Nan Owen and John Lavander are convinced that there is no better feeling in the world than the one you get from giving — except for the joy of inspiring someone else to give, too. The Minneapolis couple has used their strategic contributions to spawn a variety of successful PACER projects, and that has encouraged others to give generously, as well.

Nan and John provided seed money for their first challenge grant in 1998 to launch PACER’s Health Information and Advocacy Center. Later they jump-started PACER’s innovative new Housing Project, and then sparked giving for the creative Count Me In® puppet program.

“We are willing to fund new ideas and new ventures where other people might not want to take that risk,” John explains. “Nan and I are both of the belief that a good idea is even better than money.”

When a challenge grant is established, other individual donors are more likely to jump on board, and foundations and corporations are more willing to provide funding. Those commitments, in turn, build a case for public sector support.
“It all begins with a vision,” says PACER Center Executive Director and co-founder Paula Goldberg. “Nan and John are the most amazing people. They have been willing to step forward and support new projects, and they have inspired so many other people to support PACER, too.”

Nan and John first connected with PACER when their son Bradley, who is on the autism spectrum, was struggling in elementary school, and they were having difficulty securing appropriate special education services. With the assistance of PACER Parent Training Manager Virginia Richardson, Bradley received the help he needed to achieve his full potential. Now 30, he enjoys life, lives independently, and has worked in the accounting office of the same company for nearly eight years.

In the meantime, Nan and John have served tirelessly as PACER volunteers and have been involved in many different activities. As a successful commercial real estate developer, John brought invaluable expertise to PACER’s building committee during construction of the organization’s new offices in 2002.

“John faithfully attended the construction meetings with me every week,” says Mary Schrock, PACER’s Chief Operating and Development Officer. “As the building project manager, I was so appreciative of his guidance and advice.”

John’s involvement ensured that the new facility would enable PACER to meet the needs of families in the most cost-effective way possible. “Contractors have their own language,” John says with a chuckle. “I guess I knew what questions to ask and when to ask them.”

John is also a former co-chair of the Annual Benefit Corporate Sponsor Committee. Nan, who is a retired financial planner, is a longtime member of PACER’s Advisory Board. They have introduced dozens of other individuals and companies to PACER and helped garner substantial support. “Nan is very good at asking people to give!” John says.

“It’s not difficult,” Nan says. “We tell them what PACER does to change lives. Most people, even if they don’t have a child with a disability, are sensitive to the fact that raising a child with disabilities is a challenge for many, many families. Most people want to help.”

Nan and John are involved with several nonprofit organizations involving disability, women and children’s issues, affordable housing, and food support. They bring their entrepreneurial spirit to the table and enjoy meeting other vibrant, optimistic people who care about their community. The couple used to remain anonymous when giving, but they have since opted to share their story as a way of inspiring others to volunteer their time, talent, and resources. Nan and John have instilled those same values in their four boys — Bradley, Tommy, Davey, and James — who are all now successful, community-minded young adults and active volunteers.

“Life is not about the toys you own or the cars you drive,” Nan says. “Giving is a lot of fun and it’s good for your health, too.”

“If you focus on material things there will always be someone who has a bigger house or a fancier car and it’s never enough,” John says. “But no matter how much you give away, it always provides deep and meaningful happiness. Besides, as Nan likes to say, sometimes giving is just the right thing to do.”

Do you share Nan and John’s inspiring vision of service? Would you like to make a difference in the lives of children by offering your time, talents, or resources? We would love to have you join PACER’s team of dedicated volunteers. For more information, please call (952) 838-9000 and ask to speak with a member of our Development staff. Thank you for your support!
PACER’s Annual Benefit
Presented by:

Saturday, May 11, 2013
Minneapolis Convention Center
Tickets On Sale Now!

See Legendary Comedian Jay Leno Live!

Don’t miss your chance to enjoy the timeless humor of Jay Leno — Emmy Award-winning host of NBC’s “Tonight Show with Jay Leno” — when he headlines PACER Center’s Annual Benefit, presented by Whitebox Mutual Funds, at the Minneapolis Convention Center on Saturday, May 11. Leno’s “everyman” style and personality have made him a late-night talk show leader and helped him earn millions of fans the world over.

