It was the kind of night many parents know too well: a trip to the emergency room with a sick child, a search for an all-night pharmacy, and a seemingly endless wait with a crying youngster while a prescription is being filled.

For Ken Rosenblum, a physician, businessman, and the father of a son with Down syndrome, one of those nights turned into an “aha” moment that taught him some valuable lessons on how to approach life’s challenges. “You have a choice—to complain or try and help,” he says. Ken chose to put together a team of pharmacists and physicians and developed InstyMeds, an ATM-style dispenser of prescription medications. It’s now available in more than 140 emergency rooms, giving countless parents both comfort and convenience on their otherwise stressful night. He brings that same spirit of innovation, practicality, and progress to his work on PACER’s Corporate Sponsor committee.

“I took my personal passion for ideas and solutions and applied them to David’s world,” he says, recalling that long-ago night with his son, who’s now 18. He also applies it to PACER’s world. “Helping families with special needs requires joy in basic problem solving and determination to find the resources to just get it done,” he says. “That’s the way the world improves. Something you thought was impossible becomes possible, and people’s lives are made better.”
Such creativity and pragmatism are a perfect match for PACER. “PACER gives hope and possibility,” Ken says, “but it’s a brass-tacks organization intended to serve by solving very practical problems. I like business and try to think out of the box. I value and enjoy the challenge of bringing fresh approaches to the Corporate Sponsor committee for fundraising and furthering the mission of PACER. I also try to share tips with new members on how to seek donations in creative ways. I try to look at things from different points of view.”

His efforts are successful, even in these difficult economic times. “This past year has been hard to raise money,” he admits, but he considers it a success that he raised the amount he did for the Benefit. “The people who do give, you’re especially grateful for,” he adds.

“The satisfaction I get from being on the committee is helping PACER fulfill its mission of helping people with disabilities,” Ken says. PACER also supports Ken in his own deeply felt mission to make a more ethical world. “Improving people’s lives and assisting people in fulfilling their own missions in life creates a better world and brings joy,” Ken explains. “Finding joy in life is so important.”

Since joining the Corporate Sponsor committee five years ago, Ken has done a lot to support both his mission and PACER’s, “but there’s always more good to be done,” he says. “The issues that people with disabilities have aren’t going away. PACER helps make their lives easier.”

For anyone wanting to support PACER, Ken has this advice: “Just do it. If anywhere in your heart, you feel the need to help people, PACER is a great organization to help fulfill that goal. It touches the lives of so many people.”

Even people who don’t know someone with a disability should think about supporting PACER, he says. “Anybody could someday have a child or a grandchild or a friend with a disability,” he points out. Should that happen, “You’ll be glad there’s an organization like PACER available to give help.”

Ken helps make sure PACER will be there, and he sees a bright future for the organization. “Paula Goldberg, PACER’s executive director, has done such a good job nurturing PACER to what it is today. I’m just happy I can help it achieve its goals,” he says.

Federal and Military Employees Can Donate to PACER During Workplace Charity Drive

If you are a federal civilian, military, or postal employee, you are eligible to contribute to PACER Center through the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) charity drive at your workplace. Look for PACER in your local campaign booklet under the Children’s Charities of America (CCA) heading or alphabetically. You also can watch a video about one of PACER’s programs by visiting cfcvideospeakersbureau.org and entering PACER as the keyword.

To designate your gift to PACER, use code 12272. This code is unique to PACER and should be used under any heading where you see PACER’s name listed. The charity drive will run from September through mid-December. Please contribute at your workplace this fall to keep PACER’s important programs available at no charge.
PACER’s sixth annual HOT Party, COOL Cause is Saturday, Sept. 26, at the Fine Line Music Café in downtown Minneapolis. Support PACER’s new Teens Against Bullying Web site while you enjoy fabulous hors d’oeuvres and the music of Christy Love and You Know Who, featuring former members of Boogie Wonderland.

