



SAINT CATHERINE CENTER FOR  
*Special Needs*

*A Dream is Launched:  
Building For the Future Campaign Goal is Met*

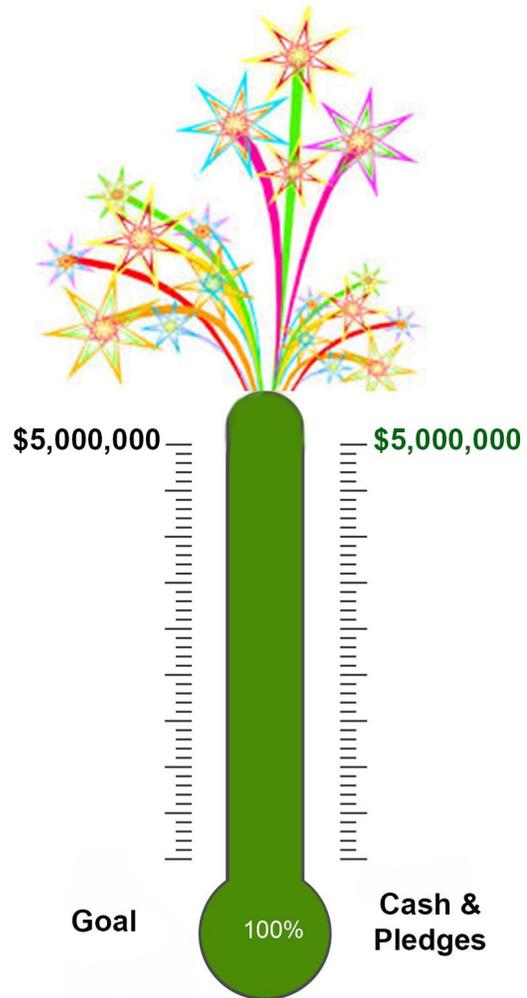
As 2022 begins we are elated to announce that the \$5M goal for the [Building For the Future](#) Campaign has been met. "Our families and friends came together to make this happen," said Helen Burland, Executive Director. "They recognize how important this expansion is to the future of Saint Catherine Center, and we are so grateful for their generous response."

While plans have been in motion for more than two years, fundraising for the campaign actively began in March 2021. "To meet our campaign goal in less than a year is clearly a testament to the generosity of the Saint Catherine community and the leadership of the Board and staff," said Charles Chiusano, Chairman of the Board. "This is truly an exciting time for the Center."

Campaign pledges and contributions will support an expansion that will double the size of Saint Catherine Center, creating much-needed space for group and individual activities, including a commercial grade kitchen and hydroponic garden. ([View the floorplan.](#)) Expanded programming will also be supported through the reserve account funded by the campaign.

Final plans are being developed; initial meetings with town officials have begun; and the project timeline is being reviewed. As the program moves forward, regular updates will be posted on the [Project Updates](#) webpage.

While the original goals for [Building For the Future](#) have been met, there are still opportunities to be part of the project. Contributions may be designated to the expansion and will be included in the project and reserve fund. [Click here to contribute.](#)





The gym at Saint Catherine Center was transformed into a beautiful starry night in Bethlehem as students from Saint Catherine Academy presented the annual Christmas Pageant to an enthusiastic audience of parents and friends on December 23rd. [View the gallery of photos.](#)

In her welcome, Helen Burland, Executive Director, shared a quote often attributed to St. Francis of Assisi: “Preach the Gospel at all times, and when necessary, use words.” “Our actors today will personify this,” she said. “We will be touched by their message... our students live the Gospel message and they teach us every day—using as few words as possible—that there is value in every life.”



The familiar Nativity story has been presented each year since Saint Catherine Academy opened in 1999. Roles are announced after Thanksgiving, and four weeks of rehearsals begin. Sr. Cheryl Driscoll directs the play each year. In creating the script, she considers the abilities and personalities of the students. “Each student has their own unique gift to bring to this story. That’s part of the beauty of the Pageant,” she said.



All students have a role. New students are usually angels or shepherds, while more prominent parts such as Mary and Joseph are played by those who have been in the Pageant before. “We switch roles so everyone has a chance to play someone different,” Driscoll said. “Those who have been in the Pageant for several years now really understand the story and their parts. They’ve grown tremendously and are able to help the others.” This year, Nyah Holmes was Mary and Vincent DiProperzio played Joseph.

Staff are also part of the cast, assisting students and helping with staging, lighting, and costumes. Christmas songs move the story along and the audience is encouraged to join in singing.

