

BARBER

NOVEMBER 2022

SPIRIT

MAKING A SPLASH WITH THE CHRISTMAS BALL



Barber National Institute
Making dreams come true.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Dear Friends,



Will you be Santa for our students?

No, you don't have to wear a red hat and fluffy white beard. By just joining us at the Barber Christmas Ball, you'll bring the gift of hope and opportunity to the children, adults and families who look to us to help make their dreams come true.

I can promise that this year's Christmas Ball will be a wonderful kick off to your holiday season. We are so fortunate to have Tim and Lisa NeCastro as chair couple and grateful for the tremendous enthusiasm and energy they bring to this event. Both Tim, who is president of Erie Insurance, and Lisa have a deep commitment to the Erie community and a strong belief in the work we are doing at the Barber National Institute.

The NeCastros also have a great interest in supporting the successful renovation of our multi-use pool. All proceeds

from this year's Christmas Ball will help fund repairs and updates for our pool and enhancements to make our locker rooms completely handicap accessible. Like so many Erie residents, Tim is a graduate of our learn-to-swim classes, and he and Lisa now want to be sure that this great facility is available far into the future.

The Christmas Ball will also mark the culmination of our 70th anniversary year – an achievement that is certainly worthy of a festive celebration. I am happy to join Tim and Lisa in issuing this personal invitation to join us at the Christmas Ball on Saturday, Dec. 10 at the Bayfront Convention Center.

As 2022 draws to a close, I want to thank you for your support of all of our programs that are making a profound difference for the 6,200 children, adults and families we serve each year. I wish you peace and joy at the holidays, and good health and prosperity in the new year.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John J. Barber".

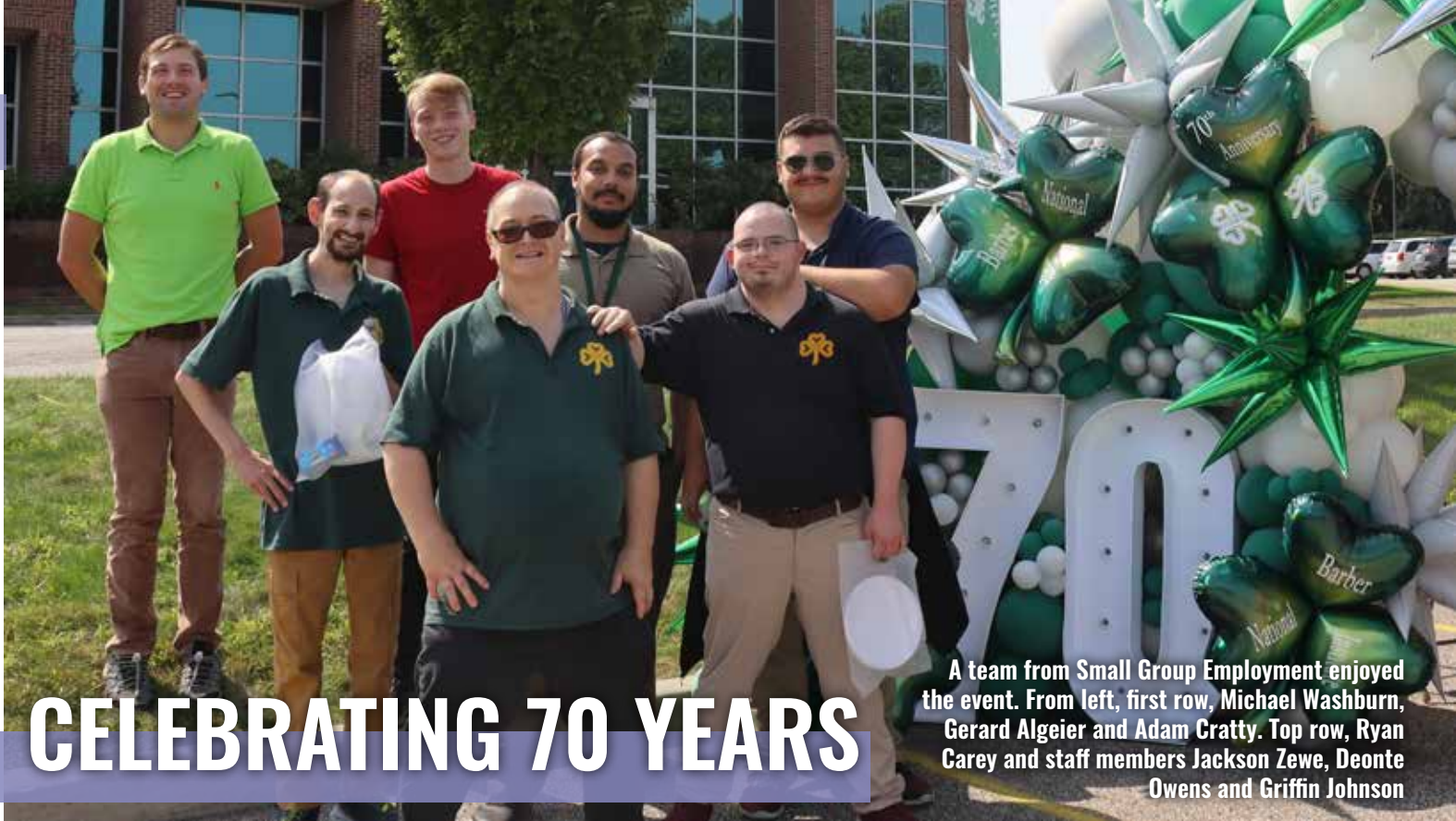
John J. Barber
President & Chief Executive Officer



