

Turning Points

Spring 2008

Serving vulnerable children and families since 1899



Tori's mother with her adopted daughter, Jackie.

A family's tradition becomes a way of life

Tori Howard remembers vividly the example set by her parents of giving back. Ms. Howard describes her mother as a tremendously generous person. For example, she was always letting foster children stay in the house and believed strongly in contributing to those in need. "If my mother ever had anything extra she would share it with others," says Ms. Howard.

For years, Tori and her family would visit low-income families in Paterson. What started as a toy drive for these families turned into a life-long dedication to giving back. Initially, the family just wanted to make the holidays brighter for the children by surprising them with gifts. However, when they arrived that first Christmas, they were shocked to learn the children didn't have basic living essentials such as food and clothing. They were horrified to see many of the children were without parents and living in deplorable conditions – some of the apartments didn't even have doors. For the next seven years, Tori and her family would deliver food, clothing, and toys to these needy children.

Years later, Tori and her husband, Frank, started a business, Mugs Pub, where they continued to give back to the community. Patrons would tell the couple about families in need, and the Howards would then collect donations for them. Whether it was coats for the homeless during the winter, or Thanksgiving dinners for needy families, they always tried to help those who had little.

When Tori was 18, a family friend left her 3 week-old-baby, Jackie, overnight with Tori's parents to care for her. When the baby was 22 months old, Tori's parents adopted her. During this time, Tori helped her parents raise Jackie, as her parents' health was declining.

By the time Jackie was 12, the Howards were too sick to care for her. Tori and her husband stepped in and helped raise Jackie, even though they already had three children of their own.

Jackie eventually moved in with the Howard's and became a cherished member of the family, living with them for several years before moving out. She is now 29 years old. After graduating from Berkely College in Waldwick, New Jersey with an Associates Degree in Business, she became manager for a fashion store, where she still works.

In this issue

Message from the President & CEO

Commitment to Aging Out Youth 3

Beach Party Gala 2008 4

A New Kitchen at Woodlea

PACS Services Expanded

The Barclays

Give a Lasting Gift 8



What a busy spring! We celebrated an early summer at our Beach Party fundraising event in March. We are extremely grateful to our generous sponsors, attendees, and our special event committee for making this an incredibly fun evening, as well as helping the agency raise funds for the vulnerable children and families we serve.

With summer right around the corner, many of us have fond memories of joyful times spent outdoors, relaxing vacations or spending time with family. But for many of the children in our care, summer isn't such a happy time – they have no close family, and there are no vacation plans.

Fortunately, there are ways <u>you</u> can help. You could provide a child with a campership to ensure they can enjoy fun activities like fishing, bike riding, and swimming. If you're part of a large corporation or organization, perhaps you could donate baseball, theater, or other tickets to give a child the excitement of experiencing one of these events, often for the first time in his or her life.

With your help, we make a real difference in the lives of these children. With your help, we're able to provide homes for children who don't have a home of their own. In the coming months, thanks to the generous support of the Helen's Hope Foundation, we will be opening two professional foster homes and also a sixth group home. Stay tuned, there's more to come...

Have a safe summer.

Bob Jones, Ph.D. President & CEO

Continuing the legacy of giving back

More than three years ago, Tori Howard mobilized her district managers to assist her with donating the food for a Wendy's Wonderful Kids "Meet and Greet" event. Wendy's Wonderful Kids is a signature program of the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption, of which Ms. Howard has been a committee member for 10 years.

After the success of this event, she wanted to help even more. The following year, her management team sponsored the second annual Meet and Greet event. They donated the food, gave gifts to all the children, and provided entertainment for the families and children at the event. She and her dedicated staff are already hard at work planning a "Day at the Races" theme for this year's Meet and Greet event!

Tori is a Wendy's franchisee of 10 stores, including seven in Bergen County. With the help of her store managers, this past holiday season she launched the "Be An Angel, Buy An Angel" campaign. For this in-store fundraiser, each Wendy's store sold ornaments, and proceeds went toward purchasing computers for the children in the agency's group homes.

She also initiated an in-store canister campaign to raise funds to purchase furniture for a new agency professional foster home in Clifton. Her newest fundraiser is called the "Pin-up Campaign" in which customers donate \$1 and have the opportunity to pin up a personalized postcard that says "I'm a sweetheart for adoption."

"I'm incredibly grateful to the hard-working managers of every Wendy's store," says Ms. Howard. "Without them, none of this would be possible."



