

The Potter's House Press

Summer 2025

tphgr.org



Congratulations, Seniors!

A look back at the legacy
of The Potter's House

Letter from the Superintendent

Dear Friends,

As the 2024-2025 school year draws to a close, I'm filled with gratitude for all God has done in our school community, and for your support that makes this transformation possible. This year has been rich with growth, resilience, and grace. I'd like to share just a few of the many stories that remind us what makes The Potter's House so special:

- **Landon:** His grandparents recently approached me at Senior Showcase to say, "He has completely changed in every aspect: socially, emotionally, academically, spiritually. Everything has changed since he came here." They once worried about their grandson (who struggled with impulsivity, school performance, and anger issues); now they are brimming with excitement about his future prospects.
- **Daniel, student body vice president,** shared: "The confidence and skills I'm gaining at TPH are preparing me for a future where I can make a difference. I've been blessed and want to bless others."
- **Sohanny,** another graduating senior, told us, "The school has taught me to serve and lead—not only in words, but through actions—living out Christ in every moment."

Each student's story is a reflection of our mission: provide a Christ-centered education for students of all ethnic heritages and income levels, equipping them to serve God and society to their fullest potential.

As I soon step away from my role as Superintendent and join The Potter's House Foundation as Founder, my heart remains anchored to the students. I am not stepping away from this mission—I'm stepping further in. With God's guidance and your continued support, we will keep welcoming students with the love of Jesus. We'll continue to equip them for lives of service, building bright hope for generations to come.

Thank you for your trust over the last 44 years. God has blessed us with over 100 million dollars in scholarship support for Potter's House students through your generosity. I deeply appreciate your prayers, your partnership, and your steadfast faith in this beloved community.



Your partner in education,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Booy".

John Booy
Superintendent (1979-2025)

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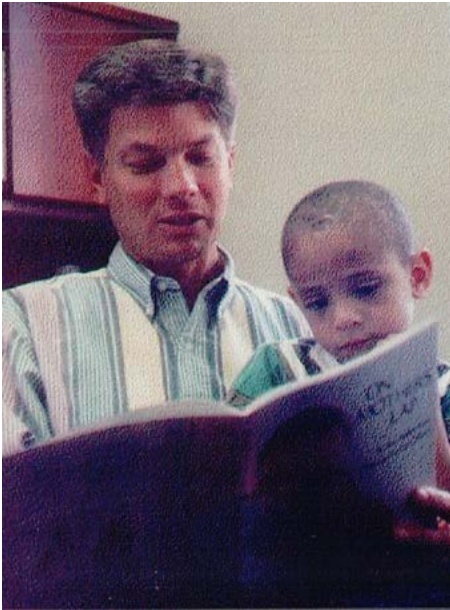
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A Night to Remember: 2025 New Friends Banquet Recap

It was a night we will never forget.

On April 25, 700 guests gathered for the 2025 New Friends Banquet—The Potter's House's largest banquet to date. We prayed for a powerful event, and once again, God exceeded our expectations.

From the first note of music to the final prayer, the event was a celebration of God's faithfulness to The Potter's House community. With hearts full and eyes opened, our guests responded generously, giving \$712,000 toward our mission: provide a Christ-centered education for students of all ethnic heritages and income levels, equipping them to serve God and society to their fullest potential.

One of the most memorable moments of the banquet came early in the program: the annual **Flag Procession**. As students paraded across the stage carrying flags from their countries of birth, the audience watched in awe. Thirty-eight nations were represented this year—a beautiful reflection of Revelation 7:9's vision of "a great multitude from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb."

Reflecting on the event, Superintendent John Booy shared, "People often ask us how international students come to TPH. The truth is, there's no single answer. Over the years, we've welcomed students from nearby neighborhoods, from families facing



financial challenges, from different cultures, and even from across the globe. While the majority of our students are domestic, embracing students from around the world enhances our rich community. What unites them isn't where they're from, but the shared opportunity to grow in a place shaped by faith, learning, and purpose."

