

'It has been amazing'

Early Intervention lays groundwork for later success

In the front room of Zulaika's home, Early Intervention Special Instructor Maribel Garcia is singing "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star" with Naomii, Zulaika's two-year-old granddaughter. When the song concludes, Maribel gently guides Naomii to bake a Playdoh cake for the tiny doll she has in her hands. Maribel has worked with Naomii for more than a year, ever since Zulaika took over custody of her two granddaughters.

RHD's Early Intervention program works with children identified as having early childhood medical diagnosis or developmental delay. An Early Intervention special instructor works with Naomii on skills in social and emotional development as part of her referral by the Department of Human Services.

"Naomii's response to Maribel was rocky in the beginning," Zulaika said. "Naomii only spoke with her hands — and that came in the form of hitting those around her."

Today Naomii communicates in English and Spanish, and Zulaika reports that her behavior is much improved.

"I'm very happy with Naomii's progress," Zulaika says. "I'm blessed with all the services and the people who have worked with Naomii since the beginning."

See **EARLY INTERVENTION** / page 2



Kenneth Kauffman | photos

Early Intervention: RHD Early Intervention Special Instructor Maribel Garcia works with Naomii on improvement of social skills and language skills.



THE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE NONPROFIT RESOURCES FOR HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

WHO WE ARE: Resources for Human Development is a national human services nonprofit founded in 1970 that specializes in creating innovative, quality services that support people of all abilities wherever the need exists. In partnership with government and those we serve, RHD builds better communities through more than 160 caring and effective programs in 15 states.

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All in a Day's Work

See story page 4

Darrell is just one of many people supported at RHD programs who have found and maintained meaningful employment in their communities

Main Line Wine Gala benefits RHD programs

RHD welcomed Laurent Drouhin, proprietor and the great grandson of the founder of Maison Joseph Drouhin, as honorary chair for the 2016 Main Line Wine Gala, an annual event celebrating the world's most innovative winemakers and benefiting RHD's innovative human services.

Pierre Calmels, one of the country's finest French chefs, served as Gala Chef.

Drouhin visited RHD's Center for Creative Works, a studio for artists with intellectual disabilities and one of the RHD programs benefiting from the Gala.

"Seeing and speaking with the artists there was a memorable experience," Drouhin said. "It was easy to see the sense of purpose they get from their work. I applaud RHD for the very, very important work they are doing."

The Tucker Law Group was the Grand Cru sponsor for the Main Line Wine Gala. All the generous donors who support RHD help us develop caring and effective programs that create brighter futures for people of all abilities. For a full list, please see Page 6.



Thanks for your support: Joe H. Tucker, Jr. of Tucker Law Group (left) supported RHD's 2016 Main Line Wine Gala as Grand Cru Sponsor.

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Please use the enclosed envelope to send a check or donate online at www.rhd.org



Building blocks: RHD Early Intervention Special Instructor Maribel Garcia (left) works with Naomii as Zulaika, Naomii's grandmother, looks on.

EARLY INTERVENTION

from front page

Supporting more than 200 children, RHD's Early Intervention empowers families and caregivers to deliver skills and strategies that improve their child's development in their natural learning environment. Home and community-based services are delivered to parents and caregivers of children from infants to preschoolers.

From Special Instruction to Occupational and Physical Therapy, to Social Work and Nutrition, Early Intervention offers services to families of varying socioeconomic backgrounds. In-person and phone interpretation are also offered for parents who do not speak English.

Early Interventionists work in collaboration with families and caregivers to develop goals. The team also works together to develop the specific service and/or educational plan that is designed to maximize the children's strengths and help them learn new, more progressive ways of functioning. Therapeutic activities such as playing, dressing and eating can be a large part of understanding the child's growing needs.

Naomii's therapy goals include improvement of language skills and better control of her behavior. Their sessions have come a long way. When Maribel first began working with Naomii, the little girl's verbal communication skills were very limited.

Besides the utilization of songs, playtime, and art projects, Maribel communicates with Naomii in English and in Spanish, a language she's known since birth. She worked to create a comfort zone for Naomii, making a slow but steady impact.