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.





CELEBRATING 70 YEARS

A team from Small Group Employment enjoyed the event. From left, first row, Michael Washburn, Gerard Algeier and Adam Cratty. Top row, Ryan Carey and staff members Jackson Zewe, Deonte Owens and Griffin Johnson

Seventy years ago, a teacher in the Erie School District borrowed a room from the local YMCA and began classes for children with intellectual disabilities who were not allowed to attend school. No one, including the families and the teacher, likely would have dreamed how this action would change the field of disabilities here and across Pennsylvania forever.

Dr. Gertrude Barber’s vision of hope and opportunity was commemorated with a Founder’s Day celebration on her birthday, Sept. 16. Outdoor activities on Erie’s main campus included entertainment by deejays from Band Together Pittsburgh, a group of musicians and music enthusiasts on the autism spectrum.

Students and faculty in the Elizabeth Lee Black School held their own outdoor dance party and marked the day with cake and ice cream. In preparation for the celebration, students created a “kindness chain,” paper strips decorated with artwork and messages, that was strung throughout the main campus as a reminder of Dr. Barber’s mission of hope and opportunity.

“Founder’s Day is special this year as we mark our 70th anniversary of our founding in 1952,” said John Barber, president and chief executive officer of the Barber National Institute. “From this humble beginning in Erie, Dr. Barber’s vision has not only spread to our facilities across Pennsylvania, but has inspired educators and advocates across the country and the world.”



WHO DOESN'T LOVE A BIRTHDAY PARTY!
Faculty and students in the Elizabeth Lee Black School came together to sing and enjoy cake. From left are assistant behavior specialist Amy Cosart, students Neal Manti, Luther Gonzalez, Lilyanna Dickson, Julianni Birchfield and executive vice president Dr. Maureen Barber-Carey.



Meet Our Chair Couple!

TIM & LISA NECASTRO

From their first visit to the Barber National Institute, Tim and Lisa NeCastro recognized that they were somewhere special.

“When I first got a tour, what I saw was pretty amazing. The adults and children are all being well served,” said Tim “The staff are outstanding. Their level of empathy and caring and relationships they are building can only be described as amazing.”

Their support of the mission of the Barber National Institute led the NeCastros to take on the role of chair couple for the 2022 Barber Christmas Ball.

