

# matheny **matters**

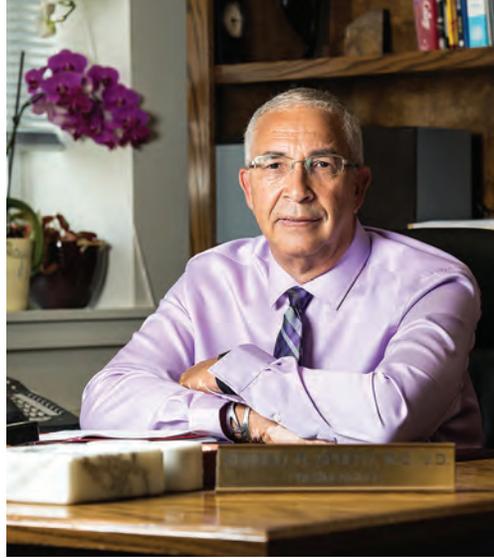
Winter/Spring 2019



## Therapy That **Works**

The 2019 Graduates | Arts Access Debuts at Sotheby's

Kendell R. Sprott, MD, JD  
President and CEO



## 2019: Already a Very Good Year

The first few months of 2019 have already given rise to several important and newsworthy happenings for Matheny. Five of our Arts Access artists were honored with a professionally curated exhibit at Sotheby's in New York in February. The exhibit showcased 56 pieces of their work, and was spotlighted on CBS TV news, CBS Sunday Morning online, Fox 5, and NJTV, introducing Arts Access to a large viewing audience.

I want to congratulate Matheny residents Chet Cheeseman, James Lane, Ellen Kane, Mike Martin and Cindy Shanks. These artists have created impactful and beautiful works and have participated in the Arts Access program for more than two decades. The exhibit was a huge success. It drew art lovers, who viewed the pieces in Sotheby's gallery setting, and

many of the artworks were purchased. I want to thank Rutgers New Jersey Medical School student Brad Chernock, who initiated the exhibition process with his sister Dana, who works for the Old Masters Paintings Department at Sotheby's. His clinical rotation at Matheny exposed him to our artwork, helping to make the connection resulting in this remarkable event.

We are happy to announce that this year's Miles for Matheny walk, run, bicycle, and wheelchair events will be moved to the J. Malcolm Belcher Fairgrounds in Far Hills. The date is Sunday, June 9. We thank Far Hills for their gracious hosting of this important event that brings such joy to everyone connected with Matheny. We also look forward to another potential connection with the borough of Far Hills: two group homes for Matheny residents currently being planned.

In this issue, you'll be introduced to the world of therapy at Matheny, including physical, occupational, speech, recreational, music, and respiratory therapies. Together, they form a network of care providers that enhances, builds, and preserves the health, functioning, abilities, and happiness of all our clients. Therapists often work behind the scenes, but they are integral to every facet of life at Matheny. I want to commend our therapists on their consistently outstanding work and innovative approaches, making life better for everyone at Matheny, and hope you'll read about their contributions to the longevity and well-being of our clients.

## mathenymatters

Winter/Spring 2019

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*On the cover:* Speech therapy helps all Matheny School students to communicate.

Photo by Keith B. Bratcher, Jr.

## Back to School

Five Matheny employees with busy work schedules carved out the time to complete their tutor training for Basic Literacy/English, sponsored by Literacy Volunteers of Somerset County (LVSC). Volunteers agree to provide free Basic Literacy or ESL tutoring to a student or small group of students



for one year. The newly trained tutors, Rosa Kettles, Mia Morse, Rev. Martisha Kanard-Dwyer, Diane Silver, and Judy Kosek started tutoring several Matheny employees right away. “I am learning so much from my student,” Mia says. “She’s so eager to learn. She wants to be a speaker, a reader, and a writer of English for her job, her family, and her future. We also laugh alot.” Judy is also enjoying the experience. “The woman I work with is so grateful—to the point of tears,” she says. “It makes it all worth it.” Dr. Peter Longa, Director of PCA/CRA Services and Co-Chair of the Cultural Diversity Team, says the efforts of the tutors will bring about “improved communication that then results in enhanced quality of care and safety.”

The newly trained tutors (L-r): Diane Silver; Mia Morse; Judy Kosek; and Rosa Kettles; and Martisha Kanard-Dwyer pictured above.



## Miles Moves

Miles for Matheny, the much-anticipated, annual wheelchair walk, moves to the J. Malcolm Belcher Fairgrounds in Far Hills this year. The event will take place on Sunday, June 9, and will feature a new 5K Race; the Porzio, Bromberg & Newman Kids Fun Run; Lu Huggins Wheelchair/Fitness Walk; and five cycling rides, including the super challenging Hills of Attrition. As always, generous sponsors make this event possible and The Friends of Matheny will be on-hand with some sustenance for all. Proceeds pay for programs and services that benefit Matheny’s students and residents.

## Matheny Artists Shine at Sotheby's

February 9 marked the opening of a stellar exhibit of 56 works by five prolific Matheny artists who are long-time participants in the Arts Access program on Matheny's Peapack campus, which recently celebrated its 25th anniversary. The professionally curated Sotheby's show attracted many viewers who also purchased 17 of the artworks. Read more about the exhibit on page 12.



(l-r) Artists Cindy Shanks, Ellen Kane, and Chet Cheeseman





### A Labor of Love

Premiere Stages, a professional theater company in residence at Kean University in Union, has been working with the Arts Access program to showcase its playwrights via onstage readings by professional actors. A staged reading of *Band on the Run*, an original play by 32-year-old writer and visual artist Chris Saglimbene, was presented in its entirety on March 23.

“It’s the first time we’re reading a complete play. It’s a testament to Chris that we’re doing this—to focus on one piece,” says John J. Wooden, Premiere’s Producing Artistic Director. The play is a romantic comedy about a group of young people who fall in and out of love and form a band to raise money to save a favorite neighborhood pizzeria from going out of business.

“The whole thing is a labor of love. I have worked on it for about four years of my life,” says Saglimbene, a Matheny resident and longtime Arts Access participant. The reading was part of the New Jersey Theatre Alliance’s Stages Festival, which provides free and discounted theatre events for all ages throughout the month of March.

### Appointment to State Board

Kathleen Powers, CPA, Matheny’s Vice President of Finance, was recently appointed by Governor Phil Murphy to the Independent Mental Health and Addiction Fee-for-Service Transition Oversight Board and the Independent Developmental Disability Fee-for-Service Transition Oversight Board.

The purpose of the Board is: to monitor and oversee the transition by Division of Developmental Disabilities-contracted providers to a fee-for-service reimbursement system; determine the adequacy of fee-for-service reimbursement rates; and provide recommendations to better facilitate the transition. The Board will also focus on the transition’s effects on access to care, continuity of care, and quality of care, and how these factors affect providers’ ability to serve their clients.



### A Win-Win for All

March 1 was a special day for residents of Matheny’s Adult Services Department. The borough of Morris Plains presented them with a Certificate of Appreciation and a Key to the City for providing Brave Bags to the police department. Councilwoman Catherine Kelly and Lieutenant Michael Rolph visited the Matheny campus to make the presentation to project participants.

