

PARENTS AS PARTNERS

Educational Development Center

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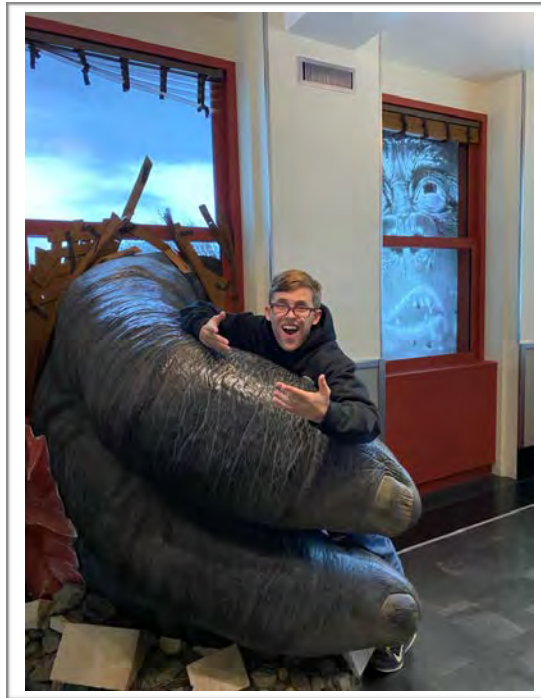
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Save the Date

**Texas Parent to Parent
(TxP2P) Conference
Aug. 22-23**

**Woodridge DDD
Sept. 18, 2020**

Seniors 2020



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James is your all around, average, normal boy. His normal may not look like your normal, but that's the beautiful thing about being normal. Everyone is different and yet still normal in their own way.

James was born with global physical and intellectual developmental delays. He is one of the



5 percent of the population that doctors can't definitively diagnose. He has overcome almost all of his physical delays with the exception of speech and some mild occupational issues.

James' story is pretty interesting. His life goal is to be a semi truck driver, buy a house, get



James' first CC Medal

married, have 5 kids, 2 Great Danes and a 2012 Shelby Cobra. James was able to get his learners permit when he was 16. He's racked up many hours of driving, and we are still working towards his independent driving, hopefully in the next couple of months. If you see a big blue Ford F150 driving through your neighborhood, wave or get out of the way! James is also a YouTube gamer. He has his own YouTube channel: "Gaming with Mustang," where nightly he creates a gaming video and uploads it to his channel. He currently has over 500 videos uploaded.

James has worked part-time at Goodwill for almost a year. At 17, he was already funding a 401K plan through Goodwill. James also works at the Wash Tub during his 3rd and 4th period Life Skills classes.

The saying "It takes a village" applies to James as he moves ever closer to graduation. He and his family are grateful for all the helpers he's encountered along the way. James is capable of doing many things on his own but sometimes needs a little bit of help. Just as Mr. Rogers from Mr. Rogers Neighborhood says, "look for the helpers," James found them everywhere in our Alamo Heights village.

Part of James's village is the AH Cross Country team. James was running 5ks before he moved to Alamo Heights and wanted (though with 5:30 AM practices, "wanted" is a strong word) to continue running and wanted to be a part of a team sport where he could contribute to the team's success. James found this in the AHHS XC team! Coach Brian Ricketts supported James's capabilities and the entire team rallied around him to cheer him to the finish lines. Even though the first year was a little rocky, with running at a slower pace than most of the team and getting lost in the neighborhoods a couple of times, Coach Ricketts overcame this by pairing James with different running partners to keep him on pace and on the right path. The best part of all this was on James's first day of freshman year, after a summer of running with the team, he walked down the halls high-fiving his fellow team members, already a part of the high school "tribe."

If you know James at all, you already know that he's a bit of a ham, and he showcased his talents on the stage. Although he doesn't read much, he was able to memorize many of his lines, and was a side kick "star" in many shows. Even though his speech was a little garbled, his body language and expressions brought the laughs time after time. His theatre partners helped him with his lines and gave him enough help with entrance cues and scene set ups; he was able to really shine.

Another part of James's village are the members of the Unified Champions club. Unified Champions has helped James with leadership opportunities, voting him in as co-President with Julie Escamilla in 2018-2019. During this time James and Julie helped themselves and others by setting up Unified Champion events like the annual Run, Walk or Roll into Inclusion 5K, prom and Homecoming inclusion groups for the dances, and Special Olympics events.



Theatre Spring Break trip to NYC

Part of James's immediate village is his sister, Amber. Lots of folks don't know, or sometimes don't believe that James is a twin. Amber's help was invaluable as she took him to school, to therapy, to work, to HEB, to Starbucks, and countless other places. She helped him talk through stuff and helped him find his way at AHHS. We can't thank her enough for all she's done to help our family.

The best part of all of this was James's everyday helpers; the folks who helped get him to class, find things, read, take tests, participate in class and all of the other little things that make up a busy school day. All of his friends helped by providing a group to eat lunch with every day. They helped by taking him out for fun in the evenings and weekends. They helped by coming over and celebrating birthdays. Everyday help is the best help and the toughest to keep up with. It's spending time and energy with folks on a regular Tuesday, not just holidays. This has been most appreciated of all.