Tickets to the Benefit include the performance, as well as silent and live auctions. This year, the Silent Auction will offer your choice of hundreds of incredible items, beginning at 6 p.m. in the Ballroom. Here are a few of the extra special opportunities you may bid on:

- Enjoy a gourmet dinner at one of the Twin Cities most spectacular homes
  You and seven friends will dine at a stunning contemporary estate home in Edina, a custom-built, eco-friendly, technologically-advanced design featured in the Wall Street Journal. Weather permitting, you may choose to have cocktails and appetizers on the terrace next to the rose garden waterfall, before dining on the patio with historic Interlachen Country Club as a backdrop.

- Spoil the special little girl in your life with a whimsical playhouse loft bed
  Sleepovers will never be the same again! What could be more fun for that special little girl in your life than her very own playhouse loft bed from Totally Kids. This fantastic, clever creation, which includes a twin-sized bed, built-in bookcase, ladder, and guardrails, will be the centerpiece of her unique and stylish personal space for years to come. Sweet dreams!

Benefit Preview continues on page 4

Don’t miss out on this year’s Benefit! Act now to reserve your tickets by calling (952) 838-9000 or visiting PACER.org.
Following the Silent Auction, the Live Auction takes place in the auditorium where WCCO TV news anchors Amelia Santaniello and Frank Vascellaro will join auctioneer Karen Sorbo to offer a few rare, priceless items and opportunities, including:

- **2013 Indian Chief Vintage Final Edition Motorcycle personally autographed by Jay Leno**

  This collector's item, one of only 26 made, marks the end of an era for the legendary Indian brand, a model so rare that your most difficult decision might be whether to ride it or put it on display. The Indian Chief Vintage Final Edition is a stunning yet powerful bike that features the 1939 World’s Fair paint scheme of Thunder Black and Indian Red with gold pinstripes. Its stylish chromed spoke wheels, tank-mounted speedometer and controls, and chrome arrow style shift rod give it a distinctive look, while Jay Leno’s signature and a numbered frame badge make it unique.

- **A private tour of Jay Leno’s personal automobile and motorcycle collection**

  Comedian Jay Leno is one of the most famous car buffs in the world, and his unique collection of some 200 vehicles, including 90 motorcycles, is one of the most extensive anywhere. You’ll enjoy an exclusive private tour of his...
expansive private garage in Burbank, Calif., where you’ll take in the splendor of an exotic menagerie that includes everything from 1870s steam vehicles to a jet-powered motorcycle, a solar-powered hybrid, and a 240 mph McLaren F1. This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity that no automobile or motorcycle enthusiast will want to miss.

The PACER Benefit would not be possible without the generosity of so many individuals and businesses that contribute to the event. The Benefit provides a significant portion of PACER’s budget each year and helps keep PACER’s vital services free to families of children with disabilities and children who are bullied. Thank you, as well, to PACER’s wonderful volunteers who donate their time to the various committees, including the Silent Auction Committee and the Corporate Sponsor Committee.

**PACER would also like to thank** the Benefit Committee co-chairs (Jessica Broyles, Kristin Geer, Mary Holmes, Lynne Singer Redleaf, Colleen McGough Wood); the Corporate Sponsor Committee co-chairs (Don Davidson, Hal Lieberman, Jim Oricchio); and the Silent Auction Committee co-chairs (Cindy Armstrong, Nancy Kaysen, Jean Lipkin, Don McNeil, Jennifer Rowland). **Thank you to all of the Benefit committee members, generous sponsors, dedicated volunteers, and loyal attendees, who are all Champions for Children with Disabilities.**

**WIN A 2-YEAR LEASE ON A 2013 MERCEDES-BENZ SLK250 ROADSTER**

For your chance to win, purchase a $100 raffle ticket at PACER’s Annual Benefit, featuring Jay Leno, on May 11, 2013, at the Minneapolis Convention Center.

