



June 2010

Assisting people with disabilities and their families  
to achieve their goals and realize their dreams since 1996.

"Shift happens!" said an impassioned speaker/parent at the Family Support Center on Disabilities conference I attended in May in Washington, DC, as part of the NC State Action Team. It instantly resonated with me, conveying a mix of the sometimes gritty and tough of both family support work and parenting, with the slow but real progress we are making as we work with families, invite and accept their gifts and build public awareness in the NC community. Sharon Lewis, the new Commissioner of the Administration on Developmental Disabilities, addressed the conference attendees, and shared ADD's new direction. One of her goals is to achieve reauthorization of the Developmental Disabilities Act. Ms. Lewis, a parent herself, intends to make family support a strong component of the Act. As I shared our FIF model with her and others, their enthusiasm for FIF reminded me again of how unique and relevant it continues to be.

Betsy MacMichael, State Director

## Breaking News

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The American with Disabilities Act will be 20 years old on July 26, 2010. First In Families of NC has joined other NC organizations in a recommitment to the mission of the ADA. See [www.2010anniversary.org](http://www.2010anniversary.org).

### Chapter News:

- ✓ **FIF of Durham** received a Community Bridging Grant from The Durham Center.
- ✓ **FIF of Gaston & Cleveland Counties** and **Johnston County FIF** hosted Applebee's Flapjack Fundraisers. FIF G-C also received a donation from a local business and participated in Belk Charity Days.
- ✓ **First In Families (FIF) of Mecklenburg County** secured three new grants.
- ✓ **FIF of the Southern Piedmont** received a grant from a local business.
- ✓ **Triad FIF** held its 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual "Making Dreams Come True" Horse Show.
- ✓ **Wake FIF** hosted a Cornhole Tournament at Rally Sports Grill and received a grant from a local church.

## Elevator for Independence

First In Families of Gaston & Cleveland Counties recently helped a family purchase an elevator for their home. The Resource Consultant worked with this family for about 8 months to find resources to pay for and install an elevator in their home. The family includes a five year old boy named Howard who uses a wheelchair. His mother had been carrying him up and down the stairs in their home and had back trouble as a result.

Howard and his parents live on a farm in a house that has been in the family for years. His parents hope that Howard will continue to live in the family home even after they are gone. With the elevator in place, he will be able get around the house independently and his parents can continue with planning for his future.

To help families like Howard's, please donate to FIFNC. You may designate a local Chapter or program of your choice.

[www.fifnc.org/funding/donate.html](http://www.fifnc.org/funding/donate.html)

## New Programs & Updates

- First In Families of North Carolina has started a new endeavor called Time Banking in Wake and Durham counties. Time Banking, started by Edgar Cahn in the early 1980s, mobilizes people to use their time and skills to help one another, through the use of Time Dollars. Members identify skills and services that they are competent to provide to someone else (earning Time Dollars) and skills and services that they need (spending Time Dollars). Everyone who gives can earn; everyone who earns can spend. Contact Cathi Drinkard, 919-571-8092, Ext. 16 or [cdrinkard@fifnc.org](mailto:cdrinkard@fifnc.org) for more information. Also, visit the Timebanks USA web site: [www.timebanks.org](http://www.timebanks.org).
- Through a generous grant from the **Home Health Foundation of Chapel Hill Endowment Fund of the Triangle Community Foundation**, FIFNC has provided family support and/or respite vouchers to 20 individuals so far this year and has leveraged 36 cents on every grant dollar. The focus of this grant is people with Traumatic Brain Injury or Developmental Disabilities in Chatham and Orange counties, including Military families.
- As part of North Carolina's federal HRSA grant, First In Families of North Carolina is providing community bridging to people with TBI in the Triangle region. This program includes the formation of networks of support for people with TBI, including returning veterans, and workshops on planning for the future. For more information, visit <http://www.fifnc.org/funding/tbi.html> or contact Gail Dupre at 919-251-8368, Ext. 102 or [gdupre@fifnc.org](mailto:gdupre@fifnc.org).
- **Got Electronics or Jewelry?** FIFNC and our 12 Chapters continue to raise money through our Green Fundraiser for education and training to benefit local families. Please contact Karen Carlton at 919-251-8368, Ext. 101 or see <http://www.fifnc.org/funding/donate.html#green>. So far we have raised \$334!

