



Celebrating the people and programs

@MAY

News from May Institute, a national nonprofit provider of behavioral health, education, and rehabilitative services

Autism Awareness Initiatives Highlight Hope

"We believe it is so important to educate others who have little exposure to, or less than a full understanding of, the strengths that each child possesses, regardless of his or her challenges."

—Suzanne and Michael, Matthew's parents

For decades, May Institute has committed to raising awareness about autism. Why? To help educate people about a disorder that is often misunderstood, to drive home the importance of early diagnosis and treatment, and to extend the network of support for families of individuals with autism.



Poster artwork featuring Matthew appears on the MBTA.

We share that philosophy with organizations and governments around the world. In fact, the United Nations General Assembly passed a resolution in 2008 designating April 2nd as World Autism Awareness Day to heighten global awareness about a disorder that affects millions. That resolution made autism one of only three

health issues to be recognized by the UN with its own "day."

Our commitment to education has led to various initiatives over the past few years, including award-winning photo exhibits and public awareness campaigns. This year during Autism Awareness Month,

RODMAN RIDES AGAIN!

FUNdraiser Helps Raise More than \$600,000 for Children's Services

It's been said that "nothing succeeds like success," and when it comes to May Institute and the Rodman Ride for Kids, that adage has proven true.

In the past four years, the Rodman Ride For Kids has helped May Institute raise over \$600,000 for programs and services that benefit children with autism spectrum disorders, brain injury, and other special needs. The Rodman Ride is an umbrella matching gift charity that raises funds for social service agencies that support at-risk kids in Massachusetts.

Rodman Ride organizers first selected the Institute as an "affiliated agency" in 2007 and set a goal of raising \$60,000. Every year since then, they have raised the bar for our fundraising goal. And every year we have jumped the hurdle and met the challenge. We have a strong incentive to do so: the Rodman Ride provides a 10 percent match for every dollar raised to affiliated agencies that meet their goals.

Letter from our **PRESIDENT**



As May Institute marks its anniversary this month, 56 years after its founding, I am reminded of the progress we have made over the past six decades. Not just at May Institute, but in this country and throughout the international community.

Fifty-six years ago, most people had never heard of “autism.” Children diagnosed with the disorder were typically institutionalized for life. Prevailing wisdom blamed a mother’s lack of attachment to her child as the reason for the condition. Fear, shame, and a dearth of answers surrounded these families.

Today, as we continue to search aggressively for answers about autism, we have a growing arsenal of tools available to us. We can diagnose children as young as 16 months. We know which treatments are most effective, and we can provide intensive therapy that can change the trajectory of a child’s life.

Through the years, we have helped countless individuals with autism obtain the skills they need to successfully transition from childhood into adulthood, and lead full and rewarding lives.

From May Institute’s own autism awareness campaigns during Autism Awareness Month in April, to the National Autism Center’s ongoing international dissemination of information on effective treatments, to the United Nation’s commemoration of World Autism Awareness Day, education about autism is making its way to families and communities throughout the world.

I invite you to read about some of our most recent efforts to educate communities, treat individuals and families, and advance the field of autism and developmental disabilities. There is still much to be done, but I applaud our collective efforts thus far and look with hope to the future.

As always, thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Walter P. Christian".

Walter P. Christian, Ph.D., ABBP, ABPP
President and CEO

Change and Opportunity at the ASD Clinic



“Things are going to change,” says **Marisa Petruccelli, Psy.D.**, the new Director of the Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) Clinic in Randolph, Mass., referring to the impact that new autism legislation in Massachusetts will have on the Clinic in the coming months. The new law is known as ARICA (An Act Relative to Insurance Coverage for Autism).

Just as Dr. Petruccelli was settling into her new office and new job, ARICA went into effect in Massachusetts. This new legislation requires all insured health plans to cover “medically necessary services” for the diagnosis and treatment of ASD. Massachusetts is the 24th state in the country to enact such legislation.

“In terms of providing diagnostic and treatment services, the ramifications of ARICA on the ASD Clinic could be huge,” says Dr. Petruccelli, who most recently served the Institute as Director of Home-based Services.

“The ARICA legislation means that some families will have more options. For example, they will not have to rely on school districts to provide the home and community services their children need; neither will they be required to fully fund those services out of their own pockets.”

