





GEORGE JUNIOR REPUBLIC

ANNUAL REPORT

FY 2022/2023

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letter from the board chair



In previous annual reports, I have written about the changes we have experienced at George Junior Republic (GJR) over the past several years. We have changed internally in order to become a more effective and responsible human services provider. Changes have resulted from external factors as we have been forced to adapt to the post COVID-19 world and the mental health and behavioral health challenges that followed.

As we adapt to these challenges, we are striving to become better at providing both the best possible services for those we serve and measurable outcomes to those who pay for the services. Providers require demonstrable results in return for payment, as they should. We must be able to measure the outcomes we say we provide. Future payment expectations are directly tied to evidence-based programs and value-based purchasing.

At GJR, we have made numerous investments in such programs in our operations in George Junior Republic in Pennsylvania (GJR in PA), George Junior Republic in Indiana (GJR in IN), and Preventative Aftercare (PAC). Programs such as Trauma Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Motivational Interviewing, Dialectical Behavior Therapy, and Aggression Replacement Training represent just a few that provide measurable treatment results.

By clearly showing the results of our treatment, we satisfy the requirements of our providers and are better able to evaluate the important work we do each day. The additional investment in the programs and the training involved is well worth it, as we see the results in those we serve.

As members of the Board of Directors, we are proud of the continuing professional growth of the administration and staff through this period of transition. Change is always challenging, but we remain convinced that our mission is more important than ever, and the future of GJR remains strong.

Sincerely,



Richard R. Stevenson
GJR Parent Board Chair

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letter from the ceo

Business resilience is the ability of an organization to adapt to disruptions or significant unplanned changes while maintaining continuous business operations and safeguarding its people, assets, and overall brand equity. The 2022-2023 fiscal year was another challenging one for GJR and its affiliates and included a focus on two main areas – workforce and program development.

The changing needs of the workforce have disrupted all human services. Staffing shortages across the country and locally have forced human service providers to do more with less, offering incentives to employees and focusing on recruitment efforts with little to no new or additional revenue in an inflationary environment.

The demand for new programs, opportunities, and lines of business is at an all-time high. Additional funding for school districts, human service organizations, and non-profits dispersed during the pandemic is now sunsetting. Due to sweeping staff shortages, human service organizations have been forced to control the volume of services they provide. This drives the demand for services even higher as the current supply is falling short. In the past year, GJR in PA has opened a detention facility as part of its continuum of services. In the fall of 2023, GJR in PA will begin offering school-based mental health services to three local school districts at six locations and residential services for specialty and complex cases. PAC has expanded its Mobile Medication Program to Westmoreland County and is working on implementing a second evidence-based program, Triple P (Positive Parenting Program). GJR in IN continues to see exponential growth of services and expansion of its geography.

GJR celebrates its 114th year of providing care, treatment, and safety across all affiliates to those served while quickly adapting to a constantly changing environment. This continuation is possible because of a supportive Board of Directors and dedicated employees.



Resiliency is a critical area that creates conditions for change and recovery for the individuals we serve and the evolving social services environment. GJR and its affiliates will continue on its path of resiliency, developing and maintaining quality programs, and meeting the human services demands of current and future needs.

Respectfully,

Nathan M. Gressel

Chief Executive Officer

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july

Long-Term Structured Residence (LTSR Adult Program) Garden Project

LTSR staff and residents planted a raised garden with cucumbers, tomatoes, zucchini, butternut squash, lettuce, and green peppers! Gardening as a self-care tool can improve mood, boost self-esteem, develop psychiatric rehabilitation skills, and improve attention span.











Adventure Based Counseling

ABC offers customized corporate team-building programs throughout the year for various groups to improve interpersonal dynamics and grow as a group.

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LTSR Art Therapy

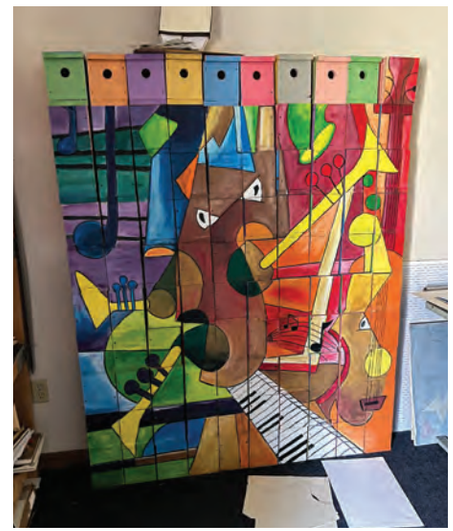
The LTSR art group is led weekly by Fine Arts Director and Therapist Glen Sanders. The focus of the group is to use art to explore and create better ways to enrich their lives. LTSR residents have participated in both group and individual art projects. Completed projects include building bird houses and piggy banks, creating jewelry, and mask making. Participants can express themselves through the use of paints, clay, ceramics, and printmaking.











