

the Achiever

Sarah began her most recent session in the Intensive Therapy Clinic at the Achievement Centers for Children with a goal that came from her heart and soul. Sarah is a loyal and enthusiastic fan of the Jonas Brothers, and she was very excited when she learned that her



parents were able to get her front row tickets to the concert recently held here in Cleveland—not in the wheelchair section of the stadium,

but the front row. Sarah would need to be able to walk to her seat if she wanted to sit right up front, and she was determined to do just that. Sarah wanted to be face to face with her favorite Jonas brother, Nick, to hear one of her favorite songs, “Heart and Soul,” performed live. This was quite a goal for Sarah, a 13 year old with cerebral palsy, who up to this point has relied primarily on her wheelchair. She has been working for sometime in therapy strengthening and conditioning her muscles to prepare her to use a walker, so this was the optimal time for her to focus on this momentous goal during an Intensive Therapy session.

THE HEART AND SOUL OF MOTIVATION

Our pediatric therapists understand that children are motivated in different ways, and need to be intrinsically motivated to achieve their goals. It is important to try to find each child’s special interests to encourage them and help them work through movements that challenge their bodies, and exercises that, at times, may not be all fun. Josh Palcic, Sarah’s physical therapist here at the Achievement Centers, knew how important it was to Sarah that she develop her ability to walk with the walker and build

Sarah’s mother said she “credits the Achievement Centers for Children in Westlake for making all of this progress happen.”

endurance in preparation for the concert. Josh and Sarah’s parents incorporated Jonas Brothers’ music, as well as strategically placed posters in the therapy room during her daily therapy sessions for added motivation. Sarah responded with enthusiasm and worked tirelessly towards her goal. Sarah’s drive and motivation, together with the carefully selected hands-on therapeutic strategies and equipment proved to be a successful combination. She loved to use the Universal Exercise Unit because it allowed her the freedom to “dance” to her favorite music, while at the same time develop balance and strength in standing, in preparation for walking.

The Achievement Centers for Children’s Intensive Therapy Clinic was developed about two years ago, and to date, there have been some remarkable results. This intense therapy program is best suited for children and young

adults that have conditions and physical challenges that limit some of their functional mobility and daily living skills. The intensive sessions include therapy, typically, for about three hours per day, five days per week, for two to four weeks. Individual goals differ, but the emphasis is generally focused on helping the child or young adult to build strength, endurance, and confidence and to develop or refine a functional skill. The Achievement Centers offers a blend of therapies when needed using experienced physical therapists, occupational therapists, and speech therapists, as well as staff with expertise in working children with autism. This allows us to provide services to children with dual diagnoses such as cerebral palsy and autism.

Sarah put her heart and soul into her therapy each and every day, and yes, she achieved her goal of walking into the Jonas Brothers concert with the aid of a walker. Sarah’s mother said she “credits the Achievement Centers for Children in Westlake for making all of



Sarah and Physical Therapist, Josh Palcic

this progress happen.” As an added bonus, Sarah was treated to a backstage “meet and greet” with the Jonas Brothers—a thrill of a lifetime for her! Visit www.achievementcenters.org for more information on our Intensive Therapy Clinic.

Message from the President and CEO

Patricia W. Nobili, MSSA



ACCREDITATION and LICENSURE

The Achievement Centers for Children's programs and services are licensed and accredited by many entities, including:

American Camp Association
Certified Medicaid Provider
Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities
North American Riding for the Handicapped Association
Ohio Department of Education
Ohio Department of Health
Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services
Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities
Ohio Department of Mental Health
United Way Agency
Numerous agreements with area universities and colleges
Cuyahoga County Early Intervention Collaborative member

For information and referrals
216-292-9700

To receive the Achiever electronically, visit our website
www.achievementcenters.org

If you would like to be removed from the Achiever mailing list please notify us in writing at: Achievement Centers for Children, 4255 Northfield Road, Highland Hills, OH 44128.

