The New England Center for Children®

FY 2020 ANNUAL REPORT
Dear friends,

I am pleased to share with you our annual report for fiscal year 2020 (July 1, 2019-June 30, 2020). This past year has had many ups and downs, but I am incredibly proud of the way our community adapted to the challenging conditions around us. It is because of YOU that we were able to weather the storm and continue to serve our students. While much of the focus has been on the pandemic, we must also acknowledge the year’s successes.

Continuing a long tradition of industry-leading research dissemination, we had our 300th article published and surpassed 2,500 total research presentations around the world. We entered into a partnership in Lebanon and opened a Clinic in Dubai. On the fundraising side, for the first time in NECC’s history, the Annual Fund surpassed $2 million.

Perhaps our greatest success, though, was in how our school faced the COVID-19 pandemic. Although we had our share of difficulties, including spending more than $3 million on response measures, our community continually persevered. Our families endured incredible hardships, as residential families could not visit students for over three months and day school families had to adapt to remote learning. Through it all they exemplified courage, resolve, and patience.

I am proud to say that our residential program never closed, the day school reopened in July and residential students returned to classes at NECC in August.

Even with these successes, we still need your support. The road ahead will have obstacles, but we are confident that we can overcome these. Thanks to you, we will continue to create a world where autism is not a barrier to happiness, growth, and independence.

Sincerely,

L. Vincent Strully, Jr.
Founder and CEO
OUR MISSION
To create a global network of educators, researchers, and programs so that those living with autism may live fuller lives.

OUR VISION
A world where autism is not a barrier to happiness, growth, and independence.
FISCAL YEAR 2020 IN REVIEW

AUGUST 2019
7: The Infant Sibling Research Project, led by NECC Senior Program Director Rebecca MacDonald, PhD, BCBA-D, LABA, is featured on CBS-WBZ.
16: Team NECC runs the 2019 Falmouth Road Race, raising $22,081.
27: Mike and Lori McKenna, parents of a NECC student, host “The Mike” Golf Invitational, which raised $71,235.

SEPTEMBER, 2019
5: Lt. Gov. Karyn Polito tours NECC, meeting students and staff.
19: NECC announces a partnership with One Two Three Autism School in Beirut, Lebanon.

OCTOBER 2019
4: 163 NECC employees attend, and 36 NECC staff present at the 40th Annual BABAT Conference.
30: The Parents Organization provide a Staff Appreciation Brunch for NECC employees.

NOVEMBER 2019
15: The Children of Promise Gala achieves unprecedented fundraising results, raising over $1 million.

DECEMBER 2019
13: NECC holds Legislators’ Day. State Representatives visit NECC to learn about the unique needs of private special education schools.
16: The NECC-Clinic in Dubai Healthcare City, UAE opens, further expanding NECC’s global presence in the gulf.

MARCH 2020
16: NECC closes the Southborough facility. The day program moves to remote learning and residential students are quarantined in their residences.

APRIL 2020
4: NECC is featured in a Boston Globe article about the difficulties facing students and families separated due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
11: NECC provides hotel rooms for staff to self-isolate when not on shift to avoid contracting the virus.

MAY 2020
9: The NECC 5K Walk/Run for Autism is held virtually with participants all over the world raising over $140,000.
25: Founder and CEO, Vinnie Strully is named to the Worcester Business Journal’s “Power 50”, a list comprised of powerful and influential individuals in Central Massachusetts.

JUNE 2020
4: NECC Board of Directors conduct first-ever virtual Board meeting using zoom video-conference software.
13: After nearly three months, families of residential students are invited to visit their children at their residence outside.

JULY 2020
7: The day program reopens.

AUGUST 2020
12: Residential students return to school.
8: NECC extends its contract with Abu Dhabi’s Department of Education and Knowledge to continue management of the Mohammed bin Rashid Center for Special Education (MRC).

