



# The Sun

The Voice of Autism in Delaware

Detachable Monthly Calendar  
**January 2007**

Autism Society of Delaware

(302) 472-2638

[www.delautism.org](http://www.delautism.org)

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 Happy New Year! ASD Office Closed	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9 Parent's Coffee Hour 9 am	10	11	12	13
14	15 Martin Luther King Day	16	17	18 Adult Issues Committee Meeting 7 pm	19 Young Teen Night Out 7 pm	20
21	22	23 ASD Chapter Meeting 7 pm	24	25	26	27 Mom's Night Out 6 pm
28	29	30	31			



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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2 Social Skills Training	3 ASD N.C.C. Roller Skating Party 5:15 pm
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13 Parent's Coffee Hour 9am  Dad's Night Out 7 pm	14 Valentine's Day 	15	16 Teen Night Out 7pm	17 Sussex County Roller Skating Party 5:30 - 7:30 pm
18	19 President's Day ASD Office Closed	20 N.C.C. Support Group ASD Office 7 pm	21	22 ASD Chapter Meeting 7 pm	23	24
25	26	27	28			



# The Sun

## Inside This Issue...

The Director's Chair.....	2
ASD Guest Speakers.....	4
ASD Holiday Parties.....	5
Parent 2 Parent.....	6
Inside the ASD.....	7
ASD Social Scene.....	9
Summer Recreational Resources.....	10
ASD Calendar of Events.....	11
Christina School District Misspends Millions.....	12
Walk the High Road for Autism.....	13
Research Headlines.....	14
A Message from Wolf.....	16
Volunteer Recognition Nominations.....	17

## Our Mission

*The Autism Society of Delaware is a chapter of the Autism Society of America. We are people with autism, their family members and friends, and professionals who work in the autism field.*

*Our mission is to improve the lives of people with autism and their families. We will educate, advocate and raise public awareness in order to promote lifelong opportunity and acceptance for people with autism in their communities.*

*We serve the entire state of Delaware.*

## ASD Will Provide a New Approach to Supporting Adults with Autism

By: Theda Ellis

In 2005 ASD completed a study on best practices for adults with autism that identified very individualized, self-directed supports for each person as the key to best practice. This year we took a look at how to offer best practices ourselves, and we developed a business plan to implement an adult service program. With assistance from Michael Chapman of Chesapeake Resources, ASD looked at creative services in the region and decided that we want to use a support broker and fiscal intermediary to assist individuals and their families to be self-directed. This means the person and their family choose what services should be, and decide how to spend the dollars that are available to them.

Because Delaware does not have a Family Support Waiver to direct Medicaid money according to the individual's needs, the State does not yet have the mechanism to pay for a support broker or fiscal intermediary. So ASD has applied to become a DDDS Certified Provider for Day Services, but with a twist! We are going to act as though the State has these mechanisms in place, and move ahead to implement self determination within the day program model. We plan to introduce this model slowly, working with one person at a time until we have needed supports in place. The ASD Board has agreed to underwrite this approach for the up to three years needed to become self-sustaining because of our

strong belief that adults should have high quality lives that they choose. To begin, we will work with individuals who live at home and who want assistance with their day. For most, that will be a day revolving around employment, but it can also include volunteer work, recreation, and other activities in the community. Once we are established, we may move into residential options as well. Our intent is to support 30 adults by the end of three years.

*What does a support broker do?*

Support brokers work for the person with a disability, not their family or others involved, but for the person themselves. This is really important! It reminds us all about who is in charge. A big part of a support broker's job is making sure that the person with the disability stays in charge of his or her own life. Support brokers help facilitate the involvement of others in their life – family, friends, co-workers, and acquaintances. Support brokers coordinate supports, assist with developing plans and budgets, and then help make the plan happen. The Support broker creates a contract with the person receiving supports that clearly indicates what the broker will provide.

*What does a fiscal intermediary (or agent) do?*

*(Continued on page 3)*

Contributions for this newsletter provided by:





### The Sun

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Brenda Holsey	Jen Nardo

**Desktop Publishing:** Cheryl Kelley



# Director's Chair

By: Theda Ellis, Executive Director

We all have special people in our life who have touched us in one way or another at a critical moment. For me, one of those people is Mary Lou Keller. Mary Lou is the first friend that I made after moving to Delaware. She is smart, funny, outgoing, and has a warm and generous spirit. Mary Lou is no longer a part of my day to day life because she moved to Florida, but we stay in touch about the important things in our lives.

Mary Lou has always been one to make a difference. She is the first to volunteer, whether it's working with teens, befriending a senior, or for doing tasks that others don't want to do. So often I was in awe of her energy and enthusiasm, but now she has outdone herself. When her sister recovered from a particularly nasty breast cancer, she decided to do something that would be both personal for her and that would make a difference. This fall she and her now-healthy sister walked 60 miles in the Breast Cancer 3-Day Walk in Philadelphia to raise awareness and money. They trained for a year to prepare, and walked the full 60 miles. While the walk was in and of itself amazing, something that is even more amazing is that these two women went to their family and friends and raised \$13,000. Wow!

Why am I talking about cancer and walking in the autism newsletter? Because this spring ASD is sponsoring our first walk – Walk the High Road for Autism. Don't be scared – it's 1 ½ miles, not 60, and you don't have to spend the night in a tent! This walk is a new endeavor for us and there are several reasons for it. First, it provides a chance for anyone to make a difference. Our two major fundraisers are designed to do that – to raise money for ASD operations and for our research gifts. They are expensive, and not everyone can afford them. The walk is affordable and accessible—it's a great way to bring family and friends to the cause. Secondly, as you hopefully read in our cover article, we are expanding to offer new services and supports. ASD will be investing our resources into developing adult services—helping our community to create high quality lives full of dignity and meaning. What could be a better way to spend our time, our energy, and our money than to invest it into our adults? After all, if we don't do it, who will?

I think we have an organization full of people like Mary Lou. Come join us on April 28 to make a difference!

We Would Like to Thank  
AstraZeneca for its continued *support*  
to the Autism Society of Delaware's  
Newsletter, *The Sun*.



ASD Supports Adults with Autism

(Continued from Cover)

A Fiscal Agent takes care of bookkeeping needs that go along with running a personal support system. Because state and federal money are involved, it must be accounted for. The day will come when individuals with disabilities are in charge of their funds and authorize all payments for their own staff and other expenses. Until that's in place, our new service will take that role—working to help the person create a budget, track the expenses, and provide monthly reports about the funds. We will also serve as the employer of record for staff. Once the waiver is approved, we will support individuals to become the employer of record, hire and supervise their own staff, and use the fiscal agent to pay for that staff.

How is this different than other services?