Thanks to everyone in this article and many, many others, James will walk across the Class of 2020 graduation stage with his peers. Granted, none of us currently know when or where our seniors will walk across the stage, but we're sure the school will make it happen. The next chapter begins at the Robbins Academy next year. We don't know what that looks like yet, and while James' story is still years in the making, the Veeder Clan would like to thank all of you who have been part of it so far.

Article by Terry Veeder

Alex Molina



*Before you go to sleep, say a little
prayer*

*Every day in every way, it's getting
better and better*

Beautiful, beautiful, beautiful boy"

-John Lennon

No truer words were ever spoken about you, our beautiful boy. We have been endowed with a blessing from above that know no bounds nor has any limits. Your gift to the world has been your very existence. You are the epitome of love and innocence. Those with whom you have been in contact are forever imbued with your great elan and vivacity.

We can recall with utmost enthusiasm the day you were born. The joy and pride we felt then was heretofore unknown to us. Now, as 17 years have passed, we feel just as much pride and a new-found dignity knowing the kind of person we have raised.

No doubt that all of the staff of AHISD with whom you have been in contact feel as we; your warm smile and enthusiastic dynamism are infectious. People want to be around you. Friends, good friends, have been by your side and will continue to be in your life because of who you are and the joy you bring to their lives.

Your sister's love for you is as much a part of her existence as the air she breathes. She, too, feels unending love for you and will always be at your side. Your grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins are all in awe of the hard work you have put forth in your young life. They, too, walk a little taller with the knowledge and feeling of familial connectedness.

We are forever grateful to the staff of AHISD for the dedication, compassion and hard work put forth on behalf of Alex beginning with his time at Howard, to Woodridge to AHJS and AHHS.

submitted by Sandi & Anthony Molina

Finn Stewart



“I don’t know where I’m going from here, but I promise it won’t be boring.”

-David Bowie

Finn,

I am so proud of you and your strength, seity and perseverance. It’s been a long, and sometimes perilous road and you’ve overcome every challenge and setback. And you’ve done it all with integrity, humor and confidence.

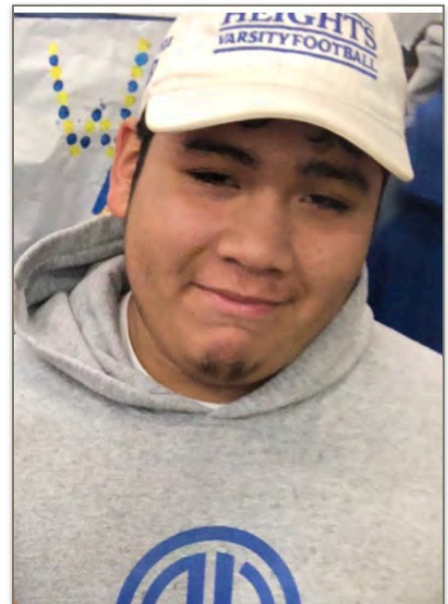
I feel lucky to be your mom, and I can’t wait to see what you’ll do in this world. I know it will be amazing. Congratulations sweet Bug!

MARK GARCIA

Mark,
We are so proud of you. Although your senior year didn’t exactly end how we all imagined that it would. These past few weeks have been emotional but you did it! You graduated. We are truly blessed to have you as our son/brother. We love you. Looking forward to your future.

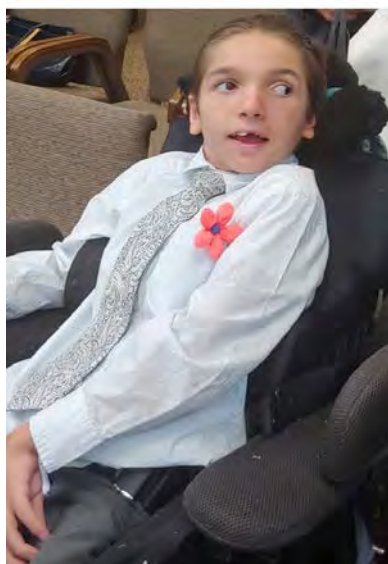
Love

mom dad Am Bash & Ana



Conrad Tullis

Conrad is a warm, wonderful, charming teenager. His beautiful personality exudes with intrinsic delight and happiness. He enjoys just about everything all other high school students across the nation like to do—listen to music, hang with friends, play games.



What is challenging for Conrad is that he lives life from the seat of his wheelchair. Although Conrad's physical movement is limited, as is his speech, inside he possesses a wealth of creativity which is observed and felt through his invigorating smiles. His intelligence evidences itself in the imaginative projects he and his friends, family, teachers, and caretakers construct.

Conrad has shared elementary, junior, and now high school with friends that have learned to communicate with him without words.

What matters in life is how we love and how well we are loved, and Conrad is an awesome example for all to follow.

