



PACE Setter

PACIFIC AUTISM CENTER for EDUCATION

Connect • Support • Educate



PACE Employee Excellence

Each year PACE honors those employees who demonstrate excellence in their work and who actively promote PACE's values:

- Providing the highest quality of life for our clients
- Promoting a culture of continuous improvement
- Showing commitment to serve all who can benefit from PACE services

This January, the 2013 award was granted to one person in each program (School, Residential, Connections and Faces). **Philip Clarkson**, Instructional Aide was chosen as the award winner for the **K-12 School Program**. Philip has proven to be an outstanding team player, respectful of his team and the students and he's a general 'get it done' type of employee. Philip is consistently reliable, hardworking, compliant and dedicated. He is a model of how staff should approach their job, and is a consummate professional at all times.

Melba Tolentino from Matranga House received the Employee Excellence Award for our **Residential Program**. Melba's coworkers and supervisor tell us that Melba continually arrives to work with a positive attitude and ready to get the day started. She's well respected by her peers and the residents she serves. She continually demonstrates outstanding service and is a team player, always willing to lend a helping hand. Matranga would

not be the same without her exceptional experience, care, and concern for the clients we serve.

The **Connections** team chose **Urmi Sheth** as winner because, "She is very encouraging and comes to work with the most positive attitude. She deserves the Employee Excellence Award for her joyful attitude, helping hand and loving spirit," say her colleagues. Urmi has a BA in Psychology from Pitzer College, and started at Faces in 2005. She has made herself invaluable at the Connections program with a proactive approach to helping others and her flexibility. She continues to step up and expand her role, which now includes administrative duties.

This year at **Faces**, 11 people on the staff received nominations! Of those 11, six individuals received multiple nominations, but in the end, the award went to **Joyce Marashlian**. Joyce was hired in 2004 as a tutor, and is now a case manager. Joyce has a BCaBA and is an excellent clinician who always demonstrates professional interactions with parents, school officials, and coworkers. Joyce notes, "I have been blessed to have wonderful training from many that I have crossed paths with from FACES and I am so grateful for the nurturing environment that I currently work in."

Congratulations to all of you who continue to make working at PACE an excellent experience.

PACE Events

Color Me Rad 5K

April 5, 2014 | Great America

Join us for the fun and colorful **Color Me Rad** 5k race in Santa Clara! For the 3rd year, the CMR group has selected PACE as the beneficiary partner for their annual 5K run! This year, they've changed the venue to the Great America theme park in Santa Clara.

CMR encourages the runners to wear something white to the race as they will get bombarded with "color bombs" of blue, green, pink, purple and yellow, creating a tie-dyed runner.

When you register, note "PACE" as the code to donate a percentage of your race fee and receive a discount. You won't want to miss this fun run! Contact development@pacifiautism.org for details or visit pacifiautism.org/events.



6th Annual Golf Classic

May 2, 2014 | Cinnabar Hills

Please plan on joining us at our very popular golf tournament, the **6th Annual PACE Golf Classic**. Each year, we hold this event on a Friday in May at the beautiful Cinnabar Hills Golf Club in San Jose. Last year, we raised over \$45,000, enabling PACE to reopen our children's residential home, Morehouse.

Your ticket includes 18 holes of golf, lunch, a swag bag, hole-in-one and other contests, dinner, and a raffle and auction. It's a full day and a great way to support PACE while having fun. Contact development@pacifiautism.org to register or visit pacifiautism.org/events.



PACE Volunteer Spotlight: Anish

by Rachel Palmer

PACE is fortunate to benefit from exceptional volunteerism. One of our outstanding volunteers is **Anish Seshadri**, a freshman at Saint Francis High School. Anish worked the past three summers at Sedgewick Elementary School in Cupertino as an aide to children with moderate to severe autism. Through this experience, he formed a goal to improve the quality of resources and help available to children with autism and reached out to PACE with his ideas.

Anish developed a collection of sensory therapy bags for PACE students. The bags include a variety of textures for sensory arousal and removable scent packets.

Danielle Borrás, Occupational Therapist says, "We are truly thankful for

Anish caring about our students and taking the initiative to create something that helps make a difference in their daily lives."

Additionally, Anish orchestrated a book drive in his neighborhood to collect books, games and DVDs for the children of PACE. His local community and even small businesses responded to Anish's book drive and over 300 items were donated to PACE! "I hope to make a difference in their lives through my efforts in teaching and raising funds so they can have access to computers, books and other learning tools," said Anish.



