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# We Care Newsletter

## MEET SEBASTIAN & SAVANNAH MALONEY: YOUR SUPPORT HAS CHANGED THEIR LIVES

WINTER  
2017

“We Care has been an incredible experience for my family. The teachers, therapists, and staff are amazing. I absolutely love the inclusion focused program and I am forever grateful for its mission and its values!”

*-Patricia, mother of Sebastian and Savannah Maloney.*

Sebastian and Savannah were born on March 9, 2014, six weeks early, nine minutes apart and five pounds each. Due to their prematurity, their medical team whisked them away the moment they were born. It was not until a few hours after they were born that our son Sebastian was diagnosed with Down Syndrome. The Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) at John Muir suddenly became our second home. They closely monitored them, treated their jaundice and observed them for breathing and feeding. It was a difficult first few weeks but it was the most crucial few weeks of our lives as a family. It truly was an experience of a lifetime as we learned how to hold, feed, and bathe these innocent little angels.

When we learned that we were having twins we were shocked and delighted. I was carefully monitored throughout because of the increased risk of premature birth associated with a multiple births. I had weekly appointments with fetal growth scans, which is far more than most women get. During these, and after all my blood tests, I was told everything looked normal and that my two babies were healthy. I was briefly told about Down’s syndrome, but no one indicated it was a real possibility and we opted not to perform amniocentesis. In all honesty, I am glad I opted not to, as I had a pretty

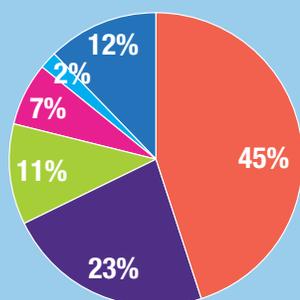


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# 2016 Financial Report

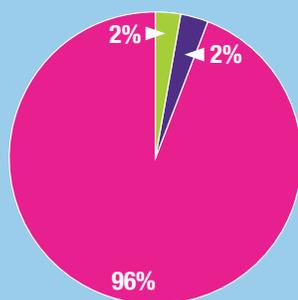
Our annual report will be posted on the We Care website - [wecarechildren.org](http://wecarechildren.org). Below is a review of our 2015 financials.

## PROGRAM REVENUE AND SUPPORT



- CONTRA COSTA COUNTY HEALTH SERVICES
- CONTRA COSTA COUNTY FIRST 5
- REGIONAL CENTER OF THE EAST BAY
- PRESCHOOL
- PROGRAM REVENUE & EARNED INCOME
- DONATIONS & OTHER INCOME

## OPERATING EXPENSES



- PROGRAMS
- ADMINISTRATION
- FUNDRAISING

## A message from Pete Caldwell Executive Director



I hope this finds you all enjoying great memories of the recent holidays and looking forward to the coming year. In 2016, hundreds of families were positively impacted by the hard work of our incredible clinicians, teachers, therapists, and specialists. Too, we added new and energetic staff, board members, and community partners to help us continue to thrive in 2017 and beyond. So many people come together each year at We Care to improve the lives of children with special needs in this community, and I'm incredibly grateful to each for sharing the belief in the importance of early intervention.

It's always nice to get a little external validation of the kind of work we do and I was excited to read a recent paper titled "The Life-Cycle Benefits of an Influential Early Childhood Program" co-authored by Nobel laureate James Heckman, a professor of economics at the University of Chicago and the director of the Center for the Economics of Human Development.

This paper contributes significantly to our understanding of the long-term impact of early education from an economic standpoint. He compares – favorably – the investment return on these types of programs (13.7 % compared to 7% - the S & P 500's historical rate, adjusted for inflation) and provides a compelling argument for communities taking an even stronger position ensuring preschool access – particularly for the types of children We Care serves.

While we've known for a long time that the Return on Investment (ROI) for early intervention is impressive and compelling, the data he's working from adds another level of certainty – particularly in filling gaps in long-term research. I encourage you to Google the paper when you want a little extra validation of just how important your support of We Care has been!

With a new year that will include important planning processes for us, I encourage you as always to reach out to let me know how you think we're doing, or ways you think we could improve our programs, connections, or communication. We are so much stronger for having you in our corner. Thank you!



Best,

*Pete*

## DONATIONS IN HONOR OR IN MEMORY

Barbara Bentley and Rex Johnston donated in the true spirit of Christmas in honor of:  
JoAnn Pico and Don Anthony; Gemma Bassi;  
John Kubitschek; Joan Galey

John and Janet Bruno donated in memory of:  
Marilou Bruno

Laura Culkin donated in honor of:  
Laura Hulburd

Glenn & Lydia Garabedian donated in memory of:  
Roger MacDonald

Steve & Robin Cavagnolo donated in honor of:  
Paula Tippet

Jim & Patty Geraghty donated in memory of:  
Barbara Milliff

Dan Gruppo donated in memory of:  
Alice Abruzzini

Lee Jordan donated in honor of:  
Paula Tippet's Birthday

Rick Kaplan donated honoring:  
Ed and Elaine Kaplan wishing them a happy birthday,  
and happy anniversary

Neil Konigsberg donated in honor of:  
Marc Greenberg and Family

Barbara Langsdale donated in honor of:  
Pete Caldwell's birthday

Barbara Langsdale donated in memory of:  
Virginia Diaz Singh

Barbara Langsdale donated in memory of:  
Greg Olson

Garda Pohle donated in memory of:  
Her Sweet Russel

## Meet Sebastian & Savannah Continued from page 1

normal and healthy pregnancy free from worries. Balancing the joy of first-time motherhood, at first, the concept of Down Syndrome felt daunting when we considered the medical, social, educational, and behavioral challenges. We had no idea how much support and encouragement we would receive from family, friends, and the larger community of other parents of kids with disabilities. In addition we have been lucky to receive the support of dedicated and caring therapists, teachers, and medical professionals.