The rich cultural diversity at TPH includes:

- **Children of missionaries** returning from the field who find in TPH a welcoming home and gentler cultural transition.
- **Adopted children from nations such as China, Ethiopia, and Guatemala**, who find belonging in a school where many faces look like theirs.
- **Refugees and asylum seekers**, resettled through agencies like Bethany Christian Services, who have experienced war, upheaval, and displacement.
- **Immigrant families from Roosevelt Park and greater Grand Rapids**, representing countries such as Mexico, Honduras, El Salvador, Rwanda, Sudan, and Somalia.
- **International students** whose families pay above and beyond full tuition, helping to support students from local families who otherwise could not afford a private education.

One of the unique strengths of The Potter's House is its exceptional **English Language Learners (ELL)** program. While many private schools require



basic English proficiency to attend, TPH admits students with no English at all—and within four years, prepares them for graduation and college, with some excelling in AP-level English courses. "This changes the trajectory of their lives," Mr. Booy said. "It gives them real options for the future."

Sharing about the heart of highlighting the flag procession at the banquet, Mr. Booy says "This isn't just about helping kids graduate. It's about helping them become who God created them to be."

Our students don't just learn about diversity in textbooks—they live it every day. In a single classroom, you might hear multiple languages spoken. You might hear first-person reflections about issues in Syria or Ukraine, or deeply ingrained traditions in West Africa, or the challenges of immigration from Central America.

"We're not just teaching global awareness," Mr. Booy said. "We're practicing it daily, guided by the love of Jesus."

That is the beauty of the beloved community at The Potter's House: Students learning to love, understand, and honor one another across cultures and experiences, guided by the love of Jesus Christ.

To each of you who prayed, gave, hosted a table, or invited a new friend: thank you. Because of your partnership, more students will be welcomed into a safe and Christ-centered school, where their full God-given potential can flourish.

The banquet may be over—but the impact is just beginning. 🏠



Summer 2025



A Life of Obedience: Honoring Mr. Booy

“This job is not about having talent or resources; it’s about being willing to obey God.”

When The Potter’s House first opened its doors in 1981, its founders didn’t have any grand plans. There was no endowment. No paid staff. No blueprint for success. Just a few young adults who believed that if God was calling them to serve their neighbors, He would also equip them.

From an early age, Mr. Booy was inspired by the missionary stories of Johanna Veenstra and David Wilkerson. “These were just ordinary believers who said ‘yes’ to God. They weren’t extra smart or attractive or extraordinary.” At age 20, Mr. Booy offered his life to be used however God wanted.

After graduating from Calvin College, Mr. Booy and a group of friends moved into Grand Rapids’ Roosevelt Park neighborhood, to live in Christian community like believers in the second chapter of Acts. They opened their doors to neighbors,



originally ministering to adults in the neighborhood. Soon, they began hosting local children for food, Bible stories, and life-giving relationships. Their outreach to kids grew from a small living room ministry called Kid Power to tutoring, community meals, and youth mentorship.

When a local pastor challenged them to start a school, they laughed. But after prayer and reflection, they sensed God calling them to something bigger. They realized the

need when they learned the local public school was ranked the third lowest in Michigan.

“It doesn’t take particularly gifted people,” he reflects. “It just takes people who are willing.”

In 1981, The Potter’s House was founded with just 12 students and two teachers who agreed to work without pay. Classes were held in the basement of Grandville Avenue CRC, but by the end of the first year, the school was required to find a new location. With only days remaining before the next school year was set to begin—and no building secured—prospects looked bleak.

Then, at the last minute, a group of local business leaders came together





and gifted a miraculous \$45,000—far surpassing the amount needed for a down payment on a school building. The building was enormous, and the team had no idea how they would ever fill such a large space. But God's plans were even bigger.

Over the past 44 years, The Potter's House has grown from 12 students to more than 650, becoming a vibrant community where children from a wide range of cultural, economic, and geographic backgrounds come together to learn, grow, and experience the love of Christ.

Today, Mr. Booy steps away from his role as Superintendent and transitions into his official role as Founder. While his title is changing, his mission remains the same—advocating for Christ-centered education. He will continue to work closely with our Advancement team, stay connected with our donor community, and help expand the life-giving impact of The Potter's House to communities around the world.

"There are children in every city, in every nation, who deserve access to a Christ-centered, excellent education,

regardless of income or cultural background," he says. "We've learned how to do this, and we want to share it with others."

The school's greatest testimony, Mr. Booy says, is its students.

