

Creativity and Autism – Emma's Story



Emma, a teen with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), found an outlet for her creativity at Community Gatepath's Autism Social Connection's film and media workshops. The workshops provide students the opportunity to express their ideas, feelings and personalities while they learn to work together, communicate, and have fun working on film projects.

People with ASD are often seen as having limited interests or capabilities because of their challenges to communicate effectively, difficulty in focusing, anxiety and are easily over-stimulated. It's not true. Many people with ASD have a wide range of interests and are very creative in their own right. They simply see and do things differently.

Creative expression through the arts can be very fulfilling and even therapeutic for an individual on the spectrum. Art therapy provides a visual tool for communication, a window to the imagination, and a motivation to make connections.

Emma joined the group because it sounded interesting and her school didn't have a film group. Emma says her view about autism is that, "It has no benefits for me. If I didn't have it, I'd probably have millions of friends because I wouldn't be closed lipped."

Since joining Autism Social Connection (ASC) in 2012, Emma's confidence has skyrocketed and she is now embracing her differences. She has worked on many film projects, and even designs her own costumes and applies stage make-up. Most importantly, she has made many friends. She goes on group

outings and has really connected in meaningful ways with her friends.

Emma's outlook on her future is bright, although she admits she has a hard time narrowing down what she wants to do for a career.

As a result of Emma's participation in ASC groups, she found the confidence to speak on panels about autism awareness and her experiences growing up. She shares what it is like having ASD and how it affected her in school. She shares how she was made fun of and her reactions then and now.

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ABOUT AUTISM SOCIAL CONNECTION: Groups meet each week and serve children, teens and adults ages eight and up. Participants meet in a casual, low-key environment, encouraging conversation and camaraderie, while giving young people hands-on experience with cameras, sound equipment, computer programs, and other aspects of visual media.

To learn more about these classes, please visit our website at www.gatepath.org/Autism-Social-Connection or call 650-259-8545.



CEO Corner: *A Call to Action!* Sheryl Young

We are proud that we have been able to provide services to thousands of children, youth and adults in the community in spite of state budget cuts and freezes over the past several years. Many families have told us that we have provided a lifeline to hope and vital services for their children. We celebrate stories everyday of successes and achievements of our participants whether it's a first word spoken or first job landed!

Due the lack of state funding over the years, we have cut back on services, laid off staff, and doubled up on our fundraising efforts. We thought as the state economy got better, we would see once again a commitment from our

elected officials to restore and stabilize services. That hasn't happened.

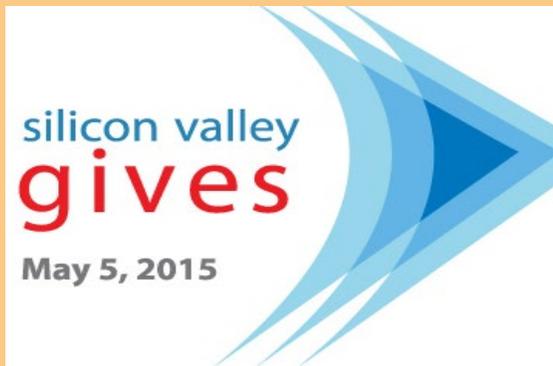
Today's booming Silicon Valley's economy is becoming a tremendous burden for agencies like ours. Our staff members can't afford to live in this county, nor can they afford the amount of time for the commute here from outside the county. Our dedicated staff makes sacrifices to work for us – they make their work a priority out of love and dedication. Many of our state rates don't meet minimum wage. Our services require trained professionals and our staff provide the quality of services needed and deserved by you. Therefore, we have to raise \$5,000 per participant annually each year to provide them with

our programs.

We have reached a critical time where programs will close throughout state without increases in the state budget this year. As always, change only comes with an outcry from you - this is how services were established in the first place in California.

Tell your story to your local and state legislators and all your friends: What challenges do you and or your family face? How does the system of case management, community services, and advocacy support you? Share your story with us and the Lanterman Coalition so they can continue the impactful work they are doing to stop budget cuts being considered by the Governor right now.

SAVE THE DATE



svgives.razoo.com/story/Gatepath

SHOP AMAZON



Sign up for AmazonSmile's and 0.5% of eligible purchases will be donated to Community Gatepath!



Matthew Frankel receives an Inspiration Award by the Golden State Warriors during their Special Needs Family Appreciation Night. Matthew got to meet his icon, Warriors point guard Stephen Curry.

A True Labor of Love

In 2011, Gatepath launched Access to Independence, an innovative program that provided new options for Community Gatepath's adult participants. As part of the new structure, our programs moved from a single central location, to several program sites throughout San Mateo County, and it was an adjustment for everyone.

