



the Achiever

AUDREY'S SWEET FUTURE



Aisha Mason and daughter, Audrey

★

"She's made so much progress, thanks to all the caring professional help we've received from the Achievement Centers."

—Lance Mason, Audrey's father



To five-year-old Audrey and her family, coming to the Achievement Centers for Children in Highland Hills feels like home, having started therapies at just six months old. From the time she was born and diagnosed with Down syndrome, her parents sought ways to provide the best opportunities for her to learn and grow, and looked to her future. Through her physical and occupational therapies, Audrey developed her strength, learned to sit, stand, walk, and jump; and has improved her speech. But for little Audrey, this is only the beginning according to her father, Lance Mason, who says, "I try to focus on not putting limits on her. I have a vision for her that is not self-limiting." Her milestones are achieved on her own schedule, and are celebrated.

By coming to the Achievement Centers for Children each week for therapy, the Masons built a close rapport with her physical therapist, Trish, who has been with them since they first came through our doors. Here, our professional staff has a personal passion and expertise for helping children and young adults reach their greatest potential. Licensed social workers in our Family Support Services offer help to families like the Mason's in conjunction with their therapies. They offer guidance for families, connections to community resources, ways for parents to best help their children, and strategies to cope with day-to-day questions and issues.

Looking to the future, the Masons began considering starting a business of their own; one in which Audrey could participate in some way as an adult. Out of their caring vision, Audrey's Chocolates was born. The mission of their business extends beyond Audrey. Their goal is to eventually employ people with disabilities and to use profits

to support research and programs for people with special needs. For now, profits from their popular handmade confections help with added tutoring and enrichments for Audrey, as well as contributions to organizations who make a social impact. Check out their website at www.audreyschocolate.com.

Audrey will be attending day camp this summer at the Achievement Centers where she will be able to continue her therapies during the day as part of her program, and enjoy fun outdoor activities with other children. Then, in the fall, she will start kindergarten in the Shaker Heights schools. She has shown a keen interest in reading, and according to her mother, is advanced for her age. Audrey reads over 200 sight words already, and is sounding out words. Though some of her cognitive abilities aren't quite as advanced as her reading ability, thanks to her early interventions here, her expert therapists, and support of her family, she has surpassed her parents' expectations. "At first I didn't think she would ever jump, but we kept working at it. Now she walks on a balance beam. She's made so much progress, thanks to all the caring professional help we've received from the Achievement Centers," said her father.



Audrey is ready for her physical therapy session with Trish.

Patricia W. Nobili, MSSA
President & CEO



SUPPORT OUR CLEVELAND METROPARKS

A levy for our beautiful Cleveland Metroparks, on which our Camp Cheerful is located, will be on the ballot this November. Please join us in helping to protect this outstanding resource. They have been a wonderful partner and supporter of the Achievement Centers for Children and all those we serve. To learn more, follow www.facebook.com/ForOurClevelandMetroparks.

Dear Friends,

At the Achievement Centers for Children, we have a proud history of providing hope and help to children with disabilities and special needs, and their families. By listening to our families as they share their personal challenges and dreams for their futures, we develop new programs and opportunities to enhance their lives. We deeply believe and have seen time and again, that when opportunities and services are provided today, achievements surpass expectations tomorrow. Just as the Mason family, in our cover story, is planning for their daughter's future, so must we always look for ways to make sure all children with disabilities have opportunities to achieve their greatest potential.

Peter Drucker, noted management consultant, educator and author, stated, "The best way to predict the future is to create it." When Mr. and Mrs. Mason's vision and unending efforts are combined with the Achievement Centers' staff expertise and passion, together we are creating a new future; a better future for Audrey and her family, and many others like them.

Our newest programs address needs for both adults with disabilities, and those of our youngest populations. Our River Rock Adult Day Program, located at Camp Cheerful, offers adults a combination of meaningful social, recreational and educational activities in our unique outdoor environment. In addition, we have expanded our home visiting program for expectant and first time moms with babies under six months old.