"When you're in the home, you're working with the family, you're impacting their whole environment by your presence," RHD Early Intervention Director Shawna Sidibe said. "Working with the family is key in the child's development. Having an opportunity to work with children in Early Intervention prepares them not only for school age programming, but even for reducing some of those risk factors that could happen in adulthood."

When RHD Early Intervention Special Instructor Sa'de Edwards arrives at La Toya's home, she greets La Toya's two-year-old son Lynden with a slew of questions: "Good morning! Did you miss me? What do you want to do today?"

La Toya found her way to Early Intervention services through a referral, after a worrisome few months of fear that Lynden was lagging behind other children his age in vocabulary. La Toya's pediatrician recommended an Early Intervention evaluation.

"From the first time Sa'de came here, she was on Lynden's level," La Toya said. "She made it fun and was about interacting with Lynden as a person. She stepped outside of what her job was and engaged him."

During a break, Lynden pulls out a skateboard from his toy chest that is almost larger than he is. Sa'de immediately prompts him to verbalize "push" and "pull" as he maneuvers the board in the small living space. As Lynden echoes the words, his mother looks on with a smile.

"Early Intervention has had a huge impact," La Toya said.

"Since Sa'de has come in and we've obtained these services, it's been amazing. Lynden has surpassed where I thought he would go."

Early Intervention is just one example of how RHD has been a pioneer in creating unique programs for children. Thousands of children and their families have found caring, effective support at RHD that has helped them achieve their behavioral and educational goals.

RHD's children's services continuum is very diverse, but the way RHD delivers services is similar. All RHD programs are trauma-informed and person-centered, and family engagement is a significant initiative.

RHD supports families of all backgrounds in ways that work best for them, by going into the home to deliver personalized service at the highest level.

"It's rewarding," Sidibe said. "This program has been in existence since 1996 and we've been able to serve multiple families as a result."

As the session with Sa'de winds down, Lynden takes a yellow truck from his toy chest and places his plush grey hippo on top of it. As he pushes the truck around the room, Sa'de has one more request for Lynden: "Repeat after me — five, four, three, two, one!"

After he repeats the last number, Sa'de smiles and says: "Good job, buddy! We're all done!"



A huge impact: La Toya reads with her son, Lynden, who has been working with RHD Early Intervention. "It's been amazing," La Toya said. "Lynden has surpassed where I thought he would go."



'NOVA III saved me'

First there were shadows, and shapes. Then Suzanne could see. After years in blindness, Suzanne regained her sight with support from RHD's NOVA III.

"I just started crying," Suzanne said. "Then I started introducing myself to the staff — I'd heard their voices. But this was the first time I could see them."

When Suzanne came to NOVA III, a long-term residential treatment program supporting individuals who are medically fragile with a mental health diagnosis and co-occurring substance use disorders, she was blind and confined to a wheelchair. Today Suzanne can walk, and she can see. While those procedures weren't particularly complicated, getting Suzanne in front of a doctor who would perform the corneal implant and hip replacement surgeries simply wasn't possible until she'd attained stable housing and progressed in her recovery.

"No one would do the procedure," said Carolyn Gessner, NOVA III Nurse Manager. "She had to be stable. She had to not be living on the street. She had to not be high. We saw in Suzanne a person we could immediately have an impact on — and a big part of that, certainly, was helping her to see and walk again."

RHD's person-centered recovery plans take into account where clients are in their unique recovery process, and RHD has long been at the forefront of dual diagnosis programs that treat addiction and mental illness. RHD has also been a leader in fighting opioid addiction since 1972, and specializes in creating and providing trauma-informed services that work in any community setting.

At NOVA III, staff helps people work toward a stable and sustained recovery by creating an environment of encouragement, responsibility, and individualized flexible services. Residents gain the highest level of independence possible and move toward integrated, recovery-based living within the community.

"This place was my miracle," Suzanne said. "I was blind, crippled, and homeless. All I thought about was suicide. Being on the street like that was unbearable. I didn't want to go on. But NOVA III saved me."

"At first I thought: This place is too nice, the people are too nice, something is up, here. I was pretty difficult. I was chewing people out, blowing up at people because I was angry at myself. I didn't trust anybody."

