

# **ALUMNI, FAMILY & FRIENDS**

**DFRC Newsletter - 2012 Edition** 

### **Justin and His Buddies**

by Ann & Bill Haggerty



Justin Haggerty with 2011 Gold Player, Adam Gonzalez

Five years ago our son
Justin was introduced to
the Hand-in-Hand
Program and the DFRC
Blue-Gold All \* Star
Football Game. At the
time, Justin was attending the Morris Early
Childhood Center and
the school nurse sent
home sign-up information in his book bag.
Unsure about what the

program entailed, we made a call to our good friend Linda Webb. Linda was super excited about this wonderful opportunity we were considering for Justin. Linda and her daughter Ashley were already involved with Hand-in-Hand and absolutely loved it! Still, being the overprotective parents we are, we had our concerns. Would this be the right path for Justin? After much reassurance and support on Linda's end, we decided to give it a try. Well, she was more than right!

The Hand-in-Hand Program has not only been life-changing for Justin but also for our family and friends. Through our eyes, we have been able to watch our son continued on page 2



Dr. Oz is the 2012 DFRC Blue-Gold All ★Star Football Game Honorary Chairperson

Dr. Mehmet Oz, 1978 DFRC Blue-Gold All ★ Star Football Player, is excited to serve as this



year's Honorary Chairperson for the 57th DFRC Blue-Gold All ★ Star Football Game. Last year, Dr. Oz contacted DFRC about reconnecting with his buddy, John Madanat, from whom he had lost touch during the 33 year interim. With some assistance from DFRC, Dr. Oz, John and the Madanat family celebrated with a nostalgic reunion that rekindled fond memories of how very



meaningful their link to each other had proven to be. The DFRC family looks forward to continuing an ongoing relationship with Dr. Oz.

continued from page 1



Justin waving to the stands on Game Day 2009 with his dad, Bill Haggerty, and player Dylan Fox

change the way people think about people with disABILITIES. Justin seems to have a way to introduce and showcase what his abilities truly are! He has melted the hearts of some of the biggest football players in Milford, like Ryan Deeny, and Jason Kollock. He has worn down Sussex Tech player Dylan Fox and beat down Milford's Adam Gonzolez in boxing on X-Box Kinect! This year, Justin is matched with Atticus Hall who has already been put to the test, making mud pies in Justin's backyard. All of these fine young men are

still very much a part of our lives. Even hundreds of miles away at college, they find the time to Facebook Justin or put up old pictures of themselves with Justin from game day. Just another reminder of how the program has allowed Justin to sprinkle his magic on them. It is definitely a family affair! Now five years in to the program my husband Billy and I both serve on the Sussex County Auction Committee and I also serve DFRC on the Board of Beneficiaries and the Board of Trustees. When you surround yourself with the DFRC family it's easy to understand why it's so successful, its many people working together for the same common goal. Those many DFRC people are good people, people that care and sacrifice for others. There is a saying that "you are only as good as the man standing right next to you." We think that says it all when it comes down to what the DFRC family and supporters are all about. We are so blessed to be a part of this organization and we feel it helps us push forward even through tough times. I only wish all families that have children with special needs could get involved and allow DFRC to help guide them into a very positive future.

Getting to the Game early is the best way to see this great program in action. We'll be there! We hope to see you all at Delaware Stadium, Saturday, June 23<sup>rd</sup>!

This year the kids games have expanded into a DFRC Family Fun Zone! Get to the Game early for face painting, balloon creations, games, bouncy houses, and a train!

The DFRC Family Fun Zone starts at 3:30 pm on Game Day, June 23<sup>rd</sup>!



640 Plaza Drive Newark, DE 19702 Phone: 302.454.2730 Fax: 302.454.2755

www.dfrcfoundation.org

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Cary Ballas

### Saint Mark's Celebrates 30 years of Blue-Gold

### The Beginning

In 1982, the DFRC Blue-Gold All \* Star Football Committee was searching for ways to expand the DFRC Blue-Gold Program and allow the participating high schools to become more involved. At the time, DFRC Blue-Gold Committee Member, Tony Glenn, testified to the welcoming environment of Saint Mark's High School and believed he would be able to lead this process within the school in his role there as an educator.

