



**RACKER CENTERS**  
*Creating Opportunities for People with Special Needs*

# OUTLOOK

QUARTERLY | SUMMER 2010

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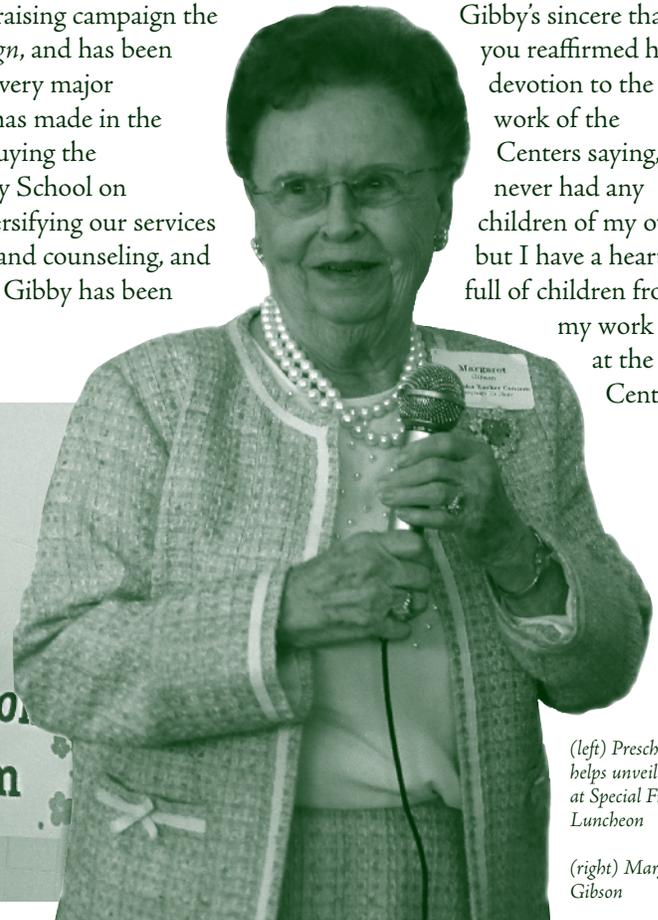
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## Long-time Volunteer and Beloved Friend of the Centers Honored

Franziska Racker Centers is pleased to announce that long-time volunteer and friend of the Centers, Margaret ‘Gibby’ Gibson, is formally being recognized with the naming of our preschool program in Ithaca in her honor. Gibby has been engaged with Franziska Racker Centers for most of the past four decades. She has been on the board of directors multiple times, helped in the hiring of Roger Sibley as Executive Director over 30 years ago, served on countless committees, and attended nearly every event the Centers has held. Gibby co-chaired our first fundraising campaign the *Half-Century Campaign*, and has been involved with nearly every major decision the Centers has made in the past 40 years. From buying the Glenwood Elementary School on Wilkins Road, to diversifying our services to include residential and counseling, and so many other things, Gibby has been there.

The Board of Directors decided to name the preschool program in Ithaca in Gibby’s honor for all of these reasons and more. The Centers doesn’t do this often; the last major naming recognition was for Dr. Racker. It should suggest to you, if you have not met her, how significant Gibby’s commitment and generosity of her time and energy have been. She is wonderful, and the Centers is thrilled to honor her in this way. When we shared this news with those in attendance at our annual luncheon in April it was met by spontaneous applause.

Gibby’s sincere thank you reaffirmed her devotion to the work of the Centers saying, “I never had any children of my own, but I have a heart full of children from my work here at the Centers.”



(left) Preschooler Ayala helps unveil banner at Special Friends Luncheon

(right) Margaret ‘Gibby’ Gibson



# ROGER WRITES

There was a recent magazine article that gave advice to people who were a bit older than their co-workers. One point was that you should never make references to things that happened a while ago, because chances are the youthful folks will have no idea what you are talking about. I can relate. And not because my elders keep making obscure comments.

Peter Drucker said, "When a subject becomes totally obsolete we make it a required course." I for one think history can never be obsolete. While there are some things that can be done well superficially, truly important things demand a depth of understanding.

