



The ALL-STAR Newsletter

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Jefferson County Board of Developmental Disabilities

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EI Helps Girl Take Steps toward Success

When Kinsley Ely blew out the candles on her birthday cake Oct. 7, it marked a major milestone in the little girl's life.

At just three years old, Kinsley has already faced numerous obstacles. Born with Hirschsprung's Disease, a condition that affects the large intestine, she has undergone multiple surgeries and uses a colostomy bag. This has significantly impacted her ability to absorb nutrients and maintain her energy levels. However, after working with the Early Intervention (EI) program at the Jefferson County Board of Developmental Disabilities, she is beginning to achieve her goals.

Kinsley, the daughter of Kayla DeGarmo and Jason Ely of Steubenville, started preschool with the Steubenville STARS program that is offered through Steubenville City Schools. The program helps students with disabilities integrate into the school community and Kinsley is already thriving in her class. She attends school two days a week, is making friends and is getting a great start on her education.

Mom Kayla recalled Kinsley's diagnosis at only three days old, saying there were not enough nerve cells in her colon to function and it led to countless operations. She is also required to wear a colostomy bag, while her caloric intake was low and left her with little to no energy. She also wears a port and uses an IV for liquid nutrients, plus protocols dictate that she be treated for fevers at Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh when she is ill. After being referred to the EI program through the hospital, Kinsley began working with EI Supervisor Neysa Rogers following her first birthday and has strived to overcome her obstacles.

They met twice weekly, then sessions grew to monthly as Kinsley made more progress. Sessions



Three-year-old Kinsley Ely of Steubenville enjoys preschool at the Steubenville STARS program through Steubenville City Schools, which she recently joined after reaching goals with help from the Jefferson County Board of Developmental Disabilities' Early Intervention (EI) program. She was born with an intestinal disorder and has undergone multiple surgeries, while it also created delays in walking and talking. She is now thriving and is pictured in class with preschool teacher Jamie Thompson.

were held at home or at Jim Woods Park, integrating activities into play so she learned to take steps, lift herself and become more self-reliant. There were challenges and Kinsley initially was not receptive to Rogers' assistance, but they would eventually form a bond.

"Neysa contacted a dietitian, and Kinsley underwent surgeries and received nutrition at night. Now she is on IV fluids and takes vitamins, but she can also eat solid foods," DeGarmo said, adding that Kinsley's condition delayed her ability to walk. "Neysa provided me with exercises and activities to do with her. Once we started strengthening her leg muscles, she was able to use a walker. The progress over time was incredible, especially within just a few months."

Rogers also assisted with respite

care and other resources to help Kinsley improve. Slowly, the little girl was becoming more and more independent.

"When she first started walking, everything started flowing and she was walking, talking and running," DeGarmo added. "When Kinsley was first getting into school, Neysa thought it would be good for therapy."

"She is a typically developing toddler with a medical condition," Rogers commented. "She was not meeting milestones because her body was not accepting food. The doctors reconstructed her intestine and she can now ingest more and use energy. It affected her milestones and she was not crawling, walking or standing but she's learned to climb and walk. I'm proud of her and her mom. Part of

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NDEAM: Martin Finds Confidence in the Workplace

Hope Martin has found both confidence and independence as she makes her way in the working world.

The Toronto woman has been employed with Reisbeck's Market in her hometown for the past two years and has been serving up deli orders and smiles to patrons. She gained her job with assistance from Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities and the Jefferson County Board of Developmental Disabilities Community Employment Services.

She also puts a face to the purpose of National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM), which is observed every October by the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP). NDEAM celebrates the value and talent workers with disabilities add to America's workplaces and economy and the purpose is to confirm a commitment to ensuring disabled workers have access to good jobs. That's the spirit behind this year's official theme of "Access to Good Jobs for All."

Martin, of Toronto, works four days per week and her job has afforded her opportunities to live in her own apartment with her cat, Karma, and purchase a vehicle.

She said she enjoys her job and being around the people.

"I love it here," Martin said. "It's all about the people! I find that when everyone comes together and supports one another. Teamwork truly makes a difference!"

She said she swiftly transitioned from washing dishes to working in the deli within weeks.

"They needed help and I'm a really quick learner," Martin added. "I love working with them and [deli manager Dee Dee Dawson] is a really good boss."

She was also grateful to CES for assisting her along the way and always ensuring that she was progressing well.

"It's very helpful that they come and check on me. The fact that they helped me find the job is the best and I can't imagine being a another job."

