

Spectrum

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Autism Society
of NORTH CAROLINA

Conference:
Strategies for a Lifetime

Simply Successful
Strategies

NC Companies Giving Back

Mission Statement

The Autism Society of North Carolina is committed to providing support and promoting opportunities which enhance the lives of individuals within the autism spectrum and their families.

Vision Statement

The Autism Society of North Carolina strives to create a community where people within the autism spectrum and their families receive respect, services, and support based on individual differences, needs, and preferences.

Privacy Policy

The Autism Society of North Carolina respects the privacy of its members and those who receive our publications. We do not sell or otherwise share our mailing list, email notification list, or any other personal information with other businesses or organizations.

The Spectrum

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Careers

Would you like to work for the Autism Society of North Carolina? ASNC is a direct-supports provider throughout the state with offices in Asheville, Charlotte, Fayetteville, Greensboro, Greenville, and Raleigh. We are always looking for qualified candidates who are passionate about helping individuals on the autism spectrum and their families.

A variety of part- and full-time positions are available! Please visit www.autismsociety-nc.org/careers to learn more about current ASNC career opportunities. We appreciate referrals; please help us recruit the best talent by sharing the above link.



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Table of Contents

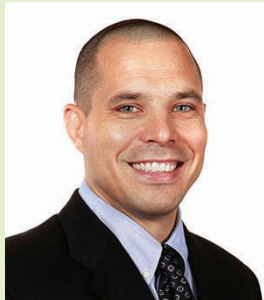
Features:

Learn About "Strategies for a Lifetime" at 2019 Conference	4
Simply Successful Strategies	6
Self-Understanding -> Self-Acceptance -> Self-Advocacy -> Happiness	8
You Can Help Us Serve Our Families	10
Teens Are Alive With Purpose	12
NC Companies Giving Back	22
Celebrate Loved Ones with Autism This April	30

Also in this issue:

Message from the CEO	3
Public Policy	14
Camp Royall	16
Social Recreation in Eastern NC	17
Chapters & Support Groups	18
Hispanic Resources	20
Fundraisers & Events	24
Donations	29
Call on Us	31

ASNC is also supported by:  **MH|DD|SAS**
division of mental health | developmental disabilities | substance abuse services



Message from the CEO

Happy New Year! As 2019 begins, I reflect upon all that has been accomplished but all that remains to be done on behalf of families and individuals on the spectrum across North Carolina. I've also given much thought to the changes coming to the Medicaid system over the next few years.

As you are likely aware, North Carolina Medicaid and Health Choice are moving to Medicaid Managed Care in November 2019. The last hurdle to move this change forward was crossed in October, when the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services approved the NC Department of Health and Human Services' application to implement a Section 1115 Demonstration waiver. This transition is the result of the 2015 NC General Assembly's direction to move Medicaid completely to a managed-care model.

DHHS's vision for the 1115 waiver is to improve the health and well-being of Medicaid recipients by providing whole-person care through a well-coordinated system of care that addresses both medical and non-medical drivers of health throughout people's lifetimes.

There are still a lot of unknowns about the transition and how things will operate under this system. This is also somewhat confusing to many because the primary support that individuals with autism receive from Medicaid comes through the Innovations Waiver, which is currently managed by the LME/MCOs and has already been under managed care for many years.

We appreciate DHHS's transparency and requests for input about the transformation thus far. We will continue to advocate for access to quality health care and services to be available for individuals with autism when they need it. We will also continue to engage with policymakers and new plans as they move into North Carolina and share with you about the changes that affect our community as we learn of them. You can also find information on the NCDHHS website at www.ncdhhs.gov/assistance/medicaid-transformation.

As you can imagine, this is a massive undertaking that will take place over the next several years. Please know that the Autism Society of North Carolina will be here to help you along this journey. As always, our Autism Resource Specialists and other staff will be available to share information, assist you, and provide support.

I also want to thank all of our individual and corporate donors who have supported the more than 65,000 families affected by autism across North Carolina. Our donors' generosity and leadership enabled ASNC to create and expand on the innovative programs that we operate across the state. One example of this is IGNITE, which we opened this fall in Raleigh. (Read more on page 12.)

We are excited about what can happen with your continued help and hope that you will join us in 2019 as we change lives across the state by helping individuals with autism live life to the fullest.

Thank you for your continued support of the Autism Society of North Carolina.

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Learn Strategies for a Lifetime at 2019 Conference

Register today! www.autismsociety-nc.org/conference

Make plans to join hundreds of parents, self-advocates, and professionals March 22-23 in Charlotte for the Autism Society of North Carolina's annual educational conference. The 2019 theme, Autism: Strategies for a Lifetime, reflects our understanding that needs change for individuals on the autism spectrum throughout their lifetimes. This conference will provide practical ideas and information that can be used in your home, at school, at work, and in the community.

"This year's conference is exciting because of the variety of topics we will discuss," said Dr. Alexander (Aleck) Myers, Autism Society of North Carolina Clinical Director and leader of the conference planning committee. "Regardless of where you or your loved one happen to be on the spectrum or along life's journey, our program will answer questions and give you tools and ideas to use in a variety of environments."

Topics will include anxiety, sleep, best practices, genetics, self-care, adult services, "gut" issues, and assistive technology.



Friday Sessions and Gathering for Autism Self-Advocates

One of the top concerns within the autism community is anxiety. We are pleased to have Dr. Patrick Friman to open the conference Friday morning with **Anxiety and Sleep: Addressing Life's Challenges**.

Dr. Friman is Director of Clinical Services at Boys Town and Vice President of Outpatient Behavioral Health Services and Clinical Professor in the Department of Pediatrics at the University of Nebraska School of Medicine.

Friday afternoon, Dr. David Mandell will present **Best Practices in the Real World**. He will explain how to implement evidence-based practices and get buy-in at school, in the community, and at home, as well as what to do when interventions don't work. Dr. Mandell is a Professor of Psychiatry and Pediatrics and Director of the Center for Mental Health Policy at Penn and Associate Director of the Center for Autism Research at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia.



The conference exhibit hall will be open Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. with more than 30 organizations, service providers, and product tables as well as the ASNC Bookstore and ASNC information section.

Friday evening, we will hold our annual gathering for autism self-advocates. This event is an opportunity for adults with autism to come together, share ideas, and connect. This event is for adults with autism only; no parents or caregivers will be admitted.

Saturday: Choose Your Sessions

Saturday will feature two keynote addresses and two sets of concurrent sessions. Attendees will be together for the opening and closing sessions and will choose between concurrent workshops in the middle of the day.

The day will begin with **From Genes to Biology: What We Know and Why It Matters** by Dr. John Spiro. Dr. Spiro, Deputy Scientific Director, SFARI, Simons Foundation, will update attendees about the importance of recent discoveries in genetics and ongoing research efforts.



The first group of concurrent workshops will be:

Adulthood: Resources and Opportunities: What resources and supports are available for adults and those transitioning to adulthood? How should families and individuals prepare for and navigate waivers, vocational rehabilitation, employment, and supported living? Learn more and get answers to your questions from our panel.

After lunch, our second group of concurrent sessions will examine:

Gut Issues in Autism: Stomach and digestive issues not only affect health but can also contribute to behavioral challenges. Learn what to be concerned about and how to better communicate with health-care providers about this important topic.

Let's Play! Getting Kids with Autism Engaged: Interactive play is an important skill, and the ASNC Clinical team will provide practical strategies for parents, teachers, and caregivers to teach play skills and shared attention. Attendees will leave with techniques that can be used at home, school, and beyond.

Relationships and Resilience: The Importance of Self-Care: Managing stress is hard. But if it is not managed, it can cause health issues and affect relationships with families, co-workers, and friends. Learn strategies that will enable you to take time for yourself and help your loved one.

The closing session will be a panel discussion on assistive technology with autism self-advocates and parents. They will share the high- and low-tech solutions that are all around us and can improve the quality of life for individuals with autism and families.

Saturday's exhibit hall hours will be 7:30 a.m.-3:45 p.m. ■

Save by using the conference app and registering early!

Register early to save your seat and save money! Based on overwhelmingly positive feedback last year, we are again using the Whova app for the conference. The app enables you to connect with other attendees, exhibitors, ASNC staff, and our speakers once you register. You also have access to handouts and other materials prior to the conference and receive updated versions if presenters change their slides or presentation content.

Because we can offer the handouts electronically (and you can print at home or save to your device) we are able to offer slightly lower rates this year. All attendees have free access to the app. If you prefer hard copy handouts, there is a \$5 per day fee.

To maximize your savings, register with the early-bird rate by Feb. 28. www.autismsociety-nc.org/conference

Conference Rates

General rates: Parent, teacher, support worker or other caregiver

General	Individual w/ASD	Professionals
single day.....\$140	single day.....\$90	single day.....\$165
both days.....\$250	both days.....\$150	both days.....\$275

Registration includes free app download, access to lectures and the exhibit hall, conference program, continental breakfast, lunch, and afternoon refreshments.

Discounted Hotel Rooms & CEUs

Conference attendees can reserve a room at the Hilton Charlotte University Place for a significantly discounted rate of \$100 per night by Feb. 28. Discounted rates are available for Thursday-Sunday nights.

We will again offer Continuing Education Units through our educational partner, the Charlotte AHEC; visit www.autismsociety-nc.org/conference for updates on number of hours, fees, and types of CEUs.

Financial Assistance

We recommend two sources of financial assistance:

CAP/Innovations Waiver Funding: Innovations waiver recipients and their natural supports system (family, caregivers, etc.) are

eligible for funding assistance to attend the conference. Contact your care coordinator at your managed-care organization (MCO) and let them know that you wish to use Natural Supports Education funds through your Innovations waiver. There is an annual limit of \$1,000 for conference expenses. Note that family members who are employed/paid as caregivers cannot use these funds. A completed registration form may be required by your MCO. Download the form at www.autismsociety-nc.org/conference.

Jean Wolff-Rossi Fund for Participant Involvement from the NC Council on Developmental Disabilities: This fund reimburses individuals with an intellectual or other developmental disability (I/DD) and parents, family members, or guardians of a child with I/DD or at risk of I/DD. It will pay for portions of costs associated with registration, child care, personal assistance, lodging, and transportation. To apply, contact the council at www.nccdd.org or 919-850-2901. Funding is limited to \$600 per year for in-state events per individual applicant.