DEAR FRIENDS,

When walking through any of our three facilities, one will encounter inspirational quotes, beautiful murals, children's artwork and success stories that come from the many children with disabilities that have come through our doors and entered our lives.

Now let's walk with a family that has just heard the words "there is a problem with your baby" or "your child is not developing normally." No parent is prepared to hear that message, no matter what their individual situation may be. Our parents tell us that receiving that message is devastating beyond words and they remember it as one of the most painful times of their lives. The Achievement Centers for Children truly understands those feelings, as well as those that may follow . . . grief, isolation, being overwhelmed and frightened. We see and hear the fears, the doubts, and the seemingly insurmountable challenges in so many areas, including the financial challenges that so often accompany a child with a disability.

As we continue to walk and work with the families, we see many other things. We see the strengths and the potential in the family and the child. We see abilities that may at first be hidden. We see the children's and families' tremendous courage and perseverance in the face of immense challenges. We see hard work and we see progress. We see doubt become hope. We see achievement. *We see what can be!* Everyone of those "walks" with families inspires us and motivates us to continue our unending efforts to make sure that every child and family who comes through our doors have the best opportunities and services to become all that they can be. However, we also know that there are still many more children who are in need of our services and we need to walk with them too.

The Achievement Centers for Children has faced many challenges over the past year. But, we have wonderful and dedicated supporters that understand our mission and goals, and play an integral role in our success. Through the generosity of our community, we continue our mission of providing a "circle of care" for the children and families that we touch every day through our variety of programs and services.

The families we serve are a great source of inspiration to us. We see the strength and courage they display when dealing with the difficulties they face on a daily basis. Despite these challenges, they persevere. They achieve. They inspire. So must we.

We hope you are inspired by knowing you have helped a child who has been given so many challenges so early in life. We so thank you.

Patricia W. Nobili, MSSA
President and CEO

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Highland Hills, OH 44128
216-292-9700

WESTLAKE
24211 Center Ridge Road
Westlake, OH 44145
440-250-2520

CAMP CHEERFUL
15000 Cheerful Lane
Strongsville, OH 44136
440-238-6200

CELEBRATING OUR 70TH ANNIVERSARY OF SERVICE TO CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES AND THEIR FAMILIES

The Achievement Centers for Children's legacy began in 1940 as the Society for Crippled Children. Many people, including staff, teachers, professionals and volunteers have played important roles in the development of the organization we now know as the Achievement Centers for Children. We recently met two important people in the history of our organization—one leading a volunteer program—the other, who as a child, benefited from this program of volunteers sharing their talents. One of them was interviewed recently on the radio for being awarded a Cleveland Art Prize and mentioned the influence of the programs she experienced at Achievement Centers for Children. We arranged a reunion of the two where they were able to share their experiences since those many years ago.

Above (l to r): Mrs. Fred Fey, Mrs. Jean Kidd, Miss Frances Parson, Linda Scott. Seated with cake: Martha Jean Leonard. November 1953

Below: Mickie McGraw and Fran Parson-Britsch



Frances Parson-Britsch graduated from Duke University with a degree in Psychology and went on to graduate from the Philadelphia School for Occupational Therapy in 1948. This turned out to be perfect preparation for her rewarding career with the Society for Crippled Children, where in 1951 she was hired as the Coordinator of Volunteer Programs. Fran developed plans for her group of dedicated volunteers and trained them to work with children with disabilities who were homebound, such as post-



polio clients. The volunteers provided art therapy projects based on their clients' interests. Fran found that these projects, while fun for the children, also provided them something they could take pride in giving as presents. Many times, health professionals such as therapists do not get the opportunity to realize the impact they may have had on their clients. As the volunteer coordinator, she didn't realize that she was "feeding a little acorn" into being all that it could be, and that one of her clients would pursue art as her career, and that this client would also continue her legacy by developing her own art therapy program.