Many services today are becoming much more person-centered. Individuals and families are choosing their provider and the service they want. Still, most programs for adults are just that— programs – they occur in a building with staff hired by the program, and individuals get the services the provider provides. This model will require the family to be involved in identifying, designing and obtaining desired supports that will be community based.

Each person will have a Circle of Support – including those who know him best who take a role in the planning and in helping things to happen, whether it's finding a job, looking for a staff person, or just brainstorming ideas about how to have fun. Like the circle, the supports will also be unique to each person.

You may ask "Where does work fit in?" We think this approach will revolve around work, including the classic services of assessment, job placement, supported employment, job coaching, and long term follow along. We plan to work with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation as well as with Developmental Disabilities Services to create and maintain job opportunities and/or small businesses for adults with autism.

It is our dream that every adult with autism will have the supports needed to follow their own dream, and that we can work together to make that dream happen!

A Special Thank You to all of our Library Awareness Ambassadors for setting up displays during the month of October in libraries across the entire state.

aaaaaaaaaaaaa

- Dafne Carnright
Christie Hoffman
Kate Stomiersoki
Sara Downey
Karen Tuohy
Nicole Curran
Kathie Cherry
Yolanda Flanigan
Robin Marks
Robin Delaney
Betsy Flannery
Heidi Mizell
Joanne Marie West
Angie Sipple
Billie Meisel
Pattie Gause
Denise Bradley
Crystal Pepper
Marianna Vyal
John Willey
Susie Kelly
Arleen McClung
Dorian Kleinstuber
Kathy Graybeal
Colleen Grier

Holiday Caroling at the Scheinbergs'

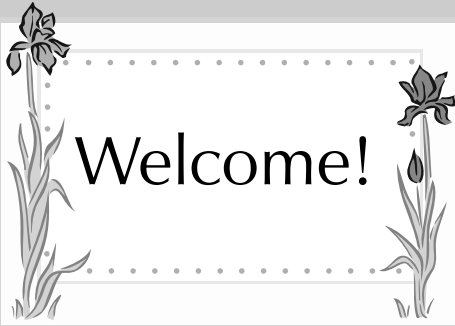


A special Thank You to Rob & Elizabeth Scheinberg for opening up their home and hearts by inviting families from ASD to join them for holiday caroling. Here is a note we received from Elizabeth...

I just wanted to let you know that Caroling went beautifully. We had about 20 people, young and old. The children had a great time. Karen Tuohy brought flashlights for everyone. We made sure all had jingle bells in case they didn't feel like singing or didn't know the words. We distributed fliers in advance and many families were waiting for our arrival. We were even met with a plate of homemade cookies at one house. A gentleman, who asked to remain anonymous, came to find us before he left for work and gave us a \$25 donation, which I am planning on bringing up to the ASD. I am very pleased with the event. Even though we didn't have a huge crowd, we a had a great one. Some families said they couldn't wait for the "2nd annual caroling party." We also received some emails from families who couldn't attend but thanked us for planning an activity for the kids. After caroling we came back to the house for cookies and warm beverages and everyone was on their way home by 9 pm.

Thank you for getting the word out for us. And at this point we are planning to do it again next year!

- Elizabeth



Please welcome the following new members to ASD...

Ira Shtab & Bertie Carter

Bob Dunlap

John Young

Christopher Small

Michael & Carolyn Toll

Thane & Jacqueline Martin

Amy & Glenn Clayville

Carol DeMaio

## ASD Options Policy

All information provided or published by the Autism Society of Delaware (ASD) is for informational purposes only. Reference to any treatment or therapy option or to any program, service or treatment provider is not an endorsement by ASD.

You should investigate alternatives that may be more appropriate for a specific individual. ASD assumes no responsibility for the use made of any information published or provided by ASD.

## ASD Chapter Meeting January / February Guest Speakers



January 23, 2007

### Digestive Dysfunctions in Children with Autism with Dr. Karoly Horvath

Gastroenterology Issues and Autism. Dr. Karoly Horvath is a world renowned gastroenterologist who is currently at the A.I. duPont Hospital for Children. He is a specialist in Celiac Disease which calls for casein-free, gluten-free diet, and is well known for his literature in this area.

7:00 p.m.—Special Olympics Office  
619 S. College Ave  
Newark, DE 19716

February 22, 2007

### MAPS and PATHS

Making Action Plans, known as MAPS and Planning Alternative Tomorrows with Hope, known as PATH, are two of the best known approaches to person-centered planning. ASD member Jane Miller of the DDS Training Unit will demonstrate with the Bashkow family how MAPS and PATHS are developed for children and adults with disabilities.

7:00 p.m.  
Location to be determined.

*Childcare is available. Please contact the office at (302) 472-2638 or [delautism@delautism.org](mailto:delautism@delautism.org) at least two days in advance.*

**Registration for childcare is mandatory.**

Next Deadline for Submissions to The Sun:  
February 1, 2007

Want to share a story? Have an idea for an article? Send it to ASD today!  
[delautism@delautism.org](mailto:delautism@delautism.org). Or mail it to us,  
(address on page 2)  
Let Your Voice Be Heard!



ASD reserves the right to edit for space and content.





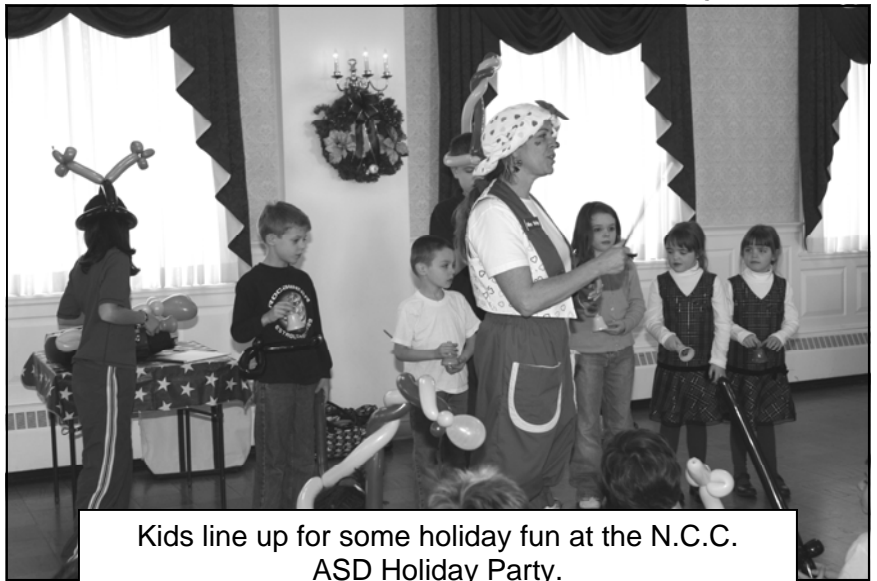
# ASD Holiday Parties



On December 10th, ASD held it's New Castle County Holiday Party at the DelVets in Wilmington with over 80 attending. A lot of food, ice cream, and fun was had by all. Thanks to Nicole Curran, Anthony Manganello and Robin Delaney for setting up a great party! On December 16th ASD also held a Holiday Party in Kent County. Below is the message we got from ASD member Kate Stomeiroski about the day's events. Thanks Kate!

