

BARBER SPIRIT

FALL 2020



**WORKING TOGETHER
TO STAY HEALTHY
& SAFE**



 Barber National Institute



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Friends,

Every fall, we look forward to the swell of student laughter in our hallways and gatherings for holiday events and activities. This, of course, is not that ordinary time. Thankfully, our students are back, but safely confined to their classrooms throughout the day. And our gatherings are now a matrix of squares on a computer screen.

But one thing continues to be true, now more than ever. I have never been prouder of the staff of the Barber National Institute who have stepped up to meet the challenges of this unprecedented time. This issue provides just a glimpse of the extraordinary work that our dedicated employees are doing to ensure that the vulnerable populations we serve continue to receive the essential services they need.

Secondly, I have never been so grateful for the generous support of our donors who are making a meaningful investment in our mission. This help is so important as we face the unforeseen expenses and the impact on our reimbursement that we could never have anticipated.

Various economic relief programs for non-profits, such as Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loans, are not available to larger non-profits with more than 500 employees. While larger non-profits such as the Barber National Institute serve a greater number of people, our needs multiply, too. As one of Pennsylvania's largest providers of adult day programs, we have a significant amount of fixed costs. We were deeply impacted by the state-mandated shut down of these programs and, even as we reopen, we operate at limited capacity by state order.

The generosity of our friends and supporters, while always deeply appreciated, now becomes even more vital to continue our mission. As you read about the ways that we continue bringing hope and opportunity amid this challenging time, I hope that you will consider how you can support this work.

Please accept my best wishes for good health to you and your family, and for a blessed, uplifting holiday season.

Sincerely,

John J. Barber
President & Chief Executive Officer



Barber National Institute
Making dreams come true.

SERVICES & SUPPORTS

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

Family Based Mental Health Services
Acute Children's Partial Hospitalization Program
Speech, Occupational & 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
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
Online Gift Shop

BarberInstitute.org

ON THE COVER

We are grateful to the many staff and families who have contributed photos for this issue.

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.



A BRIGHT BEGINNING IN AN UNCERTAIN TIME

Jenna Young helps her son, Lincoln, through physical therapy while getting direction from therapist Megan Bonk on their computer.

Lincoln Young had just started physical therapy in the Barber National Institute's Early Intervention Program in February when, a month in, his parents found out that in-person services would be interrupted. Their option, they soon learned, would be telehealth therapy over a computer or phone.

"We were a little concerned about going remote but honestly, we were so relieved that we were able to continue therapy and see Lincoln continue to make progress," said Jenna Young, Lincoln's mom.

When preparing for the change, Lincoln's physical therapist, Megan Bonk, was more concerned about how she could be effective without hands-on therapy. "I knew I would have to get really good at explaining and less concerned about demonstrating," said Megan.

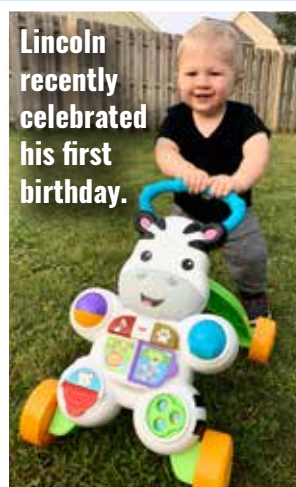
Jenna set up Facetime on her iPad, and both she and Megan soon found that they could pick up right where they left off. At four months of age, Lincoln had started therapy for torticollis, a tightening of the muscles around his shoulders and neck that led to weakness on one side of his body. If untreated, the condition can adversely affect a child's development, including their ability to crawl and walk. Around the same time, Lincoln also had started wearing a helmet to correct a flattened area on his head.

When starting out, Megan noticed that families could be a little intimidated to do the therapy with their child. But, with direction from the therapist, she saw that their confidence level grew quickly and they became much more involved in the sessions.

Jenna said that she and her husband, who are both pharmacists, benefited greatly from the experience. "We both work in the health care field, but this is our first baby and we did not know about all of the milestones he would be achieving," said Jenna. "They brought a new perspective that I didn't have as a first-time parent."

Jenna also appreciated the skills they developed to incorporate therapeutic activities into their child's life. "Megan showed us different ways to approach playing with him, like using toys with different sounds and holding them at different angles. And if one thing didn't work for him, she would find something else."