Suggested retail value of the lease: $15,000

**THE 2013 MERCEDES-BENZ SLK250 ROADSTER**

Its heritage traces to history’s first checkered flag. Its heart races at the mere thought of the open road. From the irrepressible passion of Mercedes-Benz engineering comes the irresistible magic of the SLK. Award-winning style and advanced performance converge in a compact, two-seat roadster with a retractable hardtop.

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**TICKETS ON SALE NOW!**

952.838.9000

PACER.org

**2013 Ticket Prices**

| $65 | $90 | $140* | $200* | $275* | $550* |

*Tickets include Patron Party after the performance
When one Minnesota family traveled 5,073 miles to the Ukraine to adopt a 3-year-old boy, they could not have known that the journey ahead would be so much longer and far more arduous than the trip they had just taken.

“We thought we were prepared to take on whatever challenges or strengths were brought our way,” says his mother, Laurie, who requested that the family’s last name not be published. “Once we got home it quickly became apparent that one of us would not be going back to work because Matt needed so many supports.”

Over the next decade, Laurie and her husband faced a long series of roadblocks, detours, and dead ends as they attempted to manage the impact of Matt’s multiple disabilities. Laurie gave up her career as a technology professional and went to work full time caring for her son. Thanks in part to assistance from PACER Center, the family has finally arrived at a more tranquil destination.

“I would spend hours on dial-up Internet researching, looking for resources, turning over every rock I could. That’s how I found PACER and our advocate Pat Anderson,” Laurie says. “She was just what I needed at the time, and I learned that I didn’t have to do this on my own.”

Matt weighed just 19 pounds when he arrived in America. He faced numerous physical and emotional challenges. In preschool he demonstrated highly aggressive behaviors, tossing chairs, throwing objects, destroying his school projects and those of others. In elementary school he was suspended frequently. Day treatment programs requested that he not return. “It is horrifying to your inner core to see your child behave like that,” Laurie says. “It was gut wrenching, and I would end up in tears most days. We didn’t know what to do as typical parenting techniques were not successful. This behavior was mortifying to me.”

The boy could be calm and compliant at home but when strangers ventured into his comfort zone Matt often erupted, especially in school but at times in public. The family persevered, overcoming denials of service, questionable evaluations, and confusing systems. They traversed a series of schools, treatment programs, caregivers, placements, and home schooling. Nothing seemed to work.

Eventually Matt was diagnosed with several learning problems.
disabilities, and sensory issues. With PACER’s help, Matt eventually acquired the school services and setting he needed, including assistive technology from PACER’s Simon Technology Center.

Now 15, Matt is enjoying success in an alternative school setting. He is an accomplished artist, a skilled cook, and is active in Boy Scouts. He recently returned from a three-day class excursion to an environmental center, and this summer he plans to go on a high adventure trip. “We could never have imagined that one day he would be able to do that. These are the sort of things that give you hope,” Laurie says.

Thanks to effective medications, ample therapy, one-on-one support, and a patient, loving family, Matt’s life is moving in a positive direction. He has even acquired a skill that few teens ever master — he does his own laundry!

“PACER has been our one die-hard resource,” Laurie says. “The education system can be a long, tough haul for parents, and we would truly not be where we are today without PACER.”

Selling your used vehicle is a hassle. Donating your car to PACER’s Give a Car, Help a Child program is easy, and you’ll avoid the disappointment of receiving a low trade-in value. By donating your car or other vehicle to PACER, you will help support a variety of important programs and services for children and teens. You’ll also receive a tax deduction.

Vehicles should be 1991 or newer and running. Exceptions can be made depending on the vehicle’s condition. Donating your vehicle to PACER is easy. Simply gather your keys, vehicle title, and lien release, if applicable. Then call PACER at (952) 838-9000 to arrange a time when you would like to deliver your vehicle to PACER or have your vehicle picked up. Once the vehicle has been sold, PACER will provide you with a written acknowledgement of the final value of your donation. Your contribution is tax deductible so please be sure to keep the acknowledgement letter with your other tax records.

