

Perspectives



THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

Through the community's generosity, NHS Allegheny Valley School (NHS/AVS) continues to provide quality programs and facilities to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. NHS/AVS has recently received several grants to develop innovative programs that will expand the options for and greatly benefit the children and adults in its care. Please join in our excitement as we launch these new projects and programs!

Dental Sensory Program

FISA Foundation provided funding for NHS/AVS to develop a Dental Sensory Program. The initiative will create a program to integrate sensory experiences into dental care for consumers with complex intellectual and developmental disabilities. The program is expected to reduce the consumers' resistance to and/or anxiety with the dental process, and result in a more effective delivery of care and maintained or improved dental health.

Ladies Hospital Aid Society Sensory Garden

The Ladies Hospital Aid Society (LHAS) provided a grant to build a sensory garden at NHS/AVS' Patricia Hillman Miller Campus. The LHAS Sensory Garden will provide new opportunities for exploration, learning and growth, and will also provide a beautiful space for relaxation and



gathering with family, friends, staff and peers. This will be the second garden underwritten by LHAS and will be constructed in the spring. It will include more than 85 commemorative bricks. A focal point of the garden will be Polk Pavilion, underwritten by Polk Foundation.

The pavilion will be large enough to accommodate several individuals in wheelchairs and will include lighting and ceiling fans. Classes and recreational activities, as well as visits with family members and friends, will be carried out in the pavilion, and the entire garden.

In addition to underwriting Polk Pavilion, Polk Foundation has provided funding for NHS/AVS to develop two innovative programs:

Communications and Technology

Many NHS/AVS consumers have an interest in using current communications tools. In an effort to promote use of the latest technology within the framework of protecting privacy and safety, the communications and technology project will enable us to train staff members, consumers and family members to enhance communications and learning opportunities. Through the grant we will engage a project manager to lead the initiative. New computer workstations will be placed at more than 10 NHS/AVS sites in western PA. The technology will also promote communication between consumers and their friends and family.

Specialized Alzheimer's/Dementia Program

In recent years we have seen an increase in the number of individuals with Alzheimer's and/or Dementia (A/D). NHS/AVS does not currently have the supports and resources in place to effectively manage individuals through the stages of A/D. To better meet the needs of our aging population, Polk Foundation has provided a grant to develop a Specialized Alzheimer's/Dementia Program to best support the individuals through the aging disease process, and help family members to understand and respond to the changing needs of the individual.

A Message from our Chairman and CEO

For more than fifty years, NHS Allegheny Valley School (NHS/AVS) has been providing quality programs and facilities to help individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). Your generosity has been instrumental in providing much needed funds which allow NHS/AVS to offer unique services not available by other providers. In this edition, you'll read about a new LHAS Sensory Garden, the creation of the Dental Sensory Program, and our important Specialized Alzheimer's/Dementia Program – all made possible by our many supporters.

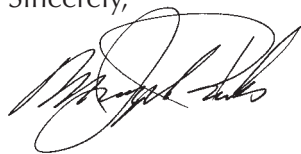


You may have heard about potential budget cuts for services for individuals with IDD. While many questions remain as to how those budget cuts will affect our programs, we at NHS/AVS remain committed to providing the best services and care to those we work with each and every day. In order to make this commitment a reality, your support is needed now more than ever.

I'd like to encourage you to take a few minutes to read about our coming events, as they are a great way to support NHS/AVS while having a great time. Together, we will continue to provide an exceptional level of care to help those with IDD to reach their fullest potential.

I want to thank each and every one of you for your commitment to our mission.

Sincerely,



The Honorable M. Joseph Rocks
Chairman and CEO, NHS Human Services, Inc.

The Legacy Society

Committed to Securing the Mission
and Future of NHS/AVS

SPOTLIGHT ON SEIMA HORVITZ

Seima Horvitz, a graphic designer and Pittsburgh philanthropist, passed away in 2010. Seima, who was familiar with NHS/AVS through a relative, supported AVS for nearly two decades, and included us in her will. During 2011, we learned of her generous bequest. Conversations with her niece, and trustee of her estate, **Annette Gordon Ayala**, confirmed Seima's special interest in the arts and education. Combining these interests it was determined that her bequest would be used for supplies and new opportunities for arts projects at NHS/AVS campuses and program centers throughout Pennsylvania, and to support the NHS/AVS Sensory Program for many years to come.

"Aunt Seima loved AVS and was proud to help," Ayala said.

Have you included NHS/AVS in your future plans? If so, please let us know! There are many options available to support NHS/AVS with a planned gift. For more information, visit avs.nhsonline.org or contact Dorothy Hunter Gordon at (412) 299-2228 or dgordon@nhsonline.org.

COMING EVENTS

FRIENDS OF AVS GOLF OPEN

SAVE THE DATE for the 2012 Friends of AVS Golf Open, Monday, August 13, 2012. **NEW LOCATION:** Green Oaks Country Club Join us as we honor the Pittsburgh Vintage Grand Prix as our 2012 AVS CHAMPION.

To sign on as a sponsor, underwriter or golfer contact Amy Rocini at (412) 299-2229 or arocini@nhsonline.org.



PLEASE COMMIT EARLY: NHS/AVS has received a challenge grant for its 2012 open! As soon as we receive commitments for the event totaling \$50,000, a match will be provided by AVS Foundation! Please commit your support early this year to help us meet the challenge.

The 20th Annual Friends of AVS Golf Open presented by AVS Foundation, held on August 15 at Churchill Valley Country Club, was a huge success, raising more than \$160,000 to benefit the Allegheny Valley School Capital Development Fund.

Pictured left to right: Terrence McNelis, the Honorable M. Joseph Rocks, Regis and Cindy Champ, Parie and John Duggan with Karen.

IPAD AN AFFORDABLE COMMUNICATION TOOL



Patty, who receives services in Hummelstown, is creative, talented and successful operating her own puzzle business. Patty is not only interested in promoting her puzzle sales, but also in enhancing her communication skills—and she is using some of today's latest technology to do so. Last year, Patty went with her house manager and communication specialist to the Apple Store to research Apple's iPad. Patty communicated numerous questions to the salesman, and enjoyed exploring the possibilities available to her. Patty used money from her puzzle business to purchase her iPad and is using it extensively to assist with her communications.

iPads have made communicating extremely accessible and affordable for those with disabilities. Communication devices cost as much as \$8,000 per item. The cost of an iPad begins at \$499, and communications apps are available in a range of prices. Patty's iPad allows her to communicate using voice activation. Through her iPad, she can express her wants, needs and feelings about events in her life. She also uses the calendar to schedule puzzle auctions and other events. The iPad is improving her ability to communicate, which may even translate into increased sales for her puzzle business.

GRADUATES AND MILESTONES

2011 was a banner year for Karyn as she graduated from the Western Pennsylvania School for Blind Children. Karyn, a resident of NHS/AVS' Patricia Hillman Miller Campus (PHMC), enjoyed wrapping up her senior year by attending her prom and graduation ceremony. She looked amazing in her beautiful graduation outfit and enjoyed the elaborate ceremony with her family and friends from AVS.



Jeffrey, also from NHS/AVS' PHMC, graduated from Pittsburgh Public School's Pioneer Education Center. He, too, attended his senior prom and graduation. Jeffrey had a blast getting fitted for a tuxedo for the prom,

and had difficulty choosing dance partners at the party.

After graduation both Karyn and Jeffrey began attending NHS/AVS' Kennedy Program Center and have transitioned extremely well to life after high school. They both continue to work on their goals, and enjoy having fun with their peers.

Way to go Karyn and Jeffrey!



The Honorable M. Joseph Rocks and Liz Greco-Rocks at NHS' Leading the Way Awards Gala

LEADING THE WAY

NHS/AVS consumers at the Philadelphia Campus helped to decorate the masks used to adorn NHS' 8th Annual Leading the Way awards gala, which was held at the Hyatt Regency at Penn's Landing on Nov. 12. The Venetian Carnival themed event was a festive affair, enhanced by the colorful and beautiful masks created by so many NHS consumers.

COMING EVENTS

PITTSBURGH VINTAGE GRAND PRIX

The 30th Annual Pittsburgh Vintage Grand Prix (PVGP) will be held July 13–22, 2012. The PVGP is celebrating its 30th anniversary by honoring MG as its Marque of the Year. The 10 days of activities include the Blacktie & Tailpipes Gala at Oakmont Country Club, historic races at Pittsburgh International Race Complex, car shows, cruises and parades in and around Pittsburgh and, topping it all off, RACE WEEKEND at Schenley Park (July 21-22). Many of the events are free and open to the public.

Last year's PVGP presented by SHOP 'N SAVE resulted in the largest ever distribution to the supported charities—\$200,000 was shared between NHS Allegheny Valley School and the Autism Society of Pittsburgh!

Left to right: Robert Speer, Rich Haeflein, Dan DelBianco, Dan Torisky, Rocky Farrar, Dorothy Hunter Gordon and charity ambassadors Anita and Brandon.



The Terrible Towel® in 2011

The Terrible Towel is crowned Pittsburgh's #1 Brand by the Pittsburgh Business Times!

In a 10-week single elimination tournament of Pittsburgh's greatest brands, The Terrible Towel was chosen as the one brand that best represents Pittsburgh. In the final round, The Terrible Towel defeated Eat'n Park receiving 6,618 (58.1%) of the votes.

We are proud that The Terrible Towel is the brand that was chosen to represent Pittsburgh!

ESPN Features The Terrible Towel in *It's Not Crazy, It's Sports*

Pittsburgh Steelers fans from around the world submitted more than 2,000 photos and videos including The Terrible Towel as part of ESPN's *It's Not Crazy, It's Sports* campaign. The winning visuals were included in a spot shown on ESPN television and online. Thanks to ESPN for highlighting Allegheny Valley School and The Terrible Towel through *It's Not Crazy, It's Sports*. To view the video, visit avs.nhsonline.org.

The Terrible Towel Benefits AVS

Since 1996, a portion of the proceeds from the sale of any officially licensed The Terrible Towel product has benefited the children and adults in AVS' care. Most of the products are created, manufactured, marketed and distributed through an arrangement with the Pittsburgh Steelers (steelers.com/catalog/). In addition, the trademark has been licensed for use on these unique products:

The Terrible Towel cookies, Bethel Bakery, Inc.
The Terrible Tote™, Steel City Totes
The Terrible Towel, candy bar, Trello Cioccolato
The Terrible Tee t-shirt, Give and Take Tees
The Terrible Towel Gameday Skirt, Effe Apparel

Please ensure that your purchase benefits AVS by purchasing only officially licensed products.



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NHS/AVS is Going Green

Help us go green by receiving emails about coming events, exciting news and more! Please send us your email address so we can stay in touch. Submit your information in the Contact Us section of avs.nhsonline.org. You can also use the enclosed envelope or email your information to Kelly Gremba at kgremba@nhsonline.org. Thank you for helping us go green!

NHS Allegheny Valley School's *Perspectives—Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow* is published by NHS Allegheny Valley School, a private, non-profit organization providing residential and therapeutic programs for children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities, most who also have multiple physical disabilities, extensive medical complications and some who have behavioral management needs. Please send comments and suggestions to:

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Notable Gifts Received in 2011

Thank you to the following trusts, foundations, companies and organizations for their support of Allegheny Valley School's Capital Development Fund:

- Allegheny Valley School Parents Association
- AVS Foundation
- Babcock Charitable Trust
- Jack Buncher Foundation
- CentiMark Foundation
- FISA Foundation
- The Giant Eagle Foundation
- The Graham Company
- Ladies Hospital Aid Society
- James McCandless Charitable Trust and Wallace Hough Charitable Trust through the PNC Charitable Trust Grant Review Committee
- NHS Human Services Foundation
- Pittsburgh Vintage Grand Prix
- Polk Foundation
- Rosebud Mining Company
- The Edith L. Trees Charitable Trust

2011 grants and contributions of \$5,000 or more.