

# Annual Report 2020/2021













I am one of the few people in this world who has never had a Facebook page, Twitter account or Instagram account. The Faison Center, though, posts on all of these social media outlets. We like to share stories that will bring a smile to your face and, hopefully, reinforce why you support The Faison Center.

One day a teaching assistant in our Faison School asked why all of the posts on our social media were of students in our school politely sitting at a classroom table, or toddlers in our Early Education Center having fun together, or adults in our residential and day programs enjoying a group activity off campus. Needless to say, I was a bit confused. I could not imagine what was wrong with showing such images. The staff then commented that the pictures do not accurately reflect the day-to-day challenges faced by those we serve...and by the staff. Instantly, I understood the frustration—our posts celebrate the successes, but do not recognize the struggles.

This report celebrates many successes. Reading about our sponsored residential program that has changed the life of one of our young adults, learning about the impact our play areas have on toddlers and students, and seeing the progress at the new Early Education Center at our Newport News campus will, no doubt, leave you smiling. As you read through the following pages (and any of our social media posts), though, please remember that the successes we celebrate are made possible because of the extraordinary Faison staff. They do not have easy jobs as the vast majority of those who we serve struggle with self injury, aggression and other severe problem behavior. This creates a very difficult and challenging work environment for them. Yet, they remain dedicated to our mission, dedicated to the toddlers, students and adults with whom they work, and dedicated to each other.

This dedication produces the tremendous results that you see in the pictures of those in our programs laughing, playing, learning and enjoying life in the community.

I am so very grateful for our staff. Their hard work allows us to share stories of success that make us all smile.

I hope that you enjoy this year's Annual Report and, as always, thank you for your support of The Faison Center.

Sincerely,

W. Brian McCann President & CEO

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# **Family Partner Program**



# "He has become his own person."

Innovation, Independence, Inclusion. These three words describe all of The Faison Center's programs and the Family Partner program is a great example of these words in action. This residential program allows individuals who are more severely impacted by autism to live in a private home setting and receive the supports they need to live their lives, to become themselves and to be a part of the community.

Our Family Partner program embraces a natural time in life when young adults move out of their parent's home to pursue greater independence. Courtney K. knew that the time had come for her son, Reid, to pursue a more independent life. However, given the level of support that Reid needs, Courtney did not know if he would ever have the opportunity to live outside of their home. Reid is 23 years old and had been a student at the Faison School for many years, graduating in 2020. Although Reid has very few verbal skills, he started saying "college" after his older brother left home to pursue an undergraduate degree. At first Courtney thought Reid wanted to visit his older brother. That was not the case. It became clear that Reid wanted to do what his older brother did—move out.

Courtney turned to Faison to see what residential options existed for Reid. "I trusted Faison, because we've been with them for so long and I knew that if it was a program that was sponsored by them, that it would be organized and safe, and we would love it," said Courtney. The Family Partner program matches adults with severe autism to live with another individual or individuals who are trained to provide whatever daily living supports are necessary in addition to recreational and social activities. When Courtney met with the team at Faison to discuss this program, she came prepared with two pages of notes on what would be the perfect match for Reid.

"I was thinking I'm never going to get this many things with the family partner we get matched with. So when we sat down with the Faison team, they asked what I thought were the main criteria for a family partner for Reid. I told them I actually had a pretty comprehensive list. It included that I would love for them to have already taught at Faison. If they're musically inclined or if they're in a band, it would be great. If they have a partner who is an elementary school music teacher, that would be even better. I was very specific about the things I wanted for Reid."

Based on Courtney's list, The Faison Center paired Reid with a family partner named Kayen who, at the time, was a teaching assistant at the Faison School and, as a member of a local band, regularly incorporated music into his interactions with students. Courtney was extremely delighted, saying "The funny thing was everything matched! Everything!" As she jokingly added, "Except that I wanted them to live next door to me. That didn't work out...but that's probably for the best!"

The matching process is very thoughtful and purposeful to allow everyone involved to get to know each other, feel comfortable, and, ultimately, determine if the match is right. To begin, Kayen, Courtney and Reid met for dinner several times. Then Kayen and Reid started meeting at The Faison Center and going into the community with each other. The next big test was overnight stays. Finally, after six months, Reid moved in with Kayen.

