Mighty oaks from little acorns grow.
The acorn... filled with possibilities, potential, and promise.
Dear Friends,

The acorn holds special meaning for the Achievement Centers for Children and is a telling symbol of our philosophy and mission. Several years ago, a parent of two boys with disabilities, compared the work and results of the Achievement Centers with the potential life of the acorn. If we are only able to see its initial appearance, without looking deeper, what would our expectations of that little acorn be? However, if we look more questioningly and learn more, we find that with an environment that feeds and nurtures the acorn, hidden and great potential can be found and released. That tiny acorn can become a mighty oak tree! Who would think that was possible if we stopped at that initial glance?

At the Achievement Centers for Children we are reminded every day that we must never assume what a child’s potential can be. We search for the potential and build on it through therapies, special learning techniques, family support and education, and an array of opportunities to discover and maximize each child’s unique abilities. We surround the child and family with “fertilized soil,” just as the acorn needs the right environment to achieve its potential. The acorn often must struggle and persevere to get through the soil and continue its growth—it can take time and great effort, but the outcome can be so much more than what we envisioned at that first glance.

As Albert Einstein stated, “Many see what is . . . but we must see what can be.”

So when a child walks for the first time at the age of six, or a child learns to swim despite having no legs, or a young adult graduates from college summa cum laude despite being born a quadriplegic, or a child learns to read and write despite cognitive impairments, may we all remember the acorn.

Your support helps enable the Achievement Centers for Children to be all that we can be, so those we serve can be all that they can be . . . the oak tree sleeps in the acorn.

Gratefully,

Patricia W. Nobili, MSSA
President & CEO

Stephen B. Perry
Chairman, Board of Directors
During 2011–2012, there were over 4,000 Therapeutic Horseback riding lessons given thanks to the dedication of over 400 volunteers and nine very special horses.

There were 1,363 sessions given in physical therapy, 4,223 sessions given in speech therapy, and 1,839 sessions given in occupational therapy. A total of 320 individual clients were served in therapy programs, with 185 under the age of six.
Jamie, ready to ride his favorite horse, “Spirit,” in his Therapeutic Horseback riding class at Camp Cheerful, proudly announced with a smile that he had had a good day at work at PNC Bank. Quite an accomplishment for a young man whose mother was told when he was born that “he would never smile, never lift his hand to his mouth, and never hold his head up.” Due to severe and seemingly insurmountable brain abnormalities, his prognosis indicated he would not live long, and Jamie’s mother was told to take him home and love him.

That was the beginning of Jamie’s journey, together with his family, in discovering just what he could be capable of achieving. At three months of age his mother, Colette, brought Jamie to the Achievement Centers for Children (then known as The Society for Crippled Children) in search of hope for Jamie’s future. She remembers being told, “We don’t know for certain what kind of promise any child has, so let’s work together and discover what unique potential Jamie possesses.” He began physical, occupational and speech therapies where Jamie grew stronger physically and cognitively. Jamie’s CAT scan at age three years old revealed that his brain, initially only $\frac{2}{3}$ normal size, had remarkably grown to normal size. Jamie’s parents and doctors attributed the stimulation he received through his early intervention program to the improvement in the growth of his brain. To his parents’ delight, he began speaking at three and a half years of age and took his first independent steps when he was four and a half years old.

Jamie continued to progress with his therapies throughout his childhood and young adulthood, further developing and strengthening his abilities beyond what was thought possible. In addition to his traditional therapies, Jamie found a real passion for horses in our Therapeutic Horseback riding program, which also helped strengthen his core muscles, and improved his balance and coordination.

Colette’s ultimate vision for her son was for him to have a job and to be a contributing member of society. Along their path to fulfill this vision, Jamie graduated from North Olmsted High School where his engaging and pleasant personality earned him great popularity. In return, he nurtured a sense of empathy and special understanding for others with challenges. Today, Jamie loves working at PNC Bank, and continues to ride his favorite horse at Camp Cheerful.

“Thanks to Achievement Centers, Jamie leads a productive, rewarding life. They saved his life.”
The Beasley family chose the Achievement Centers for Children’s autism preschool and kindergarten to help their young identical twin daughters, Sidney and Shelby, learn in an environment that would help them manage the effects of autism. Sidney and Shelby experienced anxiety in a way that interfered with their ability to interact, communicate appropriately and made learning in a traditional classroom more difficult. They were especially fearful of large groups and became overwhelmed easily.

