



MIDLAND

MAS MATTERS

A Quarterly Newsletter for Midland Adult Services

Happy Birthday

6 YEAR CELEBRATION

To kick off the new year, Midland Explores celebrated its 6th year. The individuals and staff had a fun filled day enjoying activities, face painting, crafts all around the number 6. Everyone also enjoyed eating the number 6 shaped donuts!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

EXPLORES



VOLUME 1 ISSUE 1

APRIL 1, 2024



From the desk of
Shawn M. McInerney
President/CEO



The 2024-25 State Budget Update:

Midland, along with a number of other organizations that serve and support adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD), are advocating for a 6.5% Cost of living allowance (COLA) increase to the State Budget. We have furnished written testimony to both the NJ Senate and Assembly budget committees. In the very near future, we will also be sending a communication to families to encourage everyone to use their collective voices to advocate for additional services and supports for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Unquestionably, this year's State of New Jersey budget will be challenging. Your advocacy in support of strengthening services and supports is valued, needed, and deeply appreciated.



Shawn M. McInerney, MSM

President and CEO

PO Box 5026

94 Readington Road

North Branch NJ 08876

908-722-8227 Ext 125

908-722-3134 (Fax)

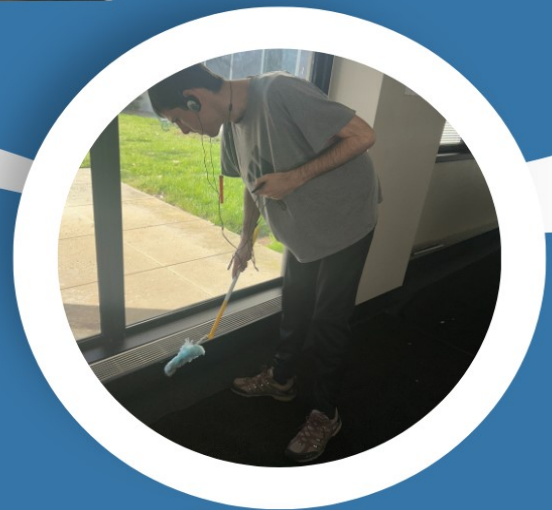
mcinerney@midlandnj.org

www.midlandnj.org



NEW VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES! EXPLORES

Individuals at Explores began volunteering at Plan NJ and Habitat for Humanity. Each week, they assist with light housekeeping jobs such as sweeping, dusting, vacuuming, organizing, stocking shelves, and helping to assemble promotional materials and giveaways.



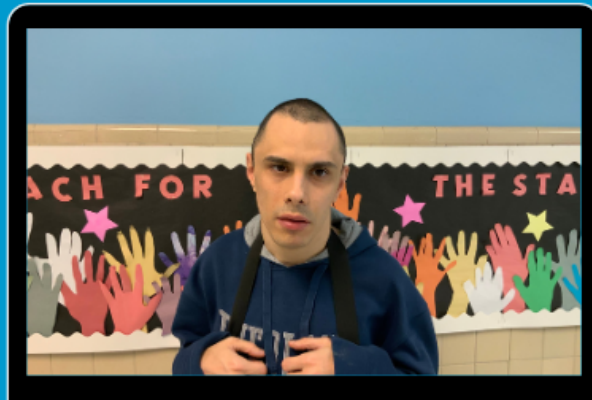
Explores Program provides adults with community integration, personal development, and social and leisure activities.





Each March, as part of the Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month, we like to share a story of one of the program participants who is happy, enjoying the program and succeeding in his new environment. Explores provides every individual with "A World of Opportunities." We are thrilled to introduce you to Ethan.

Individual Spotlight



Meet Ethan Tunkel

Ethan attended The Midland School for three years and graduated in 2017. After graduating, Ethan moved from his parents' home into a group home with another provider agency. The distance from his parents was a little farther than his family wanted, so in September of 2023, Ethan returned to the area, moved into the Windy Willow Way home, and joined three other male roommates. He has settled in so well and is happy with his living arrangement. His parents share that Ethan enjoys going to amusement parks and the beach, where there are crowds of people. Ethan recently joined Midland's Alumni and began attending their dances with his roommates. "Music class is one of the activities Ethan enjoys," says Brittany, a Community Specialist at Explores. We are so thrilled to have Ethan a part of the Midland family.

