

***Patty Bauman  
Named SLDC  
Board President***

***Longtime Volunteer  
Brings Experience and  
Excitement to  
Leadership Position***



*Patty Bauman*

When Board President Trish Wright stepped down earlier this year due to business obligations, SLDC's Board of Directors didn't look too far to select its new president. They asked longtime volunteer and former Board President, Patty

*continued on page 3*

***New Officers Elected***

At its fiscal year-end meeting in late June, SLDC's Board of Directors elected its officers for the 2009-10 year. Continuing on as President is Patty Bauman. Joining her will be Vice President Jodi Huston, Treasurer Dinko Bozanich and Secretary Marlene Henry. Watch for the feature on the new board officers in the fall StairSteps.

***SLDC Breaks Ground on  
Communication Building  
Funding Comes from Grants  
and Capital Campaign***

SLDC has begun construction on the center section, or Phase I, of its long-awaited Communication Building. It will house new offices and space for the Speech Therapy Department, a meeting room and restrooms. (Phases II and III remain part of a long-range plan for when funding becomes available.)

The foundation for the buildings was poured during the summer. The modulares, which comprise the building, should be ready for occupancy by mid-October.



*It always starts with a big hole in the ground, doesn't it?*

"We find ourselves in desperate need of the realignment of space, and we would risk losing the funding altogether if we did not go forward with this project," said SLDC CEO Dawn O'Connor.

For updates and more information on the building progress, please go to the News Section of the Center's website, [www.sldc.net](http://www.sldc.net).

SLDC went forward with this project despite budget constraints and belt tightening throughout the state because these funds were raised specifically for this purpose and cannot be used in any other way.



*Beginning the preparation for concrete footings!*

## 5th Annual Afternoon Tea Raises \$13,000



SLDC former students and current Hi-Tops members Angela L. and Cherie B. celebrated their birthdays at the Tea—and carried out the Birthday Theme with the table centerpiece and decorations.

Even the dark economic clouds could not stop the sun from shining on the 5th Annual SLDC Afternoon Tea. This popular springtime social sold out for its fifth consecutive year. More than 230 people attended and the event raised \$13,000 for SLDC programs.

“The event was well organized... impressive,” said SLDC Parent Joy Bell. “I took lots of mental notes and pictures so I could steal some ideas for next year. I loved being a part of the Afternoon Tea.”

### SLDC Board of Directors

Patricia Bauman  
*President*  
Jim Amato  
Marlon Borbon  
Dinko Bozanich  
Gary Elder  
John Gavin  
Marlene Henry  
Jodi Huston  
Trish Mauller  
Kevin McKenna  
Ron Rothschild  
Daniel Saucedo  
Don West  
Frank Williams

### StairSteps Editor

Muff Elstran  
*Director of Public Relations*

## SLDC Board Adds Five New Members Group Looking Forward to Guiding Organization

While they may come from diverse backgrounds, SLDC's five new board members share a common bond—they're committed to ensuring the Center's 50+ year legacy continues for many years to come.

Marlon Borbon is a rehabilitation expert. Gary Elder's professional background is in the construction industry. Tricia Mauller is a business woman and community leader. Ron Rothschild spent his career in finance. Daniel Saucedo is an insurance and benefits broker. Together, they bring a fresh perspective to the Center during these challenging times.

“I got involved because I believe I can help make a difference,” said Borbon, the director of rehabilitation services at Presbyterian Intercommunity Hospital in Whittier. Borbon was introduced to SLDC through the Volunteer Center of Orange County.

Although new to the board, Elder has been a “friend” of SLDC for nearly 10 years. He was first introduced to the Center by longtime supporter Jim Harker and has served on SLDC's golf, gala and operations committees prior to joining the board.

“My number one goal is to give the students the most up-to-date facilities as possible,” said Elder.

Tricia Mauller, a manufacturer's representative for the Scheffey Group, had a grandson who attended SLDC for five years.

“My main reason in joining the board was to give back to the school that helped my grandson,” said Mauller. “Like many families, I want to return the favor.” Mauller's strong ties to the community also will be an asset to SLDC.

Ron Rothschild was first introduced to SLDC by longtime board member and new SLDC Board President Patty Bauman.

“When I saw how dedicated the staff and the board were, I just had to get involved,” said Rothschild. Rothschild hopes to lend his expertise in economics to secure a good financial footing for the Center.

Dan Saucedo's firm focuses on insurance and financial services. He agreed with other new board members that the Center's financial health is critical. But he also wants to work on staff development.