Tim and Lisa are Erie natives who have a tremendous dedication to their hometown. Since becoming president and CEO of Erie Insurance in 2016, Tim has led the company’s commitment to direct more than \$64 million to the revitalization of downtown Erie.

Lisa held a number of roles at Erie Insurance during a 36-year career there. She now volunteers on many community initiatives, and is a founding member of United Way of Erie County’s Women United for Community Schools, a network of local women that direct their financial resources to projects transforming the future of Erie children.

The couple most recently chaired the capital campaign to fund the expansion and renovation of the expERIENCE Children’s Museum.



IT'S MAGICAL

For Lisa, chairing the Barber Ball was an easy choice. “The Barber National Institute plays such a vital role in the Erie community. In fact, people from other areas move to Erie just to get the services that the organization provides,” said Lisa. “And they do it with such compassion and love.”

After a recent tour, Lisa was especially impressed by the range of technology that is used to help students in the Elizabeth Lee Black School communicate with their teachers and peers. “You can see how it is helping them develop and learn,” she said.

The couple believes that the Christmas Ball is a great way to support the organization and celebrate the holidays. According to Tim,

“WE ATTEND MANY EVENTS IN ERIE, AND THIS ONE IS MAGICAL: WHERE ELSE CAN YOU HAVE ALL THAT FUN AND DO A GREAT THING FOR THE COMMUNITY. IT'S THE BARBER BALL. YOU JUST NEED TO BE THERE.”



A COMMUNITY CELEBRATION FOR A GREAT CAUSE

WHERE CAN YOU FIND THE BIGGEST CELEBRATION THIS HOLIDAY SEASON?

It's in the city – "Christmas in the City" that is – the 2022 Barber Christmas Ball. This year's event will be especially festive as it marks the culmination of the 70th Anniversary of the Barber National Institute. Make plans now for the:

Barber Christmas Ball CHRISTMAS IN THE CITY



SATURDAY, DECEMBER 10 DOORS OPEN AT 7 P.M.
ERIE BAYFRONT CONVENTION CENTER Dancing from 8 p.m. – midnight with Stiletto Fire, a dance and showband from Detroit, MI and continuous entertainment by Tony B

Join us for delicious hors d'oeuvres, desserts, soft drinks and two cocktails per person. Cash bar also available. Complimentary valet parking. Proceeds from the Christmas Ball will go toward the \$3 million renovation of the multi-use pool that provides therapy and recreation for children and adults at the Barber National Institute, as well as serves as a resource in our community.



RESERVATIONS & SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES AT **BARBERINSTITUTE.ORG**

Please join us!
NO NEED FOR A WRITTEN INVITATION!

SPECIAL OVERNIGHT PACKAGES ARE AVAILABLE FOR CHRISTMAS BALL GUESTS.
CONTACT THE SHERATON ERIE BAYFRONT HOTEL AT 814-454-2005 OR BY DEC. 1 FOR RESERVATIONS.

THANK YOU TO OUR 2022 SPONSORS

DIAMOND LEVEL



GOLD LEVEL



GARNET LEVEL





MAKING A SPLASH WITH POOL RENOVATION

Are you one of the thousands of Erie residents who learned to swim in the Barber National Institute pool? Or maybe you enjoyed exercise classes or family swim sessions?

Since opening in 1979, our pool has served as a valued resource for the community and individuals served by the at the Barber National Institute.

Now, after more than forty years of use, the pool is

in need of renovations and updates that will ensure it is here to serve generations to come. A \$3 million dollar renovation project will get underway next summer that will include a facelift for the multi-use pool and updates to improve handicap access in the locker rooms.

Proceeds from many fundraisers, including Barber Beast on the Bay and the Barber Christmas Ball, will fund the pool renovation project.

TO DONATE TO THIS THE POOL RENOVATON PROJECT, VISIT BARBERINSTITUTE.ORG/GIVING.