By donating a vehicle to PACER, you can make a difference in the lives of children, including those with disabilities. For more information on the Give a Car, Help a Child program, please call PACER at (952) 838-9000 or e-mail PACER@PACER.org.
For more than 30 years Derm Rowland was a loyal PACER supporter, and his wisdom and generosity played a key role in the organization's success. Before he passed away in the fall of 2012, Derm made certain that his spirit of giving to PACER would live on after he was gone. Derm and his wife Helen made provisions in their will for PACER to receive a gift from the proceeds of their estate. Derm believed strongly in PACER's mission and wanted to ensure that help would be available for children and families in the future.

“Derm was always so upbeat and optimistic about everything,” says Paula Goldberg, PACER's executive director and co-founder. “When we talked on the telephone you could almost 'hear' the smile on his face. He was an amazing man!”

Derm was PACER's landlord on Chicago Avenue in Minneapolis. He stopped by the office frequently, forging relationships with staff, and coming to appreciate the impact PACER has in the community. Eventually, Derm became a member of PACER's Advisory Board and was involved in many volunteer activities.

“We always valued Derm's advice,” says Paula. “He convinced PACER to buy the building we were renting from him to reduce our overhead. When it came time to move, Derm facilitated our real estate needs again. He agreed to buy our old building so that we could fund the purchase of our new home!”

Derm and Helen's children have become passionate volunteers, as well. Their son David is a member of PACER's Investment Committee, and his wife Jennifer is co-chair of the Benefit Silent Auction Committee.

When Derm died, the Rowland family named PACER as the beneficiary of memorials in his honor. His legion of friends knew of Derm's passion for PACER and made generous gifts on his behalf. The family placed these memorials, along with their own, in a named Endowment Fund.

Derm's legacy also lives on in another tangible way. He was a great lover of stained glass which was evident throughout the Chicago Avenue building. When PACER moved to Normandale Boulevard, the glass moved with it where it serves today as a colorful reminder of Derm and Helen's commitment to children and families.

Residents of St. Paul and the East Metro area have a unique opportunity to double their contributions to support bullying prevention in their communities. The Katherine B. Andersen Fund of the St. Paul Foundation will match new or increased gifts dollar-for-dollar to a maximum of $20,000 through Aug. 31, 2013. Gifts will fund the Kids Against Bullying™ puppet program for elementary school children, as well as workshops for parents, educators, and the community.

Donations may be sent to PACER Center, 8161 Normandale Blvd., Minneapolis, MN, 55437, or made online at PACER.org. All gifts are tax deductible.
Teachers, parents, and administrators are invited to this year’s Eighth Annual National PACER Symposium About Children & Young Adults with Mental Health and Learning Disabilities on Tuesday, Aug. 6 at the Minneapolis Convention Center. The symposium will bring together 1,100 teachers, administrators, and parents for a day-long event, which features outstanding national keynote speakers and breakout workshop presenters. This year’s lineup of keynote speakers will include:

- Mariel Hemingway, Academy Award-nominated actress and the granddaughter of author Ernest Hemingway, explores her family’s history of mental illness in the documentary, “Running from Crazy.” With the history of suicide and mental illness in her family, Hemingway has always felt as if she was ‘running from crazy,’ and would one day be in the same position. Her hope is that others will learn from her family history, and will realize they are “not alone in a world of dysfunction.”

- Dr. John Ratey is an associate clinical professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School and is in private practice in Cambridge, Mass. Ratey began studying ADHD in the 1980s, founding the Boston Center for the Study of Autism in 1986, and has co-authored a series of books about the disorder. His most recent book, “Spark,” is a groundbreaking exploration of the connection between exercise and the brain’s performance.

- Dr. John Maag is a professor at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, specializing in the education and treatment of children and adolescents with emotional and behavioral disorders. As a nationally recognized behavioral consultant on managing resistance and improving relationships with others, he believes the solution to misbehaving students is to change our responses to students’ resistance rather than trying to force students to comply.

PACER Center is grateful to the Ted and Dr. Roberta Mann Foundation for providing funding for the symposium for six years, with the Blythe Brenden-Mann Foundation providing financial support last year. The symposium name has changed for 2013. PACER is seeking additional financial support so that we may continue to provide this unique learning opportunity to educators and parents in our community.