Brave Bags is a community outreach and services project. The bags are small drawstring backpacks, which Matheny residents colorfully decorate and fill with

contents that any young child would enjoy—crayons, a coloring book, bubbles, a bouncy ball, and small games. Police in the participating communities keep the bags in their patrol cars to comfort young children during times of crisis.

Local police departments have responded enthusiastically to the Brave Bags, which provide Matheny residents a “way to give back” to those in the surrounding communities. The Brave Bag project includes police departments in Peapack/Gladstone, Bridgewater, Middlesex, Chester, Mount Olive, Somerville, Hillsborough, Warren, Randolph, and Parsippany, and the list continues to grow.

The project’s success is undeniable, with Matheny residents and collaborating communities agreeing that it’s a win-win for all.



Deanna Willard and Jason Weiner accept Certificate of Appreciation from the borough of Morris Plains on behalf of Matheny’s Adult Services Department.



## A Very Personal Connection

# Six Questions for **Bill Kraiss**

For Bill Kraiss, Matheny's current Board of Trustees Chair, the connection to Matheny's mission is a personal one that has been in the making almost his entire life. Here, the New Jersey native and longtime attorney at Porzio, Bromberg, & Newman in Morristown, tells why volunteering at Matheny is so important to him and what he hopes to do in his current role.



### **Can you tell *Matheny Matters* readers a little bit about your early life?**

I grew up in Stirling, New Jersey, where my parents and sister still live. I graduated from Watchung Hills Regional High School in 1983, and the University of Notre Dame in Indiana in 1987. From there, I went to Boston University School of Law, graduated in 1990, and clerked for a judge in Arizona, before returning to New Jersey to join the law firm, Porzio, Bromberg, & Newman, where I've been ever since. My father was a wholesale florist with greenhouses on the property where we grew up, so my brother and I started working in the family business at a young age.

### **What motivated your interest in people with disabilities?**

I have two siblings—my sister, who is the youngest, and my brother in between. My

sister is disabled and required significant services almost from the beginning. Volunteers—mostly neighbors and friends, but even total strangers—would come to our house every day to assist with therapies and patterning [a home-based therapy used in the 1960s and '70s for children with brain injury, learning disabilities, and other cognitive issues]. This was the environment that we were raised in. It taught me to look at people and challenges in a different way. My sister attended local programs outside of our home during her school years, but she always lived at home and still does.

### **How did you become involved as a volunteer at Matheny?**

When I returned to New Jersey, and joined my current law firm, I met Tom Chesson, a lawyer at the firm, who was also Chair of the Board of Matheny from 2002 to 2004. He asked if I would be willing to volunteer some time for Matheny and I said yes. Back then, there was a long wait time for legal services for parents dealing with guardianship applications. Our firm provided those legal services *pro bono* for Matheny parents and other family members for several years. I got to know many Matheny parents and social workers, and I was proud to be invited to be the commencement speaker one year.

### **Have you taken on other volunteer activities?**

My firm has been a sponsor of Miles for Matheny for many years. When our sons were young, my wife had the idea for

the Kids Fun Run, and it was established as part of Miles for Matheny through my wife's efforts and my company's sponsorship. The expressions of joy on our residents' faces as they approach the finish line is truly wonderful to see. I also served as vice chair for the Board of Trustees for several years, supporting numerous Board Chairs, including Annie Brady, Dan McLaughlin, Edana Desatnick, and Bruce Fisher.

### **Why have you made this big commitment now and what do you hope to do in this role?**

I have more time now for Matheny, since my sons are in college and my daughter doesn't need as much of my time. It's a very exciting time to be involved in leadership at Matheny. The Board is exploring our next steps, looking into how we can increase our services and the number of people we can help. We're looking into developing more group homes and moving more people who are able to live outside of the hospital into these medical group homes and helping to integrate them into the community. We're also trying to find avenues to treat more patients in our hospital through deeper relationships with other health care systems and agencies. There are opportunities in the current health care environment to serve more individuals through residential medical care and adult services.

### **What do you think Matheny's strengths are?**

The level of clinical excellence across the board and the level of the staff's commitment to patients is astounding. I'm amazed at the complexity of services here, where every little detail needs to be addressed to ensure the well-being of our clients. The enthusiasm that the employees have for their jobs is mind-boggling. The trips they do with the patients, planning every detail, is challenging. I know how hard it is when my folks take my sister to the mall—so many details, and there are two of them helping her. The staff here does this all the time. It's just remarkable. **MM**



# Therapy for Life



There are those who happily snow tube down mountain slopes and those who never would. There are some who love gliding across ice, and those who choose not to try. The distinctive discipline of Isshinryu Karate calls to some, but not to others.

Call it part and parcel of the human condition: a spectrum of interests, talents, and skills, with a common desire to work and excel at new ventures and engage with others who do. Despite often-major stumbling blocks, those with developmental disabilities want to participate and excel just like those who are able-bodied.

Matheny's students and residents take on new experiences enthusiastically with a highly skilled team of therapists at their side, who challenge and support them, always ensuring their safety. "The therapies," as they're often called, are a pivotal presence at Matheny, crucial to the function and well-being of everyone.

## **PHYSICAL THERAPY** **Keep Moving**

Physical therapy keeps people moving. "Our profession is concerned with patients' mobility and function in their environment, how they get from place to place and accomplish the tasks of the day," explains Lisa Tumminelli, director of the Physical Therapy (PT) Department. She began working at Matheny during a clinical rotation while still a student at the University of Delaware, and realized that this is what she wanted to do with her career.

"I still have some of the same patients as when I was a student," she says. "I love it here."

PT is a high priority in the care plan for Matheny's clients, many of whom have had limited mobility from birth. "Here we are particularly focused on wheelchairs, how clients sit and move in them, how they get out of them, and also how they move when they get out of their wheelchairs—stretching, walking, standing, biking. We look for opportunities for movement outside of wheelchairs."

Tumminelli explains that for physical therapists (PTs) who work in Matheny's school, the focus is how children function within the school environment, both within the classroom and moving from classroom to classroom. For adults in Matheny's hospital, the focus is more on bed positioning, showering, and sleeping

at night. "How we work with adults is based more on medical need," she states.

The PTs team up with occupational therapists, who concentrate more on upper extremity motions and fine motor skills; speech therapists who focus on communication, hearing and dysphagia needs; music therapists on participation and relaxation skills; and recreation therapists on planning trips off campus and modifying sports so that clients can participate. "We work together to problem solve," she says. "Swimming is a big, joint effort here. One challenge is getting everyone in and out of the pool. Everyone loves the pool."

For students in the school, goals are set up for each year, and, of course, the goals vary with the patient. "Sometimes the goal is holding up the head during class. For some newer students, the goals reflect that they are not wheelchair bound, and so may be capable of more mobility," she says.

What is unique about Matheny and its therapy programs? She names the longevity at Matheny of both staff and clients, Matheny's very personal beginnings, and its steadily growing reputational excellence. She takes pride in the dedication of both hospital and school to understanding the needs of the patients here and to focusing on what's involved in their daily care. "We look at the whole picture," says Tumminelli. "That certainly gives you a different perspective. Many of our clients live here."

