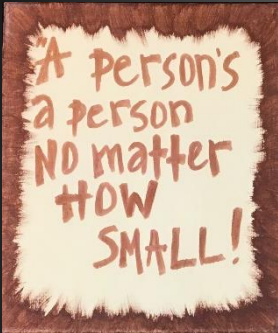




Doing more of what works and less of what doesn't

## What are we working on?



The 5 and Under shows! For the past 3 years X-Excel has supplied several local schools with crafts that range from \$1- \$5. This allows all students the opportunity to buy gifts for their family members.

### Why are we excited about this?

Besides the obvious income this generates for X-Excel, it also provides an environment where kids interact with the people we serve. Encouraging young people to get to know someone with a disability is one way to break down prejudices early on.

### Where will we be this year?

We are thrilled to be at Clearmount Elementary School and Orchard Hill Middle School in North Canton. We will also be at Guided Transitions, a Day Hab in Akron for the very first year. We look forward to meeting everyone. If your school would be interested in partnering next year, just give us a call!



Kahli showcasing her employee of the month certificate

Ashley tried Starbucks coffee for the first time, with Tom



Josh working on Buckeye keychains for the \$5 and Under shows



Kim decorating a pumpkin during the McKinley/Massillon tailgate party

Chad was excited about his paycheck



Kandy helping with World Traveler's Group to Greece

## Mental Wellness during the Holidays

1

Be realistic. Everything doesn't need to be perfect or just like last year.

2

Keep a budget. Before you go food and gift shopping decide what you can afford and stick to it.

3

Acknowledge feelings. If you miss a loved one, give yourself time to grieve.

4

Give yourself time. Go on a walk, read, or do something that calms you.

5

Say No. To avoid feeling overwhelmed, it's ok if you can't make every event.

*"Character is higher than intellect. A great soul will be strong to live as well as think."*

Ralph Waldo Emerson

# From the Desk of Tom Rickels

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*Happy December!*

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Instead of my usual banter about the many silly things we do in our field, I am just going to be thankful today.

We are coming up on the 3<sup>rd</sup> year anniversary of X-Excel and it isn't just my company, it is a company for all the people that work here. Some of my blessings are:

- To have employees that buy into the vision of what services can really look like.
- Employees that have great ideas, never give up, and aren't afraid to talk and work out issues.
- Watching people grow as they complete the current jobs they have and try to instill the positive energy that leads to community employment.

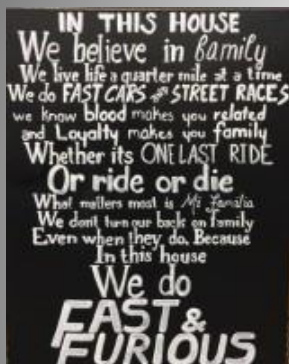
- To see two people, walk to Starbucks on their own and get coffee (one had never been in Starbucks).
- To have a leadership team that is always willing to try new and better things to help people.
- To have a positive culture and the honesty to tell people what they need to improve on and then help them do that.
- Most of all to have parents and guardians that entrust their family members to X-Excel every day.

Believe in good. I do.

Tom

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## Gift Shop Highlight- *We can customize anything you see!*



Canvas Art  
(\$15)

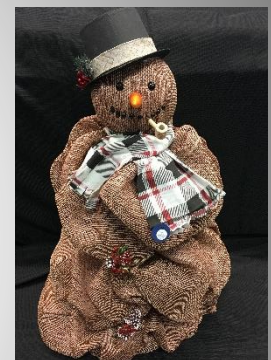
Pallet Frosty  
(\$12)



X-Excel also makes handmade Christmas cards!

We can even personalize them for your family's needs!

Snow Pallet Signs (\$15)



Mesh Snowman  
(Sm \$35, Lg \$40)

## Congratulations!

Congratulations to Megan in Jackson for interviewing and getting a job at Little Caesars!

Prior to this success, Megan approached Barb the PC at Jackson and said she had many interviews and by the end of each, she knew she wasn't getting the job. She wasn't sure what she was doing and what she needed to improve upon.

For many weeks Barb and the DSPs at Jackson worked with Megan on how to answer interview questions. Through mock interviews they discovered that often Megan talked about personal struggles at home and other details unrelated to the topic asked.

The DSPs helped Megan directly answer each question rather than giving out too much information.

Guess What? Megan has been working at Little Caesars since October 24<sup>th</sup>! The manager personally trained Megan for three weeks on making pizza dough and cleaning dishes. Megan even learned how to close up at night now works Friday through Sunday.

We are thrilled to announce that she is pursuing more days at Little Caesars and has officially moved on from X-Excel. Congratulations Megan!



# Little Caesars®

## DSP Spotlight



*Whitney Cresong*  
NC1

### Do you have any pets?

Yes, I have two. An albino German Shepard and a Maltese Pomeranian mix.

### You're happiest when?

I'm probably happiest when I'm doing something for someone and it benefits them in a good way. Like getting everyone coffee. I like to give.

### What is your favorite thing about being a DSP?

Getting to know everyone, what they like, what they dislike and developing a relationship with them.

### What is something you wish people knew about you?

I look a lot harder than I am. People tell me I look serious, but I am more outgoing than I look.

# Act of Kindness Calendar

Simple ways to share kindness this  
Holiday season!

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <b>1</b><br>Hold the door open for someone            | <b>2</b><br>Compliment a friend                                    | <b>3</b><br>Help with the dishes                              |
| <b>4</b><br>Tell someone how much you love them       | <b>5</b><br>Be kind to yourself. Do something that makes you smile | <b>6</b><br>Help make dinner                                  |
| <b>7</b><br>Donate one piece of clothing to a charity | <b>8</b><br>Make a card for someone                                | <b>9</b><br>Call a friend you haven't talk to in a while      |
| <b>10</b><br>Give someone a hug                       | <b>11</b><br>Clean a room of your home without being asked         | <b>12</b><br>Give someone a high five                         |
| <b>13</b><br>Smile at someone who isn't smiling       | <b>14</b><br>Tell someone a joke                                   | <b>15</b><br>Compliment a co-worker and then tell their boss! |
| <b>16</b><br>Return someone's cart at the store       | <b>17</b><br>Take the trash out                                    | <b>18</b><br>Thank someone in your life                       |
| <b>19</b><br>Say Merry Christmas to a stranger        | <b>20</b><br>Say hi to a stranger                                  | <b>21</b><br>Carry someone's groceries to their car for them  |
| <b>22</b><br>Help out with the laundry                | <b>23</b><br>Make someone laugh                                    | <b>24</b><br>Write a letter to someone (and mail it)          |

## What's Being Said?

"I just went to the Flour Barrel in Ashland. I wanted to thank all the [workers at X-Excel] who helped make our treats."

- A Google review

## Happy Anniversary!

*Annette Wood* 12/16/2008

## Happy Birthday!

<i>Kendra V.</i>	12/2
<i>Alaina W.</i>	12/5
<i>Jody D.</i>	12/6
<i>Tiffany G.</i>	12/7
<i>John D.</i>	12/10
<i>Logan M</i>	12/13
<i>Renee S.</i>	12/14
<i>Barb Y.</i>	12/14
<i>Jill H.</i>	12/16
<i>Sue T.</i>	12/20
<i>Kelly F</i>	12/20
<i>Kahli D.</i>	12/23
<i>Whitney M</i>	12/23
<i>Janet P.</i>	12/25
<i>Alexis D.</i>	12/28
<i>Jacob P.</i>	12/29
<i>Claudia L.</i>	12/30
<i>Katelyn R.</i>	12/31

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