

Fraser In Focus

A Newsletter for Friends of Fraser



Winter 2018

Spanish-Speaking Support Groups



Hearing stories from other parents gives hope to the Arcos family.

The Arcos family knows how to create a new home for themselves. They immigrated to the United States years ago and quickly established a new community of support for themselves. They had many friends within the local

Latino community when their daughter, Fiorella, was born four years ago. But no one within this tight-knit community could help them navigate their next journey.

"I was worried about Fiorella," remembered Karla, Fiorella's mother. "No one could help. I was desperate and looking for answers." Fiorella was eventually diagnosed with autism.

"I didn't know anyone who had a child with autism," said Karla. "I didn't even know what it was."

That is common within the Latino community says Lily Ramey, Fraser Mental Health Professional. "Autism is not as familiar and understood within the Latino community." Suddenly, this unknown word is assigned to your child, said Ramey, who runs one of the Spanish-speaking support groups at Fraser. "You don't know what it means for your child or for your family," said Ramey. "It is extremely isolating."

This multi-layered isolation is why Fraser began their Spanish-speaking support group for families with children who have autism. Despite expanding the group to two more locations, the wait list continues to grow. Currently Fraser Eden Prairie, Fraser Eagan and Fraser Bloomington host these groups. Growing the program to other sites would be ideal, since it is unique and serves a community with high needs.

Licensed Independent Social Workers, who speak Spanish, run the groups. "We are there to answer questions and offer support," said Ramey, "but the group members support each other." Each group has a range of needs and ages – 18 months to 16 years. This works

well according to Ramey, since the families with older children can help the families who are just learning about autism.

The groups are like family, a core value in the Latino culture. An understanding of that and how the loss of that support impacts a family with a child with autism is crucial for those running these groups and the group interpreters. The interpreters are educated in autism by Fraser so that they understand the families' needs. Since families in the group come from many different places in the world, the interpreters are incredibly helpful for the group to understand each other fully.

They meet every week, so the interpreters are like one of the group members, which are made up of the whole family – mother, father and all children, including siblings. This model offers the best support for families.

But what is most powerful about these groups is the connection with other families. "The first and foremost priority is the relationship with another person that can understand you," said Ramey. "Now you are not alone. Nine families, who share a common culture, come together. They understand things without needing to explain it. There is a lot of power in that."

"We need these types of groups. We need more of them, more days."

The Arcos have learned a lot from the group. Karla remembers when another mother gave her ideas on how to teach her daughter to say I love you. The

group truly supports each other, offering childcare so parents can sleep and stepping in when another family is in crisis. And hearing stories from other parents gives Karla and Cristian hope for their children's futures.

"We need these types of groups," said Karla. "We need more of them, more days." She remembers how difficult things were before her family connected to Fraser.

"We don't have family here. It's hard. We don't have that kind of help here," said Karla. "We are happy to come every Wednesday to group because to come here; it's a relief, a space to breathe. It's like therapy."

The Fraser mission is to make a meaningful and lasting difference in the lives of children, adults and families with special needs. We accomplish this by providing education, healthcare and housing services.

Building Communities of Support



Diane Cross

as we move into new neighborhoods like Woodbury and expand our services in others like Coon Rapids.

Community plays an essential role in the mission of Fraser. We believe our communities are stronger when every member is active and healthy. You can see our mission in action

Another way in which we serve our families is through creating communities of support where none existed before. Our support groups for Spanish-speaking families are a perfect example of Fraser innovation.

We also see a need for support in underserved areas of our state. So many families have limited access to treatment outside of the metro area. That's why Fraser is offering telehealth. Our new pilot program brings **Fraser Early Beginnings** to parents who live in areas where access to treatment is a barrier

to care. This pilot is just one more way that Fraser is establishing communities of support throughout Minnesota.

As Fraser grows and expands, we never lose sight of what is important - connecting and gaining support from one another. Through these bonds, bright futures are born.

Warm regards,

Diane S. Cross, President and CEO

Fraser Coon Rapids Serves All Ages

In addition to serving children, newly renovated Fraser Coon Rapids now offers mental health services for adults. Full-time staff have openings for those in need of mental health services – adult, individual and family therapy. Being able to provide these therapies is vital since Fraser is one of the few organizations that offer these specialized services in the area.

Often Fraser is seen as an organization that serves only young children, but we provide life-changing treatment for all ages – birth through adulthood. We are excited to be able to provide these treatment options to more individuals. **To get started, contact Fraser Appointments and Clinics at 612-767-7222.**



Make the Change at MOA

Mall of America has selected Fraser as their Make the Change Fund recipient for **January through March 2018!** Our logo and mission are on collection boxes throughout MOA. Fraser receives all of the donated coins at the end of the donation period. These collection boxes are located at all registers inside Nickelodeon Universe and Mall of America stores, so when you visit MOA, Make the Change for Fraser!

