

FALL 2022

# *Inspired* GIVING

BENEDICTINE FOUNDATION



*Inside this*  
EDITION

STUDENT & EASTON OFFICE SPOTLIGHTS  
CELEBRATION OF OUR DIRECT SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS  
BIRDIES FOR BENEDICTINE HIGHLIGHTS & MORE!

# A MESSAGE FROM SCOTT EVANS

## *Executive Director of Benedictine*

This fall as the weather changes and the leaves turn, we are missing an important member of the Benedictine Community. We lost Beth Mathis, our esteemed colleague and Director of Adult Services. I joined her family and friends at her funeral in her hometown in Texas in early October. Beth was the embodiment of Benedictine's core values of Compassionate Care, Dignity of Work, and Hospitality. Thank you to everyone who made gifts to Benedictine in her memory. She will always be remembered here at Benedictine for her kindness, generosity, and strength in the face of difficult odds.



**SCOTT EVANS**

We continue to move toward the future and away from the challenges that Covid brought us the past couple of years. In this issue, you'll see photos from our soccer tournament with our students and adult clients; Direct Support Professionals week where we honored the staff who work so tirelessly every day with those we serve; and our Birdies for Benedictine Charity Golf Tournament at the Talbot Country Club. Thank you to Steve Smith for chairing this year's event, and to all of our generous sponsors and golfers. We are all happy to be able to participate in these fun events and activities again.

Fall also brings our Annual Fund Solicitation and this year we chose to feature photos of the students and adults we support, so you can see the individuals who are impacted by your gifts. Thank you to everyone who has already contributed! If you haven't yet contributed – there is still time - Giving Tuesday is right around the corner.

Finally, you will see us begin construction on our new loop road in the spring. A generous Community Development Block Grant is helping make the project possible. The new road will provide improved access and safer space for those we support so they can exercise and enjoy the outdoors on our campus. As I have previously shared, this is the first stage in the Masterplan to improve Benedictine's facilities. We are also in the preliminary stages of planning a fundraising campaign to build more support for this project, our staff, and unrestricted needs. More to follow.

I wish all of you a joyous holiday season!

**SCOTT EVANS**  
*Executive Director of Benedictine*

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*Our strength lies in our roots.*

**YOU ARE AN ESSENTIAL PART OF THE BENEDICTINE FAMILY.  
YOUR GENEROUS GIFTS FEED IMPORTANT PROJECTS.**

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**SCAN HERE TO VIEW  
EVERYDAY MIRACLES**

## A MESSAGE FROM CHARLEY MILLS

### *President of the Foundation*

Dear Inspired Givers and Supporters of our Beloved Benedictine,

My fellow Trustees and the entire Foundation leadership and staff shout out a big “Thank You!” for your amazing and steadfast commitment to the welfare of Benedictine’s students and adults. Your support is vital to their advancement and enjoyment of life by assuring the resources are there to provide the high-quality services they need. Public assistance alone is insufficient to cover the full cost of Benedictine’s caring programs. Every donation of every size is critical to Benedictine’s success for its students and adults.

What have we been doing since the last issue of Inspired Giving? Thanks to you, the Foundation has actively supported both immediate and long-term programmatic needs. In September, faced with a staffing shortage exacerbated by the continuing after-effects of the Covid pandemic and the impact of inflation on the stiff competition for direct care and supervisory staff, Benedictine deployed the Foundation’s resources to fund a very necessary across-the-board hourly wage increase to spur hiring and retention that public assistance programs would not cover. For the longer term, the Foundation has continued its contribution to the improvement and modernization of the campus so greatly needed for our students’ instruction and quality of life—by both committing the Foundation’s own financial resources and spearheading fundraising from the federal and Maryland state governments as well as private foundations and contributors.

This issue of Inspired Giving is chock-full of a variety of pieces celebrating the many people and recent events of our Benedictine Community. We hope you will enjoy and be inspired by the stories about our adult participant Nicky Lentz and student Rylie DeWitt, the recent soccer tournament, the generous planned giving of Sandy Bishins and Dan Caplan, the festivities honoring our wonderful staff as part of Direct Support Professionals Week, our annual Birdies for Benedictine golf fundraiser, and many other topics of interest.

In closing, let me just say we appreciate and draw inspiration from all of you and from those we serve. Together we will propel Benedictine to new levels of success and happiness for our students and adults and be enriched in our own lives from it.



