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FROM THE CEO

Paul Garchar, Jr.

The 2022-2023 school year was a year full of accomplishments!!!

It has been a tremendous year of incredible growth for Potential Development this year.

We saw an 11% increase in enrollment that allows us to assist even more children and families. Field trips and transportation to the Jewish Community Center, YMCA, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, and Boundless were made easier by the purchase of two vans. Our dream of an outdoor fitness center at the high school was realized after a robust fundraising campaign and much thoughtful planning. We also saw incredible participation in our new esports program, art therapy, bowling, track, basketball and pep club.

Beyond our strong academic and life skills programs, our staff worked very hard to ensure that students had many fun activities to participate in such as pep rallies, sports banquet, prom, talent show, workforce speakers, educational trips and field trips.

Our new website is in production with incredible information for all families. We thank everyone who took the time to submit the surveys, which are important ways for us to know how to plan for the future.

We want to especially recognize our seniors who are part of the largest Potential Development graduating class in our history. We wish Caleb, Isaiah, Armando, Brayden, Logan, Zyaire, Logan, Alvonser, Machenzie, Jarrod, Jacob, Malachi, Riley and Justin the very best and encourage them to stay in touch with us as we grow an alumni program.

As we continue to expand, we are strengthened by the guidance of our Board and have welcomed four new Board members – Sue Filipovich, Angel Pixley, Jomont Ware and Meribeth Noble.

Thank you for your involvement and support! Let's make a strong start to the 2023-2024 school year!

Paul J. Garchar, Jr.

CEO

Congratulations POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT 2023 Graduates!

School for Students with Autism — 70TH ANNIVERSARY —



CONGRATULATIONS CLASS OF 2023!

Warm congratulations and the best of luck to our graduates:

Isaiah Behun, Boardman, Ohio

Caleb Culp, Hubbard, Ohio

Armando DeFrank, Boardman, Ohio

Brayden Fossessa, North Lima, Ohio

Logan Halk, Youngstown, Ohio

Zyaire James, Youngstown, Ohio

Logan Johnston, Boardman, Ohio

Alvonser Lewis, Youngstown, Ohio

Machenzie Palmer, Austintown, Ohio

Jarrod Robinson, Youngstown, Ohio

Jacob Rotz-Toney, Struthers, Ohio

Malachi Signor, Youngstown, Ohio

Riley Smith, Youngstown, Ohio

Justin Szabo, Austintown, Ohio.





PRESCHOOL UPDATE



Kim MacDonald
Program Coordinator
Preschool

The 2022-2023 school year was an exciting time at our Preschool!

In September our new active movement sensory room was completed just in time for the school year, complete with rock climbing wall, sensory pads & bubble tubes. Our library was revamped into a better and brighter space and now includes over 50 adapted book titles!

Students participated in the SMARTS beats drums and dance classes. Preschoolers participated in many activities including annual pumpkin decorating & candy apple making, Christmas ornament projects & tree decorating, Spring Fling and Fun in the Sun Day. In January we opened a new classroom and welcomed Ms. Brooke and Ms. Sandi as full-time staff. We wished 11 graduates well in June and are happy to say that nine students will continue on to Kindergarten at our Elementary/Middle School.

We look forward to another busy and exciting school year for our PD preschoolers and staff. We are planning our first fall activities and look forward to seeing all the smiling faces soon.



ELEMENTARY/MIDDLE SCHOOL UPDATE

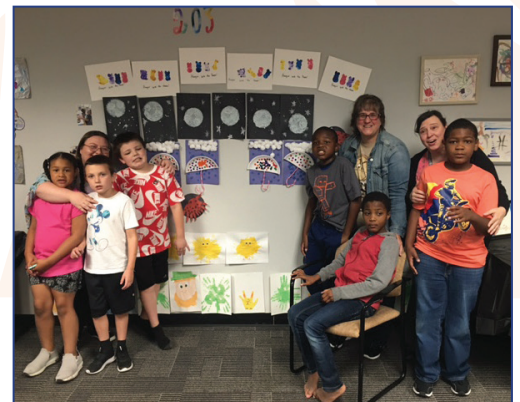


Holly Hahn
Program Coordinator
Elementary &
Middle School

The Elementary/Middle School had an exciting year with field trips to the Mario Movie, pumpkin farm, Coccia's Pizza, where students made their own pizza, Mill Creek Park, bowling and roller skating and a well-attended Art Show. We also welcomed many visitors who provided interesting presentations including Greg Rhoton, from Armstrong Utilities, who presented an Earth Day program, the Reptile Man from Komara Outdoors and WFMJ Chief Meteorologist, Eric Wilhelm.

The Helm's Foundation continued offering Art Therapy where two of our classes participated, and SMARTS provided art, dance, drumming. Our Library was relocated to better serve our students and we added new resources including books in Spanish for our bilingual students. Seventeen 6th graders graduated and are transitioning to our high school for 7th grade.