The nine Saint Mark's students who had been chosen to participate in the 1983 DFRC Blue-Gold All \* Star Football Game accepted the challenge with great enthusiasm and worked diligently with Dr. Glenn to find ways to incorporate the Blue-Gold mission and spirit into their school. The first Blue-Gold Week at Saint Mark's High School was established that very first year, and it is a tradition that continues today.

In 1985, as the Blue-Gold Fever at Saint Mark's spread, more and more students wanted to become involved. Through the years, the Blue-Gold Club has grown to include not only the football players, cheerleaders, band members and queen candidates/ambassadors who were chosen to participate directly in the Game, but also other students in grades 9 - 12, faculty, staff, and alumni. Each of these members has been part of the planning process and served on the various internal Blue-Gold committees at Saint Mark's. Blue-Gold Week at Saint Mark's includes sports tournaments - from ping-pong to flag football, raffles, senior escorts, bake sales, phone-a-thons, and Blue-Gold dress down days. These activities are surrounded by a studentdriven committee as they plan and execute each event. One of the very early values instilled in the members of the Blue-Gold Program by Dr. Glenn was that high school students are not just the leaders of the Blue-Gold Program at Saint Mark's, nor are they the leaders of tomorrow, but truly their talent and enthusiasm have proven them to be today's



Members of the 1996 Saint Mark's Blue-Gold Club

leaders. Saint
Mark's students rise
to the occasion and
lead the way to
spread awareness
about people who
are intellectually
challenged year
after year. Allyson
Kett Wagner, class
of 1996, shares
that this
philosophy had a
great impact on

her. She explains that her experience in Blue-Gold at Saint Mark's "required a lot of motivation, hard work, time commitment, and teamwork" and says that she is "very grateful that these skills were fostered by this early experience."

### The Fashion Show In 1988, Saint Mark's hosted the first Blue-Gold Fashion Show. Now, with two performances each year, this event is the kick-off

to their Blue-Gold Week and has grown to be the signature Blue-Gold event at Saint Mark's. In



2011 Fashion Show Participants

2011, the 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Saint Mark's Blue-Gold Fashion Show was a huge success. Heather Palmer, class of 1998, and Megan Lewandowski, class of 1999, both describe the planning process for the Fashion Show as giving them their first chance at planning something really big that required a great deal of preparation and coordination.

\*\*Continued on page 9\*\*

Many high schools have conducted fundraising and awareness activities benefiting DFRC since the first Blue-Gold week in 1983. Over the years, high school students have utilized their creativity to host events such as restaurant nights, car shows, merchandise sales, sports tournaments, fashion shows, powder-puff games, run/walks, and pasta dinners.

### DFRC thanks all of these schools for their ongoing commitment.

Appoquinimink High School Archmere Academy Brandywine High School Cab Calloway School of the Arts Cape Henlopen High School Caravel Academy Charter School of Wilmington Christiana High School Concord High School Conrad Schools of Science Delaware Military Academy Delcastle Technical High School Delmar Senior High School Delmarva Christian High School John Dickinson High School Alexis I. duPont High School

Glasgow High School Paul M. Hodgson Vo-Tech High School Howard High School of Technology Indian River High School Lake Forest High School Laurel Senior High School Thomas McKean High School Middletown High School Milford High School Mount Pleasant High School Newark High School Padua Academy Pencader Charter High School Polytech High School William Penn High School Red Lion Christian Academy

Caesar Rodney High School Saint Andrew's School Saint Elizabeth High School Saint Thomas More Preparatory Sanford School Salesianum School Seaford High School Smyrna High School Sussex Central High School Sussex Technical High School The Tatnall School Tower Hill School Ursuline Academy Wilmington Christian School Wilmington Friends School Woodbridge High School