Congratulations
**2023 Somerset County
Disability Advocate Award**



Bill Liberatore

Director of Employment Services

Natalie Swiatek, Director of Strategic Planning nominated Bill Liberatore, Director of Employment Services, for the Somerset County Disability Advocate Award. We are thrilled to announce that Bill is this year's recipient.

Bill is an exceptional leader who truly understands the services and support needs of the individuals we serve. Bill is a tenacious advocate, always focused on ways to help individuals achieve employment. Bill's dedication over the past twenty-seven (27) years is to gain meaningful employment for the individuals at the Work Center and Prevocational Program.

Thank you for all that you do, Bill.

There is no one else who is so deserving.

Please help us congratulate Bill.



We want to share an exciting update from the Midland Work Center: the return of our community-based career exploration activities. These educational excursions are an essential part of our mission to broaden the employment horizons of the individuals in our program and prepare them for potential future careers.

During these activities, the individuals will leave the Work Center to explore a local employment site with an experienced job coach. Each small group will spend two hours in the morning learning about occupations available at that specific job site and will return to the Work Center by lunchtime.

We aim to provide real-world experiences to help individuals identify potential career paths they wish to pursue.

Exciting UPDATE CAREER EXPLORATION



We are currently visiting Petco, Sorello's Pizza, and Red Lobster and Walgreens. Looking ahead, we plan to expand these visits to include a broader range of community sites, offering exposure to a diverse array of careers. Being exposed to this expanded set of experiences will help individuals make more informed and personally satisfying career choices.

Employment Services News



carfINTERNATIONAL

A Three-Year Accreditation is issued to
Midland Adult Services, Inc.

for the following program(s)/service(s):
Community Employment Services: *Employment Supports*
Community Employment Services: *Job Development*
Employee Development Services
Employment Planning Services
Organizational Employment Services

This accreditation is valid through
November 30, 2026

The accreditation seals in place below signify that the organization has met annual performance requirements for quality standards that enhance the lives of persons served.



This accreditation certificate is granted by authority of:

Donald J. Dew
Donald J. Dew
Chair
CARF International Board of Directors

Brian J. Boon, Ph.D.
Brian J. Boon, Ph.D.
President/CEO
CARF International

WE ARE PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE:
Midland's Employment Program received three-year accreditation. Accreditation shows that Midland is committed to delivering safe and effective services, improving ongoing performance, and satisfying the persons served.

CONGRATULATIONS!



Staff Highlight

**Tony Oxford,
recipient of NJACP
Hero Award**



Tony Oxford is not just a Direct Support Professional; he embodies the very essence of what it means to be a Hero in our community. With over two decades of committed service at Midland, Tony has consistently showcased an unparalleled dedication to the well being and growth of adults with disabilities, helping them to navigate the challenging terrains of job training, preparation, and residential life in both the Work Center and Prevocational class.

Residential News



We want to share one of the best day trips that 70 individuals and staff from Midland Residential experienced to Ellis Island. It was a picture-perfect day being tourists, seeing the Statue of Liberty, and enjoying each other's company. From all of us at Midland, we thank Mr. James Silecchia and City Experiences for making this all possible. Everyone looks forward to the next trip with just as many adventures and smiles!



Meet Support Counselor

SANDRA HENNY



ABOUT ME

I am one of the full-time overnight staff at Parsonage Hill Drive, and I am proud to say I am the only original staff. I will continue to dedicate everything to the individuals I care deeply about. I am a very soft-hearted, compassionate, and dedicated person. Working here at Midland has elevated all those skills to a higher level.

MY BACKGROUND

I've been working at the Parsonage Hill Drive home since it opened in 2010, 10 years and six months ago! Midland for ten years.

