

DRAGON NEWS

A newsletter from Principal Collins and the DES PTA

May/June 2016

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

DAMASCUS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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Damascus, MD 20872

PHONE:

301-253-7080

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301-253-8717

SCHOOL WEBSITE:

[http://
montgomeryschoolsmd.org/
schools/damascus/](http://montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/damascus/)

PRINCIPAL:

Bill Collins

EMAIL:

William_J_Collins
@mcpsmd.org

TWITTER:

@collinswj

PTA WEBSITE:

www.damascuspta.com

PTA EMAIL:

desptamail@gmail.com

I can't believe that the school year is quickly coming to a close! I am so proud of our students and teachers for all of their hard work this year. We have been faced with many challenges and changes this school year, but have managed to adapt and overcome because the DES community continues to work together as a team! As the year closes, this will be our final Principal/PTA Newsletter to our parent community and I must take a moment to thank each of you for your continued support for our students, school, teachers and me. We cannot do this work without your support! Thanks to the PTA and countless volunteers that have supported DES this year!

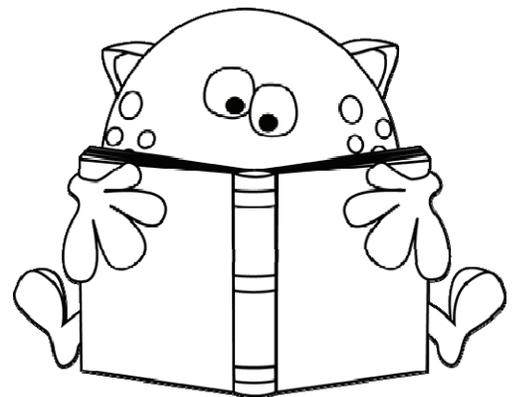
We are putting the final touches on our courtyard project and it has proven to be a great experience for all. We are left with a beautiful new instructional space for students and teachers. I would like to personally thank Scott Brown and Damascus Enterprises for their amazing support with this project. We could not have done it without them!

As we move into the summer months, parents will receive periodic

messages and updates. Please make sure we have your email address so we can ensure that you receive information and updates. We will continue to publish our summer parent/student packets electronically on our school website this summer. Parents will receive a postcard in the mail with important date reminders and notification of when summer packet will be posted to our website.

I hope everyone has a wonderful summer and look forward to seeing students at their first day of school on Monday, August 29!

*~ Bill Collins
Principal*



Remember to read this summer!

MCPS to Make Up One Snow Day on June 20

MCPS will extend the 2015–2016 school year by one day and end the year on Monday, June 20, 2016. The MCPS request for a one-day waiver of the 180-day school year requirement was approved on April 18 by the Maryland State Department of Education.

The school year was previously scheduled to end Friday, June 17, and now will end with an early release day on June 20. June 17 will be a full instructional day.

MCPS was closed for six days this winter due to inclement weather that left many roads and sidewalks in the county impassable. MCPS already had four emergency weather days built into the school calendar. With the state waiving one day from the requirement, MCPS has implemented its weather contingency calendar, which adds one make-up day to the end of the school year.

MCPS Deberá Recuperar Un Día de Nieve el 20 de Junio

MCPS extenderá el ciclo escolar 2015–2016 por un día al final del ciclo, el lunes, 20 de junio, 2016. La petición de MCPS para un día de exención de los 180 días de instrucción exigidos por año fue aprobada el 18 de abril por el Departamento de Educación del Estado de Maryland (Maryland State Department of Education–MSDE).

Anteriormente, el ciclo escolar estaba programado para finalizar el viernes, 17 de junio, y ahora finalizará el 20 de junio, con un día de salida temprana. El 17 de junio será un día completo de instrucción.

MCPS cerró por seis días durante el pasado invierno debido al tiempo inclemente que dejó a muchas carreteras y aceras del condado intransitables. MCPS ya tenía cuatro días previstos en su calendario escolar para emergencias climáticas. Al otorgar el estado una exención de un día al requisito, MCPS ha implementado su calendario de contingencias, que añade un día de recuperación al final del ciclo escolar.