Exhibits & Sponsors

We are pleased to announce that SpecialCare Mass Mutual returns in 2019 as primary sponsor for the conference. Business owners, organizations that serve the autism community, and interested individuals are eligible to apply to be a conference sponsor or exhibitor. Contact David Laxton at dlaxton@autismsociety-nc.org or 919-865-5063 to learn more.

Simply Successful Strategies

By Erica Brown, MA, BCBA, Clinical Professional

Perhaps you are a parent of a 3-year-old and are trying to work on basic communication skills. Maybe you are providing support for an adult with autism at his job at Walgreens. Perhaps you are a teacher in an autism classroom in a middle school. The individuals in each of these scenarios are very different in age, and the location in which skills are being taught also varies. More than likely, the goals for these individuals are also different. How can you help them all be successful?

Many strategies can be used with individuals with autism regardless of age, environment, or skills being taught. It is best practice to develop and implement strategies prior to issues (for instance, problem behaviors, errors in responding) occurring. Rather than wait for a problem to arise in a classroom, home, or workplace, utilize strategies to ensure success in an individual's daily life.

These are some simple and quick strategies that can be implemented by anyone and in all environments to set individuals with autism up for success!



Less is More

Imagine you were given a new project for work, and your supervisor began to give you long-winded instructions in a language you didn't understand. More than likely, you would be overwhelmed, frustrated, and unable to successfully complete the project. Many individuals with autism can feel overwhelmed when given directions using lots of language and multiple steps. Rather than "Go grab that chair over there and put it in the corner and then sit down," try "Get the chair." "Put the chair in corner." "Sit down." When directions to tasks are broken down, the individual has time to process and complete a step before the next direction is given.

Supports, Supports, Supports

Visual supports are an evidence-based practice for individuals with autism. A visual support is a concrete cue to an individual with autism about what the expectations are for an activity or setting. Visual supports can include pictures, written words, objects in the environments, and so much more. Just think about all the visual supports that allow you to be successful in your day. I know I rely on my calendar reminders, to-do lists, and map applications to ensure that I complete tasks on time and get where I need to be going.

For some individuals, a visual schedule may include two pictures telling them what they are doing first and then what they are doing next. For some, we may be teaching them how to manage and create their own visual supports, such as a calendar application on their phone. For other individuals, it is helpful to use timers to signal when a preferred activity is over or how long they have left with an activity. In each of these situations, the individual has a visual that they can continue to reference throughout the activity.



Reinforce, Reinforce, Reinforce

We all have positive behaviors that we want to see increased in individuals whom we love and support. To teach these behaviors, we use a principle called positive reinforcement. Positive reinforcement is the idea that we are delivering a reinforcer immediately after a behavior that we want to see continue.

Every individual has different reinforcers – think of these as rewards! Reinforcers are a natural part of our everyday life. For example, when we go to work every day, we do it for the reinforcer of a paycheck. Reinforcers can come in many different forms: praise, food, video games, stickers, etc. What is effective and motivating for one person may not be effective for another. When possible, ask individuals what they are motivated by or observe them to see which items or activities they most often engage with.

Sometimes, it is easy to forget to focus on the positive behaviors, especially when there may be high rates of challenging behaviors (or other kids in the home or classroom setting). But one easy strategy is to catch the individual "being good" and deliver that chosen reinforcer immediately after the behavior we want to increase. It is important with behaviors you are teaching or new behaviors that the reinforcer immediately (within seconds) follow the behavior you wish to target. For example, if a teacher wanted to deliver reinforcement to a child for keeping her hands to herself during circle time, the teacher would need

to provide the reinforcer throughout circle time or immediately after. Delivering a reinforcer for appropriate circle time behavior at the end of the school day would make it difficult for the child to connect that reward to the good behavior.

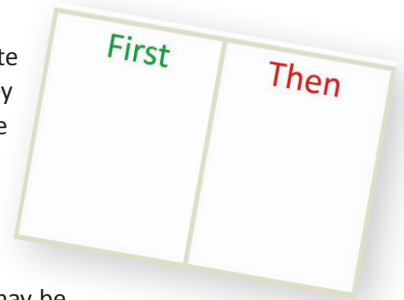
Repeat Once, Then Prompt

When teaching new skills, it is really important that the number of errors remain low. Often, if an individual makes too many errors or isn't finding success with a task, then challenging behaviors may emerge. Think about it for a minute: if you keep telling your child to put their plate in the dishwasher and they do not comply, they may begin to engage in challenging behaviors or you may get frustrated with their lack of response and put the plate away for them. At this point, they are learning that engaging in inappropriate or non-responsive behaviors gets them out of engaging in the behavior you want to increase, in this case, putting their dirty dishes away. Whenever a direction is presented, state it once and then wait a few seconds for the individual to respond. If the individual doesn't respond or responds incorrectly, then repeat the direction and prompt. A prompt can take many different forms, but it is something that is added to the environment to help ensure that the individual responds correctly. Sometimes the prompt may be a physical prompt (e.g. holding the hands of someone to help wash their hands), a gestural prompt (e.g. pointing to where an item should be stocked), or a verbal prompt (e.g. telling the individual to respond to a question asked). When providing a prompt, you want to ensure that the prompt (or help) will be effective in ensuring that the individual performs the correct behavior.

Grandma's Law

Think back to your childhood. Did you ever go to Grandma's house and ask to eat ice cream? Grandma always said yes – on the condition that you ate all of your vegetables first. This "first/then" schedule is a really great way to keep all individuals successful! Outline your directions so that the work or difficult task comes first and then comes something enjoyable. For some individuals it may be one work task, and then some fun. For others, you may

be able to have them complete several work tasks, and then they can have fun. The "fun" will be different for each individual; for example, for some it may be playing outside, reading a book, or playing on the iPad. While some individuals may be successful with you setting them up verbally, others may need some type of visual support to help show that work comes first, then comes fun!



These are just a few of the strategies that can be used to help individuals with autism to succeed at work, home, or school – no matter what their age! Keep in mind that each person is first and foremost an individual; what works for one person may not work for another. However, these strategies can help promote success when working with friends, family, or coworkers with autism! ■

ASNC's Clinical Department staff is composed of PhD and master's-level licensed psychologists, Board Certified Behavior Analysts, and former special education teachers. We provide individualized intensive consultation using evidence-based practices to support children and adults across the spectrum in home, school, employment, residential and other community-based contexts. We also deliver workshops to professionals on a wide range of topics including but not limited to, strategies to prevent and respond to challenging behaviors, best practices in early intervention, functional communication training, and evidence-based practices in instruction for K-12 students with autism.

To find out more, go online to www.autismsociety-nc.org/clinical or contact us at 919-390-7242 or clinical@autismsociety-nc.org.

Struggling with your child's challenging behavior?

LifeLong Interventions can help

LifeLong Interventions is offered in the Asheville, Wilmington, Triangle, and Charlotte areas.

The comprehensive treatment for any age or skill level is rooted in the principles of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA).

ASNC is an in-network provider for many insurers and also accepts private pay. Children who rely on Medicaid are also eligible.

919-390-7242 | clinical@autismsociety-nc.org



Self-Understanding ➡ Self-Acceptance ➡ Self-Advocacy ➡ Happiness

By Kathy Dolbee, *Autism Resource Specialist*

I was recently asked to create and present a workshop for a parent group on issues related to autism and adulthood. The subject was so broad and could go in so many different directions. But since my audience would likely be parents of younger kids who might not be ready to hear too much about employment, driving, and dating, I wanted to help those parents see that the groundwork for their child's success and happiness as an adult could be laid early on.

So I re-read my notes from a previous Autism Society of North Carolina annual conference and found my inspiration in something said by Dr. Peter Gerhardt as he addressed a room of 300+ people. He asked the parents in the audience to identify themselves by raising their hands. Many hands went up, including mine. Then he asked us a simple question: "What do you want for your kids?" I could hear the murmur of quiet discussion. No one spoke up. Finally, he said, "Folks, you are making this harder than it is. Let me rephrase: EVERY PARENT WANTS THEIR CHILD TO BE _____" and the audience finished his sentence with the word "HAPPY." Then he said something quite profound. "Then why don't we write a happiness goal?" Hmmm, good question.

Not long after that conference, I had the pleasure of reading the revised edition of "Autism, What Does It Mean to Me?" by Catherine Faherty. Catherine has been my mentor for many years. It was she who sat in the dark room with me, looking through the one-way glass as a TEACCH therapist worked with my newly diagnosed son in the room next door. I admit, in those early days, I was in a mindset I now refer to as the "I'll be happy if _____" mode.

Catherine hinted that I might need to "redefine success." She was gently suggesting that real happiness could not depend on contingencies that were out of my control. She was right. So I was not surprised to see that in her revised book, she had added an entire chapter on the subject of happiness. After more than 25 years of trying to apply her advice to redefine success, I am convinced that both for people with autism and their caregivers, happiness should not be viewed simply as a goal or destination, but rather a choice, a matter of deciding to enjoy the ride.

Q: When and where do we start?

A: Start as early as possible and include three things that can promote happiness now and lead to future happiness and contentment.

1. Self-understanding
2. Self-acceptance
3. Self-advocacy

Self-Understanding

Like some parents who put off discussing sexuality with their children, there are parents who hesitate to tell their child that he or she has autism. I believe that withholding vital information is a mistake. Autism is a fundamental difference in the way a person experiences life, so it is an important piece of information that should not be withheld. Rather than waiting for a specific age, how much better it would be to share age-appropriate doses of

New toolkits available on our website!



www.autismsociety-nc.org/toolkits

Two new toolkits have been added to our website: Autism & Health and Autism & Faith Communities.

The Autism Society of North Carolina strives to provide families and individuals with the tools they need to lead full and meaningful lives. All of the free toolkits can be read online or downloaded and printed.



information informally, as opportunities arise or questions are asked in natural, everyday settings.

People with autism who are diagnosed as adults are often so relieved to finally, fully understand their own life experience. The years spent without that self-knowledge has often meant years of self-blame and apologizing for perceived deficits, rather than recognizing and building on strengths. The psychological damage some individuals experience because they did not have all the facts can lead to heavy emotional baggage they carry as adults.

Temple Grandin does not hide the fact that she has autism, nor does she apologize for it. Quite the contrary; she sees her unique way of thinking and attention to detail as an asset: different, but not less. Isn't that wonderful?

In her book, Catherine Faherty writes:

"Self-knowledge is a lifelong process. Help your child on his or her journey of self-understanding in a positive, autism-friendly way."

