

PACE Setter

PACIFIC AUTISM CENTER for EDUCATION

Connect • Support • Educate



The Triton Museum of Art



2015 PACE Classic Golfers & Staff

Join in the PACE Fun!

Delicious & Fun!

Tapas & Tunes at the Triton

Sunday, Nov. 8, 2015 | Triton Museum

We're trying something new! We've planned a relaxing afternoon of art, music and delicious food and wine for all of our families and supporters at the Triton Museum of Art in Santa Clara on November 8th, from 4 to 7 pm. We're calling this event, "Tapas and Tunes at the Triton." Catering by Parsley Sage Rosemary & Thyme.

Along with the gorgeous art, scrumptious tapas and wine, there will be live Spanish guitar music. Since we'll be serving alcohol at the event, we ask that only adults attend. As always, you are welcome to bring guests. Make it a fun afternoon out while you support PACE!

Watch for your invitation in the next few weeks, but please do save the date on your calendar. This should be a lovely fundraising event at a beautiful gallery. To purchase tickets, become a sponsor or to make a donation, visit www.pacificautism.org/events, email events@pacificautism.org, or call 408.245.3400. ■

Save the Date

8th Annual Golf Classic

Friday, May 20, 2016 | Cinnabar Hills

Be sure and bring your friends to our most popular event each year -- our **Annual Golf Classic!** This year, we'll be golfing on Friday, May 20th at Cinnabar Hills in San Jose. Join us on the greens and help make some green for PACE's high-quality programs benefitting our students, residents and clients. Your ticket price will include:

- 18 beautiful fairways with golf cart
- Full lunch and refreshments
- Tee prizes and exciting on-course contests
- Complimentary swag bag
- Awards for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place teams
- Raffle and Live Auction
- Dinner and cocktails

Visit www.pacificautism.org/events, or email events@pacificautism.org for sponsorship opportunities. ■



PACE Welcomes a New School Director

by Deb McClellan

We recently welcomed back Silvia Pinto, who started with PACE in August of 2011 as a Special Education Teacher. Silvia was a teacher in classrooms 1, 2, 3, and 4, and knows many of the current PACE parents. She's recently returned to PACE after a one-year stint at Ravenswood City School District as Coordinator for Special Education. Here's an excerpt of our interview.

DM: Welcome back to PACE! Can you tell me why you wanted to come back as School Program Director?

SP: I really wanted to get back with the kids in this population, in a smaller school setting and with the amazing PACE staff. The PACE program is so innovative, I had always intended to come back to PACE and grow with the organization, I just didn't realize I'd come back as Program Director!

DM: Do you have a special connection to autism or special needs issues? What draws you to this population?

SP: I had worked as an Instructional Aide with a young girl with autism and became interested and decided to go back to school and become credentialed. I already knew that I wanted to be an educator and help those with disabilities,



but autism fascinated me. I wanted to become an autism specialist one day as I have a BA in Psychology. Autism is fascinating because what works for one student may not work for another. The investigation into what is causing behavior and finding the solution to the issue is a challenge I enjoy. I also very much enjoy working with the parents. We work with their children 5 hours a day, but for the parents, it's 24 hours a day. I want to help the entire family get their child ready for life after PACE and help the students become as independent as possible.

DM: What are your plans for the school? What changes do you intend to make, if any?

SP: The first thing is working with the teachers, therapists and aides on building students' skills and maintaining consistency in the programming. It's our job to make sure our students are able to become as independent as possible by the time they graduate from our program at age 22. The school district might place a student at PACE because of behavioral issues -- we aim to help the student become successful enough that they can return to the school assigned to them and graduate with their peers if at all possible.

Continued on page 3

Ask a Therapist

by Meredith Smith, MS, BCBA, Clinical Consultant

Q: The holidays are typically a challenge for my child. The increased family activities, loud music and overwhelming visits to the mall or going food shopping are often too much for him to handle appropriately. Do you have any suggestions on how we can make this busy time less stressful for my family?

A: Yes, the holidays are approaching quickly and we have answers to help you! Here are a few things you can do in advance to prepare your child for the holidays.

1. A few weeks before your celebration, work out a menu with your friends/family that includes food that your child likes to eat. Let your host know about any dietary restrictions your child has so that they may be accommodated.
2. Role-play family meal times and practice greetings so your child is comfortable with the idea of meeting lots of family.
3. Create a social story around what's going to happen. This could include details about where you are going, what you will be doing / seeing, people you will be meeting, and foods you may be eating.
4. Explain to hosts beforehand what they can expect and what normal behavior is for your child.