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august





Employee Picnic

GJR in PA employees enjoyed a hot summer day of picnic food, games, a raffle, a 50/50 drawing, and a chance to dunk the CEO at the dunking booth. Money raised at the booth was donated to the Employee Support League, which supports employees struggling with financial hardships.







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75 Days of Summer

GJR in PA's 75 Days of Summer returns! The seventh annual event provided fun, entertainment, and small group activities for youth. With over 30 clubs to choose from, each youth had the opportunity to participate. The 10 week summer schedule also included many contests, competitions, and off-campus activities.









Summer Carnival

For over 30 years, the program department has coordinated a carnival for campus youth. Held at the on-campus pool, the event included swimming, a cookout, games, and summer fun! Everyone had a great time!

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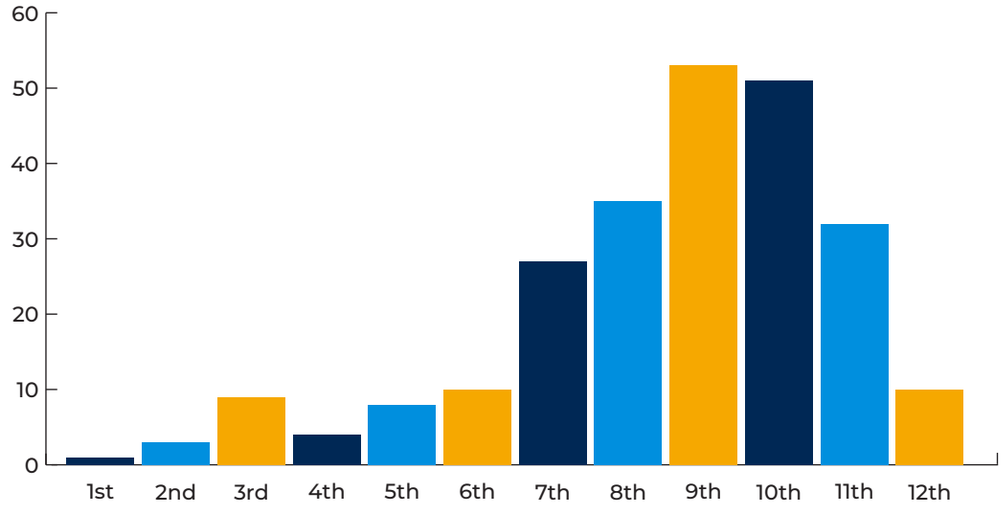
september





Immunization

In partnership with RX Xpress, GJR in PA held a flu and COVID-19 vaccination clinic on campus for persons served and employees.



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Mike Hamilton (left) and Alexis Patton (right) recruit at a local college fair.

Recruiting

GJR's recruiting team attended job fairs, displayed help wanted ads on billboards, placed hiring yard signs across PA, IN, and OH, and implemented text to apply and broadcasting job opportunities through television and radio commercials.



Suicide Prevention Awareness Month

For the month of September, GJR established suicide awareness displays in Grove City Memorial Park and in Westmoreland County. The displays are intended to raise awareness regarding the stigmatization of suicide.

"As advocates of mental health, our goal is to reduce the stigmatization of suicide and mental illness. Across our service delivery system, greater than 90% of our clients served have been impacted by a mental health illness," stated Nate Gressel, CEO.

If you or someone you know is struggling or needs support, call or text 988 or chat at 988lifeline.org. You are not alone.

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october





Halloween

Youth and staff had a great day filled with awesome Halloween activities, candy, and costumes. Staff handed out candy to trick-or-treaters!



Flight Squad Assembly

GJR in PA invited Flight Squad, a premier exhibition basketball team, to host an assembly for youth. Flight Squad members gave inspirational speeches where youth learned about the importance of respect for oneself and others and prioritizing education. They also performed a handful of entertaining skills and dunks.