Acceptance and Self-Acceptance

In an essay titled "Mental Health and Autism," Christine Motokane writes about her own experience as an individual with autism growing up, endeavoring to fit into a neuro-typical world. She writes that her life experience taught her that she needed to "camouflage and suppress my natural self because I should appear normal. Friends were chosen for me because people wanted me to be more social. I went along with the recommendations of my support people and parents, and pretended to live as a neuro-typical, because I thought they knew best. I tried all I could to suppress my natural way of being – at the expense of my self-esteem, and acceptance of my unique neurology."

The Autism Society of North Carolina magnet on my car says "#A2A, from Awareness to Acceptance." Acceptance of a child's unique neurology does not mean that a parent resigns their role as their child's teacher, but it often means that their approach and communication style may need to be adjusted. Both as a parent and an educator, I tried hard to imitate the format modeled in Catherine's book, which allows the person on the spectrum to

"highlight or circle what is true for me." Those instructions give the child permission to "be" and to communicate their needs and wants. Reading their responses gave me vital information and insight. I learned so much about the child I was raising and the children I was teaching by listening to what they communicated. Using that format gave them a voice, their first steps down the road of self-advocacy. Back in the '70s, I read a book called "I'm Okay, You're Okay." It was permission to be comfortable in your own skin. Isn't that wonderful?

Self-Advocacy

Self-advocacy is the ability to let others know what you need or want, what makes you happy, or what makes you uncomfortable. I love the simplicity of this definition because it would include the right to choose friends who share your interests even if those friends are not your same-age peers. It would also include the right to have a degree of control over your environment.

Admittedly, parents need to be advocates. But they should be working themselves out of that job as they progressively train their child to express his needs and feelings.

Since "I" in IEP stands for individualized, the sooner we hear from the individual with autism, the better. This may mean thinking outside the box for some children when it comes to facilitating communication. For example, years ago I taught a summer school program for children with ASD. Each child had an individualized journal. My son needed a predictable format: "I feel _____, because _____". I still have the journal and share it at workshops. I still smile when I read some of his entries: "I feel happy, because I finished all my work. But I feel worried because there are few pandas in Asia." It was a window into his mind as he expressed what he was feeling and why.

So when considering goals, especially social goals, allow your child to express his or her wants and desires. Catherine quotes a person with autism: "Tell them not to judge the degree of my happiness by what makes them happy. Tell them I like to be alone."

Being able to actively participate in making decisions that affect your own life builds confidence and a sense of competence. The outcome is often contentment, emotional well-being, and happiness. Wouldn't that be wonderful? ■

ASNC Autism Resource Specialists are available to help families in every county of North Carolina on topics such as accessing services, community resources, IEPs, and residential options. They are all parents of children or adults with autism themselves, so they have firsthand knowledge and a unique understanding of what you are going through. They also are trained professionals with many years of experience. Find one near you: www.autismsociety-nc.org/resourcespecialists

You Can Help Us Serve Our Families

Direct Support Professionals provide critical support for individuals with autism. Every day, they work one-to-one with individuals with autism, teaching skill acquisition and supporting them in reaching their life goals. In addition to staff, many become trusted friends, natural supports, and honorary members of families.

Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) are the largest percentage of ASNC's employees, working as employment supports professionals, autism support professionals, camp counselors, and more. We value their contributions to the people they serve as well as to the direction of our organization.

Unfortunately, we are facing a growing shortage of DSPs so dire that some are calling it a public health crisis. The national turnover rate for Direct Support Professionals is 45 percent, according to a recent report by the American Network of Community Options and Resources (ANCOR).

Why is there a DSP shortage?

Many people simply don't know about Direct Support Professionals. They do not know exactly what they do, how rewarding the jobs can be, or how flexible their hours can be. They may not know how well the positions tie into so many other careers. They may know about one-on-one workers in school, but not realize that DSPs support individuals with autism in all parts of their lives, in the home and the community.

Another reason for the shortage is the current strong job market with many options available to people seeking employment.

How do we make people aware that jobs exist?

So to serve the families who are counting on us, it becomes ASNC's job to increase awareness about DSPs. We have Staffing Specialists based in offices across the state who attend job fairs and form relationships with those who can help, such as college professors. They focus on continuous expansion of recruitment methods and activities as well as matching the best candidates with individuals and families.

We post ongoing ads on various career websites, on our website, and with local media. Our staff members make presentations to classes and community groups. We encourage and reward employee referrals.

How can you help?

Like our staff, you know what individuals with autism and their families need. They need people who are patient, caring,



compassionate, enthusiastic, and energetic to provide the care that our loved ones deserve.

So we need you, parents and community members, to be our eyes in the community and help us spread the word. Are you a member of a group like Kiwanis that we can address about working for ASNC? Does your faith community have an event coming up where they would let us set up a table? **Please contact us.**

Do you have a niece or nephew who has always been compassionate and supportive with your child with autism? When they head off to college and are looking for a part-time job, tell them about working with individuals with autism.

Do you have a kind and patient friend who is looking to supplement his income? **Refer him to us.**

Don't rule anyone out. We often hire teachers and people in allied health services, but we have had great success with people from all fields, from recent graduates to retirees.

We need people who are interested in giving back. We need dedicated people who are passionate about improving the lives of individuals with autism and supporting their families.

You can help.

To learn more about working one-on-one with individuals with autism, refer a prospective candidate, or connect us with a group we can address, please contact Aynsley Neher, ASNC Recruitment Specialist, at aneher@autismsociety-nc.org or 252-756-1316, ext. 1700.

Abbey Willis Named 2018 Roman Award Winner

In the past two years of supporting Eric Kardon as an Autism Support Professional, Abbey Willis has run with him in a half-marathon, two 10-mile races, and several other events even though she previously had just run for light exercise. "Running is an essential part of Eric's life, so Abbey took on the role of becoming his running partner," said Eric's mother, Mary Lynn Kardon.

Abbey also signed up to volunteer with the Miracle League of the Triangle so she could buddy up with Eric, attended his jazz dance recitals, and cheered him to the top of the climbing wall in an adaptive climbing program.

"Abbey is dedicated to helping Eric achieve amazing things," his mom said. "She is a motivator, a supporter, and above all, brings joy to Eric and his family."

Because of Abbey's dedication, Mary Lynn nominated her for the 2018 John and Claudia Roman Direct Service Award for outstanding commitment to individuals with autism and their families. Abbey was named the winner on Sept. 7.

Abbey said her favorite part of working with Eric has been "really getting to know him over the past few years—how hard of a worker he is and how funny he is and how sweet to everyone. I just really love getting that one-on-one connection with him."

"He pushes me to think that I can do more," she said. "He's always trying new things. It's amazing that he works so hard at everything he does." The pair spends hours volunteering at a park and a farm every week, which also was new to Abbey.

"I'm trying to grow as a person and help him grow as a person," Abbey said. "Every day I get to spend with him, I grow a little bit more."

Abbey also has enjoyed getting to know Eric's family, who live in Raleigh. "They've really welcomed me into their family. I feel like I've become part of his family. That's a really special bond." Abbey also has learned a lot from Eric's mother, who is very involved in supporting him, she said.

Mary Lynn said Abbey's "enthusiasm and support go far beyond any job description."

"Since the day Eric was diagnosed with autism, I wanted to ensure he has a life filled with fun opportunities, purpose, and meaning. Abbey Willis embraces this goal each day she works with him." ■

The John and Claudia Roman Direct Service Award, a cash award of \$1,000, was endowed by Lori and Gregg Ireland to honor Christine Roman, the direct support professional who worked with their son, Vinnie. It was named for her parents, John and Claudia Roman. The Autism Society of North Carolina has bestowed the award for 12 years as part of its annual celebration of direct support professionals.



Improve a life – and yours!

Do you know someone who is passionate about helping individuals on the autism spectrum and their families? Let them know that the Autism Society of North Carolina is always looking for qualified candidates to join us as we improve lives.

Why work for ASNC? We offer:

- Extensive training and education
- Full- and part-time positions across the state
- Flexible hours and customized schedules
- Competitive pay
- Benefits starting at 20 hours
- Extensive client matching to ensure good fit
- Rewarding and relevant job experience

We are always looking for candidates or referrals for the following positions:

- Autism Support Professionals
- Vocational Support Professionals
- Autism Services Coordinators
- Social Recreation Counselors
- Behavior Technicians

www.autismsociety-nc.org/careers

Enloe Charity Ball: Alive with Purpose

Finding our purpose in life, what we were meant to contribute to our communities, is the key to a happy and fulfilling life. At the Autism Society of North Carolina, we believe that every person deserves to find their purpose and feel truly alive.

The students of Enloe High School in Raleigh have realized that making a difference in their community makes them feel alive. They say that as teens, they don't get enough opportunities to be intentional and do something "real." So each year, the school's Student Council partners with a local charity that is making people in their community healthier, safer, and happier. Their motto is "Alive with Purpose."

This past fall, the Autism Society of North Carolina was incredibly fortunate to be the 2018 beneficiary of Enloe Charity Ball, which includes months of fundraising and volunteer work. The student leaders dedicated their efforts to helping launch IGNITE Raleigh, a program of the Autism Society of North Carolina for young adults with high-functioning autism or Asperger's Syndrome.

The students set a lofty goal: \$200,000. Enloe Charity Ball had been going for 13 years; in 2017, they had raised \$180,000.



Beating Their Goal

On Dec. 8, the students revealed that they had beaten their goal and raised \$205,000!

Benjamin Hogewood, Student Body President, said the students wanted to "really inspire student leaders in Raleigh and across the state that they can make a change in their community today. They don't have to wait."

"It's not just about the money," said Sanjana Tharuvesanchi, Vice President of Public Relations. "It's about us interacting with the community that we're giving back to."



This amazing gift will enable the IGNITE Raleigh program to grow far beyond its initial 11 members and continue for years, giving more young adults on the autism spectrum a chance to discover their passions and purpose in life. They will be Alive with Purpose!

IGNITE offers activities and educational groups that foster independence and social interaction. At ASNC's first IGNITE program in Davidson, more than 100 young adults have worked toward fulfilling lives by setting goals, learning job skills, getting driver's licenses, furthering their education, living independently, and more.

"This new IGNITE center is making that (lasting) impact that we're looking for," said Keya Pothireddy, Vice President of Service. "They're providing high school graduates with all these different opportunities."

Giving Their Time

Throughout the fall, the Enloe students not only raised money for IGNITE Raleigh, they also became true partners. They helped ASNC staff set up the center before it opened by assembling furniture, sorting program materials, shopping for kitchenware and exercise equipment, and advising which games to purchase for social time. The Enloe students also volunteered at the Triangle Run/Walk for Autism and spent a Saturday at Camp Royall doing some work projects.

