Respiratory Therapy Expansion
Positions Matheny for the Future

Respiratory therapy is a medical specialty that provides a wide range of therapeutic and diagnostic services to patients with cardio-pulmonary issues. Heart and lung disorders may not be part of Matheny’s patients’ primary diagnoses, but the importance of monitoring and treating these conditions among the Matheny population cannot be underestimated.

Matheny’s newly expanded respiratory therapy department, which is directed by Dan Cary RRT, consists of four full-time therapists and three who work on a per diem basis. While the department is not yet in operation on a 24/7 basis, Cary says, “We are moving toward 24/7, and a respiratory therapist is always on call.” The RRTs and CRTs, adds Cary, “play a critical role in the lives of patients with developmental disabilities and respiratory illness. They are responsible for patient assessments, care planning, staff education and providing various treatment modalities.”

Gary E. Eddey, MD, vice president and chief medical officer, believes Matheny’s new respiratory therapy department, “advances us from a clinical perspective. The role of respiratory therapists here is critically important, given the wide range of complex medical conditions experienced by our patients. The expansion of respiratory therapy positions us for the future, should we be asked to care for patients with even more complicated issues.”

Before joining Matheny’s staff, Cary had been lead open heart surgery respiratory therapist at Morristown Medical Center. He has an associates degree in applied science from Sussex County Community College (a collaborative program with the County College of Morris). His time spent at Morristown, which is a large acute care facility, Cary believes, “has prepared me for the many challenges that Matheny’s patients face.” The respiratory therapists at Matheny now have experience, he says, “ranging from 25-week-old neonates in a NICU to 100-year-old ventilator-dependent patients in a long-term assisted facility. We do everything we can to make sure every one of Matheny’s patients gets to experience every facet of life they possibly can.”

Respiratory therapy at Matheny was previously part of the nursing department. Now, Cary reports directly to Dr. Eddey. Even though it is no longer considered part of nursing services, the teamwork and cooperation between respiratory therapists and nurses is extremely important. And having a fully-staffed respiratory therapy department has made the nurses’ jobs easier and less stressful. “The nurses at Matheny,” says Cary, “now have a group of people they can rely on, allowing them to concentrate on nursing.”

That is confirmed by the nurses. “I love having a full respiratory therapy staff,” says Carol Enos RN. “It means so much to have that support and expertise. They have ideas for treatment we might not have thought of.”

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In 2011, Matheny received a $30,000 Community Employment Grant from the Kessler Foundation in West Orange, NJ, to fund its “21st Century Skills Transition to Employment Opportunities Program”, which is designed to enhance and expand prevocational realistic learning activities for our transition students (ages 18-21).

This past summer, Julia Stoumbos, Kessler Foundation program manager, visited Matheny to view the program firsthand. Among the activities she observed was the Tea Time Café, a snack bar run by students for Matheny employees. Twice a week from 10:45 a.m. to 12:15 p.m., three students, a teacher and an occupational therapist from the Matheny School are stationed in the rotunda near Matheny’s dining rooms to offer cappuccino, smoothies, English muffins and other treats for sale.

A new feature of the Tea Time Café is the opportunity for students to use two new HP Touchsmart 610 xt series computers, donated by Francis Mancho of Budd Lake, NJ. Mancho had received a $3,000 grant from the Jenny Jones Foundation so Matheny could buy the computers, which are important because the students’ disabilities make it difficult for them to ring up sales on a cash register.

Kessler Grant Helps Fund Matheny’s ‘Transition to Employment Opportunities’

For many of the students and patients at Matheny Tuesday, November 6, was a very memorable day. Several Matheny residents were transported to a local Peapack-Gladstone polling place to exercise their rights as citizens. Student Raven Bennett was very happy that she voted, but she had one disappointment. “People get very excited over voting,” she said, “and then it’s over too quickly.” Another student, Yasin Reddick, also found the experience very exciting, adding, “Finally my vote is counted. My opinion counts.” This was the ultimate civics lesson for two first-time voters, one they will not soon forget.
When Robert Schonhorn was the president of Matheny in 1993, he posed the question: “Can people with disabilities create fine art?” Schonhorn, who died earlier this year, recognized the creative possibilities that were trapped inside the bodies of people with disabilities. Nineteen years after he posed that question, it is clear that the answer is an unqualified “Yes!”

