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MEET THE STAFF: DR. IRENE CAVANAGH • BOARD HIGHLIGHT: TERRY TARANGELO

COMMUNICATING THE NEWS & NEEDS OF EDEN II PROGRAMS | FALL/WINTER 2019

EDEN II & GENESIS FOUNDATION

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2019
HILTON GARDEN INN OF STATEN ISLAND

For sponsorship opportunities or to purchase tickets, email gala@Eden2.org or visit Eden2.org/gala.

EDEN II & GENESIS FOUNDATION TAX ID: 06-1277426
Dear Friends:

The fall and winter months can sometimes be quite challenging for individuals with autism and their families. There are a number of factors that play into this. First, we begin to switch out our wardrobes from our summer clothes to our fall and winter clothes. For the average person, this is often fun, being able to pull out some of your favorite clothes you have not seen or worn for months. Or even better, going out and buying some new clothes. Unfortunately, for many individuals with autism, this change is hard. They are now used to wearing their shorts and short sleeves. Sweaters and jeans can bring on some serious problems in the child who simply doesn't care that it is now 40 degrees outside.

A second challenge is the loss of daylight. Shorter days often mean modified routines, which can be hard for some children and adults to adjust to. But probably one of the biggest challenges is the loss of the pool time. Many families actually heat their pools and have them swimming right through Thanksgiving as it is something many of the kids truly enjoy.

The holiday season from Thanksgiving through New Years is something many people look forward to. This may not be the case for some families of children with autism. The moving around of furniture to accommodate the Christmas tree, the burning of Chanukah candles or simply the parties or family gatherings that seem constant during that time can be overwhelming.

My message to those of you who do not live with a person with autism is: don't judge. Don't judge that mom whose son is swimming outdoors on Thanksgiving day or that child who comes to school in shorts on a 35 degree day. Life is not always what it appears to be and for many families with autism, simply getting through the day can be challenging. This is a good time to reach out to your friends or neighbors who are raising a son or daughter with autism and see how they are or if they need anything. There may be concrete ways you can make things easier, and even if not, just knowing there are people who understand and care is so important.

Here’s wishing everyone a great fall and hopefully an easy winter. We look forward to seeing you at the Eden II & Genesis Foundation Gala at the Hilton Garden Inn of Staten Island on November 8th. For more information, or to purchase your tickets online, visit eden2.org/gala.

Please remember to stop by our new social enterprise “Encore! A Thrift Store for Everything Kids.” Encore! sells a variety of gently used and new kids clothing and other items for children (sizes newborn to 10 years of age) while providing training opportunities for Eden II participants. The shop is accepting donations of new or gently used children’s items. Encore is located at 400B Victory Blvd, Staten Island, NY 10301. Store hours are Monday-Friday, 10am-5:30pm. For more information or to make a donation, please contact encore@eden2.org.

Joanne Gerenser, Ph.D.
Executive Director

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THE MISSION OF EDEN II PROGRAMS IS TO SUPPORT PEOPLE WITH AUTISM THROUGHOUT THEIR LIVES TO ACHIEVE THEIR FULL POTENTIAL THROUGH SERVICE, SCIENCE, & PASSION.

THE COVER
LITTLE MIRACLES PRESCHOOL RIBBON CUTTING & GRAND OPENING CEREMONY
I have been with Eden II Programs since 2004 and is currently Associate Executive Director for NYC OPWDD Services at Eden II Programs. She began her career at the Guild for Exceptional Children, Brooklyn, NY in 1983 within the residential program. She holds a master’s degree from Long Island University in Special Education and a doctorate in Educational Leadership from Concordia University. Her experience includes being one of the founding members of the Help Center, a comprehensive school for individuals with developmental disabilities in Saudi Arabia. She also has experience as a hospital administrator as Director of QA at United Doctors Hospital and was responsible for the commissioning of a Residential Geriatrics Center. Dr. Cavanagh ended the last 4 years of her 18 year career overseas as lecturer in the Special Education Department at a Dar Al Hekma University. Dr. Cavanagh has been an adjunct lecturer at Brooklyn College since 2008, and presents locally and internationally on topics related to the field of autism and organizational behavior management.

HOW DID YOU COME TO WORK IN THE FIELD OF AUTISM?

I started out working in the field of psychology and developmental disabilities. Then, I moved overseas and worked in a center for individuals with intellectual disabilities (ID)/developmental disabilities (DD). My strong behavioral background meant that I was the logical person on the team to work with kids with autism. Some diagnosed and some not yet diagnosed - it was almost a magnetic pull. Upon returning to New York, I had a number of career paths to choose from, but I was drawn to Eden II by both its reputation and its commitment to applied behavior analysis (ABA).

