changing lives, making a difference
Dear Friends,

The pages of our 2013 Annual Report reflect Kennedy-Donovan Center’s successful growth and expansion over the past year. With a revised and updated mission statement, we continue to pursue quality human services with renewed clarity and focus.

We unveiled a new logo in 2013 and began a re-branding effort which better encompasses our dedication to personalized care that allows individuals to reach their maximum potential. Our vision of providing services that are innovative and compassionate serves as the foundation for thoughtful decisions which have led to positive changes in the lives of people we support.

In 2013, one such change was a new contract awarded to KDC to provide the Independent Living Program, a program that helps foster children transition into independent living at the age of 18. This new program facilitated the purchase and ensuing renovations of two multi-family apartment buildings in New Bedford. These properties provide us with the capacity to serve up to 20 young adults at a time as they begin their journey into independence.

While our program growth and financial stability are two important measures of our continued progress as an agency, our true value can only be measured in the successes of the thousands of individuals and families we serve. We hope that some of the personal stories and accomplishments highlighted in this report reflect the differences that we were able to make in 2013, only possible with your donations, support and guidance. We are truly grateful for your ongoing contributions to KDC’s success.

Warmly,

Kevin Rodman Conare
President & CEO

Accomplished in 2013

- Attained the highest level of approval from CARF with a three year accreditation, and from the Department of Developmental Services with a two year licensure and an opportunity to perform a self-evaluation at the end of the license period.
- Completed renovations to the Greater Attleboro Programs Center and reached a Capital Campaign goal of $225,000.
- Completed renovations to the outdoor play space at our New Bedford Campus and raised 100% of funds needed for completion of this project.
- Expanded Foster Care services by securing the Department of Children and Families contract to operate the Independent Living Program for young adults transitioning out of foster care services.
- Increase fundraising events with inaugural 5K Trail Run in KDC’s South Central region.
- Purchase and begin renovations of property in New Bedford to accommodate our growing programs and expanding services in this region.
- Expand services available through Early Intervention by obtaining agency-wide Hanen Centre Certification in the It Takes Two to Talk program.
- Improve social recreational opportunities on Cape Cod through grant-funded efforts to assess needs and address barriers.
- Expand the capacity of our Independent Living Program to allow us to accommodate ten young adults as they transition out of foster care services.

Goals for 2014

- Purchase and begin renovations of property in New Bedford to accommodate our growing programs and expanding services in this region.
- Improve social recreational opportunities on Cape Cod through grant-funded efforts to assess needs and address barriers.
- Expand the capacity of our Independent Living Program to allow us to accommodate ten young adults as they transition out of foster care services.

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Kevin Rodman Conare
President/CEO, KDC ex officio
When you walk into Joanne Farias’ home, the love and devotion she has for her family is very clear. The walls are adorned with photos of all her children: biological, adoptive, and foster. The room is filled with toys, medical devices and baby bottles sprinkled about, serving as obvious reminders of who the priority is in her home. Joanne is emphatic about her role in working with biological parents. She explained that she tries to teach parents to appreciate their child and the gift they are. She helps parents through the arduous maze of medical appointments associated with having a sick child and works to build their confidence and commitment to parenting. She hopes that her efforts as a foster parent not only strengthen and change the children, but strengthen their parents. She says, “The goal is always to go back. Reunification is the focus of the program.”

Joanne is passionate about babies who have significant fragility, and make a difference for. For example, she is especially passionate about children with cerebral palsy, unable to speak or walk on their own. But his bright blue eyes spoke to Joanne the moment she met him. “He’s smart and has lots of potential,” she says of Gabe. She attributes the quality of care she provides to the therapists, nurses, and home health aides, but the relationship between them is evident; his eyes did not leave her for a moment.

Joanne has been caring for foster children since she was 19 years old, and has been a KDC foster parent since 1995. Her first foster child, Lori, was seven years old with down syndrome when she came to live with Joanne and her parents. Joanne was able to care for her at such a young age because Joanne’s father was 19 years old with down syndrome when she came to live with him, but who will forever be in her heart and memory. And, when asked how she keeps going, the reply is simple: “There is always another child who needs you.”

Joanne’s commitment to fostering children has worked with and child and in hope for their future, their health and their enjoyment of life. Joanne takes pride in helping give children the support they need to go back to their families stronger and in knowing what she gives to them changes them forever. Joanne is always another child who needs you.
“Bob and I have always held the belief that giving back is a huge part of being successful in business.”