My job here has allowed me to gain strength, courage, and confidence with every experience at Midland. Caring for the individuals in the house is one of my highest joys in life.

FUN FACTS

I have two children: a son, Booker, and a daughter, Glennesha. I also have two grandchildren: a grandson, Mekhi, and a granddaughter, Sanai. I have also been a Senior Library Assistant at the Parsippany Library for over 33 years.

MOTTO

"No matter what you have done for yourself or humanity, you must be able to look back on having given love and compassion that will automatically bring us to a stop and, for a moment, make us rise above ourselves."

WHAT OTHERS SAY

Sandra is reliable, adaptable, patient, and kind. She is always willing to work and works well in uncomfortable and stressful situations. She cares for our individuals deeply and it shows.



Developmental Disability Awareness Month (DDAM) is recognized annually each March. This year's theme is "A World of Opportunities." The goal is to build a community committed to creating a world where everyone can do well and succeed. For the past three years, Michael Weber, one of Midland's individuals employed at the Olive Garden, has succeeded and shares his work experience with his peers at the Prevocational program. His success story incentivizes his peers to follow their dreams and passion and find the right job. The individuals love to hear all about the job opportunities in the community. They are proud to share their current employment placements and those who are exploring future employment. The presentation ended with Michael's positive employment experience and an extensive question-and-answer session.

After the presentation, Michael offered some excellent advice to his peers. "If you push yourself, the best thing to do is not think about what you can't do. Think about what you want to do and what you want to be better at. Even I can improve at a lot of things. We are all learning. Don't worry about what you can't do. Worry about what you want to try and learn so you can improve on it. The best thing to do is ask questions. If you don't ask questions, you won't know how to do things, and you certainly don't want to do that."



Nurse's Corner

Michele Casey, RN



As we approach summer, staying hydrated and preventing dehydration is more critical than ever. People with developmental disabilities do not always recognize or respond to cues indicative of dehydration, and caregivers should be alert for signs of inadequate fluid intake. Signs of dehydration include the following:

- Headache, delirium, or confusion
- Fatigue, dizziness, or weakness
- Dry mouth, tachycardia, or hypotension
- Loss of appetite, flushed skin, or swollen feet
- Change in gait, balance, or behavior

It is important to note that people with developmental disabilities may not always show typical signs of dehydration, and signs of a problem can vary from person to person.

Tips to help ensure adequate intake include:

- Aim to drink $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 ounce of fluid per pound of body weight (for example, a 110-pound individual would need between 55 and 110 ounces of water daily).
- If suitable fluid intake is difficult, some foods have high water contents that can compensate for inadequate intake. These include melons, tomatoes, cucumbers, celery, strawberries, bell peppers, and lettuce. No additional intake is needed to account for thickened liquids, as thickener does not contribute to dehydration.
- Observe urine output. If urine is cloudy, dark, or amber in color, dehydration is mild to moderate. The goal is for urine to be pale yellow. Decreased urine output is another sign of insufficient hydration.
- Stay indoors when the outside temperature is above 85 degrees or atmospheric humidity is excessive.

If dehydration continues to be a concern, taking the appropriate steps and speaking with a physician is essential. Inadequate fluid intake can lead to significant issues, including kidney damage, brain damage, coma, and death. Although spending enough time and engaging in activities outdoors is essential, being safe is always the top priority. Stay safe—and hydrated!



Employee Spotlight



Erin Rudd

Erin started with Midland, as a Human Resources Assistant, in August 2023. She graduated from Rutgers University with her degree in Human Resource Management and also interned with Infineum where she assisted their HR department with recruitment in addition to providing administrative support.

A few fun facts about Erin is that she loves going to concerts, including Taylor Swift, and she also has two dogs, Reggie and Layla. Reggie is a King Charles Cavalier and Layla is a Shih Tzu/ Bichon mix. In addition, she also loves to read and is a fan of fiction novels.