*Ho Ho Ho from Kent County:*

The folks south of the canal celebrated the holidays with the "First Annual ASD Kent County Holiday Party." Approximately 45

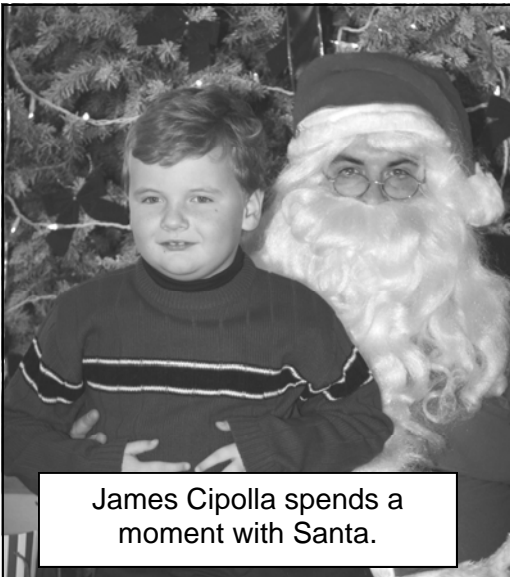


Kids line up for some holiday fun at the N.C.C. ASD Holiday Party.

a beautiful spring-like day to share good food and merriment. The look on the children's faces was priceless as Mr. and Mrs. Santa Claus entered the scene. (They were so excited, we didn't think they would let Santa make it to his chair!) A very heartfelt thank you goes out to the people who brought Santa to us: John and Donna Shoemaker; and they only asked that we pay for reindeer feed in return.

After we all fed our bellies with the subs that Kathie Cherry worked so hard to obtain (thank you Kath!), it was time to work that food off and get the party cranking! We witnessed some awesome Limbo moves. We boogied to the Hokey Pokey, which was anything but pokey, and watched Terry Dotson as she led us in the Chicken Dance.

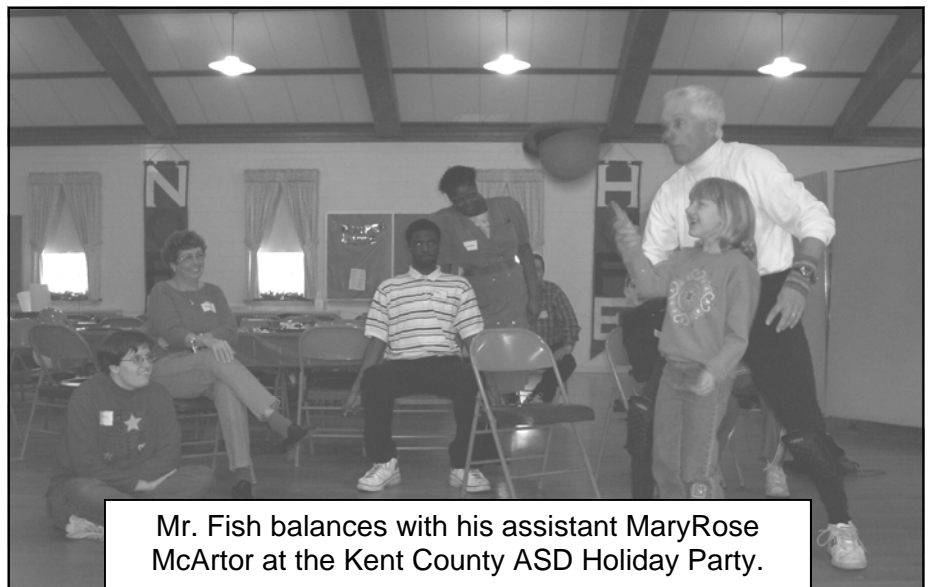
The Amazing Mr. Fish entertained us with his magic, juggling, and



James Cipolla spends a moment with Santa.

balancing feats. Our thanks to Mr. Fish (AKA Don Fisher) for his kindness and patience, and his offer to waive his fee. Many many thanks to all who made this party a success (especially Dafne Carnright, Pete Stomieroski, Rodney Oberdick, Kathie Cherry, Les and Yolanda Flannigan, and the staff at ASD), and to the wonderful folks at the Wyoming United Methodist Church.

Mark your calendars for the Second Annual ASD KC Party: Sunday, December 2, 2007. Please email Kate at [Beazelbeak@juno.com](mailto:Beazelbeak@juno.com) with suggestions on what we should do differently next time.



Mr. Fish balances with his assistant MaryRose McArtor at the Kent County ASD Holiday Party.



# Parent 2 Parent

written by parents  
for parents

## Nick and the Marines

By: Lucy Graham

Yesterday was quite a day for our family...a day of exhilaration, a day of action, a day of joy, a day of accomplishment. Our son Nick, who is 19, competed in the Marine Corps Marathon in Washington DC, among almost 40,000 other runners. Nick ran the 10K portion of the marathon.

Nick has been one lucky young man for the past nine years...he has been a student at the Delaware Autism Program. While the program has done countless things for Nick's brain, it has done equally incredible things for his body. The PE program at the DAP, led by Rob Corday and Judy Brandenburg, has worked tirelessly to enable Nick to pursue healthy activities for a strong body.

As soon as he was old enough, the PE staff enrolled him in Special Olympics, which sponsors activities and competition in many athletic areas. Nick has been an active participant in soccer, basketball and bowling skills, and has competed in the Summer Games at the University of Delaware in softball throw, long jump, and track events. These events are so very inspiring for any observer. I highly recommend attending the Summer Games, even if there is not a family member participating. Watching these athletes gives me such a feeling of gratitude, and I so strongly feel the power of perseverance as I see them strive for their personal best.

The track events are those in which Nick's coaches saw promise, so they began training him for running. He trains on the treadmill almost daily at school, and because of Rob and Judy's dedication of time after school, he trains for approximately three miles after school on Mondays and Wednesdays with a group of young men in the Running Club.

His first exciting long-distance event took place last spring in Townsend, Delaware for a 3K run. Rob and Judy entered Running Club members in the event, and gave up their Sunday morning to



Nick Graham with Marines at Marathon

run with the guys. Throughout that day, his face showed that he was filled with pure joy and exhilaration. As I marveled in his accomplishment, I also pondered how an event like this would simply not be possible without someone to reach out with their gift of time, energy, and empowerment, to say to Nick, "I know you can do this and I am going to see you through it, so that you can experience all the joys and benefits that will come to you."

