

Dear Xceptional Heroes family:

As our 3rd year draws to a close, it is a perfect time to reflect on all that we have experienced together! The concept of XH was “born” in 2015, and after a brief hiatus, here we are! At the conclusion of 2022, our membership was 536 members; as we write this note today, we are pleased to claim just under 1000! We continue to grow every day and every new Hero that joins our family is a blessing to us! XH continues to fill a necessary social and recreational gap that has been eliminated by many therapeutic services and we are so honored to have our resources in place for those who need us!

A quick recap of all the fun and exciting things we have done together over this past year:

- Bowling, Bingo, Gym Night
- Monthly Birthday celebrations
- Our hugely successful monthly Social Hour where we dance, karaoke & socialize
- Monthly cooking classes
- Weekly walking club, led by Tamara Schlosser
- Numerous outdoor activities at Rust Park, Physician’s Park, For-Mar & more
- Huge turnout for Lois Craig Invitational Run/Walk
- Flint Firebirds hockey games
- Monthly Lunch and Matinee gatherings
- Open Swim with GB Parks & Rec
- Laser Tag and roller-skating lessons/Open Skate at Rollhaven
- Defy Trampoline Park
- Heroes getting their “Ninja” on at Tri-County Ninja
- Many opportunities for public dining, movie matinees, promoting community inclusion
- Fitness Class remains a huge success with growing attendance every week
- Yoga
- Crafting activities; including creating our own, gorgeous holiday party center pieces.
- Parent University
- Several large functions such as cookouts, beach parties at Heron Beach our Harvest Party, field trip to Wilderness Trails and Alpine Mountain Golf, etc.
- Great Lakes Loons game
- Monthly dance classes with Holly Hallibicki

- XH was gifted 25 passes to attend Christmas Clash, sponsored by Pure Pro Wrestling
- Our wildly successful Holiday Party

Some noteworthy accomplishments and achievements we reached throughout the year are:

- XH excitedly and gratefully expanded our board of directors by adding Kelley Smith, who provides oversight for our XH North operations.
- XH has also arrived at contractual agreements with Christopher Cassidy to act as our Activities Director, Angel Hall as our Marketing Manager, and Shelby Mottin as our Digital/Social Media Director.
- XH received a \$15,000 grant from Community Foundation of Greater Flint in order to support our continued mission
- XH also received very generous charitable donations from Freedom For Vets, Gleaners, M & M Euchre League, and Goodwill. We also generated funds through our hugely successful bowling fundraiser, Facebook fundraisers, and through private donors. Overall, XH received more than \$50,000 in 2023, combined, all in order for us to continue to expand our mission and provide our Heroes with enriching activities to support independence & facilitate social/recreational opportunities
- XH hosted an intramural Special Olympics basketball team in 2023 in which our team went undefeated until the last game! We are now fielding 2 different teams this year
- A golf skills team was established and coached by Teresa, Greg, Bruce, and Kelsey. XH competed at both Pine Trace Country Club and at State Games at Eastern Michigan University! All of our Heroes won medals at these events, and of special note is our very own Bret Rife was awarded the Lydia Silvani Foley Award for sportsmanship, competitiveness, and teamwork. Only ONE athlete receives this award and we were so incredibly proud that Bret was chosen as the recipient!
- We were also invited to participate in the first ever Top Golf League, sponsored by Special Olympics!
- Xceptional Heroes was featured on numerous media outlets throughout the year:

- WJRT & WNEM newscasts spotlighted our Heroes
- WCRZ radio interview with Lisa Marie and Nathan
- WJRT Good Morning Mid-Michigan interview, featuring Jenn and Tyler Shue
- MTA on the Road Podcast interview with Jenn & host, Stephanie Confer
- Featured on the cover of Fenton Neighbors and Davison community magazines
- Angelina Mayer was interviewed by WJRT for Autism Awareness and was a wonderful voice for promoting XH

- Launched of online store to provide XH apparel and swag
- Expanded outreach to include the northern areas of Genesee County, affectionately known as XH North
- We initiated a quarterly newsletter in order to share all of the wonderful news and great works completed by XH
- Xceptional Heroes was designated as a charity recipient with PayPal and Kroger Community Rewards. We are requesting that our XH family take the time to register XH as your chosen charity for both of these applications. It doesn't cost you anything other than a few moments of your time to register.
- Lastly, a benefactor approached XH wishing to help a family during the holidays. We were deeply honored to receive enough funds to provide gifts under the tree for a Hero and their family this year. Thank you to our Secret Santa!

Throughout the year, Jenn and Teresa worked behind the scenes, continuing to deliver on our mission statement of providing social, recreational, and life-skills opportunities for our Heroes. We continue to work to secure additional experts in their field to bring their skillsets to XH, such as accounting, legal, grant-writing, etc! We are working to schedule speakers and subject matter experts in order to reimplement our very important monthly Parent University event, organize pickleball, in addition to a multitude of other goals we have within our reach!

We have great plans for the coming year! Just to name a few, they are:

- Expanding educational and informational services to parents and schools on how to address the transition from school to independent living.
- establish a "home base" for our group

- We are hopeful to be able to continue to expand and compensate our mentors and volunteers in an effort to recruit and maintain the important working relationships between them and our participants.
- Incorporate activities that are more life skills/vocational-oriented such as fitness, cultural, money & time management, and more.

In conclusion, we again thank you all for being part of our “family” and sharing our excitement as we move forward and grow! We welcome your input and can’t wait to see what 2024 brings to Xceptional Heroes as we “Find the Superpowers in all Abilities”!

Celebrating all abilities,
Jenn Silverton & Teresa White

