

## 10 more days to buy Cruz tickets!

### Letter from the Executive Director

I hope you have fastened your seatbelts because we are at the precipice about to head down the track at breakneck speed! This past month has offered us such great support from parents and community members who are ready to roll up their sleeves and make this dream come true! You can probably guess that these are my kind of people!

Looking ahead, there is so much to do and so much to get done. This month's priority is our CRUZ for AUTISM fundraiser. I do hope that *every* parent waiting for the chance to enroll their child in the Academy has bought a ticket. I do not ordinarily press, but there is strength in numbers, and our showing for this event will let Volusia County know that we intend to become a reality for our children, a staple in its communities and a leader among community service providers. Your donation will contribute to that success, it will convey that message, and even if you buy the ticket but can not attend, it will demonstrate your commitment to our future. This is a powerful investment, and one worth making.

I know I have said it before, but if you are not willing to invest in our future, the community will not be willing either – it is waiting for your lead, and I need you to take it. If you look around, you will see that we are being watched. We have

been featured in both The Daytona Beach News Journal and Women's Lifestyle Magazine; we have been given air time on several local radio stations including one with a popular DJ, whose background includes a young autistic child for whom she was a nanny; we are about to appear in the Department of Health's newsletter and on Bright House's community bulletin board. This community is cautiously supportive, and watching to see if we are the real thing. Only you can convince them that we are.

Make it a priority to do one thing each month to contribute to our success. No matter how big or small, we can each contribute. If you are wondering where to begin, start with a membership. The rates for our annual memberships are reasonable (*see p. 6*), and will offer you regular information and access to our events and programs. We have several events in the works for the spring including a parent's symposium, a charity auction and a possible musical festival. These events were all brought to us by parents, and they are all designed to bring information to parents, awareness to the community, and financial support to the Academy. If you are a parent who provides services to the Acad-



MIRIAM "MIMI" LUNDELL  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

emy, we reciprocate with a complimentary membership. Memberships will be the foundation for our Parent Advisory Board and our volunteer committees. We would like all of our parents and volunteers to have memberships. Those of us working for the Academy have already paid membership fees because we will not ask of you what we do not give of ourselves- parents and employees alike.

In the next few months we will be requesting donations to help get our campus ready for its fall opening, but for right now, we ask you to open your checkbook and make a capital contribution to our success. Memberships and tickets sales are the ways we will succeed. You are the one who will make it happen.

See you on the CRUZ. Buy a ticket; bring a friend!

Mimi Lundell

#### Special points of interest:

- *The Academy website is up and running! Visit us online: [www.chaseacademyofvolusia.org](http://www.chaseacademyofvolusia.org)*
- *Support the Academy by purchasing a T-shirt. Logo on front and self-portrait of Chase on back. \$10 - children; \$15 adults.*
- *Check out Kids Korner to see why you need to Cruz for Autism with us! Buy your ticket today.*
- *Has your family joined The Chase Academy? Chase the Dream with us by becoming a member! Member benefits are a great bonus.*

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## Membership Benefits Can Help You To Cruz

With only 10 days left to purchase your ticket for the inaugural *Cruz for Autism*, you do not want to miss out on the fun. Use your membership benefits now to help you purchase your tickets:

⇒ **INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS: 2 pre-event tickets at a 10% discount (\$10 savings).**

⇒ **FAMILY MEMBERS: 4 pre-event tickets at a 10% discount (\$20 savings).**

⇒ **NON-PROFIT & CORPORATE MEMBERS: 12 pre-event tickets at a 10% discount (\$60 savings) OR utilize your one time 4 complimentary tickets NOW.**

**ings) OR utilize your one time 4 complimentary tickets NOW.**

If you are not a current member, it is not too late to join the Academy's membership and take advantage of these great savings! See you on the SunCruz III!

# Cruz for Autism

Saturday, February 24, 2007 ♦ 7:00 pm - 12:30 am  
**\$50 Donation**

**On sale through February 10th**

Poker & Slot Tournaments available for additional buy-in at boarding.

