



SISTERS of CHARITY FOUNDATION  
OF CANTON

*Celebrating 20 Years of Focused Intentional Giving*

December 2016

## ADAPTIVE SPORTS PROGRAM OF OHIO: INSPIRING ATHLETES WITH DISABILITIES

Participating in sports is a childhood rite of passage. Many of us take it for granted that sports will be part of our children's lives. But as Lisa Followay learned, it's not so easy if your child is disabled.

Lisa's son, Casey, has spina bifida. Lisa wanted Casey to participate in sports. For one thing, 80% of people with spina bifida are overweight, which makes them much less independent. Participating in sports also raises the self-esteem of individuals with disabilities; improves peer relationships, health, and quality of life; and even increases the likelihood of employment. When she tried to find sports programs for children like Casey, Lisa found that no such programs existed. So she decided to start her own.



### **Adaptive Sports Program of Ohio**

offers sled hockey, sailing, basketball, kayaking, track/racing, and rugby programs for individuals with physical and visual disabilities. They serve Franklin, Lucas, Mahoning, Medina, Stark, Summit, and Wayne counties. They're the only organization in our region that offers access to competitive (in addition to recreational) sports for athletes with

physical disabilities. Most recently, three of Adaptive Sports' sled hockey teams traveled to Buffalo, NY for a national competition. Each of the teams placed in the top three in its respective category.

Adaptive Sports started in 2009, serving only five athletes and offering 50 program hours during the year. They now serve 300 athletes, offering 1,000 program hours annually. Their inventory includes more than 1,400 pieces of adaptive equipment. After participants pay a registration fee, Adaptive Sports lends out its equipment. That access to equipment is key. If an able-bodied child wants to take up running, parents simply have to purchase shoes (and possibly a uniform). If a child with a disability wants to take up racing, racing wheels can cost upwards of \$3,000. Adaptive equipment for other sports can cost up to \$10,000.

A two-year grant from the Sisters of Charity Foundation has provided partial funding to hire a new full-time program manager to lead programs in Wayne County and expand them into Stark County. By providing funding for Adaptive Sports, the Foundation is fulfilling its strategic goal of supporting healthy lifestyles in our community.

As for Lisa's son Casey, he has thrived. As one article stated, "the fact that he is in a wheelchair does nothing to diminish the role he has played as one of the brightest stars to ever grace Jesse Owens Memorial Stadium during the state track and field meet." He's currently ranked third in the US in the 100 and 400 meters in his classification. He hopes to be named to Team USA next summer and attend the 2016 Paralympic World Track and Field Championships in London.

## **SISTERS OF CHARITY FOUNDATION OF CANTON AWARDS \$1.9 MILLION IN GRANTS**

The Board of Directors of the Sisters of Charity Foundation of Canton has announced \$1,918,898 in grants for the third and fourth quarters of 2016 to meet the diverse needs of the poor and underserved in our community.

President Joni Close stated, "the Foundation celebrated its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary at a recent event, with nearly 300 community partners and friends listening to the wise words of Father Gregory Boyle. Father Boyle challenged us to create a "circle of compassion" that



includes all of us, including the "easily despised and the left out."

Since its inception, the Foundation has worked to do exactly that, by investing more than \$53.5 million to improve the lives of the poor and underserved in Stark and surrounding counties. More importantly, we have worked collaboratively with so many to widen the circle of compassion and to be inclusive of all."

For a full list of grants awarded, visit [LINK HERE](#).

The Sisters of Charity Foundation awards grants quarterly. Information on applying for funding is available at [www.scfcanton.org](http://www.scfcanton.org)

# *A Christmas Blessing*

At this beautiful time of year may your hearts and lives be warmed by the light of miracles, the light of hope, and the light of God's infinite love.

*Wishing all of you a blessed Christmas season,  
Sisters of Charity Foundation of Canton  
Board of Directors and Staff*



## **GRANT APPLICATION PROCESS WORKSHOP**

Participants will learn about our grantmaking strategies, proposal guidelines, and application process. Foundation staff members will be on hand to answer questions.

**Tuesday, April 11, 2017 9:00-10:30 a.m.**  
**First Floor Conference Room**  
**400 Market Avenue North, Canton, Ohio 44702**

To register, please contact Trudy Brown at 330-454-5800 or [tbrown@scfcanton.org](mailto:tbrown@scfcanton.org)



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400 Market Avenue North, Suite 300  
Canton, OH 44702