Investing in Futures
Dear Families and Friends,

At Melmark, we are investors – investing in those we serve and their families through staff, program and technology development, research and philanthropy. This Messenger is dedicated to showing the many ways Melmark invests in the futures of all people affected by a disability – from the families who entrust their sons and daughters into our care to the professionals who provide services for individuals with special needs.

In the pages ahead, you will read about the legacy of Melmark as we reflect on the life of our dear co-founder, Mildred “Miggy” Krentel. You will meet families who were so touched by what Melmark provided their loved ones, they are now investing in our organization to assure its longevity for others. You will also see how organizations are investing in programs that nurture job skills in young adults, and you will witness the successes of those we serve.

These successes are a direct impact of the investment Melmark staff, families and friends make in each person, no matter how great his or her need. Through an investment in research, our team of highly skilled experts in Applied Behavior Analysis at our campuses in Berwyn, Pennsylvania and Andover, Massachusetts is able to create individualized plans that promote independence and accomplishment. This research ensures that the most effective best practices and methods define our programs.

Through the Expert Speakers Series and consultation services, our team shares findings with other providers, creating a greater environment of excellence for all children and adults with special needs.

The methods through which Melmark invests in people are many and are often complex, but the outcome is quite simple – individual success. Whether that success is measured by The Joybells’ performance of the national anthem at a Philadelphia Phillies game or by reaching even the smallest personal goal, there really is no price tag to place on these outcomes.

I thank you for your investment in our programs and the people we serve, at Melmark and beyond.

Joanne Gillis-Donovan, Ph.D.
President and CEO

THANK YOU
This January, Melmark lost a great woman who made a lifelong investment to create opportunities for children and adults with special needs. Mildred “Miggy” Krentel was a pioneer in a time when people with disabilities were pushed aside, their rights ignored, and often sent to live in facilities far from home.

Miggy and her late husband, Paul Krentel, had six children, the youngest of whom was born with Down syndrome. The couple founded Melmark in 1966 to fulfill their dream of creating a home-like community for Melissa and her peers. Today, Melmark serves over a thousand children and adults with a wide range of disabilities and has schools in Berwyn, Pennsylvania and Andover, Massachusetts, as well as homes throughout neighboring communities.

Miggy was a long-standing member of Melmark’s Board of Directors who played many roles in Melmark’s history. She cofounded the Melmark Service League, a volunteer group with original members who still serve today. She also founded The Joybells, Melmark’s bell choir that has performed at The White House and the Pennsylvania Governor’s Mansion. She produced the first Christmas play at Melmark and also once led the charge in admissions, fund-raising and marketing.

As if being a nurturing parent and founding Melmark were not enough, Miggy was also an accomplished author, penning children’s stories as well as books about her personal experiences. She even maintained a blog titled “Miggy Moments” where her writing style showed her spunk, determination and her love for God. It is that love that guided her in all that she did at Melmark.

Miggy’s vision of a community based on the foundation of family, love and faith continues to touch countless lives. Today, the Krentels’ legacy thrives through Melmark’s continued mission of providing a center of excellence for children and adults with special needs and their families. We are honored to continue the investment Miggy and Paul made nearly 50 years ago, and we thank each of you for your support of our mission, programs and, most importantly, those we serve.
Melmark was not new to Eileen Macbeth when she made the complicated decision for her daughter Nancy to live at Melmark. A friend of Paul and Mildred “Miggy” Krentel, Eileen supported Miggy throughout the birth and childhood of Melissa. Eileen understood the Krentel’s anxiety as she too had a daughter with intellectual disabilities.

For the first five years of Nancy’s life, Eileen and her husband Donald cared for their daughter themselves. “She was a joy,” Eileen said. “She taught my other children so much about love and compassion.” However, when Nancy was five, Eileen and Donald agreed their daughter needed the attention and environment Melmark provided.

