

2019 - 2020 DONOR IMPACT REPORT



WHAT A DIFFERENCE A YEAR MAKES

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DEAR POMEROY FRIENDS & FAMILY

As we reflect back over the past year, I can't help but think about an old Dinah Washington song, "What a Difference a Day Makes," a song about 24 hours and the changes that can come with it. When you then think about "what a difference a year makes," this last year will live in the memories of us all - what a difference, indeed!

Millions of people have been affected by the COVID-19 virus and so many people, especially the most vulnerable among us, are worried about their futures. The Pomeroy Center, our staff, and those we serve are blessed to be able to carry on our mission and remain strong. We could not and would not be in this position without your generous support.

This Donor Impact Report focuses on the meaningful effect you have had at the Pomeroy Center over the past year. We believe the stories in this report will lift your spirits, warm your heart, and demonstrate how your gifts have made a real difference in the lives of people with disabilities---and those that serve them.

As we look ahead, despite the challenges we surely will face and not always knowing what will happen tomorrow, we know that like Dinah sings ... the difference that day makes is YOU. On behalf of the participants we serve and their families, we thank you.

Sincerely,

David Dubinsky
David Dubinsky, CEO

PIVOTING: FROM IN-PERSON TO ZOOM

While we weren't sure how everyone would adjust to sheltering-in-place and receiving all their services virtually, Pomeroy's Zoom classes and services are a hit!

Whether participants are receiving an Occupational Therapy session, making art, watching story hour, or learning ballet, there is something fun and engaging for them to do. Staff hold multiple classes daily - even on Saturdays - and they've gotten creative with the format. Virtual bingo works well on screen, short videos can be shared with everyone, and using the Zoom "spotlight" feature allows one attendee to show off their work for all to see.

While no real substitute for in-person support and services, it's still keeping us connected. Here's what some participants and families have said about Pomeroy's online offerings:

Andrew Prentice, Children & Teens Parent:

Just wanted to send you and your staff a huge thank you for Pomeroy's online services during the pandemic shutdown. My son Jack looks forward to his Pomeroy Zoom meetups every day. I'm very impressed by how fast your staff got things up and running online as well as the continued attention to detail and improvement as things are rapidly changing during difficult times for kids and parents.

Compared to the school district that my son attends as well as the school district I work for, you and your staff are light years ahead with distance activities/learning both in constant improvement and consistency. Everyone wants to go back, of course, and there doesn't seem to be a perfect substitute for in-person programs but I think Pomeroy is doing an excellent job online, dealing with the realities and restrictions of the pandemic.



Miltinnie Yih, board member & mother of David, adult participant:

I thought you might like to know what happened from 3-4 pm today on an extended social Zoom! I was about 15 minutes late coming in to turn off Zoom for David. He usually just gets up and walks away when it is over. However, today, there were five individuals still on screen: Hiep, Duane, May, Lanier, and David.

They were pretty quiet (except for Lanier's occasional comments), but they seemed to enjoy looking at each other on the screen. Then I asked if David was ready to get off, and he said, "Stay on!" so I left him and continued working in another corner of the room. I noticed that May's mom tried to get her off, and she screeched, "No!" and pushed her away. I came by to see if David wanted to get off (I wanted to use my computer), but each time, it was, "Stay on!" Duane thought this was funny.

Though the five didn't say much to each other, they definitely enjoyed looking at each other (I think they're glad there is still a Pomeroy!). And although this may not seem very social to us, I felt distinctly that they were socializing on another level. David finally reluctantly got off as the others waved goodbye to each other without adult prompting.

Diane Gallo, sister of Mark Gallo, adult participant:

Mark smiles, laughs, and often says "YAYYY!" when he sees his Pomeroy teachers and friends on Zoom! I know he's just happy to be able to stay connected with everyone.

Carol Windsor, mother of Hope Windsor-Wells, adult participant:

Hope's favorite Zoom is the upcoming Friday talent show. She loved practicing her slalom race to the song "Eye of the Tiger" which she transformed into "Eye of the Virus." She raced between COVID virus balloons, trying to make it safely to the finish. It occupied her for several days.