Mickie McGraw was 11 years old when she was taken to the hospital with muscle weakness and had difficulty breathing. Just twelve hours later, she was in an iron lung to help her breathe. After returning home, Fran's volunteers took art projects to Mickie's home and taught her such things as photography, jewelry making and ceramics each week. Mickie learned after her bout with polio that "all the things that you used to do are changed; art projects provided me a lasting reminder that I was still a unique individual." Mickie soon began to think of herself as an artist. Though she always liked art as a child, she said she probably wouldn't have become an artist without the guidance of the artists that volunteered through Fran's program. She made the covers and wrote articles for many "Cheerful Earfuls," the agency's newsletter at the time. After graduating from the Cleveland Art Institute in Graphic Design, she developed "The Art Studio" within what is now the MetroHealth Medical Center. Knowing firsthand the healing power of art, she developed her art-centered therapy program for medically and emotionally injured children and adults. The program grew and continues to this day, though she retired in 2000. Recently, Mickie won the 2010 Martha Joseph Prize for Distinguished Service to the Arts awarded by the Cleveland Arts Prize organization.

Mickie has inspired a generation of adults through her love of art that was nurtured by Fran's original home based art therapy program at the Society for Crippled Children. We thank Fran and Mickie for sharing their heartwarming stories with us, and contributing to the Achievement Centers' rich history of serving children with disabilities and their families.

OAK TREE SOCIETY THANKS MEMBER JIM BINGAY

Achievement Centers for Children depends heavily on the generosity of its donors and the passion of its board members and volunteers. By making the Achievement Centers a beneficiary of his IRA, former Board member Jim Bingay has once again demonstrated both ideals.



Knowing that a friend once benefitted from services at the Achievement Centers, its continued success has become a personal cause for Jim. From the moment he first joined the board in the

1990's, he has been an important member of the Achievement Centers team. Now, his latest planned gift ensures that his support will continue for years to come.

He says the talent, energy and dedication of the organization and its President and CEO Pat Nobili as well as the critical services the agency provides are the things that inspired him to become a board member and to make this special gift. No longer on the board and now retired as Senior Executive Vice President of Corporate Banking at Keycorp, Jim is again getting more closely involved with the agency. He has recently taken on a leadership role with the Oak Tree Society, a prestigious giving club recognizing those who make planned gifts to the Achievement Centers. "Formalization of our planned giving efforts is both worthy and appropriate. At a time when so many organizations are only focusing on

current dollars with little or no plan for the future, I think this is a wise and farsighted decision." Jim states, "Supporting current operations is very important, but so is keeping an eye toward the longer term focus of building our endowment."

The Achievement Centers is grateful for Jim's IRA gift and hopes others will consider this simple and straightforward way to give. Most people invest in retirement plans to save for the future and reduce taxes during their earning years. However, when retirement plan assets pass to heirs, they are subject to significant taxes—often both federal and state. To avoid this scenario, donors can make a charity the beneficiary of their retirement plan benefits, which can generally be done by completing a simple form.

Individuals may also wish to consider making current gifts to the Achievement Centers from a retirement account. If you are over the age of 59½, you can make withdrawals from your traditional IRA or other tax-favored retirement plan without triggering an "early withdrawal" penalty. Those over the age of 70½, who are required to

take mandatory withdrawals from retirement accounts in excess of amounts needed to fund current living expenses, may also wish to make their gifts in this way. Of course, you should seek assistance from your accountant or other financial advisor when determining the optimum amount to give from retirement plan accounts under federal and state tax laws.

For his part, Jim Bingay is just happy to be able to help and encourages others to do likewise. "It is something that was easy to do and is very tax efficient. I would much rather see my IRA retirement savings benefit children with disabilities than for as much as 80% of it to be paid out in taxes! I hope others will consider doing the same. It just makes good financial planning sense," he says.

Please call Deborah Osgood at 216-292-9700 ext 224 with questions about planned gifts and the Oak Tree Society.



Achieving Our Goals

Our Strategic Plan commits us to four major goals: expand programming as a response to community needs, continue to raise the quality standard, maintain a significant level of charitable service, and ensure sound finances.

