Project Grad-Akron is a nonprofit education reform entity that offers programs, supports and scholarships for underrepresented youth from kindergarten through career classes. Since 2002, Project Grad-Akron has partnered with the Akron Public School System. The program is designed to offer opportunities to students regardless of ethnicity or socio-economic status who are at risk in the community.

The Buchtel cluster of Project Grad-Akron held its annual Holiday Gala for several hundred children on Dec 1. Project Grad culinary arts students prepared breakfast for all participants. Undergraduate students from the Student Social Work League (SSWL) and graduate students from the Master Social Work Student Association (MSWSA) joined the gala with six tables that offered opportunities to do arts and crafts, color holiday scenes, make snow globes, play games (pin the carrot nose on the snowperson was a favorite) and face painting. These activities gave children an opportunity to celebrate the holidays in a safe, family friendly atmosphere.

Pictured above, from left, are graduate students Rachia Williams and Elizabeth Smith with Rev. Dr. Curtis T. Walker Sr., Akron School Board vice president; Dr. Mark McManus, visiting assistant professor in the School of Social Work and advisor to the MSSWA, and graduate student Zia Schrader.