At the end of August, Lincoln had reached all of the benchmarks and was ready to be discharged from therapy. At a time when so many things were unsettled, Jenna is thankful that her son could get the best start possible. "We are so pleased with the Barber National Institute's willingness to adapt to continue the therapy when everything seemed so uncertain," said Jenna. "For something that could be difficult for a parent, everything went so smoothly."



SCHOOL BELLS RING AGAIN



Paraprofessional Kathy Nicholson and teacher Stephanie Lorei create individual boxes of school supplies for each student. Plexiglas dividers on each table provide barriers while enabling preschool students to see each other and teachers.

A new school year used to mean a stylish new book bag and flashy new sneakers. This year, in preparation for an unusual and unprecedented time, supply lists also include masks and hand sanitizer.

But in spite of all of the new safeguards and procedures, the focus is still about welcoming students back. “Our teachers have expressed so often how excited they are to finally be seeing the students again,” said Dr. Maureen Barber-Carey. “And parents were also looking forward to their children returning to the classroom, and all of the supports that they have in the school.”

The year ended abruptly when schools across the state closed in mid-March. Even during the Extended School Year that takes place in July, all instruction was provided remotely. Parents were sent packets of learning materials, and teachers offered online lessons and activities.

By the time the Elizabeth Lee Black School reopened on Sept. 8, more than 90% of families had decided to send their children back for in-classroom instruction. Most of the parents who elected to continue with remote learning were expecting that their child would return for the start of the second quarter.

“Whether the child is in the classroom or continuing to learn at home, our faculty is very creative in meeting their needs and continuing their education,” said Dr. Barber-Carey.

Part of the reason for the smooth start of the school year was the months of preparation and planning for the return of students. The physical environment has had many changes, including the spacing out of student desks and work stations, the addition of Plexiglas dividers in the preschool classrooms, and the posting of arrows and other signage to ensure social distancing in hallways.

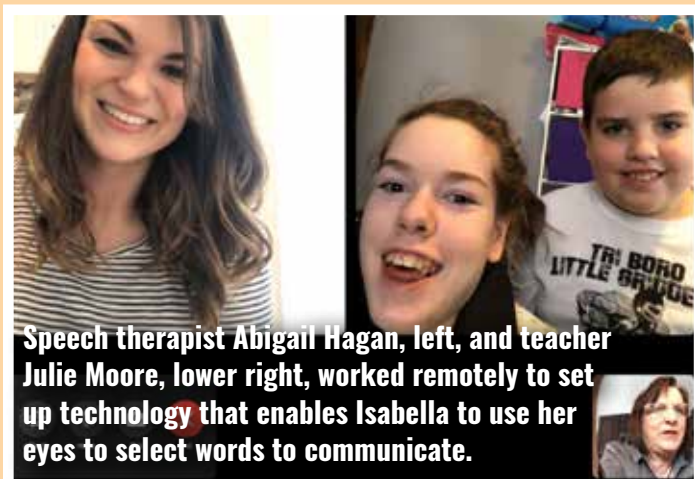
Many procedures have been instituted as well, as all staff and students have their temperatures taken upon arrival every day. To limit the possibility of exposure, students remain in their classrooms for the entire day, where they receive all necessary therapies and even have their lunch delivered.

Faculty wear masks, and so do most students. “From the first day, even children as young as three years of age were proudly wearing their masks,” said Dr. Barber-Carey. “For those other students who struggle with it, we are working to desensitize them in the hope that they will be able to wear masks for at least a portion of the day.”

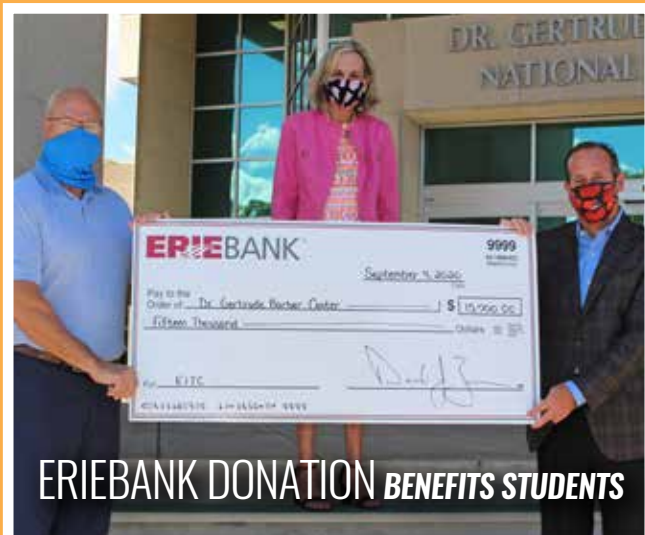
The complete safety plan is posted at BarberInstitute.org/ELBSplan.

