Zach's speech and comprehension deficits, he enjoyed San Francisco. While classes were a little difficult due to that he take classes at Academy of the Arts University in Zach was capable of creating a broad variety of artwork tried new art techniques and it became apparent that This past year, Zach had an amazing art teacher that a picture of the Disney or Pixar character to draw. mouse, referencing either a video cover or the Internet for his home computer and began drawing pictures using the were out. Zach later discovered the Paint application on his computer, referencing either a video cover or the Internet for his home computer and began drawing pictures using the computer, referencing either a video cover or the Internet for his home computer and began drawing pictures using the computer, referencing either a video cover or the Internet for his home computer and began drawing pictures using.

Zach's passion for art began as a baby, as he was fascinated by Disney and Pixar movies and was highly responsive to the images and music on the television screen. When he was three years old, he started "air drawing" with his finger, and when finally given drawing tools, he began creating artwork all over the house, even on the walls, to his grandmother's dismay! Eventually, he was given traditional art supplies and focused his artwork in notebooks, which he quickly filled with drawings. His mother always kept a drawing pad in her purse to occupy him when they were out. Zach later discovered the Paint application on his computer and began drawing pictures using the computer, referencing either a video cover or the Internet for a picture of the Disney or Pixar character to draw.

This past year, Zach had an amazing art teacher that helped to push him outside his artistic comfort zone. He tried new art techniques and it became apparent that Zach was capable of creating a broad variety of artwork with great skill and detail. Zach's teacher recommended that he take classes at Academy of the Arts University in San Francisco. While classes were a little difficult due to Zach's speech and comprehension deficits, he enjoyed them immensely.

PACIFIC AUTISM CENTER FOR EDUCATION

PACE 12th Annual Gala and Auction “Casino Royale”
Saturday, October 12, 2013 at the Crowne Plaza Cabana Hotel, Palo Alto

This year’s event will feature a live and silent auction, casino games, dinner, music, and cocktails, served shaken, not stirred in true James Bond style. All proceeds raised from the event benefit PACE programs and services.

Admission: $175
VIP Admission: $225 includes private reception, fabulous goody bag and signature Bond drink

To purchase tickets, become a sponsor or advertiser, or make a donation, visit www.pacificaustism.org, email development@pacificaustism.org or call 408-245-3400.

PACE Volunteer Highlight: Zach Umar-Durr

PACE benefits 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 Zach, a high school student who used his artistic talents to brighten up our children’s homes.

Zach was born in Palo Alto and now resides in Castro Valley. He will be a senior at Hayward High School in Fall 2013. Zach has high functioning autism and struggles with speech and comprehension. This diagnosis has not held him back from achieving his goals, as Zach has maintained a GPA of no less than a 4.0 since he started high school and is mainstreamed in most of his classes.

Zach's passion for art began as a baby, as he was fascinated by Disney and Pixar movies and was highly responsive to the images and music on the television screen. When he was three years old, he started "air drawing" with his finger, and when finally given drawing tools, he began creating artwork all over the house, even on the walls, to his grandmother’s dismay! Eventually, he was given traditional art supplies and focused his artwork in notebooks, which he quickly filled with drawings. His mother always kept a drawing pad in her purse to occupy him when they were out. Zach later discovered the Paint application on his computer and began drawing pictures using the computer, referencing either a video cover or the Internet for a picture of the Disney or Pixar character to draw.

Zach was required to perform community service hours during the school year and he was fortunate to find PACE and Rachel Palmer. Zach was very excited to draw and do-nate his artwork to PACE and provided his Disney and Pix-ar renditions to PACE for our children's residential home, Miracle House. Now, each of the children have two framed colorful pieces in their rooms and absolutely love them.

Zach understands that he has a gift and his mother is helping him realize how important it is to share that gift with others. The entire process of going to PACE from being greeted by the receptionist, to touring the facility, to meeting with Rachel and other staff members was an amazing life lesson for Zach. It not only showed him the importance of volunteering, but he also learned the process of an interview, the impact his art has on others, and that working hard really pays off.

Zach also enjoys participating in sporting events. He recently participated in the Torch Run with the Hayward Police Department and is training for his third triathlon. Zach is very active in Special Olympics and competed at the Northern California Summer Games in Davis.

