

S P I R I T

**HOW TO HAVE
A BRIGHT
BEGINNING**

PG. 2



Barber National Institute

DONOR REPORT EDITION



A BRIGHT BEGINNING FOR ALL CHILDREN

Speech therapist Sue Hutcheson, MA, SLP, right, works with Amy Edwards and her daughter, Bernadette, to promote speech development.

Amy Edwards was concerned about her youngest daughter. Bernadette was her fourth child, and Amy knew that, at nearly a year old, she should be making sounds and trying to communicate.

As a first-time mom, Kaitlyn Jones was surprised when her pediatrician said that her son, Karsen, had torticollis. The weakened muscles on his right side would require physical therapy to strengthen muscles he would need to crawl and walk.

While each situation was unique, both families said that they turned to experts they could trust for their children— the Bright Beginning Early Intervention Program at the Barber National Institute.

For Amy and her husband, Jon, it was a lesson learned from experience. They were happy with the speech therapy that two of their older children had received through the program, and knew that’s where they wanted to turn when their youngest child wasn’t meeting developmental milestones in her speech.

Once enrolled, Amy said that Bernadette started progressing step by step. “After just a few months, she started communicating and now she’s speaking in complete sentences,” said Amy. “We had goals customized for her and were able to work on what she really needed.”

ON THE COVER

Bernadette Edwards moved from saying her first words to speaking in complete sentences with help from therapists in the Bright Beginning Early Intervention Program.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT



**BARBER
NATIONAL
INSTITUTE**

We “Make dreams come true.” We provide children and adults with autism, intellectual disabilities and behavioral health challenges and their families the education, support and resources needed to be self reliant, independent and valued members of their community. In addition, we provide the professionals who serve them with world-class education and training.

As Bernadette was advancing with speech, the Edwardses noticed another problem developing. Their youngest daughter had become a picky eater and mealtime turned into a struggle for everyone.

“It was not only hard for us as parents but also hard for our other children to have Bernadette so fussy and upset at our meals,” said Amy.

The Early Intervention team responded and soon an occupational therapist was on board, even attending dinner with the family to address the problem. “She gave us strategies that helped integrate Bernadette into the family mealtime, and helped her learn to eat what the family was eating. We were thankful to be able to get this additional therapy so quickly to solve the problem.”

For the Jones family, Karsen entered the program after a routine doctor visit led to a diagnosis of torticollis, a condition that occurs when the muscles that connect the breastbone and collarbone to the skull are shortened. The head can be tilted or rotated to one side, often affecting other areas of a baby’s development.

The condition, which affects about three of every 100 babies, is usually caused by the baby’s position in utero.

“I was really concerned that this happened because of something that I did, but my therapist reassured me that it was very common and could be taken care of with therapy,” said Kaitlyn.

Physical therapist Savannah DeMayo, PT, DPT began working with Karsen, and made progress quickly. “I didn’t think that he would improve as quickly as he has,” said Kaitlyn. “They have over-exceeded my expectations.”

Kaitlyn said that she is especially grateful that



Savannah showed them a lot of exercises and activities that the family could do with Karsen to strengthen his muscles and balance. Now, he is on track to reach his developmental milestones.

According to Savannah, Karsen benefited from starting therapy early – as soon as a problem was suspected.

That is a message that Early Intervention Manager Donna Roesch would like every parent to hear. “If anyone has a concern or question about their child’s development, they can just give us a call,” said Donna. “Every child is unique and it can be hard for parents to know what typical development is and what can be a sign that help is needed.”

**Bright Beginning**
Barber National Institute

Bright Beginning Early Intervention provides therapy to children from birth to age 3 for:

- Autism
- Developmental delays
- Deafness and hearing impairments
- Emotional and behavioral difficulties
- Health related developmental concerns
- Oral-motor and feeding problems
- Physical disabilities
- Sensory-processing concerns
- Sleeping concerns
- Speech and language delays
- Torticollis and plagiocephaly (flat head syndrome)
- Vision impairments

For more information, visit BarberInstitute.org/brightbeginning or call 814-874-5671.



Who Does the Beast? It Can Be You!



What kind of person slogs through 10 miles of sand, trails and roadway, tackling more than 30 natural and manmade obstacles?

The truth is that Barber Beast on the Bay participants are a diverse group of more than **1,430** people who came from **20** states and Canada in 2018.



