As part of our 80th Anniversary celebration, our Sunday finale on YouTube featured parents and guardians of ACC clients. You may remember Stacy, who is caring for her grandson, Jacob, a lively, funny, smiling boy who attends ACC’s Autism School and receives physical and occupational therapy. We asked her what advice she might offer to parents raising children with special needs. Here are a few words of wisdom she offered:

**Don’t sweat the small stuff.** Every day has its own set of challenges. Getting upset about small things will not only drain your energy and ruin your mood, your child can sense it. They may not be able to use words but they can react. If you’re stressed, they will be too. Let the little things roll off your shoulders and keep your chin up. It might be hard but you can do it.

**Don’t be afraid to ask for help.** If you have questions, ask. If you’re struggling with your child’s behavior, ask. If you just need a minute to yourself, ask. You are not alone. There are many knowledgeable, helpful people out there who want good things for you and your child. Teachers, doctors, therapists, friends and family know more than you realize. I’ve learned so much just by asking questions that, in my mind, seemed silly. Silly or not, ask.

Your friends and family love you and your child, but they may not realize that you could really use a break, and they rarely volunteer if you don’t ask! Something as simple as going out for a drive, grabbing a cup of coffee or even a nap can soothe the soul. So ... ask!

**Say, “I love you.”** No matter how stressed or upset you get, always remind your child of how much you love them and how wonderful they are. It can be hard to know what a child with a disability is thinking, but they do recognize your love and your encouragement. Tell them all the time. Even if you’re upset with them, try to maintain a positive attitude and let them know that you are there for them, no matter what. It builds their self-esteem and teaches them positivity, even when they’re at their worst.

**The staff at the Achievement Centers for Children is so knowledgeable. They are awesome.**

Be patient. Sometimes, I’ll feel like I need to rush along with classwork for Jacob, but he can be stubborn. Many times, I have watched the Achievement Centers’ therapists and teachers wait until Jacob can handle the task at hand. They’ve taught me that it’s ok to wait him out. Quality, not quantity.

The staff at the Achievement Centers for Children is so knowledgeable in all the things they do. They are awesome. They know so much more than I would have ever believed. I am truly thankful that we found out about the Achievement Centers. It has been a blessing and a pleasure working with the staff. They are saints, in my opinion!
ENGAGING SUPPORT 2019–2020

1,487 Donors supported our work

3,312 TOTAL CLIENTS SERVED

Out of every dollar donated 83¢ directly benefits our clients and furthers our mission

3,921 FACEBOOK FANS

We served 648 Therapy Clients

Provided $1.3 million in subsidized services

3,312

83¢

648

3,921

3,312

221

311

116

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

SPEECH/LANGUAGE THERAPY

PHYSICAL THERAPY

1,487

7,985

1,236

Volunteer hours for Adapted Sports

Volunteers gave 7,985 hours of their time in our Therapeutic Horsemanship Program

1,236

3,921

3,312

1,3 million

Provided

TOTAL

CLIENTS

SERVED

688

221

311

116

PHYSICAL

THERAPY

3,312

221

311

116

VOLUNTEERS GAVE

7,985

HOURS OF THEIR TIME IN OUR

THERAPEUTIC HORSEMANSHIP PROGRAM

1,236

1,236

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Thomas McKee
Each year, the Achievement Centers for Children serves more than 3,300 children and adults with disabilities and their families. It is through the generous investments of donors that children speak their first words, take their first steps and become the best possible version of themselves.

Those who name the Achievement Centers for Children in their will or estate plan automatically become members of the Oak Tree Society. They belong to a group of special people who recognize how an investment in our agency can help those we serve grow, like an oak tree, into the mightiest version of themselves possible.

Including simple language in a will or other estate document ensures that our important services will be available for children and adults with disabilities now and well into the future.

“I give and bequeath the sum of $__________ to the Achievement Centers for Children, a not-for-profit organization incorporated in the State of Ohio, at 4255 Northfield Road, Highland Hills, Ohio 44128, for its unrestricted use.”

For the Oak Tree Society members who have made a special bequest (anonymously or otherwise), thank you! If you are interested in exploring your donation options, or how to word a bequest, please contact Deborah Osgood at 216.292.9700 x 224 or start by visiting https://achievementcenters.org/give/planned-gifts-oak-tree-society.
4-Stars in 7 years

Achievement Centers for Children’s strong financial health and commitment to accountability and transparency have earned it the highest rating possible (4-stars) from Charity Navigator, America’s largest independent charity evaluator. This is the seventh consecutive year that the agency has earned this top distinction. This award is very meaningful to us, as we are committed to financial responsibility and offering excellent governance in service to our mission.

Since 2002, Charity Navigator has used objective analysis to select only the most fiscally responsible organizations, awarding them a 4-star rating. Charity Navigator’s metrics focus on governance and ethical practices as well as measures of openness. This reveals which charities operate with industry best practices and whether they are open with their donors and stakeholders.