Discuss any special requests you may have, such as a quiet area for your child, or specific things you may need them to have in the house. This will avoid any last minute confusion that may arise once you are there.

5. Practice opening presents, singing songs, or any other family traditions that may be new for your child.
6. Pack your visual communication cards and any other visual supports that will make traveling easier for your child.
7. Speak with your child's therapists about any ideas they may have to reduce the sensory overload your child may feel with loud noises, large gatherings and holiday travel. They might also have ideas for generalizing skills to new environments and people.

This is a very short sampling of suggestions to help your child during the holidays. The Porchlight module on this subject also explores techniques for **travelling successfully**, how to handle **holiday meals** and food issues, **crowded spaces** and more. Go to www.porchlight-education.org for more ideas and options. ■

Porchlight

Autism Rates in California

by Kurt Ohlfs, Executive Director

You may have seen the recent reports from the **Autism Society San Francisco Bay Area** noting that the rate of adults with autism will triple in California in the next ten years. Key findings included:

- Every year, nearly 5,000 new autism cases enter the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) system.
- 1.2% of all male births in California in 2008 were diagnosed with autism and deemed eligible for inclusion in the DDS system, which admits only cases of substantial disability.
- As a result of the steep escalation in autism cases, adult autism rates in California will double in the next five years and triple over the next ten.

You can view the full report at sfautismsociety.org. While we all find these numbers staggering, it also serves as a reaffirmation for PACE. We are dedicated to providing a full continuum of service well into adult life for both individuals affected by autism and their families.

By the time our students graduate at age 22, our teachers, therapists and staff have been planning their

successful entry into an adult day program or other appropriate service-based program for over a year.

Our **residential program** provides four group homes for adults ages 18-59 which are each managed by an administrator who is assisted by a team of trained residential staff members, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The services and community engagement that takes place at our group homes often goes beyond what would be possible in other home settings, and residents take pride in their sense of independence.

Additionally, the PACE **Porchlight Autism Education Series** is available to parents and caregivers who are short on time, but have so many questions on how they can better manage behaviors at home and out in the community at large. We hope this free online program has been useful to you and we are excited to see the creation of modules addressing adult autism issues.

Our commitment doesn't end with ongoing education for PACE families and the community at large. Our strategic plan is to develop a strong collective community that is trained to best support the aging community of individuals affected by autism. PACE is here for the long term. ■

Children's Services Update

by Karen Kennan, Assistant Executive Director

Our program is growing! After a busy month of preparation, in early July we opened up a new K-2 classroom for PACE school. Located at the Sunny Days site on Broadleaf Lane in San Jose, this classroom is ideally situated for kiddos transitioning from preschool as well as our youngest elementary students. The new classroom shares outdoor space and a size-appropriate play structure with our Sunny Days preschool, and occupies a bright spacious portable building. Experienced teacher **Hilary Cardoza** manages this new classroom with a team of exceptional Instructional Aides. Like our other classrooms, the **K-2 class** is supported by Speech, Occupational and Behavioral Therapists and benefits from the same enrichment activities provided to all of our students. We are pleased to welcome all our new students to the Sunny Days campus.

The students on the Sunny Days campus are the lucky recipients of a beautiful new, custom-made playhouse donated by the employees of **Aeris Communications** of Santa Clara who recently partnered with **Habitat for Humanity** to design, build and assemble the playhouse. The colorfully decorated play house is 4 by 5 feet, weather-proofed and perfect for the outdoor play yard at Sunny Days. Preschool teacher



Jessica Solchenberger said, "We were so pleased and surprised by this generous donation! Our students will enjoy this adorable playhouse for many years to come!" Thank you Aeris Communications for your generous donation and Habitat for Humanity for offering such a great program for local non-profit organizations.