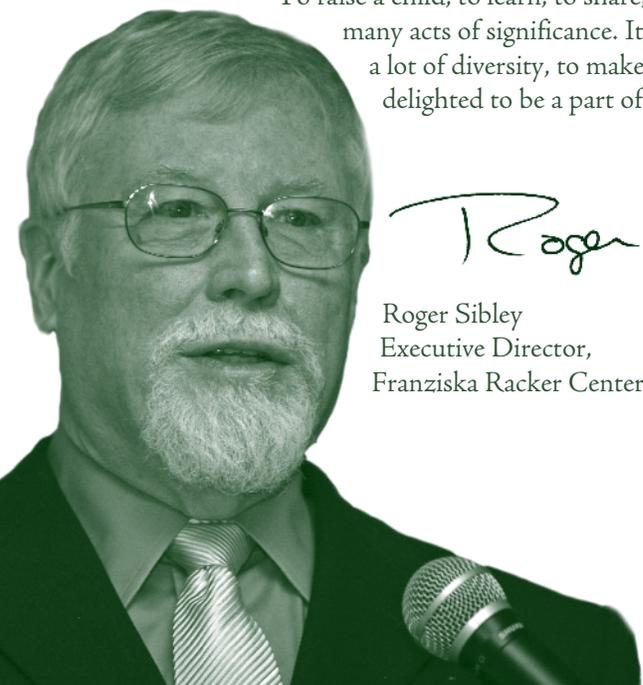
As the article on Gibby reminds us, the past is always with us, sometimes in a delightful and energetic package. Gibby is certainly an important figure in Franziska Racker Centers' history. As is abundantly clear, she is very much a part of the present, fully engaged with many of the things we are doing. And she is helping to create the future, for our little organization and for our community.

History, as my minister told the high school version of me, is "his story", the story of man, the story of people. And while historians like to divide things into eras and chapters, the truth is that it all kind of flows. The history/present/future of Franziska Racker Centers is the story of people coming together to make a difference.

While Gibby is truly unique, she is not the only volunteer who came to stay for a while, and lingered for years, helping in so many ways. It is one of our strengths. Just as we welcome people new to us with fresh ideas and new perspectives. Many, but sadly not all, organizations have their community friends engaged in making things better over the long term.

I think of the African proverb which lent its name to a marvelous organization in Ithaca. When you say "It takes a village to ...", what follows will be important.

To raise a child, to learn, to share, to appreciate, to help, to care, so many acts of significance. It takes a lot of people, a lot of time, a lot of diversity, to make an enterprise successful. I am delighted to be a part of it all.



Roger Sibley  
Executive Director,  
Franziska Racker Centers

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## Cornell Red Key Society Hosts Wrestling Event



*Jordan Leen hands out tickets for Cornell wrestling match.*

Franziska Racker Centers' program participants, families, staff, and board members were once again invited to attend a Cornell Men's Varsity Wrestling match this season. The match was preceded by a pizza party, games, trivia and prizes. The Red Key Society, a Cornell organization that honors outstanding undergraduate athletes and conducts service events to benefit the



*Tim wins a rally towel after correctly answering a sports trivia question at the pre-match pizza party.*

community, hosted a similar event last year. Now graduated, former wrestling team captain Jordan Leen, worked with the current Red Key Society co-president's Alyson Intihar (softball)

and Kerry Quinn (lightweight rowing) to plan yet another successful event. "We always have so much fun when the Centers comes for sporting events," says Alyson. Another Red Key member, Harlan Trevethick (women's rowing), commented on the event saying "I felt the same overwhelming sense of friendliness and enthusiasm present in the previous year. It was great to see familiar faces as well as make some new friends. Watching and participating in athletics is a great way to bond and I strongly value the connection the Centers gives us to the community." The fun filled day culminated with the Wrestling team's 44-6 victory over Harvard. Thank you to the Cornell Red Key Society for supporting such a wonderful event for those associated with Franziska Racker Centers!

## Young Lungs at Play Celebrated at Cortland Preschool Site

Bright yellow t-shirts adorned the children and staff at the Centers' Cortland Preschool site in March as they celebrated the Young Lungs at Play initiative. Funded through a grant by the New York State Department of Health in partnership with the Tobacco Free Cortland program, this grant provided several Young Lungs outdoor signs and literature about the program for all families at our site. The list included 12 reasons why "tobacco free is the way to be" for the health of our children and patrons. Examples include: secondhand smoke leads to many serious illnesses including asthma, respiratory infections and cardiovascular disease; the more tobacco-free environments a community provides, the fewer opportunities for youth to start smoking; and nearly 90% of all adult smokers begin smoking before

the age of 18.

