

First In Families of North Carolina



Annual Report, 2008-2009

Supporting persons with disabilities to achieve their goals and realize their dreams since 1996.



First In Families of North Carolina
524 N. Duke St., Durham, NC 27701
(919) 251-8368 ✦ www.fifnc.org

Executive Message



First In Families of North Carolina has connected people to their dreams and goals all year, as the economy steadily worsened and calls for assistance were more desperate than usual. Still, people had beautiful stories to share and

contributions to make back to us or other families.

Pat's son has a developmental disability and mental illness and was assisted with a security deposit for his new home, following which his mother joined the Wake Management Team...

Emanuel's personal network helped set up a small special needs trust to allow him to quickly access funds donated by friends and others for urgent wheelchair repairs, straws for his drinking system and other of "life's essentials."

FIFNC has 522 other stories this year alone documenting how FIF helps when other services are being cut, do not adequately meet the diverse needs of families and individuals, or simply do not help people get involved in the life of their communities.

This, our first Annual Report, will offer you some descriptions and statistics on what we have done and how we have been doing it. We greatly value your opinion and your support, and invite you to share with us your ideas on our future direction and the value of this Annual Report.

After nine years, I am retiring as President of First In Families. I am very confident that Cindy Parkey, my successor and one of the original founders of First In Families, will provide excellent leadership as we move forward.

Sincerely,
Jim McDermott
President

*FIFNC & the local Chapters have served **19,441 NC families** since 1998.*

In the last year, we have established our first corporate, fully accessible office (in Durham, NC), brought our staff from 2 to 5, added 3 skilled and dedicated board members, and started managing 3 of the 12 FIF local chapters directly. Our Lifetime Connections program expanded to include "community bridging" through which future planning and personal networks are offered in partnership with local agencies. Finally, technical assistance to our local chapters serving 2,400 NC families has never been so comprehensive with the implementation of Core Indicators and improvement of our database to better measure leveraging of dollars.



On a more somber note, the troubled economy was reflected clearly in record numbers of calls this year from people in extreme situations. Meanwhile, FIFNC lost one major local grant due to the state budget deficit. We embarked upon a community involvement effort to continue supporting the affected individuals in spite of the lack of funding. Contact us if you are interested in this important initiative which combats isolation and loneliness for people living in group homes or moving from state institutions. Our Lifeline Project, which provides assistance to people in counties not covered by FIF Chapters, is also depleted of funds due to lowered donations.

In 2009/10 we look forward to offering personal networks to individuals with Traumatic Brain Injury and Military families. NC is a "compassionate reassignment" choice for families moving from closed or other bases, and FIFNC is poised to provide our unique blend of services to these individuals and families. We also are planning innovative pilot activities including TimeBanks at the chapter level, where those we serve can truly reciprocate by helping other families who need the skills they possess. Finally we hope to engage at least one corporate partner and continue representing unique family support in several national coalitions.

We offer heartfelt thanks and best wishes to Jim McDermott for his years of creative, dedicated, smart service to FIFNC. We also look forward to working with our new President Cindy Parkey as we strive to do the best work possible for families in North Carolina.

Sincerely,
Betsy MacMichael
State Director

Our Programs

Lifetime Connections



Lifetime Connections offers unique supports and future planning services to people with all types of disabilities and their families. We provide an alternative or addition to traditional services, through a comprehensive, membership based set of services tailored to each individual or family. Core services include personal networks and workshops on wills and estate planning. The outcome of Lifetime Connections is "peace of mind" for families and a "good life" for their loved ones.

FIF Chapters

FIFNC manages three local FIF Chapters: FIF of Gaston & Cleveland Counties, FIF of Johnston County and FIF of Wake County. FIFNC also provides extensive technical assistance to all 12 FIF Chapters covering 39 NC counties. The First In Families local Chapters offer support to families and individuals according to their self-defined needs.



To respond to a particular need, FIF partners with local businesses, citizens and agencies.



Sometimes we negotiate to get the lowest possible price, or we might barter or exchange something. Other times we simply make a referral to an appropriate agency. As First In Families engages the community, relationships often develop. Through this process, the original need is met, and the community becomes a richer place.

Lifeline Project

Through a combination of private grants and donations, FIFNC is able to assist families in those counties not served by a local FIF Chapter. Though the funding for this project is minimal, FIFNC staff has been able to leverage those funds to assist the most people possible through price negotiations and community partnerships.