Do you have a preschooler who is ready to start school in an inclusive supportive program that is individualized and tailored to your child's specific needs? **Space is currently available in our Sunny Days morning classroom for children 3-6 years of age.** Call 408-551-0312 for more information and to arrange a campus tour. ■

Grants Update for 2014 - 2015

By Rachel Palmer, Annual Fund Manager

Where does the money come from? While PACE receives fees for service from the California Department of Education and the Department of Developmental Services, donations and grants from individuals, corporations, and foundations allow PACE to fulfill its mission of offering exceptional care for clients in all of our programs. In 2014 and 2015, PACE received many grants from a wide range of supporters. Our general operating fund received generous grants from **Sobrato Family Foundation, Wells Fargo, Morrison and Foerster Foundation, and The Goldman Family.**

We were able to introduce new additions to our campus including a new play structure at the PACE School through a grant from **eASIC Corporation** and donors to the **San Jose Mercury News Wishbook.** We added a new sensory water feature at the school through funds from **The In-**

tero Foundation. PACE has been able to expand our services through our online platform, Project Porchlight, thanks to initial funding from United Way Silicon Valley. Our residential program also benefited from a matching grant from the **Spark Foundation** at our 2015 Golf Classic to rehabilitate the children's group homes.

If you'd like to make a donation to PACE, please contact me at 408.625.6191, or email development@pacifcautism.org. PACE is fortunate to have a generous community of individual givers and corporations that dedicate their time and treasure to our mission each year. Thank you all for your tremendous support! ■



The News @ Faces

by Karen Kennan, Assistant Executive Director

Did you know that our **Faces program** provides parent training and consultation as well as direct behavior support for children?

Evidence shows that children can make significant gains with ABA (**Applied Behavior Analysis**) therapy, but the children who make the most gains are the ones whose parents are actively involved in their child's therapy. This doesn't mean that parents must be involved in every therapy session.

However, since our therapists are with a child for only a small portion of their day, parents can assist by practicing the skills a child is learning in therapy during a child's everyday routine.

Faces behaviorists are available to meet with parents one on one, in small groups or as an adjunct to your child's therapy program. If you are currently on a wait list for behavior services for your child but would

like to learn what you can do now, to jump start a behavior program, our therapists can help. Contact us at 650-622-9601 for more information on the program.

Spread the word! We are searching for part-time therapists and full-time BCBA's. The entry-level behavior therapist position is perfect for college students and therapists who want to work a few hours on weekday afternoons. Faces staff will train the candidates. The Faces program offers 1:1 behavioral therapy to children in the South Bay and Peninsula regions. Call 408.625.6176 for information and to apply. ■



Faces team-building effort!

Ways You Can Help

Please consider making a donation to PACE in one of the following ways:

- Secure online donations can be made directly to PACE on our website at www.pacifcautism.org.
- Donate by mail by sending your contributions to **1880 Pruneridge Ave., Santa Clara, CA 95050.**
- Donate by telephone by calling **408-245-3400** and using your credit card to make a contribution.
- Double your gift with an employee matching gift contribution.
- A donation made in someone's honor is a lovely way to acknowledge someone special and also support PACE.
- To include PACE in your workplace giving options, please contact development@pacifcautism.org.
- View the **PACE Wish List** here: pacifcautism.org/donations/pace-wishlist/.

Language Building Techniques

by Anne Salvato, M.A., CCC-SLP, Speech-language Pathologist

PACE's Speech-language Pathologists work hard each day to ensure our students achieve the highest level of communication possible for their abilities. **Anne Salvato, M.A., CCC-SLP** Speech-language Pathologist has put together this language building technique for our new K-2 classroom located at the Sunny Days campus. Teachers and aides will use this curriculum to work from and practice in-between speech therapy sessions.

Self-Talk is describing what you are doing or experiencing.

For example, "I am pushing the train, choo choo" or "I see a big blue car, the car is driving fast" or "You need to get dressed, first I'll get a shirt, then we need to find some pants."

Parallel talk is describing the actions of the child while they are playing or otherwise carrying on.

It might seem strange because you are talking without expecting a response! For example, you might say "Sally is going down the slide," "Bob is putting the puzzle piece in place," or "George is coloring with the green crayon."

Language expansion is a way of rewording a child's utterance, which may be incomplete or short, into a complete sentence. For example, if the child says

"baby cryin" you might use language expansion to say, "A baby is crying."

Where and When to Use Language Expansion Techniques

There are many opportunities to use language expansion throughout your day, though you need not do it every minute of the day.

- While riding in the car, use self-talk to describe things seen out the window, what you might see or what people are doing.
- At snack or lunch, expand a child's utterances by adding more vocabulary (e.g., "hot noodles").
- During play, use parallel talk while the child is pretending, stacking blocks, blowing bubbles or racing cars.

Why is this important? It's important to model language concepts so children or students can learn the meaning of those words.