**CHARLEY MILLS**

### **CHARLEY MILLS**

*President of the Foundation Board of Trustees*

## *In Loving Memory of Beth Mathis*

We are saddened to share that Beth Mathis, former Director of Adult Services for Benedictine, passed away on August 31st, 2022. A Celebration of Life for Beth took place in her hometown in Texas on October 2, 2022. Beth was deeply devoted to Benedictine and her presence will be greatly missed.

**To view Beth’s obituary,  
please scan this QR code.**





## *The Bishins Family Story*



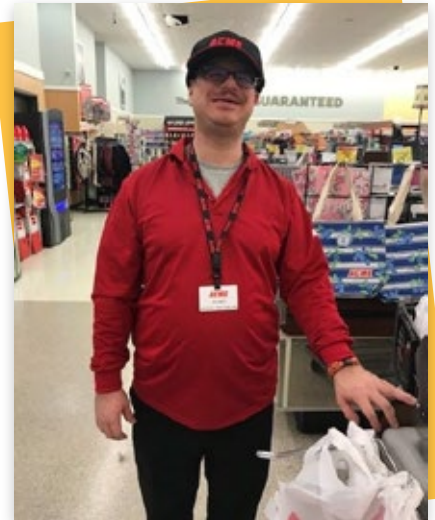
When Sandy Bishins had to make the difficult decision to place her son Dan in an adult community for the developmentally disabled, she was fortunate that a family member knew about a great program on the eastern shore of Maryland – Benedictine. This decision and acceptance into the program was the best thing that could have happened for both Dan and Sandy.

Dan has been developmentally disabled from birth and attended public school where he did not thrive. Sandy knew he needed to learn life skills, including job development skills, not history. Sandy was able to get him in a private school where he thrived. After graduation, Dan was living with his single mom and the challenges were too great. Dan is on the autism spectrum, is cognitively impaired, and also suffers from varying degrees of blindness in both eyes. So at age 25, Dan joined Benedictine. During visits to Benedictine, Sandy was incredibly impressed by the group homes and how much care and love Dan receives from the Benedictine staff. Communication between the staff and Sandy also eased her mind. It was such a relief to know that Dan was safe and well cared for.

At Benedictine Dan has learned a great deal of independence and his mother has really seen him thrive socially. He loves to celebrate birthdays and go to dinner, bowling, and the movies with his friends. He especially loves sports and has attended Ravens games in Baltimore and Shorebirds games in Salisbury. Dan also worked at Acme in Chestertown where he was recognized for his service! Recently Dan developed a condition which causes fainting and unfortunately, for safety reasons, is no longer able to work.

Sandy knew throughout this long, challenging journey that she would have to ensure Dan is taken care of after she passes. Dan receives social security and Medicaid. If she were to leave her assets to him in her will, he would lose those benefits. Therefore, Sandy set up a Special Needs Trust for Dan to cover extra expenses during his lifetime, that will ultimately benefit Benedictine and those it serves. Sandy has also recently started doing Facebook fundraisers as a way to support Dan and Benedictine. With the support of friends and family, Sandy has raised over \$2500.

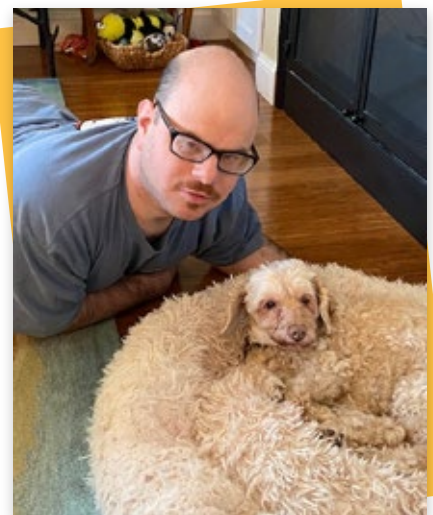
Dan will be heading out to Las Vegas soon to visit with his dad. Sandy is so grateful that Benedictine allows Dan to live a fulfilling life and allows her do things like travel to Florida to be with her mother. She is eternally thankful to Benedictine and the staff who care for and support Dan.



*Dan working at Acme.*



*Dan was the best man at his brother's wedding.*



*Dan with his dog.*

# Nick Lentz

## A JOURNEY WITH **BENEDICTINE**

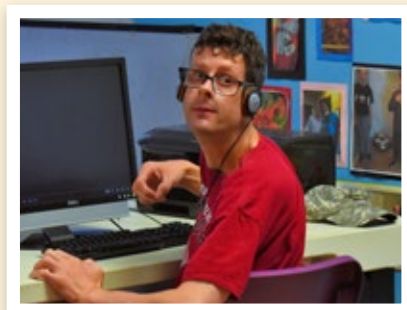
*Nick Lentz's* story is an inspiring one of living with a developmental disability. His family knew very early on that public school was not going to be the right fit for him and through friends they learned of Benedictine.