WHAT ARE SOME MOMENTS THAT HAVE STUCK OUT TO YOU WHILE WORKING AT EDEN II?

In September, I celebrated my 15th anniversary at Eden II. When I think back over the past 15 years, I can recall a deep sense of commitment to the individuals we support and their families. I have been blessed by being able to work with teams of people who go out of their way to help our families. They do not think of their efforts to “go above and beyond” as anything special, but it is; and the impact to our families, especially in times of crisis, is commendable. About three months ago, a father became seriously ill very suddenly and the family needed staff and support. Our amazing team pulled together and we were able to get some staff and throughout the weekend, the team texted back and forth, checking in to make sure our participant was safe so the family could focus on the parent’s health. That type of team effort, and that level of commitment is what sticks out in my mind whenever I think about my work at Eden II.

WHERE DO YOU SEE AUTISM AND EDEN II IN 10 YEARS?

I see Eden II fortifying their place in the field of developmental disabilities through expansion of services - both existing and new services. Of course my focus is on the OPWDD services, which mean expansion of the residential department as well as the adult services departments in both Staten Island and Long Island. For many families who have children (and adults) on the spectrum, Eden II is their first choice for adult and residential services; particularly for those with challenging behaviors. We are currently working on expanding our services for those who are more independent as well. All the participants and their families expect services to meet their individual needs and the challenge of developing new services is one that we accept. The change to managed care is coming and so we will be modifying our practices to meet the changing needs in the field. Change is inevitable, but preparing for it is our best chance for success.

HOW HAVE YOU SEEN EDEN II DEVELOP AND GROW SINCE YOU BEGAN WORKING HERE?

Eden II has grown in a number of different ways. Again, from my “OPWDD” perspective, we have opened more programs and expanded the type of programs that we offer. There are two social enterprises now, our Seasons for a Reason kiosk on Long Island and our Encore! children’s thrift shop on Staten Island. These opportunities allow for skill development that can lead to gainful employment for the individuals in our adult programs. Our new community center is an amazing space that offers so many options and has the potential for so much more. It is a very exciting time for Eden II.

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?

This is not really about my years of experience in the field, but what I learned during the years I spent out of the field. During my career, there were a few years in the middle when I worked as a hospital administrator. It was most beneficial financially, but not the most fulfilling, emotionally. I was reminded by a close friend that it is best to do what you love; the rest will come to you. I never regretted leaving that position at the hospital and going back to the field of developmental disabilities. It is where I can make the most difference in the lives of those who need the most support and through the years, it still excites me to come to work and begin a new day with new challenges to improve the services that we provide to our participants and their families. It is not easy work, and some days are more challenging than others, but in the end, if the focus remains on the individuals we support, the path stays clear.

WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR PROUDEST MOMENT WORKING AT EDEN II?

Here’s the thing. I am not sure if there is one specific proudest moment, but it is an accumulation of small victories that keeps me coming back.
Thank you to all who came out to support the grand opening of our new Early Childhood Center on St. Paul’s Avenue. This new location will offer many new opportunities for our participants, including larger classrooms. We are thankful to our donors, community members, board members, elected officials, and to everyone else who helped make this new building a reality. A very special thank you to Eden II’s Director of Early Childhood Services, Lauren Grimaldi, and her incredibly hardworking staff.

Please Support Our Early Childhood Campaign

Visit eden2.org/ECC to make your gift online.

Every gift is 100% tax deductible & greatly appreciated!
Kevin Chau, Wealth Management Advisor at Merrill Lynch, and Eden II parent, joined the Eden II & Genesis Foundation Board of Trustees at their June meeting.

Kevin shares, “I am excited to be a part of the Eden II & Genesis Foundation Board. As a Staten Islander and a parent of a child with autism, I am continuously impressed by the dedication of Eden II’s staff and board. I look forward to deepening my commitment to Eden II and helping to provide resources and opportunities for the children and adults with autism in our local community.”

In October, Kevin presented Eden II with a $5,000 check to benefit the Agency’s Early Childhood Campaign. The Campaign is raising funds for the program’s new location on St. Paul’s Avenue. Mr. Chau has pledged an additional $20,000 toward a classroom in the new space. Kevin states, “With the help and amazing care of the incredible staff at Little Miracles, my son, Edmund, is making progress and I know he is in good hands at Eden II.”

