



CENTER FOR SPECTRUM SERVICES

Brightening the lives of people with autism

.....
 "We are so thankful for the solid foundation you have given our children."

– Karen, Mother of Alexis and Casey

Scott Herrington Invites You!



Hello friends,

As host of Spectrum Services "A Taste of Sicily" fundraiser on Friday, April 20 at the Château in Kingston, I

invite you to join us for this amazing event! The dinner will be a wine and food pairing, with Tim and Laurel Sweeney of Stone Ridge Wines and Spirits providing their phenomenal wines and expertise, and our friends at the Château preparing a variety of Sicilian-inspired dishes.

Please come and support the life-changing programs and services for children with autism. The tickets are \$100.00, and include cocktail and hors d'oeuvre hour, and a well designed dinner and carefully selected wines to accompany each course. Adding fun to the various courses, Tim educates us on the wine, and does a great Q&A giveaway at the end.

There is a silent auction during the cocktail hour, and a live auction during dinner. If you can't attend but want to help, we need both silent and live auction items. Reach out to David Juhren, Development and Public Relations Coordinator, at djuhren@centerforspectrumservices.org, or call him at 845-336-2616, ext. 165.

The children at Spectrum Services are truly, truly special kids. Please join me!

Scott Herrington,
 Owner, SavOn Party Rental and
 Spectrum Services Board member



April is Autism Awareness Month, and Spectrum Services has many ways for everyone to be involved in helping us raise awareness about our Hudson Valley loved ones with Autism. Join us, and become an Autism Awareness Advocate! We'll have fundraising events, knowledge-drives, and ways for you to support Hudson Valley children with autism who attend Spectrum Services.

Join our Autism Awareness Month Facebook Fundraiser

For Autism Awareness Month, use your Facebook page to help raise

funds to support the life-changing work at Spectrum Services. Donate, get your friends involved, too, and share this on your own page! Let's make a difference in the lives of our special little learners! See instructions on how to create your own fundraiser inside this issue!

Visit Our "Through the Lens of Autism" Photo Exhibit at Ulster Savings Bank

Our friends at Ulster Savings Bank are hosting Through the Lens of Autism, a photo exhibition from photographs taken by Spectrum Services students. The exhibition will run the entire month of April, and will be displayed at Ulster Savings Bank's Wall Street branch. Read more about the exhibit inside this issue!

Remember to Like Us on Facebook and Stay Up to Date on Our Events

We'll share important information,

give you heads up on autism events in the area, facts and information for you to share with friends and loved ones about autism, and more! Speaking of social media, have you connected with us on Instagram?

Show Your Support at Hudson Valley Autism Walk 2018!

Join our greater autism community and your Spectrum Services family as we exhibit and walk at the 17th Annual Hudson Valley Autism Walk and Expo on Sunday, April 29th from 9am to 1pm at Dutchess Fairgrounds.

a TASTE OF Sicily:
FOOD & WINE PAIRING

April 20, 7-11 pm—The Château, Kingston, NY
A Fundraiser for Students at Center for Spectrum Services

Chaired by **Scott Herrington** of SavOn Party Rental

Special Honoree **Michael Paccione** for his many years of service as a member of the Board of Trustees.

Produced with the generosity of **Tim and Laurel Sweeney** of Stone Ridge Wine and Spirits.

Join us for a celebration of Sicilian wine and cuisine, as we take a gastronomic tour that unites the culinary skills of The Château with the masters of wine knowledge and lore from Stone Ridge Wine and Spirits. Cocktail hour with hors d'oeuvres, silent and live auctions, superb food, and select wines.

Come and celebrate A Taste of Sicily, while supporting life-changing programs and services for children with autism.

Tickets are \$100 for a Sicilian wine and dine experience. Make your reservation TODAY at www.centerforspectrumservices.org.



MEET THE STAFF

Christina Johnson, M.Ed

Christina has worked at Spectrum Services in Kingston for over seven years, and has proven herself again and again as a teacher who cares greatly about her students, their families, and her peers. She has taught center-based classes for school age students with autism, and also provided Early Intervention and Community-Based Services to preschoolers throughout the Hudson Valley. She has also developed professional workshops for other educators who teach children on the spectrum.

“Christina has a very deep respect and loyalty to the school,” says Program Director and Spectrum Services Co-Founder Jamey Wolff. After some time at Spectrum Services, Christina accepted a public school position for some time, and came back to Spectrum Services with a greater appreciation for the work she can do for students on the spectrum. “She’s proud of the work we do,” Wolff adds, “and is herself responsible for many positive outcomes because of her work.”

