



# Up Beat

Kids On The Go: “Where Fun is Therapeutic”

## Class Offerings Throughout Year

KOTG is now providing experiences beyond summer camp

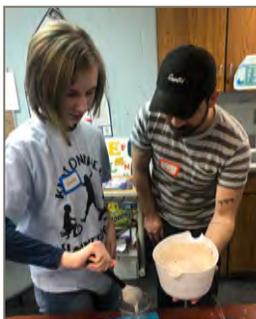


In the 22nd year of Kids On The Go the focus isn't just on summer camp anymore. With new funding opportunities and community partners, classes are being offered throughout the year.

“The year-round offerings are so important to our kids,” parent Kendra Dodson said, noting her 14-year-old son Asher has attended for almost 10 years. “Asher’s favorite thing about Kids On The Go is the sports and his friendships he has built over the years. Each week it gives him something to look forward to outside of just school. Think for a moment about all of our typical kids and who they are friends with. It is usually through sports, music, a school play or another school group. The same is true for these children in KOTG. We want them to keep those connections throughout the year.”



In the fall, students participated in a Fall Fitness class. In December, Kids On The Go teens celebrated the new year with a party planned by one of their peers. Right now, students are learning to create in the kitchen with the Cooking Around the World class. This spring, a Better Letters class will be offered in conjunction with Gigi’s Playhouse.



Seventeen-year-old Jack Potter planned the first KOTG New Year’s Eve teen party to give his friends something fun to do to ring in 2020. It started as an idea and morphed into a full party-planning task, Potter’s mother, Amy Potter said. “It was a great motivator. He did a lot of planning,” she said. “It motivated him to help others. He found a little niche—he likes to party plan.”

The opportunity was organic, Amy Potter said, explaining it was a natural opportunity that arose and involved practice of many skills including pragmatics, articulation, planning, organizing, etc. Jack said he enjoyed working on the decorations the most and the party included a secret Santa exchange. It was at Pare Non-Profit Center where KOTG is housed.



### Local Author Shares His Story, Life Challenges



JT Mestdagh presented this winter about his book, *Untether*, in conjunction with KOTG and The Family Center. His book shares his journey dealing with a lifelong serious medical condition, severe dyslexia and learning differences, how he persevered and is thriving. His goal is to encourage others who may be facing challenging circumstances to not give up. He has also started a non-profit to support other non-profits.

### Ways to Support KOTG Everyday!

**Amazon Smile:** <https://smile.amazon.com>

**Kroger Rewards:** [www.krogercommunityrewards.com](http://www.krogercommunityrewards.com). Rewards Number: 90659.

**Cloverleaf Pizza:** 2nd Monday of each month 10% of sales given back to Kids On The Go.

**CARS:** [www.careasy.org/nonprofit/kids-on-the-go](http://www.careasy.org/nonprofit/kids-on-the-go) or 855-500-RIDE

**We Are Here Foundation:** 586-615-9247

**Mother Waddles:** [motherwaddles.org/313-WADDLES](http://motherwaddles.org/313-WADDLES)

### MISSION

To recognize and facilitate the goals of children with special needs and to further develop their current skills through therapeutic and wellness programs for children and their families.

### VISION

To provide a safe environment that will foster opportunities for growth, inclusion and provides valuable resources for our community.

## SPONSOR SPOTLIGHT: UNITED SHORE



Pontiac-based United Shore is all about investing in people so partnering with Kids On The Go is a continuation of that focus, Community Relations Specialist Whitney Leverett said.

United Shore gives back to the community through its Pay It Forward platform. Employees earn points quarterly and at the end, the money raised through the points is donated. Kids On The Go was a recipient the last two years, most recently receiving nearly \$2,000.



Additionally, they created a dream-come-true kind of day for KOTG camper Micheal.

Battling cancer at the time, Michael spent the day at United Shore, enjoyed a round of basketball with former Detroit Piston Mateen Cleaves and MSU Spartans Chris Hill, Adam Wolfe and Antonio Smith. Plus he had lunch with United Shore CEO Mat Ishiba. They also gifted Michael a basketball signed by MSU Spartan legends.

United Shore is also helping KOTG bring an All Star Hoops practices to their campus this summer.

## Who We Help: The Dall Family

This summer will be Jacob Dall's fourth at Kids On The Go. He's already looking forward to both the Teens to Work and social programs he participates in, his mother Carolyn Dall said.

Jacob, 18, is a student at North High School in Grosse Pointe Woods. He has a diagnosis of autism and cognitive impairment.

His mother is appreciative that as a teenager, her son has social and active opportunities through Kids On The Go. "There's not a lot for teens," she said, noting initially Jacob was diagnosed with a language delay before he was 3 years old.

"Jacob loves the Teens at Work," Carolyn Dall said, complimenting Founder and Executive Director Kristy Schena for her dedication and determination to continually build more opportunities. "It's a fully encompassing program..."

Jacob will be volunteering at KOTG non-profit center this summer.



## GRANT ALERTS

- ❖ Kids On The Go recently reapplied for the **Ralph Wilson Legacy Grant**. A \$20,000 grant awarded last summer funded 8 Fun & Fitness programs from June 2019 - May 2020 including: Bike Riding, Friendship Cheer, All Star Hoops Camp, Little Sluggers, Tennis, First Tee Golf, All Star Flag Football, and SOMIFit.
- ❖ Kids On The Go also received a \$2,500 grant from **Wawos** for adaptive and recreational programs. Wawos is a non-profit that aims to help children with cerebral palsy and neuromuscular delays.



