

Cardinal Innovations Healthcare Announces Funding of GHA's Morrow Valley Farmstead Through Its Community Reinvestment Initiative

Morrow Valley Farmstead, a program being developed by non-profit provider GHA Autism Supports, was selected to receive funding in the form of a \$38,000 grant through Cardinal Innovations Healthcare's Community Reinvestment Initiative.

Through the Morrow Valley Farmstead program, GHA will create specialized long-term medical care for aging individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder and other developmental disabilities who require 24-hour medical care in an innovative program that has been designed to specifically meet their needs. The first generation of children diagnosed with autism in the 1940s and 1950s are now becoming older adults. Autism Spectrum Disorder is a life-long condition and yet, by far, the majority of research, funding, services, and available information focuses on children with autism. Very little consideration has been given to practice models, services, needs, longitudinal research, the developmental trajectory, and the various challenges faced by those aging with Autism Spectrum Disorder. There is no precedence for services for aging individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder, and current long-term care models. The state of the art 10-bed facility will be located on Morrow Mountain Road in Albemarle.

Cardinal Innovations created the Community Reinvestment Initiative as a way to make stable, sustainable investments across its 20-county service area. Through this initiative, Cardinal Innovations asked organizations to submit proposals for programs that would improve health outcomes for its members with intellectual and developmental disabilities, mental health conditions, and substance use disorders.

"The goal of this effort was to identify and fund high-impact projects in our communities," said Cardinal Innovations Chief Executive Officer Trey Suttan. "We could not have been more pleased with the number of responses and the broad range of requests we received from organizations throughout our geography. We received so many innovative proposals that we actually made the decision to go beyond our original commitment—funding more than \$4 million in projects. It's an investment in our members, providers and communities that is right in line with our mission." During the three-month submission period ending May 1, Cardinal Innovations received hundreds of proposals from

entities and organizations across its 20-county service area: Alamance, Cabarrus, Caswell, Chatham, Davidson, Davie, Forsyth, Franklin, Granville, Halifax, Mecklenburg, Orange, Person, Rockingham, Rowan, Stanly, Stokes, Union, Vance and Warren Counties. Per the submission requirements, proposals were accepted from municipalities, counties, public school systems, colleges and universities as well as other qualifying non-profits.

Projects were selected for funding through a comprehensive process that included reviews by members of a cross-departmental evaluation committee as well as reviews by the Cardinal Innovations Executive Leadership Team and Board of Directors, followed by approval by the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services.



GHA Autism Supports CEO Dawn Allen accepts a check from Cardinal Innovations Healthcare Network Specialist Supervisor Monvayata Ratchford.



GHA Receives Speedway Children's Charities Grant

GHA recently received a grant in the amount of \$5,000 from the Charlotte Motor Speedway Chapter of Speedway Children's Charities (SCC) in Concord. The funds will be used to upgrade the back yard area with recreational activities for the individuals at Robert W. Thompson Home during the spring of 2019. The organization was founded in 1982 by Speedway Motorsports and Sonic Automotive Chairman Bruton Smith as a memorial and legacy to his son, Bruton Cameron Smith, who passed away at a very young age. Speedway Children's Charities is focused on funding a wide range of programs that focus on children in need and their families. Dollars are raised annually by the organization through the hosting of events and promotions geared around race weeks and other activities at Charlotte Motor Speedway, as well as events within the Charlotte community. GHA Autism Supports is pleased to have received on-going support through SCC's grant program for more than fifteen years.



Wilmington Crew Visits Albemarle

September of 2018 will long be remembered for the effects left behind by Hurricane Florence, especially in the Carolina coastal areas. Since 2010, GHA has provided services in Wilmington, NC including residential programs and Port City Academy, a day program for adults with autism. Multiple individuals, along with their dedicated staff, were evacuated to Albemarle for a two-week hotel stay until it was deemed safe for them to return. During this time, the New Hanover Emergency Operations Center was operational for 13 days, and the Wilmington area received over 23 inches of rain. We were very fortunate that our sites underwent little to no damage, while many areas in the Port City were not that fortunate with the 5 foot storm surge. Staff worked tirelessly to ensure that these individuals transitioned well in what was a challenging time for many in our State. Several outings were organized including a day trip to the NC Zoo. It was also an opportunity for some of the individuals that we support from both locations to meet one another. We appreciate the quality care provided by a number of our Wilmington staff members during this temporary relocation, we salute you!

