

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Archway Lower School Students Learn a Lesson in Caring
The Bridge of Hope Cancer Walk

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ATCO, NEW JERSEY (November 29, 2023) – On October 25th, 2023, staff, students, program participants, friends, and family from across Archway were gathered on the Archway Campus for the 13th Annual Archway Bridge of Hope Cancer Walk. The walk is an annual show of support and fundraiser to assist friends, family, and neighbors diagnosed with cancer.



Pictured left to right: Ann Desjardins-Feldman, MSW, LSW; Deb Friedman, Director of Oncology Support Services; Natalie Conboy, Lead Clinical Social Worker Oncology; Monica Donley, Special Education Coordinator; Nick, Lower School Student; Kenyatta, Lower School Student; Kelly Willis, Lower School Paraprofessional; and John Petsch, Lower School Principal.



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Last year, in 2022, Archway students and staff donated proceeds from the walk to the Virtua Cancer Center. Students also provided Care Kits designed to help ease discomfort and provide a distraction for patients undergoing treatment.

Once again, this year, soon after the walk, students rose to the occasion and got to work on this year's Care Kits. They chose a new design for the front of the bags: a lotus flower, a symbol of strength, resilience, and rebirth. The students packed each bag with a card of encouragement, a journal, a multi-colored ink pen, a puzzle book, a tube of lotion, lip balm, and hard candies.



Lower School students are holding Care Kits after assembling them to donate to the Virtua Cancer Center.

The culmination of the walk and the students' work was realized on a chilly day in mid-November as the students, accompanied by Lower School staff, were bused to the Virtua Cancer Center in Berlin. The students and staff were there to present their donations. Ann Desjardins-Feldman, MSW, LSW, greeted the group at the entrance and led them upstairs to a conference room.

As the staff stood by to lend their assistance, the students, both of whom are non-verbal, used electronic talkers to communicate with center staff as they presented their Care Kits. John Petch, Lower School Principal, was among the staff members in attendance and presented Virtua staff with a check for \$1000.00 from the 2023 Bridge of Hope Cancer Walk proceeds.



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Shortly after everyone departed to return to school, Ann was kind enough to share photos of herself preparing to distribute the Care Kits. The children could see what their work accomplished and learn a lesson in generosity and caring.

Visit the Album to see photos from the event. [13th Annual Bridge of Hope Cancer Walk Facebook Album](#)

For more information on Archway Programs, visit www.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 440 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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