Last year's Beastbeaters spanned 16 to 74 years of age. More than half – **nearly 54 percent** – were returning after participating in the past (more than 60 people had actually competed all five previous years). A total of 126 teams competed, but many people took part on their own or with one or two friends.



The reasons that people participate vary widely. In a post-event survey, many respondents talked about their desire to undertake a challenge and push themselves beyond their comfort zones. For others, the experience of building camaraderie with friends – and even strangers – was appealing. And the knowledge that they would be supporting a great cause, Beasting for those who can't, was their inspiration.



Adapted Course

Whatever the motivation, the Beast provides an experience that you won't forget. More than 700 people have already registered for the 2019 Beast, set for **Saturday, Sept. 7**, at Presque Isle State Park. We'll be mixing things up this year with revisions to the course and several new obstacles, including a "rig" that involves swinging, scaling and other surprises.

Student volunteers from Mercyhurst University cheer on Adapted Course participant Natalie LaFuria as she raises a pail of water at an obstacle. The one-mile course through Waldameer Park includes more than a dozen challenges and intersects with the 10-mile course at a shared finish line. Online and paper registration is now available for the Adapted Course.

Make this the year that you beat the Beast! Register now for \$100 at **BarberBeast.org** before the final discount ends May 31.





ANDREA'S STORY: DARING TO DREAM

"It was a feeling like no other, and I can't wait to do it again."

Many Beast on the Bay participants can point to huge challenges they overcame to beat the Beast. For Andrea Reed, her shirt said it all: "I lost 177 lbs. and nothing can stop me now!"

How did the 30-year-old mother of two lose more than half her body weight and achieve a goal she once thought impossible?

It all began in 2016, when Andrea realized she was too heavy to buckle her seat belt. "I thought 'I can't be that big,'" said Andrea.

But at 335 pounds, Andrea saw that something had to change. She started using an app on her phone to track her food and exercise, and lost 50 pounds in the first year.

Andrea felt encouraged by the progress, but then, a family member passed away suddenly. They were the same age, both recently had children, and even bore a strong resemblance to each other.

It shook Andrea up. She was also facing her own health problems, with pre-diabetes and hypothyroidism and the discovery of a pituitary tumor. After successfully treating the tumor, her doctors urged her to get gastric sleeve surgery to help her accelerate her weight loss.

"Many people think the surgery is a magic fix, but it isn't," said Andrea. "If you go back to eating like you did, you will gain all of your weight back." Andrea ate just 500 calories a day for five months, gradually increasing her food intake and her exercise regimen. Then, she started setting some new goals for herself.

"I remember seeing Barber Beast on the Bay on the news and thinking 'How cool is that?' But then I thought, 'That's a skinny girl's dream.' But after my surgery, it became one of my biggest goals," said Andrea.

She began training, starting with the "Couch to 5K" app. After completing her first 5K, and then a 10K, she finally had the confidence to say to herself, "I got this."

In preparation for the 2018 Beast, Andrea beefed up her routine, running on trails, pavement and even the sand at Presque Isle. "That was difficult, but a lot of fun," said Andrea.

Still, she knew that completing the Beast, with its variety of obstacles,

would be a test. Fortunately, early on during the event, she met a group of participants, complete strangers she calls her "pace buddies," who helped and encouraged her. "That was what I really loved about the event—the camaraderie. People were so willing to help each other. We all had the same goal—to get through it," said Andrea.

Her biggest trial was the half pipe, where she had to run up a ramp and then jump into a pool of water on the other side. Not only was it physically difficult, but the obstacle tapped into her fear of heights. After pulling Andrea up the ramp, another participant promised to help her get to the other side. "I thought, 'There's no way I'm jumping off the side,' but even the ladder looked too high to me. Then, one of the guys said that we would jump together, and he promised we would get through it."

Like Andrea, someone in the group also had a daughter with autism, and they compared their experiences. This, too, is one of the best parts of the event for Andrea. "Having a child with autism, I was happy to see that, for so many people, it was not just an opportunity to do an event like this but to do it for a good cause."

By the time she crossed the finish line, Andrea said she had the worst shin splints—and the most amazing feeling—of her life. "I literally said 'Sign me up for next year right now.'"

Andrea remembers collapsing into her husband's arms, and starting to cry. "I thought, 'I can't believe I just did this,' and I had a flash of how far I had come.



