



# Celebrating 60 Years



2015 ANNUAL REPORT



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Director of Human Resources

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& Saturday Programs

**Judith Outten, M.D.**  
Senior Psychiatrist



## An Interview with the Founder

Visit our website, [www.thecenterforautism.org](http://www.thecenterforautism.org), to watch the poignant interview with Dr. Ruttenberg as he reflects on the past, present and future of the Center for Autism.



## Message from the Chief Executive Officer

I am honored to present the 2015 Annual Report. This year, we began the celebration of the Center for Autism's 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and continue to provide vital autism services to more than 1,000 individuals and families.

In reflecting on the organization's 60-year history, I must acknowledge the lifelong work of our founder, Dr. Bertram A. Ruttenberg. His dedication to helping people with autism thrive in their community gives true meaning to the Center's tagline of "better outcomes for life". In 1955, few people knew what autism was, and even fewer physicians were dedicated to autism treatment. Dr. Ruttenberg was a visionary with a cutting edge treatment philosophy. His focus on incorporating the entire family and community in an individual's treatment brought a unique component to a person's therapy, one in which their success outside of a treatment center was considered. Dr. Ruttenberg's commitment to empowering families to be involved in their loved ones therapy and giving them the tools to do so is at the core of the Center's programs to this day. We are honored to have Dr. Ruttenberg continue to serve on our Board of Directors and lend his expertise to the organization.

In celebrating this anniversary year, I would also like to acknowledge our Board of Directors, staff and donors. Without the support the Center receives from you, we would not be the successful organization we are today. Our Board of Directors provides strategic leadership that guides the organization's growth. Our staff, whose expertise is unparalleled, is the reason for each child's success while in our care. And to our donors, your financial support allows us to continually develop our services and serve more people in new ways. I thank each and every one of you for your loyalty and look forward to your continued support.

Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David M. Maola".

David M. Maola, Esq.

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# Our Donors

July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2015

The Center for Autism sincerely appreciates the generous contributions that help us continue providing better outcomes for life. Each donor is extremely important to us, and we apologize for any errors or omissions on this list.

## Annual Fund

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## Kid's Stories

### DONORS Annual Fund



#### Kayla

My name is Kayla and I am 9 years old. I participate in the Social Competency Program at the Center for Autism. I started at the Center as a client in the Pre-K Program with various challenges in communication. Through therapy, I have learned to independently communicate my wants and needs.

This has helped me to engage with my peers and therapists. I currently enjoy engaging with my peers through arts and crafts during "creative minds" activities. I love gross motor time and participate in many activities outside of the Center. You can often see me laughing in my group as we create our own games!



#### George

Hi! My name is George and I am 3 years old. This is my first year at the Center and I attend the Early Explorers Program. When I started attending the Center I did not know how to communicate my wants and needs. This would make me really frustrated. I also had a hard time using safe hands with my friends and therapists,

especially when people were in my space. Now I am able to point, use functional sign language for "more," "turn," and "finished." I also am starting to use words to communicate what I want, and to share when I see exciting things! I love to look at books and sing songs. I also love to play chase, "Ring Around the Rosie," and "Red Light, Green Light" with my friends.

## DONORS

Annual Fund *continued*

|  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <b>MISSION</b><br>To improve the quality of life for individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder and their families. | <b>VISION</b><br>To be a leading provider for individualized, evidence-based autism services. | <b>VALUES</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individuality</li> <li>• Community</li> <li>• Dignity</li> <li>• Innovation</li> <li>• Awareness</li> <li>• Professionalism</li> </ul> |
|--|---|---|

### Services

- **Evaluation & Assessment:** offered to people of all ages to determine an initial diagnosis or confirm a previous diagnosis, identify additional conditions/disorders, assess level of functioning, and make appropriate recommendations for services.
- **Pre-K Program:** an intensive program for children ages 2-5 years old that improves communication, disruptive behaviors, self-regulation and social interaction.
- **First Friends Program:** a treatment program that is focused on improving socialization and communication, particularly with peers, for children up to 6 years old.
- **Early Explorers Program:** a program for children ages 2 to 4 years old that have recently received an autism diagnosis.
- **Social Competency Program:** an afterschool program designed to develop and facilitate social competency skills in children and adolescents ages 6 to 16 years old.
- **Outpatient Program:** individualized one-on-one, family and group therapy for people of all ages.
- **Saturday Program:** a weekly program for teens and young adults that focuses on teaching pre-vocational and independent life skills.
- **Consultation Services:** customized workshops, seminars and training to those working with individuals with autism.

