

To: Media Organizations

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Re: 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Snacks and Educational Fun with Santa

Date: December 6, 2023 (For Immediate Publication)

**PROJECT GRAD AKRON HOSTS  
17<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL BREAKFAST AND EDUCATIONAL FUN WITH SANTA**

AKRON, OH – Project GRAD Akron (PGA) hosted its **17<sup>th</sup> Annual Breakfast and Educational Fun with Santa** on Saturday, December 4, 2023 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon simultaneously at two locations. The event was held at Buchtel Community Learning Center and East Community Learning, both of the Akron Public Schools. The family-friendly event was free and open to the public. A special thank you is extended to the Akron Public Schools, CareSource, and Dominion Energy Charitable Foundation for their support. Additionally, the event was the Kick-off for Ideastream Public Media’s Ready to Learn Initiative.

Project GRAD Akron’s staff members worked as a team to organize and coordinate the events. A special thank you is extended to Laurie Curfman, Kate Vajda, Theresa Manzell, and Isabella South, for coordinating the activities at both schools. This annual event attracted over five hundred (500) children, parents/caregivers, vendors, and volunteers.

In addition to a nutritional meal provided for the attendees, a host of educational activities were enjoyed by all. The event featured educational games, storytelling and reading, holiday craft making, and informational booths providing community resources for parents/guardians. Highlighting the event was the arrival of Santa Claus. Families received framed photos of their pictures with Santa. Project GRAD Akron provided and distributed more than eight hundred books (800) books to the students. Additionally, vendors provided books, supplies, games, and resources for the guests. At the Buchtel site, Mayor Daniel Horrigan’s Youth Leadership Council’s Hugs N’ Gloves program distributed gloves, hats, and socks for children as well as gift cards for families. Project GRAD Akron also distributed more than eighty (80) door prizes in the parent raffles!

In addition to the programs and services provided by Project GRAD Akron, the organization has awarded more than \$2.5 million dollars in scholarships to students from the Akron Public Schools. For additional information about Project GRAD Akron, please visit our website at [www.projectgradakron.org](http://www.projectgradakron.org), email [info@projectgradakron.org](mailto:info@projectgradakron.org), or call 330-761-3113. Jacqueline Silas-Butler, Esq. is the Executive Director of Project GRAD Akron; Laurie Curfman is the

Director of Programs, and Maura Scanlon Bozzelli, Esq., is the President of the Board of Directors.

Photos: