

## FECA Spring Gala – The Yale Club – April 5, 2016

The Foundation for Empowering Citizens with Autism (FECA) held its 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Spring Gala on Tuesday evening, April 5<sup>th</sup>, welcoming more than 250 guests to New York City's Yale Club for the first time. The event raised more than \$200,000 to help FECA continue its mission of ensuring that individuals with autism-spectrum disorders lead meaningful and productive lives.



Terry Pirraglia presenting MBIA Foundation with FECA's Community Partner Award.

The benefit was chaired by long-time Board members Elise & Phil Orlando and Melanie & Drew Schaf-  
fran, bringing together supporters to celebrate both the achievements

of our young people and FECA's broader new mission to create employment opportunities for adults with autism.

Gina DeCaprio once again chaired an incredible silent auction full of exciting items, such as theater tickets, golf outings, autographed sports memorabilia, tickets to upcoming baseball, football and basketball games, fine wines, and jewelry and designer handbags. The silent auction contributed significantly to the financial success of the annual event, as most of the items are donated and secured by members of the Benefit Committee and the Board of Directors. A few select items were hotly pursued, as guests were in a feeding frenzy to go home with their coveted prize.

FECA's always-terrific raffle drawing concluded the evening in which lucky guests Tracey & Tom Hynes won the top prize, a vacation to Cancun, Mexico.



Ms. Kimberly Osgood, President of MBIA Foundation graciously accepting her award from Terry Pirraglia.

The highlight of the evening was FECA's presentation of the 2016 Community Partner Award to its honoree, **MBIA Foundation**, which has been a steadfast supporter of FECA since 2007. The Foundation has helped to support the Devereux school's vocational training program, the Devereux Adult Day Hab/supported employment program and the ONEE program. MBIA was first introduced to FECA many years ago by

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## Opportunity Network for Employers and Employees (ONEE) Program: Three Years and Counting

FECA's ONEE program continued to make progress this year, adding several more volunteer sites to the Devereux Adult Program roster and beginning the process of establishing a network of "after day hab" opportunities.

Under the direction of Community Outreach Coordinator Lisa Keogh, DAP participants now also contribute their time and efforts to the Putnam Valley Grange as well as Croton Auto Park, Reform Temple of Putnam Valley and Cortlandt Healthcare in Cortlandt Manor. The Westchester Medical Center, one of the first ONEE site partners, continues to provide a wide range of opportunities.

"The ONEE program is such an asset and such a joy to Westchester Medical Center," states Patricia Boyce, Director of the Caregiver Center. "They are truly angels that bring sunshine to all of us here." The Medical Center has recently begun a project in partnership with Food Bank of Westchester to provide discharge food to patients that are unable to shop for their first meals upon leaving the hospital. "The young men from Devereux helped put together our first packages of dinner and breakfast in the pilot program. Their efforts will enable us to expand this outreach to every floor in the hospital." This past year, ONEE Program support has also assisted in sizing, organizing and



Brian and Greg work at Westchester Medical Center on a collaborative project with Food Bank for Westchester, readying bags of discharge meals for patients.

stocking clothing for trauma patients. "There are so many departments that

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# EVNY Candle Business Continues to Thrive; Start Up of Office Essentials Business Begins

**EV** extraordinary VENTURES

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Matt displays the charming smile he has for all the customers who come his way.

businesses that match the inherent and eminently trainable talents and interests of individuals with autism.

Liz brings not only extraordinary enthusiasm and talent to the enterprise, but years of experience working with children and adults with autism; first as a teacher at the Devereux Millwood Learning Center and most recently as a job coach for participants in the Devereux Adult Program. Liz first volunteered last fall at our initial sales events which led to her assuming the sales development position providing onsite training of our salesmen. The decision to promote EVNY candles through local craft and gift fairs has not only extended the repertoire of job opportunities from production through to sales, but has reaffirmed the importance of community integration as essential to the mission of both EVNY and FECA as a principal funder of the program.

The candles, which are still being made in the Schaffran basement laboratory, are designed for gift giving throughout the seasons, originating with fall and winter holiday scents and packaging last year. Brett and Max continue to head up the production team. Behind the scenes, Alex assembles all of the literature and bags for each sale. Brian, Matt, Avery and John sell the candles, attired in the signature blue EVNY polo shirts, at local craft fairs and farmer's markets. The summer season offered a wide range of opportunities to present the festively wrapped and sunflower



*On June 12th, 2016 Susan Varsames and Frank LoCurto challenged each other to a juried "thrown down-grill off!" Forty-five attendees came together at the beautiful Barger & Gaines offices to participate in the first official fundraiser in support of EVNY. John worked with Liz Oliveto selling over 40 EVNY candles to the guests. John did a great job, engaging all who came to his table with a smile and a handshake. Over \$4000 was raised to support EVNY's mission of employing adults with autism. EVNY would like to thank the Holistic Learning Center, Barger & Gaines and all who attended for their enormous gift of time, energy and support of our mission.*



Max and Brett proudly display their hard work preparing beautiful candles exquisitely made for the bride and groom.

adorned candles throughout Westchester county. The EVNY team sold candles at several events at the John Jay Homestead, the Strawberry Festival in Chappaqua, the Farmer's Market in Peekskill and the ever popular Yorktown Grange Fair. Seven more sales are booked at local craft fairs through the end of the year.

EVNY candles served the dual purpose of party favor and table designation for attendees at a local wedding and will be offered at several similar affairs in the near future. They are also being offered online on the enormously popular Special Mom's Network website as one of their featured products. The packaging allows for an unlimited range of specialized color coordination and personalized labeling.

A second EVNY business has been launched which caters to the office essential needs of local communities. Employees are being trained to compile mailings, offer photocopying and scanning assistance and in a special arrangement with several local libraries, regularly recycle and shred printed materials.