When describing Reid's reaction to his newfound life, Courtney said "He was so excited. He was just overjoyed. We set up his whole room. And then he was like, 'go home.' We asked 'What? Do you want to come home?' He said 'No, go home!' We then realized he wanted us to leave him and go home. This is awesome because my biggest fear was that he wouldn't like it. But he was so happy. And he still is to this day." After 18 months, Courtney has been amazed by the difference the program has made in Reid's life, "He just looks so much older and grown-up, he has a really cool beard and he has these new cool funky glasses that I love. He has become more independent in picking out what he wants to wear. He has a much larger musical taste than he did when he was here. He's always loved music so it's really cool to see that he's learning all these new songs, and talks more than he did before. He has become his own person, which is not always something you think about when you have a child with autism.

He loves feeling like he's done the same thing that his brother did and leaving and going into college. So, it's been great for us, and really easy for him...although a little harder for me, but not as hard as I thought it would be."

The Faison Center is proud that the innovation of the Family Partner program gives individuals like Reid the chance to live a fulfilling life at their level of independence with an emphasis on inclusion in the community.

Learn more about the Family Partner program.





# The **POWER** of **PLAY**

For all of those who we serve at The Faison Center, play is not only fun, but it is also an important tool for learning. Six-year-old Azy loves attending the <u>Peninsula School</u> at The Faison Center in Newport News, but when he first arrived, he could not stand wearing his glasses. In fact, he refused to do so. Without them, of course, he had tremendous difficulty with any academic instruction. This all changed when the new playground came into the equation. Azy's teaching team decided to try rewarding him with playground time for keeping his glasses on. The reward worked! Azy quickly went from wearing his glasses for just 10 seconds to nearly 15 minutes! The power of play on display!

Playgrounds are an integral part of both the Richmond and Newport News campuses where teachers can implement curriculum designed to teach our students communication and social interaction skills in addition to various academic subjects such as math and science.

The Richmond campus has multiple areas that provide different opportunities for new experiences and physical activity: three playgrounds, the Flo and Tony Guzman Community Center and the Outdoor Learning Center. The swings, adaptable basketball hoops, swivels, balance beams, seesaw and vegetable garden in the two playgrounds on either end of Kirshner-Mihaloff Hall are extremely popular with all of our students. Students are quick to want to spend time in these spaces as a reward for meeting learning and self-management goals in the classroom.

The third playground, located at Markel Hall, is used by the toddlers in our Early Education Center. Having access to group activities on the playground inspires other skills that those who we serve in this program need to work on such as social, play and imitation skills. Filled with slides, a mini rock climbing wall and space to ride tricycles and throw balls, this playground has seen many of our youngest grow so quickly. One little friend of ours who was unable to express himself vocally now goes up to fellow classmates on this playground, calls their names and runs away to instigate a game of chase. Again, the power of play on display!

The Guzman Community Center offers 10,000 square feet of indoor space for play and learning. Our Adapted PE teacher, Nicole Rosen, developed a curriculum for the Guzman Community Center that incorporates a broad range of both individual and group activities. "I have developed lots of different options," says Nicole, "so that every student, irrespective of their physical ability, can find something that works for them and that they enjoy doing."



In addition to the physical education classes inside the Guzman Community Center, Nicole works with students in the Outdoor Learning Center. With large overhanging trees providing shade, dedicated walking paths winding throughout the space, and a centrally located sand pit, this area at the end of the Richmond campus contains a large deck overlooking a stream that is used as classroom space, multiple activity stations that encourage dynamic motor activity, and special features like a water flow system and splash tables that support our curriculum of exploration and discovery. The curriculum was designed to support the development of students and adults of all ages by incorporating the natural world into an exciting learning adventure. Although this space just opened in May 2021, it has quickly become the favorite spot on campus for most students.





At our Newport News campus, we recently moved the Peninsula School from its original location into a newly renovated space in order to triple enrollment. With that increase in enrollment, we knew we needed much more outdoor space. Today, the main playground at the Peninsula School is five-times larger than the old playground! Just as in Richmond, our Peninsula School staff are constantly finding ways to incorporate the play equipment into lesson plans and self-management goals.