SEPTEMBER 2020
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WHAT WE DO

At The New England Center for Children® (NECC®), we provide compassionate, effective ABA programs and services to children with autism from 14 months to 22 years. We consider each child’s unique learning style before developing a realistic plan to foster individual achievement, self-esteem, and personal independence.

TEACHER TRAINING
We provide staff with initial training, ongoing professional development, and graduate program opportunities to equip them with the skills to advance their careers in autism education at NECC and beyond.

STUDENT EDUCATION
Our team of highly trained educators deliver a comprehensive range of services through home-based, day, and residential programs; partner classrooms in public school systems and consulting services.

RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY
The John and Diane Kim Autism Institute is home to our research center, where we study how children with autism best learn. This data is published in top peer-reviewed journals and is also directed into the ACE® ABA Software System, our autism curriculum used by educators around the world.

FAMILY SUPPORT
We support families through orientation, training, and open communication about student progress, challenges and achievements. We run special programs, activities and support groups to help parents and siblings spend quality time together in a safe and supported environment.

OUTREACH
Through media and government relations, as well as a range of special events, we increase support, raise awareness, and grow our network of advocates.
WEATHERING THE STORM: COVID-19 AT NECC

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a huge impact on 2020. This health crisis made us think critically, react swiftly, and approach all aspects of our work with flexibility and determination. When the state closed all schools to minimize spread of the virus, we re-allocated resources to ensure our residential program continued to serve our most vulnerable population.

NECC invested over $3 million in the fight against COVID-19, including hazard pay and temporary housing for staff, the purchase of personal protective equipment, sanitization supplies and equipment, and rapid testing for students and staff. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts provided great relief and the generosity of our families, friends, corporate partners, and Board of Directors made all the difference.

In addition to the financial costs, the burden on families was immense. Residential students were restricted to virtual visits for over three months. Parents of day school students had to help with remote learning. The toll COVID-19 has taken on families cannot be overstated, and likewise, NECC’s gratitude for their patience, belief, and understanding is immeasurable.
HOW WE ADAPTED

IT
The move to a virtual workplace meant new technology, additional devices, and updating security protocols. Thanks to IT, all of NECC’s business units as well as all program staff could continue to operate despite the shift in working conditions.

MAINTENANCE
From increased cleanings to renovating classrooms into de facto medical stations, their tireless efforts kept students and staff safe.

FOOD SERVICES
With the temporary closing of the school facility, Food Services had to prepare three meals/day and deliver them to the students and staff in 16 residential group homes.

RESIDENTIAL
Confined to their houses without family visits, our residential students transitioned to continuing their programs at home with the care and support of NECC teachers.

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY, PHYSICAL THERAPY, AND ADAPTED PHYSICAL EDUCATION (OT, PT, APE)
Staff used technology to continue students’ programs remotely. They uploaded workout routines and guided activities and provided live Zoom classes.

MUSIC AND ART
Using pre-recorded videos, live Zoom classes, and remote resources, music and art teachers provided students with fun, engaging activities to do at home.

DAY SCHOOL
Much like public schools, NECC shifted to remote learning programs last spring. Over the summer, students returned in person under enhanced safety and health protocols, including mask wearing, social distancing and frequent hand washing.

CONSULTING
While consulting and partner programs were put on hold during the pandemic, NECC’s team of consultants worked with students and parents to provide remote learning resources.

ACE®
The ACE® ABA Software System provided educators updated lessons about health and safety measures, including wearing PPE and hand washing.
LEADERSHIP

L. Vincent Strully, Jr.  Founder, President and CEO
Kayla Abeling, MEd, BCBA, LABA  Executive Assistant to the CEO
Michael S. Downey, MBA, CPA  Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer
Catherine M. Welch, MEd  Executive Director – Southborough
Jessica Sassi, PhD, BCBA-D, LABA  Executive Director
Jared Bouzan, MEd  Chief Development Officer
Nicole Gardenier, MS, BCBA  Executive Director, ACE® ABA Software System
Amy Geckeler, MS, BCBA  Executive Director of Global Consulting

