Volunteer aids in breakthrough for student with autism

From Reeds Spring School District

Teachers at Reeds Spring Primary School credit a volunteer with helping a kindergarten student with autism overcome an obliquid. All school year, Ayden Chaplin refused to enter the school gym. "He was just terrified of the gym. He wouldn’t walk past it without screaming,” said special education teacher Terrii Lee. That meant Ayden did not participate in physical education classes. He also missed group activities like concerts and assemblies. Throughout the school year, Mrs. Lee and special ed paraprofessionals tried to help Ayden overcome his fear. They tried several strategies to get Ayden into the gym, but nothing worked.

"We finally got him to where he would walk past the gym doors without screaming, but he was shielding himself,” Lee said. In January, Adam Gasper began volunteering with Lee’s special education class. Gasper, a 2016 Reeds Spring graduate, also has autism. The first day Adam came, Ayden just instantly ran up to him. He had no idea who Adam was, but he just gave Adam a big hug,” Lee said. "It was a pretty special bond; you could tell.” Lee had Gasper ask Ayden if he wanted to play basketball.

"Adam opened the door to the gym and Ayden followed him right in. He started playing basketball like he owned the place,” Lee said. The next day, Ayden requested to go to the gym. He now goes almost every day.

"He’s been able to go to PE and concerts. He’s adjusted well,” Lee said.

Gasper has also benefited from the relationship. "Ayden is fun. He is my friend,” Gasper said. Lee said her personal goal for the year was to get Ayden into the gym. Thanks to Adam Gasper, that goal became a slam dunk.

Febuary’s character trait was honesty. The Reeds Spring Primary School Character Students of the Month are, front row from left, Titan Stafford, Marcus Branham, Pearce Birlew, Wyatt Unruh and RJ Reeds Spring Primary School

Reeds Spring to hold kindergarten screening in April

From Reeds Spring School District

Kindergarten screening and enrollment begins soon for the Reeds Spring School District. A child must be 5 years old by July 31 to be eligible for kindergarten. These are the dates and times for screening and enrollment:

- Thursday, April 20 - 8:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.
- Friday, April 21 - 8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
- Monday, April 24 - 8:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.
- Tuesday, April 25 - 9 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

Appointments are necessary for the enrollment and screening process. Call 417-272-3241 to reserve a time. Parents will need to provide an official birth certificate, current immunization records, and proof of residency.

“I am excited to welcome next year’s kindergarten students and families,” said Reeds Spring Primary School Principal Karen Murray. “Having the opportunity to meet these children helps us to create classrooms that will meet the educational needs of each child.”

High school names top youth volunteer

From Reeds Spring School District

Aidan Bradford was named the top youth volunteer of the year. The honor was granted as part of the Prudential Spirit of Community Awards, a nationwide youth volunteer recognition program sponsored by Prudential Financial in partnership with the National Association of Secondary School Principals.

Bradford has been involved in multiple community volunteer projects including the EarthWise Recycling Center, Youth Empowerment Project (YEP), clothing and food drives, assisting local farmers markets, and leading youth sports clinics for football and basketball.

"Young people who contribute their time and talents to their communities are role models for all of us," said Prudential Chairman and CEO John Strangfeld. "We admire their dedication, their achievements, and their spirit of community.”

Aidan Bradford

Learn more at spirit.prudential.com or nassp.org/spirit.