At Enloe, they were constantly busy holding fundraisers including a kickball tournament, a band competition, an open mic night, and coffee and hot chocolate sales. They also raised autism awareness around the school. The week before the big reveal, artwork on living with autism by Enloe students hung at VAE Raleigh, a downtown gallery. Student groups also gave live performances of improv, a cappella singing, and dance.

Once IGNITE opened, the students visited often, becoming friends with members. "It's not just about the money," said Sanjana Tharuvessanchi, Vice President of Public Relations. "It's about us interacting with the community that we're giving back to."

"This new IGNITE center is making that (lasting) impact that we're looking for," said Keya Pothireddy, Vice President of Service. "They're providing high school graduates with all these different opportunities."

The students came out for game nights, worked alongside members in cooking classes, organized social activities, and invited

members to attend Enloe events. High school was not always an easy time for IGNITE members, and it was inspiring to see them and the students bond. We are looking forward to the students' continued involvement in IGNITE Raleigh!

Creating a Better Future

One of the most exciting parts of Enloe Charity Ball is that all of the students have learned so much about people on the spectrum. They have learned all that they have in common with the members: They have passions and dreams, and they are setting goals to get there.

The students will know that sometimes, people just need a little support to get where they're going. For years to come, they will go into their colleges, their towns, and their workplaces ready to build inclusive communities.

They will help EVERYONE to be Alive with Purpose! ■



Public Policy: Thoughts on Advocacy in 2019 and Beyond

By Jennifer Mahan, *Director of Government Relations*

One of the most difficult aspects of advocacy is looking at all of the barriers that one might face and *believing*, despite all of it, that change is possible. The Autism Society of North Carolina has from the start been dedicated to using advocacy to improve the lives of individuals on the autism spectrum and their families. The hope has always been to develop a world in which every person on the spectrum has the opportunity to make a unique contribution to their family, community, and society.

ASNC has made progress in educating elected officials, especially our state legislators, about Autism Spectrum Disorder and in making changes over decades that established school rights, autism-specific services and waiver programs, self-determination, and greater access to an array of services under health insurance and state-funded supports. Despite all of these positive changes, every year, the progress we have made feels overshadowed by threatened or actual budget cuts and the growing need for services.

We know that people *still* lack supports in health coverage, in access to waivers, in education, in employment, and in housing. Our public policy agenda for the next two years is ambitious and will clearly require more than two years to accomplish, but it reflects the real needs of people across our communities.

This is where your ongoing commitment to advocating, when you feel heard and even when you do not, is more important than ever. We need all families and individuals touched by ASD, whether as parents, self-advocates, friends, neighbors, or service providers, to get involved in autism advocacy to create much-needed public policy change.

2019 marks the start of the NC General Assembly long legislative session, which will run from mid-January through June. It also is the start of a new Congress in Washington, D.C. State legislators start with a “clean slate” and introduce new bills as well as a two-year budget. Congress will be looking at new spending bills, and we hope supporting the rights and safety of people on the spectrum. We urge everyone in the autism advocacy community to begin working with your legislators *now*, as they will be determining their priorities very quickly. Let’s make sure our priorities are theirs.

Here are some ways to get involved in advocacy:

1. **Build a relationship with your NC state legislators.** Sharing stories with legislators is one of the most powerful ways to educate them on the need for supports for people with autism and their families. The start of the new legislative session after an election is a good time to introduce yourself to any newly elected legislators, and if you have not contacted them before, to let your elected officials know who you are. Review the “Tips for Contacting Your Legislator” handout on our website under “Make Your Voice Heard” in the “Take Action” section.
2. **Stay informed.** Sign up for the ASNC Policy Pulse email, a periodic update to keep you aware of what is happening across the state that may affect you or your family. We encourage you also to stay informed by visiting our website at www.autismsociety-nc.org/stayinformed to sign up for other email newsletters and connecting with us on Facebook and Twitter. Visit the ASNC blog at www.autismsociety-nc.org/blog regularly for the latest on issues affecting people with autism and their families.
3. **Respond to policy alerts.** Direct action by you made all the difference in our efforts to retain services these past two years. We urge you to continue that advocacy during the year as issues come up. Please make sure autismsociety-nc.org emails are headed to your inbox and not junk folder!

Public Policy Targets for 2019-20

What follows are our state public policy targets for 2019-20. ASNC issues two-year policy targets to match up with the two year-legislative and budget cycle. ASNC seeks input on policy targets from community members, looks at the legislative outlook, and decides which issues it will work on to create policy change.

Access to Services

North Carolina should ensure a high-quality continuum of services and supports for individuals on the autism spectrum and their families across the lifespan, with a focus on community settings and ensuring that people with Autism Spectrum Disorder achieve a good quality of life. This includes access to developmentally appropriate services, supports, and interventions; health care;

employment supports; and long-term care services.

- Ensure that the services system is accessible and better serves individual needs of people with autism through eliminating Innovations community-based waiver waiting lists, increasing state-funded IDD services for people without health-care coverage, and increasing access to developmentally appropriate diagnostic services and autism-specific supports for ages birth to 5.
- Ensure that adults across the autism spectrum have access to the training, services, and supports needed to be prepared for employment.
- Ensure that appropriate and adequate housing options exist for people on the autism spectrum.

Access to Education

- The education system should be accessible to and better serve people with autism and other developmental disabilities. Students should have options that suit the unique needs of people with Autism Spectrum Disorder.
- Increase per-student funding for special education and allocate special-education funding to address individual education needs.
- Ensure a fair threat-assessment process for students.
- Increase autism-related training and professional development for teachers and other school staff.
- Ensure that employment is an outcome of education services by improving IEPs and transition plans as well as increasing access to vocational training, job experience, and post-secondary opportunities that meet individuals' goals and aspirations.

Rights and Freedoms

Our system of justice and individual rights should recognize the needs of individuals with autism and their families to ensure that people are safe, treated equitably, and able to exercise their personal freedoms.

- Create access to autism-related training (similar to that of law enforcement) for judges, magistrates, court systems, county departments of social services and others involved in determinations of guardianship, child protection, individual and parental rights, and other legal issues.
- Ensure that guardianship programs have adequate resources, and individuals and families have information about and access to alternatives to guardianship.
- Ensure that people on the spectrum have access to identification for purposes of voting.
- Implement evidence-based strategies to limit the use of seclusion and restraint across settings.

System Management and Managed Care

North Carolina should develop policies and invest in services to ensure quality life outcomes for people with Autism Spectrum Disorder and other developmental disabilities. Our public and private health-care system should support people in community settings; operate in a transparent fashion; be outcomes-focused; provide integrated access to physical health care and prevention; recognize the unique needs of people on the autism spectrum; and include autism self-advocates and families in the decision-making process.

- Encourage innovative service delivery, professional education, and funding that will improve the geographic distribution and quality of services across the state. This includes adequate funding for a well-trained and stable direct-care workforce.
- Ensure that the needs of people with autism are met in Medicaid as NC implements managed-care options.
- Focus the services system on person-centered outcomes. ■

Need help finding your elected officials or who is running for office in your area? Have questions about public policy or advocating? Contact Jennifer Mahan, Director of Government Relations at ASNC, at 919-865-5068 or by email at jmahan@autismsociety-nc.org.



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Complete the form: www.autismsociety-nc.org/edelivery



Camp Royall

Register Now for Summer Camp!

We are excited to start accepting applications for the Summer Residential Camp lottery on January 11! The application period will end February 28. We will also have a lottery for Day Camp this year, with the same start and end dates. Campers can attend multiple weeks of Day Camp.



To register and find all of the latest information about Summer Camp, including the dates and rates for 2019, please go to www.camproyall.org. If you need assistance with registration or have any questions, please contact us at 919-542-1033 or camproyall@autismsociety-nc.org.

Year-Round Programs

We love welcoming campers to Camp Royall every day! The year-round programs that we offer continue to grow; we are lucky to make new friends and see old friends returning often. In 2018, we served close to 1,600 individuals and their families at Camp Royall.

Our Mini Camps and Adult Retreats continue to be well-attended throughout the year, offering regular recreation opportunities for our campers and respite for our families. Teen Tuesday, one of our newest programs, continues to thrive by providing teens with high-functioning autism the opportunity to make friends and learn valuable life skills. In 2018, we enjoyed our third annual week of Spring Camp, our fourth annual week of Fall Camp, and our 10th Winter Camp! Our Fall Camp is especially unique in that it is entirely staffed by volunteers from Western Carolina University.

We encourage you to check out all of the happenings throughout the year and register at www.camproyall.org. Print a copy of our flyer found at www.autismsociety-nc.org/camp-royall/programs, so you won't miss anything in 2019!

Adult Retreats: Independent adults, 18 or older with high-functioning autism or Asperger's Syndrome, can spend time with friends enjoying activities at camp and in the community. Five weekend retreats and one week-long retreat will be offered this year.

Afterschool Program: Monday through Thursday from 2:30 to 6:30 p.m. throughout the school year, our participants take part in outdoor activities, gym play, group games, arts and crafts, hayrides, and more. Transportation options may be available.



Family Fun Days: Bring the whole family out to camp for a Saturday afternoon filled with fun, recreation, and leisure activities in a safe and welcoming setting. We will offer three of these in 2019, plus the World Autism Awareness and Acceptance celebration in April. These are a great opportunity for families who are new to camp to come and see what Camp Royall has to offer.

Family Overnight Camping: Come for the Family Fun Day and stay overnight! Enjoy dinner and a campfire together on Saturday night; breakfast on Sunday is also provided.

Mini Camps: Campers arrive Friday evening and stay through Sunday for a weekend of fun at camp, providing a much-needed break for both campers and families. We will have six Mini Camps throughout the year.

Residential Camps: Week-long camps during the spring, fall, and winter breaks from school provide fun and structured activities for campers and a week of respite for families.

Teen Tuesday: Our group for teens, ages 13-22 with high-functioning autism or Asperger's Syndrome, brings them together to work on life skills in an interactive group setting. The group meets monthly September through May.

Help Send Kids to Camp

The Autism Society of North Carolina has been offering camp programs for more than 45 years for individuals with autism of all ages. Camp Royall is the oldest and largest camp exclusively for individuals with autism in the United States. We work year round to raise money to give campers who are unable to afford camp the opportunity to learn new skills, have fun, and make friends. Each year, the demand for scholarships exceeds the funds we have available.



