



ANNUAL REPORT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2010

Chairman's Message:

There are an estimated 2.5 million people with autism in the United States. The vast majority will live a normal lifespan. It is this generation living with autism that is the focus of OAR's mission. As the father of two children with autism, I appreciate the need for research to identify the causes of this complex disorder. This work is vital; its promise very long term. It offers little for my son and daughter today or in their lifetime. Applied research – is scientific studies that test theories, treatments, and assumptions and offer practical answers to the everyday challenges of living with autism – does.

OAR's leadership team is built around a dedicated Board of Directors, a Scientific Council uniquely matched to OAR's mission, and a staff that delivers amazing results. Together we recognize that individuals with autism, their families, teachers, caregivers, and service providers need better answers to many and varied, pressing questions.

OAR's mission then is "to apply research to the challenges of autism." That implies three basic objectives: Raise money. Fund research. Change lives. It's that simple, and the ultimate goal—making a lasting impact on the lives of children and adults with autism—compels us to raise the bar in fundraising and research funding each year. This is our report card for Fiscal Year 2010.

Through our annual research competition, we fund pilot studies that investigate issues related to diagnosis, early intervention, communication, community living and employment, and family support. In just eight plus years, we have committed more than \$1.7 million to 105 applied research studies by researchers and graduate students pursuing degrees in field related to autism across the U.S. and abroad. With the grants we make later this year, our total funding will surpass \$2 million.

We haven't done this on our own. We make every effort to engage the autism community in what we do, and it has paid dividends. The input we received from parents and professionals immeasurably contributed to the quality of the guidebooks in OAR's *Life Journey through Autism* series. And, the financial support received from the community allows OAR to provide its resources at no cost to parents, teachers, and other front-line service providers who serve our children. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Chairman

Introduction

Founded in 2001, the Organization for Autism Research (OAR) is a nonprofit foundation dedicated to the advancement of applied autism research. Specifically, OAR's mission is to apply science to the daily challenges of autism, addressing the social, educational, and treatment concerns of parents, autism professionals, and caregivers. Implicit in this mission is the requirement to disseminate new and useful information to as many members of the autism community as possible.

Throughout its eighth full year of operation, OAR continued to grow and build upon previous successes. OAR's goals for this period included: assessing OAR's performance over its first seven years and maintaining a strategic vision for the next five, funding six to eight new professional research studies and six to ten graduate research projects, hosting the seventh annual *Applied Autism Research and Intervention Conference*, beginning work on its Military Families Initiative (creating Operation Autism www.operationautismonline.org and publishing *A Guide for Military Families* as the sixth publication in the *Life Journey through Autism* series), and raising autism awareness as well as funding through special events.

FY 2010 Program Accomplishments

OAR's programs can be categorized into three principal mission areas: research, information, and education.

Research encompasses the work of OAR's Scientific Council as it pertains to the direction and selection of OAR-funded research studies, funding research, and general oversight of the research program.

Information includes OAR's *Autism Information Program* which centers on the Web site, with updated information pertaining to current research in the field of autism, as well as the printed *Life Journey through Autism* series, the *Understanding Asperger Syndrome* DVD series, and a monthly e-newsletter, *The OARacle*.

Education extends to community outreach, both for education and general awareness, and formal, structured educational forums and formats, such as conferences, seminars, and workshops on a specific topic or theme and web-based or printed materials designed along the same lines. The OAR conference, held annually since the fall of 2003, follows an educational format. FY 2010 also saw the expansion of its Schwallie Family Scholarship Program for students with autism pursuing post-secondary education.

OAR's key program objectives for the 2010 fiscal year included:

Research

- Selecting six to eight applied autism research studies to receive funding, and issuing the ninth Request for Proposals to identify new studies for funding in FY 2011
- Gathering the Scientific Council for an annual meeting to complete the annual research competition and discuss directions for future OAR-funded research initiatives
- Conducting the sixth Graduate Research Grants Program to award grants to graduate students conducting applied research in the field of autism

Information

- Maintaining the Web site and ensuring its accessibility and functionality as a user-friendly resource on autism and autism spectrum disorders
- Distributing the *Life Journey through Autism* resource guides: *A Parent's Guide to Research*, *An Educator's Guide*, *An Educator's Guide to Asperger Syndrome*, *A Guide for Transition to Adulthood*, and *A Parent's Guide to Assessment* to the autism community
- Beginning the creative and research process for the Military Families Initiative that envisions a Web site as a 24/7 resource for military families affected by autism and a companion guidebook, *Life Journey through Autism: A Guide for Military Families*
- Utilizing Promotora training materials to provide information on developmental milestones to the Latino Community
- Continuing to publish the monthly e-newsletter, including featured articles from the Scientific Council, community updates, and summaries of the latest autism research.

