MEET DR. MARY MCDONALD • A JOURNEY TO THE FINISHLINE WITH AUTISM

COMMUNICATING THE NEWS & NEEDS OF EDEN II PROGRAMS | FALL/WINTER 2016

MURAL DEDICATION
UNVEILED AT THE
JAMES P. MOLINARO
CENTER FOR AUTISM
Dear Friends:

I am so pleased to share our Fall/Winter issue of Connections!

It’s an exciting time at Eden II as we continue our 40th anniversary year. In this issue, we highlight three of our recent guests, Dr. Pankaj Patel, Joe Kovac, and Congressman Dan Donovan. They joined us as “Principal for the Day” at our new autism center at Beach Street. We are grateful for their continued support of Eden II.

I would also like to welcome our new board member, Deepak Alur, and congratulate parent board member, Ralph Scamardella, as he assumes the role of board chairperson.

We continue to highlight staff members in our “Meet the Staff” section. This issue highlights our longtime staffer and executive team member, Dr. Mary McDonald. Mary was the first director of our Long Island program, the Genesis School. Without her, it probably would not have happened!

November 19th is a busy day for Eden II that we hope you can support. On Staten Island, we will celebrate our 40th Anniversary Gala. On Long Island, we will hold our Blazing Trails 4-Mile Run/Walk for Autism. For more information on these or any other events, visit eden2.org or call 718-816–1422 ext. 1030.

On behalf of our staff, thank you for your continued support!

Joanne Gerenser, Ph.D., CCC-SLP
Executive Director
Eden II School for Autistic Children, Inc.
(DBA Eden II Programs)
Financial Information for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2015

Statement of Activity

Operating Revenue & Support

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Revenue Source</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Programs &amp; Public Support Services</td>
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<td>97%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grants and Contract Services</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Revenue</td>
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<td><strong>Total Operating Revenue</strong></td>
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Expenses

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<tr>
<td>Program Services</td>
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<tr>
<td>Educational Services</td>
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<td>Residential Services</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adult Day Habilitation Services</td>
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<td>Family Support Services</td>
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<td>Fundraising</td>
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Net Assets

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<td>Net Assets as of June 30, 2016</td>
<td>8,681,004</td>
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Balance Sheet

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<tr>
<td>Cash</td>
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<td>Program Services Revenue</td>
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<td>Grants and Contract Services</td>
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<td>Property and Equipment</td>
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<td>Other Assets</td>
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<td><strong>Total Assets</strong></td>
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<table>
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<th>Liabilities &amp; Net Assets Details</th>
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<td>Temporarily Restricted Net Assets</td>
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<td><strong>Total Liabilities &amp; Net Assets</strong></td>
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</table>

Thank You

Thank you to all our donors for their tremendous generosity. Their donations are so essential to our programs and we greatly appreciate their contributions.

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS: BDO USA, LLP

TO RECEIVE THE COMPLETE EDEN II SCHOOL FOR AUTISTIC CHILDREN, INC. AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS, PLEASE SEND YOUR REQUEST VIA EMAIL TO: INFO@EDEN2.ORG, OR VISIT GUIDESTAR.ORG.
HOW DID YOU COME TO WORK IN THE FIELD OF AUTISM?
As an undergraduate student in Psychology at Queens College, I first began in the field as a research assistant in a research lab that was studying vocal and non-vocal imitation in infants and toddlers with special needs, as well as typically developing children. I became interested in autism through my coursework and the research that I was involved in at that time. I began working at Quality Services for the Autism Community (QSAC) and then applied to a doctoral program in behavior analysis. A few years later I was hired as the Director of Eden II’s Genesis School. It was a dream of mine to run a school for students with autism and I was honored to have the opportunity to create Genesis from the ground up with the families and staff.

