



Winterfest warms hearts  
NJ collaboration meets families' needs

PAGES 2-3



Going for the gold! Group homes shine  
ABA course offers critical training

PAGES 4-5



Staff receive Trustees' Awards  
NAC receives \$40K grant

PAGES 6-7

## Celebrating the people and programs



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

### May Institute Joins \$1.2M UMass Study Autism Speaks Grant Focuses on Early Intervention

May Institute has been invited to participate in a multi-state study led by the University of Massachusetts Boston to test the benefits of an early intervention program for young children at risk for or evidencing autism spectrum disorders (ASD). Boston University, Vanderbilt University, and the University of Miami will also participate in the study.

Funded by a \$1.2 million grant from the Autism Speaks Foundation, the study will evaluate

the effectiveness of an early intervention program called "More Than Words." The program focuses on parenting practices designed to improve children's behavior and communication

skills. Proponents hope it will positively impact long-term outcomes for children with ASD.

"We are excited to be collaborating on this important project," said **Susan**

**Wilczynski**, Ph.D., BCBA, Vice President of Autism Services at May Institute and Executive Director of the National Autism Center. "It is absolutely essential to conduct research to identify treatments that work for the youngest children at risk for ASD."

The study will involve 176 families in Massachusetts, Florida, and Tennessee. Parenting groups for Massachusetts participants will be held at May Institute. ☹

*"Early intervention is not a cure, but it can make a tremendous difference in social and language skills. How well a child is doing in terms of language is a strong predictor of lifelong functioning."*

**Dr. Alice Carter, UMass Boston  
Lead Investigator**

### Faces and Voices of Autism May Announces Photo Exhibit

When May Institute communications staff chose a photographer to visit several May Center schools and take pictures of our students, they never imagined that the images would one day find their way to the Massachusetts State House and beyond.



*Austin, of the Randolph May Center, will be one of the students profiled in the exhibition.*

But thanks to the vision of that professional photographer, Andrew Child, these beautiful and powerful photographs have become the foundation for the *Faces and Voices of Autism* exhibition, scheduled to open at the State House in Boston on Autism Spectrum Awareness Day (April 30, 2007).

### INSPIRING OUR YOUTH

May Institute is taking part in an exciting new collaboration to pilot the Positive Behavior Support (PBS) model in after-school programs in Brockton and Fall River, Mass.

The initiative is the result of a partnership with BOSTnet, a nonprofit organization that provides families with access to a rich network of out-of-school opportunities that challenge, reward, and inspire children and youth.

The goal of the initiative is to enhance the skills of program staff, enabling them to offer settings designed to maximize a child's potential for success in reaching key developmental hurdles. ●

### LIBRARY OFFERS SPECIAL COLLECTION

As the result of a unique collaboration, the public library in Leominster, Mass., is now home to a special collection of research-based materials that address specific needs of children and adults with autism and other developmental disabilities.

The collection of books and other materials was spearheaded by the North Central Office of the Massachusetts Department of Mental Retardation (DMR), in partnership with May Institute, school districts in North Central Massachusetts, and the Beach Center on Disability at the University of Kansas.

Funded by DMR and local school districts, the initiative is designed to build strong partnerships between families and professionals and make it easier for individuals and caregivers to access information about effective treatments. ●

### TACKLING CONCUSSION IN SPORTS

May Institute is once again teaming up with Harvard Medical School and the Neurological Sports Injury Center at Brigham and Women's Hospital to sponsor Greater Boston's fourth annual Sports-Related Conference on Concussion and Spine Injury. It will be held on April 27 at Fenway Park, from 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Continuing Education Credits are available.

The program will feature a panel of nationally recognized experts who will discuss groundbreaking discoveries about the effects of sports-related concussions and spinal injuries that have altered the course of treatment and return-to-play decisions for athletes of all ages. ●

## Winterfest Warms Hearts in Woburn

Moms, dads, grandparents, siblings, and friends gathered recently at the Woburn May Center school for children with autism to celebrate Winterfest!

