

B A R B E R

JUNE 2019

SPIRIT

STUDENTS IN THE
SPOTLIGHT

PG. 3



Barber National Institute



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Friends,

"There's no place like home." This line, repeated so often, reflects our belief that home should be where we can relax, be ourselves, and experience love and acceptance.

This is what we work to achieve in each of the 94 residential group homes that we provide for adults with intellectual disabilities in the Erie, Pittsburgh and Philadelphia regions. Thanks to the generous support of our donors, we have been able to provide comfortable, welcoming houses that are truly integrated into their neighborhoods and communities.

Any homeowner knows the challenge of keeping homes in good repair, and we are no different. Since July 2017, we have invested more than **\$894,000** in projects ranging from new furnaces, roofs, windows and flooring to bathroom renovations and deck installations. We have purchased four new group homes in Erie and 11 in Philadelphia, totaling more than **\$2.74 million**. To ensure that our adults have access to community activities as well as necessities such as medical appointments, we have also purchased a total of **45 vehicles** across all three cities amounting to more than **\$1.4 million**.

We will soon have an exciting addition to our residential program -- a new four-bedroom home opening in the fall that will provide enhanced accessibility for adults with physical challenges.

As you read more about the group home and other developments in this issue, please accept our appreciation for the support of donors and friends like you that makes it all possible. Thank you for helping us make dreams come true.

With wishes for a safe and happy summer,

Sincerely,

John J. Barber
President & Chief Executive Officer



INTERNATIONAL GUESTS VISIT PITTSBURGH PROGRAM

Representatives from Tobii Dynavox recently visited the Pittsburgh adult day program as part of a pilot program with the Barber National Institute to implement new technologies to help individuals with disabilities communicate more effectively. Program Specialist Patrick Then, right, spoke to representatives from the company's Pittsburgh and China locations about a new software developed by the company that is being tested with an individual in his residential group home. The Elizabeth Lee Black School also works closely with Tobii Dynavox to provide communication devices and software for students.

BEI BENEFITS THROUGH WARREN GIVES

Donors in the Warren region contributed more than **\$7,445** for Bollinger



Enterprises, Inc. (BEI) through Warren Gives on May 22. John Lasher, left, executive director of the Community Foundation of Warren County, presented the proceeds to Dr. William Clark, executive director of BEI. The funds will be used for employment and community integration services provided to adults.

ON THE COVER

Alivia Colechia, right, joins classmates Leah Spellman and Enji Shakur with teacher Julie Moore in the production of "The Rainbow Fish" at the Erie Playhouse.



STUDENTS SHINE IN ERIE PLAYHOUSE PRODUCTION

The Erie Playhouse was alive with color, song and dance as students from the Elizabeth Lee Black School took to the main stage with a special production of “The Rainbow Fish.” The beloved children’s book, by author Marcus Pfister, tells the story of a fish who comes to understand the importance of friendship and sharing his special gifts.

Since January, 25 students have worked with Trisha Yates, Playhouse education/outreach coordinator, to explore drama, movement, singing and puppetry in preparation for the performance. Teacher Julie Moore said that the students thought they were just participating in music or dance classes. “Then on the day of the show, when we brought them out onto the Playhouse stage, I really enjoyed watching their reactions to the sets and lights. That is when they realized something very special was happening,” said Julie.

The collaboration is funded by the Schuster Regrant Initiative at Gannon University and brought together faculty from the Elizabeth Lee Black School and members of the Erie Playhouse, including Prop Artist Angela Kanj who created larger-than-life sea puppets and scenery.

Julie believes that the lessons student learned went beyond performing arts. “Students learned about teamwork as well as following directions from someone new – the director, Trisha Yates, who is truly amazing,” said Julie. “But I think the best part was the sound of the applause. They don’t often get to experience that sound and it was all for them!”



Teacher Craig Allegretto helps student Rashad Johnson record narration for the show with Trisha Yates.



BEASTING FOR BLAIZE

Top 2018 fundraiser Jim Dobrich, left, celebrates a successful Beast with Blaize and Rachel Cheeseman.

Jim Dobrich would never expect to take first place in Barber Beast on the Bay. He just hopes to finish a little faster and a little stronger than the year before. But he did take home another first-place award last year – one that’s even more meaningful to him. Jim was the highest fundraiser, collecting more than \$2,850 to benefit the Barber National Institute.

“I do the Beast to help me stay in shape,” said Jim. “But if I can do it as a fundraiser to help the Barber National Institute, that’s a bonus. I always tell other participants that the challenges you have doing this event are nothing compared to the challenges that many children and their families face every day.”

Jim knows about that, too. He’s been friends with Rachel and Ells Cheeseman for more than 20 years, and has watched their son, Blaize, live with the challenges of autism. So every year, Jim does the Beast in honor of Blaize.