### Quality of Care

- Comprehensive and continual assessment of needs
- Individualized treatment plans
- Multidisciplinary, relationship-based approach
- Small treatment groups
- Experienced, dedicated clinicians

### Better Outcomes

- Develop and improve communication
- Establish important relationships
- Build meaningful social interaction
- Improve behaviors that interfere with success
- Overcome challenges in sensory processing
- Learn skills to thrive in school and in the community

### Family Involvement

- Participate as full partners in the therapeutic process
- Receive support and education
- Learn to navigate systems and advocate for the future
- Collaborate with agencies to ensure a comprehensive approach

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## Commonwealth Grants \$1 Million

The Center for Autism was pleased to announce this year that the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania awarded a \$1 million Economic Initiative Grant (EIG) to help fund the expansion of its Northeast Philadelphia location at 2801 Grant Avenue. To honor this significant contribution, Governor Tom Corbett visited the Center for Autism on



Featured in the photo taken at the Center's 2801 Grant Avenue location: Top row, left to right: Steven Lewis, past chair of the Center for Autism's board of directors; Pennsylvania Governor Tom Corbett; David M. Maola, Esq., chief executive officer of the Center for Autism. Bottom row, left to right: Children enrolled in the Pre-K Treatment Program, Brian, Dominic, Ian, and A-Keen.

December 15 to accept a certificate of appreciation, tour the facility and give children in the program holiday gifts. He also met with the Board of Directors and employees of the Center for Autism and viewed the renderings of the plan for expansion.

"The funds from the Commonwealth will have a significant impact on our ability to serve the growing number of individuals and families who need autism services in the Philadelphia community," said David M. Maola, Esq., Chief Executive Officer of the Center for Autism. "As we prepare to celebrate the Center's 60th anniversary in 2015, Governor Corbett's commitment to our organization's future further supports the vital role we have in helping people with Autism Spectrum Disorder."

The Center for Autism will use awarded EIG funds to renovate additional space in the facility, which will allow the organization to provide 350 more evaluations each year and serve 270 more individuals and families through its various treatment programs. The Economic Initiative Grant Program is administered by the Office of the Budget for the acquisition and construction of regional economic, cultural, civic, recreational, and historical improvement projects.



## Financial Report

### July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2015

The Center for Autism had another great year ending June 30, 2015. The Center had total support and revenue of \$14,984,977, compared to \$13,971,842 for the year ended June 30, 2014. The Center's largest expense item is personnel, which is directly related to our high therapist to client ratio within the treatment programs. Most of the Center's support and revenue is fee for service, in addition to grants, donations and fundraising events. The Center for Autism showed an increase in net assets of \$686,054 in 2015 versus an increase in net assets of \$624,254 in 2014. The Center also paid down approximately \$298,000 in bank loans.

| SUPPORT AND REVENUE              |                   |
|----------------------------------|-------------------|
| Medical assistance and insurance | 14,422,512        |
| Services rendered                | 283,289           |
| Fundraising & Donations          | 187,599           |
| Investment returns               | 34,377            |
| Grants*                          | 57,200            |
| <b>TOTAL SUPPORT AND REVENUE</b> | <b>14,984,977</b> |

| EXPENSES                                      |                   |
|---|-------------------|
| Personnel expenses, including consultants     | 10,751,940        |
| Occupancy                                     | 914,251           |
| Office supplies and administration            | 218,959           |
| Communications/Equipment rental & maintenance | 293,278           |
| Depreciation and amortization                 | 277,449           |
| Bad debt expense                              | 227,376           |
| Interest expense                              | 52,003            |
| Administration & fundraising                  | 1,563,667         |
| <b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>                         | <b>14,298,923</b> |

|                                |                  |
|--------------------------------|------------------|
| INCREASE IN NET ASSETS         | 686,054          |
| NET ASSETS, BEGINNING OF YEAR  | 4,683,164        |
| <b>NET ASSETS, END OF YEAR</b> | <b>5,369,218</b> |

\*The Commonwealth's \$1 million grant is not included in this year's financial statement due to accounting rules. This grant will be included in the FY16 financial statement.

