

## Renovations at Merakey AVS

### Patricia Hillman Miller Campus

Thank you to Polk Foundation, part of Hillman Family Foundations, for its \$600,000 3-year grant to Merakey Allegheny Valley School's (M/AVS) Patricia Hillman Miller Campus (PHMC). The grant will provide facility improvements to enhance the lives of the individuals we support. This year, renovations at the PHMC Group Home area included a smart kitchen, new bathroom, bedroom and living room enhancements, and more!

Founded by Patricia Hillman Miller in 1957, Polk Foundation's primary focus has been to improve the quality of life for people with disabilities. The Foundation's support has allowed M/AVS to continue to provide the highest quality services in beautiful facilities to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). Today, we are recognizing Polk Foundation for making this incredible investment into the future of our Patricia Hillman Miller Campus.

Senior Regional Executive Director Roni Erath shares, *"Ensuring a safe and nurturing environment for the individuals we care for is always our top priority."*

### Philadelphia Campus

The Philadelphia Campus on Verree Road also underwent major renovations. The second floor living area was converted into four apartments. This transformation improves the lives of individuals, enhances the work environment for staff, and gives families a more comfortable and quiet area when visiting their loved ones.

The new space allows Merakey AVS to remain one of the premier providers of services to people with developmental disabilities and those with medically complex conditions by providing safe, quality living spaces.

*"In addition to supporting the individuals' needs, we also created a caring and responsive environment that fosters comfort, cheer, and great well-being"* commented Direct Support Professional (DSP) Joseph Adeosun.



Melody and Group Home Manager Jennifer enjoy cooking and dining in the new smart kitchen.

## Order a Commemorative Brick at Merakey AVS!



### The Commemorative Brick Program is back!

Personalize your message and select a M/AVS location to have your brick placed. Purchasing a brick is a great way to help raise funds and to connect in a meaningful way with our supporting community.



Scan QR code to purchase a brick >

## Out and About in the Community



Aloha from Sarahlea and Nick from the Slippery Rock Program Center (SRPC). The building was transformed into a Hawaiian Oasis for a celebration.



Eric and friends from SRPC went fishing on Lake Erie with The Lake Ministries, which offers charter fishing experiences for those who are differently abled.



Milton cruised on a new electric bike at PHMC that has been adapted for individuals who utilize wheelchairs for mobility to ride along.



Liz greets new DSP Madisyn at orientation with a welcome bag and a copy of her poem "I Can't Be Put Down."



Rosa and Elise joined the Merakey IDD Philadelphia Division for a day at sea aboard the Spirit of Philadelphia.



The Pittsburgh Campus Fall Festival Derby included cardboard derby cars, a petting zoo, games, prizes, and staff races.



Jerome and Zachary cheered on the Pittsburgh Pirates at the Merakey AVS Night at the Pirates Game at PNC Park.



Elias spent time in the new butterfly garden area at the Pittsburgh Campus Sensory Garden.



Staff members at PHMC helped to make this year's carnival one to remember.





Olivia and Jamie attended the Center Stage Gala where they danced the night away.



Keith enjoyed the Hummelstown Campus Beach Day filled with food and festivities.



Marquisha participated in Horticultural Therapy at M/AVS's Philadelphia Campus.



Michael created a Pittsburgh Steelers painting at Fresh Memories Crafting Studio.



Elizabeth explored a sensory exhibit at the Carnegie Museum of Natural History.



Kenton, Mike, and James traveled west for a two-week vacation.

## Thank You, Holiday Donors!

M/AVS is thrilled to have many community partners visiting our locations and spreading cheer to individuals throughout the holiday season. Thank you to the following groups who have continued to work with us every year: Ascension Lutheran Church, Archangel Gabriel Parish, Guardian Protection, McKees Rocks Rotary Club, Crafton-Ingram Rotary Club, Robinson Lions Club, and Women's Committee from Carnegie Museum of Art.

If you or a community group are interested in donating, please contact [Merakey\\_AVS@merakey.org](mailto:Merakey_AVS@merakey.org).



## Event Updates

### Pittsburgh Vintage Grand Prix Motorsport Festival

The 2023 Pittsburgh Vintage Grand Prix (PVGP) brought thousands out for 10 days of events around Pittsburgh. Race Weekend in Schenley Park was filled with car shows, vendor booths, races, and activities for all. Merakey AVS Ambassadors Liz, Brandon, Carl, Eddie, Danny, KK, Eric, and others - each rode in a convertible during the Opening Ceremonies Parade.

This year, the ambassadors received a medal for their involvement in the PVGP. When presented with his medal, ambassador Eddie stated: "Thank you. I earned it!"

Thank you to the many Merakey staff members, families, and friends who volunteered this year! Merakey AVS is proud of and grateful for the continuous support from the PVGP since its founding in 1983. For more information about the PVGP, race to [www.pvgrp.org](http://www.pvgrp.org).



PVGP Ambassador Tony attends the Black Tie & Tailpipes Gala.

### Friends of Merakey AVS Golf Open

The 32<sup>nd</sup> annual golf open was held on September 18 at Chartiers Country Club and honored CentiMark as this year's AVS CHAMPION. CentiMark has demonstrated kindness and compassion to the people supported by Merakey AVS since 2006. Members of the Merakey AVS Pittsburgh Campus Choir kicked off the day by singing "The Star-Spangled Banner."

There were several other highlights from the day including a hole-in-one made by Jay Ray! With a Steelers home game that evening, dinner guests had The Terrible Towel® twirl, led by Elizabeth Cope and Merakey Foundation Board Member, Dorothy Pollon.

Thank you to co-chairs Rick Mongiovi and Dan Taylor, for helping to make this another successful year! The event raised more than \$120,000 to help M/AVS provide and maintain high quality and safe living, working, and learning environments while expanding and adapting our programs.



Congratulations Jay Ray on a hole-in-one!

### Save the Date for Our 2024 Events

#### June 3, 2024

Merakey Foundation Golf Classic | Lafayette Hill, PA

#### June 17, 2024

Merakey AVS Night at the Pirates Game at PNC Park

#### August 3 - 4, 2024

Pittsburgh Vintage Grand Prix Race Weekend

#### September 16, 2024

Merakey Allegheny Valley School Golf Open  
Chartiers Country Club | Pittsburgh, PA, 10am - 7pm

### Donate to Merakey AVS



Scan QR Code to make a donation to Merakey Allegheny Valley School.

For a complete list of Merakey's fiscal year 2023 donors, visit [annualreport.merakey.org/2022](http://annualreport.merakey.org/2022).



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