Why is bullying prevention the COOL Cause? Bullying is a major problem with devastating effects for many children and teens. PACER takes on the issue with an innovative, edgy Web site, PACERTeensAgainstBullying.org. The site launches in August, but that’s just the beginning. Maintaining it, creating new content, keeping the site appealing, developing companion materials, delivering them to schools, and extending the site’s reach to an ever-growing audience all require funding. Support this COOL Cause and have a HOT time!

Expected to draw more than 500 young parents and professionals who support PACER’s programs for children with disabilities, this premier social event of the year is hosted by the Friends of PACER Advisory Board.

Reserve your HOT Party, COOL Cause tickets now!

PACER.org/hotparty
$75 Champion Sponsor
$50 General Admission ($60 at the door)

Do More!

You can support PACERTeensAgainstBullying.org by participating in a fundraising drive.

Donate to one of 10 fundraising teams, each with a goal of raising $2,000. Visit PACER.org to donate!

You also can help by letting your friends and families know about this important project.

- Forward PACER.org to your family and friends via e-mail and post it to your Facebook page.
- Become a fan of PACER Center on Facebook to help increase awareness and receive updates on issues and upcoming events!

Thank you!
Bullying is a widespread problem that can have devastating results—and it intensifies during the teen years. As a national leader in bullying prevention, PACER has created a powerful new Web site to help teens learn about and deal with this pervasive problem. To make sure teens across the country know about it and rise to the challenge of overcoming bullying, teen star Demi Lovato is the site’s celebrity spokesperson.

Edgy, creative, and relevant, PACERTeensAgainstBullying.org invites middle- and high-school students to join a cast of teens and check out their social networking site. Through the Web site’s blogs, texts, videos, and more, students learn about what they can do to prevent bullying and deal with it if it’s already happening.

More than 150 teens throughout the Twin Cities helped create the site by suggesting ideas, writing video scripts, acting in videos, and providing feedback on the design and content. This collaborative effort has produced an outstanding site that addresses teens in the medium where they live: on the Internet. It also addresses cyberbullying, where teens may receive harassing text messages or be bullied on social networking sites.

The site has impressed those who have previewed it. “I was so blown away by the production quality, content, and overall teen relevance of the site,” says Michael Keller, chair of PACER’s Marketing Advisory Board and chief brand officer for International Dairy Queen. “I shared with the group that as a team, we need to try to help PACER take the launch of the site to the next level, because PACERTeensAgainstBullying.org, the teens it will serve, the digital nature of teens lives today, and the broad relevance and importance of bullying prevention all seem like a pile of dry hay that when lit, will just explode!”

To help ensure that it does, Michael and the marketing board have arranged for 16-year-old teen star Demi Lovato to be the Web site’s celebrity spokesperson. Demi was bullied so severely as a young teen that she was taken out of school and homeschooled. Demi understands how devastating bullying can be and what a barrier it is to education. She is committed to working with PACER to prevent it.

Launched in conjunction with Demi’s Aug. 8 concert at the Target Center, PACERTeensAgainstBullying.org will
be promoted nationally in many ways. In addition to a presence on Yahoo!Kids and Yahoo!Music and social networking connections on Facebook and Twitter, it will be publicized during National Bullying Prevention Awareness Week, Oct. 4-10. Publicity will highlight the new site and PACER’s original bullying prevention site for elementary school children, PACERKidsAgainstBullying.org.

The issue of bullying is widespread—but so is the commitment of countless people to end it. PACER is leading the way and inviting millions more to join the cause and do their part to put an end to bullying.

**Spotlight on PACER’s Marketing Advisory Board**

Building a brand, promoting an event, increasing awareness—all are important yet daunting tasks for a nonprofit organization. PACER’s Marketing Advisory Board consists of extremely talented marketing executives who volunteer their time and expertise to help PACER strategize and leverage marketing and public relations opportunities. Chaired by Michael Keller, chief brand officer for International Dairy Queen, the Marketing Advisory Board includes professionals from Best Buy, Delta/Northwest Airlines, Polaris, Qwest, Target, and many more companies committed to PACER’s mission to help children with disabilities. “We are so fortunate to have such a dynamic group of talented experts to help guide us,” says Paula Goldberg, executive director.