And come they have. Three

years ago, our Nick, who has been living with autism all his life, was hit with a second diagnosis: that of Crohn's Disease. For the longest time he would languish on the couch or in bed, not wanting to eat, go to school, or do any of his usual activities. Because he was and is non-verbal, we could not figure out what was wrong at first. We thought he was terribly depressed. After we finally got the diagnosis, Nick began a regimen of several medications, up to 27 pills a day. In spite of our efforts, he was losing weight fast and eventually weighed in at a gaunt 117 pounds on a 5'11" frame. Our specialist finally recommended surgery, which he underwent a year ago last summer. Thankfully, since then he has gained over 50 pounds. His bone scans are good each time we test them (he is vulnerable to osteoporosis because of his weak immune system). Our specialist credits much of his good health to the fact that he is running! The exercise keeps his bones and muscles strong and healthy, and the endorphins keep his mood happy and relaxed.

The day of the Marine Corps Marathon was full of heroes. Everywhere I looked, I saw them. The Marines themselves, who are putting their lives on the line daily for our country. The police force and paramedic teams, who kept the event safe for everyone. The runners, who came from all over the country and the world; who competed on foot, on adaptive bikes, in wheelchairs and on crutches, who were determined to set a goal and

(Continued on page 8)





# Inside

## The



### *Social Skills Classes to Start*

ASD will offer its first six-week long social skills class for teens beginning February 2, 2007. Hopefully, this will be the first of many classes that we'll offer around the state. These one-hour classes will be held on Friday evening at 7 p.m. taught by Paula Varrossi. Paula is a licensed clinical social worker who has also served as a Special Education Director where she started an autism program. She is currently the Director of Children's Services at the West Bergen Mental Healthcare and Center for Children and Youth in Ramsey, New Jersey, where she oversees 27 weekly social skills classes for children with a variety of needs. Requirements for participation include a meeting with the parents and child to assess the child's needs, abilities and interests prior to being accepted. The fee will be \$400 for the six sessions and initial assessment.

Contact Heidi Mizell at (302) 472-2638 or heidi.mizell@delautism.org to arrange an assessment and to register.

### *ASD Expands Office Staff*

We're happy to announce that Cheryl Kelley and Margie Rowles will be expanding their hours at ASD. Cheryl will be taking on programming responsibilities along with her web, newsletter, graphic, parent mentoring and golf duties. Margie will be taking on more administrative duties as the adult project develops, and she will be the primary liaison to the very active Social Committee that Nicole Curran and Robin

Delaney chair. On another front, Heidi Mizell has been working on our Physician's Awareness Project to teach early signs of autism. That project is wrapping up, and Heidi will be joining us to assist with our increasing activities in the areas of supports and services for individuals with Asperger Syndrome. She is the lead for our Teen Night Out and for the social skills training.

### *Advocacy Coalition Develops*

ASD is joining forces with the Arc of Delaware, United Cerebral Palsy, the Down Syndrome Association, and the Lower Delaware Autism Foundation and the Parent Information Center of Delaware to strongly support the passage of the Family Support Medicaid Waiver. We laid the foundation for funding for the waiver last year, but we didn't quite make it. While each organization and its members will continue to advocate this year, it's important for the advocacy community to speak with a single voice that funding the Family Support Waiver is our highest priority.

The waiver, in addition to providing additional funding, will assure that adults with disabilities and their families can control their services and supports. Look for more from us on this issue as the legislative season arrives.

### *Legislative Chair*

The Legislative Committee recently met to set ASD's legislative priorities for the coming season. Member Tim Ireland is taking over leadership of this committee, which has statewide representation on it. We appreciate Tim's willingness to step into this important position.

The first priority is to obtain funding for Family Support Waiver. The second priority is to support the Medicaid Buy-in. If funded, this will allow Medicaid recipients with

disabilities who go to work to buy into Medicaid as their health insurance. Individuals would pay a monthly premium provided their annual income is no greater than 275 percent of the poverty level. The poverty level for a single person living alone is \$9,800, which would cap the eligibility income at \$26,950. The lack of health insurance is one of the greatest barriers to employment for individuals with disabilities, so this is another initiative that the entire disability community supports.

### *Program*

ASD has a very exciting program lined up for the year 2007 thanks to the creative ideas of Susan Chong and Robin Ireland. Look for these sessions coming up:

#### **January 23, 2007**

##### *Digestive Dysfunctions in Children with Autism*

Dr. Karoly Horvath is a world renowned gastroenterologist who is currently at the A.I. duPont Hospital for Children. He is a specialist in Celiac Disease which calls for a casein-free, gluten-free diet, and is well known for his literature in this area.

#### **February 22, 2007**

MAPS and PATHS—Two forms of Person-Centered Planning. Making Action Plans, known as MAPS and Planning Alternative Tomorrows with Hope, known as PATH, are two of the best known approaches to person-centered planning. These processes are visual, and designed to help create a dream for individuals with disabilities, and strategies to reach that dream. ASD Member Jane Miller of the DDDS Training Unit will demonstrate how MAPS and PATHS are developed for children and adults with disabilities.



## Inside The ASD

*(Continued from page 7)*

This will be a demonstration with Ben Bashkow and his circle of support.

**March 14, 2007** - Dover, DE.

Relationship Development Intervention Program for Autism Spectrum Disorders--the RDI® Program. Tina Grahl – Certified RDI Consultant.

This program is a parent-based clinical treatment for individuals with autism spectrum and other relationship-based disorders. It is rooted in the belief that building dynamic intelligence competencies is the key to improving the quality of life of those with ASD.

**April 3, 2007**

Creative Supports for Your Adult Child. Jackie Marquette, a mom and doctoral student, will share her son's successes as an adult, along with those of 15 other families who have assisted their adult children to have a full and productive life. ASD will also be sponsoring a full day workshop on April 4, 2007.

## Nick and the Marines

*(Continued from page 6)*

reach it. The spectators, who held signs, wore goofy hats and decorated their cars to show their support for this tremendous effort and to cheer their runner to victory. Our coaches, Judy and Rob, worked so hard and gave so much of themselves to prepare our kids for this race; they are all heroes in their own right.

We often think of heroes as people who save lives. The way I see it, Judy and Rob and every teacher who has ever touched Nick's life has saved his life. Saved it from apathy. Saved it from indifference, from immobility, from ignorance, from lack of achievement and from isolation. Because of these people, Nick has had the opportunity to experience life at its best, and to experience this world-renowned race, the Marine Corps Marathon, the way every single runner from every walk of life experienced it. Semper Fidelis...always faithful. Our gratitude to you all forever!