OUR OWN MERMAID



Addie Jost enjoys the pool with aquatics coordinator Sarah Meyer.

“I TELL PEOPLE THAT MY DAUGHTER IS ACTUALLY A MERMAID, BECAUSE SHE LEARNED TO WALK IN WATER BEFORE WALKING ON LAND,” SAID ADDIE’S MOTHER, HOPE MARTINSON.

Addie Jost’s story captured the hearts of many people who saw it leading up to Erie Gives this summer.



TO SEE ADDIE’S STORY, SCAN THE CODE



OR VISIT BARBERINSTITUTE.ORG/GIVING/ERIE-GIVES



Rena Wierbinski, center, was nominated by the Barber National Institute for an award presented by Saint Mary's Home of Erie. Congratulating her are, from left, Bob, John and Bridget Barber; Dr. Maureen Barber-Carey, Courtney and Patrick Barber.

REMARKABLE RENA

If Rena Wierbinski seems to have found the fountain of youth, it probably flows from her dedication to helping others in need.

For her longstanding support of charitable causes, the Barber National Institute was honored to nominate Rena for the "Ageless Remarkable Erieite" award presented by Saint Mary's Home of Erie.

Through contact with family and friends, Rena came to know the mission of the Barber National Institute and committed herself to supporting the work done on behalf of children and adults with disabilities. She became a monthly donor, in addition to supporting many of its fund- and friend-raising events, such as the annual Art Show and the Ladies Only Luncheon.

"At 88 years old, if I can help someone, that is what I want to do. I don't want to go through my life thinking that I haven't helped anyone," she said.

At the award presentation, Rena was recognized for her support of many organizations, including Harborcreek Youth Services, Sisters of St. Joseph, Emmaus Soup Kitchen and the Erie City Mission.

"Rena's warmth, positive attitude and her genuine concern for others is really an inspiration for all who know her," said Laura Schaaf, director of Giving at the Barber National Institute. "We are so honored to have earned her dedication to our mission, and grateful for her support."



THANKS, BARNHART TRANSPORTATION!



This summer's charity golf tournament sponsored by Barnhart Transportation was a resounding success — and we are thankful for it! The Barber National Institute was one of two local organizations awarded the proceeds. Barnhart President Tim Barnhart, right, presented a \$19,858 donation to Bob Barber, left, Barber National Institute chief of staff, to support our mission. Thank you to all of those at Barnhart Transportation!



10 BARBER BEAST ON THE BAY

Barber National Institute

THAT FEELING WHEN YOU BEAT THE BEAST!

Why would anyone spend their Saturday scaling walls, scrambling across suspended beams and slogging through swamps – all in the name of fun?

That's just what 1,100 people from 18 states signed up for with the ninth annual Barber Beast on the Bay. The 10-mile obstacle course challenge tested participants' mettle with 30 natural and manmade obstacles spread over sand, trails and roadway at Presque Isle State Park.

Sound grueling? It is – and that's just what participants want for an experience they won't forget.

"I have done many different obstacle course races and yours is by far the best," said one participant in the event survey. "Obstacles are challenging, very well placed on the course and the 'fans' cheering you along are great!"

While many competitors revel in the challenge, many others just like the camaraderie of doing the event with family, friends or co-workers. For others, it is a great way to support the mission of the Barber National Institute.

THE HEART OF THE BEAST

Fireworks might light up the Fourth of July sky, but they're no comparison to the way that smiles lit up the Barber Beast on the Bay Adapted Course.

Participants age 12 and over tackled the 17 obstacles placed along the one-mile course at Waldameer Park and Waterworld. Activities ranged from rowing oars, to raising flags and hurling basketballs down waterslides.

The best part was joining up with the 10-mile participants to triumphantly cross the finish line together.



The best thing about beating the Beast? Crossing that finish line together. Andrew Cole finished the adapted course just ahead of 10-mile participants Nick Slingerland of Kenmore, NY and Michelle Bennett of Edinboro.

