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Graduation rates increase thanks to local organization

By **KAITLIN KULICH**
kkulich@chespub.com

BALTIMORE COUNTY — A countywide organization that functions like a family is helping more Baltimore County students graduate from high school than ever before.

The non-profit organization Thread was founded in 2004 by Sarah Hemminger, a Johns Hopkins University biomedical engineering graduate student, and her husband, Ryan Hemminger. Their mission since the beginning has been to build relationships between volunteers and high school students who are at risk of

failing to graduate.

The Hemmingers felt the need to start Thread because a group of caring people made sure Ryan graduated. After a series of unfortunate life events, Hemminger's mother lost her job and Ryan performed poorly in school.

After overcoming his own struggles, Ryan realized there are many kids in similar situations today who need an organization like Thread to help them out.

Marie Brown, senior director of communications at Thread, said the non-profit identifies students who are

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Thread students playing games at Thread summer camp this year

'You are not alone': Area author has hope for teens

By **KAITLIN KULICH**
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BALTIMORE COUNTY — Going back to school for some students means going back to anxiety, bullying, feeling alone or feeling depressed. Luckily, Vermell Tunstall has several books that aim to help teens with these specific problems.

Tunstall is a Baltimore local and a wife, mother, author and anti-bullying advocate. She was inspired to write about the struggles of growing up because she experienced her own personal traumas of domestic violence as a teen.

"I shared my story of how I survived to help others who are going through it," Tunstall said. "My goal is to protect and nurture the youth in communities across America and help keep schools safe."

Tunstall's book, *Perfectly Imperfect*, is about a teenage girl who gets bullied in school, becomes anorexic, is victim to sexual assault and experiences parent absenteeism.

Tunstall said that the book, "is written in hopes to grant inspiration to those who need it and determination to those who choose to keep going. There is a way out and you are not alone."

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Rosedale Baptist School gets new building

By **KAITLIN KULICH**
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Pastor Steve gives a speech before the ribbon cutting.

ROSEDALE — Students at Rosedale Baptist School walked into a brand new building this week to kick off their school year.

The school purchased the newest branch location in White Marsh just one year ago. Last week, just in time for the new school year, the school held a ribbon cutting ceremony to celebrate the completion of the 36,000 square foot elementary school building.

Pastor Steve of Rosedale Baptist Church spoke at the ceremony and talked about the preparation that went into making the school.

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