

TEE UP for CHILDREN with AUTISM

PRESENTED BY LONG AUTO GROUP



LONG CADILLAC
SOUTHBOROUGH



LONG SUBARU
WEBSTER, MA

**Highfields Golf and
Country Club
42 Magill Rd.
Grafton MA**



**September 8, 2014
Shotgun Start
10:00AM
\$100 /Player**

Any player that raises \$500 or more prior to Sunday, August 31st at 5:00PM will be refunded their \$100 registration fee. Refunds will be available on Monday, September 8 between 9:00AM-9:45AM.

Register at <http://www.firstgiving.com/arccm/2014-Golf-a-thon>
Our Golf Committee is currently seeking volunteers.

Call Joe Siegel at 508-298-1607

2014 Doing Your Piece Awards

Each Spring as we mark Teacher Appreciation Week we ask families to nominate outstanding people in their children's lives, which include teachers but also since learning can take place outside the classroom, also includes people from other walks of life. I am pleased to share with you the recipients of this year's Doing Your Piece Awards.

Excellence in Education Early Childhood Michelle Merrill

Michelle Merrill was my son's ABA teacher last year at the Early Childhood Center. Michelle is one of those people you meet once in your lifetime. She loves her job and loves the children she works with. Matthew adored her!! And so did I. She is an amazing teacher and person with tremendous dedication to what she does. I thank God for blessing us with having her in our lives.

Christina Batsarisakis

Excellence in Education Award Anita Covey

It is my pleasure to recognize Anita Covey, Davis Hill Special Education Aide for the annual Autism Resource Center's Excellence in Education Award. Anita came into our lives at a point when we really needed her most. Second grade opened our eyes to the increasing complexity of the school work and emerging social challenges Naomi would face. Anita was working as a kindergarten aide and switched mid-year to jump in and provide educational and emotional support to our daughter with autism.

Anita's own life experience includes having an older son on the autism spectrum, and Anita brings to her role both understanding and genuine empathy. As another professional at the school recently said, "Anita really 'gets Naomi'". This is our second and final year with Anita. We have been so pleased to have her in our lives for the past 1 ½ years and will be forever grateful for her care.

Jennifer & Ted Kremer

Excellence in Education Award Kimberly Orell

It is my pleasure to recognize Kimberly Orell as an Excellence in Education Award tonight. Mrs. Orell has proved to be a very valuable and vital part of my children's education. She is a fourth grade teacher at the Raymond E. Shaw School, to two of my three boys, both of which are on the autism spectrum. At the end of second grade, my boys were taken off their IEP's, much to my dismay. I was told that they would be fine and that they would be watched when they transitioned into fourth grade, which is also a change in schools. When a gap in the system caused my boys to fall through the cracks, Mrs Orell was the one to step up and help me get the services my son Jacob needed. She researched his history, which was no easy task, and was providing accommodations to Jacob BEFORE he was placed back on an IEP. Most of all, when I was in his IEP meeting once again hearing "He tested very well Mrs. Smith", it was Mrs Orell who spoke up and told the rest of the team that although he tests well that was NOT what she saw on a daily basis in class and pushed to get the IEP in place. She also took a comment made

in Jacob's meeting, about his brother Zachary and his history, to proactively have the team look at his history and add support, without me asking for it. My boys are back on the right path and I am so grateful that Mrs. Orell has become part of their lives.

Amy Smith

Excellence in Education Award Middle School Angela Tarquinio

It is my sincere privilege to recognize Mrs. Angela Tarquinio for the Doing Your Piece Awards. Mrs. Tarquinio has been my daughter's one to one aide for the past several years. She has "done her piece and then some". When my daughter started school she was nonverbal and used an augmentative communication device. Mrs Tarquinio was trained to support this device and developed endless boards on her own time. She gave my daughter a voice at school. This relationship has continued to this day. Now my daughter is verbal, but Mrs. Tarquinio continues to be her voice in middle school. The middle school environment is tough for any adolescent, but especially for one on the spectrum. It is so reassuring to know that Mrs. Tarquinio uses her voice to prevent bullying and to encourage socialization with my daughter and her peers. She continues to advocate for the well-being of my daughter and all special needs students.