A survey shows that the majority of Cortland County adult residents favor smoke-free areas. The literature concludes with several resources and support networks for smokers who want to quit. This grant and all its resources lasts throughout 2015. The Young Lungs at Play initiative has impacted many local parks, schools and daycare facilities, and we thank them for being advocates for this worthy cause and including the Centers in their fight against tobacco.

*Teacher Roxie McCall with toddlers from her class pose in front of new sign.*



## Making A Difference In Nicaragua – One Family At A Time

Since I began working in Residential Care at Franziska Racker Centers, I've learned a lot of valuable skills. I was given the chance to share these skills when, in January, I was invited to take a Service Learning trip, through Tompkins Cortland Community College, to Biliwi, one of the poorest regions in Nicaragua. Our group was expected to run medical clinics in some of the villages and to assist families who were identified as needing extra support. I requested to be assigned to a child with special needs and was introduced to a local family with a

and diapers. Unfortunately, Nicaragua has no government programs for individuals with disabilities and the few non-profit organizations with services aren't easily accessible for Orlando's family. Since there are no schools for Orlando, he's home all day.

My first goal when I arrived was to do a home evaluation/needs assessment. I noticed that Orlando shared a bed with his mother and had no place to sit (other than on someone's lap) and he also had no wheelchair. At 56 lbs, Orlando was

would work. After explaining Orlando's situation to the owner, I was able to get the chair donated! Adding pillows, blankets, and a U-shaped travel pillow, Orlando was soon safely positioned in his new chair and, for the first time in his life, he was sitting alone! Next I went to a local carpenter and explained what special type of bed Orlando would need. The carpenter gave me a reasonable price and said it would be done in four days.

Next on my agenda, was to provide Lucy with some basic information and training on nutrition, seizure safety information, range of motion exercises, wound care, and communication. Lucy was eager to learn all she could and was extremely grateful for the time and attention that I was giving her son. One of the gifts that we bought for Orlando was a large, color story book and the first time he saw it his eyes got wide as he smiled and reached for it! This inspired me to help his communication skills using pictures. I had brought a set of 150 colored pictures of household items with the Spanish word at the top and English at the bottom and with index cards and mailing tape, I was able to make homemade communication cards for him. I got right to work, explaining the concept to Lucy and practicing with Orlando. Though she seemed interested, I couldn't tell if she really understood how it would work.



*Fellow Service Trip volunteer, Laura Platzek, with Orlando and Audrey Terry.*

thirteen year old boy, Orlando, who is diagnosed with Cerebral Palsy. Orlando lives with his mother Lucy and eight other family members in a four room concrete home. He's unable to walk or talk and has limited use of his hands. Orlando has a seizure disorder that is currently well controlled with medication- when it's available. He communicates through facial expressions, including a huge smile, body language, and some vocalizations. His level of disability requires 24-hour care and Lucy, if able to find someone to stay with Orlando, makes soup to sell to have money to buy Orlando medicine, food,

underweight but other than some treatable skin conditions he appeared healthy despite not having a normal check up by a doctor in 8 years.

Orlando couldn't sit independently and had poor head control, so I felt a reclining chair would be most comfortable for him. He also needed his own bed. My final goal for the family was to improve their ability to communicate with Orlando so they could better meet his needs.

Where to begin? There were no furniture stores in the area but, at the bed and breakfast where I stayed I noticed an Adirondack style chair that I thought

**Orlando was soon safely positioned in his new chair and, for the first time in his life, he was sitting alone!**

However, on the day his bed was delivered Lucy pulled out the bag of photos and showed Orlando a picture of a 'chair' and a 'bed' and asked him which he wanted to be in. He chose his bed and

when we placed him into it his smile was priceless!

The only thing I wasn't able to accomplish while I was in Nicaragua was to get Orlando a wheelchair. However, once back in the U.S., I was able to obtain one (thanks to Franziska Racker Centers) that will fit for several years. The trick will be getting it down to him before next year!

