

# BUFFALO PROMISE NEIGHBORHOOD NEWSLETTER



## PARTNER SPOTLIGHT—GERARD PLACE

I recently had the pleasure of speaking with David Zapfel, President & CEO of Gerard Place and one of Buffalo Promise Neighborhood's key partners.

For those of you that are unfamiliar with Gerard Place, their mission is to provide safety and skill building for homeless single parent families seeking secure permanent housing and family wellness. To date over 250 families have come through their doors. With an over 90% success rate, the Gerard Place housing program continues to serve our most vulnerable community members.

Signature programs and services provided by Gerard Place Community Education include TASC (former GED), literacy, computer classes, job readiness training, health and nutrition classes and so much more! Gerard Place partners with over 30 community organizations to implement a full year-round life skills program to those most in need.

In conjunction with the Feedmore WNY the first Thursday of every month a mobile food pantry arrives on-site providing fresh fruits and vegetables to those in need. In addition, every Monday and Wednesday they host a family style dinner that is open to the public. Stop in and enjoy a healthy, hot meal with members of the community and get to know the friendly, knowledgeable Gerard Place staff.

The vision of Gerard Place is to create opportunities, strengthen families and the community all the while working collaboratively with their partners to provide hope, transform lives and break the cycle of generational poverty.

Buffalo Promise Neighborhood is proud to work with Gerard Place in partnership with our Early Learning Center located on their campus. Opened in January of 2019, the center serves approximately 100 children ages 6 weeks to 5 years. Parents who reside at Gerard Place have access to an extensive variety of programs and services through the Buffalo Promise Neighborhood Parent Achievement Zone (PAZ).

When asked to share his proudest career accomplishment Dave Zapfel said that it was raising the funds to create their new Community Center allowing hundreds of people with the opportunity to move their whole family out of poverty.

If you are interested in learning more about Gerard Place, please visit them at <https://www.gerardplace.org>

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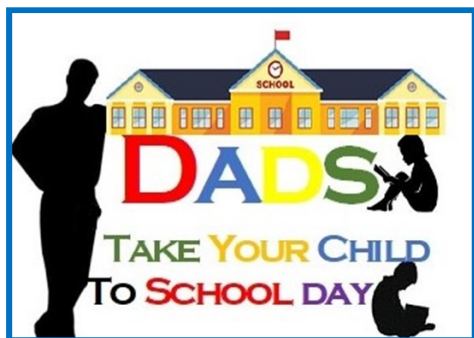
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## ABOUT BPN

- ◆ Buffalo Promise Neighborhood is an education initiative aimed at supporting our children from cradle to college and beyond.
- ◆ Buffalo Promise Neighborhood in partnership with M&T Bank also includes community residents and numerous community based organizations as part of our team.
- ◆ We are committed to providing children with access to great schools and strong systems of family and community support.

## DAD'S TAKE YOUR CHILD TO SCHOOL DAY



Parent Achievement Zone (PAZ) recently hosted “Dads Take Your Child to School Day.” This national event kicked off at Highgate Heights Elementary in September. Dads brought their kids to school and were welcomed by our PAZ M.A.L.E. group leaders with donuts, coffee, and community.

Research indicates that children whose fathers take a more active role in their lives have better outcomes related to academics, behavior, and social skills.



## 2019-20 SATURDAY ACADEMY

Welcome back to the 2019-2020 school year - it's going to be an amazing year!

We will once again host a series of Saturday Academies at Westminster Community Charter School and Highgate Heights Elementary.

There is something for everyone to enjoy this year from educational field trips to the Book Expo, Power Authority and Explore & More Museum to exciting STEM activities. Join us for math fun at Pi Night and enjoy challenging hands-on craft projects that make every Saturday Academy a new adventure!

Please check the Main Office at your school for the full schedule and be sure to mark your calendar for these free, open to the public events.

Strong Community Schools—something for everyone!!

**Saturday Academy**  
2019-2020

PRESENTED BY BUFFALO PROMISE NEIGHBORHOOD

*Free & open to the community!* Academies are fun-filled free family events!

<p><b>Mind, Body, and Soul</b> SAT 9/20 WESTMINSTER COMMUNITY 9AM-12PM CHARTER SCHOOL</p> <p><b>Harvest Fest</b> SAT 10/13 HIGHGATE HEIGHTS 9AM-12PM</p> <p><b>The Great Pumpkin</b> SAT 10/26 KELKBERG FARMS 9AM-12PM</p> <p><b>Celebrating Mother Earth</b> SAT 11/2 HIGHGATE HEIGHTS 9AM-12PM</p> <p><b>Book Expo Field Trip</b> SAT 11/9 BUFFALO NIAGARA 9AM-12PM CONVENTION CENTER</p> <p><b>I'm Thankful</b> SAT 11/23 WESTMINSTER COMMUNITY 9AM-12PM CHARTER SCHOOL</p> <p><b>Celebrations Around the World</b> SAT 12/7 WESTMINSTER COMMUNITY 9AM-12PM CHARTER SCHOOL</p>	<p><b>Winter Wonderland</b> SAT 12/14 HIGHGATE HEIGHTS 9AM-12PM</p> <p><b>Literary Superheroes</b> TUES 1/14 WESTMINSTER COMMUNITY 5PM-7PM CHARTER SCHOOL</p> <p><b>Celebrating our History</b> SAT 2/9 HIGHGATE HEIGHTS 9AM-12PM</p> <p><b>Power Authority Field Trip</b> SAT 3/7 THE POWER AUTHORITY 9AM-12PM</p> <p><b>*Pi* Night</b> THURS 3/12 WESTMINSTER COMMUNITY 5PM-7PM CHARTER SCHOOL</p> <p><b>Career Fair</b> SAT 4/4 HIGHGATE HEIGHTS 9AM-12PM</p> <p><b>Mother's Day Brunch</b> SAT 5/3 WESTMINSTER COMMUNITY 9AM-12PM CHARTER SCHOOL</p> <p><b>Explore &amp; More Field Trip</b> SAT 6/13 EXPLORE &amp; MORE CHILDREN'S MUSEUM *FOR FATHER'S DAY EVENT</p>
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**Breakfast & lunch provided!** \*Field trips require RSVP permission slips