Now it was her dear friend, Miggy, who provided the shoulder to lean on. On the day they took Nancy to Melmark, Eileen said she felt both she and Miggy were each holding one of Nancy’s hands while holding God’s, creating a circle of love. This conversation inspired Melmark’s holding hands logo.

Nancy passed away in 1999, after 34 happy and productive years at Melmark. Eileen says she remembers the sense of freedom knowing her child was being cared for in such a loving environment. Eileen has remained supportive of Melmark and its mission and in this past year, she created a new legacy by designating Melmark as a beneficiary of her will.

“I am grateful to make this gift to carry on Melmark’s work for years to come,” Eileen said. “It comes out of gratitude for what Melmark did for Nancy and my family.”
Larry Cancro’s daughter Lisa was admitted to Melmark New England (MNE) on the morning of September 11, 2001. Although the world changed in many ways that fateful day, many positive things would change for Melmark New England after Larry and his family walked through our door with Lisa.

Larry knew that Melmark was going to be different and better than other programs that had failed his daughter with autism. As a board member, he quickly got involved in all aspects of the organization from large scale projects like MNE’s involvement with the first annual NAAR Walk (now Autism Speaks Greater Boston Walk) to leading fund-raising efforts to relocate the school from leased space to Melmark-owned property.

Larry made it his mission to be a significant part of the building campaign for the Andover site. Support he helped to elicit from the Yawkey Foundation became the cornerstone of the building campaign; the foundation’s significant contribution leveraged additional gifts. With this assistance, the new school building was purchased by Melmark, Incorporated, renovated and occupied within nine months.

The new campus allowed for significant program expansion for Melmark. This increased capacity permitted over 40 students to access improved services which in turn greatly improved their families’ lives. With subsequent grants he helped secure, MNE has expanded vocational training opportunities and added an after-school program. For an individual with autism to be job trained and to gain permanent employment, it is truly life changing.

After the Red Sox World Series victory in 2004, Larry arranged for the teaching staff to be part of the intimate crowd of 1,000 inside Fenway Park to rally with the team prior to their heading off on the Duck Boats. Try as we may, we will probably never be able to employ a staff morale builder as great as that unique opportunity. Larry has been particularly effective in introducing Melmark New England senior staff to legislative leaders. In turn, MNE has assisted legislators in their understanding of the needs of children with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) and the resources necessary to provide adequate services. Larry was a key driver in having the ARICA autism insurance bill signed into law. This legislation is a huge benefit to families as they access early services for a child with ASD. The bill signing took place at Fenway Park.

Through his connection to the Boston University hockey team, he advocated to Coach Parker that autism be the community outreach cause for team members. Subsequently, players came to Andover for a service day where they helped install a playground for students. Each year, this elite hockey team participates in the Greater Boston Walk for Autism Speaks. Larry serves as Chairman of the New England Chapter of Autism Speaks. In this way, he is a tireless advocate for services for all individuals with autism.

Larry’s senior role with the Boston Red Sox is extremely demanding on his time. Still, he is always finding opportunities to advance Melmark’s mission through people he meets in the course of his duties. The most recent example was having Melmark designated as the charity partner of Boston Restaurant Week® during March and August 2012. In addition to being a successful fund-raising opportunity, it was also an excellent way to educate the general public concerning the needs of individuals with ASD and Melmark’s mission.

Larry is not only an exceptional advocate for his own child, but a man who consistently works to help other families affected by autism.
On the beautiful evening of June 12th, a grand celebration was held on the front lawn of the Andover campus to honor the mission, work and staff of Melmark New England. A large gathering of over 150 people included current and former parents, friends, Melmark staff, Dr. Joanne Gillis-Donovan, President/CEO, board members and donors such as the Yawkey Foundation and Teamsters Union Local 25.

Additionally, there were legislative and municipal representatives and members of the business community in attendance to celebrate the journey and successes of Melmark’s work in New England.

The evening featured awards and recognitions to staff, board members, parents who raised funds at special events, and major philanthropic supporters. Congresswoman Niki Tsongas bestowed a Certificate of Special Recognition of Providing Outstanding Educational Services to Children and Young Adults with Autism to Melmark New England.