Full Circle 2012: Unexpected Art, the annual celebration of Matheny’s Arts Access Program, was held on Saturday, December 1, in the Robert Schonhorn Arts Center and was dedicated to the man, who along with then medical director Gabor Barabas MD, conceived of and created this unique program, which enables people with disabilities to create fine art, assisted by professional artist-facilitators.

“My father would have been so proud,” said Erica Schonhorn Gorman, Schonhorn’s daughter, as she and his grandson Max Gorman, accepted a special plaque from Steve Proctor, Matheny president and CEO. Guests at Full Circle attended a visual arts exhibit curated by Madison, NJ-based artist Dan Fenelon, and a reception in the gallery, before viewing a stage presentation that included a video tribute to Schonhorn as well as several examples of prose, poetry, drama and dance created by Arts Access artists. A dessert reception followed.
Matheny student Daniel Gaudreau is able to select his favorite music videos by gazing at a computer screen. It’s part of a new indirect access communications program made possible by an $8,451 grant to the Matheny School from the Summit Area Public Foundation. With the grant, Matheny is training students with medically complex developmental disabilities to control a computer by using visual tracking and scanning technology.

Gaudreau is in the beginning stages of learning how to use this technology, but with assistance from Matheny speech-language pathologist Christine Mayercik, he can make choices on the computer screen that were previously impossible.

In one recent session, he chose Taylor Swift and Gangnam Style music videos over a video clip of President Barack Obama appearing on the David Letterman Show. “You need to look for two green lights,” Mayercik advised Gaudreau. “Then an arrow will take you to the next screen, and the finger pointer will take you to the video.”

The equipment used for this project was purchased with funds from the SAPF grant and has been set up on a dedicated computer table that will allow students easy access. “The trial group of students is using the eye tracker during therapy sessions,” Mayercik pointed out, “and data and photos are being collected. Students are currently able to maneuver the cursor around the screen and use either an eye blink or maintain the cursor in one spot for a predetermined amount of time to activate a mouse click. PowerPoint is currently being utilized for practice activities where students have to use either one click, to change a slide moving through a presentation, or two clicks to activate an animation and then change slides.”

Once students become comfortable with this technology, they will be encouraged to begin using it during weekend and evening hours with support from Matheny’s recreation therapy staff.

Teaching students how to utilize technology such as this is integral to Matheny’s goal of improving the lives of its students and patients. Technology such as the eye tracker system not only facilitates education and increases leisure activity options; it also enables unprecedented levels of communication between the students and patients and their teachers, family and community.
From Wheelchair to Walker: Matheny Student Makes Surprising Breakthrough

While virtually all of the Matheny students and patients spend most of their lives in wheelchairs, they often spend time in a walker during physical therapy to increase their endurance and strengthen their muscles. Occasionally, a surprising breakthrough occurs during these physical therapy sessions.

Katherine Gaudio is an 11-year-old student who decided she didn’t want to return to her wheelchair and expressed her desire to make her posterior walker her main mode of mobility. “She is her own best advocate,” says Erin Meineke, DPT, her school physical therapist. “She made her opinion known that this was really going to be good for her.” The hardest adjustment, Meineke says, was transitioning from a physical therapy session to utilizing the walker all day long. “When she would walk in therapy for 30 to 45 minutes,” Meineke explains, “she didn’t realize how much energy it would take to use it all day long. In the beginning she was very tired. She’s had her walker now for three months, and she’s stronger and more confident and not as tired at the end of the day.”

Gaudio has used the walker on trips to Wal-Mart and to her Girl Scout meetings. And she’s also riding a regular bicycle with training wheels. She can safely transfer in and out of her walker, with supervision; and she can also safely sit in a regular chair, without a safety belt, in class or in the dining room or her bedroom. “Walking,” says Meineke, “is something the therapists are always working on, but it’s usually walking with an aide. Katherine didn’t want to be finished walking after a therapy session.” The whole transition, she adds, actually took a couple of years, but “she has always been a strong advocate for herself. She broke all the rules.”