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LTSR Open House

LTSR held an on-campus open house. Contracted counties toured the campus, the LTSR program building, and had the opportunity to learn more about the treatment model.

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INTERNS

Internships

GJR had 16 students complete their college internship from:

- Bellarmine University
- Indiana University – Purdue
- Indiana Wesleyan University
- Liberty University
- Slippery Rock University
- University of Indianapolis
- Westminster College

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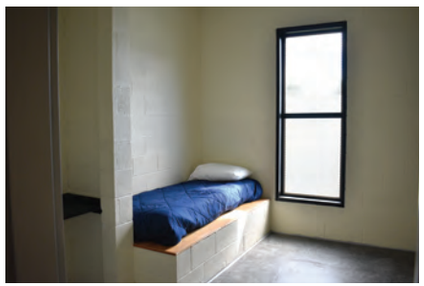
november





Aerial view of GJR Secure









GJR Secure Opens

The 11 bed GJR Secure Detention program opened in the fall of 2022, emphasizing a non-clinical therapeutic approach focusing on proper de-escalation techniques, interpersonal communication skills, and mutual respect between staff and youth.

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Honoring All Who Served

In honor of Veterans Day, GJR in PA thanked service members through a display at Grove City Memorial Park. The display recognizes the dedication, bravery, and sacrifice made by those who have served and are currently serving in the US military.

Thanksgiving

GJR in PA hosted a Thanksgiving dinner for all staff and youth on-campus. Meals were served by administrative staff.





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december



Celebrating the Holidays

In partnership with Armstrong Cable and a few local Grove City churches, on-campus youth and adults received gifts donated by community members.

“Bringing joy to adults and youth provides a sense of connectedness during the holiday season,” stated Shawn Anderson, director of development.





Shawn Anderson, center, pictured with community partner, Grove City Armstrong Cable



GJR in Indiana Holiday Parties

GJR in Indiana’s Older Youth program held two holiday parties. Because of the generosity of donors, each youth in attendance received a holiday gift. Youth played laser tag, bowling, and golf while enjoying pizza, snacks, cookies, cupcakes, vegetables, fruit, and drinks.

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GJR Gives to the Local Community

In the spirit of the holiday season, GJR in PA donated gently used kitchen supplies to Mercer County AWARE. These items will be provided to each woman residing at the shelter and to individuals when they leave the shelter and transition into their own housing.

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january



Employee of the Month

In January 2023, the Employee of the Month Program was established, which includes selecting an employee from GJR in PA, GJR in IN, and PAC. We commend all those who have been recognized and thank them for their hard work and dedication to the mission.





Mobile Medication

The new PAC Mobile Medication program began serving adults diagnosed with acute mental illnesses.

Safety

GJR began the year by formalizing safety committees for GJR in IN and PAC. Focused on the safety of all staff working in the community, members formalized committee roles, developed training, and received guidance from a safety consultant.

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Balanced and Restorative Justice (BARJ)

As COVID-19 infections diminished, BARJ employees and youth supported the community in completing lawn care projects, working at the Grove City Community Food Pantry, assisting with other local food bank efforts, and planting trees in Grove City Memorial Park.





113

Number of PA youth participating in the BARJ program.

$30,564

Total amount paid in restitution by PA BARJ youth.

61

Total number of PA youth whose fines and restitution were paid in full.

4,046

Total number of hours worked by PA BARJ youth.

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february

Celebrating Black History Month

Youth in the Intensive Supervision Unit created posters reflecting notable Black History moments and placed them in various units across campus. From historical figures to rap artists, youth learned about individuals who impacted Black History.





First Aid/CPR/AED Training

All employees are trained in First Aid/CPR/AED. Employees are required to take the bi-annual training to fulfill requirements and keep their certification current.





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“Devine” Intervention

GJR in PA Program Director and Coach Pat Devine was born and raised in Blawnox, PA (a small town near Pittsburgh) and attended Fox Chapel High School. In fifth grade, Pat wrote a paper about what he wanted to be when he grew up. He wrote, “I want to make a difference in the world, coach kids, and impact people.”

In 1982, Pat followed a fellow college classmate to GJR to complete his internship. Although Pat had never heard of GJR or Grove City, his experience put him on the path to follow the plans he made in fifth grade. He stayed at GJR after graduation for the next 41 years as a coach, mentor, and program director while working with over 40,000 young men. As of February 2023, Pat has hung up his coaching hat, but not before he won his 100th basketball game. He continues to serve as GJR’s program director.