CES Specialist Renee Pastre-Hanlin recalled Martin's beginnings when she was timid, but since then she has grown more confident in herself and



Hope Martin has built her confidence and independence by working at Reisbeck's Market in Toronto over the past two years. She gained her job with assistance from Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities and the Jefferson County Board of Developmental Disabilities Community Employment Services. She also puts a face to National Disabilities Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM), which was observed in October and promotes inclusion in the workplace.

her capabilities.

"Hope was brought in for an assessment and was hired, and they've monitored her. She started washing dishes and then was slicing meat and assisting

"I love it here... The fact that [JCBDD Community Employment Services specialists] helped me find the job is the best and I can't imagine being at another job."

**-Hope Martin
NDEAM Spotlight**

customers," Pastre-Hanlin said. "She's come a long way."

Even Dawson was impressed with Martin's transformation and work eth-

ic.

"She's wonderful. She helps everywhere," Dawson continued. "I show her things and she picks them up really fast. When she first came here, she was really shy, but now she'll wait on customers."

The CES is engaged with 25 individuals and has established partnerships with several participating businesses, including Rural King, Kroger, McDonald's, Burger King, Eat'N'Park and Parkhurst Dining at Franciscan University.

"We job search according to their interests," added CES Specialist Elyzabeth Grimm. "The individual attends an interview and it's tailored to them."

Pastre-Hanlin stated that OOD may refer individuals, and both on-site and off-site job coaching is offered to prepare them for the workforce. She credited Reisbeck's and other sites for recognizing the ability of CES individuals and allowing them to be part of the team.

"Reisbeck's has been wonderful as far as mentoring Hope and being supportive of her," she noted. "It really does take a village."

Franciscan University Rolls out the *Red Carpet*

JCBDD, Community are Special Guests through James 2 Project

Franciscan University rolled out the red carpet to community groups including the Jefferson County Board of Developmental Disabilities as part of its new James 2 Project.

Named for the Book of James 2:1-5 in the Holy Bible, the program gives the special guests VIP treatment when they come to the campus. Athletic Director Danny Andersen, who spearheaded the project, said the idea was derived from the New Testament which describes, in part, how a man should not show favoritism and should love his neighbors as himself. Andersen said the goal was simply to give others a similar experience as the university's supporters such as alumni, Boosters and sponsors and build community.

"I was convicted by the Holy Spirit to do something for those who otherwise don't get to enjoy our hospitality. We can roll out the red carpet for folks in the community, maybe kids or the under-resourced, as part of who we are as Franciscan University and what we want to be as an athletic department-- to embody our values," Andersen said. "I reached out to Bobbyjon Bauman at the Sycamore Center and he put me in touch with Steve Forte [at JCBDD]."

About nine individuals from JCBDD joined 10 kids from the Sycamore Center as well as chaperones to watch a soccer game against Marietta College in September, then another group visited on Oct. 22 for a volleyball game against Geneva College at the Finnegan Fieldhouse. While there, the special guests walked onto the field and court with the athletes, were formally recognized during the function, sat in the VIP section with university staff and received a complimentary dinner from Jimmy Johns plus free drinks and snacks from the concession stand. In addition, they gained James 2 Project T-shirts and autographs and met the Barons mascot and team members.

"At the end of the game, we print a picture of the team and roster and they get autographs. We try to roll out the red carpet and hopefully, they can experience first-class hospitality," Andersen said, adding that he hopes to continue inviting the community regularly. "The plan is to pick an event each month and we may invite them in November or December. I'm excited and looking forward because the next time will be a basketball game and there's a big crowd and a lot of fun and exciting action."

Forte, who serves as activities director at JCBDD and the Jefferson County Special Olympics, said it was a great opportunity for individuals to view activities on the



Franciscan University invited members of the Jefferson County Board of Developmental Disabilities and Sycamore Corps mentor group to view a volleyball game on Oct. 22 though the James 2 Project, an initiative begun by university Athletic Director Danny Andersen which provides VIP treatment during sporting events to community groups. So far, members of JCBDD and the Sycamore Center have attended soccer and volleyball games, met athletes and received T-shirts, autographs and free food and recognition while Andersen hoped to continue activities each month.

ABOVE: Pictured are, front from left, Sycamore Corps members Estelle Smith, Koda Lewis and Kemorah Smith with JCBDD individuals Thomas Huggins and Brandon Filby at back.

AT RIGHT: Huggins and Filby wait to get their T-shirts autographed by one of the Franciscan volleyball team members.



campus and immerse themselves in the experience.

"They contacted me to take up to 10 people to the campus and they received VIP treatment. The university is doing something for the less fortunate and people with a disability, and I take people who receive services from JCBDD," Forte commented.

He added that attendants from JCBDD included Special Olympics athletes and individuals with the Service and Support Administration (SSA).

Meanwhile, Andersen said the James 2

Project was taking on a life of its own in the short time since it has been implemented and he only hopes to watch it grow more.

"Franciscan University has three core values: encounter, conversion, and community," Andersen concluded. "One of our core values is 'community,' so this is one way we can be not just up on the hill but can build that community with the local area, particularly with people in this area who may not otherwise experience it in this way."



Fall Festival Fun



Shaffer Plaza celebrated its third-annual Fall Festival on Oct. 29 with a petting zoo and pumpkins to mark the autumn season. Residents along with students from the School of Bright Promise reveled in pumpkin painting, fall-themed temporary tattoos, playing in the leaves and a special visit from Zoo-2-Go of Cortland, Ohio, featuring alpacas, rabbits, goats, sheep, horses and Zebu, a type of miniature cow. Pictured is Shaffer resident Judy Yates making her pumpkin even more colorful.

STEPS

(Continued from Front)

the process was teaching others not to do everything for her because they wanted to protect her, and we are amazed at her progress.”

Although she and Kinsley’s father were a bit hesitant about sending the girl to school, DeGarmo said she has flourished in her new environment. She also praised the STARS program, saying Kinsley works with an on-site nurse and loves going to school.

“They are great with her and are very hands on, plus it’s a small class. She loves school and would love to go every day.”

Jamie Thompson, preschool teacher at STARS, said Kinsley was actively involved

in class and a quick learner.

“She is adjusting really well, is very vocal and tells us what she wants to eat and play with,” Thompson said. “She loves coloring and drawing, gets along with the other kids and loves to play outside.”

Meanwhile, DeGarmo said Kinsley is like any other child—loving, playful and enjoying everything from princesses to Peppa Pig.

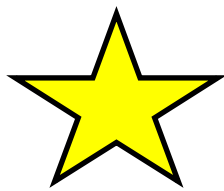
She is also very close with her two older brothers, Cameron and Noah, the latter of whom was born with a less severe form of the disease. However, it has since reversed itself following time and treatment and today he is healthy.

DeGarmo said Kinsley’s next goal is to remove her port and stop the fluid treatments, and she was grateful to the EI program for enabling her daughter to thrive.

“I recommend EI to anybody, even if you feel like you don’t need it. There are so many people who can help at each stage with physical therapy, occupational therapy and more. Kinsley has nothing but love for Neysa, and Neysa knew there were techniques and strategies to help her. I wouldn’t have known about that if not for the EI program.”

For more information about the Early Intervention program, contact the JCBDD at (740) 264-5812.

Getting to Know You...



Benjamin McEndree



Benjamin McEndree’s favorite things are truly out of this world.

McEndree, a first-grade student at the School of Bright Promise, has an affinity for deep space and could name all of the planets and their characteristics. The son of Sam and Jade McEndree of Yorkville, he will tell you he lives on Earth and discuss the rings on Saturn and the names of the moons around Jupiter.

He is quick to share his favorite planets--Saturn and Uranus--and say that Mercury is hot because it is so close to the sun.

“Saturn has some rings and Uranus has rings and spins from side to side,” he adds. “Earth is our home planet.”

When not talking space, he also notes interest in sports and says he likes football. His favorite food includes pizza and his favorite class is health. Among the things he’s learned is the importance of healthy habits such as brushing his teeth and eating fruits and vegetables (with lemons being another fave).

Still, he has enjoyed reading about space since learning about it in science and quickly adds that Pluto was a dwarf planet. He also recalls Jupiter’s largest moons, which actually include Ganymede, Callisto, Io and Europa.



Judy Creamer



Judy Creamer loves working with the Jefferson County Board of Developmental Disabilities and has been a mainstay at the School of Bright Promise for about two decades.

Creamer grew up in Steubenville but currently resides in Mingo Junction with her boyfriend, former Jeffco Workshop Production Manager Brian Dayton. She also cares for her grandson and nephew and enjoys spending time with her family when not serving as a maintenance and custodial worker at the school.

She said she loves being around the people.

“I’ve spent over 18 years at the School of Bright Promise,” she said, adding that she previously led a group of adult workers for JCBDD providing custodial duties at the rest stop along Ohio 213 outside of Hammondsville.

When not at the school, she can be seen working in her yard planting flowers, decorating and playing with the kids. Creamer said she also likes taking the boys to the park or watching cartoons, and in the rare quiet moments she enjoys watching movies and TV crime dramas.

Creamer said she loves being part of JCBDD and working with the people has been the best part.