

SHARE Notes

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Colby Wallace Embraces Center-loaned Computer

He's a miracle," says Gina Wallace, "and a pretty smart cookie."

She's speaking about her four-year-old son Colby, who continues to face significant physical and cognitive challenges, the result of "Shaken Baby Syndrome."

Wallace recalls the day that she and her husband Scott had to rush their five-and-a-half month old baby to Hasbro Children's Hospital in Providence. It was discovered that Colby had been abused by the licensed day care provider they had entrusted to look after him.

Doctors at Hasbro Children's Hospital in Providence were able to save the baby's life by stopping the bleeding in his brain. He endured 12 seizures and many days in the intensive care unit. Today, Colby cannot speak sentences or walk by



Four-year-old Colby Wallace takes pure delight in using the computer with a touch screen recently provided to him by the UMass Dartmouth Center for Rehabilitation Engineering.

himself. He also has vision problems. After years of court battles, the person responsible for shaking Colby was charged with assault on a child and took a plea sentence of 15 months. Today, Gina notes, that individual is free, but her son will deal with his disabilities for the rest of his life.

Gina learned about SHARE and the Center for Rehabilitation Engineering following testimony she presented at the State House last year. This past fall, Colby was the recipient of a Center-loaned computer with a touch screen, thanks to funds provided to SHARE by the John W. Alden Trust specifically to assist children.

"From the day Beverly [Thorn, the Center's client services coordinator] showed up with the computer,

we've had to pry Colby off it," Gina says. "He knows how to turn it on, sign on, and he uses the touch screen as a mouse to get to his favorite places." Colby is able to access child-friendly programs featuring animals, bright colors and other age-appropriate graphics.

"He understands...but he can't communicate, and it's hard for him to point at things without getting frustrated," Gina notes. She hopes that one day Colby will be able to "speak" to them via a specially-designed computer. "That's my goal...that he'll be able to communicate."

And when Colby is ready for that day to happen, SHARE and the Center will be happy to help him.

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Computer Technologists Join Center for Rehabilitation Engineering Staff

The UMass Dartmouth Center for Rehabilitation Engineering recently welcomed Ildo Dasilva and Susan Francis to its staff as computer technologists.

Ildo's duties include delivering and setting up computer equipment in clients' homes and other living spaces such as nursing homes, rehabilitation centers and assisted living facilities. He also assists the rehabilitation technician with the repair and adaptation of systems.

Susan provides training in the use of the customized computer systems. She also is responsible for teaching clients how to use the Internet and office software and for developing training plans to enhance clients' computer skills.

Ildo formerly worked as PC/Network Technician for Caritas Norwood Hospital, where he was responsible for configuration, maintenance and administration of the hospital PCs and network. Other experience included two years as Best Buy's In-Store Tech Supervisor. His duties included training new employees, computer and peripherals sales, repair and maintenance of PCs, and resolving customer issues. He received the region's TOP GUN Tech Supervisor Award and consistently maintained a ranking in the top 50 out of more than 500 stores. Additionally, he served in the United States Air Force for six years.

Most recently, Susan worked as a technology teacher/support technician at Minot Forest Elementary School in Wareham. Other positions included Senior Instructor/Developer for EMC Corporation, where she taught the company's disaster recovery and storage backup software and hardware to customers, partners, resellers, distributors and system integrators.

Susan previously served as Information Technology Manager



Ildo Dasilva and Susan Francis

for ShopLink.com in Westwood, Training Project Manager at DA Consulting Group in Quincy, and

Senior Financial Project Analyst for Stream International Inc., in Westwood.

She holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Information Systems from UMass Dartmouth and is a Certified Technical Trainer from CompTIA (formerly the Chauncey Group).

"We're delighted to welcome Ildo and Susan to the Center's team and look forward to their contributions in the year ahead," says Prof. Lester W. Cory, the Center's director. ■

Gilbert Goulet Gives SHARE Foundation \$15,000 Memorial Donation

Westport resident Gilbert Goulet recently honored the memories of the two women he loved with a memorial donation to the SHARE Foundation in their names.

The Lucie and Lorraine Goulet Memorial Fellowship Fund of \$15,000, along with a University of Massachusetts Foundation state match of \$7,500, will fund the work of student engineers at the UMass Dartmouth Center for Rehabilitation Engineering during the summer months.

"I'm elated by Mr. Goulet's generosity," said Professor Lester W. Cory, SHARE president and Center director. "It will enable students to not only assist our staff members with their important work, but also gain technical knowledge and experience in the rehabilitation engineering field."

"I know that both of these wonderful ladies would wholeheartedly agree with my decision to donate to SHARE in their honor," said Mr. Goulet. "I've been familiar



Gilbert Goulet presents Prof. Cory with a \$15,000 donation in memory of Lucie and Lorraine Goulet.

with the good work done by Professor Cory and his staff for many years and I can't think of a better cause to support."