The playground was used to help Azy learn to wear his glasses. He is just one of many students whose academic performance and skill sets have improved because of the school's creative programs with the playground. Without question, the playground is the most highly preferred environment on the Peninsula School campus. Looking towards the future of the Peninsula School, Brian McCann, CEO of The Faison Center, said "As we continue to grow enrollment with students from Williamsburg down to Hampton and across the state line into North Carolina, we look forward to more and more students not only learning in this space, but learning because of this space. It is much more than just a playground."



Following COVID-related delays in 2020, the Early Education Center in Newport News is now officially open! We welcomed our first student in January and Assistant Director for Early Education, Dr. Ashley Greer, is excited that several other youngsters are now in the process of enrolling.

Working with children ages 15 months to five years old, this program helps toddlers learn to, among other things, speak, walk, play, and socialize with peers. The program, which focuses on the entire family, also provides training to parents tailored to fit the family's needs.

Our Early Education Center in Richmond partners with a private local preschool for children without disabilities that allows us to implement our inclusive instruction.



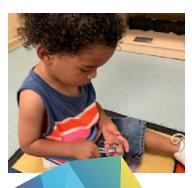
With classrooms for those we serve right next to the preschool classrooms, this partnership creates an inclusive early education model which provides our students the opportunity to participate in educational and social activities with their typically developing peers.

Whether for just a few minutes at a time or for a full day, the inclusion of our students with their preschool peers ramps up learning and provides age-appropriate behavior modeling. This inclusive learning also benefits typically developing youngsters, as their parents have reported that their children often show greater cooperation, patience, and empathy when in the dual enrollment program.

We are excited that this unique and effective partnership model will begin soon at the Early Education Center in Newport News.

Learn more by hearing from one of our Early Education Center Grandparents.







# In Their Own Words...

Members of our community share stories of the central role The Faison Center plays in their lives.

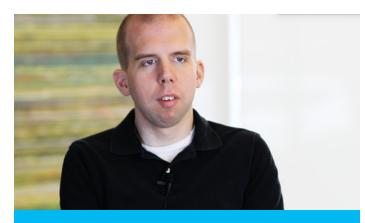


Karen I. shares the story of her son getting his COVID vaccine

Faison partnered with KidMed to provide a Vaccine Clinic for children with autism. The nurses were trained to administer shots to children with autism and other related disabilities. For those students who wanted to attend the clinic, teachers at Faison worked with them on "vaccine comfort" to help them to understand the process and feel comfortable receiving the vaccine. The clinic was also open to any of their family members who had not yet been able to receive a COVID vaccine.

Shot #1 in the books! Thank you to The Faison Center and KidMed - Pediatric Urgent Care for teaming up to make this happen for our kiddos! These are the types of challenging things that Faison helps families with! I'm forever grateful when things can be pulled off my overflowing plate.

My son was definitely a bit wary of the nurse at first. During the wiping and rolling up of his sleeve he twisted away from her initially so his arm was up against the corner of the wall but he stayed super safe. Then he stood up and she got it done. When she finished up, he actually asked her for some tickles!



Nick lives in the Faison Residence and talks about the Rideshare App

The Faison Center's Adult Services worked with Ginger Belongia, an Occupational Therapy Doctoral student, to pilot her Safe Rideshare Program at the Faison Residence. The program focuses on the challenges adults with autism and other developmental disabilities face in getting around in the community and the potential for increased independence through the use of rideshare services like Lyft and Uber. Learn more about Nick's Rideshare experience here.

I have a job at Hobby Lobby as a warehouse worker. Faison taught me how to use the Pulse and Lyft to get home from work every night. Faison staff showed me how to download the app on my phone and set it up.

It's called Rideshare and it is specifically for people with disabilities. Apart from work, I use it to go to my parents' house or if I have to go somewhere on my own.

It helps me to be more independent.