Totally Awesome 80's Dance Party Recap

Our “Totally Awesome 80's Dance Party” and Silent Auction were both very successful. We kicked off the 80's theme and brought excitement to the school a week early with a staff costume contest. They really looked great! The duo from “Waynes World” even made an appearance. The week leading up to the dance, the staff posted pictures of themselves in the 80's on a bulletin board for kids to “guess who”. The staff did not disappoint us with their throwback pictures including plenty of big hair, shoulder pads, and even a white tuxedo! Thank you to the staff for your participation and support!

The kids really took the costume contest very seriously. We had preps, rappers, lil' Madonnas, and even Elliott with E.T.! The dance floor was packed all evening. The students had a great time dancing to music from the 80's and today. OK, maybe the adults had just as much fun. Our sincere thanks to Tara Owens, 80's dance committee chair and DJ for the evening, Beth Walter, Silent Auction committee chair, the fifth grade parents for providing concessions, Chrystie Kurz who sold candy and accessories to benefit the family of Melissa Flynn (who recently lost her battle with cancer), Mr. Collins and the DES staff for their enthusiasm and support, and the many volunteers who put in countless hours preparing for and executing this amazing event!

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

"We had the time of our lives..." Can you hear the famous song from the 80's classic movie "Dirty Dancing"? As I look back at my first year as PTA President, this is exactly how I feel. Hard to believe this adventure all started after standing in line chatting with then PTA President, Laurie Murtaugh, at a Chipotle spirit night. I cherish all the fun family memories I am making while enjoying our DES PTA activities and volunteering at our wonderful school. The smile on the face of my first grade son, Colton, every time he sees me at the school is priceless (cue the waterworks).

***Volunteers are paid in
six figures... S-M-I-L-E-S.***

~Gayla LeMaire

Although this year has flown by, I cannot believe how much this amazing group of volunteers has accomplished. Last fall we had an outdoor movie night, Halloween class parties, restaurant spirit nights, Pastries with Parents, Taekwondo, Grandparents Day, Holiday Shop, and a newly added Fall Fun Fest at local Char-Lene Farm. Who knew we could again raise close to \$9,000 at our Read-A-Thon. Mr. Collins set the bar high last year by camping on the school roof as a school-wide reading incentive; however, our students blew our numbers out of the water reading 166,539 minutes this year! Mr. Collins held up his end of the deal and shaved his head!

The PTA did not slow down the second half of the year. We held a bingo night (rescheduled multiple times due to snow), Valentine's Day class parties, more restaurant spirit nights, reading incentive program, book fair, science fair, "Dashing Dragons" running program, "Drop Kicking Dragons" soccer program, Muffins with Moms, bus driver and staff

appreciation weeks, silent auction, and the 80's Dance Party. Throughout the entire year our Parents Helping Teachers Group and Staff Appreciation committee worked hard to thank and support our amazing DES teachers and staff. The list of behind the scene PTA activities and volunteer work goes on and on. Being a small school, we are truly fortunate to have so many active volunteers.

It has been an honor and a pleasure to work with our parent volunteers and school staff this year. As the school year winds down, consider taking a more active role in your DES PTA by chairing or co-chairing a committee next year. When you give of your time and talents, it pays you back more than you can imagine. Thank you for your continued support for our amazing school. Please feel free to contact me at desptamail@gmail.com with any questions or ideas. I appreciate all of your feedback on how we can make DES the best school it can be.

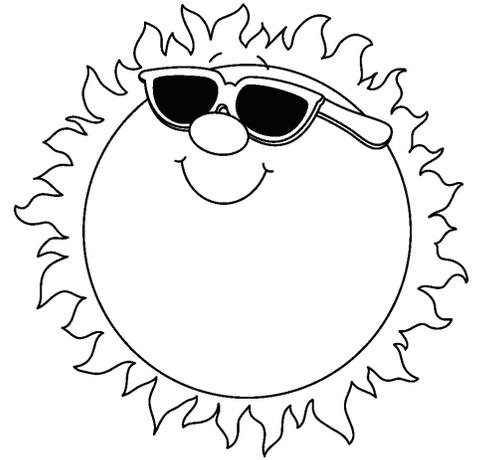
~Melissa North
DES PTA President

Damascus Elementary School PTA Board

President	Melissa North
VP Finance	Kristin Peake
VP Communications	Laurie Murtaugh
Treasurer	Lisa Willis
Recording Secretary	Chrystie Kurz
Corresponding Secretary	Tara Owens
PTA Website	www.damascuspta.com
PTA Email	desptamail@gmail.com