- Florance, who came to The Potter's House after facing instability in Uganda, shares, "Back home, education was a privilege not available to girls. Here, I'm encouraged to speak up, to dream big. Mr. Booy made sure this was a place where students like me are not just safe, but celebrated."
- Student Body President, Hannah, adds, "Mr. Booy has always reminded us that we're not just students. We're future leaders, called to serve with love and courage."
- Josh, an international student from Taiwan, faced religious persecution, abuse, and isolation. "In Taiwan, I felt like an outsider as I followed Jesus," he said. "Here, I found a family with other people who love Jesus."


Indeed, Mr. Booy's leadership has always been much more than administration. He has modeled living the Gospel out loud: choosing prayer over fear, faith over ease, and people over prestige.

As he transitions into this new chapter, Mr. Booy remains the same humble servant-leader he's always been, deflecting credit and lifting others up. "God has always sent the right people at the right time," he says. "I've just tried to stay available."

That availability has inspired countless others to do the same. Teachers who once volunteered their time now lead thriving classrooms. Alumni are serving as pastors, surgeons, local business leaders, teachers, psychologists, lawyers, and advocates. Donors and mentors have become spiritual grandparents. And year after year, students graduate not just with diplomas, but with deep roots in Christ.

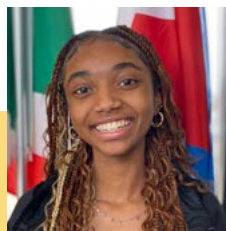
As we celebrate Mr. Booy's 44 years of leadership, we celebrate the movement God continues to sustain. A movement that began with a handful of people saying yes. A school that grew from mustard-seed faith. A community founded on miracles and sustained by radical obedience.

“By saying, 'God, You can have my life and do whatever you want with it,' I ended up getting more than I ever could have possibly gotten had I just striven for it," he reflects. "I have many very successful friends, but I don't think any of them are happier than me. **”**

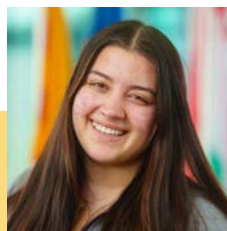
As Mr. Booy joins the The Potter's House Foundation, we look forward to God's direction and provision as He expands the reach of this beloved community. 



Congratulations, Class of 2025!



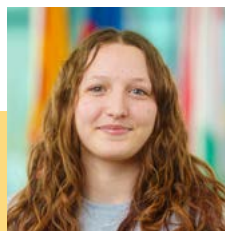
RAELLE ALLEN
West Palm Beach
Christian University
Nursing



ARIANA ARROYO
Douglas J Aveda Institute
Cosmetology



LANDON BOUKMA
Americore Teach
Small Business Owner



HOPE BOUMA
Adrian College
Environmental Science



JAEDYN BOWSER
Grand Rapids
Community College



JACOB BYKER
Calvin University
Social Work



TITUS CAI
Lehigh University
Finance and Business
Analytics



**YASMYNNE
CARDENAS RUACHO**
Grand Valley State University
Health Science



REYNA CRUZ ZEPEDA
Grand Rapids
Community College
Nursing



TING-AN (JOSH) DAI
Calvin University
Pre- Pharmacy



JEREMIAH DAVISON
Grand Rapids
Community College
Film



NAOMI DEJONG
Theater or Psychology



**CALEB
DEMOOR-TANNOR**
Grand Canyon University
Business and Entrepreneurship



HANNA ELLENS
Calvin University
Pre Med



KAYLER ERAZO
Siena Heights University
Business and Marketing



**ADONIS
FERNANDEZ-GUEVARA**
Michigan State University
Pre Law



VIVIAN FLOYD
Calvin University
Writing



**LLUVIA
GARCIA SANCHEZ**
Northpointe College



HANNAH GEANEY
Trine University
Education



JOSIAH GEMMEN
Calvin University
Pre Med



MARCOS GONZALEZ
Calvin University
Medical



**SOHANNY
GONZALEZ CASTILLO**
Wayne State University
Medical



DALLAS HAZMAN
MDRS
Equine Therapy



HAORAN (JACK) JIN
Calvin University
Engineer or Pre-Veterinarian



MICAH HINES
Grand Valley State University
Pre- Med



**EVERETT
HOEKSEMA SMITH**
Grand Valley State University
Film



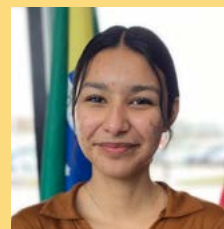
DANIEL JORDAN
Kuyper College
Sports Marketing