Thank you Zach for sharing your talents with PACE!
PACE News

PACE Receives United Way Grant by Jennifer Welling

PACE has been fortunate to have received three consecutive grants from the United Way Silicon Valley’s Strategic Investment Fund spanning 3 years. Each grant has given us the chance to expand programs and help reach families unfamiliar with treatment options, methodologies, and schooling choices.

We are excited about our 2013-16 grant as it gives us the chance to use open-source web technology to help parents and their children. With our dedication to training parents and caregivers to better manage a child’s behaviors and disability, and our success employing technology solutions for children with autism, we are pleased our resources can bring the two together for an innovative family and community wellness program.

Called Porchlight Project, our program will be an open-source free-access internet program designed specifically to provide parents and caregivers with solutions for behavioral therapy to implement at home using video training modules. Each module will be a short demonstration course, showing theory and hands-on instructions, and giving parents specific and concrete examples of behavior modifications they can make in their own homes to help to improve their child’s quality of life.

How to use the video modules: Each module will be specific and concrete examples of behavioral skills required to best help their child at home.

What Kind of Legacy Will You Leave? Leave a legacy that will sustain PACE long into the future. Please consider a gift to the Pacific Autism Center for Education in your estate plan.

Your donation will help PACE connect, support and educate by ensuring high quality programs for children and adults with autism, now and in the future. If you have made a gift to PACE in your will or trust, please let us know so we can thank you and recognize your generosity.

Joseph’s Amazing Ideas

by Melissa Whitmore

Joseph Yitzhak Jacobson is a 17 year old child of Dina and Neil Jacobson of Los Altos. Joseph is the only child of Dina and Neil Jacobson of Los Altos.

Like many kids Joseph’s age, he likes to ride bikes and play on the computer. His favorite subject is math. He has a facebook page and often posts pictures and nice things about his school experience. Joseph also has a passion for Martial Arts. He works out 3 to 5 times a week at the Hiruko Wellness Center in Palo Alto, where he has advanced to the level of brown belt. This year, he learned how to take the bus to the Center, which entails walking to the bus, scanning his bus pass, and taking and transferring buses from Los Altos to Mountain View and then to Palo Alto. He is thinking of someday becoming a Martial Arts instructor, but realizes he may change his mind and has plenty of time to decide.

Joseph is very happy at PACE. He likes his teacher, Pauline Cabales, and considers his fellow classmates and administration staff as his friends, especially Kurt Ohifi, PACE Executive Director. He is very engaging and interacts well with the school staff. He regularly works in the student store during lunch time.

Born out of a love for his new school, and a very inquisitive mind, Joseph noticed a box in the staff lounge for suggestions, and decided he would offer his own. Thus began his weekly input of ideas. The staff immediately loved the idea and began suggesting their own ideas. Joseph would start with the words, Joseph’s Amazing Ideas.

The executive team liked Joseph’s suggestions so much that in February 2013, his ideas were featured in the PACE agency-wide internal newsletter. The feature was such a hit with staff that Joseph has earned the Amazing Ideas column in nearly every issue!

It is clear that Joseph is motivated by a desire to make the school a better place and will never stop offering suggestions and ideas because in his words, “there are always things to suggest!”

Here are a few of Joseph’s Amazing Ideas from the past few months:

- Have employees take business cards to job sites in case people are interested in applying for a job or are interested in volunteering at PACE.
- The school should have a student of the month (PACE has a staff of the month and Joseph would like the school to offer this for students.)
- The school restrooms should have hooks to hang shirts when students put on deodorant.
- We should have oranges, apples, grapes, peaches, and nectarines for the school store so there is something healthy to purchase.

From the Desk of the Assistant Executive Director

A commitment to connect, support and educate is at the heart of the PACE vision. During the past 24 years, as our agency has transitioned from a small special education school with a couple of residential homes to a full-service non-profit organization serving individuals with autism from cradle to community, we have always maintained our commitment to this ideal.

As the demand for autism services continues to outpace the capacities of brick and mortar agencies like PACE, it is clear that we must find innovative ways to bring our services to individuals who do not have the benefit of attending our programs, but who are in need of connection, support and education nonetheless. So, we are pleased to announce that, in the year ahead, we will develop an outreach program for parents of children with developmental disabilities to give them every opportunity to access the behavioral skills required to best help their child at home.