Masks, social distancing and all of the other changes have done little to dampen the school spirit.

“Even though this start was very different from any other year, we know that students are still learning, growing and having fun,” said Dr. Barber-Carey.



Speech therapist Abigail Hagan, left, and teacher Julie Moore, lower right, worked remotely to set up technology that enables Isabella to use her eyes to select words to communicate.



ERIEBANK DONATION *BENEFITS STUDENTS*

Thanks to ErieBank for a \$15,000 donation made through the Educational Improvement Tax Credit Program (EITC). Scott Calhoun, left, Vice President/Commercial Lending, and ErieBank President Dave Zimmer recently presented the contribution to Executive Vice President Dr. Maureen Barber-Carey. The donation will help fund scholarships for qualifying preschool students.



SUMMER LEARNING *IS AMAZING*

Student Noah Vogan showed just how much can be accomplished with remote learning when everyone pulls together. During the Extended School Year program this summer, he created a maze with online support from his teachers and hands-on help from family. Way to go to make science fun!

Visit the Elizabeth Lee Black School

New video tours take visitors to see the gym, pool, classrooms and other areas of the school. Visit the Approved Private School at BarberInstitute.org/ELBS and see preschool programs at BarberInstitute.org/preschool



PRESCHOOL CLASSROOM *IS BREATH OF FRESH AIR*

Teacher Janine Zaunegger holds circle time for children in class, as well as a student learning remotely via an iPad.

Whoever said “the world is your classroom” could have been talking about the outdoor learning space for PreK Counts. The grass-covered, open-air spot was created nearly two years ago to promote STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) activities. It has taken on expanded usage during the current school year as a large portion of the preschool day takes place in the gated, outdoor area.

“Guidance from the Dept. of Education and other agencies encourages maximizing the use of outdoor space during the school day,” said Kathy Bastow, M.Ed., PreK Counts Director. “This allows students and staff to be out in the fresh air for the majority of their day, even into the winter months.”

To prepare for this school year, the PreK Counts team acquired additional equipment and materials to expand STEM options and establish more learning areas throughout the outdoor classroom. With a creative approach, the team found ways for students to learn many of the same traditional lessons in an outdoor environment. Extensive safety procedures are also followed outside, and materials were selected that could be easily sanitized as needed.

For families who chose remote learning, new technology is helping those students continue their education and preparation for kindergarten.

While the school year is getting off to an unusual start, the outdoor classroom offers PreK Counts students even more opportunities to learn while having fun.





NO PLACE LIKE HOME

Jonie Potter, right, is learning to make a hook rug for her room. She also enjoys making jewelry to share with other residents and staff.

Addults in the Barber National Institute's 95 group homes enjoyed the active and happily ordinary lives we all strive for. Visits with family and friends, outings to dinner or movies, shopping trips to area stores. Then, life as they knew it came to a sudden halt.

In mid-March, more than 330 residents went into a state of quarantine, staying in their homes 24 hours a day, seven days a week. While the sudden change was difficult for some adults to adjust to, the precautions were necessary to ensure the health and safety for this vulnerable population and the staff who cared for them. Individuals with disabilities, who often have pre-existing medical conditions, are at a higher risk of developing serious complications from the Covid-19 virus.



Staff and residents make birthday parties extra special.

"Our first and highest priority was responding to the threat of this virus with a comprehensive protocol to keep everyone safe," said Jennifer Lawrence, Vice President, Residential, Family Focused Services and LifeSharing. "But it quickly became clear that we had to also ensure that residents could safely continue the active and fulfilling lives that they had been enjoying."

Safety First

To create a safe environment, homes were stocked with disinfecting supplies for frequent cleaning, providing special attention to high-touch surfaces throughout the day. Temperatures of staff and residents are all taken daily, and staff wears masks throughout their shifts. All residential staff received training about the virus and infection control measures, and teams were assigned to each home to limit the number of staff who would have contact with residents. Only residential managers went grocery shopping, using each trip to stock up on items that might be needed.

Of all of the safety steps taken, restricting visitors was the most difficult for many families and residents. "We knew how hard this would be, but it was absolutely necessary for the safety of our residents and staff," said Jennifer.

