

PAOLA ADULT EDUCATION CENTER

WINTER 2019 NEWSLETTER



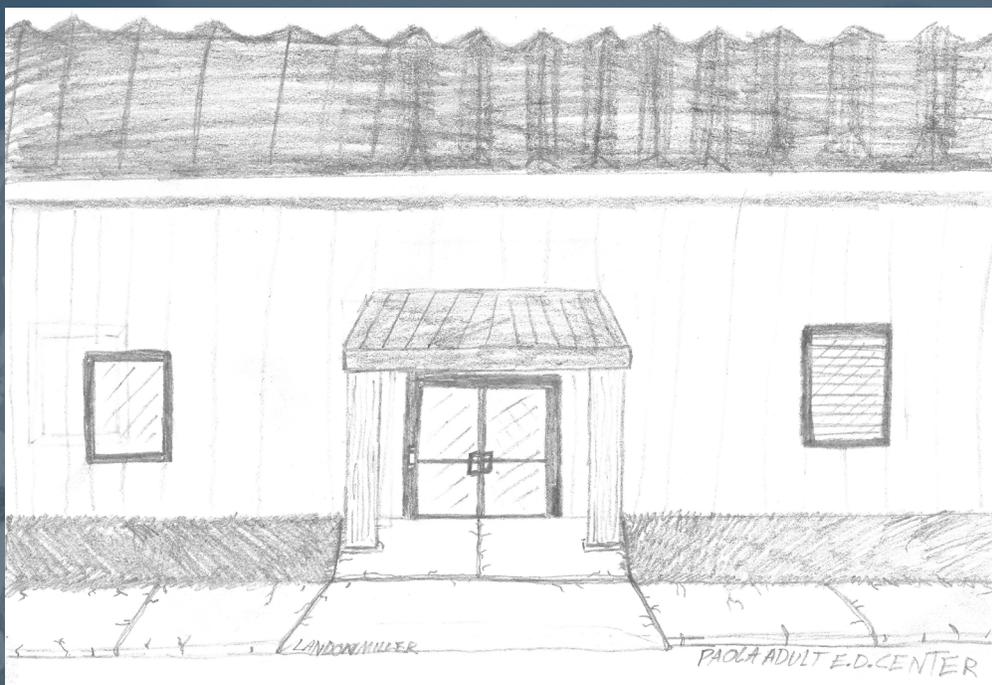
**WHAT PAEC MEANS
TO ME: A STUDENT'S
PERSPECTIVE**



**SANTALAND:
HELPING OUR
STUDENTS WITH
CHRISTMAS CHEER**



**A SCHOOL,
A SANCTUARY,
A SAFE PLACE,
A STABLE FAMILY.**



Artwork by:
Landon Miller

WHAT PAEC MEANS TO ME: A STUDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

BY JERZEY BOWEN

Hi. My name is Jerzey Bowen and I go to the Alternative High School at the Paola Adult Education Center. There are many other students who go to this program with me. Some of the things that we do are our high school classes. So if you're failing or you're really having troubles, you should ask to come over and see what it's like to be here. There are ten people here that will all help and be there for you in their own way. They will do everything in their power to make sure you graduate and see you walk that stage.

My experience at Paola Adult Education Center has been the most important thing as I've worked so hard to get where I need to be to be truly proud of myself. I've never enjoyed a teacher's company like I do at the Paola Adult Education Center. They genuinely care and put effort in for you to make sure you take care of the things you need to take care of. Even if you need them to pay for the things you need, they will. If you need something just ask Karen or Cindy or Pat. They are always there to help. I thank our high school principal and our superintendent for making our program!

A VIEW INTO SANTALAND

BY CHRIS WHEATON

With a twinkle in his eyes he went quickly to his work, filling all the stockings and getting ready for the big day. As he puts the last touches on the crafts and baked goods, Santa is now ready to invite all the kids to share in some fun. Kids show up from Osawatomie, LaCygne, Louisburg and beyond to proclaim their wishes, dreams and hopes of presents under the tree. Santa listens and with a reassuring grin states that they better be on their best behavior. Mrs. Claus, smelling like sugar cookies and dressed in her white kerchief, gives each child a stocking full of toys. Bouncing from this room to others, each child seems to be full of joy.

The level of excitement seems to build to a frenzy until an elf walks down the hall shouting, "Cake walk in 5 minutes" when kids pour down to the room in hopes of winning a cake. When the music stops it doesn't matter if they won or not, the kids are off to explore the other rooms in the building. One of bake goods and baskets to raffle off. The people flutter from one basket to another pondering which one they want. Now for the crafts they charge into the next room. There are six different ones so it becomes a challenge to decide which to create first. After their artwork is finished, their faces are painted with ornaments or holly to look a bit more festive. With a sly wave to Mr. and Mrs. Claus and a bag full of treasures, the kids skip outside with an excitement of Christmas to come.

This scenario could be a picture by Norman Rockwell, but this happens annually at the Paola Adult Education Center. The building is decorated like the North Pole and kids are excited to venture in. For almost ten years, this has been one of the school's fundraising events. All the funds collected will go to the students wanting to get their GED®. The money will also help them take the first step into college. This is an event I look forward to every year. We welcome all of you to this year's celebration on Saturday, December 7th from 9am to 2pm.

FULL-TIME SECRETARY, PART-TIME THERAPIST

BY CINDY WALTERS

The front desk is the first place students go when they enter our building. That means that the secretary at that front desk often provides the first interaction a student has in their day. Our foundation here at the Paola Adult Education Center is to provide the type of positive, stable environment that so many of our students lack at home. The front desk is the crucial point where students must be welcomed to a place where they can feel safe and comfortable.

The most effective way to do this is by creating real relationships with our students. I try to make sure every student who walks up to my desk walks away from it knowing that we care about them and that they are important to us. Too many of our kids here don't get that type of care at home and need it so badly. This is what truly makes students feel safe and comfortable here. These relationships aren't made in one day. Earning the trust of our students takes time and it can only be built on interactions that are consistently sincere and positive. Another important part of this is realizing that not all these relationships will be the same and that's okay. After some time getting to know each student better, I start to notice each one's individual non-verbal cues and patterns. This is when I know that I really know that student and that we have created a real, positive relationship.