Pat states that his teachers guided and mentored him, and he has been able to do the same for the young men he has worked with. One young man once told him, “Your legacy is that you never gave up on us.” This statement resonates with Pat, especially when he hears from a former youth. “When a 58-year-old [former youth] I coached calls me to say thanks, this makes me realize how important my work has been at GJR.”

Pat is the only employee who can say his wife, Laurie, and both sons, Tyler and Ryan, have worked or are currently working at GJR. The family shares Pat’s attitude – “If you’re not making someone else’s day better, then you are wasting your day.”







Commemorating Pat’s 100 wins.
L-R: Ryan, Laurie , and Pat

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march



Sandy Dillon-Dick stands next to GJR in PA's CARF accreditation seals certificate.

GJR in PA Attains Third CARF Seal

"GJR in PA continues to operate under the CARF International accreditation standards, which are woven into the fabric of all processes, policies, procedures, and protocols at GJR in PA; it's just how we function daily!" states Sandy Dillon-Dick, risk officer. The next triennial survey for re-accreditation will be completed prior to February 2024.



Celebrating Women's History Month

In honor of International Women's Day, we recognized the hardworking women who continuously made a difference in the lives of those we serve.

345

WOMEN EMPLOYED BY GJR THIS FISCAL YEAR

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Image credit: IARCA

GJR in Indiana Meet with Local Lawmakers

GJR in Indiana staff participated with lawmakers to create home kits for former foster youth.

Children and Residential Experiences (CARE)

GJR in PA prepared for the scheduled April visit of the Cornell University CARE consultants. Staff use the CARE model to build relationships and create opportunities for youth to develop self-concepts, self-efficacy, and self-esteem.



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april







Hoppy Easter!

Youth on-campus participated in many Easter-themed events including an egg hunt, egg toss, and egg decorating. Easter baskets were handed out to youth on Easter morning.



GJR in PA staff participating in Day of Caring.

Day of Caring

In partnership with the Grove City Area United Way, several GJR staff took time to complete beautification tasks in the local community.

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Compliance

A summary of external audits that took place across all companies this fiscal year.



GJR in PA

- Allegheny County Office of Children, Youth, & Families compliance review
- Child Residential programs licensing
- Drug & Alcohol licensing
- Lawrence County on-site compliance review
- LTSR licensing
- Maryland on-site compliance review
- Outpatient Mental Health Clinic licensure
- Prison Rape Elimination Act re-certification
- Residential Treatment Facility (SN 7 and 17) licensing by the Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services
- Secure Detention program licensing by the Office of Children, Youth, & Families
- West Virginia on-site program review
- York County Office of Children, Youth & Families virtual program audit

GJR in IN

- Older Youth Services review by the IN Department of Children's Services
- Statewide programmatic review from 2021 records completed by the Indiana Department of Children's Services

Preventative Aftercare

- Chester County Department of Children, Youth, & Families annual monitoring
- Clarion County Human Services monitoring site audit
- Cumberland County program review
- Fayette County Children and Youth Services program audit
- Montgomery County Juvenile Probation monthly file review
- Pike County contract monitoring
- Warren County Children and Youth Services program audit
- Wayne County Children and Youth Services bi-annual program monitoring
- Westmoreland County Children's Bureau contract monitoring
- York County Office of Children, Youth, & Families provider monitoring

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may



CEO Meets with GJR in IN Employees

CEO Nathan Gressel traveled to Indiana to meet with GJR in IN staff and supervisors. “The Indiana program continues to grow. The team does a great job focusing on the youth needs and meeting organizational performance metrics,” said Gressel. “It was a pleasure meeting with staff and learning more about expansion opportunities in the state.”





May is National Nurses Week

GJR in PA recognized nurses during National Nurses Week. Nurses assess the physical health needs of persons served, as well as educate them on medication adherence and side effects and how to live a healthy lifestyle.

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Years of Service Luncheon

The event celebrated 48 staff members from George Junior Republic in Pennsylvania, George Junior Republic in Indiana, and Preventative Aftercare. Their work history totals 765 years of service!









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june







Art Show

The first GJR in PA community art exhibition titled "Water Works" (inspired by a newly constructed water treatment plant in Grove City) highlighted GJR's appreciation for the arts and its involvement with the greater Grove City community.