# Thank you!

To Crystal Trust for their recent grant of \$8,300 to ASD for a photocopier!



And to all those who gave to ASD's first Annual Appeal!

Thank you to Dale Oberender of Sussex County for setting up ASD Roller Skating Parties at the Milford Skating Center. Here is a little note we got from Dale about the skating party that was held on December 9, 2006.



"We had a great time at the skating event. We had eight families, about 20-25 people come. There were several new faces which was encouraging. I hope to keep building it up and get more folks to attend. We also had a couple of volunteers (our neighbors Tom and Pat Hamer) come to help out with the kids, too. They were a big help. I collected some emails from those attending to let them know about future skating events. Everyone seemed to enjoy themselves and several parents walked the rink with their kids while teaching them how to skate. It really works well with the rink and their willingness to relax the rules for our kids."



### Girls Just Wanna Have Fun... Mom's Night Out!!

The next Mom's Night Out will be held on January 27, 6 p.m. at Monica McMahan's Home in Pike Creek. It's going to be a Tarot Party featuring Madame Cynthia! \$20.00 per reading, only the first ten people to sign-up will be able to get a reading due to time restrictions. Bring a dish and a bottle of wine (or your favorite drink) to share. Please RSVP by January 24, 2007. Contact Monica McMahan at (302) 235-2101 or



### Dad's Night Out

February 13, 2007  
Time and Location TBA  
(They always wait till the last minute to plan things!)

Who can go? Dads, Uncles, Grandfathers or Friends of those living with autism.

Interested? Of course you are!



Contact:  
Mark Frampton  
(302) 998-1466

### ASD Roller Skating Parties

Saturday, February 3, 2007—Christiana Skating Center, Newark. 5:15 -7:15 p.m. AND  
Saturday, February 17, 2007 — Milford Skating Center, Sussex. 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.



Closed to the general public. Admission is free. Bring family and friends. Skate rentals are \$1.50—\$3.00 depending on what type of skate you want. Easy lighting and music. Snack bar is open. No RSVP needed. Just show up and have a good time!

### PARENT'S COFFEE HOUR

***The Second Tuesday of Every Month***

Crossroads Restaurant, Route 7 & Kirkwood Hwy, Wilmington.



Moms, Dads, Grandparents or anyone with a connection to autism is welcome to attend. Little ones not in school? No problem, bring them along, too.

***Just Show Up at 9 a.m. and Ask for the Autism Table. Coffee is on US!***

### ASPERGER'S TEEN NIGHT OUT

Once again we announce that we will offer a teen game night for individuals with Asperger's Syndrome.

The group meets at Al duPont Hospital for Children in room 1F-51 from 7:00-8:30 PM.

The group is limited to 12 and costs \$50.00 for the five sessions. The dates we will be meeting: January 19, February 16, March 16, April 20 and May 18.

This group is purely social and is for ages 13-18.

For more information or to register, please call Heidi Mizell at ASD (302) 472-2638, ext 205.



## Summer Recreational Resources

Here is a list of resources to look into for summer time fun!

*The following camps and facilities are in no way associated with the Autism Society of Delaware and are being provided as information only. The Autism Society of Delaware is not responsible for the programs, their content, structure or guidelines.*

### Delaware Special Olympics

619 S. College Ave  
University of Delaware  
Newark, DE 19716-1901  
(302) 831-4653  
[www.sode.org](http://www.sode.org)

546 S. Bedford Street  
Room 2125  
Georgetown, DE 19947  
(302) 855-0546  
(866) 456-7633 (toll free)

### Lauber's Karate Plus

Camp Lauber Runs from the time school lets out until it goes back to session. They also have an after school program from 3:30 to 6:15 p.m.

1230 Pulaski Highway  
Bear, DE 19701  
(302) 836-8264

### TOP Soccer @ Kirkwood

Kirkwood Soccer Club  
1220 River Road  
New Castle, DE 19720  
(302) 322-4220  
[www.kirkwoodsoccer.org](http://www.kirkwoodsoccer.org)

### TOP Soccer @ Hockessin

Hockessin Soccer Club  
740 Evanson Road  
Hockessin, DE 19707  
(302) 234-1444

### TOP Soccer Schutte Park for Kent County

Central DE Soccer Association  
(302) 697-8331

### Farm of Dreams (Therapeutic Horseback Riding)

2325 S. DuPont Highway  
Smyrna, DE 19977  
(302) 653-6731

### Southern Delaware Therapeutic Horseback Riding

R.D. 1 Box 233A  
Lewes, DE 19958  
(302) 644-1920  
[www.sdtrhr.com](http://www.sdtrhr.com)

### Mary Campbell Center (Recreational Programs and Summer Day Camp)

4641 Weldin Road  
Wilmington, DE 19803  
(302) 762-6025  
[www.marycampbellcenter.org](http://www.marycampbellcenter.org)

### Summer Day Camp—United Cerebral Palsy (They Accept Autistic Children)

New Castle County:  
UCP Center  
700 A River Road  
Wilmington, DE 19809  
(302) 764-2400

Kent & Sussex County  
UCP Center for Southern DE  
3249 Midstate Road  
Felton, DE 19943  
(302) 335-5626

### Easter Seals Camp Fairlee Manor (Autism Camp Available)

22242 Bay Shore Road  
Chestertown, MD 21620  
(410) 778-0566  
[www.de.easterseals.com](http://www.de.easterseals.com)  
[fairlee@esdel.com](mailto:fairlee@esdel.com)

### Freedom Hills Therapeutic Riding Program

55 Rolling Hills Ranch Lane



Port Deposit, MD 21904  
(410) 378-3817  
[www.freedomehills.org](http://www.freedomehills.org)

### Camp Greentop, The League for People with Disabilities, Inc.

111 E. Cold Spring Lane  
Baltimore, MD 21239  
(410) 323-0500, ext 366  
[www.campgreentop.org](http://www.campgreentop.org)

### Camp Lee Mar

450 Route 590  
Lacawaxen, PA 18435  
(570) 685-1708

### Camp WISP

301 Camp Meeting Road  
Sewickley, PA 15143  
(866) 893-4751, ext 2889  
[www.dtwatson.org](http://www.dtwatson.org)

### Aaron's Acres (This Camp is Also Open to Siblings)

1901 Olde Homestead Lane  
P.O. Box 10485  
Lancaster, PA 17605  
(717-) 368-1372  
[www.udservices.org](http://www.udservices.org)

### Summit Camp

Route 371  
Honesdale, PA 18431  
(800) 323-9908  
[www.summitcamp.com](http://www.summitcamp.com)

### Rocky Run YMCA

Just over the state line in PA!  
(610) 627-9622  
[www.rockrunymca.org](http://www.rockrunymca.org)





ASD  
CALENDAR

Childcare is available at all regular ASD chapter meetings. Please contact the office at 302.472.2638 or [delautism@delautism.org](mailto:delautism@delautism.org) two days in advance.