Physical therapy sessions at Matheny provide therapeutic interventions to help students and patients accomplish their optimal level of function. PTs take a personal and client-specific approach while addressing each person’s individual needs. Students and patients may receive services such as gait training, balance training, mobility training and therapeutic exercise. They may also benefit from standing, adaptive tricycle riding and a variety of alternate position programs developed by the therapy staff.

“She has always been a strong advocate for herself. She broke all the rules.”

Katherine Gaudio in her walker, assisted by physical therapist Erin Meineke.
Dr. Lawrence T. Taft was a member of the Matheny medical staff for 13 years before he died in 2008. At that time, Matheny changed the name of its annual Service Awards to the Lawrence T. Taft Awards, in honor of the man who helped establish the field of neurodevelopmental pediatrics. He founded the Children’s Evaluation and Rehabilitation Center at Albert Einstein College of Medicine of Yeshiva University in the Bronx, and was the first chairman of the Department of Pediatrics at Robert Wood Johnson University Medical School where he established the Institute for the Study of Child Development. While at RWJUH, he developed a pediatrics department that reflected his philosophy and included a division of neonatology, in which high-risk births and prematurity were treated and studied. He also received the University Excellence Award “for demonstrating a high level of achievement and recognition by his peers for patient care.”

Dr. Taft’s widow, Odette Taft, remembers how much her husband “loved going to Matheny. He loved working with the kids, and he loved the parents as well. He would always shake the child’s hand. That way he felt they wouldn’t be afraid of him. And he always made a point of telling the parents, ‘You’re doing a good job.’ We’d get letters from families all the time.”

Herbert J. Cohen, MD, professor emeritus at Albert Einstein’s Department of Pediatrics, recalls that Dr. Taft, “pushed for the team approach. He brought together a number of people from different departments for an interdisciplinary approach.” That approach, adds Odette Taft, “is now an established, respected form of care.” Dr. Taft was Dr. Cohen’s mentor.

“When I came here in 1964, he trained me in what became developmental pediatrics. Larry was a good observer of children’s behavior and development and an excellent teacher. He was clearly a leader in the field of developmental pediatrics. He really cared about what he was doing and helping children, and a number of people he trained went on to have leading positions in the field. He was a very good teacher and role model.”

Dr. Taft was also a mentor to Gary Eddey, MD, vice president and chief medical officer at Matheny. Working with Dr. Taft, says Dr. Eddey, was "pure pleasure." Until the very end -- three months before his death -- he was training the medical staff and me how to provide care for the patient population with complex disabilities.

Odette Taft remembers a trip to China. “One of the Chinese doctors came over to him and said, ‘I’ve read your papers.’ We were in Greece, and a woman brought her child to see him. He was so gratified that people thought so highly of him.”

Dr. Taft was a mentor to Gary Eddey, MD, vice president and chief medical officer at Matheny. Working with Dr. Taft, says Dr. Eddey, was "pure pleasure."
‘Matheny is the Perfect Place for Her’

The scariest part of being parents of a special needs child, says Jacob Poleyeff, is, “What to do in an emergency. There’s no fall back.” Since May 2012, Jenna Poleyeff, the 10-year-old daughter of Jacob and Lauren Poleyeff of West Orange, NJ, has lived at Matheny. Prior to that, she was a day student at the Matheny school, and her father admits thinking that when an opportunity came up for residency, “I wasn’t sure I could let her go, although I knew it was probably the best thing.”

If they turned down the residential opportunity, it might be three or four years before her name came up again. “It was hard,” Lauren Poleyeff admits. “I cried.” The Poleyeffs did, however, with Matheny’s help, manage to make the transition a little easier than it might have been. “I insisted we leave her there on a Thursday,” Jacob Poleyeff recalls. “We brought her home for the weekend the next day instead of going a whole week. We passed that test.”