WHAT MAKES GENESIS & THE OUTREACH AUTISM CENTER UNIQUE? WHAT SETS IT APART?
When the Genesis School first opened in 1995, it was because there really was a need for a school that specialized in serving students with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) on Long Island that used research-based interventions rooted in applied behavior analysis. Throughout the past 21 years that need has continued. We unfortunately have to turn away students every year as we only currently serve 30 students in the program. It is because of this that we created the Outreach Autism Center on Long Island. The center provides onsite evaluations, behavior analytic assessments and services as well as home-based services. Consultation is provided to students in local school districts or adult programs, or individuals who are self-directed. Workshops, conferences and webinars are provided throughout the year to educate the community. I think what sets Genesis apart is the adherence to the science in the interventions used, and the dedication and caring of the staff. Our staff are our greatest resource. They make the difference everyday in the lives of the individuals we serve.

WHERE DO YOU SEE AUTISM AND EDEN II IN 10 YEARS?
As the incidence of autism, unfortunately, continues to increase, my hope is to see the field have a better understanding of the disability, in order to create more comprehensive programs and diverse services to address issues across the lifespan. I hope to see an increase in awareness and access to appropriate, quality, behavior analytic educational and adult service programs. As the population ages, there will continue to be a tremendous need for programs and services for those aging with autism. I hope to see improvement in options and outcomes for adults seeking meaningful employment, housing and residential opportunities, as well as other services to help them live their lives with dignity,

Meet the Staff:
Mary McDonald, Ph.D., BCBA-D, LBA

Dr. Mary McDonald is the Interim Associate Executive Director for Long Island Programs and Chairperson of Eden II’s Research Review Committee. Additionally, she is an Associate Professor in the Special Education Program at Hofstra University where she directs and teaches a course sequence in applied behavior analysis (ABA). She has nearly 25 years experience directing programs for students with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) utilizing the principles of ABA. She received her Ph.D. in Learning Processes from the Graduate Center, City University of New York, and is a Board Certified Behavior Analyst–Doctoral level and a licensed behavior analyst. Dr. McDonald currently serves on the Board of the New York State Council for Exceptional Children and a number of advisory boards.
purpose, and happiness. I see Eden II’s programs growing over the next 10 years in order to be able to provide services to more people with autism. In particular, I expect to see growth in our school program, our residential program and our adult dayhab program.

HOW HAVE YOU SEEN EDEN II DEVELOP AND GROW SINCE YOU BEGAN WORKING HERE?
I first began working at Eden II in 1995 and I did so because Eden II was committed to science-based intervention for students with autism. I am now in my 21st year here at Eden II and that commitment is still going strong. What has changed over the years is that the program has grown and now serves even more individuals with autism while maintaining a commitment to quality and to the families we serve. At Genesis, we began over 20 years ago as a small school with two classrooms, and have developed adult and residential programs, an outreach autism center, and family support services. It is an honor to be a part of the growth of the program and to work with such a high caliber of staff. I applaud the families and the individuals we serve for their tireless commitment and hard work.

WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR PROUDEST MOMENT WORKING AT THE GENESIS SCHOOL?
Oh, to chose only one would seem impossible, but in general all of my proudest moments have been the accomplishments of our students. The student who was expected to need residential services due to challenging behavior and came to us and made so much progress he was able to continue living at home. The student who came to us because he could not be served in another program, and is now one of our most successful adults, working in the community. The student who we supported in the local school district who went to college. I couldn’t be prouder of our participants, they work harder than anyone I know. They all have their own successes, and I am proud to say that Genesis played a role in it.

AS SOMEONE WITH YEARS OF EXPERIENCE IN THE FIELD, IS THERE ANY ADVICE YOU CAN OFFER TO THOSE INTERESTED IN WORKING WITH INDIVIDUALS WITH AUTISM?
I think that both education and hands-on experience are important for anyone who is interested in working with students with ASD. Pursuing a degree in special education and becoming a Board Certified Behavior Analyst is one path that a student may choose. New York State now has a licensure in behavior analysis as well, so that is something that students may want to pursue. Hands-on experience is invaluable as well - the more and more diverse experience that someone has will only make him/her a better clinician.