"The long-term perspective has allowed us to see many patients grow and their mobility improve, and has also allowed us to understand potential issues and challenges they may face. The number of our

adult patients has grown over the years, which says something very positive about the care that our clients get here.”

### **OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY** **Successfully Engaging in** **Everyday Activities**

Donna Kelly, director of Occupational Therapy, always loved working with children and found this profession to be a perfect fit. After earning a Master’s degree from NYU with a focus on assistive technology, she took on her first job—at Matheny.

She describes her specialty as “eclectic, holistic, working with the total person throughout the lifespan.” The focus is on assisting patients to do the things they want and need to do through the therapeutic use of daily activities. At Matheny, this is achieved through the use of assistive technology, adaptive equipment, and therapeutic positioning and handling,

“with function always as our main goal.”

It’s Matheny’s team approach and holistic outlook that attracted her to return here after years working at other sites, as well as the “unique hospital and school model. The population lives here, therefore good communication among professionals, and all staff working with patients in an interdisciplinary approach, is key. We work on the patient as a whole person.”

“There is an interdisciplinary neurodevelopmental treatment (NDT) therapy group that takes children out of their wheelchairs to work on their motor skills, while working on functional skills and communication,” she continues. “Music, touch, and movement with the body all help. We evaluate alternate positions so clients are not in a wheelchair all day. We also provide patients with sensory motor and other sensory experiences, including sound, smell, movement (vestibular) and tactile input. We all work closely as a team.”

“What’s the best way to work with Johnny?” we ask. “We take our own discipline and merge it with other disciplines to offer what’s best.”

The transition program, which focuses on individuals transitioning from child to adult, provides “activity-based therapy,” she explains. “And after graduation from high school, we work with patients to continue to pursue activities for greater independence.”

What might those activities be? “Every person wants to do something meaningful; they want to make a difference in the world or in people’s lives,” she states. “Patients here want to do the same.”

One such project involves making greeting cards by using a particular computer program. “Each person is set up to make some choices, hit certain switches, and contribute in different ways in creating the final product,” she says.

Another project involves making paper, creating frames from the paper, and selling the frames. “There are many skills involved. First, using an adaptive chute to place the paper into a paper shredder, then blending the paper with water using switch access for the blender, then pouring it into screens to create the frames, using hand skills. The group then sells the frames, which involves money and math skills,” she explains. “The task involves sequencing skills and problem-solving abilities, too.”

Another focus is working on self-care. With greater independence as a goal, patients work with a team on dressing, bed positioning, showering, and toileting. “We try to give each person choices—directing care if they can’t do it themselves,” she states. “If a person can feed himself with an adapted spoon, or access a call button, or use voice output equipment, that’s something that a patient can do for himself or herself.”

Kelly particularly loves working with the Rehabilitation Engineering Department to “create things—not available on the market—to better our patients’ lives.”

She explains that many patients need a



Occupational therapist Ronni Armellino works with Matheny resident Jessica Evans.

lot of sensory input in order to achieve a calm state, and OT can help provide this with time spent in an adapted rocking chair, or on a bike or swing, or walking. For elementary school students, occupational therapists work in the classroom directly with the teacher. Children who can't hold a crayon can be fitted with a functional hand splint with a holder for crayons, markers, or stylus, so they can work on projects in school and also at home.

For those who use iPads, wheelchairs can be fitted with an iPad holder and special switches to allow switch access. "We determine—as an interdisciplinary team—which body part moves most easily and consistently, and then we hook up switches to that part of the body, which might be the head or eyes or the tongue. Our goal is for everybody to be independent in some way."

Research is a high priority for Kelly—looking at different treatment techniques that can be evaluated at Matheny. Over the years, she has collaborated on publishing research in professional journals, such as that on robotics use with children with hemiplegia. "We are currently looking at the effect of acoustically engineered music on patients to see if it can decrease self-stimulation behaviors," she says.

OT is also involved in developing ways for patients to engage in leisure activities. For patients who love working on the iPad, the team helped make it safe by putting the device in a good position for them with an iPad holder created and manufactured at Matheny. With the therapists' new 3D printer, "we may be able to make other adaptive equipment," says Kelly. She explains that the 3D equipment will also be used to make things with patients and students, adapting the steps so everyone can participate in making and selling the end product.

Talking business, Kelly hopes to work with rehab to design mounts for adaptive switches and to create other adaptive equipment, such as customized joysticks.

All in all, members of the OT team set their sights on maximizing clients' independence, well-being, and quality of life, "goals that all Matheny staff share," she says.

## SPEECH THERAPY

### Learning to Communicate

Communication is at the root of our human experience. But for those who are nonverbal, the struggle to communicate is enormous and constant.

Speech therapy is always a priority because communication is a priority. "But it's always a team approach," says Jackie Jardim, Director of Matheny's Speech Therapy Department. Communication devices and equipment are of no use if the client cannot access the devices in some way—with hands, feet, head, or another part of the body—and that comes under the aegis of occupational therapy.

**"We're different here because of the residential facility," says Jackie Jardim. "There's a lot of carryover from the school to the hospital, and a lot of teamwork. That's really unique."**

Communication devices range from low tech to high tech, according to the client's ability to use the device. Jardim explains that there are a number of lower tech devices, some with the capability to record one or several messages that clients can be taught to access via direct selection or switches, others with a communication board displaying an array of pictures and symbols that the user can point, or eye gaze, to when communicating. Another communication device, the Go Talk 4, is picture-based and has a 22-message capacity that is programmed on site, allowing therapists to work with clients to expand their language skills and achieve more independence.

At the higher tech level are communication applications for the iPad and iPhone, such as Proloquo2Go, designed for those who are unable to speak or are difficult



to understand. The manufacturer calls it "a voice for those who cannot speak... providing a means for these individuals to communicate with a high degree of independence." It works when the user taps on or uses an adaptive switch to select a symbol that represents a word or phrase. It then converts the input to natural-sounding voices. "We can start small and use the device for teaching meaning, that a picture has meaning," she explains.

"Not all clients can use all devices. Some can just learn how to use a single voice output switch. But our goal is always to find what gives the client the most independence," Jardim says. "We find the most appropriate and efficient mode of communication for that student or resident."

While communication is at the root of this specialty, so are such lesser known issues such as dysphagia or difficulty swallowing, which puts individuals at risk of aspiration pneumonia. "We determine a safe diet, modify foods if necessary, look at the clients positioning and types of equipment used, such as spoons and cups, and determine different strategies for feeding to minimize risk," Jardim explains. "Some clients receive nutrition, hydration, and medications through a G-tube [a gastrostomy tube that delivers nutrition directly to the stomach]. Others have a G-tube and can still have the pleasure of eating. But we have to maintain safety."

Jardim started at Matheny 10 years ago as an intern. “We’re different here because of the residential facility,” she says. “There’s a lot of carryover from the school to the hospital, and a lot of teamwork. That’s really unique.”

“Also, the speech therapists here are highly specialized in augmentative communication and dysphagia,” she says. “We have access to special communication devices that school districts may not have, and we provide school and home speech therapy services, when a child has to be schooled at home.”

Jardim points to their many successes. Most clients are independent users of communication devices, and many carry their iPads everywhere they go. Even when clients travel, their devices travel with them.