EVNY is in the process of obtaining office space which will enable both these businesses to continue to grow and promote the exploration of future ventures all to provide employment to an expanded workforce.

## DMLC Moves to New Home in Mt. Kisco

After two decades at it's original home in Millwood, the Devereux Millwood Learning Center (DMLC) moved to a beautiful, new, substantially larger, facility in Mt. Kisco, New York. The move came with a new name, Devereux New York Cares (DNYC). The creation of the school was FECA's primary mission over 20 years ago, and a close and productive partnership with Devereux enabled DMLC to grow and thrive. FECA provided funding for the security/observation system for the new site which enables staff to

not only monitor safety, but also provides parents/caregivers the ability to observe without interference in the daily routine of the classroom. DNYC continues with an ABA model providing 48 students from the metropolitan New York area with a state of the art education for students ages 5 through 21. Congratulations to our longtime partner!





## Gala

Joseph Pirraglia, an older brother to Matthew, who is a DMLC graduate and currently a member of the Devereux Adult Program (DAP). Joseph, who is an employee of MBIA, was also recognized for his involvement in MBIA Foundation's support of FECA.

FECA also had the opportunity to showcase its newest business venture, *Extraordinary Ventures New York* (EVNY). FECA provided the seed money for EVNY, which is a

non-profit company that intends to support three business: EV Gifts, Office Essentials and Laundry Services. These



Phil Orlando presents Joseph Pirraglia with an award recognizing his contribution to FECA through the years.



The Pirraglia Family  
Joe, Joseph & Terry

businesses provide a place of employment for our adults with autism, with each person contributing to the best of their ability.

Candle sales is the first EVNY business that's up and running. The candles, which were available for sale at the FECA event, are made and packaged by young adults with autism. Staffed by EVNY's Director, Liz Oliveto, and one of our young salesman, Brian, the candles were prominently displayed at the event. In addition to selling more than 150

candles, Brian engaged several guests, encouraging them to learn about the candles and to make a purchase.

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## FECA Supports Cardinal McCloskey's Day Habilitation

FECA's mission of supporting programs that enhance the lives of individuals with autism spectrum disorders continues to thrive with our partner of the past five years, Cardinal McCloskey Community Services (CMCS, [www.cmcs.org](http://www.cmcs.org)).

In 2011 CMCS established its first ABA based, IRA residence in Ossining, New York for young adults with autism. FECA provided the grant money needed to purchase an ABA curriculum from the New England Center for Children (NECC). NECC has a nationally recognized program for people with autism located in Southborough, Massachusetts. This curriculum contained best practices for individuals with autism in both day programming and residential life and continues to provide CMCS with the essential guidance needed to help serve the autism population.

Building on this foundation, FECA next funded a scholarship for Elizabeth Noble to obtain her Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) certification. This concentrated training has enabled Beth to train and oversee other CMCS staff in ABA in her new position as Supervisor of Day Habilitation. This year, CMCS enlisted the help of FECA to fund an ABA consultation agreement with Holistic Learning Center located in White Plains, New York. Susan Varsames, director of HLC and member of the FECA Board of Advisors, will serve as an on-going consultant providing hands on training and supervision to the CMCS Day Habilitation staff at their program in Valhalla, New York.

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Check out FECA's website,  
[www.fecainc.org](http://www.fecainc.org)

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## ONEE Program

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benefit from the work done by the adults that visit us every Wednesday. The program staff are so in tune with the ways in which the time they spend here can make a difference," explains Boyce.



Jesse organizes the prayer books at Reform Temple of Putnam Valley.

The Community Center of Northern Westchester in Katonah will welcome participants to perform duties at their thrift store-style clothing bank. They will also ready items in the food pantry on weekday afternoons, preparing the facility for Saturday morning visits by clients. CCNW is the first site to sign up for after day habilitation hours, a priority for the ONEE program. Most participants end their activities in day hab in the early afternoon, leaving several hours free and often idle. The FECA Board recently moved to target this time period, during which participants would be required to work out their own arrangements for transportation and job coaching, if needed.

It is an exciting time for ONEE as new opportunities continue to arise. A recent



Alex (L) and Alec cover the tables for a meeting at the Putnam Valley Grange.

partnership with TJX Companies' Non-Traditional Workforce Initiative Program has begun with Marshalls Shoe Shop in Ossining as the first site. ONEE program participants will work side by side with traditional store employees and management to coordinate store displays, manage inventory, assist with pricing and enhance the overall customer experience. This collaboration will enable ONEE to explore opportunities within the TJX Companies to closely align work preferences and styles with the work available at Marshalls, TJX and Home Goods stores located throughout Westchester County. Another new development in 2017 includes a listing of ONEE Program Site Partners on FECA's website complete with a description of volunteer opportunities available at partner sites. FECA would like to thank ONEE program funders MBIA Foundation and New York Collaborates for Autism (NYCA) for their support.



(L to R) Rey, Jackson, Alec, Alex and Jesse pose with the PV Grange banner prior to hanging it for an event.

## MBIA Foundation Grant Enables the Launch of a Mobile Device Technology Training Program



Arc Westchester technologist Jordan Jankus (standing) instructs John, Brett and Avery in an iPad application while Mark Haines and Barbara Flickinger (seated), members of the Charitable Contributions Committee of the MBIA Foundation, look on. Also pictured is Theresa Pirraglia, FECA board member, and Christopher DiMella, Director, Devereux Adult Program.

22ND ANNUAL

# FECA Spring Reception

**Tuesday, April 4, 2017 • 6:30 – 9:30 PM**

The Yale Club of New York City, 50 Vanderbilt Avenue, New York, NY

Cocktail Reception and Silent Auction • Invitation to follow