"The group home staff made it a priority to connect residents with their families, often setting up phone and online times so that they could all talk and see each other."

As community restrictions eased and family visits resumed during the summer, many safeguards are still in place. Visits are limited to immediate family members in either the group home or the family home, everyone has their temperature taken and family members sign an attestation about their health status.

Staying Healthy, Staying Happy

In addition to maintaining safety, residential staff are focused on ensuring that adults are as happy and comfortable in their homes as possible. They have been creative in developing an array of activities to meet the preferences of individual residents, as well as constructing group undertakings to forge connections among the adults and staff.

The homes purchased supplies of arts and crafts materials to provide creative outlets. Many of the homes set up "spa days" so the ladies could get their hair and nails done. Others had a variety of cooking lessons, with everything from baking banana bread to assembling pizzas.

As the weather improved, homes held backyard picnics and sightseeing drives to landmarks in their communities. They also invested in a variety of yard games to help adults stay active, and held basketball games and other sports contests.

Throughout the past several months, special occasions have become extraordinary celebrations. Residents in one home assembled Easter baskets for their loved ones, and staff delivered them to the family homes. And birthdays have become all-out celebrations, with creative decorations and special dinners for the honoree. Jerome Owens, a resident in a Philadelphia home, was



BACK FOR BINGO



Residents of Barber National Institute group homes enjoy a favorite pastime and see their friends with weekly online bingo games. Cheryl Lepkowski, program specialist at the Lakeside Senior Center, organizes the online games and calls the numbers, while adults connect and play from their own homes.

disappointed that he could not go out for dinner to his favorite restaurant. To make up for it, staff recreated the dining experience in the home, even providing Jerome with a printed menu of some of his favorite dishes that would be served for dinner.

Jennifer believes the reason the homes have been running so smoothly during this challenging time is the dedication of the entire residential team, including the direct support professionals, the residential managers and the program specialists. "We always knew we had dedicated staff, but I think that the way they have met the demands and challenges of this time has really proved that," said Jennifer. "It shows how well they know each of their individuals, and how committed they are to creating a family environment while keeping everyone safe."



Residents in Philadelphia plant flowers to brighten their homes.

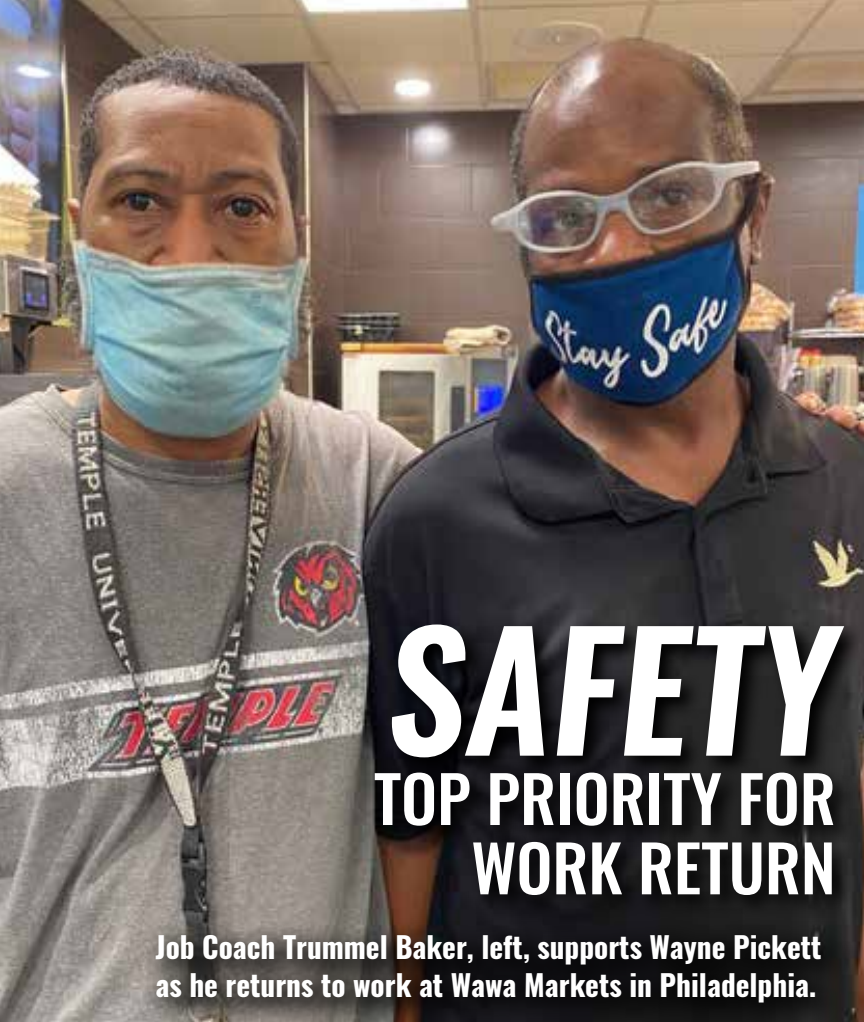
"The way staff has responded shows that, for them, the residents really are like family."