We hope you will consider giving to provide life-changing experiences for campers with autism. Please contact Kristy White, Chief Development Officer, at kwhite@autismsociety-nc.org or 919-865-5086 to donate to camp, learn about named scholarships, or help with fundraising. We look forward to working with you to help campers across North Carolina. Thank you! ■

Social Recreation in Eastern NC

Register for Summer Camp starting March 1!

We have been running Social Recreation programs in Eastern NC for 2-1/2 years and have seen amazing growth in our programs and in our campers!

This past summer, we served 174 campers in five Eastern NC locations. Campers ages 4-22 enjoyed swimming, arts and crafts, gym time, and all of the typical camp activities in Winterville, Wilmington, Newport, Brunswick County, and Onslow County. The Summer Day Camps ran from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on weekdays with a counselor-to-camper ratio of 1:1 or 1:2 based on self-help and behavioral needs.

Registration for this summer will open March 1 at <https://srp.campbrainregistration.com>.



Year-Round Programs

We also offer Afterschool Programs for children, social programs for adults, weekend group respite programs for all ages, and Day Camps for kids ages 4-22 during school breaks in Winterville, Wilmington, and Newport.

“The most significant outcome was that our son was happy and confident and tired when we picked him up each day. He felt valued at this camp.”

All of our Eastern NC programs are made possible by funding from Trillium Health Resources. This initiative supports children and adults with autism through programs in underserved areas of the state, helping them to improve their social and communication skills, peer networks, and physical well-being.

In the fall of 2018, we provided afterschool programming for 124 school-age children with a 1:2 counselor-to-camper ratio. The programs run from 2:30 to 6:30 each school day, with transportation from schools. Children take part in enriching and engaging activities in an environment that is designed to meet their needs. Our application is available online at all times for those who are interested in inquiring about a spot in the program.



We also served 34 adults in our Adult Programs. Our adult programming provides meaningful opportunities for adults on the spectrum to learn social skills, hang out with friends, and so much more. Adults 18 and older can contact our sites directly to

learn more about our programs or they can sign up online through our registration site.

Our group respite programs have expanded this past year, and we served more than 50 children through various date nights, weekend drop-ins, and other respite opportunities. We currently have monthly weekend respite opportunities available at each location as well as Day Camps when school is out of session (teacher work days, spring break, etc.). These programs provide a great opportunity when school is out of session for campers to come to our centers and enjoy recreation and leisure activities



in a group setting. Families also experience much-needed relief, knowing their children are well cared for and they can have time to devote to other activities and events. Registration for these events is available on our registration website.

Learn More

For more information about any of our programs, go online to www.autismsociety-nc.org/socialrecreation or email the director for your area:

Winterville: SRP_Winterville@autismsociety-nc.org

Wilmington: SRP_Wilmington@autismsociety-nc.org

Brunswick County: SRP_Brunswick@autismsociety-nc.org

Newport: SRP_Newport@autismsociety-nc.org

Onslow County: SRP_Onslow@autismsociety-nc.org



Want to Help?

If you would like to volunteer or donate items, please contact us. ■

Chapters Helping Chapters: Pulling Together When It Counts

There is no question that ASNC Chapters make a difference for our individuals with autism and their loved ones. Chapters are a lot like family, offering unconditional welcome, safety, and social acceptance that their members might not easily find elsewhere. They also share goals that extend far beyond community borders and include a concern and commitment for the well-being of all NC families.

This broader level of support was very evident a few months ago when two horrific weather systems bore down on our state. Historically devastating Hurricane Florence – followed by Tropical Storm Michael – wreaked havoc for days with massive wind and flooding, lengthy power outages, loss of property and homes, and safety concerns for displaced individuals and families.

During the month of October, our Chapters collectively raised several thousand dollars that went directly toward assisting families whose lives were turned upside down by the storms. ASNC matched what the Chapters donated in order to help even more families. Chapters also held events to help ease the emotional stress felt by family members and to give individuals a sense of security and calm.

To say that we're proud and appreciative of our Chapter families is an understatement. We're also relieved that some normalcy is returning, and Chapters are once again meeting and planning. Now is a great time to belong to your local Chapter. Check out the possibilities in YOUR neighborhood by visiting our website at www.autismsociety-nc.org/chapters.

Crystal Coast Chapter 'After the Storm' Get-Together



The resilient families of our Crystal Coast Chapter gathered to catch up with each other, share a meal, and celebrate birthdays after Hurricane Florence. About 30 people came to the Newport Social Rec Center to enjoy a break from storm cleanup and repairs.

Florence hit the Carteret County area hard, and many Chapter families are still in temporary housing as they put the pieces of their lives back together. The laughter of the kids, knowing friends were safe, and the chance to come together as a community reminded everyone that we really are stronger together!

Mecklenburg County Chapter Farm Outing

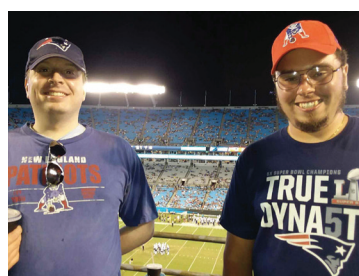
On a Saturday in late October, the Mecklenburg County Chapter hosted bushels of fall fun at Hodges Family Farm. Families spent time together and were treated to a wagon ride, petting zoo, and coveted time in the hay mountain play zone.



Guilford County Chapter Afternoon of Science

Guilford Chapter families immersed themselves in the world of science one Thursday afternoon in August when nine families met up at the Greensboro

Science Center. According to Guilford Chapter Facilitator Courtney Chavis, everyone had a blast mixing some hands-on learning with valuable friend time.



Surry County Chapter Gives Back and Makes Time for Fun

Annual funding to local schools, used for training and supplies, is a huge way that the Surry Chapter gives back each year. Surry Chapter

Facilitator Bridget Soots recently presented a donation from the Chapter to Loretta Barneycastle, the EC teacher at Jones Intermediate School. The Surry County Walk for Autism each April makes this kind of giving possible.

The Surry Chapter also makes time for fun! In August, the Chapter sponsored an adult outing to the Panthers vs. Patriots pre-season game. In October, 82 people attended the Chapter's annual fall festival. The event at the Salvation Army in Mount Airy included a cat walk, ring toss, corn hole, plunko, ducks, fishing, crafts, and more!



Wake County Chapter Grandparents Group Dines Out

The Wake Grandparents Support Group enjoyed a late summer reunion dinner before their first Chapter meeting back in September. The group regularly meets on the second Monday of each month at Hudson Memorial Presbyterian Church in Raleigh.

Person County Chapter Dances the Night Away

The Person County Chapter hosted its first-ever Second Chance Prom, with the theme Emeralds of Hope, on Sept. 8 at Palace Point in Roxboro. Forty attendees came out in support of the Chapter and to raise awareness of autism – and of course to dance their feet off! Jamie Harris Photography was on site to snap portraits and donated all funds from the portraits to the Chapter. It was a night of great music, dancing, and socializing as guests re-created their prom night. The Chapter plans to make this an annual event.



ASNC Campus Chapters Earn an “A” for Effort

Several of our ASNC Campus Chapters, under the coordination of Central RCC and Campus Chapter Coordinator Meleah Lowe, expanded recruitment efforts this past semester and made their presence known through hosting booths and events in collaboration with their student affairs departments. Campus Chapters increase autism awareness in the community, coordinate activities that benefit the local autism community, and raise funds for local ASNC families. Participation with a Campus Chapter can provide students with autism training and experience in addition to preparing them for professional roles in the autism field.



Stokes County Chapter Enjoys Art Exhibition

A group from the Stokes Chapter enjoyed viewing a very special art exhibition by autism self-advocate Anthony Miller in mid-November at the Hanging Rock State Park Visitors Center. It was

inspiring to see Anthony’s creations, said Julie Coulter, Regional Chapter Facilitator for the group.

UNC Chapel Hill Campus Chapter Hosts Spooky Shenanigans

The UNC Chapel Hill Campus Chapter’s Halloween Extravaganza was a big hit this year in the local autism community. From face-painting, to games, to a “not so haunted” house, fun was had by all! Even Belle made a sensory-friendly appearance, thanks to UNC’s A Moment of Magic.



Davie/Forsyth Chapter Paints Masterpieces

In November, Davie/Forsyth families and friends painted for a good cause at Merlot & VanGogh in Winston-Salem. Parents from the Chapter, friends, and family had fun together creating their own versions of “Moon over Winston-Salem.” The attendees donated to the Chapter, and the studio contributed some proceeds.



Orange/Chatham Chapter Tours Local Police Department

Orange/Chatham families had an inside peek at the local Chapel Hill Police Department in early September. Attendees learned more about how to interact with police officers, toured the building, and checked out a police car. A few even had their fingerprints made.



The tour provided a nice, low-key opportunity for kids to learn in a fun group setting. “It was great for us to become familiar with our local police and for them to become familiar with us,” said Mary Berridge, Chapter Co-Leader. ■

For information on how you can become involved with one of our Chapters around the state, please visit www.autismsociety-nc.org/chapters. No chapter in your area? ASNC works with local families to start new groups. Contact Marty Kellogg at mkellogg@autismsociety-nc.org for more information.

Recursos y Eventos para Familias Hispanas

La Sociedad de Autismo de Carolina del Norte ofrece recursos en español para ayudar a las familias hispanas afectadas por el autismo, profesionales bilingües que trabajan con niños y adultos con autismo, y la comunidad.

Próximos Talleres

Se ofrecen talleres en español en todo el estado para educar a padres y profesionales sobre temas que incluyen comunicación social, estrategias de comportamiento, transición, Plan Individual Educativo (IEP), genética y nutrición. Para inscribirse, por favor comuníquese con Mariela Maldonado.

- Autismo y Genética: Charlotte y Greensboro
- Entendiendo el Autismo Funcional: Wilmington y Winston-Salem
- ¿Qué es el autismo y cómo puedo ayudar a mi hijo?: Seminario vía internet

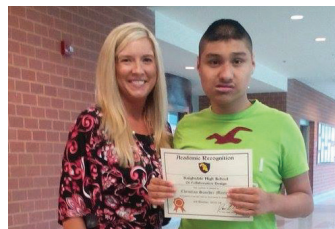
Actividades Recientes

Picnic Hispano: Los Grupos de Apoyo Hispanos de los condados de Wake, Mecklenburg y Johnston se reunieron este verano en sus parques locales para participar en este evento anual. Las familias compartieron comidas tradicionales e intercambiaron experiencias y recursos.