In our smaller classroom environment and through our specially trained teachers, Shelby and Sidney learned ways to deal with their feelings of being overwhelmed so they could focus more on learning and just enjoying preschool and kindergarten with their classmates. In addition, our teachers worked closely with their family to provide consistency between home and school, which allowed them to progress more rapidly.

After kindergarten at the Achievement Centers, Shelby was successfully transitioned to her public school system for first grade with an aide to assist her. Her parents believe that through the very individualized care and instruction she received in preschool and kindergarten as a foundation, along with a carefully planned transition to her new school, Shelby was prepared for success. Shelby’s mother said, “What impressed me most about Achievement Centers’ program was the staff—they saw her potential. They recognized what she needed in order to be successful in her public school first grade class. They made very sure that Shelby was going to get everything she needed. Lisa, her classroom teacher, even prepared a transitional booklet for Shelby and met with her new teacher,” related Mrs. Beasley.

Meanwhile, Sidney is progressing well in first grade in our autism classroom in Highland Hills. By experiencing different social situations within her familiar classroom environment, her patient teachers are equipping her with coping techniques to use outside the classroom as well. Her next step, when she’s ready, will be to join her sister in public school.
Last year, we served 675 children with autism and their families through our education and autism services, therapy services, family support services, recreation, camp and adapted sports programs. We serve between 30–35 children in our specialized autism classrooms in Highland Hills and Westlake, who like Sidney and Shelby, are learning to manage the unique effects of their autism with the goal to successfully transition to their neighborhood’s public school.
Everyone wants the same outcome—to have children grow up to be happy, productive adults,” said Juan and Stephanie Antunez. They were first introduced to the Achievement Centers for Children when they attended our annual Sparkle, Shimmer and Shine Gala with friends in 2004. The Antunezes were moved as they listened to our parent speakers at our gala talk about what it meant to raise a child with a disability, their joys and sorrows, and the care they received at the Achievement Centers. Juan and Stephanie easily related as the parents of two teenage children. They felt an immediate connection to the work we do, and wanted to be involved in helping us make a difference with families in our community. They understood the importance of helping not only the child, but helping the entire family, regardless of the family’s ability to pay.

Stephanie is now active on the auction planning committee for our next Sparkle, Shimmer and Shine Gala, having served as the chair of the committee in 2010. She enjoys reaching out to area businesses for their donations of unique and valued items for auction baskets to be sold at the gala. “When they see you’re giving of your personal time as much as your financial resources and we tell them what we’re doing and who we’re helping, they understand it’s a worthwhile cause,” related Juan.

Juan and Stephanie find it especially gratifying to support organizations that help children achieve their greatest potential. They were particularly drawn to our mission, understanding how critical it is for children with disabilities and their families. They found Achievement Centers to be a well-run organization, fiscally responsible, and one that collaborates with other organizations to help families. Juan said, “At Achievement Centers, you know your money is going directly to programming and right to the children the best way that it can.”

We join hand-in-hand with our dedicated supporters and volunteers who so generously give of their time and financial resources to make positive life changing differences for children with disabilities, their families, and for our entire community.
Majestic Steel

In 2009, Majestic Steel USA was a corporate sponsor of our “A Most Excellent Race.” That was just the beginning, as Tom Innis related, “We’ve now transitioned from primarily financial support to full organizational engagement. It’s been an amazing thing to see.” Not only did they commit to a three-year sponsorship of our “A Most Excellent Race” which began in 2011, but together with the Cleveland Indians, created an on-field “Up to Bat” baseball experience at Progressive Field especially designed to create a fun day for the campers of Camp Cheerful. This memorable day was followed by the opportunity for the campers to watch a Cleveland Indians game on the same field the following week.

The leaders of Majestic Steel USA have seen the benefits of their partnership with Achievement Centers extend to their staff through their volunteer participation at the events. They found that it has created a special bond and camaraderie that has carried into the workplace allowing a higher level of collaboration on the job. “This experience is something our staff can carry with them everywhere they go. This sense of pride from working with the Achievement Centers’ staff, children and families will always be with them. It’s tremendous,” said Katie Corrigan of Majestic Steel USA.