The exhibition included the exclusive "Man-Up" project which is comprised of sculptures created by GJR youth depicting self-reflection and stories highlighting their experiences and journeys while developing into young men.





Strawberry Days

Dippin' Dots was the featured item sold at the GJR booth during the Grove City Strawberry Days Festival. Staff and youth volunteered their time to run the booth and connect with local residents.

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Older Youth Services Graduation Party

GJR in IN celebrated the 67 youth served who graduated from high school. A special graduation party was held in Georgetown, Indiana. Congratulations graduates!









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financial overview

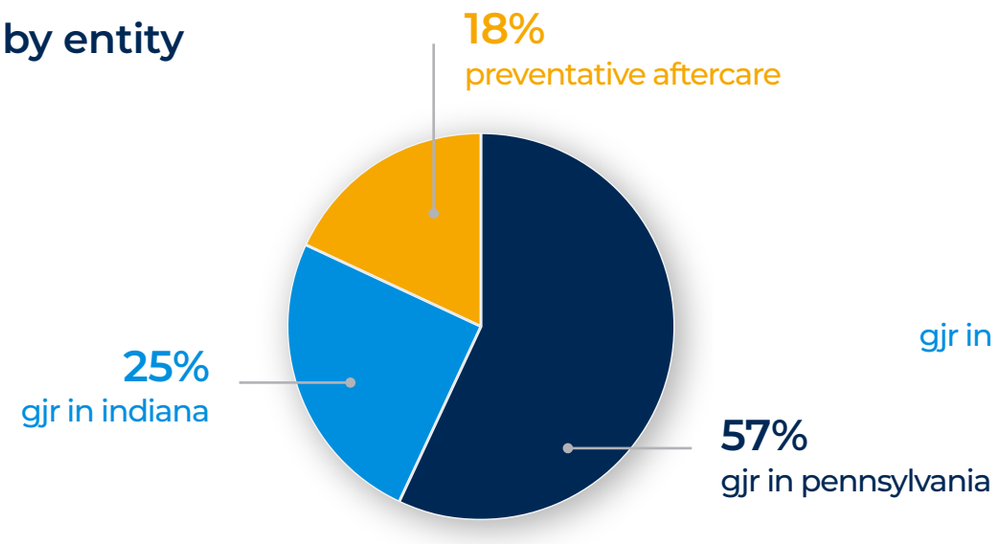
revenue

specialized residential	43%
in-home	29%
older youth	11%
regular - drug & alcohol - residential	5%
long-term structured residence - adult	6%
outpatient	1%
pandemic/stabilization/grant funds/other	5%
total	100%

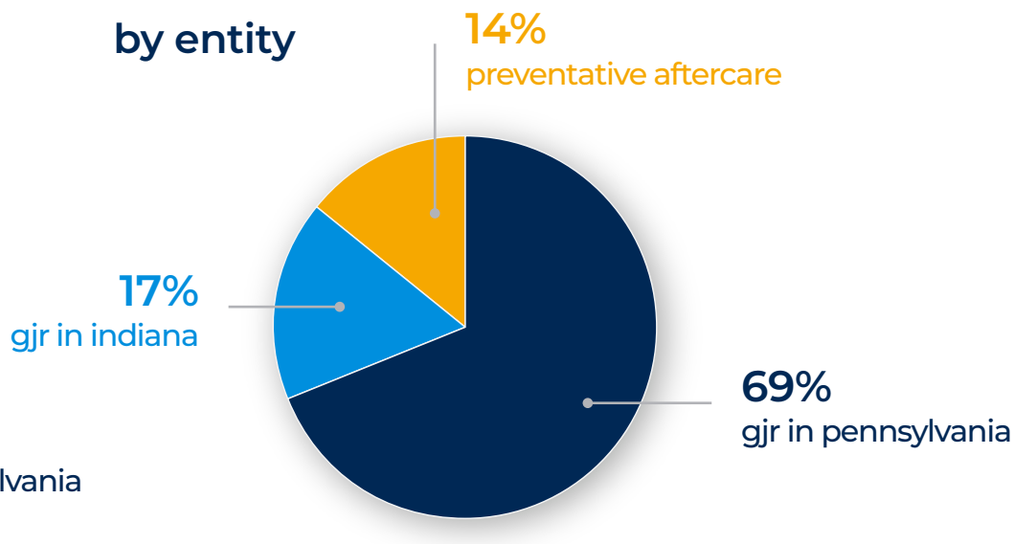
expenses

personnel	72%
facilities/operation	13%
clothing/food/supplies	7%
occupancy	5%
transportation	3%
total	100%

by entity



by entity



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WE NEVER STOP BELIEVING SCHOLARSHIP

The George Junior Republic and Affiliates *We Never Stop Believing Scholarship* was established in 2022 to assist the natural, step, or adopted children of employees up to age 21 with post-secondary undergraduate educational expenses. This annual scholarship will be provided to full or part-time students accepted to an accredited college, university, community college, or career and technical school.