“He’s come such a long way,” said Jim. “Here is a kid that wasn’t expected to talk. It’s amazing to see everything that he is doing.”

Rachel has seen that progress, too. Blaize, non-verbal when he started preschool at the Elizabeth Lee Black School, recorded narration for the school’s recent play at the Erie

Playhouse. He enjoys music and has started dance lessons. He’s trying out a variety of sports, and recently earned three gold medals in his first Special Olympics.

“He really enjoys social activities and is becoming more engaged with others,” said Rachel. “He is seeking out other children in his class to play.”

Rachel said that Blaize has always enjoyed the Mini-Beast, an obstacle course set up each spring in the school’s gym. So when he turned 12 last year, Rachel signed him up for the Beast adapted course held at Waldameer in conjunction with the 10-mile Beast course.

“He really likes challenges and enjoyed going through with all of the people cheering,” said Rachel. “He really thrives in that kind of environment where there is so much encouragement.”

Every year, Blaize and his family would be waiting for Jim at the finish line. Last year, Jim was waiting for Blaize so that they could cross together. “That was the best,” said Jim.

For 2019, Jim has two goals. He’ll try to beat last year’s Beast performance, and he’s working hard to raise even more donations this year. But, he doesn’t want to earn first place again. “I really do hope that someone will beat me,” said Jim. “That will mean even more was raised for a good cause.”



Blaize performing in the Erie Playhouse production “The Rainbow Fish.”



NEW BEAST, NEW OBSTACLES

Kate Thiem makes her way across the "Tail of the Beast," one of six new obstacles to be introduced at this year's Barber Beast on the Bay.

What challenges you most? Scaling across moving grids? Gripping metal bars while hanging upside down? Or is it the well-established test of running on the sand?

Whatever you're looking for, chances are you'll find it at the 2019 Beast on the Bay on Saturday, Sept. 7. Six new obstacles will be added to the mix of physical trials, along with a revised 10-mile course over sand, trails and roadway.

More than 1,000 participants from 16 states and Canada have already signed up. Don't miss an experience you'll never regret – register today at BarberBeast.org.



Mike Estrada hangs on as he makes his way down the "Rings of Fire."

THANK YOU SPONSORS!



MINI BEAST BRINGS GIANT SMILES

Students closed out a wonderful school year with their own obstacle course challenge designed by faculty in the Elizabeth Lee Black School. Mini Beast activities were adaptable for all ages and abilities with the same result – smiles for everyone involved!

At one of the favorite obstacles, speech therapist Amy Moczulski helps Damien Lane launch bean bags at the targets.



Participating in groundbreaking ceremonies for the new group home were, from left, Barber National Institute board member Mary Ita Power; Fr. James Power; John Barber; Nancy Curran with staff member Kayla Riesdorph; Rep. Robert Merski; Diana Zenewicz, parent; Fiore Leone, Erie County Council; and Rep. Pat Harkins.

NEW HOME COMING TO BAYFRONT NEIGHBORHOOD

A new addition will soon be welcomed to Erie's east Bayfront neighborhood anchored by the Barber National Institute. Construction is underway on a group home residence located at 203 East Ave. The modern, 4,800-square-foot structure will offer enhanced accessibility for adults with significant physical challenges.

The facility, expected to open in fall 2019, will offer:

- An attractive brick edifice with an outdoor patio accented by flower gardens and trees.
- Four spacious bedrooms providing privacy for personal care needs. An office near the cluster of bedrooms keeps staff close by throughout the night.
- Two living areas providing flexibility for residents' interests and preferences.
- A large kitchen with portions of the counter at wheelchair level to enable residents to participate in meal preparation.

- Circular driveway for easier transportation.
- Two completely accessible bathrooms.
- Wider doorways and hallways.

The new home represents another significant investment in the east Bayfront neighborhood that the Barber National Institute has been committed to for more than six decades. In all, more than \$4.5 million has been spent on renovations to buildings, improved lighting and other outdoor security features, and the development of green spaces.

The new facility is designed by Roth Marz Partnership and construction is being completed by Building Systems Incorporated (BSI) of Erie.

Donors interested in supporting the construction project are encouraged to contact Laura Schaaf, director of Giving, at the Dr. Gertrude A. Barber Foundation at 874-5802 or lschaaf@BarberInstitute.org.

NOW, TWO FAMILIES

When Missy Zenewicz was 16 years old, her parents made a big decision – moving her into a Barber National Institute group home. Her mother, Diana, said that it was a choice that continues to enrich all of their lives.

Missy was just nine months old when she was diagnosed with cerebral palsy and microcephaly, a rare condition that affects brain development. She became one of the first babies in the Early Intervention Program and then attended the Elizabeth Lee Black School.

When starting services, Diana said that the first person she met was Dr. Gertrude Barber, who she remembers for her positive, calming way and her wealth of information. “Dr. Barber attended every parent meeting or event,” said Diana. “We found out that the services that we all took for granted all had a story and a fight behind them.”

