



2010 ANNUAL REPORT



One-of-a-kind services  
for one-of-a-kind people.

# 2010: A "One-of-a-Kind" Year



**Thomas Sy**

Aspire of WNY had another interesting and eventful year in 2010. We continued to expand our base of supporters, engaged in advocacy and served nearly 3,200 individuals with disabilities throughout Western New York.



**Thomas Andruschat**

We also began the process of revamping our brand identity, which is important to our future growth. One of the core branding elements

resulting from the effort is our new tagline, designed to more accurately reflect the person-centered planning and unique set of individualized solutions that we provide to people with developmental and similar disabilities. Aspire's one-on-one approach is one of the key characteristics that differentiates us from others in our field.

It is imperative that we continue to raise awareness about what we do and whom we serve in order to grow our individual donor base, build corporate and foundation support and help maintain public funding.

In this report, we're proud to tell you about some of the wonderful one-of-a-kind people that we serve and about the unique needs that Aspire addresses for each of them. We introduced you to three of these individuals in our branding campaign: Mannie, Terrel and Larry. Here we tell you more about their lives, painting a more complete picture of who they are as individuals.

In 2010, we also experienced a technology explosion at the Center for Learning, which we illustrate in our story about Bria who uses the SMART Board and other new devices that we've been fortunate enough to obtain. Advanced assistive technology will help Bria and others like her experience fuller, more interactive lives.

Looking forward, we see that 2011 and 2012 will be challenging for many non-profits and human service agencies. Substantial budget cuts are looming and we need to be prepared. We ask that you continue to support us in any way you can, whether by donating, advocating for us or by attending one of our many fundraising events. We need all of the champions we can get in these trying and uncertain times.

Moving ahead, we will ceaselessly work to meet our mission of supporting children and adults with developmental and similar disabilities, helping them to live their lives to the fullest by providing individualized assistance based on personal choices.

As always, we thank you for your interest, collaboration and support.

Sincerely,

**Thomas Sy**  
*Executive Director*

**Thomas Andruschat**  
*Board Chairperson*

**Aspire is the region's leader in supporting individuals with disabilities. We envision full participation of those we support in all aspects of community living. Toward that end, Aspire empowers individuals to maximize their potential, including those we support, those who work for us and those who work with us.**

# Vision

# Lighting Up the Room with a Smile:

## MANNIE LITCHARD

Six-year old Mannie attends Aspire of WNY's Center for Learning (CFL) where he receives a variety of care, education and services. Some might say that he gives back even more than he receives.

His teacher, Donna Bauer tells us, "He is just a doll. He is the sweetest little boy. He loves to interact with the adults he knows here and lights up the whole room with his smile. He also tries harder than anyone I've ever met. He'll focus on anything you ask of him and give it his all."

Mannie has a brain anomaly that has significantly impaired his movement and vocal abilities. But his teacher and physical therapist have high hopes for him because he is a trooper and always tries his best.

Aspire first got involved with Mannie when he was 1½ years old. Aspire performed a sleeping safety evaluation and arranged for Mannie to receive a Stockton Wed which greatly minimized the risk of entrapment and suffocation. Later,



Mannie started at the CFL's pre-school and now attends its elementary school program.

Mannie's day consists of many healthy, fun and interactive pursuits. He plays music with switch-activated toys. He's learning to move his own electric wheelchair with the motion of one leg. He plays baseball, paints, uses musical instruments and bounces in the bounce house (with a little help from his CFL friends.) He's also learning cause and effect relationships with assistive technology and computers. And, he receives physical therapy, chest therapy to keep his airways clear, nutrition through a "G-tube," and a whole lot of care and attention. His team of providers feels hopeful that Mannie will live a full, multifaceted life.

# Donors

**We gratefully acknowledge these individuals, foundations and businesses who so kindly contributed to Aspire in 2010.**

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## Spreading Love, Cheer and Enthusiasm:

### TERREL ROWSON

Terrel Rowson is a precocious ten-year old with an interminable zest for life. He's incredibly active even though he was born with Spina Bifida. He plays basketball, swims, fishes, rides a cool, tricked-out bike and plays hockey.

He started playing hockey when he was just three years old after his mom read about the opportunity in a flyer at their doctor's office. Terrel plays at the Jamestown Savings Bank Arena and travels to all kinds of places including Ohio, Maryland and Buffalo. He's seen the Sabres in action and had the chance to meet some Edmonton Oilers when he and his family joined the rally to keep Children's Hospital open.