The Marketing Advisory Board has helped PACER with several major initiatives in the last few years, including rebranding PACER’s graphic identity and Web site, marketing its IBM KidSmart early childhood technology project, promoting the annual Benefit, building awareness for National Bullying Prevention Awareness Week, and most recently, strategizing a major launch of the new PACERTeensAgainstBullying.org Web site. (See page 4 for more on this exciting new project.)

PACER thanks the Marketing Advisory Board for its input and guidance. This dynamic group has helped to make us all Champions for Children with Disabilities!
One morning, a youth named Abdi called PACER, upset and in tears. The high school senior had just been expelled from school and did not know what to do. His highest priority was to graduate with his peers, yet it all seemed in jeopardy. Eighteen, homeless, and with no family, he knew no one who could help him.

The PACER advocate learned that Abdi had been going through a special education evaluation when a security guard informed him that he was not welcome at that school anymore. Even though the special education teacher explained that she had asked Abdi to come in for the evaluation, the guard forcibly ejected him from the school.

The PACER advocate assessed the situation and realized that three things needed to happen: The question of whether Abdi had a disability needed to be resolved, an administrative error underestimating Abdi’s credits had to be corrected, and Abdi needed to be transferred to a school where he could successfully complete his secondary education. After making many phone calls and attending dispute resolution meetings on Abdi’s behalf, PACER’s advocate succeeded on all counts.

Abdi, the PACER advocate, school personnel, the school psychologist, and the district special education coordinator agreed that although Abdi probably would qualify for special education if he took some additional tests, they would forgo them because the school year was nearly over. That question about missing credits? It was resolved when administrators found they had made an error. Everyone also agreed that a placement in another school might be best for Abdi. Although he was apprehensive, Abdi understood that the move would benefit him and he accepted an administrative transfer to another location.

Abdi continued to call his advocate to seek advice. One day he called nervously to ask a personal question. Since he had no family, would the advocate go with him to graduation? On that important day, the PACER advocate and Abdi’s special education teacher were there to see him walk across the stage in cap and gown and receive his hard-earned diploma.

“Despite so much hardship in his life, this young man showed amazing resilience and perseverance,” says his PACER advocate. “Where others might choose easier paths or even give up, Abdi surmounted obstacle after obstacle to graduate from high school and set himself on a path to a bright future.”

Only three months after that initial tearful call from the youth, the advocate received a June 18 text message that showed just how far things had come. It was from Abdi, wishing him a happy Father’s Day.
Committed, passionate, energetic. These three words describe many of the volunteers who help PACER ensure that all children, including those with disabilities, reach their full potential. One of PACER’s outstanding volunteers, Don McNeil, was recognized in June as a “Heart of the Event Award Winner” by Minnesota Monthly magazine. Don was one of only six volunteers honored from a field of many nominations that were submitted by nonprofits throughout the community.

The volunteer activities for which Don was recognized are extensive. In addition to being president of PACER’s Board of Directors, Don is an active member of the Corporate Sponsor committee and a co-chair of the Silent Auction for PACER’s Benefit. His dedication to children with disabilities also is evident in his involvement in policy issues as he served on the state’s 10-member Special Education Task Force, a commitment that required many hours.

The father of three children, two of whom have disabilities, Don personally understands PACER’s mission. Although he and his wife, Julianne, spend many sleepless nights caring for their youngest son with autism, Don never misses a meeting and always arrives with a smile on his face, full of energy and optimism.

A partner in the law firm of Coleman, Hull, & van Vliet, Don practices in the field of business litigation. He willingly shares his legal expertise with PACER on a pro bono basis, adding yet another dimension to his gifts to the organization.

At the award ceremony, Mary Schrock, PACER’s chief operating and development officer, closed her remarks with a quote by leadership expert John C. Maxwell: “A leader is one who knows the way, goes the way, and shows the way,” she said. “This statement is a great way to describe Don. Don helps set the vision, but he does the work to implement and leads by example.”