The Open House gave families a chance to visit with staff, tour the school, and admire recent renovations and the new library. The event featured creative student artwork on display and for sale.

It was also an opportunity to celebrate achievements both big and small. Mary, whose son Brandon (pictured above) is a student at the Center, was thrilled about his progress. "Brandon has made a



*Brandon shows his mom Mary what he created for the Winterfest.*

complete turnaround," she said. "He has gone from constant non-compliance to where he's progressing academically because his behavior is under control." Because of his success, he will transition to public school this spring. ●

## Teens Part of Historic Event

Two members of our Children's Services program were invited to attend the historic Governor's Youth Inaugural event at the Schubert Theatre in Boston. Our delegates, 14-year-olds Jovan and Makeisha, joined 1,000 other young people from the Commonwealth to hear Governor Duval Patrick's vision for Massachusetts.

Jovan and Makeisha were inspired by the Governor, who motivated

them to achieve their goals by "persevering through obstacles" and not giving up on their dreams. The two teens are excited to explore civic involvement in their own communities. "It was the best day of my life!" Makeisha shared.

The Children's Services program collaborates with the Department of Mental Health to provide support services for children and teens living in Greater Fall River, Mass. ●

## Mardi Gras Comes North!



Student revelers recently took to the hallways of the May Center school in Randolph in celebration of Fat Tuesday. The Center is one of our schools serving children with autism and other developmental disabilities.

The Center came alive with a flurry of activity as students and teachers, dressed in flamboyant costumes and masks, paraded through the

## Daring Dippers!

Nineteen very brave and fun-spirited teachers and staff from two of our Centers recently took an icy, early morning plunge into the waters of Nantasket Beach. The plunge raised funds to support sporting activities for the Centers' students with brain injury and adults with mental retardation.

The "Brainwaves" team (pictured right) from the May Center for Education and Neurorehabilitation in Brockton, Mass., raised over \$3,000. The "Maysicles," from our Center for Adult Services in Springfield, Mass., collected over \$2,000 in pledges. Both teams raised critical dollars to fund the year-round sports training and athletic competitions sponsored by Massachusetts Special Olympics for athletes with intellectual disabilities.

"The Passion Plunge is so rewarding for us plungers!" says **Elizabeth Violanto**,



organizer of the Brockton team. "The funds we raise enable Special Olympics to be successful. That's why we're 'freezin' for a reason'!"

The May Center for Adult Services provides residential and day habilitation services for adults with moderate to severe mental retardation.

The May Center school for children with brain injury enables students to regain cognitive skills and develop independence. Eighty percent of the students in our care move on to more independent settings. ●

## Meeting the Standard

May Institute's Western Massachusetts and Connecticut divisions have received full three-year national accreditations from the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF).

This latest achievement means that all western Massachusetts and Connecticut programs have earned full CARF accreditation.

To receive accreditation, programs must undergo a comprehensive review process and demonstrate that services are of the highest quality, measurability, and accountability.

The CARF report stated, "May Institute is staffed by well-qualified, rigorously trained staff members who are truly dedicated to their jobs...The unique programs have a broad continuum of support services...that are coordinated to give persons the best care." ●

## MID-ATLANTIC @MAY

### COLLABORATING TO MEET FAMILIES' NEEDS

In response to the growing demand for behavioral and autism-related services in the New Jersey area, May Institute's Mid-Atlantic regional office has created an affiliation with a local organization specializing in pediatric neurology and related fields.

The Center for Neurological and Neurodevelopmental Health (CNNH) is an integrated medical practice that provides neurological and other medical services to families in the New Jersey area. The Center treats many families who then seek behavior support services for their children with special needs, many of whom are dealing with aggression, self-injurious behavior, hyper-

activity, socialization issues, and other challenges.

