



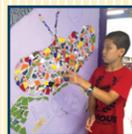
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Helps Make
Learning Easier

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SAVE THE DATE!
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**Education...
for a Lifetime**

GPA today



News and
Information
from Garfield
Park Academy

Fall 2016

GPA Welcomes New Director of Social Work



Audra Snyder, L.C.S.W. has joined the staff of Garfield Park Academy as the Director of Social Work. She earned her B.A.

from Alfred University and her M.S.W. from the University of Pennsylvania. Her years of experience include crises and intervention work with children, teens and adults; management and development of effective psychotherapy practices for families; and planning and implementation of social service programs for state and local agencies. She has developed and implemented curriculum for social and emotional development/intervention for students utilizing The Nurtured Heart Approach of positive reinforcement.



STEPS

Social Teaching for Employment
& Personal Success

Some Wiggle Room Helps Make Learning Easier

Call it fidgeting, wiggling, getting up, or bouncing in their seats, students at Garfield Park Academy are not being told to "sit still" – in fact, they are encouraged to move.

For many students with ADHD, learning disabilities, and autism, excess physical energy can be distracting in the classroom. When the expectation is that students remain still and seated, sensory integration dysregulation issues can look like a behavioral problem. According to Rebecca Wind-Samu, OTR/L, Occupational Therapist at GPA, a more sensory-friendly classroom allows students to use that energy in a way that helps them – and those around them – pay attention and learn.

Classrooms at GPA are now equipped with a toolbox of 'hand fidgets' - the student equivalent to an executive desk toy. Students use the plastic tangles, porcupine balls, rubber stress balls, therapy putty and more while at their desks to improve concentration.

Even the desks and chairs now invite motion. ErgoErgo stools help support posture and allow students



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Momentum Transition Program Places Students in Internship Programs

Seventeen-year old **Daniel** loves getting under the hood of a car. Last fall, his skills and motivation prompted his teacher, Dan Riley, the automotive instructor at GPA, to place a call to the local Meineke Car Care Center to arrange an internship placement for his student.



Twice a week, Dan, who is on track for a June, 2017 graduation, dons his uniform to go to Meineke. There, he works under the supervision of another mechanic as an intern. A job coach from GPA attends with him, helping Dan adjust to new situations, and acting as a ‘go-between’ to help him problem-solve and interpret work situations.

According to Jeff Dalrymple, Transition Coordinator at GPA, community-based internships like this one help get students ready for the world of work.

“Our students face behavioral challenges in addition to learning challenges so it may be hard for them to accept and give feedback on the job, or to maintain self-



control when the situation is stressful,” he said.

“On campus, we teach a lot of coping skills for them to be successful at work or at college. These opportunities help students figure out what they want to do and line them up with resources for that first job out of high school.”



SOME WIGGLE ROOM MAKES LEARNING EASIER

continued from cover

to rock gently in any direction. New Fit Desks® equipped with stationary exercise bikes offer a movement break, helping students stay focused. “Sit to Stand” desks give students the option to stand up while they do their work, and in other classrooms, students sink into oversized beanbag chairs for calming and relaxation.

“The new classroom equipment offers students an outlet for their energy and a chance to self-regulate so they can get on with the focused task of learning.”

-Rebecca Wind-Samu, OTR/L

MOSAICS & MURALS TELL STORIES OF HOPE

For the last several months, Art Therapist and certified K-12 art teacher Sheri Roseman, M.A., A.T.R.- B.C., has been working with students at Garfield Park Academy, piecing together shards of broken glass and tile to tell stories of shared hope.

Ms. Roseman is leading the school-wide mosaic and mural project which, when complete, will include six mosaics and several large painted murals, tied together around the theme of hope. While the finished artwork is beautiful, this project is more than the product- it is the process.

“It is a challenging time to be a teen in America. We wanted students to talk about that and have a place to share their hopes for the future. Building these projects has pulled students together as a team to work on something larger than themselves.”

According to Roseman, the public art project promoted candid discussions about economic inequity, despair, race relations, trauma, and politics. “For some students, it took a long time to get to the feeling of hope that we wanted to convey,” she said.

Students had to answer the question: what does hope look like? Next, they had to work as a group to decide how to tell the story of hope in a picture



that will last for years and be viewed by others who do not know them. The project provides a visual roadmap to their future. It helps them to take a step back and see things in a new way.

For one of the mosaics, students generated words related to hope – family, love, happiness, peace – which they etched onto mirrored tiles that represented leaves on a tree.

“Through these mosaics, students are learning that they have a voice and a story to tell. They are literally seeing themselves reflected in the mosaic. It reminds them that this school is about them, and that their stories matter,” she said.

Community Connections

Thanks to a generous donation from **Paul and Terri Bachow**, the GPA Gym got a facelift this summer, with new Universal Fitness equipment.

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So much is happening at STEPS!



Jeopardy with Ms. Michele

Trip to Burlington Waterfront. We also had ice cream!



Wildflower frames made in Horticulture Class

Red Robin for dinner... always a favorite!



Celebrating two STEPS Birthdays tonight!

A beautiful evening at the lake.



Fun playing basketball!

STEPS is a New Jersey Division of Developmental Disabilities Approved Provider for:

- Habilitative Services,
- Individual Supports, and
- Transportation Services

The STEPS program is located at Garfield Park Academy.

For more information visit our website at Steps4living.org, or call 609- 877-4111



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The Training Institute at Garfield Park Academy

The Training Institute at Garfield Park Academy offers free trainings to school leaders and other educators, with a focus on innovative, evidence-based approaches to serving students with social, emotional, learning and behavioral challenges. Learn more at:

www.GarfieldParkAcademy.org/the-training-institute-gpa/

EUGENE MORSE GALA DINNER AND GOLF OUTING SAVE THE DATE!



Garfield Park Academy is a New Jersey state approved, not-for-profit school that provides effective, evidence-based special education services for students in grades K-12 who have a history of learning, social, emotional and behavioral challenges. Garfield Park Academy is accredited by the Middle States Association and accredited by the Teaching Family Association. For more information, please contact Garfield Park Academy or visit our website.

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