WHY WOULD YOU BEAST? WHATEVER THE REASON, YOU WON'T WANT TO MISS THE 10TH ANNIVERSARY BARBER BEAST ON THE BAY ON SATURDAY, SEPT. 9, 2023. IT'S THE PERFECT TIME TO SIGN UP – REGISTRATION IS JUST \$65 THROUGH DEC. 31 AT [BARBERBEAST.ORG/REGISTER](https://barberbeast.org/register).



SOMETHING TO CHEER ABOUT

As a Beast on the Bay Cheer Zone, the Mercyhurst Women's Lacrosse team put their whole heart and soul into spurring participants on to the finish line. But for one participant in particular, they give it 110 percent.

Head Coach Sam Struss had just finished crawling through the 25th obstacle, Down & Out, when she saw her team waiting up ahead and was greeted by more than a dozen smiling faces. This was the second year that Mercyhurst Women's Lacrosse took the course by storm.

Up to five community groups can sign up to be a Cheer Zone and win cash prizes when participants vote for them as a favorite. The Women's Lacrosse team won first place — and \$500 — in both 2019 and 2022.

Sam attributes their success to the infectious, family-like energy the players bring to push participants through to the end.

"Our players love spending time with each other, and they are each other's biggest fans," she said. "I get to see it every day in practice, so I am grateful for the opportunity to have them share it with others."

While the cash prize is great, their wins also help the team in other ways. Sam believes participating as a Cheer Zone provides further opportunities for the women to develop and become stewards of the community.

"Our players are so much more than athletes," she said. "I think it is important that we all take time to remember that we are all part of something bigger."

That is a sentiment many Beast participants can relate to: wanting to be a part of something bigger than themselves. That is why Sam continues to sign up. She loves the competition and pushing herself with friends, but supporting the mission of the Barber National Institute is what keeps her and the team coming back.

"The team always has a great time at the Beast," she said. "It's a great opportunity for them to spend time with each other, support the community, and contribute to a great cause."



The Mercyhurst Women's Lacrosse team cheers for coach Sam Struss.

SIGN UP & FIND YOUR REASON TO BEAST!



WITH A LEAP OF FAITH

Our donors blew this year's Erie Gives goal right out of the water!

Thanks to the 356 generous donors who jumped in to surpass our \$50,000 goal. The one-day giving event and a pro-rated match from the Erie Community Foundation and its sponsors resulted in a total donation of \$70,233 for the pool renovation project.

To celebrate, we really took the plunge! Chief of Staff Bob Barber and Patrick Barber, vice president for Treasury Management, jumped into the pool while a gathering of staff, adults and students cheered them on.



Special appreciation to the following donors who make a gift during Erie Gives:

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Kevin and Lisa Baird
James Baldwin
Courtney Barber
Jack and Elizabeth Barber
John and Bridget Barber
Nathan R. Barber
Patrick Barber
Robert Barber
Dr. Maureen Barber-Carey
Betty Lou Snyder-Barczyk

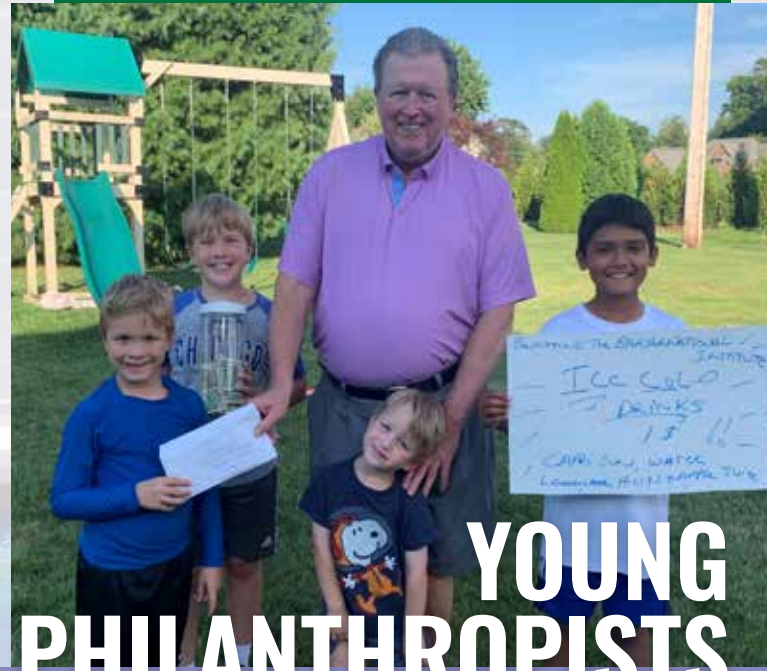
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 Terese Wieszczyk