Families come to the ASD Clinic not only for diagnostic evaluations and evidence-based therapeutic treatment services, but also for support services that include group and one-on-one therapy sessions that help them adjust to an ASD diagnosis and manage stress.

In addition, the Clinic’s “Pathways” onsite parent education series provides families with important information that will help them help their children. “It is our long-term goal to have additional family educational information available both onsite and online,” Dr. Petruccelli explains. “For example, we hope to offer sibling training and a parent education series uniquely related to Asperger’s Syndrome in the near future.”

Editor’s note: Education and support services are not covered under the ARICA law.

HOME-BASED AND SCHOOL CONSULTATION SERVICES EARN CARF ACCREDITATION

“Children and youths with ASD throughout the world receive better treatment outcomes in some part because of the leadership and research demonstrated by May Institute.”

That statement was part of a recent accreditation report from the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF), issued at the completion of a three-year accreditation of May Institute’s home-based and school consultation services in Georgia and Massachusetts.

The CARF accreditation report commended the Institute for its exemplary service delivery models which incorporate current research and evidence-based practice. “May Institute is a national leader in the field of treatment for children with ASD (autism spectrum disorders),” CARF noted.

The report also praised May Institute staff and Board of Trustees members, noting, “May Institute is fortunate to have many highly educated, certified, and licensed individuals in its employ.” It went on to say that, “board members are knowledgeable and provide leadership and direction” and that, “the practice of growing individuals for greater responsibility percolates throughout the organization.”

“I am extremely proud of our organization, its employees, and Board of Trustees,” said **Walter P. Christian, Ph.D.**, ABBP, ABPP, May Institute’s President and CEO. “This accreditation is not only a well deserved recognition of our outstanding consultation services, but also a formal acknowledgment of the Institute’s national leadership, our employees’ impressive clinical expertise, and the invaluable guidance provided by our Board members.”



RANDOLPH STAFF HONORED

The entire staff from the May Center residential and teaching community in Randolph, Mass., recently had the opportunity to recognize their peers' significant contributions to May Institute.

At a recognition luncheon, **David Murphy**, M.Ed., the school's Executive Director, explained that "the occasion was meant to take a moment to honor those on the staff whose years of service have left an indelible imprint on the entire program."



Dr. Walter P. Christian shares a heartfelt congratulations with Ann Marie Flaherty.

Other speakers included **Walter P. Christian**, Ph.D., ABPP, ABPP, the Institute's President and CEO, and **Ralph Sperry**, Ph.D., ABPP, Chief Operating Officer. Both personally congratulated and awarded Certificates of Appreciation to 49 staff in recognition of their years of service.

"Every day, lives are being changed because of you," said Dr. Christian. "There isn't a day that goes by that I don't recognize that at the very heart of May are those of you who have dedicated so much, for so many years, to the families we serve. I am deeply grateful for the commitment, compassion, and professionalism that you have brought to May throughout these many years."

Those honored included: **Dale Nasman**, Direct Care II, for 22 years of service; **Deirdre MacInnis**, Program Support Coordinator, for 18 years of service; **Kathleen Buckley**, Nurse, and **Ann Marie Flaherty**, Clerical staff, for 17 years of service. 🍷

APPRECIATING THE LITTLE THINGS

Randolph Students Shine at Winter Showcase

Every parent beams with pride when their child steps on a stage. And every student lights up with excitement when they see their very own artwork on public display.

Opportunities for special moments like these came for families, staff, and students at the May Center for Child Development's first-ever Winter Showcase held at the Randolph, Mass., campus. The event featured a holiday and winter-themed art exhibit and musical extravaganza, where students from ages 3 to 22 sang, played, and danced to their favorite songs.

The performances represented significant individual accomplishments and personal courage for students like Josephat. Here are excerpts from his mother's letter:



Music Teacher Justina Stickland guides Josephat during his solo, while staff members Rebecca Parenteau (back) and Lisa Roscoe (far right) look on.

Josephat was two years old when he was diagnosed with autism. I was not naive or in denial. I had known that something was "wrong" long before then, and had been pushing his pediatrician for answers for more than a year. Still, hearing that diagnosis was heartbreaking. It made it official. My beautiful, big-eyed boy with the contagious smile was autistic.

