



Client Travels From Dominican Republic to Receive RHSC Services

Second-grader Maria Perez attends Santiago Christian School, an American school in the Dominican

Republic. At the school, English is predominantly spoken, but at home Maria's family speaks Spanish. Maria's parents felt she needed more practice with the English language and emphasized how important it was to them to have Maria speak fluent English for her future.

After doing extensive research online to determine where to bring her for the summer, they felt RHSC was the best fit for Maria's needs. Maria worked over the summer to address the areas of reading, writing and spelling. The purpose of the instruction was to help her strengthen her foundational literacy skills in English.

Maria's sessions lasted four hours a day, five days a week, with two hours of speech and two hours of literacy. She spent time working on phonemic awareness (being able to hear, identify and manipulate the sounds in words), phonological awareness (being able segment and blend sounds to

help decode, read fluently and spell), writing letters to improve her written expression, and oral reading to improve her fluency.

When she initially came to RHSC, Maria was very shy and hesitant to engage in conversations. As time progressed, she became more comfortable and confident in her English and began communicating with several people in the office. Through the use of a mailbox, Maria was able to write letters back and forth with the staff, allowing her to have real-life experiences while at the same time developing skills she needs. These real-life experiences appeared to increase Maria's curiosity about English, and her motivation and attitude towards learning English.

A recent email from her current teacher, Leonela Cabrera in the Dominican Republic, stated, "We have definitely seen a huge progress in her skills."

Both Maria and her parents seemed to have such a great experience working with RHSC. In their final meeting with RHSC, they were already talking about returning next summer because they were so pleased!



Maria Perez

Specialty Clinics Developed to Address Growing Needs of Children

Rochester Hearing and Speech has initiated steps to develop and grow two specialty clinics to address the needs of children in the Greater Rochester Area and surrounding areas. RHSC is establishing the Central Auditory Processing Clinic and the Childhood Apraxia of Speech Clinic to provide the highest quality of evidence based diagnostic and intervention services in the Greater Rochester Area and to provide services to these two pediatric populations that are currently under-served.

Children with auditory/spoken language processing deficits struggle with auditory and language based tasks, for example, they have decreased ability to manipulate and sequence sounds for reading and spelling; weak skills in remembering what was said to them; difficulties in understanding how information fits together; and more. Children with childhood apraxia of speech are affected in their ability to produce and sequence the sounds in spoken words, use appropriate grammar when

speaking and comprehending small but important parts of words. This may have a very significant impact on the development of reading skills.

Literally thousands, in fact as many as 16,000 children, are affected with these speech issues in Monroe and surrounding counties. RHSC has highly trained clinical professionals ready to provide the required therapy to help. To this end RHSC is in the early stages of developing two specialty clinics to meet the individual needs of these clients—not otherwise available in the area. Though these new clinics over 900 children, families and educators can be served each year.

The initial start-up of the two new clinics is made possible through grants and gifts of foundations and individuals and through RHSC resources. Additional funds will be required to complete the project. If you would like to participate in this important project for the children in our community please call **271.0680**, ext. **286**.



Speech Department



Noreen Boje Podyma, Ed.D., CCC-SLP
Director of Speech Operations

Fall is a busy time in the speech department, since many of our young clients receive services on the same schedule as the school calendar. We continue to work with young children with communication needs, age 1 year to 5 years in a variety

of homes, day cares, preschool programs and Head Starts. Because these are critical developmental years, we are focusing on assisting parents who have questions about their child's speech or language development. A new "Developmental Milestones" brochure is available to help parents, teachers and day care providers look for key skills that should emerge during this time. Experienced speech language pathologists are available to discuss, by phone, questions parents may have about their child's speech/language development. In addition, we are conducting brief screenings at selected sites in the community. A screening is a short interaction between the child and the speech-language pathologist to determine if the child's speech or language development is with expectations or offer a recommendation for a more in depth evaluation if there are questions. Evaluations are offered at no cost to parents for children age birth to five. For children age birth to three, parents can call Monroe County Child and Family Services at 585 753-KIDS to start a more formal screening and/or evaluation process. For children ages 3 to 5, parents should call their local school district to request an evaluation. The local school districts coordinate preschool special education services, despite the fact that these youngsters are not yet enrolled in school. We encourage parents with concerns not to take a "wait and see" approach. In general, the sooner a child receives needed services, the faster the progress! For students age 5 to 21, we continue to offer therapy focusing on a variety of communication and language based learning needs. In the near future, we anticipate offering Saturday morning sessions at our Elmwood clinic.

