

20 YEARS OF “PLAY DATES”

UCP’s Lekotek program is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year. The Lekotek of Northeastern Pennsylvania was the first one established in the commonwealth. The program officially began serving families in the summer of 1986 at its original location in the IBEW Building on Wyoming Avenue in Scranton.

The program was initially funded by a grant from Project Home-town America, which was an effort of American Express. The initial grant was facilitated by the United Way of Lackawanna County. Because of the terms of the grant, the Lekotek was originally a collaborative effort between UCP and the ARC, but since ARC primarily served adults, UCP assumed responsibility for the program within a year.

The Lekotek concept was developed in Sweden in the 1960’s and brought to the United States in 1980 by Sally Curtin DeVincentis, a Scranton native who opened the first Lekotek in Evanston, Illinois, where the organization’s national headquarters is still located. Susan Van Fleet, UCP’s first Lekotek Coordinator, trained and then worked at the national center for three years, returning to the Scranton area in the fall of 1985. Sally McCullon, who began at UCP as Assistant Coordinator of the program and is now the agency’s Lekotek Leader, also trained at the national center.



Mary Ann Kaminski and her son Scott, along with then-Lekotek Leader Susan Van Fleet, play with the Tracker II, a toy that teaches cause and effect and enhances eye hand coordination, in this 1986 photo.



Michael and Matthew Howard enjoy the Wooden Roll & Watch, a newer toy that also works on eye-hand coordination and cause and effect.

Lekotek is an invented Swedish word combining the terms for play (lek) and library (tek). The Lekotek does function somewhat as a library, allowing families to borrow toys on a monthly basis. The program, however, encompasses much more.

Play is a natural way in which children learn and families interact. During each monthly session, the Lekotek Leader models play activities based on the child’s developmental needs, abilities and interests. The sessions involve parents and siblings to help the family grow closer and have fun together through play. After each session, the family can select a few toys to take home to continue the activity. The National Lekotek Center began the Compuplay program in 1984 and UCP began offering the service in 1996. Compuplay uses

computer activities and games in much the same way Lekotek uses toys and play. The Lekotek Leader develops activities based on the child’s age and abilities – younger children are taught how to use the computer and any adaptive equipment they may need through games while older children and teens can engage in educational activities. Compuplay sessions also encourage the participation of other family members while Compuplay Camps include non-disabled children and teens as peer volunteers.

Funding for Lekotek is provided by Lackawanna/Susquehanna Mental Health-Mental Retardation Program, United Way of Lackawanna County and private donations.



Zachary Kongvold and volunteer Cheryll Davies enjoyed each other’s company as well as computer activities at a recent Compuplay Camp.

An Overview of Assistive Technology Services

Available thru UCP

UCP of Northeastern Pennsylvania serves as an Assistive Technology Resource Center for PIAT, Pennsylvania's Initiative on Assistive Technology.

Through PIAT, the ATRC at UCP of NEPA provides:

ACCESS

Device demonstrations – “hands on” opportunities for people with disabilities and their caregivers to explore specific devices to determine what might best suit their needs.

Pennsylvania's Assistive Technology Lending Library - a free, statewide program thru which people can borrow devices to find what meets their needs.

ACQUISITION

Funding Assistance – individualized assistance to help people with disabilities and their families to navigate the maze of funding possibilities including health insurances, public sources and non-governmental programs like the Pennsylvania Assistive Technology Foundation, which provides low and no-interest loans for the purchase of devices.

Equipment Recycling & Reuse – REEP, the Recycled and Exchanged Equipment Partnership is a statewide listing of items that people want to sell or donate.

AND MORE

Public Awareness – information and referral for consumers about their choices regarding devices and service providers as well as events to help educate the public about the benefits of assistive technology.

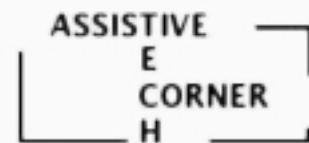
Technical Assistance & Training – for service providers to help them better serve persons who need and use assistive technology. In addition to the services funded by PIAT, UCP's Assistive Technology Practitioner also provides evaluations for persons who need devices and individualized training to help those who use assistive technology and their caregivers to get the most out of their devices. For information and assistance on any of the above, contact Linda Mesavage at UCP.



Annual Meeting & Staff Appreciation Dinner

UCP's 53rd Annual Meeting was held on Tuesday, June 27th at The Melting Pot in Scranton. Officers elected for the 2006-2007 term are: Robert Schwartz, President; John Darcy, Vice-President; David Walline, Past President; Edward Karpovich, Treasurer; and Marilyn Vitali, Secretary. Robert Jones was named a Lifetime member of the Board while Linda Gable was elected to her first term.

The Staff Appreciation Dinner was held in concert with the annual meeting. Staff members honored for their years of service were: Cheryl Astolfi, Children's Services Coordinator for 20 years; Ray Labutis, Tom Lord and Mike McAndrew, for 10 years; and Marion Goldstein-Beckhorn, Janet Burton, Theresa Butler, Jennifer Callejas, Executive Director Sarah Drob, Ken Keib, Anthony Rosario and Dolores Shermanski, all for five years.



