skills immea-

surably, and increase their ability to use learning strategies. Tutoring is also available during the summer.

A new **ADD and LD Coaching Program** has just begun for students who need a little assistance rather than full-scaled tutoring. Miss Kramer earned her Coaching Certificate last year and will be training additional coaches this fall. This program is for junior high, high school, and adults. The student calls his/her coach and has a 30 minute telephone conversation to assist in organization or to receive help with assignments or projects. The coaching is usually twice a week for a three month period.

The purpose of both tutoring and coaching is to make students independent—to help them so they can do it on their own. The program has hundreds of success stories!

The Lab School Tutor Training Program

The Tutor Training Program was established in 1984 to meet the need for tutors trained in Lab School methodology. Our Tutor Corps trainees receive in-depth, on-the-job training in state-of-the-art individualized classrooms five mornings a week and attend intensive seminars two afternoons a week.

Our unique program requires a joint commitment: on The Lab School's part—there is no tuition for the program; on the trainee's part—it is nine months of intensive training. A former trainee compared it to a year in the Peace Corps.

At The Lab School, we have found that our best tutors possess strong divergent thinking skills combined with a liberal arts background. Over the years our trainees have come from such varied backgrounds as law, acting, visual arts, business, and the sciences. Very few have teaching backgrounds but they quickly develop the necessary skills. All are very caring people who want a change in career to something more personally rewarding.

All applicants must have a Bachelor's Degree from an accredited institution. Experience working with children or adolescents as a teacher, camp counselor, advisor, or a parent is a plus. However, we are not as concerned about the past experience of our tutor trainees as we are with their potential and their commitment to the program.

After completing the training, the new master tutors are encouraged to join The Lab School Summer Program and become a paid tutor. This provides an opportunity for them to begin tutoring students professionally, while continuing to collaborate daily with Lab School staff—an excellent transition to a career as an independent tutor. At the end of the program, if all requirements have been met, trainees can become part of the Lab School Professional Tutor Corps.

Evelyn Novins, M.A., a highly experienced teacher, tutor, and adjunct professor, is the Director of Tutor Training.