

# The Midland Messenger



## Winter Edition 2016

### Margo Lyons – A Midland Student Success Story

They say “time flies when you are having fun,” but for Margo Lyons, “time flies when you are having fun, learning, and becoming the best version of yourself.”

It’s hard for Margo, her family, and her teachers to believe it has been a decade since Margo first walked through Midland’s doors as a shy fifth grader. “Margo came to Midland as a child lacking self-confidence, but she will graduate this year as a young woman who is more mature and self-assured than older adults I know. To say I am proud is an understatement,” says Margo’s father. The Lyons looked at many varied schools, but ultimately selected Midland as the best fit.

Margo says that her time at Midland has definitely made her more confident and mature, but most importantly, happy. “My favorite thing about Midland is being with my friends,” says the now extrovert who has been involved with numerous school clubs including drama, chorus, Girl Scouts, cheerleading, and the Student Council, where she served as Vice President of her class.

However, Margo’s transformation did not happen overnight. “As with every student, it was multi-year individualized process that considered Margo’s strengths, weaknesses and interests while building upon her accomplishments,” says Midland’s Principal, Mrs. Barkan. “Margo was always a good student, who required encouragement

but was willing to try new things and access all the opportunities available for her here at Midland.”

Now as a “Super Senior” Margo splits her time between the work program and the school, spending two days per week in the classroom and the other three days out at job sites. Some of her most memorable job-training experiences include the Phillips Van Heusen (PVH) retail store in Greenbrook, Merck bakery in Rahway, Celgene pharmaceutical in



Summit, Belle Mead Animal Hospital, and the Allen Group marketing company in Branchburg. But her favorite places to work are MacAfee Elementary School in Somerset and Branchburg Central Middle School, where she’s done everything from classroom assisting to custodial work.

In her free time Margo loves to read, use the computer, and listen to music –Justin Bieber and Taylor Swift in particular. She also enjoys spending time with her family, especially Aunt Barbara and Aunt Maryann. In fact, Margo and her Aunt Maryann are starting a weekly cooking class together soon!

Margo, who recently celebrated her 21st birthday, says her career goal after graduation is to work as a cafeteria or classroom aide in a school setting. While the details are still being ironed out, she is hopeful that upon graduation her hometown district of Franklin will hire her to work in the school café. This dream job would symbolize her coming “full-circle” – first being educated in the district, then coming to Midland, and finally, returning as an employee.

“We are all so proud of what Margo has accomplished during her Midland career,” says Principal Barkan. She always enjoyed working with younger students so it is very exciting to know that she will be working in a school, helping others and achieving her goals!”

# FROM THE PRESIDENT AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



It is a pleasure to be writing my first *Messenger Message*. Although I am “new” to Midland, recently joining the staff as President and CEO this September, I am well acquainted with Midland. For over 30 years, I worked at the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) in a variety of roles before retiring as the Assistant Division Director. Midland is held in high regard by numerous state agencies and I am honored to lead such a deeply respected organization.

After evaluating our programs and services, I am most impressed with the quality of the programs, the professionalism of the staff, and in the outcomes in both the School and Midland Adult Services (“MAS”). We clearly have a model that works here at Midland.

However, as an organization that requires funding from agencies such as DDD and the New Jersey Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services to fulfill our mission, we must stay abreast of any changes and adjust accordingly. With that being said, 2016 will be a year of significant regulatory changes that will impact how we operate our employment and residential services. For instance, DDD is set to launch “fee-for-service,” changing the way Midland funds the operation of our Community Residential Group Homes and Employment Program.

Although these changes may bring challenges, they will create opportunities for us to expand and improve our already outstanding programming. For example, there is great demand for housing and employment training for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. In response to that need, we will expand our Residential program to include several supervised apartments. We are also actively planning ways to meet the ever-growing need for employment and day program services. Our vision is to expand Midland’s Work Programs which provides employment, job training, contract work, and formal or informal follow-along services.

In addition to broadening residential and employment service options, we plan to re-tool some of our educational programs to provide services that are unique and meet the needs of children with behavioral and medical challenges. Our goal is to serve even more families in 2016.

Socrates once wrote “The secret to change is to focus all of your energy, not on fighting the old, but on building on the new.” Our focus in 2016 will be to do just that. It will be a pivotal year for us—bringing challenges, changes, but most importantly, opportunities. The key is to embrace these changes with an open mind and teamwork. Together, we can expand our services and supports while maintaining a quality framework.

With the support of our trustees, staff, families, varied stakeholders, the community, and generous donors, I am certain that the best is yet to come for Midland. Thank you for your interest, involvement and investment in the Midland mission.

With warm regards,

*Shawn M. McInerney*

President and Chief Executive Officer



A fundraising Dance-A-Thon for all ages!

## MOVE FOR MIDLAND

A Fundraising Dance-a-thon for All Ages!