“They use words, pictures, and combinations of both, to communicate their message. Or they can just say ‘hi’ to their peers, for instance,” she says. “Even the lower tech devices can be used pretty independently.”

### **RECREATION THERAPY** **Fun and Games?**

While there is a breadth of therapies that boost function and enable Matheny’s clients to stay at the top of their game, despite fluctuations in their medical conditions, it is recreation therapy and leisure activities that link them most closely with the outside world. Feeling connected to the community is a major priority for clients who have often been sidelined by difficulties with mobility and communication.

“Our busy season is April to December,” says Sean Bielefeldt, Director of Recreation Therapy and Adult Day Services at Matheny, but a spectrum of activities is offered year-round. Baseball, track and field, bowling, bocce, golf, yoga, surfing, kayaking, adaptive bicycling, karate, swimming, water skiing, and annual campouts and overnight trips to Wildwood and the Poconos. Even the winter months are not so quiet, with adaptive ice skating, skiing, and snow tubing, shopping and restaurant trips, concerts, theater and attending sporting events all part of the clients’ active schedules.



## Speaking About Breathing

**G**ino Custode did a little of everything in his first 10 years as a respiratory therapist. From his first job at Morristown Memorial, he went on to become a transplant coordinator for the Sharing Network, followed by years of a variety of critical care jobs in several different hospitals (his favorite was open heart surgery recovery “because it’s so upbeat”), and then a year overseeing sleep studies for a private company at various locations. He came to Matheny in 2012 as a “floor therapist” and two years later moved into the position of Director of Respiratory Therapy. He manages four full-time and four per diem staff members, who work 12-hour shifts. He also oversees biomedical services, which ensures that all the medical equipment that keeps clients functioning at Matheny is up-to-date and in good working order.

“We have 18 patients who get routine, daily respiratory therapy, and we do assessments with a doctor and a nurse for conditions like pneumonia at any time and respond to any emergency situation,” he says. The department is based at the hospital and treats all ages, children to adults. He also chairs

the Code Committee, which ensures a rapid, coordinated response when emergencies arise.

“We are a small team, ensuring the safety and professional care of many medically complex patients, around the clock,” he says. “We’re the smallest but one of the most important departments. Many of our staff have been here for years, day in and day out.”

Among Custode’s points of pride is his implementation of Matheny’s mechanical ventilator program in 2014, which involved writing policies and procedures, purchasing the equipment, and training the staff, including how to wean a patient off the ventilator. They are fully prepared and always ready to go.

Responding to respiratory issues, and providing the everyday breathing therapies that some patients require, are critical to many at Matheny. Respiratory therapists are integral to the increasing longevity of clients, and to their ability to engage in so many active pursuits, from sports to trips off campus, which so many Matheny residents can now count on as part of their day-to-day lives.

“Community connections” are a high priority, says Bielefeldt, whose enthusiasm for his job is evident. Meghan Walsh, a senior recreation therapist, explains that the department works with all ages—from 4 to 60s—to provide both recreation therapy, which like the other therapies offered here is aimed at enhancing the functioning of clients, and leisure programs, which provide social and community interaction and support interests outside of Matheny. One such leisure program is the annual prom, an event everyone looks forward to, which offers a night of music, food, and social interaction that Matheny clients anticipate happily for months before. Even going to the mall to shop for dress-up attire provides a fun-filled leisure-time activity.

Walsh explains that some recreation therapy clients receive individual treatment, after a therapist has assessed the client and determined what is in their best interests. This might include therapy to enhance communication skills, independence skills, community resource skills, community independence skills, and sensory integration.

There is no typical patient, says Bielefeldt. Each individual’s needs are unique. Improving the client’s ability to use a power wheelchair, to get on and off a van lift, to navigate sidewalks, to use automatic door openers, to order food in a restaurant, and to shop and have money skills to make a purchase are all part of the program.

“It is the goal of Matheny to integrate clients back into the community, to help prepare them to live in group homes, by working with them on skills that will maximize their independence,” he says. “We want to give them the opportunity for their voice to be heard.”

Recreation therapists work closely with staff from the other therapy departments. For instance, says Bielefeldt, “We have a dining out program, which combines skills learned in all the therapies and then applied in a real-life situation.”

“Matheny is unique in the numbers of activities that enhance community integration,” he continues. “We do 20 trips a month, which is pretty much unheard of in similar programs. We feel that we

owe it to the patients. We’re always asking ourselves: ‘How do we do more for our clients? How do we get more people involved?’”

“We work as a team and parents are part of the team,” says Walsh. “They trust that we can give the kids the opportunities that they never thought their kids would have.”



Senior recreation therapist Meghan Walsh works with Melvin Rhett (top); and with Jess Costanzi, recreation therapy intern, and Kim Alarcon (bottom).

The team interaction is beyond a doubt what allows the special events to happen, such as attending three New York Giants football games this year (supported by the ever-generous volunteer group, The Friends of Matheny). Such as taking a small group of kids to Disney for several days two years ago (also underwritten by “The Friends”). “It was hard—planning for and dealing with the complications we all encounter when traveling that are so much more arduous when traveling

with a child with special needs—checking in, TSA screening, boarding, storing and breaking down wheelchairs, getting everyone comfortably seated and fed, and then doing it all again on the return trip,” says Bielefeldt.

And now the Recreation Therapy Department plans to do it all again in September when a group of Matheny patients travels to Morgan’s Wonderland in San Antonio, Texas, “the world’s only ultra-accessible water park and amusement park in the U.S.”

“We’ve navigated the challenges of air travel before, and we know how to do it safely,” he says. “We keep setting the bar higher for ourselves.”

“We ask: ‘How can we make this happen?’ and we succeed because we work together,” he says. “We’re all committed to adding more for the clients without taking anything away. We want to do everything we can to improve the quality of life of the people we serve.”

## A Very Personal Experience

Cindy LaBar’s professional world and personal life have become closely aligned. As Director of Therapeutic and Rehabilitative Services, and a physical therapist herself, she oversees Matheny’s Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Speech Therapy, Music Therapy, and Recreation Therapy departments, Adult Services programs at the Peapack campus and at the Adult Services Center at Hillsborough, as well as the Assistive Technology and Rehab departments.

She explains that while the setting may be different, school or hospital, the goal is the same—to allow each student or patient the opportunity to participate fully in their lives and be as independent as possible. Therapists focus on maximizing the clients’ independence and participation in everything they do, including but not limited to: their own personal care, including tooth brushing, showering, dressing, transferring from bed to wheelchair, bed-positioning, eating, and moving throughout their environment with the least restriction possible. In the classroom, therapists follow an individualized educa-

tion plan and help students to participate in their school day through improving movement, communication, mealtime skills, as well as activities of daily living.

Quality improvement is an important focus at Matheny, she says. Each department decides what it will be measuring and each one has a scorecard. The music therapy department, for instance, is using biofeedback to measure clients' responses to different techniques. Occupational therapy is working on toileting programs, and physical therapy is working with

**“That’s what we do as therapists, give our clients a voice, provide them with mobility, support them to make choices, bring the newest and the greatest to help our patients be independent and happy,” says Cindy LaBar.**

patients on safe and appropriate footwear. When a department reaches its goals, it establishes a new quality improvement goal to work on. All goals are collaborative, crossing many departments and take team work to accomplish.