On behalf of all the children with disabilities Don has helped, PACER offers heartfelt congratulations on having his outstanding volunteer service recognized by the community.
Minnesota has a national reputation as a state in which philanthropy is a value championed by many corporations and individuals. PACER is very fortunate to have a passionate philanthropist, Dr. Roberta Mann, committed to helping children with mental health and learning disabilities.

For four years, Dr. Mann has co-sponsored with PACER the National Ted and Dr. Roberta Mann Foundation Symposium about Children and Young Adults with Mental Health and Learning Disabilities. Thanks to the incredible generosity of Dr. Mann, this popular full-day event is offered at no charge to educators and parents who want to learn about new developments and practical strategies to use with their students and children who have these disabilities.

The 2009 symposium, featuring national speakers, was Aug. 12. PACER and all those who have benefited from the four symposiums thank Dr. Mann for the hope that she provides for children by educating their teachers and parents.

Dr. Mann expressed her philosophy in this beautiful letter she wrote to PACER about this year’s symposium:

It is said that life should be not measured by the breaths you take, but by the moments that take your breath away. Today is one of those moments in my life. I feel honored that I have been given the opportunity to sponsor the fourth annual Ted and Dr. Roberta Mann Foundation Symposium and to make a difference in the lives of children and adults with mental health and learning disabilities.

If I had one word to describe my life, it would be “transformational.” My life has been a transformational journey that has shaped me, sharpened me, increased my confidence, and changed me both personally and professionally.

It was seven years ago that I struck out on an academic journey to receive my doctorate degree from Saint Mary’s University of Minnesota. That journey was exciting, exhausting, and invigorating all at the same time. I would compare the process to climbing a mountain. Mountain climbing requires stamina and at times scaling sheer cliffs.

I have learned to be persistent—and that the guides of experience are essential. What I have also discovered is that learning is an ongoing process, a lifelong commitment to open the doors of our minds.

What I believe is that I have—and each of us has—the potential of changing the world.

I now have a true understanding of the poster that hung in the hallway of my school that said, “One hundred years from now, it won’t matter what car I drove, what kind of house I lived in, how much money I had in my bank account, or what my clothes looked like. But, the world may be a little better because I was important in the life of a child.”

To this I would add the world might be a little brighter because I now choose to use my resources and leadership to inspire, motivate, and teach that we all have the potential to impact another person, the future of our world. We all matter.
When you receive your United Way pledge card from your workplace giving campaign, please consider writing in “PACER Center” under the “Other” or “Donor Choice” category. Doing so provides funding that helps PACER continue to respond to the 43,000 requests for assistance received each year.

PACER is not a United Way agency and therefore does not receive support from its general funds. PACER does, however, benefit from the donor choice program of the Greater Twin Cities United Way, Tri-State United Way, and others.

“Identifying PACER as your choice organization provides important funds to PACER while still contributing to your overall workplace campaign,” says Mary Schrock, PACER’s chief operating and development officer. “Your donation helps PACER open doors for children with any disability. Thank you for being a Champion for Children with Disabilities.”

When Jonathan Fogel, founder of Fogel Law Offices, invited his colleagues to his second annual Bowling and Happy Hour Event to benefit PACER Center, the response was immediate and enthusiastic. After paying an entry fee to participate in the tournament, teams gathered at The Park Tavern in St. Louis Park for food, drinks, and fun while supporting PACER. Some teams even sported matching bowling shirts, and the spirit of competition and generosity was in the air.

All of the proceeds from the June 18 event went to PACER’s new Teens Against Bullying Web site. Fogel said it was a great way for his colleagues to “have fun for a good cause.”

