

**The Achievable Foundation**

*It's* **achievable**

**Spring 2018**

**From the CEO's Desk: Carmen Ibarra**



**The Achievable Health Center's Five Year Anniversary - Looking Forward**

**In our last newsletter, I reflected back on the Achievable Health Center's first five years.** The creation of our first of its kind health center and growth to our current size - treating almost 2,000 patients annually - is something for our community of supporters, partners, staff and board to be proud of. I am just as excited when I think about the next five years and what they will hold for Achievable!

The vision for the Achievable Health Center was not just to treat patients at our Culver City location but rather to change the face of health care for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD). This is exactly what we will be doing over the next five years.

To change the face of health care for our community, we must start at the beginning, by changing the face of education for the health care workforce. Over the next five years Achievable intends to do just this, by increasing the knowledge and ability of those entering the health care field to treat individuals with I/DD. We are already impacting the behavioral health care workforce through our groundbreaking partnership with The Chicago School of Professional Psychology. In this project, graduate students provide individual and group therapy to Achievable patients, acquiring the skills necessary to provide behavioral health services to our population once they graduate and enter the workforce.

I am pleased to announce Achievable has several similar projects in the works with different educational partners around L.A. County. This year we will be creating a program with a local community college to provide training to students studying to be medical assistants. Medical assistants are vital to any medical office, be it a primary care physician or specialty care office. Medical assistants are the people we interact with when we check into a doctor's office, have our vitals taken, or coordinate referrals. Training these individuals on how to interact with patients with I/DD can have a profound impact on these patients' overall experience at their doctor's office. Through this program, we can ensure that these students have the skills and comfort level to work with individuals with I/DD when they enter the workforce.

I am also delighted to say that Achievable is forming a partnership with a local medical school to help train nurse practitioners. Through this partnership, nurse practitioner students will gain hands-on experience treating individuals with I/DD and other vulnerable patients, by shadowing Achievable doctors as they treat our patients. Lastly, we are working on a similar partnership with a local medical school so that we can help teach the doctors of tomorrow how to better provide care to patients like those we treat at Achievable. As other opportunities arise to help educate and train the medical workforce to offer more culturally appropriate, compassionate care to patients with I/DD and other vulnerable populations, Achievable will be there! The future is exciting for Achievable and I hope you will continue to join us on this journey!

**Achievable's Wine and Dine**

*On Sunday, June 10th at 1 p.m., Achievable will host its first "Wine and Dine" along with Chateau Ste. Michelle winery. Join Achievable and Chateau Ste. Michelle's National Wine Educator at Napa Valley Grille for a five-course tasting menu paired with award-winning wines. For more information, contact Josh Kruskol at [jkruskol@achievable.org](mailto:jkruskol@achievable.org) or (424) 266-7483.*

## Speakers Panel Spotlights End-of-Life Planning



**For its Spring Speakers Series, The Achievable Foundation hosted a panel featuring Culver City Councilman Jim Clarke on a topic that weighs heavy on the minds of parents of children with developmental disabilities – end-of-life planning.** Community members and experts came together in April to discuss legal, financial and health considerations, and resources available to these families.

The panel included experts on issues related to aging, especially for families of children with a developmental disability. The evening's discus-

sion was moderated by Michelle Wolfe of JLA Special Needs Trust, a nonprofit that provides Pooled Special Needs Trusts – a vehicle for parents to provide financial support to their children with a disability after their own death. Wolfe and elder law attorney Janet Morris outlined helpful legal vehicles when planning for end of life, including powers of attorney, wills and health directives.

Tracy Pea, of Wells Fargo Wealth Management, discussed the role banks and other commercial trustees can play in helping create and administer special needs trusts.

Finally, Dr. Tom Kelly of the Westside Regional Center discussed the significant emotional issues end of life brings for all people, pointing out that this is no different for individuals with developmental disabilities. “Families need to have frank and honest conversations with their adult children about the issue as they get older,” said Dr. Kelly.



## Autism Diagnoses on the Rise According to New Study

**You may have skimmed headlines recently about a study by the Centers for Disease Control and Rutgers University which stated autism diagnoses are on the rise in the U.S.**

The study looked at 8-year olds in 11 states and found the diagnosis rate is up 15 percent from just two years ago, to 1 in 59 children. The study also found that boys were diagnosed at four times the rate of girls. This is down slightly from the prior study period, perhaps indicating better pinpointing of the condition in girls, whose signs may differ from the stereotypical signature behaviors in boys.

