



# BOBCAT BEAT

January 2016

Volume 1 Issue 2

## Inside This Issue...

- Feature Story.....1**
- Student Spotlight.....2**
- From the Director's Desk.....2**
- Calling All Bobcat Campers.....3**
- Academic Clubs Successful at TRS-Beloit.....3**
- TRS-Beloit Student Art Show Planned at Beloit College.....4**

# Music Therapy

## Hums a Tune at West Allis this Semester

There is much to be excited about at TRS-West Allis this year. New collaborations have begun with Bethesda thrift store, the Hunger Task Force, MADAAC and the VA hospital to provide students with valuable job skills and community service opportunities.

TRS-West Allis is also in the process of creating a music therapy program, in conjunction with Alverno College. TRS is fortunate to be located near the only certified Music Therapy program in Wisconsin.

According to Alverno, music therapy involves “using music to promote positive changes in the psychological, social, physiological and physical functioning of the clients. Music therapy makes a difference for people with diagnosed mental health needs... cognitive and physical disabilities.”

According to a 2014 study by Geretsegger, M., Elefant, C., Mossler, K.A., & Gold, C. music therapy “may help children with ASD to improve their skills in primary outcome areas that

constitute the core of the condition including social interaction, verbal communication, initiating behavior, and social-emotional reciprocity.”

Alverno interns will soon begin visiting and becoming familiar with the students, with the official program launch targeted for early February.

The incorporation of music therapy into a student’s day furthers part of the mission and vision of TRS:

to provide optimal therapeutic intervention combined with individualized curriculum approaches, and to be the local educational provider of choice for students that require unique behavioral and educational approaches.

Alverno College will be an integral part of this program using over two decades of independent study, research and work within the field of music therapy.

*“Music is a therapy. It is a communication far more powerful than words, far more immediate, far more efficient.”*

*- Yehudi Menuhin*



The Richardson School



# Student *Spotlight*



## Our Mission

*The Richardson School is devoted to educating students with diagnoses of developmental/ neurological disabilities and behavioral or emotional issues that significantly interfere with their learning process and ability to learn in a more traditional educational setting.*

*The Richardson School individually tailors services to each child with an emphasis on re-integrating the child back to the home school setting as soon as possible.*

*The Richardson School strives to provide an optimal therapeutic environment, and therapeutic behavioral interventions in conjunction with highly individualized curriculum approaches.*

[RichardsonSchool.com](http://RichardsonSchool.com)



All students have special talents, skills and abilities that make them unique, and this High School student is no exception. Meet Michael, a determined and diligent artist that is passionate about animals, and creatively helping to change the landscape of the halls of TRS-Brookfield.

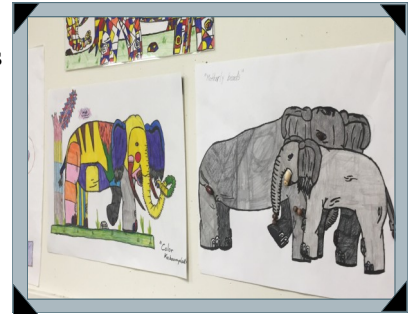
“It has been such a joy to see what Michael will create, and staff and students alike all enjoy viewing his inspiring works of art!” says Katherine Vandenberg, the TRS Art Therapist who works with Michael.

His favorite medium is drawing with colored pencils, and creates detailed and whimsical works of art from his imagination that are creative interpretations of his favorite animals. In addition to his art found throughout the school, Michael showcases a special selection in a room he has aptly titled “Elephant Valley,” a gallery displaying his collection of elephant-themed art.

Michael has even given personal tours to visitors at TRS.

“Everyone marvels at his creativity,” says Jessica Finlayson, the Admissions Coordinator, “It is a special tour when Michael is a part of it.”

Michael’s creativity continues to evolve as well. He is working on putting together a digital portfolio of his drawings, so that one day, he can use it when applying for creative work. There are also plans to create cards with his artwork that can be sold at the Bobcat Bistro, the coffee shop located inside TRS-Brookfield.



One day, Michael hopes to work both as a professional artist, and also in a zoo. The sky is the limit for this young man with awe-inspiring talent.

***“Autists are the ultimate square pegs, and the problem with pounding a square peg into a round hole is not that the hammering is hard work. It’s that you’re destroying the peg.”***  
**-Paul Collins**

## *From the Director's Desk...*

*Hello everyone, the cold has finally arrived! I hope everyone is out enjoying the season and winter events like ice skating, sledding, ice fishing and others that are unique to our region.*

*Looking back on the past few months since the last release of this note we have had many celebrations including our holiday plays and on-site winter activities. The stories from all of you make the reason for TRS existing even more important to us! Thank you*

*for trusting your children in our care.*

*Looking forward, there are many new developments on the horizon for our Original Location... TRS-West Allis. Our staff and maintenance department have been putting in overtime, focused on re-vamping the school in many new ways including programming improvements to physically modifying and upgrading the school. We are planning to host an Open House on March 1st*



*and 2nd to unveil all the new changes. Please check your calendars and call for a reserved personal tour timeslot!*