UPCOMING EVENTS AND IMPORTANT DATES

- May 26: Grades 3/5 PARCC Testing from 9:45-11:45 a.m.
- May 27: Parents Helping Teachers, 9:30-11:30 a.m.
- May 27: Field Day (Grades 3-5 in morning and Grades K-2 in afternoon)
- May 27: Outdoor Movie Night, 7:00 p.m.
- May 30: NO SCHOOL—Memorial Day
- May 31: Grade 5 Fieldtrip to National Art Gallery
- June 1: Grade 4 PARCC Testing from 9:45-11:45 a.m.
- June 2: Grade 4 PARCC Testing from 9:45-11:45 a.m.
- June 3: Damascus HS Graduation (DES used as over flow parking—
student car drop-off will be in the bus loop)
- June 3: Grade 4 PARCC Testing, 9:45-11:45 a.m.
- June 6: MAP-M Testing (Barrick/Spiridopoulos), 10:00-11:30 a.m.
- June 7: MAP-M Testing (Jordan/Warner), 2:00-2:30 p.m.
- June 8: MAP-M Testing (Blakley/Weaver/Moxley), 10:00-11:30 a.m.
- June 8: Grade 2 Butterfly Release and Celebration
- June 10: Donuts with Dad from 8:45-9:30 a.m.
(student car drop-off will be in the bus loop due to parking on rear blacktop)
- June 10: Parent Helping Teachers, 9:30-11:30 a.m.
- June 10: Grade 5 Career Showcase
- June 15: Grade 5 Promotion Ceremony and Celebration
- June 17: End of Year Awards Assembly 9:45-10:45 a.m.
- June 20: Last Day for Students (early release at 1:20 p.m.)
- June 22: Orientation Meetings for Incoming 6th Grade at Baker Middle School
Student Sessions: 9:00-11:45 a.m. and 1:00-3:45 p.m.
Parent Session: 10:45-11:45 a.m. and 7:00-8:00 p.m.



STAY CONNECTED

Are you receiving emails from the PTA? If not, email Laurie Murtaugh at laurie.murtaugh@verizon.net to be added to the list to stay up-to-date about upcoming events and activities. Did you know your Damascus Elementary School PTA has a Facebook page? "Like" us on Facebook to stay up-to-date on PTA news and activities.



<https://www.facebook.com/damascusPTA>

VOLUNTEER NEWS

This spring many people continued to be generous with their time. By the end of April, we had 710 volunteers give a total of 3,132 hours. I am certain many more hours went unrecorded, but we appreciate them all. I want to recognize some of the people who have given time and resources during the months of March, April, and May.

First, thank you to all of the people who helped with **Bingo Night**.

Led by Laurie, we had more than 25 helpers who made the night run smoothly and who were especially flexible as the snow continued to reschedule the event. Thank you to Erin, Gerry, Christine, Melissa, and Laurie, who helped to set up.

Thank you to the fifth grade parents led by Nancy who provided concessions. A huge thank you to our SSL helpers who made Bingo possible: Evan, Emma, Katie, Leah, Tommy, Isabelle, Charlie, and Kaitlyn.

Thank you to everyone who helped make **The Totally Awesome 80's Dance Party** and **Silent Auction** a super fun evening!

Thank you to our chairs: Tara and Beth, and our helpers: Melissa, Stephanie, Chrystie, Christine, Laurie, Lisa, Brittany, and many more. Our fifth grade parents did an amazing job again with concessions. A huge thank you to all of the SSL helpers: Joshua, Valentino, Tyler H., Tommy, Rachel, Sydney,

Tyler R., Kaitlyn, Mark, William, Andres, Hope, and Dina who provided fun activities off of the dance floor.

Kindergarten Orientation in April provided an opportunity for our newest dragons to visit DES. Thank you to Melissa, Laurie, Gerry, Teresa, Stephanie, Tara, and Christine who helped everyone find where they were going and helping the days run smoothly.

Thank you to Kelly and everyone who helped during May's **Staff Appreciation Week**. People were so generous with their time and donations to make it a special occasion.

Thank you to Rachel, Roberta, and the **Yearbook** team who worked so many hours to put together an awesome yearbook that will be out soon.

Thank you also to Kristin, coordinators and participants in the **Spirit Night** fundraisers which provide a fun way to raise money for our school.