Josephat is now nine years old. Over the last seven years there have been many setbacks, but just as many triumphs. I still hold high, albeit different, expectations for my son. I have learned that while autism brings many challenges, it does not limit Josephat's ability to be happy. Most importantly, I have learned to appreciate the little things.

The Winter Showcase was full of little things to appreciate. There was seeing the beautiful artwork, created by Josephat and other May Center students, that lined the walls leading into the gym. There was watching Josephat on stage with his classmates, banging the drum and dancing around to the music. And, there was listening to Josephat, a minimally-verbal child, sing "Jingle Bells," one of his favorite songs. He was a bit off tempo, but all smiles.

Seeing Josephat so happy is the best thing of all! 🍷

Making a Difference in the Lives of Adults With Special Needs

In recent issues of *@May*, we have highlighted our Massachusetts clubhouses and day habilitation programs. In this issue, we turn our attention to the Institute's adult residential services—more than 150 group homes and supported living apartments located in communities across Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Florida.



These residences are staffed by dedicated employees who are committed to providing respectful, effective, and supportive services to adults with special needs; adults like Nancy (above), an 81-year-old woman with developmental disabilities and dementia.

Nancy used to live in a nursing home. Thanks to the settlement of a class action lawsuit on behalf of disabled individuals, she was able to move into a May Institute group home in North Reading, Mass.

"When I get Nancy up in the morning, she always throws her arms around me and gives me a big hug," says **Sue Santapaola**, a program specialist who works with Nancy.

Today, Nancy enjoys attending dances for seniors, participating in music therapy sessions, and helping her caregivers prepare meals. She goes to her local church, enjoys shopping and other community outings.

"They're good to me here," Nancy says, "and the food is really good too!" 🍷

Celebrating Thomas!

*Adorned in his cap and gown and wearing a very big smile, Thomas is a proud high school graduate. Thomas lives in one of the May Center for Adult Services' community residences for adults with developmental disabilities and is a member of its Raynham, Mass., day habilitation program. Director of Day Services **Marcia Galavotti**, B.A., B.S., (pictured) and other staff members, friends, and housemates helped Thomas mark his wonderful achievement. "May staff helped me celebrate," he said. "There was a party with food and music...I had a good time!" Thomas dreams of owning his own business some day. 🍷*



Autism Awareness... CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

our billboards in prominent locations in Boston and Columbus, Ga., call attention to the prevalence of autism.

We are also proud to bring back our "What Does Autism Look Like?" campaign on the MBTA (Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority). The campaign puts a human face on the disorder through its beautiful photographs and compelling stories of children and adolescents with autism.

Young Matthew, the son of Suzanne and Michael, is one of the children who brings the exhibit to life. "Matthew has always had the ability to draw people into his life, so being

one of the faces of this campaign gives him the opportunity to shine as an educator about those who share his special traits," his parents tell us.

The campaign includes 125 large platform posters currently displayed

Have you seen our autism billboards or MBTA campaign?

If so, we'd love to hear your thoughts. Please email us at info@may-institute.org, or contact us via our website.

in 55 stations, and more than 1,300 educational "car cards" displayed on subway cars, buses, and commuter trains. The broad reach of the MBTA allows us to provide

important information about autism to an audience of over 1.3 million commuters who use the MBTA every day.

Feedback on the campaign has been extremely positive. JudyAnn Bigby, M.D., Secretary of Massachusetts Health and Human Services, wrote, "This autism awareness initiative shares a powerful message about the importance of research, early diagnosis, treatment, and—above all—hope. The campaign captures the diverse faces and winning spirits of so many people with autism and their loved ones."

To learn more about other autism awareness initiatives, see page 7. 🍷



5 notable grants & gifts

We are truly grateful to the corporations, foundations, and agencies that support our vital services through their grants and donations. Recent supporters include:

1.

New York Center for Autism awarded May Institute a \$20,000 grant, representing a portion of the proceeds of Comedy Central's 2010 *Night of Too Many Stars*. Proceeds from the televised fundraiser, which raised over \$3.5M, will help create new programming for individuals with autism in our care.

2.

BJ's Charitable Foundation provided a \$5,000 grant to purchase reading supplies and books for children with autism served at the May Center for Child Development in Randolph, Mass.

