



# Our World

## Back on track after a brain injury *Man completes degree, launches life*

Mark B.\* was a junior in college when his life-altering accident occurred. Driving down an icy hill in upstate New York three years ago, he spun into a telephone pole and hit his head.

After a week-long coma, Mark was left with a brain injury – resulting in short-term memory problems, difficulty paying attention, trouble finding his way around, and other cognitive challenges.

Even after two months in the hospital, he “wasn’t very clear-headed,” the East Windsor, N.J., resident recalls. “If I read a sentence, I would forget the beginning of the sentence before I got to the end.”

But thanks to four months of cognitive rehabilitation at Bancroft, Mark regained so many skills that he was able to return to college, missing

just one semester. He graduated a year later, and is now working full-time and planning for a bright future.

“Bancroft was very helpful,” says Mark, who received his BA in politics from Ithaca College in late 2009. “They showed me a lot of methods to make things better.”

Mark also credits the drug Ritalin for helping him stay focused. “The two [Bancroft and the medication] worked well together,” he says.

Mark worked with speech/language pathologist Barbara Miller in Bancroft’s Plainsboro, N.J., brain-injury program on a variety of thinking and verbal skills.

“We did exercises to strengthen his abilities, and I taught him strategies to compensate for some of his challenges,” says Miller.



Since completing his program at Bancroft, Mark has graduated from college and started a full-time job. Here, he studies for grad-school admissions exams in his Central New Jersey home.

For instance, Mark needed to relearn how to plan and organize his activities, so Miller had him practice creating a daily schedule for himself. He eventually got a BlackBerry, which he still uses to plan his activities “by

*(continued on p. 3)*



## Bancroft earns arts award

Bancroft has been recognized by a regional arts organization for promoting access to cultural opportunities for people with disabilities.

Philadelphia-based Art-Reach gave its 2010 Commitment to Cultural Access Award to Bancroft during its annual Jazz Brunch last fall at the Hyatt Philadelphia Bellevue.

Art-Reach works to increase cultural participation among people with disabilities and economic disadvantages. The awards brunch – co-chaired by such local luminaries as Philadelphia First Lady Lisa Nutter and arts supporters Virginia and Harvey Kimmel – drew nearly 300 guests.

“Bancroft truly understands how arts and culture can

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At the Art-Reach awards ceremony, from left: Bancroft staff member Linda Miller, volunteer Peter Fisher, NBC10 news anchor Dawn Timmeney, and Bancroft President Toni Pergolin.

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our president,  
**Toni Pergolin**



## Each of us can transform

*In our world, we wake up every morning to a life of possibility.*

I hear from family members all the time about how their son or daughter has surpassed what they dreamed possible, because of Bancroft.

In fact, one parent said recently: "What you guys have done at Bancroft is nothing short of miraculous!"

As you can imagine, such life-changing transformations inspire us to do even more.

And, each time we help a child learn to say "thank you," or enable a college student to return to school after an injury, or help someone get a job, we feel great pride, because we're helping to give new meaning to their lives.

I hope you will think about the work we do for children and adults with neurological challenges and their families, and consider how you, too, might help.

More financial support would enable us to modernize older facilities, improve technology, and enhance programs to better help people learn and grow.

You'll be reading more about our "Transforming Our World" campaign (see p. 6), which we're launching to help meet these needs and secure our future for every family that depends on us. We encourage your involvement!

The people we support have extensive needs – cognitive, medical, behavioral – and it is only through relentless innovation, a commitment to clinical excellence, and compassionate persistence, that we can be successful.

Please help us pursue the "possibilities" for those we support, and join us in making this One World. For Everyone.

## Spotlight on: Linda Miller



*Longtime staff member Linda Miller gardens with Bernie King at Bancroft's Flicker Residences. Linda has always been keenly focused on the individual interests of those in her program.*

*A side note: Linda is married to Dennis Duffy, also a 25-year Bancroft veteran.*

Linda Miller isn't the biggest sports fan. But when people in her program asked to attend a Phillies game last July – during a brutal heatwave – the dedicated staff member was right there, supporting them.