Making the transition to a group home 31 years ago was a big step for Missy, Diana and their family, but one that they soon realized was the right choice. “Group home living has given Missy an opportunity to build relationships – friendships with her peers. Her behaviors improved and we were amazed at what they could get Missy to do.”



Diana Zenewicz with her daughter, Missy.

Diana shared her family’s story during groundbreaking ceremonies for the new group home currently under construction.

As a parent, she expressed what many other families have come to experience in the group homes. “We now say that Missy has two families – the family she was born to and the family that she has found at the Barber National Institute group home. Actually, the staff has become a second family to us all. It was the best decision we ever made.”



ERIE GIVES 2019 IS TUESDAY, AUG. 13 FROM 8 A.M. – 8 P.M.

This year, all donations to the Barber National Institute during Erie Gives will support the new group home for adults with significant physical challenges.

Donations can be made online during this 12-hour period at **ErieGives.org**. New this year is the option of making a donation by check in advance of the online giving event.

Checks must be:

- Made out to the Erie Community Foundation and be accompanied by a check donation form available at ErieGives.org
- Mailed or delivered to the Erie Community Foundation at 459 West Sixth Street, Erie, PA 16507 by Monday, Aug. 12.

All donations will receive a prorated match from the Erie Community Foundation and participating sponsors.



Rendering of new group home under construction for adults with significant physical challenges



James Fonash, right, works alongside his job coach, Trummel Baker, to clean at the Courtyard Marriott Hotel in Philadelphia.

JOB OPENS “NEW HORIZON”

The windows have never sparkled so much at the Courtyard Marriott Hotel on City Avenue.

James Fonash sees to that.

James is one of five individuals hired at the Philadelphia hotel with assistance from the Barber National Institute Supported Employment Program. For the 49-year-old Philadelphia man, it's his first real job — a milestone his parents thought they might never see.

All I know is he can't wait to get up in the morning, put on his uniform and go to work," says his father, James Fonash, Sr. "It is a new horizon for us. We just never imagined that we would see this day."

The partnership between Courtyard Marriott and the Barber National Institute has led to the goal of community employment in housekeeping, the laundry department and the hotel bistro. Job coaches from the Barber National Institute shadow each employee throughout their workday to help them develop all of the skills they need to be successful.

"We're helping them, and they're helping us," says Laura Williams, head of HR at the Courtyard Marriott Philadelphia City Avenue. "It's hard to find team members who are excited and extremely proud to come to work every day. That's what we get with an employee from the Barber National Institute."

Things started off a bit rocky for James. He initially had difficulty controlling his emotions on the job. But with calm guidance from his dedicated job coach as well as patience from the Marriott staff, James quickly became comfortable in his role.

"James vacuums and cleans the windows on several floors of our hotel every day," Williams says. "He's proud of the job he does and takes it very seriously. It's an inspiration to see him at work."

For information about
Supported Employment, call:
Erie – 814-878-4143
Pittsburgh – 412-220-6030
Philadelphia – 215-871-0731



ARTISTS AWARDED AT ART SHOW



A panel of judges selected work for awards in the Jay & Mona Kang Art Show and Sale at the Barber National Institute. Pictured at the adult artist presentation were, from left, Dr. Maureen Barber Carey, Executive Vice President; Drs. Mona and Jay Kang, Art Show sponsors; Francis Demaske, Honorable Mention; Peter Garami, Honorable Mention/Photography; Robert Harris, Honorable Mention; R. Reynolds Frost, Best of Show/Photography; Lynn Marie Fizel, Honorable Mention; Jill Rouke, Best of Show; Dorothy Kloss, Honorable Mention/Photography; Maggie Rutkowski, Honorable Mention/Photography; John Barber, President & Chief Executive Officer; and Bridget Barber, Vice President, External Affairs.

Pictured at the ceremony for youth awards were, front row, from left, Cassandra McLaughlin, Honorable Mention Award; Ashley Reider, Honorable Mention; Yeslian Vargas, Best of Show Award in PreK – Grade 6; Owen Johnson, Best of Show Photography PreK – Grade 6; Noah Perino, Honorable Mention; and Austin Weaver, Honorable Mention in Photography. Back row, from left, Dr. Jay Kang; Danielle Carpenter, Best of Show, grades 7 – 12; Allison Myers, Best of Show Photography, Grades 7 – 12; Dr. Maureen Barber-Carey; Bridget Barber; and John Barber.

OPENING A HOME, AND A HEART



Provider Wendy Sadlier, center, enjoys the dinner with her Lifesharing participants, Amy Murphy, left and Judy Anderson.



Sherry Neil participates in Lifesharing with Tina and Mike Mercer.

