

University of Florida at Jacksonville  
Center for Autism and Related Disabilities

Constituency Board Biographies  
2011

Our constituency board is comprised of family members and individuals with autism and related disabilities. They help guide program policies, priorities, and activities. The constituency board meets with CARD staff on a regular basis throughout the year. If you are interested in more information, please feel free to contact our office at (904) 633-0760.

***Rom Alderman – Chair - CARD Board Person - Corrugated***

I am the Dad of Thomas & Sarah. Thomas is a severely autistic 11 year old; but not as severe as many. His language is limited and he will barely eat unless prompted. He has fun as long as he gets what he wants, and he is not thinking about what he can't have, kind of like me. He will flee from anywhere with no thought of return; in search of his obsessions of water, running water, tractors, most any wheel, and other secondary obsessions.

We have the resources create a safe environment and through ABA therapy we have greatly reduced his bad behaviors, and enhanced our family's knowledge & skills in handling him (that includes my 8 year old daughter, wife & many more). I cannot imagine a family that is not blessed with these resources we have, to handle a child like Thomas. He is so much happier and healthier because of these ABA skills (mostly common sense but just consistently applied & reminded).

I am involved in CARD & the Autism community to lend what meager contribution I can, to insure that we are doing all we can for autism families in need.

I am a financial & systems analyst with an early career in statistics. I hope to help create a picture of the needs of our Northeast Florida Region.

Please lend a hand, where you can.

### ***Ron Timonere – Co Chair***

In recent years, Ron Timonere has served as Director of Business Development for Shands Jacksonville/ University of Florida College of Medicine. Ron initiated through NCQA efforts that led to UF&Shands Jacksonville becoming the first health system in Northeast Florida to receive the Medical Home designation which identifies and provides better access for children with behavioral health care issues, including Autism. Ron was responsible for the formation and successful implementation of First Coast Advantage, the pilot privatization of Medicaid in Duval County that also serves the health care needs of children and their families.

Ron came to Shands Healthcare/ University of Florida College of Medicine with a 32- year management background in corporate leadership roles within health care, telecommunications and financial industries. Ron's six year old grandson has Autism. Since his diagnosis, Ron has been an advocate and fund raiser for a number of Autism related events. He continues to reach out to many corporate sponsors and recently worked with his church to implement a program designed to provide services to the families and children with Autism. It is a model he hopes will catch on across the City of Jacksonville.

A US Army Medical Corp veteran, Ron has been married to his wife for forty-two years has two children and three grandchildren.

### ***Heather K. Sams – Secretary***

Heather Sams was born on the west coast and grew up moving around a lot and living in many amazing places. At age 7 she moved with her family to Saudia Arabia. Heather now lives in Mandarin with her husband of 20 years and four children. The family moved to Jacksonville after residing in Pittsburgh, PA and Dallas, TX. Two of Heathers children have been diagnosed with Aspergers. Heather is a graduate magna cum laude of Arizona State University with a BA in Art History, MA in Art, and a MBA in non-profit Arts Administration. Heather is the owner of HAS Art Solutions, her own consulting LLC, and is a valued partner of R. Roberts Gallery in Avondale. "I've always been involved in the arts in all communities where I've lived. The arts are the source and barometer of a community. If you want to know what REALLY happening or what's REALLY important to a community, look to the arts."

### ***Jasmine Dixon***

Jasmine Dixon is the mother of 4 children, one who has autism spectrum disorder. Jasmine is a graduate of Loyola University, Chicago, Illinois. She graduated with a B.S. in Communications and a minor in Public Relations. In the past, she has worked in the Banking industry; currently, she serves as Case Worker for the State of Florida. Over the years, Jasmine has dedicated her life to raising her children to become determined, independent, and self-supporting adults. Jasmine believes that any person, with or without a disability, must reach their full potential and be the person they desire to be. Her son with autism graduated high school on time with a standard diploma in 2007. He currently attends FCCJ in the Computer Support Program. A few years ago, she joined and became an active member of CARD/Jacksonville. As a Board member, she feels that she can contribute her experiences as an advocate in transition services and help make a difference to improve the individual outcomes for individuals with autism spectrum disorders.

### ***Zohreh Kianmehr-Roumi***

I would like to introduce myself to all the member of Constituency Board. My name is Zohreh Kianmehr-Roumi. I graduated from Indiana University with a B.S. degree in Business Administration. I am advancing my education in the ABA program, and proceeding with BCABA certification. Also I am working with children and adults with disabilities as a behavior specialist. I am married with two children. My son Ashkan is 15 years old who has been diagnosed with Autism, and my daughter Elle is 12 years old.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the University of Florida at Jacksonville CARD for giving me the opportunity to serve on the Constituency Board. I hope my contribution will be beneficial for the CARD program.

### ***Jacqueline Bargas***

### ***Lou Cabrera***

Lou Cabrera is currently employed as a manager at Office Max. Through the years he has worked in management positions at fortune 500 companies such as Gap, Inc., Bed, Bath & Beyond, and Target. Lou attended school at California State University at Fullerton where he earned a Bachelor of Arts in Criminal Justice and History.

In 1998, Lou and his family moved to Miami, Florida from Southern California. Soon after arriving, his son was diagnosed with autism at the age of 22 months. Lou has been a committee member and team captain for the National Alliance for Autism Research Walkathon every year since 2002. He participated in the father support group at the University of Miami CARD. In the late spring of 2006, they moved to Jacksonville where he started the first father support group for dads with autistic children. In his spare time Lou enjoys helping others, traveling, hiking, and backpacking. Most of all Lou enjoys spending time with his family and friends.