Do you have a centrally located, accessible space that you would be willing to donate for use?

The Assistive Technology Resource Center at UCP of NEPA is still in need of a location for their inventory of recycled equipment.

Please contact Linda Mesavage at 570-347-3357, toll free at 1-877-UCPTECH or by email at ucptech@yahoo.com.

United Cerebral Palsy of Northeastern Pennsylvania

Board of Directors

Officers

Robert Schwartz, *President*
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Barbara Wagner
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SPECIAL EVENTS

Golf Tournament Benefits UCP

Stone Hedge Country Club in Tunkhannock provided the setting – and Mother Nature provided a rarity for this summer, a rain-free day – for a Golf Tournament benefiting UCP on Friday, August 25th. Ninety six golfers took part in the captain & crew format tournament, enjoying the competition, a hot dog and beverage at the turn and topping off the day with a steak dinner.

UCP extends our thanks to all who participated as well as the sponsors and other donors listed below; special thanks to Moran's Pub and owner Tammy Moran for their tremendous support.



Winners of UCP's recent Golf Tournament enjoy a beverage from their commemorative mugs.

Gold Member Sponsors

Durabilt Fence Company
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Cheryl's Studio #II
Tastykake
The Cusick Family
Baglewich
Stone Hedge
Kraft Foods
Jim Coyne
Ernie DeStefano
Ross Jewelers



UCP's Gift Wrap

will be at the Viewmont Mall beginning Friday, November 24th and continuing thru Christmas Eve.

If you would like to volunteer, alone or with your club or organization, a group of friends or a few family members, call us at 347-3357 or drop us an email at ucpnepa@epix.net.

If you don't like to wrap, don't forget to stop by our booth and have our volunteers take care of this holiday chore for you!!

EVENING OF TREASURE

No Animals Were Harmed.....

...at UCP's annual Evening of Treasure - although many *people* had sore feet by the end of the evening! The event, featuring a canine theme in honor of the Year of the Dog on the Chinese calendar, was held on Sunday, June 4th at Boscov's in the Mall at Steamtown.

After enjoying food and beverages donated by a variety of local restaurants and stores, guests began doggedly trying to solve their clues which hinted at one of eight famous pooches. The evening was topped off by desserts and coffee and of course, the grand prizes drawing.

UCP is grateful to Boscov's for again hosting the event, all those who attended and the following businesses and individuals who made contributions.

PRIZES

Bill & Doris Lindsley
Boscov's
Altier Jewelers
Caesars Pocono Resort
Courtyard by Marriott
Split Rock Resort
Woodloch Pines
Medieval Times
Comfort Suites
Ciccotti's Jewel Case
HarperCollins Publishers
Nada & Co.
Elk Mountain
AAA of N.E. Pennsylvania
American Dojo Karate
Lakeland Golf Club
Dorney Park
Alora Dining Room
Candy Bouquet
Cooper's Seafood House
Dick's Sporting Goods
Gertrude Hawk Chocolates
La Cucina
Lackawanna Coal Mine Tour
Perkins Family Restaurants
Shell Oil Co.
South Side Floral Shop
Taylor Flower Shop
W-B/Scr. Penguins
Cinemark
Krispy Kreme Doughnut Co.
Nolan & Rogers
The Red Barons
Texas Roadhouse
Windsor Inn
John Balko
Nancy Frick
Rose Geueke
Louise Krafjack
Barbara Wagner



Executive Director Sarah Drob and Bill and Doris Lindsley, donors of the Grand Prize week at Hilton Head, congratulate prize winner Joanne Finnerty.

PROGRAM ADS

Man, Levy & Nogi Insurance
Kelly, Barbetti & Co. CPA
Paper Magic Group
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Tri-County Human Services
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Boys & Girls Club of NEPA
Commonwealth Telephone
Friendship House
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Ted & Cindy Neubert
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Scr./Poc. Girl Scout Council
Atty. William C. Steppacher
Zandy's Auto Service
Baha'i Community of NEPA
Richard & Faye Bishop
The Walline Family



UCP staff member Pat Votav, along with consumers Sharon McHugh, Dorene Morse and Marlene Kuratnick enjoyed managing one of the clue stations.

FOOD, BEVERAGES, ETC.

Amici
Arcaro's Pizza
Basillico's
Granteed's Pizza
John's Italian Restaurant
Mamma Mia's Pizza Inc.
The Melting Pot
Entenmann's Bakery Inc.
Minooka Pastry Shop
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Giant Markets
Price Chopper
Jim & Sarah Drob
Tim & Linda McHugh
John & Connie Sanko
Schultzville Deli
Dupli Craft Printing
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DONOR PAGE

Contributions received April 1 - September 30, 2006

Memorials

In Memory of Ann M. Colleran

Dr. Scott Naftulin
Janice M. Pettinato

In Memory of Paul Ryder

The Ronald Krafjack Family

In Memory of Patricia Webb

Frank, Francis, Nancy &
Regina Savage

In Memory of Betty Luciani

Frank, Francis, Nancy &
Regina Savage

In Memory of Anne Davis

Nancy Savage

In Memory of Gloria L. Sottile

The Ronald Krafjack Family

In Memory of Robert P. Rembecki

Richard & Erin Weinberger

In Memory of Peter Shepherd

The Ronald Krafjack Family
Bill & Doris Lindsley

In Memory of Martha Vacendak

Bill & Doris Lindsley

In Memory of Susan Mastri

Mary K. Hart
James Tedesco, Jr.

