

## KAP Information:

### The Kelly Autism Program

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## Featured Student

### Matthew DeRosa



#### All About Matthew

Written By: Robyn Fine

Matthew DeRosa joined the middle and high school program late last fall semester. He is 10 years old and in the 5th grade at Natcher Elementary. His hobbies are playing Runescape on the computer, creating new game ideas, and reading about animals. His favorite place to eat is McDonalds and his favorite food is a toss up between ice cream and pizza. We really enjoy having Matthew as a part of our boys' social group!

### *Upcoming Events:*

- March 23 3:30-5 Imagination Station- elementary particants
- March 24 St. Vincent DePaul Thrift Store- all participants
- March 30 Swimming- all participants

## Capital on the Hill

Written by: Sarah McMaine

Last Thursday, Sarah McMaine, Felicia Wells, Jonathan Beaty, and Dr. Boman traveled to Frankfort for Capital on the Hill. During their time there they were able to present a poster about KAP to members of the legislature. Also on this day a bill was being presented to support more funding for autism programs and education for teachers. The staff and Dr. Boman attended the meeting and found it to be very moving. The autism bill was the last one to be presented, but it had a very powerful effect on the members of the committee. Three mothers told their stories on their struggles with raising a child with autism and the relief this bill would provide for other families in similar situations.

Needless to say the bill was passed with an unanimous yes. As KAP staff we felt very privileged to be in the meeting and to see that our government really supports the need to provide services and education for those with autism, their families and other support staff.

Dr. Boman also was able to meet with Representative Scott Brinkman, the sponsor of the bill. He was excited as he stated that KAP has started many of the activities that he was intending to accomplish with the bill. He also was informed regarding the new Autism Spectrum Disorders certificate that will be available at Western Kentucky University starting this fall. After the KAP space is finished, he wants to come to Bowling Green to see the program. This will have an impact on KAP!

## Director's Desk

Written by: Dr. Marty Boman

February was truly been a great month for the autism community statewide! First of all, Representative Scott Brinkman's HB 109, an act providing money for individuals with autism spectrum disorders for various services passed through the House Standing Committee on Thursday, February 15. KAP families and staff were present for this occasion.

Secondly, the Autism Spectrum Disorders Certificate Program passed through the Western Kentucky University Senate, its final hurdle as it became a reality. This program will be the first of its kind in Kentucky, and will support WKU and KAP as we become a national model. The program is designed for educational professionals or families members who have earned a Master's degree, and will consist of five courses. The hope is that the Speech Disorders and Psychology departments will create more courses before the program advances to the Kentucky Education Standards Board for approval. Upon completion of the certificate program, we will have leaders in the field, who will work as consultants to assure that research base strategies are implemented for these individuals.

At KAP, all programs continue to grow; this is particularly true for the elementary and college programs. The collaboration effort between the Speech Clinic and KAP is progressing smoothly.

On a final note, the completion of the 4,000 square feet KAP space at the CEC building has begun!! The hope is to have all programs located in one area by May. Everyone is looking forward to this great accomplishment. This truly was a great month for everyone!



**Taylor Haney (participant) and Travis Dukes (staff) creating new music.**

## Psychology Intern

**Christy Weller**



My name is Christy Weller and I am a senior here at Western Kentucky University. I am originally from the Northern Kentucky/Greater Cincinnati area. I am majoring in Psychology with a minor in English. After four great years, I will be graduating in May. I plan to continue my education in mental health counseling. I am working at the Kelly Autism Program this semester for my field placement class. I will be on site about eight hours a week. Each week I make observations or reflect back on activities I participated in at KAP, connect them to a theory or concept I have learned about in a previous psychology class, and then compose these reflections into a paper for my class. So far, I am really enjoying working with the excellent KAP staff and getting to know some great kids! It is proving to be an excellent learning experience for me and I am looking forward to the rest of this semester and my placement at KAP.

## Music Therapy

Written by: Dr. Boman

Music therapy helps individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders, and the KAP staff is seeing some changes already. Staff member Travis Dukes is teaching Taylor Haney how to play the guitar. This process has really made a difference with Taylor's attitude and behavior.

Music therapy is really a good way to communicate with individuals, and helps them to express themselves. It also can assist individuals with transitions and relaxing. As KAP moves to the CEC, there will be more opportunities as we have received a baby grand piano and other musical instruments to develop the program further. This will be exciting as we might have another music prodigy in the making soon.