Thomas Tripp and Robert Santoro are the founders of Top Tier Site Development in Carver, Massachusetts. TTSD is a full service general contractor focusing on wireless communication, commercial and residential construction, with a specialty in retail installation. The company has been growing and has awarded Bob and I have always held the belief that giving back is a huge part of being successful in business. To be able to give something back to the people in our community that we have experienced hardship, tragedy, or live with the day-to-day challenges from disabilities, gives us a sense that what we do has a greater purpose.”

Just last year, TTSD donated nearly $50,000 to local and national charities and Kennedy-Donovan Center was one of those fortunate recipients. Although TTSD is one of Kennedy-Donovan Center’s newest supporters, they have been extremely generous both financially and in volunteerism. Their support began when they participated in the “Swing For Kids” Plymouth Golf Tournament in support of KDC’s Early Intervention program. Tom’s wife, Jill brought their daughter to participate in a child group at the EI Center and learned of the tournament. Jill not only shared the tournament information with Tom, she became a very active member of the golf committee while securing a number of prizes, foursomes and sponsorships. She’s also been a wonderful advocate for KDC as a member of the Development Council, a committee formed to help fundraising efforts for all of KDC’s programs statewide.

Tom’s passion for KDC comes from understanding the number of people who turn to us in time of need and how crucial it is to have the resources we offer to the children and families in the communities we serve. Tom and I have always held the belief that giving back is a huge part of being successful in business.”

In the meantime, they continue to make a difference in the lives of children and adults with development delays and disabilities, and for families dealing with difficult challenges. KDC applauds Top Tier Site Development for the children and families in the community. Jill and Tom have a long-lasting friendship for the impact they have made and looks forward to a lifelong-together.
participation in recreational and social activities has a lasting, positive impact on health, well-being and behavior. Addressing opportunities through Social Recreation at KDC’s Milford Programs Center runs an Adult Education classroom. While she has problems with her vision, she attends public school and participates in a special nutrition project where participants prepared meals for their families which they brought home.

Many social recreational opportunities have been offered through KDC’s Cape Cod program for adults with developmental disabilities. The program has grown since last summer, serving eight different families from Milford and the surrounding towns. Grants funding allowed KDC to introduce a formal cooking and nutrition project where participants prepared meals for their families which they brought home.

Research has shown that individuals with developmental disabilities socialize less frequently than their peers. It has been shown that participation in recreational and social activities has a lasting, positive impact on health, well-being and behavior. Addressing this issue through social recreational participation on Cape Cod and beyond is important. While the needs after school is not possible. Parents have discovered how difficult it was to meet their daughter’s socialization and supervision needs after school. Typical after school programs are not suitable because of his need for personal attention and assistance during the activities. While John enjoys spending time with his sisters and their families, he lacks a peer group or friends of his own. KDC’s Milford Programs Center runs an Adult Education program for adults with developmental disabilities in which participants can socialize and learn new activities. Upcoming spring classes will include yoga, crafts, Zumba dance, and cake decorating. Demand and participation continues to grow for these fun and educational classes where folks like John can begin to develop friendships in a natural setting among peers with common interests.

Another KDC-based service, the After Club program, was born out of necessity when parents of young teens with developmental disabilities were struggling to meet their children’s supervision and socialization needs after school. Typical after school programs are not appropriate for children, and yet being left unsupervised after school is not possible. Parents got together and partnered with the local First Unitarian Universalist Church to form the volunteer partnership known as the Special Community. While the Special Community offered a number of social and recreational activities, the After Club became their sought-after program. Demand meant growth, and growth required agency support and structure, which presented an opportunity for KDC to get involved.

Since KDC’s involvement with After Club, the program has continued to flourish. Participation has increased since last summer, serving eight different evenings. Milford and the surrounding towns. Grants funding allowed KDC to introduce a formal cooking and nutrition project which participants prepared meals for their families which they brought home.

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Making a Difference for a Cape Cod Family

There are many ways to make a difference in the life of a child, adult or family. KDC’s Cape Cod Family Support Center learned of a Mashpee family with two developmentally disabled children, ages 5 and 7, and their mother who has multiple sclerosis, who needed some fence repair. A section of the fence had been blown down over the winter and since their home is on a corner lot, the children were unable to go out and safely play in the yard.

KDC staff reached out to find someone who could either fix or upgrade the fence. They were overjoyed to learn that the Kiwanis Club of Mashpee would cover the cost of new fencing, and that two contractors and Kiwanis members would provide the installation. The family is grateful and the children are happy to be playing outside again.

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