A triumphant Andrea Reed celebrates after reaching her goal to complete the 2018 Beast.

FOR ARTIST, A CHANGING LANDSCAPE

Fine Arts Supervisor Frank Fecko helps artist Maria Salas create a landscape for the 2019 Art Show.



Every morning for more than 20 years, Maria Salas has greeted Frank Fecko with a warm hello as he walked past her program area. Then, one day in early January, she shouted “Paint.” And that change in her daily routine opened up a whole new world.

Frank, the fine arts supervisor at the Barber National Institute, was surprised when Maria voiced a desire to paint. She had always been busy with other activities in the Community Participation Supports Program and never expressed an interest in the artwork that was being created every day by other adults.

But as soon as Maria showed an interest in art, Frank undertook an assessment to determine her preferences for media and subject matter. While trying out paint brushes and other tools, Frank noticed that she liked painting with a roller. “Because of her limited fine motor skills, the roller was large enough for her to paint with, and she really enjoyed it,” said Frank.

Maria’s fondness for layering coats of paint colors brought to mind a style of landscapes popularized by

contemporary painters. “I saw that look of her art and explained how she could paint a landscape, with the sky, grass, and trees – really anything she would want to add in,” said Frank. “She really likes layering the colors.”

Frank mixes the paint colors that Maria has decided to use, and moves the canvas so that she can reach all of the areas that she wants to paint. Her painting time is limited to 15 or 20 minutes at a time because her shoulders tire from the motion. But she paints every day – sometimes twice a day.

“She really loves watching the piece unfold because she never thought she was going to create something this nice,” said Frank. “In her face you can see the pure joy that she gets from art.”

Visitors to the Jay & Mona Kang Art Show in April will get to experience that joy when Maria’s artwork is on exhibit along with pieces created by more than 10 other adults in the Fine Arts program.

“I think it will be a highlight of the show,” said Frank.

2019 ART SHOW: PREPARE TO BE AMAZED

THE
JAY & MONA KANG
Art Show
& SALE
CELEBRATING THE POSSIBILITIES

From portraits to landscapes, animals to abstracts – enjoy a wide range of creative expression in one of the region’s most eclectic exhibits with the Jay & Mona Kang Art Show & Sale at the Barber National Institute. This year’s event will be held:

- **FRIDAY, APRIL 5, 10 A.M. - 8 P.M.**

Enjoy a community Wine & Cheese Reception, 5 - 8 p.m.

- **SATURDAY, APRIL 6, NOON - 3 P.M.**

- **SUNDAY, APRIL 7, NOON - 3 P.M.**

Family-friendly activities with arts and crafts, refreshments and an art scavenger hunt. Youth Artist Award Ceremony, 1 p.m.

- **MONDAY, APRIL 8, 1 - 6 P.M.**

The show, now in its 12th year, offers an opportunity to enjoy art in a variety of media, including painting, photography, sculpture, clay and fiber art. Last year’s exhibit featured the work of more than **330** adult amateur and professional artists and **260** youth artists.

This marks the second year that Drs. Jay and Mona Kang, two Erie physicians, have come forward to sponsor the show. Their interest began in 2016 when their daughter, a student at Erie Day School, first participated in the exhibit. Since then, both of their children, as well as Dr. Mona Kang, have displayed their talents in the show.

Many pieces of art are available for purchase, giving the buyer an opportunity to own and enjoy an original piece of artwork and support local artists. In addition, a portion of every sale benefits the Barber Foundation.

A panel of judges will select artwork for cash awards in the adult and youth categories, but visitors to the show can cast their ballots to select winners for the People’s Choice Awards among the youth and adult artists.

Admission is free of charge.

For more information, visit BarberInstitute.org/artshow or call 814-874-5603.

STAFF RECOGNIZED FOR DEDICATED SERVICE



Carrie Kontis and Traci Gardner present original artwork created by an adult in our program to Ann Akines in commemoration of her 20-year anniversary of employment.

“I started because I needed a job, but then fell in love with the company and with the individuals,” said V’Lynncia Riggins, who was recognized for reaching a service anniversary in the Barber National Institute Philadelphia program.

During an awards luncheon in November, V’Lynncia described how she moved from part-time to full-time, and on to become a manager and then program specialist. “I went to school so that I could further myself in the field,” said V’Lynncia.

