

CARD



CENTER FOR AUTISM & RELATED DISABILITIES

at The University of South Florida

COMMUNITY CONNECTION

Louis de la Parte Florida Mental Health Institute, Department of Child & Family Studies — Volume 14, Issue 1 • Feb 2011 - July 2011

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Executive Director's Message: *Community Partnerships Create Opportunities*

On January 13, 2011, Mayor Pam Iorio cut the ribbon at Mercedes-Benz of Tampa's new location at 4636 Dale Mabry Highway. This is CARD's newest "autism friendly" business and is the first car dealership in the Tampa Bay region to pursue this distinction. Not only is this going to be an "autism friendly" business to welcome customers who might have a family member diagnosed with autism, but it will also be a dealership that will have Artistas Café, a coffee bar in the facility, run by Art for Autism, a non-profit organization.

Staffed by young adults (known as "Artistas"), who are on the autism spectrum, Artistas Café will serve premium gourmet beverages such as coffees, teas and cocoas – bearing such names as "The Dali" and "The Picasso" – to Mercedes-Benz of Tampa guests and employees. Three full-time Artistas, who have previous work and volunteer experience, have been hired, ranging in ages from 19 to 22 years old.

"Working in the Artistas Café is a great way for people who are on the autism spectrum to gain on-the-job training and to learn and practice social

skills," said Art for Autism's owner Vicky Westra.

It was the vision and commitment of Mercedes-Benz of Tampa and its general manager, Frank Cuteri, to support and truly embrace the idea of welcoming individuals with autism into the Mercedes Benz family. Mr. Cuteri contacted the Center for Autism and Related Disabilities (CARD) at the University of South Florida to provide on-site training to 120 employees. "I saw it as a way to give back to the community and to take care of our customers," said Cuteri. "I think it sends a powerful message: we don't know what we can accomplish until we try."

For more information about Art for Autism, please visit http://www.javamo.com/autism_foundation.shtml

—Karen Berkman, Ph.D.



Dr. Karen Berkman,
CARD Executive Director

Highlights In This Issue

Executive Director's Message: <i>Community Partnerships Create Opportunities</i>	1
Learning Academy Class of 2011 Ready for Internships.....	2
The CARD-USF Learning Curve: <i>Our Website for Teachers</i>	3

2011 Health & Wellness Symposium	3
Autism Support Directory	4
Spring Sprint for Autism: <i>Registration Form</i>	5
Spring Sprint for Autism: <i>Sponsorship</i>	6

Preparing for IEP Meetings: <i>A Parent and Teacher Perspective</i>	7
Autism Friendly Business Update!.....	7
Fiesta by the Bay: <i>Save the Date</i>	8



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Our Mission

The mission of the Center for Autism & Related Disabilities (CARD) at the University of South Florida is to provide support and assistance that optimizes the potential of people with autism and related disabilities. Our effort to achieve this mission is exemplified in the four "components of caring" that are the focus of our work:

- Direct Assistance – Providing individualized support for people with autism and related disabilities, and their families, in natural community settings.
- Technical Assistance & Consultation – Undertaking activities on behalf of programs (e.g., classroom, supported living residence, supported employment site, etc.) that serve people with autism and related disabilities.
- Professional Training – Providing instruction on autism and related disabilities through our workshops, conferences, in-service training, and college courses.
- Public Education and Awareness – Developing and disseminating information about people with autism and related disabilities.

As one of seven regional, university-based CARD sites, CARD-USF provides its services to individuals with autism and related disabilities, their families, related professionals, and the general public throughout a fourteen county catchment area in west, central, and southwest Florida.

Endorsement Policy

As a policy, CARD will not lend its name to the endorsement of any specific program, practice, or model that is offered for service to people with autism and related disabilities. However, the sharing of information and training opportunities are key functions of the CARD program.

Events, activities, programs, and facilities of the University of South Florida are available to all without regard to race, color, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, disability, age, Vietnam or disabled veteran status as provided by law and in accordance with the University's respect for personal dignity.