"She didn't believe us for a second — and why would she? Since childhood, she's had no one she could depend on," said NOVA III Director Susan Gueye. "When she got her sight, when she could see, it was amazing. The floodgates kind of opened for her."

When Suzanne entered NOVA III, staff took her picture as part of her intake procedure. Two months later, in recovery and having regained her sight, Suzanne



NOVA III: Suzanne holds up the "before" and "after" pictures of herself that she uses for motivation in her recovery. Above, Suzanne said she's received great support from NOVA III staff (left to right) Andrea Johnson-Edwards, Financial Admin; Janine McCullers, Licensed Practical Nurse; Susan Gueye, NOVA III Director; and Carolyn Gessner, Nurse Manager.

got another picture taken. She keeps the "before" and "after" photos with her, and looks at them every day. Seeing where she'd been and where she is now gives Suzanne hope for where she's going.

"I look at these pictures and it's just: Oh my gosh," Suzanne said. "This is the first place that made me feel like I had a chance at something better. I have so much support. I'm so glad I got here. This place did so much for me. I would not be here if it wasn't for them."

Suzanne continues to work toward the goal of attaining her own housing. And, now that she can see their faces, she thanks each member of the staff every day.

"Recovery is hard work," Gueye said. "And you can't do that very, very hard work in an environment where you don't feel safe. Nothing else matters if you're in an environment where you feel traumatized just walking down the hallway. When you know your needs are met, when you know you are in a safe place, when you know you are surrounded by people who are there to help you, that's when you can begin recovery."

"We can't do the work for you — but we can provide an environment where you can do the work."



Family reunion at COSTAR

James, a client at RHD's COSTAR, was able to reunite with his brother John thanks to Direct Support Professional Kysha Selby.

At COSTAR, a multi-faceted residential and family supportive services program for individuals with behavioral health challenges, James struggled at times because he couldn't contact his fraternal twin and didn't know John's whereabouts. Selby tracked John down and reconnected them. A COSTAR program goal this year is to reconnect clients with estranged family (so far, staff has reunited 25 clients with family). When Kysha learned of James and John's estrangement, she worked to bring the two brothers back together — and amazingly, reconnected them the day before their birthday.

"If I found myself in a similar life circumstance, I would want someone to do the same thing for me," Selby said.

"Anything we want for ourselves, we should assure that our clients have the same," said COSTAR Director Lynia Harper. "They are our driving force."

With his brother's return to his life, James is more talkative and outgoing and has shown a greater interest in his recovery journey.

"I know where John is now," James said. "That's the best thing."

For more on this story, please visit: www.rhd.org/costar

All in a Day's Work



Kenneth Kauffman | photos

Talking shop: Darrell, at left, shares a laugh with his coworkers in the break room between shifts at AmeriPride, where he works. Darrell is a consumer at RHD Memphis.

Darrell sits with his coworkers in the break room, talking excitedly about plans for the weekend, talking shop about their jobs, swapping stories and sharing a laugh. Today is a little unusual, since there is a photographer there taking pictures of Darrell; his coworkers are buzzing about Darrell's celebrity and asking for autographs.

"Darrell is a great worker," said Brian Forehand, Production Manager at AmeriPride, one of the largest uniform rental and linen supply companies in the country. "He's a lot of fun to be around. Everybody here loves him."

This comes with no qualifier, no caveat, no mention that Darrell is a young man with developmental disabilities and a client at RHD Memphis in Tennessee. That's exactly what RHD programs in Tennessee are striving for — with great success across the state.

Tennessee mandates that providers find and support employment for 15 percent of their consumers. At RHD's programs in Tennessee, 33 percent of consumers have attained and held employment.

"We are an employment-first program," RHD Tennessee State Director Mary Hamlett said. "Our first option is to see if the people we support can be employed in some way — whether that is as a volunteer, or doing seasonal work, or part-time, or full-time. For most people, it's about feeling more independent and, maybe for the first time in their lives, really setting and achieving some goals. We're proud to be assisting in those goals."