The evening ended with the viewing of a specially created anniversary video which inspired cheers and tears throughout the audience. We thank all who were able to attend and share this special evening with us.
Thanking Our Many Investors

The Evening’s Honorees

**Visionary Leadership Award**
Joanne Gillis-Donovan, Ph.D.
President and CEO

**Visionary Partnership Award**
Yawkey Foundation

**Community Partner Award**
Teamsters Local 25

**Good Neighbor Award**
AvalonBay Communities

**Corporate Partner Award**
Eastern Development

**Vocational Partner Award**
Jackson Lumber

**Leadership Awards**
Jim Alex
Larry Cancro
Jamie Stahle

**Special Tributes**
Larry Cancro
Jim and Angela Alex
Joe and Tara Beaulieu
Jim and Jill Fitzpatrick
Brian Farrell
Bob and Rosemarie Hubbard

**Special 15 Year Leadership Recognition**
Rita M. Gardner, M.P.H., BCBA
Executive Director

Frank L. Bird, M.Ed., BCBA
Chief Clinical Officer

Peter J. Troy, M.B.A.
Vice President

Helena L. Maguire, M.S., BCBA
Senior Director of School Services

*Under the tent at the 15th anniversary event*
The Joybells of Melmark performed the national anthem at the Phillies game on Saturday, July 13th at Citizens Bank Ballpark. The Joybells is a hand bell choir that comprises adults with intellectual disabilities. The group is led by two directors who give hand cues to the musicians.

The Joybells of Melmark is a unique group that presents a varied repertoire of patriotic, holiday, classical, sacred, popular, Broadway, and Disney selections. Members of The Joybells play beautiful selections on their five-octave Schulmerich hand bells, silver melody bells, hand chimes and percussion bells.

The Joybells have performed since the early 1970s on television and at The White House, the Pennsylvania Governor’s Mansion and the Kimmel Center. The group has also held concerts at churches, schools, colleges and corporate as well as community events, from Maine to Florida and throughout the Midwest. This was their first performance at a Phillies game.

Melmark President and CEO, Joanne Gillis-Donovan, Ph.D., says this was a wonderful opportunity, not only for The Joybells, but also for Phillies fans and players. “We are so grateful to the Phillies for selecting these men and women to perform the national anthem,” said Gillis-Donovan. “These adults have incredible talent, and being able to share those talents with the more than 40,000 fans, players and Phillies staff in Citizens Bank Ballpark was just amazing. Our mission at Melmark is to highlight the abilities of those we serve when, too often, people focus on their disabilities. The Joybells always capture the hearts of their audience and gently open their eyes to the many similarities we all share, regardless of our ability level. We are so proud of each member of The Joybells for their beautiful and moving performance.”

In addition to the fans who saw the live performance at the ballpark, The Joybells’ performance had more than 10,000 views through its Facebook page. The story also appeared in several local newspapers and on Clear Channel Radio Stations in Philadelphia.

For more information about The Joybells, please contact SueGraves@Melmark.org.
Janet and Dana’s Disney Vacation

Vacations are fun, but they can be stressful too. Imagine the anxiety of getting to your destination and then learning you just don’t have access to some of the fun activities you had looked forward to. The next year, you’d probably travel with a different group or book through a different travel agency. That’s exactly what Melmark clients Janet and Dana did after a vacation that just didn’t meet their expectations.

The two lifelong friends live at Melmark and look forward to their vacations just as much as you and I do. But Janet often found that when she booked a trip, she’d be placed with large groups of people with very different sets of abilities. And that meant she didn’t always get to do the things she wanted to do, like go on rides.

So when the two friends began planning their trip to Disney World this past summer, they turned to Melmark staff to help them find the perfect travel group. With the help of staff, they researched travel groups focusing on people with special needs. When they found a company they were interested in, the two ladies began their self-advocacy work by interviewing the owner, Chris Wetzler. He’s been working with people with disabilities for years and started Downingtown based, Compass Point Travel, in 2007. The organization offers trips to small groups with high staff-to-client ratios, so the focus remains on the traveler.

