Before I began therapy for my children at Achievement Centers for Children, I simply had the sadness and struggle associated with Dominic’s autism diagnosis, and the global developmental delays of his younger sister, Valentina. Dominic was very unhappy and unable to communicate his needs in any significant way. Valentina was not hitting her developmental milestones and with low muscle tone, she was unable to roll over, crawl, or talk.

A friend suggested the Achievement Centers to us. From our first visit, I felt that the Achievement Centers for Children was different. They provide a safe, positive environment where my children feel at home. The therapists are always encouraging and patient, even during the rough sessions. I especially appreciate the holistic approach given to each individual client. The therapists consult with each other to find the best approach tailored to each child’s specific needs. They provide helpful insights on how to approach issues and are happy to answer any questions or concerns I have. Our social worker gets to know our unique family situation providing support and resources.

My daughter Valentina, now three years old, was diagnosed with cerebral palsy. In addition to physical, speech, and vision delays, Valentina struggled greatly with separation anxiety. When we began physical therapy, Valentina screamed for the entire session unless I held her. Working with an early childhood social worker, we developed strategies that have enabled Valentina to attend therapy sessions more successfully.

In the midst of childhood disabilities, Achievement Centers has helped us find hope. I learn so much working with the therapists here. I share this knowledge with family members and friends. I believe that spreading knowledge about a disability, and how to positively interact with special kids, makes the world a better place.

Achievement Centers has helped our family move past painful diagnoses to find the joy in the achievements of my uniquely gifted children. There is no greater joy than watching my child achieve something that I thought was impossible. It is here that I have found hope for my kids and their future.

—Gabriella Gennarelli
Dear Friends,

At the Achievement Centers for Children, relationships are at the heart of our work. The power of relationships is that they are, by their very essence, mutually beneficial, allowing everyone involved to grow, learn, and feel valued through shared interaction.

Our staff and families work together to forge a strong relationship or connection which focuses on maximizing the child’s success. This partnership provides the foundation for change. Our collaborative team approach with staff from multiple disciplines allows for all of their expertise to be focused on developing creative solutions to particularly complex situations. This approach is carried throughout all of our services: in education, therapy, family support, and recreation.

In addition to a dedicated staff, we also have an incredible Board of Directors whose members bring valuable skills, relationships, and knowledge to the agency. Board members leverage their networks and personally support the Achievement Centers. In addition, Board members continually partner with our staff, hear family’s stories, and reach into the community as ambassadors and advocates.

This brings me to each of you. Some of you are staff, and some of you are Board members. Some of you have children with disabilities, and some don’t. Some of you have been supporters for years, while others have only just learned about the agency and our work. Whatever your connection, and whatever your reason for being interested in the Achievement Centers, we thank you and are thrilled to welcome you into our extended family. Without you, we could not do the work we do, or serve over 2,500 children and families each year.

These relationships form the foundation that allows the Achievement Centers for Children to fulfill our mission “to enable and empower children with disabilities and their families to grow, learn, play and prepare for lifelong achievement in society.”

Thank you!

Sally Farwell
President & CEO
Ke’Shawna, De’Shawna, Sha’Nice, and Sha’Maria are sisters with young children very close in age. A hard-working group of mothers, they share a love of their children, and are dedicated to providing the best that they can for their families. This dedication is what motivates them to participate in the Help Me Grow program.

**KE’SHAWNA and KARTER (Age: Two years)**
Ke’Shawna was the first sister to enroll in the program when Karter was one month old. Ke’Shawna said, “Madelaine, our Help Me Grow Home Visitor, is real nice. She helps me with understanding my son Karter’s development, and keeps us on track. I learn pointers, how to deal with situations, and she gives me information and resources. She encourages me. I learn so much that I am able to also use with my class of toddlers at the child care where I work.”

**SHA’NICE and RASHAUD (Age: 19 months)**
Sha’Nice enrolled in the program a few weeks before Rashaud was born. Although she has an older son, Sha’Nice wanted the extra support that the program provides. “Today, Madelaine brought me information about Rashaud’s head banging. I understand more about why he might be doing it, and how I can better read his facial expressions to help him before he gets too frustrated. I worry about him, but Madelaine’s information has made me feel better able to take care of my son,” related Sha’Nice.

**DE’SHAWNA and JAVONTE (Age: 9 months)**
When De’Shawna found out she was pregnant with her first child, she quickly enrolled in the program—still in her first trimester! Madelaine provided De’Shawna with information about her baby’s development each month, and supported her in preparing for his birth. De’Shawna continues to benefit from regular visits from Madelaine. De’Shawna said, “Not only did I get pregnancy information, but Madelaine helped give me job information, flyers for special events, and helped me with housing. It’s been very helpful.”