Visit eden2.org/2016 to make your gift to support Eden II Programs, including the Genesis School, Little Miracles Preschool, family services, respite, day hab, and IRAs!

For more information, please contact Stefanie Racano, Associate Director of Development at sracano@eden2.org or call 718-816-1422 x1030.
THE WORLD IS COMPLICATED
and planning ahead with your finances is not always so straightforward! Planned giving to charitable organizations can seem complicated. It usually involves an attorney and legal documents. There is an easy way to make a planned gift now that doesn’t require an attorney or too much pain.

Most of us have an IRA, 401K, or 403B plan through our current or former employers. The qualified employee benefit plans accumulate tax free during your lifetime. At death, they are subject to tax. Any taxable beneficiary who receives a distribution from your retirement plan (as a result of the death of the owner) must pay income tax on the entire amount received. However, by naming your favorite charity as a beneficiary, it becomes tax exempt for them as they are not subject to income tax.

Would you consider naming Eden II as a beneficiary? It doesn’t have to be the whole plan! You can designate a percentage; even 10% can be a helpful planned gift for us as we plan for Eden II’s future with sustainable sources of funding. Of course, if your priorities change you can easily change the beneficiary designation at any time.

Contact your 401K or 403B plan (e.g. Fidelity Investments) and they will have you fill out a simple form and have you write your fractional beneficiary details with the exact percentage. We ask that you contact us so that you can be properly recognized and we can make a note in our files.

Please consider helping children and adults with autism on Staten Island and Long Island. You can name Eden II Programs as a fractional beneficiary on your plan. The tax ID is 13-2872916. As we celebrate our 40th anniversary this year, we plan ahead to the next 40 and beyond with your help!

For more information, call the Development Office at 718-816-1422 x1029 or email info@eden2.org.
ROBYN SCHNEIDER'S identical twin toddlers, Alex and Jamie, were happy, energetic and playful little boys. Until one day they weren't. The changes in her boys, seemingly subtle at first, happened over several months. Playfulness was replaced with inexplicable meltdowns and repetitive behaviors. The boys stopped responding when others tried to engage with them, and Alex and Jamie were largely silent. The genuine happiness Alex and Jamie had shown early on was traded for days filled with challenges, anxieties and compulsive behaviors. The life-changing diagnosis -- “language delay with autistic characteristics” -- came when the boys were 21 months old.

As Robyn came to realize there was no cure for Alex and Jamie's condition, her focus shifted to finding what made them happy. Because the boys were, and remain, nonverbal, they couldn't tell her what they liked, but much could be discerned from their reactions to activities. While some activities were more successful than others, the boys’ love of exercise and its ability to help calm them became apparent.

Alex and Jamie began running three times a week and eventually began participating in races. Given the boys’ severe autism, finding coaches who could intuitively understand and work with them was difficult. And even though the boys are identical twins, they are unique in their approach to running, necessitating their own unique coaches.

"Alex is in another place when he runs; he looks absolutely euphoric,” Robyn says. “He’s in a state of Zen; a total state of focus that incorporates a total togetherness of body and mind. And he is incredibly fast, almost always winning in his age group in races”.

Jamie, on the other hand, is more of a social runner. “He likes to run with his ipod, stop at aid stations and is especially intrigued by swishing blond ponytails,” says Robyn, now one of Jamie’s running guides. “Jamie has a ‘forever pace’ and does not care about his time.”

Schneider and her husband both began running because of the boys. Allan, was the first to lace up. He suffers from multiple sclerosis but discovered that running helped him feel better physically; it also gave him and Jamie their version of father-son time.

Robyn began running at Allan’s insistence while she was battling breast cancer. She had never taken time to care for herself, but she found a joy and freedom in running. As she progressed in both her recovery and her running abilities, she was able to share running and racing with her husband and sons, like a “normal” family.