Jenna was born at 36½ weeks and went home from the hospital EEG revealed that Jenna had Lennox Gastaut syndrome, a severe form of epilepsy. The toughest part of caring for Jenna had been managing her seizures, but, since December 7, 2011, according to her father, “she has not had an obvious seizure.”

As for her residency at Matheny, Jacob Poleyeff acknowledges that, “We didn’t know what to expect, but when she comes home, she’s happy, and when we go back to Matheny, she looks out the window and is happy, too. When we were introduced to Matheny, we never met so many caring people in one day.”

“Matheny,” explains Lauren, “is able to do things with her that we’re not able to. They take her out to restaurants, baseball games, and she likes bowling, swimming and the sensory room (a specially designed interactive room with soft play areas and special lighting).”

Jenna, the Poleyeffs say, is comfortable at Matheny, and the staff members “go out of their way” to provide the little extras that make the hospital and school seem like home. One example is a special prayer the Poleyeffs would sing to Jenna at home before she went to bed. “Somebody suggested recording it, Jacob says, “so it could be played at Matheny. When she’s home, I sing it, and when she’s at Matheny, they play the recording. Matheny is the perfect place for her.”

From left, Jenna, Jacob, Lauren and sister Callie.

When a bed became available at Matheny in May, the Poleyeffs came face-to-face with the toughest decision they would probably ever have to make. “As she grows, her physical needs get harder to handle,” her mother Lauren explains, “but when the call came that a bed was available I thought it was a little too soon.” However, the West Orange, NJ, couple knew that with everything supposedly normal. When she was about four months old, her parents noticed that she wasn’t holding her head up. When she was one year old, an MRI disclosed some brain malformations and, by the time she was 18-20 months old, she began having what her mother described as “little tics. They were subtle, but they were happening frequently.” An
Darlene Tammara looks at her students and sees their abilities, not their disabilities. “Who knows how far they can grow?” she wonders. Tammara teaches a transition class at the Matheny School, which means she has the responsibility for instructing older students in life skills that will help them after they graduate.

“I love working with students at all different levels.”

Four years ago she started the Tea Time Café, a snack bar managed by Matheny students for Matheny employees. Now, in her transition class, she has her students count money from Tea Time sales, enter the results on a special math worksheet and make bank deposits. The students also work on clerical jobs for Matheny and fill packages for Operation Shoebox, an organization that sends care packages to U.S. troops deployed overseas. On December 1, some of her students, along with some Matheny adult patients, participated in an Operation Shoebox packing event at the YMCA in Hillsborough, NJ. And in January 2013, both groups were scheduled to make weekly visits to the Bridgewater, NJ, Library and a local yoga studio to learn appropriate job skills.

Tammara, a resident of Bridgewater, is in her 17th year at Matheny, although she left once, in 1997, to stay home and raise her children for three years. Then, after four years as a part-time community education teacher at the Middlesex Regional Education Services Commission, Tammara returned to Matheny in 2005. One of the aspects of working at Matheny that she really cherishes is the creative freedom. “Creativity here is not squelched,” she says. “If you have an idea, you can go with it. Matheny gives you an opportunity to try things. I love working with students at all different levels,” she continues, “coming up with creative ways to bring the world to my students, giving them every opportunity to grow themselves.”

Tammara also appreciates Matheny’s trans-disciplinary approach, “where therapists work in the classroom with teachers. We all work together. I feel very strongly about that – it’s such a collaborative effort.”

“We all work together. I feel very strongly about that – it’s such a collaborative effort.”

Darlene Tammara uses picture symbols to make a story more understandable to student Deborah Eike. At left, is occupational therapist Debbi Goodheart.

“We all work together. I feel very strongly about that – it’s such a collaborative effort.”

“create programs that provide the best outcome for student progress.” Her colleagues apparently feel the same way about her as they nominated Tammara as Matheny’s educator of the year for the 2012-2013 school year.
Oktoberfest: Celebrating to Benefit Matheny

“My daughter doesn’t walk, and she doesn’t talk. But during her first year at Matheny, the recreation department told me they wanted to take her camping. I said, ‘You’ve got to be kidding!’ They always think outside the box.”