Current Open Positions with Midland

- Support Counselors, Residential
- Community Specialist, Explores
- Teacher/ Personal Aide, School



For Everyone

This class is mandatory for all Midland staff who drive vehicles for Midland day programs staff (Explores and Work Center), Residential staff, School job coaches, and Maintenance staff. It is open to families and friends of Midland for \$15.00 each.

Taking this course could result in points off on your driver's license and a minimum of 5% or 10% reduction in auto liability (Individual's Insurance company determines either 5% or 10% reduction), no-fault and collision insurance premiums each year, for five years, if you are the principal operator of a vehicle.



Defensive Driving Class Schedule



<div style="font-size: small; margin-bottom: 5px;">Tuesday</div> <div style="font-size: large; font-weight: bold;">April 9th</div>	<div style="font-size: small; margin-bottom: 5px;">Thursday</div> <div style="font-size: large; font-weight: bold;">April 11th</div>	<div style="font-size: small; margin-bottom: 5px;">Monday</div> <div style="font-size: large; font-weight: bold;">May 20th</div>
<div style="font-size: small; margin-bottom: 5px;">Tuesday</div> <div style="font-size: large; font-weight: bold;">May 21st</div>	<div style="font-size: small; margin-bottom: 5px;">Monday</div> <div style="font-size: large; font-weight: bold;">June 17th</div>	<div style="font-size: small; margin-bottom: 5px;">Thursday</div> <div style="font-size: large; font-weight: bold;">June 20th</div>



All classes begin at 4:30 PM in the Great Room at The Midland School



Please allow 3 hours of training, and you must bring your driver's license.



Parents of Special Needs Children Forum

HOSTED BY MIDLAND SCHOOL & TRI COUNTY CMO

SATURDAY
APRIL 20TH
10AM-12:00PM

MIDLAND
ORGANIZATION &
THE MIDLAND SCHOOL
94 READINGTON RD.
BRANCHBURG, NJ 08876



SPECIAL GUEST SPEAKER CAPTAIN
GERALD TURNING JR.
OF BLUE BRIDGE AUTISM TRAINING
& BACON AND JUICEBOXES BLOG

Free Special Needs ID Card

Come learn about the lifelong continuum of services that Midland and Tri County CMO provide to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The presentation will include an overview of Tri County Care Management Organization's services & Midland's programs which include: The Midland School, Employment, Prevocational, Day Habilitation and Residential Services.

Register in advance*
by clicking [HERE](#)
OR
scan the
QR code



Inquires to Marlin Hernandez at
mhernandez@tricitycmo.org

Open to the Public

Midland and Tri-County CMO are co-hosting an Autism Awareness event on April 20th from 10:00 AM -12:00 PM in the Multi-purpose room at The Midland School. Hear special guest speaker, Captain Gerald Turning, Jr. of Blue Ridge Autism Training, who will share information about his personal experience being a father of a child with autism as well as a retired police captain. He will talk about bridging the gap between first responders and parents. He trains first responders to interact and work with those with special needs. Also meet Midland's Directors of the Adult Programs as they present an overview of each program's services.

Celebrations!

Pecan Cream Pie



This pecan pie recipe is one that you must try! During the holidays, the Work Center staff had a baking contest. The winner shared his no-bake recipe and won the votes of our judges.

Congratulations to Eric Ware. Bon Appetit!



INGREDIENTS

- 19 inch blind baked pie shell
- 1 cup heavy whipping cream
- 1/4 cup powdered sugar
- 16 oz cream cheese softened
- 1 1/2 teaspoons vanilla
- 1/2 cup packed brown sugar
- 1/4 cup real maple syrup
- 1 cup finely chopped pecans
- 1/2 cup roughly chopped pecans for garnish

DIRECTIONS

- In a large bowl, whip cream with powdered sugar until stiff peaks form. Set aside.
- Mix cream cheese with vanilla, brown sugar and maple syrup until smooth. Fold in whipped cream and finely chopped pecans and pour into baked pie shell.
- Top with roughly chopped pecans and refrigerate until ready to serve.

Are you following us across all social media channels?