Researchers are unsure of how to attribute the rise in diagnoses. However, experts agree that early intervention can play a significant role in outcomes, and how well children with this diagnosis respond to treatment.

The study also found the average age of diagnosis was stagnant at 4+, though many experts agree children can be reliably diagnosed as young as 2.

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## Celebrating The Achievable Health Center's Fifth Anniversary Brad Silverman - A Patient from the Beginning

**Brad Silverman is an artist and famous actor (I Am Sam). He is also a patient with Down Syndrome who's been with The Achievable Health Center since we opened our doors in 2013.** When Brad isn't acting, he likes travelling, creating art and jamming out on the multiple instruments he plays. He found out about Achievable through his conservator (a sort of legal guardian for an adult with a developmental disability) Petite Konstantin, Executive Director of one of Achievable's key partners, L.A Goal, and a member of Achievable's patient advisory committee.



Before Achievable, Brad was reluctant to visit a doctor. He explains that "he would get loud in the doctor's office in protest because he was scared to have them listen to his heart," and he hated getting bloodwork done. It became so difficult that Brad's conservator would book doctor appointments at the latest available time so there would be fewer other patients in the office. To have blood drawn, Brad often had to be restrained before the medical staff could get a sample. Brad didn't find out he had a condition causing anemia until multiple doctor visits and finally, sedation, which enabled a more in-depth physical exploration.

In 2013, Petite was part of an advisory council that helped establish the Achievable Health Center. Brad became a patient soon after. Since Achievable is co-located with the Westside Regional Health Center, Brad already felt comfortable and familiar with the area. His first visit was with Dr. Mark Benor, who made Brad feel at ease from the outset. Brad explains that he really enjoyed Dr. Benor because "he was patient with me, told me that everything was going to be okay, and took some time to get to know me personally." Dr. Benor felt like more of a friend than a doctor according to Brad, who breezed through appointments from then on without restraints or sedation.

Brad believes that Achievable is better than any doctor's office he's been to because the staff "sees him as more than just a person with a disability." He credits Achievable with helping him become more independent and open to sharing about his health. Brad thinks his health has improved because of the excellent staff and the comfortable environment Achievable creates: "Achievable is reliable and always there when I need it."

### THANK YOU to the Supporters Who Make a Difference

<b>JL Foundation</b>	<b>\$75,000</b>	<b>WINDES</b>	<b>\$2,900</b>
<b>Ahmanson Foundation</b>	<b>\$58,000</b>	<b>MedPoint Management</b>	<b>\$2,500</b>
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<b>SoCalGas</b>	<b>\$5,000</b>	<b>Barry Speyer</b>	<b>\$1,000</b>



*The Achievable Foundation's mission is to provide high quality, integrated health care to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, their families, and other vulnerable populations.*

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**Achievable is hiring medical providers!!**  
**If you are interested in being part of a team innovating a new model of care for vulnerable populations, especially individuals with developmental disabilities, go to our website to apply:**  
<https://achievable.org/contact-us/join-our-team/>

## Autism Diagnoses on the Rise According to New Study



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The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends that all children receive autism screening at 18 and 24 months of age. The M-CHAT-R is one of the AAP's recommended tools.

Achievable offers resources and screenings for autism, among other developmental conditions. You can also request a free screening through Early Start California Department of Developmental Services: <https://dds.ca.gov/EarlyStart/>, (800) 515-BABY. Autism Speaks, [AutismSpeaks.org](http://AutismSpeaks.org), is another good starting point for more information.

Above all, if you suspect language or social development delays in your child, talk to your doctor. In addition to better short-term outcomes, early detection and diagnosis can lead to specialized care and a tailored treatment plan that could carry lifelong benefits.

## Friends of Achievable

*Do you want to help Achievable make a difference in the lives of individuals with developmental disabilities and underserved populations? Do you have experience with marketing, event planning, fundraising or other areas? Please join our "Friends of Achievable" Advisory Council today! Contact Josh Kruskol at [jkruskol@achievable.org](mailto:jkruskol@achievable.org) or 424-266-7483 for more information.*