

## **Page 1: First In Families of North Carolina Annual Report 2011-12**

Helping people with disabilities and their families to believe in their dreams, achieve their goals, and give back to others since 1996.

### **The FIFNC Mission in Action**

#### **Believe.**

In 2006, a mom contacted Triad First In Families for assistance with paying for horseback riding lessons for her 6-year-old son. By August 2009, Joshua, who loves to ride horses and happens to have Down Syndrome and Autism, was given a horse by someone who saw the positive effect horses had on him. Tammy again contacted Triad FIF to request help with a temporary barn and fence for the horse.

#### **Achieve.**

Over two years, Triad FIF and Tammy worked together and raised almost \$6,000 from grants and the community to build a temporary lean-to; and then built a barn and a fence. The permanent barn was completed in 2011. No state funds were used for this request and Mom was an active partner in the process.

#### **Give Back.**

By 2012, Joshua and his mother offered that any family with a child with a disability could come ride horses for free. They call it Joshua's Angel Center and the families who ride there pay with "sweat equity," such as helping with chores around the center. Triad FIF was contacted soon after by a family needing a horse blanket and grooming supplies for the horse their daughter was using at Joshua's Angel Center!

### **Leadership**

Erica Ferranti, President, Raleigh  
Greg McGrew, Vice-President, Apex  
Peggy Balak, Secretary, Raleigh  
Robin McDuffie, Treasurer, Chapel Hill  
Mark Bullock  
Constance Finch  
Melinda Kupner  
Melanie Mattingly  
Gwen McArthur  
Cynthia K. Parkey  
Pat Reid

FIFNC and the local chapters have served 27,716 families since 1998.

FIFNC is a 501(c)(3) North Carolina not-for-profit corporation founded in 1996, incorporated in 2001 and acknowledged as tax-exempt in 2003.

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## **Page 2: A Letter from the Board President and State Director**

Family support is coming of age; as baby-boomers approach their elder years, including both aging caregivers and people with disabilities, the relevance of supporting the whole family is becoming increasingly important. Dollars are and will be scarcer for formal services, more people will be living at home and therefore what First In Families does is even more necessary than ever. This past year, through all our programs, we have served 973 individuals with a developmental disability or Traumatic Brain Injury, and their families, 14% of which are considered “older families” (child over age 34).

The capacity of creative, compassionate individuals from our Management Teams was impressive this year, as record numbers of funds were raised through 32 very grassroots initiatives throughout the 7 FIFNC Chapters. Sponsorship by a local large corporation, collaboration with a children’s clinic, Family Night at various restaurants, a tour of holiday bedecked homes, yard sales, benefit concerts, church drives, and letter campaigns, generated many extra funds, goodwill, and long-lasting relationships. In total, \$26,686 was raised in 2011-2012 to help many additional families.

Our new in-house Salesforce Database became totally operational this fiscal year, and allowed us for the first time to: begin collecting, tracking and sharing the services offered to others BY the families we serve, integrate our extensive in-kind contributions of goods and professional services into our accounting system, and measure and report important data in real time and as needed.

2011-2012 also marked a departure from previous practice at most of our Chapters. Management Teams decided to no longer fund emergency requests for rental or utility assistance, but instead help families connect to the many other resources available for these needs, especially in our urban-based chapters.

Another achievement this year was to define a set of organizational and program-specific Outcomes, and develop/implement their measurement. Up until now what we do and what makes us really different have been difficult to document: the value of leveraging resources from the business community, families giving back to others, and peace of mind through future planning, are several examples. In later pages please see what our Impact is. Now established, we look forward to documenting progress over time for these Outcomes.

These are a few of the accomplishments, outlined in greater detail in the rest of this, our fourth Annual Report. Erica is retiring as Board President, and Vice-President Greg McGrew follows for this new year!