YOUNG PHILANTHROPISTS RAISE FUNDS

When life gives you lemons, donate the proceeds from your lemonade stand! Over the past two summers, four young philanthropists had a sweet idea about holding a neighborhood stand to sell lemonade and soft drinks. By the end of summer 2022, they raised \$100 for the Barber National Institute. The children, from left, Patrick, Declan and Kieran O'Hare and Jared Kang, presented the donation to John Barber, president and chief executive officer. The four youngsters showed that there's no such thing as being too young to give back!



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William Young
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Stephanie Franklin and her grandchildren, Ke'Maree and Ke'Arie, visit the Brig Niagara during Erie's Tall Ships Festival.

FROM CHALLENGE, HOPE

BLENDED CASE MANAGEMENT SUPPORTS FAMILY JOURNEY

Every Monday, Ke'Maree and Ke'Arie make sure all of their toys that may have piled up during the week are put back in place. It's part of a pact they made with their blended case manager, Brian Zona. They know it will mean time on the playground or some other fun activity during his visit.

Ke'Maree, age 6, and his sister, Ke'Arie age 5, meet with Zona every Tuesday at the home they share with their grandmother, Stephanie Franklin. For the kids, it's a time to have fun and set new goals to work toward. For their grandmother, it's been lifechanging. "Some days, I don't know where I get the strength," said Stephanie. "But I wouldn't know what I would do without Brian."

Stephanie and her grandchildren use Blended Case Management, a Barber National Institute service that provides professional assistance to locate, advocate for and coordinate services to meet the needs of children or adults with an autism or a behavioral health diagnosis. Supports can be provided for all issues spanning a child or adult's life, including medical, educational, social, housing or vocational issues.

A PHONE CALL THAT CHANGED EVERYTHING

Stephanie said that her grandchildren experienced neglect and instability before a traumatic event led her to gain custody four years ago. In spite of

her efforts to provide a stable, loving home, both children showed the effects of the upheaval. Nearly every day, their day care center would call and Stephanie would have to leave work to try to calm them down or take them home. When the day care center asked them to leave, Stephanie knew that she needed help.

After hearing about the Barber National Institute, Stephanie telephoned – not knowing who or what to ask for. A behavioral health staff arranged for a BHT – behavioral health technician in the home – and Blended Case Management for Ke'Arie. Stephanie thought they were on their way to making progress



Ke'Maree and Ke'Arie enjoy the view from aboard the Brig Niagara.

when Covid 19 lockdowns hit, affecting their services. Then, in late 2021, Brian became their case manager.

At first, Stephanie admits she was skeptical. “I thought, ‘what is this guy going to do for us?’ It felt like just another person coming and going from our lives.” But she quickly saw a change in their home. Brian helped her and the children set up structure and routines. They focused on activities of daily living, such as cleaning up their toys, sitting for meals and preparing for bedtime. “The kids really listen to him,” said Stephanie. “He always gives them something to work toward.”

Their favorite reward is going to a nearby playground, where Brian also works on reinforcing social skills such as taking turns and interacting appropriately with peers. “It is really important for kids who have experienced trauma to feel that they can have success in their lives,” said Brian.