Accomplishments In 2008-09:

523 Fulfilled Requests in these categories:

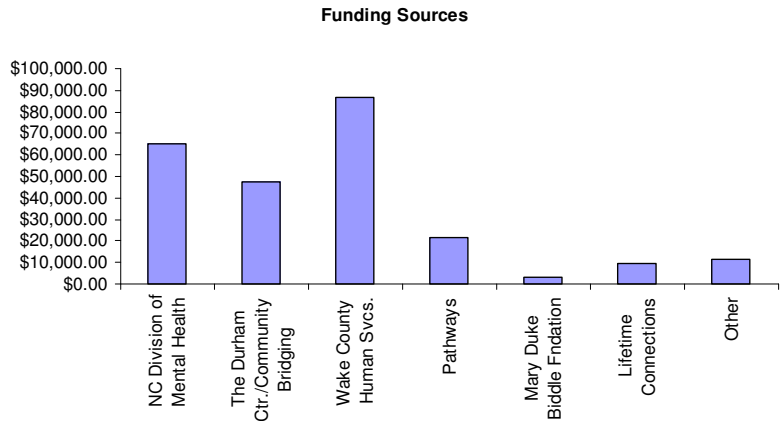
Basic Needs 46% (food, clothing, utilities & housing)	Medical & therapy 9% (prescriptions, equipment, co-pays)
Education 10% (school supplies, tutoring)	Other 28% (home repair & modifications, respite, etc.)
Transportation 7%	

\$64,261 In Private Donations, Grants & In-Kind Contributions

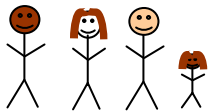
63 Business partnerships in place including 48 new ones forged this year.

10% Increase in Lifetime Connections memberships and 69 families trained in estate planning and alternatives to guardianship.

During the period July 1, 2008 through June 30, 2009, 74% of FIFNC's income was state money. Of the remaining 26%, approximately 69% is generated by in-kind donations, 12% by program revenues, and the remainder comes from grants and private donations.

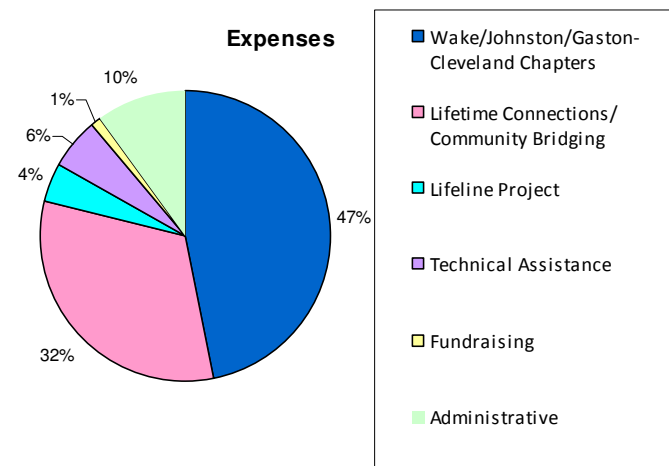


"I want to thank First In Families for helping me pursue my curriculum studies at Wake Tech." Self-Advocate served by Wake FIF



Average Size of Families Served: 3.5

Average Net Annual Income of Families Served: \$21,697



Satisfaction Survey Results

50 surveys were completed by families served by the Wake and Johnston County First In Families Chapters. Of those surveys:

- 98% rated their **overall experience with FIF as very good or excellent.**
- 100% of families reported that **FIF was able to assist or refer them.**
- 94% reported that their **quality of life improved** as a result of the assistance from FIF.
- 98% reported that **FIF reduced stress in their lives.**

A Lifetime Connections (LC) survey of members showed:

- 100% of members surveyed agreed or strongly agreed that their personal networks helped them **set goals**; while 89% reported **achieving goals** during the past year.
- 78% of participants said the program helped them **feel good about their future.**
- 100% of members agreed that LC helped individuals with disabilities **participate in community events.**

5 Ways You Can Make a Difference!

1. Become involved in our Community Bridging effort for less than 2 hours per month. Call us to find out how to join a personal network.
2. Become a Management Team member at a local Chapter or apply to join the FIFNC Board.
3. Offer your talents and skills in fundraising, corporate sponsorship help, marketing assistance or whatever you may have to contribute.
4. Let us recycle your old electronics to raise funds for our initiative.
5. Donate online at www.fifnc.org or through www.iGive.com.