Thank you to Nancy, Jody, Teresa, Roberta, Christine, Veronique, and Gerry for their help during **Parents Helping Teachers**. It is an amazing resource for all of our teachers!

Finally, I also wanted to extend a

special thank you to those who contribute in so many ways throughout the year even though I don't have specific names.

- The sponsors and volunteers for our sports programs **Dashing Dragons** and **DropKicking Dragons**

- **Classroom volunteers** who help specific teachers by copying, cutting, creating bulletin boards, mentoring individual students, participating in classroom special events, and chaperoning field trips

- Our **special event coordinators** who worked throughout the year to sponsor staff appreciation, bus driver appreciation, grandparents day, muffins with mom, the upcoming donuts with dad, and all of the families who donated time and items to make those events special

- The contributors and counters for our **box top program**

- The people who contribute time, resources, and skills in so many behind the scenes ways to make our school amazing

We appreciate all that you do and it makes a huge difference! I hope that you have a wonderful and restful summer!

~Christine Derby, Chair

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Breakfast Helpers

We still need one helper each school day for breakfast . Sign up online at:

bit.ly/DESmealhelpers

Field Day—Friday, May 27

Volunteers are needed to help with the field day activities. Please contact Mr. Lee at Joonhyuk_Lee@mcpsmd.org.

Parents Helping Teachers

This workgroup helps teachers prepare classroom materials by copying, cutting, and laminating. We meet Fridays from 9:30-11:30 a.m. and we always welcome new helpers. The next meetings are May 27 and June 10. No preregistration is necessary; just show up at the main office.

If you have any questions about these opportunities or would prefer to sign up directly with me, please contact Christine at derbyjc@bellatlantic.net.

THANK YOU!

I would like to thank everyone who participated in the monthly spirit nights for the 2015-2016 school year! We got to hang out with our wonderful Principal Collins and teachers who joined us for dinner. Families and friends shared a meal and friendship while helping to raise money for DES. I encourage all of you to frequent these restaurants that were so happy to help support DES!

Tom & Ray's

Cafe Rio

Music Cafe

Chipotle

Maggi's

Chick Fil A

*~ Kristin Peake
Spirit Night Chairperson*

PARENTS HELPING TEACHERS WORKGROUP

Thanks to Roberta Sherwood, Teresa Tenzier, Nancy Bailey, Linh Nguyen, Gerry Choulas and Christine Derby for helping out at the Parents Helping Teachers Workgroup on March 18, Teresa Tenzier, Christine Derby, and Gerry Choulas for helping out on April 15, and Nancy Bailey, Teresa Tenzier, Christine Derby, and Gerry Choulas for helping out on April 29. We would like to thank all the parents and caregivers that have given so generously of their time for this workgroup through the year. Both the teachers and the PTA appreciate all that you do each time you come to help out.

Our last two Friday workgroups for the school year will be from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. on **May 27** and **June 10**. We wish everyone a great summer!

*~ Gerry McBrinn-Choulas
Co-chair*

GOLD BADGE PATROL SPOTLIGHT



Each month we highlight a patrol who has shown great character while performing their duties. Below are listed patrols who take their job very seriously and make smart decisions on their own.

October:	Amanda Tippet
November:	Aly Gibson
December:	Belen Romero
January:	Yomi Adamo
February:	Heaven Henning & Kason Willis
March:	David Soussana & Kari Sirk
April:	Izzy Bohrer
May:	Anna Baisden
June:	Matthew Ridgeway

Thank you to all of our patrols for keeping our DES students safe!

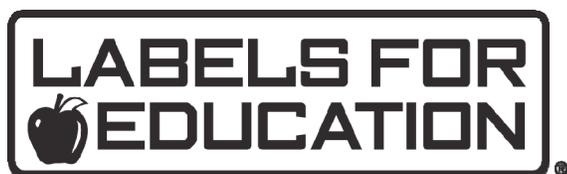
STAFF APPRECIATION

The first week in May is always like the Olympics for the staff appreciation committee. We hosted a week full of events; hot breakfast, gift card raffle, bake potato bar, root beer floats and a dessert bar. We couldn't have pulled off this great feat without these awesome people; Kristin Peake, Gerry Choulas, Roberta Sherwood, Jaime Kemp, Faizah Khan, Holly Werner, Tanya Bohrer, Teri Trybus, Erica De Shetler, Karen Sherwood, Chrystie Kurz, Melody Brown, Alexis Peterson, Christine Derby, Sheila Roark, Erin Luther, Nancy Bailey, Patricia Burbano, Diane Loomis, and all of the parents who donated to our gift card raffle! Our staff were over the moon about all the love they were shown. Thank you!

