

Preparing students for



CELEBRATING 30 YEARS OF EXCELLENCE

life beyond the classroom

FOCUS ON PHOENIX

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This year, **The Phoenix Center celebrates 30 years of educational excellence.** We are so grateful for the opportunity to commemorate this milestone. In 1991, The Phoenix Center opened its doors with the dream of best serving students with special needs and their families. Today, The Phoenix Center's accomplishments have not only made those dreams come true, they have surpassed them. There are a few highlights of our accomplishments

in our feature article in this newsletter.

Don't forget—we are celebrating our 30th Anniversary by holding a Gala Fundraising event, planned for Saturday, June 5th, 2021. Please mark your calendars! We are hopeful we can all be together in person for this historic evening.

Our social media, email blasts and newsletters will be using the hashtag **#thephoenixcenter30th** to mark this milestone—we encourage you to do the same with your social media!

Thank you again for being a part of our learning community. We look forward to celebrating this big year with you. Take care and be well.

In Gratitude,
Julie Mower, M.A.Ed., Executive Director

P.S. We are transitioning to electronic only newsletters to reduce costs and paper. If you are not receiving this via email, please email Carolyn Sharaway at CSharaway@thephoenixcenternj.org to be added to our mailing list.

The mission of The Phoenix Center, working in partnership with families and community, is to develop the potential of each student with developmental disabilities and those on the autism spectrum ages five through 21 and to provide customized, unique, and individualized programs aligned with the New Jersey Student Learning Standards. Promoting the development of the whole student, we care for, educate, and empower our students and graduates so that they will develop life-centered skills which will prepare them for life beyond the classroom.



30TH ANNIVERSARY GALA FUNDRAISER EVENT ANNOUNCEMENT

We have reserved Saturday, June 5, 2021 for our special 30th Anniversary Gala Fundraiser event at Macaluso's in Hawthorne, NJ. They have recently renovated, expanded their menu and offerings, and are rolling out the red carpet for us! Please save the date!

Because we had to cancel our Casino Night in May due to COVID-19 earlier this year, this Gala event is even more critical to our fundraising efforts. Our Casino Night cancellation represented a loss of approximately \$35,000 in fundraising contributions in support of our students and school programs.

These funds support program enhancements not covered by tuition from sending school districts. In the past, they have included:

- **Technology** such as SMARTBoards, Chromebooks, iPads, and more;
- A **new mini-van** to transport our students for our community-based initiatives and recreation and leisure programs, including therapeutic horseback riding, yoga, gymnastics and bowling;
- **Playground** improvements such as a new shade structure;
- **Our Recreation and Leisure program** that promotes socialization with a focus on community-based leisure activities such as bowling, gymnastics and horseback riding;
- **Emergency support for Phoenix Center families** in meeting our families most urgent needs as they arise.

You may remember completing a survey to determine if you wanted us to incorporate a Casino/gambling component to the Gala event. The results told us that the gambling component was really secondary for our typical attendees—if

you didn't get one, please feel free to reach out to Carolina Silva at CSilva@thephoenixcenternj.org to be added to our email list. Your responses indicated that you wanted to attend a get together, enjoy a great meal and evening with like-minded supporters of The Phoenix Center, and contribute to our mission and programming.

We will focus our energies on creating a memorable evening for all, with amazing food and entertainment! We will also be using a silent auction bidding software called *GiveSmart* this year, making it much easier and more entertaining to win prizes and merchandise...and we will be able to open the bidding the week leading up to the event! Stay tuned!

On an important note, we very much need sponsors to help us underwrite the event, and the wonderful programs we listed above. We call upon our sponsors, friends, families, vendors, local businesses, and volunteers to attend and contribute in any way you can.

We have sponsorship opportunities ranging from the Title/Event Sponsorship to Legacy Sponsorship, Leader Sponsorship, Ambassador Sponsorship, among others—at multiple investment levels.

We will also be offering an **event journal** for advertising messaging opportunities. If you would like to know more, please contact our Development Officer, Carolyn Sharaway at CSharaway@thephoenixcenternj.org or 973.542.0743 ext 403. ■

WE'VE COME A LONG WAY IN 30 YEARS

It is so gratifying to reflect on the success and growth the school has experienced in 30 years. We are eternally grateful to people like you for your ongoing belief, and support.

This year—with COVID-19 adding so much complexity to our educational lives—we are also so lucky and proud to have such a dedicated and creative staff. If you followed our regular updates from March to August on our website and on social media, you would have seen our school community, students, staff members and parents in action, making the most out of an unprecedented and challenging situation.