ASD Chapter Meetings

- ▶ **January 23, 2007** — ASD Chapter Meeting, 7:00 p.m. Special Olympics Office, Newark. Special guest speaker, Dr. Karoly Horvath on Digestive Dysfunctions in Children with Autism. More information on page 4.
- ▶ **February 22, 2007** — ASD Chapter Meeting, 7:00 p.m. Location TBA. Learn about MAPS and PATHS, life planning for youth and adults with disabilities. More information on page 4.
- ▶ **March 14, 2007** — ASD Chapter Meeting, 7:00 p.m. Charlton School, Dover. Special guest speaker, Libby Majewski on a new therapy, RDI. More information in the next issue of *The Sun*.

Social Events, Public Awareness & Fundraisers

- ▶ **January 9, 2007** — Parent Coffee Hour, Crossroads Restaurant– Route 7 & Kirkwood Highway, Wilmington, 9:00 a.m. More information on page 9.
- ▶ **January 19, 2007**—Young Teen Game Night. More information on page 9.
- ▶ **January 27, 2007**— Mom’s Night Out — 6:00 p.m. Tarot Party. More information on page 9.
- ▶ **February 3, 2007** — ASD New Castle County Roller Skating Party, 5:15-7:15 p.m. Christiana Skating Center, Newark. More information on page 9.
- ▶ **February 13, 2007** — Parent Coffee Hour, Crossroads Restaurant– Route 7 & Kirkwood Highway, Wilmington, 9:00 a.m. More information on page 9.
- ▶ **February 13, 2007**— Dad’s Night Out. Time and location TBA. Please contact Mark Frampton, (302) 998-1466. More information on page 9.
- ▶ **February 16, 2007**—Teen Game Night. More information on page 9.
- ▶ **February 17, 2007** — ASD Sussex County Roller Skating Party, 5:30—7:30 p.m. Milford Skating Rink. No RSVP needed. Free admission. \$1.50-\$3 skate rentals. Snack bar is open. Autism friendly lights and music. Bring family and friends! More information on page 9.
- ▶ **March 31, 2007** — ASD Spring Egg Hunt. More information in next issue of *The Sun*.
- ▶ **April 28, 2007** — Walk the High Road for Autism Walk. Bellevue State Park. More information on page 13.
- ▶ **May 31, 2007**—Drive for Autism Research Celebrity-Am Golf Outing. DuPont Country Club, Wilmington.

Support Groups

Parents/caregivers of an individual with an autism spectrum disorder are welcome. (*Autism, Asperger’s Syndrome, PDD-NOS*). The New Castle County evening support group meetings are held on the third Tuesday of every other month.

- ▶ **February 20, 2007** — ASD’s N.C.C. Support Group— South Wilmington. Meetings are held on the 3rd Tuesday of every other month and are facilitated by Kathy Hupp. Meetings are held at 7:00 p.m. at the ASD office, 5572 Kirkwood Highway, Orchard Commons.

Other Events

- ▶ **February 13, 2007** — Parent Information Center of Delaware Presents: “Hear it Here First! How the No Child Left Behind Act and the IDEA 2004 Regulations impact students with disabilities.” A Wrightslaw Program featuring Peter and Pamela Wright. Delaware Technical & Community College, Stanton Campus. Register on line: [www.picofdel.org](http://www.picofdel.org) or call 1-888-547-4412.
- ▶ **April 14, 2007** — AutismExpo 2007, 10 a.m.—5:00 p.m. Howard Community College, 10901 Little Patuxent Pkwy, Columbia, MD 21045. [www.autismexpo.com](http://www.autismexpo.com).
- ▶ **April 27 & 28** — PECS International Conference—“What’s a Picture Worth?” Keynote Speakers, Andy Bondy & Lori Frost. Renaissance Philadelphia Hotel Airport, Philadelphia, PA. For more information call: 888-732-7462 or visit them on line: [www.pecs.com](http://www.pecs.com)





## Christina School District Misspends Millions; Other Local Districts' Tax Tuition Contributions Now To Be Analyzed

By: Robin Ireland

Two months after the announcement that the Christina School District may have misspent \$2.8 million in funds earmarked for special needs programs and services, State Auditor R. Thomas Wager, Jr. says he plans to review how the alleged financial mismanagement may have impacted four neighboring districts.

It all began in January 2006 when Christina School Superintendent Joseph Wise left for a job in Florida and was replaced with Dr. Lillian Lowery. Seeking to understand why the district was in such dire financial trouble, Dr. Lowery requested an audit. The audit revealed that the district had spent \$2.8 million in tuition tax dollars for special needs students on items not allowable by state law.

Some call it creative accounting. Others say it was incompetence. Wagner describes it as "an egregious abuse of taxpayer trust." Either way, special needs students from across Delaware have lost the financial equivalent of dozens of teachers.

The state collects tuition taxes in order to educate special needs children – to pay for programs, hire teachers, and buy equipment that isn't useful or available in a typical school setting. Guidelines for the use of tuition taxes are clear. By law, that money can't be used to improve buildings, enhance regular education programs or to pay the salaries of teachers for typically developing children.

The Christina School district used \$1.2 million in tuition tax funds to

renovate the Pyle Building of the Sarah Pyle Academy, an alternative high school for students who aren't succeeding in a traditional setting. So, while the school does serve special needs students, using tuition tax money to pay for the renovation was against the law, Wagner said. Renovations costing more than \$500,000 must be approved by the voters in a special referendum. Plus, tuition taxes can't be used for capital improvements.

"There are rules about how money can be spent by a school district. It doesn't just go into one big pot that you can use as you like," Wagner said. "I can't judge their intention. What I can say is that they were spending too much money and they had a problem. Districts are allowed to collect tuition taxes without a referendum. So I can see how an administrator might set an artificially high tuition tax and then spend the money on other things."

In addition, tuition taxes follow a child from district to district. If you live in the Brandywine School District and send your child to the Delaware Autism Program, a portion of school taxes are paid by your district to Christina. If Christina spends that money on other things, they have, in essence, inappropriately taken funds from taxpayers in another district.

Wagner met with officials on Friday and it was decided that tuition taxes paid to Christina from the Appoquinimink, Colonial, Brandywine, and Red Clay districts also will be examined.

## ASD and the Christina District

ASD does not attribute any wrong use of funds to the Delaware Autism Program, it's staff or management. It is our concern however, that the DAP have all the funds available that are required to teach our children with autism. To address this issue, the ASD Board of Directors has reached out to Christina's School Board about our concerns, and we have been invited by Dr. Lowery to work with the district to ensure that this occurs. Board member Rob Gilsdorf, who has school board and extensive financial experience, will be working with district officials and the Finance Review Committee (FRC) to make sure a robust process is in place so that our children receive the funding they require.