The unaudited financial information set forth above is preliminary and subject to adjustments and modifications. Adjustments and modifications to the financial statements may be identified during the course of the audit work, which could result in significant differences from this preliminary unaudited financial information.

The Center for Autism is a registered nonprofit organization exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Contributions to the Center are tax-deductible as provided to the extent of the law. Official registration and financial information may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

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### 8th Annual Golf Outing

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### 8th Annual Golf Outing

## 8th Annual Golf Outing Raises \$26,600

On Tuesday, June 9, 2015 the Center held its 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Golf Outing at RiverCrest Golf Club and Preserve in Phoenixville, PA. There were 80 golfers participating in the event, which raised \$26,600 to support the Center's evaluation and treatment services. Event highlights included a putting contest, Hole in One prizes, silent auction and more. A special thanks to all of our sponsors & donors, especially Firsttrust Bank, CBIZ MHM, Devon Construction, Caddick Construction, and Capital Solutions.



Jeff Czajkowski (left), Bob Kelly of the Philadelphia Flyers (center), John Bickel chairman of the Board of Directors (right), and son, Jake Bickel (front) enjoy the picture-perfect weather on the golf course.

## New Website



The Center was pleased to launch a newly designed website this year at [www.thecenterforautism.org](http://www.thecenterforautism.org). Highlights of the new site include:

- Fully responsive site, easily viewed on any computer, tablet or mobile device
- In depth information about program and service offerings
- User-friendly sections help you find resources and answer FAQ's
- "Make A Donation" button makes it easy to donate online
- Access more information about our doctors, management team & board of directors
- Special events, photo and video galleries keep you up to date on a variety of autism-related community activities
- Homepage inclement weather banner (bright pink) will make it easy to be aware of changes in operating hours

## DONORS

### 8th Annual Golf Outing continued

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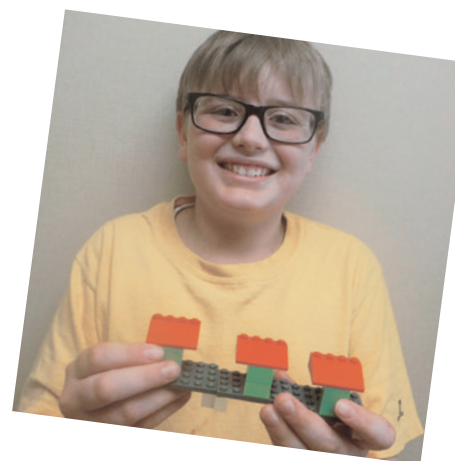
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**3rd Annual Winter Classic Hockey Game**  
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## Kid's Stories continued



### Thomas

Hi! My name is Thomas and I am 11 years old. I have been attending the Social Competency Program since September 2011. I am very friendly and I genuinely enjoy talking to others about all different types of things.

Before starting the Social Competency Program, I didn't really have friends that I could talk to or play with, but I did have my family. Now, I have a lot of friends with whom I can talk and play! I know the names of many kids and therapists in my program, and when someone is missing I'm the first to notice and ask about them. I have learned so many skills like sharing, waiting my turn to speak, trying new things, and that I can't always just talk to the adults – now I want to talk to my friends too!



### Felix

My name is Felix. I am 5 years old. I have been attending the First Friends Program since September 2012. I love

super heroes and action figures and will excitedly share my collection with you! When I first started at the Center I had few words, I was not very interested in my peers and wasn't really sure how to play with them. Now I have many words and lots of things to say. I am friendly, outgoing and could play for hours. This will be my last year in the First Friends Program because this fall I will start kindergarten. While I will miss my friends and therapists at the Center, I know that I am ready for this exciting transition. I'm off to learn new things and I know there's nothing I can't handle!



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### 3rd Annual Winter Classic Hockey Game *continued*

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## 3rd Annual Winter Classic Raises \$22,000

On Saturday, January 17, 2015 the Center hosted its 3rd Annual Winter Classic, a charity hockey game vs. the Philadelphia Flyers Alumni. Held at IceWorks Skating Complex in Aston, PA, the event drew more than 350 attendees who helped raise over \$22,000 for the Center for Autism's evaluation and treatment services.