Sincerely,  
Betsy and Erica

## **Page 3: Our Programs and Accomplishments**

### **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 to provide families with relief and security regarding the future of their loved one, through the knowledge that their family member has a support network in place and they themselves have their legal and financial planning in order. This year, Lifetime Connections has 17 active members.

### **Lifetime Connections in Action**

A few examples of what people with Lifetime Connections Personal Networks are achieving and doing at this time!

- Jeremy just returned from his first kayaking trip
- Barbara has started dictating her memoir
- Aaron started to walk for more exercise
- Cassie is putting together a personal yearbook
- Tim enjoys his new job working on a farm
- Emily is starting a photography business

### **A Chapter in Action**

Brian, who has Cerebral Palsy, plays basketball for Special Olympics in Johnston County. His dream was to have his own professional basketball court because when he was at the park or at a gym, he never felt that he could just join a game. This often limited Brian's social skills and prevented him from making friends on the court. FIFJC worked with Dick's Sporting Goods to purchase a discounted Goalrilla basketball goal, and "We Do Concrete Cheap" offered to do all the grading and all the finishing of the concrete for free, and sold the concrete at cost. For just \$500, FIFJC and their partners made Brian's dream come true: a dream that had a price tag of over \$2,500. The court not only allows Brian to play basketball any time, but it also allows Brian to be "king of the court" and many people now want to play with Brian on his court!

### **FIF Chapters and Technical Assistance**

FIFNC provides extensive technical assistance to all 13 FIF Chapters covering 45 NC counties. Technical Assistance includes training and assessment based upon Core Indicators for chapter health which measure customer leadership, leveraging of resources, and many other criteria for adherence to the FIF model of customer service and best practice family support. Ninety two percent of Chapters scored over 80% on the core Indicators of Good Chapter Health, and 94% of all Chapter staff rated FIFNC Technical Assistance as useful.

## **Page 4: Our Programs and Accomplishments**

### **FIFNC Time Bank**

The FIFNC Time Bank connects community members through a system for sharing skills in which no money is exchanged - only time and talents. All services are valued equally, and Time Bank members include people with and without disabilities.

The FIFNC Time Bank began operation in June 2010, and welcomed 105 members by the end of FY 2011-12. Of these members, 59% are either a self-advocate or a family member of an individual with a developmental disability.

Time Bank members spent 189.25 hours of service, and offered 98 different types of services – from pet sitting to piano tuning – to communities in Durham, Orange, Wake, Person and Chatham counties.

### **Time Bank in Action**

Wake FIF received a request for direct family support from a family with a 14-year-old with Autism who needed repairs to a leaky roof. FIF staff coordinated with Mike, a Time Bank member who is a professional roofer, to make the repairs. Mike earned three Time Dollars by repairing the roof, and saved FIF close to \$1,000 by donating his skills through the Time Bank!

### **Lifeline Project**

Through a combination of state funding, private grants, and donations, Lifeline Project assists families in North Carolina counties not served by a local FIF Chapter. In 2010-11, FIFNC staff leveraged 26 cents/state dollar spent and assisted 107 families in 29 counties across the state.

### **Lifeline Project in Action**

Last year we told you about Sidney, a then-17-year-old young man with Autism who decided he wanted to be a graphic designer or a game developer. He researched and found out that for both of those careers he needed to be able to use software on an Apple computer. We were able to assist him in getting a MacBook.

This year his mother wrote to tell us that he did well in his introductory classes and was doing such advanced work now that he needed a more robust iMac. Sounds like Sidney is well on his way to achieving his goals!

## Page 5: Specifics of Services

### Our Services at a Glance

FIFNC & the Chapters it directly manages served 973 families in FY 2011-12.

The average income of the families served through our chapters last year is \$19,682.60, 106% of federal poverty level for a family of 3 (our average family size last year).

### Who We Serve

#### FIF Chapters & Lifeline Project

Primarily people with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities or a Traumatic Brain Injury, of any age, in 72 counties. (The other 28 counties are served by 6 Chapters hosted in other non-profits.)

