

We build better futures for children and adults facing life's greatest developmental and behavioral challenges.

# DAMAR

# VIEW

## A DREAM REALIZED Putting a Plan into Action

Megan, 16, told Stephanie VanLieu, Director of Autism Services, the two things she wanted to experience in her lifetime: a total solar eclipse, and a trip Disney World. Stephanie told her she couldn't help her with the solar eclipse, but with some effort on Megan's part, she'd see what she could do about the trip to Disney World. On her own, Megan researched modes of travel and calculated expenses, including costs to get herself, her brother Marcus, 15, and two staff to Florida. Megan anxiously took her findings to Stephanie.

Incredibly, doors began to open. First, approval came from Damar, then from the court system. Park tickets were graciously donated by Radio Disney. The trip was coming together, and then came a stumbling block – no money was available. Fortunately, Greenwood high school student, Adam Conn, was planning a fund-raising golf tournament for his senior project to benefit Damar. The necessary funds were raised and the Disney trip was on!

Stephanie's staff planned a surprise party to tell Megan and Marcus the request had been approved. While the kids were playing outdoors, Mickey Mouse came out of the house, presenting them with a cake that said "Disney World, Here We Come!" Megan danced, hugged Stephanie, and screamed, "It's my dream come true!" They were on their way.

Megan and her brother Marcus, who live in one of Damar's 24-hour residential homes in the community, experienced their first time at the beach and visited several museums. An entire day was spent at Disney World right down to the closing fireworks. Megan's dream was realized. Looking back on Megan's research, Stephanie marvels, "So many details had to fall into place to make this trip happen. Seeing Megan realize her dream was awesome!" Amazingly, the amount Megan estimated to cover the cost of gasoline for the trip was right on – almost to the dime!



INSIDE



Summer Opportunities for Learning



Summer Fun at Damar



It's All About Families



*Valuing Dreams, Encouraging Success*

# HANGING In There

Like most parents, I wish great things for my daughters; satisfying relationships, fulfilling work, contentment and happiness. But just as much, I want them to understand the importance of perseverance or, the ability to hang in there and keep trying when life's inevitable curve balls come their way.

If you think people with developmental disabilities lack perseverance... think again. Remember the high school basketball player with special needs who sank all those 3-pointers and made national news a few months ago? Think about our cover story and Megan's determination to realize her dream of visiting Disney World. Also, consider a woman with special needs who, when hearing about Damar's services, walked for six hours across Indianapolis to inquire about Damar's community living and the opportunity for a better life.

Although we are all faced with challenges in life, there are many whose struggles are far beyond our comprehension. Each day, people with developmental challenges fight for dignity and the same opportunities we enjoy.



Greg Johnson  
President & CEO

My girls could learn a few lessons from them as well.

# DAMAR ACADEMY

## Summer Opportunities for Learning

During this year's Damar Academy summer session, more than 100 children enjoyed educational activities like physical recreation, educational field trips, and therapeutic art sessions in addition to reviewing basic

reading, writing and math skills. The students also had the opportunity to give back to the community as they partnered with organizations of their choice to perform a variety of community service projects.

Damar would like to thank the following organizations for helping make the 2006 summer program possible.

- ▶ City of Indianapolis – DMD/HUD ▶ Damar Annual Fund Donors
- ▶ Good Shepherd Church CYO Group ▶ Junior League of Indianapolis
- ▶ Lilly Endowment Inc. ▶ Miller Summer Mission for Children ▶ Mission Indy
- ▶ Pacers Foundation ▶ PeyBack Foundation
- ▶ Scientific Games/Hoosier Lottery
- ▶ VSA Arts of Indiana

## CYO and Mission Indy Provide

# SUMMER FUN AT DAMAR

The summer of 2006 will be remembered for special events hosted by Good Shepherd Catholic Church's CYO group and Mission Indy. Since 1975, Bernie Price and her 8-9th grade CYO group have brought fun, fellowship, and entertainment to the kids at Damar. This year's fun-filled line-up included: Bingo Night, Recreation Night, Car Jam, and a new event – Damar Idol.

This is the 5th summer that Damar's kids have enjoyed Vacation Bible School hosted by volunteers with Mission Indy. Puppets, crafts, recreation, Bible lessons, music, games, and round-table discussions about teen issues made the week pass quickly. Friendships were formed and lives were changed for Damar kids and Mission Indy teens alike.

If you didn't make it to Damar's 12th annual Fair Day, you missed more than just Elephant Ears and Lemon Shake-ups. Mission Indy was on-site to participate in dunking, jumping, an obstacle course, popcorn duty, and lots of great fun.



# THANKS for Many Years of Service

In August, **Peggy Patterson** celebrated 25 years of service at Damar. Peggy's first job at Damar in 1981 was as a Unit Leader. After many years as Director of Group Homes, she became a part-time social worker. In addition, Peggy also makes time to manage past client records.