Mrs. Tarquinio goes to work every day, ready to face the challenges that autism can bring on a moment's notice. It is a pleasure to

2014 Doing Your Piece Awards

share our story and see her recognized for her outstanding work.

Lisa Wondolowski

Excellence in Education Award Catherine Carey

It is my privilege to recognize Mrs Catherine Carey, the transition classroom teacher at Chocksett Middle School, for her efforts on behalf of my daughter Emily.

I was concerned when Emily was transitioning to a new school in a new town. Would she make friends? Would she have the necessary supports in the classroom that she needed. Would they work with Emily on how to interact appropriately with her peers and others? Would she be successful?

It has been two years since Emily entered into the Transition Program at Chocksett Middle School and I can say Yes Emily has made (and lost) friends. She continues to struggle with friendships, but Mrs Carey guides her along the way. And yes, supports in the classroom are always there when she needs them. Mrs Carey and Emily's team of providers continue to work with Emily on interacting with others, on perspectives and much more. Mrs. Carey continues to help Emily feel like she belongs and encourages her to make the right choices (not always an easy task). She supports Emily if she is having a bad day and just needs to talk about the issue bothering her so she can move on with her day. But then can be firm when she needs to be and provides consistency that is so important to our children. Mrs. Carey and the team of professionals working along side her have made Emily's transition into a new school

successful. Mrs. Carey makes a difference in the lives of many students every day. I would like to acknowledge Mrs. Carey and say on behalf of myself and all the students whose lives you touch, Thank you for your caring teaching and support you give our children every day.

Kathy Taylor

Excellence in Education Award Social Skills Provider Judy Scola Denault

I am pleased to be able to recognize Judy Scola Denault, owner of InSync Communication Center in Sterling for her outstanding work with my daughter, Annabelle.

Annabelle has been attending social skills classes at InSync for three years. Judy's positive attitude comes across in all she does. She believes in our kids, and they can feel it. She is patient, tough when she needs to be, and always encouraging. She helps parents and students alike. At InSync she has created a place that Annabelle calls the "best place in the world". A place where we can all feel safe and happy.

Deborah Campagna

Outstanding Autism Support Professional Kathy O'Neill

Kathy O'Neill is the cheerful, responsive and knowledgeable Autism Information Specialist at the Autism Resource Center of Central Massachusetts (ARCCM). Kathy is usually the first person from the Center families connect with in hopes of putting the pieces together for their child. Her friendly nature reassures families, and they soon discover that they are not

alone in their journey, but are in quite caring and capable hands.

Kathy lends an attentive ear and her friendly nature shepherds families through the myriad of paperwork and application processes for many services. She assists families with their educational concerns as well as helps navigate them through the ever changing insurance parameters. Kathy also provides appropriate resource recommendations for the child as well as supports for all family members.

Kathy's commitment and passion to help support children on the spectrum and their families is evident every time she picks up the phone. Not only is she doing her piece, but she is laying the groundwork as a courageous, resilient mom whose sage words of wisdom have made other parents more compassionate caregivers and better advocates for their own children. Kathy is the quintessential role model for other families to do their piece as well.

Kelly Hurley

Outstanding Friends Daisy & Deliah Perez

I am pleased to be able to recognize two people, a Mother- Daughter combo who provide a team effort to support my family. I am a mother to six wonderful children with a wide range of ages starting at age nineteen and twins who are four years old and a wide range of challenges. Daily and Deliah are family through inheritance. We are the luckiest family in the world

2014 Doing Your Piece Awards

to have them in our lives. I never played or won the lottery but I know what it feels like to hit it big because we did with this family. We are the luckiest. They have not only been there for my son who is autistic and bipolar, but for ALL my children and family. I have no words except they are amazing and everyone needs a daisy and a Deliah in their lives, Thank You So Much!

