



THE
Elim
EQUIP
Spring 2020



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Elim
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**EQUIPPED TO
DO GREAT
THINGS**

When the clock hits 12:30 on a Monday afternoon, you'll find Ryan in a cooking lesson with his peers. Part of Elim's transition program, this activity involves food preparation skills important for Ryan as he prepares for the next stage of his life as a young adult.

Learn more on page 2!

Each day, you equip others to use the gifts they've been given by God, and to thrive in the world He created for them.

RYAN IS COOKING UP SUCCESS

STORY CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

THRIVING, THANKS TO YOU!

In class, Ryan and his peers work together to follow a recipe they pick out each week. After Ryan passes the recipe out to the group, they begin the steps, one by one. Ryan readily volunteers for steps like putting the pan in the oven or measuring out ingredients into the bowl.

For Ryan, participating in this group instruction is a big indicator of his growth over the last few years. Though very social, Ryan had trouble being around peers or staff who he did not already favor. When Jessica began working with him three years ago, she noted that he was not yet equipped to handle those frustrating situations successfully. But today she shares that his progress has been incredible.

Now, Ryan is doing a great job of communicating, “I need a break,” when he finds himself in un-preferred situations. By practicing self-advocacy, he is becoming more comfortable in group situations – a huge win that he continues to build on.

AN ADMIRER FRIEND

Lauren shares that Ryan is a joy to have in class. He loves to dance and create artwork in recreational therapy. Ryan has a fondness for inside jokes and loves to laugh, so much so that Lauren often can't help but laugh along with him. He is also a great athlete, with one of the fastest mile runs (13 minutes!) in the Pathways group.

“Ryan is so charming. He has a magnetic smile and energy, and he is very intelligent,” Lauren gushes.

“I could say so many great things about him!”

A TEAM OF SUPPORT

No matter what goal he is working toward, Ryan knows that at Elim he has a supportive team helping him each step of the way. Each staff member on his team works hard to help equip him with the skills he needs to thrive.

Each week, Ryan works to find productive ways to manage his frustrations. He practices communicating his wants and needs with Elim staff. He gains pre-vocational skills when he ventures out on a community-based outing, and he's learning daily living skills with Jessica at his side.

Jessica shares, “Ryan is one to really want to try new things on his own, and he never stops surprising me with what he does. From my perspective, I can't ask for anything more than being independent. I am really proud of him!”

Each person is uniquely made in God's image, and Elim's educational programming enables personalized plans for the success of each individual student. Each of these programming efforts come together to support our students in the special way that Elim does, thanks to your support of our mission.



Thank you for your gifts that allow Ryan the programming and resources he needs to thrive. Can you give a life-changing gift today?

AUSTISM AWARENESS MONTH!

Read our bonus story for Autism Awareness month and learn how Elim has touched the lives of an entire family!

Visit elimcs.org/stories/lydias-elim-family





DREAMS OF INDEPENDENCE

For 19 years, Elim has equipped Darcell with the skills and confidence to be independent. His grandma, Grace, says, “Elim has one of the best special education programs out there. As you step onto campus, you can tell every single person wants to see your child advance and learn.”

One job in which Darcell thrives in Elim’s adult programs is packing bags of beans for those in need. According to Darcell’s instructors, he is “the best bean pourer we have!” Darcell has grown in this role, quickly picking up the skill. He knows the importance of this work and will patiently fill bags to meet his goal. The packs of beans he assembles will then be distributed to children and families in need in the Chicago area and around the world.

Darcell brings his independence home and gladly helps his grandma with daily chores. He folds his laundry as soon as it’s ready, makes his bed, keeps his room neat, and even pulls out a chair at the dining table when guests are over.

“I attribute Darcell’s independence to his time at Elim,” says Grace, “Elim has changed not only Darcell’s life, but our entire family’s lives and we are so thankful for that. We wouldn’t be who we are without Elim.”



Message from the president

ELIM’S COMMITMENT

To say that we live in interesting times is probably an understatement. Politically, economically, socially, spiritually, and in just about every other way, our world is changing. We are constantly being challenged to adapt.