Sister Mary Agnes fondly remembers Nick when he first came to Benedictine at age 5. She said he was shy and tiny and she would carry him. He was still drinking out of a bottle. The Benedictine staff helped Nick learn how to drink out of a glass. Other milestones for Nick included learning to bathe and dress himself. Nick's family always felt at peace knowing how well he was being taken care of by the staff at Benedictine. The atmosphere at Benedictine provided a nurturing place where Nick could thrive. His language skills improved and he even learned to read a bit. Through focusing on life skills, Nick was able to develop a better understanding of the world around him.

When the time came for Nick to graduate from the Benedictine school, his family knew they wanted Nick to continue on to one of Benedictine's adult group homes. While they pursued other options, an opening became available and Nick moved into a home with three other men in Henderson in 2006. Through the years Nick has developed relationships with his three housemates and they enjoy doing activities together. Nick even participates in horseback riding with Talbot Special Riders. He also enjoys music and likes to dance to music he refers to as "Oldies but Goodies!"

At home, Nick and his housemates work together to complete household chores including cleaning and sorting laundry. The skills Nick's learned enabled him to secure a job with a local, public golf course. Ann, his Benedictine job coach, says Nick loves talking with the staff and is a joy to work with - his excitement for his job is amazing! Nick also loves to watch the planes that fly overhead leaving from the nearby airport. Nick's dad is proud to say that he's a happy guy and everyone likes him.

Nick's story is truly a Benedictine success story, from his first days in the school to his transition to a group home and now contributing to his community through his work. Nick is a wonderful example of how all Benedictine's programs work together to bring about small miracles and success for the individuals served.



*Clockwise from top left: Nick in Career Connections, Nick with his family, and Nick with Sister Mary Agnes.*

## Rylie's Story

### ACHIEVING HER GREATEST POTENTIAL

*Rylie DeWitt*, a shy young lady, joined Benedictine when she was 12 years old. Before coming to Benedictine, she was in the public school system. Once she became an adolescent it became incredibly challenging for her and her family. Rylie was born with a rare condition called Potocki Schaffer Syndrome. She does not have the full effects of the condition, but struggles with epilepsy, autism, ADHD and a language disorder. Before Rylie came to Benedictine, her behaviors were very dangerous to herself and her family. She was digging teeth out of her mouth and drawing knives on others. She even jumped from a window and broke her foot. Her parents knew they had to find another option. Initially, they were not sure what to expect at Benedictine.

Rylie began in the Benedictine School's Academic and Behavioral Learning Environment (ABLEs), which is the area that serves students with the most extreme behavioral challenges. Along with her behavioral issues, Rylie also struggled with severe social anxiety and was unable to interact with her peers and staff. However, in the four years that Rylie has been at Benedictine she has progressed by leaps and bounds and is now in a Functional Academics (FA) classroom. Her teacher, Katie, shared that Rylie has learned to talk through what is bothering her and has developed tools to self-soothe. She responds to staff and has even started a girl's lunch table to socialize with her peers! Karen, who is Rylie's counselor, added that she has become a wonderful young lady who is kind, has a great sense of humor and is always working to improve herself.

Thanks to her progress, Rylie is able to enjoy many activities at Benedictine. She loves playing basketball and enjoys swimming and participates in tournaments at Benedictine. She also loves working in the Garden Center where she is able to identify plants and hang out with the local cats. Her first love is animals - including dogs, cats and hamsters. She has goals like being able to run errands independently on campus, answer the phone and give tours of the greenhouse. She also is very creative and enjoys drawing and painting. Participating in kayaking for Special Olympics has also helped Rylie gain confidence.

The progress she has made is exciting and rewarding for Rylie and her family and staff are proud of how far she has come since she came to Benedictine! Rylie's family hopes that when she graduates from Benedictine she will find work that is meaningful, and that she is happy and feels accepted. They are forever grateful for Benedictine and the staff that have worked tirelessly with Rylie to help her achieve her greatest potential.



