

# Barber Honors

2019-2020 Report to our Donors



Dr. Gertrude A. Barber Foundation

*Making dreams come true.*



# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Friends,

You may have heard the saying, "Hard times reveal true friends." This past year, we have all discovered the truthfulness of that sentiment.

It is why we so deeply appreciate you, our generous donor and friend, who stepped forward to support our mission at what has certainly been the most challenging time in our history. You have helped us continue to serve our most vulnerable children and adults to not only keep them safe and healthy, but to provide what they need to thrive, grow and look with confidence toward a future of possibilities.

With your support, we have been able to face formidable challenges. These included the loss of approximately 20% of our annual budget as our adult day programs were closed for months at the recommendation of the Office of Developmental Programs (ODP.) Practically overnight, our 95 group homes across the state had to prepare to quarantine our adults 24 hours a day for months on end.

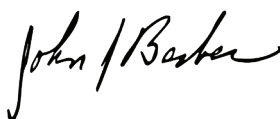
Our school had to transition to remote education, even for students with significant intellectual, behavioral and physical challenges. As weeks turned into months, our faculty reached new levels of innovation with hybrid and in-classroom instruction designed to meet individual needs in the best way possible.

Technology funded by our donors helped us respond so that we could safely provide telehealth services to meet the needs for behavioral health and early intervention therapies.

As help came in the form of low interest loans and grants to many businesses, larger non-profits serving a sizable population were essentially excluded from most such government assistance. We are thankful every day that we can rely on our donors who are so deeply committed to our mission of bringing hope and opportunity to individuals and families at the greatest risk.

Even as we are reminded to remain physically distanced, your generosity and selflessness shows us that, in many ways, we are more connected than ever to our donors whose impact can be felt every day.

On behalf of the more than 6,200 children, adults and families we serve, thank you for this commitment to making dreams come true.



John J. Barber  
President & Chief Executive Officer



## HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE 2020?

*In this year of historic and often monumental challenges, our donors have generously responded to help us continue providing essential services for our most vulnerable populations. Thank you for helping us find the words that are making dreams come true.*

*Flexibility* pg. 5

*Transformative* pg. 6

*Resourcefulness* pg. 13

*Tenacity* pg. 14

*Inventiveness* pg. 16

*Solidarity* pg. 18

*Some images were taken prior to the onset of the pandemic.*

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• = Matching gift \* = Deceased





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## WHY I GIVE

*"We had a family member with Down Syndrome that received various levels of services from the Barber Center for most of her life. We are very grateful for all that you did to help her and our family."*

▶ Rick Linker

Gifts received July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020.

• = Matching gift \* = Deceased





**Adults share the artwork they created during a virtual art class held as part of the remote Community Participation Supports Program.**

## ADULTS EXPLORE THE WORLD FROM THE SAFETY OF HOME

**W**hen Community Participation Supports Day Programs closed due to the COVID-19 outbreak in March 2020, many adults with disabilities felt as though they lost a connection to their friends and communities.

As restrictions prevented adults from gathering, their staff looked to fill the void. The result was the development of a menu of activities offered online that adults can access without ever leaving the safety of home.

Experienced staff from the Barber National Institute CPS program lead the activities to facilitate meaningful small group participation and provide positive, nurturing encouragement. Adults can choose from sessions that include art, dance and music classes, chair yoga, current events, sports and job exploration.

“Many of the adults have been largely confined to their homes for a long time, and these sessions offer them opportunities to develop skills and interests of their choosing,” said Tamara Reese, associate director, IDS Day. “The adults are also really happy to see their friends and staff again. The sessions are really important for enabling us to safely have a connection to others that is always so important.”

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# HOW THE SEARCH GOES ON

The benefits from Project Search were not going to be undermined by restrictions caused by the pandemic. Instead, this collaborate partnership geared up with all precautions in place to ensure young people could learn skills needed to enter the workforce.

Plans for Project Search were announced in November 2019 for a partnership among AHN Saint Vincent Hospital, the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR), the Erie County Intellectual Disabilities/Mental Health Office, the Erie School District and the Barber National Institute.

The nationally developed program brings partners together to provide students with disabilities the opportunity to develop skills with on-the-job internships. Barber National Institute job coaches help train and supervise students as they intern in hospital departments that include the pharmacy, laboratory, food and nutrition and materials handling.

