The Heart of Our Mission

Encouragement

Achievement

Discovery
The Heart of Our Mission...

Thinking about this year’s Donor Report theme, I am filled with gratitude to all those who lend their support to Melmark. Every individual, corporation, organization and foundation listed in this report has played a key role in Melmark’s mission. Your support not only encourages us, it inspires us to continually strive for excellence and innovation in the programs and services we provide to hundreds of children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities who face extraordinary challenges everyday. Your gifts of time, talent, and finances mean a great deal to the dedicated Melmark staff who encourage each individual in their care to learn, grow, and build on their strengths. With your help, Melmark’s staff can continue to provide the innovative programs and services that promote self-confidence, independence and a sense of achievement for those children and adults served.

Our partnership with our donors provides a foundation and bond, which strengthens our efforts in making extraordinary things happen each and every day. In the Meadows Program individuals are encouraged to explore their creativity through the arts and horticulture and, as a result, they are award winners at the Philadelphia Flower Show. The young adults in the Vocational program are empowered to strive for independence and enjoy meaningful employment in the community, experiencing the satisfaction of a job well done at a local restaurant, convenience store or business office. Throughout Melmark’s educational, residential, and recreational programs, children and adults experience the joy of developing friendships with peers, learning to communicate with family, participation in the care of their home, and the fun that comes with going to the movies or shopping, many things we often take for granted. Melmark offers each individual every opportunity they need and deserve to achieve.

In these difficult economic times it is most gratifying and assuring to know that so many of our friends and families continue to believe in our mission and so generously offer encouragement and support.

You are at the Heart of our Mission. Thank you.

H. Robert Marcus
Chairman, Melmark Board of Directors

Nine-tenths of education is encouragement
-Anatole France
Dear Friends and Families,

As I reflect on the past year at Melmark, I am struck by the significant role our families, friends, donors and volunteers play in carrying out our mission. Thank you. The Melmark staff and, most importantly, the children and adults we serve continue to make great strides because of your support.

We should all be very proud of the many achievements realized. A number of new programs and services are underway and growing rapidly. The Early Elementary Education Programs in Pennsylvania and New England are helping very young children overcome behavioral and intellectual challenges. It is such a joy to see these boys and girls flourish and enjoy their newfound skills and independence. The Melmark Pennsylvania Vocational Program, now in its second year, is serving a growing number of young adults, helping them develop a variety of job and social skills. The goal of the program is to place these young adults in community-based employment opportunities.

We are also pleased with the tremendous success of our new Family Training Series at Melmark New England. This program is offered to families of children with autism and was made possible by a foundation grant from Autism Speaks. We are also anxiously awaiting the completion of the Staff Training and Development Center in Pennsylvania, which will offer a significantly expanded and improved training program with the most up-to-date technology for our entire staff. And it is with great pride that a number of our Leadership Staff have contributed to the Pennsylvania “Speaker’s Journal,” an important reference that assists legislators to understand the challenges that individuals with disabilities and their families face each day.

Capital projects are integral to our educational and vocational programs. This year the completion of a new greenhouse for the Meadows Program in Pennsylvania and a playground for the New England school were made possible through the generosity of individuals and foundations.

We also enjoyed a number of special events throughout the year. Among them, a Gala in Pennsylvania held at the Park Hyatt Bellevue in Philadelphia, hosting close to 350 people. We had the privilege of presenting the Melmark Humanitarian Award to the Honorable Dennis O’Brien, then Pennsylvania Speaker of the House, who has been a tireless advocate for individuals with autism. In addition we held two golf tournaments, in Pennsylvania and New England, both extraordinarily successful because of the leadership and generosity of very dedicated volunteers.

Throughout this 2008 Donor Report you will learn more about our programs and initiatives and I hope you will be as gratified as I am in the knowledge that together we are changing lives and insuring that our services are available to those in need. Measured by how much our clients have achieved throughout this year and years past, Melmark’s mission is truly remarkable. I am confident that with your continued investment in our work we will achieve the goals set forth for the coming year and create brighter futures for years to come. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Joanne Gillis-Donovan, Ph.D.
President & CEO
Expanding Early Childhood Initiatives

The Melmark School opened a new classroom for young students ages 5-8. With this additional classroom the School strengthened and expanded its Elementary Education Program that already serves students 9-12 years of age.