The two organizations formed a partnership this fall with the goal of offering quality clinical treatment (CNNH's specialty) along with educational and behavioral assessments and treatments (May Institute's specialty).

May staff in the Mid-Atlantic region offer a variety of behavior support services and parent trainings. They work with children and families at the May Institute/CNNH offices, in the home, or in the child's school, tailoring services to best meet the needs of the individuals they serve. ●

### TRAINING IN BEST PRACTICES

With enthusiastic support from the Trenton, N.J., district administration, high school special education teachers are taking advantage of new professional development opportunities.

May Institute staff are conducting trainings in effective classroom management strategies—an initiative designed to further improve the learning environment. The training series is one of the newest initiatives in Trenton's multi-year collaboration with May Institute. ●



## SOUTHEAST@MAY

### GOING FOR THE GOLD!

#### Group Homes Shine

May South, May Institute's Southeast division, operates group homes in Florida for children and adults with autism, mental retardation, and mental health issues. We work in partnership with the Florida Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD), a state agency tasked with serving the needs of Floridians with developmental disabilities.

On the front page of their most recent newsletter, ADP commended May South with their "Providers Going for the Gold" medal. The congratulations resulted from a recent visit to one of our children's group homes. In the newsletter, APD commented that "the home looked wonderful...The individuals who live in the home were cheerful and organized in their daily activities." Congratulations to May South staff! 🍷

## 3 notable grants

*May Institute recently received more than \$40,000 in grants to support programs and services.*

#### Everybody Move!

The physical education program at the May Center for Child Development in Randolph, Mass., received a \$7,500 grant from the Massachusetts Governor's Committee on Physical Fitness and Sports as part of the state's "Everybody Move" initiative. The grant enabled the school to purchase "Snap City," a heavy-duty indoor plastic gym that is already being put to good use by the Center's youngest students.

#### Libraries for Learning

A \$25,000 grant from the Yawkey Foundation helped create a new library at our Woburn, Mass., May Center school which serves children with autism and other developmental disabilities. The grant is also supporting the expansion of the library in the May Center school in Brockton, Mass., which serves children with brain injury.

#### After-School Program Builds Skills

Thanks to a \$10,000 grant from the Doug Flutie, Jr. Foundation for Autism, adolescents with Asperger's Syndrome who live in western Massachusetts can participate in an after-school program aimed at improving their communication and social skills. This spring, the program will offer students an intensive 10-week training, along with education and support for their parents.

### A CLOSER LOOK AT ABA...

What most attracts parents to a program of applied behavior analysis (ABA) are its positive and reinforcing tone, its strong focus on teaching new skills, the documentation of progress in reports and charts, its foundation in research, and the manner in which it is individualized for every child.

ABA is a methodology, or framework, that applies scientific interventions to address behavioral needs. ABA facilitates the development of language, social interactions, and independent living by applying basic behavioral practices—positive reinforcement, teaching in small steps, prompting, and repeated practice. ABA can also help reduce both everyday social problems and serious behavior disorders.

Hundreds of scientific studies have shown that ABA is the most effective method to teach children and adolescents with autism and other developmental disabilities. ABA has been endorsed by the National Institutes of Health and the Association for Science in Autism Treatment, and has been identified by the Surgeon General of the United States as the most effective way to treat autism.

## MIDWEST@MAY

### Building a Center of Excellence

The Midwest division continues to expand its consultation services to families and school districts in the Peoria, Illinois area. Staff are developing affiliations with local colleges, universities, and agencies, most recently entering into a collaboration with Illinois' Easter Seals and other autism-related organizations to plan an Autism Center of Excellence.