Would your company consider holding an “Event for a Cause” to benefit PACER’s programs for children with disabilities? Such events are wonderful morale boosters and networking opportunities. They also provide an easy way for employees to give back to the community as a group. PACER’s staff would love to work with you to plan a fun, successful event! To learn more, please contact Mary Schrock, chief operating and development officer, at mschrock@PACER.org.
PACER’s Silent Auction has many unique offerings, but this year’s concert by singer-songwriter Dan Wilson was outstanding by all measures. Generously hosted by Melissa and Uri Camarena in their beautifully restored historic home, the evening began with a delicious and sophisticated hors d’oeuvres buffet donated by Thyme to Entertain. It was followed by Wilson’s private performance. Along with the music, he shared personal stories about his inspiration for composing songs, including those he wrote following the birth of his daughter, who has a disability. The hour-long concert thoroughly engaged the 50 lucky people who bid on this item, and many of the guests requested that PACER offer this experience again next year.
Thank You!

We can never extend enough appreciation for the support we receive from volunteers, board and advisory board members, donors, and corporate and foundation sponsors. Your contributions of time, energy, ideas, and finances allow PACER to help children with disabilities and their families throughout Minnesota and the nation. Thank you for your part in PACER’s success and for being a Champion for Children with Disabilities.

National Bullying Prevention Awareness Week, Oct. 4 – 10

Join people across the nation in saying “no” to bullying during National Bullying Prevention Awareness Week, Oct. 4 – 10. Bullying can have a devastating effect on young lives. Be part of the solution. Visit PACER.org to learn how you can help.

Spring 2010

Save the Date! PACER’s 28th Annual Benefit, May 8

Be sure to mark your calendar for PACER’s biggest event of the year. You can count on having an entertaining, energized evening while supporting PACER’s projects for children with disabilities.

Fall 2009

HOT Party, COOL Cause, Sept. 26

Have fun while supporting PACER’s new TeensAgainstBullying.org Web site, this year’s COOL Cause. More than 500 guests will be dancing the night away to the beats of Christy Love and You Know Who. Make sure you’re one of them! Order your tickets now at PACER.org. (See page 6 for details.)

Remember PACER as You Plan for the Future in Your Will

Through many local and national projects, PACER is a vital resource for families of children with disabilities in Minnesota and the country. In order to keep its services available at no charge to families, PACER relies on donors to contribute now and in the future through planned giving. You can leave a legacy and make an impact on the lives of children with disabilities by naming PACER in a planned gift, such as a bequest.

A bequest in your will provides a gift that lives after you. Bequests can be in cash, real estate, securities, or other assets, and they may be deducted from your estate taxes. PACER Center, Inc., is registered as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation in Minnesota.

For more information on how you can leave a legacy for children with disabilities, contact Mary Schrock, PACER’s chief operating and development officer, at 952-838-9000, or an attorney who represents your interests.
Let a sledding snowman and three rainbow penguins send winter cheer to your friends, relatives, clients, and employees this holiday season. These charming PACER cards, created by a child with a disability, can be customized with your own greeting.

When you send these cards, you’ll warm hearts twice—once when the recipients open them, and again as your purchase supports PACER programs for children with disabilities. You also make a statement to the world that you care about your community.

Featuring the artist’s bio and photo on the back, these full-color cards measure 4 ¾” x 6 ¼”, are printed on glossy card stock, and come with white envelopes. To learn more or to place an order, visit http://www.PACER.org/help/creativecustom2009.asp or contact Nicole Stanich at 952-838-9000 or Nicole.Stanich@PACER.org. Deadline for ordering is Sept. 30.

Since 2006, PACER has sponsored an annual Creative Kids art contest. Initiated by artist Anthony R. Whelihan, the event invites children with disabilities to let their artistic talents soar. The winner of each year’s contest has his or her artwork featured on PACER’s greeting card. This year’s winner is Nick Sullivan, 16, an aspiring cartoon animator with a charming, enthusiastic personality and an infectious sense of humor.

This is the first year the cards have been customizable. Proceeds from the sales of these cards support PACER programs such as the Simon Technology Center, the Count Me In® Puppet Program, and bullying prevention Web sites.