Enroll. Engage. Achieve  
BPS Strong Community Schools are an initiative of the New Education Bargain with Students and Parents

## VICTORY SPORTS PROJECT



The mission at Victory Sports is to help under-resourced schools, leagues, teams and kids obtain all the equipment they need to play a sport and compete. Many kids don't try out for sports because their families aren't financially able to purchase the necessary equipment.

We at BPN would like to extend a very special thank you to Victory Sports Global Outreach Inc., Project Play WNY and the Ralph C. Wilson Jr. Foundation for choosing Westminster Community Charter School for a Ball Bin to be used in our playground!



# PLAYWORKS



Playworks is a national nonprofit that supports learning and physical health by providing safe and inclusive play to low-income students in urban schools. Playworks partners with schools to design curriculum and activities that offer play opportunities during recess, lunch and after school programs .

Buffalo Promise Neighborhood is pleased to partner with Playworks to encourage healthy and safe play in our elementary schools.

Highgate Heights and Westminster Community Charter are proud to utilize the Playworks Coach model as we continue to foster social, emotional, and physical development in our students throughout the day. Stay tuned for more Playworks fun!

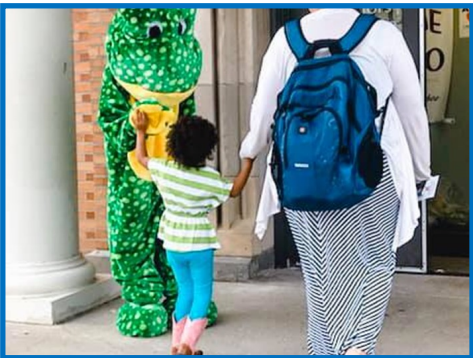
## FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL—CHILDREN’S ACADEMY LOCATIONS



The first day of school at our Children’s Academies is always an exciting time for our youngest learners and their families! This year children and families were welcomed with hugs, kindness, and plenty of fun in all of our classrooms. We are looking forward to building relationships and teaching all of our children to love learning as we prepare them for Kindergarten and beyond.

Some of the enrichment learning experiences we have planned for this year are KinderMotion classes (ballet and gym), monthly library field trips to Westminster Community Charter School, Aquarium of Niagara Touch Tank, ZooMobile, and off-site field trips to Becker Farms, Explore and More, and the Theater of Youth. It’s sure to be our best year yet!

## HIGHGATE HEIGHTS—REDDY FREDDY & BACK TO SCHOOL NIGHT



Pre-K students at Highgate Heights started the newest chapter of their lives when they attended Ready Freddy orientation. The Ready Freddy initiative focuses on the importance of attendance in the early grades and setting the foundation for academic success. Students and families were greeted by the Ready Freddy mascot and were able to tour their classrooms and meet their new teachers. While students were learning about all the fun opportunities school has to offer, parents learned about in-school and community resources available. Lastly, students had the opportunity to take a ride on a school bus for the very first time.

Highgate Heights kicked off the new school year with a very successful Back to School Night. Families were able to meet teachers and school staff while learning about the many in-school and community supports available to help in their children’s success. At the conclusion of the night families played games and enjoyed a pizza dinner!



# COMMUNITY EVENTS



Our annual Welcome Back Community Block Party was a bit hit again this year! Thank you to our community members, teachers, students, partners and volunteers who made it such a success .

We would like to recognize the following organizations for their donations: Buffalo State College, University at Buffalo, Wegmans, Buffalo Police Department E-District, Law Offices of William Mattar, Evergreen Healthcare, Health Education Project, Highgate Heights Block Club, Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Blue Cross/Blue Shield of WNY, Toby David-Trip and Styles of Man Barbershop.

Please be sure to mark your calendars for our Annual Holiday Food Basket Giveaway on December 19, 2019!



# VOLUNTEERS MAKING A DIFFERENCE



We love our M&T Bank volunteers! Over the summer we rely on our volunteers to help us prep our schools for the new year as well as keep our gardens looking beautiful!

Each Monday throughout July, August and September, volunteers from M&T's Intergenerational Resource Group joined us to help maintain the Westminster teaching garden. They pulled weeds in the pumpkin patch, cut the grass and trimmed the plants. With their help, our WCCS garden club was able to do experiments and harvest the vegetables to cook them with Chef Jason! Several groups of volunteers also helped us with the other community gardens in our neighborhood including the Bailey Dartmouth Garden.

Before school began, 65 volunteers from M&T's Management Development Program (MDP) visited Westminster to prepare for the students to come back in September. They cleaned the lockers and classrooms, put up

colorful bulletin board paper, cleaned our greenspace and so much more. Thank you to our volunteers for making a difference in our community!



We are NOW on Instagram! Follow us at:  
[@buffalopromise](#)



We're on Facebook and we think you are too.  
[Buffalo Promise Neighborhood!](#)



Don't have either? Not a problem! We're on Twitter!  
Follow us [@BuffaloPN](#)



Only have a LinkedIn? We are there too!  
[Buffalo Promise Neighborhood](#)