As a member of the project's steering committee, we are actively providing guidance and expertise. This initiative, scheduled for completion over the next decade, will offer valuable resources to families and professionals in the Peoria area. 🍷



## Aiden's Story

Ginnie and Jimmy Taylor's young son, Aiden, attends The Bay School, a May Center for Child Development in Santa Cruz, Calif., that serves children with autism and other developmental disabilities. In a letter they sent to us recently, the Taylors shared their gratitude for the support, confidence, and hope they receive from the school's staff. Pictured is Aiden with instructor Christy Gaukel. Below are excerpts from their letter:

*Dear Bay School staff:*

*Our son, Aiden, was diagnosed in October of 2005. We were quite relieved to learn that The Bay School (TBS) was local, as we believed from the beginning that ABA (applied behavior analysis) was what Aiden needed. However, we had no idea how much more TBS was than "just" a school that provides empirically supported interventions for autism.*

*It's a very special place. There is such devotion and caring that my husband, Jimmy, and I often catch ourselves eagerly anticipating the next school day so we can share something new and great Aiden has done with his teachers, as we know that they are going to be as excited as we are. This is the kind of emotional support that is so powerful when you are in the early stages of adjusting to the diagnosis of autism.*

*In this past year, Aiden has made many significant gains. He has gone from being a child who barely noticed and didn't emotionally react to being dropped off and picked up at school to having that tearful separation reaction, but also smiling and being comforted by his teachers. He has also gone from a child who rarely made any vocalizations to saying the much anticipated "mama."*

*TBS makes you feel like you are part of a very talented and genuinely caring team—the perfect antidote to the feelings of despair and isolation that can come from a diagnosis of autism. We're amazed at how positive and hopeful we feel about Aiden's future, as this is a striking contrast from how we felt a year ago.*

*Although we know there are no guarantees about how far our son will come, we have a contentment that comes from knowing that you are doing absolutely everything you can, because he is receiving the best that is out there.*

*Thanks for giving us this opportunity to put some of our feelings and experiences to words.*

—Ginnie and Jimmy Taylor

## ABA COURSES TO PROVIDE CRITICAL TRAINING

The Bay School, a May Center for Child Development in Santa Cruz, Calif., is proud to be sponsoring an Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) Program for Special Education and Autism.

The program consists of three graduate-level courses intended for teachers, school psychologists, or classroom aides. It is designed to teach special education staff how to use research-supported ABA methodologies to further support students with autism and related disabilities. The program will also help prepare participants for the national certification examination in behavior analysis.

The courses will be taught by Dr. Alisa Bahl, a California licensed psychologist and a Board Certified Behavior Analyst. Dr. Bahl served as a school psychology faculty member at Towson University in Towson, Maryland, and has many years teaching experience.

These courses are made possible through the generous support of the Coryell Family Foundation. 🍷



## TUGGLE PROMOTED TO LEAD HUMAN RESOURCES



**Deloris Tuggle**, M.A., PHR, was recently promoted to Senior Vice President of Human Resources at May Institute. Tuggle replaces Beth Howard, who retired after 11 years of service.

“Deloris has been a valued May employee for the past six years, first as Director of Employment, and most recently as Director of Human Resources,” said Institute President and CEO **Walter P.**

**Christian**, Ph.D., ABPP, in making the announcement. “In her new position, she is responsible for overseeing all human resources efforts company-wide.” 🍷

## MAY TRUSTEES SELECT AWARD WINNERS

Seven of May’s staff members were honored in December with Trustees’ Fund Awards. Established in 1994 and funded by board members, these awards recognize individuals who exemplify the Institute’s ideals of service and professionalism. Each recipient received a plaque and monetary gift.



**Stephanie Barney**  
Educational Team Case Manager (May Center for Child Development, Randolph, Mass.)



**Christine Irving**  
Office Manager and HR Representative (May Center for Child Development, Woburn, Mass.)



**Pamela Beaver**  
Vocational Coordinator (Corner Clubhouse, Attleboro, Mass.)



**Rich Kovacs**  
Child Development Specialist (May Center for Child Development, Chatham, Mass.)



**Shirley Gan**  
School Secretary (May Center for Education and Neurorehabilitation, Brockton, Mass.)



**Brain Stavesky**  
Program Coordinator (May Center for Community Services—Soundview Group Home, Manchester, Conn.)



**Shawn Healey**  
Staff Psychologist and School-based Program Supervisor (May Institute Behavioral Health Services, West Roxbury and May Counseling Center, Walpole, Mass.)