“Porchlight Project (Bringing good ideas home),” is a program designed specifically to provide parents and caregivers with solutions for behavioral and developmental therapy they can implement at home. PACE has always been committed to family education and understanding that provided families with the skills to communicate and interact with their children in a meaningful way expands their opportunities for successful engagement. PACE is building on its successful Early Intervention Parent Training program and allows us to provide much needed resources to an expanded community of users. For more information about Porchlight Project and the grant that made it possible, please see the accompanying “PACE News” story on this page.

Karen Kennan
Assistant Executive Director

PACE Morehouse Reopens!

Morehouse, a 4-bedroom home that provides 24/7 care for children with autism, re-opened its doors in May 2013 and quickly filled with new residents. The children currently residing in the home are between the ages of 6-15. Staff are skillfully trained in behavior and intervention plans to help assist children with their daily living skills and provide behavioral support.

This year, PACE Golf Classic 2013 chose the reopening of children’s home Morehouse as the beneficiary for the Fund-A-Need donations raised at the live auction. The generous golfers who participated in the event and attended the dinner donated $14,500 in support of Morehouse reopening.

How You Can Help

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

- Donate by mail by sending your contributions to 1880 Pruneriage 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 giving option, please contact development@pacificaustim.org.
- To include PACE in your workplace giving options, please contact development@pacificaustim.org.
- Do you have an item you want to give away? It may be on PACE’s Wish List. Contact development@pacificaustim.org to make an in-Kind donation.

PACE Morehouse

Staff (l to r): Mohamed, Dawn, Alfonzo

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Great Givers

By Ashley Koepplin

This past April, Sunny Days Preschool was given the wonderful opportunity of participating in the Silicon Valley Rebuilding Together Project (http://rebuildingtogether.org/), thanks in large part to the generosity of the Cupertino Rotary. This large group of volunteers kindly donated their time and resources to give the preschool a much needed “makeover.” Over 70 volunteers came to contribute their wide variety of skills on a Saturday. Volunteers started working at 7:00 am and stayed until the early evening.

Projects included a lot of painting: the volunteers painted the inside of classrooms, the outside of all of the buildings, both outdoor sheds, and ramps. Along with painting, the team was able to do some sanding and repair for many of the tired and worn out surfaces. To help make the preschool even more cheerful, wonderful planter boxes were custom built, painted, and filled with colorful plants. A lengthy cleaning for the playground was in order and volunteers spent countless hours power washing the equipment.

The Cupertino Rotary was a wonderful group to work with. Some of the volunteers came ahead of time to do prep work before the actual day, in order to complete as much work as possible. The work was done professionally and with much care and attention. Henry Buffalow headed up the team, along with Tom, Jim, Bob, Mike, Barbara, and Deanne. The Cupertino Rotary was also joined by St. Jude Episcopal Church, who contributed much time and effort to the project. You can see photos of the day’s activities at: http://www.flickr.com/photos/rtsvsets/7215723303187285/

Hastening this kind of work done to the preschool helped the older buildings look sparkly and new. With limited resources, it is often difficult to give students the best possible environment for learning. Thanks to the Cupertino Rotary and the Rebuilding Together Project, this is now possible for Sunny Days!

Staff Highlight

At PACE, we are fortunate to have a staff of very dedicated, caring and talented individuals. In this newsletter, we would like to highlight Ashley Koepplin and Rebecca Bright, the dynamic duo who manage our Connections Children’s Program.

A certified Early Childhood Special Education teacher, Ashley Koepplin came to PACE in 2008, as an Instructional Aide for Sunny Days Preschool. Later that year, after earning her teaching credential, she was promoted to a teaching position in the preschool, and in 2010 became the Manager of the preschool program. Ashley completed her undergraduate studies at Santa Clara University, where she made the decision to work with young students. As a young adult, Ashley’s early experiences working with typical children and developmentally challenged children as a caregiver, swim instructor, volunteer and teacher fueled Ashley’s interest in Special Education, ultimately leading her to San Jose State University where, in 2011, she received her MA in Education with an emphasis on Special Education.

A native of Santa Clara, Ashley is active in her church, is married to Grant and has a 14 month old son named Cohen. Says Ashley about working at PACE Connections: “I enjoy this work because every day is so different and never boring. Working here helps me appreciate all the little things that we so often take for granted.” For more information about Sunny Days Preschool, contact Ashley at ashleykoepplin@pacificaustism.org.

