

L. Jones, Executive Director

**In This Issue:**

Newest Agency	1
Autism Conference	1
Strike Out Autism	2
Autism Awareness	2
Our Board Members	3
Current Volunteer Staff	3
Volunteers Needed	3
Collaborating with RIT	4
Partnering with AHEAD	4
Sec. & HE Resources	4
Reg. Center for Indep.	5
Visual Communications	5
Our Mission	6
Subscription	6
Contributions	6

## Newest Agency Now Serving Rochester Youth with Developmental Disabilities



**L. Jones,  
Executive Director**

Welcome to the premiere edition of *Transitions* – a publication of The Autism Council of Rochester, Inc.

Formed in 2007 by a parent with a young student with Autism, The Autism Council of Rochester is a 501(3)c Not-for-Profit, New York State approved agency.

Published quarterly, this newsletter provides students, young adults, and parents of children with Autism or other developmental disabilities with the latest information relative to specialized programs and services of The Autism Council of Rochester, Inc.

On behalf of all of us at The Autism Council of Rochester, I wish to express a sincere thank you for your interest in our agency. We look forward to working with other community agencies in providing services to families in the Rochester, New York and surrounding counties.

Be sure to visit our agency offices located at 11 Centre Park, Suite 305, Rochester, New York 14604. And be sure to visit our website at [www.theautismcouncil.org](http://www.theautismcouncil.org).

## Autism Conference – Save the Date May 13th



**William Stillman, Speaker**  
[www.williamstillman.com](http://www.williamstillman.com)

The Autism Council of Rochester, Inc., in partnership with Nazareth College of Rochester, will be hosting a conference entitled, “Demystifying Autism: An Inside-Out Perspective”. The presenter, William Stillman, is a nationally-known autism spectrum speaker and author who has worked in the human services field since 1987. His books include *Demystifying the Autistic Experience*, *The Everything Parent’s Guide to Children with Asperger’s Syndrome*,

*The Everything Parent’s Guide to Children with Bipolar Disorder*, and *Autism and the God Connection*. In addition, he writes for and hosts a column in the national publication, *The Autism Perspective* magazine - a great way to market your product or service as well as create credibility and build your organization’s identity among peers. Anyone and everyone involved with individuals experiencing the Autism spectrum—persons on the spectrum, parents,

1 out of 150 children in US are born with an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)



Considering that Autism is the largest health crisis for children in the U.S., the National Health Institute only spends .28% of it's budget on research and other related medical field work for Autism



ASD has increased tenfold in the last decade

## Autism Conference (continued)

grandparents, special education teachers, regular education teachers, therapists, paraprofessional support staff, administrators, guidance counselors, psychologists, residential staff, day program staff, etc. Join speaker William Stillman for an insightful, inspiring "inside-out" workshop. As a person with Asperger's syndrome, Bill provides a non-clinical, humanistic overview of the autism spectrum from the

perspective of those who experience it: What is autism? What is it like to have autism? What is considered best practice in supporting others' communication, sensory sensitivities, mental health and movement differences? He shares the many differences among people labeled with autism, including perspectives from his friends on the spectrum as well as his own experiences. More

importantly perhaps, Bill shows us how we are all more alike than different, and participants will leave the day having experienced their own "autisms".

The conference is scheduled from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. with lunch provided. Registration deadline for the conference is April 27<sup>th</sup>, 2009.

## Strike Out Autism Fundraiser –April 19th

Please join us April 19<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 a.m. to Noon for *Strike Out Autism* - a fun-filled event for the whole family to raise awareness and funds in celebration of *Autism Awareness Month*.

The Autism Council of Rochester is honored to host Rochester's first year in this National Autism Awareness event. Generation Rescue and Autism Speaks have been holding this annual event for years, and Rochester is now the 12th city to participate. While a donation of \$35 is

requested, exceptions will be made for individuals with Autism.

To register for this fun event, go to [www.generationrescue.org](http://www.generationrescue.org) and look at the special prizes from Jenny McCarthy that are available for donors. Family, friends, and colleagues are great people to recruit for your five-member bowling team.

If you don't have a full team, contact us and we will set you up with one. Mark your calendar for May 19<sup>th</sup> as this fun-filled event will be held

at Empire Lanes, 2400 Empire Blvd., Webster, New York.

