

# EXPRESS YOURSELF with Allegro Foundation

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## Champion for Children with Disabilities Inspires Students, Parents, Volunteers and Donors

Expression takes many forms and can manifest itself through words, our mannerisms, or even in our movements. For Allegro Foundation . . . a Champion for Children with Disabilities, discovering the way in which someone living with disabilities uses expression can be incredibly poignant. So how do Allegro Foundation students, parents, volunteers, instructors and donors express themselves?

Allegro students often find innovative ways to express themselves through movement education. *Allegro's curriculum combines cognitive and muscle memories to encourage learning, problem-solving, and communication.* Allegro's movement techniques are scientifically shown to increase cognitive, educational, and emotional function. One student stated, *"I think people should support Allegro because it gives kids a chance to be like everybody else."*

When it comes to their children, Allegro parents have a unique perspective regarding expression. One Allegro parent, who is also a physician, gushed that, *"In just a few short weeks, Allegro has healed my son's heart, empowering him to overcome crushing disappointment and frustration as his body rapidly loses motor control. Despite his physical complications, he has never been happier because he is surrounded by a group of children with disabilities who are just like him.* In many years of medical practice and motherhood, I have yet to find another organization that provides a more comprehensive approach to academic education and physical intervention than Allegro Foundation."

Allegro volunteers express themselves through the bond they develop, by working one-on-one with the students. Support from volunteers encourages Allegro's students to develop emotional connections and friendships. One volunteer said, "Allegro Foundation will be a part of me for the rest of my life. The experiences and the insight I have gained are



### An Allegro student with an Allegro volunteer

invaluable. At first, I came to Allegro apprehensive because I had never worked with children living with disabilities, and I did not know what to expect. *Not only did Allegro change my outlook, but the children have had a major impact on me as well.*" Another volunteer remarked, "When I am having a bad day, I think about the Allegro students I will be helping and all the challenges they overcome every

day. It makes me realize how strong and determined they are, and that inspires me to think the same way!"

Allegro Foundation instructors also discover unique ways to boost creativity and self-expression. The Champion for Children with Disabilities welcomes all into their free programs and teaches children with intellectual disabilities, Down syndrome, autism, orthopedic challenges (including the use of wheelchairs and walkers), Spina bifida, cerebral palsy, learning disabilities, muscular dystrophy, visual and hearing impairments, children "at-risk," and children living with cancer.

Instructors utilize Allegro's movement education curriculum to bring about positive changes in Allegro's students. One instructor feels that Allegro "gives my life meaning. To have the ability to change a person's life and witness the results is life altering. It reaches into the very core of my existence, and may be the reason I was put here on earth."

Allegro Foundation's donors are able to see first-hand where their funding goes. They express their generosity through donations, allowing Allegro to offer free movement education classes to over 700 children annually. Allegro Foundation is not a member of a large national organization, nor are they an umbrella for other organizations. Allegro Foundation resides in our Charlotte community and serves children

living with disabilities throughout Charlotte and the surrounding areas, including Fort Mill and Rock Hill in South Carolina.

To make a donation, get more information about volunteer opportunities, or to ask about registering your child, please contact Allegro Foundation at 704.412.5229, pfallegro@aol.com, or visit the website at [www.AllegroFoundation.net](http://www.AllegroFoundation.net). ■