

March 2023



SAINT CATHERINE CENTER FOR *Special Needs*

Framing the Future: Construction Update

Construction for the building expansion is fully in progress. The area for the new playground has been excavated and leveled. The foundation has been laid and concrete has been poured for the two courtyards. The structure of the new building is starting to take place as large metal frames are being assembled. Plumbing and draining is in the process of being roughed out and installed.

Construction is running smoothly and is on schedule. "Everything is going well," said Site Manager, Jeff Price, "we have been lucky with the mild weather and we are continuing to make really good progress." The project's completion is expected in early Fall of 2023.

The students and staff have been excitedly following the daily changes. Each day, we talk about what is new so we can follow along as the project continues. "We use it as an opportunity to learn and engage with our surroundings and community," explains Jim Winebrenner, an Academy teacher.

Watching from the inside and seeing incredible progress each day is growing the anticipation for our expanded facilities!

To see more project updates: [View photos of the ongoing project](#)



At The Core: Bringing Hope and Joy

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. We continue to share stories from the Saint Catherine community that show our Core Values in action.

Core Value 7: We bring hope and joy to our students, adult participants, families, staff, and community partners.

Each of our Core Values leads to this one. A sense of hope and joy—and gratitude—grows as together we respect each person's dignity and diversity, focus on their well-being, create an atmosphere of belonging, celebrate abilities and successes, and build interpersonal relationships. The evidence is in the faces of the young people we serve. [Take a look.](#)

By spreading hope and joy in everything we do, we create a community where everyone is included and enjoys. "One of my favorite parts of the day is welcoming everyone each morning and seeing all the smiling faces," says Eric Spencer, Principal. "It is a wonderful and positive way to start the day."

All these smiles are contagious. You can't help but grin when **Gus** and **Ronald** greet their friends and staff with an upbeat "hello" or **Patrick R** delivers a silly joke.

There is an atmosphere of joy that is unique to Saint Catherine Center. You can see it when **Tanisha** and **Francisco** are proud of their finished artwork, or **Ryan** can't contain his excitement when he sees his friends and teachers. It is a contagious sense of hope and happiness that stays on your heart even after leaving the Center.

Check out [past newsletters](#) to see our Core Values in action!



Fairfield County Giving Day Success!

Thank you everyone who contributed on Fairfield County Giving Day. With your help, we raised over \$25,000! These contributions are directed to the adult activities fund to support activities such as music, art, movement, bowling and field trips. Meaningful activities such as these, create meaningful learning experiences and socialization onsite and within the community.



PB&J Friday



Less than a month into my new job at St. Catherine Center, I had the opportunity to join PB&J Friday. Once a month, students and staff from the Academy along with volunteers gather to prepare sandwiches to donate to Merton House, a local food pantry. Everyone had their own role and knew exactly what to do. It was inspiring to see all the students concentrating and working together to complete the task at hand.

The project creates a real sense of comradery among those involved while each sandwich gets passed to the next stage of the assembly line. Students supported and encouraged each other while they worked. "Come on **Tanisha**, good job" **Vinny** said cheerfully. This is a wonderful experience where students continue to practice useful life skills and teamwork.



The process went incredibly smoothly and 300 sandwiches were made in no time. I can only imagine how far this process has come compared to the first time. "We have had a lot of practice to get to this place," Executive Director Helen Burland explained. "It is rewarding to see students grow over the months, they should all be very proud of their work."



I am looking forward to seeing the student's confidence and skills grow as they are serving others.

Angela Hite, Assistant Director of Communications



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