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a newsletter from Via of the Lehigh Valley

336 West Spruce Street  
Bethlehem, PA 18018

ViaNet.org | 610-317-8000

## The Difference in a Family's Life - a Mother's View

### Via's Early Intervention Program



Zachariah started speech therapy with Via when he was almost two years old. We came to Via because Zachariah was barely using words and was unable to tell us what he wanted or needed. It was frustrating, for us and for Zachariah, not being able to understand what our child was trying to tell us.

Our starting goals may have seemed simple but, trust me, they were important to us. We wanted Zachariah to say "Mom" and "Dad" and call his grandparents by name. We wanted him to tell us what he wanted, but more importantly, needed. When he started, Zachariah's communication skills consisted of pointing and whining or crying and grunting to get his needs met.

In the first two months of speech therapy, our Via therapist work with Zachariah and taught

us how to continue his learning at home through songs and reading. Together, we worked hard to help our son. After we reached the two month mark, his speech abilities just took off. He began putting two words together, then three and after seven months, our Zachariah was speaking in complete sentences and using "please" and "thank you" consistently. He could count to ten, sing songs and was working on learning his ABC's.

Zachariah is three years old now and loves to talk; he says some of the funniest things we have ever heard. Working with Via was a life changing experience for our family and we are thankful to Via for giving our son a bright and healthy start in life.

**Help Via continue to make a difference in the lives of the children we serve every day. Make a gift online at [ViaNet.org](http://ViaNet.org) or in the enclosed envelope.**

## Via Thrift Stores

Everyone loves a bargain. You'll find great prices and a wide selection of clothing, housewares, linens, furniture, electronics and more at Via Thrift Stores. When you shop at the Via Thrift Stores, you help provide opportunities for children and adults with disabilities. **Visit our website [ViaThrift.org](http://ViaThrift.org) for a list of locations.**

## Via Thrift Stores

**\$5 off**

your purchase of \$20 or more

**[ViaThrift.org](http://ViaThrift.org)**

Expires 12/31/2010

## Host a Via Clothing Drive

Holding a clothing drive for Via is easy. Your group collects the clothing, Via provides signs and information and picks up donations of clothing and shoes in any condition at your site. For more information or to schedule a clothing drive, contact Jeannette MacDonald, [J.MacDonald@ViaNet.org](mailto:J.MacDonald@ViaNet.org), 610-317-8000 x450. Join the growing list of Via Clothing Drives:

5000 Forms | A D Computer | Air Products & Chemicals | Alpha Sigma Tau — Lehigh Valley Alumni  
Bridgestone Americas Tire Operations | Britech | Cambridge Integrated Services | Coordinated Health | Crayola  
D&B | The Express Times | Holy Cross Evangelical Lutheran Church | IAAP | Infineon | Jr. League of the Lehigh Valley  
Just Born | LaFarge | Lehigh Valley Charter School for the Performing Arts | LSI | Lutheran Manor Apartments  
Majestic Athletics | Olympus | Packaging Corporation of America | Penn State Lehigh Valley | PPL  
Schnecksville Elementary School | Strawberry Acres



## From the Interim Executive Director

My role as interim executive director has been to assess the needs and capacity of Via, while overseeing the day-to-day operations and program delivery so Via's Board of Directors can determine the necessary skills and attributes needed for a permanent executive director.

During the last ten months, the board and staff have adopted policies, procedures and industry best practices that allow for organizational stability and program growth. Via has the capacity to expand its program initiatives and has thoughtfully planned for expansion. The executive search committee expects to have the permanent executive director in place by September 1, 2010.

Dedicated board members and staff have worked very hard during this transitional time. Responsibilities and expectations have changed and I thank everyone – from staff to funders, thrift volunteers to Officers of the Boards, consumers, employers and vendors – for your commitment to Via's mission. Thank you for your patience and generosity. Via is positioned to provide programs and services for those who want what everyone wants – a job, friends, safety and acceptance.

You've read Zachariah's story and the plans for Via's Teen Summer program – help us turn a "Can I?" into an "I can!" and make a gift in support of these programs. Your donation, in any amount, will help Via impact young lives for a bright future.

Wishing you all acceptance,



Karen Forbes, Interim Executive Director

## Via's Mission

Via provides leadership, support, opportunities and resources for people with disabilities so that they may be independent, productive and enjoy full lives within the community.

## Board of Directors

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## What's Happening with Via's Teen Summer Program

Via's Teen Summer Experience helps young adults with disabilities connect to their community through recreational, social, volunteer and educational activities to help prepare for adult life. Participants, age 14 to 21, learn about their community, participate in career shadowing and mock interviews with local companies and volunteer at organizations across the Lehigh Valley.

In addition, teens and young adults will explore career and service learning opportunities.

This provides an opportunity to learn about potential careers and community resources. In turn, the community has the opportunity to discover the potential of teens and young adults with disabilities and the skills and abilities they offer.



recreational and social fun, teens and young adults will participate in activities at Camel Beach and Dutch Springs, attend Iron Pigs and Reading Phillies games, plan trips to the Mint and cultural exhibits in Philadelphia, and make various excursions in the Lehigh Valley.

### Career Exploration & Service Learning Sites

- Allentown Senior Center
- Bear Creek - Behind the Scenes Tour
- Cancer Support Community
- Care Alternatives
- Cat Shack
- Cedarbrook
- Center for Animal Health & Welfare
- Coca-Cola Park Tour

- Food Bank
- Habitat for Humanity
- Martin Guitar Tour
- New Bethany
- North Star Adventure
- NORWESCAP
- Phoebe Home
- Relationships Boundaries Training
- St. Luke's Neighborhood Center
- WFMZ Channel 69 - Behind the Scenes Tour



The summer 2010 schedule is exciting and challenging. To provide an outlet for

recreational and social fun, teens and young adults will participate in activities at Camel Beach and Dutch Springs, attend Iron Pigs and Reading Phillies games, plan trips to the Mint and cultural exhibits in Philadelphia, and make various excursions in the Lehigh Valley.



