

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Archway Programs Celebrates Black History Month
Appreciating African American history and culture

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ATCO, NEW JERSEY (February 28, 2020) – Staff, clients and students at Archway Programs celebrated Black History Month to honor the contributions made and highlight how the African American culture has profoundly shaped American culture in many ways. Programs throughout the organization held various Black History Month events and participated in a number of activities to remember important people and events in history while celebrating their achievements.

“It’s important to celebrate black leaders in history and recognize that they come from all walks of life. Each of these people faced challenges in life; however that did not hold them back. This is something that the population Archway serves can relate to,” said Shawn Gibson, Chief Operating Officer at Archway Programs.

Students from Archway’s Lower School learned about African American artists and composers during their Music Program. Lucas Waldburger, Board Certified Music Therapist at the Archway Lower School, planned a week-long exploration of black artists and composers for students. Each class participated in their own unique blend of song listening, song recreation and movement from traditional and contemporary black musical culture. Students had a chance to play percussion instruments like the African Djembe and sing in distinctly African American song forms like Call-and-Response.



Lower School students enjoyed learning about traditional and contemporary black musical culture.



The Art Program at the Archway Lower School honored Black History month by participating in art lessons based on African culture led by Art Teacher Chayla Ortiz. Students explored the importance of masks in the African culture and created their own masks using a variety of styles and colors. They also learned about the different geometric designs of African huts and then created their own masterpieces.



Archway Lower School students created their own masks inspired by the African culture.



Archway Lower School students designed African huts using geometric designs that they created.

Students from each of the classrooms at the Archway Upper School were assigned an African American who made important contributions or was involved in important events from American history. Students decorated



280 Jackson Rd
PO Box 668
Atco, NJ 08004

tel: 856-767-5757
fax: 856-767-8047

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their class bulletin boards with interesting facts regarding their assigned person. They continued to learn more about these important historical characters cumulating with a presentation from all twenty classrooms in the Upper School gymnasium.



Proud Upper School students ready to present their project to Archway staff and their peers.



Archway students and staff attended the Upper School's Black History Month presentations.



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The world renowned Universal African Dance and Drum Ensemble visited Archway's main campus on February 27th, 2020 and performed at the Archway Upper School in Evesham, New Jersey. Administrative staff, school staff and students from the Upper School, Lower School and Cooper's Poynt gathered together for a phenomenal performance in the Upper School gymnasium. This is an event that Archway students look forward to each year, as part of the Archway Schools' Black History Month celebration. This year, students and staff from the Archway School at Cooper's Poynt traveled from Camden, New Jersey to join their peers for this year's performance.



Members of the Universal African Dance and Drum Ensemble visited with Archway students and staff after their performance.

The Universal African Dance and Drum Ensemble consist of different dance techniques based from an African culture as well as utilization of drums not only for a musical entertainment but also for communication purposes. The performers ranged from two years old to sixty years old. The Universal African Dance and Drum Ensemble also visited Archway's Adult Counseling and Therapy (ACT) Program earlier this month. Archway staff and adult clients enjoyed the performance so much that they got up and started to dance along. This was the first of hopefully many visits to Archway's Partial Care location in Washington Township, New Jersey.

Counselors from Archway's partial care youth programs, HOPE and DISCOVER, incorporated Black History facts into their weekly current events group, on their bulletin boards and by hosting a special dinner. Each week, youth took turns announcing inspirational quotes over the PA system from famous African Americans followed by trivia questions to test their knowledge and learn about history. Youth in each of the group rooms worked in teams to collectively choose their answer. The group room at the end of the week with the most correct answers won a prize. The real prize, however, was the opportunity to enrich everyone's knowledge of the African culture and the impact these men and women made. Archway staff also planned a special dinner for youth to celebrate the history of different foods as it pertains to the African American culture.



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Youth from Archway's HOPE Program proudly standing in front of one of the Black History bulletin boards.

Archway's before and after school care program, Just Kids, celebrated Black History month by participating in various group discussions and activities. One of the activities that children from Just Kids at John Glenn participated in was a directed portrait drawing activity of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Kids learned about the significance of his "I Have a Dream" speech.



One of the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. portraits reminds us how important it is stand for everyone.

For more information on Archway Programs, visit www.archwayprograms.org.



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Media Contact:

Jillian Pustizzi

856.325.7369

Jillian.Pustizzi@archwayprograms.org

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About Archway Programs

Since 1965, Archway Programs has been meeting the individualized needs of thousands of families throughout the state of New Jersey. Archway Programs is a diverse, non-profit, human services organization which includes approved private schools for students with disabilities in addition to several model programs providing unmatched services. Built on a solid foundation of core values, providing safety, possessing compassion and promoting individuality, Archway Programs strives to improve the life of every individual served. Our goal is to ensure that each individual's needs are met and customized services are provided and partnered with passionate, committed and talented professionals in a safe environment. Over 450 individuals are currently employed by Archway Programs and this dedicated and talented staff provides services to over 1,800 children and adults requiring individualized care. Please visit www.archwayprograms.org for more information.



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