# Three Counties ★ Two Teams ★ One Mission...

to enrich the lives of Delawareans with intellectual disABILITIES

### A note from this year's Game Chair, Missy Brady

As we come together to celebrate the 57<sup>th</sup> Annual DFRC Blue-Gold All \* Star Football Game, we remember that, although we become two teams on the football field, we are united as one in our mission to enrich the lives of individuals with intellectual disABILITIES. When we converge at Delaware Stadium on June 23, 2012, we will celebrate the proud history of DFRC and the profound sense of family that encourages and drives our commitment to spread awareness and change consciousness year after year.

To this day, DFRC has distributed nearly \$6 million to numerous organizations throughout Delaware that share our goal of celebrating *all* lives by creating meaningful opportunities for individuals with intellectual challenges. Funds that we, the DFRC family, have raised, create and sustain opportunities that might not otherwise exist. This commitment is the key to our future as a foundation; to know that we are raising awareness, creating unique opportunities and promoting acceptance for everyone, regardless of race, gender, age or ability.

Perhaps we have met in this newsletter for reasons familiar to each of us. My involvement in DFRC, a source of great personal pride, began when I participated in the 1995 DFRC Blue-Gold All ★ Star

Football Game. The relationship my buddy and I experienced led me to an understanding that, despite his

inability to speak, we were able to enjoy our own means of connecting and share the joy we discovered from each other. My buddy inspired me to remain committed to a cause that has become an important part of who I am as a person.

This passion to serve DFRC has driven my enthusiasm this year and led our committee to new ventures. This past winter, the DFRC family travelled north to south in Delaware to meet with the parents of high school participants, encouraging them to join the fun and share the Blue-Gold experience with their sons and daughters. During these sessions, our 2012 slogan was reaffirmed. Although we come from three different counties to form two teams, we all believe in the mission of DFRC.



Missy and her buddy, Matthew Jenkins, in 1995

I personally invite you to attend this year's DFRC Blue-Gold All \*Star Football Game and share in the excitement and pride that this Game generates.

Reaffirm your commitment to DFRC so we can continue to change lives... just like it changed mine.



# One small touch that lasts a lifetime... your gift makes this possible

DFRC, Delaware Foundation Reaching Citizens with intellectual disABILITIES, has touched hearts and enriched lives for over 56 years.

Your support helps DFRC create opportunities for all Delawareans with intellectual disABILITIES to maximize their potential, independence and enjoyment of life.

Please join DFRC in continuing our mission by making your tax-deductible gift today!



640 Plaza Drive Newark, DE 19702 302-454-2730 www.dfrcfoundation.org



# BENEFICIARY SPOTLIGHT The Totally Awesome Players



A reflection by Charles Conway

During its thirty-three years, the Delaware Theatre Company (DTC), the state's largest professional theatre, has produced more than 150 plays seen by over one million residents and visitors. For the past 24 years, DTC has been a pioneer in the revitalization of Wilmington's Christina Riverfront and remains an important player in the development of the state's rich cultural heritage. Our education and outreach programs are nationally recognized and serve thousands throughout the tri-state area. The DTC staff and Board of Directors are most proud of The Totally Awesome Players (TAP) and we salute DFRC for allowing us to develop and continue this awesome program.

TAP is the cornerstone of the Delaware Theatre Company's Youth at Risk Program. DTC has long been aware of the lack of artistic opportunities and outlets for individuals with cognitive disabilities in the state of Delaware. The arts in general and theatre in particular provide a safe environment for individuals with



Geoffrey Steggell and Charles Conway in The Forgetful Town in 2009

disabilities to explore essential adaptive life skills without judgments. In the spring of 1992, DFRC funded a Theatre Company pilot program: a theatre education program for children with cognitive disabilities. These classes, held at the Theatre, allowed students with a wide range of abilities to explore and utilize their imaginations and to express their creativity through theatre games and exercises.