Crystal Guzman & Family

**Outstanding Mother &
Grandmother
Marcia Feingold**

My mum has been there
Since Jagger's day of birth
Through good days and bad
To witness his firsts

When they started to slow
Her faith didn't stop
Whether stimming or tantrums
Toe-walking and spinning like a top

She was the first one I called
On that fateful day
When Dr Castro told us
Jagger had the Big A

Together, we struggled to teach him
To love, laugh, learn and play
She stood by my side
While his dad walked away

She's been here for us
Through life's downs and ups
When life would crumble
She filled with love our cups

With love, happiness and hope
She taught us again, to stand
To love, dream and cope
Through strains and demand

So mum thanks for being
The person you are
Because of your faith in Jagger
There is hope he'll go far

Now being faced
With challenges of your own
Please know we are here
That you are not alone

You have made us strong
And we'll be by your side
No matter what the days bring
This wave too, shall we ride!

Stacey Levine-Lavelly

Honorable Mentions

Debbie Sloane

Abby Carlson

Ana Dufault

FAMILY FUN & FITNESS

Did you know that a recent study done by Dr Croen at Kaiser Permanente's Autism Research Center on the health of adults on the autism spectrum revealed that adults with ASD were 90% more likely to have received treatment for sleep disorders, such as sleep apnea, which is a common side effect of being overweight. Also they are 70% more likely to be overweight; 50% more likely to have diabetes; 42% more likely to have high blood pressure; 24% more likely to have gastro-intestinal troubles. Excess weight is a contributing factor to the aforementioned health challenges. The sedentary life style of youth in general today predisposes them to obesity, for kids on the spectrum this is compounded by their difficulty in participating in sports

Summer is a time to be outdoors and active. Our Family Fun and Fitness Group for teens and young adults is extending an invitation to families of all ages to join them this summer on the road to better health. We will be walking some weeks and trying out other activities on other weeks. The group meets on Mondays from 6-7—7:30 PM. We'll walk at various locations in Central Massachusetts if the weather is good. If it's raining we'll meet at St. Vincent Hospital's Atrium to walk there. Locations and activities are listed in the calendar. Families may join us to walk at no cost.

Join us this summer for either a Monday Mile or a Family Fun Activity in the Community. Establish a lifetime of good health habits for your child to avoid some of the chronic health problems that we currently see in adults on the spectrum.

Donations and Memorial Gifts

UNITED WAY DONATIONS

Hanover Insurance

*Brian Kelly
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To designate the Autism Resource Center as the recipient of your United Way Donation use the name Autism Resource Center and the code UN 00365

DONATIONS

Jayne & Stuart Fisher

Bonnie Wallace

Matthew Camfield

Brandi Thomforde

GREATER WORCESTER GIVES DAY

DONATIONS

*Brian Kovalski
Karen Kowalik
Jen Kremer
Cathy Small
Eric & Maleah Gustafson
Kathy Despotopulos
Alison Bromberg
Anonymous*

CARS FOR AUTISM

Time to get rid of an unwanted vehicle? You can donate a used car and support your Center.

A professionally licensed, bonded and insured towing company will pick-up your car donation and provide you with a vehicle donation receipt. We make donating a car more convenient than selling it and more rewarding than trading it in. Feel great knowing that your car donation can make a difference!

Car Donations are accepted at

<http://www.donateacar.com/> or call 800-240-0160 to speak to a representative

of Car Program LLC directly.

MEMORIALS

In Remembrance of Francis M St. Hilaire

*Sandra St Hilaire
Jody St Hilaire
Steven & Karen Cappellucci
Stony Brook Elementary School*

In Remembrance of John Mara

*Debra & Paul Marino
Janet Mara
Linda Mara
Charles & Karen Kaufman
Amy Amantangelo
Joanne M. Jacobs
Sara Rocha*

In Remembrance of Marie Bisceglia

*Dawn Battista
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph DiVerdi*

In Remembrance of Dolores M. Rabbitt

Patricia Buckley

In Remembrance of Richard Burdin

Charlotte Foss

Our condolences to the families who've lost loved ones. The gifts made in their memory will be used with care and concern to benefit the families we serve.