HELP IN THE HOME



Janna Fischer continues to receive services in her home with dedicated Agency With Choice staff Chelsie Gilson.

When Covid-19 first hit in March, parent Margie Fischer said, "I never knew such fear could exist." She was worried about keeping her daughter, Janna, safe while still meeting her needs. The Fischers are one of more than 500 families that continue to receive essential services in their home from more than 700 staff in the Agency With Choice program. Margie said that she really appreciates all of the precautions that her staff are taking while still providing Janna with the support she needs. "Their smiles are visible in their eyes behind those masks," said Margie. "We are truly blessed to have such beautiful, loving and caring Agency With Choice staff in our home."



Job Coach Trummel Baker, left, supports Wayne Pickett as he returns to work at Wawa Markets in Philadelphia.

As restrictions began to lift in the hard-hit area of Philadelphia, adults like Wayne Pickett were eager to get back to their jobs in the community. For the staff assisting them in the Supported Employment Program, however, the first priority was ensuring that adults would remain safe and healthy when they returned to the worksites.

Trummel Baker, a job coach in the Philadelphia program, paved the way for Wayne by developing a plan to safely transition back to employment. He worked to ensure that the necessary safety protocols were in place at Wawa Food Markets, a large chain of convenience stores in the region where Wayne had been working.

Next, Trummel made sure that Wayne understood all of the new safeguards that had been put in place to prevent the spread of infection. Trummel secured a supply of masks and gloves for Wayne, and trained him in wearing the protective gear during his work shift.

With transportation changes, Trummel arranged to pick up Wayne for his shift, and drive him back to his group home after work.

While precautions remain ongoing, Wayne is happy that, with Trummel's help, he can remain on the job.

A NEW DAY DAWNS WITH PROGRAM REOPENINGS

Over the course of several months, adults and families would call the Bollinger Campus asking when day programs would reopen. Finally, in early August, there was good news to share with them. The reopening set for Aug. 3 brought a happy response from the adults, who said they were looking forward to getting back into their routines and seeing friends and staff again.

Community Participation Supports and other Day Programs were closed March 17 by a mandate from the Office of Developmental Programs. Barber National Institute programs in Erie, Girard, Corry, Warren, Bedford and Somerset were among the first phase of programs to reopen during early and mid-August, with programs reopening in Pittsburgh and Philadelphia in September. Programs can operate at up to 75% of capacity, and all adults must first participate in a meeting with their supports team and family to determine their preferences for programming.

Safety preparations at the sites actually began months before doors reopened. Changes were made to the physical environment, with signage added to the floors and hallways with reminders for social distancing, work areas were spread out and Plexiglas dividers were installed in many areas.

Each day starts with temperature readings for all staff and adults. Staff walk individuals through the program to show them safe pathways, and they review plans for lunch that ensure social distancing. Everyone – all staff and adults – wear face coverings throughout the day.



Kelly Witchcoff has a temperature check with Community Support Professional John Belovarac as she arrives at Club Erie.



Club Erie continues to offer volunteer activities to safely engage adults in their communities. Derek Herbert, left, Community Support Professional in Club Erie, assists Maria Kaliszuk in refilling bird feeders at Asbury Woods.

Day program staff also completed additional training on infection control, and help with ensuring that all of the adults receive their training when they return about proper mask wearing, hand washing, recognizing the signs and symptoms of the virus, and other topics intended to keep them safe. The training includes “social stories” that use words or images to explain many of the safety concepts.

Increased cleaning occurs throughout the day, particularly of all high-touch surfaces, with a more thorough disinfecting every night.

Activities that allow for social distancing are planned in the community, depending on safeguards in each location.

