



# the Achiever

## The Glistening Snowflakes of Autism

Carli is a 10-year old student in our Highland Hills autism classroom who loves movies, singing, dancing and twirling. One of her favorite movies is *Frosty the Snowman*. Her mother, Kathy, describes Carli as being very much like her favorite movie's main character.

success when they are ready to transition to public school. Research has shown that early intervention with specialized services for children with autism is most effective in developing their cognitive and social skills, and prepares them to become capable and productive adults.



**"WHEN IT TAKES YEARS FOR YOUR DAUGHTER TO BE ABLE TO SAY 'I LOVE YOU,' YOU APPRECIATE IT SO MUCH MORE."**



"When Carli was first diagnosed with autism at 2½ years of age, she was sort of like Frosty without his hat. The magic was within her. She just had no way of letting it out. She lost all her words. You could bang pots and pans behind her and she wouldn't even flinch or react. She was trapped inside of herself."

Our autism expertise extends throughout all of our programs, including our Therapeutic Riding program's sensory trail at our Camp Cheerful, adapted aquatics, weekend respite camps, and day camps in the summer. In addition, our Achieve Consulting professionals provide trainings for teachers and paraprofessionals in schools to improve the educational experiences of children with autism in their classrooms.

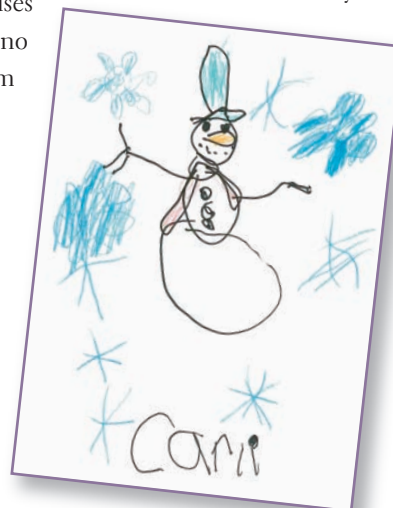
"However, with the help of a bunch of glistening snowflakes (my family, friends, Carli's therapists, teachers and the entire staff at the Achievement Centers) and a magic hat (help from God above), she began to speak. She began to dance around. She came to life."

If Carli's mom had one wish, it would be to trade places for one day with Carli so she could understand how Carli feels and how she perceives the world around her. Then, maybe she could help her daughter even more. Carli's mom sees each little developmental step as a gift. "When it takes years for your daughter to physically be able to say "I love you," due to

Mothers, like Carli's mom, along with families and friends of children with autism can tell you what glistening snowflakes of individuality and surprises their children are. Like snowflakes, no two children on the autism spectrum "look" alike—no two children have the same perceptions, anxieties, or learning styles.

the challenges of autism, you appreciate it so much more."

With expertise, experience and compassion, teachers in our autism classrooms (preschool–5th grade) provide individualized learning experiences to allow children with autism, like Carli, to develop their abilities, and work through their anxieties to prepare them for



Carli's drawing of Frosty the Snowman, the main character from her favorite movie.



**"WHEN THEY PLACED THE MAGIC HAT UPON FROSTY THE SNOWMAN'S HEAD, HE BEGAN TO DANCE AROUND. HE CAME TO LIFE."**

—Kathy, Carli's mom





Patricia W. Nobili, MSSA  
President & CEO

### Barb Fields honored as "STAFF OF THE YEAR"

Barb Fields is our Administrative Manager of Recreation and Sports, and has worked at Camp Cheerful for nearly ten years. In that time, she has seen the number of campers triple. "Barb is the contact to many of our families who call with worries on registration or billing, and Barb has the skills and compassion to walk them through the process," commented Tim Fox, vice president of Recreation and Sports. "By the end of the calls, their worries are gone." Barb says the most rewarding aspect of her job is "the children and families that I've met, and to see and hear how important Camp Cheerful is to them." Barb has been married to Charlie for 41 years, has three grown children and one grandson. Many thanks to Barb for her love of our mission, and the children and families of the Achievement Centers! Congratulations Barb!



Tim Fox and Barb Fields

### DEAR FRIENDS,

At a time when we hear so much about the problems in our world, we sometimes overlook the many good deeds and good people that surround us. I am fortunate that I am reminded almost every day, how many people and organizations in our community are extremely caring and giving. Volunteering is an expression of caring and giving. Volunteers come from all walks of life and their "good deeds" may vary tremendously, but they all have one thing in common—a sincere desire to give of themselves for the benefit of others. The Achievement Centers for Children has hundreds of volunteers supporting our efforts.

A few extraordinary examples of our volunteers' impact are:

- 1) over 300 volunteers work in our Therapeutic Horseback Riding Program annually, where approximately 80–90 children and young adults ride our gentle horses each week at Camp Cheerful;
- 2) over 90 volunteers assisted with the implementation of our new Adapted Sports Program, which includes basketball, football, baseball, and aquatics with more sports to come;
- 3) our Board of Directors and Auction Committee gathered superb community support, raising over \$436,000 at our Sparkle, Shimmer & Shine Gala on November 12.

WOW! What a remarkable difference our volunteers continue to make in the lives of children with disabilities and their families.