We will never lose sight of the importance we place on people—those who are served and those who serve them.

HOW DID WE DO IN OUR LAST FISCAL YEAR? (July 1, 2009–June 31, 2010)

- Provided a total of 180,155 service hours to children, adults and their families
- Provided approximately 5,000 hours of service to school districts and educators
- Provided approximately \$1.1 million in subsidized services
- Received a client satisfaction rate of 97 percent through family surveys
- Raised \$1,370,000 in charitable support from the community
- Initiated new programs including Residential Weekends at Camp Cheerful for Individuals with Autism and Intensive Therapy Clinics

ACHIEVEMENT CENTERS FOR CHILDREN SPECIAL EVENTS



Fall Festival to Benefit Camp Cheerful

Nearly 250 people gathered at Camp Cheerful for the 18th Annual Fall Festival on October 23.

We were honored to have Tiffani Tucker, news anchor for WOIO-TV, serve as our enthusiastic master of ceremony. A delicious buffet prepared by Chef O and his team of Culinary Arts students from Polaris, was enjoyed by all. The event, sponsored by Catan Fashions and Robert W. Baird & Company with additional support provided by Brunswick Automart, raised over \$55,000 to help support programs for the over 1,500 campers each year. Many thanks to our dedicated volunteers and supporters!

20th Annual A Most Excellent Race: A Most Excellent Cause

Over 900 walkers, runners and supporters came out to Beaumont School last June to raise an amazing \$109,000 to benefit the Achievement Centers' Camp Cheerful, Ohio's first barrier-free camp for children and adults with disabilities. The 5k and 10k competitive races, administered by Hermes and part of the Road Race Series, took runners and walkers through the historic and beautiful residential areas of Cleveland Heights. An abundance of refreshments, family activities, awards and smiles awaited all at the finish line. Our sincere thanks to our major sponsors last year: Majestic Steel USA and Edgepark Medical Supplies, Fortis Plastics and Elk & Elk. Help us reach 1,000 participants next year!

SAVE THE DATE

A Most Excellent Race 2011

SUNDAY, JUNE 26, 2011

Beaumont School
Cleveland Heights

26th Annual Blue Chip/Blue Tee Golf Outing

ENTHUSIASTIC GOLFING SUPPORTERS OF ACHIEVEMENT CENTERS

+ KIRTLAND COUNTRY CLUB

+ PERFECTLY BEAUTIFUL DAY

= A SUCCESSFUL GOLF EVENT BENEFITING THE ACHIEVEMENT CENTERS!

The event, co-chaired by David Dunstan of Western Reserve Partners and Hank Centa of Chase Bank, raised more than \$75,000 for the Achievement Centers' programs and services. Special thanks to our local dealer partner, Classic Lexus in Willoughby and to Lexus Champions for Charity for their continued support.



Presentation of check from Classic Lexus and Lexus Champions for Charity. Pictured (l to r): Pat Nobili, Dave Dunstan, Brian Nash, Andrew Cohn

“There is something about the outside of a horse that is good for the inside of a man.”

—WINSTON CHURCHILL

Thanks to nearly 300 therapeutic riding volunteers and nine horses, we were able to provide 4,048 therapeutic riding lessons last year! Riders of all ages and abilities love their horse time, while many volunteers grow personally from their experiences working with children with special needs. We'd like to share some letters and testimonials from our Therapeutic Riding program volunteers:



Volunteers, Michele Bailey and Mary Calfee; riders Peggy and Laura Brown



“I remember standing (my first day) in the barn thinking what am I doing here. Little did I know the following rewards would come to me: acceptance, giving, unselfishness, caring, and smiles. So I thank you Camp Cheerful, for being a part of my life.” —Lynn

“I grew up terrified of people with special needs. I came with my friend who encouraged me to volunteer. I fell in love with the kids and discovered that I was a perfect fit for the job. Helping the kids ride horseback showed me that I had the patience and love it would take to make teaching children with special needs a full time job. Although only a sophomore in high school, I cannot wait to take a better look at the school that will make my love of volunteering into a career as a special education teacher. Volunteering with the therapeutic riding program has been one of the best experiences I've ever had, and remains the highlight of my week.” —Rachel



Most riders require three volunteers each time they ride—two side-walkers and one leader. If you are interested in learning more about volunteering in our therapeutic riding program, contact Cory at 440-238-6200. No experience is needed—just a big heart and desire to work with children. We have classes to teach you all about our horses and therapeutic riding program.