Providers and the adults who have joined their families celebrated the 25th anniversary of the program that brought them together. A dinner was held April 30 for the Lifesharing program that has served more than 60 adults and their provider families since it began in 1994.

Lifesharing was established to enable families, which could include traditional families, empty-nesters, couples or individuals, to bring an adult with intellectual disabilities into their home to form an enduring, long-term relationship. Providers receive support from staff at the Barber National Institute to match them with adults and to help them in addressing their needs.

Many of the providers described feeling that they have received much more than they have given in relationships with the adults. One adult, Lamont, expressed the gratitude that the providers and adults have felt about their experience. "They're wonderful," he said. "I thank God for them every day."

Are you interested in opening your home – and your heart – to an adult with a disability?

Lifesharing providers are needed in the Erie and Philadelphia regions. Learn more by contacting the Barber National Institute at 814-878-4115.



CELEBRATING THE ARTS

A collaborative piece was featured at the Art Show held in May at the Pittsburgh offices. Andrea Little, Antonio Allessi (front row) and Tia Wiley, participants in the Barber National Institute art program, look over the artwork, "Gateway to the Steel City," with Jared Delio, back left, center manager at Grifols Biomat; Laura Schaaf, director of Giving at the Barber National Institute; and Dan Streepy, associate director in the Bridgeville Program. Artists from Grifols Biomat, the event's major sponsor, worked on the piece that was one of more than 70 pieces of artwork on exhibit.



Volunteer Christina Lachia, left, and Sarah Lupo took a brief break from dancing at this year's adult prom sponsored by the Barber National Institute Expanding Social Opportunities (ESO) program.

PROM PERFECTION

More than 200 adults from the community had a wild time at "Safari Soiree," the fourth annual adult Prom sponsored by the Barber National Institute Expanding Social Opportunities (ESO) program.

The event, held June 8 at the Bel-Aire Clarion Hotel, was complete with music, flowers and crowns for all of the prom kings and queens.

Refreshments were sponsored by the Corry VFW and Curtze Foods, and corsages and boutonnieres were created by college students on the ESO Council.

Robin Davis from Hair Cutz provided free makeup and hair styling for more than twenty women attending the prom. Davis also worked with Planet Hope to bring dresses to the Barber National Institute for a pre-prom shopping day where adults could select their perfect outfit and accessories free of charge.

The prom is one of eight dances sponsored by the ESO program throughout the year with assistance from student volunteers from Gannon University, Mercyhurst University, Edinboro University and Penn State Behrend.



A volunteer pins a boutonniere on Tom Mantsch at the start of the dance.

CONCERT ENTERTAINS ADULTS AND STAFF IN SOMERSET

Katy Howard, standing at right, band director at Meyerdale School, introduces the school's Jazz Band before a concert at the Somerset adult day program. The band, which has given a holiday performance for several years, added a spring concert to their schedule for adults and staff at the facility.



COMMITTEE AT WORK ON LADIES ONLY LUNCHEON



Committee members are at work on preparations for the Ladies Only Luncheon to be held Saturday, Nov. 22 at The Kahkwa Club. Seated from left are:

Deb Musolff, Shannon Latouf and Jennifer Nygaard Pontzer. Standing are Dr. Maureen Barber-Carey, Shanda Coleman, Gretchen Hunter, Rhonda Sember, Julie Sanner, Janet Fowler, Sally Leubin, Kari Nygaard, 2019 Chair Woman.

Also on the committee are Wendy Bahm, Jeanne Baker, Bridget Barber, Emily Hutchinson, Emily Ingram, Lesli Lindenberger, Julie McCain, Pam McCormick, Cede McNutt, Lynne Miller, Annie Rutkowski, Mary Rutkowski, Carolyn Sabolcik, Lisa Salvia, and Laure Sieber.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

For more information about all events, visit BarberInstitute.org

ERIE GIVES

AUG. 13

BARBER BEAST ON THE BAY

SEPT. 7

PRESQUE ISLE STATE PARK /WALDAMEER & WATERWORLD

LADIES ONLY LUNCHEON

NOV. 22

THE KAHKWA CLUB

BARBER CHRISTMAS BALL

DEC. 14

BAYFRONT CONVENTION CENTER



EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

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

THERAPIES

Traditional & Specialized Family Based Mental Health Services
Acute Partialization Program for Children
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
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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ELIZABETH LEE BLACK SCHOOL AGAIN RECOGNIZED FOR EXCELLENCE

The National Association of Special Education Teachers (NASET) has again recognized the Elizabeth Lee Black School for meeting its highest standards to be named a School of Excellence. The honor is presented to private special education schools that meet rigorous professional criteria and demonstrate exceptional dedication, commitment and achievement for students. This marks the 12th consecutive year that the school has achieved the distinction since becoming the first school in Pennsylvania to earn the honor in 2007.



OUR MISSION STATEMENT

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.