Safe patient handling is another of LaBar’s areas of focus. The committee that she heads up looks at every aspect of how all staff handle patients—while helping them to transfer, helping them dress, and helping them eat, for example. “We want patients to be as independent as possible and to be active participants in their lives. It is our priority to keep our patients as well as our staff safe.”

LaBar came to Matheny for the last three-month clinical rotation for her PT degree from Columbia University and “I loved working here,” she remembers. She never left.

In 2006, she became director of physical therapy, and has been in her current position for about four years. LaBar has

three children, one of whom is nonverbal and was in a wheelchair until she was 8 years old. “She has many similarities to some of the clients we serve, which allows me to relate to parents and family members a little bit more than before having her in my life.”

What are the priorities of her job? While safe patient handling ranks first, ensuring that all clients are as independent as possible and practice their skills is a close second. Third, “I want our clients and our staff to be happy. Our clients have great experiences—skiing, surfing, camping, ice skating, travelling, attending and performing at concerts. All of our staff ensure that our clients are safe during each and every one of these experiences.”

Another top priority is helping the interdisciplinary team to work well together. Patients and families are number one on that team, she says. “We can ac-

complish great things together, with the patient and family at the center. Being a parent to my daughter helps me in this.” LaBar has also been a patient. “It simply shifts your perspective. My daughter and my personal experience have shaped how I view things here,” she explains.

“There is not another place like Matheny—that provides so many experiences and opportunities for clients. It’s a safe place to live and it answers the clients’ medical needs. We work to improve functional skills and have frequent social events so clients can engage with their peers,” she says. “It is the responsibility of the therapists to make working on therapeutic goals fun for our clients, and each therapist absolutely does so. The therapists are creative, engaging, knowledgeable, and compassionate. They are able to motivate our clients to work hard.”

LaBar points out that some patients have self-injurious behaviors, and require safeguarding equipment. “Right on the Matheny campus, our rehab department fabricates the necessary equipment, and the therapists conduct trials to ensure the equipment is fulfilling the desired outcome. The whole team figures out what’s best for the patient,” she says.

Therapists are also part of many clinics—among them seating and mobility, orthotics, psychiatry, audiology, and orthopedics—and work alongside the doctors



Physical therapist Katrina Low-Beer and physical therapy aide Jeff Francisco work with patient Natasha Williams

and clinicians, sharing what they see day-to-day. Therapists often attend outside medical appointments and travel to the hospital when needed to assist patients with positioning and safeguarding.

“I want our clients to be moving, doing for themselves, not watching,” she says. “When you participate in your life, make choices, communicate, that’s when you’re happiest and successful.”

LaBar has seen this both at work and at home. “My daughter has become proficient at utilizing her communication

device. She can initiate thoughts and have conversations, she can engage more with her family, and share how she feels. Not only is she functional, she is now independent. The excitement I feel as a mother witnessing my own daughter's accomplishments is equivalent to the feelings I have when I observe a patient at Matheny working with our therapists to achieve milestones. We celebrate every accomplishment with our patients."

"That's what we do as therapists, give our clients a voice, provide them with mobility, support them to make choices, bring the newest and the greatest to help our patients be independent and happy."

## MUSIC THERAPY

### An Apt Quote: "Where words fail, music speaks."

This quote by Hans Christian Andersen captures the power of music. Lynn Coyle, Director of Music Therapy, can attest to that power for Matheny's clients. She has captured on video the impact of participating in music-making at even a rudimentary level and the effect of rhythm on an individual who is barely mobile.

A harpist who grew up in Illinois, Coyle was a performance major at the University of Illinois, a top school for music. Despite initially wanting to attend medical school, she decided to combine her interests in music and medicine by earning a Master of Music Therapy degree.

She came to Matheny for an internship in 1995, stayed to work and even met her husband on the job, and has been a music therapist at Matheny ever since. She still plays the harp, but also the guitar, piano, cello, drums, and bass. "You have to be versatile in music therapy," she says.

"In my specialty, you're always aware of the goals and needs of clients, and what the other therapies are working towards. Music is a vehicle to help clients meet their goals."

The music therapy program is geared primarily to the hospital patients, except for one afternoon a week that music therapy is provided in the school, under a grant-funded program supported by The Friends of Matheny. "This is to



Lynn Coyle, Director of Music Therapy, works with a client.

supplement the students' music education experience," she explains.

"Music therapy is very client specific," Coyle states. She describes the experience of a young man who had serious problems with impulse control and transitions. "He had a hard time. He would grab things. Now he's patient. Waits his turn, communicates instead of grabbing. We listen to him."

She speaks about the physiological reason for music's great power. "Music affects every lobe and both hemispheres of the brain. It doesn't matter where the brain is damaged, the person is still able to benefit from therapy attached to music."

Coyle shows a short video that demonstrates the power of music. "In this group music-playing session, the client, who has limited purposeful, functional movement, is working on a lot of skills," she says, "social, group participation, motor skills. It gives this young man, who has no way to communicate, an opportunity to express something and be heard." The department has five full-time music therapists.

The Music Therapy Department will soon expand into Matheny's group homes with a grant from Janssen Pharmaceuticals. What will the

therapists do there? "Answer whatever the individual residents' needs are," says Coyle. For instance, "some clients have lots of anxiety. Writing songs is a therapeutic way to express yourself and lessen anxiety."

While three of her workdays are taken up with administrative duties, Coyle's Tuesdays and Thursdays are filled with client-sessions. With one client who has severe cerebral palsy, she works on hand-eye coordination at the piano. Another patient writes her own lyrics and puts them to different tunes. "We've done rap, country, gospel, classical. She loves to explore different sounds and different styles, this one on cello, that one on harp."

But where does the therapy come in? "She's nonverbal, and uses an augmentative communication device. It gives her a way to say things in the song and be heard," says Coyle. "It's her emotional expression and there is no judgement. My job is to put her words to music."

The department also does relaxation training, involving different breathing techniques, guided imagery, and progressive muscle relaxation. According to the music therapist, this co-treatment with PT get clients out of their wheelchairs and into alternative positioning equipment in the sensory room. "We work with clients as a group, and also with some individually," she says.

"What many people don't realize is that fun is a byproduct of what we do, but it's not our purpose. There are a lot of benefits to music therapy," she says.

"We are a young profession and there hasn't been much research in our field yet. So, unlike OT, PT, and speech, it's hard to quantify," Coyle explains, "but we do know that music gives clients normal life experiences."

The 35-member vocal choir, including children and adults, presents concerts in May and December. "It's very challenging pulling a concert together and calls upon many complex skills of the clients. We perform here on stage, and also out in the community."

The powerful pull of music is hard to explain, but impossible to deny. Its effect is especially compelling for those with limited means of communication. **MM**

# Matheny Debuts at Sotheby's

By Shannon McCloskey Allain

**O**n a bright, cold Sunday in February, five accomplished artists gathered for a reception to celebrate an exhibit of their work at Sotheby's, the world-renowned auction house in New York City. Entitled *The Art of Choice*, it was held from February 9 to 11 and showcased 56 paintings. For any artist, an exhibition at Sotheby's represents the pinnacle of a successful fine arts career. To these artists, who have developed their skills and honed their craft through the Arts Access Program at Matheny, it represented much more.