Anish Seshadri

Autism News

Autism Speaks posted the Top 10 Advances in Autism for 2013 -- which includes whole genome sequencing advances, very early detection methods using high-tech eye tracking, and information helpful to those planning a family. There is strong evidence that prenatal folic acid supplements may greatly reduce the occurrence of ASD. The article states, "The findings suggest a safe and practical step women can take to reduce autism risk. However, the benefit may turn out to be restricted to women with propensities to low folic acid levels." The report appears in the Journal of the American Medical Association, and the findings support previous research showing lower risk of autism in children of mothers who take folic acid in the weeks before and after conception. To see the entire article or learn more about advances in autism, visit www.autismspeaks.org.

From the Desk of the Executive Director, Kurt Ohlfs

As PACE completes its 25th year of service, we are astounded at how far our agency and the autism service community have come. When PACE was formed in 1989, there was very little information and even fewer services available to families searching for answers. Now there is a veritable tidal wave of information flooding the internet regarding autism, and the Bay Area has a growing roster of services and resources for the disabled community. However, these services still do not begin to meet the needs for those looking for non-public schools, housing, and solutions for their family member living with autism.

PACE is constantly exploring ways to expand our programs and services and examining ways we can reach out to the community and determine the most extreme gaps in client support. Two exciting outreach projects we are currently working on are the Parent Collaborative Home (**PCH Model**) and **Project Porchlight**.

With housing options severely limited, more adults on the spectrum are remaining at home with aging parents or caregivers who are increasingly concerned about planning for the future of their disabled child. **PCH** is an innovative model that enables four adults with developmental disabilities to live together in a private home. The PCH model guarantees that each resident will have a home for a lifetime, increases the quality of residential services offered within the home and holds all parties

involved in the home accountable for success. We are currently searching for homes in the Bay Area that would support our plan for this program.

Another outreach program, **Project Porchlight**, will provide support for parents and caregivers via online modules and group workshops. The focus will be direct, usable solutions for challenging issues and behaviors. In February, I had the opportunity to discuss this project in a lecture entitled **Assistive Technology Opportunities in Autism** at **Stanford University**. The focus of the class, *Perspectives in Assistive Technology*, focuses on how technology can improve quality of life for individuals affected by autism.

You can help us celebrate 25 years of providing services and solutions for the autism community by joining us on October 25th for our annual Gala at the Computer History Museum in Mt. View. With your support, the next 25 years will show an even greater expansion of PACE services for those living with autism in the Bay Area. I encourage you to follow us on Facebook so that you stay informed about our ongoing growth and community outreach.



Kurt Ohlfs speaking at Stanford University

Residential Homes

by Deborah McClellan

PACE owns and operates two children and four adult group homes in Santa Clara County, each licensed to serve residents from 6 to 59+ years of age.

Each Residential Group Home works under a **Code of Honor** which is posted by the front door of the home. Each quarter, Operations Manager, Janice Morreira determines which home has done the best in sustaining their code. For the last quarter, **Meadows House** received the Code of Honor Award because their team did a great job of involving the residents in appropriate activities and quickly responding to problem behaviors as they occurred. Their continued dedication and commitment to following their house Code of Honor is greatly appreciated. The Meadows team will receive a plaque for their house and a celebration lunch for their efforts.

Our **Mahalo House** received a wonderful new backyard and **therapy garden** in 2013. This is the second such garden designed for a PACE group home.

The Mahalo House landscape was designed by Paul Jay Reed of **Reed Associates Landscape Architecture**. Mr. Reed donated his thoughtfully designed planting plan to create

a flow of colors and smells for a calming therapy garden for residents to enjoy. The walkways were finished in October 2013 and the planting was completed in November.

Boy Scout, Corban provided the organization and volunteers to plant the garden following Mr. Reed's design. This was Corban's service project which will help to complete his Eagle Scout award. Monies raised at two PACE fundraising events provided the labor and materials for the hardscape and for the plants.



Volunteers planting at Mahalo



Mahalo resident and Corban

Connections & Sunny Days Preschool

by Deborah McClellan

Always a flurry of activity, our **Sunny Days Preschool** is planning its **Open House** for Friday, April 4th, 11am-1pm, 897 Broadleaf Lane, San Jose. One of our two guest speakers this year will be **Shanti Kurada**, editor of Autism Bay Area magazine. Shanti will be discussing life / family balance. Sunny Days Preschool founder and PACE supporter, **Marcia Goldman** and her therapy dog, Lola will also be joining us. Marcia is author of the book, "Lola Goes to Work." We hope you can join us and visit with our highly-trained, energetic staff.