I'm really looking forward to going back to Nicaragua where I'll keep sharing my knowledge and skills. It was so rewarding to come home feeling like I made a difference in someone's life and to realize how much I've learned from my work at the Centers! — *Audrey Terry*



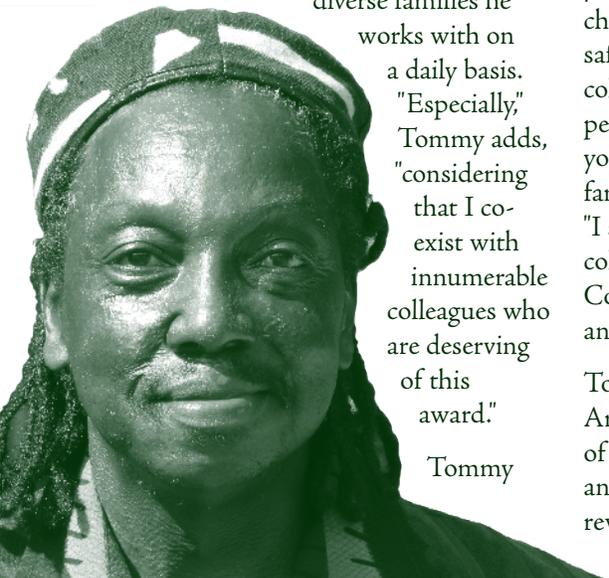
*Audrey poses with children from Biliwi during her service trip to Nicaragua.*

## Employee Honored for his Distinguished Community Service

"I guess they feel that in 'my own humble way' I try to make a difference," says Tommy Miller who was recently awarded the Ruth Pettengill Award for Distinguished Community Service by the Human Service Coalition. Tommy, who was nominated for this award by four different Tompkins County human service organizations including Franziska Racker Centers, adds that he was "surprised and appreciative" to be recognized for his dedication to the many

diverse families he works with on a daily basis. "Especially," Tommy adds, "considering that I co-exist with innumerable colleagues who are deserving of this award."

Tommy



has been serving participants of Franziska Racker Centers' Family Resolution Project since 2004. It is his responsibility to be the neutral facilitator at Family Team Meetings which involves family members and children from ages 0-21 along with other stakeholders such as attorneys, foster parents, caseworkers, therapists, school officials, etc.

He observes that his job as facilitator is to create a climate that affords parents, youth and community members the chance to establish a partnership in a safe environment and then promote collaboration to ensure safety and permanency planning for the children/youths while simultaneously addressing family needs. "Conversely," says Tommy, "I am impressed and thankful for the collaborative efforts of the Tompkins County Department of Social Services and Franziska Racker Centers."

Tommy finds advancing the Native American Circle of Courage principles of independence, generosity, mastery, and generosity to be one of the most rewarding parts of working at the Centers

*Tommy Miller*

as it affords him the opportunity to collaborate with families and community members to be "part of their journey." He also likes the Centers' philosophy that "everyone deserves respect" because this aligns with his own values and belief system. "The families I work with are often undergoing great stress and are coping in a crisis mode," Tommy explains, adding, "I have a profound appreciation for families' resiliency and their ability (with a little nudging) to embrace the concept that crisis is an opportunity for learning and teachable moments." This non-judgmental approach, combined with Tommy's willingness to assist his participants in exploring choices, is part of what led to the multiple award nominations he received.

"What are my future personal and professional goals?" Tommy pauses thoughtfully, "Getting out of God's way and allowing him to order my footsteps without imposing my beliefs on others... I don't let my spirituality get in the way of serving families, instead it enhances it."

— *Susan Henninger*

## Temple Grandin: My Experiences with Autism

At first glance, Dr. Temple Grandin may look like an unlikely hero, but she's idolized by countless parents, teachers, professionals, and those diagnosed on the autism spectrum. So it wasn't surprising to see nearly 2,000 people crowd into the Tompkins Cortland Community College gymnasium on February 23rd to hear her speak. Diagnosed with autism herself at age four, Dr. Grandin gives her audiences an unforgettable glimpse into the mind of an autistic person, both by recalling her experiences as a child and by explaining how she has been able to use her autistic tendencies to become a highly successful animal behavioral scientist, a prolific and well-known author, and a knowledgeable spokesperson for the autistic community.

