



INNOVATIVE EDUCATION FOR STUDENTS WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS

Dear TCA Parents and Friends:

I hope this finds you preparing for a joyous holiday season. Here at **The Chase Academy**, we have been continuing to work behind the scenes to keep our dream alive! We have come up with some great new additions to our program, and we are putting together our planning committee and our community liaisons for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Children's Expo hosted again by Stetson University this coming April 2009! I would like to take this opportunity to share a little more with you on each of these subjects. Finally, please do not forget to support The Chase Academy throughout the holiday season by placing all of your online gift orders through our YellowBrickMall.com page. (The link is available on the last page of this letter.)

### **PLANNED PROGRAMMING**

The Chase Academy has designed a three-tiered program for our academic program. **Tier I** is **The Chase Select** program which will provide classroom facilitation and support within private McKay-based schools. This program is completely afforded by the McKay Scholarship, and is available at any private school that is willing to act as a host. TCA provides the facilitator, training, supplies and expertise! It is a win-win situation for everyone, and costs nothing out of pocket when paired with most private school tuitions. This program is currently available all over Volusia County!!!

**Tier II, The Chase Premiere** program, is designed to be our own private school's academic program for those with High-functioning Autism or Asperger's Syndrome, and combines mainstream academics with Autism specific supports and skill training. Classroom sizes will be a maximum of 15 and will contain two teaching staff with subject area (Language Arts/History and Math/Science) and ESE certifications. Small group teaching will consist of about 5 students for daily lessons. We plan to confine the cost to the McKay's allotment for those with High-functioning Autism, which is about \$10,800. This program does equate with a general education diploma and will be available once a building is secured.

**Tier III, The Chase Prestige** program, is more big news for parents! In Tier III, **we are accepting all students with a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder**. This program is designed for all other spectrum designations and will range in services depending on needs. Ratios for this group will range from 5 - 8 students to every certified ESE teacher with a para-professional and/or intern available as well. Curriculum will be student-centered and focus on maximizing both academic and self-sufficiency skill sets. This program may bridge into the Tier II program and/or a vocational upper level program, and is estimated to confine its costs to the McKay scholarship designation for those with a diagnosis of profound Autism, which is currently about \$19,500. Again, this program will be available once a building is secured.

As most of you can see, Tier II is the Academy's original academic model, while Tier I and Tier III have grown out of our expanded understanding of the range of needed services for our students. We feel we can assist those who would flourish in a mainstream room given adequate support, and we are anxious to see everyone on the Spectrum given the opportunity to maximize their education now while they are young so that continued education – a part of so many adult programs – will be a welcomed addition to their adult lives. The goal for everyone is maximum independence and satisfaction in a well-rounded life!

### **The 2nd Annual Chase Your Dreams Family Day Expo**

Hosted by Stetson University

Last year's Expo, though small, was a rousing success! Everyone who came found it relevant and rewarding and EVERYONE wanted to come back again this coming year! We raised hundreds of dollars in a very short amount of time, with only a few volunteers helping out. The local community including Stetson, the museums, tutoring agencies and schools were so enthusiastic about our Expo that we are expecting a much bigger turnout this year! That is why I am spearheading a **Planning Committee** for this year's event. **Planning Committee** members will meet regularly to develop a full marketing plan and provide support for sponsorships. Among our members will be our **board members, parents, and local community volunteers**. (I have already targeted several). The object of the committee is to encompass as much of the Volusia County community as possible and we want as diverse a membership as we can find. If you have any suggestions, please email the name and contact information to me at [mtlundell@aol.com](mailto:mtlundell@aol.com) and I will approach them about joining.

Do you want to be involved but need to stay close to home? How about being a **Community Liaison**? We need a representative from each of our communities – DeLand, Deltona, Orange City, Daytona Beach, Port Orange, New Smyrna, Ormond Beach, etc. to act as contact for local children-based businesses. Local businesses need to see someone face-to-face so they can have their questions answered and we can add them to our roster as well as get them to advertise in their place of business. This is a perfect “mom” job as you can do it in your spare time on your travels around your community. ***It is one of the most vital jobs, and I need all the volunteers I can get!***

Please consider joining us as a Community Liaison and/or Planning Committee Member! We will start planning in January and continue through until our event in April. Mark your calendar now and make TCA a priority so we can get make this event a HUGE success and finance the opening of our school!

### **So Much More to Come...**

For those of who have followed the evolution of our organization, you will note that my Autism Endorsement is finished next week and I will be officially as an ESE certified teacher with an Autism Endorsement – one of the few in our county! It is because of this education that **The Chase Academy** is prepared to widen our enrollment parameters and is currently developing new parent resource services that will include consulting for behavioral issues, IEP plans and more. If you are a parent who is looking for more resources, contact me and we will see what we can provide for you. Our policy is to turn no one away. We are revamping our website to include our new academic programs, our parent resource services, and provide a resource page on the

site. Do you want to see something additional on our site? Send your request now! We may be able to include your suggestions and ideas on our new site.

### **YellowBrickMall.com**

"Do you shop eBay, Fandango, Amazon.com, SIRIUS, Dell, Circuit City, Staples, Catherines, Toys R Us, 1-800 Pet Meds, PetSmart or Petco, just to name a few? If you have said "yes" to even one of these, then this is an easy way for you to help financially support The Chase Academy.

We have teamed up with the YellowBrickMall.com which is an online shopping mall that donates a percentage of online sales back to us. You can help by linking to and purchasing from any of the hundreds of national online merchants shown on our YellowBrickMall.com page at

<http://www.yellowbrickmall.com/chaseacademy.php>.

Please take a look at the wide variety of stores available and remember The Chase Academy when making online purchases this holiday season. There are over 600 online stores listed on our YellowBrickMall.com page.

Are you making holiday travel plans? Please consider booking your travel plans through our fundraising partner site. You can help support The Chase Academy when you book your travel by linking from our page to the over 35 travel related websites including Hyatt, Marriott, Travelocity, Hotwire, Hotels.com and more. Consider supporting us by booking your business travel as well.

You can go directly to the travel related sites at

<http://www.yellowbrickmall.com/chaseacademy.php#Tra>

Remember, you can help support The Chase Academy financially when you shop online at the YellowBrickMall! Our page is open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year! Enjoy the convenience and variety of online shopping and help support us at the same time.

***Come get INVOLVED for the first time, or RE-INVOLVED again as we CHASE the Dream!!!!***