

SEPTEMBER 2024

GHAzette

Official Newsletter of GHA Autism Supports



Fun in the Sun at Wake the World

For ten years running, Wake the World Lake Tillery has been an amazing experience for so many in our GHA Family! On August 1st, we cooled off with pontoon boat rides, took advantage of wading and splashing in the water, and enjoyed a yummy pizza lunch, delicious cupcakes, and other sweet treats! A special thank you to; Robin and Melissa Lemons for coordinating this year's event, Lilly's Bridge Marina for providing an amazing location, staff, and boats, the Boat House Restaurant for the pizzas, Make "Mia" Cakes for cupcakes, boat owners that gassed up their watercraft for boat rides, tubing, surfing and wakeboarding, and the countless volunteers it takes to run an event like this! We would like to give a shout-out to our direct care staff who always go above and beyond to provide amazing opportunities for the individuals that we

support! Check out page 2 for pictures from event day!



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WAKE the WORLD

SCENES FROM Lake Tillery



"Wake the World Lake Tillery is an outstanding example of how important partnerships are in enhancing the quality of life for the individuals we support."

DAWN ALLEN, CEO
GHA AUTISM SUPPORTS



GHA Autism Supports gratefully acknowledges the following individuals who made memorials and honorary gifts between June 1, 2024 and August 31, 2024. Every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of this list. If you feel an error has been made, please contact the Development Department at 704-982-9600, x 125.

In Honor of Aaron Andrews

Dorea M. Fisher

**In Honor of Justin Morrell &
Maureen Morrell**

Patrick & Kathleen O'Brien

**In Memory of
Ervin "Mac" Funderburk**

Nadine B. Bowers
Larry & Martha Hupp
Laura Lorch
Al & Ann Sadowsky

**In Memory of
John H. Southerland**
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Southerland

**In Memory of
Bobby K. Harwood**

Nadine B. Bowers

**In Honor of
Thomas C. Southerland**
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Southerland

In Honor of Sandy Hinson

Nadine B. Bowers

**In Honor of Morrow
Valley Farmstead Staff**

Amy Whichello

Smile!--Dental Program Proves To Be Excellent Partnership

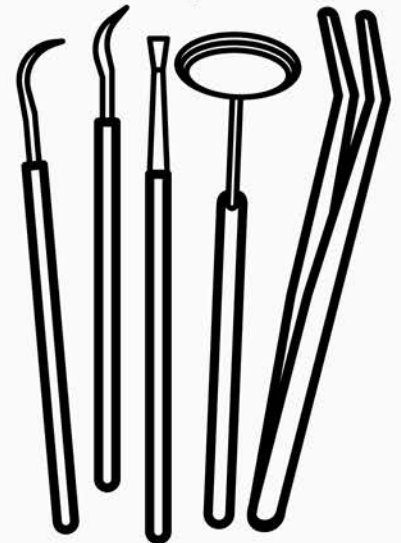


Families and autism professionals will agree that one of the biggest challenges for individuals with ASD is sensory issues. Many patients with ASD are hypersensitive to touch, sound, and light, which can make dental exams and cleanings uncomfortable or quite overwhelming. GHA Autism Supports is very fortunate to partner with Access Dental to provide mobile dental care on-site in Albemarle for the individuals that we serve. They provide a variety of dental services for our individuals including x-rays, cleaning, and exams, as well as other

specialty treatments. Their specially trained dental teams consist of a dentist, a dental hygienist, and two dental assistants. Access Dental Care is a non-profit organization recognized as a regional, state, and national leader in special care dentistry. They have provided comprehensive, mobile dental care for more than 20 years.

“Dental providers who work with patients with autism have to be equipped and prepared to address many challenges from sensory issues to communication difficulties. Through our partnership with Access Dental, we have made great strides in ensuring that we facilitate comfortable access to dental care that our individuals need in a familiar environment.”

LORI SHUE,
EXECUTIVE VICE
PRESIDENT/CHIEF OF
MEDICAL SERVICES
GHA AUTISM SUPPORTS



Board of Directors

Dr. Robert Craft
Granseur Dick
Lisa Ewers
Brian Freeman
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Dr. Russ Sharples

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Meet Our GHA Qualified Professionals at GHA Autism Supports



Our team of Qualified Professionals in Stanly County are (l to r) Anna Cain, Steven Edwards, Eric Baldwin, Ryan McIntyre, Chantal Green and Markez Brown. Cindy Moore (featured to the right) is the Qualified Professional for our New Hanover County programs.



The Qualified Professionals (QPs) at GHA Autism Supports serve as an integral member of the interdisciplinary team serving the individuals we support. From guiding the development of person-centered plans and overall programs to developing, coordinating and monitoring the array of services and supports needed to address each individual's goals, each QP serves as a link between the individuals served and their families/guardians, the agency and direct support staff. We are fortunate to have a wonderful QP Team with a wealth of experience!