In addition to learning hard and soft skills, students were also taught about safety measures to stop the spread of COVID-19. "Right from the start, students learned about infection control practices and the use of masks and other PPE where necessary," said Maggie Dimitriadis, director of Intellectual Disabilities Services. "They haven't missed a beat with their internships, and everyone involved can see how much they are learning every day."



A student intern stocks supply shelves in the emergency department at AHN Saint Vincent Hospital as part of the Project Search collaboration.

A student intern assists in Dietary Services at AHN Saint Vincent Hospital.



## PROJECT SEARCH BY THE NUMBERS

**6** High school interns



**7** Internship opportunities

**5** Number of community partners



**5** Hours of on-the-job training every day

**2** Hours of classroom instruction every day

**8** Weeks in each selected internship

# TRANSFORMATIVE





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Gifts received July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020.

• = Matching gift \* = Deceased

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 Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Pianta  
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*"Having a family member with special needs, I have witnessed firsthand how the Dr. Gertrude A. Barber Foundation enriches people's lives. From early on and into adulthood, my niece has been able to participate in programs and events that have been truly beneficial to her. Thank you to everyone who give so much so that others can have their dreams come true."*

▶ Carol Holdnack

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 Mr. and Mrs. Kevin Uht

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 Mrs. Gloria Venal  
 Ms. Laurie Vendetti

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## Education Improvement Tax Credit

Erie Indemnity  
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 KeyBank  
 Knox McLaughlin Gornall & Sennett, P.C.  
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# EITC

*"The scholarship has been a blessing for our family as it allows us to choose a great provider like Happy Hearts. We have seen tremendous gains in academic and social skills that simply would not be possible in another environment. We are so lucky to be able to choose a quality provider like the Barber National Institute and can't thank the teachers, administrators, classmates, and especially the donors for making it possible."*

- Andrew & Ashley Heidt

**Sawyer and Andrew Heidt**

**For information about the EITC Program, contact Dr. Maureen Barber-Carey, 814-878-5960 or [maureenbc@BarberNI.org](mailto:maureenbc@BarberNI.org).**

A donation to the Educational Improvement Tax Credit Program is a commitment to the future. Businesses participating in the EITC Program funded 19 scholarships for children to attend quality preschool programs, as well as provided technology and adaptive equipment for students in our school.

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Rev. Leo Gallina

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Ms. Marcia Osborne

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Mrs. Vilma Paterniti

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#### **In Memory of Eleanor Sample**

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WHEN THERE REALLY IS  
“NO PLACE  
LIKE HOME”



# RESOURCEFULNESS

***Painting, baking, learning how to bike ride or kayak. These were just a few of the activities that residents in the Barber National Institute's 95 group homes have been exploring with help from their dedicated staff and support from donors to the Barber Foundation.***

**B**eginning in March 2020, more than 310 adults entered a quarantine phase to help ensure that they would stay healthy and safe amid rising infection rates in their community. Day programs were closed for months, only to reopen with limited capacity. In-person visits with friends and family were transformed into virtual meetings on Facetime or computers.

As the adults were staying in their homes 24 hours a day, seven days a week, their staff went to extra lengths to make their days meaningful, stimulating and interesting. They used areas of interest to help adults forge new connections and develop new everyday living and social skills. For some adults,

this meant learning to make jewelry or hook rugs. Others learned to make favorites such as banana bread or pizza. Others enjoyed picnicking in favorite parks or walking on trails. And every holiday turned into a celebration.

“While the pandemic upended the lives of all of us, we wanted to be sure that our adults were finding ways to enjoy their days while staying safe,” said Jennifer Lawrence, vice president, Residential, Family Focused Services and Lifesharing. “It was important that our staff had the supplies and supports that they felt they needed to help adults transform these challenging times into opportunities for growth and fulfillment.”



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## GETTING THE JOB DONE

*Pete Ulam works at Country Meadows Retirement Communities in suburban Pittsburgh (photo taken February, 2020). Pete has continued working in his job throughout the pandemic.*

**P**ete Ulam had been working successfully for more than a year at a large senior living center in suburban Pittsburgh. Then, in March 2020, the facility went on lockdown to visitors, including Pete's job coach, who could no longer come in to check on Pete's progress.