Now 26 years old, Alex and Jamie have accomplished more than many people without disabilities. Collectively they have run in almost 350 races; including 23 marathons. They have raced several New York City Marathons and Boston Marathons, and were among those running in Boston the year of the bombing in 2013. This past May, Alex ran a personal-best marathon, 3:09:04, and has two Ultra marathons (50K) under his belt. As much as running brings the boys, their parents and friends joy, it also brings challenges. The proof of success, though, is in their smiling finish-line photos and walls full of medals.

In addition to caring for her sons, running and advocating on behalf of those with autism, Robyn has written a memoir, “Silent Running: Our Family’s Journey to the Finish Line with Autism.”

Robyn shares, “Even though my sons will never be able to read my book or understand the significance of it, my wish was to leave a legacy for them,” she says. “What I didn’t realize was how much my story would resonate and inspire so many people all over the world.”

You can follow Alex and Jamie’s journey at autismrunners.com, and Robyn Schneider’s memoir is available on Amazon.
Eden II proudly hosts a number of prominent community members throughout the year as “Principals for the Day.” These visits serve as an opportunity for community leaders to spend time with our participants as they perform their daily activities. This allows them to see first-hand the programs and services Eden II provides. Our most recent visitors were Congressman Dan Donovan, Dr. Pankaj Patel and Mr. Joseph Kovac.

CONGRESSMAN DANIEL “DAN” M. DONOVAN, JR. represents Staten Island and parts of South Brooklyn in the 11th Congressional District of New York in the U.S. House of Representatives. Dan was elected on May 5, 2015 during a special election and sworn in on May 12, 2015. Dan grew up on Staten Island, the only son of two working class parents. True to his modest upbringing, he worked his way through school. He earned his Bachelor’s degree in criminal justice from St. John’s University and his J.D. from Fordham University School of Law as an evening student.

Dan has dedicated his life to serving the people of New York. He began his career as a prosecutor under legendary Manhattan District Attorney Robert M. Morgenthau. After leaving the DA’s office, Dan began serving his native Staten Island as Chief of Staff to former Borough President Guy Molinari, then as Deputy Borough President to former Borough President James Molinaro. In 2003, Dan was elected Richmond County District Attorney, beginning 12 years of service in that office. During his tenure, he earned the Diversity Champion Award from the New York City Bar Association and was elected president of the New York State District Attorney’s Association.

Congressman Dan Donovan said of his recent tour, “I had such an incredible time with the Eden II students during my visit; and the facility’s staff is providing an invaluable service. I’m proud to represent a team so dedicated to improving the lives and experiences of our special needs population. I look forward to returning again soon.”

Dr. Pankaj Patel is board certified in psychiatry, and a member of the American Psychiatric Association, the American Medical Association, the Medical Society of the State of New York and the Richmond County Medical society. He was awarded the Nancy C.A. Roeske M.D. award by the American Psychiatric Association in May 2008 for outstanding and sustained contribution to medical student education while at New York Medical College.

Currently, Dr. Patel is the Chairman of Psychiatry at Richmond University Medical Center. He is an Assistant Professor of Psychiatry of New York Medical College, Chairman of the Credentials Committee, and a member of the Board of Trustees Quality Subcommittee, the Continuing Medical Education and Graduated Medical Education Committees.

Dr. Patel shared, “I was invited to be the Principal for the day at Eden II’s School in Stapleton. When I arrived at the school, I was greeted warmly by the leadership group who gave me a tour of the facility and told me what they do. I was escorted by one of the senior students to all the classrooms. I found all the students were actively engaged in various learning activities. The teachers were very caring; I was amazed with the energy and atmosphere of learning and teaching which was evident throughout the school. It is an excellent program for all the children who otherwise would not have a place to go.”

Joseph A. Kovac has worked for the City of New York for over 20 years in various managerial and compliance capacities. Presently, Joe is the Director of Discretionary Contract Review & Compliance and oversees over $53 million in City Council Discretionary funding overseeing more than 1,000 not for profits in New York City. Joe has three beautiful daughters; Milla, Olivia, and Emily, and lives in the New Dorp section of Staten Island.

