



# Help. Hope.

THE CENTER FOR AUTISM & NEURODEVELOPMENTAL DISORDERS



## Join Us in Offering Help...and Hope

We funded The Center for Autism & Neurodevelopmental Disorders in late 2012. During that time, two themes were emphasized in each of our many discussions and planning sessions:

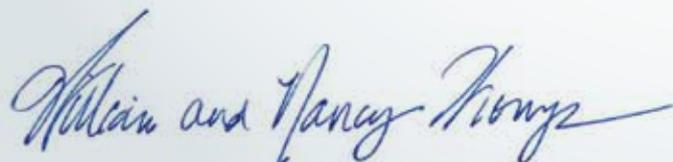
Help & Hope!

It quickly became clear that these two concepts must form the foundation of The Center. Importantly, we realized that families and individuals who are bravely struggling with autism and other neurodevelopmental disorders absolutely need professional help. At the same time, with support, clinical treatment and education, these families can be lifted by hope.

They need to know that they are not alone. That's where The Center, and compassionate people like you, come in. On behalf of those who will turn to us for help, we're aiming for the stars: our goal is to create nothing less than the nation's premier center for evaluation, treatment, education and research for the wide range of autism spectrum disorders. Our ambition and our determination are reflected in The Center's alignment of major partners in autism for this venture, including UC Irvine School of Medicine, Chapman University College of Educational Studies, and CHOC Children's. Guiding The Center's efforts is Dr. Joseph H. Donnelly, pediatric neurologist and director of the former For OC Kids.

Since the major catalytic investments from the Thompson Family Foundation and the Children and Families Commission of Orange County, we have seen the difference The Center can make in a family's life. More than anything, I hope we make it abundantly clear that, in order for The Center to achieve its dream of bringing new help and hope to those who need it most, we need you.

With sincere appreciation,

A handwritten signature in dark blue ink that reads "William and Nancy Thompson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

William and Nancy Thompson

# How Your Generous Donations Will Benefit Those We Serve

The Center has identified immediate priorities to which donors' generous gifts will be directed.

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## **BUILDING BRIDGES WITH SCHOOLS**

Through programs known as FAST (Families and Schools Together) and CAP (Chapman Ability Project), each led by Chapman University's College of Educational Studies, The Center will build strong bridges to Orange County schools. These efforts will work to promote collaboration and provide support and educational opportunities designed to meet the needs of individual students, families and schools.

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## **EXPERT EVALUATION AND TREATMENT**

The Center will promote early identification and intervention, and will offer multidisciplinary evaluation, diagnosis and treatment of autism spectrum and other neurodevelopmental disorders. Our team of specialists will include neurology, developmental pediatrics, psychiatry, social work, behavioral intervention, psychology, special education, speech-language, occupational therapy and others. We aim to facilitate optimal outcomes for comorbid conditions such as epilepsy, sleep, genetic, metabolic, gastrointestinal, and allergy-immunology disorders. Our behavioral intervention and counseling services will be highlighted to provide the support, education and empowerment families need to thrive.

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## **RESEARCH IN DRUG DISCOVERY AND CLINICAL INNOVATIONS**

The Center for Autism & Neurodevelopmental Disorders is participating in cutting edge research conducted by UC Irvine's Center for Autism Research and Translation (UCI CART) whose key focus is to develop promising new drugs designed to normalize biological pathways in the brains of those with autism. This priority builds upon the groundbreaking efforts of J. Jay Gargus, M.D., Ph.D., Director of UCI CART, and his 40 fellow faculty members. We will also conduct our own clinical, neuroimaging, and physiological research focused on improving the efficacy of traditional therapies, and explore innovative ways to improve the lives of individuals through new knowledge, exercise and the arts.

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## **TECHNOLOGY AND FAMILIES**

Increasing awareness of the optimal use of technology is critical to The Center and the individuals, families, and professionals we serve. We aim to create an Autism Technology Program that will engage in research, education and community outreach. Our goal is to highlight the best of existing software applications and devices, create new options and provide an assessment site to pinpoint the specific needs and solutions for individuals today.