Summer Event Benefits GHA Programs

Attendees enjoyed delicious food, drinks, music and fellowship at the Annual Gathering at Christine's Wood Fire on June 22nd as they gathered to celebrate the 1st anniversary of the restaurant. Restaurant management chose GHA Autism Supports as the first beneficiary for an event they hope to organize on an annual basis. A number of individuals and businesses donated a wide array of items that were up for auction to add to the excitement of the event. A highlight of the evening was the Car Raffle drawing, and Geoff Olivieri was the lucky winner walking away with a 2024 Chevrolet Trax! Proceeds from the event and car raffle assist in the on-going programs of GHA Autism Supports.



Athletes Compete at Special Olympics

More than 1,000 Special Olympics athletes competed at the 2024 Special Olympics North Carolina Summer Games May 31 – June 2! Taking place in Triangle region, the Summer Games were the largest state-level event for Special Olympics North Carolina featuring competition in seven different sports. Special congratulations to the following GHA Autism Supports participants who earned medals and ribbons:



- Nick Benedict
 - Athletics/Track and Field
 - gold medal in the 25 meter dash
 - silver medal in the softball throw
- Michael Francis
 - Bowling
 - silver medal in the traditional team bowling
- Maria Gurski
 - Bowling
 - silver medal in the traditional team bowling
- James Jones
 - Athletics/track and Field
 - silver medal in the 25 meter dash and softball throw
- Thomas Jasinski
 - silver medal in the 25 meter dash
 - bronze medal in the softball throw
- Zachary Lowder
 - Bowling
 - silver medal in the traditional team bowling
- Jonathon Martin
 - Swimming
 - gold medals in 25y backstroke, 25y freestyle and 50y freestyle
- Sam Poplin
 - Athletics/Track and Field
 - gold medals in the 25 meter dash, 50 meter walk and softball throw
- Temika Singletary
 - Bowling
 - silver medal in the traditional team bowling
- Chris Walsh
 - Swimming
 - gold medal in the 25y backstroke
 - 4th place ribbon in the 25y freestyle
 - 5th place ribbon in the 50y freestyle



**GO TEAM
GHA!**



GHA Autism Supports has enjoyed the longstanding partnership with the Stanly County Special Olympics for over 25 years. Fall sports are well underway, and the fun is in full swing!



Get Those Dirty Cars Ready in Albemarle and Wilmington !

We are excited to partner for the fourth year with Tidal Wave Auto Spa of Albemarle for their Annual Charity Day on Friday, September 20, 2024. For the first time this year, we are also partnering with their new location in Wilmington located at 8005 Market Street! For every car wash that is not part of a monthly membership, GHA Autism Supports will receive 50% of the cost of the wash, while the other 50% will go to their national corporate charity. Tidal Wave Auto Spa is committed to giving back to the communities in which they operate, with a particular focus on supporting non-profit organizations that assist individuals with special needs. Founders Scott and Hope Blackstock, who have a son with special needs, have made it a priority to support these organizations since the company's inception in 2004. To date, Tidal Wave's Charity Day has raised over \$1,300,000 in donations. "Each year, our Charity Day event becomes a bigger and more meaningful celebration of community and giving," said founder and CEO Scott Blackstock. "I am filled with pride knowing that Tidal Wave can make a positive impact and help organizations continue the important work they are doing in our communities. Our team eagerly anticipates this special day and the opportunity it brings to support causes close to our hearts." Save your dirty cars for Friday, September 20th! There will be collection cans located at each self-service vacuum station, where you can donate your spare change as well. Tidal Wave Auto Spa of Albemarle will be open from 8:00 AM - 9:00 PM and the Wilmington location will be open from 8:00 AM - 8:00 PM. Hope to see you there!



Speedway Charities Continues Support

Grant funds from the Charlotte Chapter of Speedway Children's Charities have provided support for programs for children and adolescents at GHA Autism Supports for nearly 20 years. Grant funds for 2024 were used for a variety of equipment and supplies for both the Smith and Thompson Homes. From activity boards and sensory activities, to a hammock chair and balance ball, many individuals have enjoyed the new additions to their homes. No one can argue the favorite item, a new snow cone machine that has been a great purchase to help beat the summer heat!



Tailored Plans Launched July 1

Tailored Plans launched on July 1, 2024, and this initiative is a new kind of NC Medicaid Managed Care health plan which covers mental health, severe substance use, I/DD, TBI and prescriptions in one plan. Tailored Plans in North Carolina are managed by four companies called Local Management Entities

(LMEs). Currently, if your NC Medicaid is moving to a Tailored Plan, it will be managed by one of these four companies including the following: Alliance Health, Partners Health Management, Trillium Health Resources and Vaya Total Care. Please reference the LME coverage map to the right to clarify each North Carolina County's coverage. Your LME will cover your behavioral health, physical health, and prescriptions. Should you have any additional questions about the new rollout or about Tailored Plans in general, please contact Dee Pankey-Thompson at deepankey@ghainc.org or by phone at 704-982-9600, ext. 119.

LME/MCO COVERAGE MAP (AS OF FEB.1, 2024)



What's Up Wilmington?



SUMMER FUN AT GHA IS THE BEST!



OUR EDITORIAL TEAM

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