

Revolutionizing Education

# ZANIEZ





# The Birth of Zaniez



Longtime Autism researcher Laurent Mottron wrote a recent scientific editorial in which he points out that the current approach to treating a child with Autism is based on changing them, making them conform, suppressing repetitive behaviors, intervening with any “obsessive” interests. Our family experienced this firsthand. Some of our early behavioral therapists would see Gio lie on the ground to play, his face level with the cars and trucks he was rolling into long rows, and they would tell us, “Make him sit up. No lying down. Let’s rearrange the cars. Tell him, they don’t always have to be in a straight line, Gio!”

To me, this approach seemed rigid. We don’t all have to act in the exact same way. These kids need to function, not robotically imitate “normal”.

- Harvard Health Publishing, Harvard Medical School, Monique Tello, MD, MPH

As a parent of a child diagnosed with Autism, reading the words above was the very moment that I realized that every thought and feeling that I had been experiencing with regard to the failed education and treatment of my child was validated. I wasn't an educator despite my achieved level of education but I inherently knew that the plethora of education available to my child was not what he needed. It was then that I realized that I was put on this Earth to tackle this issue. It was up to me to create a learning environment and program that didn't strive to “normalize” my child but rather to honor my child. It was up to me to make sure that children like my son had an inspirational environment in which to reveal their greatness and foster it to create a pathway for long-term success. Zaniez was born on this day with a commitment to revolutionize education for kiddos on the Autism Spectrum.

- Dana Leigh Shafman,  
Zaniez Creator and Executive Director





# The Zany Truth



Every daycare worker, preschool teacher and public school educator that we encountered created an IEP or some other document full of goals to "normalize" our child on the Spectrum neglecting to see the beauty within him as he is today and to build upon his natural talents. Zaniez was created to foster the brilliance inside children on the Autism Spectrum and to find ways to build upon what is already there for lifelong success in every discipline to include music, swimming, cooking, math, science, art, gardening, sports, farming, animal care, horse riding, agriculture and more!!!

Zaniez is planned to open in January 2026 with kiddos that are age 3 to age 12 (Phase 1) in a revolutionary FARM TRADE SCHOOL setting that doesn't conform to traditional norms. When ready, Zaniez will expand to include students age 13 to age 18 (Phase 2) followed by Adults 19+ (Phase 3) with a foundational focus on independent living for every student and adult.

Zaniez will provide a pathway for direct advancement into the student's chosen pathway via channeled learning and strategic partnerships. By adopting a trade school approach, Zaniez will encourage entrepreneurship by providing basic business formation assistance along with vocational training programs. Zaniez will look within our own talent pool to hire first always!!!!



**ZANIEZ**

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Mentorships, Internships and Apprenticeships will be encouraged for the high school students of working age and adults when ready to transition them into a career to foster independence and independent living. We have a plan to work with science, gaming, video production and technology leaders to create conduits for our brilliant minds.



# Our Zany Story

There is always an upside to every awful situation and Zaniez is proof of that during the Covid lockdowns. We were given a "gift from God" to watch our child learn for about seven (7) months and by doing so, we realized that every program that we put him in prior to that moment not only misunderstood our child but also negated many neurotypical children due to the cookie cutter teaching style and single lane instruction that removed almost every creative element to learning. That wasn't good enough for our munchkin so, we began researching and learned that there was a better way. Zaniez was born that revolutionary day in our home in September 2020.

Zaniez is revolutionary in that it is positioned to provide individualized education in a group farm setting with a focus on trades in order to observe each student individually to identify the brilliance within each student and foster it.

As our students grow in every way, their career paths will form and will include hands on education from the beginning of their time at Zaniez all the way through the launch of each student's career, on or off campus.

Every student has the ability to succeed in life independently, it's our job to pave the pathway for success with wonderment!







# No Zany Trade-Offs

Every student possesses greatness, it's our job to find it!

Zaniez is committed to exploring every option for learning to unearth the brilliance in Spectrum kiddos and adults. We believe that this type of learning environment and philosophy can foster many exceptional and inspiring leaders in society through Zaniez similar to the famous humans on the Spectrum like Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Steve Jobs, Michelangelo, Elon Musk, Thomas Jefferson, Dan Akroyd, Andy Warhol, Nikola Tesla, Sir Isaac Newton, Satoshi Tajiri, Temple Grandin, Albert Einstein, Bobby Fischer, and so many more.



Zaniez individualized career pathing takes into account each student's inner brilliance and natural aptitude in various areas from day one to foster learning through individual interests. For example, if a student leans towards technology and music then the learning will be funneled through one of those channels in activity form to encourage learning and growth in an area already approved and adored by the student.





# Activity Based Learning



Zaniez adopts the concept of Activity Based Learning (ABL) that offers a homelike, diverse environment with specialized education like Spelling to Communicate (S2C) and various options for learning in an exciting environment that includes outside-the-box thinking and instruction as well as both indoor and outdoor classrooms that combine nature, animals, activity and learning versus solely desk or table learning. It engages the entire body while learning and includes learning by doing such as counting pedals on a flower, popcorn pieces in a bucket, number of jumps on a trampoline or crab walks on a gym mat, chips in a cookie recipe, squirts of goat milk during milking, brushes of a horse during brushing and so many more extraordinary ways to learn utilizing Activity Based Learning.