"It was awful for me, but they loved it!" she laughs.

That "person-centered" attitude is typical of the 25-year employee, who's worked in a gamut of Bancroft settings – from adult arts programs to employee recruiting.

No matter the position, "Linda's focus is always on making things better for the people we support," says her supervisor, Bet Kinney. "She really cares about who they are and what they want."

Even Linda's current job – activities coordinator at the Flicker Residences for older adults, and tax-credit coordinator for the Flicker and Brick (N.J.) programs – seems an odd mix. Unless you know Linda.

"She's an artist at heart," explains Kinney, Flicker program director, "but she does the tax-credit paperwork because it enables people to live here – and that's what they want."

At Flicker, Linda arranges activities in the community at least nine times a week, plus special outings, on-site performances and more (see the "arts award" story on p. 1).

She also recruits volunteers for on-site parties or special projects, and is on Bancroft's Accessibility and Inclusive Ministry committees – where her impact is felt organization-wide.

Says Linda: "Whatever is needed, that's where I'll be."

## Making it One World. For Everyone.

## Cultural access recognized

*(continued from cover)*

improve the lives of people with disabilities," said Michael Norris, executive director of Art-Reach. "The organization not only engages frequently with Art-Reach; Bancroft also initiates many other cultural activities for the people in their programs."

NBC10 news anchor Dawn Timmeney presented Art-Reach's award to Bancroft President Toni Pergolin.

"Access to cultural and lifelong learning opportunities is critical to personal fulfillment and good health for everyone," said Timmeney, "so we are very fortunate to have organizations like Bancroft and Art-Reach for making this a priority."

Added Pergolin: "Community connections and supports are important in enabling all people to lead more satisfying lives. Groups like Art-Reach make it easy."

Indeed, Bancroft regularly partners with Art-Reach to offer cultural opportunities to people with neurological challenges. Art-Reach provides discounted event tickets to people who are supported by Bancroft. Art-Reach also arranges shows at Bancroft's Judith B. Flicker Residences in Voorhees, N.J., which serves older adults with neurological disabilities.

Pergolin also acknowledged the efforts of Bancroft staff member Linda Miller, who promotes Art-Reach opportunities within both her program – the Flicker Residences – and throughout the organization (for more on Miller, see p. 2). And she recognized Peter Fisher, a man supported by Bancroft and an ardent Art-Reach supporter, whose photographs were displayed at the event.

"We appreciate all those who support cultural activities for the children and adults in our programs every day," she said.



Mark and his brother, Peter, review photos from Mark's month-long trip to Spain. Bancroft's brain-injury program helped Mark regain the skills he needed to travel, among other goals.

## Brain-injury rehab helps man finish college, start career

*(continued from cover)*

the hour," he says.

"Barbara taught me to be more careful to write things down," notes Mark. "I used to always try to remember things. Now that's not an option."

Miller also used maps to re-teach Mark navigational skills.

"We started with simple exercises, like marking a particular intersection," the therapist explains. "As Mark progressed, the tasks became more and more complex: like finding the shortest route between two locations, and choosing the quickest way if you're stopping at several places."

Miller taught Mark to use the Internet or a dictionary to find words he couldn't recall. And she employed a special computer program to help Mark practice math, memory, and problem-solving skills.

In addition to his hour-long therapy sessions at Bancroft, Miller gave Mark exercises to complete at home – another key to his success.

"Whatever we worked on that day, I gave him a homework assignment to practice that skill," she explains. "It only takes 20 minutes a day, but that

repetition and reinforcement makes a big difference."

Mark made so much progress that he was able to return to college just eight months after his Jan. 2008 accident.

"It would've been a lot harder to return to school without Bancroft," says Mark, recalling how Miller helped him practice studying and taught him better note-taking techniques, too.

"Mark made significant gains in all areas," says Miller. "He achieved 90- to 100-percent accuracy on all tests, by the time of his discharge."