Learning Academy Class of 2011 Ready for Internships

The Learning Academy Class of 2011 returned to class in January eager to begin their internships which are a critical component of the program. During the first semester, students engage in self-discovery and career exploration through a variety of self assessments and interest inventories. The students assess their strengths and abilities and make decisions about where they would like to gain more experience through an internship. Learning Academy staff then go about the process of recruiting desirable internship sites based on these preferences. The entire process is time intensive but extremely valuable because each internship is created with an individual student in mind and each student gets the opportunity to try out work in a career they have selected.

This year, students will be completing internships in a variety of settings. Students will be gaining experience in accounting, nursing, library science, graphic design, child care, criminal justice, clerical, and animal science.

As the students progress through their internships, they maintain a journal where they record their experiences. There are multiple purposes for the journal. First it provides the staff with a summary of the specific tasks completed each week by each student. Secondly, it calls for the students to reflect on their experience

and think about issues such as whether or not they have received enough support and guidance from their co-workers and supervisors at the internship site, what the most challenging thing that happened during the week was, and what if any actions or decisions would they have done or made differently and how?

The students are also required to think about how their activities are helping them with their employment goals. We prompt them to answer questions such as, are you learning more about a particular topic, creating more connections/networks in their field of your interest, or simply polishing their communication and social skills?

All this information is utilized during class discussion so that students can enhance their problem solving and team building skills in the safety of the class environment.

Internships have paid off well for the class of 2010. Five students continue in their previous internship assignments in a volunteer capacity providing a valuable community service. Two students have been hired by their internship locations and one is self employed in her own business. One student is attending Hillsborough Community College and one student is applying for the New York Academy.



The CARD-USF Learning Curve: *Our Website for Teachers*

In addition to the CARD-USF website, the CARD-USF Learning Curve website focuses specifically on the issues, needs and accomplishments of teachers of students who have autism. This online resource provides interesting and interactive classroom features and ideas for teachers, tutorials on specific instructional strategies and video summaries of CARD sponsored in-service training opportunities.

Given the current financial and time limitations teachers often face, the CARD Learning Curve offers a way to learn from other teachers as well as showcase student accomplishments. It also is a great source for free downloadable instructional materials, ranging from literacy instruction to health and fitness, social supports, and data collection. Specific website features include:

- **CLASSROOM HIGHLIGHTS** — features about what teachers and

their students are doing in their classrooms

- **PEPSA PARTICIPANTS** — features that illustrate the PEPSA program and the innovative activities of PEPSA participants
- **TUTORIALS** — short, directive instruction videos on strategies and support ideas for the classroom
- **LITERACY** — Instructional tutorials on literacy topics for teachers, along with a wealth of downloadable stories, videos and instructional supports for instructional use.
- **SOCIAL SCRIPTS** — a place to get and share illustrated and printable or animated social scripts that pertain to a range of common social situations in the school or classroom setting.



- **INTERVIEWS WITH EXPERTS** — video summaries of presentations or in-service training sponsored by CARD-USF for teachers.

The CARD-USF Learning Curve can be found at <http://learningcurve.fmhi.usf.edu>. For more information, contact Mary Reed (reed@usf.edu).

2011 Health & Wellness Symposium

Last year's 1st Annual Health & Wellness Symposium united more than 200 families and vendors around promoting healthy lifestyles for individuals with autism spectrum disorders. With spirits high and New Year's resolutions in gear, this year's event will be moving to the Lakeland/Winter Haven Area in September 2011. Health issues such as dental care, difficult sleeping habits, feeding challenges, and access to community based fitness opportunities can be challenging for individuals with all types of disabilities. Join CARD-USF as we promote Healthy Living 4 Everyone.