The new classroom provides early intensive behavioral intervention for young students with an autism spectrum disorder and other developmental disabilities. It also incorporates the full range of Melmark's services and expertise. The young students follow a basic early education curriculum, receive related services such as speech, physical, and occupational therapies, and begin to develop social skills and peer group friendships. The small classroom settings allow Melmark teachers and staff to focus on the individual needs of each child. There is also time for “fun” learning – music, art and visiting the animals at The Barn.

“The Elementary Education Program has been very well received,” notes Norm Dahl, Ph.D., Melmark's Clinical Director for Children's Programs. “In partnership with area school districts and families, we have designed a unique program that addresses a young student's behavioral issues and educational needs. Our goal is to work with the children, allowing them to interact positively with family members and other students. The program has allowed Melmark to share its resources with local school districts, families, and human service organizations while also expanding our program continuum.”

Thanks to the support and commitment of our friends and donors, a whole new group of children and their families will benefit from Melmark's services.
The Bridge to Adulthood

Melmark’s Vocational Program prepares adults for a better quality of life by providing them with vocational training that increases their opportunity for paid competitive employment. Participants are provided with work experience opportunities that consist of on-campus training programs as well as job sampling and job shadowing in community work settings.

The goal of the Vocational Program is to increase employability and life skills of participants through a vocational curriculum specifically designed for individuals with developmental and behavioral challenges. Staff develop relationships with community businesses that provide community-based employment opportunities for adults with developmental challenges. Area businesses such as McDonalds Restaurants, Genuardi Markets, and WAWA have partnered with Melmark to provide these opportunities for our clients. Staff provide transportation to and from work sites as well as on-site job coaching.

With initial support from The Daniel Jordan Fiddle Foundation and Bristol-Myers Squibb Charities, the Vocational Program was launched in 2007. The program purchased a food cart and a cash register and began selling bagels and donuts to staff and residents at Melmark. Within a year and a half, the program has grown to provide services currently for 16 clients, with future plans to accommodate 45 clients. The Vocational Program has received additional support from WAWA Corporate Charities for equipment and a recent grant from the Alfred I. duPont Foundation to help purchase a van. With growth and support like this, we can continue to provide encouragement, empowerment and opportunity for the adults we serve.

Adults enjoying meaningful work
The Meadows Country Garden Guild, Melmark’s unique entrepreneurial program for adults, has a new greenhouse! With generous contributions from families, friends and a grant from the Hoxie Harrison Smith Foundation, a new state-of-the-art horticultural facility has been realized.

The greenhouse is a vital component of the Meadows Program, where program participants prepare seedlings that will grow in our campus garden, resulting in flowers that will be dried and arranged in baskets, cards, and other craft items. The Meadows’ participants also cultivate their own plants and arrangements that have become part of their award-winning entries in the Philadelphia Flower Show. Members of The Country Garden Guild are invited to a number of local corporations to sell their goods to the company’s employees, which have resulted in many new Melmark friendships.

The revitalization of the existing greenhouse will enable program participants to see their products “grow” from seed to sale, offering them opportunities to experience the joy of cultivating their own plants and the satisfaction of achieving extraordinary results.
Generosity With Vision

As a result of generous contributions from a Melmark family and a corporate matching gift, we have established the Kathleen J. Weiss Memorial Fund for Staff Training and Development. This fund will enable us to renovate our existing employee training center and upgrade vital equipment and materials.

The renovation project will significantly increase the size of the Training Room, allow for the installation of a fully ADA-compliant bathroom, provide additional office space to support staff training and create a new resource library for videos, reference books and periodicals.

Equipment upgrades will include: a Smart Board for use in conducting group training and PowerPoint presentations, viewing video footage and Internet access for research; a Resusci Anne Full Body Manikin for CPR training; an AED Trainer Machine to conduct defibrillation training for nurses; a video camera and computers.