3.

The Scheidel Foundation awarded a \$5,000 grant to purchase athletic equipment, musical instruments, and electronics for the activity room at our Adult Day Training Program in Jacksonville, Fla.

4.

Billy Andrade-Brad Faxon Charities for Children awarded a \$3,000 grant to purchase recreational and fitness equipment for our Children's Connections program in New Bedford, Mass.

5.

Peoples Federal Savings Bank Foundation donated \$1,000 to support the food pantry at the May Counseling Center in West Roxbury, Mass.

Rodman Rides Again!... CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

In 2010, our goal was \$175,000. Once again, we met the challenge and earned another \$17,576 from the Rodman Ride, thanks to the 10 percent match. Credit for our continued success goes to employees throughout May Institute, our board members, business partners, families, and corporate sponsors.

Our 2010 May Institute cycling contingent included 20 teams whose members pedaled a combined total of 2,800 miles. In addition to the revenue generated by the riders, employees organized local events that attracted strong support and brought in significant contributions.

"One hundred percent of these funds will benefit the thousands of children

- **\$30,000**
 - Stephen H. Peck & Associates/UBS
- **\$10,000**
 - Fabiani & Company
- **\$5,000**
 - Todson, Inc.
 - Merrill Lynch
 - Big Y Foods, Inc.
 - BJ's Charitable Foundation
- **\$4,000**
 - Arbella Insurance Group Charitable Foundation
- **\$3,000**
 - Telamon Insurance & Financial Network
- **\$1,500**
 - The Beveridge Family Foundation
 - BlackRock Financial Management, Inc.



May Ambassador Christa Keil rides with Hans Keil and Julia Wooldridge (l-r).

in Massachusetts who receive our services," says **Heidi Howard**, M.P.A., Chief of Business Development. "We are extremely grateful to the Rodman Ride for helping us make a difference in the lives of the children we serve."

Each year, we are fortunate to benefit from the support of our business partners. We are grateful to the following 2010 sponsors:

- **\$1,000**
 - 596 Summer Street, LLC
 - Boston Bean Coffee Co.
 - Centre Street Garage
 - Cummings Properties
 - Fenno Trust
 - Hub International New England
 - Jackson Lewis, LLP
 - Smith & Rauschenbach
 - Weinstein Smith, LLP

Commitment to Military Families Extends to Autism Awareness Efforts

As part of our ongoing commitment to expand autism services to military families, May Institute opened two new May Centers for Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) in the second half of 2010.

One of these Centers is located in Killeen, Texas, near Fort Hood; the other is on the border of Tennessee and Kentucky, and serves families at Fort Campbell. Both sites started serving military families immediately, and are working with almost 30 additional families who have shown interest in services.

These Centers join a growing list of locations serving installations in 10 states. As we meet families and build relationships in these communities, we are also focused on increasing autism awareness.

medical vehicles, and fire trucks.

- The Center in Columbus is also sponsoring a billboard (pictured below) in town with the message, “One in 88 military children has an autism spectrum disorder,” and inviting visitors to our website to learn more.
- Austin Peay State University in Clarksville, Tenn., will host May Institute’s *Faces and Voices of Autism* photo exhibit. Located in the same city as our new May Center, the university is also in close proximity to Fort Campbell.



Staff at these Centers are using Autism Awareness Month in April to educate and inform. Here are some of the initiatives taking place:

- The May Center for ASD in Columbus, Ga., is holding its third annual “Salute to Safety” event to address safety concerns for children with special needs. First Responders from the local community will attend, and children will be able to climb aboard police cars, emergency

- The April issue of *Exceptional Parent* magazine includes a feature story by **Christina Bock Giuliano, M.S., BCBA**, Clinical/Program Director at our May Center for ASD in Clarksville, Tenn. It highlights the challenges and successes of a little girl with the rare diagnosis of Rett syndrome—one of the five autism spectrum disorders. Young Riley receives services from the May Center. For more information on these or other initiatives, visit www.mayinstitute.org.

Why I Love My Work

By Heather Castle, B.A.

I first met “Tommy” in October 2005 when he was 5 years old. He worked with a team of four therapists and was receiving close to 35-40 hours of in-home applied behavior analysis (ABA) a week.