Looking back on the year, I am proud of how far our students have come and the dedication of our staff. We started the school year with 25 kindergarteners transitioning from our preschool and ended the year with 17 6th graders graduating and moving on to our high school. As the 2023-2024 school year is approaching, I look forward to another great year.





HIGH SCHOOL UPDATE

The High School includes activities which provide our students with fun, social, and educational experiences.

This past year included students participating in SMARTS drums and art, swimming and exercising at the Jewish Community Center, going to the English Festival, providing a Santa's Workshop for our students, starting a high school garden, visiting colleges and trade schools, completing successful seasons of bowling, basketball, pep club, esports, and track, getting a brand-new fitness center playground, showcasing our students' abilities through a talent show, dancing at prom, and of course, graduation! It was a very successful year, and our students learned a lot and experienced a lot.



Next year, we hope to continue these same programs and provide even more opportunities for our students to learn and grow. We are especially looking forward to a strengthened Workforce Development Program, field trips, and Special Olympics. Our wonderful staff plan fun events for their classrooms and participate in cultural events as well. This upcoming year will be an exciting one, with a record-setting 16 seniors ready to graduate! We are looking forward to our building getting some improvements on the inside - fresh paint in the hallways and a facelift for the fitness center.

As we get closer to the end of August, we are getting ready for familiar faces to return to the high school and preparing for our new friends, too! We can't wait to see you at the high school!



Katie Petridis
Program Coordinator
High School



SPECIAL EVENTS SUPPORT POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

Signature in-person events such as Mahoning Valley Trivia with a Twist, Bill Roux Memorial Scholarship Golf Outing and the Mahoning Valley Pizza Cook-Off offer the community multiple ways to support Potential Development. Individual school events such as art shows, holiday events, parent meetings, PTO, field trips, prom, sports banquet and graduation provide our families with tangible ways to become a part of the fabric of the Potential Development experience! Contact Jodi Harmon, Marketing & Special Events Manager at jodi@potentialdevelopment.org to become involved.





COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND PHILANTHROPY ELEVATE POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

Coupling our signature events with a vigorous grant and development plan brought physical and programmatic improvements at all three school buildings. Without the support of those in the area who recognize Potential Development's unique position in our community, we could not continue to provide a safe and healthy environment, wealth of additional services and exceptional level of education which allows children diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder to develop and flourish. A strong financial commitment from parents, teachers, community leaders and donors continuously sustains Potential Development, allowing us to embark on many worthwhile projects to elevate our schools.

Every donor is important and holds a special place in Potential Development's legacy and history. We sincerely acknowledge and thank our PD Promise Partners who have provided consistency and ongoing support to Potential Development through their philanthropy. Current PD Promise Partners are Compco, Covelli Enterprises, Daprile Insurance Group, The Muransky Companies, Melissa Mullane Padgett, DDS, Premier Bank, Simon Roofing, and Tri County Tower LLC.

Their support and that of countless other donors has allowed us to hire a full-time social worker who provides valuable services to students at all three PD locations; construct a state-of-the-art outdoor fitness center at our high school; construct a Life Skills Lab at our Elementary/Middle School; implement a robust Special Olympics program; and offer Culinary Culture Classes, to name a few projects.

Be assured that gifts to Potential Development will continue to enhance our ability to meet our academic mission, and to bring home, school and community together ensuring every child has access to what they need. Please consider joining us as a PD Promise Partner, where you will be investing in our continued growth and the success of every student that walks through our doors. Contact Crissi Jenkins, Chief Growth Officer at crissi@potentialdevelopment.org for more information.

THANK YOU TO OUR PD PROMISE PARTNERS:



IN THE KNOW...

Order PD Merch

We have a great assortment of PD merchandise on our website perfect for birthdays and holidays. Check it out at www.potentialdevelopment.org

Resources for Families

First on our list is the Autism Society of Mahoning Valley. Please visit their site at <https://autismmv.org> and sign up for their emails. Check their Facebook page too for all sorts of great events and resources.

The Public Library of Youngstown and Mahoning County offers numerous sensory friendly events. Their website is <https://plymc.bibliocommons.com/v2/events?q=sensory>.

Youngstown Macaroni Kid will send you an email if you sign up but also has a great website for events and activities in our area at <https://youngstown.macaronikid.com/events>.

It's always good to get out into some fresh air and **The Walnut Grove** outdoor space is the perfect place. Check them out at <https://thewalnutgrove.com>.

The Butler Institute of American Art will begin a sensory friendly time to visit on the first Sunday of each month, on September 3, October 1 and November 5. The Museum will open one hour earlier--at 11:00 a.m.--prior to public hours.

The Jewish Community Center will offer sensory friendly Sundays where an art project will be created in a calm and soothing environment. The dates are Sundays, September 10, October 15, November 19 and December 17 from 3:30-4:30 p.m. The cost is \$7 for JCC members and \$10 for non-members. Go to www.jccyoungstown.org to register in advance.

Keep in Touch

We will be starting PD Alumni, a program designed to stay in touch and engage with our former students. Please update your address and email address by emailing Lori Factor, Communications Manager, at lori@potentialdevelopment.org.