

FAMILY ACHIEVEMENT FOUNDATION

Building Community and Connection

Family Achievement Foundation

October 2026

Eighth Annual Move to Your Own Groove Raises Nearly $16,000 for Family Achievement Foundation

Family Achievement Center hosted its eighth annual Move to Your Own Groove All Abilities Run, Walk and Roll on Sunday, September 13, at Colby Lake Park in Woodbury. With more than 180 participants and the support of over 45 Family Achievement Center staff volunteers, the event was another wonderful celebration of inclusion, movement, and community.









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Families had the opportunity to visit a variety of community booths, including Family Achievement Foundation, Anna Elder Homes, Blooming Neuropsychology, and more. Participants of all abilities could take part in a 50-meter dash, 1K, and/or 5K route. The activity lawn offered additional fun with bubbles, temporary tattoos, and face painting. A heartfelt thank-you goes out to our 22 amazing sponsors, whose generosity helped make this event possible. Families also enjoyed connecting, playing, and spending time together at Family Achievement Foundation's Family Meetup in the park during and after the race.

Thanks to the incredible support of our participants, volunteers, sponsors, and community partners, the event raised nearly $16,000 to support Family Achievement Foundation's 2027 initiatives. Thank you to everyone who helped make this year's Move to Your Own Groove a memorable celebration of abilities, connection, and community!









Thank You Sponsors

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Families Enjoy Outdoor Play Meetup with HOPE Grove

A warm and wonderful fall day was enjoyed by all during Family Achievement Foundation's Free Family Meetup in partnership with HOPE Grove, LLC! Nine families joined us on Saturday, October 10. The sun was shining, and we couldn't have asked for better weather for an afternoon of outdoor fun and connection.
Families participated in a variety of fall-themed activities, including a nature walk scavenger hunt, bubbles, and making leaf crowns. There was also plenty of time for free play on the outdoor treehouse, swings, and climbing structures. The highlight of the afternoon was a fun hayride through the neighborhood!

HOPE Grove, LLC, located in Hudson, offers nature-based occupational therapy and free-play groups designed to encourage children's resilience, curiosity, and growth. We are so grateful for their partnership in making this special family event possible!

To learn more about HOPE Grove, LLC, visit www.hope-grove.com.













Journey Award Recipient

Andi

Congratulations to our most recent Journey Award recipient, Andi.

Andi was nominated by her mother, Robin, who wanted to recognize her daughter's journey as she navigates the challenges of raising two children with special needs and complex health conditions. Robin writes "Andi certainly never expected to have two kids, Philip and Sebastian, with significant health issues or care needs. She is a stay at home mom whose life centers around caring for her family. She simply loves her family and does her best for them. There are no simple answers to their problems, but she has grown in her ability to trust in God's provision for their needs in the moment, without thinking about what the future might hold.

I admire Andi's commitment, day after day, to caring for Philip and the rest of her family. This Journey Award mentions courage, resilience and determination...I think that for Andi, each day she lives those things in an exceptional way, not because she is a perfect "Pinterest" mom, but because she remains faithful and committed day after day doing things that aren't what she envisioned, things that are hard, and which require a lot of personal sacrifice."

Congratulations Andi and family.



The Journey Award

The Journey Award was created with the hope of touching a parent on a challenging journey. While they may not see what they are doing as special because they love their children, those around them see their caretaking, tireless advocacy, and unconditional love for their children. The individuals selected will receive a $500 check, a custom-made heart stone, and an award certificate explaining why they were nominated.

Nominate a deserving caregiver for our Journey Award at www.journeyaward.org



Board Member Testimonial

Richard Frieder, Learning RX

I have been a member of the Family Achievement Foundation Board of Directors for over 3 years now. My name is Richard Frieder, the owner of LearningRx. Our focus, similar to the Family Achievement Center, is working with individuals with learning struggles, various diagnosis and difficulties. Before joining the Family Achievement Foundation board, I consistently heard from clients we worked with about the Family Achievement Center and how helpful they were. It seemed the majority of those I interacted with at our Woodbury LearningRx center, had some connection to FAC in their past.

In seeking to learn more about FAC, I discovered that Sarah and Tom, founders of FAC and FAF, had a passion for helping families. I was forming a small group of business owners who shared a similar passion and asked Sarah if she would be interested. I was thrilled when she agreed!
In getting to know Sarah, I was incredibly impressed with her desire to help parents trying to navigate the difficulties of raising children with learning struggles, emotional difficulties and/or mental health challenges. Her own experience was a driver for this and was also the case for her husband and business partner, Tom.

When I was asked to join the board, I was excited to take part! Given our youngest daughter had struggled with several diagnosis, we knew firsthand how difficult and overwhelming it can be to navigate getting help and the emotions that come as a result.

The past 3 years have only deepened my admiration for Sarah and Tom and my fellow board members who are willingly giving their time and energy to build an organization that provides love, connections, and resources for families on a challenging journey (the Family Achievement Center Foundation's mission).