# Faison Center Research: Impacting Autism Around the World

Another unique aspect of The Faison Center is the amount of research we conduct on our campuses and publish in peer reviewed journals. We have been recognized as the most published non-university affiliated lab in the country in the field of Organizational Behavior Management, an area of behavior analysis. We are also proud of these recent research projects:

- Published in the Journal of Autism and Developmental Disabilities research with Old Dominion University regarding the Quality of Life of families of children with autism.
- Published in the Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis research with Kennedy-Krieger Institute at Johns Hopkins and University of Maryland Baltimore County regarding ways to optimize learning by children significantly impacted by autism.
- Published in the Journal of Organizational Behavior Management research regarding safety protocols and protective clothing and equipment for staff when working with students with severe problem behaviors.
- Published in two journals, Education and Treatment of Children and in Behavior Analysis Research and Practice, research regarding job skills training for teens with autism.
- Research in progress with a provider in Italy regarding increasing leisure skills for adolescents with autism.
- Research in progress on Richmond campus regarding effective ways to help students with autism tolerate getting shots, such as the COVID vaccine.



# 2020/2021 The Faison Center Highlights



### **JULY 2020**

Faison's adult community always enjoys **movie** night. This month we watched Disney's "Onward" in the Guzman Community Center.



### **AUGUST 2020**

Both our Richmond and Newport News campuses reopen to school students for in-person learning.





## **SEPTEMBER 2020**

The Safe Rideshare app launches after being piloted at the Faison Residence. The app helps adults with autism independently navigate their communities by increasing their confidence in rideshare services like Lyft and Uber.



OCTOBER 2020 Faison's virtual Halloween Spooktacular was a big hit with all our students!



## NOVEMBER 2020

Peninsula School celebrates Dominion's support of our new playground.



### **JANUARY 2021**

Peninsula School's **Early Education Center** opens.



FEBRUARY 2021

COVID vaccinations continue to roll out on campus for Faison's Adult Services.



### **MARCH 2021**

Style Weekly covers a story about one of our Faison families and how their daughter Joy was able to continue receiving behavioral support throughout the pandemic in our Early Education Center.



Faison welcomes visitors to campus for the first time in a year during a series of small socially distanced receptions honoring sponsors during Action for Autism Month.



experience nature through an interactive outdoor learning space.



### **DECEMBER 2020**

Faison and UVA's Curry School launch a joint research project using our Early Education Center to identify the skills youngsters need to thrive in inclusive environments.





### **JUNE 2021**

### Faison's Weekly Adventure Club restarts

with our community partner, Beyond Boundaries. Students and adults are excited to step out of their classrooms and again enjoy community-based experiences.

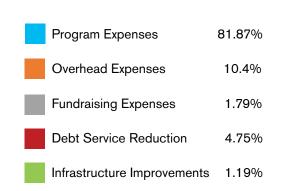
# The Faison Center Annual Report Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2021



The Faison Center Operations (in millions)	
Program Revenue	\$17.5
Faison Apartment Rental Income	\$0.8
Net Funding from Fundraising*	\$0.4
Program Expenses	(\$15.6)
Overhead Expenses	(\$1.9)
Debt Service Reduction	(\$0.9)
Infrastructure Improvements	(\$0.2)
Net Fiscal Year Ending 06/30/2021	\$0.1

\*Capital campaign funding is not included

Financial information is provided following the Generally Accepted Accounting Principles.















# The Faison Fund - Honor Roll of Donors

Recognizing All Gifts Received 7/1/2020-6/30/2021 to the Annual Fund, Action for Autism and Aces for Autism. Gifts to Faison's Forward into the Future campaign will be recognized at the close of the campaign.

### \$25,000 and up

**Dominion Energy** Paul and Debbie Edmunds Alan Kirshner and Deborah Mihaloff Markel Corporation The U.S. Charitable Gift Trust

### \$10.000 - \$24.999

Abbitt Family Foundation Carolvn Abbitt AECW Fund of The Community Foundation for a greater Richmond Will and Cindy Anderson Dr. Kenneth Årndt BB&T I SunTrust, now Truist Daniel and Patricia Carr The Community Foundation for a greater Richmond Davenport & Co. Donald and Lynne Faison The Gordinier Family Don and Ann Hall Danny and Brenda Jones Lloyd and Tracy Little Peake Law Group PC Brad and Janet Sauer Paul and Kathryn Smoke