“When you watch the staff work with the students it's overpowering,” said Saucedo. “As a board member, we need to help ensure that essential services continue to be available.”

Saucedo best summarized the new board members' mission:

“Our number one job is to make sure SLDC is around for another 50 years...and more,” he said. “I'm honored to be asked to take on that role.”



Marlon Borbon



Gary Elder



Tricia Mauller



Ron Rothschild



Daniel Saucedo

## ***New Board President***

*continued from front page*

Bauman, to complete Wright's term. She readily agreed.

"I know (serving as board president) this time will be totally different than when I served in the past," said Bauman, who has been a board member since 1989 and served as its president for two terms. "That's one of the reasons I accepted the position. If it was the same, where would the challenge be?"

"Following Trish (Wright) and Jim (Amato) will be tough," admitted Bauman. "Both former board presidents put in a tremendous amount of work to get us where we are today. The business of running the Center takes so much more time and effort.

"Jim laid out the structure for our strategic plan and Trish set the Center's goals and objectives," added Bauman. "My task will be to implement them. We've done the homework, now we must act. Fortunately, we have five new Board members to participate in the task.

"As we move forward I don't want to lose sight of what got us here in the first place—our staff," said Bauman. "They remain at the core of all that we do."

Bauman's interim term ran through the end of the fiscal year. In June, the SLDC Board of Directors re-elected Bauman president and elected new officers.

## ***California Dreamin' Makes a Splash!***

Over 220 people attended the 5th Annual Casino Night to benefit the Hi Tops. The event, with its SoCal theme, was held at the Los Alamitos Race Track and raised \$12,000. Proceeds help fund the group's travel program.

Plans for next year's casino night are already underway. It will be held on March 6, 2010, and will again be held at the Los Alamitos Race Track. The theme will be "On the Road Again."

# ***From the CEO***

## ***A Challenging, Changing Year***



*Dawn O'Connor, CEO*

SLDC has always worked to be innovative and inventive—whether it comes to devising techniques to help individual students, developing new programs or surviving the business of education. As we move on to a new fiscal and school year, our review of the past 12 months reveals interesting trends and accomplishments:

We had continued referrals of appropriate students to our program—despite the impact of the state budget and generalized economic uncertainty. Our school age enrollment averaged 220 students from 55 school districts.

Sacramento's impact on the Regional Center system effected our under-three population in that the referral base significantly decreased over the year. But, even with this tightening, we provided a program and services to over 130 young children.

This downturn has provided an opportunity for us to open our doors to more children in our community who could use a "jump start" or a more intensive pre-school program. This new program is scheduled to start in September 2009.

Over the years we have had a steady stream of requests to provide clinical services to individuals, both children and adults, who are not enrolled in our school program. Our new Clinical Services Program was launched to meet this need and has the potential of providing needed services to many individuals in the general public.

We have pursued and received a significant number of grants (nearly \$135,000) that allowed us to continue needed programs and improve educational technology. In our critical economic climate, these awards have been especially welcomed.

The Board of Directors continues to provide guidance and lead strategic planning for our organization as whole. This past year, we added five new members to the Board—each of whom brings a particular expertise.

Through all of this, the staff and the board never lost sight of what is most important—our students and their parents. We are continually reminded of the role that we play in the lives of our students—a sentiment echoed in this parent email:

*Thank you for all you do.*

*I try to communicate my gratitude often, but I must say that I am so relieved at the outcome of the IEP today. I know it is hard to work with (my daughter) and her behaviors. I know it is easy to love her, though, in spite of her challenges...but I am her mom. :) (happy face)*

*It was such a blessing today to see that you and ALL of the members of the IEP team today were not willing to give up or put up the white flag. It is very apparent that you are all still very invested in helping (my daughter) to reach her full potential.*

*All of this is not news to me, but it sure eased my mind to be reassured once more today that the dedication of all people that work with (my daughter) is unfaltering, even in light of her escalating behaviors.*

Thank you to each and every one of you who have now and have had a part in making SLDC what it is today and what it will be tomorrow and for the next 50 years!

## **Occupational Therapist Dianna Edmunds Recognized**



*SLDC OT Dianna Edmunds with student Paul V. in the classroom*

Dianna Edmunds, an Occupational Therapist at SLDC, was awarded one of two DbD\* 2009 OT Awards (the other winner is from Ohio). Edmunds has been an occupational therapist for the last 10 years and currently focuses on students in the Jolin Program. She was nominated by Michelle Wenk, a teacher in Jolin, who commended Edmunds for her inventive, thorough and conscientious approach to students.