We will share news, feature some exciting activities and communicate events. Subscribe today!

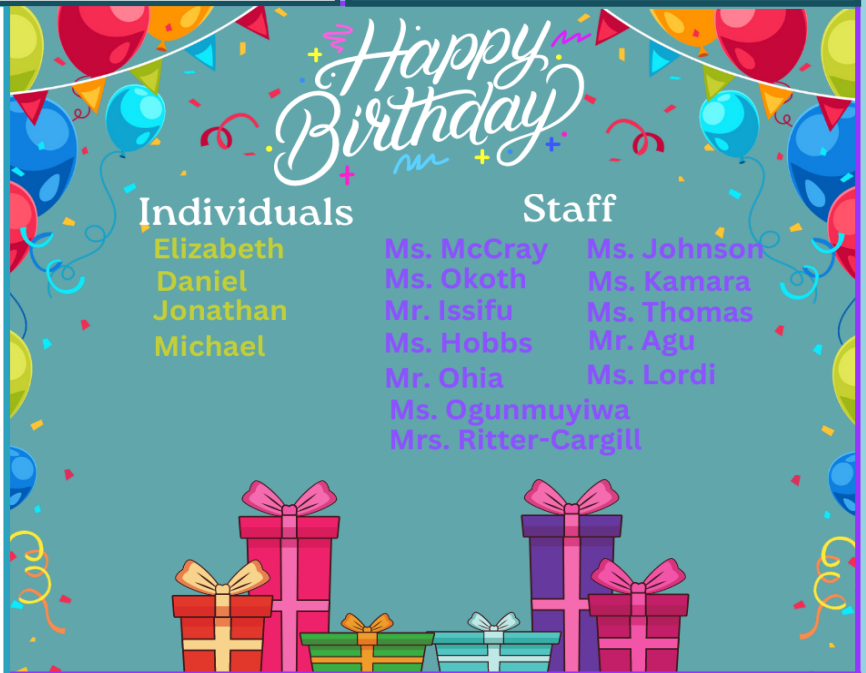
Facebook: @TheMidlandSchool

YouTube: Midland NJ

X (formerly Twitter??:@MidlandMessages

Instagram: Midland_School_NJ

LinkedIn: school/the-midland-school



Individuals

- Elizabeth
- Daniel
- Jonathan
- Michael

Staff

- Ms. McCray
- Ms. Okoth
- Mr. Issifu
- Ms. Hobbs
- Mr. Ohia
- Ms. Ogunmuyiwa
- Mrs. Ritter-Cargill
- Ms. Johnson
- Ms. Kamara
- Ms. Thomas
- Mr. Agu
- Ms. Lordi

Spring is finally here as April comes along, with bright flowers and birds singing their song.

A birthday wish for you for the blue skies above, and may your days be filled with family, friends, and love.

Events

Upcoming alumni *events*

April
12

Semi-Formal Dinner
Dance at Flemington
Elks with DJ Jeanmarie
6:30 - 9:30 PM

May
17

Oldies Dance
with DJ Jeanmarie
7:00 - 9:00 PM

June
7

Beach Party Dance
with DJ Jeanmarie
(2024 Graduation Class Invited)
7:00 - 9:00 PM

Midland has an Alumni Association that is an exceptional organization with extraordinary members. The purpose of this association is to provide social and recreational functions for its members. This organization offers opportunities to continue learning, practicing, and enjoying social interactions with their peers at the school with regularly themed dances with a DJ and other fun events.

Midland's events are a BLAST!

Take off and join us on Saturday, June 1st, at the Midland School's multi-purpose room for a fun-filled family and community event.

You don't want to miss it so mark your calendar for an Out of this World-themed event that will include dancing, food trucks, face painting, free games, and tons of fun!

You will feel like you are on another planet!

SAVE THE DATE

OUT OF
THIS
WORLD!

MOVE FOR MIDLAND

JUNE 1, 2024

3:00 - 5:30 PM

The Midland School
94 Readington Road
North Branch, NJ 08876