Tori with her husband, Frank, at the agency's Beach Party Gala.

Save the Date! Children's Aid and Family Services Wine and Food Tasting Fundraiser is Saturday, November 1, 2008.

Strengthened Commitment to Aging Out Youth

For most teenagers, the prospect of leaving their childhood homes to begin college is an exciting adventure. It's the beginning of a new chapter in their lives. Yet they know they can always rely on their family for guidance and support should they need it.

But for many of the teenagers in the agency's care, taking this step can be daunting. For example, during school breaks when classes end and campus closes,

they often don't have a family home to go to. They can't call their parents to ask for help to pay for clothes, phone calls, or even a tube of toothpaste. And when they're done with school, they often don't have a family home to return to while they search for a job. They're on their own at a very young age.



Additionally, the vast majority of these teens have experienced severe abuse. They suffer from a range of emotional, psychological, social and learning challenges. They are without the support of their families to help them succeed, and are at a huge risk of making self-destructive decisions.

To help ease the challenges of this transition, the agency is strengthening its commitment to youth "aging out" of foster care through initiatives including Youth Permanency, Phase II Mentoring, and outreach to youth that have left the agency's care.

Youth Permanency focuses on finding a caring adult from a teenager's past with whom he or she can make a lasting, adult connection. It may be a coach, religious leader, teacher, friend or relative. This person plays a key role in the teenager's life, ensuring that when he or she leaves the agency's care, there will be someone to rely on for support and help.

There is not always an adult from the child's past who is able to fulfill a mentor-type role in this way. An expansion of the agency's existing mentor program seeks to address this gap. The current mentor program matches adult volunteers to children and teenagers in agency foster care, and the mentor-mentee relationship ends when the child leaves the agency's care. Now, volunteers also have the option of applying to become a "Phase II" mentor and continuing the mentoring

relationship once the teen has "aged out" of care. The mentor can continue to be a trusted and reliable influence in the mentee's life: the mentee may also visit the mentor's home and they can enjoy holidays and family dinners together. "We're already seeing the positive results of this program," says June Sosland, administrator, out of home care. "During this past winter, one teenager in school didn't have a place to go

during break, and stayed at the mentor's home. The mentee felt comfortable staying in the home of someone she knew and trusted."

The agency is also growing its outreach to youth that have already "aged out." As teens leave care they are asked to participate in a quarterly survey for the next five years. The surveys provide information on how they are doing, make us

aware of issues and problems they may be facing so that we can shape future services, and provide invaluable longitudinal data. The survey is reinforced by a regular phone call from an agency employee, so there is personal outreach to ensure these youth are staying on track and know the agency is there for them. To date, there have been two survey mailings: the first survey generated an 85 percent response rate, and the second, 68 percent. In the past, very few of the teens kept in touch after they left the agency's care. Thanks are due to the Redlich Horwitz Foundation for funding a new position to make these service enhancements possible.

The agency's Thomas R. S. Burgin "Parents" Fund continues to offer stipends to teens attending college or vocational school, and now also provides emergency funding to help any young adult formerly in our care, to support them through a crisis. It is hoped that further donations to this fund will enable us to help many more teens and young adults that need our help in the coming months.

"It's vitally important that the agency has increased its commitment to teenagers "aging out" of foster care," says Bob Jones, Ph.D., president & CEO of Children's Aid and Family Services. "Too often, these teens don't have any support to fall back on. The agency is the only family they have. We have a duty to be there for them and help them stay on a good path and navigate the many challenges of adulthood."

Fun and Fundraising

More than 400 Bergen County residents attended Children's Aid and Family Services' Beach Party Gala on Friday, March 28th, at the Hackensack Golf Club in Oradell. Many of the guests, ready for spring after a long winter, enthusiastically embraced the event's Beach Party theme and dressed the part in bright, fun summer fashions.

The stately club was outfitted with patio furniture and decorated with colorful umbrellas, giant beach balls, beach toys, and a sand castle surrounded the podium. The guests enjoyed hors d'oeuvres, a dinner buffet, and an abundance of desserts, while bidding on several one-of-a-kind experiences in the live and silent auctions.

Sponsors of the event were Irwin Franchise Capital Corporation, Applebee's, Elaine & Mike Adler, BD, Boiling Springs Savings Bank, Commerce Bank, Hudson City Savings Bank, Mutual of America, TD Banknorth, Toys "R" Us, Inc., Wyeth, and Prestige Lexus.

Thank you all for your support!