Daniel Gould, PhD, BCBA-D  Executive Director – Abu Dhabi, UAE
Cammarie Johnson, PhD, BCBA-D, LABA  Director of Education Services
Susan Langer, MS, BCBA, LABA  Chief Program Officer
Bethany McCann, Esq., MEd  Director of Enrollment and Family Support
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Heather Morrison, MS, BCBA, LABA  Director of Administration
Meghan Reidy, MS  Director of Recruiting
Darcie Stawinski, MSA, CPA  Director of Finance
Jason Bourret, PhD, BCBA-D, LABA  Clinical Director
NECC further strengthened its position as the foremost provider of applied behavior analysis (ABA) services to children with autism in the Gulf Region. In December of 2019, the NECC-Clinic in Dubai Healthcare City (DHCC), UAE officially opened. The Clinic provides session-based ABA, and Speech and Language services to clients across all nationalities in both English and Arabic.

Training and educating local staff in foreign countries ensures program sustainability and local growth of ABA programs. In addition to session-based services, the NECC-Clinic provides a licensed BCBA, parent training, and the ACE® ABA Software System. The NECC-Clinic also offers free workshops to the public on topics such as helping children with autism build patience and tolerance in stressful situations.
“We are so thankful for the dedicated NECC staff that is working so hard during these difficult times to keep all the students safe, happy and engaged in learning.”
— NECC Parent
EDUCATING BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

In addition to academics and life skills, NECC prepares students for life beyond school. Vocational education provides skills but is also the key to health and wellbeing. Working builds confidence, pride, and personal achievement, and offers opportunities for social interactions.

Working leads to greater independence and an improved quality of life. In FY20, NECC had:

- 145 NECC students receiving vocational services
- 48 Students in volunteer/internship positions
- 22 Work sites

Participating Organizations:
Ashland Thrift Shop
Beaumont Rehabilitation and Skilled Nursing Centers
Brookhaven Hospice
Buddy Dog Humane Society, Inc.
Chestnut Hill Farm
Community Harvest Project
Drumlin Farm
Ecotarium Museum of Science and Nature
Encompass Fitness
Framingham Public Library
Habitat for Humanity
Homecare and Hospice at MetroWest Medical Center
J. White’s Automotive
Mass Audubon
MetroWest Humane Society
Milford Senior Center
Natick Service Council
News America Marketing
Old Navy
Pet World
St. Anne’s Thrift Shop
Starbucks
Sun Life Financial
TJ Maxx
Walgreens
Wegmans
Whole Foods
Worcester County Food Bank
INVESTING IN AUTISM EDUCATORS

The professional landscape has evolved dramatically in recent years. NECC’s recruitment strategy seeks to attract competent, compassionate caregivers and provide them with training, professional development, and a graduate education to become world-renowned autism educators.

Opportunities abound for NECC-trained teachers. NECC provides myriad advancement options within the organization, and has trained thousands of professionals who are now providing state-of-the-art services worldwide, through consulting, teaching, or their own programs.

Career paths at NECC

- Stay at NECC to be a clinician, consultant, or educator
- Partner Classroom teacher in an NECC public school classroom
- Share knowledge globally via lectures, symposia, conferences, or other programs
- Work at NECC’s Abu Dhabi School
Even before the 2020 pandemic forced mothers and fathers to take on the impossible role of guiding their child’s education, NECC recognized the heroic nature of teachers. The 2019 gala was dedicated to them, and NECC rolled out the red carpet to honor their commitment to bringing out the best in our students.

Sponsors, parents, friends and guests showed their agreement with the sentiment, pledging an incredible $157,750 in donations to support the direct-care staff at NECC who lovingly and tirelessly support the students with autism entrusted to their care. This gesture accompanied a standing ovation for the thirty teachers seated at the head table in the ballroom, and the funds were used to provide computers, staff appreciation events throughout the winter and spring, as well as a cash bonus for each of the hard-working direct care staff — more than 700 in total.

The excitement in the room was palpable as Gala Co-Chair, Elizabeth Wetherbee Klein announced that for the first time in the school’s history the event raised over $1 million!