**Autism Society of America
(National Organization)**
Website: <http://www.autism-society.org/>

**Autism Society of Florida, Inc.
Florida State Chapter #131**
E-mail: webmast@autismfl.com
Website: <http://www.autismfl.com>

COLLIER COUNTY

Collier County Autism Support Group
Meetings: 3rd Thursday of the month
Time: 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.
Location: North Naples United Methodist Church
Founder's Hall • 6000 Goodlette Rd N • Naples, FL
Contact: Robin King
E-mail: CollierAutism@gmail.com

HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY

Asperger's Support Group for Adults
Meetings: Every other Thursday
Time: 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Location: 2901 Swann Ave • Tampa, FL
Cost: \$30 per session
Contact: Jason Tompkins, LCSW
Phone: 813-784-0153
Contact Mr. Tompkins for eligibility information.

Concerned Parents of Autistic Children
Meetings: Last Sunday of the month
Time: 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Location: 9631 Raiden Ln • Riverview, FL
Contact: Jim Evans
E-mail: jim.evans@sqldbhelp.com

Easter Seals THRIVE Program
Location: Thrive Office
10335 Cross Creek Blvd, Suite E • Tampa, FL
Contact: Tori
Phone: 813-988-7633 x-15119
Website: http://fl.easterseals.com/site/PageServer?pagename=FLDR_TBThrive
Parents of children with autism.

Parenting with Special Needs
Meetings: Every other Wednesday
Time: 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.
Location: Kid Pro Therapy
16546 N Dale Mabry Hwy • Tampa, FL
Cost: \$10.00 per person per session
Contact: Erica DuPont, LCSW
Phone: 813-966-7064
E-mail: Erica.DuPont@hotmail.com
Parents and caregivers of "special needs" children.

**Parents of Autism and Asperger's
Syndrome Support Group (PASS)**
Meetings: 1st Friday of the month September to May
Time: 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
Location: Campo Family YMCA
3414 Culbreath Road • Valrico, FL
Website: <http://geocities.com/thepassgroup/>
Contact: Lisa Neumann
Phone: 813-765-8644

**STAND (Statewide Advocacy Network
on Disabilities)**
Meetings: 3rd Thursday of the month
Time: 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.
Location: Children's Board of Hillsborough County
1002 E Palm Ave • Tampa, FL
E-mail: advocate@standonline.info
Hillsborough monthly chapter meetings (all disabilities).

LEE COUNTY

*If you are aware of any support groups in Lee County,
please let CARD know.*

PASCO COUNTY

AWARE 4 Autism – East Pasco
Meetings: 1st Saturday of the month
Time: 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Location: First Congregational Church
7900 Fort King Rd • Zephyrhills, FL
Contact: Johanna
Phone: 813-782-9431
E-mail: aware4autism@gmail.com
Caregivers of persons with an autism spectrum disorder.

Koolkidz Social Skills Group for Children with ASD

Meetings: Activities each Wednesday. See website
for current events.
Contact: Suzette
E-mail: suzette@koolkidz.mysite.com
Website: <http://www.koolkidz.mysite.com>
*Children with Asperger's Syndrome and high
functioning autism.*

NAMI Adult Mental Health Peer-Support Group

Meetings: 1st & 3rd Wednesday of the month
Time: 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.
Location: Community Hospital of New Port Richey
Conference Room • New Port Richey, FL

PINELLAS COUNTY

SINC (Sensory Integration: Networking for our Children)

Parent-Only Meetings: 3rd Tuesday of every month
Time: 7:00 p.m.
Location: Jason's Deli • Clearwater, FL
Open Meetings: 2nd & 4th Friday of every month
Time: 9:30 a.m.
Location: Panera Bread, Countryside • Clearwater, FL
(across from Country Side Mall)
Contact: Heather Stevens
Phone: 727-543-2859
Website: http://health.groups.yahoo.com/group/Pinellas_SPD_Support/
*During open meetings, parents responsible for own
children. Online support group also available.*

POLK COUNTY

A Differently Abled Parent Support Group (ADAPS)

Meetings: 3rd Tuesday of the month
Time: 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
Location: Family Fundamentals Building
1021 Lakeland Blvd. • Lakeland, FL
Contact: Kim Ellis at 863-701-1151 ext 152 or
Nicole at 863-686-1221 ext 228
*Families and caregivers of children with disabilities,
ages birth to 21 years.*