### \$5.000 - \$9.999

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\$2500 - \$4999 Gerry and Kathleen Albanese Artcraft Management, Inc. Atlantic Union Bank Baskervill Scott and Nancy Belleman Nelson and Kathryn Cutler Fidelity Charitable Gift Fund The Jane and Arthur Flippo Foundation Hourigan Construction Hunton Andrews Kurth LLP Interline Brands Jackson Lewis P.C. The West End Jaycees Mike and Kathy Laing McGriff Insurance National Philanthropic Trust Old Point National Bank Old Point Trust and Financial Service Stephen and Donna Parker Dennis and Cindy Pryor Ratner Law Boyd and Kate Rawles Cullen and Rosemary Seltzer Snead Family Foundation Christopher and Sara-Ellen Snow Stepping Stones Foundation, Inc Morton G. and Nancy P. Thalhimer Foundation TowneBank Howell and Margo Wallace Walsh Electric Co. Inc. The Waltie Fund Warwick Plumbing and Heating Corp. West Second Charitable Lead Annuity Trust Thomas and Ann Wilson WKH Solutions Walter and Rebecca Young

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- Tinsley and Mary Alice Yarbrough

- Kersey, Sealey, Clark, & Associates Martin-Star Cabinetry & Design LLC The Milton M. Meyer, Jr. and Mildred B. Peninsula Community Foundation

## The United Way of the Virginia Peninsula

### \$250 - \$499

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## The Faison Fund - Honor Roll of Donors

Jean Childress

Recognizing All Gifts Received 7/1/2020-6/30/2021 to the Annual Fund, Action for Autism and Aces for Autism. Gifts to Faison's Forward into the Future campaign will be recognized at the close of the campaign.

### Up to \$249

Matthew and Elizabeth Abbitt Nick Ackerman Ken Aducci David and Mary Ahearn Anonymous Martin and Anne Atwood Mikey Citrus Dick and Happy Barnwell Mr. and Mrs. Gary A. Barranger Tom and Sue Ellen Billups Kevin Bishop Elizabeth Bishton Bill Booth Tripp and Kamila Bowles Carl and Cynthia Brakman Elizabeth Broderick Robert and Patricia Brooks Anonymous Doug and Susan Burgoyne Mike Burnett Anonymous Patrick Carlucci Robert Cataldi Steve Chafin Rev. James Chambers Linda Chambers Charitable Family Fund LLC

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Susan Van Dyke Ernest and Nancy Vaughan Tony and Deborah Vincent Ginger and Martin Webber White Orthodontics Dr. and Mrs. Paul R. White Joann Whitt Dennis and Allison Wixted Anonymous Robert and Amanda Woodrum Thomas Yambrick

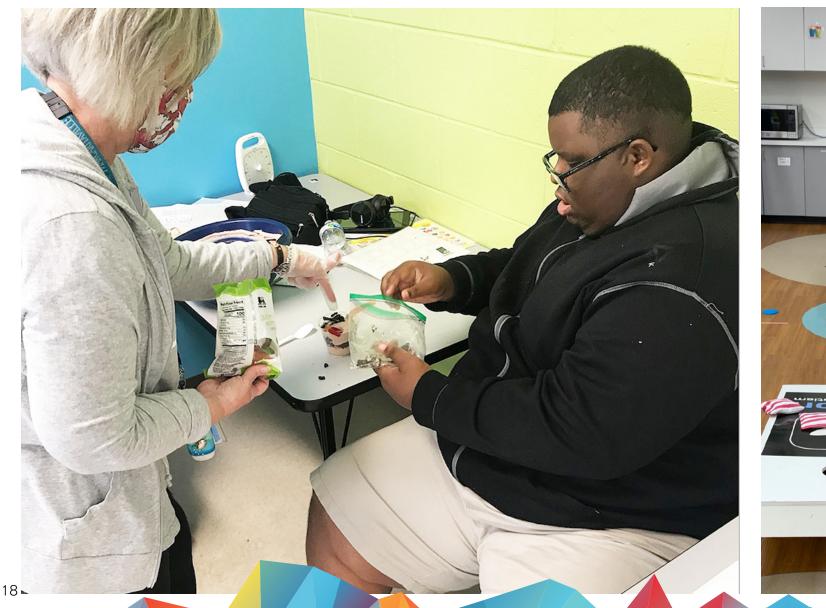














## Tributes

In Memory of Richard Abbitt Dick and Happy Barnwell

In Honor of Jake Acciarito Elisabeth Brittain

In Honor of Kyle Aldridge Mark and Margaret Hilldrup Mike and Joslin Hultzapple Jerry and Terry Bullard