For more than 25 years, Arts Access, an innovative program that enables individuals with disabilities to participate fully in the visual, literary, and performing arts, has employed a novel method of facilitation that allows artists, many of whom are non-verbal, to maintain full control of their creative work. This is achieved through 'facilitators,' professional artists trained in the Arts Access philosophy and methodology, who work alongside the artists to present a vast array of artistic choices, and execute their wishes with precise care while maintaining strict neutrality. The program also seeks out exhibition and performance opportunities that bring the works of artists with disabilities to the public.

Chet Cheeseman, James Lane (top left), Ellen Kane, Mike Martin (bottom center, with his father), and Cindy Shanks are all prolific artists who have developed their creative legacies in more than two decades of work in this program. Though they are wheelchair users with limited mobility, range of motion, and verbal communication, they have produced works of astonishing beauty that bring viewers into the world of their experience and reveal insights that transcend their physical limitations. Their works have been exhibited in corporate headquarters, universities, and local museums.

When Rutgers New Jersey Medical School student Brad Chernock visited

Matheny during his third-year pediatrics rotation last year, his group was given a tour of the Robert Schonhorn Arts Center on campus, the home of the Arts Access Program. He was amazed at the beauty and quality of the art work.

"I thought the art they produced was incredible," he says, "and they were treated like professional artists. The method in which the art is created was fascinating to me and has so many complex dimensions that it was truly unique and remarkable."

Brad shared his experience with

**Art is not  
what you see,  
but what you  
make others see.**

EDGAR DEGAS

his sister, Dana, who works in the Old Masters Paintings Department at Sotheby's. "When Brad told me about his tour at Matheny and explained the arts program," she says, "I was immediately interested in learning more and seeing how Sotheby's might be able to offer a collaboration in some capacity." After visiting the program last summer with her colleague, and witnessing the integrity of the innovative process and the inspiring art work, Dana and her colleagues planned the Sotheby's exhibit.

As a company, Sotheby's has long had a reputation for staging singular events that bring groundbreaking works to the public, making the collaboration with Arts Access a natural fit.

On the day of the event, the artists and more than 80 guests, including family, friends, supporters, Matheny staff, and the public gathered to view the exhibit and celebrate this momentous

achievement. A film depicting the novel facilitation process and program history played at the entrance, as red dots indicating sales appeared on the placards next to the works.

Featured artist Ellen Kane, and her mother, Pyong Sue Kane, were interviewed by CBS network reporters about Ellen's artistic process and journey. Al Martin, father of featured artist Mike Martin, stood next to his son beaming proudly as he explained to a viewer why Mike's dramatic acrylic on canvas work 'Untitled' was on loan to the exhibit but not for sale. "It hangs in our home, in our living room, in a place of honor," he said. "It took Mike 7 years to complete, so it's a special piece."

Eileen Murray, Director of Arts Access, thanked Sotheby's and congratulated her staff and the artists themselves: "Cindy, James, Mike, Ellen and Chet are always stretching their imaginations, exploring and even creating new techniques. The creative process is filled with hundreds, more likely thousands, of artistic choices, all within a single painting. Arts Access makes these choices possible by offering the arms and legs for these artists who can't physically create their work, but every decision comes from them. This show is about the art of choice, and we are proud to feature these talented artists of choice."

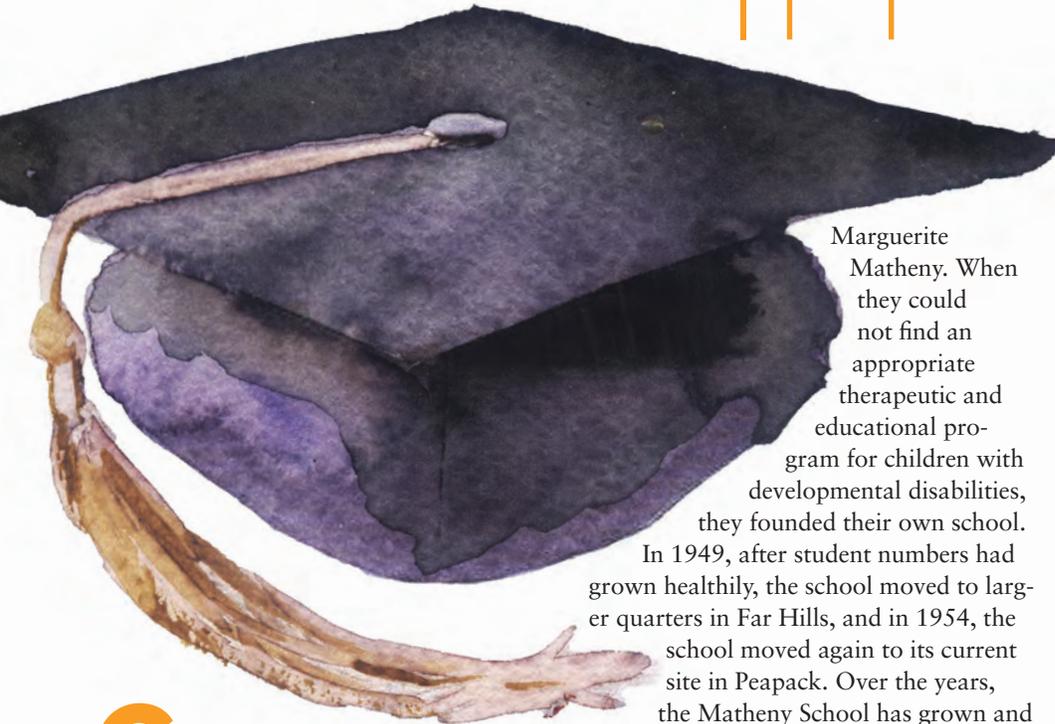
It was clear the exhibit was about far more than the sale of beautiful art. It was about connection, understanding, and respect. It was about well-deserved recognition for these artists, and the journey that brought them to this moment in such a highly respected gallery. It was about the power of art to transcend differences that divide us, illuminate and inspire, and reveal our common humanity.

It was about the power of choice to allow these artists to speak to us through their art, give us the opportunity to hear them, and leave all of us forever changed.



## Matheny's 2019 Graduates

# In Their



Marguerite Matheny. When they could not find an appropriate therapeutic and educational program for children with developmental disabilities, they founded their own school.

In 1949, after student numbers had grown healthily, the school moved to larger quarters in Far Hills, and in 1954, the school moved again to its current site in Peapack. Over the years, the Matheny School has grown and earned a reputation for its remarkable breadth of services and educational activities for students, and the dedication and compassion of its staff.

**G**raduation day 2019: a memorable event for graduates nationwide. For the seven students completing their studies at the Matheny School (like all high school graduates), it is the culmination of years of hard work, sometimes struggle, often challenges, frequent fun. It is time for them to transition to a new stage of life, a more adult life, a life with more choices and greater responsibility for those choices. Like all graduates, Matheny's seven have decisions to make, and hopes and dreams they are setting out to fulfill. They also have continuing support and encouragement from their parents, family and friends, and the teams of professional educators and caregivers who have helped make their graduation possible.