The mission of the training and development department is to support our staff to serve our clients and to assist them in achieving their career goals and professional objectives.
On October 20, 2008, the 3rd Annual Hubert J. P. Schoemaker Classic, co-presented by GlaxoSmithKline and Accenture, hosted close to 230 golfers at three of the Philadelphia area’s finest courses. This premier golf event supports Melmark’s many programs, services and capital projects. This year’s event raised $370,000 in net proceeds making the Classic’s three-year total just over $1,000,000.

The Classic was established to honor Hubert J. P. Schoemaker, a pioneer in the biotechnology industry. Dr. Schoemaker’s friends, colleagues, and family, along with Melmark’s leadership make up the Schoemaker Classic Advisory Board, co-chaired by Lee Ahrensdorf, President, Ahrensdorf & Associates; Mickey Flynn, President, Pennsylvania Biotechnology Association; and Denny Willson, President and CEO, Cytokine PharmaSciences. This group of dedicated volunteers works tirelessly for months planning, organizing and securing sponsorships to make this one of the premier golf events in the Philadelphia area.

Amazing things are possible through partnerships. Melmark is most grateful to the Schoemaker Classic Advisory Board and the many contributors to the Classic for their support, generosity, and most importantly, for creating brighter futures for hundreds of children and adults with disabilities.
On March 29, 2008, Melmark hosted the Reaching for the Stars Gala. Many wishes came true at this beautiful event held at that Park Hyatt Philadelphia at the Bellevue. Close to 350 Melmark friends and families enjoyed an evening filled with music, delicious cuisine, dancing, and the exceptional talent of the Melmark Joybells.

The 4th Gala was a great success, raising $355,000 in net proceeds to support Melmark’s programs and services. The event’s success was due, in large part, to the generosity of many local and regional corporate, foundation and individual contributors. A very special thanks to Pilot Freight Services, the Reaching for the Stars Presenting Sponsor and to our Super Star Sponsors, an anonymous family, Mr. H. Robert Marcus and Audrey Flack, Clay and Garrett Kirk.

Melmark was honored to have Dave Roberts of Channel 6, WPVI –TV, Philadelphia as Master of Ceremonies and auctioneer. A very important part of the evening was the presentation of the Melmark Humanitarian Award to then Pennsylvania Speaker of the House, Dennis O’Brien, for his advocacy for individuals with disabilities.

To all the Melmark families and friends, generous contributors and volunteers, our heartfelt thanks for joining us to make the Reaching for the Stars Gala a very special event and for your encouragement and support of Melmark’s mission. Together we create brighter futures for many children and adults with special needs.

Thanks to all our Gala Donors
We are deeply grateful to all those who have given so generously to help us provide the best educational, programmatic and therapeutic services to the children and adults we are privileged to serve. In this report we extend our thanks and appreciation to those who have contributed from January 1 to December 31, 2008.

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There are many ways to give to Melmark. Each method of giving helps to ensure the future of those we serve. The most frequently used methods are:

**Check/Money Order**
Make checks payable to “Melmark” and send to Melmark Advancement Department, 2600 Wayland Road, Berwyn, PA 19312.

**Credit Card**
You may now donate to Melmark using MasterCard, Visa or American Express by contacting Peg McCluskey in the Advancement Department at 610-325-4981 or by visiting our website at www.melmark.org.

**United Way**
Melmark’s United Way Donor Choice # is 1012.

**Bequests**
Bequests, both large and small, account for a major portion of Melmark’s endowment and provide significant funding for programs, facilities and client support. In addition to being one of the simplest ways to distribute your estate, your Will can be a creative vehicle through which you can make a thoughtful gift to Melmark.

**Life Insurance**
One of the simplest ways to make a significant gift is to designate Melmark as the beneficiary of all or a portion of the proceeds of a life insurance policy. You can thereby make a gift that may ultimately be larger than its cost.

**Charitable Gift Annuities**
This is a wonderful way to make a meaningful gift to Melmark while enjoying income and tax benefits that can also help enhance your financial well-being. By making a charitable gift of cash or securities, you and/or another person you designate receive lifetime payments, a portion of which are tax-free.

**Matching Gifts**
Many employers match gifts made by their employees. If you work for a matching gift company, be sure to complete the necessary form to multiply your gift.