*Rylie working in the Garden Center.*



*Rylie with her mom.*



*Rylie swimming.*



# Securing Jobs in the Community

## CELEBRATING **DIGNITY OF WORK**

The Benedictine Community Services & Training Center located in our Easton Office is operating at full-speed with the re-opening of businesses in the region. Working in conjunction with our community partners, new opportunities are now continually being filled. We are excited to see our young adults thriving in their new roles. Dignity of Work is at the core of Benedictine's values and the adults we serve love to be valued and appreciated!

Two of our recent placements include Jakeem, who has secured a position at the YMCA in Easton, and Hartford, who is working at the Inn at Perry Cabin. Our adult clients go through extensive training in order to be considered for employment. The training modules include Work Readiness, Self-Advocacy, Retail and Hospitality.



*Hartford works at the Inn at Perry Cabin.*



*Jakeem working at the YMCA of the Chesapeake.*

*“Dignity of Work is at the core of Benedictine's values and the adults we serve love to be valued and appreciated!”*

# Birdies for Benedictine

ANNUAL

# GOLF

## Tournament

Another year of great camaraderie and golf swings is in the books all in support of Benedictine! This year's Birdies For Benedictine raised \$41,000 to support urgent needs, including student and adult program funding, staff development and facility repairs.

We are grateful to the numerous sponsors that supported the event including PNC Bank, Hilb Group, Preston Automotive, BDK Inc., Barstow & Sons Heating and Cooling, Mullen, Sondberg, Wimbish & Stone, P.A., WRNR, Tri Gas & Oil, Provident Bank and Marasun Roofing. Individual family support came from Sandra Amato, Mr. and Mrs. John Krieger and Mr. and Mrs. Laurence Hoffman. Participants also enjoyed tastings from Lyon Rum of St. Michaels.

The winning team was John Patrick, Charlie Shiles, Dave Mummert and Wes Sims.



## UPCOMING EVENTS

TO BENEFIT THE **BENEDICTINE FOUNDATION**

*Mark your calendars for another year of fun events all in support of Benedictine. Thank you to everyone that joins us each year. We look forward to seeing you at our gala, on the golf course, and on our school campus!*

**AN EVENING IN CASABLANCA SPRING GALA** Saturday, May 6 | Trident Aviation Hangar, Easton Airport

**WOODMORE CHARITY GOLF TOURNAMENT** Monday, June 12 | Woodmore Country Club, Mitchellville

**CHROME CITY RIDE** Sunday, July 30 | Benedictine Campus, Ridgely

**BIRDIES FOR BENEDICTINE** Monday, October 2 | Talbot Country Club, Easton



# Ways to Give

THERE ARE MANY WAYS TO SUPPORT BENEDICTINE & OUR MISSION:



**THE BENEDICTINE FOUNDATION'S ANNUAL FUND** – Every year, the Benedictine Foundation raises critical unrestricted funds to support emerging needs and operating expenses. Your support helps make up the difference between funding agencies and the actual operating costs to ensure quality programming and services. This past year, unrestricted gifts helped fund facility repairs on campus and at group homes, supported vital programs, and provided compensation and incentives to our dedicated staff.

Participation is important. Each Annual Fund gift contributes to our success. Your gift may have an even bigger impact than you realize; it can allow us to leverage larger gifts from foundations and corporations that consider donor participation when deciding whether to give. You may also designate your gift for a specific purpose such as staff compensation.

**THE BENEDICTINE FOUNDATION'S ENDOWMENT** – Endowment funds provide a financial benefit to Benedictine forever. You can establish an endowment with a major gift in memory or in honor of someone you love. They will always be remembered, and funds will be provided in perpetuity. While we encourage unrestricted endowments to relieve pressure on the operating budget, you can also designate an endowment for a specific purpose. Benedictine's Board of Trustees reviews and approves the annual spending rate, and The Benedictine Foundation's endowment spending policy is designed to maintain and increase principal value, while at the same time providing stable and predictable funding.

**EVENTS** – A variety of fun and exciting fundraising events are held throughout the year. In addition to supporting the Annual Fund, we'd love to see you at one of these events! You can participate as an individual or corporate sponsor:

**BIRDIES FOR BENEDICTINE** – Over the past 30 years, this annual charity golf classic has successfully raised money from the community in support of Benedictine's programs and services.

**SPRING GALA** – Since 1978, the Benedictine Foundation has hosted this evening of food and fun to celebrate the people who make Benedictine special.

**CHROME CITY RIDE** – Every summer, Benedictine hosts Maryland's largest classic car and motorcycle ride on the school's campus in Ridgely.