For Club Erie, this has meant more outdoor activities, including Dance Vibe classes that became “Dancing in the Park” sessions. “The individuals were moving to the music more enthusiastically and they came back at the end of their day still talking about how much fun they had getting out and moving,” said Jenifer Gross, Club Erie Operations Supervisor.

Since reopening, Jen has heard enthusiastic comments from many of the adults and families. “One father said his daughter needed a routine that involved being around her friends, and not just him, all of the time. She missed the social interaction and being busy in the community.”

Even amid all of the safeguards, the programs focus on accommodating the preferences of each individual.

“Whether they are in the community or remaining in the programs, adults still have many options to choose activities that they enjoy,” said Carrie Kontis, Chief Officer, Intellectual Disabilities Services. “We are very happy to again be working directly with the individuals to help them engage in the kind of life and activities that they want.”



Day programs reopened Aug. 3. at the Bollinger Campus.



Katelyn Myers contemplates her color choices for artwork she is creating at the Journeys Program.

FOR JOB SEEKERS, THE SEARCH MUST GO ON

virtual meetings to assess his interests and look for open positions. But Marquis sensed that the lack of in-person contact was affecting their progress.

“The biggest challenge in the pandemic is finding new ways to connect when you don’t have that tangible presence,” said Marquis. “Particularly for adults who are non-verbal or have limited verbal communication, it is important to find a new way to build a bond with them.”

For Gabe, this meant building a rapport by talking about his favorite video games, and then moving onto employment in that context.

As traditional job tryouts and exploration at businesses had to be avoided, Marquis and other job coaches began looking for videos they could share with the adults to help them understand and become comfortable with a possible work environment.

After submitting an application, Gabe and Marquis were called to an in-person job interview – all while maintaining social distancing. Gabe was offered his first job with Service Masters, and is now part of the cleaning staff at UPMC Magee Women’s Hospital Clinic in Erie.

For Tom Carlucci, restrictions surrounding the pandemic led to a layoff from his full-time job. He quickly found a part-time position with another employer, but was still committed to a full-time job. Marquis used screen sharing to show Tom how to look at job sites, and even submit an application on his own.

A job coach accompanied Tom to an in-person interview that was quickly followed by an offer for a job with Metz Culinary Management in a position with the cleaning staff at Lord Corp.

While the pandemic has changed how the Supported Employment team helps adults look for and locate jobs, their ultimate goal is the same – bringing together skilled and dedicated adults with the perfect job at a community employer.



Gabe Counasse is at work in his first job with Service Masters at the UPMC Magee Women’s Hospital Clinic in Erie.

Whether it’s finding a new job after a Covid-related lay off, or landing a first job with a community employer – the Supported Employment Program is providing virtual and in-person support to make those dreams come true.

To be sure, the effects of the pandemic have changed how job development and searches are being done. “We couldn’t revert to the previous ways of doing business,” said Marquis Wallace, transitional team leader. “While it’s been a challenge, it has also had its rewards as we all have had to look for something new and different in ourselves, and find different ways for the process to be successful.”

More than 40 adults in the Erie region are still being coached at jobs that are considered to be essential through the pandemic. And some adults, such as Gabe Counasse, were still committed to finding a job in the current climate.

Gabe had been working with a cleaning team in Small Group Employment, and then moved into

SHILLELAGH MAN OF THE YEAR AWARD



A tradition of more than 30 years continued this summer with the presentation of the Shillelagh Man of the Year Award to Norm Boetger, Jr., second from right. Joining in presenting the honor were, from left, John Barber, president and chief executive officer of the Barber National Institute; Bridget Barber, vice president for external affairs; Norm’s wife, Linda; and Dr. Maureen Barber-Carey, executive vice president. A long-time supporter of the organization, Norm has raised more than \$70,000 for the Barber National Institute with an annual golf tournament held in memory of his father. The Shillelagh continues through the fall as a golf outing.

STILL BEATING THE BEAST!

The Beast was back for 2020, but with a whole new look. With Barber Beast on the Block, participants decided where and when to do a virtual 5K in support of the Barber National Institute. Registrations came from 16 states and two foreign countries. Patrick's Beasts, above, a team named in honor of Patrick Sullivan, center, came together to walk in their own neighborhood. Every year, Patrick participates in the adapted course held at Waldameer Park as part of Barber Beast on the Bay. The adapted course, as well as the 10-mile obstacle course challenge, are planned for Saturday, Sept. 11, 2021.