Our Own “Jacquie O” Honored

“Jacquie O” proudly announces that she has been awarded the regional winner title and was a finalist for the 2010 Horse of the Year Award. The North American Riding for the Handicapped Association, Inc. (NARHA) Regional Awards Committee recognized Jacquie O as an outstanding representative of the special animals that are the heart of a successful therapeutic riding program. We are very proud that “Jacquie O” has won this award, as she is a very special horse to us.



VOLUNTEERS LEND A HAND FOR GLOBAL YOUTH SERVICE DAY



Volunteers help prepare Camp

Spring is always an especially busy time at Camp Cheerful getting ready for the over 1,500 anticipated campers. After a long winter, there is much work to be done. Thankfully, the Achievement Centers for Children hosts several volunteer groups each year to complete the numerous tasks to get Camp ready. Last April, with the help of Business Volunteers Unlimited, we hosted over 50 employees from the Cleveland Clinic and the Cleveland Indians for Global Youth Service Day. They completed a variety of tasks including cleaning cabins, painting, landscaping and more. Thank you to each volunteer for making a difference for our campers!



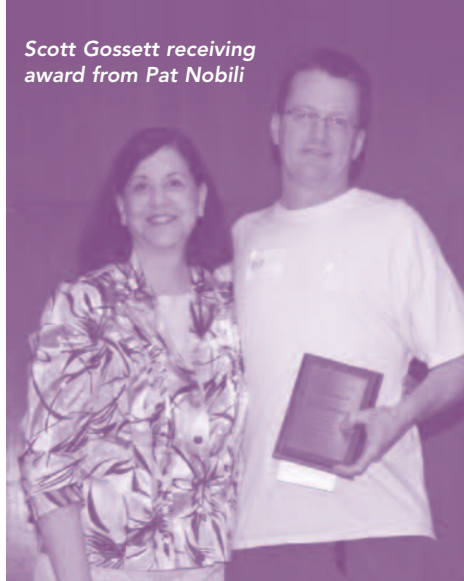
Blue Ribbon Camp

CAMP CHEERFUL recognized as a NASET Blue Ribbon Camp!

One of only four camps nationwide

Camp Cheerful has been selected by the National Association of Special Education Teachers (NASET) as a NASET Blue Ribbon Camp, the highest honor a private special education camp can achieve through this professional organization. Only four camps in the nation received this distinction! The other camps are located in Maine, Texas and California.

Scott Gossett receiving award from Pat Nobili



GREAT SCOTT!

Scott Gossett, our Manager of the Autism Program, was awarded our highly prized “Staff of the Year” award at the annual Staff Institute at Camp Cheerful. Scott, who has been with Achievement Centers for Children for eight years, is extremely dedicated to providing the very best program for the growing number of children in our autism program. Scott said he “finds

being an active part of the children’s learning and seeing them achieving goals the most rewarding part of his job.” Scott is married to Sloane, and has three children, Ty (15), Catie (13) and Lily (6). It is dedicated employees such as Scott that make our programs for our children exemplary. Thanks Scott!

DID YOU KNOW?

- Help Me Grow (HMG) is a statewide program for infants and toddlers under the age of three and their families. The Achievement Centers’ continues to be recognized as a premier Help Me Grow program provider, one of only nine contracted agencies in Cuyahoga County. The Achievement Centers’ Help Me Grow program served 846 children/families in the past year, providing home-based services including service coordination, developmental screenings and assessments, parenting support and education, and linkage to other community programs. Core services are provided at no cost to families.
- A new autism K–4 classroom has been added to our Highland Hills location.
- Out of every dollar donated to Achievement Centers, 83 cents goes directly for the benefit of our clients and to further our mission.