"At RHD, we work very hard to look at their interests, their abilities, what their strengths are," said Anthony Ricks, RHD Memphis Mainstay South. "We know the people we serve. We want people placed in situations where they'll be challenged, but also where they have the best possible chance to be successful."

In Tennessee, RHD supports four programs from Memphis to Nashville that work with people with developmental disabilities in supportive, supervised residential settings. RHD promotes the fundamental concept of people living with the highest level of independence possible. For many people, the opportunity to attain employment is a key element of self-esteem and dignity. One of Darrell's main goals is to work — even on weekends, when he's not at AmeriPride, he washes cars, trims hedges, mows lawns and does other odd jobs in his neighborhood to earn extra income.

"He's a go-getter," said Direct Service Professional Mike Sasfrass, who accompanies Darrell on the job at AmeriPride. "He really loves having a sense of being needed. He loves his job so much; he's always upbeat and ready to go, every morning. If you're around him, even on days when you're feeling kind of down, he'll lift your spirits. I wish I had half his energy."

At AmeriPride, Darrell noticed his coworkers set daily goals for themselves, keeping tallies on a white board. He began carrying a notebook with him to set and record his daily production. Forehand said that Darrell worked hard to learn each task, and before long was exceeding his goals every day.

"This is the best job," Darrell said. "All my coworkers are real nice; they help me stay on task, and I stay busy. It makes me happy. I feel happy to have this job."

Behind Darrell in the AmeriPride break room are portraits of the employee of the month. As he talked about his goals, Darrell pointed at the wall and said: "I'm trying to get up there!"

"Working is very important to him," said Taria Brown, RHD Program Manager. "He wanted to

Dennis loves his job, because he likes to earn his own money and do things for himself. That's important to him. And that's important to us, that people be able to live in their own homes with as much independence as possible. Being able to help Dennis achieve that makes me happy."

Jatory Johnson, DSP

“We know the people we serve. We want people placed in situations where they’ll be challenged, but also where they have the best possible chance to be successful.”

Anthony Ricks, Program Director



All in a day's work: Dennis, a consumer at RHD of Middle Tennessee's Respite program, helps manage the aisles at his job at Goodwill (above) and punches in on time every day. At bottom, Dennis sorts through paperwork with Direct Support Professional Jatory Johnson.

prove to himself and everyone else that he's capable just like you and me, that he can do it. Having a job shows him that he's able and responsible. He was very adamant about: I can do this. Let me show you.”

Dennis is a consumer at RHD of Middle Tennessee's Respite program, and he works at Goodwill in Lebanon, Tennessee. After he punches in each day, Dennis gets right to work; he begins by rounding up shopping carts across the parking lot, then moves inside to help manage the aisles and the displays.

“I love to work,” Dennis said. “I love my job. You gotta work if you want to make that money!”

“Dennis is great to have here,” said Hannah Malone, Lead Sales at Goodwill and Dennis' supervisor. “He does a lot, he's always on time, and he works hard. Anything we ask, he does it with a smile on his face. Everyone loves Dennis. He's great.”

RHD staff assisted Dennis in applying for his job, but he's worked hard on his own to be successful there. He's progressed to the point where staff transports him to work, but once there Dennis goes through his day independently, without staff on site.

“Dennis has set a great example for the people in our program,” said Aaron Jolly, Director at RHD Nashville. “He's one of the people we point to, to say: Dennis graduated the program and you can do it as well. He's a hard-working, fun, easy-going guy. He wants to be involved in his schedule, and he wants to make his own decisions.”

“He's really independent,” said Direct Support Professional Jatory Johnson. “He loves his job, because he likes to earn his own money and do things for himself. That's important to him. And that's important to us, that people be able to live in their own homes with as much independence as possible. Being able to help Dennis achieve that makes me happy.”

Hamlett said one of the advantages RHD's programs in Tennessee has is a high number of long-standing staff, who know the community and can help identify and work with businesses like Goodwill and AmeriPride who are willing to partner with RHD to provide meaningful work in a positive and productive environment.

“Part of what we've done here is look at different ways to provide opportunities for people to find employment,” Hamlett said. “We don't stick to a strict narrative of: A job is this many hours, and here is what it looks like. That doesn't apply to some people. We've found that people are happier and behavioral incidents decrease significantly when people are employed.”