Change, and adjusting to that change, is something that we at Elim are accustomed to. Because the needs of those that we serve are ever more diverse and involved, we have had to adapt. The effects of aging, autism, inclusion, and mental illness are just a few of the factors that contribute to our need for more specialized services. We have adapted by adding specialized staff, modifying programs, enhancing facilities, and adjusting delivery systems.

While so much at Elim is adjusting, there is also much that is not. Elim is, and will always be, Christ-centered (Hebrews 10:23).

God’s truth that everyone is created in God’s image and has innate value and purpose in God’s world is a non-negotiable for us.

And as Elim proclaims that truth, it continues to receive God’s favor.

In very real ways, Elim’s commitment to what will not change increases its capacity to adapt to what is changing. This dynamic is Elim’s platform of excellence. **And your support makes it possible for us to proclaim this truth!**

The testimonies of Ryan and Darcell in this issue of Equip are evidence of God’s favor and an affirmation of how God uses your partnership to provide life-changing services, even while we continue adapting to these most interesting of times.

Dr. Bill Lodewyk
President



DARCELL THRIVES WHEN HE PUTS TOGETHER FOOD HOPE PACKS, AND YOUR SUPPORT IS MORE CRITICAL THAN EVER – GIVE TODAY AT HOPEPACKS.COM.



➤ **"WE GAINED A CONNECTION BETWEEN STUDENT LEARNING, EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT, AND POSITIVE COMMUNITY PRACTICES."**

-Faculty member, Southwest Chicago Christian Schools (Oak Lawn, IL)



LAYING THE FOUNDATION

ELIM PARTNERS WITH FELLOW EDUCATORS TO PROMOTE POSITIVE AND SUCCESSFUL LEARNING

Focusing on social emotional learning (SEL) helps each student develop the skills they need to manage their emotions, build positive relationships with others, make responsible decisions, and engage in learning. This year, Southwest Chicago Christian Schools (of Oak Lawn and Tinley Park, Illinois) reached out for Elim's expertise to help enhance their SEL programming.

Allie Szczecinski, an education consultant in Elim's Learning program, kicked off the school year with a two-hour professional development presentation for the teachers and staff at Southwest Chicago Christian Schools. She focused on social emotional learning, community building, and the importance of consequences being logical. One elementary teacher in attendance shared that "we gained a connection between student learning, effective management, and positive community practices." Allie's presentation led into year-long partnerships with both campuses. Allie's coaching is equipping the teachers and staff with a toolbox full of tools to integrate social emotional learning across the school day!

Because of your support of Elim, teachers and staff at Southwest Chicago Christian Schools are stronger at addressing the social emotional needs of their students. You are equipping them to focus on building a strong community in each classroom, pivotal in seeing each student thrive.



USE THE ENCLOSED PERSONALIZED FORM TO SEND YOUR GIFT TODAY!

YOUR GIFTS EQUIP PEOPLE FOR GOD'S PURPOSES!

➤ Choosing one of the following options will provide the opportunities and support that will equip children and adults at Elim to pursue their highest God-given potential. Please mark the amount you are enclosing:



- \$50
- \$100
- \$250
- \$_____ to support as many children and adults as possible.



ELIM CHRISTIAN SERVICES | 13020 S. Central Ave. | Crestwood, IL 60418 | 708-293-6509 | www.elimcs.org



Smart and Powerful Giving

Planned gifts offer you smart and creative ways to increase your impact – with your generous efforts resulting in simple, flexible, cost-effective, and extraordinarily powerful support of Elim. Learn more by email (Bob.Marsh@elimcs.org) or by phone (708-293-6513).

To give securely online, go to www.elimcs.org/donate



ELIM CHRISTIAN SERVICES: OUR MISSION

At Elim, we know that each individual has been created in God's image and that He has a specific purpose and calling for each of us. With your help, we strive to equip individuals with disabilities to pursue their God-given potential by living their lives to glorify Him! Elim accomplishes this mission through the following program areas that serve people of all ages:

- School program
- Adult services
- Elim Learning
- HOPE Packs



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