#### Lifetime Connections

People with any disability, living in the Triangle - Durham, Orange and Wake counties.

#### FIFNC Time Bank

People with and without Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities or a Traumatic Brain Injury living in Durham, Orange, Wake, Person and Chatham counties.

#### Requests by Category 11-12 Graph:

Vocational/Employment	1%
Advocacy, Activities, Day Care, Respite, Other	9%
Basic Needs	14%
Camp/Programs	8%
Education	15%
Equipment	5%
Health & Wellness	3%
Home Repair/Modification	3%
Household Items	7%
Medical	2%
Recreation	4%
Therapy/Counseling	3%
Transportation	7%
Utilities/Housing	19%

## Page 6: Financial Report

Through leveraging the dollars provided by our public funders and foundations, First In Families of North Carolina stretched each dollar by 24 cents in 2011-12 by generating in-kind contributions and donations from individuals and businesses.

### Income

During the period July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2012, FIFNC's total revenue was \$1,148,496, an increase of 19% over the previous year.

### Income Graph:

Membership Program Fees	1%
Foundation & Corporate	1%
Contributions & Fundraising	3%
State/Federal Grants	3%
In Kind Contributions	6%
Local Government Grants	86%

### Expenses

Total for year: \$1,051,239

### Expenses Graph:

Direct Support of Families & Individuals with Disabilities through our Programs	\$907,344
Fundraising	\$17,083
Management & Administration	\$126,812

## **Page 7: Partnerships**

Partnerships are at the heart of our work. We strive to partner with local businesses to receive items at the lowest cost possible to better stretch our dollars and serve more families.

### **Thank You to FIFNC Business Partners**

FIFNC partnered with 198 businesses or organizations in the community, and 158 of these were new partnerships in FY 2011-12.

### **Thank You to FIFNC Volunteers**

FIFNC thanks each person who volunteered with us! Volunteers donated a total of 1,754.25 hours of service this past year.

### **Chapter Partnership Highlight**

In the spring of 2012, Gaston-Cleveland-Lincoln FIF Resource Consultant was the guest speaker at Achieve Learning Center in Shelby, which hosts a day program for adults with I/DD and TBI. After several years of struggling to re-establish a presence in Cleveland County and engage the community, several self-advocates and Achieve staff offered to host FIF Management Team meetings in their space. Other Cleveland County residents were delighted to have a place to meet in their community and joined the Management Team.

The team has been a strong asset to the GCL Chapter by hosting fundraisers, building community awareness, and collecting items for families in need. Their sister company in Gastonia has since become involved, building our Gaston county team and providing new members and a place to meet. This partnership has been key to the success that GCL FIF has had with reaching new families, leveraging, donations, and fundraising.

### **Remembering Steve Jordan**

NC Division of MH/DD/SAS Director Steve Jordan was an advocate and hard worker on behalf of the disability community. Steve tragically lost his life this past summer. FIFNC will remember Steve, his support for our work, and his friendly, open interest in listening to “those of you affected by the policies we create,” as Steve expressed to us last spring.

## **Page 8: Donors**

FIFNC expresses heartfelt thanks to our 29 new and loyal donors, 319 individual contributors of items for families, and our FIFNC Connector Society Members! We also thank the anonymous donors who assist us in various ways throughout the year.

### **5 Ways You Can Make a Difference**

1. Apply to join the FIFNC Board or become a Management Team member at a local Chapter
2. Volunteer with Lifetime Connections for less than four hours per month – call us to learn how to join a personal network
3. Offer your talents and skills in fundraising, corporate sponsorship help or as a member of our Time Bank
4. Recycle your old electronics to raise funds for our initiative
5. Donate online at [www.fifnc.org](http://www.fifnc.org), through [www.iGive.com](http://www.iGive.com), or purchase a gift card to support FIF at [www.giftcardsforacause.com](http://www.giftcardsforacause.com)

### **Quote:**

“People like you make life much easier when life is hard!” - Child, age 11 from Lifeline Project