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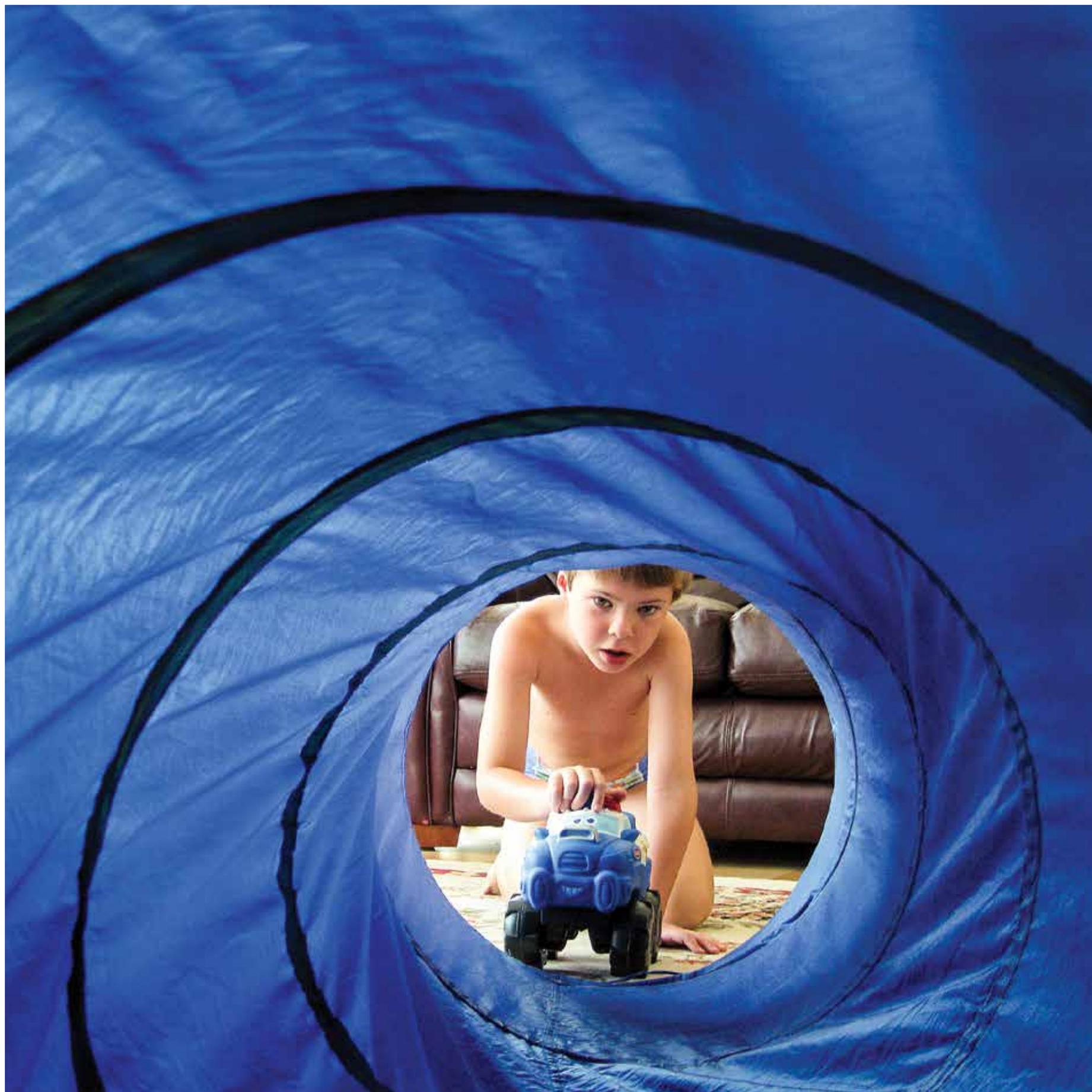
## **TRANSITION PROGRAMS AT CRITICAL STAGES**

Comprehensive transition programs will be created to help children and families navigate from early intervention to school-based services. We will also offer programs for young adults navigating the transition to higher education, the workforce and appropriate living situations, encouraging them to live happy, healthy and meaningful lives.

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## **WELLNESS**

We will organize a broad array of activities and programs which engage the body and mind – such as dance, music, art, drama, yoga, sports, nutrition and beyond – to enhance the lives of our patients and their families, as well as to study the efficacy of such participation on development, behavior and social skills.





# Center Naming Opportunities

The Center is making several of our most prominent facility areas available for naming in honor and recognition of major donors. The gifts associated with the following naming opportunities will enable The Center to positively impact many lives for years to come. At the same time, they will stand as a visible tribute to donors' compassion and concern for those who turn to us for help...and hope.

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## WAITING AREA

The Center for Autism & Neurodevelopmental Disorders has been designed to radiate a strong feeling of friendliness, warmth and compassion – and it begins the moment families enter our waiting area. Designed as the facility's "front door," the waiting area will be equipped with toys, tables and chairs, making it a space where children can play and feel comfortable. The space will also feature a fascinating custom train inspired by Bill Thompson's lifelong love and passion for trains.

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## GYMNASIUM

A growing body of research suggests a connection between physical activity and improvements in development, academic performance, behavior and social skills. The Center's well-equipped gym will provide a convenient on-site area in which occupational and physical therapists, and others, will conduct comprehensive treatment programs. The gym will promote motor and sensory experiences that support motor development, emotional growth and a child's ability to learn.

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## CLASSROOM

As a leader in clinical care, teaching and research, The Center will host a robust schedule of classes, workshops, and conferences focusing on the latest in service and research discoveries. Our classroom will accommodate up to 80 people; the state-of-the-art facility will be equipped to facilitate learning by all, including children, teens, young adults, families and professionals. This classroom will allow for a variety of activities such as dance, music, art, drama and yoga, presenting an opportunity to see how these activities contribute to the well-being of children and families.

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## THE CONFERENCE ROOMS

There are several areas available within our facility to promote the exchange of ideas and stimulate collaboration. Conveniently located in the middle of our facility is our main conference room with an adjacent patio. Another consultation room is closer to our assessment area for clinical and parent meetings. Additionally, two gathering rooms, one focused on interaction between our evaluation teams, and the other between our therapists, are available.

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## THE SOCIAL BEHAVIOR TREATMENT ROOM

The social behavior treatment room is designed to support and teach children using the latest in research and behavioral treatments. In this space, therapists will work with individuals and families to build and enhance the social behaviors necessary for improved daily living, social opportunity and quality of life.



#### ABOUT THE PHOTOGRAPHER

Photos courtesy of Bruce Hall, a legally blind photographer and autism advocate. His twin sons were diagnosed with autism at age two and have been patients at The Center since 2006. His photography explores his sons' profound experience with autism. We are grateful to the Hall family for sharing their personal journey – and in doing so, providing help and hope to others.

#### WHY THE CENTER FOR AUTISM & NEURODEVELOPMENTAL DISORDERS?

Research shows early intervention is crucial. The Center focuses on early diagnosis and treatment for children and families. Thanks to a unique public-private partnership, this center has an extraordinary opportunity to expand our circle of help and hope, and to improve the lives of children and families challenged by autism spectrum disorders.

Together, we will not only support the child, but the community.



**THE CENTER FOR AUTISM  
& NEURODEVELOPMENTAL DISORDERS**