Letter from the President:

We have so much to be thankful for at NLG! We are so grateful for the opportunity to change the lives of those we serve in partnership with their families. We are thankful every day for our fantastic staff and the choice they each have made to devote their talents to enabling those with autism to succeed! We are so pleased that we are able to grow our programs and serve more of those who need us! We are thrilled that our influence has reached far beyond those we serve directly through our outreach efforts, and in particular through our newly launched Applied Research capability.

We are so proud of each and every one of our students and our adult members for their hard work and all they have achieved!

And, most of all we are thankful for you! It is your support that makes all of this possible. Thank you for all you do to help those with autism! We are a team at NLG and the contribution of every member is vital. Thank you for being part of the NLG team! Your support means so much to the 142 individuals we serve in our School and Adult Programs and to those who will be able to join us over the next year. 2016 was an eventful year and we are looking forward to an upcoming year of growth for each individual we serve and for our programs.

All of us at NLG wish you joy and peace in the New Year.

Liz Martineau
Annual Fund

NLG’s Annual Appeal was mailed in mid November. If you have not received it, or you would like additional copies, you can access it online at www.nashobalearninggroup.org or call Emily Wheet at 781-275-2500. We thank you for your support! The Annual Appeal is the kick off for our Annual Fund. There has always been a need for philanthropy at NLG because payments from our cities and towns, Department of Developmental Services and MassHealth do not fully cover our costs. Annual Funds are ongoing drives to raise unrestricted support. For instance, staff professional development and training is funded by donations. The specialized staff who are so critical to our adults and students’ success in learning to manage their behavior so they can participate the community and work are funded through philanthropy.

NLG thanks our hardworking Annual Fund Co-Chairs, Cynthia Reed (Adult Program), Carol Rakers, Marta Wolf, and Brendan Cheever (School Program) for leading our Annual Fund efforts. We would love your help! Please contact us at 781-275-2500 or Emily.wheet@nashobalearninggroup.org if you are interested in joining the team.

Halloween at NLG

Applied Research at NLG

At NLG we have always sought to use and enhance best practices in Applied Behavior Analysis for the benefit of those we serve. We are very pleased to announce that we now have a Director of Applied Research at NLG, our very own Dr. Jessica Slaton. Jessica has been at NLG since 2004. She earned her PhD this spring, with the support of NLG, and has developed a thriving portfolio of research projects at NLG with the assistance of many NLG staff members. Our goal is that all research we undertake is of direct benefit to the students and adults involved and covers topics that are vital to the success of many individuals with autism. We are thrilled that Jessica has already had two articles accepted for publication in the Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis. They are titled “Effects of multiple versus chained schedules on stereotypy and item engagement” and “Interview-informed functional analyses: A comparison of synthesized and isolated components.” We are so proud to contribute to the success of individuals with autism both within and outside our programs.

Berkshire Association of Behavior Analysis and Therapy

NLG presented 2 symposia this year at BABAT. Lauren Savioli, David DePetris and Liz Martineau presented: Increasing Access to Work and the Community for Adults with Autism. Jessica Slaton presented: Comparing Synthesized and Isolated Contingencies in Functional Analyses. NLG’s work was also featured in three other symposia talks at BABAT as part of collaborative research between NLG and other schools. We were very proud that Jessica Slaton won the BABAT 2016 Student Paper Award for her dissertation work.
Give Them Wings Auction

NLG’s 14th annual Auction and Dinner was a wonderful night of inspiration, community, and support for NLG! The new venue, The Westin, and new Auctioneer, Sherry Truhlar, were great additions. Parent speaker Ina Breuer gave an eloquent testimony on what NLG means to a new family. Student speaker Josh Doucette with Clinical Director Leanne Patenaude, and Adult Program Member Paige Campbell with Adult Program Staff members Lauren Savioli and Stephanie Walker demonstrated what NLG means to the individuals we serve. Our 250 guests bid on an exciting variety of items and enjoyed the evening. We are happy to report that we raised over $130,000, net of costs! This is a record for this event! Thank you to all who participated, your support enables individuals with autism to soar!

NLG Celebrates AAC Awareness Month!

NLG celebrated AAC Awareness Month in October! Augmentative and Alternative Communication, or AAC, “includes all forms of communication that are used to express thoughts, needs, wants, and ideas.” People use AAC to support their language skills or to replace speech that isn’t functional in communicating. AAC is a variety of supports, including visuals, and is not just a speech generating device. Between our two locations, more than half of our students use a device to aid in communication. We recognize that not being able to speak is not the same as having nothing to say. NLG’s speech department has worked hard to increase their inventory of customized AAC books for learning core vocabulary and enabling our staff to support our students communication needs. Here at NLG we believe everyone has the right to communication!

Welcome to AmazonSmile

An easy way to finish your holiday shopping while giving back.

- By choosing NLG as your charity Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases.
- AmazonSmile is the same Amazon you know. Same products, same prices, same service.
- Support NLG by starting your shopping at smile.amazon.com.

Advocacy efforts by NLG families and staff members result in a victory!

NLG parents and staff members responded with heartfelt advocacy to regulatory changes proposed by the MA Department of Developmental Services (DDS) this summer. Thanks to the outpouring of concern about some of the proposed changes and their unintended harm to the individuals we serve, DDS has put the regulatory changes on pause and will engage NLG and other service providers in a re-draft of the regulations. We are very grateful that DDS heard our concerns and listened. It was the outpouring of testimony from our parent community that made the difference. Thank you to all of the parents who participated. Parent advocacy makes a difference! Our community is strong and we are heard when we advocate for our loved ones.
Thank You to Our Generous Donors!

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