Disclosure and Liberation ~ Michael Comeau

Michael Comeau, a twenty one year old man with Autism Spectrum Disorder and son of Family Advisory Board member Amy Comeau, may be a familiar face to many of you. Mike and his family first became involved with the Autism Resource Center when Mike was diagnosed at age 12 with Asperger Syndrome. He volunteered for many summers at camp, and has been a volunteer each year at the Walk in April. Mike has is a student at Quinsigamond Community College. He has worked for a number of years as a server at an assisted living facility and has recently been hired at Great Wolf Lodge. He shares his experience about disclosing his disability .

“ The day I disclosed to my new boss that I had a disability. It felt like a huge weight was lifted off my shoulders. Allow me to clarify. For those of us who don't have an immediately obvious disability, it is advantageous to not disclose to employers, because, while it is illegal to fire someone for a disability, some employers find creative ways around this. Most of the time it is because they just don't have the patience to deal with a disability.

Because of this, I am always nervous disclosing. Always. There is never a situation where I like doing it. It is a massive burden, and it involves a LOT of judgment. It can quite literally be the difference between having a job and being unemployed.

So it is a huge deal. I don't think a lot of people know just how big of a deal it is. Now, I was going to wait until a few

months in, have everyone get to know me, etc. But today we were starting to get into menu memorization and the way things were going, I knew I had to mention something. I waited until the end, and got my boss and my boss under him to talk with me. I simply told them that I have a learning disability and that because of that, I need a bit longer to memorize the menu than most people, and that I may learn things more slowly than other employees.

I have to say that this particular disclosure was the smoothest and most liberating disclosure I have ever had. With previous employers, they almost seemed annoyed to have been bothered with such a trivial thing. The attitude was mostly "Why are you telling me this? I don't see how this matters at all." Eventually, at Sunrise, I built up an understanding with my boss, but it was a painful and very long process.

This time was significantly different. The moment I brought it up, I had instant understanding. My boss actually asked me if there was anything he could do to help me learn better, to make things easier for me. I have to say I wasn't entirely surprised, because the general feel of Great Wolf is understanding and acceptance. But this was an entirely new experience for me. To just mention it and not to have to fight to build an understanding, to just have it from the start is so amazing I just can't even believe it was so easy.

I expressed my concerns about disclosure, and told him that I am always nervous because of the above mentioned issues, and he said to me that "We aren't those type of people." I was so relieved to hear that. And my supervisor was just as understanding. When I started to explain about disclosure to other employees, they already both knew it wasn't their place. I seriously don't have the words to describe how liberating this was.

I have to think that part of the reason for the easy disclosure was because of awareness. I am so thankful for the great work that charities and organizations do every day to help spread awareness. To get individuals with disabilities into jobs is crucial. “

Data from the National Longitudinal Transition Study 2, a 10-year study of youth who received special education services, suggests that young adults with autism spectrum disorders are less likely to work than most other disability groups. The final data collection point was completed in 2009 when participants were age 23-26:

- **32.5%** of young adults with autism spectrum disorders currently worked for pay versus an average of **59.0%** for all respondents. Only one disability group had a lower rate of employment participation.
- **47.7%** of youth with autism spectrum disorders worked for pay in the past two years versus an average of **78.4%** for all participants.
- **29.0%** of young adults with autism spectrum disorders were looking for work if they were unemployed compared to **47.7%** for all participants.

Register for Events @ www.autismresourcecentral.org or call 508-298-1610 Fees for Events are as stated

JUNE



June 2, 2014

Family Fun & Fitness Walk
Quinsigamond State 6 PM

June 4, 2014

**Support Group for Parents of More
Able Children on the Spectrum
Parent Night Out**
99 Restaurant
West Boylston St, Worcester 7 PM

June 9, 2014

Parents and Tots
4:30-5:30 PM
Family Fun & Fitness Walk
Quinsigamond State Park 6PM

June 11, 2014

Classic Autism Support Group 7 PM

June 16– 20 2014

**Family Fun Days At Camp
Camp Laurelwood**
45 Buteau Rd. Spencer MA
1-8 PM daily

June 23, 2014

Family Fun & Fitness Walk
Quinsigamond State Park 6 PM

June 25, 2014

Support Group for Parents of Teens
Teen Socialization Group Meets
concurrently 7-9 PM