When Janet and Dana interviewed Chris, they asked lots of questions – many focusing on the experience they’d receive on the trip. Both ladies are ambulatory, and one thing Janet did not want to miss out on was the opportunity to get on rides at the park. After a lengthy interview session, the two friends had made their decision, and they booked their trip with Compass Point.

Chris says he appreciates the ladies’ self-determination. “I’ve traveled with groups on vacation before, and I know how tough it can be to have choices when you’re in a large group,” said Chris. “I admire these women’s tenacity in making sure they got exactly what they wanted out of their trip.”

To make sure travelers like Janet and Dana get to do as much on their vacation wish list as possible, Chris groups clients together based on their abilities. Those who need extra assistance often have their own staff to assure a joyful experience for all. Chris even makes sure families and caregivers back home see all the fun his group is having by texting photos and updates throughout the trip. “Facebook has become a powerful tool in our business,” said Chris. “It allows us to, with permission from the individual or guardian, post photos and updates so everyone can share in our travel experience.”

It was an especially memorable experience for Janet. This trip was part of her yearlong 60th birthday celebration. She says the staff at Compass Point made her feel extra special to mark the occasion. Chris says it was his honor to share in this vacation experience. “It’s always been my intention to show people with disabilities in a positive light. I don’t know anyone who doesn’t look forward to a vacation.”
2013 Commencement

On Friday, June 14th, five young men and women graduated from The Melmark School. Family, friends and staff gathered in Melmark’s Center Circle to recognize these students for their accomplishments.

As these young men and women approached the stage to receive their diplomas, audience members stood to applaud their achievements.

One graduate, Wilfredo, was profiled on NBCPhilly.com. The website featured a story about Wilfredo’s accomplishments that included his graduation remarks.

Congratulations to each graduate of the Melmark Class of 2013!

Spring Festival

This year’s Spring Festival gave us the opportunity to remember a dear friend of Melmark, the late Richie Phillips, whom we lost this year. The Phillips Family are longtime supporters of Melmark, and The Spring Festival is sponsored by the family’s company, Pilot Freight Services. Melmark President and CEO, Joanne Gillis-Donovan, Ph.D., was joined on stage by Ellen Phillips, who helped announce Melmark’s Citizen and Athlete of the Year.

The Melmark Players also performed Melmark’s Movie Medley. Afterward, families enjoyed an outdoor carnival.
Investing through Corporate Support

Gifts and Benefits

TD Charitable Foundation
A Corporate Champion

In July, Melmark's Chris Maurer Vocational Program was the recipient of a $10,000 grant from the TD Charitable Foundation, the charitable giving arm of TD Bank. We are most grateful to the TD Charitable Foundation for its continued support of Melmark and the young men and women who participate in the vocational program.

It is with gratitude that we recognize that TD Charitable Foundation was one of the first supporters of this program at its inception in 2009 and has continued to provide vital funds through the years.

Today, the vocational program offers participants opportunity to develop needed skills for employment on campus and in community-based jobs. Philanthropic support has allowed us to purchase training materials, acquire a vehicle for transportation to work sites, purchase vending machines for a business start up, and underpin program operations.

Our many thanks to TD Charitable Foundation for its partnership, helping to build strong communities, and creating brighter futures for those in need.

Meadowlands Charity Day Benefits Vocational Program

The Chris Maurer Vocational Program at Melmark was most fortunate to be chosen as the recipient of the 3rd Annual Meadowlands Country Club Charity Day held on August 7, 2013. This special day included golf and bridge tournaments followed by dinner and a silent auction. There were 140 participants in the festivities.

Kathy and Nate Holtzman, Melmark parents and club members, introduced the event committee to Ellen Donohoe, Melmark's Vice President for Advancement, and gave her the opportunity to acquaint them with Melmark's programs and individuals served. They were most interested in the vocational program and the employment opportunities provided for young adults. They readily chose Melmark as the 2013 Meadowlands Charity Day recipient. The proceeds of the event totaled close to $30,000 which will directly impact program participants.