DAP Principal Dr. John Dewey said the school has not suffered for the incident. He said that teachers at DAP are hired by a funding formula related to the number of students at the school and that he generally gets what he asks for in terms of equipment, professional development and supplies. "It's not like we had this money and now it's gone," Dewey said. "If we meet the funding criteria for a new teacher, we hire one."

"Still," Wagner said, "laws exist for a reason. Taxes collected for one purpose cannot be used for another. This money was supposed to be used to make education better for children with special needs, who don't speak English, who are deaf, and these administrators may have taken it away from the taxpayers on false pretenses. Now we have to find out if they overcharged taxpayers in other districts, too."



Walk The  
High Road  
For Autism

## Team Up for Walk the High Road for Autism!

We're calling all ASD members to gather their friends, family, co-workers, and congregations (any group you can think of!) to form Teams for *Walk the High Road for Autism* on April 28!

Team members help each other raise money through mutual encouragement and friendly competition. Teams might hold informal contests to see who can raise the most money, sign up the most donors of \$20+, or recruit the most new Team members. Gatherings like monthly breakfasts to report progress or a happy hour to celebrate hitting a milestone are fun ways for Teams to bond and remember why they're Walking. Other ideas for Team and individual fundraising can be found at [www.delautism.org/walk.htm](http://www.delautism.org/walk.htm).

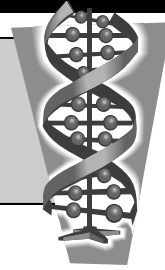
Captaining a Team is a great opportunity to exercise your leadership skills. ASD will look to our Captains to recruit Team members, encourage Walker fundraising, and be the "point person" for both ASD and their Walkers. Captains can also set up a Team page at [www.firstgiving.com/asdwalk](http://www.firstgiving.com/asdwalk) where their Walkers can register as part of the Team and build their own personalized fundraising web pages to receive online donations. On Walk Day, Captains will collect their Walkers' money and paperwork, check it for accuracy, and deliver it to the Team Registration station. All Captains will have an ASD liaison who will check in periodically to make sure Captains are not only giving encouragement, but receiving it!

If you've been thinking about forming a Team, now is a good time to build your Team Page and start recruiting Walkers. Make a list of people who might be interested, and send them a link to [www.delautism.org/walk.htm](http://www.delautism.org/walk.htm). From there, they can get all Walk information and register at your Team Page or use the registration form in the brochures that will come with the official Team packets. The brochures will also include worksheets to track offline (cash/check) donors.

Team packets will be printed and distributed in early February 2007. To be added to the list to receive one, email [kim.siegel@delautism.org](mailto:kim.siegel@delautism.org).



# Research Headlines



## Ped Med: The biological factor in autism

By LIDIA WASOWICZ  
UPI Senior Science Writer

SAN FRANCISCO, Nov. 28 (UPI) -- Scientists trying to dig up the roots of autism are unearthing mounting evidence of the immune system's involvement in the intractable disorder.

Scientific hints that the body's disease-fighting mechanisms play a role in autism first surfaced in 1986, researchers said.

However, for the most part, these studies were small and the results inconclusive so that what now appears a logical concept didn't catch on until more recently, said David Amaral, professor of psychiatry and behavioral sciences at the University of California, Davis, School of Medicine and Medical Center and M.I.N.D. research director.

"You cannot have a normal neurodevelopment without having a normal immune system," said Judy Van de Water, an immunology specialist at the UC Davis Center for Children's Environmental Health.

"We know when these kids are faced with particular environmental agents, such as certain bacteria, they don't respond as rigorously as the control kids do."

Among other projects, she's looking into whether children with autism show signs of autoimmunity, a phenomenon in which the body's protective system goes haywire, turning on the very tissues and organs it's

supposed to safeguard from attack.

"This is important because a lot of investigators have suggested that patients with autism have auto-antibodies, so we're looking at whether these kids have auto-antibodies to brain tissue," she told an international meeting on autism research in Boston.

Indeed, when Van de Water probed the brain's disease-deflecting armor in 30 autistic children ages 2 to 5 and 26 without the disorder, she detected a variation in the way specialized messenger molecules called cytokines react to bacteria and other health threats in the two groups.

These immune proteins, which normally get into gear when a response is needed to injury or irritation, instead appear to be constantly "switched on," or inflamed, in individuals with autism, reported another team, which veered off the beaten path to study the issue.

Rather than taking the more common approach of looking at the immensely complex immune system as a whole, the investigators from Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine in Baltimore and the University of Milan in Italy decided to narrow their field of inquiry to just a few components within the relatively restricted environment of the central nervous apparatus.

They confined their search to the cell-coordinating cytokines, measuring their levels in brain tissue samples taken from 11 children and adults ages 5 to 44 who had

died by accident, illness or injury.

They observed the abnormal patterns of inflammation, reinforcing the view that immune activation in the brain is involved in autism. However, the authors noted, it is not yet clear whether the irregularity is destructive or beneficial, or perhaps both, to the developing brain.

Wanting to see if their findings would hold up, the investigators followed up with an analysis of cerebrospinal fluid from six children with autism ages 5 to 12.

As in the previous studies, they once again detected elevated cytokine levels, raising the possibility that ultimately doctors might be able to use these anomalies to diagnose autism or even that they might be able to treat the inflammation, thereby preventing or reversing the disorder.

But that's a long time and many studies away.

First, they must deal with such challenges as figuring out the chicken-and-egg quandary that can sabotage attempts to definitively get at the source of an ailment.

In the case at hand, the scientists were uncertain whether the abnormality they observed is a cause or consequence of the disorder.

Just as the body's first-aid response to a skinned knee is to protectively wall off the injury and ward off the agent of harm with heat, redness and swelling, so, too, it may be that the inflammation detected by the researchers may represent the brain's efforts to combat some other cell-damaging process.

*(Continued on page 15)*



Ped Med: The biological factor in autism  
(Continued from page 14)

The finding "backs up what we're seeing in the peripheral blood, that perhaps there is a change in these kids and the cytokine production in the brain is altered," said Van de Water, who plans to conduct her own investigation into what those changes mean, whether they affect brain function and how they might be related to some of the classic symptoms of autism.

For example, cytokines are known to affect slumber, and sleep disorders are a common complaint of individuals with autism.

Among the next steps, scientists are looking into what role heredity may play in the development of immune abnormalities in the brain that may stir up a susceptibility to autism.

To get a clue, Van de Water and other researchers are looking back, sifting through tens of thousands of medical histories for any patterns in the rates of earaches, colds and other infections in autistic youngsters.