**GRAND PRIZE** for Poker Tournament:  
**Powerhouse Gym - 1 year membership**

**GRAND PRIZE** for Poker Tournament:  
**Seaside Music Theater - 2 tix Summer show**

- ♦ *Las Vegas Style Casino Action*
- ♦ *Free Drinks while Gaming*
- ♦ *2 Additional Drink Vouchers*
- ♦ *Buffet Dinner*
- ♦ *Hourly Door Prizes:*  
*LPGA, Marine Discovery Center, Inlet Harbor, Stephanie Hill Artist*
- ♦ *Live Music by VINTAGE*  
*"Classic Rock & Roll"*
- ♦ *Dancing*
- ♦ *\$5 Casino Cash*



Alternate Date in case of High Seas - Sat, March 3, 2007 - 4880 Front Street - Ponce Inlet - 386 322 9000

## University Internship to Start in Fall

# STETSON UNIVERSITY

It has long been our objective to create a relationship with Stetson University's Psychology Department in order to create a unique set of credentials for our faculty. While we recognize the validity an ESE degree gives our faculty, we also know that traditional educational paths might not be the best route to reaching kids like ours. When we began researching our business plan, we reviewed several schools in Miami, and noticed that their faculties were not those with education degrees but rather those with psychology degrees. This only makes sense when you realize that Autism belongs in the field of psychology, and who better to teach from a position of understanding than those in

this field. From there these young professionals will still attain their ESE certification.

What The Chase Academy can bring to newly degreed students is the opportunity to earn a professional salary, build their resume and work in their field while still pursuing their post-graduate degree. Our Executive Director brought this idea to Dr. Richard Kindred, the Chair of the Psychology Department at Stetson University. Not only did he embrace the idea of building a relationship, but he suggested that perhaps we would be a great facility for an internship program.

On Thursday, February 1<sup>st</sup>, our E.D. met for the first time with this term's interns, and introduced the Academy and our intent for hiring psychology graduates. Our hope is that, while still in college, they will take the opportunity to pursue the courses in childhood development, behavioral disorders and any other autism-based psychology and educational courses offered at Stetson. Though not versed in Autism, the interns were excited and intrigued by the idea. Many have offered volunteer services and several confided that this is the field they would like to pursue professionally. We know we will see many Stetson faces when we open, whether they are volunteers, interns or faculty!

## “Chase” Items Are On Sale NOW

The Chase Academy has custom made t-shirts available for sale. All sizes are available for children and adults. The children's tees sell for \$10 each, and come in sizes S, M, L. The adult tees sell for \$15 each, and come in unisex sizes of S, M, L, XL, XXL. The t-shirts have the Chase Academy logo on the front, and on the back is a self-portrait drawn by Chase Lundell at age 6.



The tees have been made by Marilyn Sullivan of Sullivan's Shirts in New Smyrna

Beach. Marilyn is very flexible, so if you need a size smaller or larger than the ones we have in stock, we can put in a special order just for you at no extra charge!

In addition to the t-shirts, Marilyn has polo shirts available in a variety of colors. The polo shirts will not have the portrait on the back, and the logo is embroidered instead of printed. The polo shirts can be purchased for \$25.

Marilyn has also designed a delightful canvas tote bag with

the self-portrait of Chase printed on it. They are \$25 as well, and both items must be prepaid when an order is placed. If you would like to order a polo shirt or tote bag, please contact Eileen Taft at letaft@chaseacademyofvolusia.org.

To see samples of Marilyn's custom embroidery design work, go to her website, [www.sullivanshirts.com](http://www.sullivanshirts.com). Marilyn can personalize almost anything, and has a great selection of specialty items.



## [www.chaseacademyofvolusia.org](http://www.chaseacademyofvolusia.org) - Online NOW

The Chase Academy is so thrilled to announce the debut of its website located at [www.chaseacademyofvolusia.org](http://www.chaseacademyofvolusia.org)!

This is a wish come true thanks to the generosity of Paul & Donna Savia. Paul contacted us to let us know that he has a friend in California, Skip Regan, that is a web designer. He told us that he would ask Skip if he would be willing to donate his services to build our site. Thankfully, Skip agreed,

and as you can see, it is a professional beauty! The Savia's generosity went one step further: they have donated to the Academy the hosting of our site for the first two years!

Skip Regan has done hundreds of interactive multimedia projects during the past 15 years, developing computer-based interactive systems (exhibits, kiosks, educational games) for museums, zoos, aquariums and theme-parks mostly using the Macromedia Director

platform. He has extensive experience in programming/animation, graphics, video, audio and web design.

The Chase Academy is so grateful to be added to Skip's portfolio. To learn more about our webmaster, please go to: [www.skipregan.com](http://www.skipregan.com).

Thanks again to Paul, Donna & Skip for making our website dream a reality! It is people like you that will build and sustain the Academy.

# KIDS KORNER

## Cruzing for Kids Like These

The reason that I am writing to you is because I was given an article, by a friend of mine, that appeared in the News Journal. The story featured your plans to develop a private school for children with Autism, because of the lack of proper educational programs for children like your son, Chase. I also have a child with Autism. Michael is now 19 years old, and was diagnosed with "High Functioning" Autism when he was 3, which later was determined to be Asperger's Syndrome.