GHA Autism Supports Releases Results of 2018 GHA Stakeholder Satisfaction Survey for Fiscal Year 2017-2018

Near the end of each Fiscal Year, GHA Autism Supports surveys our community stakeholders focusing on their overall satisfaction with GHA’s program and organizational processes. For the third year, our Quality Management Department utilized *SurveyMonkey®* in gathering this important information. Only community individuals familiar enough with GHA Autism Supports to provide meaningful feedback were included. Links to the *SurveyMonkey®* site were sent to all identified stakeholders via email. Anonymity of individual responses was promised to all survey participants. The importance of this information to our organization was emphasized.

In May 2018, 71 links to *SurveyMonkey®* were emailed to community stakeholders. The deadline for completion of surveys was June 11, 2018. Thirty surveys were completed, a return rate of 42%. Stakeholders were asked to respond to ten statements selecting one of four responses: *Strongly Agree*, *Agree*, *Disagree* or *Strongly Disagree*. For each of the ten survey questions, the *Strongly Agree* end of the continuum was the most positive response.

Response Options	SA	A	D	SD
GHA works with other community organizations as an advocate.	97%	3%	—	—
GHA has an educational program to make its presence known.	80%	20%	—	—
Staff seem respectful and knowledgeable.	93%	7%	—	—
Personnel seem qualified and competent.	79%	21%	—	—
Services are conveniently located.	83.5%	13.5%	3%	—
Locations are clean and well-maintained.	86%	14%	—	—
GHA does not discriminate in provision of service.	87%	13%	—	—
GHA provides culturally sensitive services.	76%	24%	—	—
GHA’s website (ghautismsupports.org) is user friendly.	63%	37%	—	—
Overall, I am satisfied with GHA and its services and supports.	93%	7%	—	—

As in the prior survey, stakeholder responses were extremely positive. For eight of the ten survey questions, the percentage of respondents who selected *Strongly Agree* increased from 2017 to 2018. The final question addressing overall satisfaction with GHA’s services and supports is particularly noteworthy. Again, moving from 2017 to 2018, the percentage of participants who strongly agreed increased from 76% to 93%.

Maintaining a strong network of community supporters is of critical importance to GHA Autism Supports and is essential to our effectiveness. The Stakeholder Satisfaction Survey will continue to be conducted annually and reviewed by our Executive Leadership Team, making organizational changes as warranted.

The GHAzette is a quarterly publication. If you would like to submit story ideas, please contact a member of the GHAzette Editorial Team: Beth Olivieri, betholivieri@ghainc.org or Denise Dye, denisedrye@ghainc.org.

2018

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MISSION

GHA Autism Supports provides quality, community services to meet the unique needs of individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder.



GHA was pleased to host another visit from a large group of Japanese professionals this fall. Groups have been coming to GHA to tour our programs for more than 28 years!



Staff members at O'Brien Service Company in Wilmington helped Chris celebrate his birthday recently. Chris is employed with the locally owned and operated business that provides a complete range of heating and air services. We appreciate the support of O'Brien Service Company and many other community partners in New Hanover and Stanly Counties!



GHA Autism Supports was pleased to present at the i2i Center for Integrative Health Conference in Pinehurst on December 6th. GHA Director of Quality Services Jennifer Rorie-Bruton served as part of the provider panel discussion "Provider Perspectives on EHR Selection, Implementation and Long-Term Utilization".

GHA Autism Supports was founded in 1978 as "The Group Home for the Autistic" with one 5-bed children's home in Albemarle. The organization had five employees and operated on an annual budget of \$78,000.