This little boy had very few words and was using a Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) to communicate. After working his way through basic programs such as matching, fill-in-words, and letter and number identification, Tommy began working with more expressive programs and letter sounds. With the help of his therapy team, he began to improve his communication, social, and self-care skills.

Tommy attended a Pre-K program, and then progressed to a Kindergarten class at a local school. There, he began to interact with his peers and learned to follow directions without acting out.

At his next school he studied math, science, and writing, and participated in art, music, and physical education. Soon, he was able to read short stories and complete his homework independently. Outside the classroom, he enjoyed playing baseball and soccer with his peers.

Given his steady progress over the years, Tommy reached a point where he no longer needed one-on-one assistance in school. By the end of August 2010, he was at the top of his class for reading skills, and could hold one-on-one conversations with peers and adults. He began playing piano and joined the Miracle League baseball team.

When he “graduated” from his May Institute therapy sessions, Tommy had mastered over 25 programs, and improved his reading, social, and self-care skills. He could follow directions, take on new challenges, and ask for help without displaying any of his previous challenging behaviors. He had become a happy young man who was a joy to be around.

Working with students like Tommy is one reason why I love my work!

names & FACES

VP OF ADULT SERVICES FOR CONNECTICUT DIVISION NAMED



Tracey Walker, M.A., has joined May Institute as Vice President of Adult Services for the Connecticut division. She will ensure quality day and residential adult ser-

vices for programming in that area. Her responsibilities will include oversight of operations, budget, training, evaluation, research, and quality assurance.

Walker has more than 30 years of experience in the human services field. She comes to us from the Connecticut Council of Family Service Agencies where she served as Director of Programs. She has also served as Executive Director of Hockanum Industries, a day services agency.

She received both her bachelor's and master's degrees from Rhode Island College in psychology. 🍷

MERRILL PROMOTED TO VP



Stephen Merrill, LICSW, BCD, was promoted to Vice President of Behavioral Health Services for May Institute. Merrill's responsibilities now

include clinical and budgetary oversight for all behavioral health programs.

Merrill has more than 30 years of experience in the behavioral health field; 27 of those years have been with the Institute. Previously, he served as Director of Programming for our southeastern Massachusetts division.

Merrill holds degrees from Roger Williams University in psychology and sociology. He received a master's degree in social work from Rhode Island College. Merrill is a Licensed Independent Social Worker and a Board Certified Diplomat in social work. 🍷

INSIDE @MAY

Innovative Technology Improves Clinical Consultation Around the Country and Throughout the World

Children with autism spectrum disorders as far away as California, Florida, and even Saudi Arabia are benefiting from the expertise of senior clinicians at our corporate headquarters in Massachusetts, thanks to state-of-the-art video conferencing capabilities.

For the past year, **Jade Lewis, M.Ed.**, BCBA, Clinical Director for the May Center for Autism Spectrum Disorders in Columbus, Ga., and therapists from her office have participated in weekly meetings with colleagues in Randolph, including **Robert Putnam, Ph.D.**, BCBA-D, Senior Vice President of School Consultation, and **Marisa Petruccelli, Psy.D.**, Director of the Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) Clinic. Twice a month, one of the therapists presents a case that the entire team discusses.

It's the kind of collegial consultation that takes place all the time at May Institute. What makes these meetings unique is that, because of video conferencing capabilities installed at Randolph's corporate headquarters, no one has to travel to attend.

Video conferencing enables therapists to share their data, assessments, and behavior support plans with senior clinicians nearly 1,000 miles away, who then provide immediate feedback.

"The meetings take place on Friday mornings and include a client summary, graphs of behavior acquisition/reduction data, and a competing pathways form that Dr. Putnam has trained us to use," says Jade. "He and I lead the discussion, and then he and other staff in Randolph provide feedback."

According to **Kevin More, M.B.A.**, the Institute's Vice President of Information Systems, May's video conferencing

system is fully encrypted to meet HIPAA and other regulatory requirements.

"Of course we use the phone and email to communicate with staff in the field," says Dr. Putnam. "But video conferencing allows us to interact face-to-face. Reviewing functional behavioral assessments works better with video conferencing than by phone," he adds, "and it's significantly less expensive than having staff travel back and forth."