Today, Mark works full-time at a Princeton, N.J., company that teaches English and offers educational exchange programs worldwide. Since graduating from college, Mark also spent a month in Spain, learning how to teach English as a second language (ESL). He hopes to eventually teach ESL abroad, and is considering graduate school after that, to become a high-school history teacher.

Says Mark: "Bancroft helped me to be able to do things in life."

\*Mark declined to use his last name, to protect his privacy.

# Mullica Hill Campus kicks off reconstruction

Bancroft has launched reconstruction of our Mullica Hill Campus, after several years of planning and preparation.

The campus is being rebuilt to provide more modern, fully accessible facilities that will better meet the needs of the people we support, now and in the future.

“The Mullica Hill Campus has been a key facet of our continuum since its construction in 1974,” says Bancroft President Toni Pergolin. “The program has supported and continues to support many of the adults we serve, as their needs change over time.”

Despite some inevitable disruptions, campus residents are generally excited about the reconstruction project.

“I think it’s a good idea because they’ll make it more wheelchair-accessible,” says Keith Konopacky, who uses a wheelchair. “Countertops will be lower, doors will be wider.”

Adds Josh Gottlieb, who also lives on the campus: “We won’t have to walk to the laundry room when it’s cold and raining. We will have a washer and dryer in the house.”

The two-year project will include the renovation and/or reconstruction of all campus buildings except the Saw Mill I & II homes, which are less than seven years old, and the administrative building.

The program’s 16 apartments will be replaced by nine four-bedroom homes. This change will both improve staffing efficiency, and provide campus residents with added companionship and social opportunities.

“I live by myself now,” notes Gottlieb. “I’ll have more friends; more people to talk to and watch movies with.”

In addition, the Chammings (vocational) Center, greenhouse and craft shop will be replaced. A new utility building will include a technology hub, enabling each bedroom and residence to have phone and Internet access.

The barn will not be rebuilt, but the area previously used for animal stalls and grooming will be renovated. This renovated space will be made into vocational space for the craft and wood shops, an assistive technology room, and rooms for individual activities.

In order to minimize inconveniences, the renovation will occur in phases, enabling programs to temporarily relocate to other campus buildings as needed.

The bottom line? Says Violet Mwangi, senior operations director for Mullica Hill programs: “New facilities will help us do a better job of helping people overcome their challenges.”

For more details, visit [www.bancroft.org](http://www.bancroft.org).



Artist’s renderings of the campus after reconstruction.

## Mullica Hill – at a glance

### Programs

- Residential and vocational services for adults with developmental disabilities and acquired brain injuries
- Day treatment services for adults with acquired brain injuries

### Population

- 26 adults with developmental disabilities
- 18 adults with acquired brain injuries

### Strengths

- A resource for adults who require additional support
- Person-centered treatment model supports intensive behavioral needs
- Can serve persons with significant disabilities in a comfortable, homelike environment
- Beautiful rural setting with 200-plus acres of fields, woodlands and a lake

**Funding the reconstruction project:** *The Mullica Hill renovation is the start of an organization-wide initiative to modernize our older facilities. Bancroft is simultaneously launching a major philanthropic campaign to fund these and other needs. For details, see “Campaign begins” on p. 6.*

# Job strikes chord for music lover

Peter Brown has a thriving guitar-repair business – a small shop where he restores vintage models and builds custom instruments. He’s been doing this precise, painstaking work for 11 years, mostly by himself, in order to meet his exacting standards.

But over the past two years, the young entrepreneur has come to rely on a key employee for critical aspects of his business. And that worker – Gavin Rogers – just happens to have a brain injury.

“Gavin is meticulous in everything he does,” says Peter, who operates South Jersey Guitar Repair in Collingswood, N.J. “I can’t imagine doing this work without him now.”

Indeed, Gavin isn’t the typical employee. “A lot of the time, he’s more excited about [the work] than I am,” observes Peter. “He never comes in with



Gavin Rogers (right) works on a guitar with employer Peter Brown at South Jersey Guitar Repair. Gavin, who has a brain injury, has become indispensable to Peter, who “can’t imagine doing this work without him.”

