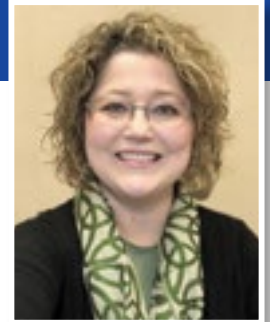




HOPE & THRIVE ACADEMY

Finding Hope. Learning to Thrive.

FALL • 2023 • NEWSLETTER



I've been thinking a lot about the nations lately. This year, we added a new Foreign Studies class because many of our students live on a fixed income and are unable to travel outside of Tennessee, let alone to another country. Since our students are unable to go to the nations, we decided to bring the nations to them! We will welcome guests from other countries to share about their culture, music, language, traditions, art, and food. We will also host an internationally themed fashion show featuring models with disabilities ranging in age from 5 to 55!

With all the preparations for the new Foreign Studies class, I began thinking about the Great Commission. In Matthew 28:19-20, we are instructed: *"Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."*

While we may not physically be going to the nations during our studies, we are still making disciples here locally and teaching them to obey all He has commanded us to do in His Word.

Recently, two new female students were invited to a bowling birthday party for another female student. The three ladies have a lot in common. All have lost their mothers and two also lost their fathers. On our way home, one of the students began talking about the loss of her mom and shared how she was afraid that when she dies, she would not go to heaven because she had not been saved. She had been under the impression that you could only get saved if you went to church, and she didn't go to church anywhere. This is the case for many

of our students as they have either gone to church and not felt welcome or they do not have reliable transportation to get to church. I explained to her that God is omnipresent — He's always present in all places — so she could give her heart to the Lord in her bedroom, at a bowling alley, or in a car. I asked if she felt like that night was the night to give her heart to the Lord and she said "yes." So, somewhere between Rogersville and St. Clair, sitting on the side of the road in a gas station parking lot, with tears rolling down her cheeks, she prayed and gave her heart to Jesus!

Alan Scott, an author and pastor in Ireland, wrote in his book *Scattered Servants*, "The dream of God over your life is that you come alive in His presence and bring life to every environment, spilling contagious hope into hurting humanity." Our mission at Hope & Thrive Academy is to express the love of Christ to adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. My prayer is that we all would be awakened to dream in partnership with God and express His love to those in our own spheres of influence including our city, state, nation, and world.

Thank you for helping to share the love of Jesus with our students. Opportunities are regularly available to sponsor students through scholarships, provide transportation to and from church, assist with fundraising activities, and more. I'd love to talk with you about your next steps!

Tracy E. Lewis, Director

UPCOMING

FASHION SHOW AND ANNUAL CELEBRATION BANQUET

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 6:30 PM
First Presbyterian Church
600 W Main Street, Morristown

There is still time to register for our "Hello World - Art and Fashion from Around the World" Celebration Banquet and Fashion Show.

For more information or to make reservations, please call or email Susan at 423.787.8753
SusanBernier@HolstonHome.org.

Reservation deadline is
September 14.

PRAYER REQUESTS

Please join with us as we pray for our students and celebrate our praises.

- New vehicle for Leslie who regularly drives others to church.
- Supported living environment for Cassie, Molly, and Josh.
- Cassie's co-worker, Ms. Wanda, who is having medical issues.
- Melissa needs dental work but is afraid of the dentist.
- Molly's friend, Princess, has cancer and is on oxygen.
- Chloe would like more of her friends to join her at HTA.
- We have a NEW passenger van!
- We have four NEW laptop computers!

A financial statement is available upon written request from the Office of Charitable and Regulatory Programs.

STUDENT SUCCESS

JOSH MILLHOUSE has been with us for many years. He attended our "Day Camp" in October 2013, which was a trial run of our new day program, and he became an official student on opening day in January 2014. Josh was the second student from our program to get a job. He has been working part-time at Carson Newman University in the cafeteria since September 2014, and started his second part-time job at Team Technologies Plant 4 in November 2016. In Taekwondo, he has his Decided Red Belt, and his goal is to be a First-Degree Black Belt.

Josh enjoys meeting new friends at HTA and has really thrived in our program. He shared:

"I feel like I have more confidence. I feel like I'm able to tell a person how I'm feeling now instead of being closed-off and to myself. At the beginning, I felt closed-off and didn't talk a lot. I was like this during high school. I just kept to myself. Back then, I didn't have the tools I needed. But now, I work two jobs and I am an active member at my church, Heritage Fellowship in Jefferson City. Some Sundays, I'm a greeter. Other Sundays, I work in the media booth as a presenter, where I put things on the screen, such as lyrics to songs and play videos. I also have a girlfriend now. Her name is Lauren Watkins and we have been dating for three years. I love her patience and I'm really amazed that we have a lot in common."