Carrera/Caminata por el Autismo: Padres y profesionales se unieron en este evento de recaudación de fondos y concientización de la Sociedad de Autismo de NC en Greensboro, WNC y el Triángulo. Agradecemos a UNVISION-40 y otros medios de comunicación por apoyar la Carrera/ Caminata por el Autismo. Aprenda más sobre estos eventos y regístrese en línea www.runwalkforautism.com.

Próximos Eventos

Conferencia Anual: La conferencia de dos días, 22-23 de marzo en Charlotte, será una oportunidad emocionante para que familias, profesionales y auto-defensores del autismo aprendan nuevas estrategias. Para registrarse en línea y obtener más información sobre los temas y presentadores destacados, vaya a www.autismsociety-nc.org/conference. Miembros de los Grupos de Apoyo Hispano pueden recibir becas financiadas por donaciones de Iglesias locales, negocios hispanos y fondos de los



chapters de ASNC. Para más información sobre las becas, por favor comuníquese con Mariela Maldonado.

Celebración del Día Mundial de la Concientización y Aceptación del Autismo: Acompañe a las personas con autismo, sus familias y miembros de la comunidad en un día de celebración que es el 6 de abril en el Camp Royall. El evento incluirá comida, camión de helados, música, juegos, casas inflables, pintura para la cara y más. Por favor confirme su asistencia en línea: <https://waaad2019.eventbrite.com>.

Otros Recursos

Camp Royall: Este campamento cerca de Pittsboro, atiende personas con autismo de todas las edades y habilidades. En el verano se ofrece campamentos residenciales y de día. Los programas de todo el año son: Días de Diversión Familiar, Campamentos Familiares, Mini-Campamentos, Retiros para Adultos, Campamentos Residenciales en vacaciones escolares, Programa Después de la Escuela, y Los Martes Adolescentes (grupo social para adolescentes). Regístrese del 11 de enero al 28 de febrero para la lotería del campamento de verano. Para más

detalles y programas, visite www.camproyall.org o comuníquese con el personal del campamento camproyall@autismsociety-nc.org o al 919-542-1033.

Recreación social: En estos programas los participantes conectan sobre intereses comunes, practican habilidades sociales y tratan nuevas actividades. En los condados de Newport, Wilmington, Winterville, Brunswick, Onslow y con el apoyo de Trillium Health Resources, se ofrecen programas de recreación social para campamento de verano, cuidado después de la escuela y programas para adultos. En otras áreas están disponibles programas después de la escuela y grupos de habilidades sociales para una gran variedad de edades y capacidades. Para más detalles y programas, visite www.autismsociety-nc.org/social-recreation.

Se necesitan patrocinadores: El Departamento Hispano de ASNC recibe con agradecimiento donaciones para proveer educación y a promover oportunidades para las familias hispanas en todo el estado. También, otorga becas para la conferencia anual, así como servicios de traducción de talleres y la conferencia. Si usted quisiera ser uno de nuestros patrocinadores o contribuir a ASNC, por favor comuníquese con Mariela Maldonado, Enlace de Asuntos Hispanos. ■

Para más información o ayuda en español, comuníquese con Mariela Maldonado, Enlace de Asuntos Hispanos, al 919-865-5066 o mmaldonado@autismsociety-nc.org.



Grupos de Apoyo Hispano

Los grupos de apoyo hispano ayudan a familias de niños y adultos con autismo a obtener información de recursos y tratamientos y compartir sus experiencias en su lengua materna en el área local. Estos grupos promueven la concientización del autismo en la comunidad hispana. En muchos casos se ofrece cuidado de niños y traducción al español para las presentaciones en inglés.

Cumberland/Robeson: Reuniones el último viernes de cada mes, 9:30-11:30 a.m., en la oficina regional de ASNC, 351 Wagoner Drive, Fayetteville. Líder Voluntaria: Alma Morales, 910-785-5473

Durham: Reuniones una vez al mes, en El Centro Hispano, 2000 Chapel Hill Road, #26-A, Durham. Líderes Voluntarias: Juana García, 919-687-7692; Mayra Tapia, 919-450-6543; y Karen Díaz, 919-641-3718

Guilford: Reuniones el segundo viernes de cada mes, 5:30-8 p.m., en la Iglesia Saint Mary Catholic's Church, 812 Duke St., Greensboro. Líder Voluntaria: Xochitl García, 336-253-2482

Johnston: Reuniones el primer viernes de cada mes, 9-11:00 a.m., en The Partnership for Children of Johnson County, 1406 S. Pollock St., Selma. Líderes Voluntarias: Hilda Munguía, 919-946-5080 y Mónica De la Cruz, 919-464-0306

Mecklenburg: Reuniones el segundo jueves de cada mes, 9-11 a.m., en la Iglesia Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, 6212 Tuckaseegee Road, Charlotte. Líderes Voluntarias: María Laura Torres, 704-430-0281 y Clara Amarante, 347-217-5661

Pitt: Reuniones el primer viernes de cada mes, 5pm-6:30 p.m., en la Iglesia Saint Gabriel Catholic Church, 3250 Dickinson Ave., Greenville. Líderes Voluntarias: Mary Córdova, 252-288-1668, y Amelia Velázquez, 252-217-0111

Randolph: Reuniones el último viernes de cada mes, 6-8 p.m., en la Iglesia First United Methodist Church, 224 N. Fayetteville St., Líderes Voluntarias: Sugey Ramírez, 336-308-6097, y Mariela Vences, 336-653-1989

Vance: Reuniones una vez por cada trimestre en Henderson. Líder Voluntaria: Beatriz Solano, 252-378-4491

Wake: Reuniones el primer viernes de cada mes, 6-8 p.m., en at Westover United Methodist Church, 300 Powell Drive, Raleigh. Líderes Voluntarias: Ana Chouza, 919-244-9633; Guadalupe Ortega, 919-247-5760, y Becy Velázquez, 919-802-0621

NC Companies Giving Back

More and more often, corporate leaders are coming to the Autism Society of North Carolina with a strong desire to give back.

They know that some of their employees have loved ones with autism. They know there are many individuals on the autism spectrum in the communities in which they work. They want to support these individuals and families and make their everyday lives better. They want to create communities that welcome, support, and accept individuals with autism so that they can build fulfilling lives.

Often, this starts with donations to the Autism Society of North Carolina. We've been improving lives for almost 50 years, so they know we have experience. Our staff includes clinical professionals, policy experts, former teachers, autism parents, and individuals with autism themselves, so we have expertise. We are good shepherds of their money, putting 89 cents of each dollar donated directly into services.

Next, many company leaders want to know what more they can do. They want to support our camps through work projects, send staff to volunteer at our events, or run their own fundraisers. We welcome all of these efforts! If you would like to sign your company up for a volunteer opportunity, please see the box to the right for details.

This year, we have been excited by some innovative corporate partnerships that have gone one step further to directly touch the lives of children and adults with autism in our state.

STEM Fun with Lenovo and the Carolina Hurricanes Foundation

The Carolina Hurricanes Foundation, formerly known as the Kids 'N Community Foundation, is a longtime supporter of the Autism Society of North Carolina. Recently, the Foundation teamed up with Lenovo to provide an amazing opportunity for some local teenagers on the spectrum. The teens visited Lenovo to experience virtual reality, visit the company's Innovation Center and Product Lab, participate in a STEM career conversation, and learn about the inner workings of a computer.

One parent said, "Chris wants to work in the field of computer programming and is already investigating the types of colleges that have autism support and deal with computer programming. So this day only helped him see all the possibilities for himself in the future. Sometimes he feels like his autism diagnosis may get in the way of being successful, but this day helped him see that he, too, can be a valuable asset in the world. We are so grateful!"



The day was filled with questions like "What do I do next?" and "How do we get this to work?" Lenovo volunteers worked one-on-one with campers to answer their questions as they refurbished a computer. "I've never seen the inside of a computer before!" said one camper as she worked to complete the steps. After the STEM activities, the campers played floor hockey with the Hurricanes staff and defenseman Haydn Fleury.

"We are so thankful to Lenovo and the Hurricanes for providing this chance for our campers to explore career options in STEM fields and think about their futures," said Kristy White, ASNC Chief Development Officer. "Even as they were having fun, the campers were learning new skills."

"These young kids are our future. In just a few years, they will contribute to our community with jobs in this field, and today showed them all that is possible."

Want to Volunteer?

Check out our new volunteer portal!

- Web-based and mobile-friendly
- Browse needs and events by region or date
- Register online, as an individual or with a team
- Share opportunities with friends
- Track your hours, add reflections, and download a volunteer "resume"

www.autismsociety-nc.org/volunteer

Interviewing with Microsoft

This summer, Microsoft reached out to IGNITE Davidson to offer a fun-filled day to the members as part of the company's community involvement efforts. IGNITE is the Autism Society of North Carolina's unique "peer-to-peer" program for young adults with high-functioning autism or Asperger's Syndrome transitioning into adulthood. IGNITE offers activities and educational groups that foster independence and social interaction.

IGNITE's staff talked to the Microsoft staff about going one step further to provide a meaningful learning opportunity, and they were excited by the opportunity!

Many individuals with ASD, especially our IGNITE members, have talents, skills, and impressive resumes. They often receive a first interview but don't get called back for a second interview or a job offer. With no feedback on how they did in the interview, it is hard for them to improve their interviewing skills. Microsoft agreed to set up mock interviews to allow our members to receive immediate and written feedback on things they did well and what they could work on to be more successful.

To get ready for the event, IGNITE staff worked with members to create or update their resumes. The members learned about appropriate interview attire and social skills and reviewed their responses to typical interview questions. As Microsoft staff began receiving the IGNITE members' resumes ahead of time, they said they were surprised and impressed by the members' level of skills, and it caused them to increase their preparations for these professional-level interviews.

Finally, the big day arrived. The members were "dressed to impress" as they headed into the Microsoft Technology Center in Charlotte, where they were treated with the utmost respect.

Each member participated in two interview sessions. After each, they received constructive feedback on their interview skills, social skills, and resumes from each interviewer. "I never know how I did in an interview, so it was great to hear from my interviewer what I did well and what I need to work on," one member said. "It was a very positive experience."

"I am so glad I did it – now I won't be as nervous next time," said another.

Microsoft provided the members with a wonderful lunch and everyone still had time for some fun with a celebratory karaoke party.

The IGNITE members weren't the only ones who learned something that day. The members educated the Microsoft professionals and HR department about the talent and skills possessed by individuals on the autism spectrum.



"I really learned a lot just having exposure I hadn't had before," said one Microsoft employee. "I think I got as much out of it as our new friends did!"