“The recipients of the Trustees’ Fund Award are among the organization’s finest role models,” said **Walter P. Christian**, Ph.D., ABPP, May’s President and CEO. “I salute their hard work and commitment to the Institute’s mission of providing the highest standard of service to those in its care.” 🍷

## Team Success

May Institute’s Southeast Residential Services program in Attleboro, Mass., provides vital community living services to approximately 70 adults with mental illness throughout southeast Massachusetts. Clients are matched with the housing model that gives them the best opportunity for rehabilitation and, ultimately, independent living.

The program staff are passionate about helping adult residents with learning, behavioral, psychological, and special healthcare challenges. Program director **Marlene Cantor** shared some thoughts recently about this dynamic and dedicated team:

*The members of our staff are committed to understanding each person’s unique needs and seeking to find the most effective means to help them reach their potential. We feel that we can all make a difference in someone’s life.*

*Each Attleboro team member has talents and abilities that the program taps into—and residents benefit! The team thinks in terms of “we,” not “I.” Everyone pitches in when they need to. They utilize best practices and are strength-based to help all clients in the program. Each member of this team is willing to try new things or look at something in a new light to achieve success. They are creative and don’t let great ideas slip away. Instead, they capture and capitalize on them.*

*It is important to acknowledge these individuals and let them know how much they are valued and appreciated. Thank you to a loyal team that takes pride in its workplace and in the mission of the May! 🍷*

## NAC RECEIVES \$40,000 FOUNDATION GRANT

The National Autism Center was recently awarded a \$40,000 grant from the Lynch Foundation, to be used to support the Center’s state-of-the-art Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) Clinic. The Clinic offers families comprehensive diagnostic screenings for toddlers, young children, and adolescents.

“It is our sincere wish that these funds assist you in providing parents—especially families with newly

diagnosed children with Autism Spectrum Disorders—with a comprehensive diagnosis of their child’s disorder so they are able to implement the proper interventions in the home or school settings,” wrote Lynch Foundation Executive Director Kathryn Everett in notifying the Center of the grant.

“Families suspecting their child has an Autism Spectrum Disorder are faced with significant obstacles to obtain the diagnosis they need to begin services,” said **Susan Wilczynski**, PhD., BCBA,

Executive Director of the National Autism Center. “The Lynch Foundation funds will play a significant role in helping families to overcome these obstacles and obtain the diagnosis and services their children need.”

The Clinic also provides parent training sessions to families of children newly diagnosed with an ASD. For more information, call 877-313-3833 or visit [www.nationalautismcenter.org](http://www.nationalautismcenter.org). 🍷

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

### ... FACES AND VOICES

The exhibition will be presented by May Institute and the National Autism Center, in collaboration with Andrew Child. It brings together the “faces” of children living with autism with the “voices” of people in their lives—parents, siblings, teachers, friends, and others. Their stories will not focus on the child’s diagnosis, but rather on his or her life and what makes that child special.

Our goal is to share these images as a way to raise awareness about autism. The photographs and stories will provide a unique opportunity to educate people about autism, and move them in a deeper and more meaningful way than facts and statistics alone.

See page 8 for more details. 🍷

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

### ...MARDI GRAS

school and the adjacent corporate headquarters. Delighted staff were entertained by the parade, the festive paper costumes, and the model floats that were creatively assembled from shoeboxes and tissue paper.

Young children boogied to Creole and Zydeco music and older students danced at a Mardi Gras ball. Everyone enjoyed a King Cake, face painting, bowling, and cookie decorating.