Terrel's list of interests is rather lengthy. He enjoys so much...from painting and photography to listening to Bruno Mars to watching WWE wrestling and The Little Mermaid.

He also enjoys spending time with his extended family in a home brimming with love. Terrel was adopted by Lisa and Melody Rowson who knew his birth mother and requested

an "open" adoption so that Terrel could see his biological family. Terrel brightens the life of "Poppy," Grandma Sally, stepbrothers and biological siblings. At the family home, nestled on the shore of Chautauqua Lake, a kinetic trio of dogs whooshes out the door as it's opened and circles the yard, tails wagging. Neighborhood teens stream by to say hi to Terrel and shoot a few hoops. The yard is scattered with toys and filled with an above ground pool that gets plenty of use. For Terrel and his family, life is good.

Aspire of WNY has worked with the Rowsons for many years to help make life good. Aspire facilitated a variety of services including installation of a ramp for their home, renovations to make the home wheelchair accessible, arranging for a morning aide and ongoing physical therapy.





## Learning More with Advanced Technology:

### BRIA RAWLES

The staff and teachers at the Center for Learning can't help but rave about Bria Rawles. She is always happy, cooperative and alert. Her interests vary widely and include bowling, painting, music of all kinds and using some of the CFL's advanced assistive technology.

She has used a switch-activated DynaVox for some time. The DynaVox shows her topics/answer options on a screen. When the correct choice for what she's trying to communicate pops up, she presses the switch. She is now

testing the eye gaze system with her DynaVox, which will allow her to make choices using the blink of an eye.

She also interacts daily with the SMART Board in her classroom (shown here). The giant, touch-screen learning device offers virtual stories, basic lesson plans and all kinds of fun and interesting activities that help improve learning outcomes. Bria and her classmates can play music, make a bright "digital ink" drawing or play a game with the touch of a giant stylus.

Bria is also currently trialing a wheelchair and has been scooting down the halls from class to class with it whenever she can. Others in her classroom have started trying out some of the CFL's new iPads, which offer many types of assistive technology for students with disabilities. Hopefully Bria will be able to test out an iPad in the near future.

Even though Bria is becoming very adept at using advanced technology, her underpinnings are that of a true "girly-girl." She loves the yearly prom; shopping with her mom at the mall; getting her nails done; and wearing lip gloss and rhinestone-studded specs.

*Special Note: The CFL's first SMART Board was sponsored by the Ballow Law Firm.*

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Julie Kwiecinski  
Erik Lash  
Cheryl Lesinski  
Natalie LeVan  
Precious Lewis  
Carmen Lippert  
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Stephanie Loranty  
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**This listing includes new donations and gifts of \$50 or more made between January 1, 2010 and December 31, 2010. We do our best to be as accurate as possible, but mistakes or omissions may occur. Please contact Michael Holley at 716.505.5512 or michael.holley@aspirewny.org with any corrections. Thank you!**

## Adding Splendor to His Community: LARRY DESKIEWICZ

Larry Deskiewicz has been participating in Aspire of WNY's iXpress art program for nearly ten years. He creates beautiful pieces of artwork by using a paintbrush attached to a helmet he wears on his head.

The process is fascinating to watch. Larry positions himself in front of what looks like a very typical art board. Using a nod of his head, he expertly dips the tip of the paintbrush into a pallet at the edge of his canvas. He then applies the paint with painstaking precision. He keeps a photo of the subject matter on hand to use for reference. He uses the utmost care and meticulousness. His determination shows. His work is just stunning.

Over the years, Larry has tried different techniques and medium. Right now, he is working with acrylics and enjoys the depth of color and layering that they allow. His ability to share his creativity has given him the opportunity to



contribute substantially to his community. Many of Larry's works are donated to Aspire's yearly art auctions. The funds raised are used to support iXpress and other programs that benefit people with disabilities.

While not painting, Larry listens to books on tape, visits art galleries, travels, and hangs out with his best friend, Ed.

Larry has substantial disabilities. He has very limited hand agility, is speech impaired and wheelchair bound. Yet he still manages to create and share beautiful artwork; give back to his community; and support the programs he himself has benefitted from.