My son has had many hurdles to overcome, in his life, and we believe that early intervention is the reason that he has done so well. He had some of the classic Autistic traits, but not all. He was always very happy and non-violent, but just never quite fit in with his peers, although he always tried so hard to be more social.

Michael is currently enrolled in classes at DBCC, and has always done very well academically, but not socially. We absolutely believe that there should be

special educational programs because with behavior modification and social interaction programs, they learn so much in a controlled and structured setting.

We used to live in Long Island, NY, and there were many different programs available through the school districts, but there is a total lack of it down here in Florida. Michael was enrolled in an early intervention program that was administered by a place called "Just Kids" (<http://www.justkidsschool.com/>). We attribute much of his success to this program, and all of the others that came after it.

I just wanted to tell you that you're doing the right thing, and bravo to you!! I hope that you get the funding and support that you need because this would be a great service to the community as well as a benefit to your son.

Most people do not understand Autism and fewer yet have even heard of Asperger's Syndrome. But the educational



**MICHAEL SALERNO**  
DBCC STUDENT

community has, and should be ashamed of themselves for turning a blind eye to it, and not providing the proper environment for these kids to get the right start in life. If I can be of any help, or if you have any questions, please feel free to contact me. Best wishes for you and your family.

Andy Salerno

## Another News Journal Reader Responds



**LIAM RAGAN**  
THIRD GRADE  
FRIENDSHIP ELEMENTARY

Trimble of the Daytona Beach News Journal. She was gracious enough to share it with me.

I am also the mother of an autistic child who actually sounds like he could be your son's twin! Liam is 8 years old, in 3rd grade and is getting ready to be flunked because he can not pass the reading portion of FCAT, although he can do amazing math in his head.

My son also can not ride a bike or tie his shoes, but if you asked him any question about Dragonball Z, he's the expert!

Liam goes to Friendship Elementary in Deltona, and while I have been pleased with my two older children's education, it has been a nightmare with Liam.

Your new school sounds like a breath of fresh air. I have no idea how we will be able to afford it, but I already told my husband he better get a second job!

Sarah Ragan

Hi. I got your email from Linda

## Local Asperger's Student Has Interest in Helping The Chase Academy

The day that the Academy ordered its shirts from Marilyn Sullivan of Sullivan's Shirts, she met with another customer of hers who has played an interesting role for The Chase Academy. Marilyn happened to mention to Denzel "Sonny" Ellison that she had just met with Eileen Taft of The Chase Academy. After hearing about the Academy and its mission, Sonny was very interested in getting in touch with Eileen, so Marilyn passed his phone number on to her. Sonny is a teacher at New Smyrna Beach Middle School, and when Eileen gave him a call, she learned that he is extremely supportive of what the Academy is doing for the Autism community, and that he would like to help in any way that he can.

Fast forward to February 1st, Eileen unexpectedly received a call from Carletta English, the grandmother of 19-year old Derek Booth. Mrs. English explained to Eileen that Sonny Ellison works with Derek twice a week, and had brought Derek printed copies of all of The Chase Academy newsletters. Derek's enthusiasm over the Academy prompted his grandmother to place the call.

She told Eileen that Derek is extremely excited about the Academy, and would also like to help through volunteerism in anyway that he can. She proceeded to share some background information on Derek with Eileen, mentioning that he had been written up in the local paper. Carletta told Eileen that they have even received phone calls from Washington D. C. because of the newspaper coverage he has received!

Eileen went to the internet to try to find the article. When she searched on "Derek Booth Asperger's," she was amazed at how many hits came up. This young man has been featured on the websites, ASPIRES (Asperger Syndrome Partners & Individuals Resources, Encouragement & Support), [www.aspires-relationships.com](http://www.aspires-relationships.com), [www.autismvox.com](http://www.autismvox.com) and [www.jacksonville.com](http://www.jacksonville.com), and articles on him have been published in the Miami Herald, Herald Tribune, Bradenton Herald, Daytona Beach News Journal and Florida Today.

How incredibly fortunate for the Academy that through a series of fateful steps, Derek has been made aware of our work and wants to help. Below are excerpts from one of the many articles that have been published on this remarkable young man:

### Shuttle a lifeline for autistic man

BY MARK I. JOHNSON  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS  
NEW SMYRNA BEACH -- Under a bright summer moon, Carletta English carried her grandson in her arms as she walked to her son's house near Pioneer Trail.

As she noticed the lunar spectacle, English pointed it out to then 15-month-old Derek Booth. He turned toward it and said "moon."

"That was his first word," English said. In the almost two decades since, the 19-year-old autistic man's attention has rarely left the heavens.