**Securities**
Gifting an investment to Melmark may be the optimal way to provide a significant gift while also reaping tax benefits.
Our focus is on the needs of each individual.
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Great care has been taken to assure the accuracy of our donor lists. Please accept our apology for any discrepancies and let us know if you are incorrectly listed.
Dear Families and Friends,

As Melmark New England celebrated its 10th anniversary in 2008, it was an opportunity to reflect back on our hopes and dreams when we first opened our doors in 1998.

Dr. Joanne Gillis-Donovan, President and CEO, and Melmark’s Board of Directors took a leap of faith in Melmark New England and, on behalf of the students we have been able to serve and all the lives that have been touched over the past decade, we are grateful for their initial and ongoing commitment.

During the “Building for the Future” capital campaign that resulted in Melmark New England moving to a wonderful new school building in December 2006, we had the following goals:

• Continue the development of sophisticated clinical and educational systems that improve the lives of children and their families every day.

• Expand graduate training and professional development for our staff and for public school teachers.

• Expand the reach of our professional development programs.

• Extend the reach of our training and in-school consultation services to public schools and their students.

• Evaluate our services and disseminate those results to the larger community to improve the lives of children we may never directly serve.

I am proud to report that we have accomplished these goals and the pace has not slowed since we moved into our permanent home in Andover, Massachusetts. These goals would not have been accomplished without the assistance of very special individuals like Jim and Angela Alex who initiated the “fore Melmark New England” golf benefit in 2006 and continue to organize it every summer (this year it will be on Monday, July 27, 2009); our local board members Larry Cancro, Jim Alex and Jamie Stahle for their leadership and support of our services; the friends, family members and grant foundations who made financial contributions despite the difficult economy; our talented and dedicated group of educators, clinicians and support staff who come to work every day; and our amazing students who continuously provide inspiration and enrich our lives with their personal growth and well-being. There is no greater reward for what we do at Melmark New England than seeing how our combined efforts are reflected in so many positive ways in the lives of our students and their families.

I look forward to continuing Melmark New England’s development and reporting more about our accomplishments in the coming year.

My very best wishes for a continued happy and healthy 2009!

Rita M. Gardner
In this report we extend our thanks and appreciation to those who have contributed from January 1 to December 31, 2008.

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Melmark New England’s parent group organizes the Annual Staff Appreciation Lunch. This year the parents donated homemade salads and side dishes, served monster grinders and even provided an Ice Cream Sundae Bar!
Kimberly Fair and her son Brody, a student at Melmark New England, enjoy the 2008 Harvest Fest Dance.
Melmark New England teacher Jennifer Marr works with Chuckie, one of our students in the School Age program. Donations help provide educational opportunities for our staff as well as program materials for our students.
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Melmark New England staff and students participated in the 2008 Walk for Autism sponsored by Autism Speaks. More than 20,000 people from Greater Boston participated in the walk at Suffolk Downs.

Helena Maguire, Senior Director of School Services, John Demanche and Pattie Finney, Directors of School Services, at Melmark New England’s 10th Anniversary Open House last June.
Possibility

In 2006, Jim and Angela Alex approached Melmark New England about hosting a golf tournament to raise the funds needed to finish the renovations and move into the school building in Andover. Jim and Angela’s son Charlie received consultation services through Melmark and were so impressed with the work Melmark does with students with autism that they wanted to help.

“We were extremely happy with Charlie’s progress and the level of caring and commitment given to Charlie and to us as parents, said Angela Alex. We noticed that Melmark New England was looking to relocate to a bigger facility and were happy to see they had found a home in Andover, where we currently live. The closeness was very comforting.” She added that Jim, being in the real estate development business, had participated in many fundraising golf tournaments and that the couple thought they, too, could provide a fun event that could help the school raise money to facilitate the move.

Fore Melmark New England is the school’s largest single fundraiser, raising more than $400,000 in the past three years. The event is one of the premier golf tournaments in the area, selling out in just days and featuring a fantastic live and silent auction. Jim and Angela’s commitment and vision has helped Melmark New England complete its capital campaign, make on-going improvements to the building, provide professional development opportunities for its staff and educational excellence to every student—every day.