In Memory of Caroline Siarkiewicz

Louise Krafjack

Special Memorial Funds

A Donation was made to the Susan D. Keller Memorial Fund

In Memory of Eleanor D. Fitch

and

In Honor of the 50th Wedding Anniversary of Marilyn & Harvey Applegate

by Frieda K. Robertson

Donations to the Assistive Technology Resource Center

In Memory of Phebe Jane Mesavage from:

Cheryl Astolfi

Kathy Fountain

Sally McCullon

Barbara Gilsdorf Lynn

Ruth Stryker

Kathy Vanvestraut

Friends of the Mesavage Family

Honoraria

In Honor of the 50th -Wedding Anniversary of Ronald & Louise Krafjack

Rita L. Peak

In Honor of Cheryl Astolfi's 20 Years of Service to UCP

Marian Goldstein-Beckhorn

In Honor of the 75th Birthday of Pauline Heckman

Bill & Doris Lindsley

General & Membership Donations

Donor Levels

\$2,500 – Benefactor

\$1,000 2,499 – Partner

\$500.00 - \$999.00 – Associate

\$250.00 - \$499.00 – Friend

\$100.00 - \$249.00 – Patron

\$50.00 - \$99.00 – Donor

Up to \$49.00 –Supporter

Donors

Mrs. Margaret Gumble

Supporters

Mr. Robert Walsh

Mr. Thomas T. Harding

Bridget Carter-Conlogue

Mary & Robert Jablonowski

Kenneth & Leah Rudolph

Mary & Lawrence Yeager

Special thanks to

Trinity Lutheran Church
for their generous contribution sponsoring the
Lekotek program's
summer outing at
Knoebels Amusement
Park.

How to Contact UCP

United Cerebral Palsy
of Northeastern Pennsylvania
425 Wyoming Avenue
Scranton, PA 18503-1227

Phone: (570) 347-3357

TTY: (570) 347-3117

Toll free: (877) UCP-TECH

Fax: (570) 341-5308

E-mail: ucpnepa@epix.net

Web: www.ucpnepa.com

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

As the new president of the Board of Directors for UCP of Northeastern Pennsylvania I want to take this opportunity to introduce myself. I joined the board in 2005 and served as vice president last year. I am proud to be a part of UCP and am blessed to be surrounded by a board whose sole motivation is the betterment of UCP and the people it serves.

Personally, I am married to Alycia and have 2 wonderful stepchildren (Daniel and Amanda Kucz). I am involved with several charitable organizations including the Rotary Club of Newfoundland, Challenger Little League of Lackawanna County, and I also serve on the board of the United Way of Lackawanna County.

Professionally I am a financial advisor at Smith Barney with offices in Honesdale and New York City.

As a board our focus is to improve the efficiency of UCP while trying to maximize the service we provide for our clients. One of my personal goals is to be receptive and responsive to the needs of both our consumers and the staff that serves them. In that regard, I welcome your comments and input.

I look forward to helping UCP be the best that it can be and thank you all for the support I know I will receive.

Robert M. Schwartz

The United Cerebral Palsy Newsletter is published three times a year by:

**United Cerebral Palsy
of Northeastern Pennsylvania
425 Wyoming Avenue
Scranton, PA 18503**

for the staff, volunteers and friends of this agency.
Barbara Siarkiewicz, *Editor*
We welcome your comments and suggestions. If there is an error in your address label, or if you have any questions regarding agency programs or services, please write or call the agency at 347-3357



Please recycle

United Cerebral Palsy of Northeastern Pennsylvania
425 Wyoming Avenue • Scranton, Pennsylvania 18503
Telephone: 570-347-3357 (voice) 570-347-3117 (TTY) 1-800-UCP-TECH (toll-free)

Robert Schwartz, *President*

Sarah A. Drob, *Executive Director*

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Pennsylvania Association of Child Care Agencies • Pennsylvania Association of Resources for People with Mental Retardation

Licensed by Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare, PA Department of Education
Participating agency of United Way of Lackawanna County and United Way of Wyoming County
Provider agency of Lackawanna-Susquehanna Mental Health/Mental Retardation Program
Provider agency of Wayne County Mental Health/Mental Retardation Program

United Cerebral Palsy of Northeastern Pennsylvania is a non-profit, voluntary health agency serving those with cerebral palsy and other disabilities regardless of race, color, creed, national origin, sex or age.

UCP is registered with the Pennsylvania State Bureau of Charitable Organizations.
A copy of the official registration and financial information may be obtained from the PA Department of State by calling toll-free, within Pennsylvania, 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

A United Way Agency

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Organization
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Scranton, PA

United Cerebral Palsy of Northeastern Pennsylvania
425 Wyoming Avenue
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