HONOREES

Community Autism Champion
Erland Construction, Inc.

Outstanding Alumnus
Andrew Roberts

Educator of the Year
NECC direct-care staff
ANNUAL FUNDRAISING EVENTS

While the COVID-19 pandemic impacted our event schedule on the back half of FY20, the NECC community still came together in unique ways to help raise needed funds for the Center. We are grateful for each and every donor who participated in this year’s fundraisers.

TEAM NECC FALMOUTH ROAD RACE
August 2019
Raised $22,081
Jordan Saks
Lori McKenna
Jessica Mirisola
Caroline Fearnley

Lauren Palmateer
Matt McKenna
Emily McKenna
David Blank
Robin Drew
Beth McGonagle
Priscilla Camarda
Stephanie Muse
Fatou Njie-Jallow
Margaret Smith
Stephanie Carlin

THE “MIKE” GOLF
August 2019
Raised $71,235
Supported by NECC parents, Mike and Lori McKenna

5K WALK/RUN FOR AUTISM
May 2020
Raised $148,801

BOSTON MARATHON
September 2020
Raised $45,094
Kyla McHaffie
Ashley Arsenault
Katie Olszowy
John Gobron
WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR LEADERSHIP SUPPORT from Foundations and Corporations

Support from corporations and foundations help sustain and improve our programs, facilities and research. We are immensely grateful to our long-standing benefactors who share our mission as well as to those who responded this year when the pandemic brought unforeseen challenges.

In early April, Dave Klein of Greenwood Industries in Worcester, called the school to ask what NECC needed most to battle the coronavirus and keep the residential program operating. At a time when personal protective equipment across the state was very hard to procure, Greenwood found the most effective way to help. Using his network in the building industry, he made some calls and on April 28, a delivery truck with thousands of gowns, facemasks, and Tyvek suits were donated by Greenwood and Atlantic Asphalt and Equipment.

Greenwood has been a model of philanthropy for more than six years, supporting NECC through events like the SK, the Falmouth Road Race, the Children of Promise Gala and golf tournaments.

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FINANCIALS

Donors: 2,016
Donations: $2,099,199
Restricted Gifts: $219,737

FY 2020 Annual Fund Allocation

20% Student activities
Field trips/activities: bowling ($25,000), transportation ($10,000), apple picking/farm/state park trips ($5,000), team-specific celebrations and outings ($50,000)

21% Research and staff training opportunities
Conferences, staff salaries related to research, includes infant research project

11% Staff support
Parent and friend-sponsored events (staff dinner, appreciation gifts, etc.) ($60,000), healthy option vending machine ($15,000), small reinforcers through team budgets ($25,000)

5% Individual student needs
Specialized furniture for student/staff safety, student clothing, protective equipment for staff, unique student PPE needs

6% Specialized IT
Specialized apps ($15,000), IT to facilitate remote work and learning

9% Off-hour activities
Weekend activities at NECC Southborough, lifeguards for student/family events

3% Vocational
Transportation, job coach, supplies

25% Student equipment and materials
Fitness equipment at schools and residence, playground equipment, swimsuits and pool equipment, art and music supplies, minor capital improvements to school and residences, outdoor furniture and equipment to encourage outdoor activities, meetings, and family visits
FY 2020 Consolidated Financial Statement

Operating Revenue
$113,930,234

- Tuition: $106,380,585 (93.37%) (day, residential, adult, home-based, daycare, partner classrooms, international)
- Consulting: $3,567,469 (3.13%)
- ACE Technology: $1,831,169 (1.61%)
- Fundraising: $2,081,732 (1.83%) (grants, events, in-kind donations and contributions)
- Other: $69,279 (0.06%)

Operating Expenses
$111,007,278

- Program Services: $102,867,800 (92.74%) (day, residential, adult, home-based, daycare, partner classrooms, international)
- Administrative: $7,204,260 (6.39%)
- Marketing, PR and Fundraising: $935,218 (0.87%)