



Connect. Support. Educate.



## PACE Highlight

By Bridget Holian

PACE strives to not only educate our students, but also the greater community. For example, this summer PACE provided hands on training and education for two therapy interns: Christine Hanna, an Occupational Therapy (OT) Intern, and Ramya Sridharan, a Speech and Language Pathology (SLP) Intern.

This past August Christine graduated from San Jose State University's OT program, and Ramya is expected to graduate in December from California State University East Bay. All graduate Occupational Therapists and Speech Language Pathologists are required to complete two separate internships totaling six months of unpaid fulltime supervision before becoming eligible for their license, so both women came to PACE.

Allison Gaughan, one of PACE's Occupational Therapists, and Stacey Hinnach, one of PACE's Speech Language Pathologists, mentored each intern for a three month period. Christine is Allison's fourth intern since she entered the field. Allison continues to mentor interns because she believes that "OT plays an important role in the lives of children and adults with Autism; it is imperative that future OT professionals receive training and experience to help the ever growing population of children with Autism." While this was Stacey's first experience with an intern, "it's been a great experience," she says.

"We at PACE have a unique setting and population, and it's nice to share this experience with upcoming SLP professionals."

Managing an intern may require devoting additional time during the week, but Allison shared that "working with Christine was enjoyable. Her enthusiasm reminded me why I became an Occupational Therapist!" Overall it was a positive experience for both the staff members and the interns. "Allison opened my eyes to how to provide amazing OT to children with disabilities and sensory integration deficits," Christine said. And Ramya explained, "I learned so much by working with both the SLP and OT staff. I totally loved it!"

PACE is a challenging and rewarding site for a clinical rotation that allows for creativity and freedom. The training that PACE provided to both Christine and Ramya will give them the skills and knowledge to have a positive impact on children and adults with Autism. Thank you Christine and Ramya!



Christine at the PACE Carnival

## PACE 20th Anniversary Celebrations Continue

### PACE 8th Annual Gala: A Roaring 20th And All That Jazz

Saturday, November 21st  
Hayes Mansion, San Jose  
5 p.m. VIP Reception & Registration  
6 p.m. General Registration

PACE Annual Gala and Auction is near, and we are VERY excited to invite you all to come and celebrate our 20th Anniversary of serving children and adults with Autism in the South Bay Area. We'll take you back in time to a world of flapper girls and strings of pearls! Roar back to the '20s and enjoy an evening of music, food, and a few surprises at this year's A Roaring 20th And All That Jazz!

Tickets- \$150 per person  
VIP Tickets- \$200 per person  
Includes VIP reception with wines poured by Roy Froom, Estate Sommelier of Clos laChance, a commemorative wine glass and hors d'oeuvres.

For sponsorship, advertisement or ticket information please contact PACE at [development@pacificaautism.org](mailto:development@pacificaautism.org) or 408.245.3400.

### All That Jazz Fundraiser Event

Saturday, October 3rd  
Capital Club, San Jose  
6 p.m. Registration



SILICON VALLEY  
CAPITAL CLUB  
A Member of the ClubCorp Family

We are thrilled that this year PACE has been selected to receive one third of the funds raised at this year's Capital Club Gala and Auction, All That Jazz. The event will include a fabulous silent auction, dancing, a

wonderful dinner at the stunning Capital Club. Tickets \$100 per person. To sit at a PACE table please contact [bridgetholian@pacificaautism.org](mailto:bridgetholian@pacificaautism.org). For advertisement or ticket information please contact Amy Yarberry, Capital Club Coordinator, at [amy.yarberry@ourclub.com](mailto:amy.yarberry@ourclub.com) or 408-938-2366 or visit [www.clubcorp.com](http://www.clubcorp.com).