Twenty employees were recognized for achieving their 10- and 15-year milestones, and one staff, Ann Akines, received a special award for celebrating 20 years as a direct support professional in a residential group home.

NEW OPPORTUNITIES EXPAND PERFORMING ARTS



Dancer Shari Mastalski works with students to encourage movement through an Artist-in-Residence experience sponsored by Erie Arts & Culture.

Two programs are offering students new opportunities for expression and skill building through the performing arts. For the second year in a row, a partnership with the Erie Playhouse will lead to a live musical performance, while an artist-in-residence is providing dance instruction for a group of female students.

Erie Playhouse Education/Outreach Coordinator Trisha Yates and her assistant, Maeve Kirby, visit each week to work with student in three classrooms on an adaptation of the international bestselling book "The Rainbow Fish." The story explores themes such as sharing, friendship and giving, and offers students a chance to work on activities that promote physical development, range of motion and exploration of sea life.

This spring, students will present the production on the stage at the Erie Playhouse.

Dancer Shari Mastalski is working with girls in three classrooms to explore various forms of dance and movement through an artist-in-residence program sponsored by Erie Arts & Culture. They will be presenting what they have learned in a production for families, fellow students and faculty in March.

"Both of these outreach programs provide wonderful opportunities for students to further explore the performing arts," said Dr. Maureen Barber-Carey, executive vice president. "In addition to the skills that the students learn, they are finding that the arts are a lot of fun and really a way to enrich their lives."



Erie Playhouse Education/Outreach Coordinator Trisha Yates prepares students for a musical performance of "The Rainbow Fish."



PITTSBURGH ART SHOW PLANNED

Fine Arts Supervisor Frank Fecko recently worked with staff from the Barber National Institute Pittsburgh Day Program to explore new techniques for assisting adults in the creation of artwork. The visit is in preparation for the annual Art Show that will be held Thursday, May 16, from 4 to 8 p.m. at the facility, located at 20 Emerson Lane, Suite 905, in Bridgeville. The community is invited to the exhibit that will feature the artwork created by adults in the Pittsburgh programs.



Kacie Shaffer is all smiles meeting Pittsburgh Pirates pitcher Kevin Newman.



PIRATES VISIT SCORES BIG

Pitcher Nick Kingham visits with student Keagan Deimling.

Students, adults and families were happy to “come aboard” for a visit from the Pittsburgh Pirates. Players Nick Kingham, Kevin Kramer and Kevin Newman were joined by Coaches Kimera Bartee and Tom Prince and announcer Joe Block for a visit to the Barber National Institute in January as part of the team’s 11-city winter Care-A-Van tour.

After a question-and-answer session, the team participated in an array of carnival games, signed autographs and joined participants in a photo booth.



JOIN OUR TEAM

Do you know someone who loves working with people and would really like to make a difference in another person’s life? The Barber National Institute is hiring new employees to join our team. Immediate openings are available for direct support professionals in residential and day programs, paraeducators in our school and a variety of positions in behavioral health. Learn more about all available positions and apply online at BarberInstitute.org/careers.



FROM WASHINGTON TO WARREN

Dr. Michael Gamel-McCormick, second from left, Disability Policy Director in the office of Sen. Bob Casey, recently visited Bollinger Enterprises (BEi) in Warren to meet with staff and adults and tour the facilities. Welcoming the visitor were, from left, Dr. William Clark, BEi Executive Director; Ronna Tipton, Forest-Warren Human Services Director; Ron Heinrich, Production Manager/Community Participation Supervisor; and Kim Nowell, Rehabilitation Supervisor.



ANNUAL AWARDS HIGHLIGHT HOLIDAY CELEBRATION

Job Coach Gale Williams, right, accepted the Program of the Year Award for the Supported Employment Program from Traci Gardner, director of Southeast Regional Programs.



Monique Holmes, Manager of Day Services, presented the Staff of the Year Award to Rafiq Corbett.

Individuals, families and staff from the Philadelphia program came together in December for a dinner to celebrate the Christmas season. A highlight of the gathering was the presentation of awards recognizing the highest achievements among the region's staff and programs.

The Staff of the Year award was given to Rafiq Corbett, a community support professional, while the Program of the Year Award was presented to the Supported Employment Program. With help from Supported Employment job coaches and developers, 12 adults found jobs in the Philadelphia community over the past year.