Music and art programs have vanished from many educational and learning environments, which is detrimental to learning and personal growth for all student types. Zaniez integrates music and art daily, we believe in a classical music approach to daily learning that includes a grand piano for Spectrum kiddos and adults that are naturally musically inclined as well as art easels and creative environments for our little Picassos and Monets.

Imagine if the brilliant Zaniez minds were left to fend for themselves in traditional, failing educational and learning environments to be predestined to a life without achieving personal independence and greatness through the gifts bestowed to them by God. Zaniez is committed to unearthing the brilliance of every student regardless of age and developing it to be sustained by the student over their lifetime of success.





# nestle toll house cookie lesson

## activity

**\*READING\***

Reading the Recipe

**\*COUNTING\***

Count the Ingredients

**\*MEASURING\***

Measuring in Fractional Amounts

**\*CRACKING\***

Cracking Eggs

**\*SHAPES\***

Forming Cookie Shapes

**\*BAKING\***

Baking the Cookies

**\*POURING\***

Pouring Milk into Cups

**\*EATING\***

Eating Cookies with Milk

### ACHIEVEMENTS

Students will engage in this fun activity to build necessary life skills to encourage independence while mastering basic reading, math and cooking skills that inspire careers in various areas.





# Let's Get Zany

Zaniez was created utilizing our child's middle name, which is Zane that means "gift from God". We believe wholeheartedly that children on the Spectrum are little gifts from God and should be cherished and treated in that manner with respect and dignity. We are committed to revolutionizing education for every student on the Autism Spectrum as far as our reach affords until all are reached.



Join us in honoring our Zaniez students and families by Donating Startup Fundraising Capital, Inquiring Spectrum Parent or Adult, Applying to Work for Zaniez, Volunteering at Zaniez, Spreading the Word About Zaniez or any other way you feel you can impact the future of our little gifts from God.



Zaniez is a 501c3 nonprofit trade school. There is no charge for Spectrum kiddos, adults and families for school.







# Contact Us



**Presently  
gardening at:**

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Show Low, AZ 85901**

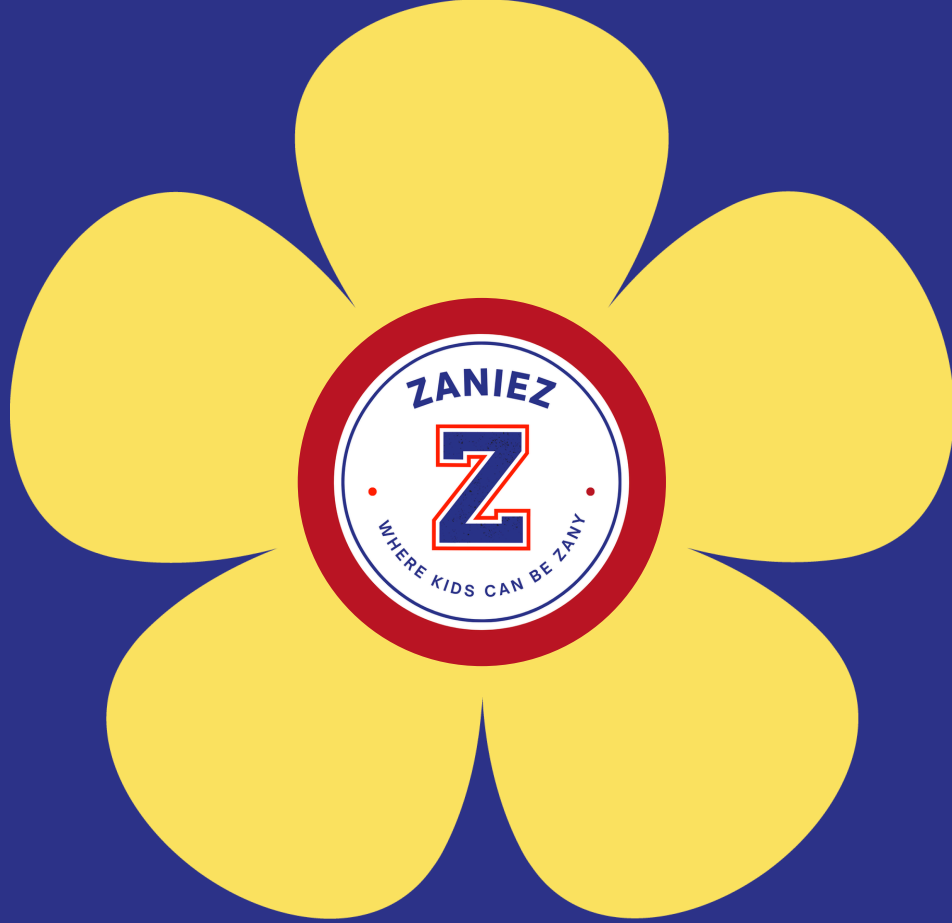


**“On the Go”**

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JOIN THE  
**REVOLUTION**  
TODAY

**ZANIEZ**