We have been successful because we have the resources and expertise to rethink how our students are served in an unconventional environment. And for that, we are a rare and fortunate school. On another happy note, here are a few high-level statistics of where we were and where we are now, 30 years later! We:

- **grew our annual student body** from 16 students and 12 staff in 1991 to an average of 140 students and 220 staff.
- **developed our curriculum and program offerings** that serve the whole child to best prepare them for *life beyond the classroom*, including 17 extra curricular activities, 33 job sites, and 34 community-based instruction (CBI) locations.
- **rose as a leader in innovation** using emerging technologies to better engage students in their education. Our SMARTBoards, Chromebooks, G-Suite for Education, robots (Nao and Photon) and our Funtronic Interactive Floor System are just a few examples of how we incorporate technology into our curriculum.

TPC really has come a long way and we are excited to see what the next 30 years holds for our learning community! ■





The Phoenix Center *at a glance*

Founded in

1991 → Today

 16 students

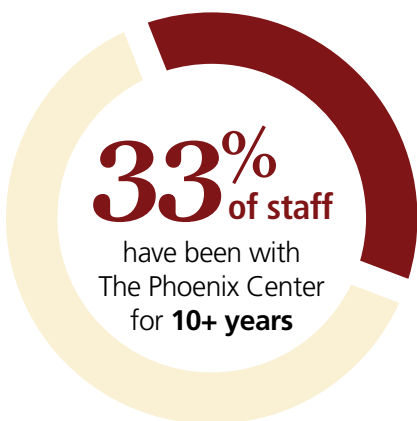
 140 students

 12 staff

 220 staff*

*(full- and part-time)

 Students from **60+** districts in 8 counties



6
special
area
subject
classes

16

classrooms



divided into four
units based on age,
classification, and
level of function

5

related
service
offerings



10

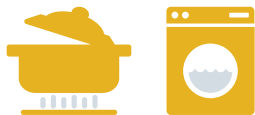
treatment
rooms

4 Principles of the **FISH!** Philosophy

- 1** choose your attitude
- 2** be present
- 3** make someone's day
- 4** play

Transition Services

- **33** local job sites
- **6** transition programs
- **34** Community-Based Instruction locations



17

extracurricular activities



Supported Employment

51%

of students ages 16–21

hold paid or unpaid
positions in the community



A THOUGHT LEADER IN THE FIELD OF SPECIAL EDUCATION, AS SEEN IN...

As we reflect during this unusually difficult year, it seemed like the perfect time to stop, take a deep breath, and be grateful for the diverse media outlets we have had the privilege of being covered by. Our reputation as an innovative school, with thought leadership and subject matter expertise in the field of special education has never been more apparent. In the last several years, we have been featured in these news media, with our most recent article appearing in *Autism Parenting Magazine* entitled "[How to Select a Private School for Your Child with Special Needs.](#)" ■



GIVING TUESDAY

GivingTuesday was created in 2012 as a simple idea: a day that encourages people to do good and give back. Over the past seven years, GivingTuesday has grown into a global generosity movement unleashing the power of people and organizations to transform their communities and the world.

This year, GivingTuesday is December 1, 2020!

Look out for upcoming information—Facebook blasts, emails and other notifications—about how you and your friends/family can help this initiative! We cannot do this without your support! ■

GIFTS THAT COST YOU NOTHING

There are many different ways of supporting TPC.

A basic and super easy way to contribute to TPC is to [designate The Phoenix Center, Inc as your favorite charitable organization on Amazon Smile.](#) This allows us to receive a small percentage of every purchase you make (0.5% of each eligible purchase). So, every time you shop at AmazonSmile, you're automatically giving TPC a gift, which makes us smile!

Another way to donate is to see if your employer will [match your contributions,](#) allowing your dollars to go that much further. You can find the list look-up on the donate page on our website.



Other ways to donate: a one-time donation, a recurring donation (monthly, quarterly or annually) or the opportunity to create a significant legacy by putting The Phoenix Center in your will and/or to follow a [planned giving strategy.](#) A planned gift is pledged now and gifted at a later date. There are a variety of ways to make a planned gift at no cost to you and some can give you income now while benefiting TPC today from your intentional philanthropy.

To consult with us about making a planned gift, setting up a trust, donating stock or another type of marketable securities, please contact Development Officer, Carolyn Sharaway, 973.542.0743 ext. 403 or CSharaway@thephoenixcenternj.org. ■

In an effort to save money, and some trees, The Phoenix Center is in the process of transitioning to an electronic newsletter. Please email CSharaway@thephoenixcenternj.org to be added to our list! Many thanks!



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SAVE THE DATES

#GIVINGTUESDAY
Tuesday, December 1, 2020

TPC'S 30TH ANNIVERSARY GALA
Saturday, June 5, 2021
Macaluso's, Hawthorne, NJ



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