**"I'm looking forward to Arts Access and new classes after graduation."**

DAEON

*Matheny Matters* is taking this opportunity to introduce you to this year's graduates, who proudly carry on the Matheny School's tradition. Its founders were visionary, dedicated, and knowledgeable, and focused their efforts on giving students every opportunity to learn and grow as human beings. That same drive on the part of current staff has encouraged the 2019 graduates to be communicators, artists, and active participants in their communities and in their own futures.

According to Jim Hintenach, assistant principal of the school, graduation day is

an exciting event, with a large audience of well-wishers turning out to celebrate the graduates as they receive diplomas from their home-districts during a very traditional graduation day ceremony on the Matheny campus. The class has a valedictorian and a salutatorian. The choice is based on which students have achieved the highest assessment scores in eleventh grade, according to Hintenach. "The principal, Sean Murphy, the mayor of Peapack, the chairs of Matheny's Board of Trustees and School Board, and CEO Dr. Kendell Sprott all participate in the graduation ceremony," the assistant principal says. Afterwards, everyone celebrates at a bountiful reception sponsored by The Friends of Matheny.

Here some of the graduates tell—in their own words—a little about themselves and their experiences at the Matheny School.



### Morgan

BORN August 19, 1997  
FROM West Orange, NJ

What are three of your favorite memories?  
**choir, I like bowling, I like going swimming in the pool**

What are your favorite subjects in school and why?  
**science—I like doing experiments, music—I like music, social studies—I like paper bag mysteries**

What are some extracurricular activities or trips you have participated in?  
**yoga, bowling, choir. I also love going for long bike rides in Ocean Grove and boogie boarding in the ocean with my Mom.**

# Own Words



## Jaheem

BORN June 1, 1998  
FROM Elizabeth, NJ

What are your favorite subjects in school and why?

**One of my favorite classes is social studies. I like working with the social studies teacher, Gypsy, and learning about different events that have happened around the world. I also like language arts class, learning new words and different stories throughout the school year.**

What will you miss about the Matheny School?

**I will miss all my teachers and going out on school trips.**

What are some extracurricular activities or trips you have participated in?

**I participated in transition class. Being part of this class allowed me to experience different job sites.**

## Daeon

BORN September 5, 1997  
FROM Newark, NJ

What are your favorite memories?

**Halloween parade, prom, Earth Day**

What are some extracurricular activities or trips you have participated in?

**prom, choir, Special Olympics, movies, the farm, out to eat**

What are your favorite subjects in school and why?

**all of them. My top 2 are: PBI [Positive Behavior Interventions] and social studies.**

What are you looking forward to after graduation?

**Arts Access, new classes**

## Megan

BORN April 25, 1998  
FROM Skillman, NJ

What are your favorite memories from school?

**Halloween because of the parade, prom because I can get all dressed up, PCAST lunch because mom and dad came**

What are your favorite subjects in school and why?

**social studies because we play dress-up and get to be explorers, language arts because I love listening to stories**

What is one thing you will miss about the Matheny School?

**all of the people**

What are some extracurricular activities or trips you have participated in?

**ice skating, movies, shopping for tea time, shopping mall**

## Jamil

BORN July 13, 1997  
FROM Plainfield, NJ

What are your favorite memories from school?

**Transition trips, winning the Halloween costume contest. I was *SpongeBob SquarePants*. Prom. Telling jokes on Fun Joke Friday.**

What are your favorite subjects in school?

**Social studies because we sing a lot of songs.**

What are some extracurricular activities or trips you have participated in?

**choir, church, Student Council**

What are you looking forward to after graduation?

**meeting new people and telling them jokes**



## India

BORN November 2, 1997  
FROM Denville, NJ

When did you start school at Matheny?  
**in 2001**

What will you miss about the Matheny School?

**all the different classes**

What are some extracurricular activities or trips you participated in?

**Challenger Baseball, choir, CCD, karate**

What are you looking forward to after graduation?

**trying out new classes**

*A special thank you to teacher Felicia Querrey and speech language specialist Christine Mayercik, who work closely with the graduates to create their autobiographies through the PCAST (Person Centered Approaches in Schools and Transition) program, helping prepare upcoming graduates for their post-secondary school life.*

## The 2018 Honor Roll of Donors

Individuals, corporations, organizations, and foundations generously helped support every aspect of life at Matheny during Fiscal Year 2018. Because of our donors' compassion and support of Matheny's mission, the lives of hundreds of students, patients, residents, as well as their families and friends have been enriched in so many ways. We thank all contributors for their extraordinary generosity.

*This donor list includes gifts received between July 1, 2017 and June 30, 2018.*

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### Prestigious Grant for Arts Access

In February, for the third consecutive year, the **National Endowment for the Arts** announced a prestigious Challenge America grant of \$10,000 to the Arts Access Program at Matheny for their Full Circle 2019 event. Challenge America grants support projects that extend the reach of the arts to underserved populations—those whose opportunities to experience the arts are limited by geography, ethnicity, economics, or disability. This year's Full Circle takes place on November 2 in the Robert Schonhorn Arts Center on the Matheny campus.

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## On the Road Again

Sometimes wishes *do* come true. Just ask anyone at Matheny.

**The Friends of Matheny**, a nonprofit group of volunteers who underwrite Matheny students' and residents' wish-lists, the Hyde and Watson Foundation, and donors to Giving Tuesday 2017 joined forces recently to underwrite the addition of a wheelchair accessible minivan to Matheny's transport vehicles.

The new van is used primarily to transport one or two clients at a time to recreational opportunities and community outings. Group trips are the norm for Matheny residents, who rarely get to go out on personal ventures.

Shortly after the minivan was purchased, Matheny patient Tony Santia's dream did come true. He rode in the new van to meet Ace Frehley, the original lead guitarist and a co-founding member of the rock band Kiss. Tony was an avid fan of Kiss for many years. Sadly, Tony passed away shortly after this meeting.

"The new van means more opportunities for recreational and practical trips," says Sean Bielefeldt, Director of Recreation Therapy and Adult Day Health Services. "The world outside our walls is just as important to patient well-being as our facility itself."

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**The Amazing Life of a 3D Printer**

Matheny students and teachers are venturing into the high-tech world of 3D printing with the help of **Sanofi-Aventis**, a biopharmaceutical company with corporate headquarters in Bridgewater, NJ. The company recently donated a 3D printer to the school, and it has found a home in the science classroom. The printer serves as a teaching tool that makes science teaching more innovative and helps science students to collaborate on problem-solving. A second 3D printer, paid for by **The Friends of Matheny**, which has raised more than \$3 million to purchase equipment and support Matheny programs, is slated to arrive soon. "It can be utilized to make more and better adaptive equipment for our clients, and also to make things with adult clients—they collaborate to make an end product to sell," says Donna Kelly, Director of Occupational Therapy.



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### There's Music in the Air

Love of music is a recurrent motif at Matheny and what better time than spring to feature world-class music. In May and June of 2019, a series of musical performances underwritten by **Delta Dental of New Jersey** and presented by members of the **New Jersey Symphony Orchestra** will take place for residents, families, and staff of Matheny. The first performance took place at the Adult Learning Center at Hillsborough on April 30th. And that was just a warm-up, so to speak. NJ Symphony Orchestra performers will also visit Matheny's hospital in small groups to make music for the patients and staff in the hallways, and the line-up will crescendo with a summer concert in the Robert Schonhorn Arts Center for a larger group of Matheny's family and friends. Delta Dental has a strong history of providing generous support to Matheny's Oral Health Care Center on campus, but these performances will be a musical first.