## NEW BOARD MEMBER: DIANA MOAK

Estate-planning attorney and special education mediator Diana Moak is the newest Kids On The Go board member. Moak is excited to become more involved and supportive of the organization.

"I love what they do. I love that everything is free," Moak said of Kids On The Go. "Kristy was so forward-thinking (in creating KOTG). I really appreciate the offering to the community."

Moak lives in Sylvan Lake with her husband. She has two children now in their early 20s. With her children grown, Moak is happy to get more involved in supporting community organizations like Kids On The Go. One of her children dealt with a learning disability, which is part of where her appreciation for the non-profit stems.

In her spare time, Moak enjoys boating and sailing. She also leads an all-abilities inclusion ministry at her church and is involved with Gigi's Playhouse Detroit and has helped with coordinating the connection between that and KOTG.

## KIDS ON THE GO

“Where Fun is  
Therapeutic”

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Tony Shereda, Chair  
Sarah George, Vice  
Chair  
Kendra Dodson,  
Treasurer  
Carly Hickey, COTAL,  
Secretary

### MEMBERS

Deborah George  
René Hansemann  
Patricia Ilitch  
Laura Marcero  
Diana Moak  
Christy Petroff, M.D.  
Regan Wright

### HONORARY MEMBERS

Russ Agosta  
Darien Harris  
Tim Hudson  
Anthony Ianni  
Hon. Ted Metry  
Robert Rahaim  
Robert Takla, M.D.  
Celia Wade  
Jeff Laethem  
Lia Mansfield

Kristy Piana Schena,  
Executive Director/  
Founder

### STAFF SPOTLIGHT:

#### KATIE SCHERVISH, M.A. ECDD

During the school year, Katie Schervish teaches toddlers and preschoolers with developmental delays in Rochester Community Schools.

This summer will be her second with Kids On The Go. She leads the Students Helping Students Literacy program, which helps children ages 5–8 maintain skills they targeted during the school year using literacy-based strategies.

“Literacy is a big focus in my classroom. A huge focus,” Schervish said, explaining the natural fit for the KOTG class. She incorporates age-appropriate books with many supported literacy materials to enhance the children’s comprehension and practice their targeted skills. Working with young children is her area of passion.

Funded by the Kirt Foundation, the Students Helping Students Literacy Program is offered at the Rochester location of Kids On The Go.



### COMMUNITY PARTNER

#### JOHNSTONE & JOHNSTONE



A soup-tasting on Giving Tuesday yielded about \$3,600 for Kids On The Go last fall thanks to the efforts of the Grosse Pointe Farms Johnstone &

Johnstone real estate office.

The branch manager had previously held smaller fundraising efforts for Kids On The Go and when it came time for all of the agents to vote on the recipient of the branch’s bigger event in 2019, they all choose Kids On The Go, Realtor Donna O’Keefe said. “We see a need for the summer services and we like to support locally.”



Participation in the soup-tasting was a \$5 minimum donation but the average was closer to \$20, O’Keefe said. Real Estate One—the parent company—matched the funds 100%, doubling the money raised in the local branch.



#### Honorary Board Member Named Darien Harris

Former NFL  
linebacker and  
newest MSU football  
coaching staff member Darien Harris will compete in Dancing with the Michigan Stars to raise funds for Kids On The Go.

Harris, who first became involved with KOTG through his friendships with Taiwan Jones & Anthony Ianni, was to be on the board of directors but his new job has potential to pull him away. He’d rather not miss meetings but he still wants to be involved as much as he’s able by attending events and supporting the non-profit, he said.

He’s enjoyed his experience at camp so far. “I love the kids. They teach you so much about life,” he said. “It’s great to make an impact.”

Harris helped with flag football, some with basketball and with movement based exercise last summer. He also attended the New Year Eve party planned by a KOTG teen and helped with the fundraising gala.

Kids On The Go  
Kristy Schena  
23500 Pare St., #10  
St. Clair Shores, MI 48080  
[www.kidsonthegocamp.com](http://www.kidsonthegocamp.com)

## Kids On The Go

As a non-profit pediatric program designed to provide special needs children (3-17 years) with physical, occupational, speech and recreational therapies at no cost to the child's family. A program like this is rarely covered medical benefit and often too costly for private payment. Because of the generosity of our sponsors, Kids On The Go has provided more than 3,000 scholarships to children in the tri-county area. Your tax deductible donation can be made in Honor or in Memory of someone. Donations should be made payable to Kids On The Go and mailed to: Kids On The Go, 23500 Pare St., #10, St. Clair Shores, MI 48080 OR can be made on our website at: [www.kidsonthegocamp.com](http://www.kidsonthegocamp.com).

## Newsletter Now Online Too!

Read quarterly updates & highlights

Kids On The Go publishes a quarterly newsletter highlighting upcoming events, class offerings, employees, sponsors, volunteers and more. The newsletter has traditionally been mailed but it's now available online. Visit [www.kidsonthegocamp.com](http://www.kidsonthegocamp.com) to see the most recent newsletter.

DOWNLOAD the latest Kids On The Go newsletter!

## Donate Today!

Donations are tax deductible

Consider donating to Kids On The Go to help support the many programs the nonprofit. Monies received directly benefit a child in the tri-county area and allow for therapy services to be provided year-round free of charge to the families. Donations are tax-deductible as Kids On The Go is a charity organization. Donations can be made online: <https://www.kidsonthegocamp.com/>