Christina specializes in Applied Behavior Analysis and Verbal Behavior, both scientifically-based methodologies that are proven successful in teaching children with autism. Her training experience includes areas such as the PEAK curriculum, an autism assessment and treatment protocol for children on the spectrum.

She’s respected by colleagues for her professionalism, and deeply appreciated by the parents of her students for her dedicated efforts, and the progress they see in their children. “Christina’s intuitiveness while working with challenging students is remarkable,” says Cheryl Engel, Spectrum Services Clinical Department Head, “and will easily change track when she sees a specific method not working for a particular student.” Engel adds that Christina has a knack for forming trusting relationships with her students, a vital element for teaching children with autism.

An exemplary educator, Christina runs a model class that is used for best practices in training staff, and for showing visitors to the school. “We have so much respect for Christina,” declares Wolff, “that we asked her to get her School Building Leadership Certificate, which she is currently working on, and which will only elevate the high-level of quality education she provides her students with autism.”



Christina Johnson
and daughter Riley

MEET THE STUDENTS

Greer and Knox

Greer and Knox began their journey at Spectrum Services in Ellenville in the fall of 2016. While they’re fraternal twins, Greer and Knox had very different needs. Greer, a beautiful and feisty little girl, had very little language that often led to frustration. She would become upset when transitioning from one activity to another. Knox, who is easy going, faced challenges keeping up with his peers on the playground and his siblings on family vacations due to tactile defensiveness, low muscle tone, and endurance. He also started at Spectrum Services with limited communication skills.

This school year, both Greer and Knox have blossomed! Greer is now greeting peers and teachers by name and commenting on activities going on in the school. “She is much more aware of her peers now,” says Special Education Teacher, Janine Sprague. “She cheers them on during circle time and group activities, and is excited to see her friends succeed.” Greer now not only participates in the daily morning walk but also enjoys them. With her ability to communicate her needs and wants, she is much more tolerant of transitions and change in routines.

Knox is now able to keep up with his peers on the playground and on walks. He is climbing equipment outside without support, and can throw a ball with force. Knox was able to enjoy his family’s beach vacation this summer for the first time after his therapists and classroom team worked on desensitizing him to the texture of sand. “Prior to all the work done by all the staff at school, going to the playground or the beach seemed impossible,” Knox’s mom recalls. He is also now communicating his needs and wants by using an ipad, and vocalizes several words.

Marci and Doug, the twin’s parents, are thrilled with their children’s progress. “The school is such a blessing,” Marci says, and adds that “the support the staff provides changes the lives of families.”

We’re all excited to see the progress these two students have made. We’re especially grateful for the hard work of the family to carry over suggestions and strategies at home. It truly does take a village.



Knox and Greer

Ulster Savings Bank Hosts Autism Awareness Photo Exhibit

Through the Lens of Autism

Our friends at Ulster Savings Bank, who have been great advocates and supporters of our special students, are hosting *Through the Lens of Autism*, a photo exhibition from photographs taken by Spectrum Services students in our program of the same name. The exhibition will run the entire month of April, and will be displayed at Ulster Savings Bank’s Wall Street branch, located at 280 Wall Street. Over 30 pieces of photographic work will be on display.

Through the Lens of Autism is a series particularly beneficial to our students with autism. Taught by Deborah DeGraffenreid, a local professional photographer with a master’s degree in special education, the program is currently in its eighth year. “Many of the students in the program find it challenging to communicate verbally,” says DeGraffenreid, “and the majority of



Through the Lens of Autism: Floating Ball

them struggle with getting their meaning across.” With the lens of a camera, children who participate can share how they see the world, portrayed so aptly in this heartwarming exhibit.

The program was founded by world-renowned photographers Yva Momatiuk and John Eastcott, a wife and husband team who make their home in Hurley, and whose photos have appeared in National Geographic, Audubon, and Smithsonian, among other publications. Since then, the program has been funded by Momatiuk and Eastcott, as well as a grant from the Stewart’s Holiday Match Program.

“We couldn’t be more grateful to our generous friends at Ulster Savings Bank,” says Susan Buckler, Spectrum Services Co-Founder and Administrative Director. “With their help, the *Through the Lens of Autism* exhibit will have a positive impact on autism awareness throughout our community.”



Spectrum Services Honors Michael Paccione, CPA

Long-Time Board of Trustee Member

Our special Honoree at April's **Taste of Sicily** gala is Michael Paccione, CPA, for his years of dedicated service and volunteerism at Center for Spectrum Services as a member of the Board of Trustees.