(I. - r.): Rob Gawley, the auctioneer for the Beach Party Gala, Liz Mason, executive vice president, Erik Sorenson, 1st vice president of the Board of Trustees and the emcee for the evening, and his wife, Cornell.





John and Anne Oros placing a bid at the silent auction.





(I. - r.): Jeff Deutsch, William Lopa, Jr., Mickey Capelli. Mr. Deutsch of Ridgewood and Ms. Capelli of Wyckoff each bid on and won a limited edition painting by Mr. Lopa, Jr. in the live auction.

Beach Party Gala a Smashing Success



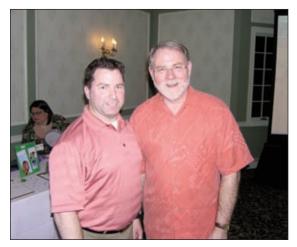
John Rinaldi (Center) CEO of Irwin Franchise Capital Corporation, the signature sponsor of the Beach Party Gala, with company employees.



Members of the special event committee that helped plan the Beach Party Gala. (l. - r.): Lauren Auerbach, Katherine Lucas, Bernadette Davis, Carol Whaley, Julie Dimino, Nancy Slott, Jennifer Contrucci, and Stephanie Karl. Missing: Megan Dunphey, Wendy Epstein, Martha Fickinger, Lynn McBeth, Barbara Ricciardi, and Eve van den Bol.



Guests of Prestige Lexus, which was a sponsor of the event. (I. - r.): Stacy Seader, Danielle Mullen, Vicki Noorigian, Joan Foley, Patty Murphy, and Jane Toledano.



(l. - r.): John Morris, a mentor to a child in the agency's care and 50/50 raffle winner, with Bob Jones, Ph.D., President & CEO.



(l. - r.): Keith Barksdale, a member of the agency's Honorary Board of Trustees, and Ken Ford.



Marie Adler-Kravecas and friends enjoying themselves at the Beach Party Gala. Ms. Adler Kravecas is a member of the agency's Board of Trustees.

A New Kitchen at Woodlea

Children's Aid and Family Services' Woodlea group home in Ridgewood desperately needed an updated kitchen. With up to 10 girls and three staff members living in the house, approximately 208 meals are prepared every week. And that doesn't include two snacks per day for each girl. There was also a shortage of storage. The staff shops twice a week for groceries, and purchases large amounts of staple items.

Until recently, they made do with a kitchen that had last been renovated 25 years ago, and lacked organization and appropriate storage space. But that changed when Barbara Abney Bolger, member of the Board of Trustees and president of the Woodlea/PATH I Advisory Council, approached David Ulrich, of Ulrich, Inc., in Ridgewood and asked him for ideas to spruce up the kitchen. Mr. Ulrich took a tour of the dated space, and said it needed a complete renovation. Since he was working with a nonprofit organiza-

tion with a limited budget, he did everything possible to keep costs low. He donated his services as project manager, as well as the services of Ulrich Inc., designer Gabriel Jordan, and obtained substantial discounts and donations from subcontractors and suppliers.

The project included new, darker cabinets to match the house's woodwork, as well as new countertops, flooring, wallpaper, paint, and energy-efficient appliances and lighting. Additionally, Ulrich Inc., renovated Woodlea's laundry room, which is adjacent to the kitchen, to create more storage and enhanced lighting. They built a large pantry, added cabinets, installed new lighting, flooring, and added a modern, half-glass exterior door.

"We are overwhelmed by the generosity of Ulrich, Inc., and are tremendously grateful for the amazing work of such a community-minded company," said Liz Mason, executive vice president of the agency.

The Woodlea Kitchen and Laundry Room Before and After — A Dramatic Transformation



Kitchen Before



Kitchen After



Laundry Before



Laundry After

Post Adoption Counseling Services (PACS) Expanded

Sometimes, children who have been adopted need help coping with issues that are related to their unique birth circumstances. These issues include loss, separation, rejection and abandonment; curiosity about their birth origins and heredity; and struggles with identity. These feelings can manifest in anger, sadness and self-destructive behavior, and cause concern for the rest of the family.

To help these families during times of stress, Children's Aid and Family Services offers free postadoption counseling (PACS) at its Ridgewood office for families living in Bergen and Passaic Counties, and in South Orange for families living in Essex County. Recently, the agency obtained additional funding from the state of New Jersey for a Teen Adoption Support Group. All of the services are available to families with children between the ages of

two and 18, who have been adopted through any private or state agency.