“We work with a challenging group here, and we can accomplish a lot by supporting them as they work to be involved in their community. So we find unique ways to make opportunities available. That's how success stories like Darrell and Dennis happen — when people can be in a situation where they love their job and are well respected on the job. It makes you proud to be a part of that.”

Thank you for your support

Your generosity helps people build successful lives through support and encouragement in RHD programs



Dyann Roth, CEO of Resources for Human Development

It's not always an NBA all-star like Chicago Bulls point guard Rajon Rondo lending time and effort to support RHD programs (see photo, back page). Every day, people from all walks of life discover a place and people they want to support here at RHD.

One example is Dr. LaToya Floyd, a child psychiatrist at the University of Pennsylvania. Dr. Floyd has spent much of her career working with children in need, and she's been in more than her fair share of shelters. But when she walked into RHD's Woodstock Family Center, Dr. Floyd knew she'd found something different and special.

"When I walked in, I thought: Is this a shelter?" Dr. Floyd said. "It's a beautiful space for community living, welcoming and friendly. I was so impressed with the work they do to create a typical upbringing for children — from a play room and an activity room, to a staff that shows such compassion for the people there. Homelessness is a very, very traumatic event for children. But the staff works so hard to help people overcome that and not make it the focus."

Dr. Floyd, with Helen Ferraro, Juwaan Kibler and Dominic Foleno, delivered winter coats to Woodstock Family Center, which provides emergency shelter for homeless women with children. Dr. Floyd was the child psychiatrist at an RHD children's acute partial hospitalization program and during that time, with the help of Holman Automotive, she was able to help sponsor a family who was experiencing homelessness.

Holman, through the usage of a community champion, was able to bridge a much-needed gap. This year Holman Automotive at Audi of Willow Grove agreed to donate coats to children in need in the city of Philadelphia. While Dr. Floyd now works at the Hall-Mercer Community Health Center at the University of Pennsylvania, she continues to support RHD programs for children like Woodstock Family Center.

"RHD has a wonderful corporate mission, and I so appreciate the work RHD does," Dr. Floyd said. "There are corporations and people out there who want to work to strengthen our community, and who are committed to philanthropy. I'm a believer in supporting businesses and programs that give back."

This is just one example of people who have found a reason and a way to support RHD programs. Margaret Goldfarb attended our Main Line Wine Gala fundraiser, which featured RHD's La Casa program. Margaret and her son Martin were taken with La Casa, Philadelphia's only safe haven for young adults experiencing homelessness, and donated suits for La Casa clients.

Sneaker Villa provided a Thanksgiving dinner at RHD Fernwood, which provides emergency housing for men experiencing homelessness. Generous donors in Florida helped RHD DeFuniak Springs, a day program serving adults with developmental disabilities, send a dozen clients to a University of Alabama football game — an unforgettable experience.

We're honored, and incredibly fortunate, that so many people have been moved to support the work we do at RHD.

Thousands of people across the country gain support and encouragement in RHD programs. Their milestones and successes, large and small, are made possible by your generosity.

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All-Star Thanksgiving

NBA All-Star Rajon Rondo of the Chicago Bulls provided a catered dinner at RHD's Woodstock Family Center to mothers and their children who are experiencing homelessness. Rajon, who was in town to play the Philadelphia 76ers, served dinner, stayed late, and spent time with every kid. The children presented him with a gift, a hand-drawn portrait of Rajon that they all signed.

Kenneth Kauffman | photos



1 RHD Early Intervention lays groundwork for later success



3 Suzanne regains her sight and ability to walk at RHD's NOVA III

6 Thank you to our generous donors and supporters for all you do



In this edition ...



4 RHD helps consumers maintain meaningful employment

About Resources for Human Development

A national human services nonprofit founded in 1970, Resources for Human Development serves tens of thousands of people of all abilities every year with caring, effective and innovative programs addressing intellectual and developmental disabilities, behavioral health, homelessness, addiction recovery and more. In partnership with local governments and those we serve, RHD builds better lives, families and communities.