If you have any questions about Speech-language Pathology or SLP therapy techniques used at PACE programs, please feel free to contact us at 408.245.3400. PACE SLPs do an amazing job and we thank them greatly for their excellent efforts. ■

Residential News

By Janice Morreira, Residential Director

On Saturday, June 13th **Google** volunteers painted the living areas and bedrooms at **Miracle House**, which hadn't been painted in over 10 years. Thank you so much Google volunteers! And thanks to Hands On Bay Area who organized the event.

This summer, the 2014 Golf Classic "Fund a Need" donations enabled us to install new flooring throughout **Meadows House**. We were also able to purchase new playground equipment for the children's home (**Morehouse**) from the 2015 Fund a Need.

Additionally, we were able to purchase a new stove, microwave and complete some kitchen remodeling at Morehouse, again, thanks to mon-

ies raised through PACE's Fund-A-Need campaign!

Our residents were able to enjoy trips to Santa Cruz Beach & Boardwalk, San Francisco Pier 39, Monterey Bay Aquarium, and Great America over the summer months. It's always a challenge when taking our residents out into the community, but our dedicated and devoted staff are fully prepared to handle any and all issues that could arise. Our goal is to provide our residents with the most normalized experiences as possible, both at home and in the community.

If you are interested in learning more about the PACE residential program, please contact me at 408.625.6172. ■



The Wonderful Google Volunteers who Painted Miracle House!

New School Director

Continued from page 1

DM: Do any students at PACE stand out in your mind? Why does this student stand out?

SP: I was pleased to be part of the team who helped one student who is no longer at PACE greatly decrease his self-injurious behaviors (SIB). His parents weren't terribly happy with me at the beginning of our process, but realized over time that the SIB was decreasing. It was wonderful to see this student use more appropriate ways of communication, and to create a more successful school experience for him. His parents ended up being happy with me and with our methods! I also missed other wonderful students during my time away from PACE – too many to name!

DM: What is your vision for the PACE School in one year's time?

SP: Get our name out there as a school that helps the students become successful. I hope PACE will just be a short-term stop on their educational road -- or, as appropriate, getting them as independent as possible in preparation for graduation. ■



PACE School Playground Update

By Deb McClellan, Marketing & Communication Manager

You might recall that the school received funds from the **San Jose Mercury News Wish Book** and **eASIC Corp.** late last year and we were able to install a wonderful Occupational Therapy play structure for our K-12 students. A majority of PACE students suffer from agility and balance problems, and our Occupational Therapist (OT) team carefully selected segments for the structure that help students with these issues via daily use of **obstacle course** challenges.

PACE students have really enjoyed the play ground since it's installation in April, and are now able to participate in daily physical activity which helps them to relax enough in class so that they can more easily receive and process information. Physical movement stimulates the entire nervous system, and encourages cross body-cross brain learning which ultimately increases our students' ability to move through the physical world with higher levels of engagement and safety. For children struggling

with the social, cognitive, and physical deficits of autism, physical activities are the essential tools with which we support our therapeutic mission.

Members of **The Intero Foundation** were intrigued by the San Jose Mercury News article and also wanted to help! They attended our Open House and Playground Grand Opening in April and encouraged us to submit a grant application. We received more funds for the playground and were able to order and install a sensory sand and water feature for our students in June! A sensory area with sand and water provides for students' varied sensory needs -- and who doesn't like playing in the sand!

It's wonderful to have so many community members and organizations who support our mission and help us to provide the exceptional programs that PACE is known for, community-wide. ■

• Go to **www.escrip.com** and enter PACE's ID number: **472692** to register your credit and reward cards. PACE will receive a percentage of the money spent on your purchases when using preferred merchants such as Big O Tires, Draeger's Market and Lunardi's.

• Donate your old vehicle to **Donate for Charity!** Call 866-392-4483 or use their website **www.donateforcharity.com**. Donate for Charity handles all the details and distributes the net proceeds to PACE!

• When you shop on **AmazonSmile** (smile.amazon.com), the AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the price of eligible purchases to PACE.

PACE is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, Tax ID 77-0259858. Contributions to PACE are tax-deductible as specified by the current tax law.



Follow PACE on Facebook and get the latest photos and updates! Spread the word - support our programs by sharing! **www.facebook.com/pacificautismce**

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Executive Director: Kurt Ohlfs

The PACE mission: *To enhance the lives of people impacted by autism, through innovation, exceptional education and compassionate care.*



Be Stylish and Support PACE!