Sunny Days Preschool is an inclusive preschool, serving all children, including those on the autism spectrum for ages 18 months - 5 years. Working out of the preschool site, our **Connections** program also offers **Occupational Therapy** and **Speech Therapy** services for preschool aged kids. Children don't need to be part of the PACE program or preschool in order to receive these services. To find out more, contact (408) 551-0312, or visit the Sunny Days website, sunnyday-preschool.com.

Sunny Days Preschool
Invites you to an
Open House
Friday, April 4, 2014
11am-1pm
897 Broadleaf Lane, San Jose

Come learn about our programs, take a tour, and meet our staff. We are an inclusive preschool, serving all children, including those on the autism spectrum. Ages 18mos-5yrs.

Scheduled Activities

- 11:00 am - Welcome and meet staff
- 11:15 am - Meet Marcia Goldman, author of "Lola Goes to Work," and her therapy dog Lola
- 11:45 am - Break
- 12:00 pm - Meet special guest speaker, Shanti Kurada, editor of Autism Bay Area Magazine. She'll discuss life / family balance.
- 12:30 pm - Preschool tours with staff

Children are available during the open house.



Marcia Goldman and Lola

The PACE School

by Deborah McClellan

The PACE School is constantly working to develop continuity among students' programs (general coursework, Occupational Therapy, exercise, etc.) so that instructional aides, teachers and therapists are all working from the same checklist. This continuity of skills and training will benefit the transition to home, as well.

At 9:15 am each morning, PACE students start their day by going outside to exercise (weather permitting!). They get fresh air and activity, allowing them to then focus on their school curriculum and goals for the day.

We've also instigated a new meal preparation program at the school and are improving food selections in the school store in order to provide more nutritious options. The Occupational Therapists have been working with students on cooking and preparing nutritious meals and have revamped the kitchen so that it's more functional.

The classrooms haven't been left out of the school updates! Each classroom has been redesigned to enable single workstations for intensive teaching. In the new design, workstations are set up as single-person cubbies, allowing for a distraction free area to work in on a one-to-one basis. Parents are welcome to visit us and explore the changes! Please arrange for your visit through your child's teacher.

PACE will be a cosponsor at the **Gilfix & La Poll 10th Annual Special Needs Trust Seminar** at the Doubletree Hotel in San Jose on April 2nd, 2014. Trusts, their operation, their management and how they are coordinated with eligibility for public benefits will be discussed. There are 2 sessions, 2-4 and 6-8. Visit www.gilfix.com for details.



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.

- 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@pacificautism.org.

- View the **PACE Wish List** here: pacificautism.org/donations/pace-wishlist/.

PACE Receives Sobrato Family Foundation Matching Funds Grant

By Jennifer Welling

The Sobrato Family Foundation has been an on-going supporter of PACE since 2008 and for this we are both honored and grateful. This January 2014 we were awarded our fourth consecutive Sobrato Family Foundation two-year challenge grant.

With their commitment to "Investing in People and Places," the Sobrato Family Foundation has generously been supporting the local non-profit community for eighteen years. Created in the 1996, the Family Foundation is their commitment to sharing their success with the Silicon Valley communities in which their real estate development business has thrived for over 50 years.

The Foundation exists to provide capital that supports nonprofits' capacity to deliver services, achieve their community mission and strengthen the local community. The Foundation's mission is to create and sustain a vibrant and healthy community where all Silicon Valley residents have equal opportunity to live, work and be enriched. To support these efforts, the Sobrato Family Foundation is a place-based grantmaker that invests exclusively in nonprofits serving those most in need in Santa Clara, San Mateo and Southern Alameda counties.

The Foundation's innovative People & Places portfolio utilizes both cash and real estate to achieve maximum impact. Funding from the Sobrato Family Foundation is flexible and may

be used to support salaries, Board development, staff training or volunteer training; or to support our PACE facility, including building rehabilitations, remodels, or general utilities and our on-going facility operation expenses.

