



Winter 2024

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Students Learning on Campus

Issue #1

Foundation for Success

by Alex Argüello
Head of Community Engagement

At TSBVI, we strive to help our students develop a comprehensive tool kit of independent living skills which allow our students to thrive at home and in the workplace. This month in furtherance of this goal, special guest, Valerie Alvarez, from the Criss Cole Rehabilitation Center, taught a makeup tutorial, sponsored by Estée Lauder, to High School and EXIT students. Dori Senatori, TSBVI Day Student Coordinator, organized the training and secured makeup donations from Estée Lauder, so that each student could receive their own cosmetic bag filled with top quality products.

For many students in the class, this was the first time they had ever applied their own makeup. Students often



Student twisting open a bottle of mascara



Student practicing a technique to apply eyeshadow

have lots of experience having makeup applied to them by their parents, but they do not know what it feels like to apply their own makeup. Before any makeup was applied, there was discussion about the classroom being a safe space to learn new things with their classmates. Applying makeup without sight requires students to learn a step by step process and to practice over and over again until it becomes second nature to their hands and fingers.

The first step involves exploring their makeup bag and learning how to open the various packages. Students then learn a system for organizing the makeup in their bag so that it can be found when needed. The students then felt the various brushes, sponges, and makeup applicators.

Foundation for Success

Continued

Ms. Alvarez, who is blind, shared time tested techniques to apply foundation, mascara, eyeliner, and lipstick. In addition to the instruction provided by Ms. Alvarez, the students also learned how to use a mobile application developed by Estée Lauder. This app uses AI and facial recognition to give auditory instructions to help guide the user through the process of applying makeup.

Although this was an introductory course, it laid the foundation for future discussions about style choices for hair, makeup, clothing, and other facets of creating a personal style. While this class was a first step to empowering our students to learn how to apply makeup, wearing makeup is a personal choice, and now these students have the skills to make that choice.

"It's important that our students learn that they can apply makeup by themselves."

**Dori Senatori, TSBVI Day
Student Coordinator**



Ms. Alvarez speaking with a student about how to apply makeup

Students Make “Energy Bites”

by Alex Argüello, Head of Community Engagement

Learning how to make healthy food from scratch is a critical independent living skill. EXIT Teacher, Paula Willson, highlights this lesson by inviting Nutritionist, June Holder, to her class for a discussion and demonstration on how to make a healthy snack.

Ms. Holder starts the discussion by passing around a tactile plate which shows the various portions of vegetables, proteins, fruits, and grains recommended when preparing a meal. This prompts a discussion about how the body processes food and why different foods cause your energy level to rise and fall. During the lull in energy, which typically occurs 2 hours after a meal, Ms. Holder recommends her favorite snack recipe which she calls “energy bites”. The ingredients in this snack are easily digested and raise your energy level.

To create the bites, the students mix various portions of salt, almond butter, oats, honey, and dried cranberries in a bowl. Then they scoop ping-pong

Student mixing a healthy snack



sized portions and rolled them into “energy bites”. The students have a great time making the bites but have an even better time eating their new healthy snacks. Try making them at home!

No-Bake Energy Bites (portions to personal taste)

- old fashioned rolled oats
- sunbutter or almond butter
- sliced almonds
- dried cranberries
- honey
- salt

Student rolling an “energy bite” with her hands



Nutritionist, holding a plate with food portion areas displayed

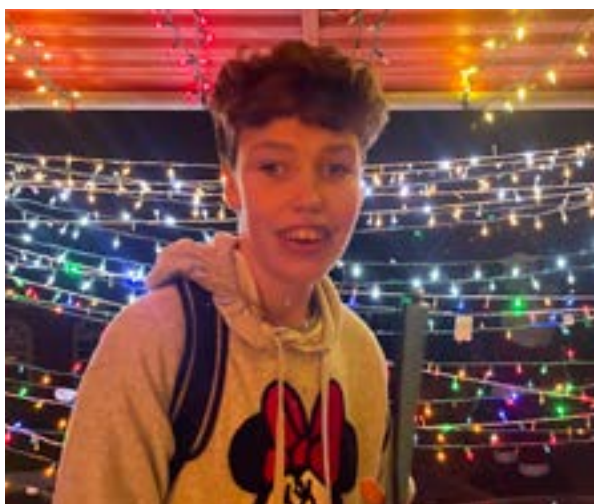
Braille of Lights

by Alex Argüello

Head of Community Engagement



Student explores different tactile decorations on a peg board



Student surrounded by twinkling lights

Making the holiday season come to life for our students requires a lot of creativity and craft. In what has now become a holiday tradition, creatives in the Residential Department reimagined Austin's iconic "Trail of Lights" into a sensory rich experience filled with tactual, olfactory, and auditory cues called the "Braille of Lights".