*We are really excited for everyone to see all the new, creative educational options being offered to your kids.*



**Has Bobcat Camp or TRS made a difference in your child's life? Tell us about it!**

*"My son has autism and is very reluctant to try new things. We were so nervous about dropping him off for his first day of camp! However, our fears were soon forgotten when we saw his huge smile leaving camp that first day. He got exactly what he needed from the competent and caring staff: fun community outings, interactions with peers, a sensory room and meaningful activities. We would've noticed immediately if he didn't enjoy himself or if he was scared. The opposite happened...he is still asking to go back! The daily communication from the staff was appreciated and so was their clear dedication to our most fragile children. Bobcat camp was an answer to my families prayers."*

[RichardsonSchool.com](http://RichardsonSchool.com)



# Calling All Bobcat Campers!

Registration is now open for spring and summer Bobcat Camp. Although it may seem far away, space is limited. Please reach out to your respective school (Beloit, Brookfield or West Allis) to discuss any dates you wish to reserve.

In 2015, TRS served more campers than all previous years. More growth is anticipated this summer, so campers at the West Allis and Brookfield locations will now only be able to schedule in one-week increments, instead of reserving individual days. While this may be an inconvenience for some, it is necessary in order to maintain the quality camp experience that TRS strives to provide.



TRS was excited to serve some new faces over winter break, and honored to receive this feedback from parents:

*"Oh my goodness we are feeling so fortunate and blessed for the opportunity for Addy to attend camp! It went so well! You have an amazing staff. I can't say enough about their patience, daily communication and the care and stimulation they provided each day...PLEASE tell everyone a huge heartfelt thank you from our family; we can't wait for spring and summer."* -Jessica K.



*"We just completed day 2 of camp and I cannot tell you how impressed I've been with you, your staff and your facility. This has been life-changing so far (I've gotten so much done!). I can't wait for next week and a continued relationship with your wonderful school. Merry Christmas!"* -Megan J.

**Go Bobcats!**

# Academic Clubs

are popular activities at The Richardson School-Beloit Campus



While academic clubs are a staple in the public school system, this option has not always been readily available to TRS students in the past—until recently.

Since this past fall, TRS-Beloit students have been taking advantage of new academic clubs, held during the school day that are within their areas of interest.



"As the student population has grown at TRS, it has created the ability to provide supplementary learning options for our children," says Craig Brimacombe, Day School Director at TRS-Beloit.

Staff believe the new student clubs developed for the 2015-16 school year provide augmented activities that enhance student academic

development while strengthening valuable social skills. Each child is encouraged to join a club that provides his or her greatest avenue for personal fulfillment and skills development, and will have the opportunity to join a different club each quarter.

Clubs offered include: Art, Book, Cooking, Fitness, Karaoke, Lego, Movie, Drama, and Photography Club. This spring, TRS-Beloit will offer Garden Club as an option with the help of a local master gardener.



# Student Art Show

## TRS students showcase their work at Beloit College

The Richardson School and Beloit College are collaboratively hosting an art show showcasing original artwork by students of The Richardson School in Beloit. The display opens Thursday, March 10 with a reception for the exhibition's artists, families, and the public from 6-7:30 p.m., held as part of the art show's opening night.

Against the backdrop of the Wright Museum of Art, 700 College Street in Beloit, more than 30 pieces of art from 23 artists will be displayed—all framed and illustrating participation by the therapeutic school's students.

The artwork, is done by artists who felt free to experiment through self-expression. The creative process involved helps students resolve issues while developing and managing behaviors and feelings, reducing stress, and improving self esteem and awareness. Art therapy essentially improves a person's physical, mental, and emotional well-being.

*Unearthing the Artist Within* is curated by Sasha Spataro, an art therapist at The Richardson School. "I wanted to help students find their artists within,"

describes Spataro, "and in the process, learn more about who they are."

The Richardson School is an alternative day school environment that stabilizes the child's behavior in a therapeutic setting while helping them to thrive academically. The art therapy program is one of several therapeutic programs offered at

The Richardson School to help its students become successful.

Those not able to see the exhibit on opening night can stop by during regular museum hours, Tuesday-Sunday from 11:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Artwork will be on display until March 15. The event is free, and there is no cost to visit the museum. For more information, contact The Richardson School at (608) 473-3244



### Upcoming Events

#### March 1 & 2

**West Allis Unveiling & Open House**  
8 a.m.—4 p.m. March 1  
10 a.m.—6 p.m. March 2

#### March 10

**Opening Reception TRS Beloit Student Art Show**  
Beloit College,  
Wright Museum of Art  
6-7:30 p.m.



### The Richardson School

175 S. Barker Rd.  
Brookfield, WI 53045



#### Beloit

321 Olympian Blvd.  
Beloit, WI 53511  
608.473.3244

#### Brookfield

175 S. Barker Rd.  
Brookfield, WI 53045  
262.468.0700

#### West Allis

6753 W. Rogers St.  
West Allis, WI 53219  
414.540.8500

[RichardsonSchool.com](http://RichardsonSchool.com)