Circle of Friends Support Group

Meetings: Every other Thursday of the month.
Location: Alternate between Winter Haven Hospital
and Circle Building, Stuart Avenue • Winter Haven, FL
Contact: Mertice Fehringer
Phone: 863-679-2507

Parental Education for Autism in Children Everywhere (PEACE)

Meetings: 1st Tuesday of the month
Time: 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Location: Family Fundamentals Building
1021 Lakeland Blvd • Lakeland, FL
Contact: Nicole
Phone: 863-686-1221 ext 228
E-mail: Nikki73170@aol.com
Website: <http://www.peacelakeland.com/>

SARASOTA COUNTY

Families Helping Families – Family Support Group

Meetings: 1st & 3rd Thursday of the month
Time: 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.
Location: Venice Bible Church
2395 W Shamrock Drive • Venice, FL
Contact: Vicki
Phone: 941-544-0167
*Family with a child age birth to 22 years with any
behavioral or emotional difficulties.*

Parent Support Group

Meetings: 4th Tuesday of the month
Time: 6:30 p.m. to 7:45 p.m.
Location: Jacaranda Public Library
4143 Woodmere Park Blvd • Venice, FL
Contact: Susie Tromley
Phone: 941-400-4568
*Parents of children with autism/ASD or sensory
processing disorders.*

*Please contact CARD-USF via email at card-usf@fmhi.usf.edu with changes or additions.
Support Group listings are provided as a service
and are not an endorsement by CARD-USF.
Our website has the latest list at http://cardusf.fmhi.usf.edu/MK/support_groups.html.*

Saturday, March 5, 2011

Sunlake High School Stadium

3023 Sunlake Blvd., Land O'Lakes, FL

Join **Oakstead Elementary** and the **Center for Autism and Related Disabilities at USF** as we increase autism awareness and raise funds for special autism projects throughout Pasco County as well as Oakstead Elementary School's physical education and fitness programs. Featuring certified and chip-timed 5K with prizes for top finishers and teams, as well as fundraising awards.

5K, 7:30am:

Students (w/ ID): \$15 Early Bird \$25 after Feb. 5
Adults: \$20 Early Bird \$25 after Feb. 5

1 Mile Fun Run/Walk, 8:15am:

All Ages \$15 Early Bird \$20 after Feb. 5

Online registration and event info at Active.com or go to <http://tinyurl.com/AutismSpringSprint>

Tech shirt guaranteed to all early registrants!

Check-in and onsite registration begins at 6:30am

Packet pick-up: Oakstead Elementary, Fri. March 4th, 4-6:30pm

Sponsorship Info: Contact Christine Rover at crover@usf.edu

Registration Info: Contact Leah Williams or Terra Corrao at springsprintforautism@gmail.com or 813-346-1500

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Sponsored by:



Registration Form

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: (____) ____-____ e-mail: _____

Team? ☐ N ☐ Y (Name): _____

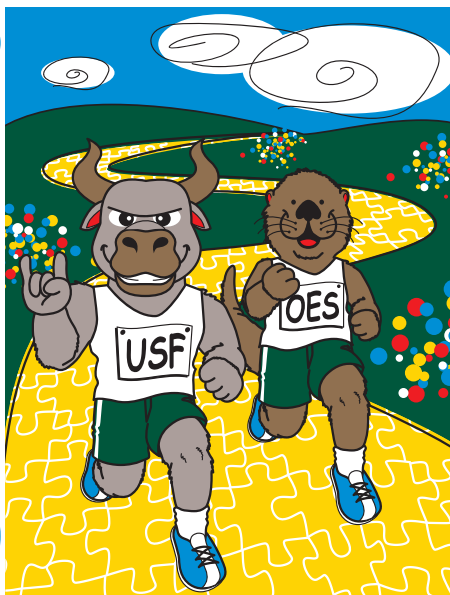
Mail registration form and payment to:

Oakstead Elementary School
Attn: Spring Sprint for Autism
19925 Lake Patience Road
Land O'Lakes, FL 34638

5K Participants			Before 2/5/11	After 2/5/11
Name #1: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F D.O.B. ____/____/____	<input type="checkbox"/> Student (w/ID)	<input type="checkbox"/> \$15	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25
T-Shirt Size (Circle one): YS, YM, XS, S, M, L, XL, XXL	Age on race day 3/5/11: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Non-student	<input type="checkbox"/> \$20	
Name #2: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F D.O.B. ____/____/____	<input type="checkbox"/> Student (w/ID)	<input type="checkbox"/> \$15	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25
T-Shirt Size (Circle one): YS, YM, XS, S, M, L, XL, XXL	Age on race day 3/5/11: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Non-student	<input type="checkbox"/> \$20	
Name #3: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F D.O.B. ____/____/____	<input type="checkbox"/> Student (w/ID)	<input type="checkbox"/> \$15	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25
T-Shirt Size (Circle one): YS, YM, XS, S, M, L, XL, XXL	Age on race day 3/5/11: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Non-student	<input type="checkbox"/> \$20	
1 Mile Fun Run/Walk Participants			Before 2/5/11	After 2/5/11
Name #1: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F D.O.B. ____/____/____	<input type="checkbox"/> Student	<input type="checkbox"/> \$15	<input type="checkbox"/> \$20
T-Shirt Size (Circle one): YS, YM, XS, S, M, L, XL, XXL	Age on race day 3/5/11: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Non-student		
Name #2: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F D.O.B. ____/____/____	<input type="checkbox"/> Student	<input type="checkbox"/> \$15	<input type="checkbox"/> \$20
T-Shirt Size (Circle one): YS, YM, XS, S, M, L, XL, XXL	Age on race day 3/5/11: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Non-student		
Name #3: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F D.O.B. ____/____/____	<input type="checkbox"/> Student	<input type="checkbox"/> \$15	<input type="checkbox"/> \$20
T-Shirt Size (Circle one): YS, YM, XS, S, M, L, XL, XXL	Age on race day 3/5/11: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Non-student		
Total Payment:				

Checks payable to: OES PE (Oakstead Elementary Physical Education)

SPRING Sprint for Autism



Saturday
March 5, 2011
Sunlake High School
3023 Sunlake Blvd. Land O'Lakes
6:30am Registration

**Spring into Action.
Be a Sponsor!**

Champion Sponsor-\$5,000

Note: This level is limited to only one presenting sponsor.

- Large logo on participant tech shirts
- 10 race registrations
- Starter of 1 mile fun run
- Logo on event materials
- Banner at finish line
- Company name on race bibs

Platinum Sponsor - \$3,000

- Medium logo on participant tech shirts
- 6 race registrations
- Logo on event materials
- Banner at start line

Gold Sponsor - \$1,000

- Small logo on participant tech shirts
- 3 race registrations
- Logo on event materials
- Banner along race route

Silver Sponsor - \$500

- Company name on participant tech shirts
- 2 race registrations
- Company name on event materials
- Banner along race route

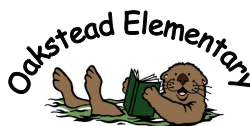
Bronze Sponsor - \$250

- 1 race registration
- Company/sponsor name on event materials
- Sign along race route

Join the Center for Autism and Related Disabilities at USF as we increase awareness of autism and raise funds for special autism projects throughout Pasco County through a partnership with Oakstead Elementary School's physical education and fitness programs.

Please make checks payable to: USF Foundation

For questions or credit card options for sponsorships, contact:
Christine Rover, crover@fmhi.usf.edu or 813-974-9264
Federal Identification Number: 59-0879015



Preparing for IEP Meetings: A Parent and Teacher Perspective

Parenting a child with autism always comes with many challenges. Probably one of the most stressful and challenging times is the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) process.

