



SAINT CATHERINE CENTER FOR *Special Needs*

An Intern Shares Her Experience

Caroline SanAngelo, a rising senior at the University of Delaware, was searching for a meaningful internship in her field and found Saint Catherine Center online. After speaking on the phone with Helen Burland, Executive Director, they both felt it would be a valuable learning opportunity.

Since the beginning of June, Caroline has been assisting in the Adult Program with Team 2, doing everything that our regular direct service providers do, from transportation to helping with ADLs and accompanying participants to vocational worksites.

Caroline's major is in psychology and cognitive science, with a minor in disability studies. She is also part of the honors program and a peer mentor in the Access:Ability Scholars Program. Caroline reflected on her time at the Center.

Right from the start, the members of Team 2 were very welcoming and helpful. It took a while to learn where each participant's strengths lie and which supports and techniques work best for them. For instance, Jake can identify the correct number when prompted, and Nicky can do addition on the SmartBoard. Working in this individualized way has really shown me the positive effects of personalized learning and teaching.

I have also learned how to track, manage, and assist with behaviors. When something is not working, we try another way while trying to keep the environment as positive as possible.

As I have become more comfortable, the adults have also grown comfortable around me and are more open to trying new things, like Francisco loading the dishwasher for the first time, or Eve going up to bowl on her own. Seeing this progress in independence has been the most inspiring part of my time.

I have especially enjoyed going out to the job sites with the participants. At Merton House my role was to point out where all the items go in the pantry. Everyone was always ready to work, and they wanted to complete all their tasks. This was great to see.



I feel very proud of each of the participants on Team 2. I have learned so much from them, and from my great coworkers at the Center. The value of care, compassion, and patience is the most important takeaway from my experience at Saint Catherine's. These are important skills to nurture. I am so thankful to have had this learning opportunity and first-hand experience.



Summer Fun at the Academy



The four-week summer session at the Academy is more casual than the regular academic year: no uniforms necessary, shorter days, lots of physical activity. All classes focused on maintaining skills, but there was still plenty of time for summer fun, including field trips to Beardsley Zoo and the bowling alley.

Four student interns assisted in the classrooms. Bianca Jones-Christie from Notre Dame High School joined us for the first time. Kylee Faulkner, Michael Pinedo, and Lucas Crowell returned this summer and are headed to college this fall. From helping in the classroom, to playing games in the parking lot and dancing in the gym, the interns were mentors and role models for Academy students. "I liked spending time with the student helpers," Vinny said.



"It's so good for our students to hang out with typical peers close to their own age," said Eric Spencer, Principal.

As the summer session ended, many students were looking forward to vacations with their families. Destinations included Maine, the Tennessee River Gorge, Florida, and their own backyards. Anna was looking forward to spending two weeks at Horizons Summer Camp. Others were staying closer to home. "Relax at home, go out to dinner, swim in the pool," Philip said. "I love August!"



[View some photos of our Summer Session.](#)

At the Core



Our Core Values

We respect the dignity and diversity of each person.

We serve people of all races, ethnicities, faiths, and economic backgrounds.

We focus on the total well-being of each person we serve.

We create a supportive and welcoming atmosphere, where each person feels a sense of belonging.

We celebrate the abilities and successes of each person.

We seek to build interpersonal relationships in a nurturing community.

We bring hope and joy to our students, adult participants, families, staff, and community partners.

www.SICatherineCenter.org

www.SICatherineAcademy.org

When Saint Catherine Center for Special Needs was formed in 2014, the Board of Directors and staff came together to create a set of Core Values to describe what is important to us and to guide us in our work with young people with disabilities. Although these values had been active since the early days of Saint Catherine Academy, it was especially important to organize them more formally as we expanded to include a new program for young adults in early 2015.

The process was a collaborative effort between the staff and Board of Directors during a strategic planning exercise. "We all agreed that the value statements that arose from this exercise were a real reflection of our mission," said Helen Burland, Executive Director.

In a conversation about our Core Values during a joint professional development day earlier this year, staff members shared stories and interactions with students and adults that affirmed these values are active every day at the Center.

They spoke of working with students and adults of different races and faiths, of meeting individuals where they are, focusing on strengths, and finding creative ways to make each person feel welcome.

"It's gratifying to see that our Core Values are still very much alive," Helen said. "They will continue to guide us as we go through our next expansion this year."

In our e-newsletters over the next several months, we will be sharing stories of Saint Catherine students and adults that show our Core Values in action. Stay tuned!

[Download a PDF of the Core Values](#)

• COME ONE, COME Y'ALL! •

JOY AND GRATITUDE DINNER

**Joy
&
Gratitude**

Sunday, October 2, 2022



Invitations will be in the mail soon!



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