It has been encouraging to see the foundation's vision come to life through resources like:

- Events tailored to equip parents with practical information.
- A peer-to-peer family support program linking parents seeking help with parent mentors who offer support and guidance.
- An "About Me" tool which streamlines the process of getting key caregivers - like teachers - familiar with a child's needs.
- A parent/caregiver retreat that offers refreshment and encouragement.



The Family Achievement Foundation exists to help families on a challenging journey, and it has been a joy being part of it!



Navigating Your Child's IEP: A Caregiver's Guide to Advocacy and Empowerment

When your child qualifies for special education services, the Individualized Education Program (IEP) becomes a cornerstone of their academic and schooling journey. It's more than just a document—it's a roadmap tailored to your child's unique needs, strengths, and goals. But for many caregivers, the IEP process can feel overwhelming, confusing, and emotionally charged. Here are some tips to help you navigate it with confidence, clarity, and purpose.

Understanding the IEP: What It Is and Why It Matters

An Individualized Education Program (or IEP) is a written statement for a student with a disability that is developed, reviewed, and revised by a team of people, including the student's family, that outlines an educational plan for the student. An IEP is a legally binding plan developed by a team of educators, specialists, and you—the parent/caregiver. The IEP ensures your child receives a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Note: An IEP is different than a 504 as the accommodations provided by a 504 plan tend to be more generalized, whereas an IEP provides more specific individual supports and services.

It outlines:

- Present Level of Academic Achievement and Function Performance
- Specific goals for the year
- Special education services and supports
- Accommodations and modifications
- How progress will be measured

Preparing for the IEP Meeting

Preparation is key. Here's how to get ready:

- Review existing documents: Read through previous IEPs, evaluations, and progress reports.
- Know your rights: Familiarize yourself with IDEA and your state's special education laws.
- List your concerns and goals: What's working? What's not? What do you want to see change?
- Bring support: You can invite an advocate, therapist, or trusted friend to the meeting.

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Collaborating with the IEP Team
The IEP team typically includes:
• Your child's general and special education teachers
• A school psychologist or evaluator
• A district representative
• You (and your child, if appropriate)

Approach the meeting as a collaboration, not a confrontation. Ask questions like:
• "Can you explain how this goal was developed?"
• "What data supports this decision?"
• "How will this accommodation help my child in the classroom?"

Monitoring Progress and Staying Involved
IEPs aren't static. You should receive regular updates and be part of any changes. Stay engaged by:
• Attending parent-teacher conferences
• Requesting progress reports
• Communicating regularly with teachers
• Asking for reevaluations if needed
If you disagree with the IEP, you have options: mediation, due process hearings, or filing a complaint with your state's education agency.

Final Thoughts: You Are Your Child's Best Advocate
Navigating an IEP isn't just about paperwork—it's about partnership, persistence, and advocacy. Trust your instincts, ask questions, and remember: your voice matters. When parents are informed and empowered, children thrive.

Find out more by watching our free Resource Series on our YouTube Channel:
https://www.youtube.com/@FamilyAchievementFoundation



Thank you to our Board Member and Special Education teacher, Amanda, for presenting on this topic in August!



All About Me Profile

Introducing your child to new teachers and caregivers can be challenging for both the parents and the child. Every child has unique interests, strengths, and needs. Parents/caregivers often need a simple and effective way to communicate that information to their child's teacher at the start of the school year or a new PCA/babysitter anytime throughout the year. Family Achievement Foundation's All About Me profile can help make this easier for everyone involved!

An "All About Me" profile is a great way to introduce your child to their teacher(s), therapists, other caregivers and/or any other professionals that will be working with them. It can be used when your child enters a new grade, moves to a new school, or is preparing for a big transition. The document is a great summary of your child's needs, safety considerations and medical information.

This profile will allow you to drive the narrative for your child. It will include all the important things you think your child's team should know and is a great way to open the lines of communication between you and your child's team. This is a great tool for teachers and care providers to reference all year long! You can fill this out as the parent/caregiver or you and/or your child can fill out together.



Make your own "All About Me Profile" by visiting
https://familyachievementfoundation.org/resources/about-me-tool/

Upcoming Events

Free Family Movie Meetup
Toy Story 5

Saturday, November 14th
12:00 PM
Woodbury 10 Theater

Email info@familyachieve.org to register



FAMILY ACHIEVEMENT FOUNDATION'S MOVIE MEETUP IS AN INCLUSIVE, ACCESSIBLE EVENT! COME AS YOU ARE!

VISIT FAMILYACHIEVEMENTFOUNDATION.ORG/EVENTS TO SEE ALL UPCOMING EVENTS



Support Family Achievement Foundation on Give to the Max Day!

HELP US REACH OUR $5,000 GOAL TO FUND OUR 2027 INITIATIVES! DONATE TO FAMILY ACHIEVEMENT FOUNDATION THROUGHOUT THE MONTH OF NOVEMBER BY VISITING GIVEMN.ORG/ORGANIZATION/FAMILY-ACHIEVEMENT-FOUNDATION.

Join Family Achievement Foundation's online closed group for parents/caregivers on Facebook!

Follow Family Achievement Foundation on social media to stay updated!