

# SEARCHLIGHT

Beacon Day School Monthly Newsletter

July 2017 Issue

## Dr. Lang Presents at 2017 Autism Society Conference

On July 14<sup>th</sup>, Dr. Lang presented at the 49<sup>th</sup> Annual Autism Society National Conference in Milwaukee,

Wisconsin. The theme of the conference this year was *Your Quality of Life* and the topic of Dr. Lang's presentation was *Neuropsychology of ASD: Essential Issues Regarding Executive Functioning in Adulthood: Implications for Independence and Employment*. Dr. Lang focused specifically on important issues facing adults on the spectrum today, such as barriers to employment and independence and the necessary steps organizations, schools, employers, parents and caregivers need to take to help the adult autism population overcome these barriers.



It was important to Dr. Lang that her presentation touched upon the diverse needs of the adult autism population and their families. "Not

everyone is going to go into accounting. We must seek out opportunities to support employment through microenterprises for those individuals who require more support and accommodations so they too feel they are productive members of society," says Dr. Lang.

Casey Nguyen, who attended the conference as well, appreciated Dr. Lang's ability to capture the essence of the conference into a succinct and informative presentation that left the audience feeling empowered. "What she did was really great. During our time at the

conference, both Dr. Lang and I attended as many talks as possible, and her presentation was an organized and comprehensive overview of everything the conference was trying to capture," says Casey. "Dr. Lang discussed the importance of having a purpose for everyone and how that comes into play with quality of life," she says.

Having attended their fair share of events such as this one, Casey and Dr. Lang really appreciated the relevant and important theme of the conference, the quality of the speakers, the organization of the event, and the welcoming and beautiful city of Milwaukee. "The entire conference was inspirational," says Dr. Lang. "There were profound quotes on every wall that evoked thought and emotion and were tied into the theme of the conference. The speakers were excellent, and I think the Board did a superb job putting the conference together. We were able to hear from parents who are raising individuals with autism, as well as the individuals on the spectrum themselves, which I believe is very important. I was incredibly impressed," she says.



Casey agrees: "Overall, the conference was very eye-opening and inspiring. I feel charged! There's so much work to do. I look at Beacon – and compared to Autism Society of America, we are a small organization - but we have a huge mission." she says. "This conference really inspired me to keep doing the work we need to do to help our amazing student population and the families we serve," Casey says.



Beacon is so proud to have these two incredibly dedicated members of our school community representing our students and families at this and other autism events. Both Dr. Lang and Casey are lifelong learners. They know attending conferences such as this one is an important part of the work they do. Gaining valuable insight from other professionals in the field, as well as parents, caregivers, and individuals with autism allows them to uphold Beacon's mission to provide those we serve access to meaningful and compassionate education, opportunities, and accommodations. We can't wait to see where they go next!

## Beacon Gets Zen

Julie Reister wants everyone at Beacon to relax. After all, relaxation is her area of expertise, which is why Julie – who has practiced yoga since she was a little girl - is spending the summer teaching the basics of this nurturing and healing practice to Beacon students and staff.



Though yoga was an important part of Julie's life from a young age, her love of working with the special needs community came a little later, during high school to be exact. While working trash duty on school campus, Julie got to know a group of students with special needs. "They would sit at their table and yell to me and tell me where to find the trash. I started helping in their classroom," Julie says. Soon, she found herself giving swim lessons to a group of kids from a local special needs camp while she was a lifeguard. In 1995, she began teaching at Hope

Center for the Arts – a local non-profit serving adults with disabilities - and in 1999, Julie received her certification in Teaching Yoga for the Special Child from Sonia Sumar, author of *Yoga for the Special Child*. Since then, Julie's been bringing yoga into the lives of individuals with disabilities for nearly twenty years, working along the way with various organizations such as United Cerebral Palsy and Down Syndrome Association.

