Bringing Us Together:
St. Joseph Home Mini Walk & Roll Exceeds Expectations

By Sandra Lundgren, SJH Communications and Grants Manager

St. Joseph Home residents and 200 family, friends and volunteers walked and rolled around their beautiful campus on May 22 to raise money for the facility’s residential, respite, and adult day programs for individuals with complex disabilities.

“This adapted event exceeded all our expectations,” said Dan Connors, CEO. “From the gorgeous weather, to the generosity of our sponsors, to the wonderful volunteers who handed out water and lunch from Sweets & Meats BBQ Food Truck, everything came together to make this Walk & Roll event the perfect experience for this moment. Plus we surpassed our fundraising goal!”

Twenty-two teams of participants wore costumes as well as masks, complete with siblings and pets, adding to the festive, family spirit. One resident even celebrated her 23rd birthday on the route with her family in tow.

Vice President of Advancement Jordan Huizenga thanked the Walk & Roll sponsors for their support in making this such a successful and celebratory day. He added, “Historically, St. Joseph Home hosts an annual 5k for hundreds of runners and their fans and families. We missed 2020 but this year, we were excited to host an event our residents could participate in that brings us closer to normal. Coming together as a community felt so good.”

More ‘closer to normal’ steps include re-opening of the SJH Adult Day Programs in April and the main residential campus to family visits. The Harold C. Schott Respite Center will re-open later this year; individuals with complex developmental disabilities may stay at the center for up to two weeks, providing a much-needed break for families caring at home for someone with a disability.

The next St. Joseph Home Community Event is the annual golf outing, scheduled for Oct. 4 at Maketewah Country Club. Golfers gather for 18 holes in support of complex disability care. Tickets and sponsorships are available. Registration includes lunch, a round of golf, cart rental, open bar and light bites on the pavilion afterwards. Gear and bourbon raffles throughout the day.
In collaboration with Opening Minds through Art (OMA), Bayley held an outdoor art show in June to showcase work created by more than 70 residents during COVID closure. OMA is an award-winning, evidence-based, intergenerational art-making program for people with dementia. The organization is based at Scripps Gerontology Center at Miami University. People with dementia (artists) are paired with volunteers who are trained to rely on imagination instead of memory and to focus on remaining strengths instead of lost skills. Local artist Maureen Born played an integral role in inspiring and assisting Bayley residents with creating these stunning pieces. This event was open to families of residents and raised nearly $6,000 to continue the OMA program at Bayley.

In a school year like no other, DePaul Cristo Rey High School seniors persisted through a pandemic, virtual learning and all the related challenges to cross the stage and receive their diplomas at an in-person commencement ceremony on May 25 at Mount St Joseph University. The 64 graduates collectively earned $13.7 million in merit-based scholarships and have committed to 23 different colleges and universities.

Mount St. Joseph University held three commencement ceremonies and two Baccalaureate Masses to accommodate graduates from 2020 (who did not have a formal graduation due to COVID-19) as well as graduates earning degrees in 2021. While the pandemic made things difficult financially, the University provided financial assistance to many students to enable them to continue or complete their degrees. Additionally the Student Resource Center has been working to lighten food and housing instability among students, attempting to redefine the hope and stability needed to endure the remainder of the COVID-19 restrictions. A variety of services are provided, such as childcare, transportation, disability aid, and general financial relief.

Seton High School’s Seton Helping Saints board presented a $1,000 donation to a staff member from Dress for Success as this year’s Magnified Giving philanthropy recipient. Donations from the club were also given to Pregnancy Center West and St. Vincent de Paul. Throughout the school year, club members learned about and also volunteered at these nonprofit organizations.

“We have to make our occupations holy. We do this by seeking God in them.”
- St. Vincent de Paul

“You must realize that authority is not to be wielded absolutely, but charitably.”
- St. Louise de Marillac