~ Kelly Jonas
Chair

Caught Reading—Mason Walter





ARTS • ATHLETICS • ACADEMICS

Send your box tops and labels into your child's classroom. At the end of each month the class in each grade that collects the most will receive a treat!

PAINLESS FUNDRAISING

Many companies and stores offer money and credits for supplies and equipment to schools based on the purchases of customers. THAT'S RIGHT, you can help OUR SCHOOL support OUR KIDS just by doing your regular household shopping – at no additional cost to you!

Box Tops for Education

Labels for Education

Coke Rewards Points

Ink and Toner Cartridges

Amazon Smile

Giant

Safeway

Harris Teeter

Find more information on the PTA website at:

www.damascuspta.com/fundraising/

YEARBOOKS

Yearbooks should arrive the first week of June. If you have not purchased a yearbook, please see the attached form. Yearbooks are \$23. Please complete the form and return to the main office.

SILENT AUCTION

Thank you to all of the families that donated items for the Silent Auction. Your contributions made the event a huge success. I hope everyone that attended had a great time. We cannot wait for next year!

*~Beth Walter
Chair*



Damascus Cougar Football

Registration Now Open

Ages 5-14. Regular registration is May 22 -June 30 at \$225 per player/\$135 for pitbull (5-6 year olds).

For more information visit <http://www.dsasports.org/cougarfootball>

or to register visit <https://www.youthleaguesusa.com/dsa/16-17/Welcome.html>

DES PTA BOARD 2016-2017

We are looking forward to another fun and productive year with our newly elected 2016-2017 PTA Board.

President: Melissa North
VP Finance: Chrystie Kurz
VP Communications: Laurie Murtaugh
Treasurer: Lisa Willis
Recording Secretary: Beth Walter
Corresponding Secretary: Tara Owens

Open Committee Chair Positions

Attached is a list of the committee chair positions for next year. Holding a chair position or helping on one of our many committees is a great way to get involved. We have positions in the PTA to fit any schedule. Even if you see a committee with a chair you are interested in serving, let us know. We can never have too many volunteers. Don't be intimidated – the PTA board is here to help you every step of the way. It is also a great way to get to know other families and the school staff. Please email Melissa North at desptamail@gmail.com if you have any questions about any of the positions. If you do not want to chair alone, feel free to ask a friend to co-chair with you. The more the merrier!



**PTA Committee Chair Positions
2016-2017**

Bingo Family Fun Night	Beth Walter Laurie Murtaugh	Painless Fundraising <i>Overseeing escript, amazon smile and other store rewards programs.</i>	Lisa Willis
Birthday Board	Diane Loomis	Parent Breakfasts <i>Pastries with Parents - Oct Muffins with Moms - May Donuts with Dads - June</i>	Karen Sherwood
Book Fair	Kristin Peake	Photographer	1) Mollada Sweet 2) Suzie Thompson 3) OPEN
Book Fair Evening Family Events	Mollada Sweet	PTA Audit Committee <i>Meet with group in August to review the PTA books.</i>	1) Stephanie Desmond 2) Jaime Kemp 3) OPEN
Box Tops, Soup Labels and Ink Cartridges	Chrystie Kurz	Reading Incentive Program	1) Jaime Kemp 2) Tara Owens
Bus Driver Appreciation	Kimberly Llanos Itzel Bazan	Read-a-Thon	1) Laurie Murtaugh 2) Chrystie Kurz
Coke Rewards	Chrystie Kurz	Restaurant Spirit Nights	Kristin Peake
Cultural Arts	OPEN OPEN	Room Parent Coordinator	Lisa Willis
Communication <i>Includes list serve, emails and Facebook</i>	Nicole Frasca	School Beautification	Damascus Enterprises
Damascus Cluster Delegate	OPEN	Science Fair	1) Christie Hayes 2) Faizah Kahn 3) Sarah Grimshaw
DES School Sign	Diane Loomis	Sock Hop Family Fun Night	1) Tara Owens
DES Directory	Tara Owens Jaime Kemp	Silent Auction	1) Beth Walter 2) Brittany Marshall
Directory Advertising	OPEN	Spirit Wear	Chrystie Kurz
Fall Fun Fest	Melissa North	Staff Appreciation	Co-Chairs: 1) Kelly Jonas 2) Melody Brown 3) Alexis Peterson 4) Sheila Roark
Fifth Grade End of Year Celebration	1) Tara Owens 2) OPEN 3) OPEN 4) OPEN	Staff Appreciation-End of Year Lunch <i>Coordinate a lunch for the staff on the last day of school 2015.</i>	Brittany Marshall
Grandparents Day	Beth Walter	Staff Raffle	OPEN
Group Piano	OPEN	Volunteer Coordinator <i>Send periodic emails requesting volunteers.</i>	Christine Derby
Kids on the Run	1) Chrystie Kurz	Website - PTA	Diane Loomis
Kindergarten Orientation	1) OPEN 2) OPEN	Yearbook	1) Stephanie Desmond 2) OPEN 3) OPEN
Kindergarten Family Night	Chrystie Kurz		
Holiday Shop	1) Mollada Sweet 2) Suzie Thompson		
Mad Science After School Program	Sarah Grimshaw		
MCCPTA Delegate	Holly Werner		
Membership	Tara Owens		
Newsletter	Diane Loomis		
Outdoor Movie Nights	Tara Owens		
Parents Helping Teachers Group	1) Christine Derby 2) Gerry McBrinn		



