

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**



## **PACE School Leadership**

**Santa Clara, CA, January 1, 2017** – The leadership of PACE School is bringing new inspiration. Dr. Naomi Betiku, Director of Education and Behavioral Services, holds a doctoral degree from UCLA in Developmental Psychology and has recently joined PACE with over 16 years of experience in childhood developmental delays, including specialization in autism. Mary Tucker, graduated with a B.A. in Psychology from Duke University, compliments the team with special education credentials and 4 years of experience as a public school Special Education Teacher. Ms. Tucker joins PACE to develop a brand new position, Teacher Resource Specialist, and is chartered to implement the latest technology and resources in PACE classrooms to enhance our mission. Both Dr. Bekitu and Ms. Tucker are drawing from their depth of experience working with special needs community to continue to advance the PACE School curriculum.

Dr. Naomi Bekitu says, “It is necessary to approach each student not just from their Individualized Education Plan (IEP) but from a comprehensive understanding of who they are as a person and what behaviors might be most problematic for each of them.” At PACE, we are creating a long-term strategy that focuses on diminishing aberrant behaviors safely and early in development. As Ms. Tucker noted, “If we allow unsafe behaviors, we are doing a disservice to the students and the parents.” In order for us to advance the knowledge base of instruction and behavioral management for staff, PACE, dedicates two and a half hours a month for staff training.

Parent Outreach Program is a newer forum that allows us to connect with our parents and subsequently creates a deeper connection to our mission. As Dr. Bekitu says, “It is easier to have compassionate care when we meet the parents and hear their personal stories. This helps us to better connect and effectively educate the students.” Ms. Tucker adds, “It makes it clear as to why we are here and the value we can add to these children’s lives.”

###

**About PACE:** Founded in 1989, Pacific Autism Center for Education provides high-quality programs for individuals with autism and its related developmental disabilities. PACE operates a non-public school for ages 6-22, offers Early Intervention and behavioral therapy services including Sunny Days Preschool and operates two children and four adult group homes in Santa Clara County. EIN: 77-0259858. [www.pacificautism.org](http://www.pacificautism.org) [facebook.com/pacificautismce](https://facebook.com/pacificautismce)

**About Autism:** Autism is a neuro-developmental disability that impacts an individual's ability to regulate sensory input, to communicate, to interact socially, and to learn in conventional ways. Autism is considered a spectrum disorder and so affects each individual differently and at varying degrees. <http://pacificautism.org/about-pace/about-autism/>

**Contact:** Marta Weinstock, Marketing and Resource Development Manager | 408.625.6174 | [marketing@pacificautism.org](mailto:marketing@pacificautism.org)