As the presentation began, Dr. Karen Fried, Director of Autism Services at the Centers, introduced Dr. Grandin as someone who has "moved, educated, and inspired so many people" and you could hear a pin drop as the guest speaker began to share her life experiences and advice.

"High school was the worst time in my life," she recalls matter-of-factly. "Kids like me were tortured. They called me the Tape Recorder because of the way I talked." She attributes her success later in life to her ability to learn tasks and behaviors that are more accepted, and to her ability to promote her work, instead of herself. She dismisses the emotional connections that mean so much to the non-autistic, noting that she gets her social interactions through shared activities and interests like horses and research, rather than conversation-based, interactive relationships.

When she poignantly says, "If I didn't have an interesting career what would I have?" the words may strike an emotional chord in those who hear them. "Social people talk on the phone to their friends



*Dr. Grandin speaks to professionals, families, and students at TC3.*

but it's geeks like me who made the phone," she explains, "I'm interested in things, not people." While some may interpret this lifestyle as isolated, you begin to develop an intense admiration and respect for how she's adapted, taking the characteristics and behaviors that accompany her diagnosis and successfully using them to advance not one, but several, inspirational careers.

**Dr. Grandin stressed the importance of the non-autistic trying to understand the sensory issues of autism, explaining, "It takes us time to process things and shift tangents..."**

Dr. Grandin also stressed the importance of the non-autistic trying to understand the sensory issues of autism, explaining "It takes us time to process things and shift

tangents...It's the difference between jerking open a front door and carefully going in through the back door." She characterizes the autistic thought process as "bottom up thinking" because for her to understand something in the future, she has to go back to the past. Describing herself as having visual thinking and a systemizing mind, she adds "There's nothing vague in my mind, it's all specific, I have no truly abstract thinking."

Recently, Dr. Grandin's story was portrayed in the semi-biographical HBO movie, titled "Temple Grandin" starring Claire Danes. Dr. Grandin's excitement over Danes portrayal of her in the new movie is apparent when she exclaims "Claire became me in the 1970's. Seeing the movie was like being in a weird time machine!" She also credits the HBO movie with "doing a fantastic job of showing the viewers exactly how I think in pictures."

Throughout her presentation, Dr. Grandin gave many tips to families and

professionals who work with autistic children including:

- ✦ Make sure kids with autism get constant exposure to as many different experiences as possible.
- ✦ Play lots of board games, especially those that have rules and require turn-taking.
- ✦ Give kids meaningful work experiences at an early age. For example, Dr. Grandin cleaned horse stalls, sewed, and did basic carpentry projects as a child and teenager.
- ✦ Limit screen time, both television and computer, to an hour a day.
- ✦ Make sure that they eat healthy diets and get lots of exercise.
- ✦ Have clear and consistent expectations for behavior and manners.

Dr. Grandin's visit was a collaborative effort between Franziska Racker Centers, Tompkins Cortland Community College and Cornell University. For more information about Dr. Temple Grandin visit [www.templegrandin.com](http://www.templegrandin.com).

— Susan Henninger



*Dr. Grandin signs books during Autism Resource Fair.*

Preceding Dr. Grandin's speech, an Autism Resource Fair was held during which Barnes and Noble facilitated a book signing at which attendees could purchase copies of Dr. Grandin's books and have them signed by the author. Franziska Racker Centers' Social Worker, Heidi Lieb-Graney, and Finger Lakes Writer, Sue Henninger, volunteered at the book signing table. "This proximity to Dr. Grandin was much more moving than I had anticipated," commented Sue. "Watching eager audience members approach her, it's clear by their expressions and carefully chosen words just how much her work and her writing have impacted so many people in every walk of life."

As a result of the book signing, Barnes and Noble donated a portion of the proceeds from their sales during the event to Franziska Racker Centers in the form of a gift card. The gift card is being used to purchase materials on autism and other special needs to be used by staff and families we serve in many of our programs.