I remember my first IEP, as a parent, going fairly smoothly even though it was at a time that my soon to be three year old, was extremely demanding of my time. The thought of someone taking my child and providing her with learning opportunities and therapy was looked upon as a much needed respite, with the added benefit of helping her. The two years of preschool seemed to fly by effortlessly and then it was time to transition.

During that two year period, I grew along with my daughter. I became versed in the world of autism which included best practices, best therapies, and

countless suggestions from other mothers of children who had autism. The things that stuck out at that time were “inclusion”, “ABA” and “one-on-one support”. I had been told that I was going to have to fight to get all of those things and fight I did – all the way to the superintendent’s office with a lawyer/advocate by my side.

The meeting was extremely difficult. I would never wish that type of interaction on any parent or professional. The result was that my daughter would be attending one of the “better quality” magnet schools, with a one-on-one aide by her side. It did not last more than a week.

The teacher and the aide were not prepared for the behaviors that erupted from my daughter. This “prepared-to-fight” mother gave in for one reason, I wanted my child in a place where she

would be happy, accepted, and cared for. She still had inclusion, but at the school closest to our home. She also had a teacher trained in special education available who would step in as needed. The point is that even without the ABA, without the one-on-one, my daughter still made tremendous progress.

During that episode of my life, I was pursuing my own degree in special education. I wanted to be that teacher who understood and who could provide an education at the same time. I was ecstatic when the special education director approached me about teaching a preschool class of children who had autism. This was exactly what I had envisioned myself doing and it came into being.

The time came for my first IEP meeting as a teacher. It was very enlightening to be sitting on the other side of the table, knowing full well what everyone must be feeling. I now knew it was difficult to be sitting on the teacher side, knowing that these parents were putting their trust and faith in me alone. I also came to understand that most of the people, who seemed so intimidating to me, as a parent, were there because they had a passion for teaching children.

For parents: The point of the story is to help you be able to put your faith in your schools, your teachers, and your therapists. Most are there because they want to be and because they truly do have the best interest of your child in mind. Try to look at what is best for your child based upon their abilities – rather than everything you might read or hear, particularly on the Internet.

For teachers: Remember to take time to listen to the parents. They know their child better than most others. A simple, informal meeting held prior to the IEP meeting, to go over the process and expectations can go a long way in reducing tension and anxiety for both sides of the table.

Beverly King, M.Ed.
Parent/Teacher

Autism Friendly Business Update!

We have some new members of the “Autism Friendly” business initiative. The following businesses are now autism friendly:

- COURTEOUS CANINE, Tampa
- FIFTH THIRD BANK, Tampa & St. Petersburg
- INGRAM’S PRO KARATE, Tampa
- JABIL, St. Petersburg
- KLS TAE KWON DO, Riverview
- THE LAST RESORT (TRANSDERMAL AND AROMATHERAPY, REFLEXOLOGY), St. Petersburg
- THE MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, St. Petersburg
- NEOS MASSAGE, Wesley Chapel
- TRADEWINDS ISLAND RESORT, St. Pete Beach



The autism friendly initiative helps in many areas. In fact, Tradewinds Island Resort recently hosted a national conference on autism. The training for staff at the resort and the created visual supports helped make the guests feel at home. Jabil has employed a person with autism and continues to be an inclusive employer. If you know of a business wanting to become autism friendly, have the manager contact Mindy Stevens at 813-974-6108.

<http://card-usf.fmhhi.usf.edu/business.asp>



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Louis de la Parte Florida Mental Health Institute
College of Behavioral and Community Sciences
University of South Florida
13301 Bruce B. Downs Blvd., MHC 2113A
Tampa, FL 33612-3899

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SAVE THE DATE!
April 29, 2011

6 *Center for Autism and Related Disabilities at USF*
Years of Celebration!

Fiesta
BY THE BAY

Join us at Gaspar's Grotto for great company,
cool music and delicious food!
Doors open at 5:30pm

For Sponsorships, donations, or questions, please contact Christine at crover@fmhi.usf.edu or 813-974-9264