Identifying the "Silent" Hearing Losses in Children

It's that time of year when many transition from carefree summer days to getting organized for the school year. We shop for clothes, pencils, papers, folders, but what about hearing? Most don't think about measuring this until screening in school. Research shows that 5 years old is the most common age of hearing loss identification, even though the most critical years for speech and language development are 1 to 3 years. Waiting for the school screening misses this 2 to 5 year old group. In 2002, the Universal Hearing Screening Program at birth became mandatory and we started to identify moderate to severe hearing losses much earlier. However, children with minimal hearing losses, unilateral hearing losses and fluctuating hearing losses are often missed. These types of losses affect a child's ability to acquire speech and language, their future academic performance and fast paced peer interactions which are critical to socialization. Also, a child may be fatigued from struggling to hear.

Some parents who suspect their child is not hearing normally incorrectly assume it is a phase their child is going through. Modern methods available to an audiologist can allow us to accurately determine the hearing level of newborns, infants and toddlers. Without comprehensive testing, it is impossible to determine if a child is hearing adequately and consistently at all pitches necessary for speech acquisition, auditory processing and academic performance.

The audiologists at Rochester Hearing and Speech Center are skilled in evaluating young children and can determine slight losses or losses in only one ear as well as the type of loss. Our audiologists combine objective testing, which does not require a child to respond, with conventional testing to obtain an accurate threshold of hearing and middle ear health.

Help your children to be successful in their speech and language development by having their hearing tested if you suspect less than normal hearing.

Recent Grants

Rochester Hearing and Speech Center is pleased to recognize recent grants from the following:

- **New York State Department of Health**—a grant for the refurbishing of the RHSC Mobile Unit
- **Greater Rochester Health Foundation**—a grant for audiology and given as our missions are closely aligned; through a cooperative effort with United Way
- **Davenport-Hatch Foundation**—an unrestricted grant for RHSC programs and projects
- **Harter Secrest & Emery**—a grant to create the Presidents' Wall at RHSC in memory of Dr. Peter K. Hixson
- **Susan and Scott Miller**—a gift to the Peter K. Hixson Legacy Society
- **Rochester Press Radio Club**—a grant to purchase books, crayons and backpacks for students
- **Polisseni Foundation**—a grant to support two speciality clinics at RHSC

Congratulations to Noreen Boje Podyma, Director of Speech Operations, on receiving her Ed.D. from the University of Rochester this past spring! Dr. Boje Podyma oversees the entire speech-language department, and works with over 30 speech-language pathologists!

“It takes a community” has more than one context



Tom Gibbons
President

Rochester Hearing and Speech Center is proud to have reaffirmed its membership last year in the recently renamed Al Sigl Community of Agencies. It is fitting indeed that this new name was adopted by the Sigl Center. We certainly believe that we have common interests and common concerns. As a local organization we identify with the needs of the residents of our community in Monroe and the surrounding counties. Last July, in celebration of Independence

Day, we came together with the six other members of the Sigl Community of Agencies to celebrate the achievement of some of the people served by the Center and other member organizations and to ask the community for their continued support.

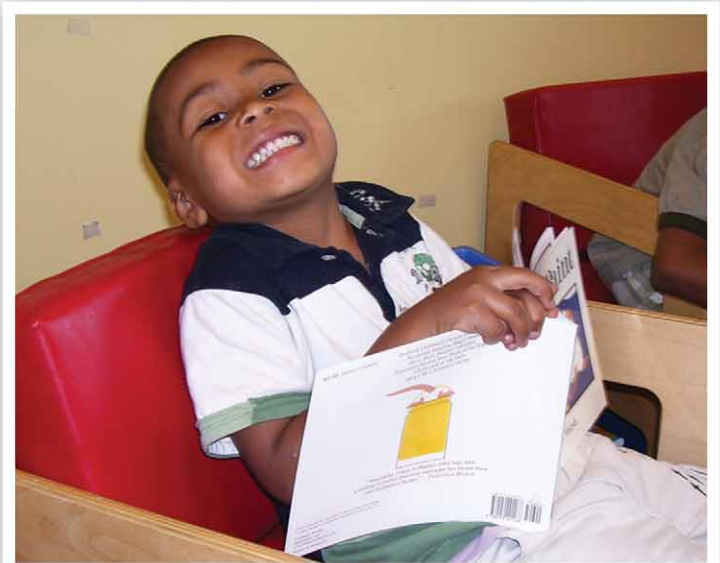
Our participation in this community means acknowledging those individuals whom we have successfully served and those who have been so generous with their philanthropic support. It also means identifying and responding to members of our community who experience difficulties with speech and hearing. The power of expressing thoughts by speaking and the process of perceiving sound by hearing are profound gifts. You will read elsewhere in this newsletter about Maria Perez whose parents were so intent on helping her to succeed with her speech challenges that they sought out our services. We are equally strongly committed to those who, due to a hearing loss, begin to lose touch with their community. Vibrant and interactive communication with family, co-workers, at social outings and in all aspects of our daily activities keeps us connected to our unique communities. We are a part of this community and we are committed to support your ability to maintain **communication for life!**