One of our stylish Mom Ambassadors has spearheaded a beautiful idea! She has contracted with the artist behind the popular jewelry maker, **the ROPES of Maine** to making **original PACE bracelets**. These beautiful bracelets in PACE colors will be available in November, just in time for the holidays! Each bracelet is individually handcrafted from authentic marine rope and hardware. You may have seen this jewelry in local specialty shops, J.Crew, or elsewhere.

\$70 for either style: Kennebunkport or Camden. **Pre-order** via email development@pacificautism.org, at pacificautism.org, or call (408) 625-6191. 100% of the profits go to PACE and a portion is tax-deductible.

Room 3 Builds

By Michelle Myers, Room Three Teacher

Classroom 3 had an out-of-the-box idea to spend one of our Friday outings at Home Depot. Here are the results! Room Three students worked diligently and patiently to put together these beautiful and functional coat racks for our jackets as the weather cools off. Each student was responsible for choosing one knob, and one color for paint. We even waited for the Home Depot staff to mix the paint right before our eyes! Next we brought our items back to school and built our projects together. Each student painted one half of a coat rack, and screwed in their knobs. Nice work, gentlemen!



Help spread the word about PACE programs and services! [Follow](#) and [share](#) on Facebook! www.facebook.com/pacificautismce

PACE School Memory Book on Sale Now!

PACE School families, there's still time to place an order for the 2015 PACE School Memory Books! The Memory Book was created in order to capture moments from the 2014-2015 school year. We utilize photos taken by staff to create an 8x8 photo-essay book. The book will only be available to parents and members of the PACE community.

If you're interested in purchasing a book, the cost is \$20 each. Books are arriving in mid September. Please place your order now to ensure your family gets its copy. E-mail Rachel Palmer with your request: rachelpalmer@pacificautism.org. You may also pay online at: <https://pacificautism.ejoinme.org/memorybook>. Cash payments must be brought into

the PACE office. If you would prefer to pay by check, checks should be made out to "PACE" and mailed to:

Pacific Autism Center for Education
Attn: Rachel Palmer
1880 Pruneridge Avenue
Santa Clara, CA 95050

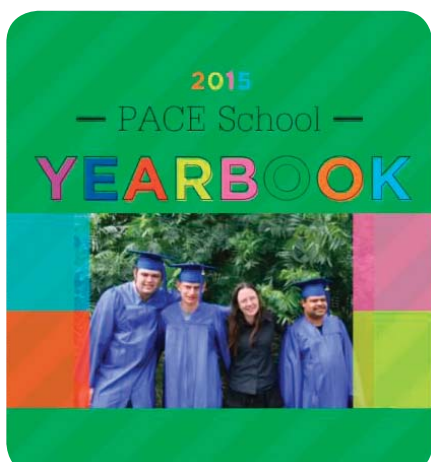
Please note on your check that the monies are for the 2015 School Memory Book. Last year's Memory Book was very popular with students and families, and we think this year's version will also bring joy and happy memories for years to come. ■



PACE Board of Directors

Welcomes 2 New Members!
Tom Marchok
Sarah Schwartz Mudgett

Matt Moran, President
Tom McGovern, VP
Paul Lacy, Treasurer
Kurt Ohlfs, Secretary
Joe Dermer
Jeff Fallick
Lisa Grisalin
Harry Lopez, Esq.
David Setti



PACE Youth Group Lights it up Blue

By Rachel Palmer, Annual Fund Manager

The Youth Leadership Committee (YLC) had a busy 2014-15 school year with many fundraisers and awareness events. The YLC hosted their first Light It Up Blue concert at Santana Row in April with great success. The concert included performances by Goo, Ali Myers, Socorra and Dean, and long-time PACE supporter Caelin Anne. There was a second stage that featured instrumental music by local high school musicians including Monta Vista Jazz Band, Monta Vista Tri-M, Harker Tri-M and Angeline Kiang. Members of the YLC had outreach booths at Santana Row with information about PACE and activities to raise awareness about autism.

The YLC is open to high school age students who are passionate about helping others. Not only is it important to have an interest in autism,

but our members must be driven, motivated, responsible, committed, enthusiastic, and empowered. Additionally, the YLC seeks leaders who are open to new ideas and possess strong communication skills.

If you are a high school student looking for a challenging way to meet or exceed your schools' community service requirements, e-mail me at rachelpalmer@pacificautism.org and we can discuss your ideas.

The YLC will be back in action for the 2015/16 school year beginning in September under the leadership of incoming President, Adele Li. Stay tuned for updates on upcoming events and awareness activities organized by these talented high school students! ■