*\*DbD (Development by Design) is a company dedicated to helping kids with or without disabilities to develop new skills through fun and engaging games and toys.*

## **SLDC Creates Founders' Circle Group Explores New Growth Streams**

Speech and Language Development Center's Board of Directors recently formed a support group called The Founders' Circle. The Founders' Circle has adopted three key areas of responsibility:

- To establish a broader fundraising base for the Center
- To identify and recruit Founders' Circle Members
- To recommend prospective Board Members

The idea to form this new support group was the outgrowth of needs assessments and discussions by SLDC Board Members, supporters, consultants and staff. Aleen Agranowitz, SLDC's chief advancement officer, recruited the initial members to The Founders' Circle. Ongoing staff support will be vested with the Chief Advancement Officer and the Director of Development.

In determining the direction for the group, the existing Founders' Circle members have set a threshold annual minimum donation of \$5,000 and selected Jim Harker, a longtime supporter of SLDC and former Board Member and Board President, as the initial leader of the group. Further qualifications for membership and responsibilities will be established as the Founders' Circle moves forward.

Among its initial efforts, the Founders' Circle held a Friends' Tour morning at SLDC and is planning a holiday gala titled, "**A Swingin' Big Band Christmas**," to be held on December 5, at the beautiful Gem Theater in Garden Grove (see announcement on page 5).

Agreeing to serve on the Founders' Circle are Joanne Arkush, Vince Ferragamo, Ilene and Jim Harker, Marty Keithley, Elden Peterson, Kerry Peterson, Bobbie and Jim Stovall, and Janet and Gerald Thomas. Jim Amato and Patty Bauman serve as board liaisons.



*Present for the Friends' Tour of SLDC are Bobbie and Jim Stovall, right, and their guests Nicole Cassesso and Damien Lorton.*

## **Grants Update**

In the first four months of 2009, SLDC has received four additional grant awards. The cumulative total for the academic year now tops \$133,702. SLDC Development Director Ray Bell said that surpassing the fund-raising goal has been a very fortunate combination of a worthy program, dedicated staff and some exceptional grant writers.

"Matching program needs with an organization's giving goals takes time and patience," said Bell. "It doesn't happen overnight. These recent grant awards are the result of hard work the past several years. We thank these organizations for their continued trust in Speech and Language Development Center."

CVS Caremark Charitable Trust provided \$15,000 for therapeutic services not covered as a part of the contract between the referring school district and SLDC.

The Employees Community Fund, Boeing, California gave SLDC \$4,000 for technology for the Center's High School. Funds were used to purchase a SMARTBoard for classroom instruction.

The Noon Lions Club in Buena Park awarded the Center a Silverado Days Grant of \$1,000. SLDC will use these funds to purchase computers for its Speech Department.

The Season of Caring, OC Register and the Festival of Children Foundation selected SLDC as one of 10 agencies in Orange County to be honored during the holiday season, which lasted through January. Readers donated \$9,262, which will help provide alternative communication devices in the Speech Department in order to provide an assessment and to help identify the right equipment a student might use to communicate.

## ***Extravaganza at GEM Theater***

### ***Founders' Circle Event Will Kick Off the Holiday Season***

A one-time only performance will be just one of the spectacular features of this inaugural event conceived by members of the SLDC Founders' Circle. A champagne bar, gourmet hors d'oeuvres and "smooth jazz" will start the evening. Then, a move to the second floor of the theater will change the mood with a martini bar and a "Holiday Yule Cabaret." While guests enjoy an intermission that features handmade desserts and liquors, the theater will be converted to a 40s style Holiday USO, complete with a 15-piece orchestra playing the Big Band tunes of Benny Goodman, Glen Miller and Duke Ellington.

Titled "***A Swingin' Big Band Christmas***" and hosted by Founders' Circle members Jim & Bobbie Stovall, the elegant evening will be a one-of-a-kind experience for guests. Performances by One More Productions ensemble, jazz singer Debbie Ebert and the Mike Henebry Orchestra will certainly put the audience in a holiday frame of mind.

Tickets are \$250 per seat and seating is limited. The GEM Theater is located at 12740 Main St. in Garden Grove, minutes away from the 22 and 5 freeways. For more information or to order tickets, please contact Nancy Egbert at SLDC (714) 821-3620 x 264.