In Josh's spare time, he enjoys helping his family and hanging out with friends. Josh also has a unique hobby. He elaborated: *"I like to watch a TV show and on certain shows, I'll copy the dialog from closed caption into Microsoft Word and then I look for any typos or errors in the dialog. I also like to create my own episode guide for certain DVDs that don't carry one. Recently, I came across a few books that apparently do not have a table of contents, so I create the table of contents for the book and try to match the same format that the author or publisher used."*

Josh has been able to attend HTA through the generosity of a sponsor and recognized, "If it hadn't been for my sponsor, I wouldn't be here. I'm very grateful and honored for her support."

When asked what he's learned the most by being at HTA, Josh said, *"I've learned to be more patient with everyone else and to enjoy every moment you have in life. Enjoy life one day at a time. Life is not a race."*

DONOR SPOTLIGHT



God planted a seed in the heart of **Dave Orzechowski** and the Knights of Columbus to pursue getting a van for us after learning of the need a little over a year ago. We hope you enjoy this chat with Dave!

Hope & Thrive Academy (HTA): How did you first connect with HTA?

Dave: Each year the Knights of Columbus Council 12838 in Jefferson City holds an annual tootsie roll drive supporting those with intellectual disabilities.

As the Grand Knight of the Knights of Columbus at Holy Trinity Church in Jefferson City, it's my responsibility to identify organizations within our community who have a successful track record. I first heard of the wonderful things HTA was doing through a fellow Knight. We discovered what we had heard about the Academy was true. I knew that this was an organization we would want to support for a long time.

HTA: Why is HTA's mission and ministry so important to you and why do you support it?

Dave: The Knights of Columbus proudly supports HTA because of the work they do to help mainstream those with intellectual disabilities. Through their hard work many at the Academy move on to be productive citizens of their community.

HTA: How have you supported HTA?

Dave: The Knights support HTA through annual tootsie roll drives. Each year HTA partners with us at the event passing out tootsie rolls in front of the Walmart

in Jefferson City. Proceeds are donated to HTA. The students enjoy participating in this worthwhile event!

Recently we helped HTA acquire a passenger van to transport students to and from school/work. Through Kind Charities of Tennessee, our local Council was able to obtain a funding grant due to the work it has done in association with the annual tootsie roll drives. We have been working toward this goal for the last 2 years. This need has finally come to fruition!

HTA: What do you want others to know about HTA?

Dave: We want the community to know that there are folks and organizations like HTA who are working with and supporting those individuals who just need a chance to show their worth and productive value.



SEMESTER UPDATE

Our students are growing and learning new skills every day. Celebrate their successes with us and help reinforce what they are learning!

BOOK CLUB. Students are building communication skills with activities based on the novel, *Mr. Popper's Penguins* by Richard and Florence Atwater. Students read chapters out loud in class — acting out the characters including Captain Cook, a real, live penguin that Mr. Popper receives as a surprise gift!

DRIVERS ED. We're covering the rules of the road in the *Tennessee Driver License Manual* plus driver safety tips since several students aspire to getting their driver's license this year.

FITNESS. The physical fitness focus is on activities like bocce ball, badminton, and partner drills with pads as well as Taekwondo instruction that enables students to earn belts.

JOB SKILLS. Our goal is to enhance the skills needed to be hired and keep a job such as communication, problem solving, teamwork, attitude, and professionalism.

LIFE SKILLS. Our focus is on money management, food preparation, housekeeping tasks, personal hygiene, and self-care.



HOPE & THRIVE ACADEMY

Finding Hope. Learning to Thrive.

P.O. Box 237 | Jefferson City, TN 37760 | (423) 254-3744 | www.htahh.org

*Hope & Thrive Academy is a program of Holston United
Methodist Home for Children*

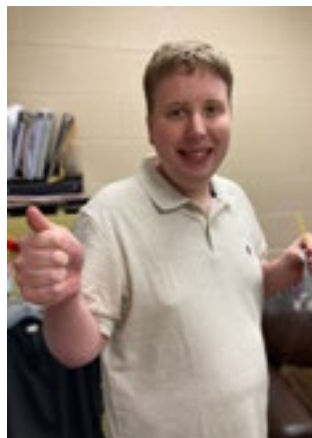
Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Knoxville, TN
Permit No. 309



HOW CAN I HELP?

- **Personal vehicle** for a student who regularly drives others to church.
- **Copy paper**
- **Tuition Assistance**

Please call Susan at 423-787-8753 if you're interested in supporting HTA for any of these needs.



HOPE • GROW • THRIVE