



The Center for
Family Support

Caring Matters

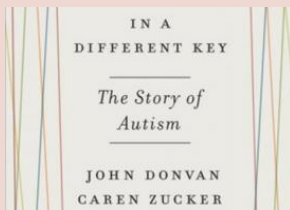
April 2017 Edition



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CaringMatters

A Promotion Is In Order!

For the past four years, Tyrone Quick has traveled first by bus and then two subway rides to get to his job in maintenance from his Highbridge neighborhood apartment in the Bronx. To Tyrone, the work he does for the McDonald's on 241st St. is important, as a clean restaurant is a busy restaurant. Recently he was rewarded for his all-star efforts and was promoted to Manager of Maintenance for this McDonald's.

Under ordinary circumstances, a promotion is an achievement most of us seek. But Tyrone is anything but ordinary. He is a young adult with a developmental disability, who was one of the tens of thousands housed in institutions not that long ago. The professionals at The Center for Family Support gave him the tools he needed to leave the institutionalized life and to live in his own apartment, navigating the mass transportation system, shopping for and cooking his own meals and enjoying a freedom that most young adults take for granted. Coupled with The Gateway Employment Pathway Program, Tyrone not only was living on his own, but he was able to earn a living and be a productive member of society.

When you ask Tyrone what he thinks about his job, he says, "It's

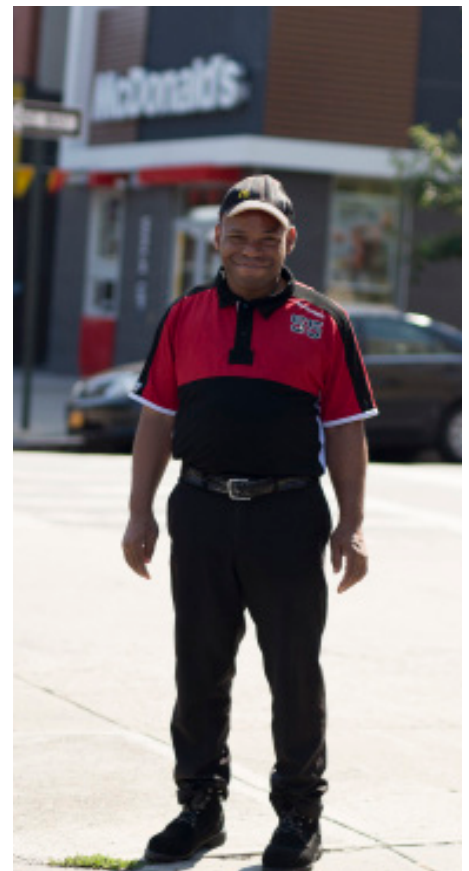
great! It's great! I have been there a long time. Just last week I became the Manager of Maintenance Work."

He beams with pride as he explains how he now trains his staff to keep his McDonald's clean and neat. "I tell my staff that this is a dining room and how it needs to be always clean and neat. If they miss something I talk to them nicely about it and remind them what needs to be done during each shift. I tell them we are a team and we can finish together. Our McDonald's is very popular and when customers come in they give us the thumbs up," he explained.

The Center for Family Support taught Tyrone how to dress for success with a clean uniform and for work and his appearance.

While Tyrone usually works three day shifts each week, he is always ready to come in to cover an extra shift for a co-worker who is sick or needs a personal day. In addition to his job, he volunteers on the weekends at The Split Rock Nursing Home, taking care of the elderly residents. He helps them navigate in their wheelchair, teaches the residents to feed themselves and has even learned how to administer CPR. "I like to keep busy and this gets me out of the house on the weekends. Some-

times I stop in on my way home from work too. I like to say hello to my friends there and I like to see them smile," he explained.



Tyrone Quick begins each day with a smile at his place of employment, a busy, neighborhood McDonald's restaurant in the Bronx.

The Center For Family Support Announces New Board Member



"My oldest daughter, Emily has special needs and I know firsthand....-Carol Dillon

Steven Vernikoff, Executive Director of The Center for Family Support, (CFS) announced the appointment of Carol Dillon, of Manhattan, to the CFS Board of Directors.

After college, Carol was employed by Goldman, Sachs & Co. where she worked on the Commercial Paper Desk for 10 years. A mother of three, Carol left Goldman to devote all her time and energy to raising a family. After her children were grown she became a member of the Admissions office at Saint David's School in Manhattan. After six years in Admissions, Carol became a member of the team that established the Horizon

Summer School program at St. David's, focused on academic advancement for disadvantaged boys from the Harlem community. Currently, Carol tutors at LSA Family Health program in Harlem. She is married to Jim Dillon who is employed by the Federal Reserve Bank of New York and is an adjunct professor at Manhattan College.