### Bloomingtondale's Event: Give a little, Get a lot!

Thursday, October 29th  
10am-10pm  
Bloomingtondale's, Stanford  
Join PACE for a day of shopping, family and kid events, live music, celebration



and savings at this year's "Shopping Benefit Day" at Bloomingtondale's, Stanford. PACE, along with other local charities, will be a beneficiary of this annual event that raises funds for the benefit of local, non-profit organizations. Purchase a \$10 ticket in advance from PACE and get 15% off of most purchases. Get 20% off purchases of \$300 or more when you use your Bloomingtondale's card. (Some exclusions apply.) When you bring in your pre-purchased ticket the day of the event, Bloomingtondale's will donate an additional \$5 to PACE. Extra tickets can be purchased at the store on the day of the event for a \$10 donation. 100% of the proceeds will be distributed among all of the participating organizations. For more information and to purchase tickets call 408-625-6191 or e-mail [development@pacificaautism.org](mailto:development@pacificaautism.org), and look for your invitation in October.

## Autism News

The California state budget cuts have hit education, health, and developmental services hard. On top of the \$6.1 billion cuts to K-14 public education, the budget slashes funding for the Department of Developmental Services (DDS)—including Regional Centers, which manage services for people with developmental disabilities—by \$234 million in 2009-2010. This cut is in addition to the \$100 million regional center cutbacks included in the February Budget Act. Further, the governor vetoed \$50 million from the DDS, Regional Centers Purchase of Services for children with disabilities up to age 5, which will impact early intervention programs. Indeed, Early Intervention and group homes especially have been affected: the reduction of General Fund support for the Healthy Families program, totaling \$178.6 million, includes eliminating \$59.1 million from various programs managed by Early Intervention, Home and Community Based Care, and Housing. Amidst these cuts, the budget has allocated \$65 million to Special Education Behavior Intervention Plans (BIP) due to a mandate settlement between certain school districts and the state administration. To review the CA budget in full, go to the CA Department of Finance website (<http://www.dof.ca.gov/>); and for a helpful analysis of the budget, go to the California Budget Project ([http://www.cbpp.org/publications/pub\\_statebudget.html](http://www.cbpp.org/publications/pub_statebudget.html)).

## From the Executive Director's Desk



It is often said that hard times bring out the best in people. Recent economic woes would certainly qualify this year as hard times for Bay Area nonprofits. With funding dropping and the demand for services increasing, many local agencies are struggling to survive. According to a recent survey conducted by the United Way of the Bay Area, a full one third of the 25,000 nonprofits located in the Bay Area are worried they may have to shut their doors by the end of the year. And, as they rush to institute cost-cutting measures, more than 75% of those surveyed expect demand for services to just keep increasing throughout 2009.

Hard times, indeed. But at PACE we're finding that the glass is half full, rather than half empty.

One of the positive side effects of the turbulent economy has been a considerable uptick in the number of highly qualified individuals volunteering for the agency. From classroom workers, to administrative assistants, to graphic designers, the quality and quantity of individual volunteers willing to commit has been amazing. This has been an extraordinary year for corporate and community volunteerism as well. PACE has benefited from hundreds of hours of volunteer labor through the efforts of programs like "Rebuilding Together," United Way's Day of Action, and local community groups like the Kiwanis and Lions Clubs, as well as our own Advisory Council. These organizations have cleaned, painted, refurbished, gardened, planted, and organized our facilities, saving the agency thousands of dollars and building a strong foundation for ongoing relationships.

While recent belt-tightening measures require that our programs minimize expenses, our staff has learned to maximize their creativity by working together and sharing resources. Our residential clients are enjoying activities closer to home that focus on socialization and communication. Our Adult Day Clients continue to benefit from the generous support of local businesses that provide them with worksites for ongoing vocational training. Our school and preschool programs continue to benefit from the efforts of an extraordinarily committed staff and the generosity of local businesses that continue to provide in-kind services and support.

Challenging times, certainly. But, as we celebrate our 20 year anniversary we are grateful for the support we have received from the many businesses, organizations and individuals who believe in the work we do at PACE, and who have sustained us over the years. By focusing our mission on connecting and supporting, we are fortunate to have such a remarkable community to help weather this storm.

Sincerely,

**Kurt Ohlfs, Executive Director**

## Graduation 2009



Jamie starts the procession

The multipurpose room was packed with relatives and friends for this year's graduation on June 22nd.