Education

- Hosting the seventh annual *Applied Autism Research and Intervention (AAR&I)* Conference, focusing on the latest applied research in the field and how it can be used to improve the lives of individuals with autism
- Developing a plan for the eighth AAR&I Conference, to be held in the fall of 2010.
- Heightening public awareness of autism through existing OAR programs (the research competition, distribution of the *Life Journey through Autism* guides, as well as through conferences and special events.
- Expanding the Schwallie Family Scholarship Program, awards for persons on the autism spectrum pursuing post-secondary education.

Research Programs. OAR's research programs primarily consist of the annual Applied Research Competition and the Graduate Research Competition. The eighth Applied Research Competition began in January 2009 with the release of the Request for Proposals (RFP), and concluded in October 2009 when the Scientific Council presented the most deserving proposals to OAR's Board of Directors for funding consideration. The Board approved seven studies from an initial group of 75 pre-proposals. The grants ranged from \$30,000 for six one-year studies to \$60,000 for one two-year studies. The total for the research grants awarded in FY 2010 was \$240,000 bringing OAR's eight-year total of research funded through the annual competition to just under \$2 million.

FY2010 saw the continuation the Graduate Research Grants Program. OAR received 19 applications and awarded seven grants totaling \$13,000 to six doctoral students (\$2,000 each) and one master's level student (\$1,000).

Both the ninth annual Applied Research Competition and seventh annual Graduate Research Grants Program began in January 2010 with the release of RFPs and are currently underway.

In addition to OAR's research grant activities, the Scientific Council convened its seventh general meeting in October 2009 just prior to the OAR conference. The distinguished members of the Council met to discuss the future directions of OAR's research funding, as well as to identify the most outstanding proposals in the annual *Applied Research Competition*.

Information Programs. The OAR Web site has functioned as the main component of the *Autism Information Program* since OAR's founding. With frequent updates made by the OAR staff, the site offers visitors information on the current state of applied autism research, as well as news relating to OAR activities and events. Here visitors can sign up to receive the monthly e-newsletter, find information on autism centers in their area, and read about upcoming OAR conferences and fundraising events. As OAR continues to grow and expand its reach entering FY 2011, the Web site continues to be the primary communications platform from OAR to the global autism community.

In 2003 OAR introduced its *OAR's Life Journey through Autism* series with a publication entitled *A Parent's Guide to Research*. Since then OAR has added *An Educator's Guide to Autism*, *An Educator's Guide to Asperger Syndrome*, *A Guide for Transition to Adulthood*, and *A Parent's Guide to Assessment*. This year OAR began work on *Life Journey through Autism: A Guide for Military Families* and Operation Autism (www.operationautismonline.org), a companion Web site intended for military families that have children with autism. These resources, which will come online in FY2011, will offer information on autism, autism treatments, the military healthcare system, and raising a child with autism in the military community.

As the third key element of OAR's *Autism Information Program*, the monthly e-newsletter, *The OARacle*, keeps subscribers up to date on OAR activities, as well as current autism research. Since its inception in the fall of 2002, *The OARacle* has featured articles from the Scientific Council as well as guest experts, teachers and parents, and has a readership of now approaching 4,000. OAR's e-newsletter furthers OAR's mission by bringing research news to those autism community.

Education Programs. The OAR *Applied Autism Research and Intervention* Conference was the centerpiece of OAR's Education Program in FY 2010. Held on October 23-24, 2009, the conference brought autism experts from across the country to speak on topics ranging from early intervention for children with autism spectrum disorders to the latest on research initiatives at the National Institutes of Health and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Over 200 people attended the conference each day of the two-day event. Each attendee received a CD-ROM including PDF versions of all of OAR's guidebooks to date, including the first four translated into Spanish and *The Best of the OARacle*, further expanding the reach of OAR's information resources. The 2010 conference is set to take place on October 29-30, 2010, and was well into the planning phase at the close of FY 2010.

Outreach. Special events are included under the Education Program as a major component of community outreach. They serve to heighten the public awareness of autism as well as OAR programs and activities. The 2010 FY saw the continuation of the highly successful *RUN FOR AUTISM* program, introduced in 2003. Through the continuing partnership with the Marine Corps Marathon, and new ones with the Bank of America Chicago Marathon, Houston Marathon, and New York City Half Marathon since, OAR has been able to place the autism cause in the national spotlight as the only autism organization ever to participate in these events as an official charity partner. Through the efforts of its dedicated runners, OAR raised more than \$550,000 for new research and information programs. Plans for the 2011 *RUN FOR AUTISM* were underway at the close of the fiscal year. As the program continues to expand, it is introducing OAR to people and further heightening autism awareness across the nation.