Success at the “Cheers to 40 Years” Gala Auction!

On Saturday, November 10th, over 200 gathered at the Carolinas HealthCare System-Stanly Family and Education Center for the “Cheers to 40 Years” Gala Auction where guests savored an array of food and drinks while pursuing over 200 fabulous items up for bid! Auction planning committee members, including Dawn Allen, Tonia Camiña, Tonia Diggs, Denise Drye, Tonda Forrest, Larry & Martha Hupp, Gina Martin, Kim McGowen, Lyda Mihalyi, Maureen Morrell, Sandra Morton, Beth Olivieri, Melissa Rivera, and Mary Stokes, worked tirelessly for months securing items and sponsorships and providing those final touches in creating extraordinary displays for the event. Special thanks also to Artist Lynda Wilson for providing her graphic design skills in creating the invitation and other print materials. Emcee Rob Morrell energized buyers and helped to set the tone for the evening as families and friends of GHA gathered at the organization’s sixth run of its signature fundraising event. The gala auction raised over \$40,000 to support GHA’s initiatives to provide quality services for individuals with autism.



A Very Special Thank You to Our “Cheers to 40 Years” Sponsors

Presenting Sponsor – \$5,000 and above – Tim Marburger Honda

Platinum Sponsors-\$2,500 to \$4,999 – In Honor of Ellen Brooks, Anna & Hank Finch, Forrest Fence Company, GHA Autism Supports Board of Directors, Hudson Fence Distribution and Uwharrie Bank

Gold Sponsors – \$1,000 to \$2,499 – Albemarle Pediatrics and Southern Pharmacy Services

Silver Sponsors – \$500 to \$999 – Bear Insurance Service, Crook Motor Company, Davidson, Holland & Whitesell & Co., South Central Oil Company & Professional Propane, Stanly Appliance Parts & Service, LLC and Storm Technologies, Inc.

Bronze Sponsors – \$250 to \$499 – Albemarle Tire, Deese Electric Company Heating & Cooling, Patriot Systems and SimplyHome

Media Sponsors – The Stanly News and Press, WSPC 107.3 FM, 1010 AM and Magic 103.3 FM

Pictured above to the left: Over 200 items were up for bid in the four sections of the silent auction. Pictured bottom left: Volunteers from the Pfeiffer Chapter of Kappa Kappa Gamma were a great help at the auction fundraising event!



GHA creates and maintains an environment that respects and supports individual's and staff's diverse backgrounds (i.e.: culture, ethnicity, beliefs, age, race, gender, etc.)

THRIVENT FINANCIAL HONORS ARTIST AND HOSTS EVENT TO BENEFIT GHA

Chuck Benway and Dru Schmeeburger, Thrivent Financial Professionals, hosted an event on December 13th in Hudson, NC to highlight the works of artist Owen Calloway. At the “young” age of 82, Mr. Calloway took up painting. Owen shared, “God gives us many talents and gifts. Sometimes we don’t realize we have them until late in life...I now really enjoy painting and sharing my gifts with others.” At the event, Mr. Calloway had the opportunity to exhibit his art. Thrivent published a calendar and Mr. Calloway’s art was featured on one of the months. Attendees at the event received a calendar and had the opportunity to get their calendar autographed by Mr. Calloway. In addition, donations were accepted for both Caldwell Hospice & Palliative Care and GHA Autism Supports. He has donated artistic creations to both non-profits, including the “Cheers to 40 Years” Gala Auction on November 10th. GHA was chosen by Mr. Calloway because of his personal connection to his granddaughter Emily, who happens to be a resident at the Durrett Home. GHA appreciates the commitment Mr. Calloway has made through his love of art to benefit GHA and to Thrivent Financial for organizing an evening of fun and refreshments.



Pictured above are two of Mr. Calloway’s original pieces of artwork. Pictured below is Mr. Calloway who is joined by his wife Mickey at the Thrivent Financial event on December 13th to benefit GHA.