Congratulations to this year's recipients!



Kylee Miller *(right) is the daughter of Emily Miller, Human Resources Generalist. Kylee graduated from Wilmington Area School District. She plans to attend the Culinary Institute of America to pursue an associate's degree in culinary arts.*



Kathryn "Katie" Dew (left) is the daughter Lance Dew, GJR in PA therapist. Katie graduated from Lincoln Park Performing Arts Charter School and plans to attend Slippery Rock University where she will be majoring in developmental psychology with a minor in creative writing.



Elijah Binakonsky (right) is the son of Jeremey Binakonsky, Preventative Aftercare mental health worker. Elijah graduated from Hempfield Area High School. He will play football at Mercyhurst University. He plans to study sports medicine/pre-physical therapy.

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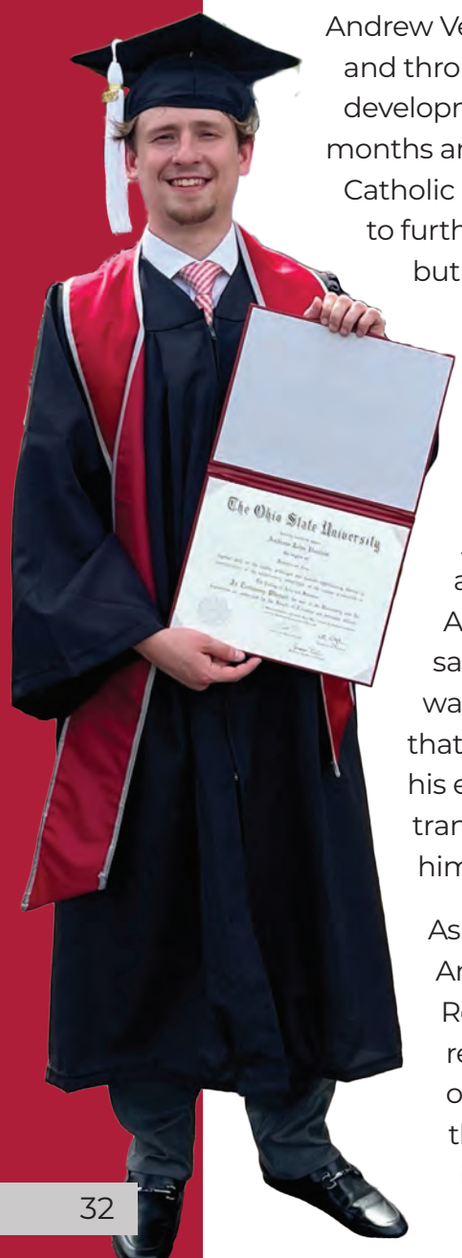
andrew vecchio: successful graduate



Andrew Vecchio attended GJR in PA in fall 2017 and through his commitment to his individual development, he was discharged after a few short months and graduated from Wheeling Central Catholic High School in June 2018. Andrew went on to further his education at Ohio State University, but his path wasn't always so smooth.

Andrew's path to Ohio State University was marked by perseverance and a commitment to self-improvement. Initially beginning his college career at St. Vincent College, he always dreamed of joining Ohio State's ranks. Despite facing academic difficulties and personal struggles, Andrew continued pursuing his dreams. He said, "I wasn't applying myself for school; I wasn't really applying myself for anything at that time." This realization led him to double his efforts, eventually achieving his dream of transferring to Ohio State, where he immersed himself in his studies and campus life.

As a proud alumnus of Ohio State University, Andrew's journey wasn't without its trials. Reflecting on his past experiences, he revealed that he got sucked into the mindset of needing to fit in but also needing to be the best at whatever he fit into. This mindset is what catapulted him into a life of selling drugs at a young age. Experiences with legal troubles and poor decision-making served as a wake-up call, guiding him toward self-discovery and growth. These experiences, coupled with his passion for music and aspirations to become a successful entrepreneur, molded him into the person he is today.