Mr. Kovac shared, “I was honored to be selected as Principal for the Day at Eden II’s new school. Meghan and Billy were fantastic on taking me for a tour and explaining what they did during their day. I appreciate their time and sincerity. I commend Joanne for all of her hard work and passion to the families that are a part of Eden II. I would like to also give a special thank you to Erika Hellstrom, who I have known for almost 20 years, for the amazing person she is, and undying commitment she has for all of the participants of Eden II.”

Eden II’s Executive Director, Dr. Joanne Gerenser, stated, “We’re thrilled to have so many wonderful members of the community visit our new facility, and see all it has to offer. It shows tremendous commitment to education and dedication to the community.”
Meet the Board:
Deepak Alur, MBA

Deepak Alur is a community member of the Eden II Board of Trustees. He graduated from T.A. Pai Management Institute (Manipal, India) with an MBA in Finance and Marketing. He began his career in financial services with Citibank India where he quickly held the position as Head of Sales for key markets in western regions of India. With exceptional service delivery and an unwavering fervor, Deepak has received some of the most esteemed industry awards including the President’s Club Award and the Premier Producer Award. While distribution planning is included in one of Deepak’s many proficiencies, his true passion lies in providing clients with financial independence through intricate planning and comprehensive decision making. Deepak supports creative disciplines influenced by the arts of India, and contributes to many charities. Joanne Gerenser shares, “We are grateful for Deepak’s involvement with Eden II Programs and his support of the autism community.”

Eden II Receives Donation from TAO Cares

EDEN II BOARD CHAIR, Ralph Scamardella, recently presented Dr. Joanne Gerenser with an $11,530 check to support Eden II Programs. The proceeds, benefitting the agency came from a TAO Cares promotion held during the month of April in recognition of Autism Awareness Month. Dr. Gerenser shares “This is a wonderful contribution to Eden II. We are honored to have the support of TAO Group, and this donation will truly benefit individuals with autism.” During the month, TAO Group’s restaurant brands, including TAO and LAVO, raised the money through sales of special “blue” food and drink items. TAO Chief Operating Officer and newly installed Eden II & Genesis Foundation board member, Bill Bonbrest, shared his delight in helping the agency, saying “TAO Cares is always looking for a way to give back to the communities that touch us. It is very inspiring to see the community, educators, and parents all come together - like a family - to support the Eden II participants throughout their lives, and to give them a skillset to be independent. Eden II is a shining example of that quality of love, commitment and the community coming together.”

Eden II Programs

40th Anniversary Gala

Saturday, November 19, 2016
Hilton Garden Inn of Staten Island

HONORING

Ambery Leadership Award
The Past Chairs of the Board of Trustees
Joseph Casucci, In Memoriam
Kathy Potterfield
Lucy Buttermark
Hon. David Trager, In Memoriam
Dr. Frederick Weinbaum
Thomas Scarangello
Richard Grado
Lenore Puleo
Shanx Ravisankar

McGowan & Potterfield Memorial Award
Zack Benasillo

Little Miracles Achievement Award
Jake & Matthew Vieira

2016 Participant of the Year Award
Celeste Chou

100% of the event proceeds will go to Eden II Programs to support people with autism throughout their lives to achieve their full potential through service, science and passion.

Online pre-bidding on auction items is available at: www.501auctions.com/40gala

For more information on sponsorship opportunities or to get involved, email gala@eden2.org or visit www.eden2.org/gala.

Eden II & Genesis Foundation Tax ID: 06-1277426
Then...

JOHNNY was diagnosed with autism at 2 1/2 years old. When he was younger, Johnny’s mom said he would have a hard time changing his clothing, going from short sleeves to long sleeves or wearing a winter jacket. He has come a long way since he began Genesis at 9 years old.

& Now

JOHNNY currently attends Genesis DayHab program and lives with three other participants in a group residence. He is very happy living with his housemates that he has known since he was 10. He enjoys swimming, basketball, dancing with his roommates, and is a master at Nintendo games!