Want more information? Contact Lawana Jones of The Autism Council of Rochester at 585.530.7284. Or sign up today at [www.generationrescue.org](http://www.generationrescue.org).

## Autism Awareness Workshop

There will be a free Autism Awareness Workshop at the Byron-Bergen Library on April 25th from 10:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. This is perfect opportunity for parents and members of the community to learn more about Autism.



## Introducing Our Board Members



Current board members of The Autism Council of Rochester include:

- Dorothy Robinson, formerly of Learning Disabilities Association (LDA)
- Mary Jones, Community Volunteer, LPN
- Juanita Jones, Community Volunteer, Parent
- James Muto, Special Education Paraprofessional
- Ty Hookway, Business Owner (Service Master, Inc.)
- Rick Dawson, Community Volunteer
- Pat Willis, Coordinator, Fiscal Employer Agent Services (FEAS)
- Thomas Michaels, Residential Manager
- Advisory Board Member - Chris Gold, BOCES 2 Music Therapist

## Current Volunteer Staff

### Kathleen McLaughlin, *Community Volunteer*

Kathleen has over 18 years experience of experience in the MR/DD field with an educational background in Communicative Disorders and education. She focused her studies on the Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and Down's Syndrome Language Acquisition. Ms. McLaughlin says she wanted to join The Autism Council of Rochester due to the giant misrepresentation individuals have about ASD. They are not considered Mentally Retarded. The public needs to become more aware of their abilities as individuals and as humans. Ms. McLaughlin's main goal for the year is to get individuals the programming and skills they need to become productive, independent members of our community.



### Anna Barker, *Community Volunteer*

This Anne's first year working with developmental disabilities and is quickly learning that aspect. She joined our team to familiarize herself with health care policy and hopes this year truly brings equal educational opportunities for the developmentally disabled. As an interim volunteer and Director of Communications, Anna will be writing grants and developing marketing materials.

## More Volunteers Needed

We desperately need volunteers and interns!

- **Volunteer teachers** to teach basic computer skills using Microsoft Office. If you're proficient with these programs, we can train you to work with individuals and small groups who have ASD. For many of our clients, the computer is a tool facilitating communication when verbal language is difficult.
- **Artistic volunteers** to assist with art therapy and art lessons. If you have taken an art class such as drawing, painting, sculpture, or graphic design, then you have a lot to share with individuals who are trying to interpret the world they live in and to communicate with their emotions.
- **Office Assistants** to organize paperwork, document and keep track of correspondence, and make sure incoming calls and emails are routed to the appropriate board or staff member. We need volunteers who will maintain confidentiality guidelines and who are reliable and trustworthy.
- **Event Decorators!** We have several exciting events coming up in April, May, and June and we need volunteers who can decorate and set-up for these special occasions. We have a large conference, information booths at community events, and a health fair. If you have a good eye for aesthetics and can be creative with a limited budget, we need your help! This is a great volunteer position for someone who can't commit to a weekly volunteer position, but can look at our calendar or e-mail alert to see if they are free on any of the event days that month.

For a volunteer application, go to <http://www.theautismcouncil.org/volunteers.html>.

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*A new case of ASD is diagnosed every 20 minutes*

## Collaborating with RIT

The Autism Council of Rochester in collaboration with Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) are pleased to announce a Computer Literacy & Job Readiness Skills Workshop. Designed to help young students prepare resumes and learn job preparation skills. All workshops will be held on Saturdays in the BIB Lab of the RIT Library from 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.

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*More children have been diagnosed with ASD than diabetes, AIDS, and cancer combined*

## Partnering with AHEAD

The Autism Council of Rochester is pleased to announce that it is partnering with the Association on Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD). AHEAD is a professional membership organization for individuals involved in the development of policy and in the provision of quality services to meet the needs of persons with disabilities involved in all areas of higher education. With 2,500 members throughout the United States, Canada, England, Australia, Ireland, Northern Ireland, New Zealand, South Africa, Sweden, Japan and Greece, the Autism Council of Rochester is AHEAD's only partner within New York State working to advance equity in higher education for people with disabilities. For more information about available resources and programs, check out <http://www.ahead.org>.