Over its twenty-year history, the program has gone

through many changes, including its name. It was originally called Acting Classes for Children Who are Mentally Challenged but in 1998 the students and staff decided to rename the troupe the Totally Awesome Kids (TAK). It was felt that this designation better reflected the program's primary objective of showcasing the students' abilities and talents. In 2010, in celebration of its 18th anniversary and to better represent the ages of

the actors, DTC re-christened the troupe the Totally Awesome Players (TAP).

At its inception, only a handful of students were enrolled in the program but now it serves over 150 students per year. In 1995 the troupe began producing plays and musicals and since that time has created close to twenty productions. These crowd-pleasing works have been presented on DTC's main stage and in over twenty



Cece Toy in *The Solution Institution* in 2009

community venues including libraries, schools and senior centers. The TAP troupe has appeared at three Holidazzle events, DFRC's glittering fall fundraiser. At both the 2008 and the 2010 Holidazzle celebrations, TAP opened for Colin Mochrie and Brad Sherwood, stars of the hit TV show *Whose Line is it Anyway*?

Beginning in 1994, DFRC funding has enabled the Theatre to serve the entire state of Delaware by offering multi-day classes for students with cognitive disabilities. Residencies have been offered in seven New Castle County schools, one Kent County school and five Sussex County schools, including a work to school program. DTC's good work has not gone unnoticed by the community. In 1994, the Arc of Delaware honored the DTC for the TAP program and in 1995, DTC received the ChildCare Connection's (now Children & Families First) Delaware Tomorrow Award for its Children At Risk Program, which includes the TAP program. In 2000, DTC received the prestigious Barrymore Award for Excellence in Theatre Education for its Youth At Risk Programs. And DFRC continues to honor our work through its encouragement, advice and financial support.

# PLEASE CUT ALONG DOTTED LINE—IF SUBMITTING BY MAIL, PLEASE MAKE A COPY FOR YOUR RECORDS.

# **2012 DFRC BLUE-GOLD ALL★STAR FOOTBALL GAME**

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### SUPPORT THE DFRC BLUE-GOLD PROGRAM



s we celebrate 57 years of the DFRC Blue-Gold All \* Star Football Game, there are three ways that you and your family can give back to the game that means so much to so many. Alumni, family and friends can support DFRC's Blue-Gold Program using either the form in this newsletter or by going online to www.dfrcfoundation.org. Thank you for your support!



■ Each year there are more than 400 high school participants and more than 100 Hand-in-Hand buddies

 DFRC encourages our alumni, family and friends to join other donors by supporting this most unique program.

who participate in the DFRC Blue-Gold Program. As always, there is never a charge or a fee to participate.

### BE A YEARBOOK PATRON

Since the first game in 1956, thousands of individuals, businesses, and other organizations have assisted in our fundraising by becoming DFRC Blue-Gold Patrons. Patrons will be listed in the 2012 Game Day Yearbook.



3

### PURCHASE TICKETS TO THE DFRC BLUE-GOLD ALL★STAR FOOTBALL GAME ON JUNE 23rd

- Alumni, family and friends are encouraged to attend.
  General Admission Tickets are only \$10, with student tickets for \$7, and group ticket discounts are available.
- Tickets may also be purchased through our website at www.dfrcfoundation.org
  DFRC thanks Grotto Pizza, the official ticket sponsor of the 57<sup>th</sup> DFRC Blue-Gold All ★ Star Football Game.
- Call the DFRC office at 302-454-2730 for reserved box seating information.
- Visit www.dfrcfoundation.org to purchase tickets online and for more details about the DFRC Blue-Gold All ★ Star Football Game.

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# In 2011, DFRC provided 27 Delaware—based agencies and organizations with grants totaling \$125,000.00

Since 1956 DFRC has provided nearly \$6 million in funding to programs serving Delawareans with intellectual disABILITIES.