BUILDING RESOURCES

Blended Case Management also supports caregivers, helping individuals or families get services they need to be successful. Stephanie said that Brian helped her locate appropriate day care programs for the children so that she could return to work, and arrange for Blended Case services, as well as an assessment and IEP (Individualized Education Plan) for Ke’Maree.

“Stephanie has definitely become more confident advocating for what the kids need,” said Brian. “There is a whole lot of love in the home; we encourage that and build the supports to be successful.”

In addition to finding resources in the community, Blended Case helps caregiver develop the resources within themselves. Stephanie said that Brian and her daughter form her support team. “I would be so lost without both of them,” she said.

Stephanie makes a list of questions for their next appointment or, if she needs something right away, texts Brian for help. “When I’m stressed or frazzled, he helps me break it all down. When I feel like I’m failing, he tells me that I’m doing a good job. It means a lot to have someone who believes in me,” said Stephanie.

SETTING GOALS

Their next step is applying for a low-rate mortgage program that Brian identified so that Stephanie can become a first-time homeowner. “I never thought it would be possible for me to own my own home,” said Stephanie. “But now, I would be sure that my grandchildren would always have this home that they would never have to leave.” Ke’Maree has gotten off to a good start with first grade. Ke’Arie began kindergarten working with a behavior specialist to help address ongoing behavior issues.

While they continue working on their challenges, Stephanie now feels the confidence to set a goal. “With the kids, I want them to grow up to be healthy and happy,” she said. “When my time on this earth comes to an end, I want to know I have done all that I could to make that happen.”

TO BEGIN THE INTAKE PROCESS OR TO ASK MORE QUESTIONS, CONTACT THE BCM PROGRAM AT (814) 459-3693 OR BCM@BARBERINSTITUTE.ORG



As their blended case manager, Brian Zona has been working to help access needed services to support Ke'Maree, left, and Ke'Arie.

GROWING NEW SKILLS

French artist Claude Monet is renowned for his painting, but he considered his garden to be his greatest masterpiece.

Adults in Club Erie are experiencing some of that same sense of pride for the community garden they helped plant, tend to and harvest over this past summer. The garden, located on East Fifth Street between Parade and German Streets, is on land owned by Erie Insurance and maintained by the Master Gardeners program.

A group of adults in Club Erie, an adult day program that provides a wide range of opportunities in the community, have been working on the garden since May. Every Wednesday, 15 – 20 adults helped till the beds, plant the seeds, weed and tend to the growing plants. Other days, 3 – 5 adults watered the growing plants.

Jenifer Gross, Club Erie manager, said that adults were learning about the various seeds, using hand tools and organizing the tool shed. After a summer of



Janine Calabrese, left, and Club Erie staff Casey Pelinsky work on preparing the community garden.

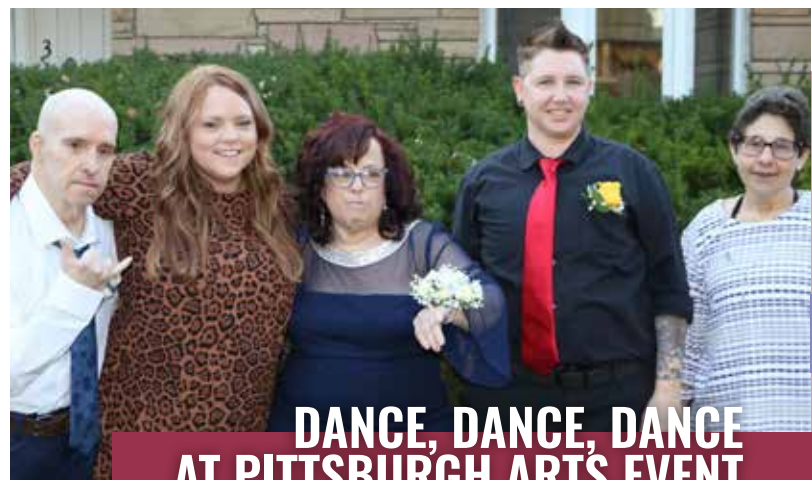
seeing the plants grow, they also helped harvest the vegetables and then cleared the beds to prepare for winter.