BARBER BEAST
ON THE BAY
Barber National Institute



The
Jay & Mona Kang

ART SHOW & Sale

CELEBRATING THE POSSIBILITIES

For information and updates about the 15th annual Art Show & Sale in 2021, check BarberInstitute.org/artshow

THE SHOW DID GO ON!



Drs. Jay and Mona Kang with their children, Genelia and Jared, welcomed Art Show visitors in a virtual message.

The creative work of talented artists from throughout the region was featured online in the first Jay & Mona Kang Virtual Art Show and Sale. On exhibit were more than 270 works in a variety of media by adult artists and 100 pieces created by youth artists, including artwork from students at the Elizabeth Lee Black School and adults in the fine arts program at the Barber National Institute.

Show patrons were invited to a preview, the Chris & Phil English Donor Debut, followed by a three-week online exhibit open to viewers everywhere. In an opening video statement, Dr. Jay Kang told visitors, "The Barber Institute's contribution to our community is definitely unquestioned, and for us, it is an honor to be part of this organization in any capacity."



BARBER BEHAVIORAL HEALTH UPDATE



Coping with all of the changes brought on by Covid-19 can be difficult, or even overwhelming. Cecilia Hollands, MA, LPC, Senior Clinical Supervisor for the Barber Behavioral Health Institute, offers these answers to common questions about the effects of the pandemic.

How is the pandemic affecting people's mental and emotional health? What are some of the most common issues you have seen?

We have seen a substantial impact from the Covid-19 pandemic on both mental and emotional well-being. In children and adolescents, there has been a definite increase in anxiety. Particularly in children, this can manifest in a number of different ways, such as an increase in noncompliance, tantrums, meltdowns, and/or engaging in potentially harmful or risky behaviors. In the adults that we serve, there has been a running theme of stress and anxiety related to financial and employment concerns. For those who may already lack a strong natural support network, the Covid-19 pandemic has increased feelings of alienation and isolation from others.

What is some advice to help people protect their emotional health and feel their best?

For parents, one of the most important things they can do to allay their children's anxiety is to talk to them about Covid-19 and why things have changed. This way, children won't jump to their own conclusions or "fill in the blanks," so to speak. Additionally, parents should let their children know that it is safe and okay to share any worries or questions they might have related to changes brought on by Covid-19.

Another precaution people of all ages can take is to set limits around how much time is spent gathering data and Covid-19 updates--and to make sure that they're getting their information from reputable sources. Additionally, it can be helpful to spend some time each day focusing on what activities can still be done safely (such as walking, bike riding or gardening) and to find ways to stay safely connected to loved ones. Last, it never hurts to take a few quiet moments each day practicing simple gratitude for those aspects of life that we often overlook, like our health, having a home, or even something as seemingly trivial as a beautiful, sunny day.

What are the signs that it may be time to get professional help?

If you find that you're worrying excessively or feel anxious or depressed most of the time, it's a sign that you should seek professional help. Additionally, if your symptoms are interfering with your day-to-day functioning (such as your ability to go to work, school or take care of basic hygiene tasks), then that's another indicator that professional help is needed. To get started, do some online research to find local mental health providers in your area. Your primary care provider may be able to assist you in your search as well.

For more information, visit BarberInstitute.org/BBHI or call 814-878-4063.

CAMPERS CONNECT IN A VIRTUAL WORLD



At the end of this summer's virtual Connections Camp, staff hosted a drive thru send off for the campers and their families.

A visit to the San Diego Zoo, an adventure with dolphins at Marineland, a tour of the neighborhood firehouse. These are just some of the things that children in Connections Camp did this summer – all without ever leaving the safety of home.

For the first time, Connections was a virtual camp for children and teens with high-functioning autism. As they participated in a range of remote activities, campers had opportunities to interact with each other to build the communication, social and coping skills that are the hallmark of the summer experience.

In a survey conducted after the Camp, parents shared their overwhelmingly positive comments about the experience. "They really did a good job of keeping (my daughter) engaged and encouraging her to contribute," wrote one parent.

"They taught tolerance of the new virtual world, which I was able to have a sneak peek of what it would look like," commented another parent.

Even though they could not be physically together during the four-week program, Camp staff brought everyone for a drive-thru celebration.



DRIVE-BY GOODBYES

The cancellation of the usual large graduation ceremony did not keep faculty and families from celebrating the achievements of our students completing preschool programs. Cars of graduates, parents and other family members from PreK Counts, Happy Hearts Preschool and Early Intervention classes rolled through a send off in July where faculty presented diplomas and congratulations. Above, Ryleigh Laseck has a celebratory photo with PreK Counts teacher Janine Zaunegger (foreground) and teacher Kristin Fisher (in background).

