

Hive Mind:

2025 Horizons

School Donor Report





Table Of Contents

Message from the

Director

Meet Our Team

Board of Directors

School Overview

Donation Highlights

Student Success

Career Success

Community Safety

Contact Us



Message from the Director



Dear Horizons School Community,

This report highlights donor impacts, the meaningful opportunities your support provides to students with learning differences. We achieved much in 2025 thanks to YOU, our students, dedicated staff, and board members!

We mentored more than 100 university fieldwork students, and those completing fellowship requirements and capstone projects. These eager graduate students were enrolled in Health Professions and Education degree programs. University mentors developed knowledge about autism and learning differences while enhancing the well-being, safety, and prevocational skills of Horizons students. We highly value this continued collaboration with university partners!

We actively support in our residential community 25 young adults with learning and other disabilities from the states of AL, GA, MS, & TX. Support includes teaching skills for self-management, community living, and employment success. Horizons School students enroll in Adult Education courses through the Alabama Community College System and Jefferson State. Horizons is a host site for Alabama Career Essentials (ACE), and provides weekly support to our students as they complete learning modules and prepare for in-demand careers.

Students completed industry certifications as a step toward paid jobs! Credentials earned by students included Jefferson County, Alabama Food Handler Training, Food Safety for Home Kitchens, NRF Retail Industry Fundamentals, Workplace Fire Safety, Youth@Work: Talking Safety, and Hands-only CPR, AED and Adult Basic First Aid. Students applied new skills during planned volunteer service and job shadows, benefiting others across our city. Students are supported through generous contributions to the Kramer Family Scholarship, Russell West Talent Development Fund, the Webb Family Fund, and Charlotte's Fund.

Thirteen advanced students work for wages, primarily in Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources, Hospitality and Tourism, & Human Services occupations. Six students were placed in training internships during the past academic year. The remainder are completing prevocational training for future placement. We celebrate their achievements!

Prospective students and families are welcome to campus for monthly open house events to meet students and staff and preview classes. Spread the word about our success to teens and young adults who may be eligible to enroll in a proven licensed post-secondary program!

With continued support from the Megan Montgomery Foundation, Horizons staff joined with Disability Rights and Resources to present 26 “tech safety” workshops to nearly 600 teens and young adults in 7 counties. There is no fee for workshops.

Message from the Director Continued

Youth learn to seek help from trusted adults, act to reduce identity theft and financial exploitation, block threatening contacts, and report unsafe behavior and criminal activity when online. Our Hearts of Horizons Civitan Club enables students to learn leadership skills as they serve others in the community. We completed many service activities benefiting youth, families, and older adults! Beneficiaries of our service included Grace's Kitchen, Megan's Foundation, Lakeshore Foundation, UAB Civitan International Research Center, Camp McDowell Special Session, Special Education Program of Jefferson County, SEC Baseball Tourney, World Police and Fire Games, and Kids Food Basket.

We especially recognize our donors and supporters who made 2025 Bingo Night the most successful fundraiser for our public charity. This event has grown each year and raises essential funds for student support and school improvements. Thank you!

I am reminded of a quote attributed to Harriett Tubman, Every great dream begins with a dreamer. Always remember, you have within you the strength, the patience, and the passion to reach for the stars, to change the world. Together with your support, we will help young adults with learning differences to find their place in the world!

Brian F. Geiger, EdD, FAAHE
Executive Director



*Dr. Geiger pictured with colleagues at
Partners in Policymaking Alabama*

Meet Our Team



Dr. Brian Geiger Executive Director



Michelle LaTullipe Business Manager



Cierra Dunbarr Marketing and Development Manager



Martha Loukotka Admissions and Transition Coordinator



JT Williamson, Jr Career Coordinator



Drew Roberts Post-Secondary Education Teacher



Donna Larriett Post-Secondary Education Teacher



Chelsey Hicks Post-Secondary Education Teacher



Joshua Rocha Resident Assistant



Tyler Carlisle Resident Assistant

2025 Board of Directors



Thank you for serving Horizons families and staff

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Captrust

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Disability Advocate



Vision And Mission

Vision

- Empowering dreams, and illuminating possibilities. Our vision at Horizons School is to sculpt a future where every student, regardless of challenges, transcends boundaries to embrace a life of limitless potential and independent success.