"We are so pleased to welcome Carol Dillon to the CFS Board. Her willingness to give back to the community and her deep interest in helping those with intellectual disabilities is a fine combination and she will be an asset to the organization," explained Vernikoff.

When asked why she chose to volunteer for The Center for Family Support, Carol explained, "My oldest daughter, Emily, has special needs and I know firsthand what is needed to raise a child with special needs and all of the extra supports that are necessary to enable the child to grow to be as independent as possible. I'd like the opportunity to contribute my energy and experience to help others who share similar circumstances."

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Pool Partners: The Center for Family Support and Caldwell Community Center

For many, learning how to swim is a fuzzy memory. Perhaps it was frolicking in the waves at the shore, buoyed by the salt water and a raft. Or perhaps the earliest water memories were at the town pool, enrolled in swim lessons and then waiting in line to jump off the diving board.

Swimming is a life skill that offers numerous health benefits and the mastery of water safety skills can save your life or someone else's. Water safety skills are particularly important to individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and related developmental disabilities, as an estimated 91% of total U.S. deaths of children with ASD ages 14 and young-

er is associated with accidental drowning. Many children and teens with ASD have little understanding of danger and are unable to respond to their name when called, making water emergencies most critical. So when The Center for Family Support, (CFS) an organization that provides support and assistance to individuals with ASD and related developmental disabilities, partnered with the Caldwell Community Center for a 10-week swim program, it was with a dual purpose: to give the young adults a chance to learn how to swim, and to have fun and socialize in a relaxed atmosphere.

Once a week, 6 adults from the CFS program in northern

NJ gathered at the Caldwell Community Center to enjoy instruction and free time in the pool, with instructors Mike Connelly from West Orange and Jen Trespasz from West Caldwell.

The program began with learning how to maneuver in the shallow end by kicking, while holding on to the pool's edges and using arm movements to stay afloat. Next, the swimmers mastered floating on their back for the length of the pool, with instructors by their side. By the end of the program, the new swimmers, who were always paired with an instructor, were encouraged to swim on their own using one of several swim strokes learned

over the course of the lessons. Meanwhile, lifeguards always kept a watchful eye on the class.

"We want to thank the Caldwell Community Center for giving our service recipients the opportunity to exercise and have fun in the pool," said Steven Vernikoff, CFS Executive Director.

When they felt comfortable, each participant was encouraged to jump into the deep end from the swim team's starting blocks. One participant, Michael, earned the nickname "Michael Phelps" from the swim instructors. Rather than jump in off the blocks, he warmed up with a few jumping jacks and stretches and then

entered the water via a picture-perfect dive.

To end each session, to promote recreation and relaxation, the young adults were able to float on tubes and toss balls to each other. Swimming not only provides a health benefit through exercise but also a psychological benefit by relaxing the mind and promoting healthy brain function from learning a new skill.



"Watersafety is particularly important to individuals with ASD"

CFS Monthly: *Community*Leaders

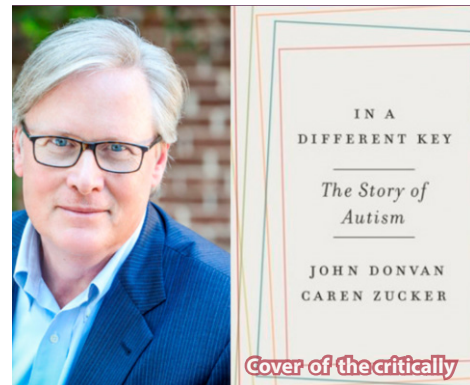


The Center for Family Support Delivers Inspiring Opening Remarks

Pictured above is the author of, "In a Different Key – The Story of Autism", Caren Zucker, (left) with CFS Associate Executive Director, Barbara Greenwald. Barbara delivered opening remarks about the work at a recent book signing held at Caldwell University in Caldwell, NJ. Barbara congratulated Caren and co-author, John Donovan, on such a fine volume of work, filled with stories about parents and professionals working together to identify the intellectual disability and devise ways to help those with autism lead more productive and meaningful lives. Barbara

felt that the book could be recommended to CFS families to help them gain a better understanding of what autism is, where the diagnosis originated and what is being said about individuals with autism today.

For more information about the book, visit inadifferentkey.com.



Cover of the critically acclaimed book, and the second author, John Donovan