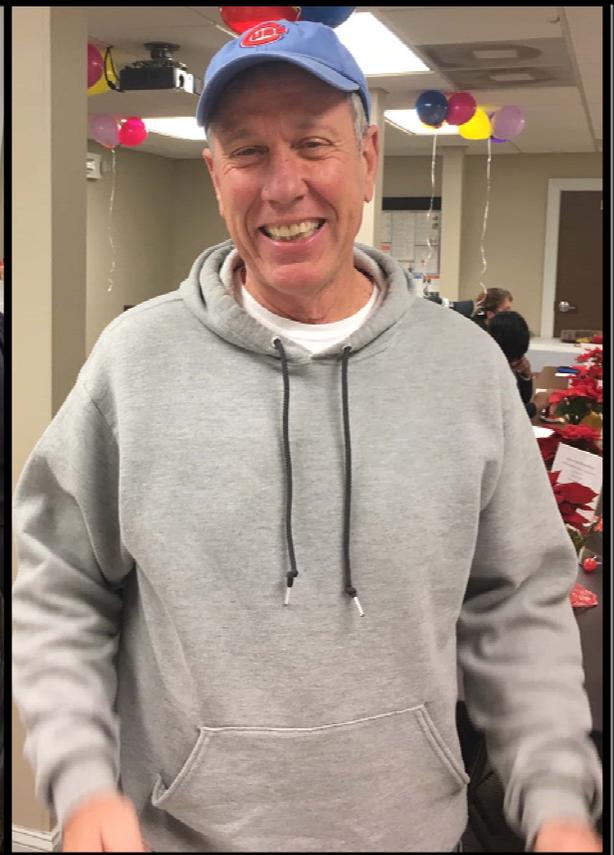


GHA and First Presbyterian Church Partner for Art

Under the leadership of Creative Arts Coordinator Kyoko Bruton, individuals supported at the licensed day services program located in Albemarle always enjoy an opportunity to highlight their works of art. Many of the creative works were placed on display for several weeks this fall at the First Presbyterian Church Art Gallery in downtown Albemarle. In addition, church members, along with members of the greater community, were invited to view the fall art exhibit at a reception the Church hosted on September 11th. This year’s show titled “FACE OFF 2018”, was modeled after the popular reality television series in which a group of prosthetic makeup artists compete against each other to create facial prostheses, such as those found in science fiction and horror films. Participants in the GHA Creative Arts Program were given the opportunity to explore the world of cultural and ceremonial masks to create their own masterpieces. Refreshments were provided by Second Street Sundries, and Carolina Farms Home #3 assisted in providing some sweet treats. We value the partnership GHA has with First Presbyterian to showcase many extraordinary artists!



Many of the individuals we support, including Jake, are enjoying our monthly Bingo gatherings at Second Street Sundries in Albemarle organized by Day Services Coordinator Jessica McIntyre. We are always in need of prizes. For more information on how you can assist, contact Jessica at jessicamcintyre@ghainc.org.



Celebrations were organized in December at both GHA programs in Albemarle and Wilmington to honor all staff members for their dedicated efforts throughout the year. Staff members received holiday bonuses, and those in attendance enjoyed food, festivities and prizes! Special thanks to the numerous families that gave gifts totaling over \$9,000 to assist in providing the bonuses. Several parents were also on hand to thank the staff members. Dale Stittgen dropped by and was a great BINGO caller!



*From our GHA family to yours,
we send warm wishes this holiday season
and good tidings for a happy and healthy
New Year!*



*Happy Holidays
from Stephen*



Residents from our Wilmington programs took time out for a visit with Santa!

Santa and Mrs. Claus visited the Day Program in Albemarle to spread some holiday cheer!



Albemarle residents enjoyed a drive-thru light show at Carolina Farms for the first time this holiday season. Special thanks to Agricultural Manager Daniel Furr for spearheading this effort that helped make the season merry and bright!



Santa and his elves were on hand at Second Street Sundries on November 19th.

Visit us on the web at www.ghautismsupports.org