Mission

- The Horizons School provides a community-based educational program promoting a successful transition to independent living for young adults with learning disabilities, autism spectrum, and developmental disorders.



Donation Highlights

	2024	2025
Donations	\$263,477.94	\$376,029.29
New Donors	37	32
Total Donors	126	116

We extend our sincere gratitude to all of our donors for their generosity and trust. Your support makes our work possible and allows us to continue advancing our mission and serving our community. Every contribution, large or small, has a meaningful impact, and we are deeply thankful for your commitment to creating lasting, positive change.

Student Success



Student of the Year- Joseph D. pictured with Ms. Hicks, Mrs. Loukotka, and Dr. Geiger

Credentials & Skill Building

Horizons students earned industry-recognized certifications, including Food Handler Training, NRF Retail Industry Fundamentals, Workplace Fire Safety, and Hands-Only CPR/AED/First Aid, then applied those skills through volunteer service and job shadows across Birmingham.

Leadership & Service

Students strengthened leadership skills through the Hearts of Horizons Civitan Club, completing service projects that benefited Grace's Kitchen, Lakeshore Foundation, Camp McDowell, Kids Food Basket, and other community partners.

Postsecondary & Life Skills Growth

Students enrolled in Adult Education courses through the Alabama Community College System and Jefferson State and completed Alabama Career Essentials modules with weekly staff support, strengthening self-management, communication, and readiness for adult life.

Career Success



Horizons Students career fieldtrip to Birmingham Squadron

Career Outcomes

Horizons prepares young adults with learning differences for meaningful participation in the workforce through intentional training, credentialing, and individualized support.

In 2025:

- 13 advanced students earned wages, primarily in Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources; Hospitality and Tourism; and Human Services career pathways
- 6 students completed training internships, gaining supervised, real-world experience
- Remaining students continued structured prevocational training to build readiness for future placement

Students entering career pathways are supported with job coaching, employer coordination, and ongoing follow-up to promote retention and long-term success.

Horizons also serves as a host site for Alabama Career Essentials (ACE), providing weekly support as students complete career-aligned learning modules and prepare for in-demand occupations.

Career success at Horizons is measured not only by placement, but by stability, skill transfer, and sustained engagement, ensuring students are prepared for work environments where they can contribute, grow, and belong.

Community Safety & Law Enforcement Education



Horizons Students pictured with Birmingham Police

Horizons School partnered with University of Alabama at Birmingham on a doctoral capstone project led by Ms. Hannah Carnaggio, an Occupational Therapy doctoral student, focused on strengthening student safety, self-advocacy, and confidence when interacting with law enforcement.

Building Skills for Real-World Safety

As young adults with disabilities increased their independence, navigating public spaces and community interactions became an essential life skill. This initiative equipped Horizons students with practical tools to understand their rights, communicate effectively, and respond safely during encounters with law enforcement.

Through structured lessons and guided discussions, students learned:

- How to self-advocate calmly and clearly
- What to expect during common law enforcement interactions
- Strategies for managing anxiety and sensory overload in high-stress situations
- Personal safety planning tailored to individual needs

Collaborative, Respectful Engagement

The program extended beyond classroom learning. Local law enforcement partners, including officers from the Birmingham Police Department, participated in planned, supportive training activities on campus. These sessions were designed to foster mutual understanding, reduce fear, and build respectful communication between students and officers. This collaborative approach benefited everyone involved. Students gained confidence and clarity, while officers gained valuable insight into working effectively with individuals with learning differences and disabilities.

Contact Us



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