I believe the following quote from Robert Thorn is applicable to our volunteers:

*"When you do what you must, that's honor,  
When you do that, even though it may be difficult or challenging, that's courage,  
And when you do that for the sake of someone else, that's love  
And that's the best that we can be."*

Perhaps when one is volunteering, it is the best that we can be. We are so grateful to all our volunteers!

Very sincerely,

*Patricia Nobili*

#### ACHIEVEMENT CENTERS FOR CHILDREN BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2011–2012

- |                       |                        |                             |                     |
|-----------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| Robert J. Bentley, II | Kevin Grobelny         | Gary Miller                 | Jennifer L. Vergili |
| Julie Boland          | Charles W. Hardin, Jr. | Thomas E. Moran             | Ken Vinikoff        |
| William Brancovsky    | Nicole T. Hilbert      | Stephen Oh                  | Paul Voinovich      |
| R. Anthony Brice      | Lawrence M. Hirsh      | Matt Ottaway                | Richard T. Wallack  |
| Mike Bunker           | Mozelle Jackson        | James K. Peel               | Robert J. Wells     |
| Rita Carroll          | Irwin Jacobs, M.D.     | Stephen B. Perry            | Chas Withers        |
| Franziska H. Dacek    | David Jenkins          | Nick Russo                  | DIRECTORS EMERITI   |
| David Dunstan         | James Kacic            | Edmund (Ned) Searby         | John G. Breen       |
| Gregory A. Ferrence   | Tracey E. Kooser       | Peter J. Shipley            | Bruce G. Higley     |
| Hiroyuki Fujita       | Timothy J. Lathe       | Karen Sorace-Thomas         | Thomas McKee        |
| Darryl Greene         | Thomas N. Littman      | Marvin (Bud) A. Thomas, Jr. |                     |
| Richard J. Greisch    | Yvonne A. McNulty, CPA | Tiffani Tucker              |                     |



Matthew enjoys being a part of several Achievement Centers' sports programs.



## FROM COACH TO COACH

*Letter from an athlete's parents and college coach to Achievement Centers' Coach, Mike Urban*

Having a son with autism in a very sports-minded family, it is very important for us to find safe and fun ways to expose our Matthew to football as well as other sports. As a full-time football coach at Baldwin-Wallace College, I have a deep appreciation of sports and its life-long, positive effect on young athletes. Naturally, I desire for all of my children to participate in sports and feel very strongly that it will help them as they navigate through life. The Adapted Football League through the Achievement Centers for Children has played a significant role in helping our son gain exposure to football in a safe and fun environment. The coaches and volunteers not only instruct; they support, uplift and encourage each player. They accept each player as an individual and work with him or her at any and every skill level. Our son has received countless acts of kindness, positivity, unconditional love and FUN through his participation in the league. We are so thankful for the Achievement Centers. We look forward to our participation in next year's flag football league!

—Shelly and John Snell

### ADAPTED SPORTS PROGRAM CONTINUES TO GROW

We are excited to be partnering with the National Basketball Academy (tNBA), Cleveland Cavaliers, and the Michael Carter Group to offer adapted basketball clinics for individuals ages seven and older with special needs through the tNBA's "Everybody Wins" program.

Our adapted aquatics program is growing, thanks to a new partnership with LifeWorks of Southwest General Hospital. Skilled and caring instructors will teach independent swimming and water safety to children and adults with special needs in LifeWorks' warm therapy pool and a deeper lap pool.

For more information, visit [www.achievementcenters.org/sports](http://www.achievementcenters.org/sports)

Many thanks to our

### ADAPTED SPORTS PARTNERS

- Cleveland Browns Foundation
- Cleveland Cavaliers
- Cuyahoga County Board of Developmental Disabilities
- Invacare

### FOOTBALL GOLD LEVEL SPONSORS

- Atfco
- N2Y
- Campana Development
- Bravo Wellness





***“One generation plants the trees; another gets the shade.” —CHINESE PROVERB***

When talking to her estate planning attorney about her plans, Kay Baum chose to include the Achievement Centers for Children in her estate plan since her daughter, Jennifer, has been enjoying Camp Cheerful for over 20 years.

At the age of eight months, Jennifer was diagnosed with cerebral palsy. Today, Jennifer is 39 years old and looks forward to returning to Camp Cheerful’s residential camp each year. Though she is nonverbal, Jennifer is very expressive and is able to communicate her emotions, needs and wants. Her mother related that Jennifer is very social and likes to be around others, and especially enjoys the dances and being in the pool at camp on a hot summer day.

Many members of our Oak Tree Society relate to us similar personal connections to Achievement Centers for Children, expressing how they have seen family or friends benefit personally, and their desire to be able to help the next generation benefit from all our programs. The process of naming Achievement Centers in your will is simply executed by your attorney, and is appreciated from any size estate.

Donors who support us with a planned gift are part of our Oak Tree Society—to learn more about planned giving and the Achievement Centers, call Deborah Osgood, Vice President of Development and Marketing at 216-292-9700. Or visit [www.achievementcenters.org/donate](http://www.achievementcenters.org/donate) to find out more online.