Contact Us to Provide Opportunities

We are so grateful for all of the companies and organizations that have partnered with us to improve lives and support families in North Carolina. We value corporate involvement and are excited about all of the ways companies could provide opportunities for our loved ones with autism. Please contact us if you have ideas or would like to learn more.

Together, we will be here for the families who need us today and the families who will find out they need us tomorrow. ■

Please contact Kristy White, Chief Development Officer, at kwhite@autismsociety-nc.org or 919-865-5086 to learn about more about corporate partnerships or provide opportunities for individuals with autism. Thank you!

Fundraisers & Events



Run/Walk for Autism Events

We thank everyone who ran, walked, donated, or volunteered to make our fall Run/Walk for Autism events a success! The Run/Walks provide a day for us all to come together, celebrate our loved ones with autism, and teach our communities about acceptance. Relive those wonderful memories with our photo albums on Flickr: www.flickr.com/photos/autismsocietync.

WNC Run/Walk for Autism

On Sept. 8, almost 300 participants and 23 teams came out for the 13th annual WNC Run/Walk for Autism in Fletcher. They raised \$30,000 to improve lives and support families in WNC through the Autism Society of North Carolina's programs and supports.

Danny Landry knows firsthand what a difference employment supports can make.

Landry, a 33-year-old who is on the autism spectrum, faced some challenges at his first jobs. He was capable of doing the work but needed a different way to learn the tasks. "A lot of times the employer doesn't understand autism or why you're not picking up on it," he said.

Then Landry started receiving services through the Autism Society of North Carolina, and his direct support professional created visual supports to help him learn. "It really helped me tremendously," he said. The employers "learned that I learned different, but I could still do it."

Now Landry puts his experience to use on the staff at ASNC. As an autism support professional, he works with 3-4 individuals on the spectrum on social skills, communication, and daily living each week.

As a person on the spectrum, Landry said, he understands his clients' perspective. "I understand the anxiety," he said. "Like when my client is worried about the time or something changing." He understands how to approach the clients and how they would like to be treated. He also recognizes the value of visual supports and how to creatively customize them to each individual. These are all lessons he shares with other direct support staff. "I can have empathy for both sides."

As a client and staff member of the Autism Society of North Carolina, Landry looks forward to the WNC Run/Walk for Autism each year. The September event feels like "autism community day," he said, and is a great chance to "see all your friends and meet new people."



"Employment supports really helped me tremendously. The employers learned that I learned different, but I could still do it."

Greensboro Run/Walk for Autism

In Greensboro, almost 600 participants and 49 teams raised \$35,000 on Sept. 29. Some of the local programs that are supported by proceeds of the Run/Walk for Autism are our summer camp and afterschool program.

EJ Clay, who is 10, has attended those programs for a couple of years. EJ loves puzzles, bubbles, music, anything outdoors, and most of all, basketball. “They call him the little LeBron,” said his mom, Cecily Shropshire, explaining that he is tall for his age. He’s also very funny and is often the class clown, she said.

Just two years ago, EJ was mostly nonverbal. “He couldn’t really express what he wanted,” his mom said. He had been diagnosed with autism when he was 2-1/2, and remained shy and extremely attached to her. When he started attending the Autism Society of North Carolina’s afterschool program, he was always saying, “Mommy coming to get me?” “Mommy coming?”

EJ attended the Greensboro summer camp as well, and the interaction with the staff and other children, as well as the structure, made a big difference. “All of a sudden last summer, he just started talking,” Shropshire said. “Now he actually uses full sentences. That kind of shocked everybody there.”

Judy Smithmyer, Autism Resource Specialist Coordinator, has also supported EJ and his mom. Smithmyer worked with EJ’s schoolteachers so they would know how best to support him. Now, EJ is doing great in school. He’s more open and adventurous, and he speaks his mind, his mother said. “It’s been such a change.”

“The Autism Society of North Carolina is a wonderful organization,” Shropshire said. “The people there, they really, truly care.”



“All of a sudden last summer, he just started talking. Now he actually uses full sentences.”

Triangle Run/Walk for Autism

On Oct. 13, ASNC celebrated the 20th anniversary of the Triangle Run/Walk for Autism with cotton candy, miniature horses, and more! ASNC’s biggest fundraiser of the year drew more than 2,400 participants and 143 teams to downtown Raleigh. They raised more than \$200,000 to improve lives and support families, while celebrating their loved ones with autism.

The Kidd family hasn’t missed a single Triangle Run/Walk for Autism since 2007, the year Greyson was diagnosed. “You want to be around other people who are experiencing what you are experiencing,” said his father, Kevin Kidd.

Greyson was just 2 when he was diagnosed. He did not speak much or know how to interact with people. He exhibited a lot of repetitive play and banged things together. Over the next few years, Greyson received occupational and physical therapy. At first, he had one-on-one support in school, and he has always had an Individualized Education Program.

Now, he is 13 and has made the honor roll in mainstream classes at Mills Park Middle School in Cary, where his mother, Jan, teaches. “I think Greyson’s a role model of what therapies and intervention can do. He has come a long way,” Kidd said.

Greyson loves leading his team of friends and family at the Triangle Run/Walk for Autism each year, where they all wear shirts that say Racin’ for Greyson. “We do love Greyson having his own day,” Kidd said. “I feel famous!” Greyson exclaimed.

The family also participates in the Triangle Run/Walk for Autism in hopes of increasing awareness. They want people to pause before judging people who might act differently from themselves. Kidd hopes that learning about autism will make people be more patient and understanding when a child has different social skills.

The Kidds think it is important to support the Autism Society of North Carolina, which Kidd said does “awesome work.” They typically bring a team of 20-30 people, and raise \$1,000-\$2,000 a year. For Greyson, they dream of independence. “I see him working with kids, driving, living on his own – with his doting mom and dad checking in on him, of course,” Kidd said. “That’s every parent’s dream.” ■



“I think Greyson’s a role model of what therapies and intervention can do. He has come a long way.”

Run Sponsors: Many thanks to the following sponsors of our fall Run/Walks for Autism. Please support these businesses and thank them for their support of the Autism Society of North Carolina.

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The Pediatric Express • The PorterHouse Bar & Grill • TTH Family Dentistry

FRIEND

Asheville Pediatric Associates • Blue Ridge Pharmacy • Catherine & John Faherty • Connecting the Light, PLLC
Lionheart Academy of the Triad • Pepsi-Cola Bottling Company

Host a Fundraiser to Help Families

Volunteers throughout our state host fundraisers to benefit the Autism Society of North Carolina. They rally friends, families, and colleagues to participate in restaurant nights, donate proceeds from the sale of various items, or create a unique event. It all starts with an idea. If you are interested in hosting your own fundraiser, please contact Gillian Hayden at ghayden@autismsociety-nc.org or 919-865-2275.

ASNC is grateful to the many individuals and businesses that hold fundraisers to help families affected by autism. Here is a list of recent events and supporters:

Apex Friendship HS Volleyball Team - Aces for Autism
 Arthur and Tara Johnson - RC 4 x 4 Truck Fall Crawl for Autism
 Ben & Jerry's - Free Cone Day
 Bonefish Grill - Autism Family Night
 Burlington Royals Baseball Club - Autism Awareness Night
 CADCO Construction - Golf Tournament
 Cageside Fight Shop
 Carson Reeves, Troop 332 - Lemonade Stand
 Charlotte Hornets - Autism Awareness Night
 Clyde Erwin Elementary Magnet School - Staff Fundraiser
 Coddle Creek Elementary - Jeans Day
 Corriher-Lipe Middle School Junior Civitan Club
 D.H. Conley High School Softball Team
 Dunkin' Donuts - Antiquity Car Show
 Dunn-Benson Ford - All Ford Car Show
 Durham Bulls - Autism Awareness Night

East Wake Academy - Staff Fundraiser
 ECU Students - Bake Sale and Fundraiser
 Elizabeth Phillippi - The Out of the Water Book Club
 Emily Kovac - Wine and Win
 Etcetera Book Club
 First Flight High School Soccer Team
 Foster's Grille - Dine Out
 Four Oaks Middle School Life Skills AU Class
 Guilford College - Lacrosse Tournament
 Gwendy's Goodies Fundraiser
 Hendrick Toyota Scion - Jeans for a Cause
 Heroes Sports Bar - Poker Run for Autism
 Huckleberry Trail Farm - Pumpkin Sale
 Kameron Brown - 5K Awareness Run
 Kona Ice of WWC - Autism Awareness
 Launching Pad Trampoline Park Raleigh - Jumping for Nolan
 LuLaRoe
 Midtown Events -
 North Hills Beach Music

NC Rock Autism Music Festival
 NorthCross Shopping Center - Family Fun Puzzle Run 5K event
 Panera Bread, Covelli Enterprises - Pieces of Hope for Autism Cookie Campaign
 Park Lane Jewelry
 PPD - Jeans Day
 Raleigh Elks Lodge No. 735 - Annual Golf Tournament
 Raleigh Youth Nerf Club - Tournament
 Rebecca and Eddie Hurst - Wine for a Reason
 Sports Car and Vintage Racing - Legends of NASCAR
 Trinity Manufacturing - Bowling for Autism
 Tuna Run 200
 UNC Peds - Manuary Event
 Vibhu Pavuluri - Grease Recycling Project
 Wakelon Elementary - Autism Awareness
 Wild Birds Unlimited of New Bern
 Wilson's Mills Elementary School



WIN this restored 1967 Camaro!

The Camaro was restored by Premiere Communications and Consulting, Inc. and features LS1 engine & transmission; Viking coilover adjustable front shocks; QA1 rear shocks; 4-wheel disc brakes; a new positive traction rear end; subframe connectors; CalTrac suspension; new interior seats, carpet, and headliner; a new dash cluster; and a new sound system. Special thanks to Premiere Communications and Consulting for donating the Camaro.

Raffle tickets are \$100, and all proceeds will provide services for individuals with autism and their families.

Buy tickets now at <https://go.rallyup.com/1967camaro>

NC Rock Autism Music Festival

The Jordan family of Elizabeth City took one of their passions, music, to raise money for another: improving the lives of people with autism. Their second annual NC Rock Autism Music Festival in August raised more than \$20,000!

The Jordans' 6-year-old son, Jagger, was diagnosed with autism when he was 2. "Jagger is a fireball," his mom, DiAnna, said. "He's a very intense and extreme sensory seeker."



Over the years, Jagger has benefited from therapy, and about three years ago, his father, Daniel, started thinking about having a music festival to help other families affected by autism. "There's still things that these families and these children need," DiAnna said.