**SHA’MARIA and NEVAEH (Age: 25 months)**
Sha’Maria is the youngest of the four sisters and enrolled in the program when her daughter, Nevaeh, was four months old. “After Madelaine started visiting...
PAVING THE WAY TO ACHIEVEMENT

Thanks to many members and companies of the Ohio Contractors Association (OCA), our Westlake location has new smooth cement walkways and repaired asphalt parking lot surfaces! This project was very important, especially for families with children with physical disabilities that use assistive equipment such as wheelchairs, crutches, and walkers. All materials and labor, estimated at $16,000 was donated. We are thrilled with the results, and cannot thank everyone involved enough!

EMPLOYER GIFT MATCH
DOUBLE YOUR DONATION!

Many companies offer matching gift programs to encourage employees to contribute to charitable organizations. Some provide matching funds to support employee volunteer hours. Most of these programs match contributions dollar for dollar, and some will even double or triple the amount of your gift! Visit our website at www.achievementcenters.org and see if your employer will match your gift—and increase your impact for children with disabilities when you donate to the Achievement Centers for Children.

THOUGHTFUL TRIBUTE GIFTS
LOOKING FOR THE PERFECT GIFT FOR THAT SPECIAL SOMEONE?
WANT TO HONOR THE MEMORY OF A LOVED ONE?

Pay tribute to that special person with a memorial or tribute gift to the Achievement Centers for Children. It’s the perfect gift for any occasion.

We will acknowledge your gift by sending a note to the person in whose name the gift was made. The amount of your gift will not be mentioned, and a separate receipt will be sent to you. Your tribute will also be listed in our Annual Report.

Your gift will help provide critical services to children with disabilities and their families.

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L to R: Ohio CAT Volunteers Dave Winter, Mike Schilling, Sean McCann. Not pictured: John Sinarski.

Sparkle, Shimmer & Shine Gala

Our Sparkle, Shimmer & Shine Gala held Saturday, November 12, 2016 honored Richard J. Buonocore, Managing Partner of MAI Capital Management for his generous long-time support of children with disabilities and their families.

While a festive evening for the attendees, Sparkle, Shimmer & Shine exceeded its goal and generated over $500,000 for the Achievement Centers for Children. Over 82% of the event’s proceeds go directly to the programs and services of the Achievement Centers. We are so very grateful to all our Sparkle, Shimmer & Shine contributors for their caring, and for making a real difference in the lives of those we serve.

Thank you to all of our sponsors and our generous guests who made the evening a success! The Achievement Centers for Children is so grateful for your support.

Thoughtful Tribute Gifts
Looking for the perfect gift for that special someone?
Want to honor the memory of a loved one?

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Employer Gift Match
Double Your Donation!

Many companies offer matching gift programs to encourage employees to contribute to charitable organizations. Some provide matching funds to support employee volunteer hours. Most of these programs match contributions dollar for dollar, and some will even double or triple the amount of your gift! Visit our website at www.achievementcenters.org and see if your employer will match your gift—and increase your impact for children with disabilities when you donate to the Achievement Centers for Children.
We were thrilled to have the Achievement Centers chosen as a Good News Giving agency for 2016, and to have little Dallas featured in the Thanksgiving Day paper on Thursday, November 24! We are so proud of all of our clients, and honored to be a part of so many children achieving important steps!


Dallas Coleman laughs after walking up a padded ramp and jumping into a soft pit during a therapy session at the Achievement Centers for Children. (Lynn Ischay/The Plain Dealer)

Congratulations to the Achievement Centers for Children and Sally Farwell, our president and CEO, for being honored as a recipient of a 2016 Business Longevity Award by Smart Business. Sally is joined by board member Jim Kacic.

STAFF ACCOLADES

“2016 Staff Member of the Year” Awarded to Kathy Henry

“As the Manager of Marketing Communications, and the editor of this publication, I was thrilled to be given this award! For the past eight years, I have had the honor to see firsthand the difference our mission makes in the lives of the children and families we serve—from watching children with leg braces bravely practice climbing stairs, and students in our autism school learning new ways to communicate, to seeing the simple joy on the faces of campers at Camp Cheerful just having fun. I strive to tell their amazing stories to show how our mission, expertise, and passion improves lives and gives hope to families every day.”

Barb Obiaya, our Director of Family Support Services received a Professional Achievement Award for demonstrating professional career success and achievement from the Mandel School of Applied Social Services at Case Western Reserve University! We are so proud of Barb, and honored to have her as part of our management team!
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 school; 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 care centers, schools, homes
216-292-9700

A MOST EXCELLENT RACE
Sunday, June 25, 2017
Beaumont School in Cleveland Heights
- Timed 10K and 5K races
- One mile and 5K walk
- Family activities including Flower Clown, bounce house, art activities, DJ, and refreshments
achievementcenters.org/race

Special Events
Help support our mission . . . join us!
For details, visit www.achievementcenters.org

BLUE CHIP BLUE TEE GOLF TOURNAMENT
Monday, August 7, 2017
Kirtland Country Club