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**education Notes**

Thursday, December 20, 2007; Page PG04

**Montessori Students Sing For First Lady, Patients**

Early this month, 22 elementary students from Christian Family Montessori School in Mount Rainier asked their teacher if they could sing Christmas carols to patients at Children's Hospital in the District.

The students were disappointed to learn that by then the hospital's schedule was booked. But recently, the hospital contacted the school with good news: They needed a choir for a special event, so the students would be able to sing for patients after all.

And there was more. The special event was first lady Laura Bush's annual visit to the hospital on Dec. 12.

During her entrance, the students sang "Deck the Halls." They sang "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer" after Bush read the Christmas story by the same name.

They concluded that portion of the concert with "We Wish You a Merry Christmas" and "Feliz Navidad," as the first lady departed. The students sang a variety of other holiday songs as patients were brought into the atrium.

The young singers received another treat, a visit from a guest conductor, Dr. Bear, the hospital's mascot.

Christian Family Montessori School was founded 26 years ago to provide a Montessori education to low- and moderate-income families, reflect the rich diversity of the surrounding neighborhoods and offer children a spiritual formation. The school serves children age 2 1/2 through sixth grade.

Music is an integrated part of the curriculum. In the past, students have used their musical talents to raise money for a sister school in Uganda.



Montessori students sang for a special visitor at Children's Hospital. (Christian Family Montessori School)

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**U-Md. Health Web Site Receives National Honor**

A Web site created by University of Maryland students to help families with limited budgets get health tips has been named the National Award Winner in Internet Education Technology by the National Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences.

The site, Eat Smart, Be Fit Maryland, at <http://www.eatsmart.umd.edu>, began as a nutrition and fitness test project in Charles, Calvert, Dorchester, Allegany and Garrett counties and was funded by the Agriculture Department.

Targeting residents throughout the state, the site offers searchable listings of weekly grocery store bargains and community activities in every county.

The site has had more than 110,000 hits this year.

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