Rebecca Bright earned her B.S. in Psychology from Santa Clara University in 2002. She has always been interested in psychology and working with families, but found a passion for ABA (Applied Behavioral Analysis) while working as a behavioral tutor for FACES (Foundation for Autistic Childhood Education and Support).

Rebecca left FACES in 2007 to finish her M.S. in Clinical Psychology from San Jose State University. She returned to FACES in 2010, while completing behavior analysis courses through Florida Institute of Technology. She is now a Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) and Licensured Marriage and Family Therapist (MFT). When FACES merged with PACE in the Fall of 2011, Rebecca became a Case Consultant and provided clinical oversight for the FACES staff.

In March of 2013, Rebecca was promoted to Clinical Manager of PACE Children’s Programs, where she divides her time managing clinical services at both FACES and Connections, as well as training staff, overseeing insurance cases and working directly with students and families. Rebecca’s professional background includes early intervention, parent training, school consultation, behavioral intervention and Naturalistic Incidental Teaching. When she can, she enjoys visiting her home state of Oregon, as well as traveling to see family and friends across the country with her husband Matt. For more information about home therapy services, please contact Rebecca Bright at rebcbright@pacificaustism.org.

Autism News

By Jennifer Welling

Thirteen years and considerable advancements in scientific understanding of mental disorders have passed since the American Psychiatric Association published its Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders IV (DSM-IV). The revision, DSM-5, was published this past May and immediately supersedes use of DSM-4 for all diagnostic coding and treatment of mental disorders. The DSM revision forms the backbone of all diagnostic and treatment by the mental health community, insurers, and public and private treatment programs. DSM-5 now contains the most up-to-date criteria for diagnosing mental disorders, along with extensive descriptive text, and is a common language for clinicians and insurers to communicate about their patients.

However, parents need to be aware of the changes that have happened beneath the surface so their children receive the appropriate treatment and care management. One of the most important changes with DSM-5 has been to group Asperger’s Syndrome within the larger Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), whereas previously Asperger’s had its own diagnosis. For children already diagnosed with an Asperger’s diagnosis, there will be no change, as these children will continue to qualify for coverage under the Autism Spectrum. The change will be for parents seeking a first-time diagnosis.

Likewise, DSM-5 takes the previously listed four neurological sub-disorders (autistic disorder, Asperger’s disorder, childhood disintegrative disorder, or pervasive developmental disorder not otherwise specified) and now appends them to the larger ASD coding. The advantage here is the consistency and streamlining of a diagnosis, whereas under the DSM-4 the separate diagnoses were not being applied consistently across different clinics or treatment centers, resulting in some confusion and mis-diagnoses.

Lastly, DSM-5 is geared towards diagnosing children at a younger age (in order to be able to begin treatment earlier) and states children must exhibit ASD symptoms from early childhood, even if the symptoms are not recognized or diagnosed until later.

The American Psychiatric Association states: “People with ASD tend to have communication deficits, such as responding inappropriately in conversations, nonverbal interactions, or having difficulty building friendships appropriate to their age. In addition, people with ASD may be overly dependent on routines, highly sensitive to changes in their environment, or intensely focused on inappropriate items. The symptoms of people with ASD will fall on a continuum, with some individuals showing mild symptoms and others having much more severe symptoms. This spectrum will allow clinicians to account for the variations in symptoms and behaviors from person to person.”
Ask a Therapist
What is ABA Therapy? by Rebecca Bright, MS, LMFT, BCBA and Kelly Montague, BCBA

At PACE, we accommodate each individual’s particular learning style, blending multiple methodologies that, in collaboration, provide for each person’s unique needs. The primary methodologies we draw upon include: Floortime/DIR, (focus on social/emotional capacities), San-Rise (focus on joining the child to build effective, meaningful communication), TEACCH (structured approach that creates order and organization) and (ABA) Applied Behavior Analysis. In this article, we highlight the practice of ABA.