BENCHES DONATED FOR NEW MUSICAL GARDEN



Dr. Maureen Barber-Carey joins PreK Counts students Harley Wayne and Shane Williams in the new musical garden constructed near the playground. Two benches have been installed so that students, faculty and other visitors could enjoy the sights and sounds in the new garden. The benches are generously donated by the Wexler Family in memory of Laurie Wexler, a longtime participant in our residential program, and her father, Sidney Wexler.



DONORS MAKE HISTORY

The Barber National Institute set a new record for Erie Gives in 2020, with its highest number of donors and the highest amount raised. With the match from the Erie Community Foundation and its participating sponsors, the Barber Institute received \$95,517, an amount more than four times the total from the previous year. In all, 399 donors made a gift to the Barber Institute during the Aug. 11 online event.

"We asked our supporters to make a gift in lieu of their reservations for our holiday events, the Ladies Only Luncheon and the Barber Christmas Ball, major fundraising activities that have had to be cancelled because of the current circumstances," said John Barber, president of the Barber National Institute. "We are very grateful that our donors responded with such generosity. I am personally very heartened by the support of our friends and donors at a time that our communities face so many challenges."

Our grateful appreciation is extended to the following donors for their gift to Erie Gives:

Breanna and Rob Adams
Ted (Buz) Allegretto
Mike and Nancy Allgeier
The Allgeier Family
Jim and Cindy Andrus
Daniel Andrzejczak
Robert G. Angelucci
Anonymous (15)
Garrett and Georgeann Antalek
Chris Antolik
Christine Arreola
Penny Austin
M. Bachmaier
Elizabeth Backmeier
Dr. Ron Barac
Brendan Barber
Bridget Power Barber
Jack and Elizabeth Barber
Joe and Lori Barber
John and Bridget Barber
John Barber
Nathan R. Barber
Patrick Barber
Robert Barber
Dr. Maureen Barber-Carey
Ed Barlow
Kathy Bastow
Tammy Batchelor
John P. Beal III
Jeanne Bender and Family
Bill and Jill Bengel
Kathleen and David Benson
Maggie Benson and Jonathon Wertz

John and Karen Berry
Bob and Pam Blakely
Monica Dillon Bloomstine
Marilyn Bohn
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Gertrude Barber named Erie's woman of the century



Our founder, Dr. Gertrude A. Barber, was hailed as Erie's Woman of the Century in August by the Erie Times-News. The honor was part of a nationwide celebration recognizing the achievements of women as part of the 100th anniversary of voting rights for women.

As a true trailblazer, Dr. Barber was committed to achieving equality for all persons, particularly our most vulnerable citizens that society had forgotten and shut away. She dedicated her life to bringing children and adults with disabilities opportunities for education, employment, and full inclusion in all aspects of their communities. For her lifetime of service and dedication to her faith, the Diocese of Erie opened the Cause for her canonization in December.

The highlights of Dr. Barber's life and her many contributions to benefit individuals with disabilities and their families are captured at DrBarber.org.

BARBER SPIRIT

Barber Spirit is a quarterly publication for friends of the
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Home for the Holidays



Barber National Institute
Making dreams come true.

Although two major events – the Ladies Only Luncheon and the Barber Christmas Ball – will not be taking place as planned this holiday season, the spirit of generosity they fostered can still enrich the lives of our most vulnerable children and adults.

“Home for the Holidays” is an appeal to donors and friends to continue their support of the Dr. Gertrude A. Barber Foundation with a charitable gift this holiday season. In the absence of important fundraising events, these donations become even more important to support the essential services that are provided to more than 6,200 children and adults with autism, intellectual disabilities or behavioral health challenges this year.

“Even though we can’t be physically together around the holidays this year, I think that the spirit of giving is still very much alive among our supporters who believe so strongly in our mission,” said John Barber, president and chief executive officer of the Barber National Institute. “I truly believe that we can turn this time, which has had so many challenges, into the most successful effort we have ever had to bring even greater hope and opportunity to those we serve.”

For information about how you can support “Home for the Holidays,” visit BarberInstitute.org/holidaygiving or contact Laura Schaaf, director of Giving, at 814-874-5802.

Check out our **LIGHTING CONTEST** for Christmas 2020!
Visit BarberInstitute.org/lights for information.