

# WILLIAM CRAMP

# FIT FLYER

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## Cramp graduate empowers others

Elaine Gonzalez Johnson met her best friend when they were students at William Cramp. They're still best friends, have been to each other's weddings, and are godparents to each other's children.

In an interview with the *Fit Flyer*, Mrs. Gonzalez Johnson spoke about her roots at Cramp and her work today in philanthropy and empowering women.

She remembers her third-grade teacher telling her, "You are going to be amazing," and she took that idea with her after she graduated from Cramp. Mrs. Gonzalez Johnson recently visited Cramp to celebrate Women's History Month by speaking to the entire school in an assembly.

She is the founder and chief executive officer of Latinas in Motion (LIM). It was "organized to encourage, inspire, and empower women to get active," according to the group's website.

Mrs. Gonzalez Johnson began to run to get back into shape after she had her first child. When she first started running races, she noticed there were not many Latinas around her. She wanted to support them. "Who you surround yourself with makes a difference. Your village matters," she said.

"Having social connections and a sense of belonging are protective factors to help you manage stress



Illustration by Kailyn Santana

and give you a ... feeling that you are not alone," say experts at the Mayo Clinic, a hospital and research

(See **Running** on Page 2)

## Teacher sees benefits from gardening

Gardening helps fifth-grade teacher Ms. Morales teacher, think positively: "It helps my mental health, giving me an outlet. I feel like everyone needs one, and this is a good one to get me outdoors."

Gardening is an activity that can reduce depression and anxiety, according to a research study published in the National Library of Medicine.

Ms. Morales said she told *Fit Flyer* reporters that she gardens by herself because it's one part of her day when she doesn't have to be giving instructions. It gives her a reason to go outside even if she doesn't

want to. It also helps her own children to eat more vegetables because they help in the garden, she said.

Please read more from Ms. Morales' interview. Her answers have been lightly edited.

**Question:** Please describe your garden.

**Ms. Morales:** I have a vegetable garden in my backyard, a small herb garden in front of my house in a raised bed built by my husband, and then we plant flowers in various places around our yard.

(See **Gardening** on Page 2)

# Running can connect you to others

(Continued from Page 1)

institution. Being active with others makes for more fun.



Mrs. Gonzalez Johnson

Running LIM is not Mrs. Gonzalez Johnson's full-time job. She works in philanthropy as her day job. Her organization gives money to groups that help young people read, or that give youth opportunities they might not otherwise have.

"You don't have to pick one thing. When you grow up, you don't have to choose to be only one thing. You are limitless. I don't believe you were created to do one thing. You have the right to change your mind," said Mrs. Gonzalez Johnson.

Even though LIM started in Philadelphia, it now has 5,000 members across the country, according to



Illustration by *Fit Flyer* reporter

Mrs. Gonzalez Johnson. Her daughter is a member and both her daughter and son enjoy running with her, she said.

—By *Fit Flyer* reporters

# Gardening helps Ms. Morales relax

(Continued from Page 1)

Around our pond in our backyard, we grow a lot of tall green plants that take up a lot of space, some that are planted especially to keep mosquitos away.

I like to plant wildflowers each year to see what comes up because it makes me happy. I also grow cucumbers, tomatoes, sweet peppers, and hot peppers. We like to take on something new each year.

**Question:** When do you garden? How often do you garden? And why do you garden?

**Ms. Morales:** I garden all year long. I prepare my outdoor stuff at the end of April and I do my planting on Mother's Day weekend. I take care of my flower garden every single morning in the summertime. The vegetable garden you have to be consistent with from spring to fall.

I started gardening because I was having health issues and it took my mind off things. We built a little pond, and my husband said we need plants back here. I realized that when I was playing in the dirt, I wasn't thinking about other things. It became a form of meditation, and it makes me feel successful.

**Question:** How did you start your garden?

**Ms. Morales:** I started with just vegetables because my mom always had one with cucumbers, tomatoes, and eggplants. I always thought, I couldn't wait to have my own backyard to do that.

I would advise someone to start small, not too much at once, do a little research, because everything grows differently. Stick with it! It feels good at the end of the season

**Question:** What gardening challenges have you faced?

**Ms. Morales:** Growing colorful flowers is really hard. We've tried doing it from plants, seeds, cuttings, and then we just decided to have (the garden) green and not colorful. Then, lo and behold, we saw one day that colors started showing up.

We also have trouble growing cucumbers in more than just one spot. We learned to buy more than one variety in case one doesn't work out. You're not always going to be successful.

I've killed houseplants, so when that happens, I read to see what is going wrong.

## William Cramp *Fit Flyer*

The *Fit Flyer* is a publication of William Cramp Elementary School in the School District of Philadelphia. Fifth-grade staff members include Demetri Benene, Aiden Brown, Lamar Brumskill, Alberto Colon, Aloe Colon, Daniel Gonzalez, Elias Gonzalez, Zoey Gonzalez, Amiyah Hardaway, Shemar Hinton-Taylor, Amauri Huggins, Ivelisse Ortiz, Cataleya Rivera, Luna Rivera, Jayceon Rodriguez, Zoralee Saez, and Kailyn Santana. The *Fit Flyer's* faculty advisor is Ms. Morales and the school principal is Dr. Rodriguez.