**You can help teens with disabilities explore their community and develop valuable skills that will take them into their adult lives. Make a gift online at [ViaNet.org](http://ViaNet.org) or in the enclosed envelope.**

# Via's Autism Services

Through a three-year, \$275,000 grant from Lehigh County HealthChoices, Via of the Lehigh Valley offers a program to provide support and services to adults age 21 and older with autism. Via provides services annually to 20 adults with an autism spectrum disorder diagnosis (ASD). Services are provided free of charge as part of the grant and Via is accepting adults in this program.



Developing social skills and peer networks helps people with autism gain independence and find success in life and career development. With the increasing number of ASD diagnoses, resources for support are limited. Via's Autism Services provide educational, vocational and recreational activities in the community which helps participants learn valuable skills and gain independence.

Via's Autism Services serves a group of individuals whose skills and talents have gone unrecognized in the community. Due to

a lack of state and local funding for adults with autism, this group has gone without support for too long. The population served by Via's Autism Services has a wide range of untapped skills and potential. Without programs like this, their abilities may go unnoticed and unexplored.

Via's Autism Services also serves as a way to educate the community about the potential for employment and volunteer opportunities for adults with autism that they may not have otherwise thought possible. Via partners with employers, local agencies and institutions of higher education so participants participate in job shadowing, job site visits, career exploration, resume preparation, inclusive service learning and volunteer activities.

**Your gift to Via of the Lehigh Valley will help adults with autism live and connect to their communities. Make a gift online at [ViaNet.org](http://ViaNet.org) or in the enclosed envelope.**



## Via of the Lehigh Valley Donor Spotlight

For a community, compassion is measured by the people and the manner in which they support all its members. Everyone deserves the chance to succeed and, through the support of our community, Via is able to provide opportunities for the people we serve. We rely on our community to provide financial support so we can continue to provide quality programs for children and adults with disabilities. Thank you to our donors who help us achieve our mission.

### *Gifts made from October to May 2010*

*For an annual giving list, visit us online at [ViaNet.org](http://ViaNet.org) and click on How You Can Help.*

#### **\$10,000+**

East Penn Bank, a division of  
Harleysville National Bank  
Mary Ellen Keller Trust  
The Estate of Marjorie Kulaitis

Lawrence Center  
C.F. Martin & Company  
Coordinated Health  
John Crampsie  
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David Freedman  
Thomas Hall  
The Estate of Dorothy Hittell  
David Hudson  
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KNBT

Wachovia Corporate Foundation  
The Waldman Family Charitable  
Trust  
West Side Republican Club  
Gerry Yasso

Express Times  
Fraser Advanced  
Habitat for Humanity  
Corey Hersh  
K Lee Web Design  
Lehigh University "Great Southside  
Sale"

#### **\$5,000 - \$9,999**

Brown & Brown Insurance  
Louis J. G. Buehler Memorial Trust  
Campbell, Rappold & Yurasits LLP  
Freedom High School  
MetLife

Franklin Markley Trust  
Martin Guitar Charitable  
Foundation  
PenTeleData  
Petrucci Family Foundation  
J.B. Reilly  
Laurence Riola  
Lisa and Jerry Somers  
The Evelyn Stewart Trust  
Team Capital Bank

#### **Gifts made in memory of the following friends of Via**

Lea and James Arnold  
Judith Dowling  
Nicholas Economedes  
Lori Markulics  
Kirsten Diahann Miller  
Billy Racosky  
Andrew Reisteter  
Willard "Lefty" Wieder

Morning Call  
Northampton Community College  
RCN  
Runner's World  
Service Electric  
Sodexo  
Technicom Audio & Visual Inc.  
TMR  
Turning Point  
Valley Youth House  
ViaMedia  
We Haul Moving  
WFMZ Channel 69

#### **\$1,000 - \$4,999**

Mabel Adams Trust  
Air Products & Air Products  
Foundation  
Anonymous Friend  
Banko Enterprises  
Frederick & Margaret Bedford  
Charitable Foundation  
W. Douglas Brown

#### **Donations of Product or Services**

Adams Outdoor Advertising  
Bethlehem Area school District  
Boutique at the Rink  
Edwards Business Systems

Via's programs continue to grow and strengthen our ability to fulfill our mission. Your gift and support can make real changes in the lives of the people we serve. Please consider making a gift online at [ViaNet.org](http://ViaNet.org) or in the enclosed envelope.



**Creating Success Every Day**  
336 W. Spruce St | Bethlehem, PA 18018

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## Lehigh Valley Health Network Marathon for Via *September 12*

Registration is open for the LVHN Marathon for Via, a five-person Team Relay, Full and Half Marathon, and 5K Walk from Allentown through Bethlehem to Easton. Volunteers are also needed – groups welcome!

**Volunteers Needed**



## Via All-Star Basketball Classic

Via All-Stars staffed the inaugural Via All-Star Clinic, an event for kids with special needs in March. The clinic was a new addition to the Via All-Star Classic which has been held in our community for the past 35 years. Selected Via All-Stars from the graduating class of 2010, along with area coaches and members of the Lehigh Valley High School Basketball Hall of Fame, staffed the clinic.



## Via Golf Classic



Thank you to golfers, title sponsor Brown & Brown and hole sponsors of the May Via Golf Classic. This double shot-gun scramble saw the largest number of golfers for any Via Golf outing.

**Register today at ViaNet.org Save the Date: May 23, 2011**