“We’re happy beyond words that the tournament has achieved such enormous success,” Mrs. Alex added. “We can only hope to continue that success in years to come, especially considering our current lean economic times. Jim and I can be counted on to help in any way we can as well as our friends and other supporters of the tournament.”
Melmark New England was proud to receive a $24,700 grant from Autism Speaks for a Family Training Series to help parents and caregivers deal with the stress and challenges that accompany parenting a child with autism.

Dr. Florence DiGennaro Reed, Director of Professional Development, Training & Research, said that parents and caregivers can be at risk for a variety of negative outcomes, such as depression, marital dissatisfaction, feelings of incompetence and social isolation.

“Although the literature contains numerous examples of parent-mediated interventions, many fail to address the dynamic family unit as a whole,” said Dr. DiGennaro Reed. “The parent training made available through Autism Speaks will allow us to address this issue by funding a parent training model that embraces family-focused intervention while incorporating behavior analytic principles.”

Because of the overwhelming response, Melmark New England is offering two, 11-week sessions, each lasting two hours. Dr. DiGennaro Reed, and Dr. Barbara O’Malley Cannon, a Melmark New England consultant, lead the sessions.


“The parent training group has been a tremendous success so far,” said Dr. DiGennaro Reed. The parents are a dynamic, interactive group that add depth to the information presented by sharing their personal stories. I hope they learn as much from me as I have from them.”

Frank Bird, Peter Troy, Rita Gardner along with Larry Cancro, a member of Melmark’s Board of Directors and the Autism Speaks New England Board, Leslie Chambers, Senior Vice President of Autism Speaks and Vincent Goglia, Executive Director of the New England Chapter of Autism Speaks. Ms. Chambers and Mr. Goglia visited Melmark New England, presenting the school with the $24,700 check toward the Family Training Series.

Dr. Florence DiGennaro Reed and Dr. Barbara O’Malley Cannon present at the parent training group funded through a grant received through Autism Speaks.
Creativity

When she was in pre-school, Helen Root had just one wish — for her cousin Brian to start talking.

Nearly a decade later, Helen's cousin Brian, now 14, a student with autism spectrum Disorder at Melmark New England, is quite a talker, striking up conversations with his classmates, teachers, staff and family. The cousins have remained close and Helen recently spearheaded a fundraiser to help Brian's school.

As a school project, Helen's eighth-grade class was asked to accomplish a goal within six to eight weeks. Helen spent 24-hours behind a sewing machine, stitching together dozens of colorful scarves and hats which she sold at a local craft fair.

Helen raised $220 for Melmark New England.

"I've been wanting to do something for Melmark and this gave me the perfect opportunity," said Helen, 13. "I liked that the money could go toward Brian's school, so it could make a difference in their everyday lives."

Helen's donation will support teaching programs at the school.

"It's a good feeling," said Helen when asked about her gift.

"A gift of this nature is tremendously meaningful because it was generated out of the love and caring of a young person," said Peter Troy, Melmark New England Vice President.
Accomplishment


More than 300 Guests took VIP tours of Fenway Park, listened to the sounds of Eguie Castrillo and his Orchestra, feasted on Fenway favorites like hot dogs, sausage, Cracker Jacks and ice cream sundaes, participated in a silent auction and raffles and even had the opportunity to have their pictures taken with the 2004 and 2007 Red Sox World Series Trophies.

The event honored the accomplishments of Melmark New England raising $25,000 toward its new playground.
Melmark New England parents, Lisa Marie Noke-Kearney, Luise Cancro and Katie Barbarisi served on the planning committee for this event along with Ann Guay, Larry Cancro and Bill Paquette, (not pictured).

Event volunteers Karen Fitzgerald, Vanessa Wellington, and Ann Guay

**Our New Playground**

Melmark New England thanks the Trust Family Foundation and those who donated to the 10th Anniversary Celebration at Fenway Park for helping us build a new playground this year. We raised $35,000 for the new structures, which were installed in the fall of 2008. The school now has separate playgrounds for the early childhood and the school age programs.
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