

# Napa Valley **Kids Connect** News

December 2013

Our Non-Profit has evolved since our original inception. We started out as a classroom with four walls to a program without walls. Napa Valley Unified (NVUSD) saw a greater need for Assistive Technology (AT) and has hired a full-time AT teacher to meet the need throughout the district. The district has also dedicated more teachers and support staff to the Assistive Technology Lending Library (ATLL) which is operated in conjunction with the Napa County Office of Education (NCOE) Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA). We are pleased to be working with two agencies dedicated to helping all students achieve success.

Our current project has partnered us with NVUSD to design a summer school program which will bring children who use AAC and AT together focusing on advancing communication skills as well as incorporating more movement opportunities.

Because of our fundraising efforts, we continue to provide training and education to staff, parents and children. Keeping up on technology is imperative. This year, we sent four people to the Closing the Gap Conference in Minnesota. Closing the Gap provides professionals, parents and consumers with the information and training necessary to best locate, compare and implement assistive technology into the lives of persons with disabilities.

Here are some comments about how this made a difference:

*It was an invaluable experience for me and my students. Since the conference I have redesigned our reading program, received new math and reading curriculum, and increased my focus on classroom seating and its effects on student learning.*

**Krystie Yeo, Middle School Special Education Teacher**

*I gained a better understanding of our daughter's challenges and struggles in using both a power wheelchair and a communication device. We have been able to implement motivating ideas in our daughter's education; such as video modeling and positioning for fuller engagement. At home, our family has implemented using our daughter's device during dinner. It is powerful lesson on the challenges she faces on a daily basis.*

**Ashley Derr, Mom to a 14 year old Middle Schooler**

*Today I was able to share with over 20 teachers the information about video modeling primarily from the presenters at CTG, (specifically) about what type of video will benefit their students.*

*...the 3 days were jam-packed and very educational and inspirational.*

**Margo Slack, NVUSD AT Specialist**

*On Implementing a new program; MeMoves can be completed in about 5 minutes with a lasting calming effect.*

*On use of the IPad for children with Autism: Some students have no interest in paper and pencil activities to learn letters and numbers; however, with the iPad they are engaged in tracing, writing, and matching.*

**Liz Prado, Occupational Therapist**

## Lampyridae Vineyards

Our largest fundraiser, is through the sale of the Communication Block wines. All of the profits from this project are donated to Napa Valley Kids Connect. To find out more or to order our wine visit:

[www.lampyridaevineyards.com](http://www.lampyridaevineyards.com)



**Aaron and his helpers bringing in the grapes!**

THANK YOU to our local businesses who continue to support us: UCPNB, NVUSD, NCOE SELPA, Napa Valley ATLL, Pott Wine, Quixote Winery, Corley Family Wines, Schulz Cellars, Napa Tax, Ranch Markets & Walsh Vineyards Management

Thank YOU for supporting our efforts. Your donations really make a difference. Your continued support is greatly needed and appreciated. To find out how to help visit:

[www.napavalleykidsconnect.org](http://www.napavalleykidsconnect.org)

## Happy Holidays!

Ashley E. Derr, President

Mary Ferons, Vice President

Bertha Rodriguez, Secretary

Carri Mello, Treasurer

Pedro Irucuta, Advisory Committee