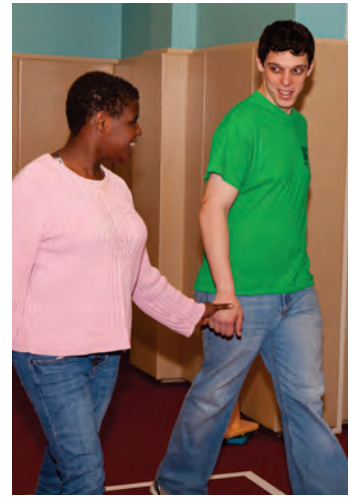




33 Perry Avenue | Attleboro, MA 02703 • 508-455-6200 | www.AmegoInc.org



June 2011



*Caring,
support
and lifelong
learning*



From John Randall
President and CEO

As Amego, Inc. celebrates forty years of service to people and families affected by autism and other developmental disabilities, we are poised to expand our support models, improve quality of service, and provide increased opportunities for staff development. We have become a stronger and more flexible organization despite facing many challenges in the past few years.

It is our hope that our new newsletter is one way to share information about current happenings and events at Amego. This is one of several ways that we will be sharing information with stakeholders in the coming years.

Considering the changes at Amego over the past three years, it is impressive that we have come as far as we have. This would not have been possible without the dedication of all staff at Amego. The support the organization receives from our board, families, staff, and all stakeholders exemplifies the spirit of this great agency.

To reflect on the accomplishment of the past three years, it is important to understand the context of what Amego's recent experiences were:

- Dr. Barbara Brown, a beloved CEO & President, passed away after a battle with cancer.
- Katherine Sangree, Amego's founder, passed away.
- The agency was faced with large deficits in adult services.
- Adult and children's services were viewed as being comingled in the space that day services were conducted.
- There was and is an unprecedented financial crisis at the state and national levels.

In the face of these challenges, all staff at Amego rallied and have contributed to major accomplishments over the past three years:

- Coordinating services while preparing to move to our new building in Attleboro.

- Commencing day habilitation services for adults and attaining a three year CARF accreditation for this new program.
- Opening new homes in adult services.
- Negotiating salary increases and retirement matches for collectively bargained employees despite not having salary increases included in state contracts.
- Bringing adult services to a break-even point operationally.
- Creating a strategic plan that addresses issues and opportunities in our community that will position Amego to become a stronger presence in our field.
- Maintaining high levels of accreditation in adult and children's programs.

As we celebrate our fortieth year, we should look back from whence we came, hold onto the core values that were the genesis of this remarkable organization, and build upon them to become even better.

From Judy Siggins
Director Human
Resources Department

Greetings from the Human Resources Department!

It is a very exciting time at Amego as we are opening new programs. We are pleased to be able to provide employment opportunities 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for both experienced Human Service professionals and those seeking new career challenges. We have Residential and Day Programs serving both adults and children. We have recently expanded our Nursing and Clinical support staff which should enhance our provision of those services. We are especially proud to have negotiated a substantial pay increase for those Assistant Teachers with Bachelor's Degrees to assist us in attracting and retaining a professional educator workforce.

We offer a rewarding work environment, competitive wages and an excellent benefits package. We welcome referrals of qualified applicants for a variety of entry level, mid and senior management positions in a wide variety of Massachusetts communities.

For an application and details on our employment opportunities and benefits please visit our website at www.amegoinc.org

From Lisa Wirth
Director of Children's Services

Children's Department News

SCHOOL

Students are enjoying a brand new school environment that has a fully functional cafeteria, gym, handicapped accessible shower, laundry room, and Library with a computer lab. It is a pleasure to have such a beautiful environment to work and see our students learn. Students are participating with increased access in the Science and Technology learning standards in large part due to a generous donation from the Flutie Foundation; Amego was a recipient of a brand new laptop computer and three refurbished desk top computers. In addition to the increased accessibility to computers our students are enjoying the use of I-Pads and demonstrating how quickly they can learn to use new technology. It is our hope to have a computer in every classroom in the near future.

Our students have been actively participating in physical fitness and learning the rules and regulations of many new group

RESIDENTIAL

It has been a long winter and our students are enjoying the warmer weather and getting outdoors daily. Students continue to participate in activities at their local YMCA and in their local community. All of our

sport activities. In the winter we had a small group of students participate in the Special Olympics and all of our athletes brought home a medal for their efforts bowling. On March 26th students volunteered at a "Spin-a-thon" by handing out snacks and water to the cyclists who were riding for a cause – Amego was the recipient of \$2,000 from that event and we have purchased a basketball hoop for our gym. Next month we will have 7 athletes participate in the Special Olympics again, this time in the track and field events.