To Tom and Katie, and the many Majestic Steel USA employee volunteers, and the entire Majestic Steel USA organization, thank you for “creating a majestic experience for all.”

“There is a sense of the incredible good that Achievement Centers is doing in our community to give children a chance to reach their full potential. When you see the parents watch their children make unbelievable strides; to be a part of that and to be a catalyst to this service that’s being done in the community is something we can’t put into words. We’re so proud to be affiliated with the Achievement Centers.”

— Tom Innis, Director of Corporate Relations for Majestic Steel USA
New Bus Stop
Thanks to the generous support of Art Anton and a matching grant from the Lennon Foundation, we have a new universally accessible transportation bus (pictured below), and are hoping to purchase another bus in the coming year. We expect the new buses to be transporting our precious cargo for many years.

Strategic Plan 2011–2014
Our new three year Strategic Plan serves as our road map to guide the steps we take to fully unleash the potential of children with disabilities and their families as they grow, learn, play and prepare for a lifetime of achievement in society. Learn more about our Strategic Plan from our website.

Emmy Award Nominee
“Step by Step,” a video by reporter, Lynn Ischay of The Plain Dealer, was nominated for a National Academy of Television Lower Great Lakes Chapter award. It is the story of Joe, in our Intensive Therapy Clinic, who learned to walk without his crutches. Visit our website to watch the video.

Cleveland International Film Festival
We were a proud community sponsor of the Israeli film, Mabul, about a family with a son with autism and their challenges. Our sponsorship of this film helped promote a greater understanding of issues relating to autism, and allowed us the opportunity to communicate our expertise in helping children with autism to many people.

RECREATION AND SPORTS
Welcome Connie Boros as New Vice President of Recreation and Sports
Connie (above) has a rich combination of education (Master of Science in Social Administration), work experiences, personal interests and enthusiasm that she brings to her new role. Connie looks forward to getting to know each of the campers and their families, and providing exemplary, memorable camp experiences for them.

Adapted Sports
The Achievement Centers’ Junior Wheelchair Cavaliers Basketball team competed nationally for the first time in Colorado Springs, and won three of their four games. Congratulations to Patrick Tomic (left) on being awarded a full scholarship to the University of Illinois to play wheelchair basketball.

Our adapted aquatics program is growing, thanks to a new partnership with LifeWorks of Southwest General Hospital. In addition to our classes at our Westlake location, our collaboration with LifeWorks enables us to offer a deeper lap pool for classes with older children and adults.

Therapeutic Horseback Riding
New for this year, a group of eight riders representing the Achievement Centers participated in the Chagrin Valley Hunter Jumper Classic Riders with Disabilities Horse Show. This was a special opportunity for children and young adults with cognitive or physical special needs to proudly show their equestrian skills and earn ribbons.
EDUCATION AND AUTISM SERVICES
In our innovative “Snack Shack” (above) mock retail shop, children in our autism classrooms learn social skills such as greeting customers, helping them make selections, taking their food order, and working with money in a cash register. What great “real life” practice for the children!

THERAPY SERVICES
Our highly skilled speech and occupational therapists shared their expertise with five interns this year, providing them with hands-on experience, clinical supervision and training needed to complete their clinical rotations. The interns were from Cleveland State University, Kent State University, University of Akron, and Brenau University in Georgia.

Our Intensive Therapy Clinic continues to grow, attracting our first out of state clients.

FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES
We provided home visiting services to over 2,130 children and their families, with the majority of the children under the age of three. This is an increase of 537 children over last year. Families found personalized emotional support, parenting skills and education, coordination of services, and linkage to other programs to be a “lifeline” in helping them provide the best possible futures for their children.

We offered several workshops for families such as “Understanding Medicaid Waivers” and “On Your Journey: You Are Not Alone.”

Parents learned the soothing art of massage through our Infant Massage Classes. The babies all enjoyed their “hands on” experience.