# 2010 Revenue and Expenses<sup>1</sup>

## REVENUE

Program Service Revenue <sup>2</sup> .....	\$66,690,670
Government Grants .....	\$3,134,312
Fundraising .....	\$313,475
Other .....	\$177,734

**TOTAL REVENUE**                      **\$70,316,191**

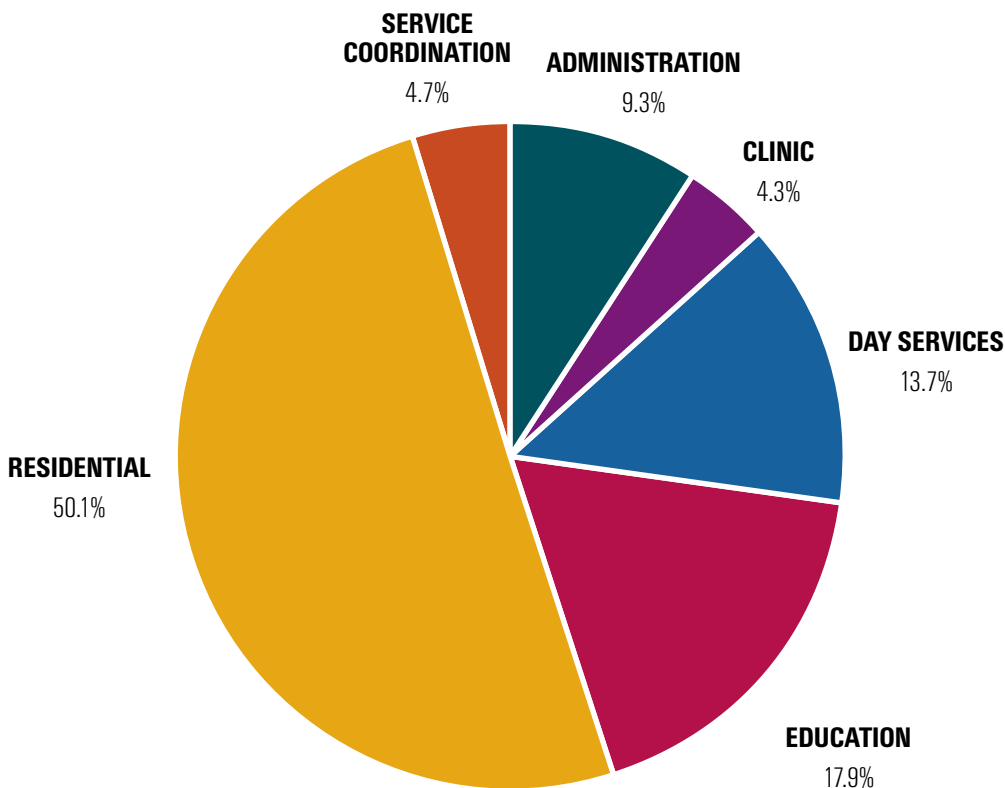
## EXPENSES

	PERCENT
Administration .....	9.3%
Clinic .....	4.3%
Day Services .....	13.7%
Education .....	17.9%
Residential .....	50.1%
Service Coordination .....	4.7%

**100.0%**

<sup>1</sup> Unaudited

<sup>2</sup> 98.9% Federal and New York State Governmental Funding





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## Meet Mannie

**Attitude:** Super positive. I will try anything and do my best to succeed.

**Outlook:** Optimistic.

**Loves:** Interacting with adults at school, lighting up the room with a smile.

**Favorite Games:** Baseball, Big Bang Bus Game, Five Firefighters.

**Interests:** The bounce house, gym class, music.



## Meet Terrel

**Pets:** Marley the Lab, Alice the Chihuahua, Zack the Wiener Dog, and two cockatiels.

**Favorite Sport:** Hockey – been playing since I was three years old.

**Big-Time Crush:** Ashley Porter, our neighbor.

**Activities:** Basketball, swimming, fishing, video games.

**Dreams:** To be a surgeon and a hair stylist.



## Meet Bria

**Loves:** The mall and shopping for prom.

**Favorite activities:** Using the SMART Board, painting, bowling.

**Always:** Happy.

**Favorite shows:** Anything musical, especially *"American Idol."*

**Feels good about:** Helping my teacher sort supplies.



## Meet Larry

**Favorite Places:** Rome, Vegas, Letchworth.

**Best Friend:** Ed, who I have known for 50 years.

**Most Proud of:** My artwork and "placing" at the Special Olympics.

**Cake or Pie?** BOTH.

**Likes:** Visiting art galleries and going on field trips.

Read more about these "one-of-a-kind people" inside.