Kathleen Russo, clinical services administrator and director of the PACS program, leads the program, and works with master's level clinicians who have completed the Rutgers University Adoption Certificate Program and are well qualified to offer guidance to both the children and parents. "Adoptive parents often have high expectations about expanding their families, and experience disappointment when their relationships aren't going as hoped," Ms. Russo said. "They often need coaching and help with their sadness and loss."

The PACS team also treats children and parents of international adoptions. Often, these children have not had proper care during their infancy, and as a result have severe developmental delays. One young woman's story stands out in particular. She was adopted at three years old from an orphanage in Eastern Europe, and her adoptive family did not know much of her early

background.

As she neared adolescence, she became angry and destructive, and her family became alarmed. In this instance, one of the clinicians coached the mother to respond to her daughter more effectively and calmly, so the girl would not continue to put the rest of the family in turmoil. Her mother was thrilled with the program, and still calls to check in, even after the counseling ended.

Another young woman, who was adopted through New Jersey's Division of Youth and Family Services (DYFS) and received therapeutic support in the program, was having difficulty handling her aggression, but since attending

therapy has made progress. She is now using her coping skills, is aware of consequences, and is transitioning to the local high school.

As an added support, the Teen Adoption Support Group, which is led by Christie Sutera, meets for eight sessions, and participants discuss their adoption stories, identity, and school, social and family issues in a relaxed, supportive environment.

"This is a unique program that addresses issues specific to adoption, and families are quite happy to find it," says Ms. Russo. For more information on the PACS program, please call Kathleen Russo at 973-763-2041.

Volunteers needed for PGA Tour

Ridgewood Country Club, Paramus, NJ August 19 to August 24, 2008



Children's Aid and Family Services will be a beneficiary of proceeds from this year's Barclays Classic PGA Tournament at the Ridgewood Country Club. This is a tremendous opportunity for us to raise more money to help the vulnerable children and families we serve. We have committed to assist with the recruitment of volunteers for the event. There are some terrific volunteer opportunities for golfers and non-golfers alike - plus, there's the chance to rub shoulders with the top 144 players in the world. For more information, or to register as a volunteer, please visit www.cafsnj.org, or call 201.261.2800.



Give to our endowment today to ensure a brighter tommorow

Give a Lasting Gift

By making a planned gift or giving a gift to Children's Aid and Family Services' endowment, you will ensure a brighter future for our clients for many years to come.

Your endowment gift will help:

- Keep services accessible to all, regardless of ability to pay.
- Give the agency the ability to respond to community crises or disasters.
- Diversify the agency's income sources so they are less vulnerable to fluctuations in the economy.
- Provide a safety net in the event government or foundation support for essential programs is no longer there.

For more information, or to receive an endowment brochure, please call Liz Mason at 201.261.2800, or visit www.cafsnj.org to download a copy.

The mission of Children's Aid and Family Services is to preserve, protect and, when needed, provide families. Motivated by compassion for vulnerable children, young adults, frail elderly and their families, we provide high-quality and innovative services that meet their social, educational and emotional needs. Since 1899, the agency has been recognized as a leader in adoption and specialty therapeutic services for children who have been severely traumatized and abused. For more information, please visit www.cafsnj.org.



AND FAMILY SERVICES, INC.

200 Robin Road Paramus, NJ 07652 201.261.2800 www.cafsnj.org

Board of Trustees

Chair
1st Vice Chair
2nd Vice Chair
Treasurer
Secretary
President & CEO

Sharp John Kandravy, Esq.
Erik Sorenson
Carol L. Whaley
Joanne E. Mandry, C.P.A.
David M. Repetto, Esq.
Robert B. Jones, Ph.D.

Marie Adler-Kravecas Jerrold B. Binney, Esq. Barbara Abney Bolger Harvey D. Braun Gregory J. Bullock Joan K. Doherty Hon. Nicholas R. Felice Barbara Hyslop Ellen Jacobs Heidi Kay Kenneth J. Karl Maribeth Lane Lynn A. McBeth J. Christopher Nettleton Frank Plateroti Dan Shiver Carol Smith Joyce Snider, Ed.D. Robert G. Sommer Eve van den Bol Non-profit U.S. Postage **PAID** Hackensack, NJ Permit No. 104

Change Service Requested

If you would like your name removed from our mailing list, please call Gail in the development department, at 201.261.2800. Interested in receiving newsletters and updates by email? Please send your address via email to info@cafsnj.org.