

MEMORANDUM

To: All OGC Families, Staff and Volunteers
From: Kyle Hauth, Executive Director
Subject: **OGC Update**
Date: April 21, 2008

I hope you are planning on joining us tomorrow, Tuesday, April 22nd, at 7:00 p.m. for the Parent Meeting which will be held in the OGC Habilitation Center Training Room. We will bring you up to speed on changes that are taking place at Orange Grove and, as usual, have an open forum for questions, comments and general discussion. I look forward to seeing you tomorrow evening. Much has taken place since our meeting in January and I know you will benefit by attending.

Although the Tennessee Division of Mental Retardation Services continues to impose undue funding cuts on our program and every other community agency in Tennessee serving people with mental retardation, we are doing everything possible to withstand the damage. We continue to communicate with State officials regarding the inequity of this decision and hope to soon have additional conversations about possible partnerships which could help the State meet its new expectations and benefit people with developmental disabilities living in Hamilton County. I am happy to report that in spite of this dreadful situation, we have witnessed more people funded through the new self determination Waiver than we have seen in many months. Although I find it perplexing that the State is not fulfilling its responsibility to people currently in the system, I am certainly pleased for the many people who have been stalled for so long on the waiting list.

The outpouring of support for our Capital Campaign from so many people throughout this county, state, union and, in a few instances, outside of the U.S. has given us hope and encouragement. Under the leadership of John Germ and Tom Caldwell, we are making great progress. I have no doubt that we will exceed our goal by the end of June. We have already begun some of the much needed improvements to our facilities, such as the extension of the Recycling Center and upgrading of the Dental Clinic. We should begin the process of creating the new homes for our aging population in the next few months. If you read the April 12th article in the *Times Free Press*, then you know that we are already beginning the work on developing a comprehensive approach to meeting people's needs on the autism spectrum disorder. Under the leadership of Hal Baker, we are facilitating meetings with developmental disability and autism specialists across the country in planning a broad collaboration to help those with autism and their families navigate the wide and sometimes confusing array of resources available in the community. This will be another very exciting result of our Capital Campaign.

I hope you are busy about setting up your First Giving site for Orange Grove. This is a very simple way for your friends and family to honor you by contributing to the Orange Grove Center Capital Campaign. You can simply go to our website and click on the link which is in the text of the third paragraph of our home page (www.orangegrovecenter.org). If you prefer to contribute to one of the existing pages, feel free to scroll through the many pages that are up and running. Feel free to contact me, if you would like additional information regarding this project.

We are interested in highlighting a few Direct Support Professionals in some short video series who enjoy what they do, are caring, dependable, passionate, and are loved by the people they serve and their families. If you know of a person that you would like us to consider in this effort, please send me a note, email, call, or come by my office and share your thoughts. Obviously, we are only successful in what we do because of the dedicated efforts of our front line staff. Please share with us any feelings you may have in this regard.

Thank you for your attention in this matter.