



## **Report to the Pathfinder Membership**

For the year ending September 30, 2007:

**RESOURCE CENTER USAGE AND OUTREACH.** Website usage increased again and the site is now visited over 200 times per day. On average, every day a family called or emailed (i.e., over 365 times last year) and was directly assisted by Linda Pearl, Resource Center Coordinator. Under the direction of Rebecca Rienzi, we expanded our outreach efforts, distributing over 3600 Pathfinders brochures and making presentations or staffing displays that reached more than 4600 individuals. Additionally, our staff and Board were interviewed for multiple television, radio and print media stories on autism.

**IMPLEMENTED NEW TRAINING INITIATIVE.** As discussed in last year's letter, Pathfinders has embarked on a new strategic initiative, focusing on training—of professionals, teachers, medical personnel and parents. We began a series of very well received trainings for the Division of Rehabilitative Services (DORS), a division of the Maryland State Department of Education, to train front line staff in techniques for serving their adult clients with autism. We continue to serve on the committee (the Autism Pilot Screening Project) charged with implementing the Early Detection initiative—training physicians—that resulted from the legislation we helped enact two years ago. In concert with that, we have formed a partnership with the American Academy of Pediatrics—Maryland Chapter to train pediatricians in screening for autism spectrum disorders and to provide informational resources to medical professionals and families.

**COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS IN THE AUTISM COMMUNITY.** Pathfinders continued coordinating with other autism organizations to further the collective goals of the autism community:

--In April (National Autism Awareness Month), Pathfinders again partnered with parent support groups and local chapters of the Autism Society of America (ASA) to run a statewide awareness campaign featuring "Early Detection" advertisements and television public service announcements.

--In May, Pathfinders for the second year sponsored the World of Possibilities Expo at the Timonium Fairgrounds--providing free vendor space for autism groups and arranging for presentations by several nationally recognized speakers.

--In August, Pathfinders again sponsored two Family Fun Nights at Port Discovery in Baltimore. Once again, families from all areas of Maryland, Washington D. C., and Pennsylvania were able to enjoy free admission to Port

Discovery. Special arrangements were made by our partner Port Discovery for those nights and ongoing changes (signs, color coded pathways, etc.) were made subsequent to last year's event to make the attraction more "friendly" for individuals with autism and/or other disabilities.

--Pathfinders sponsored the 10<sup>th</sup> annual Maryland Respite Care Awareness Day on October 22, highlighting the importance of parents getting a "break" to focus on themselves once in a while.

**BROAD BASED FUNDING SUPPORT:** Not only did we have another hugely successful Golf Tournament, sponsored by Corporate Sponsor: Bob Davidson Ford and Family Sponsor: The Mund Family, that raised over \$150,000, we received independent support from others in the community, including:

- CIBC Financial – \$10,000 through their Annual World Miracle Day
- Mount Washington Tavern, which awarded us \$10,000 after our night at the tavern raised more money for our charitable cause than at any other sponsored night, and
- ComedyFest 2007, a three day event created and produced by Greg Hall.

Our sincere thanks goes out to all our supporters!

**NEW LEADERSHIP.** Effective October 1, I stepped down after eight years of service and Alisa Rock became the new President of the Board. I wish her well in leading Pathfinders forward and thank all the great team, in particular our outstanding Executive Director Dawn Koplos, who has helped to achieve the strong position we currently enjoy. In particular, thanks to all those who have supported Pathfinders in myriad ways.

**IN SUMMARY:** With new leadership and lots of new ideas, we are indeed entering a new era in Pathfinders' history. Nonetheless, one thing remains as always—our mission:

**“To find a path for our children.”**

On behalf of the Board of Directors of Pathfinders, Inc.,

Brian R. Mund  
Past President  
December, 2007