Helping to create better futures is a privilege, as well as a significant responsibility. Hence, we must always be evaluating emerging needs, so we can develop meaningful opportunities and interventions. Together, with the families we serve, and with the generous support of our community, may we continue our quest to predict futures by helping to create them.

Patricia Nobili, MSSA
President & CEO

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WAYS YOU CAN HELP

\$5,000

Sponsor a therapeutic horse through our Adopt-a-Horse Stall program, and you help provide hay and grain, veterinary and farrier services, bedding, medication and other related needs for a healthy, happy therapy horse. Your name will be engraved on your horse's name plate on their stall.

\$2,000

Provide a year of weekly sessions of Adapted Aquatics for one child.

\$1,000

Help provide transportation for field trips for campers.

\$765

Sponsor a week of overnight camp for a child or adult.

\$250

Help provide the cost of special therapy equipment to help a child walk for the first time.

\$100

Donate gift cards, such as Wal-Mart and Target, to help provide basic needs for families.

PRICELESS

Volunteer to help in our Therapeutic Horseback Riding Program. No experience needed.

**Call Deborah Osgood
at 216-292-9700**



“Even the smallest act of caring for another person is like a drop of water — it will make ripples throughout the entire pond . . .”

—JESSY AND BRYAN MATTEO



Ron was eager to learn how to ride a bicycle.

Proud Achievers

RON successfully achieved his occupational therapy goals, and was rewarded by his therapist, Carol Leslie, with a graduation ceremony. Throughout his weekly therapy sessions, Ron learned life, social and independence skills. He even learned how to ride a two-wheeled bike, which was donated by Carol, and used as a teaching tool. The bike enabled Carol to teach Ron about balance, and looking ahead to plan his movements. Along the way, his eye-hand coordination improved, he became more independent and earned pride in all the new things he could do. For his graduation from occupational therapy, Carol surprised him with a graduation gown and certificate, and served refreshments to share with staff for this special occasion. The personal passion and creativity of our staff makes real differences with our clients and families!

PRESTON is an avid swimmer. Born with cerebral palsy, he has been taking adapted swimming classes for over five years. He advanced his skills to learning the breast stroke, but his teacher, Karyn, could see he was having difficulty raising his head enough to take breaths and continue swimming. She found that he was ready, able, and excited to learn to use a mask and snorkel which allowed him to continue to swim across the pool without having to surface for air. Watch videos of Preston on YouTube at www.YouTube.com/achievementcenters. What progress he has made, and how he enjoys swimming!



Adapted Aquatics instructor, Karyn, helping Preston get ready to use his mask and snorkel (above). Preston enjoying the warm water of our pool before his lesson.



CAMP CHEERFUL KITCHEN GETS A FACELIFT!



BEFORE AND AFTER Our new, bright and shiny remodeled camp kitchen!

Thanks to our generous donor, PARKER HANNIFIN, and just in time for the summer camp session, the kitchen at Camp Cheerful has been remodeled. VOCON Design provided pro bono services and brought in many additional resources that really stretched the original gift. Improvements include new flooring, enhanced lighting, a convection oven and a new sink. Now we're cookin'!

Different Needz Foundation

We are grateful to the Different Needz Foundation, who through their grants, will be helping us improve outcomes for four special children.

- A teenage boy with cerebral palsy scheduled for surgery on his legs will learn to walk again in our Intensive Therapy Clinic.
- A young boy with several challenges and who has been making tremendous progress in our adapted aquatics program will be able to continue his classes.
- A teenager with cerebral palsy and legally blind will enjoy going to Camp Cheerful this summer.
- A child with autism, especially challenged with social communication will attend our "Social Adventures" eight-week Social Skills Workshop this summer.

Thank you to Brian Marino with the Skylight Financial Group who helped coordinate the grants for these children.