The six twenty-two year-old graduates, dressed in blue caps and gowns, bustled with energy before the ceremony at 1pm. The two verbal students practiced their graduation speeches. "Come on Chris, you know you can give that speech!" the staff encourage. "Clayton, please try to smile when you give that speech!"

Soon "Pomp and Circumstance" started to play, and the graduates proceeded down the aisle. Kurt Ohlfs, Executive Director, and Marcia Goldman, Education Director, both spoke followed by Chris and Clayton. Each of the other four graduates-- Jamie, Nathan, Israel, and John-- stood up as a staff person joined them at the podium with some personal remarks. In a unique and

touching gesture, each graduate presented a rose to his mother or special person in the audience to acknowledge the role that this person played in his achievement. The graduates then received their diplomas from school program director Marquis Zane. Afterwards, friends and family enjoyed cake and lemonade with the graduates.

Peggy Tanger, PACE staff member and special education teacher for more than twenty years, marveled at the "unique and beautiful faces of the kids I have worked with for three years." Indeed, the ceremony represented a bittersweet, exciting, and emotional milestone for friends and family: it is formally the last academic graduation for PACE graduates. The occasion marked not only the young men's achievement, but also the dedication and support of staff, friends, and family.



Nathan with his family

## PACE School Events

### Prom

Students, families, and staff spent a Night in Camelot for this year's Prom on May 29th. Thanks to a dedicated team of staff, parents and community volunteers, the Cory Educational Facility auditorium was magically transformed into a castle!

A lot of planning and preparation went into this amazing event. Staff members volunteered hours of time to create a balcony photo booth, drawbridge and over thirty castle walls and windows. Weeks in advance, students worked with therapists and staff on learning the steps to the Hokey-Pokey, the Macarena and the conga line. Their hard work paid off at the dance; we had fearless leaders showing us the way through every move. Adding his own energy to the enthusiasm was our D.J. and special needs teacher, Jeff Rherig, who made his second consecutive appearance at a PACE prom.

The family-friendly event had students and parents alike dressed up and dancing to the music. A prom king and queen were selected, and our prom king got to dress in full king attire. "It was so much fun," Ramya Sridharan, Speech Pathologist Intern, said. "A lot of the students danced for the full two hours!" All in all, A Night in Camelot was a very special evening for the students of PACE.



PACE student Steven cracking a smile



Sheila, PACE student, starts a conga line



Student Mahayla dancing

Want to know what else PACE students are doing?

Follow us on Twitter!

[www.twitter.com/PacificAutismCE](http://www.twitter.com/PacificAutismCE)

## Summer Camp

Summer is sports camps season, and some PACE students got that experience firsthand by participating in a basketball camp alongside typical teenagers.

Brian Tanger of Executive Sports Management runs the program, which involves eight different camps at private schools in weeklong sessions from 9am-1pm. PACE students learned basketball fundamentals in groups of seven to ten teenagers. Santa Clara University and Stanford University students, as well as other adults who take off a week from work, volunteered to coach. It was a great opportunity for some of our PACE students not only to exercise and develop their skills, but also to play and learn alongside typical kids their own age.

"When our students participate," PACE staff member Peggy Tanger observes, "something triggers for the kids with Autism; they are just part of the group, and learn along with everyone else." The camp provides intermingling and relationship building with kids of similar ages, and the PACE students really enjoyed the experience. For the future, Brian hopes to replicate this peer socialization strategy for teenage clients, such as lunch hour visits once a week.

Brian Tanger with PACE student Demitri



## How 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.pacificautism.org](http://www.pacificautism.org).

- Donate by mail by sending your contributions to PACE, 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 Karen Kennan at 408-625-6176.

- Do you have an item you want to give away? It may be on PACE's Wish List. Contact [karenkennan@pacificautism.org](mailto:karenkennan@pacificautism.org) to make an In-Kind donation.

# Great Givers

By Karen Kennan

PACE has benefited from the generosity of many individuals, businesses and organizations that support our agency by giving of their time, treasure and talents. Generous financial contributions, donations of in-kind goods and services and volunteer assistance are just a few of the ways PACE is supported by the community. In this issue of PACE Setter we are pleased to highlight Rebuilding Together Silicon Valley.