## Impact of First In Families Across North Carolina

**July 2009 - March 2010:**

**2,087** Families Served

**517** Children Birth to 10 Served

**\$367,028** In Private Funds  
& In-Kind Donations

**5,796** Volunteer Hours Donated



## Amy's Network Takes Off!

Amy is 19 and loves being out and about with friends in her community. Her favorite outings are going to the mall, bookstores and Chick-Fil-A and she adores all things Disney. Amy's favorite band is the Bee Gees, and in particular, Andy Gibb. She and her family are founding lifetime members of FIFNC's Lifetime Connections program, and they hired Meredith as her Community Connector in November. They have since worked together to get her personal network up and running, and have gathered three times.

**"As far as thoughts about the meeting....Amy said 'I had a blast' and is already planning the menu ("Smiley Face" potatoes) for her next meeting. Dennis & I were very moved and grateful to have so many of Amy's friends gathered together in our home. We look forward to more get-togethers."**

**Joanne, Amy's mother**

At her second network meeting, Amy and network member Jenna hosted a Pajama and Book Donation Party to support Pajama Pals, a nonprofit in the area that provides PJs and books to children in need. Many items were collected and several network members even wore PJs to the party! Amy wore a mortar board with her PJs to announce her May 29 high school graduation. Congrats, Amy!



Amy was also proud to be a torch runner for Special Olympics recently. We can't wait to see what Amy does next!

## Emily Grows A Garden & A Network

Emily, a 29-year-old Air Force veteran, has a traumatic brain injury. She has a personal network through a special project funded by the NC Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Substance Abuse Service and the Health Resources and Services Administration.

Natalie is Emily's Community Connector and together they have explored Emily's interests in gardening, crafts, exercising and music, and have begun building her network around those and other interests. Emily and her mother recently moved into an apartment and Emily is an enthusiastic volunteer for the community garden in her new neighborhood. She also volunteers at the local animal shelter, where she works in the cat room to socialize and care for the cats awaiting adoption.



Natalie has supported Emily in reconnecting with activities at her synagogue as well as catching up with old friends and making new friends through activities such as going to plays and movies together in addition to her volunteer work.

Through the generous support of The Durham Center, we are able to offer financial assistance to families or individuals living in Durham County to become a Lifetime member of our Lifetime Connections program. Contact Gail Dupre at 919-251-8368 or [gdupre@fifnc.org](mailto:gdupre@fifnc.org) for more information.

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[www.fifnc.org](http://www.fifnc.org)

First In Families of  
North Carolina, Inc.  
is a 501(c)3 tax-  
exempt organization.

## FIFNC 2010 Summit

FIFNC held its Annual Summit on March 25-26 in Morrisville, NC. Ninety local Management Team members (governing boards for each Chapter) and staff attended this annual training event, as well as 20+ people from the community



for our Keynote luncheon on Friday. FIFNC thanks **Sweet Tomatoes** in Cary for sponsorship of Thursday's dinner!



David Ptonyak presented a powerful Keynote on The Importance of Belonging. For more information on David's work, see his website at [www.dimagine.com](http://www.dimagine.com). Breakout sessions at the conference included Fundraising, Leveraging and corporate partnerships, Strategic planning, and Building/Engaging Management teams, Building relationships with our public partners, and Time Banks.



All of the funds for this year's Summit were privately raised, thanks to great work by the FIFNC Board of Directors, our community supporters and the 12 FIF Chapters. The FIFNC staff also worked with community partners to leverage 65 cents on every dollar spent on the Summit.

## Wake & Durham Time Banks



Through the new FIF Time Bank (see page 2), we are excited to be able to demonstrate "paying it forward" like never before. Reciprocity, a fundamental principle of both Time banking and First In Families, is explained by Timebanks founder Edgar Cahn in this way:

***"All of us are driven by a desire to make a contribution. But in practice, we don't usually ask or encourage those whom we help to give back in some way. That means that they don't get a chance to receive that very special feeling that we know comes from helping someone else. We may even be creating dependency if we do not provide them some way to give back."***

The new FIF Time Bank is open to the entire community in Wake and Durham counties, but will also include the gifts and talents of those served through FIF in both Wake and Durham counties. In this time of economic challenge and seeming scarcity of resources, Time Banks are a perfect complement to the FIF model. Using Time banking, we anticipate the following outcomes:

- More resources and services will be available at no cost to people with disabilities, as Time Bank members contribute their skills or services to one another (for example, mowing grass, teaching yoga, cutting hair, walking dogs).
- Members of Time Banks will share a sense of ownership and both short- and long-term investment in their Time Banks.
- There will be greater participation in First In Families by community members, because the Time Banks will be open to everyone interested, not just the disability community.
- People with disabilities will be perceived as valuable, contributing members of their communities as they provide skills and services and contribute to the broad community in a very tangible way.