

January 2020



SAINT CATHERINE CENTER FOR *Special Needs*

We are Truly Blessed

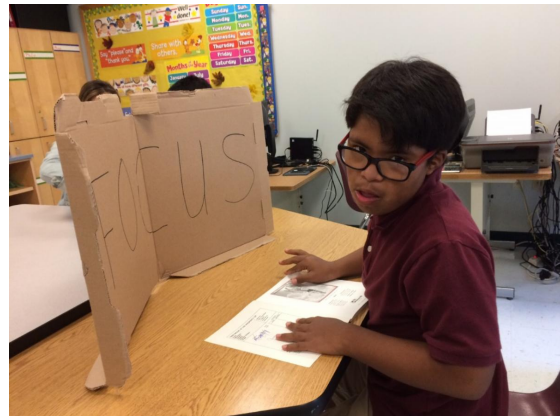
As the New Year begins, we thank all the individuals and organizations who support Saint Catherine Center. As the responses come in from our annual appeal, especially during the Christmas season, this generosity becomes even more apparent. Since approximately a third of our budget comes from philanthropy, we depend on this generosity. We are truly blessed.

Our donors support us in many different ways. For instance, one individual pledges \$10 each month; another, a business owner, donates the cost of buying and mailing Christmas cards and sends email greetings instead; volunteers rally family, friends, and colleagues to make donations on Giving Day; and many families and friends make contributions throughout the year in honor or in memory of a loved one.

There are also family foundations whose grants fund our programming, and corporations who support both their employees and the Center by matching their employees' gifts. Each of these ways to give is a part of the vibrant network that supports the Saint Catherine Center.

There is no right time to give. [Donations throughout the year help support our mission.](#)

A picture is worth a thousand words: [View some photos of the ways your contributions make an impact.](#)



*A Very Special
Christmas Story*

On December 20th, the gym at Saint Catherine Center was filled with family and friends eager to watch our students enact the annual Christmas Pageant. This year's production, "A Cousins' Christmas," was written by former Academy teacher Mollie Mitchell and told the familiar story with an emphasis on the closeness between Mary and her cousin Elizabeth and the value of the gift we are to each other. From Mary and Joseph to the shepherds, angels, and brightly shining star, each student had a role. "It was beautiful to see how much some of our students have grown in the past year," said Sr. Cheryl, who directed the Pageant.



This special event each year would not be possible without the help of many people: volunteers from the Order of Malta who provide refreshments; Knights of Columbus-St. Patrick Council who bring Santa with them; Sean Nayden, who set up the ramp for the actors to travel on; Russ and Amy Nagy from the Fairfield University Quick Center, who set up the lighting; and the dedicated Saint Catherine Academy staff. Thank you all!



[Read more about the Pageant](#) in *Fairfield County Catholic*.

[View photos](#)



"It's a Strike!": Bowling is a Favorite Activity

"You're up, Tyler!" Mr. Richard, a direct service professional in the Adult Program, positions Tyler H. at an angle near the center of the lane, sets up the ramp, and places the bowling ball on it. He guides Tyler's hand toward the ball; Tyler taps it, and the ball rolls a straight run down the middle. "Strike!" Richard grabs Tyler's hand in a celebratory high-five, and everyone whoops and claps. "Go, Tyler!"



It's another Friday morning at Nutmeg Bowl in Fairfield.

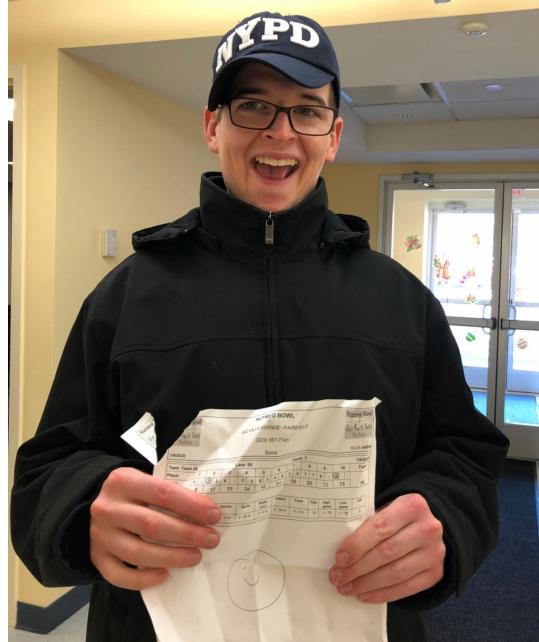
Bowling has long been a favorite activity of Center participants, all of whom go at least once each week. Interactive and fun, each

player can bowl at their own level while also enjoying the mutual support and camaraderie of being on a team. Learning to wait and take turns is an important skill. The group also practices regularly at the Center using the Wii bowling game.

“While there are obvious physical benefits to bowling, the feeling of being on a team together is what everyone likes—along with a bit of healthy competition,” said Brady Cronin, Director of the Adult Program. After a recent bowling session, the proud smile on Ryan’s face matched the smiley face on his score sheet.

One of our participants, Natalie, has been bowling since she was girl. Recently, she competed in the Special Olympics in East Haven, where her team placed fourth. “I learned to bowl without using the bumpers,” she said. “It was tough, but I got the hang of it. I love getting strikes!”

For Christmas, Natalie’s parents offered her a choice of bowling balls. “We’ve seen such growth in Natalie since she’s been bowling with her peers at the Center,” said her mother Alison. “She really enjoys the social aspect of it.”



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