For some people, this may have meant an end to their employment. But Pete, his coach and his employer all believed that he was ready to perform the job on his own. Throughout all of the challenges of the coming months, Country Meadows Retirement Communities knew they could count on Pete to be there.

Pete has continued working five days a week in food services, where he washes dishes and helps with setting out food at mealtimes. He had been working at a fast food restaurant for several years but, when he wanted to look for a new job, was referred to the Supported Employment Program at the Barber National Institute.

With the onset of COVID-19, Pete has remained very vigilant with mask wearing, hand washing and social distancing. But his program specialist said he never even considered not working.

"He really loves everything about his job," said Trina Greer. "He is very independent, and likes being able to take responsibility for getting his job done. It is a great fit and we are happy that it has been able to continue."

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# THE CAUSE

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*The Dr. Gertrude A. Barber Legacy Society recognizes those generous donors who have made a planned gift, such as a bequest in a will or trust.*

*To learn more about becoming a member of the Legacy Society or planned giving options, call Laura Schaaf, Director of Giving, at (814) 874-5802.*

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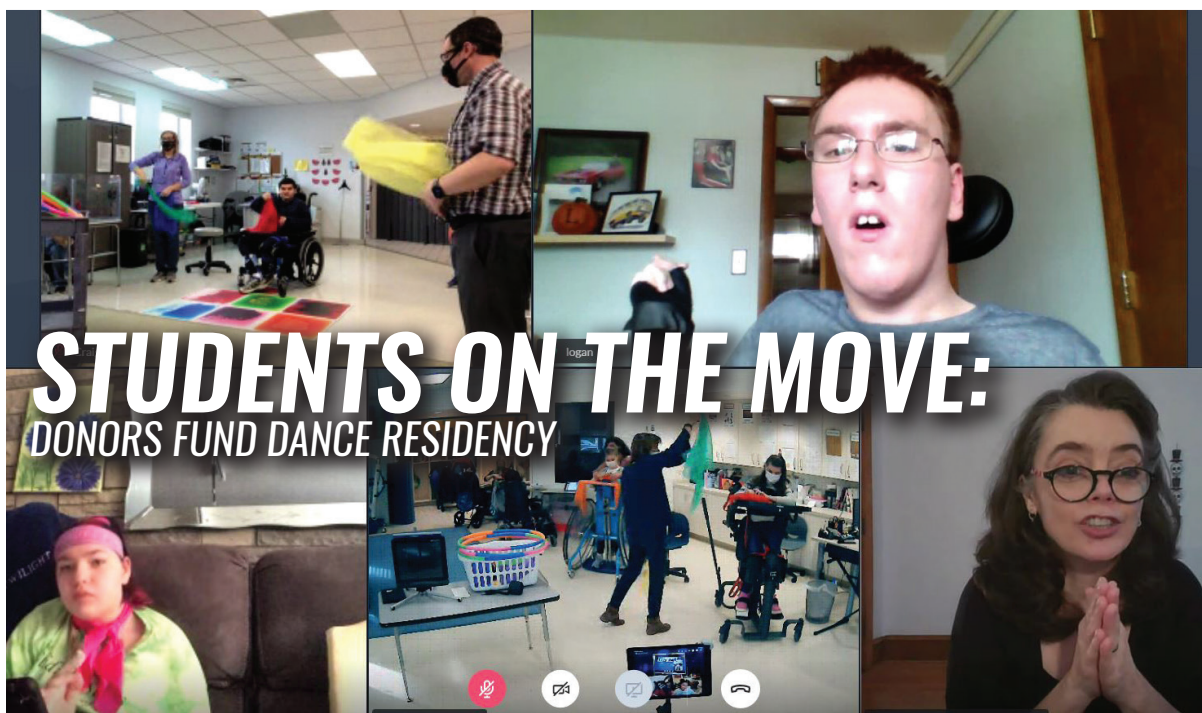
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## STUDENTS-ON-THE-MOVE: DONORS FUND DANCE RESIDENCY

**Students in the Elizabeth Lee Black School followed instructions from Miss Lea, bottom right, during their Artist-In-Residence program. Students learning remotely from home continued to participate.**

In March 2020, faculty and students were excited about embarking on a new Artist-in-Residency to explore dance and movement. The syllabus was set and classes were scheduled. Then, school doors were suddenly closed.