HIT THE GREENS FOR A GOOD CAUSE

Tea up for a good cause when the annual Shillelagh Golf Tournament is held Thursday, June 20, at Whispering Woods Golf Course. The event begins with a shotgun start at 12:30 p.m. and concludes with an awards dinner.

John Downey, a longtime volunteer, will be recognized as the 2019 Shillelagh Man of the Year. John has been a member of the tournament planning committee for more than 25 years. In 2016, he retired after working for 35 years at Erie Beer.

The tournament offers many sponsorship opportunities for businesses. Foursomes are now forming for the event, which includes lunch, dinner and a participant gift.

More information and registration is available at BarberInstitute.org/golf.



John Downey

NEW PROGRAMS SERVE CENTRAL PA COMMUNITIES

Two facilities in Central Pennsylvania recently became the newest members of the Barber National Institute family. The prevocational and community participation supports programs are located in Bedford and Somerset, and serve 97 adults and their families in those communities.

The programs made the transition on Jan. 17 from Bedford-Somerset Developmental and Behavioral Health Services (DBHS) after federal and state regulations required the county agency to divest some of its programs serving adults with intellectual disabilities.

"We appreciate Barber accepting the responsibility and ensuring continuity of care for our

commonwealth's most vulnerable population," said Mary Piatt-Bruner, DBHS administrator.

A total of 14 staff chose to transition from DBHS to Barber, and three new employees were hired in Bedford and six staff in Somerset. The 44 adults being served in the Bedford area and 53 adults in Somerset all chose Barber National Institute as their provider.

"We have truly felt welcomed into this community and look forward to working with families and other providers to continue our tradition of providing the highest quality of services," said John Barber, president and chief executive officer of the Barber National Institute.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

For more information about all events, visit BarberInstitute.org

BARBER BEAST & BREWS

March 14, 5 p.m. • BrewErie at Union Station

JAY & MONA KANG ART SHOW & SALE

April 5 – 8 • North Complex

STUDENT MINI-BEAST

April 23 – 25 • Gym

PITTSBURGH ART SHOW

May 16 • Bridgeville Offices

ELIZABETH LEE BLACK SCHOOL GRADUATION

June 4, 6:30 p.m. • Gym

SHILLELAGH GOLF TOURNAMENT

June 20 • Whispering Woods Golf Course



Barber National Institute

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Bright Beginning Early Intervention (birth-age 3)
The Elizabeth Lee Black School (Approved Private School)
Autism Center
Happy Hearts Day Care & Inclusive Preschool
Deaf & Hard of Hearing Program
Pre Employment Transition Services for Youth

THERAPIES

Outpatient Behavioral Health Clinic
Traditional & Specialized Family Based Mental Health Services
Advanced Children's Therapies (ACT) Program
Speech Therapy
Occupational Therapy
Physical Therapy
Behavioral Health Rehabilitation Services
Psychiatric & Psychological Services
Nutritional Services
Trauma and Grief Counseling
Health Services Department
Social Skills Training

LIVING IN THE COMMUNITY

Respite Care
Lifesharing through Family Living
Supported Living in homes and apartments
Residential Group Homes
Community Habilitation

DAYTIME COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICES

Club Erie
Community Endeavors
Community Participation Supports
Prevocational Services
Small Group Employment
Supported Employment
Adult Training Facilities
Older Adult Daily Living Centers

SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES

Blended Case Management for Children & Adults
Family Support Services
Family and Sibling Support Groups
Agency with Choice, Habilitation Services

RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Aktion Club
Connections Summer Camp for children with high functioning Autism/Asperger Syndrome
ESO Dances and Summer Camp (Expanding Social Opportunities)
Learn to Ride Bike Camp
Camp Shamrock Summer Program
Time for Me

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Before/After School & Summer Child Care Programs
Consultative services to schools & professionals
Swimming Lessons & Water Exercise Classes
Kids on the Block Puppet Troupe
Gift Shop

For more information, call the Barber National Institute at 814-453-7661 or visit www.BarberInstitute.org.

BARBER SPIRIT

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Read more about the Jay & Mona Kang Art Show, page 7.



THE
JAY & MONA KANG
**Art Show
& SALE**

April 5 - 8, 2019

Dr. Maureen Barber-Carey; Drs. Jay and Mona Kang, Art Show sponsors for the second year in a row; Nick & Kim Scott; Bridget and John Barber.