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*There is no known cause or cure for ASD disorders*

## Secondary & Higher Education Resources

Check out just a few of many resources available for secondary and higher education:

<p><b>Career Planning &amp; Placement</b></p>	<p>AHEAD offers practical strategies on how to empower students and human resource managers to recruit, hire, train, and promote qualified college graduates with disabilities in today's diversified work force. For more information, contact Ronnie Porter <a href="mailto:v.porter@neu.edu">v.porter@neu.edu</a> or Kathy McCreedy <a href="mailto:kmmccreedy@chartermi.net">kmmccreedy@chartermi.net</a>.</p>
<p><b>Community Colleges</b></p>	<p>AHEAD serves as a forum for dissemination of information and promotion of shared problem solving around the unique issues concerning disabilities and community and junior colleges. For more information, contact Cindy Jepsen at <a href="mailto:cindy.jepsen@cgcmail.maricopa.edu">cindy.jepsen@cgcmail.maricopa.edu</a> or Jennifer Radt at <a href="mailto:jennifer.radt@uc.edu">jennifer.radt@uc.edu</a>.</p>
<p><b>Graduate &amp; Professional Studies</b></p>	<p>AHEAD helps bridge the GAP experienced by many service providers and students with disabilities in graduate and professional programs. For more information, contact Christy Willis at <a href="mailto:cwillis@gwu.edu">cwillis@gwu.edu</a>, Jane Thierfeld Brown at <a href="mailto:jbrown@law.uconn.edu">jbrown@law.uconn.edu</a>, or Linda R. Walter at <a href="mailto:lwalter@lsac.org">lwalter@lsac.org</a>.</p>



## Partnering with Regional Center for Independent Living

The Autism Council of Rochester is collaborating with the Regional Center for Independent Living with the purpose of securing grants for transitional programs targeted towards youth 13 through 21 years of age.

The Regional Center for Independent Living empowers people with disabilities to self-

advocate, to live independently, and to enhance the quality of community life. They accomplish this providing advocacy and independent living services supporting individuals with all types of disabilities; specifically, providing opportunities for assisting deaf, deaf-blind, people with Spina Bifida, and youth with disabilities.

Together, we are seeking funding for transitional programs that allow people with disabilities to make decisions affecting their lives just as their non-disabled counterparts do and to overcome barriers when choosing to live independently.




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*There is no medical detection test for Autism*

## Visual Communications Workshop

A series of New Visual Communication Workshops will be held on three consecutive Saturdays (May 2, 9, and May 16) from 11:00 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. at the Basil Marella Park, 975 English Road in Greece.

Registration is required with a \$15.00 fee for each class. To attend, the

student must have DD diagnosis.

Topics to be covered include:

- Visual Correspondence
- Create Your Own YU-GI-OH Cards
- Creating collages



## Autism Council of Rochester

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E-mail us at:  
[info@theautismcouncil.org](mailto:info@theautismcouncil.org)

We're on the Web!

Visit us at:  
[www.theautismcouncil.org](http://www.theautismcouncil.org)

## Our Mission

The mission of The Autism Council of Rochester, Inc. is to be the community leader in providing high quality and individualized community integration services. We support youth, young adults, and parents of individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and other developmental disabilities.

We provide ASD awareness training to the community, service providers, educators, and medical rescue personnel. Collaborating with other agencies, businesses, and schools,

we help young adult ASD clients develop work, education, and independent living plans. With the help of our successful therapies, clients will have a better future and will be successful in reaching their goals. We are committed to helping each client develop personally and professionally.

These programs will benefit our community by adding technical and artistic brilliance to our society. Our programs will also raise the bar for providing services and hope for young adults with

ASD. If we are not proactive about this public health issue, Autism rates will continue to grow exponentially and will strain the resources of our government and health care systems. Opening a dialogue with the community is the only way to raise awareness and to promote a healthy society.

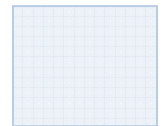
## Subscriptions

To obtain subscription information and to subscribe to this newsletter, please contact Lawana Jones at [info@theautismcouncil.org](mailto:info@theautismcouncil.org).

## Contributions

To contribute an article to this newsletter, please contact Lawana Jones at [info@theautismcouncil.org](mailto:info@theautismcouncil.org).

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