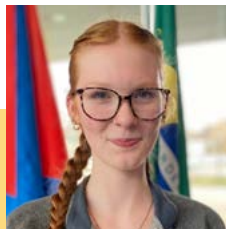
NATHANIEL KUIPERS
Grand Rapids
Community College
Welding



EDIPELL LEON
Grand Rapids
Community College
Web Design

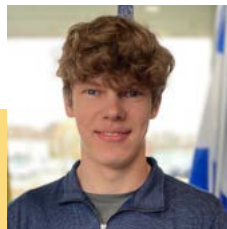


ISABEL LOPEZ
Central Michigan University
Social Work



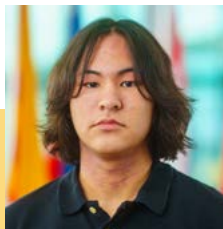
RUBY LEEDY

Western Michigan University
Sports Medicine



MATTHEW LYNDE

Boyce College
Engineering or
Computer Science



NOAH MARRINAN

Grand Rapids
Community College
Social Work



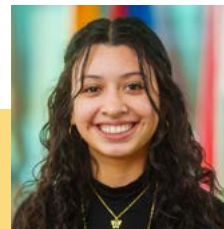
MARQUIS MARSHALL

Calvin University
Special Education



ARIEL MARTINEZ

Davenport University
Information Technology



MELANIE MENDEZ

Calvin University
Nursing



ABIGAIL MILLER

Missions Work
Evangelism and Bible
Translation



**ANTONIO MONTANO
MARTINEZ**

Grand Rapids
Community College
Business or Marketing



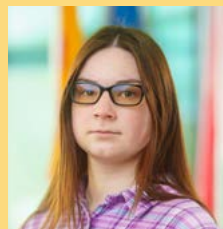
CALEB MOTAUNG

Michigan State University
Finance



KAME MUHWANGA

Grand Rapids
Community College
Theater



**MARIA (MASHA)
MYKHNEVYCH**

Calvin University
Psychology



REED OSTERINK

Grand Rapids
Community College
Business



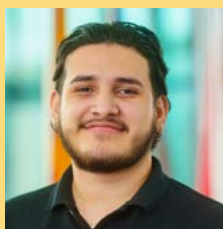
ISAIAH POST

Calvin University
Business or Finance



**CHRISTOPHER
RAMIREZ PERDOMO**

Trade School
Considering Welding
or Tool & Die



**JORDAN
REYES MORENO**

School to Tools
Trade School
Welding



**ALEXA
RODRIGUEZ-JUAREZ**

Douglas J Aveda Institute
or Paul Mitchell
Cosmetology



ALLY SAEZ

Grand Valley State University
Counseling



SUZANA SHUKURU

Michigan State University
Nursing



CARLY SICILIA

Adrian College
Occupational Therapy



MARYN TOONSTRA

Davenport University
Nursing



ABIGAIL TULS

Biola University
Exercise Science,
Pre Physical Therapy



ASHLEY VAN DORP

GRCC, then Ferris University
Criminal Justice



**ASHER
VANDER GRIEND**

Calvin University
Engineering or Pre-med or
Analytical Risk Assessor



MEGAN VERMERRIS

Calvin University
Undecided - Athletic
or a STEM field



ABRAM VERWYS

Calvin University
Business



**DEYBI
VILLANUEVA GOMEZ**

Grand Rapids
Community College
Business or Real Estate



AMELIA WILBER

Michigan State University
Marketing



KENDALL WILSON

Lipscomb University
Biology, Physician Assistant



ANNIE WINKLE

Xavier University
Medical



A Healing Presence: Melanie Mendez's Journey at The Potter's House



Melanie Mendez was a fourth grader when her family discovered The Potter's House. After years of moving between different schools, she needed a place that offered both academic consistency and spiritual support. Around that time, her family connected with Jay and Kathleen Morren through mutual acquaintances at the Mendez's church. As their relationship grew, they realized they shared a connection to The Potter's House—Melanie's younger brother Gabe was already enrolled, and the Morrens were longtime supporters. When Melanie joined the school, the Morrens immediately joined the Partner Program, committing to walk alongside her throughout her journey.