The Arc of Delaware Statewide

Art Therapy Express Hockessin

Bernard and Ruth Siegel Jewish Community Center Wilmington

Best Buddies Delaware Statewide

Brain Injury Association of Delaware Statewide

CENTER for Therapeutic and Educational Riding Townsend



Collaborative Effort to Reinforce Transition Success (C.E.R.T.S.) Newark

Delaware CarePlan Statewide

Delaware Developmental Disabilities Council Statewide

Delaware Theatre Co. -Totally Awesome Players Wilmington

Down Syndrome Assoc. of Delaware Statewide

Easter Seals Delaware and Maryland's Eastern Shore Statewide

Exceptional Care for Children Newark

Governor's Advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens
Statewide

Hearts, Hands, and Horses 4 H Club Wilmington

Independent Resources Wilmington

Lyons Dental Clinic -Nemours/duPont Hospital Rockland

Mary Campbell Center Wilmington

Kent-Sussex Industries
Milford

Milford School District Milford

Pet-Assisted Volunteer Visitation Services (PAWS for People) Newark

The Pilot School Wilmington

Practice Without Pressure Newark

Reel Expectations
Dover

Richardson Park Learning Center -Red Clay School District Wilmington

Variety -Delaware Chapter Statewide





# **THANK YOU TO OUR 2012**

ALUMNI, FAMILY & FRIENDS SUPPORTERS

who generously donated funds last year in support of our 2011 DFRC Blue-Gold buddies and high school participants:

Frank Albero
Harry Alexander
Joan Bowling
Tom Gilligan
Walter Headley
Rebecca Hill
Edward McAbee

Donald O'Bier Robert Powell Richard & Linda Till Abi VanderLek Alex VanderLek Lois West Please complete the information on page 6 to sponsor a Buddy or Participant, be a Yearbook Ad Patron, and to order Game Tickets
- OR- go online at www.dfrcfoundation.org

continued from page 3

Heather Palmer returns to Saint Mark's each year and is excited that the fashion shows have continued and expanded.
Ashley Zeroka, 2011 Fashion Show Executive Chair, feels so strongly about DFRC and her Blue-Gold experience at Saint Mark's that she has joined the DFRC Blue-Gold Football Game Committee. Ashley is working with the Blue-Gold Ambassadors while pursuing her degree in Early Education, with a specialization in Special Education, at the University of Delaware.

### The Friendship Program

In 1998, students expressed an interest in having a buddy (a child or young adult



DFRC Executive Director, Dr. Tony Glenn with 2011 Saint Mark's Blue-Gold Fashion Show Committee Members

with intellectual disABILITIES), which led to the birth of the Saint Mark's Friendship Program. This program matches interested juniors and seniors with a buddy. Buddies often have small groups of students with whom they interact, either as a group or on a one-on-one basis. Saint Mark's has expanded their Blue-Gold Program beyond the week of events to include parties and gatherings throughout the year that the Saint Mark's students and buddies can attend and enjoy together. Many of the students that are matched through the Saint Mark's Friendship Program continue their relationship through the DFRC Hand-in-Hand Program during their senior year. Current Saint Mark's Blue-Gold Assistant Advisor/1974 DFRC Blue-Gold Cheerleader, Anne Smith says that she is "overwhelmed with the students' maturity and enthusiasm to rise to the occasion with their buddies. It brings out the best in the students because the focus is on the buddies, not on them. The buddies are amazing in their willingness to trust, enjoy and accept new friends. Their excitement is contagious."

The Friendship Program that the students and faculty have created has become a hall-mark of the Blue-Gold Club. Alums describe this special aspect of the program as having a profound impact on their lives, whether or not they are still in contact with their buddy. The program serves as an opportunity for the buddies and buddy families to widen their social circle, while giving students the opportunity to connect and understand the abilities and challenges of people with disabilities.

### Spreading the Program

The success of these events benefiting DFRC was not only apparent within the Saint Mark's community, but spread quickly throughout the state. Other schools started to notice and reach out for help in starting their own fashion shows and other Blue-Gold events. Saint Elizabeth High School has a thriving Blue-Gold Program that includes an Annual Blue-Gold Week. Just this school year, Conrad Schools of Sciences reached out and asked Saint Mark's to help strengthen their new Blue-Gold Club.