Now she's adding Beacon to her list, where she hopes to bring a sense of calm and tranquility to everyone who takes her class. "The students are responding so well. I thought it would take a few times of observing the class before the students were ready to strike a pose, but they've been coming in, choosing a mat, and enjoying the music," Julie says. She's also noticed something very special about Beacon. "The BIs here are fabulous," she says. "They are so engaged. They don't over-direct the students or push them. They are allowing the students to apply what they see, and giving them a chance to own their own practice. They are encouraging them to have fun."

With ESY in full swing, Julie is looking forward to continuing her Tuesday and Wednesday classes for the next several weeks. She's hoping to provide her yoga students with simple but effective tools they can generalize into their everyday lives. "I want them to come away with being calmer, breathing deeper, and gaining some new coping strategies," she says. "I want them to know a little better where they are in space. Yoga provides the opportunity to do moves they would otherwise not do during the day, which results in making new connections with their bodies. I want them to know this is their practice, that yoga is something they can do for themselves," Julie says. Namaste.



Follow us on

facebook.

<https://www.facebook.com/BeaconDaySchool/>

## **Beacon's Community Resource Corner**



Each month we'll be compiling a list of local activities and resources we think our Beacon families may find interesting. This month we're still focusing on some local summer events and ideas you and your child may enjoy!

### ❖ **Summer Beach Party for adults with special needs, their families and caregivers**

Hosted by: Jewish Federation and Family Services of Orange County  
**When:** Sunday, July 30<sup>th</sup>, 11:00am – 2:00pm  
**Where:** Marina Park, 1600 W. Balboa Blvd., Newport Beach, CA  
**Cost:** \$18.00 per person. Includes boxed lunch and rainbow popsicles

Bring your own sunscreen, chairs, towels, hats, etc.

### ❖ **Autism Society GLP/SGV/OC's Summer BBQ and Swim Party by [Autism Society Greater Long Beach/San Gabriel Valley/Orange County](#)**

**When:** Saturday, August 12<sup>th</sup>, 1:30–5:30pm  
**Where:** Palm Park Aquatic Center, 5703 Palm Ave., Whittier, CA 90601  
**Cost:** Free  
**Schedule:** 1:30pm – 3:15pm Lunch, Crafts & Games  
3:15pm – 5:15pm Swimming  
5:15pm – 5:30pm Goodbye

This event is popular and space is limited, so you must register by August 1<sup>st</sup> to secure your spot! Please visit <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/autism-society-qlbsgvocs-summer-bbq-swim-party-tickets-35580364829?aff=es2>

For more information call 562-457-0605 or email at [autismsociety.qlb.sgv.oc@gmail.com](mailto:autismsociety.qlb.sgv.oc@gmail.com)

**Please note:** All individuals who need assistance in the pool, must be supported by a parent and/or an aide. There will be lifeguards, but there will not be staff available to assist inside the pool.

### ❖ **Adaptive Swim Lessons and Family Swim**

Swim lessons are offered to children and adults in a private or group setting. Family swim is a great way to enjoy the pool together during designated times 6 days a week.

**Where:** Rehabilitation Institute of Southern California (RIO), 1800 E. La Veta Ave., Orange, CA 92689

For more information, including fees, call 714-633-7400 or [visit https://riorehab.org/our-facilities-2/rio-orange/](https://riorehab.org/our-facilities-2/rio-orange/)



### **Barkin' Beacon Biscuits**

If you have a photo of your favorite furry family member enjoying these delicious and healthy treats, send us a photo and they can be featured in an upcoming issue of our newsletter! On this issue, we're featuring Cat's dog, Ziggy!

If you or someone you know wants to treat their beloved dog to our amazing, gluten and casein-free dog biscuits while simultaneously supporting our vocational skills training program benefitting our transition students, please contact Lisa Lo Russo via email at [LLorusso@beacondayschool.com](mailto:LLorusso@beacondayschool.com) or by calling 714-288-4200 ext. 136.

☞ Artwork by Beacon Students ☜