**WHAT:** First Annual Dance-a-thon Fundraiser  
**MOVE FOR MIDLAND**

**WHERE:** The Midland School - 94 Readington  
Rd. North Branch, NJ

**WHEN:** Saturday, March 5, 2016 from 6 p.m.  
to 10 p.m.

**Pre-registration admission is \$20 and \$25 at the door. If you raise \$20 or more through on-line fundraising, attendance is free! This family-friendly event is open to the public.**

**The fundraising part is simple: Visit <https://www.firstgiving.com/MoveForMidland/move-for-midland> and hit REGISTER. It will prompt you to help you create your fundraising page. Copy and paste your link in an e-mail to friends and family so they can make online donations.**

**Don't want to dance or can't attend the event? You can still make a contribution on the MOVE FOR MIDLAND First Giving page using the DONATE button, or make a page and help Midland reach its goal. Want to bring friends and raise money as a team? You can start a team page or join an existing one. For help setting up your page or how to support the event without one, contact Brianne at 908-722-7210 ext.151 or [rabouin@midland.school.org](mailto:rabouin@midland.school.org).**

### Event Features:

**Performances & Demo Lessons by professional dancers and instructors - Zumba, Country Line Dancing, Merengue, & more!**

**A Live DJ during the 4-hour event with \$5 dedication shout-outs (Great for birthday & congratulatory messages).**

**A professional photo booth to capture fun memories. Photos are only a \$5 donation!**

**Great give-a-ways & prizes – Concessions & refreshments.**

**For sponsorship opportunities contact Gail at 908-722-7210 x150 or [russell@midlandschool.org](mailto:russell@midlandschool.org). Check out our website: [www.midlandschool.org](http://www.midlandschool.org).**



# PROVIDENT BANK FOUNDATION SUPPORTS AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

Provident Bank Foundation, with offices in Morristown, NJ awarded a Community Grant to the Midland Foundation in the amount of \$3,500 to support the After School Program at the Midland School.

“The Midland After School Program provides Midland students with the opportunity to socialize and continue learning in a structured environment under trained staff supervision,” says Midland’s CEO & President, Shawn McInerney. “Thanks to the generosity of the Provident Bank Foundation, Midland can continue to offer recreational opportunities for students to acquire new skills and interests in athletics, crafts, music, film and other activities outside of the academic environment. This peer-to-peer interaction is essential for our students as they develop their social skills, and we are very grateful to the Provident Bank Foundation for making this grant possible.”



*The generous donation from Provident Bank Foundation was presented by First Vice President, Area Manager, Vanda S. Ferreira, to Shawn McInerney on December 4th. Midland students getting ready to go out to go off-site for job training joined in for the presentation photo-op.*

# 29<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL MIDLAND GOLF CLASSIC

On October 5, 2015 the Midland Foundation hosted the 29th Annual Midland Golf Classic at the beautiful Ridge at Back Brook in Ringoes, N.J.

Many thanks to all the golfers and generous sponsors!

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### SPECIAL THANKS TO:

The 2015 Midland Golf Classic Committee:  
Michael Bateman, Bill Caulin, John Cunningham (Chair),  
Gary Gawreluk, Michael Pinkerton, Michael Reynolds, and Tom Vollers



**Committee Members, Tom Vollers & Mike Bateman  
(center) with friends,  
John Fitzsimmons & Dave Wintermute**



# FALL 2015 VOLUNTEER GROUPS

Johnson & Johnson – October 14th



PVH Corp. – October 15th



Sanofi – October 28th



WS+B – November 25th



Thank you to our corporate friends for making a difference at Midland!



# MIDLAND GOES TO THE MOVIES WITH PNC

On Nov. 22, 2015 the Midland Foundation hosted the “Midland Goes to the Movies with PNC” event at the Purnell School in Pottersville, N.J. The event featured the surprise film, “Love and Mercy” along with cocktails and a delicious 60’s themed dinner. Thank you to all the event patrons, supporters and sponsors that made the evening such a success!

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The 2015 film committee & chairpersons,  
Deanna Anderson, Terri Reynolds & Gabby Valentine  
The 2015 program book supporters

From left to right, Co-Chair, Deanna Anderson, Co-Chair, Gabby Valentine, & Committee Member, Kirsten Neville.



# Midland Thanks the following contributors for their generosity.

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Vollers Excavating & Construction, Inc.  
W.B. Wood  
W.H. Mell Associates, Inc.  
WithumSmith+Brown  
Zeldis Family Charitable Trust

## Employee Giving & Matching Programs

AT&T Employee Giving Campaign  
Bank of America Employee Giving Campaign  
BNY Mellon Community Partnership  
Bristol-Myers Squibb Employee Giving  
Capital One Matching Gift Program  
Colgate-Palmolive Company  
Dr. Reddy's Laboratories, Inc.  
Johnson & Johnson Matching Gifts  
Merck Foundation  
Microsoft Matching Gifts Program  
Novartis Matching Gifts  
PSE&G Power of Giving  
Sanofi Foundation of North America  
TRUIST  
United Way of Northern New Jersey  
Wells Fargo Foundation Matching Gifts Program



**On Oct. 28 Mrs. Kane's Transition Class, Jane Wilkie, MAS Program Dir., and Irene Francis, Job Placement Coordinator, had a fun and educational job-training experience at the Olive Garden in Bridgewater. The group learned kitchen safety tips, and how to roll silverware, measure portions, and prepare Olive Garden's specialty food item – bread sticks! Special Thanks To: Luke, John, Sunny (Mgr) & Anthony (GM).**





The Midland Messenger  
The Midland School  
P.O. Box 5026  
North Branch  
New Jersey 08876

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## Winter Edition 2016



*Drums Alive, taught by Midland Social Worker Virginia Abu-Bakr, is a fun after school program for Midland students, that incorporates drumming and movement, along with great music. It can reduce stress, anxiety, and balance the right /left hemispheres of the brain. The very vibrations created by drumming relax and condition the nervous system. Our Drums Alive program creates a dynamic, interactive and creative program that has many benefits as well: Fosters a sense of self-confidence and joy since no musical training is necessary to drum; develops creativity and self-regulation; encourages sharing, respect, appreciation; creates a sense of membership within the group; & acknowledges self-worth and individuality.*