In addition to the generosity of the club membership, they warmly welcomed Greg, a vocational program participant, as a member of the Pro Shop staff. Greg has enjoyed a part-time position assisting with golf cart maintenance. We sincerely appreciate the generosity of the Meadowlands Country Club membership and their belief in our mission and in those we serve.
Under the direction of Frank Bird, M.Ed., BCBA, Chief Clinical Officer and Mary Jane Weiss, Ph.D., BCBA-D, Executive Director of Research, there are several research projects ongoing at Melmark. It is this ongoing research at both campuses (Berwyn, PA and Andover, MA) that helps make Melmark the Center of Excellence it is known as in the field of service delivery to special needs populations.

In Pennsylvania, staff members have continued to study how to select the best communication modality (e.g., vocal speech, sign language, picture exchange communication system, or iPad) for learners. The study focuses on two questions: 1) identifying the modality that is associated with the best (fastest) learning, and 2) finding out which modality is preferred/chosen by the learner.

The study is interesting because it integrates learner choice into the assessment of clinical strategies. In addition, the study contributes to the sparse literature on the use of the iPad, which has received a great deal of attention in the past few years for its potential relevance for learners on the autism spectrum. Preliminary results were presented at the Association for Behavior Analysis International (ABAI) Conference in May in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Other projects being actively worked on include explorations of the iPad in teaching independent living skills, the treatment of severe issues in feeding and food acceptance, and various methods for understanding why challenging behaviors occur.

At Melmark New England, projects include developing methods to distinguish autism from obsessive-compulsive disorders, the identification of different methods for conducting assessments of challenging behaviors within functional analysis, and the exploration of different ways to motivate learners.

An analysis of long-term outcomes for the treatment of severe behaviors is also ongoing, and represents a unique analysis of how such individuals can be successfully treated in real-world clinical settings. A major new study is examining readiness skills for group instruction which will assist us clinically in moving students systematically from 1:1 instruction to small groups as their progress dictates.

In addition, Melmark New England staff are working with researchers from Harvard to understand sleep disorders in students with autism, and staff in Pennsylvania are in collaboration with Kennedy Krieger Institute on understanding dementia in aging individuals with Down syndrome.

Special thanks go to Jim Chok, Amanda Fisher, Jill Harper, Nicole Heal, Megan Kane, Helena Maguire, Kylee Merendino, Chris Perrin and Kathy Tomon for their work to advance research initiatives at both sites.
Melmark Expert Speaker Series

Professionals in the field of Applied Behavior Analysis presented on a variety of clinical topics during Melmark’s Annual Expert Speaker Series in Pennsylvania and New England. The focus included performance feedback for staff, evidence-based practices and treatment evaluations, ethical challenges in the practice of behavior analysis, increasing compliance in individuals with disabilities, treatment integrity of programs, medication use in treating behavior disorders, and iPad technology in educational settings.

Among the expert presenters were: Dr. James Connell, Dr. Richard Foxx, Dr. Jessica Kendorski, Dr. Robert LaRue, Dr. Mark Mautone, Dr. Michael Murray, Dr. Dennis Reid, Dr. Mary Jane Weiss, Dr. David Wilder and Dr. Thomas Zane. Melmark staff, along with parents and clinicians from the local community, learned valuable and immediately applicable information and skills in the education and treatment of children and adults with autism and other intellectual disabilities.

In addition to the Expert Speaker Series, Melmark also hosted workshops specifically designed for parents and caretakers in honor of Autism Awareness Month. Each week in April, professionals led small group discussions on issues common to individuals with autism (ASD). The series wrapped up with a presentation titled, “What to Consider When Considering Medication” by Melmark’s consulting psychiatrist, Dr. Michael Murray. The workshops received positive reviews from parents of Melmark students and parents in the community.