Since their establishment in 1991, Rebuilding Together has committed its resources to renovate over 640 homes and community facilities in the South Bay. While the majority served are low-income, elderly or disabled individuals, repair and maintenance work for non-profit facilities like PACE assists these organizations' efforts to provide services to the community.

Every fall and spring during Rebuilding Days, Rebuilding Together brings together a cadre of volunteers who use donated materials to provide repairs and renovations that result in life changing improvements for homeowners and organizations.

For the past few years PACE has been fortunate to be selected by Rebuilding Together for facility improvements and upgrades. This year on April 25th, two teams of volunteers took over PACE Facilities at the School and at PACE Morehouse for a day of repair and renovation.



Meriwest volunteers enlist a little helper

At PACE school, more than 30 volunteers from Meriwest Credit Union spent the day cleaning and painting the interior of the building, landscaping, building new planter boxes, and assisting in administrative and organizational tasks. "This year's project was especially gratifying as the work we performed created a nicer environment for the many students and staff of PACE School," said Christopher Owen, President and CEO of Meriwest and member of Rebuilding's Honorary Board of Directors. "Meriwest Credit Union staff are no strangers to PACE. Two years ago the group volunteered on a renovation project at one of PACE's children's homes.

At PACE More House, another group of volunteers also made a repeat visit to PACE. Volunteers from IBM spent the day landscaping, weeding and planting, cleaning the house, repainting and completely replacing and recovering two bathroom floors. In addition, volunteers designed and built a beautiful set of wooden stairs to allow safe and secure access to the backyard trampoline. "The commitment of the IBM team was amazing," said PACE Residential Administrator Rhoda Austin. "Volunteers returned throughout the week to complete the work they couldn't quite finish on Saturday." And later in the month Rebuilding Together donated additional volunteer time and enough linoleum to replace the flooring in all the public living spaces in the house. A third group of Rebuilding



Volunteers hoeing and planting

volunteers from the Cupertino DeAnza Lions Club made a trip to PACE Miracle House in June to improve the grounds by building beautiful free standing planter boxes. Now these boxes are home to colorful flowers and tasty vegetables that all the residents can enjoy.

These improvements would not be possible without the support of local businesses, corporations and volunteers. For their role in assisting non-profit agencies like PACE in their efforts to provide services to the community, we salute Rebuilding Together as a true Great Giver.

**PACE thanks UPS (United Parcel Services) whose local employees have pledged more than \$40,000 in the coming year to PACE through their company United Way campaign.**

**Do you work for a business or belong to an organization that would like to learn more about autism? PACE staff would love to come make a presentation to your group. Contact Karen Kennan at 408.625.6176 or karenkennan@pacificautism.org.**

• Use the link to some of your favorite online stores at [www.goodshop.com](http://www.goodshop.com) and up to 30% of your purchase will go to PACE! Online stores include Amazon, Target, Staples and many more!

• Go to [www.escrip.com](http://www.escrip.com) and go to the "sign on" screen. 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 Safeway, Macy's, American Airlines and Draeger's Market.

# Employee Corner by Veronica Rodriguez

PACE welcomes the latest additions to our growing team of dedicated professionals, and wishes a happy anniversary to our seasoned veterans who have been with PACE for more than five years:

**Welcome!**

*January - March*  
• Juliana Bayle

- Tabettha Cameron
- Faith Martinez
- Jessica Solchenberger
- Kamaljeet Kaur
- Jessica Tucker
- Kristina Walker
- Mariama Fasuluku
- William Galat
- Peter Hemphill

- Mohamed Kamara
- Toni Kimple
- Karefa Sesay

*June - July*

- Leonora Drequito
- Michelle Galare
- Christine Hanna
- Kaberi Bhattacharjee
- Kelly Fisher
- Juan Pablo Ghazaleh
- Debbie Key
- Nora Martin
- Helen Tesfu

*April - May*

- Ahsan Ahmed
- Irene Chan
- Shantea Huery
- Lora Meadows
- Hiwet Shiferaw
- Ramya Sridharan
- Patrick Vigil