ACHIEVE CONSULTING
Our consultants provided training in autism and Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports Trainings (PBIS) to 494 public school districts’ personnel representing 36 school districts in Ohio and a large district in Illinois. Through the PBIS program, our consultants work collaboratively with teachers and school teams to increase academic achievement and create a positive learning climate through consistent and positive behavior supports.

SPECIAL EVENTS
All our fundraising events and appeals were generously supported by our community, raising over $1.5 million in the 2011/2012 fiscal year, enabling us to provide most services regardless of a family’s ability to pay.

Sparkle, Shimmer and Shine Gala, (above) honored Christopher Connor, CEO of The Sherwin-Williams Company. Thanks to our generous sponsors, supporters and distinguished guests, we raised over $436,000.

In addition, Chris and Sara Connor generously donated $100,000 to the Achievement Centers for Children for our Intensive Therapy Clinic.

Blue Chip Blue Tee golf tournament held at Kirtland Country Club, raised over $75,000.

A Most Excellent Race raised $104,000 and attracted over 1,000 walkers and runners on a spectacular June day. Special thanks to our Friends Group of the Achievement Centers for Children, an outstanding group of young professionals who organize, promote and support the race each year.

Fall Festival, raised over $77,000 to benefit Camp Cheerful in Strongsville.
In Fiscal Year 2011–2012, many of the clients served by the Achievement Centers participated in or received multiple programs and services. Over the past year, the agency provided more than 7,924 programs and services to 4,370 individuals and their families.
2011–2012
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<td>Dr. Gerald and Phyllis Wahl</td>
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<td>In honor of Stephanie Bastock</td>
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<td>Mr. Brian Bastock</td>
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<td>In memory of Clara Bednar</td>
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<td>Anne Marie and Warren L. Wolfson</td>
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<td>Ms. Judith Revak</td>
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<td>In honor of Carli Kausek</td>
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<td>Gifts received for the birthday of Thomas Libecco</td>
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<td>Gifts received for the birthday of Claire List</td>
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<td>Mr. and Mrs. William De Lauder</td>
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<td>In honor of Judy and Ron Marc’s</td>
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<td>50th Wedding Anniversary</td>
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<td>Mr. and Mrs. Chuck Siracusa</td>
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<td>In honor of Dylan Mates’ Happy Days at Camp Cheerful</td>
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<td>Ms. Gretchen Mates</td>
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<td>In honor of David Williams and Fran McCaffrey</td>
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<td>Mr. and Mrs. Donald Bernardo</td>
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<td>In memory of Martha McClellan</td>
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<td>In honor of Kevin Pech</td>
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<td>In honor of Michael B. Petras, Jr.</td>
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<td>In honor of Maria and Domin Polito</td>
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<td>Ms. Amanda Wayner</td>
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<td>In honor of Mr. and Mrs. William Prusak’s Wedding Anniversary</td>
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<td>Ms. Susan Prusak</td>
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<td>In honor of Elma Razem</td>
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<td>Jacob Razem</td>
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<td>In honor of Laura Steiner</td>
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<td>Mr. and Mrs. Eddie Steiner</td>
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<td>Mr. Kevin Steiner</td>
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<td>In memory of Deolores Swigart</td>
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<td>Mr. and Mrs. Hugh T. Ellsworth</td>
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<td>In memory of Terry Pepper Thomas</td>
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<td>Ms. Diane Towne</td>
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Deborah and Roger Osgood
In memory of Evelyn L. Waffen
Ms. Lisa Villao
In memory of Spencer West
Ms. Barbara Price
In memory of Laura Suzanne Wilk
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Today’s Headlines Salons
Tony’s K’s Bar & Grill
Mr. and Mrs. Mike Trivisonno
Trivs Restaurant & Lounge
Turner Construction Company
University of Akron
UPS
Upward Bound
V107.3 Cleveland - The Wave
Valley Tack Shop, Inc.
Jennifer and Mark Vergii
Mr. Paul Verlei
Vita-Mix Corporation
Mr. and Mrs. Richard T. Wallack
Mr. and Mrs. William Walsh
Walsh Jesuit High School
Walter F. Ehrnfelt Recreation and Senior Center
Weathervane Playhouse
Ms. Virginia M. Weiss
Mr. and Mrs. Robert J. Wells
Wendy’s Restaurants
Western Reserve Management, Inc.
Westfield Shoppingtown SouthPark
WEWS-TV 5
Weymouth Signature Event Center
Willet Middle School
Willowood
Ms. Mary M. Wilson
Yeager Co.
Your HomeTown
Estate of Antoinette M. Zick
Zinner & Company

