Another Successful Telethon: THANK YOU!

The 43rd Meeting Street Telethon aired on WPRI 12 on Saturday January 26, 2019. Thanks to all of you, our Telethon raised over $1.1 million, all of which will support critical educational and developmental services for more than 5,000 children and families. Over 500 people attended the live event, including our student co-hosts: Jason, Mercy, Athan, and Madisyn. Thank you to everyone who made this event successful, especially our presenting sponsors, Cardi’s Furniture & Mattresses and WPRI 12, whose generosity enables 100% of the proceeds raised to directly benefit Meeting Street!
Meeting Street Visits Washington D.C.

Written by Heidi Lamb, Grace School Teacher

At dawn on an early November morning, our eighth grade class at The Grace School waited with chaperones as a coach bus pulled into the Meeting Street parking lot to take them to Washington D.C. This was a long planned trip, the culmination of a grant to study accessibility, so it was all the more discouraging to discover that the bus – ordered well in advance with a contract stipulating ADA accessibility for our students who use wheel chairs – was DEFINITELY NOT wheel chair accessible. There was no lift. The aisle between seats was too narrow for a wheel chair to pass through. There were no tie downs.

Months of planning had gone into this trip with therapists, teachers, and nurses making sure every facet was addressed, with bags carefully packed and stops mapped out strategically to meet the needs of all students. Yet it was a hard lesson that even careful planning cannot prevent obstacles to accessibility.

Without the ability to safely travel together in the coach bus, the only option was for the two students needing wheelchair accessibility to take the Meeting Street van. Two staff members - Michelle Godfrey (Special Education Coordinator) and Crista DeSano (Head Nurse at the RI Campus) - stepped forward to volunteer as qualified drivers. These two amazing women not only drove the 12 hour trip to D.C., but they also went out of their way to give the students who had to ride separately from their classmates a non-stop multi-hour endurance party on wheels. With singing, joking, and non-stop banter, complete with celebrations at every rest stop with songs and dance moves as the students were loaded and unloaded, Crista and Michelle reinvigorated the energy that had been dampened by the need for separate transportation.

The students traveling on the bus opted to videochat with their classmates to have a more inclusive experience. However, traveling in two vehicles would have presented more obstacles in the city. Quietly, Scott Marques (Physical Education Teacher), a trip chaperone, texted a family member who lived in the area, and together they managed to arrange for an accessible bus to pick the students up the next day, which restored the group to its inclusive ideal. Thanks to the hard work and selflessness of these staff members, our students enjoyed the D.C. trip as a truly inclusive experience as they visited many of our nation’s landmarks and historic sites, including the U.S. Capitol, the White House, and the Lincoln Memorial.

Give a Gift

Are you inspired by these amazing Meeting Street professionals, who selflessly go the extra mile every day for every child?

Please consider making a donation today to show your support for Crista, Michelle and Scott and their colleagues!

Visit www.meetingstreet.org/Support-Us
Community Partner Spotlight:
Blue Cross Blue Shield of Rhode Island

In so many ways throughout the year, Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Rhode Island has shown their support for Meeting Street and the more than 5,000 children and families across Southern New England who benefit from the programs and services we offer.

A perennial sponsor of the Telethon and other fundraising events, Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Rhode Island also sends volunteers to assist with behind-the-scenes work. Additionally, through their BlueAngel Community Initiative, they continue to underwrite the costs of printing our Holiday Cards every year so that 100% of proceeds directly benefit Meeting Street.

It is because of the support of Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Rhode Island and other community partners that Meeting Street is able to continue to meet the needs of children in our community. Thank you for all of your support!

Holiday Concerts at
The Grace School and The Schwartz School

Students in both Providence and Dartmouth showed off their musical skills to family and friends at our Holiday Concerts in December. Students were able to use various musical instruments to perform songs for a packed room full of family and friends. Both concerts were hugely successful, thanks to the hard work of Jenn Damiano, our music teacher, and the other teachers and professionals who assisted in making it a truly inclusive musical experience.
Ways to Support Meeting Street:

Meeting Street is able to positively impact over 5,000 children and their families this year, and none of it would be possible without generous supporters.

Thank you to everyone who has helped Meeting Street strive towards the mission of empowering every child to thrive!

Make a Gift
Visit our website, send a check, or call us to make a gift today

Become a GEM
Set up monthly payments to make an ongoing contribution

Leave a Legacy
Consider designating Meeting Street in your estate plans

Help further our mission with an IRA Charitable Rollover!
If you are 70½ or older, you can avoid taxes on transfers of up to $100,000 directly from your IRA to Meeting Street. You can reduce your tax liability from required minimum distributions, all while helping our children!

For more information, please contact Lianne Pinheiro at 401-533-9235 or lpinheiro@meetingstreet.org

Upcoming Events

The 9th Annual Fishing for a Cause Tournament & Seaside Dinner
Friday, June 21st & Saturday, June 22nd
New Bedford, MA

Allstate & Bay Realty Cocktail Party
June TBD
Narragansett, RI

CVS Health Charity Classic
Friday, June 21st - Tuesday, June 25th (volunteers needed!)
Rhode Island Country Club, Barrington, RI

The 31st Superhero Walk & 5K Race
Sunday, September 22nd (volunteers needed!)
Fort Taber, New Bedford, MA

Be IN THE KNOW. Follow us on social media!
Facebook.com/MeetingStreetNow
Twitter.com/MeetStreetNow
Instagram.com/MeetingStreetNow

Featured Artwork
Winter Penguin
Mixed media
by Gabe, student at The Schwartz School
December 2018

Helpful Tips for Successful Events:

- Communicate with volunteers in advance to ensure they understand their roles and responsibilities.
- Provide clear instructions and guidelines for attendees.
- Solicit feedback from attendees to improve future events.

Visit our website, send a check, or call us to make a gift today.

Volunteers Needed for:

- The 9th Annual Fishing for a Cause Tournament & Seaside Dinner
- The 31st Superhero Walk & 5K Race
- CVS Health Charity Classic
- Allstate & Bay Realty Cocktail Party

For more information regarding our events, or if you are interested in volunteering, please contact Amy Barrett at 401-533-9230 or events@meetingstreet.org