Hope also loves classes like hangman, singing, and social hour. She has been sequestered in her house and loves the social interaction the Zoom classes provide! Thanks for keeping in contact with the participants!!! Thanks for being there!!!!

Check out Hope's legendary act on our youtube channel: <https://youtu.be/m1whqLjfs88?t=799>

Lisa and Dan Hall, parents of Tracy Hall, adult participant:

We are pleased to say that Tracy is doing OK. She misses her friends and activities at Pomeroy, but that is where the classes are making a difference for her. She especially loves Lesley's Story Hour Zoom Class. She gets excited to see her teachers and friends. The cute part about Tracy is that she smiles and is happy to see everyone, but doesn't speak to them. She is used to watching a television show in which the people don't respond to her, we think she isn't quite sure they will hear her? Too cute for words. Thank you for brightening her day and keeping touch.

Metelda Paul, Pomeroy Program Staff

Staff have made the adjustment to remote teaching, too. Metelda Paul has worked at Pomeroy for 17 years, often helping with participants' personal needs, providing hand-over-hand support, and friendship. "My favorite thing about working with the participants is positively impacting their daily lives, whether it's simple conversation or daily activities."

Going into shelter-in-place made Metelda sad because she couldn't see the participants anymore. Using technology to stay connected was obviously the only way to do that, so she pushed herself out of her comfort zone. "It was hard to adapt to something that was new to me. A challenge I faced was consistency with work, especially not having my own technology and having five kids at home that were doing online learning."

Metelda didn't know what to expect from her Zoom classes with clients - it hasn't been all bad! "The most surprising thing is how interacting with clients on screen compares to interacting with them in person. An example is my client Jason who is very dependent when we are at the Center. But in Zoom classes, he has learned to be independent. He is able to follow instructions without aid."

To all of you who have supported the Pomeroy Center over the past year, these little victories are yours, too. Thanks to your caring and generosity, participants like Jack, Tracy, Hope, and Jason are navigating these challenging times well. Thank you!



BUILDING UP

The past year has seen some dramatic facilities improvements at Pomeroy, most of which nobody has had the chance yet to enjoy!

An old storage space cluttered with dozens of jammed file cabinets, event supplies, and dusty old broken items has been completely transformed into a large, airy classroom, thanks to donors like our own Banner of Love Auxiliary and the Barulich Family Foundation. This space will become our inclusive daycare classroom, welcoming about 20 young children with and without disabilities. A second grant from the Barulich Family Foundation will allow us to remove a line of trees where we plan to build an outdoor play area for the little ones.

The Women's Changing Room at the pool has had a complete makeover - fresh paint, resurfacing, new benches and shower fixtures, new toilets, lots of hooks and cubbies for storage, and ventilation and heating improvements. Pool users had about two weeks to use it and then we had to close, but it is still there waiting for our return. These improvements couldn't have happened without funding from the Herbst Foundation, the William G. Irwin Charity Foundation, and many of you who attended Banner of Love in 2019!

At Banner of Love one year earlier, many of you chipped in to help us improve our Children & Teens classrooms, all of them worn out and tired from years of heavy use. Like most renovation projects, this took longer than expected to complete. We needed to shuffle kids around like puzzle pieces so the work could get done with the least disruption - we were grateful to have that nice big future daycare space to use. The rooms are now bright, fresh, and ready to use, thanks to your generosity!

Buildings are just one thing we count on to provide programs for our participants at Pomeroy. Vans and buses are critical to accessing the community. One of our vans kept breaking down, including on one trip to Disneyland! Luckily for us, we have a friend who responded to our urgent request for support to buy a new van by funding it in full.

Once we can all be onsite together again, these long-awaited capital improvements will make a difference to the entire community, especially the children and adults who call the Pomeroy Center their home away from home. Thank you for making such a visible impact at Pomeroy!

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