2011-2012 CONTRACTOR AND COLLABORATOR LISTING

Achievement Centers for Children is proud to contract and/or collaborate with the following entities:

Academy Court
Aluminum Cans for Burned Children
Alcohol, Drug Addiction and Mental Health Services Board of Cuyahoga County (ADAMHS)
Al Sirat Grotto
Amherst Exempted Village Schools
Aristocrat Berea
Autism Family Foundation — Robert J. Keegan Center
Avon Local School District
Baldwin Wallace University
Beachwood Board of Education
Bedford City Schools
Bellefaire JCB
Belmont City Board of Developmental Disabilities
Berea City School District
Berkshire Local School District
Brecksville/Broadview Heights School District
Brooklyn City Schools
Buckeye Local School District
Business Volunteers Unlimited (BVU)
Canton Local Schools
Case Western Reserve University
Catholic Charities Head Start
Cleveland Browns
Cleveland Cavaliers
Cleveland Clinic
Cleveland Foundation
Cleveland Heights/University Heights School District
Cleveland Hearing & Speech Center
Cleveland Metroparks
Cleveland Municipal School District
Cleveland State University
Cuyahoga County Board of Developmental Disabilities
Cuyahoga Falls City School District
Cuyahoga Heights School District
Deepwood Foundation
Different Needz Foundation
Doc’s Deepwood Run
East Cleveland City Schools
East Holmes Local Schools
Easter Seals of Northern Ohio
Education Alternatives
Education Service Center of Cuyahoga County
Elyria Board of Education
Erie County Board of Developmental Disabilities
Euclid City Schools
Fairhill Partners
Fairview Park City Schools
Flat Rock Community Services
Fleet Maintenance Council of NE Ohio
Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities
Garfield Heights City Schools
Gateways to Better Living
Geauga County Board of Developmental Disabilities
Geauga County Dept. of Job & Family Services
General Electric Co.
Girl Scout Troop 1072
Girl Scout Troop 7174
Guidestone
Help Me Grow of Cuyahoga County
Hocking County Board of Developmental Disabilities
Holy Name High School
Hudson City Schools
Huron County Board of Developmental Disabilities
Independence Schools
Invest in Children
IO Waivers — Columbiana
IO Waivers — Cuyahoga
IO Waivers — Erie
IO Waivers — Franklin
IO Waivers — Geauga
IO Waivers — Lake
IO Waivers — Lorain
IO Waivers — Medina
IO Waivers — Summit
IO Waivers — Tuscarawas
Kenston Local Schools
Kent State University
Kirtland Local Schools
Lake County Board of Developmental Disabilities
Life Banc Support Group
Literacy Cooperative
Lorain County Board of Developmental Disabilities
Lorain City School District
Madison Local Schools
Massillon City Schools
Medina County Board of Developmental Disabilities
MetroHealth
Michael Carter Group
Midview Local Schools
Midwest Council for Children with Disabilities
Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA)
Music Therapy Enrichment Center Inc.
Naperville, IL Community Unit School District 203
National Autism Association of NE Ohio
James R. Nicholl Memorial Foundation
Nordonia Hills City School District
North Canton City Schools
North Olmsted City Schools
North Ridgeville City Schools
North Royalton City Schools
North Royalton Preschool
Northern Ohio Hemophilia Foundation
Ohio Center for Low Autism and Low Incidence (OCALI)
Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities
Olmsted Falls School District
Ottawa County Board of Developmental Disabilities
Our Lady of the Wayside
Our Lady of Angels School
Padua High School
Perry Local Schools
Plain Local Schools
Plymouth Church
Positive Education Program (PEP)
Prentke Romich Company
Project Panda
Ravenna City Schools
Richmond Heights School District
Rocky River School District
Shaker Heights School District
Solon High School
South Range Local School District
Southeast Local Schools
Starting Point
State Support Team Region 9
St. Ambrose
St. Albert the Great
St. Augustine Manor
St. Francis-Xavier Medina
St. Mary of the Falls
Stow-Munroe Falls City Schools
Streetsboro City Schools
Strongsville Rotary
Summit County Board of Developmental Disabilities
Summit County Children Services
Swagelok Co.
Tallmadge City Schools
Team NEO
The National Basketball Academy
UCP — Edendale House
University Hospitals PKU Program
University Hospitals Rainbow Babies & Children’s Hospital
Voices for Ohio’s Children
Warrensville Heights City Schools
Wayne City ESC
West Stark Center
Westlake City School District
Whitney Elementary Girl Scout Troop 1046
Wickliffe City School District
Woooster City Schools
Youth Challenge