In Honor of Cindy and Will Anderson Alan Kirshner and Deborah Mihaloff

In Honor of Lindsay, Jason, and **Oliver Belnick** Alan Kirshner and Deborah Mihaloff

For the Birthday of Joaquin **Bielawski-Mendez** Everett Kohler

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In Honor of Joaquin **Bielawski-Mendez** Gerardo and Sharon Mendez-Picon

In Honor of Hunter Burger Larry and Andrea Hogan

In Honor of Christopher Corsello Ginger and Martin Webber

In Honor of John Ellis Cottom Susan Cottom

In Memory of Connie Cowardin Joann Whitt

In Honor of Ty Dorion The Benevity Community Impact Fund

In Honor of Melody Drisko Anonymous



### In Honor of Paige Edmunds

Daniel and Patricia Carr Myra Jane Harris Roy and Ann Tyler Allen Sterling and Nancy Edmunds Chip and Julie Harris Walter and Rebecca Young Jan Crowell

In Honor of The Edmunds Family Chris Rudner

In Honor of Brittany Faison Alan Kirshner and Deborah Mihaloff

In Honor of Brooke Faison Alan Kirshner and Deborah Mihaloff

In Honor of Donald and Lynne Faison A. Nieves Guzman, III Alan Kirshner and Deborah Mihaloff

In Honor of The Faison Center's Teachers Mehmet Camurdan and Yujie Shan

In Honor of The Faison Residence Staff Nick Zweerink

In Honor of Catherine and James Gregory Alan Kirshner and Deborah Mihaloff

In Honor of Tommy Handley Rebecca Kleinhample

In Honor of Linda Lee Johnson / Shelly Blum Betty Johnson

In Honor of Ben Kim Lou Ladson

In Honor of Laura, Nick, Owen, and Nora Kirby Alan Kirshner and Deborah Mihaloff In Honor of Alan Kirshner and **Deb Kirshner Mihaloff** Donald and Lynne Faison Jean Childress

For the Birthday of Philip W. Klaus McNier and Nancy Tilman and Sandra Mihaloff Irvin and Linda Seeman

In Honor of Kathi, Barry, and Matthew Klein Alan Kirshner and Deborah Mihaloff

In Memory of Jack Kreuter Barbara Kreuter

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In Honor of Mason Lester Anonymous

In Memory of John Maloney Tripp and Kamila Bowles

In Honor of Ruffin Manning H. Robert Simmons

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For the Birthday of Jon Markiewicz Cullen and Rosemary Seltzer David and Anne Schwartz

In Honor of T.J. and Molly Mascia Mike Burnett

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In Celebration of Nate Melbourne Tony and Deborah Vincent Ryan Stumpf

In Memory of Mildred and **Milton Meyer** Richard Michael and Roberta Meyer

In Honor of Isaac Michael Hannon Craig and Heather Hannon

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In Honor of Carter Joseph Ledford In Honor of Meghan Riley Bob and Judy Riley

> In Honor of Calvin Ritter Will and Kelli Ritter

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In Honor of Sarah Anne Seltzer John and Diane Golden Sheldon and Carmen Seltzer

In Honor of Liam Strickland William J. and Lydia J. Strickland

In Memory of Aloise VanZant

In Honor of Blake Vincent

In Honor of Adam Warman Oden and Deborah Warman

In Honor of Taylor Wixted Dennis and Allison Wixted

In Honor of Terry Deane Young Henry and Virginia Woodhead







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  - Lucille Wagner



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- Dr. Louis Hagopian, PhD, Director of the Neurobehavioral Unit, Department of Behavioral Psychology, Kennedy Krieger Institute
- Dr. R. Douglas Greer, Professor of Psychology and Education, Teachers College at Columbia University
- Melissa B. Nelson, M.D., Pediatric Associates of Richmond and Fellow, American Academy of Pediatrics
- Terry J. Page, PhD, BCBA-D
- Joshua K. Pritchard, PhD, BCBA-D, Southern Illinois University









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