Another Great Year for Our Summer Speech Program

This past summer saw over 200 children, ages 3-8, served through the RHSC Summer Outreach Program. Children received group therapy and participated in the RHSC Early Literacy Program at 10 city day cares over a 6 week period. The purpose of the program is to ensure that at-risk children do not regress in their speech-language skills over the summer months and, in some cases, actually make significant progress—returning to school “ready to learn”. Special thanks to the following organizations that made the Summer Speech Program possible through their generous donations: Ames-Amzalak Memorial Trust, Fred and Floy Willmott Foundation, Glover-Crask Charitable Trust, Joan and Harold Feinbloom Supporting Foundation, Marie C. and Joseph C. Wilson Foundation, Wegmans. The photos below illustrate children participating in the program.



Students read some of the donated books at the Friendship Children's Center



A student is all smiles during his literacy lesson!



Special Education Itinerant Teacher Amanda Wing stops to smile for a picture with two of her students.

Former Board Member Spotlight



Peggy Willard

Lives:

Town of Brighton

Occupation:

Retired in 2006 when my husband, Joe, sold his company of 41 years, Pittsford Picture Framing

I am enjoying working part-time at Pittsford Florist. Also, I finally have more time for "hands on" volunteering, such as:

- tutoring first grade reading at Rochester School #46,
- getting involved in RAIHN (Rochester Area Interfaith Hospitality Network), which provides food and overnight shelter to displaced families

Family: Husband Joe Willard and two Cairn Terrier dogs, Maggie and Max

Son Doug, his wife Lorri and our grandson Owen Willard live in Fairport and are both teachers in the Fairport Schools.

Daughter, Sue Willard, lives in Pittsburgh, Pa. where she is the Head Womens' Soccer Coach at Carnegie Mellon University.

Interests: Gardening, traveling, visiting extended family and being able, since retirement, to spend most of the summer at the cottage we built ourselves as a family on an island in southern Georgian Bay, Ontario, Canada.

RHSC Involvement —Did a bit of volunteer work in 1971 and later that year was asked if I would be interested in becoming a Board Member. At the time, I was single and Peggy Minnett.

RHSC is a fantastic organization that has gone through some "difficult growing periods", but has come out on TOP! I am very proud to have been part of RHSC history.

RHSC Partners with Community Leaders

For many years Rochester Hearing and Speech Center has provided educational seminars, awareness luncheons and free hearing screenings to individuals in the Greater Rochester Area in an effort to reach all individuals and offer advice about better hearing health. This past year has seen a sharp increase in these sorts of activities as RHSC has reached out to many agencies, companies, and senior centers in our community. Already this year RHSC has provided over 12—presentations and 400—free hearing screenings as a result of its new Partnership Outreach Program! This year alone RHSC has partnered with:

Legacy Senior Living Centers ■ The Gables at Brighton
 Cloverwood Senior Living Center ■ Town of Brighton
 Senator James Alesi Health Fair
 Senator Joseph Robach Women's Wellness Health Fair
 Valley Manor ■ Anthony Jordan Health Center

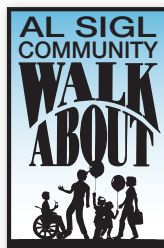
Plans are already underway to continue and to expand the Partnership Outreach Program to all individuals in need. During the fall and winter months RHSC will work with many new partners as we join together to improve the hearing health of all in our community. Future partners include:

Town of Pittsford ■ St. John's Meadows ■ Jewish Community Center
 Town of Victor ■ Southside Medical Supply and Lifespan—a joint partnership

Together we can provide information, advice and testing to children, adults and seniors thus ensuring better hearing health for all! Together we can make a difference in the daily lives of many—at work, at home, at school, in social situations and more! We look forward to another successful year of partnering for the better hearing health of our community!