Peggy Patterson

For many years **Trudie** served as Housekeeping Supervisor, and now works part-time as laundress in the housekeeping department.



Trudie Bishop

August also marked the 10-year anniversaries for **Kristie Barna**, School-Based Program Coordinator, **Aimee Brown**, Damar Academy Education Coordinator and **Katie McCoy**, Executive Assistant and Chair of the Special Events Committee.

Damar thanks these staff for their many years of dedicated service.

**Trudie Bishop** celebrated her 20th year at Damar in July. Trudie has contributed her talents in direct care, dietary, and housekeeping.

## Quality Plus/Damar Best

# IT'S ALL ABOUT FAMILIES!

Research indicates that families who engage with loved ones during treatment, and participate regularly in their care, experience greater success and long-term gains.

At Damar, we experience that truth first hand. By inviting families to participate in group activities, day trips, and parties, or by providing bus passes, accommodations, or transportation, no stone is left unturned in the pursuit of best outcomes for the children and adults we serve.

As a result of the Damar Best commitment to family involvement, Damar has seen up to an 85% increase in family/parent involvement with their children during care. Damar's open door policy for visitation, monthly reviews, unrestricted phone calls, and e-mail communications underscores that commitment.

When families are together, good things happen. One of our parents said it best, "There are not words to express my gratitude. It was the best family outing ever. Actually, it was the first outing where my entire family could be together." Now that's Quality Plus!



Nick Parkevich  
Director of Marketing  
& Development

## MAKING An Impact

Often, families that come to Damar for assistance have been living in crisis. For many, Damar is the answer they've been seeking – and often is their last resort for hope. We're frequently asked, "So, what can I do to help?"

If you want to better understand the difference you can make by supporting Damar, just ask one of the hundreds of families no longer living in crisis. Through your continued generosity, Damar is able to continue changing lives and making a positive impact on the families we are so very privileged to serve. Thank you for your ongoing support – you truly make a difference.

**AUTISM Services**

Did you know that in addition to residential care, Damar now offers Outpatient Autism Services? Diagnostic assessments, behavior evaluations, behavior management consultation, and mental health counseling services are available. **Contact Mark Fairchild at 856.5201 or markf@damar.org for more information!**

# DUKE ENERGY

## Volunteer Efforts Bring Savings

A \$1,000 grant from the Cinergy Foundation made it possible for 21 volunteers to provide over 50 energy-saving improvements to a Damar group home in Avon. The grant allowed Duke volunteers to purchase new appliances and make energy efficient updates. After an initial visit to assess needs, the team scheduled a work day and wrapped the water heater, insulated the attic, sealed gaps around windows and doors, installed a dishwasher, and made many other cost-saving improvements. The employees were joined by DGH, Inc., an electrical contractor, and Accu-Temp, a mechanical contractor. Thank you, Duke Energy, for volunteering!



## VIRTUAL Tour

Visit Damar's residential campus when you log on to [www.damar.org/tour](http://www.damar.org/tour).

## A WINE TASTING EVENT

*Hosted by the Damar Guild*

Join us as we "Kick Off to Damar's Success" with a fun-filled evening of entertainment, wine and food benefiting Damar Services!

**Friday, September 15, 2006**

The Colts Pavilion at the Union Federal Football Center

VIP Reception, 6-7pm

\$60 in advance, \$70 at the door

General Admission, 7-10 pm

\$35 in advance, \$40 at the door

For tickets, call 317.899.2188 or purchase online at [www.damar.org/guild](http://www.damar.org/guild).



ACHIEVEMENT ♦ HOPE ♦ COMMUNITY ♦ SAFETY ♦ CONFIDENCE ♦ SKILLS ♦ INDEPENDENCE ♦ VALUES ♦ STRENGTH

All donations to Damar Services, Inc. are tax-deductible to the extent provided by law. In remembering Damar's mission in a will or bequest, the following language is suggested: "I give, devise, and bequeath the (sum of \_\_\_\_, percentage of \_\_\_\_, residue of my estate, etc.) to Damar Services, Inc. an Indiana non-profit corporation, exempt from federal income taxation under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, and located in Indianapolis, Indiana, for the furtherance of its charitable purposes."

To find out more about Damar call us at 317.856.5201  
or visit our website at [www.damar.org](http://www.damar.org)

**SIMON EVENING OF GIVING**  
*An evening of private shopping and family entertainment!*  
Sunday, November 19, 2006 ♦ 6-9pm  
**THE FASHION MALL ♦ GREENWOOD PARK MALL**  
Damar has tickets for sale for \$10, \$7 of which will benefit Damar. The remaining \$3 will benefit the Simon Youth Foundation. To order tickets, call Katie McCoy at 317.856.5201, or email [katiem@damar.org](mailto:katiem@damar.org).

Return Service Requested

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*Valuing Dreams, Encouraging Success*



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