*(l-r): NJSO musician Jonathan Storck; Dennis G. Wilson, CEO of Delta Dental of NJ/CT; NJSO musician Fran Storck; Randy Stodard, Chief Marketing Officer, Delta Dental; and Matheny patient Jenny Cox*

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# Remembering a Perfect Ambassador

**Larry Thornton** dedicated his retirement years to volunteering and, lucky for those at Matheny, its school became a second home and family to him. After a successful career in marketing that spanned almost five decades, as well as raising four children with his wife of 41 years, he wanted to remain active and connected with the world. Following a visit to Matheny in 2008, that world and his became strongly intertwined.

He started out by volunteering for several hours one day each week in the science classroom; that quickly grew to two days, then three. “Initially, I didn’t know if I could do this,” he said during an interview in 2016. “But I developed such a love for the students.”

His positive classroom experiences fostered a growing sense of connectedness with the students and staff, and led him to think about additional ways he could contribute. First, he was invited to take a seat on Matheny’s Board of Trustees, and he accepted. Then he joined Matheny’s School Board. But he still wanted to do more. That’s when he hit upon the idea that his marketing background might make him a perfect “ambassador.”

He looked around the Matheny campus and saw that the nature trail was difficult to navigate; the path to the Arts Center was treacherous for wheelchair-travel in bad weather; the pool deck needed repairs. These were just a few of the projects that needed funding.

With a gentle, unassuming demeanor, he went out into the community to tell Matheny’s “story,” making new friends, who, in turn, contributed their time and money. Large corporations, small businesses, and individuals with big hearts all answered his calls. His strategy was simple: to connect with someone and

get inside the door, talk with them about Matheny (a neighbor that many only know in passing), inspire their interest, and invite them for a tour. “To know Matheny is to love it,” was his motto.

That strategy worked. Within a few years, several Somerset County businesses, as well as individuals, “adopted” major projects and, in so doing, changed the face of Matheny.

His most recent venture brought about a collaboration between Rutgers University’s biomedical engineering students and Matheny.

“The students want to apply their learning to real-world problems,” he observed. “Matheny can provide them with opportunities to make life better



**“Initially, I didn’t know if I could do this,” said Larry Thornton during an interview in 2016.**

**“But I developed such a love for the students.”**



for people with complex disabilities.” The new relationship quickly took root because of his efforts.

“Before coming to Matheny, I never understood how hard it is for these really intelligent students to communicate with other human beings,” he stated. “I’m so impressed with the dedication and compassion of the staff, and their striving every day to give some normalcy and happiness to the children’s lives.”

Larry Thornton died on April 13. He will be missed by all those at Matheny whose lives he touched in so many positive ways. **MM**

Larry Thornton (second from right) and biomedical engineering students from Rutgers University who are participating in a collaborative project

PHOTO BY ROY GROETHING

## Matheny Loses a Friend

Volunteerism was central to the life of Jonathan Black from an early age. Born on January 25, 1995, in Pequannock, NJ, he grew up in the Somerset section of Franklin Township and attended the public schools there. In 2013, he graduated from Bishop George Ahr High School, where he played varsity football and was a varsity wrestler. He was an insurance agent at Schumacher Insurance in Montclair when he died in an accident on December 8, 2018.



On his LinkedIn page, Jonathan featured his volunteering experience with Matheny and the Special Olympics front and center. He described himself as a “mentor, supporting special needs children to win their races at the Somerset County Special Olympics every May, representing Team Matheny School.” His mentoring began in May of 2005, and he proudly displayed the Special Olympics logo on his page.

Perhaps the best memorials are the most personal ones—from those who knew Jonathan and loved him. Sean Bielefeldt, Matheny’s Director of Recreation Therapy & Adult Day Health Services, knew him well, and shares his memories with *Matheny Matters* readers:

“I’ve known the Black family for as long as I can remember. We grew up in the same church. Jonathan, the middle of three brothers, was the most loving and outgoing person you’d ever meet. I was fortunate enough to be his mentor during his 8th grade confirmation.

“This was a very important time in both of our lives and it cemented our friendship. My father also served as a mentor to Jonathan, and his parents credit both of these relationships in Jonathan’s desire to give back to the community.

“Through our relationship, I was able to introduce Jonathan to Matheny. From the first time he volunteered, he connected with the residents. His larger than life personality, infectious smile, and heartwarming hugs were always welcomed when he came to Miles for Matheny and Special Olympics. I could count on him to get the residents excited about an event they were competing in or just talking with him about what was happening in their lives.

“Jonathan made a special connection with one particular individual from Matheny, David (see picture). From the first time they met, they hit it off and became close friends. Jonathan was a great young man who had a heart of gold and would do anything for anyone. I’m grateful he became part of the Matheny family and impacted the lives of Matheny residents.”

Friends of Jonathan wrote this poignant message online after his death:

“There are no words, in any combination, that can properly convey my condolences... The one thing that first came to my mind when seeing Jonathan’s picture here was that smile and those eyes that have the same glow and brightness they had when he was 2. From what I have read, it sure seems that that brightness has touched a great number of people...”

Jonathan’s brightness touched many at Matheny. He will be missed.



## Making Music at Matheny

Listening to music is a great pleasure for many at Matheny, but participating in making music and performing it for an audience are even greater joys. Just ask Lynn Coyle, Director of Music Therapy who has worked with Matheny’s musicians for more than 20 years, about her experiences forming and leading the Matheny choirs, which are 35 members strong and perform before live audiences every Spring and every Winter holiday season. There are three musical groups—the Vocal Choir, whose members use their voices to sing musical selections, and the Midi Performance Choir and the Midi Interest Choir, groups that provide the opportunity to make music to those who are nonverbal. Participants utilize switches to create sounds and make music. The choirs rehearse weekly and, most recently, proudly performed their Spring concert in May to a most appreciative audience.

## contact us

**Adult Day Habilitation Services  
at Hillsborough**  
908-904-6530

**Assistive Technology**  
908-234-0011, ext 1764

**Center of Medicine and Dentistry**  
908-234-0011, ext 1785

**Friends of Matheny**  
908-234-0011, ext 1282  
friendsofmatheny@gmail.com

**Matheny School**  
908-234-0011, ext 1234  
mathenyschool@matheny.org

**Rehabilitation Technology**  
908-234-0011, ext 1785



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The Arts Access Program at Matheny presents

# FULL CIRCLE 2019

art without limits



Exhibit Opening | Stage Performance | Reception

**Saturday, November 2, 3:00-6:00pm**

Matheny | 65 Highland Ave | Peapack, NJ 07977

Event proceeds benefit the Matheny Arts Access Program

Register online: [artsaccessprogram.org/event/full-circle-2019](http://artsaccessprogram.org/event/full-circle-2019)  
Admission: \$50 | Tickets: 908-234-0011 ext. 1260 | [pcats@matheny.org](mailto:pcats@matheny.org)



Large Print



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