If you would like to partner with RHSC, or know of a partner wishing to join in the effort, please call **271.0680**, ext. **286**.

Gearing Up for 2009 WalkAbout



At the 2008 Al Sigi Community WalkAbout, Rochester Hearing and Speech Center placed 1st overall, moving up from number two the year before! Over \$30,000 was raised to help nearly 17,000 adults and children in the Greater Rochester area in need of high quality, thorough audiology and speech-language services. The challenges this year—can RHSC maintain its number one position? Can RHSC garner additional walkers and support to remain number one? We're sure going to try!

This year's Walk will take place at Marketplace Mall on Sunday, October 25, beginning with a pre-Walk reception at 8:00 a.m. New this year is a silent auction, with bidding between 8 and 9 a.m.! There are a myriad of items to bid on, including a signed Lee Evans jersey from the Buffalo Bills! There will be lots of fun and frivolity together with special gifts and awards for motivated leading teams and walkers!

RHSC has formed an internal staff committee to ensure the success of this year's Walk. Team members include audiologists Jen Popovich, Dawn D'Agostino, Rachel Newman, and Ramona Stein; speech staff members Sue Reynolds, Jason Zuch, and Beth McLellan; support staff members Serena Michels, Denise Bailey, Becky Conine, Kathy Gilman, and Jen Heberle; Rachel Henderson, marketing/development coordinator; and Mary Consler, director of development.

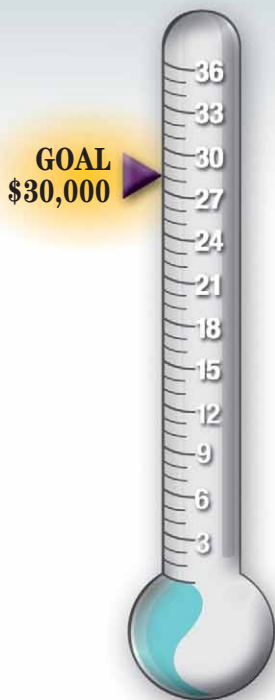
Last year RHSC had over 20 corporate supporters. Most have already rejoined the effort and new companies and firms have been added!

Come join the fun on Sunday, October 25 at Marketplace Mall! Bring your family and friends – the more the merrier as we walk together to raise money to help Rochester Hearing and Speech Center clients all year long!

2009 WalkAbout Corporate Gifts

Alesco Investment Advisors	Lifespan
Audiometric Technology LLC	Mengel Metzger Barr & Co LLP
Bonadio Group LLP	Merkel Donohue/Deskset
Buckingham Properties	Oticon
Canandaigua National Bank and Trust	Phillips Lytle LLP
Doyle Security Systems	Phonak
EBS Benefit Solutions Inc.	Practis, Inc.
Entre Computer Services	Smart Holdings of New York LLC
Federated Clover Investment Advisors	Starkey
Helluva Good Cheese	Tipping Point Media
Interpretek	Towers Airport Business Park
The Konar Foundation	Wegmans

Annual Friends Appeal Off and Running



Rochester Hearing
and Speech Center



The Rochester Hearing and Speech Center Annual Friends Appeal is off to a great start! Last year's appeal raised \$28,000 and, while not meeting its projected goal, equaled the previous year's total during challenging economic times! This year's goal is \$30,000 and board member Andre Godfrey will again serve as the Honorary Chair!



Andre Godfrey

Monies raised by the Annual Friends Appeal are used to support programs and projects for RHSC clients most in need. Examples of the use of Annual Friends Appeal funds include:

- Summer Outreach Program—this is a program designed to help at risk children, ages 3-8, receive speech-language group therapy and early literacy training during the summer months thus ensuring they return to school in the fall “ready to learn”.
- Specialty Clinics—two clinics are in the process of being established at RHSC to address the needs of children in the Greater Rochester Area and include the Central Auditory Processing Clinic and the Childhood Apraxia of Speech Clinic—both providing the highest quality of evidence based diagnostic and intervention services for two pediatric populations which are currently under-served.
- Financial Assistance Program—this program provides financial assistance for RHSC clients so that all clients can continue to receive the highest quality clinical services available—regardless of their ability to pay.

Won't you be a part of this year's Annual Friends Appeal? You can do so by returning the envelope included in this newsletter to RHSC or be calling **271.0680**, ext. **286** today!