## RESOURCE FAIR PARTICIPANTS

- Autism Speaks  
[www.Autismspeaks.com](http://www.Autismspeaks.com)
- Autism Support Team in Dryden  
[www.dryden.k12.ny.us/StudentServices](http://www.dryden.k12.ny.us/StudentServices)
- Advancing Autism Research Team, Ithaca College  
[www.ithaca.edu/hs/depts/psychology](http://www.ithaca.edu/hs/depts/psychology)
- Barnes and Noble Bookstore  
[www.bn.com](http://www.bn.com)
- Children with Special Care Needs, Tompkins DOH  
[www.tompkins-co.org/health/cscn/index.htm](http://www.tompkins-co.org/health/cscn/index.htm)
- Cornell University Lab for the Neuroscience of Autism  
[www.human.cornell.edu/che/HD/People/people.cfm](http://www.human.cornell.edu/che/HD/People/people.cfm)
- Families for Effective Autism Treatment, CNY Chapter  
[www.featofcny.org](http://www.featofcny.org)
- Family Support Services Council, OMRDD  
[www.omr.state.ny.us/hp\\_fss\\_all.jsp](http://www.omr.state.ny.us/hp_fss_all.jsp)
- Franziska Racker Centers Autism Lending Library  
[www.rackercenters.org/index.cfm/page/services/earlychildhood.htm](http://www.rackercenters.org/index.cfm/page/services/earlychildhood.htm)
- Institute for Child Development, SUNY Binghamton  
[www.icd.binghamton.edu](http://www.icd.binghamton.edu)
- Kelberman Center  
[www.kelbermancenter.org](http://www.kelbermancenter.org)
- Magic Paintbrush  
[www.magicpaintbrushproject.org](http://www.magicpaintbrushproject.org)
- National Autism Association, Cortland Chapter  
[www.cortland.org/community/clubs/index.html](http://www.cortland.org/community/clubs/index.html)
- Rochester Regional Center for Autism  
[www.urmc.rochester.edu/childrens-hospital/autism](http://www.urmc.rochester.edu/childrens-hospital/autism)
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[www.cortland.edu](http://www.cortland.edu)
- Three Tier Consulting  
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# TRAININGS & EDUCATION

## Training on Poverty Gives New Perspective to Audience

On March 18th and 19th, over three hundred attended the 'Bridges Out of Poverty' workshop led by Teri Dreussi Smith, M.A. Ed and OCPS II, co-author of the book *Bridges Out of Poverty: Strategies for Professionals and Communities*. The goal of the training was to develop awareness of the dynamics of

**As a society we need to partner with families to understand their challenges – and strengths – so we can work together to create opportunities for success.**

generational poverty and the challenges it presents to our communities. During the three hour presentation, Terie discussed the 'hidden rules' or unspoken habits that govern many aspects of life for the poor saying "people in poverty are often in survival mode and support systems taken for granted in the lives of the middle class and wealthy are largely nonexistent." The audience often took breaks to discuss and brainstorm about various topics including the ways that poverty can originate, the mental mindset of economic classes, and the domino effect that can occur if an individual is faced with the inability to pay bills, find work, obtain healthcare or have supportive relationships. Terie stressed that as service providers it is "hard to move people out of poverty so we typically work to improve their lives while in poverty." Overall, the message Terie delivered was that with 21% of all

**A Poverty Simulation is a unique tool that educated participants about the day-to-day realities of life with a shortage of money and an abundance of stress.**

children in the United States living in poverty, we are all exposed, knowingly or not, to the struggles the poor face. As a society we need to partner with families to understand their challenges – and strengths – so we can work together to create opportunities for success. The training was made possible by a grant from the SUNY Workforce Development Training program obtained through the collaborative efforts of TC3. biz, the Advocacy Center and Franziska Racker Centers.