“The gardening helped promote physical activity, self-esteem, responsibility and, of course, patience,” said Gross.

After harvesting the plants, adults helped deliver the produce they helped grow to be enjoyed at the Emmaus Soup Kitchen.

Alexis Milburn and Katreese Burnett, below, represented the Barber National Institute at The Alliance of Community Service Providers Annual DSP Conference in Philadelphia. The Barber National Institute nominated three direct care staff for the awards presentation: Marnie Moore for the Leadership Award; Ciera Dyches, for the Positive Impact Award and Omar Santos for the Team Spirit Award.

DIRECT CARE STAFF RECOGNIZED AT CONFERENCE



DANCE, DANCE, DANCE AT PITTSBURGH ARTS EVENT

Adults and staff enjoyed a recent dance sponsored by the Center for Theater Arts in Pittsburgh. From left are David Driscoll; Kim Areford, program specialist; Ellen Siciliano; Misty Smith, residential manager and Rosanne Suitor. Ellen and Roseanne attend rehearsals at the Center every week, and participate in two musicals held annually.



School faculty helped fill in the artwork created by artist Helen Tullio



MAKING FITNESS FUN

Brightly colored rainbows, flowers and a few puffy clouds are encouraging students along a new fitness trail at the Elizabeth Lee Black School playground. A ribbon cutting was held in August to open the trail with artwork designed and created by an Erie artist. Helen Tullio donated her time to draw the artwork for 12 activity stops along the trail as well as artwork around a butterfly garden.

"I have done many similar projects, but this felt different," said Tullio. "I was just so happy to do something for kids with special needs and know that they will enjoy this for a long time."

The activities in the fitness trail were developed by physical and occupational therapists in the Elizabeth Lee Black School to promote exercise, following directions and social interaction for all students.

The pathway is the first phase of a "sensory play space" that is funded by a grant from Erie Insurance through the Educational Improvement Tax Credit program.

Student Christopher Rose, second from right, cut the ribbon to open the new fitness trail as he was cheered on by, from left, Dr. Maureen Barber-Carey, student Gavin Nelson, artist Helen Tullio, and Brian Wilking, senior community outreach specialist at Erie Insurance, which funded the trail through Educational Improvement Tax Credit donation.

PICKING UP STEAM

Teacher assistant Kathy Nicholson joins Happy Hearts day care students in using a wind machine during a visit from the ExpERIENCE Children's Mobile Museum this summer. The museum brought three displays relating to STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math) that replicate larger scale exhibits in the downtown facility. The Flight Lab pictured creates a wind tunnel to explore concepts such as flight and air currents with hands on activities.



BARBER SPIRIT

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✦	BARBER CHRISTMAS BALL Saturday, Dec. 10, 2022 Bayfront Convention Center	✦
★	CONSUMER HOLIDAY PARTY (Funded in part by donors to the Dr. Gertrude A. Barber Foundation) Sunday, Dec. 11, 2022 Bayfront Convention Center	★
✦	JAY & MONA KANG ART SHOW & SALE Call for Entries: March 9, 10 & 11, 2023 Donor Debut & Artist Reception: April 20, 2023 In-Person and Virtual Art Show: April 21 – May 6, 2023 North Complex and On-Line	✦
★	SHILLELAGH GOLF TOURNAMENT Thursday, June 15, 2023 Whispering Woods Golf Course	★
✦	ERIE GIVES DAY Tuesday, August 8, 2023	✦
★	10TH ANNIVERSARY BARBER BEAST ON THE BAY Saturday, Sept. 10, 2023 Presque Isle State Park	★
✦	LADIES ONLY LUNCHEON Saturday, Nov. 18, 2023 Kahkwa Club	✦
★	BARBER CHRISTMAS BALL Saturday, Dec. 9, 2023 Bayfront Convention Center	★