Restrictions brought on by the pandemic upended all of the plans in motion with Alethea “Miss Lea” Bodine, founder of the Chromatic Dance program in Erie. The residency was funded by donors to the Barber Foundation, as well as Erie Arts and Culture and the Kennedy Center for the Arts.

Although the next several months were marked by uncertainty, faculty and Miss Lea kept working on a new plan and were ready to take up the residency when school resumed in fall 2020. They were prepared to carry out lessons with a mix of in-person and remote learning that had been adapted from the earlier plans.

Miss Lea came to students on the screen every week, whether they were gathered with teachers in



### ART RESIDENCY BY THE NUMBERS



**19** Classrooms participating



**31** Preschool students participating



**3 - 21** Ages of students



**12** Weeks of instruction

**133** Students with disabilities participating



classrooms or learning from home. Together, they explored how dance and movement are tied to the senses through music, rhythm and culture.

Even though the road to the residency took a few detours, Miss Lea said that it was an amazing experience for everyone. “I think that this is probably my favorite group of students I’ve worked with. And the teachers, too. They have the patience and the perseverance that you rarely see,” said Miss Lea. “This experience has been one of a lifetime.”

An experience, it turns out, worth waiting for.



For a video about the residency and an interview with Miss Lea, visit [BarberInstitute.org/Arts-Program](https://BarberInstitute.org/Arts-Program)



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## MAKING CONNECTIONS

**A drive-thru celebration marked the end of the virtual Connections Camp, which offered online activities, including virtual field trips to exciting venues, for children and teens with high functioning autism.**

*"The staff have done an amazing job helping Richard improve his social skills, verbalize his feelings appropriately and learn new coping skills. Connections Camp is an important service, because it provides an opportunity for children on the spectrum to engage with peers and work to improve their social skills during the summer months."*

- Camille Hulsinger

*Gifts received July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020.  
Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this report.*



# DONORS SET RECORD

**F**or the first time in more than 50 years, the Barber Christmas Ball could not take place. The absence of Barber Beast on the Bay, the Ladies Only Luncheon and the Shillelagh Golf Tournament had already left a void in the community's social calendar. The cancellations, brought on by restrictions to reduce rising COVID-19 infection rates, meant the loss of major fundraisers in support of the Barber National Institute.

While friends and donors were not able to physically gather at these events, they came together to ensure that the mission of the Barber National Institute would still benefit from their support and commitment. More than 390 donors helped the Barber National Institute set a new record for the 2020 Erie Gives. With the matching gift from the Erie Community Foundation, the Barber National Institute received a \$88,330 donation to fund essential services.

In appreciation for rising to the occasion during this challenging time, we extend our grateful thanks to all of those who donated during Erie Gives.

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▶ **Linda Stolarski**



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**Sun Woo Kim and Andrew Cole use the laptop in their group home to research their favorite recipes. Computer technology funded by donors was especially important for fostering new interests and activities, as well as enabling residents to stay in touch with family during the pandemic.**

**D**onors to the Barber Foundation helped families stay connected to loved ones during the worst days of the pandemic. When quarantine restrictions prevented adults from having visitors or leaving their group homes, computer technology that enabled online visits was a lifeline.

Residential group homes received upgraded internet connectivity through a donation from Erie Insurance. Donations from Erie Insurance and other donors have also helped to fund devices and apps for the homes.

Technology was also important for staff to complete state-mandated training from the safety of home. A three-year donation from Erie Insurance also partially funded the Barber Hub, a new Learning Management System for employees to receive individualized interactive training to both advance their skills and meet requirements for their positions. The technology went into place in 2019 and became indispensable during the pandemic.

## BARBER NATIONAL INSTITUTE LOCATIONS

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100 Barber Place | Erie, PA 16507

**PITTSBURGH CAMPUS**  
20 Emerson Lane, Suite 905  
Bridgeville, PA 15017

**PHILADELPHIA CAMPUS**  
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Philadelphia, PA 19129

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670 Sciota St. | Corry, PA 16407

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**CHILDREN'S ACUTE PARTIAL HOSPITALIZATION**  
4176 West Ridge Road | Erie, PA 16506

**SOMERSET DAY PROGRAM**  
1219 Red Brant Road  
Somerset, PA 15501

**BEDFORD DAY PROGRAM**  
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