This year PACE has been selected, through a competitive grant review process, to receive a 2:1 Challenge grant from the Sobrato Family Foundation totaling \$102,500 over a two-year period (through August 2015). **To benefit fully, and where we are asking for your participation, our challenge is to raise new and increased contributions to PACE that total \$50,000 by December 31, 2014.**

We are looking now for all current donors to increase their annual donation, for lapsed donors to renew their commitment to PACE, and for new donors to step forward and make their financial commitment in this calendar year. Once we meet this challenge, the Foundation will match and double those donations and provide a second year of funding of \$52,500.

With your donations, and two years of funding from the Sobrato Family Foundation, by January 2016 we will have raised at least \$152,500 in new monies, all to support PACE's staff, facilities, and programs. Our first Sobrato Family Foundation grant was in 2008. Our challenge this year is a 60% increase over this first grant!



We invite you to invest in Pacific Autism Center for Education during calendar 2014 when your contribution will be doubled by the Sobrato Family Foundation.

All your new or increased contributions received during the 2014 will be matched 100% by the Challenge Grant and show the Sobrato Family Foundation that our community is committed to PACE.

Donating is easy!
Go to
pacificautism.org/donations
 and take advantage of this generous grant and **Double Your Donation!**

April is Autism Awareness Month

April is designated as Autism Awareness Month – a good time to review the updated findings and facts associated with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) that have occurred over the past year. A good source of information on the latest on ASD research is the Simons Foundation Autism Research Initiative (SFARI). To find their most important developments in autism for 2013, visit sfari.org. National advocacy group, Autism Speaks is also an excellent resource for those searching for answers to the autism puzzle, autismspeaks.org.

In Santa Clara County, the number of school-aged children being diagnosed with autism has risen 13.4% annually since 2002. And in 2012, more children were diagnosed with autism than with AIDS, diabetes, and cancer...combined. PACE was founded to answer this need and offers three key areas of service for those who are living with autism.

If you want to participate in Autism Awareness Month, we'd love to have you volunteer with PACE! Simply

contact development@pacificautism.org or visit our website, pacificautism.org/about-pace/volunteer/ for more information on how you can help. A great place to start is the Color Me Rad 5k run at Great America on April 5th as proceeds from the race will benefit PACE programs and services.

Working together as a community, we build hope.



The United Nations has declared April 2nd as World Autism Awareness Day. Join the autism community for this "Shine a Light" event! PACE is planning to spotlight our building at 1880 Pruneridge Avenue in Santa Clara with blue light to show our support for this world-wide event. To find out more, visit un.org/en/events/autismday.

Dozens of Love

High school junior, Liliana Morreira has assembled a team of colleagues who find creative ways to support PACE. This group, called "Dozens of Love" has held bake sales in order to raise funds and purchase needed items at our residential group homes.

Lily's mom is PACE Operations Manager, Janice Morreira, so Lily has a good understanding of the needs of our clients. Lily says, "I started The Dozens of Love Club at my school to support the needs of children living with autism. Right now we have 19 members and we've mostly held bake sales. The money we've earned so far went toward Christmas gifts for the children living at PACE Miracle and Morehouse homes. We're looking forward to another spring event to purchase some arts & craft supplies to donate to the children at the PACE preschool."

Thank you Lily and Dozens of Love for helping the children of Miracle and Morehouse and for your ongoing fundraising efforts through 2014.



Dozens of Love Team

PACE Board of Directors

Matt Moran, President
 Tom McGovern, VP
 David Piazza, VP
 Paul Lacy, Treasurer
 Kurt Ohlfs, Secretary

Joe Dermer
 Jeff Fallick
 Tom Hayes
 Harry Lopez, Esq.
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 David Setti

• Go to www.escrip.com and select 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.

• Follow PACE on Facebook to get the latest photos and updates! www.facebook.com/pacificautismce



• Donate your old vehicle to **Donate for Charity**, a company that processes vehicle donations. 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!

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.

Edited by Deborah McClellan

Contributors: Karen Kennan, Deborah McClellan, Liliana Morreira, Rachel Palmer, Kurt Ohlfs, Taylor Peterson, Jennifer Welling

Executive Director: Kurt Ohlfs

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



Project Porchlight: How You Can Help!

Parents and caregivers! We'll need your help in guiding our **Project Porchlight** program this summer! Project Porchlight, is an open-source free-access internet program designed specifically to provide parents and caregivers with solutions for behavioral therapy to implement at home.

