



## Providing Information, Support and Advocacy . . .

Each year, the Howard County Autism Society offers support groups, training and education on topics of interest to its members. In 2014, more than 100 meetings were sponsored on a variety of topics, including the following samples:

- *The Changing Dynamics of Family Roles and Relationships*; Zosia Zaks, MS, M.Ed., CRC, The Hussman Center for Adults.
- *Planning with Your Service Coordinator*; William Webster, Supervisor, Service Coordination.
- *New Directions Waiver & Housing*; Edward Willard, Independent Advocate for Self-Directed Services at DDA.
- *Autism and Problem Behaviors: Addressing Concerns in School and Home*; Tom Caffrey, M.Ed., BCBA. Co-sponsored by the Howard County Public School System and Rise for Autism.
- *Supports/Services Offered by DORS for Individuals with Autism*; Lee Armstrong, M.A., MD Division of Rehabilitation Services.
- *ASD Research Findings*; Audrey Thurm, Ph.D., licensed child clinical psychologist and staff scientist, Pediatrics and Developmental Neuroscience Branch at the National Institute of Mental Health.
- *Planning for the Future When Your Family Includes a Member with a Disability*; Tina Campanella and Jonathan Martinis of the DC Quality Trust for Individuals with Disabilities. Co-sponsored by the Howard County Department of Citizen Services, The Arc of Howard County and the Howard County Public School System.
- *Using Mindfulness Practices to Promote Interpersonal Skills in Children with Social Challenges*; Harriette Wimms, Ph.D., Chase Brexton Health Services. Co-sponsored by Pathfinders for Autism — Brown Bag Series.
- *Assessment and Treatment of Problems in Children with ASD*; Eric Levey, M.D. Kennedy Krieger Institute.

### NEW in 2014 . . .

**Subcommittee on Housing created** to explore housing options for individuals with autism and other developmental disabilities that could be replicated for creation in Howard County. Efforts are supported by a grant from the Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council.



Marya Pecukonis of Cedar Lane School talks with a Transition Symposium attendee.

**The first annual Transition Symposium** was held February 2014 in partnership with the Cedar Lane School. With more than 100 attendees, the Symposium featured two plenary speakers, George P. Tilson, Jr., Ed.D. who discussed *Career Development and School-to-Adult Life Transitions*, and Ken Nibali, J.D. who presented *Supplemental Security Income and Social Security Disability Insurance*. Four workshops were also offered: Parent Advocacy, Exploring Housing Options, Guardianship/Wills & Trusts, and How to Choose a Service Provider.

**Social Skills Groups** were developed for young adults with autism, ages 16-23, and 11-15.



Transition Symposium attendees visit with more than 25 exhibitors.

*Working to improve the quality of and access to services and educational opportunities ...*

**Family Advocacy and Parent Education**, is funded by a grant from the Howard County Office of Citizen Services. The grant enables HCAS to offer one-on-one advocacy to parents on special education topics and sponsors several seminars each year. This grant is not specific to autism; anyone with special education concerns in Howard County benefits from its offerings.

**Special Education Laws, Rules and Regulations workshops** offered by Leslie Margolis, Managing Attorney Maryland Disability Law Center (MDLC):

- IEP Development: Modifications and Data Collection
- Discipline, Restraint, and Seclusion
- Basic Special Education Rights: A Legal Tour of the "Parental Rights Handbook"

**Public School Listening Posts** held in partnership with The Special Education Community Advisory Committee (SECAC) to identify concerns among parents. The concerns were then shared with the HCPSS Office of Special Education.

*Annual Gala  
Raises over \$75,000*



Board President, Roger Thibaudeau presents award for Outstanding Volunteers of the Year to Emil and Charlotte Bernhardt.



Brandon Beck, an HCAS member with autism, plays piano during the cocktail hour.

Gala guests enjoy the silent auction.



*Annual Walk/5K:  
More than \$60,000 raised*

*Members enjoy the day*



*Thank You to  
Our Donors*

\$15,000+

Howard County Office of Citizen Services

The John P. Hussman Foundation

\$5,000—\$14,999

Columbia Association/  
Community Fdn. Howard County  
Dart Group II Foundation  
Karen Mead

\$2,500—\$5,000

Autism Society of America/  
John P. Hussman Fdn.  
John P. and Selena Benevides  
The Lisa Higgins Hussman Fdn.

\$1,000—2,499

Heidi Abdelhady, M.D. and  
Mehdy Rahman  
Eric and Kate Cha  
Don Farris  
Intelligent Fiscal Optimal Solutions  
Kristopher and Lori Krausz  
Next Logik/Kirk Couser  
Ben Nibali  
Turf Valley/Peter Mangione

The Howard County Autism Society typically operates on a balanced budget and relies on the generosity of the community to support its programs and services. The net revenue in 2014, due primarily to lower than budgeted expenses, allowed us to achieve our financial stability goal of maintaining one year of operating funds available at all times.