Liz Geraghty, president of The Friends of Matheny, was describing her daughter Bozena’s experience at Matheny to a crowd of more than 100 people attending Oktoberfest, a casual evening of celebration by The Friends to benefit Matheny students and patients. The Friends of Matheny has raised more than $3 million for Matheny since 1983.

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Guests at the event, held at Vliettown Farm in Oldwick, NJ, enjoyed German food and music and made extra contributions to Matheny by buying raffle tickets, bidding in the silent auction and purchasing special Community Connections packages that help fund activities for Matheny’s students and patients in the community such as the previously-mentioned camping trips, as well as attendance at concerts and plays and the opportunity to dine out at restaurants.

Music was provided by Alpine Squeeze.

From left, Jim Brady of Far Hills; Jean and Donald Wadsworth of Basking Ridge; and Jennifer Duke of Far Hills.

Fred and Isabelle Frisco of Hillsborough with Matheny student Shane Szott.

From left, Cheryl Liccardi of Peapack, high bidder for NY Jets tickets, jerseys, jackets and a signed Mark Sanchez football; Debra Ross of Far Hills; and Andrea Szott of Morristown.

From left, Fred and Isabelle Frisco of Hillsborough with Matheny student Shane Szott.

From left, NJ Devils Hall of Famer Scott Stevens and his wife Donna of Bedminster; and Tom and Maria Carwithen of Madison.
Every fall, incoming freshmen at Centenary College in Hackettstown, NJ, participate in Community Plunge, a mandatory community service requirement in which students volunteer at a variety of community organizations. Matheny is fortunate to be on Centenary's list every year, and this fall several students from the liberal arts college participated in a variety of Olympics-style events that included wheelchair races and obstacle courses.

Centenary student Chelsea Qualliu of Westwood, NJ, steers Matheny student Scott Gordon in a wheelchair race.

Centenary student Christine Aquino of Somerset, NJ, relaxes with Matheny student Yasin Reddick.

Centenary student Kelly Conklin of Monroe, NJ, maneuvers Matheny student Michael Taurozzi's wheelchair through an obstacle course.
“W e go to 60 places, but you guys are Number 1.” With those words, Tim McLoone founder and leader of Holiday Express, launched the 2012 holiday concert at Matheny on Sunday, December 9. The theater in the Robert Schonhorn Arts Center rocked with the sounds of “Nobody Ought to be Alone on Christmas” and “Santa Claus is Coming to Town”. The energetic Holiday Express singer Pam McCoy was everywhere, sharing her microphone with Matheny students, patients and their family members. And Geri Brewer, a resident of Somerset, NJ, and mother of adult patient Rasheedah Mahali, joined the band, performing a solo on “This Little Light of Mine” and prompting McLoone to say, “The light keeps shining on all these wonderful people, the dedicated caregivers at Matheny.”

Tinton Falls, NJ-based Holiday Express’ mission is to deliver music, food, gifts, financial support and friendship to those in need during the holiday season. The organization is made up of about 1,300 volunteers including more than 80 professional musicians. Members of the Matheny Choir performed with Holiday Express during the concert, and McLoone announced that members of the choir would again be performing at the eighth annual Holiday Express Benefit Concert on December 20 at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC) in Newark.
Family Day at Matheny is an annual outdoor celebration that enables parents and other relatives of students and patients to not only visit with their children but to mingle with other families in an informal, unstructured atmosphere. There was plenty of food, an opportunity to swim in the outdoor pool and a chance to visit with Matheny staff members as well. This year the weather – in the 70s with very little humidity – made it close to a perfect day, attracting what was probably a record turnout.
Did you know there are gifts anyone can make?

One of the easiest ways you can help Matheny continue to provide exceptional care for individuals with medically complex developmental disabilities is to name the Matheny in your will.

Called a charitable bequest, this method of support lets you help us without ever jeopardizing your personal financial security. This type of gift offers you four key benefits:

**Tax Relief**
If your estate is subject to estate tax, your gift is entitled to an estate tax charitable deduction for the gift’s full value when given to a qualified charitable organization such as ours.