*Members of Girl Scout Troop 738 of Huntington Beach, led by former SLDC Board President Trish Wright, recently rejuvenated the Sensory Garden in the Jolin Courtyard.*

## ***Fourth Annual Coaster Run Continues Positive Trend***

### ***Participants Top 1,900—A Jump of Over 50%***

When thousands of runners, walkers and well-wishers arrived at Knott's Berry Farm on March 15, for the fourth annual Coaster Run, one thing was certainly clear. Word had spread about this annual event.

Registrations alone had jumped by more than 700 participants and crowds of spectators were already gathered along the course route.

There were more elite runners in the 2009 USA Track and Field Road Championship race, competing for the \$2,000 in prizes. There were more 5K and 10K participants, dressed in their Coaster Run T-shirts. There were even more children at the start of the 1K Kids Run, ready to race through Camp Snoopy and receive a medal.

"I think that's what makes the Coaster Run so special," said Race Committee Chair and SLDC Public Relations Director Muff Elstran. "This is truly a family event – there's something for everyone."

And everyone seemed to agree.

"The elite runners like the race because it's flat and fast," said Race Director Jonathan Pauley of Renegade Racing. "Our Elite 5K Race Winner finished in 14 minutes and 14 seconds and we had 9 elite participants go under 15 minutes. The Elite 5K at the Coaster Run could easily become the fastest 5K run in Southern California in just a year or two."

"I like the Coaster Run because we can decide between the 5K or 10K," said one participant. "You've got something no matter what level you are."

"My son has been excited about the 1K for the past two months," said parent Dean Kazoleas, who brought his family from Irvine. "He gets to run through Camp Snoopy and we all get to go to Knott's Berry Farm."

In addition to half-price adult entry (good for up to four people) to Knott's Berry Farm, race features included a commemorative T-shirt, goody bag, health expo, and a complimentary slice of Knott's famous boysenberry pie for all race finishers. Registered participants with \$100 or more in sponsorship also received free entry to America's first themed amusement park.

"We couldn't have done this for the past four years without the wonderful support of Knott's Berry Farm," said Elstran. "They've helped us put this race on the map. We look forward to our continued partnership."

Even before the last of the free Boysenberry pie was eaten and the banners were taken down, race organizers already were planning for The Coaster Run's fifth anniversary. What will you be doing on March 21, 2010?



*The Kids' Fun Run (1k) through Camp Snoopy had nearly 200 registrants this year!*



*This year's Coaster Run EXPO in Knott's Lagoon area was bigger than ever.*

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January - June 2009

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January - June 2009



The Elite 5k runners take off at the start of their race, to be followed shortly by the regular 5k.

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## Hi-Tops Casino Night

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Preston Thomson  
Clive Tollmon  
Chad Wadell, M.D.  
Chuck Weaver  
Scott Weddle



Representative Eric Niece, from CVS Caremark Charitable Trust, presents a check for \$15,000 to SLDC Board President Patty Bauman at The Coaster Run. Funds were earmarked for therapeutic services.

# California State Department of Education Renews SLDC Certification

Following the on-site review by an auditor from the California State Department of Education, Speech and Language Development Center's status as a state-certified non-public school was renewed.

For two years the annual certification process is done through a verification of appropriate documentation, procedures, credentials, curriculum, etc. Every third year an on-site review is conducted, in addition to the above verifications. This year's on-site took place on two consecutive days.

While the final paperwork from the state has not been received as of this writing, the state auditor did meet with SLDC staff for a verbal summation of his findings. His commendations to SLDC included comments on SLDC's integration of services and the efforts made to meet students' needs. He also mentioned the dedication and caring attitude of staff at all levels; the bright and well-maintained physical plant; and the equipment in the OT/PT therapy rooms, the playgrounds and the Social Courtyard for High School/Transition students. Way to go, SLDC staff!

Founded in 1955, SLDC is a non-profit school and therapy center, serving 350 children and young adults who have special needs in language, learning, and/or behavior, as well as typically-developing students in Reverse Inclusion classrooms. SLDC students have a variety of diagnoses, including autism and autism spectrum disorder, hearing impairment, learning disability, and emotionally disturbed. The Center is certified by the state Department of Education and licensed by the state Department of Social Services. More info: <http://www.sldc.net>

## SAVE THE DATE!

SLDC 31<sup>st</sup> Annual Golf Tournament  
Monday, October 12, 2009  
Alta Vista Country Club

### Address Correction

If you're receiving more than one copy of StairSteps, if you're moving, or if your address needs revising, please let us know so that we can stay in touch!

Co-Founders  
Aleen Agronowitz, Ed.D., CCC-SP  
Gladys Gleason, M.A., M.F.C.C.

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