Damascus Elementary 2015-2016 Yearbook

You still have time to Order the DES Yearbook filled with all the fun and memories of this school year!!

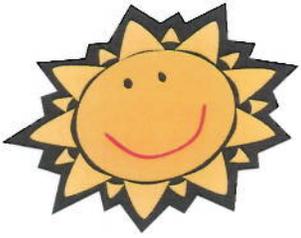
✓ **Send in your check for \$23 made payable to
DES PTA
(and include the bottom portion of this flyer)**

Supplies are limited - so order soon!

Child's Name _____

Child's Grade/Teacher _____

of Yearbooks Ordered _____



JOHN T. BAKER MIDDLE SCHOOL

New 6th Grade/Incoming Student

Re-Scheduled ORIENTATION

Welcome!

This year's summer orientation has been rescheduled because of the extended school year. It will consist of two sessions from which you may choose. Each student should come to one session. Parents will need to provide transportation to and from the school. The dates/times are as follows for both parent and student orientations...

STUDENT SESSIONS

Wednesday, June 22, 2016
9:00 – 11:45 am.

OR

Wednesday, June 22, 2016
1:00 – 3:45 pm.

PARENT SESSIONS

Wednesday, June 22, 2016
10:45 – 11:45 am.

OR

Wednesday, June 22, 2016
7:00 – 8:00 pm.

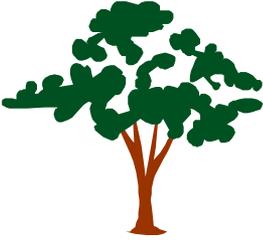
There is no need to sign up for the PARENT orientation but *all incoming students who would like to participate in the STUDENT orientation should call the counseling office at 240-207-2410. Please ask for Mrs. Loweth to sign up for the date desired.* All sessions will be filled on a first come basis. Parents and students need only come to one of the sessions listed.

The MCPS 6th Grade Orientation Day is scheduled for *Thursday, August 25, 2016, in the morning. Details can be found in the Baker Middle School summer packet which will be available online in early August. *Date is subject to change if MCPS calendar changes occur.

Sincerely,

Louise Worthington, Ed.D.
Principal





DAMASCUS ENTERPRISES

INCORPORATED

“Your Outdoor Project Experts”

Design & Installation

Landscape Design* & Installation
Water Garden Design* & Installation
Outdoor Lighting
Paver Patios & Walkways
Retaining Walls
Drainage Improvements

Landscape Maintenance

Yard Clean Up, Spring & Fall
Pond Clean Out & Maintenance
Lawn Fertilization & Weed Control
Aeration & Seeding
Edging & Mulching
Tree & Shrub Pruning
Tree Removal & Stump Grinding
Mowing & Trimming & Weeding
K-9 Clean Up
Leaf Removal
Gutter Cleaning
Snow & Ice Management
Handyman Services

Estimates are Free!

* Fee for Design Work

301-253-0475

www.damascusenterprises.com