



## The PCI Portal

A Monthly Newsletter from Porto Charities, Inc.

At Porto Charities, Inc. our mission is to support children with special needs with the opportunity for an inclusive Catholic education, and young adults with special needs, assistance with meaningful employment in the Diocese of Arlington.

[Visit our Website](#)

[Donate Now](#)

Follow us on social media to stay up to date on our events!



## From the Director's Desk...

Dear Friends,

We are very excited to announce that Porto Charities, Inc. will be hosting its 1st Live Webinar next Wednesday, May 25th, at 7:30 pm. Please join us - registration is free! Just click the button below.

[Webinar Registration](#)

LIVE WEBINAR

# INCLUSION IN ACTION



## Speech and Occupational therapies in Catholic Schools



**ELIZABETH SPOTH,  
M.Ed., CCC-SLP**  
DIRECTOR OF SPEECH AND  
LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY AT  
DISCOVERY SPEECH AND OT



**CAROLE FLEMING,  
MOTR/L**  
DIRECTOR OF OCCUPATIONAL  
THERAPY AT DISCOVERY  
SPEECH AND OT



**ANNE NIEZ, M.S.  
CCC-SLP**  
SPEECH THERAPIST AT TEMPLE  
RODEF SHALOM EARLY  
CHILDHOOD CENTER

**WEDNESDAY MAY 25TH, 2022  
7:30-8:45PM**

**REGISTER  
AT:**



[WWW.PORTOCHARITIES.ORG/FUNDRAISING](http://WWW.PORTOCHARITIES.ORG/FUNDRAISING)

*This Webinar was underwritten  
through the generosity of the  
Maria Grazia Panaro  
Foundation*

## Inclusion Catalysts

Recognizing our Friends who have made a Significant Difference toward an Inclusive Community



**St. Leo the Great Catholic School**



**Gerald Pelano**

Saint Leo the Great School community recognizes that each person has unique God-given gifts. In a safe, nurturing atmosphere, infused with faith, morals, and Catholic principles, we employ strategies and methods designed to meet the needs of a diverse population to assist everyone in achieving spiritual, intellectual, and social potential.

With this in mind, we are working to employ persons who have intellectual and developmental disabilities. Additionally, we have students in our school who have special needs. We continue to work with the Arlington Diocese to offer professional development for our teachers so that they will be well equipped to instruct children with diverse needs.

St. Leo the Great Catholic school is committed to accepting and supporting learners with special needs. We will continue to grow in our knowledge about how to best support a diverse population, so that we might provide an education that ensures all students meet their God-given potential.

Gerald Pelano is a business consultant in Virginia with a focus on Strategic Planning, Revenue Growth, Marketing, Process Development, Mergers, Acquisitions, Succession, Operations Crypto and Digital Awareness.

He has a B.S. from the Saunders College of Business from the Rochester Institute of Technology. He is a retired CPA and was the founding director of the Potomac Bank of Virginia where he also served as Bank Director and other committees.

Gerry has been on the Board of Saint Paul VI Catholic High School for 18 years, where he is the Founding Member and Co-Chair of the Development Program, also serving as the Finance Chair and liaison to the Arlington Diocese and Co-Chair of the Capital Campaign. He sits on the Advisory Board at George Mason University Athletic Department, Fund Raising and Membership Recruitment and is in the President's Roundtable at the Rochester Institute of Technology.

## Parents' Advisory Council



Dear Parents,

The PAC has been hard at work this month!

We have been invited to collaborate with Diocesan COO, Ward Jones, and the Working Group for the Strategic Plan. The PAC has been brainstorming about how best to achieve the Strategic plan's goal to "make Catholic schools, faith formation, and youth ministry programs more accessible to students with special learning needs."

We appreciate all who have devoted their time, experience and expertise to these sessions. The Diocesan Working group will be meeting in June and PAC representatives will be there. Our hope is to begin a conversation with the Diocese that will continue to expand inclusive opportunities throughout the Diocese. Stay tuned for updates!

Blessings,

**Steven, Sharon, Lupita and Carmen**

**The PCI Parents' Advisory Council (PAC)** is made up of parents/legal guardians of children with special needs and representatives of the Office of Catholic Schools. The PAC assists Porto Charities in its mission of expanding inclusive Catholic education and employment options throughout the Diocese of Arlington. If you would like to participate, send an email to Larry Rzepka, PCI Executive Director, at [lrzepka@portocharities.org](mailto:lrzepka@portocharities.org) and we'll add you to our roster.

## Help Wanted!

BECOME A VOLUNTEER - MAKE A DIFFERENCE



*"Volunteering is at the very core of being a human.  
No one has made it through life without someone else's help." Heather French Henry*

As Porto Charities continues to increase the size of our Board and the amount of funds we raise and distribute to our local Catholic schools, we are also looking to expand our educational and employment initiatives. More activities...more programs...and more opportunities to volunteer some of your time and talents to support our efforts.

We are currently in the planning stages of a variety of outreach, education and fundraising initiatives that require several new committees to be formed so work can begin. If you would like to become a **Porto Ambassador** by donating some of your time to help us plan these activities, please reach out to our Executive Director, Larry Rzepka, at [lrzepka@portocharities.org](mailto:lrzepka@portocharities.org). He will be more than happy to discuss the opportunities we have available to find the perfect match for your interests.

## Save the Date!



**14<sup>th</sup> Annual Porto Charities  
Golf Tournament  
Friday, Oct 7, 2022**

**Regency at Dominion Valley  
Golf Club in Haymarket, VA.**

**Details Coming Soon!**

## Thank You for Supporting Porto Charities, Inc.!

Porto Charities Inc is a 501(c)(3) non-profit, charitable and educational organization (Tax ID #30-0544129).  
Contributions to Porto Charities are tax deductible to the extent permitted by law.

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