"From the moment I walked through the doors," Melanie reflects, "it felt like a place where I could grow—academically, spiritually, and relationally."

For Melanie and her family, The Potter's House quickly became more than just a school. It became a community of mentors, teachers, and supporters who showed up consistently through the highs and lows of life. Her fourth-grade teacher, Mr. Van Zanten (aka Mr. Van) became a steady presence: showing up for

her eighth-grade graduation, attending her quinceañera, and helping her family through hardships. Melanie also thinks fondly of her high school Bible teacher, Pastor Trice. "He has been a mentor to me in high school, always guiding me with wisdom. The love and support I have received here has shaped me into the person I am today."

"When my family was facing a crisis, Mr. Van and the Morrens stepped in without hesitation," Melanie recalls. "They've been there through it all, like members of our family."

The school's Partner Program, which pairs students with TPH supporters, had a profound impact on Melanie. Her partners, Mr. Jay and Mrs. Kathleen, have been part of her life for nearly a decade. "They're not just my partners," Melanie says. "I call them my great-grandparents." Their relationship goes far beyond lunch visits. They celebrate birthdays and holidays together, swap homemade cookies, and support one another through life's seasons. "They've helped shape not just my education, but who I've become."

Melanie's story is one of transformation—from instability to deep-rooted purpose. At The Potter's House, she discovered her calling to become a nurse. Through classes at

KCTC and hands-on experience in nurse technician training, Melanie found herself drawn to the kind of compassionate care that treats patients with dignity and love.

"Someone has to do the hard work," she explains. "Someone has to be able to treat people the way they need to be treated, without dehumanizing them. I want to be the hands and feet of Jesus for people in their hardest moments, just as others have done for me."

This fall, Melanie plans to pursue a bachelor's degree in nursing at Calvin University. Her dream is to become an ER nurse, serving patients and their families with empathy, skill, and Christ-like compassion.

For Melanie, the support of her school community has made all the difference. From Mr. Trice, her longtime mentor, to Spanish teacher Mr. Cole who challenged her to refine her skills, to Mrs. Sisco who guided her through a senior project on opioid addiction, each educator left a lasting impact.

"The Potter's House isn't just where I went to school," Melanie says. "It's where I found purpose, confidence, and people who truly cared. I'm leaving here equipped not only for college, but for life."

When asked what she would say to someone considering The Potter's House, Melanie doesn't hesitate: "It's not just a school. It's a place where your child will be known, loved, and supported through every high and low. It's an investment that transforms lives." 🏠



More Than a Mentor: Greg and Marquis' Story

Eight years ago, Greg Conway had just retired early from a successful banking career. He and his wife, Amy, were eager to invest their time and resources in something meaningful. A fellow board member at the Salvation Army suggested they check out The Potter's House.

"We had never heard of it," Greg recalls. "But the more I learned, the more I was drawn in. The academic outcomes, the Christ-centered mission, the deep commitment to students—it was extraordinary."

What began as financial support soon turned into something more personal. Greg joined the Partner Program and prayed God would connect him with a student who could use his support. That student was Marquis—a fifth grader at the time—walking through a season of family hardship and uncertainty.



"I was in a really rough spot," Marquis shares. "School was hard. Life was harder. And then I met Mr. Greg."

Their early meetings focused on schoolwork—math, reading, staying on track. But very quickly, Greg realized this was about more than academics.

"Marquis didn't just need help with homework. He needed someone who would show up, listen, and care," Greg explains. "I could see God at work in his life and in his family, and I knew I was meant to walk alongside him."

That first year ended with a simple question: "Do you want to keep meeting?"

Marquis didn't hesitate. "I lit up and said, 'Definitely. A hundred percent.'"

From that moment on, Tuesday lunches at The Potter's House became a weekly ritual. What started as tutoring turned into a deep and lasting friendship built on consistency, encouragement, and trust.

"Even on my hardest days, it helped to know that Mr. Greg would be there," Marquis says. "He wasn't just a mentor—he became a true friend."

Over the years, Greg shared lessons that shaped Marquis far beyond the classroom. He taught him how to budget and save money. How to set and pursue goals with purpose. How to approach relationships with respect and faith.



"Every Tuesday lunch felt like a masterclass in life," Marquis says. "Mr. Greg believed in me when I didn't believe in myself. He showed me that my worth isn't tied to my grades or achievements—but to who I am as a child of God."