Upcoming Events

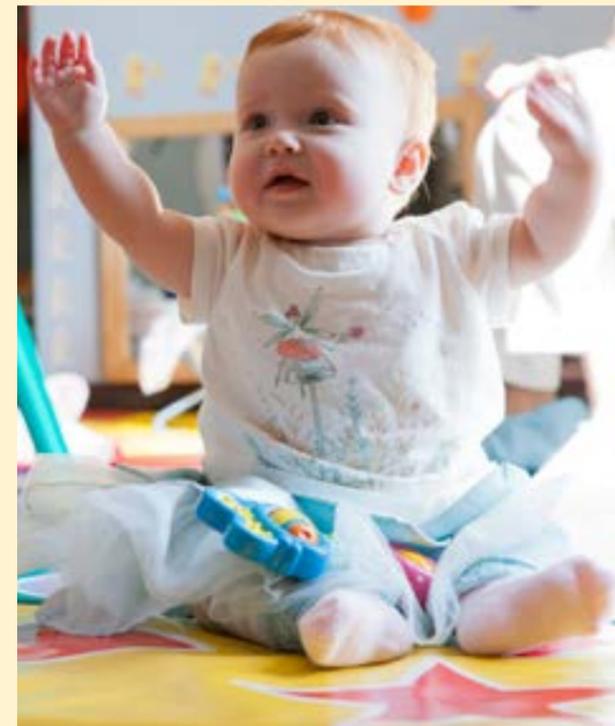
Fore! Fraser Benefit Golf Classic

Monday, July 9 from 11:00 am to 8:00 pm at Brackett's Crossing Country Club in Lakeville

fraser.org/golf

Music for Music Therapy

Saturday, July 28 from 3:00 to 10:00 pm at Eagles #3208 in Bloomington



Early Beginnings

An innovative pilot program for Fraser Early Beginnings starts in April. Families who have a child at risk for developmental delays and live in greater Minnesota can access Fraser Early Beginnings through telehealth. Telehealth allows delivery of treatment in client homes in remote locations. Through parent training and tailored interactions, this model targets social skills and language development. Research has shown that this early intervention puts at-risk infants and toddlers on the path toward healthy development. Families receive all the equipment needed for the 12-week training.

Fraser Early Beginnings is also available for families who live in the metro area at the following clinics: Fraser Coon Rapids, Fraser Minneapolis, Fraser Eden Prairie, Fraser Eagan and Fraser Richfield.

To access either Fraser Early Beginnings, contact Fraser Appointments and Clinics at 612-767-7222.



Why we walk

“We fully support Fraser and their commitment to awareness, educating others about autism and their relentless pursuit to ensure equal opportunity and access for all individuals with different abilities. My family and I will always make it our mission to advocate for Joseph, for children in special education and for all children so that they always have the opportunity of living out their dreams.”

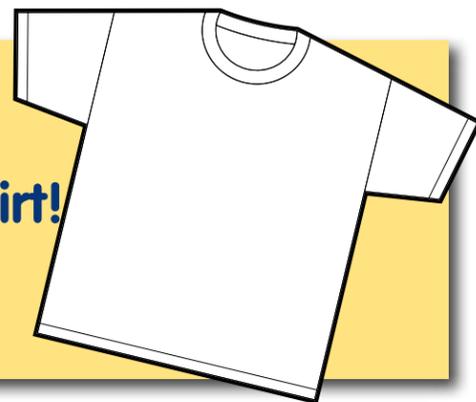
— Jesenia, Joseph’s sister

Join Jesenia in supporting Fraser families on Saturday, April 14, 7:00 am at Mall of America. Gather a team and raise some money. Each dollar donated through the Fraser Walk for Autism helps local families get the services they need to reach their full potential.

Get started at fraser.org/walk

Design the Fraser Walk for Autism T-shirt!

Download the form at fraser.org/walk and submit by March 15!



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Jan Andersen and Diane Cross

All that Jazz!