### Impact

The Friendship Program and all of the different events that are part of the Blue-Gold Club at Saint Mark's have provided experiences that participants will never forget. Many Saint Mark's High School alums have chosen a career in Special Education and credit Blue-Gold as influencing this decision. Current Blue-Gold Advisor, Diane Kuczmarski, also credits the program with adding "an understanding of how other people should be treated, despite any differences... learn[ing] to love [the buddies] simply for who they are." Michael Murphy, 1988 player, remembers that "my time in Blue-Gold instilled a commitment to service that shapes my life to this day." No matter what career path alums of the Blue-Gold Program follow, DFRC hopes that this commitment to others and the understanding that everyone has the ability to give and inspire, lives on through each Saint Mark's alum always.

Today, the Saint Mark's Blue-Gold Club continues to be a strong, inclusive, and thriving program. DFRC is grateful for the vision that led Dr. Glenn to begin Blue-Gold Programs in our high schools, and thanks all of the current and alumni students, faculty, and staff for their hard work and commitment to the mission of DFRC.

# **SAVE THE DATE**

### **SUNDAY, MAY 20**

DFRC Blue-Gold Hand-in-Hand Buddy Picnic at the DSA Buddy Walk South Campus Athletic Complex University of Delaware, Newark, DE

### **SATURDAY, JUNE 9**

DFRC Blue-Gold All ★ Star 5K Run/ 1-Mile Walk Irish Eyes in Lewes - 8:00 am Visit dfrcfoundation.org/run for registration information

### **MONDAY, JUNE 11**

DFRC Blue-Gold All★Star Golf Classic – New Castle County Celebrating 25 years! White Clay Creek Country Club

### **MONDAY, JUNE 11**

DFRC Blue-Gold All★Star Golf Classic – Kent County Maple Dale Country Club, Dover

### THURSDAY, JUNE 14

DFRC Blue-Gold All ★ Star Golf Classic – Sussex County Cripple Creek Country Club, Dagsboro Visit dfrcfoundation.org/golf for more information on all three Golf Classics

### **SUNDAY, JUNE 17**

Media Day and Picnic - 2:00 pm University of Delaware Football Stadium

### **WEDNESDAY, JUNE 20**

DFRC All★Star Football Scrimmages Open to the public – free admission!

- \* Gold Squad ScrimmageMilford High School 5:30 pm
- \* Blue Squad ScrimmageTower Hill School 5:30 pm

### **SATURDAY, JUNE 23**

57<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL DFRC BLUE-GOLD ALL★STAR FOOTBALL GAME

Family Fun Zone starts at 3:30 pm Gates open at 5:00 pm

# THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 6 DFRC BLUE-GOLD KICK-OFF CLASSIC

- \* Sussex Central High School at Lake Forest High School
- Conrad Schools of Science at Dickinson High School

### **SATURDAY, OCTOBER 27**

DFRC HOLIDAZZLE LOVE & LYRICS
The Grand Opera House, Wilmington

DFRC 640 Plaza Drive Newark, DE 19702-6369 Phone: (302) 454-2730

Fax: (302) 454-2755 www.dfrcfoundation.org

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Wilmington, Delaware

Join us in supporting the hundreds of high school students, volunteers and community members who make this game happen every year!

SATURDAY, JUNE 23, 2012 at 7pm University of Delaware Stadium

Parking Opens - 2:00 pm
Family Fun Zone - 3:30 pm
1962 & 1987 Reunions - 4:00 pm
Stadium Gates Open - 5:00 pm
Opening Ceremonies - 6:00 pm
Game Kickoff - 7:00 pm

3 Counties ★ 2 Teams ★ 1 Mission



To enrich the lives of Delawareans With intellectual disABILITIES.

DFRC THANKS OUR 2012 DFRC BLUE-GOLD ALL★STAR FOOTBALL GAME SPONSORS