Discovering Disabilities Day

Discovering Disabilities Day is a one day event held during students' specials class with the goal of increasing student's awareness of the variety of disabilities that may affect their peers, their family or their community.

Woodridge Elementary 9.18.2020

Whew! We made it! That's true for all our graduating seniors as well as for the rest of us, both students and the parents who were helping facilitate the continuous learning our district put in place. I know that like me, you probably appreciate *even more* the amazing job our teachers do! So take a deep breath, congratulate yourself and your child for persevering and finishing strong and thank a teacher for his or her dedication to our kids. I hope that whatever your family's plans for summer are, you are able to appreciate the gift of a slower schedule and good health. Until we see each other again, Mules Up!



With Gratitude,

Michelle Harrison

Parent Liaison



You can help reshape our community’s system of care for people on the autism spectrum.

Autism Lifeline Links (ALL) is a collaborative of non-profit agencies and service organizations working together to positively effect change for people on the autism spectrum.

Joining forces with **ALL** can help everyone living with autism in many ways, including:

What you GET when you register	What you GIVE when you register
<p>Referrals – You will be linked to a team of community providers for diagnosis, therapy, respite, and other support services regardless of where you are on the spectrum now and in the future as your needs evolve.</p> <p>Care Coordination – You will be linked to a Care Coordinator who will provide seamless referrals to ALL member agencies and information on other community services requested. If no referrals are needed, a Care Coordinator is available for future support and contact.</p> <p>Resources - Visit our website to view our <i>Community Resource Guide</i> designed specifically for individuals with ASD and their families/caretakers.</p>	<p>Advocacy - Help shape legislation relating to autism issues. One voice is important. Many voices can make the difference.</p> <p>Contribute - Visit our website to recommend resources for our Guide, helping others get connected.</p> <p>Hope - Your registration in ALL will help us continue to identify the current gaps in services for people with autism, educate our community on barriers, build awareness and improve the system of care for people living with autism.</p>

Can we count you in?

Visit <https://autismlifelinelinks.org> to learn more

To join click the button...

Registration information is confidential.



Woodridge Elementary: Coming Fall 2020

1 goal

Use hands-on experiences to raise awareness of the variety of **'differently-abled'** individuals in our schools, families and community

8 different special needs will be introduced:

- vision
- hearing
- autism
- gross motor delays
- fine motor delays
- head injuries
- prosthetics
- orthotics

talking points

- Everyone is differently-abled. Some kids are great artists, some can hardly draw a stick figure. Some children need a wheelchair, others do not. Encourage children to find something in others they admire and focus on what others do well.
- Teach children to focus on what they have in common with peers like sports teams, movies or books.
- Educate yourself and your family about different disabilities so your children are not afraid of approaching people who are differently-abled.
- Always address the person first: "child with a disability" not "disabled child"
- Other acceptable terminology: person with physical disability, person with cognitive impairment, person with fine motor or gross motor delays.
- When referencing a person with an intellectual disability it is inappropriate to use "retarded" or "mentally retarded." Discourage your children from taunting anyone (differently-abled or not) using those terms.
- Resist saying a person with a prosthetic limb has a "fake" arm or leg.
- A person uses a wheelchair for mobility instead of wheelchair bound

dear parents,

While your students will momentarily experience what it feels like to have a special need, many children and adults live with disabilities for their entire lives and are often misunderstood.

Two keys to acceptance and integration are education and exposure...and there is no better place to start than home. The more you discuss disabilities in your home, the more readily your children will accept their peers with disabilities into their lives. Use the talking points to spark conversations.

28%
 of US households are impacted by special needs

190,000
 Bexar Co. residents have a special need

www.kinetickidstx.org • 210.478.5860



AGES SERVED
Children and youth ages 0-21 yrs.
Ages may vary for each program

DIAGNOSES
Serving all medical conditions and developmental delays both diagnosed and undiagnosed

ELIGIBILITY
Serving Bexar County and the 18 surrounding counties at no cost to families, regardless of income

LOCATIONS
Offices in San Antonio, New Braunfels, Kerrville, Methodist Children's Hospital & Children's Hospital of San Antonio

NEW BRAUNFELS
1620 S. Seguin Ave. New Braunfels, TX 78130
800.524.3755

KERRVILLE
819 Water St. Ste. 109 Kerrville, TX 78130
830.792.4222

Since 1982, Any Baby Can has been the safety net for families with children and youth facing serious health or developmental challenges.



CASE MANAGEMENT
Long-term comprehensive support service designed to build a stable family foundation in order to increase the quality of life for the journey ahead

AUTISM SERVICES
Training, counseling, and resources for families facing autism

HEALTH & WELLNESS
Nutrition and exercise classes for individuals with unique learning abilities

PRESCRIPTION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
Providing access to free or low cost prescription drugs

SIBLING SUPPORT
Support group for siblings of children with special needs

CENTER FOR INFANT & CHILD LOSS
Supporting families who have lost an infant, child, or youth due to any cause

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