Determined to nurture the friendships that had grown between the participants from years of daily interactions at the sites, Gatepath staff invited families to share their ideas about ways to connect our participants in enjoyable social settings...and EventPath was born!

For the past several years, a dedicated group of parents have spent hundreds of hours planning and organizing EventPath



Pictured left to right: Sheila Cowdrey, Nancy Bates, Pete Nannarone, Carol Windsor, Ginny (Virginia) Weed

parties to create memories not just for their loved ones, but for a grateful group of participants. This devoted group of parents - Sheila, Nancy, Pete, Carol and Ginny - work for months planning each

party, which includes a great dinner, festive table decorations, games, arts and crafts, and of course dancing!

Their dedication is truly inspiring – Sheila and her daughter Rachel travel all the way from Novato to attend the parties! Sheila, who participates in the planning and volunteers for every event, says “Staying involved with EventPath allows me to keep in touch with friends, but more importantly, Rachel is able to keep in touch with her Gatepath friends.”

A big round of applause for EventPath volunteers and supporters whose commitment goes far beyond planning parties – it provides opportunities to foster lifelong friendships.

If you are interested in getting involved with EventPath, please contact Anne Jarchow at (650) 259-8529.

A Tradition of Sharing Time, Talent and Treasure



In 1950, a special group of women formed the Hillsborough Auxiliary to Community Gatepath, which became a legacy volunteer fundraising group. Headed by Katherine Hearst, this group evolved into one of the most active auxiliaries along the Peninsula.

For over half a century, the Hillsborough Auxiliary has worked in partnership with Gatepath to support children, youth and adults with special needs and disabilities by providing resources and social events that help turn “disabilities into possibilities.” This devoted group of women work as stewards, volunteers, fundraisers, friends, mentors

and advocates, enabling Gatepath to fulfill its mission of creating greater independence for those it serves.

Powered by the dedication of more than 160 members, the Hillsborough Auxiliary is Gatepath's largest source of volunteer hours and a powerful fundraising partner. They have provided millions of dollars in equipment and services for the individuals who benefit from Gatepath programs.

At the McCarthy Center for Children & Families, you can see the work of this dedicated group in every classroom, therapy room and on the playground. At the Employment and Resource Campuses they have provided equipment that is used every day – from supplies for classes and art lessons, to iPads and Smart Boards.

The Auxiliary creates lasting memories at their well-planned and attended parties hosted throughout the year for

Gatepath's adult participants.

Gatepath is eternally grateful to the Hillsborough Auxiliary – the compassion and kind deeds by this group provide hope to the families of Gatepath and fulfill dreams. The Auxiliary members are making a difference - today and in the future.

Auxiliary Resale Shop

Location

1606 Rollins Rd, Burlingame, CA

Days of Operation

Tuesdays and Thursdays

Hours of Operation

10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

*For more information visit
www.gatepath.org/resale-shop*

Upcoming Events

April is Autism Awareness Month

April 11 - Earthquake's Special Needs Night

April 24 - Kinky Boots

April 25 - City of Mountain View 37th Annual
Downtown Spring Family Parade

May 2 - Touch-A-Truck

May 5 - Silicon Valley Gives

May 9 - Betty Ivey Lange Technology Library
"SmartEd Apps" Free Workshop

For more information visit:

www.gatepath.org/calendar



COMMUNITY
GATEPATH
"Turning Disabilities Into Possibilities"
Serving Silicon Valley for 95 years

Sobrato Center for Nonprofits

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Gatepath Proudly Accepts Grant



A special **THANK YOU** to the following organizations that awarded us with grants to support our ongoing programs and special projects during the first half of this fiscal year:

- Atkinson Foundation
- Bothin Foundation
- City of Burlingame
- Town of Colma
- Endue Foundation
- First 5 San Mateo County
- The Carl Gellert & Celia Berta Gellert Foundation
- Genentech Foundation
- Lucile Packard Foundation for Children's Health
- Mission City Community Fund
- Peninsula Health Care District
- Robert Half International
- State Council on Developmental Disabilities Area Board 5

Gatepath proudly accepted a grant from Peninsula Health Care District that will help us provide developmental speech screenings, so we can identify children with delays and offer them support services as early as possible. The District also recognized one of our volunteers, Frank Ponterio, for his efforts to help us launch pediatric therapy services funded by insurance. Pictured left to right: Helen Galligan, R.N., Sheryl Young, Tracey Fecher, Kim Malhotra, Frank Ponterio, Rick Navarro, M.D.