The 2nd annual "Braille of Lights" features stuffed reindeer, giant candy canes, and the smell of pine cone scented ornaments. The tricycle track carport is adorned with Christmas lights, garland, and themed items for students to touch.

Students hear holiday themed music playing in the background to create a fully immersive experience. As students walk the trail, they can also explore various peg boards with curiosity items in various shapes and sizes. The students can also press on large buttons to activate prerecorded songs or surprise messages. For the grand finale, students can visit with Santa and have their picture taken.

This event is a team effort and is a great way to cap off a wonderful semester of learning. The Residential Department loves creating meaningful experiences for the students and wishes you a happy holiday!

Braille of Lights

Student and teacher pushing an orange button



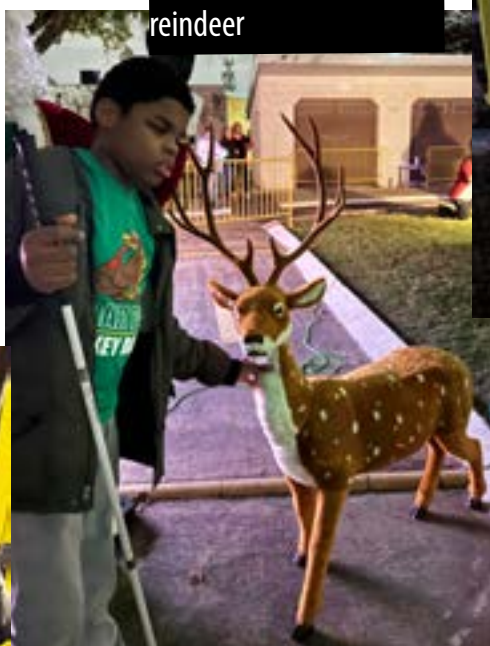
Student touching lights



Student touching various ornaments on a pegboard



Student petting a stuffed reindeer



Student sitting next to Santa



Student hitting a drum

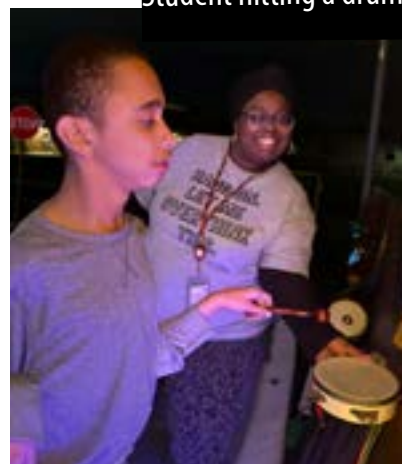


Photo Booth

Student wearing an elf hat playing the vihuela



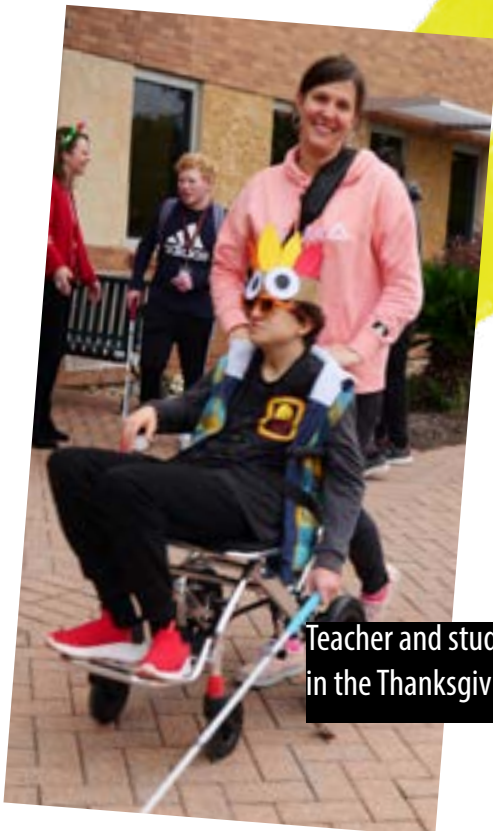
Student and teacher stroll around the track at the Jingle Bell Run



Dori Senatori assisting two students with their makeup




Teacher and student participating in the Thanksgiving parade



Students playing the guitar at The Big Show



A young man with red hair is playing an acoustic guitar and singing. He is wearing a dark blue long-sleeved shirt and grey pants. The guitar has a sunburst finish and a black pickguard. The strap is black with white text that says "PRESLEY". The background is a light-colored wall with a green bench.

Student playing the guitar

Alex Argüello, Editor and Head of
Community Engagement:

Paula Willson, Itza Perez, Photo
Contributions

Wildcat Times is a publication of the
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Impaired. It's purpose is to inform
parents about the many exciting
activities on campus and to spur
conversations between parents and
students.

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