STAFF OF THE YEAR AWARD

Congratulations to Scott Matson, our Manager of IT extraordinaire, who received our "Staff of the Year" award this year. "The most rewarding part of my job is that providing the technical support for staff, I feel a part of the team that helps children with disabilities "be all they can be," he said. Scott and his wife, Lisa, live in Brunswick, along with his collection of over 300 GI Joes.

Pictured at right, from left to right: Pat Nobili, President and CEO; Scott Matson, Manager of IT; Sally Farwell, Vice President of Programs



Thank you to our generous sponsors for the ADAPTED SPORTS PROGRAM



Meet our newest "volunteer"

Mocha is a nine-year-old Draft Cross who has been nicknamed "Dennis the Menace" because he is a bit of a comic. Mocha was generously donated to our Therapeutic Horseback Riding program so he could continue to "work." All of our therapeutic riding horses are carefully assessed to be sure they have the proper demeanor, and are specially trained to be a part of our program. With Mocha, we now have ten horses and four miniature horses who serve the children and adults with disabilities in our Therapeutic Horseback Riding program at Camp Cheerful.

NEW AT CAMP CHEERFUL! River Rock Adult Day Program

Named after the Rocky River that runs through part of the 52 acres of the Cleveland Metroparks on which Camp Cheerful is located, our new year-round program for adults with disabilities provides a unique outdoor environment and offers gardening, landscaping, horsemanship activities, exercise and sports, as well as cooking, arts and crafts, community activities and field trips. "We focus on enhancing the quality of life for each of our adults through engaging social, recreational and educational activities customized to each person's special needs, abilities and interests to make their days productive, meaningful and fun," said Connie Boros, Vice President of Recreation and Sports for the Achievement Centers. For more information, contact Connie at 440-238-6200 or email connie.boros@achievementctrs.org.



Gardening is a favorite with our River Rock adults.



There's No Place Like Home . . .

Thanks to a contract with the Ohio Department of Health, the Achievement Centers for Children's Help Me Grow Home Visiting Program provides support to first-time mothers. The Achievement Centers' Home Visitors have been trained with the "Healthy Families America" model and are utilizing the Parents as Teachers curriculum. The program is designed to help promote healthy pregnancies, healthy child development and positive parent-child interaction through frequent home visits through a child's first three years of life. If you, or someone you know, would like more information about this program, please contact Carol Levanoff at 216-292-9700.



ACHIEVE CONSULTING

New! Online Training Programs for Education Professionals

Our new online professional training courses for both special education and regular education classroom teachers are designed to offer the convenience of online training, with a personalized approach by our experienced team of teaching specialists. Participants will come away from our online courses with concrete strategies for their classrooms and schools. Graduate credit is available through Ashland University, or participants may take the classes for CEUs.

Courses offered include:

- Preparing to Include Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in the General Education Setting
- Positive Behavioral Supports and Strategies (PBS)

For a complete list of all professional trainings offered through Achieve Consulting, visit www.achievementcenters.org/training or call Kristin Vigar at 216-292-9700 ext 306.

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



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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 and autism services; physical, occupational and speech therapy; Intensive Therapy Clinic; family support services; recreation, camp and sports programs.

LOCATIONS

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



SPECIAL EVENTS

Help support our
mission . . . join us!

www.achievementcenters.org



A MOST EXCELLENT RACE 2013

Presented by Majestic Steel USA was held

SUNDAY, JUNE 23, 2013

Thank you to our participants, supporters and volunteers for another successful race!



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SAVE THE DATE

**Blue Chip Blue Tee
Golf Tournament**

MONDAY, AUGUST 5, 2013

Kirtland Country Club

Fall Festival at Camp Cheerful

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2013

Sparkle, Shimmer and Shine Gala

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 2013

*A Special Celebration and Tribute
honoring Ralph M. Dela Ratta, Jr.*

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