## MOMENTIVE “HIGH FIVES” FOR CAMP CHEERFUL

Employees of Momentive Performance Materials choose Camp Cheerful for the fifth year for their annual “Day of Caring.” Among the seven major projects completed was the reconstruction of a bridge along the therapeutic horseback riding sensory trail.



Strongsville Mayor Thomas Perciak commended the group of 70 volunteers during the bridge dedication ceremony by saying “You have no idea how many hearts you have touched and how many people’s faces you have placed smiles upon.” *Many thanks to the outstanding group of volunteers from Momentive!*

## Sparkle, Shimmer & Shine 2011

Thanks to our generous sponsors, supporters and distinguished guests at our annual Sparkle, Shimmer & Shine Gala honoring Christopher M. Connor of The Sherwin-Williams Company. Because of you, we raised over \$436,000 for the benefit of the children with disabilities and the families we serve.

### PRESENTING SPONSORS

Jack and Mary Jane Breen  
Chris and Sara Connor  
Fifth Third Bank  
Invacare Corporation  
Jones Day  
Key Bank  
The Sherwin-Williams Company  
Swagelok Company

### GOLD SPONSORS

Calfee, Halter & Griswold LLP  
Cleveland Cavaliers  
Edgepark Medical Supplies  
Ernst & Young LLP  
GE Lighting  
MAI Wealth Advisors, LLC  
Medical Mutual of Ohio  
University Hospitals



*Pat Nobili with honoree, Chris Connor, CEO of The Sherwin-Williams Company, and Board Chair, Steve Perry*

## RAMBUS FOUNDATION ADOPTS CHEYENNE

Many thanks to the Rambus Foundation for being an "Adopt-A-Horse Stall" donor. Their generous contribution provides for hay and grain, veterinary and farrier services, bedding, medication, and other related needs.



### Did You Know?

- We have openings in our 3-Star Step Up to Quality **Child Development Center** for preschoolers? And . . .
  - our center is an inclusive preschool and child care, offering speech, occupational and physical therapy sessions (when needed) for children during their school day,
  - with low teacher to child ratio (1:4), we are able to provide children individual attention and direction to help them excel in kindergarten and elementary school.
  - Please call Peggy at 216-292-9700 ext. 261 for a tour of our facilities and to speak with our educators.
- Through our **Family Support** programs, over 1,600 children, ages birth to three and their families received home visiting services last year including developmental assessments, parenting education, parent/child counseling and linkage to other programs.
- Our **pediatric therapy specialists** use many creative tools to motivate children, such as iPads, Wii, games and music. Therapy services include physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, and our Intensive Therapy Clinic.

## TURN UP THE HEAT CAMPAIGN

Our therapeutic horseback riding program horses warm the hearts of each and every child they carry. Now it's our turn to warm the hearts of our riders, volunteers and horses by heating our indoor riding arena.

*You can help by:*

- 1) Making an online gift and designating your gift for "Riding Arena Heater." Visit [www.achievementcenters.org](http://www.achievementcenters.org)
- 2) Making a gift by phone by calling 440-238-6200 ext. 222
- 3) Mailing a check in the enclosed envelope, adding "TR-Arena Heaters" in the memo line of your check.

### Achievement Centers for Children

*Providing Services to Children with Disabilities and their Families*

HIGHLAND HILLS  
4255 Northfield Road  
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



# the Achiever

Achievement Centers for Children  
4255 Northfield Road  
Highland Hills, OH 44128



NONPROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
CLEVELAND, OH  
PERMIT NO. 1162

OUR MISSION is to enable and empower children with disabilities and their families to grow, learn, play and prepare for lifelong achievement in society.

## HELPING CHILDREN BE "ALL THEY CAN BE"

Founded in 1940 as Society for Crippled Children

A non-profit organization providing support, services and programs for children with disabilities and special needs and their families.

## PROGRAMS INCLUDE

Education; Autism services; Physical, occupational, and speech therapy; Family support services; Recreation and sports programs

## LOCATIONS

Highland Hills  
Westlake  
Camp Cheerful in Strongsville  
Child cares, schools, homes  
216-292-9700



## Achievement Centers for Children 22nd Annual A Most Excellent Race

Benefiting Camp Cheerful  
Presented by Majestic Steel USA

SUNDAY, JUNE 24, 2012

10K Run (timed), 5K Run (timed),  
5K Family Fun Walk (non-timed)  
Family Activities

Visit [www.achievementcenters.org/race](http://www.achievementcenters.org/race)  
to register or donate online.



## Majestic Steel USA Created a Major League Experience for Camp Cheerful Campers

Majestic Steel USA in partnership with the Cleveland Indians hosted an "Up to Bat" VIP Workout Day for over 60 Camp Cheerful campers at Progressive Field in July. Campers experienced a variety of baseball-themed activities during the day such as running the bases, hitting and fielding, and returned the following week to watch a real Indians' game. Many thanks to Majestic Steel USA for putting smiles on children's faces, and giving them a wonderful day to remember.

Editor: Katherine Henry; Contributors: Patricia Nobili, Deborah Osgood, Katherine Henry