## A concussion is a brain injury

About 3.8 million concussions are caused by sports and recreation each year in the United States, according to government estimates.

But many people don’t realize that a concussion is actually a brain injury – even if you don’t lose consciousness – and that a lack of proper diagnosis and care can result in a serious long-term consequences, coma or death.

In recognition of Brain Injury Awareness Month in March, spread the word about concussions – and make sure the coaches and athletes you know get the message, too!

For more information, visit [biausa.org](http://biausa.org).

a bad attitude.”

Gavin attributes his success to his employer as well as Bancroft, which provides him with vocational and residential support, and rehabilitation for his cognitive (thinking) skills.

“I’m working with a team,” says Gavin, who was struck by a train 15 years ago, at age 21. “It’s awesome... This [job] has helped a lot; you keep focusing and gaining knowledge.”

Staff members from Bancroft’s Community Vocational Services for

Adults introduced Peter to Gavin, predicting that Gavin’s love of music would make for a good job fit.

Within six months, Gavin went from volunteer to paid employee, and the result was clear: “It’s a match made in heaven,” says Rose Dougherty, vocational program director.

“Gavin is great,” says Peter. “He’s a cool dude. He’s good to be around.”

At South Jersey Guitar Repair, Gavin’s duties include prepping guitars for restoration. For instance, he removes the strings and cleans the fret boards

(the part of the neck under the strings). He also polishes the new fret wires (thin metal bands that span the guitar’s neck) after Peter installs them.

“Most people get tired of doing it. Gavin does it better than I do,” states Peter, explaining that the repetitive task requires great patience and care.

Gavin is also learning to restring guitars. “He’s doing really well with it,” says Peter, who recently developed a computer program to teach Gavin stringing and other guitar-maintenance tasks.

Working here “is my dream,” says Gavin, smiling as he rhythmically sands a fret wire. “Guitars are awesome; I love guitars.”

Employer and employee have also developed a strong connection.

“Peter is a great man,” says Gavin, whose boss has also become his friend.

Gavin puts his Bancroft job coach of six years – Vinny Petruzzelli – in that same category, and praises the organization as a whole.

“If I wasn’t in Bancroft, I’d probably be in an institution and bedridden,” says Gavin. “Bancroft is a great place to be.”

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“If I wasn’t in Bancroft, I’d probably be in an institution...”

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— Gavin Rogers

## Campaign begins for our future

Bancroft is undergoing the most significant transformation in our history, as we launch a groundbreaking campaign to secure future opportunities for the people we support – today and tomorrow.

“Transforming Our World | The Campaign for Bancroft” forms the foundation for our future. Its success will enable us to:

- **Modernize our facilities** through capital improvements
- **Enhance our technology** to improve lives
- **Meet ongoing needs** through unrestricted donations to the Margaret Bancroft Annual Fund

For updates on our progress – including our Mullica Hill renovation (see p. 4) – please register for our campaign blog. Simply forward your email address to CampaignforBancroft@bnh.org.

To support the campaign, please contact Linda Wasilchick, director of campaign operations, at (856) 348-4002 or lwasilchick@bnh.org.

## Ball a blast!

Bancroft’s annual Butterfly Ball last fall was our most successful ever, breaking records for both fundraising and attendance.

With nearly 300 guests, the gala raised \$335,000 in gross revenue to support Bancroft programs – \$10,000 higher than goal! (Organizers also reduced expenses for the third straight year, which further boosted the Ball’s benefit.) Plus, the event helped us communicate our important mission to many new friends and associates.

Thank you to everyone who helped make the evening a smashing success – your support is sincerely appreciated.



The Mate Family found a powerful way to help Bancroft. Here, Patricia and Bob visit with daughter Christine.

## A gift that gives back – to you

Bob and Patricia Mate have supported Bancroft for many years. They make regular contributions, support our fundraising events, and have connected us with other key donors.

But the North Brunswick, N.J., couple – whose daughter Christine is in Bancroft’s adult program – wanted to make a bigger impact. They were looking to provide a nest egg that would benefit Bancroft for many years to come.