**MATCHING GIFTS** – Many companies will match the generous contributions of their employees. Ask your employer if they will match your gift, to double or triple your contribution's benefit to those in our care.

**GIFTS-IN-KIND** – For donations of goods or services, please contact the Benedictine Foundation.

**AMAZON SMILE** – Go to [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com) and select Benedictine School for Exceptional Children Foundation as your charity. A percentage of your purchase will be donated. **Please Note:** Only purchases at [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com) or through AmazonSmile activated in the Amazon Shopping app will support your selected charity.

*Make an* **IMPACT**

DONATIONS CAN BE MADE ONLINE AT [BENSCHOOL.ORG/FOUNDATION](https://benschool.org/foundation)

CHECKS MADE PAYABLE TO **BENEDICTINE FOUNDATION** MAY BE MAILED TO:

*Benedictine Foundation, 14299 Benedictine Ln., Ridgely, MD 21660*

TO GIFT **STOCK OR ALTERNATE ASSETS** LIKE REAL OR PERSONAL PROPERTY, CONTACT: *Claudia Nichols Cunningham, Chief Advancement Officer at 410.634.2292 or [claudia.cunningham@benschool.org](mailto:claudia.cunningham@benschool.org)*

FOR **BEQUESTS AND TRUSTS**, PLEASE CONTACT:

*Claudia Nichols Cunningham, Chief Advancement Officer at 410.634.2292 or [claudia.cunningham@benschool.org](mailto:claudia.cunningham@benschool.org)*



# Celebration of our



## DIRECT SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS

A Direct Support Professional (DSP) is someone who works directly with people who have intellectual or developmental disabilities. DSPs aim to assist people in realizing their full potential. They help people become integrated and engaged in their community. Qualities include compassion, adaptability, reliability and attentiveness. Benedictine's DSPs exude all these qualities and we celebrated them during Direct Support Professional Week September 11-17. Actually, we always celebrate them!



Support Benedictine Staff with a gift on Giving Tuesday

GIVING TUESDAY

Nov 29, 2022



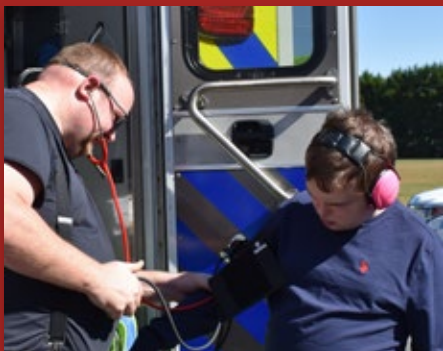
## *Benedictine Student and Adult Soccer Tournament*

Everyone at Benedictine is so excited to be back on the fields and in the gym engaging in sports. During our soccer tournament the bleachers were full with staff, families, students and adults cheering on the teams! Congratulations to everyone for playing with so much enthusiasm!



## *Emergency Personnel Visit Benedictine School*

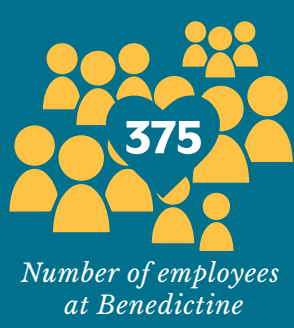
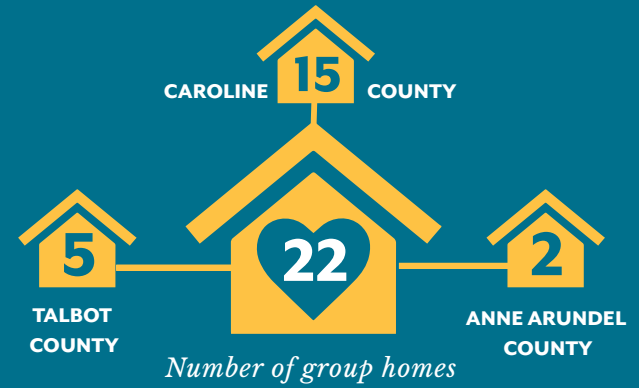
Benedictine had a safety assembly to expose our students to first responders and their vehicles, showing them that police, firefighters and EMS personnel are not scary and are there to help them! First responders were also provided with information about responding to emergency situations with individuals with autism. The students enjoyed exploring the emergency vehicles and especially loved the K9 unit!





# INSPIRING IMPACT

*Benedictine by the Numbers*



*You Inspire Us!* Your generosity helps children and adults with developmental disabilities achieve their greatest potential.