Expert Speakers Series are open to the general public and serve as an excellent source for professional development for special education teachers, psychologists and allied health professionals. For the coming school year, Melmark again has an outstanding lineup of presentations including James Partington, PhD, BCBA-D addressing the Assessment of Functional Living Skills and Wayne Fuqua, PhD, BCBA-D addressing the Promotion of Ethical Behavior. Watch our website for these unique opportunities.
Investing in Melmark’s Mission

Events Provide Opportunities

**Hubert J.P. Schoemaker Classic VIP Reception**

To honor major sponsors of The Hubert J.P. Schoemaker Classic, Melmark hosted a VIP Sponsor Reception in May. The Melmark Players performed vignettes from their play, *Melmark’s Movie Medley*, at the event. Before and following the performance, guests were treated to incredible hors-d’oeuvres provided by reception sponsor, Sodexo.

On October 7th, more than 300 leading business and life sciences professionals from The Greater Philadelphia Region will gather for the 8th Annual Hubert J.P. Schoemaker Classic. This annual event benefits Melmark and honors the memory of Hubert J.P. Schoemaker, founder of Centocor and advocate for people with special needs. Schoemaker, whose eldest daughter lived at Melmark for 28 years before her passing, dedicated much of his life to giving back to the community. Accenture is the Presenting Sponsor of the 2013 Classic. The event has raised nearly $2,800,000 in its seven years of support for Melmark!

The Classic will be played on Gulph Mills Golf Club, St. Davids Golf Club and Waynesborough Country Club. Tournament play will be followed by a cocktail reception, dinner, silent and live auction.

The 8th annual *fore* Melmark New England Golf Benefit for Children with Autism at the Andover Country Club was another amazing day. Over 160 golfers and sponsors competed for the top three place prizes. Participants also had the opportunity to participate in raffles and a helicopter golf ball drop for their chance to win cash and prizes.

The day was highlighted by a visit from Rene Rancourt (Bruins national anthem singer). Rene posed for photos, sang and placed the Stanley Cup ring on the finger of every Bruins fan there. The tournament was kicked off with his lofty rendition of the Star Spangled Banner.

Once tournament action finished, participants returned to the ballroom where they were greeted by Melmark staff, volunteers and families. The silent auction was very active during the cocktail hour, bringing winning bids well above the listed value of many items. The live auction with auctioneer Mark Menery resulted in lively and competitive bidding for spectacular packages including an Ireland Golfing experience, a Bruins game suite with Ray Bourque, and a suite to the Justin Timberlake & Jay Z concert at Fenway Park.

A big thank you to all who supported this special event. We look forward to seeing you at next year’s tournament on July 28, 2014.
Zumba for Autism

Over 200 participants came to dance and support Melmark New England at the 2nd Annual Zumba for Autism event on a Wednesday night in May. Zumba gurus Amy Fournier and Ann Saldi and a team of 18 instructors guided the crowd through two hours of fun, fitness and health while raising over $6,000 for Melmark New England!

This high-energy party featured a live DJ and Emcee (DJ Charles), night club style lighting, tribal drummers, T-shirt cutting table, a photo area, on-site vendor experiences and shopping opportunities.

Thank you to the food and drink vendors for their delicious donations, to all the fabulous instructors for sharing their talents and to all the participants who came and shared in this event with us. We hope to see even more next year at the 3rd annual event.

Volunteer of the Year Awards

Melmark hosted a volunteer appreciation event in April to thank the many volunteers who make a difference in the lives of children and adults with special needs who attend Melmark’s day and residential programs. Below are this year’s honorees:

- Vanguard - Corporate Partner of the Year
- ValleyPoint Church - Community Partner of the Year
- Louisa McDonald - Volunteer of the Year

Thank you to all of our volunteers in Pennsylvania and New England!
SAVE THE DATE!

October 7, 2013
Gulph Mills Golf Club
St. Davids Golf Club
Waynesborough Country Club

May 3, 2014
Hotel du Pont
Wilmington, DE