MANAGEMENT TEAM

Patricia W. Nobili, MSSA
President and CEO
Bonnie Boenig, OTR/L
Director of Therapy Services and Intensive Therapy Clinic
Sally Farwell, M.Ed.
Vice President of Programs
Connie Farwell, M.Ed.
Vice President of Programs
Mary Beth Koss, M.Ed.
Director of Achieve Consulting
Rachel Leuthaeuser, MBA
Director of Quality Assurance and Westlake Operations
Donna Hefner McClure, M.S.
Director of Education Services
Darla Motil, R.N.
Director of Community Relations
Barbara Obiaya, LISW
Director of Family Support Services
Deborah Osgood
Vice President of Development and Marketing
Scott Peplin
Vice President of Finance and Operations/Chief Financial Officer
Achievement Centers for Children

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

Founded in 1940 as the Society for Crippled Children, we now serve children with a broad range of disabilities and special needs including autism, cerebral palsy, spina bifida, and other physical and emotional challenges. Our unique, comprehensive service model weaves together education and autism services; therapy services; recreation and sports programs; and family support services to meet the needs of the entire family. The agency serves children from birth through young adulthood, with a special focus on children from birth through age five.

**EDUCATION AND AUTISM SERVICES** include the Technical Assistance Program, consultation services for childcare programs to serve children with disabilities; Child Development Center, and Autism Classrooms for preschool and Kindergarten through fifth grade for children diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder.

**THERAPY SERVICES** include physical, occupational and speech and language therapies. We also offer an Intensive Therapy Clinic, which offers a different approach to therapy.

**RECREATION AND SPORTS PROGRAMS** include day and residential camping experiences as well as a competitive sports program. Camp Cheerful in Strongsville provides traditional camp activities including arts and crafts, hiking, swimming, canoeing, therapeutic horseback riding, adapted aquatics and a fully-accessible high ropes challenge course. Our sports program includes Junior Wheelchair Cavaliers Basketball, Cleveland Browns Adapted Football League, adapted baseball and soccer.

**FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES** include the coordination of services, counseling, support groups and family education for children with disabilities and their families. It also includes the Early Intervention Home Based Program which delivers home-based services to children with special needs (ages birth to three years) and their families. The Early Childhood Mental Health Program is designed for children who are experiencing social, emotional or behavioral challenges.

Over 4,300 children from throughout Greater Cleveland and beyond received services last year at our three locations—Highland Hills, Westlake, and Camp Cheerful in Strongsville.

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**ACCREDITATION, LICENSURE AND PARTNERSHIPS**

The Achievement Centers’ programs and services are licensed and accredited by: The American Camp Association, The Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International (PATH Intl.), Equine Assisted Psychotherapy and Equine Assisted Learning (EAGALA), Medicaid, Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services, Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities, Ohio Department of Education, Ohio Department of Mental Health, Ohio Department of Health and the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF). The Achievement Centers has been recognized as a three-star Step-Up-to-Quality program and has numerous agreements with area universities and colleges. The Achievement Centers for Children is also proud to be a United Way agency.
Highland Hills
4255 Northfield Road
Highland Hills, Ohio 44128
phone 216-292-9700
fax 216-292-9721

Westlake
24211 Center Ridge Road
Westlake, Ohio 44145
phone 440-250-2520
fax 440-250-2530

Camp Cheerful
15000 Cheerful Lane
Strongsville, Ohio 44136
phone 440-238-6200
fax 440-238-1858

INFORMATION
216-292-9700

Achievement Centers for Children is a United Way partner agency.