\* \* \*

**Happy Anniversary!**

*July-September*

- Naward Hernandez, 13yrs
- Jason Hernandez, 12 yrs
- Mary Easley, 5 yrs
- Danilo Jacquez, 5 yrs
- Richard Buonocore, 5 yrs
- Cairbre Fanslow 7 yrs
- Betty Ripley 5 yrs

- Marissa Basiga 8 yrs
- Maria Basiga 10 yrs
- Marina Amate 5 yrs
- Cecilia Macasero 13 yrs
- Dulmar Dualeh 9 yrs
- Nelson Basiga 8 yrs
- Bernadita Prado 8 yrs
- Josefina Chavez 8 yrs
- Aida Urena 8 yrs

- Troy Scott 9 yrs
- Kristen Rodriguez 10 yrs
- Petronila Tacmo 12 yrs
- Melba Tolentino 12 yrs
- Armando Suarez 12 yrs

**Announcements**

Join us at PACE K-12 school to celebrate Birthdays and Anniversaries on every last Wednesday of the month.

Social Committee is now in session! Anyone interested in helping plan PACE employee events please contact either Veronica or Michelle.

**Save the Date**

Our Annual PACE Employee Holiday Party will be on October 2, 2009! RSVP and wear your best costume to be eligible for a valuable grand prize.

**Join the PACE Team! Open positions:**

- Special Education Teacher K-12
- Instructional Specialist - K-12
- Direct Care Staff - Residential
- Facility Manager - Residential

*Thanks to all employees for making PACE such a great place to work!*



## YLC Kick-Off

This August, more than 30 high school students attended a kick-off event at PACE to jump-start a new leadership training program for young people: the Youth Leadership Committee (YLC). With the goal of encouraging philanthropy and social service, the YLC will organize and plan events to raise funds and awareness of Autism. The event included music by Go Kart Mozart, raffle prizes and refreshments. After the event, the youth were interviewed and selected to be members of the YLC. Each committee member has pledged to raise a minimum of \$365 per year for PACE and to educate the community about Autism and Developmental Disabilities. Stay tuned for new events that will be organized by the YLC.

## PACE Board of Directors

- Joe Dermer, President
- Kati Miller, Vice President
- Geoff Davis, Treasurer
- Valerie Burniece
- Gail Hashimoto
- Yvonne Linney
- David Piazza
- Christian Picone
- Jocelyn Zona

PACE is proud to introduce our newest Board member, Scott Johnson.

## PACE Advisory Council

- Jerry Matranga, Chair
- Edward Ball
- John Cheng
- Tom Crotty
- Paula Davis
- Bill Gould
- Maria Hermanussen
- Katie Nguyen
- Gregory Thomson



Co-Chairs Kara Risser and Hannah Nguyen

**PACE is a 501C(3) nonprofit organization. Contributions to PACE are tax-deductible as specified in the current tax laws. The Tax ID for PACE is 77-0259858.**



## Ask a Therapist

In this issue of PACEsetter we introduce a new column dedicated to answering all those questions you've wanted to ask an Occupational or Speech Therapist. All printed answers come from the PACE Therapy staff.



**Recently I went to buy school supplies for my son with Autism and debated whether to buy a backpack, since he doesn't seem to like to carry it anyway. Is there a benefit to my son wearing a backpack to school?**

Most people think of backpacks as simply objects that transport items, but they serve many other important functions—especially for students with Autism and other Developmental Delays. First is the social aspect of a backpack: most school-aged children use a backpack; it can represent the student's personality through a favorite color, favorite action hero, etc.; and it has space for favorite toys or games to share with friends.

Second, carrying a backpack provides proprioceptive and tactile input. Proprioception is your "body sense," or how your body fits into the world around you. This sense is processed by the major joints in the body, like shoulders. Weight on those joints provides input that is calming and organizing. Carrying a backpack is a good way for students to get this needed input, since it is typically part of their daily routines. Too much weight can be harmful to joints and muscles, however, so weight should be roughly no more than 15% of a person's body weight. Tactile or "touch" input can be gained through backpack material, keychains, or other "fidgets" attached to zippers or buckles.