ABA, or Applied Behavior Analysis, is an evidence-based, data-driven approach that can be used for teaching new skills and replacing undesirable behaviors in nearly any area of life (e.g., smoking cessation, weight loss, anxiety reduction, relationship improvement). It is most commonly applied to the treatment of the symptoms of autism. ABA is based on B.F. Skinner’s principles of operant conditioning (how everything you do is because it has an effect on your environment or how you feel). Behavior analysts are careful to examine the function of each behavior in order to come up with a safe and socially-appropriate replacement behavior. To teach new skills, each task is broken down into discrete components to help the child stay successful while learning. Additionally, behavior analysts look at what motivates each child and attempt to build relevant programming using those natural motivators. For example, if a child loves balloons they can be incorporated into teaching any number of skills: requesting, counting, prepositions, and even concepts like body parts and emotions. This reduces frustration and increases the likelihood of success for everyone involved.

In the past, ABA was thought of as strict teaching time with a therapist and a child, with the child being rewarded for correct answers with M&Ms and being told “No!” for every mistake. This is not the typical scene for ABA today. Depending on the child’s learning style and the skills being taught, some teaching may still occur in a more structured environment. However, current best practices guidelines dictate that skills should be taught within the natural environment whenever possible to promote generalization and approaches should be customized to allow for the safest, least restrictive, and most effective interventions possible. Positive behavior support (increasing appropriate skills) is always preferred to punishing “bad” behavior and graphs of data are used to objectively look at whether interventions are effective.

Many ABA techniques look much like those used in other intervention modalities and thanks in part to the current naturalistic approaches. You may see ABA and Floortime therapists interacting similarly with children, but their explanations for what they are doing and why may differ! For example, an ABA therapist playing a child’s favorite game on the first day they meet would say she is condition- ing herself as a reinforcer for that child, whereas a Floortime therapist would say he is building a relationship. Pivotal Response Training, or PRT, is a branch of ABA that uses a child’s natural behaviors, language, and place behavior. To teach new skills, each task is broken down into discrete components to help the child stay successful while learning. Additionally, behavior analysts look at what motivates each child and attempt to build relevant programming using those natural motivators. For example, if a child loves balloons they can be incorporated into teaching any number of skills: requesting, counting, prepositions, and even concepts like body parts and emotions. This reduces frustration and increases the likelihood of success for everyone involved.

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Young Philanthropy
by Rachel Palmer

PACE benefits from the gracious support of volunteers throughout our agency, and in particular, in the Development Department. Volunteerism has allowed our organization to develop valuable relationships within the community while preserving and raising funds to enhance programs and services for clients served.

Youth Leadership Committee (YLC) was founded in 2008 to engage high school age students in philanthropy and raise awareness of autism. This year, the YLC focused on smaller fundraisers to engage the local community and performed Operation Enable, an anti-bullying workshop. Operation Enable was created to spread awareness among young people about the harm that bullying can have on individuals with autism.

The YLC coordinated several fundraisers with businesses in the community including a FUNdraise at California Pizza Kitchen at Valley Fair Mall in Santa Clara, which raised over $230 for PACE and a prom flower fundraiser with SF Events in Fremont. The group also benefited from the generosity of Maya Kapur, a young student at Sam Lawson Middle School in Cupertino that coordinated a teddy-gram fundraiser on Valentine’s Day and raised $170 for PACE.

PACE Welcomes Annual Fund Manager Rachel Palmer

Rachel Palmer joined the Development team in December 2012 as the Fund Development Associate. She jumped in headfirst and mastered the Development Department’s database, Salesforce, and took the lead on major fundraising efforts including the PACE Golf Classic 2013. Rachel helped with developing new community fundraising events such as Gordon Biersch tapping parties and is the advisor for the Youth Leadership Committee (YLC). Rachel has nurtured relationships with young philanthropists including the YLC, Cold Suspension (young musicians), Zach (the artist featured on page 1), and volunteers.

In June 2013, Rachel was promoted to Annual Fund Manager with the responsibility of managing all unrestricted fundraising campaigns. Rachel is excited about spreading awareness of PACE, raising funds on major events and services, and developing new connections within the community to benefit PACE. Please join us in welcoming this fundraising powerhouse!

FACES Has Moved

FACES, our behaviorally based program located in Redwood City, is moving to a new office in September. Founded in 1995, FACES merged with PACE two years ago and became our northern-most major fundraising environment, offering early intervention and behavior services for school age children, founded on the principles of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA).

Located only a few miles north of our current space, we are pleased to announce our new address: 220D Marine Parkway, Sunnyvale, CA.

The new space is light and spacious and located on the first floor of a small office park of professional buildings surrounded by green open space. We look forward to welcoming you to our new facility.

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