Greater Rochester Health Foundation Provides Extra Support During Difficult Times

Rochester Hearing and Speech Center and United Way of Greater Rochester have enjoyed a strong partnership for many years. United Way support recognizes the excellent work and outcomes achieved by RHSC staff in addressing two United Way program initiatives: Early Childhood and Overcoming Disabilities. 1,525 children, most from families having an aggregate income of \$15,000 or less, were seen in our Early Childhood program in 2008 to address language/communication issues with the goal of facilitating age appropriate cognitive, social, and emotional development upon entering kindergarten. As part of our Overcoming Disabilities initiative, RHSC Audiology served close to 15,000 individuals (of which approximately 2,750 received some form of state aid funding, such as Medicaid) to help individuals at risk for/or diagnosed with a hearing loss to enjoy the independence that good hearing brings.

This year, through a generous collaborative effort between United Way and the Greater Rochester Health Foundation recognizing challenging economic times, GRHF generously supplemented decreased United Way funding with a one-time grant to Overcoming Disabilities. GRHF did so knowing that the missions of GRHF and RHSC are closely aligned—and to minimize program cuts to people receiving critical services in our area. RHSC recognizes and thanks both United Way and the Greater Rochester Health Foundation for helping us to provide the highest quality clinical services to all individuals in our community—regardless of their ability to pay.

Board Members

Catherine Frangenberg
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Ray Saucke
Vice Chair

Martha DeShong
Treasurer

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Stephen Brown
James DeCaro
Andre Godfrey
Jody Hellman
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Michael Rizzolo
Lalit Shah

Bernadette Skobjak
Deborah Stendardi
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Ken Diller
Kathy Johncox
Clint Koenig
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Doug MacKenzie
Sandy McCormack
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Comments or suggestions
may be submitted to:
Mary Lewis-Consler, *Editor*



Calendar of Events

- October 7**—Presentation and Hearing Screenings at Town of Pittsford
- October 13**—Presentation and Hearing Screenings at Town of Victor
- October 15**—Sen. Alesi Health Fair
- October 25**—Al Sigi Community WalkAbout at Marketplace Mall
- October 27**—Presentation and Hearing Screenings at St. John Meadows
- November 3**—Perinton Health Fair
- November 7**—Genesee Valley Parent Women's Expo

Check
www.rhsc.org
 for updates



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 & Speech
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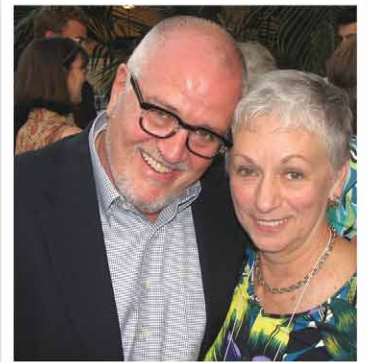
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2008 President's Reception Fun For All

On May 20, 2009, friends of RHSC gathered once again for the 4th annual President's Reception. Over 80 people came together at the Memorial Art Gallery to celebrate another successful year in RHSC history, and to recognize the 2009 Community Volunteer Award winners.

Victor Merkel, Kathy Johncox, and Greg Litz were this year's recipients of the Community Volunteer Awards. The awards given were "Building a Sound Community," "Communication for Life," and the "James J. DeCaro Leadership Award," respectively.

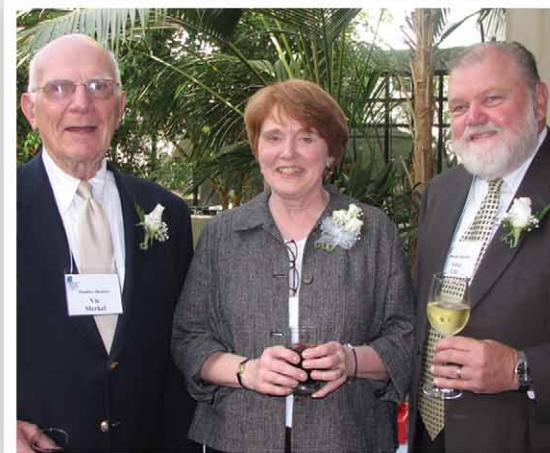
RHSC's community awards recognize volunteers and friends of the agency who have consistently supported its mission with their leadership, creativity, networking, and expertise.



Al Sigi Community of Agencies President Daniel Meyers and RHSC's former Vice President of Speech Operations, Lois Benedict



RHSC Board Chair Catherine Frangenberg and committee member David McLellan



Community Volunteer Award winners l to r Victor Merkel, Kathy Johncox and Greg Litz



RHSC client Evan Young (left) with his grandpa, Dr. William Clark