Our teaching staff has been very busy working with our students to complete the required MCAS Alternative Portfolios and our teachers have been participating in furthering their education by attending presentations by Dr. Brian Iwata on Functional Behavior Analysis. Amego was invited to attend an Applied Behavior Analysis Speaker Series hosted by UMass

residential homes are getting some spring cleaning and sprucing up, in addition to getting ready for barbeque season! We have been actively recruiting new staff and look forward to a full complement of



Dartmouth – "Using Science to Improve the Education of Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders"; the keynote speaker was Dr. William Heward. We had 7 employees attend this event and it was a great experience. In addition to the great continuing education events listed above Amego has two teachers who attended the annual MAAPS conference on May 6, 2011.

staff over the next 2 months. We also have many college interns coming to work with us this summer and are very excited to have them back.

by Kerry Kleckner
Director of Quality Assurance

SPOTLIGHT ON SAFETY

Amego, Inc. is dedicated to the constant review and improvement of safety for the individuals we serve and the staff we employ across settings.

One area of constant emphasis is the safety of our transportation services. Amego has a fleet of vans and mini-vans. Maintaining the vehicles and the safety of all passengers and drivers using the vehicles is an interesting challenge.

The first and most vital tool available for our use is a well trained and dedicated group of staff members. Starting during orientation and training safe driving and thorough vehicle maintenance is presented as a key part of their job.

Imagine this scenario; you are out to dinner with a group of individuals and a co-worker. At the end of the meal you leave the restaurant and approach the vehicle you arrived in only to find one of the tires is flat. What do you do? How will you get everyone home safely? Will you try to change the tire yourself? Will you call AAA?

At Amego we constantly strive to make sure our employees can answer those questions correctly and without hesitation. By providing good training and support combined with clear procedures we minimize the many safety concerns involved in transportation.

Vehicles are inspected regularly for maintenance issues, safety issues and the need for supplies to ensure that all trips from one place to another take place with minimal risk to everyone involved. Any maintenance issues or safety issues identified are resolved as quickly as possible. Van inspections are done weekly, inspection tools are completed and reviewed by appropriate personnel. Staff are encouraged to communicate any and all van issues with the constant focus on safety for all those individuals served by our agency.

Amego is dedicated to safe driving policies and procedures, appropriate use of vehicles and the safest possible transportation for the individuals we support.

From Susan McCarthy
Director of Development

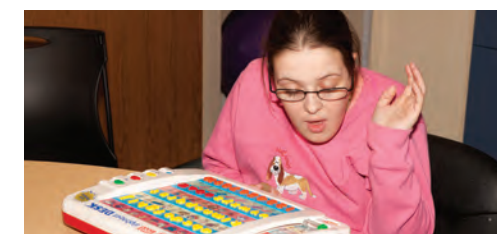
My name is Susan McCarthy and I'm the Director of Development. I look forward to bringing creative fundraising ideas to Amego as well as my passion and hard work to the process of fundraising, public relations and community outreach.

I came to Amego because I believe in this organization the same way you do. I want to see it succeed and I am excited to see the advancements we can make for Amego through fundraising and development. It is my sincere hope that I can reach out to our local and extended community to advocate for Amego.

I am the mother of three children: Matthew 13, Danny 9 and Caitlin 8. Caitlin has significant medical and developmental needs so I am personally connected to the special needs community.

We are already hard at work planning a few different events and programs to raise money for Amego and it is with great excitement that we announce our first annual pre-holiday bazaar to be held here at Amego on November 4, 2011! Save the date. We will be sending out the event details soon!

I look forward to meeting and working with you and since fundraising is a collaborative effort I look forward to hearing from you with any ideas that you would like to see put into action or if you know of any donors that may like to contribute to Amego.



From Jacqueline Chase
Director of Day Habilitation Services

Here at Amego we have several great connections with the surrounding communities. But one of them we are especially proud of is situated right here in Attleboro. The Day Habilitation Program has been volunteering with Hebron Food Pantry in conjunction with the Attleboro Senior Center for over a year now. Each Thursday a group of dedicated individuals from the Day Hab assists the staff from the Senior Center to deliver boxes of groceries to seniors in town. Then on Fridays the group helps clean-up the pantry after their busy week.

Each year the Hebron Food Pantry holds an Appreciation Dinner for all their volunteers. This year Toni, John, Michael, and David were all able to attend the dinner and represent Amego. Michelle Burch, director of the pantry, thanked these individuals personally and presented each of them with a Certificate of Appreciation.