Third, students build vital skills by organizing their backpacks before and after school. Developing an awareness of what needs to go into their backpack, following a visual sequence or schedule to pack it, and recognizing what is missing are essential for students to learn in order to gain more independence and control over their daily routines. This consistency can also help decrease anxiety and make transitions between school and home easier.

For more information about backpacks' importance, please visit [www.aota.org](http://www.aota.org)

If you have a question to ask a Therapist please send it to:  
[pacesetter@pacifcautim.org](mailto:pacesetter@pacifcautim.org)

## Sunny Days Graduation

Parents, relatives, parents and peers gathered at the graduation of seven Sunny Days Preschool students this past August. Jennifer, Naia, Oskar, Parker, Sofia, Stephanie, and Victor will move on to kindergarten in the fall. The ceremony itself was small and casual, celebrating the preschoolers' development and the efforts of their teachers and parents. The students present for the ceremony wore paper caps and walked down the impromptu aisle of the classroom, singing a graduation song that they had learned a few days earlier. Then they each received a "diploma" from Jessica Solchenberger, Teacher, and Ashley Dahl, Teacher Assistant. We wish these graduates well!



Stephanie, Jennifer, Naia, and Sofia

**Sunny Days Preschool is currently accepting applications for typical children as well as children on the spectrum. For more information contact: [heena@pacifcautism.org](mailto:heena@pacifcautism.org).**

## Special Care Planning

Miceli Financial Partners (MFP) has a Special Care Planning Team that provides financial strategies for families with members who have special needs. The group allies with legal and medical professionals, non-profit organizations and support groups at the community level to implement effective life care plans. Below MFP provides a financial checklist for parents and caregivers of children with special needs:

- Identify financial resources, including government benefits
- Establish a Special Needs Trust
- Choose a Guardian / Conservator / trustee
- Complete Estate Planning
- Review health plan options
- Anticipate changes when your child reaches the age of majority
- Explore housing options for your child after becoming an adult
- Get the right advice from experienced professionals

Checklist for Parents and Caregivers

- Create a Life Care Plan and communicate it to all interested parties
- Create a Letter of Intent and update it periodically
- Include yourself in your plan

MFP is a wealth management and insurance services company that has actively supported PACE as a generous corporate sponsor. Visit [www.micelifinancialpartners.com](http://www.micelifinancialpartners.com) for more information.

## PACE Announces a Changing of the Guard

### PACE Thanks Outgoing President Kati Miller



Kati Miller has been an active member of the PACE Board since September 2004, and became Chair in January 2007. Soon after, PACE was suddenly faced with a challenge: the agency was given only ten months to vacate its leased school property in the Cupertino Union School District. Through her

leadership, PACE was able to secure the purchase and renovation of its new Pruneridge K-12 school in a build that took just 3 months to support the rush of students on January 8th, 2008. In July, Kati stepped down from the role of President after two and a half years of service. During her tenure, the PACE organization flourished with its strongest years of fundraising support and visibility. Kati will now serve as Vice President.

### PACE Welcomes Joe Dermer as Incoming President



We are proud to welcome Joe Dermer as the new Chair of the PACE Board of Directors. His involvement with PACE began with his brother, who has been a resident of Matranga House for 10 years. Joe had been a volunteer for the Spark Foundation before it merged with PACE in 1995. He

joined the PACE board in 2008. The highlight for Joe so far is co-organizing the successful first annual golf tournament this past April. Mr. Dermer is a seasoned entrepreneur, founding companies such as Better Image and Emerging Solutions, and is now a partner in the Dermer Law Firm (founded by his father in 1975). His chief areas of practice include business transactional law, taxation and trusts and estates. His hobbies are golfing and coaching Little League.



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A newsletter providing information on PACE programs and services.

Published by Karen Kennan

Edited by Nora Martin

Graphic Design by Rasta Khazeni

Contributors: Kurt Ohlfs, Karen Kennan, Bridget Holian, Nora Martin, PACE staff

PACE's mission is to provide high quality programs for individuals with autism/developmental disabilities so they may experience the satisfaction and fulfillment that accompany learning, self-expression, self-care, productive work and interpersonal and community experiences.

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