Although still preliminary, results of one study — of 88,000 babies born between 1995 and 1999 in Northern California — hint at an increased risk of autism in the offspring of mothers with psoriasis, a chronic condition that runs in families.

Some 3 million American women of child-bearing age have the disorder marked by itchy, scaly, inflamed skin on the elbows, knees, back and/or scalp, according to the patient advocacy group Psoriasis Cure Now!

The early findings also indicate expectant mothers suffering from asthma and allergies — particularly

during the second trimester — may face double the typical risk of giving birth to a child with autism.

However, the presence during pregnancy of 45 other autoimmune diseases that turn the body against itself — including rheumatoid arthritis, type 1 diabetes, rheumatic fever, certain heart complications, lupus and multiple sclerosis — appear to have no bearing on the baby's autism status, the study authors reported.

These maladies are under scrutiny because they affect primarily women — who account for 78 percent of all cases — and because chemicals produced in response to their presence often are found at high levels in the bloodstream of autistic children.

That would suggest a possible link between autism and pre-birth exposure to an autoimmune ailment, scientists said.

The authors speculate a common genetic cause may underlie such conditions as asthma and autism. Or, because the mother's illness was frequently diagnosed in the second trimester of pregnancy, the flare-up may have triggered her immune system to produce more inflammatory cytokines, which, in turn, might have disrupted brain development in the fetus, the researchers proposed.

*(Note: In this multi-part installment, based on dozens of reports, conferences and interviews, Ped Med is keeping on eye on autism, taking a backward glance at its history and surrounding controversies, facing facts revealed by research and looking forward to treatment enhancements and expansions. Wasowicz is the author of the forthcoming book, "Suffer the Child: How the American Healthcare System Is Failing Our Future," to be published by Capital Books.)*

## ASD 2007 New Year's Resolutions

1. Join ASD
2. Attend an ASD Chapter Meeting
3. Join a Committee
4. Make a Donation
5. Volunteer at an Event
6. Make Another Donation
7. Gather a Walk Team
8. Attend a Social Function
9. Put Out a Poster
10. Tell a Friend!





## A Message from WOLF

Last year ASD brought three adults who are on the spectrum to Delaware to share their experiences. We continue to get feedback from families who heard them about what a powerful experience it was. We received this note from one of the speakers, Wolf Dunaway, who lives in Baltimore and we thought you would all like to hear how he is doing.



years ago I was on SSI, SSDI and Special Section 8 Housing Programs for the disabled.

My success is a testimonial to the good you all do in the name of helping others. An old Wolf never forgets where he came from and those who helped him. If ever you want me to share my story again in any forum just let me know. Stay strong and God Bless.

Mr. Wolf F. Dunaway  
SSA EWD Operating System Integration \ 3rd Level Tech Support  
SSA Image Management Team

*Wolf will be the featured speaker at the November 2007 ASD Chapter Meeting in Dover.*

*The Greatest  
Revenge is to  
Accomplish  
What Others  
Say You  
Cannot Do.*



Dear ASD,

I have not heard from you in a long time. I hope all is going well with you and the great work you do on behalf of disadvantaged and disabled students. I am doing extremely well. I am still working on my Autism Awareness book but it is finally nearing completion thank goodness. Since I am now a GS-12 as an Information Specialist with the government I have far less time to write than I used to when I had no job.

Anyone who thinks government employees are not overworked need only follow me around in my job duties to be completely disabused of that outdated inaccurate notion. Since I am so old now I know I won't be invited back to speak but I want you all to know I have not forgotten you. I am a GS-12 now making almost 70K a year now. I just want you to know when I entered Howard Community College almost seven

### Posters, Posters Everywhere and Still so Many More to Go!

ASD is trying to get public awareness posters into the community during the month of January. If you are willing to put a poster at your place of employment, a favorite store, church or any other available public place, give us a call!

We will also be asking folks to put posters out during the months of March and April for ASD's upcoming walk—"Walk the High Road for Autism" which will be held on April 28, 2007. (More information on page 13.)

This is a super easy way to help ASD and spread public awareness. Posters are available now. Just call (302) 472-2638 to make arrangements to pick one or several up today!





## Volunteer Recognition Awards—April 2007

Who do you think has made a difference to the Autism Society of Delaware? Is there someone in the community you'd like to publicly honor because they made a difference to your loved one with autism?

ASD is asking for nominations for its Volunteer Recognition Awards. If you know of a business or individual who should be honored for their efforts, please nominate them for a Volunteer Recognition Award to be presented in April 2007. Your nomination should include their name, address, phone number, and a brief description stating why you think they should be honored.

Please send your nomination by: February 15, 2007:

Autism Society of Delaware  
5572 Kirkwood Highway  
Wilmington, DE 19808  
Attention: Volunteer Recognition

Or e-mail at: [delautism@delautism.org](mailto:delautism@delautism.org)

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### Volunteer Recognition Nomination

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Person/Business you wish to nominate: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason why you wish to nominate this person/business: \_\_\_\_\_

Nature of the Volunteer work \_\_\_\_\_

Time spent \_\_\_\_\_ Who Was Impacted? \_\_\_\_\_

Nominee's address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Nominee's Phone: Daytime: \_\_\_\_\_ Evening: \_\_\_\_\_

Please send your nomination by: February 15, 2007:

Autism Society of Delaware 5572 Kirkwood Highway Wilmington, DE 19808  
Attention: Volunteer Recognition or e-mail at: [delautism@delautism.org](mailto:delautism@delautism.org)

# Autism Society of America Membership Application

Please enroll me in the following category:

Student \$15    Individual \$30    Family \$40    Outside USA \$50    Professional \$100    Agency \$500  
 Life \$1,500

I am a new member    I am renewing membership

Name (s): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (h) \_\_\_\_\_ (w) \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Employer or professional background: \_\_\_\_\_

I am joining through ASA's local chapter named the Autism Society of Delaware.

I am a:  Parent    Family Member    Service Provider    Educator    Medical Professional  
 Individual with Autism    Other (please describe): \_\_\_\_\_

**Yes!** Please add my name to the mailing list to receive ASD's newsletter *The Sun*. (***This is for families who do not receive The Sun through DAP Distribution only please.***)

My membership fee is..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
I would also like to contribute this amount directly to ASD ..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Total amount enclosed (add both amounts)..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please make your check payable to the Autism Society of Delaware (ASD) and send the check and application to ASD, 5572 Kirkwood Highway Wilmington, DE 19808. All membership fees and contributions are tax deductible.

The Autism Society of Delaware  
5572 Kirkwood Highway  
Wilmington, DE 19808

Non Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage Paid  
Permit # 317  
Newark, DE