“This was a nice way to creatively teach the kids about the world around them,” said Adapted Physical Education Teacher **Alan Anselmi**, who led the parade. “The staff really



*Students from the integrated preschool pose along the parade route.*

went the extra mile to make this event as colorful and exciting as possible.”

“To see all the students and teachers participate and have fun together was amazing,” said lead event organizer and music teacher **Annie Christian**. “We just had a great time!” 🍷

# UPCOMING @MAY

## SEMINARS & WORKSHOPS

### Use of Visual Supports for Persons with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

On April 10, 2007 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., Howard Shane, Ph.D., of Children's Hospital Boston, will present a workshop about visual aides to improve expressive and receptive language, as well as expanded ways to organize daily events and learning activities.

Continuing Education Credits are available for psychologists and BCBA professionals.

This Professional Continuing Education Seminar will take place at May Institute's corporate headquarters in Randolph, Mass. For more information or to register, please contact Caroline Harrington at 781-437-1346.

### Behavioral Social/Language Skills Training for Children With Autism

Many children with autism experience difficulties with complex social/language skills. On April 27, 2007, from 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., Coleen Sparkman, CCC-SLP and Jill

Young, Ph.D., BCBA, of The Kendall School, will discuss how a multidisciplinary approach can be combined with direct observation to develop behavior analytic intervention programs for children with autism.

The free seminar will take place at the Student Union building on the San Jose State University campus. For more information or to register, please contact 831-462-9620 or visit [www.thebayschool.org](http://www.thebayschool.org).

## NATIONAL CONFERENCES

### 33rd Annual Convention of the Association for Behavior Analysis International

May 25-29, 2007 at the Manchester Grand Hyatt in San Diego, Calif.

Program areas include: autism, developmental disabilities, education, teaching behavior analysis, behavioral pharmacology, community interventions, and social and ethical issues.

For more information or to register, please visit [www.abainternational.org](http://www.abainternational.org).

## SPECIAL EVENTS

### Face and Voices of Autism Photo Exhibition

(see article on page 1)

Sponsored by May Institute and the National Autism Center. The exhibition will be displayed at the following venues:

- Mass. State House, Boston April 30 – May 4, 2007
- Prudential Center, Boston May 11– May 18, 2007
- Children's Hospital, Boston June 2007

For more information, please call 781-437-1369 or visit [www.mayinstitute.org](http://www.mayinstitute.org).

### Autism Spectrum Awareness Day

As a culmination to Autism Awareness month, Advocates for Autism of Massachusetts (AFAM) and the Statewide Autism Coalition are sponsoring this event at the State House in Boston on April 30, 2007, beginning at 9:30 a.m.

## 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 and other developmental disabilities, brain injury, mental illness, and behavioral healthcare needs. The Institute also provides training and consultation services to professionals, organizations, and public school systems.*

*Our programs touch the lives of more than 25,000 individuals and their families each year at nearly 200 service locations in the Northeast, Mid-Atlantic, Midwest, Southeast, and on the West Coast.*

*Together with the National Autism Center<sup>sm</sup>, whose initial development has been sponsored by May Institute, 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.*

**MayInstitute**  
Shaping Futures. Changing Lives.

@MAY is published four times a year by May Institute's Office of Communications, 41 Pacella Park Drive, Randolph, Massachusetts 02368. © 2007 May Institute, Inc.

**EDITORIAL STAFF:** Julia Burgess, Editor | Eileen Pollack and Patricia Ladew, Editorial Associates | Juanita Class, Designer  
tel| 781.437.1348 fax| 781.437.1350 e-mail| [jburgess@mayinstitute.org](mailto:jburgess@mayinstitute.org) web| [www.mayinstitute.org](http://www.mayinstitute.org)

**MayInstitute**  
Shaping Futures. Changing Lives.

41 Pacella Park Drive, Randolph, MA 02368

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED