

May 2026



SAINT CATHERINE CENTER FOR *Special Needs*

Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon

In recognition of Volunteer Appreciation Month this April, Saint Catherine Center for Special Needs proudly hosted a special luncheon to honor the dedicated individuals who generously give their time and talents in support of the Center's mission.

The event was a celebration of gratitude, as students took the lead in welcoming guests and expressing their appreciation. Volunteers were greeted with warm smiles and personally crafted, handmade thank-you cards—each one a meaningful reflection of the impact they have on the lives of those at the Center.

“April is a time to recognize the power of volunteerism, and we are incredibly grateful for the compassion and commitment our volunteers show every day,” said Laura Grozier, Executive Director. “This luncheon is just a small way for us to say thank you.”

Saint Catherine Center for Special Needs extends its deepest appreciation to all volunteers whose generosity and kindness help make its programs and mission possible.



Teacher and Nurse Appreciation Week



Last week, Saint Catherine Academy celebrated Teacher Appreciation Week, honoring the incredible dedication and compassion of our teachers and staff. Throughout the week, small but meaningful gestures of gratitude were shared each day.

At Saint Catherine Academy, our teachers and staff do much more than educate. They inspire curiosity, guide personal growth, and nurture each student with patience, understanding, and care. Their commitment reaches beyond the classroom, shaping a supportive environment



where every individual is valued and encouraged to thrive.

“Our teachers and staff go above and beyond, embracing the uniqueness of each student and encouraging them always to do their best,” said Lisa Lanni, Director of Education.

We also took time to recognize Nurse Appreciation Week, and we are incredibly grateful for Katy O’Brien, our dedicated nurse. Her compassion and attentiveness to the health and well-being of the individuals we serve is valued. Katy plays an essential role in our community, always offering the utmost care.

We are thankful for all our staff’s commitment and the difference they make in our community each day.

Cinco de Mayo Dinner Dance

On Friday, May 1st, Saint Catherine Center for Special Needs hosted a Cinco de Mayo Dinner Dance at Assumption Church in Fairfield. The evening brought together young adults with special needs for a celebration centered on community.

Guests enjoyed an evening of music, dancing, and laughter, as the dance floor stayed busy throughout the night. A shared meal added to the sense of togetherness, giving everyone the opportunity to socialize and celebrate alongside friends and peers.

The event highlighted the importance of creating inclusive social opportunities where individuals of all abilities can come together and build meaningful connections in a welcoming environment.

Saint Catherine Center extends its heartfelt thanks to Assumption Church, Herb Ramirez, the Knights of Columbus from St. Margaret’s Shrine, Cathy Romano, and everyone who helped make this special evening possible. A sincere thank you goes out to the volunteers from Kolbe Cathedral and Notre Dame High School, who made the night truly unforgettable.



Out in the Community



Saint Catherine Center for Special Needs was out and about last month, as both Academy students and Adult Program participants enjoyed a variety of field trips.

Academy students visited the Yale Center for British Art. In preparation for the trip, educators from the museum visited Saint Catherine Academy, introducing students to the artwork they would soon experience in person. This thoughtful collaboration allowed students to engage more deeply with the exhibits, bringing the artwork to life in a meaningful and accessible way.

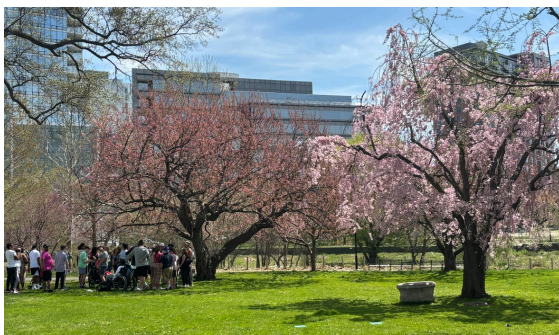


Students and adult participants also came together for an outing to a Bridgeport Islanders hockey game. The group had a fantastic time cheering from the stands, sharing in the excitement of the game, and enjoying a fun, community-based experience together.

The Adult Program continued the momentum with additional outings. Participants headed to the theater to see *The Super Mario Bros. Movie*, immersing themselves with the characters on the big screen.



Another field trip brought the Adult Program to Mill River Park in Stamford for the annual Cherry Blossom Festival. Surrounded by blooming trees and scenery, participants spent the day exploring, learning, and appreciating the beauty of nature. The festival offered a perfect blend of education, relaxation, and community engagement.



These field trips are meaningful, hands-on experiences that enrich the lives of our students and adult participants. Whether through art, sports, film, or nature, each outing creates lasting memories while fostering learning and independence.

1,000 Pizza Boxes!

Back in February, Ian had the idea to start counting how many pizza boxes the group folded during their weekly vocational training at Vazzy's. Since then, they have folded 1,000 pizza boxes!

“Next up, 5,000 boxes!” says Ian.

Congratulations on this milestone!



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