Upon graduation, Andrew embarked on a new chapter by joining Champion Windows and Home Improvement. His role at the company signifies his professional growth and the culmination of years of self-improvement and dedication. Working diligently, he strives to build his brand, representing Champion while establishing his personal identity. Through tireless efforts and continuous learning, he aims to achieve a sales goal of $100,000 within his first year, driven by ambition and unwavering commitment.

Andrew's journey shows the importance of self-awareness and the capacity for change. He shares, "It's okay to be crazy. It's okay to be different. It's okay to be weird." His experience serves as a reminder that no one is immune to life's challenges, but our response to adversity defines us.

The lessons learned from Andrew's story are numerous: the value of self-discipline, the importance of second chances, and the power of perseverance. Andrew has proven through his struggles and triumphs that with the right mindset, even the most daunting obstacles can be surmounted. As he continues to build his future, Andrew Vecchio inspires us all, reminding us that the journey from hardship to success is often paved with dedication, self-reflection, and a relentless pursuit of improvement.

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jacob redfield: intern to employee

As I type this, I am sitting in my own office reflecting on the amazing opportunities I have been part of at George Junior Republic in Pennsylvania. Just over a year ago, I began as an intern, learning the ropes of not just art therapy but teaching art and thinking in imaginative ways.

With the mentorship and support of Fine Arts Director Glen Sanders, I quickly took the reins on a few art therapy groups, and together, we ran over a dozen Art_2O groups including clay and pottery therapy groups. I acted as a co-facilitator in some of these groups eventually getting to lead painting classes and art activities with the LTSR (Long-Term Structured Residence Program) residents. We helped them construct and paint 100 birdhouses.

Glen and I also painted CARE (Children and Residential Experiences) signs with youth which are displayed throughout the GJR in PA campus and we repaired and delivered bikes to the South Dakota's Lakota residents as part of the Without Reservations program.

While completing my requirements as a graduate student, I was able to pick up unique opportunities to try different roles along the way. In addition to my role as an art therapy intern, I started working as a fine arts facilitator and therapist, behavioral health technician, and a counselor. Thanks to one of my mentors, Ann O'Grady, I witnessed important counseling skills in action that I learned to use as a co-facilitator and later on my own when providing art therapy and art directives to youth and LTSR residents. I also learned to develop a rapport with those we serve as well as staff, and gained a myriad of advice from some of the strongest and kindest staff I have ever met.

Over the course of this past year, I have interacted with various other departments, including information technology, adventure-based counseling, staff development, human resources, treatment team coordinators, maintenance, and even some of the teachers who work at the on-campus school. It is through them, and too many other staff to name here, that I learned professionalism, the ins and outs of residential programming, and how to be the best employee I can be. I am thankful for all the wonderful coworkers I have met, and I am happy to have learned what I can as I continue to grow as a person and full-time art therapist.



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thank you

A special thank you to our donors! Your dedicated support to our mission is making a difference in the lives of those we serve.

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Marcel Farrish
Flynn's Tire and Automotive Service of Hermitage, PA
The Gasiewicz Family Fund
GBU Financial
Michelle Gerwick
Nathan Gressel
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LEADERSHIP TEAM

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Sandy Dillon-Dick
Risk Officer

Susan Boland
Human Resources Officer

John Horgan
Vice President of Operations

Brandy Stark
Vice President of George Junior Republic in Indiana

Megan Grivas
Director of Preventative Aftercare

Nate O'Lay
Director of Business and Clinical Development

Bryan Redfoot
Director of Information Technology

Fred Harris
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Designed by Kelly Ruder, design and marketing coordinator.
Photo contributions by Anwen Thomas, development assistant.

George Junior Republic is a private nonprofit organization incorporated under Pennsylvania law. Gifts and bequests, therefore, are tax deductible. The official registration and financial information of George Junior Republic may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll free, within Pennsylvania, 1.800.732.0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

A copy of the Drug & Alcohol Program Annual Report is available for review through the chief financial officer, whose office is located in the Administration Building on the George Junior Republic in Pennsylvania campus.

George Junior Republic is committed to creating and maintaining a workplace in which all employees have an opportunity to participate and contribute to the success of the business and are valued for their skills, experience, and unique perspectives. The same equal opportunities apply to the care, treatment, and rehabilitation of the persons and families served.

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ANNUAL REPORT
FY 2022/2023

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