The Center for Autism Puzzlers, a team comprised of friends and donors, battled against legendary Flyers including Bob Kelly, Joe Watson, Brian Propp, Rob MacInnis, Ray Allison and others. The Flyers Alumni won with a final score of 5-3, and a great time was had by all who participated.

Additionally, the Phillie Phanatic dropped the official puck at the start of

the game, and the Flyers very own Lou Nolan was the event announcer. The event also featured a silent auction, 50/50 raffle, Chuck a Puck contest, autograph signing & player meet & greet. We look forward to seeing you at the 4th Annual Winter Classic on February 20, 2016.

## DONORS

### 3rd Annual Winter Classic Hockey Game *continued*

Mr. Craig Super  
 The Bravo Group  
 The Haverford Trust Company  
 The Safeguard Group, Inc.  
 Ms. Jennifer Tommuscheit  
 Mr. Timothy Vecchiarelli  
 Ms. Jessica Vollmer  
 Mr. and Mrs. Francis E. Wellock, Jr.  
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## DONORS

### Holiday Giving Campaign

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 Ms. Arielle Williams

### In Honor of Mr. Santino Stagliano

Mr. William C. Lafferty



Santino's Dragon Drawings presented its first donation to the Center on Tuesday, June 2, 2015. The donation of \$2,500 represents the proceeds from Santino's t-shirt sales and a matching donation from the Center for Foot & Ankle Disorders in Philadelphia. Pictured left to right: Bethany Barney, Manager of Outpatient Therapy Services, Lisa Stagliano, Santino Stagliano, Mario Stagliano, and David Maola, Chief Executive Officer.

## Santino's Dragons

In April, Santino Stagliano, a 10 year old boy with autism from South Philadelphia, started designing dragon t-shirts to sell to a few family and friends. Santino attends the Outpatient Program at the Center and previously attended the Social Competency Program. Drawing the dragon shirts is a way for Santino to feel better about a bad day. When his mom, Lisa, posted about the shirts on Facebook the word spread quickly, and over the next few weeks orders were pouring in. Since then, his orders have grown into the thousands and have shipped all over the world. Celebrities, including Adam Sandler, have even shown their support by wearing a Santino Dragon Shirt. Santino has also been featured in numerous media outlets, including the Philadelphia Daily News, Philadelphia Inquirer, Today.com and the Huffington Post.

Grateful for the progress he has made during his time at the Center, Santino and his family generously decided to donate proceeds to the Center and host community initiatives for families affected by autism. His mission is to help other children with Autism Spectrum Disorder "find their dragon."



## By The Numbers

### How Your Donation Helps...

**\$10**



provides one week of integrated occupational therapy to a child in the **Early Explorers Program**

**\$50**

provides weekly **Tasting Time** program supplies for the **First Friends Program**.

Tasting Time works to expose children to



new healthy food with a variety of tastes, textures and colors



**\$75**

provides yearly curriculum and program supplies for an individual in the **Social Competency Program**

**\$225**

provides one year of integrated **speech therapy** to help a child learn to communicate his wants and needs

**\$475**

purchases an **occupational therapy swing**, which helps children in their sensory integration therapy

**\$500**

provides **cutting-edge tablet** technology to help a child in the Pre-K Program improve communication and build relationships with peers

**\$1,000**

sends the children in the Saturday and Social Competency Programs on a **field trip** to help practice new skills in a real-world setting

**\$1,750**

provides a **critical diagnostic evaluation** for an uninsured child

**\$2,500**

purchases **safety mats** for the gross motor rooms, which need to be replaced every 2 years

### ....and Who We Serve



**275** phone calls each month from people seeking services or resources

**556** individuals received an **evaluation**

**104** children ages 2-5 years old were treated in the **Pre-K Program**

**36** children under the age of 6 attended the **First Friends Program**



**144** children and teens received treatment in the **Social Competency Program**

**24** young adults attended the **Saturday Program**

**63** individuals and families received treatment in the **Outpatient Program**

**70%** of the people we serve **live below the federal poverty level**

**79%** served were **male**



**81%** of the population we serve are **ethnic minorities**

**8** is the **average age** of an individual who received an evaluation

**58** is the age of the **oldest person** who received an evaluation



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*The Center for Autism is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, and an equal opportunity employer and service provider.*