Congratulations to Toni, Michael, David, John, and Marc for your hard work and dedication to the program! And a special thanks to Michelle for the opportunity to work with you and the other volunteers at the Hebron Food Pantry. Together we're making a difference in our community. Keep up the great work everyone!!!

To learn more about the Hebron Food Pantry visit www.hebronfoodpantry.org



From Patricia Darling RN

Director of Health Services

I graduated from LaBoure Jr. College in 1975. I started my nursing career in medical surgical nursing including intensive care nursing for 10 years. I spent the next 20 years at a facility for the DDS population. I then moved to a collaborative, working in the classrooms with Autistic children with medical needs. I have been at Amego since 2007 enjoying my role as the Director of Health Services.

We now have a school nurse, Lisa Black Sholudko. I'd like to welcome Lisa to Amego. We are very happy to have her with us.

From Lisa Black Sholudko

School Nurse

I live in Franklin, MA and have 3 sons. Austen is 14 and in 8th grade, Evan is 17 and a HS junior. Andrew is 22 and in his second year of Medical and Dental School at UCONN. I grew up in New Hampshire and Maine. I graduated from Boston College with a BSN, started my nursing career in Med-Surg, then as an Emergency (Code) Response Nurse, spent 8 years working in the Operating Room and was the Head Nurse of the Transplant, Dental and GU Services. Once I had children, I worked part-time in Home Care, College Health, Extended Care, and finally, School and Summer Camp Nursing. I have been working in School and Camp Health for over 10 years and have worked with children with all sorts of physical, developmental, psychiatric and behavioral issues. In my spare time, I am a NCAA, NFHS, Masters' and Nationally Certified USA Swimming Referee. I am also the Special Olympics of MA Summer Games Meet Referee. (My boys are all swimmers and the younger 2 are close to making National cuts.) I am on the USA/NE Swimming Officials' Committee and on the USA/NE Swimming Safety Committee as well.

Here is some seasonal information:

TICK SEASON IS UPON US!

According to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, ticks are prevalent throughout the United States. Ticks may cause Lyme disease, Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever and a host of other illnesses. The most common symptoms of tick-borne illnesses are fever and chills, aches and pains, rashes ("bull's eye" rash is common) and neurological reactions. Here in the MA/RI area ticks are most prevalent from mid-March to October.

PREVENTION

Ticks are found predominantly in wooded or brushy areas, in grass (your yard for instance) and tall vegetation. Avoidance of these areas is the best defense, but may not always be practical. To minimize tick exposure, wear protective clothing in a light color along with a chemical repellent, tuck pant legs into socks, and stay near the center of walking trails. Also, wash and dry clothing at high temperatures to kill ticks hiding in seams. After potential tick exposure, remove clothing and inspect the skin carefully for ticks. Remember to inspect your child's entire body from top to bottom when he/she is finished playing outdoors, and don't forget the hair and behind the ears!

REPELLANTS

DEET is the main active ingredient in most tick repellent sprays. Along with repelling ticks, DEET also keeps mosquitoes and other bugs away. Products with low amounts of DEET (concentrations lower than 5 percent) are suggested to reduce potentially harmful exposure to DEET. In large amounts DEET may be harmful to the central nervous system. Permethrin-containing tick sprays, such as Duranon or Permanone, are recommended for kids as a repellent for ticks. This type of tick repellent is applied to children's clothing, instead of the skin, and may be applied to other items used outdoors such as sleeping bags and shoes. Along with chemical repellents, there are botanical options that will repel ticks. The University of Arizona suggests that using tick sprays with citronella, lavender or eucalyptus oil is also an effective way to keep ticks away. Botanical oils are not recommended for children under the age of 2. These sprays are very effective in repelling ticks and may be reapplied safely without concern of harm to children.



TICK BITES

Should a tick bite occur, remove the tick and disinfect the bite area. If symptoms persist, seek medical attention. It is a good idea to call your child's health care provider to report that he/she has suffered a tick bite.

FOLLOW THESE STEPS FOR REMOVING TICKS:

1 Use forceps or tweezers, not your fingers, to remove ticks.

2 Grasp the tick as close to the skin as possible, pulling back gently but firmly. Try not to crush the tick's body.

3 Place the tick into a small jar for possible submission to a laboratory for identification.

4 Wash the affected area with soap and water.

5 Consult your doctor if a pustule or rash develops at the site of the bite after several days.