Registration for the symposium will open May 14 and spots do fill quickly. To register, visit PACER.org (preferred registration method) or call (952) 838-9000. Cost for the event is $20 per person and includes lunch.
An enthusiastic group of young artists with disabilities took part in the eighth annual Creative Kids Contest, held Saturday, March 2 at PACER Center. Using paints, markers, color crayons and pencils, the children created their masterpieces with inspiration and support from celebrated artist and longtime PACER supporter Tony Whelihan.

Children with disabilities from ages 3 to 17 were eligible to enter the contest. The first-place winner’s design will be revealed at PACER’s Annual Benefit and Silent Auction on May 11 at the Minneapolis Convention Center. It will be featured on the 2013 PACER greeting card which will be available on our website. In addition, the top 10 creations from the contest will be framed and available for purchase at the auction.

Congratulations to 13-year-old Juliana Collins, a talented, expressive artist with ADHD, Sensory Integration Disorder, and other disabilities, who won last year’s contest. To see her design and purchase her card, visit PACER.org/help/creativeKids/creative2012.asp.

Artistic Talent was on Display at Creative Kids Contest
Acquire Winning Creations at PACER’s 31st Annual Benefit

Run, Walk, Roll Against Bullying Oct. 5

Make plans to join PACER supporters Saturday, Oct. 5, 2013 for the Run, Walk, Roll Against Bullying at Mt. Normandale Lake Park in Bloomington, Minn. Organized by the Friends of PACER, this fun event is part of PACER’s National Bullying Prevention Month in October. It will include a four-mile run and a 1.5 mile fun walk/roll followed by live music, guest speakers, and family activities.

Last year, the Run, Walk, Roll Against Bullying was held in more than 20 states to raise awareness for bullying prevention and generate financial support. All funds raised in Minnesota help PACER’s National Bullying Prevention Center provide resources to students, families, and schools. The cost is just $20 for adults, $10 for ages 7 to 16, and children age 6 and younger are free. Online registration begins in June. For more information visit PACER.org/bullying.
From lace gloves and neon spandex to acid-washed denim and animal prints, if it was in fashion 25 years ago it was likely on display at PACER Rocks the ’80s Feb. 2 in Minneapolis. Nearly 200 partiers got into the spirit of the event, complete with period clothing and retro dance steps, as they moved to the ’80s beat of Brat Pack Radio at the Fine Line Music Café.

This Friends of PACER event was organized by PACER’s Young Professional Advisory Board (YPAB), whose members selected two important programs — the Simon Technology Center and the National Bullying Prevention Center — as beneficiaries. More than $30,000 was raised to help make a difference in the lives of children, including those with disabilities.
Thank You!
PACER is making a difference in the lives of children, including those with disabilities, but we could not do it without your help. We'd like to say a special thank you to Whitebox Mutual Funds, Presenting Sponsor of PACER's 31st Annual Benefit on May 11. Thanks to the generous community support of all of our sponsors, donors, and Benefit attendees, PACER can continue to provide its vital services to families at no charge. Thank you to all of you!

Would you like to join our team of dedicated volunteers at PACER? For more information, please call (952) 838-9000 and ask to speak with our volunteer coordinator in the Development office. We would love to have you involved!

PACER's Annual Benefit featuring Jay Leno, May 11
Don't miss this spectacular event, featuring the popular humor of Jay Leno, one of America's favorite comedians of all time. See page 3 for details.

EX.I.T.E. Camp for Girls, Aug. 5 to 15
Middle school girls with disabilities have until May 1 to apply for this fun science and technology camp at PACER. Visit PACER.org/stc for more information.

The Eighth Annual National PACER Symposium About Children & Young Adults with Mental Health and Learning Disabilities, Aug. 6
This year's event will be held at the Minneapolis Convention Center and registration opens May 14. For more details on the Symposium, see page 9.

PACER's Run, Walk, Roll Against Bullying, Oct. 5, 2013
Join us in October for Run, Walk, Roll Against Bullying, part of PACER's National Bullying Prevention Month. For more details, visit PACER.org/bullying.