No stranger to the Hudson Valley, Mike spent a lot of time in the area when his parents bought a vacation home in the mountains in West Shokan in 1956. "We would come every summer," Mike reminisces. He inherited the property from his parents, which retained a lot of memories of the time he spent in Ulster County.

Mike and his wife of 46 years, Joan, moved to the Mid-Hudson Valley permanently in 1979, where he later opened his accounting practice in Woodstock in 1987, recently retiring in 2016. Joan is a retired Kingston school teacher and principal, and the couple share two wonderful children, and four beautiful grandchildren who are the joys of their lives.



Mike has been a member of the Center for Spectrum Services Board of Trustees since 1986. When he first came across Spectrum Services, Mike was working

at Benedictine Hospital, which was right across the street from the Sophie Finn School, where Spectrum Services was located at the time. Over the years Mike served on the Board as a Member, Treasurer, and President. "I worked for the NYS Department of Health as a Medicaid auditor in the 70's," Mike says, "and so my background in health care has been a major help to Spectrum Services and its Finance Committee."

"We've been very lucky to have such an experienced individual as Mike on our board, and for as long as we have," declares Susan Buckler, Spectrum Services Co-Founder and Administrative Director. "He is so deserving of being our honoree at our **Taste of Sicily** event, and we're all very proud of him."

Community Supports Spectrum Services

Harvest Hop Fundraiser a Success thanks to Bob Siracusano of Sawyer Motors

This past year's Harvest Hop fundraiser was a brilliant success, and the event doubled its proceeds from the previous year. A major part of that success came from our MCs and auctioneers for the night, Bob Siracusano, owner of Sawyer Motors in Saugerties, and his right-hand man Ray Tucker. Both did a phenomenal job as hosts and auctioneers, keeping guests entertained, while helping to raise funds with a "Donation Auction," where attendees made bids at various donation levels.



The Donation Auction added almost \$7,000 to the night, and Bob himself pledged a \$2,500 donation from Sawyer Motors. "We're very grateful to Sawyer Motors for continuing to support our special students," says Spectrum Service's Development and Public Relations Coordinator David Juhren.

DO YOU KNOW?

Spectrum Services offers early intervention services to our community for pre-schoolers. BUT... this program is woefully underfunded. Each year we must fundraise to fill the gap between costs to provide these programs and the government funds we receive.

You can change the life of a child with autism. Making a donation is as easy as going to our website www.centerforspectrumservices.org, and clicking the Donate Now button in the left column. Any level of donation is appreciated.

fundraise with
facebook

Raising Needed Funding for Spectrum Services on Facebook is as easy as A, B, and C

- A) First, log into your Facebook page, and find on the upper right of your page the dark blue, downward arrow that clicks your pages dropdown box. In that, you'll see "Create Fundraiser," and click on that to bring up the Create a Fundraiser pop-up box, and then click "Get Started."
- B) On the next box, you'll be given options on who you're raising funds for, from which you'll click the middle option for Nonprofit, which opens a box allowing you to select what nonprofit. In the text box up top, type "Center for Spectrum Services," which will bring the Spectrum Services fundraising option. Click that, and choose how much you want to raise, and when your fundraiser should end. We suggest the end of April, so it runs throughout Autism Awareness Month.
- C) That opens the "Tell your story" box, which already has text, but which you can edit to tell your story. Perhaps you're raising funds in honor of someone you love, or maybe you have a birthday or celebration coming up, and instead of gifts, prefer donations to your fundraiser. Then, your next option is to choose a graphic, and we suggest the Spectrum Services Logo. Then, click "Create" to start your fundraising.



CENTER FOR SPECTRUM SERVICES

Brightening the lives of people with autism

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Center for Spectrum Services is a not-for-profit organization designed especially for children with Autism Spectrum Disorders. We are approved by the New York State Office of Education of Children with Disabling Conditions and the New York State Health Department.

Since our inception in 1976, Spectrum Services has served as a model special education program. With two centers located in Kingston and Ellenville, our outreach extends to children and families from throughout New York's Hudson Valley. In addition to our educational programming, we also operate the Spectrum Services Outreach Program, providing comprehensive diagnostic evaluations to children, adolescents, and adults in the community. It also offers Social Skills Groups, individual counseling, and professional and family trainings and workshops.

Annually, we attract hundreds of visitors, sponsor trainings and seminars for professionals and families, and are nationally recognized for our leadership in the field.

KINGSTON
845-336-2616

ELLENVILLE
845-647-6464

www.centerforspectrumservices.org