In summary, OAR's major program accomplishments through June 30, 2010, included:

- Seven new research studies funded through the eight annual Applied Research Competition (\$240,000 in total grant awards); ninth competition currently underway

- Seven grants (\$13,000 in total grants) to students through the annual Graduate Research Grants Competition. 2010 competition is also underway.
- *Life Journey through Autism* series - distributed more than 3,500 copies free of charge to families, teachers, and autism and service professionals.
- *Applied Autism Research and Intervention* Conference held in October, 2009; eighth annual conference to be held in October, 2010
- Seventh annual *RUN FOR AUTISM* raised in excess of \$550,000, with more than 600 participants.
- Readership of *The OARacle*, OAR's monthly e-newsletter grew to almost 4,00 by June 30, 2010.

Meetings of the Board of Directors in Fiscal 2010:

During the period of July 1, 2009 until June 30, 2010, the full Board of OAR met on the following dates:

October 24, 2009

January 20, 2010

Board of Directors

Terms of Service: The members of OAR's Board of Directors serve for one year, to be renewed through majority vote, until his or her earlier resignation or removal. A director may serve for any number of terms, consecutive or otherwise.

Officers

Chairman

James Sack
Attorney at Law
Sack, Harris & Martin, P.C.
McLean, VA

Vice Chairman

Lori Lapin Jones
Attorney at Law
Lori Lapin Jones, PLLC
Great Neck, NY

TREASURER

Dean Koocher
CFO/COO
Hooray Toy Company
White Plains, NY

SECRETARY

Michael Maloney
Executive Director
Organization for Autism Research
Arlington, VA

Directors

William Donlon
Hicksville, NY 11801

Edward Schwallie
Manasquan, NJ

Anthony Ferrera
Hillsborough, NJ

Gregory L. Smith
Lorton, VA

Peter F. Gerhardt
Arlington, VA

Staff

Michael V. Maloney
Executive Director

Alyssa Kruszyna
Assistant Director, Business
Operations and Communications

Peter F. Gerhardt
President

Lily Matusiak
Director, *RUN FOR AUTISM*

Sarah Schuyler
Coordinator, *RUN FOR AUTISM*

Statement of Financial Position for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2010

Assets

<u>Current Assets</u>	\$
Cash and cash equivalents	419,719
Contributions receivable	318,074
Prepaid Expenses	18,129
Other Current Assets	<u>41,392</u>
Total Current Assets	<u>\$ 797,314</u>
Office equipment, net of accumulated depreciation	<u>15,157</u>
Total Assets	<u><u>\$ 812,471</u></u>

Liabilities and Net Assets

Current Liabilities

Accounts Payable	7,959
Accrued Expenses	3,716
Deferred Rent	<u>484</u>
Total Current Liabilities	<u>\$ 12,159</u>

Long-Term Liabilities

Deferred Rent	<u>7,920</u>
Total Liabilities	<u>20,079</u>

Net Assets

Unrestricted	677,534
Temporarily Restricted	<u>114,858</u>
Total Net Assets	<u>\$ 792,392</u>
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	<u><u>\$ 812,471</u></u>

Consolidated Statement of Activities and Changes in Net Assets
Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 2010 and 2009

	Year Ended <u>June 30, 2010</u>	Year Ended <u>June 30, 2009</u>
Unrestricted Net Assets		
Contributions and grants	\$ 536,493	\$ 556,573
Special Events	603,772	562,797
Conference	25,370	35,050
Donated Services	10,425	9,150
Other income	2,487	2,620
Net assets released from restrictions (Note 1)	<u>(133,923)</u>	<u> --</u>
Total support and revenue	<u>1,178,547</u>	<u>1,166,190</u>
Expenses		
Program Services		
Research	435,949	494,109
Information	326,998	224,775
Education	<u>133,300</u>	<u>198,639</u>
Total Program Services	<u>896,247</u>	<u>917,523</u>
Supporting Services		
Management	57,543	49,828
Fundraising	<u>135,190</u>	<u>40,224</u>
Total expenses	<u>1,088,980</u>	<u>1,107,575</u>
Increase in Unrestricted Net Assets	<u>160,045</u>	<u>34,201</u>
Increase in Net Assets	89,567	58,615
Net Assets, beginning of year	<u>702,825</u>	<u>644,210</u>
Net Assets, end of year	<u>\$ 792,392</u>	<u>\$ 702,825</u>

Notes to Financial Statements
June 30, 2010

1. Temporarily Restricted Net Assets

The temporarily restricted net assets were released from donor restrictions by incurring expenses (or through the passage of time) which satisfied the restricted purposes specified by the donors. They are represented by a negative number to illustrate that the temporarily restricted net assets that were released have been consolidated and dispersed accordingly into the appropriate unrestricted net asset categories. This was done so that the temporarily restricted net assets that were released from donor restrictions were not factored into total support and revenue twice.