

Hello, my name is Gia Scardina I am the co-president of the PSA and the mother of 2 hard-of-hearing (HOH) / Hearing impaired children Thomas age 5 and Ariana age 7. Both children were born with Bilateral Sensorineural hearing loss and were fitted Ariana at 4 months old and Thomas at 1 month old with Oticon pediatric hearing aids. My family was fortunate to have been referred to Cleary School by a friend when Ariana was born in late 2010. I was a new mother and scared to pieces, I think I cried everyday at least 2 times wondering what would come and how I would do anything to hear my child say momma or daddy. In Feb 2011 after things were settled my husband Joe and I and our daughter Ariana in her pretty pink hearing aids started to attend the Parent Infant Program (PIP) which included Music Together, Individual Speech sessions, Playgroup, and of course Teacher of The Deaf (TOD). Sounds like a lot but it truly was the best thing that ever happened to our children and to our family. Cleary School has provided not just an education for my children but education and support to our entire family. My both children attended PIP and the Pre K programs and have both moved into our home district after graduating Cleary School. Thomas is in a 12.1.1 in our district because we believe that this was the appropriate placement for him at this time. Our daughter is mainstreamed in a 2nd grade general education class and doing great. Both children have the use of an FM system in class and do well with them.

My children are no longer attending Cleary School however I asked and was fortunate enough to be granted permission to stay on the PSA. I want to be a part of the PSA to be able to give back and pay forward all the things my family has experienced through during our time at Cleary School. There was never a day in 7 years there wasn't someone there for us when we were concerned, upset, angry, or anxious, they listened to us in the halls, on the phone, through notes or emails. They provided parents with classes and tools that helped teach us to advocate for our children. They gave us hope and inspired us to be the best we can be.

I am lucky that I will be able to be a part of putting a smile on someone's face, to see the room light up with children's smiling faces when we sponsor activities or events, to thank not just one staff member but all of them and to be there for a parent, grandparent, aunt, uncle, brother or sister who may just need ear to listen. I do not know where my family would be without the teachers, the staff members and wonderful friendships we have made along our journey at Cleary School.

I hope you will consider joining the PSA. We are looking forward to meeting families, parents/guardians, grandparents and caregivers that would like to get involved with our PSA this school year. We encourage you get involved volunteer as much or as little as you want or can. Come to meetings. Read the minutes. Give us your thoughts. Jump in and help. Ask questions. Everyone is busy, but think about how happy it will make your child when they get to see you or a family member at an event helping out. It's a wonderful investment that will produce lasting benefits. If you are able to give some time, day or evenings, at school or from home, please join us! Many hands make the job easier. Every hour helps! We hope you will join our team.

If you have any questions, concerns, comments please contact me at any time.



Thank you,
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