*Cortland Preschool Director Tammy Goddard (standing, far right) gives directions to Franziska Racker Centers staff at beginning of poverty simulation.*



*Terie Dreussi Smith presents to Centers' staff and community in Ithaca in March.*



## Poverty Simulation Reemphasizes Training

Following Friday morning's 'Bridges out of Poverty' session, nearly 100 clinic and educational staff from Franziska Racker Centers met at the Tompkins Public Library to take part in a Poverty Simulation. A Poverty Simulation is a unique tool that educates participants about the day-to-day realities of life with a shortage of money and an abundance of stress. During a simulation, participants role-play the lives of low-income families, from single parents trying to care for their children to senior citizens trying to maintain their self sufficiency on Social Security. The task of each family is to provide food, shelter and other basic necessities while interacting with various community resources staffed by volunteers. The idea originated from a

**“I don’t know how people do it; it is just so stressful. I found myself in a panic mode. I couldn’t even begin to think about the future.”**

similar exercise that Cortland Preschool Director Tammy Goddard and Social Worker Linda Kline had through the Community Foundation of Western New York. In the Borg Warner meeting room at the library, various tables were labeled as: employer, daycare, social services, utility company, bank, supercenter, community action agency, school, pawn shop, mortgage and realty company and more. Each "location" had instructions on procedures that needed to be followed for services to be rendered or deadlines that needed to be met for participants to maintain housing, keep their utilities active, and provide food and care for their family. The simulation lasted 70 minutes with each 'week' taking place in 15 minute increments and weekends lasting 3 minutes. Although the simulation used "play" money, props, fictional scenarios, and time limits, the participants got a very real view of poverty from the experiential setting. Following the exercise, participants thoughtfully applied their experience in the work they do each day as teachers, aides, therapists, social workers and administrators. Suzanna Schenck, a teacher's aide at the Ithaca Preschool, said "you have to know to ask the right questions" when trying to get the right resources in place. Tessa Zimmerman, a Social Worker at the Centers' site in Owego, volunteered as the Community Action employee and said, "Not even half of the families came to me and I had

enough resources to give everyone something. At the same time, it was hard to remember all of the places I could send people." Robb Stone, the Kitchen Supervisor at the Ithaca Preschool, played the role of a child and said "it was hard to stand in line with the adults and I found I only got attention when I was in trouble." Rosemary Vail, day care teacher at the Cortland Preschool who played the role of Robb's grandmother agreed saying, "I don't know how people do it; it is just so stressful. I found myself in panic mode. I couldn't even begin to think about the future." Discussing how the simulation would impact their work in the future, the group agreed that compassion is the key and we can't always be aware of the stress a family is encountering. Tessa expanded on this saying, "if you don't have food or a car, paperwork probably isn't at the top of your list. It should be a red light for us to ask if a family needs help elsewhere."

Jody Scriber, Director of Educational and Clinical Services, was pleased with the outcome saying "This was a great opportunity for staff from all our sites to get to know each other and work as a team to experience something that is very relevant to our everyday work with families that might be in a tough economic situation." Dave McNamara, Preschool and Special Education Director in Tioga County, commended the work that Tammy Goddard and Chris Truex, Administrative Assistant at the Cortland preschool, put into organizing the simulation saying, "You managed to take on a very important issue in a unique and challenging way. This event had impact and broadened all of our knowledge base."



Day Care Teacher Rosemary Vail argues with Social Service Caseworker role played by Nurse Karen Kilgore. In background, Classroom Aide Cheyenne Roberts, examines paperwork required to receive services.

# MAKING FRIENDS

## Thank you Business Partners

*for your generous support and unfailing commitment to the mission and vision of Franziska Racker Centers.*

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Elks of New York State

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J. M. McDonald Foundation

Legacy Foundation of Tompkins County

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*Our Business Partners are donors who make gifts of \$1,000 or more.*



United Way Member Organization

## Your Gift Makes a Difference – Thank You!

When you become a Friend of the Centers, you help us provide people with disabilities the services, supports and opportunities they need to do the things that are important to all of us: learn, have new experiences, enjoy friends and family, and be contributing members of our communities.

## Funding Options

### UNRESTRICTED ANNUAL SUPPORT

Allows us to respond to areas of immediate need.

### BOHN FAMILY FUND

Created by Donna and Tom Bohn, provides resources and supports for families with children having special needs.

### FRANCES G. BERKO LECTURESHIP FUND

Created with a leadership gift from the JM McDonald Foundation in memory of Dr. Berko, the Centers' executive director from 1964 to 1974. It supports community education and professional development for those working in the disability field.

### FRANCES V. WILSON MEMORIAL FUND

Created by Margaret Gibson, provides financial support for needed items not covered by traditional funding sources.

### FRANZISKA W. RACKER MEMORIAL FUND

Created in memory of our former medical director and the agency's namesake, supports early childhood services, an area that was dear to Dr. Racker's heart.