June 27, 2014

Friends & Family Movie
Cinema World
John Fitch Highway
Fitchburg MA 10 AM \$2/pp
Followed by Picnic at Coolidge Park

Dad's Night Out

at The Worcester Brave Hearts
4:30 PM

June 30, 2014

Family Fun & Fitness Walk
Quinsigamond State Park 6 PM

JULY



July 4, 2014

CENTER CLOSED

July 7, 2014

Family Fun & Fitness Walk
Nashua River Rail Trail Ayer MA
6PM

July 11, 2014

Friends & Family Movie
West Boylston Cinema
Rt 12 West Boylston 10 AM \$2/pp
Followed by Picnic at Reservoir

July 13, 2014

**Autism Awareness Day
at Worcester Brave Hearts**
Fitton Field, Holy Cross 2 PM

July 14, 2014

Family Fun & Fitness Swim
Philip Weihn Pool
Route 110, Clinton Ma 6 PM

July 20, 2014

**Family Fun Day
Breezy Picnic Grounds**
520 Northwest Main St
Douglas MA 10—5PM
\$5.00/pp (Rain Date August 10)

July 21, 2014

Family Fun & Fitness Walk
Richard Larkin Recreation Area 942
Church St Ext. Northbridge MA 6PM

July 25, 2014

Friends & Family Movie
Cinema World
John Fitch Highway
Fitchburg MA 10 AM \$2/pp
Followed by Picnic at Coolidge Park

July 28, 2104

Family Fun & Fitness Swim
Eugene Casey Swimming Pool
49 Prospect St Milford MA 6 PM



AUGUST

August 4, 2014

Family Fun & Fitness Walk
Cogshall Park
Electric Avenue Fitchburg Ma 6PM

August 8, 2014

Family Fun at Dunn State Park
289 Pearl St Gardner MA
10 AM– 2 PM

August 11, 2014

Family Fun & Fitness Walk
Blackstone Rail Trail Millbury 6PM

August 15, 2014

Friends & Family Movie
West Boylston Cinema
Rt 12 West Boylston 10 AM \$2/pp
Followed by Picnic at Reservoir

August 18-22, 2014

Family Fun Days at Camp
Camp Virginia, 96 Hudson Road
Bolton Ma 9 AM –4 PM

August 25, 2014

Family Fun and Fitness Picnic
Doyle Park



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West Boylston MA**

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Email: autism@HMEA.org

www.autismresourcecentral.org

Sue Loring RN - Director

Cid DeLeo - Assistant to Director

Kris Gregoire , Autism Waiver Supervisor

**Kathy Taylor, David Iborra - Autism Waiver Support
Brokers**

Kathy O'Neill - Autism Information Specialist

Joe Siegel—Event & Development Coordinator

**Monday, Wednesday & Thursday 9 AM– 9 PM
Tuesday 9AM –5 PM Friday 9 AM–3 PM**

Summer Hours M-Th 9AM- 5PM Fri 9AM -3PM

We are the Center of the autism community



The Resource CONNECTION is a quarterly publication of The Autism Resource Center of Central Massachusetts

The Autism Resource Center does not endorse any treatments, programs or products. Articles, announcements and resources are provided for information purposes only.

Run the New Balance Falmouth Road Race

As you may have seen on our website and through Facebook posts, the Center has been chosen again as a “Number for Non-Profits” charity for the 2014 New Balance Falmouth Road Race.

The New Balance Falmouth Road Race is a 7 mile road race that starts in Woods Hole and finishes in Falmouth Heights on the second Sunday of August. There are approximately 12,000 runners that run this race annually from elite runners to weekend warriors. If you have never run this race before, I urge you to consider it! The fundraising minimum is \$1,250 which includes a dri-fit shirt, a race singlet and your registration fee. Numbers are going fast !

The race is on Sunday, August 17, 2014. You must be registered by August 10th. If you are interested in running, please contact Joe Siegel at 508-641-1295 or jsiegel@hmea.org All numbers will be given on a first come-first serve basis.

Experience the thrill of running in the New Balance Road Race while giving 2700 people a chance to demonstrate what they can accomplish throughout the year.

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