Spring 2021

Leap of Faith Learning

Believing in Every Child's Potential

Good News!

With a seemingly never-ending pandemic hanging around, businesses fighting to survive, families struggling financially AND emotionally and a media and political environment dividing Americans, good news is sometimes hard to find.

Not so at Leap of Faith Learning! Let me just highlight a few of those good news stories:

- Many non-profits have struggled in this COVID era, but God has blessed LOFL with ALL of our champions standing with our families while adding over a dozen new supporters. Proof once again, **God doesn't provide a mission without the means!**
- This generosity has allowed us to add **5 new enrollment openings** to start 2021…all of which have already been filled. This brings the total we are serving to 47 students and their families. Check out just some of our incredible students on the following pages…"Beautiful Faces, Unlimited Potential".
- Our weekly **Bible study and support group continues to grow** with the addition of 2 new parents to start the year. We are living life together and overcoming our challenges by approaching them through the lens of Scripture. The support is irreplaceable and as one mom put it, "I don't know what I'd do without this group."
- Emerging from a challenging year, we were able to **add a dynamic new Director of Support Services**, Tia, to our team who is already having a significant impact on our families.
- We are continuing to provide a **comprehensive array of critical services** including assessment, advocacy, tutoring and therapies for our children and their families. For some of the details, check out "What's New" on the next page.

All thanks go to God and the army of faithful ministers He's brought to us including our supporters, board of directors, staff, volunteers and prayer warriors. Thank you!

While this newsletter is filled with good news, the ultimate good news comes from God. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. *John 3:16*

For me, my family and many of our LOFL families who have put their faith in Jesus, this is the promise that has gotten us through countless challenges and dark times. While our entire team at LOFL wishes all our families could experience the peace and joy that come with a relationship with Jesus, we provide support to every child regardless of their beliefs.

This summer, we are starting a casual get together for all our parents called, "Good News Stories". My wife, Eileen, and I will be sharing the amazing stories of how God lifted our family out of the deepest valleys as we were ill-prepared to raise a daughter with special needs. But through countless leaps of faith, we moved forward clinging to Jesus' promise "…I am with you always, to the end of the age." Through two occasions when we thought we were going to lose our daughter and the daily challenges of dealing with medical, academic and basic life issues, God was there in amazing ways, giving us hope.

A hope that can never be shattered and a promise that will never be broken. Now THAT is really GOOD NEWS!

Ron Vachon-Vierra

Kaelob, our Facilities Associate, is hard at work every week keeping our facility and grounds…"clean and green." As part of our work study program, Kaelob is learning important employment skills and earning a paycheck for the first time. While he enjoys working in the learning center cleaning, shredding documents, organizing our library and working on our mass mailings, nothing compares to using power tools. Teenagers and power tools…what can we say!

Leap of Faith Learning

Introducing Tia

TIA MARQUIS

Please join us in welcoming our new Director of Support Services, Tia Marquis. Tia has been working in education for over 10 years.

She has a bachelor's degree in elementary education, a master's in special education with an emphasis on deaf and hard of hearing and a special education certificate in mild to moderate incidences.

Tia has taught at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. She has been a general education and special education teacher along with being a Teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and as an Early Intervention Teacher/Coach for families with children who have hearing loss.

Tia has worked in various public and charter schools in the Verde Valley and across northern Arizona. She is conversationally proficient in American Sign Language.

Tia has been married to her husband, Sam, for over 17 years. They have an amazing daughter, Sydney, who is 12 years old and a middle school student with special needs.

She has a passionate love for Christ and enjoys deepening her relationship with Him. She loves engaging in fellowship and sharing her walk with others.

Tia's education, expertise and passion for families and children with special needs make her a valuable addition to our Leap of Faith Learning family.

What's New

As we move forward into 2021, we have lots of exciting news to share, so let's get to it!

Teen Club and Tutoring

We are happy to announce the return of two of our previously loved programs: Teen Club and Tutoring. Teen Club has already returned to Wednesdays at the LOFL Center. Ms. Renee and Ms. Ann have been hosting and organizing this group for a few weeks now and things are off to a great restart. Everyone involved is having a fantastic time being back together and building relationships. Yippie! Our Tutoring program will finally be starting in the next few weeks. Ms. Laura is excited to return and begin supporting our learners after a difficult year. Tutoring will start on an individual basis and we hope to expand this program through the summer months.

IEP Training and Picnic

Our families are ready for interaction and fun! We have several spectacular events coming up. Back by popular demand is an IEP training led by Dr. Susan Marks. This training is filled with tons of helpful information and will be held in early April at Verde Christian Academy. This program is open to the community so all parents can learn how to work with their child's school to develop appropriate educational programs to unlock their child's potential. We will also be hosting additional trainings in the fall, but let's not get ahead of ourselves! Next, is our Spring Picnic, woo hoo! We are planning on having this fantastic event in mid-May at Verde Park. There will be lots of food and fun to be had by all. We really miss getting all of our families together.