Sebastian and Savannah are both a joy, and they truly complement each other. Being a new parent of twins is a challenge and being a new parent to a child with disabilities carries unique challenges, but life is all about challenges.

After six weeks of being in the NICU, we were introduced to the Regional Center and the Down Syndrome connection. Through our case manager, we received vital information and guidance on the programs and services available for Sebastian. I vividly remember touring We Care, and immediately falling in love with the inclusion structure and the teachers. In early December 2015, we received a call from We Care notifying us of a spot opening up in January for Sebastian. We were ecstatic for him and dearly wanted his sister to attend with him as well. Savannah's spot opened up a month later and they were able to be put in the same class - it was perfect and all I had prayed for.

The love, friendship and support we have experienced from the inclusion program at We Care over the past year has been invaluable. My twins have had the opportunity to learn alongside a diverse group of children with many different strengths. It took some time for Sebastian to really connect but he fell in love with his teachers, therapists and the staff at We Care.

The We Care program was just what Sebastian needed to give him a jump start. With the support of We Care, his development skills, language and social skills have improved drastically. The teachers and therapists are all so knowledgeable and patient and they truly want the best for all their students.

The interaction between my twins is heart-melting. Savannah sees Sebastian as any other playmate — she involves him in all she does, tries to wrestle him, mothers him and never fails to ask that her brother also be given one of anything she receives. On Sebastian's part, having his sister with him in the We Care program eased his adjustment and improved his learning. I firmly believe that the opportunity for them to be together in the same class has had a long term positive impact on the development of both of them.

Sebastian's quality of life is excellent now and while his path may not be as smooth as that of his sister, I strongly believe that all children flourish with guidance - Sebastian's diagnosis will never keep us from limiting his abilities. I have no doubt that as they get older the gap between them will increase, and it is likely Savannah will go to school a year before Sebastian, although we hope to keep him in mainstream education.

The teachers, therapists and staff at We Care are truly one-of-a-kind and the mission and approach of the program is so unique. Through the funding of supporters like you, We Care has changed, and will continue to change, the lives of my and many other children. Thank you.

## Check out our latest educational videos!

You'll find them on our website ([wecarechildren.org](http://wecarechildren.org)) in "Videos" on the "News" menu.



## We Care Board of Directors

Marc Greenberg  
*Chair*

Dirk Fitzgerald  
*Vice Chair*

Bob Sachs

Nicole Brocato

Jeff Butler

Maureen Bullotta

Paul de Paschalis

Nina Rowe

Steve Mellema

Little Stars   
*Gala*



## hope changes everything

We Care Services For Children

# Thanks All of You

Who Supported This Year's Annual Little Stars Gala



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Tesoro Refining and Marketing Company

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# 2016 Supporters Thank you!

We Care Services for Children is grateful to our generous investors. With our partnership, we are able to give children the help needed to reach their full potential. Without you, we could not help change the lives of children with developmental disabilities, continue our fight against child abuse, or give parents the support needed. Thank you!

## **\$40,000 and Above**

Susan Alonso

## **\$30,000 to \$40,000**

Steve and Debra Gonsalves  
Dean and Margaret Leshar  
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## **\$15,000 to \$30,000**

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Dan and Shay Martin  
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## **\$10,000 to \$15,000**

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## **\$250 to \$500**

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and David Grant  
Norman and  
Adria Schwartz  
David and  
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Barry and  
Barbara Silberman  
David Thomas  
Anne and Rob Thull  
Robert and Brenda Truax  
Phil and Mary Williamson

## **DONATIONS IN HONOR OR IN MEMORY** *Continued from page 2*

Jo Ann Pico donated in honor of:  
Barbara Bentley and Rex Johnston

Rick Kaplan donated in honor of:  
Ed and Elaine Kaplan wishing them a  
Happy Hanukkah

Garda Pohle donated in memory of:  
Phyllis Lewis

Republic of Cake donated in memory of:  
Samuel Austin McNiff

Cheryl Shaffer donated in memory of:  
Don Shaffer

Ermino Trebino donated in memory of:  
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Claire Murphy donated in honor of:  
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Jim Johnson donated in memory of:  
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Stephanie Semler in honor of:  
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Cathleen Simmons in Honor of:  
The Hulburd Family

Judith Bullotta donated in honor of:  
Hudson Bullotta

Jason LeGrand donated in honor of:  
Marc Greenberg & Family

Greg Keenan donated in honor of:  
Joyce M Keenan who was one of the  
founding volunteers at the We Care  
Center.

Barbara Bentley donated in honor of:  
Jo Ann Pico's birthday

David and Erica Quistgard donated  
in honor of:  
Tyler