The expansion of physical space and services in the new building is urgent, with the dramatic increase in autism over the past decade. Eden II has been serving children and adults living with autism since 1976. However, today, the number of children born with autism has grown dramatically. The CDC estimates one in 59 children born today will have some form of autism.

“Kevin’s investment in the mission of Eden II is a testament to his dedication and commitment to our children and the Staten Island community. We are grateful for individuals like Kevin who believe in the work that we do,” notes Dr. Joanne Gerenser, Eden II’s Executive Director.

The mission of Eden II Programs is to support people with autism throughout their lives to achieve their full potential through service, science, and passion. Eden II strives to provide the maximum help possible to the autism community through education, adult day programs, residential care, family support, respite, and a number of other services.

“We are very appreciative of Kevin’s support of Eden II. This new building will help Eden II serve the youngest population of individuals with autism in an even better capacity, and really make a difference in the lives of so many,” shares Ralph Scamardella, Eden II Board Chair. Ralph is also the Early Childhood Campaign Co-Chair and parent of an Eden II participant.

Kevin resides with his family in Tottenville. His youngest son, Edmund, attends Eden II’s Early Childhood Program. Kevin is very involved with his local community through philanthropic organizations. He serves on the board of trustees for Boys Hope Girls Hope of New York, Snug Harbor Cultural Center and Botanical Garden, and spends time serving as a mentor to underprivileged and at risk children.

For more information or to make a gift to the Early Childhood Campaign, please contact a development associate at 718-816-1422 ext. 1030 or info@eden2.org.
Handmade Items—Made by Individuals with Autism

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For Sponsorship Opportunities
Please contact Kara Alicakos at 516-937-1397 ext. 1314
or email kalicakos@eden2.org.

Visit us in the Broadway Mall at 358 N Broadway, Hicksville, NY 11801
seasons@eden2.org • 516-937-1397 ext. 547
TO OUR GENEROUS SUPPORTERS

CITY COUNCIL PROVIDES $165,000 IN FUNDING FOR EDEN II PROGRAMS

The New York City Council adopted the fiscal year 2020 budget, and Eden II is pleased to announce funding from the Staten Island delegation: Joseph Borelli, Steve Matteo and Debi Rose.

South Shore Councilman, Joseph Borelli allocated $10,000 for Eden II’s early childhood classes. The councilman first learned of our early childhood program when serving as the Chief of Staff for then Councilman Vincent Ignizio, and has supported the project since his election in 2015.

Mid-Island Councilman Steve Matteo allocated $5,000 for Eden II’s early childhood program. Matteo has helped fund a number of programs, including our running and soccer clubs, and dayhab extension program (Doing Extraordinary Things, also known as DXT). The DXT offers participants unique job training skills and opportunities.

North Shore Councilwoman Debi Rose has allocated $5,000 towards Eden II’s new Early Childhood Center on St. Paul’s Avenue. Rose has been a steadfast supporter of Eden II for many years. She has provided funding for various projects, including the running club and equipment for the Hon. James P. Molinaro Center for Autism. Additionally, the councilwoman was instrumental in securing $50,000 from the Speaker, Corey Johnson.

Eden II Executive Director, Dr. Joanne Gerenser, shares, “We are always very thankful for the continued support of the Staten Island council members. They continue to go above and beyond to secure needed funding for our programs. They understand the importance and necessity of the services Eden II provides, particularly this year as we open up our new Early Childhood Center, and serve more young individuals with an autism diagnosis.”

Eden II will also receive $95,000 in funding from the City Council’s Autism Awareness Initiative. The monies will support respite trips, afterschool sessions, and informative webinars to help educate parents and autism professionals.

Dr. Irene Cavanagh, Associate Executive Director for OPWDD Services, shares, “The Autism Awareness Initiative grant provides funding for crucial services that positively impact dozens of families in our community, and our webinars are able to reach and educate people locally, as well as throughout the United States. I am thankful to the council for their continued commitment to Eden II and the autism community.”

NORTH SHORE ROTARY DONATES $9,000 FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD CAMPAIGN

The North Shore Rotary Club of Staten Island has awarded $9,000 towards the Early Childhood Capital Campaign. In 2018, members of the Rotary toured the new program facilities at 309 St. Paul’s Avenue. They saw firsthand the opportunities the students will have in the space, including access to much larger classrooms and a gymnasium.

North Shore Rotary member, Dennis Surmanek, shares, “The North Shore Rotary is honored to support Eden II and the Early Childhood Program with a donation of $9,000. We look forward to continuing to work with Eden II to better the lives in our community!”