Achievement Centers for Children’s rating and other information about charitable giving are available, free of charge, on www.charitynavigator.org. More-detailed information about Achievement Centers for Children’s rating is available to Charity Navigator site visitors who register at no cost. A link to the Achievement Centers for Children’s Charity Navigator page can be found at AchievementCenters.org

Donor Appreciation Awards

The 2020 Donor Appreciation Awards quietly passed by us at the end of last year. Now, we would like to make some noise and officially acknowledge and praise our former board president, Bob King, and Jerry Franklin, founder of Buffalo Wild Wings. We appreciate the time, funding and encouragement they have offered up over the past 20 years.

BOB KING joined the ACC board of directors in 1998 and served as board president from 2003 to 2005. In those years, he made a significant and lasting impact on our agency offering guidance, direction, inspiration and board accountability. Bob was an active member of the capital campaign to build the new Highland Hills facility and, after leaving the board in 2006, has continued to act as an agency advisor, event supporter, networker, advocate, donor and friend. Bob’s interest in the Achievement Center’s work and mission has never flagged. Thank you, Bob, for more than 20 years of helping us grow, thrive and succeed!

JERRY FRANKLIN got involved with the Achievement Centers for Children through a visit to Camp Cheerful. During that visit, Jerry showed a genuine interest in our campers and in our agency’s overall work. He has been a generous donor since 2013, making contributions personally and through his family foundation and supporting ACC fundraising events.

Through the local Buffalo Wild Wings restaurants he owns, he has provided corporate support, in-kind contributions of food for events and even provided the Buffalo Wild Wings mascot for A Most Excellent Race. Jerry is the definition of the “perfect donor” – thoughtful, accessible, caring and gracious.

THANK YOU
to our generous sponsors for the Adapted Sports Program Sponsors

PARTNERS

GOLD SPONSORS
The David and Jacqueline Clark Foundation
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Vana Family Foundation
Padua Franciscan High School
A Message from Sally Farwell

Tumultuous. Uncertain. Challenging. Unprecedented. Unique. These are words we all have seen and used to describe the year 2020. And, like all organizations, the Achievement Centers for Children has certainly experienced its share of troubles and obstacles over the past year. I won’t say that I am sorry to say, “goodbye” to 2020, but along with difficulties, I am proud to say we also experienced many positives.

I was inspired by the clients and families we serve, who didn’t let even a pandemic get in the way of reaching toward their goals. I saw parents step up in new ways to help their children continue to grow and progress. I was so proud of our staff…they worked long hours and went the extra mile to make sure our clients received the services they needed. We provided well-received virtual programs and services, remote learning and online experiences for the first time. Our Board of Directors and our Associate Board helped us move forward by sharing their support, expertise and passion for our mission.

Multiple and dramatic instances of racism sparked a national conversation and we took up the important work of strengthening our agency’s commitment to racial equity and social justice. And, on the celebration side, we had the chance to celebrate the Achievement Center’s 80th anniversary with a fun, virtual event. We remain eternally grateful for the charitable support of our many donors.

We are looking forward to 2021, and though none of us have a crystal ball to help us see the future, I am sure that we will face any challenges head on and will find new opportunities to fulfill our mission…remaining always committed to our community’s children and adults with disabilities and their families.

Sincerely,

Sally Farwell, M.Ed.
President & CEO

OUR 80TH ANNIVERSARY (Though, we don’t look it)

Last November, we demonstrated how successful a virtual celebration can be. November 12–15 the Achievement Centers celebrated its 80th Anniversary of helping Cleveland’s children and adults with disabilities. The best news is that we grossed $288,000!

The event included a mobile auction, a raffle and Barnyard Bingo, plus two hours of YouTube programming. Chef Brad Gambrell shared a recipe and showed how to make some drinks from 1940 (the year ACC was founded). Musical entertainment was provided by “Cleveland’s Piano Man,” Mike Petrone, LA-based singer, Quinn L’Esperance (who has a brother who attends Camp Cheerful) and Mr. Jeff, a local singer/songwriter who provided a campfire concert.

Our anniversary programing also highlighted adapted sports, therapeutic riding and featured conversations with staff, volunteers and parents of those we serve. Alissa Piwinski, manager of camp programs, demonstrated a craft. If you missed any of our programing, you can view it all on YouTube: www.youtube.com/user/AchievementCenters.

Here’s to 80 more years!
OUR MISSION is to empower children and adults with disabilities and their families to achieve their greatest potential. We are a non-profit organization providing support, services and programs for children and adults with disabilities and special needs and their families.

Programs, currently being provided in a variety of ways, include education and autism school; physical, occupational and speech therapy; Intensive Therapy Clinic; family support services; recreation, camp, sports and adult day program.

A trusted partner unlocking the potential beyond disabilities

LOCATIONS
Highland Hills
Westlake
Camp Cheerful in Strongsville
Providing services on-site, via telehealth and remote learning
AchievementCenters.org
216-292-9700