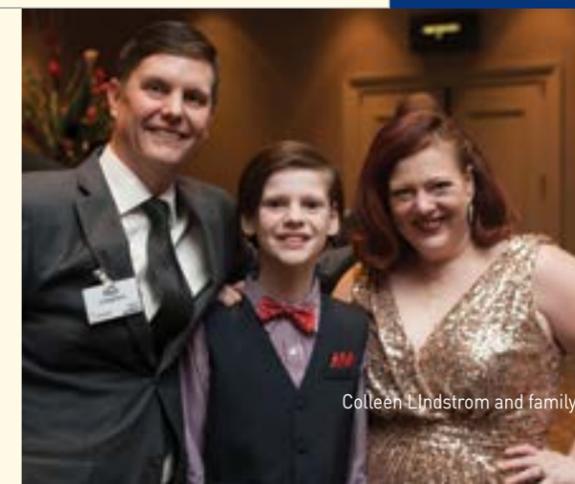
Hundreds of guests joined us in November at the Fraser Annual Benefit, presented by U.S. Bank. More than \$540,000 was raised for Fraser families. Because of that generous support, more families in our community will receive life-changing Fraser services.



The success of the event would not be possible without our sponsors. We’d especially like to thank our presenting sponsor U.S. Bank. Special thank you to all of the generous volunteers who helped out before, during and after the event.

It was such a gorgeous evening that you will want to relive the magic at flickr.com/fraserorg.

Save the date! October 27, 2018 at Hilton Minneapolis



Colleen Lindstrom and family



Debbie Duncan

New Names, Same Gratitude

In 2017, 3,113 individuals, corporations and foundations donated nearly \$3.4 million to Fraser. These gifts, regardless of size, allow Fraser families to thrive.

In an effort to better recognize donors, Fraser has named the giving levels. You can see them in action in [the 2017 Fraser annual report](#), available online by April 1.

The Bright Futures Circle recognizes individuals, corporations and foundations whose gifts total \$1,000 or more each calendar year.

- Pioneers** (\$100,000 or more)
- Visionaries** (\$50,000 to \$99,999)
- Innovators** (\$25,000 to \$49,999)
- Dream Makers** (\$10,000 to \$24,999)
- Nurturers** (\$5,000 to \$9,999)
- Friends of Fraser** (\$1,000 to \$4,999)

Each donation level describes our founder, Louise Whitbeck Fraser. Her own struggles as an orphan, widow and single mother to a child with special needs inspired the home school she created in the midst of the Great Depression, laying the foundation for Fraser today.

The Louise Legacy Society, named in her honor, recognizes those who have included Fraser in their estate plans. These gifts create a lasting legacy of change in the lives of individuals with special needs and their families.

For more information about how to include Fraser in your estate plans, or if you have already done so but not informed Fraser, please contact Joel Barker, Vice President of Development, at 612-798-8323.



The Louise Whitbeck Fraser vision lives on through Fraser and her family – son, Scott, grandson, Chris and great-grandson, Wesley.

Thank you to all our donors for believing in and supporting the vision of Louise Whitbeck Fraser – a world where all people have equal opportunity to live, work, learn and play as members of our community.

Why I Walk

My youngest brother, Joseph, was born in the summer of 2009, and we were absolutely overjoyed with the new addition to our family.

As the years went on, my family and I began to notice minimal progress with Joseph's speech and cognitive abilities. By the time he reached four years old, my sweet baby brother still had difficulty formulating words that were neurotypical for other children at his same age. After multiple trips to different doctors, several therapists and a multitude of theories, Joseph was diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder.

Immediately, we enrolled him in services through his current school and weekly speech therapy. This has helped him tremendously with communication and completely changed our lives during an uncertain time. It has also motivated us to act on our vision of a more accessible world, inclusive of education and resources, for children with different abilities.

Unfortunately, we have experienced situations in which we faced obstacles during our search for suitable education due to my brother's

condition. My predominant hope is that other children like Joseph are able to access the resources needed to live healthy, fulfilling, extraordinary lives. They are just as worthy and deserving as anybody else.

“My predominant hope is that other children like Joseph are able to access the resources needed to live healthy, fulfilling, extraordinary lives.”



Joseph and his sister, Jesenia

That reason precisely is why my family and I are participating in the Fraser Walk for Autism. We walk because we fully support Fraser and their commitment to awareness, educating others about autism and their relentless pursuit to ensure equal opportunity and access for all individuals with different abilities. My family and I will always make it our mission to advocate for Joseph, for children in special education and for all children so that they have the opportunity of living out their dreams.

He is the light of my life. I'll take him as the funny, silly, cartoon expert and Paw Patrol enthusiast – exactly how he is – every day.

- Jesenia, Joseph's sister



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Help Fraser be green. If you are receiving multiple newsletters at your address, please contact us so we can update our records.



Fraser Mental Health

Fraser Coon Rapids now serves adults with mental health needs like depression and anxiety. Immediate openings in adult mental health, individual and family therapy.

Call Appointments and Clinics at 612-767-7222