"It was like he was born in space," English said, as she watched her brown-haired, blue-eyed grandson pace across her front lawn, rhythmically reciting the pre-launch checklist from the Dec. 7 scrubbed liftoff of space shuttle Discovery.

Whether pacing around the house he shares with his grandmother, or sitting in a recliner in his small bedroom watching the NASA Channel, much of the young adult's world centers on the nation's space shuttle program.

Ask him about the current flight, past missions even before he was born, or future scheduled flights, and he will respond with details of mission parameters, crew biographies, launch times and reasons for delays.

"This is a tough mission," he said of STS 116, currently in space. "They are trying to rewire a space station.

"They are shifting the power system from a temporary unit to a permanent unit," he said, pointing to the section of the space station being added, as he installed it on a clay model he has constructed of the orbital laboratory. "If you don't have power you can't run anything."

Now, the 11th-grader is home-schooled. English said she is astounded by Derek's ability to absorb information about the space program, or his second love -- NASCAR.

"It is like he has a photographic memory," she said.

"He knows more than they do at NASA," Brenda Booth added.



**DEREK BOOTH**  
**11th GRADE; HOME-SCHOOLED**

Almost as if to illustrate his mother's point, Derek perked up with details of space walks associated with the Discovery's mission and those related to the international space station.

"There have been 74 space walks (prior to the Discovery flight) -- totally 444 hours and 14 minutes in space during the construction," he said.

Derek's teacher, Sonny Ellison, uses that ability, keeping his student on track by working space into the curriculum.

"It has been a challenge keeping up with (NASA), but every now and then I find out something Derek doesn't know," he said.




Ellison said one day he would like to see Derek attend Space Camp in Titusville or a similar program, but currently that is beyond the family's means.

"I want to find someone to sponsor him," he said. "It is amazing what his grandmother has sacrificed for Derek."

For Derek, life may remain a constant series of challenges, but he isn't willing to give up on his dreams.



"I would like to see the Earth from space," he said.

Thank you to the following organizations for donating prizes to our *Cruz for Autism* fundraiser:

-  [Powerhouse Gym:](#)  
One-year membership  
Poker Tournament Grand Prize
-  [Seaside Music Theater:](#)  
2 tickets for a Summer production  
Slot-Machine Tournament Grand Prize
-  [Bright House Community Bulletin Board:](#)  
Advertising *Cruz for Autism* ticket sales

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS






### Family Members:

-  Paul & Donna Savia
-  Rick & Melissa Hose
-  Randy & Sharon Barry
-  Bill & Doreen Andrews
-  Andrew & Nancy Salerno
-  Portia & Lorin Katz

### Non-Profit Members:

-  Seaside Music Theater

### Corporate Members:

-  John & Kathy Sadowski
-  Dr. Mark & Kristen Nagrani  
Powerhouse Gym
-  Dr. Jaime & Susan Quinteros  
Twilight Pediatrics
-  Dr. William & Linda Kuhn  
Island Images
-  Sullivan's Shirts

## STEERING COMMITTEE

**Mimi Lundell** - 386/690-0893  
[mtlundell@chaseacademyofvolusia.org](mailto:mtlundell@chaseacademyofvolusia.org)

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**Dr. William & Linda Kuhn** - 386/451-6609  
[islandimages1@cfl.rr.com](mailto:islandimages1@cfl.rr.com)

## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

(For One Year Membership)

*I wish to join The Chase Academy in the category of:*

\_\_\_\_\_ **Student (18 years +)** **\$ 15.00**

**Benefits:** E- newsletter, priority notice for all Academy related functions and events, 10% discount on all Academy merchandise

\_\_\_\_\_ **Individual** **\$ 30.00**

**Benefits:** Same as Student plus - 2 pre-event discounted priced tickets for fundraisers or events

\_\_\_\_\_ **Family** **\$ 50.00**

**Benefits:** Same as Individual except for 4 pre-event discounted priced tickets for fundraisers or events

\_\_\_\_\_ **Non-Profit Organization** **\$100.00**

**Benefits:** Same as Family except for 12 pre-event discounted priced tickets for fundraisers or events plus - 4 complimentary tickets to any single event, 20% discount on all promotional advertising

\_\_\_\_\_ **Corporate** **\$300.00**

**Benefits:** Same as Non-Profit Organization

**Enclosed is my check for \$** \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to: The Chase Academy, Inc.

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

(If family, supply names of both spouses)

Company or College Name (If student) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Home or Office Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

***Join us today as we Chase the Dream!***

**[www.chaseacademyofvolusia.org](http://www.chaseacademyofvolusia.org)**