

Kids have a ball at Bowling for Scholars

\$12,080 raised most in four-year history of event

Nov. 10, 2017



Young bowlers check their raffle tickets during Butler County Community College's fourth "Bowling for Scholars" on Nov. 10, 2017, at Family Bowlaway Fun Center.

(Butler, PA) Walt Baer hoisted his beaming 6-year-old daughter into his arms and returned to the console separating Lanes 29 and 30 at Family Bowlaway Fun Center, where Mackenzie anxiously awaited the return of an orange ball that toppled eight pins.

Four lanes away, 10-year-old brothers Dominic Shakely and Ray Lyman huddled around a tabletop of snacks and debated the merits of the ball color they would select to participate in Butler County Community College's fourth Bowling for Scholars fundraiser.

Dominic preferred a reddish one – “It is over there,” he said, pointing to a rack; and Ray countered that “It doesn't really matter about the color. I just don't want one that is going to drop in the gutter. Or on my foot. Or both.”

Waiting for his turn on Lane 37 was David Sommers, who announced “I am currently 8. But tomorrow I am going to be 9” before pronouncing that he would select a heavy ball, regardless of color, “because I think it will have more power on the pins and make them go down.”

Like the pins targeted by the 106 participants in the only annual fundraiser for the BC3 Alumni Association, the fourth Bowling for Scholars went down as the most successful yet.

The family friendly outing Nov. 10 raised \$12,080 toward funding BC3 Alumni Legacy Scholarships, which since 2004 have been awarded to 26 children or grandchildren of former students who earned at least 30 academic credits at BC3.

The \$12,080 represented a 13 percent increase from the 2016 event, said Michelle Jamieson, a 1984 BC3 graduate and associate director of the BC3 Education Foundation Inc.

As importantly, “There are a lot of kids here,” Jamieson said. “That just reaffirms this is a family oriented event. It is nice that families can come and have fun and support the Alumni Legacy Scholarships.”

Everyone likes to bowl, said Lynn Ismail, staff accountant with the BC3 Education Foundation Inc.

“That is the biggest reason why this is popular, especially if you have a family,” she said, noticing “The kids. They are having fun. They are running around with the music on. They're bowling. Eating the pizza. Going for the fountain drinks. It is just a lot of fun for them.”

Bowling for Scholars put the fun in fundraiser, according to 12-year-old Alice Sommers, David's sister and the granddaughter of Kathleen Sommers.



A young bowler watches pins fall during Butler County Community College's fourth "Bowling for Scholars" on Nov. 10, 2017, at Family Bowlaway Fun Center.

Kathleen Sommers, Ray D. Steffler, Lucille Shapiro and Glenn T. Miller this spring had Alumni Legacy Scholarships permanently named in their honor in recognition of their 20-year commitments to the BC3 Alumni program.

“It is just so much fun to see all the families bowling together,” Alice said. “People cheer on each other. It just makes my heart happy and it is just fun to see.”

She recognizes that happiness, she said, “Whenever they cheer, and whenever I see their smiles.”

Mikayla Moretti, BC3’s new director of special events and grants, and Ruthi Orloski, BC3 Education Foundation secretary, were all smiles as they informed guests of their lane assignments and distributed fliers announcing ARMCO Credit Union as the king pin sponsor, Future POS as the giveaway sponsor, AEC Group as the Pittsburgh Penguins tickets sponsor, Pizza Joe’s as the pizza sponsor and Meagan’s Mainstreet Bake Shop as the cookie sponsor.

“I hear that we get a lot of kids, which is a good thing,” Moretti said of her first Bowling for Scholars. “Kids come, they have fun. A lot of the sponsors will bring kids and get them raffle tickets and they will have snacks and pizza. We try to make it about kids, which is good.”

Bowling for Scholars, Orloski said, is entertaining because “It is so much fun to hear all the balls just crashing against the pins one at a time. In unison. Like BOOM! Everyone is hitting strikes.”

Through four years Bowling for Scholars has raised \$38,830 and drawn 546 bowlers – among them, Mackenzie Baer and her father, Walt Baer -- of Allison Park, whose company, ABM, is among the Bowling for Scholars sponsors; and Tony Shakely, of ARMCO Credit Union, who brought his wife, Kay, daughters Audrey and Sophia, and sons, Dominic and Ray.



Bowlers Steve and Amanda Fleming are shown Nov. 10, 2017, at Butler County Community College’s fourth “Bowling for Scholars.” Amanda is BC3’s college business services specialist.



Bowlers Mike and Nicole Barnes are shown Nov. 10, 2017, at Butler County Community College’s fourth “Bowling for Scholars.” Nicole is a BC3 purchasing agent.

“It is a family event, absolutely,” Shakely said. “We have had employees bring their families for years. It is always extremely popular and everyone always has a great time. It has become a tradition for us. We look forward to it every year.

“Every year I say it is time for BC3 bowling, and they get super excited.”

As was son Dominic, when he won a \$300 Xbox One S, donated by Microsoft, during the Bowling for Scholars raffle; and 8-year-old Aden DeVore, the lucky winner of a \$540 package of two Pittsburgh Penguins tickets from AEC Group in Club Loge 5, Row A for a Feb. 6 game against the Las Vegas Golden Knights.

Corbett Inc. / KI and Thompson-Miller Funeral Home-Butler Pet Cremation were Bowling for Scholars’ strike zone sponsors; and Dr. Louis and Lucille Shapiro, and Twin Capital Management, were star scholar sponsors.