The International Connection

May Institute clinicians also use Skype technology to facilitate supervision with consultants in the field, and to provide consultation and training to individuals and organizations throughout the world. "For more than a year we were Skyping monthly with colleagues at the Center for Early Intervention in Warsaw, Poland, sharing presentations and providing peer review," says Chief Clinical Officer **Lauren Solotar, Ph.D.**, ABPP, who now oversees the Institute's Center for International Training and Support.

Thanks in part to technology that has facilitated global outreach, staff have been able to serve families from a number of different countries. For example, our ASD Clinic has provided assessments and evaluations for families from England and Saudi Arabia, and our Randolph school has served students from as far away as Iceland and Germany.

Full story on www.mayinstitute.org. 🍷

TRUSTEES' FUND AWARD WINNERS

Seven May Institute employees were honored with the 2010 Trustees' Fund Awards. Established in 1993 and funded by May Institute Board of Trustee members, these awards recognize individuals who exemplify the Institute's ideals of service and professionalism. Each award recipient received a plaque and a monetary gift.



Rose Arruda, Medical Coordinator at the May Center for Education and Neurorehabilitation in Brockton, Mass.



Dan Martin, Regional Team Leader, Home and School Consultation in Randolph, Mass.



Ceci Blanford, Behavior Specialist/Activities Coordinator for the Bottomridge Group Home in Orange Park, Fla.



Caitlin McMahon, Ph.D., Staff Psychologist, Autism Spectrum Disorders Clinic in Randolph, Mass.



Amy Bontranger, Military Marketing Manager at the May Center for Autism Spectrum Disorders in Columbus, Ga.



Jennifer Richardson, Program Coordinator, Reservoir Avenue Residence in Revere, Mass.



Todd Fournier, Job Coach at the May Center for Child Development in Randolph, Mass. (May Institute lost a dear friend and colleague when Todd passed away on December 11, 2010, after a lengthy illness. He was unable to attend the recognition ceremony, but delighted to learn he was an award winner.)

Chiefs Solotar and Sperry Receive ABPP Credentials

May Institute is proud to announce that **Lauren Solotar**, Ph.D., ABPP, Chief Clinical Officer, and **Ralph Sperry**, Ph.D., ABPP, Chief Operating Officer, have earned board certification in their respective specialties from the American Board of Professional Psychology (ABPP).

ABPP is a national governing board that recognizes individuals who

demonstrate excellence in meeting the advanced education, training, and experience requirements in approved specialty areas of psychology.

Dr. Solotar received her ABPP certification in clinical psychology with a specialization in cognitive behavior therapy. Dr. Solotar is an expert in cognitive and dialectical behavior therapies, and specializes in the

treatment of eating and anxiety disorders.

Dr. Sperry received his ABPP certification in organizational and business consulting psychology. He is one of 44 psychologists in the country with this designation, and the only psychologist in Massachusetts with this credential. Dr. Sperry is also a licensed marriage and family therapist. 🍷

MORE NAMED SIM PRESIDENT



Congratulations to **Kevin More**, M.B.A., our Vice President of Information Systems, who has been elected President of the Boston Society for Information

Management (SIM). SIM is the area's leading professional society for information technology (IT) specialists interested in the innovative use of IT to learn, collaborate, and improve their skills.

"SIM offers a variety of forums in which members come together to explore the revolution that is changing the way the world communicates, learns, and does business," says More. "I want to go 'back to the basics' and focus on strengthening these roundtable programs that allow technology leaders to share ideas, experiences, and knowledge in a vendor-neutral environment."

He plans to use technology in innovative ways to market the Chapter, recruit new members, foster collaboration opportunities, and deliver value to its members. Last year, he chaired the SIM International Social Media Team and was responsible for integrating social media into the organization's overall communications and collaboration strategy. He plans to leverage this same technology at the local level by integrating multiple channels, including Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn, and Facebook with traditional offerings to accomplish this goal.

"It is important that SIM not only gives back to the profession, but to the community as well," More noted. "We encourage students to consider information technology as a profession through our work with local colleges and universities, through our outreach partners, and through our own outreach program, Future Potential in IT. There is an increasing demand for qualified IT workers in the U.S. and not enough skilled workers to meet the demand of the IT job marketplace." 🍷

Congressman Receives Warm Welcome at TBS

- The *Autism Advocate*, the magazine of the Autism Society of America, published the article, "Learning Each Other's Language: Strategies to Improve Communication Between Neurotypicals and Individuals on the Autism Spectrum." Authored by **Susan Wilczynski**, Ph.D., BCBA-D, Executive Director of the National Autism Center, the piece is based in large part on the communications lessons Dr. Wilczynski has learned from her colleague and friend, a college professor with Asperger's disorder.
- More than 200 national and regional media outlets carried the announcement from the PR Newswire about the impact of the National Autism Center's educator manual (see related article on page 11).
- *Exceptional Parent* magazine featured the stories of families served by May Institute in its November and December issues. The article "Fighting Back: Helping Students with Special Needs Build Skills, Prevent Bullying," was authored by **Marisa Petruccelli**, Psy.D., and **Patricia Ladew**. "Family Matters: Enlisting the Family to Ensure Successful Early Intervention for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders," was authored by **Robert Putnam**, Ph.D., BCBA-D, and **Patricia Ladew**.
- In the *Boston Business Journal's* listing of the area's largest nonprofits, May Institute is ranked 31st out of the 50 nonprofits cited, based on assets. The Institute is also highlighted as the ninth highest revenue-producing nonprofit, and the fourth largest nonprofit employer in the state.
- The *Santa Cruz Sentinel* article, "Bay School Students to Showcase Winter Bird Art at Downtown Boutique," highlighted a creative initiative and community collaboration spearheaded by parent Jesse Gonzalez.

The Bay School (TBS), one of May Institute's five special education schools, was delighted to welcome California Congressman Sam Farr to its campus in Santa Cruz, Calif., last fall.

"Congressman Farr visited each classroom at TBS and spent time interacting one-on-one with students and staff," says **Andrea Gold**, Ph.D., BCBA-D, Executive Director of TBS.

"Congressman Farr participated in a language training program with Molly, who is nonverbal," Dr. Gold continues. "It was wonderful to see her excitement when he praised her for correctly identifying an item."

Later, Molly approached him again. Using a special program on her iTouch to communicate, she asked the Congressman to join her outside on the swing. "He was clearly amazed by the use of this kind of device in the classroom," continues Dr. Gold.

While visiting with another student, Congressman Farr confided that he, too, struggled with a disability—dyslexia—when he was younger. The child was

intrigued and with an earnest expression replied, "You have a disability? Well, then it's good that you're in a school that helps people with disabilities!"

The students and teachers honored Congressman Farr with a book of artwork. "I was very impressed with the work the school does with these special children," wrote the Congressman in a letter. "The information you provided is crucial to the work I do as a member of Congress. Thank you for giving me this extraordinary opportunity to spend time with your staff and students." 🍎

Molly uses her iTouch to communicate with Congressman Farr. After she selects words and images, the device "speaks" for her.



Pictured (l-r): An aide to the Congressman; Laura Newman, Interim Director of Education; Andrea Gold, Executive Director; Congressman Farr; Jose Torres, Admissions Coordinator; and Gilbert Arias, Facility Coordinator.



NAC Educator Manual Gets Rave Reviews

Almost 90 Percent Report Greater Knowledge about Treatments for Autism

With thousands of copies in circulation in all 52 states and dozens of countries, the National Autism Center’s autism manual for educators — *Evidence-based Practice and Autism in the Schools* — is receiving high marks from educators in the special education community.

In a national survey following the release of the 181-page guide this winter, responses demonstrated that the manual is making a significant impact on improving educators’ knowledge about autism spectrum disorders (ASD) and providing effective interventions for students.

In one of the important findings from the survey, 89 percent of respondents say their knowledge about effective treatments for students with ASD has improved as a result of the manual.

“The manual is designed to give teachers the resources they need to make informed choices and to collaborate with parents to ensure effective treatments are used to offer the child the greatest hope for his or her future,” says **Susan M. Wilczynski**, Ph.D., BCBA-D, Executive Director of the National Autism Center.

The manual provides important information about the 2009 published research findings from NAC’s National Standards Report, the most extensive analysis of treatments for

children and adolescents with ASD ever published. It also offers guidance on how to integrate professional judgment, family values, and preferences into treatment selection in order to build capacity and implement interventions accurately.