LOFL Summer Camp

This summer LOFL is planning a Summer Camp in June to be held on our campus. There will be engaging activities such as bouncing, playing, climbing and more! We'll have arts and crafts stations as well as chances to share some love with gentle animals like Duncan the donkey and Paisley the very affectionate pig. We love to create opportunities for people to get together. We would like to see some previous groups get rejuvenated like our homeschool group, park days, and mom's coffee.

New Therapy Opportunities

The excitement never stops as we have some new therapeutic opportunities heading our way. We found two new providers for equine therapy (hippotherapy). Serenity Therapeutics located in Cottonwood, AZ and Stable Foundations Therapy located in Flagstaff, AZ. Both organizations are eager to provide therapeutic support to our children who need it. Through experienced therapists, these horses provide our children with sensory integration, core strengthening, confidence building and lots of fun.

SuperKids

It's a bird...it's a plane, no, it's SuperKids! SuperKids is up and running and fully functional at Verde Community Church. The children's ministry is available at the 9:30 am service and enables all our kids to become Super Kids!

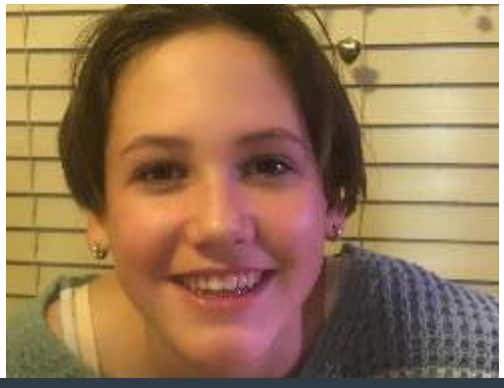
Tips and Tricks

Lastly, I am thrilled to share with you the start of a new monthly "Tips and Tricks" email that I will be sending out to our parents. "Tips and Tricks'' will help provide parents with useful information for navigating their child's special education journey. In addition to this email, I am thrilled to be the "go-to" person when our parents have questions or concerns regarding their child's education, are looking for resources, or just need some support. Most importantly, I want our families to know...I am here for you!

I want to thank everyone for being a part of LOFL's family as we navigate this journey together. Let's get ready for some fun!

Tia

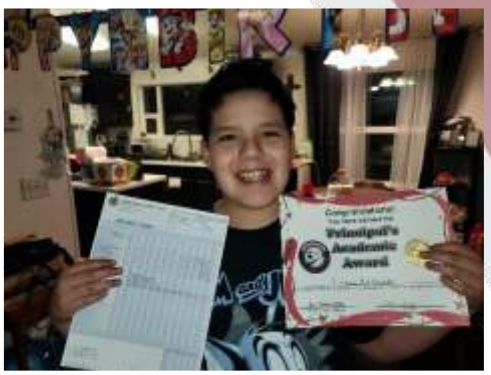
Beautiful Faces... *Unlimited potential!*



Cindy's Legacy

Congratulations to Logan for getting straight A's and receiving the Principal's Academic Award last semester! Logan is such a smart young man and nobody knew that more than his parents, Cindy and Daniel.

While Cindy passed away in June, her legacy lives on through her sons. Cindy was a relentless advocate for her son and fought for over a year, together with Daniel, to have Logan placed in an appropriate program to unleash his potential. With our help, she relentlessly pursued a program with the supports he needed to succeed.



Today, Logan likes school again, is excelling in all his subjects and on his way to becoming an independent young man. **What a legacy!**

Giving the **Gift of Hope**

3 Ways to Help our Children Unlock their God-Given Potential:

#1 Donate to LOFL Directly

If you'd like to impact families who have children with special needs, please prayerfully consider a monthly recurring gift or send a one-time donation.

Donate online at:
www.leapoffaithlearning.org

Or mail a check to:
Leap of Faith Learning
P.O. Box 3898, Cottonwood, AZ 86326

To be permanently inscribed on our Wall of Hope, please ask for a brochure.

#2 Amazon Smile

You can link your Amazon account to Leap of Faith Learning. Every time you shop, Amazon will donate the equivalent of .5% of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to LOFL. Go to www.smile.amazon.com and sign into your account; select "Leap of Faith Learning" as your preferred charity. Our organization number is: 36-4781904. **Most importantly, ask your family and friends to designate LOFL as well!**

#3 Fry's VIP Card

You can link your VIP card to Leap of Faith Learning. Every time you shop, Fry's will donate the equivalent of .5% of your grocery purchases to LOFL. Go to: www.frysfood.com/i/community/community-rewards and follow the simple steps. Select "Leap of Faith Learning" as your charity or use our organization number: LU688. **Please ask your friends and family to do the same.**

Thank You

TO ALL WHO MINISTER TO OUR FAMILIES

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