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Because you are not actually making a gift until after your lifetime, you can change your mind at any time. Until your will or trust goes into effect, you are free to alter your plans.

**Versatility**
You can structure the bequest to leave a specific item or an amount of money, make the gift contingent upon certain events, or a percentage of your estate to us.

**Simplicity**
Just a few sentences in your will or living trust are all that is needed. It is as simple as adding the following to your codicil, will, or living trust: “I give Matheny Medical and Educational Center, located at Peapack, NJ, (Federal Tax ID #22-1482276), the sum of $________, or _______% of my estate for its chosen purposes.”

To make a charitable bequest, you need a current will or revocable living trust. Your gift can be made as a percentage of your estate or you can make a specific bequest by giving a certain amount of cash, securities or property. In considering a bequest to Matheny, we suggest you put your families first. Emergencies happen, and you need to make sure your family is financially taken care of first. Including a bequest of a percentage of your estate ensures that your gift will remain proportionate no matter how you estate’s value fluctuates over the years.

To learn more about Planned Giving options please visit www.matheny.plannedgiving.org or contact Janice Kriegman at 908-234-0011 ext. 315

This information is not intended as legal or tax advice. For legal or tax advice, please consult an attorney. References to estate and income taxes apply to federal taxes only. State income/estate taxes or state law should also be discussed with your advisor.

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**Miles for Matheny!**

Sunday, April 21, 2013 • Liberty Park, Peapack, NJ

Registration opens January 23, 2013 • www.milesformatheny.org
2012 Annual Honor Roll of Donors

Outstanding Generosity

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The donor listings below reflect gifts received during the period of July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2012.

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A Message to Our Supporters

Thank you on behalf of all of us here at Matheny for your continued generosity and spirit of giving. The 2012 Annual Honor Roll of Donors published in this issue represents all of those individuals, corporations, foundations and organizations who have supported Matheny over the course of this past fiscal year (July 2011 through June 2012). Many thanks to all of you who have been so generous with your time, talent and treasure in support of Matheny’s mission and the individuals we serve.

Gifts and grants over the course of this past year have allowed us to support the funding of several critical projects and programs such as: Community Connections, which enables us to bring our patients and students/off-campus into the community to visit museums, attend theater performances, sporting events, restaurant dinners, and to participate in activities such as adaptive ice skating, adaptive surfing, adaptive horseback riding and other types of activities they would not be able to experience on Matheny’s campus. Dollars raised have also enabled us to make upgrades to various types of technology and equipment in our classrooms, to allow the Arts Access Program to expand its reach, to strengthen the operations of our Center of Medicine and Dentistry and community residences, and continue enhancing our nationally recognized transitional nursing program. Please know that your gifts, no matter the size, do make a difference in the lives of all the individuals that we serve on a day-in and day-out basis.

Thank you once again for your ongoing support of the Matheny Medical and Educational Center and I look forward to receiving your feedback and ideas as we continue to move forward with our efforts to support this very special organization.

Kevin Ralph, Chief Development Officer
908-234-0011 ext. 318 | kralph@matheny.org
Matheny DSPs Receive Special Recognition

National Direct Support Professional Recognition Week was celebrated from September 9-15 to acknowledge the important work performed by DSPs to provide quality life-enhancing supports and services to individuals with developmental and intellectual disabilities.

In New Jersey, 13 Matheny personal care assistants received special recognition on September 11 at the New Jersey Law Center in New Brunswick for DSP professional training they have received from The College of Direct Support at the Elizabeth M. Boggs Center on Developmental Disabilities. In addition, Matheny PCA trainer Brenda Hoagland was honored as New Jersey’s first credentialed DSP. About 60 of Matheny’s employees have either completed or are enrolled in The College of Direct Support, more than any other facility in the state.

Safy Diedhou, one of Matheny’s PCAs enrolled in the program, says DSP training prepared her to handle difficult situations. “Without DSP training,” she points out, “there were tools I was missing. I didn’t know how to deal with emotions. I wasn’t comfortable dealing with certain challenges. When a patient was difficult, I didn’t know what was appropriate to make them comfortable. Now, anything that comes my way, I’m ready for it.”