Angela's Beach Wedding

Angela, who has severe developmental disabilities, had always dreamed of getting married on the beach. Her family shared this dream with FIF of



The Wedding Party, June 2009

Johnston County. FIFNC worked with a hotel near the beach to provide accommodations for the entire wedding party for a discount of 45% off the regular rate; they then found a local florist who discounted the bridal bouquet and donated flowers for the entire wedding party. FIFJC leveraged \$500 worth of First In Families funding for \$951 worth of goods and services, and Angela and her family lived their dream.

Accessible Home for Briana

Briana, a young adult with cerebral palsy, needed her home to be more accessible. Her family contacted FIF of Wake County for help with the modifications, which included work on both a backyard deck and an unfinished ramp, some inside painting, carpet removal and laminate floor installation.

Wake FIF organized a partnership in which a local church member coordinated the project on a

volunteer basis, overseeing the purchase of materials and providing transportation to Mr. P., a man who is homeless but able to do the work. FIF paid Mr. P for the work, furthering his efforts towards moving into a home of his own. The family was pleased with the results and Wake FIF has an additional resource for skilled labor.

Cookout Connections

Billy is a man in his fifties with Traumatic Brain Injury who has been part of Lifetime Connections for 2 years. Billy has had many ups and downs over the last year. He was very excited about a trip to Hawaii with his nephew, only to have to be admitted to the hospital with a blood clot in his leg, thus having to cancel the trip. He became very



Billy and his Network, June 2009

depressed. With the help of his Community Connector who has been with him since he became a member, they decided to go forward with planning his "2nd Annual Cookout". Twenty-five people were invited and 23 came! This is a man who 2 years ago, had almost no one other than paid staff in his life! The party was still going strong when the Community Connector left after five hours!

Recognizing Our Friends & Supporters

First In Families exists because of generous donations by individuals, businesses, community organizations, and foundations as well as our public funders. We have done our best to ensure that our list of donors is as accurate as possible. If you wish to remain anonymous in future acknowledgements or have a correction, please contact us at 919-251-8368. Thank you for your kind support – you make a difference to us and the families we serve!

<p>\$500 or Greater Bank of America Broad Street Café Thomas & Charlene Butala Brian & Robin Carlton Alexis Greeves Ireland Family Foundation Lamb Foundation of NC Ross MacMichael Jim McDermott The Parikh Family Pullen Memorial Baptist Church Shared Visions Foundation Federico Sheppard Wal-Mart Laura White</p> <p>Up to \$500 Ken Alden Amber Alsobrooks Peggy Balak Cary & Robert Battle Rhonda & Harold Beam Kelly Calegar Chick-fil-A Cape Fear United Way Civitan Club Cary</p>	<p>Up to \$500 cont. Dan & Emily Carlton Karen Carlton Pam Clark Shawndy Conway Harry Delung, Jr. Tom Desmond & Betsy MacMichael Joseph Dew & Myra Teasley Jennifer & Patrick Downie Cathi Drinkard Lawson Drinkard Gail Dupre Eaton Corporation Laura Elliott Laura & Kenneth Fischler Food Lion David Gibson Kevin Harper Marian Hartman Holly Springs Civitan Club Anne Ilson Joy of Discovery Lutheran Church Anneliese Kellner Gretchen & Kenneth Kopp Scott Latus Kara Leibel</p>	<p>Up to \$500 cont. Melanie Mattingly Gwen McArthur Maggie McGlynn Greg McGrew MOJO Tobi Nguyen Nosh Eclectic Foodstuffs Dennis & Joanne Papinchak Susan Pepper Pftographics Phase II Sign Supplies Powder Puff Technology Karen & Craig Rosenthal Wendy Russell Ms. Schenectady Eugene & Angie Schexnayder George & Joy Stone Susan Stultz Maria Tedesco Spine Patricia Tedesco Debby Torres Jerrie & Christopher Walters Whole Foods Durham Whole Foods Raleigh Susan Zuntini</p>
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Our Leadership

Jim McDermott

President
 Charlotte, NC

Cindy Parkey

Secretary
 Raleigh, NC

Peggy Balak

Raleigh, NC

Jessie Dancy

Concord, NC

Erica Ferranti

Raleigh, NC

Karen Harrington

Asheville, NC

Melinda Kupner

Glade Valley, NC

Melanie Mattingly

Franklinton, NC

Gwen McArthur

Fayetteville, NC

Greg McGrew

Apex, NC

Susan Parish

Carrboro, NC

Pat Reid

Statesville, NC

John Russ

Wilmington, NC

Ex-Oficio Members

Jenny Alley

Durham, NC

Kara Leibel

Durham, NC

Wendy Russell

Southern Pines, NC

For more information, contact us at: (919)251-8368, Ext. 100 or BetsyM@fifnc.org.