LOOKING FOR QUALITY CHILD CARE?

The Achievement Centers’ Highland Hills Child Development Center has openings! We offer a full-day program for children with and without special needs. Our award-winning child care center boasts a low student-to-teacher ratio and highly-qualified, caring staff to give your child the best care available. Experience the Achievement Centers’ difference, as your child enjoys a challenging, age-appropriate curriculum. Our Director of Education, Donna McClure, invites you to call her at 216-292-9700 ext 289 to schedule a tour to see our facilities and meet our teachers for yourself.

Autism Overnight Respite Weekends Expanded

The autism overnight respite weekends at Camp Cheerful have been a real hit! The weekend participants, school-age children with Autism Spectrum Disorders, have a great time with other children and their parents get much appreciated respite. Activities include traditional camp experiences such as swimming, hiking, arts and crafts, horseback riding, and nature activities. Additionally, trained camp counselors provide one-on-one support for the children, while encouraging social interaction with other campers. Weekend sessions are scheduled for March 26–March 27, 2011 and April 30–May 1, 2011. Please contact Lindsey Fedor at Lindsey.fedor@achievementctrs.org for more information or to register.

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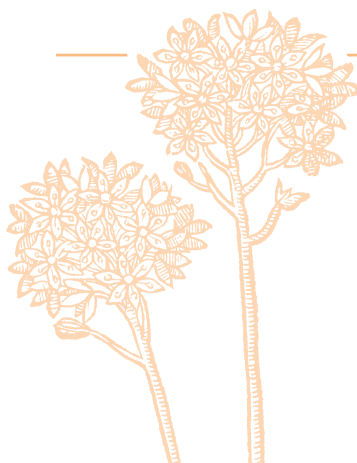
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THOUGHTFUL TRIBUTES

Gifts of flowers may wilt and wither, but a tribute gift to Achievement Centers for Children will allow a child with disabilities to bloom.

ACHIEVEMENT CENTERS FOR CHILDREN

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ACHIEVEMENT CENTERS FOR CHILDREN

Services by Location

Home and Community Services

(offices at the Highland Hills and Westlake locations)

Help Me Grow Service coordination for children with special needs and at-risk, ages birth to three; child care Technical Assistance Program (TAP)

East/Highland Hills

ACCENT, Early childhood mental health counseling, early intervention program for children ages birth to three with special needs; Child Development Center preschool for children with and without special needs; preschool for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder/PDD-NOS; kindergarten through fourth grade classroom for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder/PDD-NOS; social work and counseling; physical, speech and occupational therapy; Champ Camp and Sensational Day Program (summers only); parent support groups

West/Westlake

ACCENT, Early childhood mental health counseling, early intervention program for children ages birth to three with special needs; Preschool for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder/PDD-NOS; kindergarten through fourth grade classroom for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder/PDD-NOS; social work and counseling; physical, speech and occupational therapy; Champ Camp and Sensational Day Program (summers only); Adapted Aquatics; parent support groups

South/Strongsville/Camp Cheerful

Social work and counseling; recreational activities; residential and day camp programs; Sensational Day Program; therapeutic riding; High Ropes Challenge Course

About the ACHIEVEMENT CENTERS FOR CHILDREN

Founded in 1940 as the Society for Crippled Children, the Achievement Centers for Children provides a wide variety of therapy, recreation, education and family support services for children with disabilities and their families. We serve over 3,500 children with disabilities and their families each year.

Our mission is to work with children with disabilities and their families to strengthen abilities and create opportunities for lifelong achievement in society.

The Achiever is published by the Development Department of the Achievement Centers for Children.

Editor: Katherine Henry; *Contributors:* Patricia W. Nobili, Deborah Osgood, Rebecca Bendlak, Katherine Henry



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