# College Program

Written By: Sarah McMaine

After semester break our college program gained two new students. The program has outgrown the study room at DUC and three of the participants now attend study tables at the new CEC. These participants like the new CEC and especially the availability of the computers. They also like that the atmosphere is laid back and that there is a lot of room to spread out.

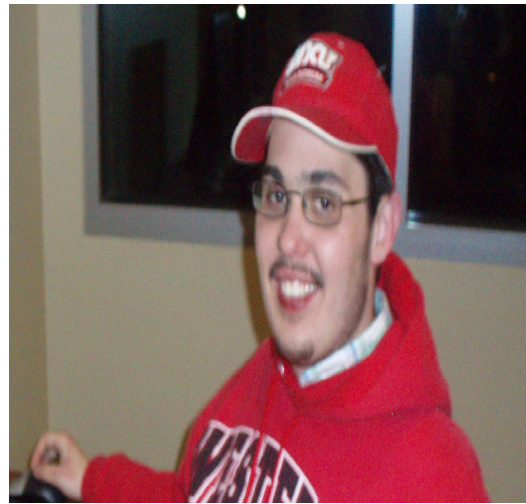
These participants are taking part in a study skills group through Dr. Pam Petty in the Literacy Department. They have weekly sessions on reading strategies, study skills and organization. These sessions take place during study tables and they will receive gift certificates from the Dollar General Grant.



**Above, Richard Noble (participant) with Avish Nagpal (staff) studying for a test. Below, BC McCandless, another new college student who transferred from Glasgow campus.**



**Above, Dinesh Sharma (staff) and Tahir Poroy (participant). Below, Holly Conley (staff) works with two elementary participants.**



## Elementary Program

Written by: Sarah McMaine

Wow, has the elementary program really taken off this semester! Already it has grown by five children and every week more intake packets are being sent to families. We have just finished our unit on “All about Me” and both the participants and staff really learned a lot about each other. It was exciting to see the participants understand that they had a lot in common and friendships are beginning to form. Something else great and new about our program is the collaboration with the speech department. The speech students now spend time in the classroom and work on speech goals as a group. After talking with several of the speech students, they all agreed it was a better setting for the participants and it allowed them to work on social skills with peers their own age. The Communication Disorder students have been great and are really diving into our program.

This Friday will be our first social and our students have really taken an active roll in planning the event. Also in the near future will be our trip to Imagination Station, as they are close to earning one hundred chips! I know that participants and KAP staff are really looking forward to both of these events.





**Cancellations: If participants are unable to attend their scheduled session, please call the KAP office as soon as possible so staff can be notified.**

## **Middle School Boys Group**

Written by: Travis Dukes and Jonathan Beaty

For the past month, the middle school boys' group has enjoyed various events such as Mexican Day, Uno Day, and model train week. On Mexican Day, the children began by making Maracas. The participants took two large Easter eggs and filled one with uncooked rice and the other with uncooked popcorn kernels. Each has their own unique sound. Everyone enjoyed making music, and some even danced with their new instruments. Continuing with the theme of Mexican Day, everyone went to the kitchen in Jones Jagers and prepared quesadillas. We used chicken, cheese, salsa, and tortilla shells. Some of the children were somewhat timid regarding eating them at first, but many decided to try the new food. Even though some participants did not like the quesadillas, they were introduced to a new experience. While preparing the food, the children worked on proper table manners such as: not putting your elbows on the table, keeping your feet on the floor, putting your napkin in your lap before eating, and using words such as "please" and "thank you."

Uno Day was probably one of the most successful days thus far. The participants engaged in group play and socialization. They learned about helping each other when someone did not understand how to play a particular game. They also enjoyed snacks and received prizes for winning the games.

One of our favorite events that we have completed this semester was the construction of a model train track. The participants put the train track together, then they added the train. Houses that the students personalized were added to create a village. These buildings included a fire station, a hospital, a hotel, a haunted house, a house with a dog, and a restaurant. We are thoroughly enjoying working with your children and are enjoying the progress they are making both academically and socially. We thank you for allowing us this opportunity to work and make friends with your children.



**Above, Clay Hall (participant) and his friend, Alex, at High School Boys Night. Below, Holly Conley (staff) works with elementary participants on crafts.**



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## **Scholarships and Charitable Giving**

As always, we ask that everyone remember KAP and the benefits that are being brought to the community. KAP has an endowment fund or consider us in estate planning and other forms of giving. KAP can also grow through your effort of time, talent, and treasure.

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