### RICHARD M. LEAVITT, M.D. MEMORIAL FUND

Created by Judy Leavitt and her sons, provides support for special experiences for children and young adults with disabilities.

### SCRIBER/CASH FAMILY FUND

Created by Jody and Kent Scriber and David and Lori Cash, supports community-based experiences for preschool/elementary age children with special needs.

### TOMPKINS TRUST COMPANY BRIDGE FUND

Supports otherwise unfunded clinical services for children throughout the year.

For more information on making a donation to Franziska Racker Centers, call Perri LoPinto at 607.272.5891 x.234 or e-mail [perri@rackercenters.org](mailto:perri@rackercenters.org).

## Hockey Team Raises Funds and Visits Centers



Hockey Player Colin Greening gets a hug from preschooler during a visit to the Centers.

The Cornell University Men's Ice Hockey Team raised funds for Franziska Racker Centers and the Cancer Resource Center of the Finger Lakes by selling fans teddy bears to throw on the ice after their last home game of the 2009-2010 season. Goalie Ben Scrivens and Forward Colin Greening took the lead on organizing this event, selling enough bears to give over a thousand dollars to both organizations. Additionally, members of the Cornell Big Red Hockey team took the time to visit the Centers in April to present the check from the fundraiser to Roger Sibley, Executive Director, and spend time in the preschool classrooms playing and reading with the children. Thank you Big Red!

## Excellus BlueCross BlueShield Provides Hospitality for Events

One out of ten students in the United States has a mental health challenge that gets in the way of their school success each year. In an effort to support those students and their families, Franziska Racker Centers, with the help of a federal grant administered through TST BOCES, is organizing collaborative events in our area

throughout the year between school-based service systems and mental health services in our area. Excellus BlueCross BlueShield has generously stepped forward to fund the hospitality for each of the events include a performance piece, a celebration of mental health workers, and a best practices workshop. Thank you to Excellus BlueCross

BlueShield for supporting Franziska Racker Centers in our efforts to raise awareness of the importance of mental health care.



## Ithaca Community Orchestra Gives Free Performance

On May 12th, the Ithaca Community Orchestra (ICO) entertained program participants, staff, families, board members and friends of the Centers with a program of enchanting music.

The ICO is a group of about 40 talented musicians ranging in age from 16 to 97, and representing students, working men and women, professionals, and retired persons, who have in common their love of music and enjoyment of playing together.

The Orchestra supports community musical education through the rehearsal and performance of the classical orchestral repertoire, as well as music of the twentieth and

twenty-first centuries.

Now in its ninth season, the Ithaca Community Orchestra (ICO) is committed to presenting two public concerts a year, performances at community events and festivals, and performances at local residential institutions. Much thanks to the Ithaca Community Orchestra for sharing of their time and talents. An additional thank you to David Resig, ICO member and a Service Coordinator for the Centers, for his part in making this concert a reality. It was truly an experience to be remembered!



Audience listens to Ithaca Community Orchestra Brass Quintet

# OUTLOOK

Franziska Racker Centers  
3226 Wilkins Road  
Ithaca, NY 14850

Non-Profit Organization  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Permit No. 780  
Ithaca, NY 14850

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED



[www.rackercenters.org](http://www.rackercenters.org)

## VISION

We are inspired by the vision of our founding families: that all people with disabilities will be valued members of a welcoming and supportive community.

## MISSION

We are dedicated to helping people with special needs and their families have good lives, with opportunities to learn, to be responsible, to feel cared for, to share, to be connected to others. We are committed to creating a culture of inclusion in our community, celebrating the richness that diversity and interdependence bring.

## Faces of the Centers

### RED HIT THE BIG TIME

On Saturday, February 27, a group of thirty Franziska Racker Centers program participants, family members, and staff attended the final Cornell men's basketball home game at Newman Arena. This was made possible through the generosity and cooperation of Assistant Athletic Director Christine Wlosinski and members of the Cornell Women's Volleyball Team, who accompanied the group into the arena.

— By Jon Ulrich, Family Support Coordinator

Stephanie, Community Support Staff, and Erica give a thumbs at Cornell Men's Basketball Game.