Greg, in turn, says he's learned just as much from Marquis. "The Partner Program is not a one-way street. It's reciprocal. Marquis has inspired me with his honesty, his perseverance, and his growing faith. He's helped me grow, too."

Marquis' time at The Potter's House has also been shaped by supportive teachers, friends, and programs like theater.

"In the theater program, I found my voice," he says. "We laugh together, we encourage each other. It's a family."

Now, as a graduating senior, Marquis is preparing to attend Calvin



Marquis with Greg and Amy Conway enjoying a recent Partner Day event

University to study special education. He and Greg still meet regularly and plan to continue their lunches whenever possible.

"Calvin is just a few minutes from where Mr. Greg lives," Marquis smiles. "We'll definitely stay connected."

Their story is a powerful reminder of the heart behind The Potter's House: building a Christ-centered community where students know they are loved, and where faithful friends walk beside them.

"There are so many students like me at The Potter's House," Marquis says. "They need someone who listens. Who shows up. Who cares."



Marquis performing as Charlie Brown in "You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown!"

Greg adds, "If you're wondering whether you can make a difference—through prayer, giving, or becoming a mentor—the answer is yes. You can. And it just might change your life, too."



From Despair to Bright Hope: Vivian's Journey at The Potter's House

When Vivian took the stage at this year's New Friends Banquet, the room fell silent. Her story, both heartbreaking and inspiring, reminded everyone in attendance why The Potter's House exists.

Vivian's early years were marked by instability. Born in Japan, she was brought to the United States at just 18 months old and placed in the care of her grandparents. Her father had hoped to persuade her mother to join them in the U.S., but she never came. The divorce followed, and Vivian grew up wondering why her parents weren't there.

"I blamed myself for their absence," she said. "For their divorce. For things no child should ever have to carry."

As Vivian entered middle school, the emotional toll deepened. She battled depression and anxiety, and eventually attempted to take her own life. Her grandparents, struggling to

manage her outbursts and care for their own health, made the painful decision to send her back to Japan to live with her father and stepmother. There, things only worsened.

"The abuse became physical. The police were at our house almost every day. It wasn't safe for me or for my little sister."

After just one semester, Vivian's grandparents brought her back to the United States. She returned not just shaken but broken, unsure of her identity, her faith, and her future.

"My grandmother started looking for schools that would take me. Some wouldn't. They didn't say it out loud, but the message was clear – I wasn't worth the risk."

Then she discovered The Potter's House.

"When we met with Mr. Clark, he looked me in the eye and said, 'If I let you in, can you handle the work?' I didn't have all the answers. But I told him I'd try."

From the very first day, Vivian sensed this school was different. She had attended faith-based schools before, but never felt truly cared for.

"At The Potter's House, I felt seen. I felt wanted. I wasn't just a statistic."

The impact of that welcome has rippled through every part of her life.

Through the love of her teachers, the safety of her classroom, and the friendships she formed – particularly in the theater program – Vivian began to find her footing again. She also began to rediscover her faith.

"I still have questions and doubts. But I've learned that God's love doesn't depend on how strong my faith is in any given moment. And this school reminds me of that truth every day."

Teachers like Ms. Scott and Ms. Ophoff played a powerful role in her journey. "Ms. Scott welcomed me with open arms when I was still figuring things out. And one day, when I came to school in tears after an argument with my grandmother, Ms. Ophoff just said, 'Do you need a hug?' At that moment, I knew I wasn't alone."

Vivian's favorite subject is English, and her time at The Potter's House has inspired her to pursue a career as an author. This fall, she will attend Calvin University and begin that journey – a dream she once thought was out of reach.

Looking back, she credits the school for changing her life.

"This isn't just a school. It's a family. A place where you're encouraged to become who God created you to be."

Vivian's story is just one example of the kind of transformation made possible by the generous support of donors, mentors, and partners in the TPH community.

"I hope that in hearing my story, you're reminded of the power of a community that chooses to care. Because that choice changes lives. It changed mine." 🏠





More Than Robots: Building Skills and Confidence in Every Student

What started as an afterschool club with a handful of students has grown into one of The Potter's House's most dynamic programs: robotics. Today, every student in grades 2-8 participates in robotics class, and competitive teams are thriving at the elementary, middle, and high school levels.