“This is the story of God become human,” announced the narrator at the beginning of the Pageant. “It’s not the sort of thing whose meaning we can exhaust in one telling. Every time we listen to this story, our hearts are touched in a new way.”

“We look forward to this event,” said Michelle Rivelli, a Board member and parent of a participant in the Adult



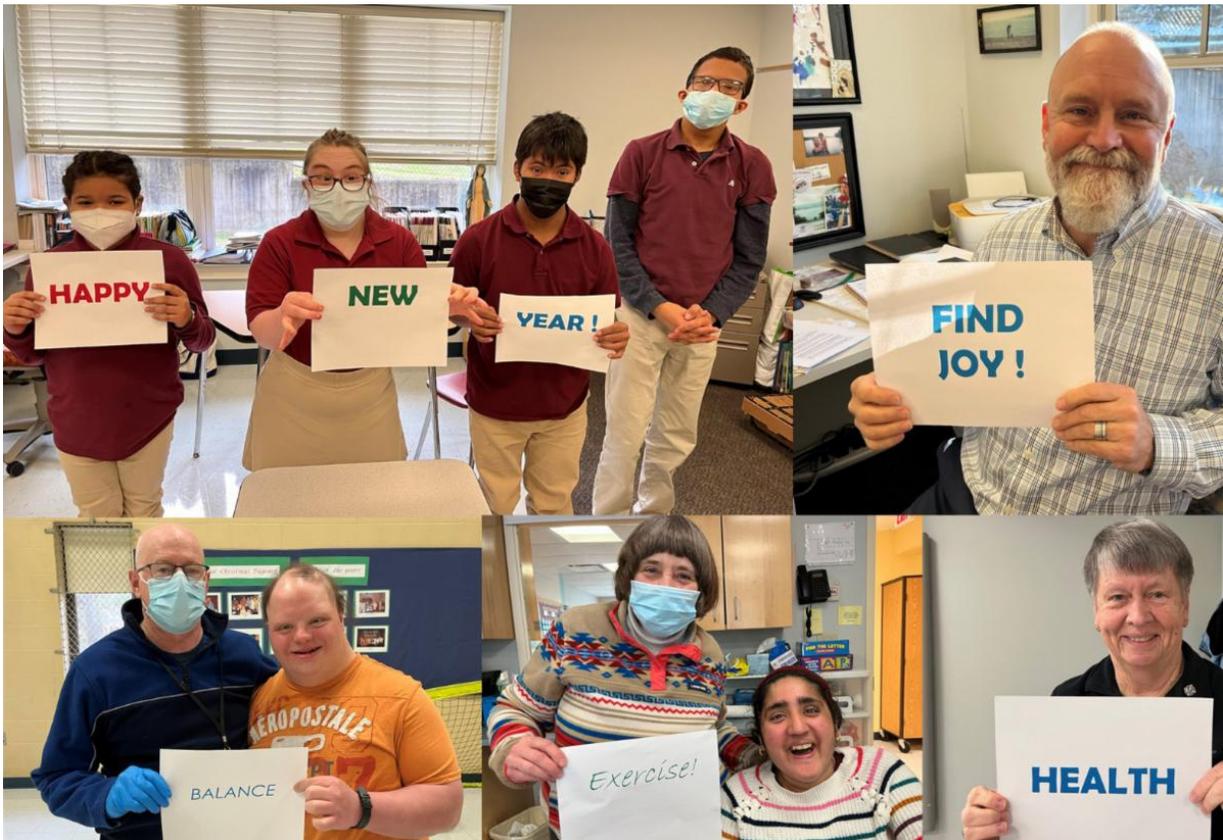
Program. "It really begins the Christmas season for us, as I know it does for many others who come every year. Watching every student participate helps us focus on the real meaning of the hope and joy the season brings."

## *Hopes for the New Year*

What is your hope or resolution for 2022? Our students shared their resolutions when they returned from Christmas break. Jocelyn wants to color in the lines; Anna wants to be a better singer; Fabricio wants to sing songs at home; and Antonio wants to study his words.

As our staff reflected on the New Year, it was more about hope than resolutions. Many shared hopes and prayers for "good health for all" and an end to the pandemic. Others expressed a desire for more balance in their lives, to connect more with others, and that people will be respectful of each other.

Perhaps the most "hopeful resolution" came from Eric Spencer, Principal of Saint Catherine Academy, who resolves to "Be thankful and find joy throughout each day!" Luckily, we are good at this at Saint Catherine Center. Let it be our mantra for 2022.



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