The couple had never done anything like it before, but they had deep roots in the area. Daniel had always loved music and has a band that plays locally, The Daniel Jordan Band. He started reaching out to other musicians, and she started looking for venues and ideas. "The community, really, it was unbelievable how supportive they were," Dianna said.

Soon local business owners Marty and Sheryl Hurdle offered free use of their event space near their Crawfish Shack. Local lifeguards volunteered their services, because the area includes a large pond, and experienced security staff also came out for free. Bands also played for free.

In its first year, the festival raised just under \$10,000, but this year it more than doubled! More than 1,200 people attended. Event



proceeds came from tickets, hats, T-shirts, sponsorships, a cornhole tournament and more.

It was important to the Jordans that the event be a fun celebration for families. They even created an indoor, quiet space where families could relax if they had loved ones with special needs who needed to take a break from the hustle and bustle. DiAnna said it can be isolating to have a child with special needs, and the couple hopes to have more of those families come out each year.

They also hope the festival, which they plan to continue holding in early August, builds awareness in the community. "The more we know about something, the easier it is to learn to accept it," she said. "I want the world to be more accepting of differences."

"I want my son, and adults with autism, to have the same chances, similar opportunities for experience. He just does things differently. He doesn't do them wrong.

"I just hope that he finds his niche, just like any other mom would. We want him to have his say in his future. We don't want him to be limited.

"We want him to be happy in whatever way being happy for Jagger means."

Keep updated on the 2019 NC Rock Autism Music Festival, scheduled for Aug. 3, at www.facebook.com/NCRockAutism. ■

AmeriCarna LIVE Car Show

Even a rain delay couldn't stop thousands from coming out for the sixth annual AmeriCarna LIVE Charity car show in Davidson on Thanksgiving weekend, hosted by Ray Evernham, legendary NASCAR crew chief and Hall of Fame inductee.

This year's show stars included vehicles from Evernham's personal collection, Rob Kauffman's 1966 Le Mans-winning Ford GT40, and Jeff Gordon's 1952 Oldsmobile Super 88 Convertible, in addition to hundreds of entries from individuals and car clubs.

The show and a Friday evening reception raised more than \$150,000 to benefit IGNITE, a program operated by ASNC for young adults with high-functioning autism or Asperger's Syndrome. MSC Industrial Supply Company, Ingersoll Rand, and Carlisle Companies Incorporated were once again the lead sponsors.

The IGNITE program was founded with support from the Evernham Family-Racing for a Reason Foundation. In 2018, IGNITE opened its second location in Raleigh. IGNITE offers activities, skills training, and educational workshops that foster social, financial, educational, and employment independence for members. ■



The Autism Society of North Carolina extends a heartfelt thank-you to all of our donors. Below is a list of Honorarium and Memorial gifts. Thank you for your tremendous support.

This list reflects donations received on or between July 1, 2018, and November 30, 2018. Please contact Beverly Gill if you have any questions or corrections at 800-442-2762, ext. 1105, or bgill@autismsociety-nc.org.

Honorariums

Kathie Alexander
Vidant Health

Dwayne Ballen
Womble Bond Dickinson

Erica Brown
Sheila and Eric Brown

Isabela Brown
Lynette and William Weant

Melissa Brown
Sheila and Eric Brown

Sally Lynn and Ted Buckner
Anne Dahle

Courtney Chavis
Denny Dukes

Nathaniel Clanton
Diane and Philip Zaleskin

Elaine Coonrod
Betty Wolf Coonrod

Fuzani Curtis and Jean Curtis
Duke Eye Center CRNA Center

Grace Dietz
Jill Cassone

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ASNC has an App for that!

- Access to the top sections of the ASNC website at your fingertips
- Receive important updates and policy news on your phone
- Download from the App Store (iPhone) or Google Play (Android)



Celebrate Our Loved Ones with Autism this April

Join us this spring as we strive to build acceptance and inclusion for our loved ones with autism in all of our communities. This is a year-round effort for us – and you, we are sure – but National Autism Awareness Month brings more public attention. Let's take this opportunity to renew our focus and let our communities know what individuals with autism and their families want and need.

We want people to know about autism's challenges, so they can be more accommodating and provide necessary supports. But we also want them to know how their lives can be better when they include people with autism.

We want people with autism, and their families, to feel welcomed in their communities. They deserve the same opportunities as everyone else to reach their goals and dreams. They deserve to be celebrated!

Share on Social Media

We'll be spreading this message across our social media channels, and we hope you will join our efforts! Share photos of autism awareness events in your schools, houses of worship, and local communities. Snap a pic of your kids playing with their neighborhood friends. Share photos of your loved ones with autism that celebrate their unique talents. Tag us so we can see and share your images, too!

Order Your Gear Now

Wear your support with one of our T-shirts at www.autismbookstore.com or put a magnet on your vehicle to spread the message around town. Start a conversation – you never know who might need support or who might have a way to lend a hand, perhaps by hiring someone with autism or holding an awareness event at their school.

Celebrate on April 6

You are invited to our seventh annual World Autism Awareness and Acceptance Day celebration on April 6 at Camp Royall in Moncure, outside Pittsboro. (We have moved the celebration to a Saturday this year.)

Join us for special activities including bounce houses, outdoor games, hay rides, face-painting, an ice cream truck, and a lunch cookout. You can also check out Camp Royall's facilities, including the boating pond, the playground, and the zipline. You'll also have a chance to chat with ASNC staff, including our Autism Resource Specialists. The event is free, but donations will be accepted to help with food costs. Please register online to help us plan: <https://waaad2019.eventbrite.com>.

Use Our Online Resources

Check out our online materials that you can use to raise awareness and increase acceptance in your schools and community organizations. The resources include videos, informational items, ideas for crafts and fundraisers, and book recommendations for all ages from the ASNC Bookstore. These are all free and available at www.autismsociety-nc.org/awareness-acceptance year-round. We hope you will find these helpful as we join together to build welcoming communities that celebrate our loved ones with autism!



Call on us!

The Autism Society of North Carolina improves the lives of individuals with autism, supports families affected by autism, and educates communities.

Autism Resource Specialists connect families to resources and provide training to help you become your child's best advocate. As parents of children with autism themselves, they understand your concerns. Find yours: www.autismsociety-nc.org/resourcespecialists

Workshops and conferences with our Autism Resource Specialists or Clinical staff will help you learn more about topics that concern you, such as early intervention, evidence-based practices, IEPs, transitioning, and residential options. See the complete schedule: www.autismsociety-nc.org/workshops

Online resources, including toolkits, webinars, a blog, and a Staying Safe section, provide opportunities to learn on your own time from your home. www.autismsociety-nc.org

Chapters and Support Groups around NC provide a place for families who face similar challenges to feel welcomed and understood as they offer each other encouragement. Find one near you: www.autismsociety-nc.org/chapters

Skill-building and support services provide children and adults with autism the skills to increase self-sufficiency and participate in the community. ASNC's services across the state include skill-building in areas such as communication, socialization, community integration, and personal care; family consultation; respite; and adult day programs. Services are provided through the NC Innovations waiver, state funding, B3, and private pay. Contact us to learn which supports are available in your region. www.autismsociety-nc.org/skill-building

LifeLong Interventions provides comprehensive treatment across skill domains and the lifespan. This service is rooted in the principles of ABA and involves intensive teaching, using evidence-based practices to promote appropriate skills and behaviors. LifeLong Interventions is directed by a psychologist who supervises PhD and master's level psychologists and Board Certified Behavior Analysts. Training is provided by registered behavior technicians under the direct supervision of these clinical professionals. ASNC is an in-network provider for many insurers, including BCBSNC, Aetna, and United Healthcare. Children under 21 who rely on Medicaid are

also eligible to receive treatment under EPSDT. We also provide treatment through private-pay arrangements. www.autismsociety-nc.org/clinical

Behavior consultations provided by our psychologists and BCBAs can help explain why behaviors are occurring, develop comprehensive behavior plans, and coach caregivers on effective strategies. www.autismsociety-nc.org/clinical

Employment Supports helps individuals with autism explore their skills and interests, then assists them in finding, keeping, and thriving in a job. Services are funded through the state Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. www.autismsociety-nc.org/employmentsupports

Camp Royall is the nation's oldest and largest camp for individuals with autism. Located near Pittsboro, Camp Royall serves all ages and offers year-round programming, including an afterschool program. www.camproyall.org

Social Recreation programs provide opportunities for participants to bond over common interests, practice social skills, and try new activities. In Newport, Wilmington, Winterville, and Brunswick and Onslow counties, social recreation programs include summer day camp, afterschool programs, and adult programs, with support from Trillium Health Resources. In other areas, afterschool programs and social-skills groups for a range of ages and abilities are available. Contact us to learn which services are available in your region. www.autismsociety-nc.org/socialrecreation

IGNITE is a peer-to-peer program for young adults with high-functioning autism or Asperger's Syndrome. IGNITE, in Raleigh and Davidson, offers activities and educational groups that foster independence and social interaction. Members work toward financial, educational, and employment success. www.autismsociety-nc.org/ignite

ASNC's public policy efforts aim to advocate for the needs of individuals with autism and their families by maintaining a wide range of ties with the executive and legislative branches of state government. You can get involved and make your voice heard. www.autismsociety-nc.org/make-voice-heard

www.autismsociety-nc.org

We have regional offices in Asheville, Charlotte, Fayetteville, Greensboro, Greenville, Newport, Raleigh, and Wilmington. Contact our state office to be connected to resources.

ASNC State Office
800-442-2762

Sign up online to receive our email updates:
www.autismsociety-nc.org/contact-us



Autism Society
of NORTH CAROLINA

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Spring 2019 Events

Carolina Hurricanes Autism Awareness Night

Raleigh - March 8

Hornets Autism Awareness Night

Charlotte - March 26

World Autism Awareness & Acceptance Day

Camp Royall - April 6

Catwalk to Camp

Raleigh - April 11

Surry County Walk for Autism

Mount Airy - April 13

Eastern Run/Walk for Autism

Greenville - April 27

Coastal NC Run/Walk for Autism

Wilmington - April 27

Cabarrus County Puzzle Run

Concord - May 4

Camp Royall Classic Golf Tournament

Chapel Hill - May 6

Crystal Coast Run/Walk for Autism

Beaufort - TBA

Catwalk to Camp

Charlotte - TBA

For more information, please contact
Heather Hargrave at 919-865-5057 or
hhargrave@autismsociety-nc.org

2019 Annual Conference

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