"Our robotics program is about more than just building machines," says teacher and coach Tricia Figueroa. "It's about equipping students to think critically, collaborate well, and believe that they can succeed in STEM fields."

Jackie Frens, robotics teacher, adds "When students build and program robots, the messy process of finding just the right tools and pieces to complete a design while working with a partner can be challenging. However, this makes the process all the more rewarding."

Students learn to design, build, and program robots to compete in local and international FIRST robotics competitions. This year, the high school robotics team had the opportunity to be paired with another school's robotics team, and together they earned

second place at the West Michigan district competition—a huge accomplishment in a challenging field!

"This program shows students what's possible," Figueroa explains. "They begin to see themselves in future careers they never imagined before."

From Curiosity to Career Goals

For 8th grader Jackson Bobo, robotics began as a fun elective and became a calling. After three years on the middle school team, Jackson got to join the high school team this year and now dreams of becoming an engineer.

"Robotics is a fun, free learning environment that sparks interest in building, coding, and playing with robots," Jackson says. "But my favorite part is the building—and learning how to work with others to solve problems."

He adds that the class has taught him how to support others and persevere: "Before robotics, I didn't really know what I wanted to be. Now I'm strongly considering engineering."



Sophomore Duy Huynh says the high school team transformed how he thinks about collaboration. "I used to prefer working alone because I wanted everything to be perfect. But I learned I can't do it all by myself," he says. "Now I value teamwork—and I've improved a lot because of it."

Learning to Think—and Try—Like Engineers

Seventh grader Steven Sanchez says the program taught him how to code in both JAVA and BLOCKS, and how to build a robot to compete with other schools. But just as important, it gave him confidence and connection.

"I didn't know if I had the skills to do it," Steven admits. "But I met kids I didn't think I'd be friends with, and now we're teammates. Our coaches were very kind to all of us."

This sense of belonging is intentional. "One thing that's delighted me," Mrs. Figueroa says, "is seeing second graders use engineering vocabulary and creatively build drivetrains with real parts. They believe they can do this—and they're right."





What Robotics Looks Like at TPH

- **Elementary** students use snap-together VEX kits to explore physics and engineering through hands-on building and block-based coding.
- **Middle and High School** students work with REV kits using real metal, plastic, screws, and sensors to design and build custom robots. Students compete in local and international competitions and refine their skills in team strategy, project documentation, and game-day decision-making.
- **All students** develop critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and perseverance in a structured but playful environment that welcomes all skill levels.

Students who take the robotics class don't just learn how to build a robot. They also learn how to fail—and try again. "The design process includes many iterations of the robot," says Mrs. Figueroa. "Students learn to improve their ideas and understand that failure is just part of growth."

Why Start So Early?

TPH's vision is to prepare students—starting in second grade—for success in life, not just in school. Introducing students to STEM concepts early opens doors. Research shows that early robotics education increases student motivation, improves academic performance across subjects, and leads to higher rates of college and career readiness in STEM fields.

"Robotics gives students a reason to come to school excited," Figueroa says. "It shows them that math and science have real-world applications, and that they have what it takes to succeed."

A Win for the Whole School

While the high school robotics team is having great success in West Michigan district competitions, Mrs. Figueroa is just as proud of the quieter victories—second graders confidently using words like "gear ratio," middle schoolers solving problems together, and

high schoolers mentoring younger students.

"I'm always delighted when students learn something they didn't think they could," she says. "I'm also challenged to make robotics accessible to every student in our school, regardless of experience."

Looking ahead, TPH plans to continue expanding the program, with more courses, more tournaments, and more opportunities for students to discover their God-given potential.

Because at The Potter's House, robotics isn't just about robots. It's about building people. 🏠

Gifts In Memory Of:

Jason and Larry Preston

William and Nancy Meyer

Lois Stob

William and Phyllis Johnson

Charlotte Uken

Donna Bliek

Chris and Melida Brown

Beatrice Hayen

Marjorie Kusters

Mary Ann Meyer

Raymond and Dawn Mulder

Carol Nyenhuis

Alice Pasma

Wilma Quist

Herbert and Helen Ranta

William and MaryBeth Roedema

Ronald and Suzanne Uken

Timothy and Edith Vanderveen

Bradley and Mimi Vanmanen

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Marvin and Ruth Vos

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Thank You!





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