Mr. Goulet was born in Fall River and lived in Tiverton, Rhode Island for many years with his first wife, Lorraine, who passed away in 1995. They are the parents of three daughters—Suzanne, Louise and Jeanne. In 2002, he married Lucie, who died unexpectedly in the fall of 2005.

Gifts of \$10,000 or more made to the university qualify for the state matching gifts program. Donors may name the fund and specify its purpose. ■

Colby

Continued from page 1

Gina is “extremely pleased” with the progress Colby is making as a full-time student at Meadowcrest Early Learning Center. Several times per week, he still visits numerous hospital departments for various treatments. When the weather warms up, he will resume horseback riding and swim therapy, Gina says.

“I can’t say enough about how grateful we are to SHARE and the Center,” says Gina. “Colby knows that this computer is his to use and he’s very gentle with it. It makes him so happy to sit in his chair and show others what he can do.” ■

BY THE NUMBERS

During 2007, SHARE is celebrating 25 years since its incorporation as a nonprofit organization. In FY’06, the Center for Rehabilitation Engineering at UMass Dartmouth provided nearly 1,000 service transactions, serving 244 different clients and adding 114 new individuals to the list of people with disabilities it assists. The number of system modifications, equipment repairs, equipment loans, services provided, and client evaluations totaled 876.

Over the years, we’ve had the opportunity to enable more than 2,500 individuals with cerebral palsy, ALS (Lou Gehrig’s Disease), multiple sclerosis, spinal cord injuries, and a host of other conditions lead more independent lives.

Your ongoing support makes miracles happen every day. Thank you for your generosity!

SHARE Remembers Ron Kostyla

On December 11, 2006, SHARE lost a true friend and supporter with the passing of Ronald A. Kostyla, age 65, following a six-month battle with colon cancer. For more than 20 years, Ron and the “Sunday Morning Golfers,” in conjunction with the Pawtuxet Valley Rotary Club, ran a golf tournament in Ben Boyle’s memory to benefit SHARE. In addition, he was a past member of SHARE’s Board of Directors.



A mechanic and the owner of Kostyla’s Service Station, Ron was a lifelong resident of West Warwick, Rhode Island. He was very active in that community and a recipient of the Citizen of the Year Award from the West Warwick Lion’s Club, as well as the “Unsung Hero” Award from the Pawtuxet Valley Semi-Fast/Modified Pitch League. Ron was also a member of the West Warwick Elks, the Scottish Rite Valley of Providence, the RI Shriners, Club Frontenac and the Swords of Bunker Hill Gaspee Order 99, among others.

We at SHARE and the Center for Rehabilitation Engineering extend our deepest sympathy to his wife of 37 years, Jeanne; his two daughters, Kristen M. Fox and Dr. Karen J. Farren; his sister, Carolyn K. Stepka; his brother, Dennis J. Kostyla; and grandchildren Ryan and Brenna Fox.

SHARE will always be grateful for Ron’s generosity and kindness to us over the years. His laughter and enthusiasm for life will be remembered always.

BJ’s Charitable Foundation Grant to Support Off-site Training

The SHARE Foundation recently was awarded a \$15,000 grant from BJ’s Charitable Foundation. The grant funds will be used to support SHARE’s off-site training program.

The program sends a trainer/evaluator into the homes, hospital rooms or nursing home facilities of people with disabilities who contact the Center for adaptive equipment. The trainer assesses their needs, instructs them in the use of the computer systems and other equipment, and reevaluates the quality of systems people are already using, providing updates if necessary.

“We are very pleased that this grant will allow a skilled computer technologist to work with our clients to ensure that they have the appropriate equipment and training that best meets the needs of their changing physical conditions,” says Professor Lester W. Cory, SHARE president.

He added that the program is a huge boost for clients who have no means of transportation to the university or who live in nursing homes or other assisted living facilities. ■

THANK YOU

We extend our gratitude to the many supporters who have donated to SHARE over the past few months. Your generous gifts are making it possible for us to provide the opportunity for independent communication to more children and adults with disabilities.

The following donations were received from September 14, 2006 through March 23, 2007.

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SAVE the date

The 24th Annual Ben Boyle/Ron Kostyla Golf Classic

Sunday, July 29
Richmond Country Club
Hope Valley, RI

*Sponsored by the
Pawtuxet Valley Rotary Club
and the Sunday Morning Golfers*

For more information, please
call 401-821-9100 x. 243 or
401-615-2799



The 13th Annual Auto Show & Fun Day

Sunday, August 12
(Rain Date – August 26)
UMass Dartmouth Campus



SHARE Fun Walk

Sunday, October 11
Rain date: October 28
UMass Dartmouth Campus

**FOR MORE INFORMATION
about these events,
please call SHARE at
508-999-8482**

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