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# Reporters imagine their own garden

After learning about the health benefits of gardening, *Fit Flyer* reporters reflected on what their ideal gardens would include.



I would like to garden fruits like cherries, apples, bananas, watermelon, and grapes. I would not garden vegetables. —*Lamar Brumskill*

I would like to plant a fruit, maybe a strawberry, because it could be used for a lot of things like drinks and desserts or by itself. —*Luna Rivera*

I would like a garden to plant watermelon, strawberries, melon, peppers, and flowers. I would like to plant those because they are pretty and also good and healthy to eat. —*Kailyn Santana*

I would like to have a big garden with roses, tulips, fruits, and veggies. —*Aloe Colon*

I would have a flower garden because they're so beautiful and you can make tea with some flowers, too. —*Ivelisse Ortiz*

My dream garden would probably be a big farm with a greenhouse next to it growing tomatoes and stuff. My farm would have veggies such as broccoli, cabbage, lettuce, carrots, or even pumpkins next to it.

I want to have a bigger garden to grow lots of watermelon, cantaloupe, and pomegranates, and dragon fruit because I've never tried them. I would want plum trees and grapes because of their sweet taste. I also want to grow oranges and next to them have an apple tree. I want a space to keep chickens, cows, sheep, and pigs.

The reason I want these is because they're all edible and because my mom knows how to make good food with what I'm growing. It's also better if I grow it because it's free and fresher. —*Aiden Brown*

I would like to have a garden with flowers and especially sunflowers. —*Cataleya Rivera*

## Cub Corner

# Book review: *Get off the couch*

*The Couch Potato*

Written by Jory John

Illustrated by Pete Oswald

*The Couch Potato* is about a potato who likes to sit on his couch in one spot watching screens all day. When the power goes out one day, he decides to take his dog on a walk and discovers all the things he's been missing. He enjoys the fresh air, the sunshine, and nature. He learns that having a balance between screen time and outdoor time is important.

Second-grade reporters in Ms. Salkin's class recently read and reviewed *The Couch Potato* and enjoyed the book. They said they could identify with the Couch Potato because they also like to be on



screens. The book taught them that it's important to balance activities and not spend all their time on screens. When the Couch Potato goes outside, he realizes that he's been missing out on so many things. "You can be a couch potato AND a fun potato," one student said. This means you can enjoy your screen time and also do healthy outdoor activities.

Reporters said this book would be best for students in grades 1 to 4. Younger kids might not understand the idea of a couch potato, since the character is actually a potato. This book would also be good for teachers or parents who are trying to help kids understand why it's not healthy to sit on a couch all day using screens.

# Cub Corner

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## Creating art can calm you down

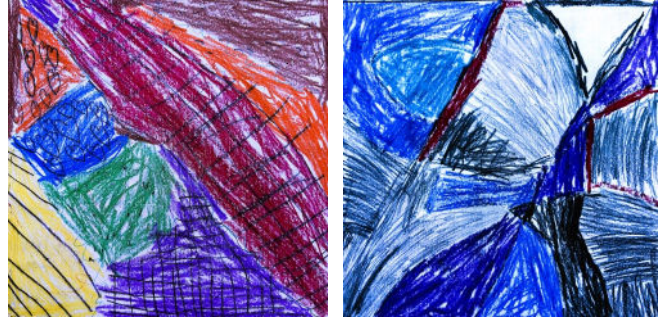
Art can help you relax and reduce stress, say researchers at Drexel University.

Second-grade reporters in Ms. Quintana's class tested how they would feel after drawing. They drew a Zentangle. A Zentangle is a design that anyone can make.

The reporters noticed that they felt calmer and their breathing was slower and more peaceful while they were drawing.

Here are directions to make a Zentangle. There are no right or wrong ways to do this!

- \* Find any kind of blank paper.
- \* Draw a square on paper.



Second-grade reporters in Ms. Quintana's class illustrated these Zentangles.

- \* Inside the square, draw lines from one side to another—straight or curved. You'll have empty spaces where the lines cross.
- \* Inside each empty space, create a pattern with colors or shapes.

## Healthy habits are good for your heart

Healthy habits are important for keeping our hearts healthy, Mrs. Lugo's kindergarten reporters recently learned.

Health experts at KidsHealth.org say that drinking water, eating healthy food, getting enough sleep, and lowering stress can help our hearts stay strong and healthy.

Reporters shared their favorite ways to keep their hearts healthy.

- \* Jumping
- \* Riding a bike
- \* Swimming
- \* Playing football
- \* Going rock climbing
- \* Running
- \* Doing push-ups
- \* Playing tag
- \* Playing soccer
- \* Going for a walk with a friend



Illustration by a second-grader in Ms. Salkin's class