



Madonna School & Community-Based Services

EDUCATION · LIFE SKILLS · EMPLOYMENT

Fall 2017

CELEBRATION! 2017

The Grand Ballroom of the CenturyLink Center was awash with red, white and blue as our students, faculty and friends gathered in support of Madonna School & Community-Based Services on August 26th. A lively cocktail hour was followed by a heartwarming performance of "God Bless America" by the Madonna Student Choir and Bell Choir. Event Emcee John Knicely lead the program through dinner. Attendees purchased fabulous experiences and items during the silent and oral auctions, and generous bidders raised their paddles to donate to Education Assistance programs. Thank you to our event Co-Chairs Nancy and Russ Mandel, Kelley and Ed Prosser, and Wendy and Mike Prosser, Honorary Chairs Mike and Suzie Lawler, and Honorees Ron and Carol Henn. Thank you also, to all the wonderful volunteers who helped set up for and run the event, especially those members of the Madonna Council and Madonna Young Professionals Board. And finally, a special thank you to Event Coordinator Toody Moffatt and Development Officer Tabitha Foster, without whom this successful event would not be possible.

Together, we raised more than \$346,000 in support of Madonna and its programs!



ABOVE:
Students perform onstage



LEFT:
Madonna President Jay Dunlap with representatives of the Nebraska Knights of Columbus

Upcoming Events

ANGEL FARE LUNCHEON
AND BOUTIQUE
Tuesday October 24, 2017
Il Palazzo – Italian American
Heritage Society, 5110 N. 132 St.

10:30 a.m. – Boutique opens
11:30-12:30 p.m. – Lunch and
student performance
12:30 – Guest Speaker
Fr. Tom Fangman
Tickets - \$45.00

Register online at
madonnaangelfare.com

Memorials

Bill Fitzgerald
Theresa McCaslin
Stan Jensen
Karen Ihrig
Frank Kean
Mary Bathen
Robert Vesely
Andrea Glinka
Nancy Nahas



We Want to Hear from You!

Parents, alumni and Madonna School supporters, send us your favorite Madonna stories or memories and we will share them with our community. Moved? Please provide a current address so we can keep you up-to-date on happenings at Madonna.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email address: _____

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

What's Happening at Madonna

Dear friends of Madonna,

Ricky, who is in his 40s, has been a part of Madonna Community-Based Services (MCBS, formerly the Madonna Workshop) for most of his adult life. Like many of the people we serve, there is no mystery about what's on Ricky's mind: he will let you know what he's thinking about: usually firefighters, rodeos, or polka music.

I look forward to being with Ricky every time I visit MCBS. He grabs my hand we sing "Roll Out the Barrel." It makes him happy, which makes me happy, and then we both go on with our day, better off for having shared a moment in song.

While there's no mystery surrounding Ricky's likes and interests, there is a great deal of mystery surrounding why his mind works the way it does. In fact, each child or adult we serve at Madonna School & Community-Based Services is a unique mystery. Many are on the autism spectrum, but that's

a wide and diverse spectrum. Some will have Down Syndrome, but while that may tell you a few things they have in common it by no means captures each individual's gifts, challenges, and personality.

Consequently, to do our work well, it has to be highly individualized. We don't provide one-on-one staffing, but we're close to it – one on three, four or five, depending on the program. If that sounds expensive ... well, it is. But it happens – and beautiful things happen – because you support our efforts. Please keep us in your thoughts and prayers, support our children and adults with special needs, and share what you can to keep Madonna growing and thriving in our service to these wonderfully mysterious individuals who come through our doors every day!

God Bless,

Jay

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

Our Lady of Hope Transition and Employment Program

At Madonna, the parents, faculty and staff work together to teach our students the skills and knowledge they need to lead enriching and meaningful lives. Madonna's primary, middle school and high school classrooms provide our students with a solid foundation of academics and social skills. And thanks to Madonna's Our Lady of Hope Life Skills-Transition Program, our students can build upon that foundation after graduating from high school.

Transition students ages 18-21 and adult clients in Madonna Employment Services participate in a variety of structured lessons and activities aimed at helping each of them reach their own maximum level of independence. Program Director Diane Cochran works closely with parents and guardians to set individualized goals specifically tailored to each student's abilities. One student may work toward earning a driver's permit; another may aspire to comfortably navigate Omaha on a bus.

Whatever the goal, Diane and her staff break each student's plan down into manageable parts and help students learn to piece all the parts together until their goals are achieved. "Each student has an Individual Transition Plan with specific goals they wish to achieve," says Diane. "We then teach each skill needed to accomplish the goal, not moving on until each skill is mastered in turn. This approach fosters confidence and independence in the students."

The Transition and Employment programs' approach is certainly a successful one – over 80% of the students who complete it go on to achieve permanent employment. That is something that many families may not have thought possible prior to their child attending Madonna. "We give families hope – hence the name – Our Lady of Hope Transition and Employment Program," says Cochran.



2017 Annual Appeal Kicks Off in November

Madonna School



ANNUAL APPEAL

Four years ago, a student named Aden came to us as a highly introverted, non-verbal eight-year-old boy, with a diagnosis on the Autism Spectrum. It was nearly impossible for him to participate in classroom activities with his peers, even in a class of just six students. "He was simply unable to take part in whole-group activities," says Leah Stewart, Aden's classroom teacher. "It really limited his social interactions, and his learning."

Over time, Mrs. Stewart, together with her full-time teaching assistant Ann Brammer, worked with Aden to improve his social skills and communication. "Today, he participates in activities with our class, and he is able to communicate his needs to me," reports Stewart, "He has made tremendous strides."

What makes these tremendous strides possible for our students?

- Class Size - Our 3:1 student-teacher ratio makes it possible for each student to receive the personalized and specialized instruction needed to help them achieve their social and academic goals.
- Continuity – Our K-12 and Transition education takes place in a single building, affording our students a chance to grow and learn in a familiar environment from age five through twenty-one

These invaluable benefits of a Madonna education come at a cost, however.

- It takes \$17,000 a year to educate just one student at Madonna
- The tuition we charge covers less than one third of that cost.
- Madonna is a Catholic school without a parish and therefore, without regular financial parish support.

Each year, we launch an Annual Appeal in November, asking generous-minded members of our community to provide the financial support needed to help us close the gap. You will be receiving further information about Madonna's 2017 Annual Appeal next month. Please prayerfully consider a financial contribution that will make you a partner with Madonna as we continue to impact the lives of students like Aden and their families.

With Sincere Gratitude,

Erin Dahms
Development Director

Meet Our School Faculty and Staff!

Our team of caring and dedicated teachers and staff are making an impact in the lives of Madonna students every day. Their knowledge and experience are just some of the many things that set Madonna apart!

Back Row From Left: Laura Clark, Leah Stewart, Diane Gose, Cathy Hirschert, Beth Books, Ann Brammer, Reagan Heaton, Bryan Geras, Rosie Tomka. Front Row From Left: Leah Woods, Jennifer Higgins, Ally Clark, Mary Lynn Bennett, Angel Robertson, Peg Carney, Cecilia Fanciullo, Debra Faith, Elizabeth Connors, Diane Vaiskunas, Rachel Halonen, JoAnn Griffel, Mandy Alison



SR. MARY EVANGELINE RANDOLPH, FOUNDRRESS 1919-2015

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