For more information about the manual, to download a free copy, or to learn more about the survey’s findings, visit www.nationalautismcenter.org.

COMING SOON: NAC’S AUTISM MANUAL FOR PARENTS

“A Parent’s Guide to Autism and Evidence-based Practice,” NAC’s new manual for parents, will be ready for distribution this spring. This guide for parents will include information from NAC’s National Standards Report about the most effective evidence-based treatments for children on the autism

spectrum. It will also provide an overview of autism spectrum disorders (ASD) and special parent-to-parent sections with practical guidance from a parental perspective.

“It is our hope that this manual will give parents of children with ASD the support and information they need to make the best

possible decisions regarding effective treatments for their sons and daughters,” says **Susan Wilczynski**, Ph.D., BCBA-D, Executive Director of NAC.

For more information about the parents’ manual and to download a free copy, visit www.nationalautismcenter.org.

Dr. Wilczynski Moderates Autism Panel for Big Think



Susan Wilczynski, Ph.D., BCBA-D, Executive Director of NAC, was tapped to moderate “What Is Autism?” This panel discussion featured leading

researchers talking about prominent research in ASD—from genetic testing and diagnosis, to current treatments.

The discussion was hosted by Big Think (www.bigthink.com) and sponsored by Pfizer as part of its new program, “Breakthroughs.” This medical series brings together thought leaders, academics, and other experts to discuss cutting-edge scientific research in the areas of Alzheimer’s disease, cancer, and autism.

Big Think is one of the country’s fastest growing online knowledge forums featuring interviews, multi-media presentations, and round-table discussions with intellectuals from a wide range of fields.

Among the topics addressed were: where autism research will be in 10 years; whether other diseases can help us find an autism gene; the most pressing issues in autism research; and the need for public/private partnerships in autism research.

To view the complete discussion, visit bigthink.com and search for “autism.” To find out more about the National Standards Report that highlights today’s most effective autism treatments, visit www.nationalautismcenter.org.

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FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Ride for our Kids in the 2011 Rodman Ride

This year's ride will be held in Foxboro, Mass., on Saturday, September 24, and feature more than a thousand riders cycling 25, 50, or 100 miles.

How can you help? Register as a May Institute rider, create a team with family and friends, donate to an existing team, volunteer, or become a corporate sponsor.

When we reach our fundraising goal of \$200,000, we will receive a 10 percent matching gift from the Ride for Kids. Every dollar we raise will directly benefit our children's programs.

For more information about the Ride, please contact Dana Pellitteri at 781-437-1457 or dpellitteri@mayinstitute.org. Or, you may visit our website at <http://rodmanride.kintera.org/may>.

To view a video of last year's Rodman Ride, visit www.mayinstitute.org.

Get the Latest Autism News

Visit the "Industry News" section on May Institute's website at www.mayinstitute.org to read the latest autism news from around the world.

Get Your Cards by Kids

May Institute is offering "Cards By Kids," a special collection of beautiful blank note cards featuring delightful, whimsical artwork by children we serve. These cards are perfect as greeting cards, thank-you notes, and party invitations.

Choose from the "Nature" series, the "Creatures" series, or the "Abstract Art" series—or buy them all!

Each box of 12 cards contains three different designs. Cards are 5"x 7" and printed on high quality card stock. Blank white envelopes included. Boxes are \$15 each.

100% of the funds raised go to May Institute's programs and services.

To place an order online, visit www.mayinstitute.org/give/cards.html. Or, contact Tyson Smith-Ray at 781-437-1269 or cards@mayinstitute.org.



"Nature" series



"Creatures" series



ABOUT MAY INSTITUTE

Founded in 1955, May Institute has its roots in a family's vision of enabling children with disabilities to lead the fullest lives possible.

Today, May Institute provides educational, rehabilitative, and behavioral healthcare services to individuals with autism spectrum disorders and other developmental disabilities, brain injury, mental illness, and behavioral health needs. The Institute also provides training and consultation services to professionals, organizations, and public school systems.

Our programs touch the lives of thousands of individuals and their families each year at nearly 200 service locations across the country.

Together with the National Autism Centersm, May Institute's Center for the Promotion of Evidence-based Practice, we are committed to identifying and applying universal standards for the treatment of autism and to providing care and hope to families throughout the country.