
Eleven year old Mikey is on the autism spectrum and when he came to Clare Woods Academy (CWA) he could not write a complete sentence. He was only able to write his name and address. Our amazing staff (his teacher, speech therapist, and occupational therapist) were working closely with Mikey and starting to make progress. Then the Covid-19 pandemic hit and CWA was forced to shut our doors and transition to remote learning. Unfortunately, like the majority of our students, Mikey did not have a computer to use at home to keep up with the progress he was making. With help from supporters like you, Clare Woods Academy was able to provide Mikey a Chromebook and work with him to teach him the technology. Mikey not only made progress, HE THRIVED! Staff worked with him consistently, and Mikey was able to learn how to navigate Microsoft Word for the use of spell/grammatical error check, as well as word prediction and speech to text software. Mikey now knows how to use Microsoft word, can write a whole story, can present to the entire class and even **taught himself how to use Photoshop which he used to create his own unique character**. Mikey went from having no ability to write and share a story, to learning how to virtually share his photoshopped "Super Mikey Odyssey World 2" and associated stories related to his character to his entire class. **Mikey, is just one example of an individual who thrived in a time where many students across the nation were secluded. This is the type of difference we can make in every child's life if we have the resources to support them.**



Since the pandemic began, CWA and Cupertino Home spent nearly \$45,000 on keeping our individuals and staff safe, healthy, prepared, and learning. At the same time, our major fundraising events have been cancelled due to the social distancing guidelines. COVID has also caused an additional 25% decrease in our operating budget. With this astonishing and unbudgeted amount of money, the challenge is even greater for us to raise desperately needed funds. As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, about 50% of those we serve through our private therapeutic day school and Cupertino Home are from low income households. **Now more than ever donations are needed to provide the best quality of life for our students and residents.** Throughout it all, staff remains positive and always keep our students and residents at the center of all we do. Staff have continued to innovate with courage to keep things fun and new. Whether it was a zoom class party, delivery of supplies, providing additional certified nursing staff, help with essential needs such as food and toiletries, a drive through graduation, a personalized "plushie" project, or making sure each student was set up for remote learning success with a Chromebook, the dedicated staff rose to the challenge! They continue to come to work every day to care for those entrusted to us.

Please consider making a donation today to help Clare Woods Academy and Cupertino Home continue to enrich the lives of our learning and developmentally disabled youth and adults like Mikey to become self-sufficient and self-directed. Go to blcinc.org/donate to help. Thank you for your continued support and trust in us as we operate with integrity, care and compassion for our students and residents!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Miller".

John Miller