The North Shore Rotary has generously supported Eden II for decades, beginning with the donation of a transport van over 30 years ago. Since then, they have provided funding for holiday parties for our students, as well as our Beach Street Capital Campaign. In recognition of their advocacy, the staff lounge at St. Paul’s has been named in honor of the North Shore Rotary.
TERRY TARANGELO was a career banker for 40 years before retiring in 2016. She spent 30 years with Staten Island Savings Bank/ SI Bank & Trust. Following the merger with Independence Community Bank, and later Sovereign Bank, she was a Vice President with the Business Development Department. She finished her career with Signature Bank as an Associate Group Director/Vice President.

Terry is a member of the Eden II Programs Board of Trustees, where she served as Co-Chair for the James P. Molinaro Center for Autism Capital Campaign for the new campus in Stapleton. In addition, she serves on the Eden II & Genesis Foundation Board and the Eden II Audit Committee.

Terry is a member of the South Shore Rotary Club, where she served on the Board of Directors. She is a two-time recipient of the CAR Rosenberger “Service Above Self” award, Rotarian of the Year, and the Paul Harris Fellow Award, the highest award given to a Rotarian. As a former member of the Staten Island Economic Development Corporation, she served as Chairperson of the Women’s Leadership Council. Terry also worked with Meals on Wheels as their Event Coordinator.

Terry is an Area Coordinator for the Stephen Siller Foundation Tunnel to Towers Run, coordinating the entertainment/encouragement for the 25,000+ participants on the Manhattan side of the run. She is also a member of their committee for the Veteran’s Day Golf Outing.

Near and dear to her heart is the Staten Island Agency for Alzheimer’s & Dementia, as her Mom suffered from Alzheimer’s for 10 years before passing away at the age of 90 in 2017 on Mother’s Day. Terry has been Co-chair of their golf committee for the past 8 years and a committee member with Cooley’s Anemia, ECHO Foundation, South Shore Rotary, and Staten Island University Hospital.

An alumnus of St. Joseph By the Sea High School, she was Parent Coordinator of their Football Program for 10 years, and was inducted into the school’s Hall of Fame.

Terry is the mother of Stephanie, Michelle and Michael, Mother-In-Law to Jimmy and Lauren. She is the proud grandmother of James, Shawn, Christian, and twin granddaughters Delia and Natalie. In addition to being passionate about her family and volunteering, she loves golf, skiing and singing.
Encore! is thrilled to announce a new social enterprise: ENCORE! A THRIFT STORE FOR EVERYTHING KIDS

Encore! sells gently used children’s clothing, toys, and other items, all geared to children under the age of 10.

The store provides an array of vocational skill development opportunities for individuals with autism spectrum disorders, in an environment where structure and supports are carefully arranged to meet each individual’s unique needs.

DONATE YOUR GENTLY USED OR NEW ITEMS TODAY!

We could really use more toys, coats, clothing, bottles, strollers, and any other items for boys and girls ages newborn to 10-years old!

Eden II parents may send items in with their children or drop-off to their child’s site. All other donations should be delivered to our 400 B Victory Boulevard site.

For more information or to schedule a pick-up, please contact 718-816-1422 ext. 1810 or encore@eden2.org.

Open Monday–Friday, 10:00 AM–5:30 PM
(718) 816-1422 ext. 1810
eden2.org/encore

LET YOUR OLD STUFF DO GOOD

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ACCESSORIES:
Shoes and Sneakers (newborn to young adult), Socks, Hats, Books, and much more!
Amazon Smile is a free and easy way to help raise funds for Eden II’s programs and services. Visit www.eden2.org/smile for more information. When you choose “Eden II School for Autistic Children” as your charity of choice, a portion of every purchase you make will benefit Eden II.

Congratulations to Dr. Joanne Gerenser on her new book!

“It takes a village to write a book about ABA for SLP, in a truly collaborative framework” said co-author, Dr. Mareile Koenig. An essential part of every future speech-language pathologists (SLPs) education—and an eye-opening guide for practicing professionals—the timely text shows how experts from two vital fields can learn from each other and work as a seamless team to support better lives for people with autism. The book provides SLPs with a clearer understanding of applied behavior analysis (ABA)—and bridges the gap between the two fields, with a comprehensive plan for collaboration. Chapters of this text have been written by other Eden II Programs employees, including Dr. Mary McDonald and Dr. Frank Cicero, in addition to other distinguished experts in the field.