Our program will involve creating a set of video training modules and making them available on-line for easy and free access. 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 their child gain back the losses from a development disability. We're planning

the first few parent education modules and we'll need testers who can offer input on subject area and ease of use. If you have ever wished for a quick, simple example and direction on working with your child on behavior modification, you're an excellent candidate for our beta tests! We expect the first training sessions will cover issues such as:

- Eating habits
- General health and wellbeing
- Grooming

Our aim with this project is to provide you with a useful resource that can be accessed 24/7, when you need it most. Email info@pacificautism.org, include 'Porchlight' in the subject line, and we'll put you on our contact list. **Thank you for your help!**

What Kind of Legacy Will YOU Leave?

Leave a legacy that will sustain us long into the future by including PACE 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 into 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.

To learn more about how you make a legacy gift to PACE contact Karen Kennan, Assistant Executive Director, at 408-625-6176 or e-mail karenkennan@pacificautism.org. All inquiries are confidential and without obligation. **Thank you!**

Save the Date!

The PACE **25th Anniversary Gala** is set for **Saturday, October 25, 2014** at the Computer History Museum in Mountain View! Join us for our 'silver' anniversary celebration. We're planning a night to remember with a live and silent auction, excellent food, and entertainment. Call Rachel if you'd like to join the planning committee, (408) 625-6191. This is your chance to meet other PACE parents and our wonderful supporters and staff!



www.pacificautism.org

Ask a Therapist

What is the importance of early intervention in the area of speech therapy?

by Taylor Peterson, M.A., CFY-SLP

There is growing recognition of the importance of providing speech therapy services for birth to three populations, whether these children are neurotypical or present with developmental disability; however, children with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) are particularly good candidates for receiving early speech services.

Many children with ASD have difficulty with communication, social skills, and reacting to the world around them. Early intervention services, including speech therapy, could address these deficits directly and hopefully bridge the gaps before they become too wide. Facilitating communication at an early age may also lead to a reduction in maladaptive or defective communicative behaviors, such as hitting or screaming to express wants and needs.

The **American Speech-Language-Hearing Association** (ASHA) published a series of documents reviewing early intervention research that highlighted some key early intervention principals. For more information, please visit www.asha.org/policy.

1. Services are family centered and culturally and linguistically responsive.
2. Services are developmentally supportive and promote chil-

dren's participation in their natural environment.

3. Services are comprehensive, coordinated and team based.
4. Services are based on the highest quality evidence that is available.

Parent involvement in early intervention is critical. The following suggestions were taken from a handout created by the Memorial Foundation for Lost Children for parents of children with autism called **The ABC's of Autism** (shared with permission).

"Narrate what your child is doing, i.e. Emmy is looking at book or Max is playing with car. Sometimes they respond better to singing. Sing their name to get their attention.

Use short phrases. Don't clutter your speech with meaningless words. Use short commands like give, touch, and do this. Teach every possible moment. During meals say, 'use fork' and 'look.' Request a sound from your child before automatically giving him/her something they would like.

Copy what your child says or the sounds s/he makes.

Use positive reinforcement after desired actions. Be consistent in praising your child's accomplishments."

Youth Leadership Committee

by Rachel Palmer

The PACE **Youth Leadership Committee** (YLC) has a special emphasis on community involvement and bringing individuals from high schools in the Bay Area together for worthy causes. Our 2013-2014 YLC members have organized several restaurant fund-raisers and a Valentine's Day teddy-gram fund-raiser to raise money for PACE programs and services. The group plans to raise over \$5,000 this year through various fun fund-raising events.

Calling all high-school students! The YLC is excited to announce the 2014 **'Breaking the Silence' Mixer** will be held **April 25th** at Addison-Penzak Jewish Community Center in Los Gatos. The mixer will bring together high school students from all over the South Bay Area to raise awareness and funds for PACE while dancing the night away to live Wild 94.9 DJs. Registration is easy – go to pacificautism.org/home/events/ylc-events/.

The group is also planning a series of **'Operation Enable' anti-bullying workshops** to be held at local community centers. These workshops will give audiences an insight into how living with autism feels through a variety of hands-on activities and will aim to diminish bullying in our local schools.

To find out more about this high-energy group of high school philanthropists, or to receive an application for the 2014-2015 school year, students can email development@pacificautism.org.

To learn more about how anyone can volunteer at PACE, please visit pacificautism.org/about-pace/volunteer, or call us at (408) 625-6191. Thank you for your support!



YLC at Pinkberry Fundraiser



The 2013-2014 YLC Group