Their solution? The Mates created a “charitable gift annuity” – a gift of cash or securities, in exchange for a fixed income they’ll receive for the rest of their lives.

For the Mates, it’s “an ideal way” of giving, says Bob, a longtime board member and now an emeritus trustee of the organization.

“It gives Bancroft the cash they need,” he says. And, in addition to providing the couple with lifetime income, the Mates’ gift offers them some tax advantages.

“It’s an easy way to [help] Bancroft,” Bob adds, “and see good things happening while you’re alive.”

Heidi Rixman, Bancroft’s director of major gifts, stresses the importance of such support.

“Charitable gift annuities provide needed security for Bancroft’s future,” she says. “It’s funding that we can truly rely on.”

For more information, contact Rixman at (856) 348-1164 or hrixman@bnh.org.

## A sample giving plan

A charitable gift annuity offers many advantages to both Bancroft and the donors, as described in the story above.

For instance, donors receive lifetime income in exchange for their gift. The amount of income is based on the donor’s age and the gift’s value.

**Here’s one example:** *Ann Jones, age 70, transfers \$100,000 to Bancroft in exchange for a single-life immediate charitable gift annuity. The annuity rate corresponding to her age is 6.5 percent. Therefore, Ann will receive \$6,500 a year for the rest of her life.*

The minimum amount for a charitable gift annuity is just \$10,000. For a personalized illustration of how such a gift can work for you, please contact Heidi Rixman (see contact info above).

*As with any charitable gift, donors should consult their attorney and accountant regarding potential tax benefits and legal considerations.*



## Highlights from our world: people and events making news

Clockwise from top left:

- **Having a ball:** Former Eagles quarterback Ron Jaworski (left) was a winning emcee at the annual Bancroft Butterfly Ball. Here, he and wife Liz (from left) meet speaker Beth Kaiser Thompson, Bancroft executive Joan Galon King, and Beth's husband, David Thompson. For more Ball photos, visit [bancroft.org](http://bancroft.org).

- **We've got talent:** A student\* gets his Elvis on, during the annual Bancroft School Talent Show. This year's production featured spirited singing, dancing and instrumental performances by students and staff members. \*Name

*withheld*

- **High-tech help:** An exhibitor at Bancroft's Assistive Technology Vendor Fair discusses a communication device with a visitor. The fair was part of a day-long event last fall on assistive technology, including a lecture by international expert Joy Zabala.

- **Breaking ground:** Bancroft kicked off reconstruction of the Mullica Hill Campus with a festive ceremony. Digging into the project, from left: Ed LaMonica, Joshua Gottlieb, Toni Pergolin, Ann Frambes, and Violet Mwangi.

- **Award winner:** Victoria Brown

(center), who is supported by Bancroft, receives the Self-Advocate Award from the Alliance for the Betterment of Citizens with Disabilities, a statewide advocacy group. Also shown are Bancroft President Toni Pergolin (left) and Dawn Apgar, deputy commissioner for the N.J. Department of Human Services.

- **Celebrating success:** Joselyn Hodakowski accepts the Butterfly Award for her outstanding progress in Bancroft's Community Services for Adults program. Six people received the award at the program's holiday dinner and recognition gala this winter.



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## ***Boredom busters!***

Looking for fun, easy activities this winter? Check out our great new recreation tips!

Visit [www.bancroft.org](http://www.bancroft.org).

## **Our World**

Our World is published three times a year by Bancroft, a private, nonprofit organization.

## **Our Mission**

Bancroft's mission is to ensure that every person is given opportunities for lifelong learning and fulfillment.

We do this by altering perceptions, and by supporting those with intellectual and developmental challenges and acquired brain injuries in achieving their life goals as valued and respected members of our world.

**To contact us, call:  
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## **Inclusive daycare opening soon!**

Bancroft plans to open a unique daycare center this winter, designed for children both with and without developmental challenges, ages 0-7.

The Haddon Heights, N.J., program will fill an unmet need, notes Sharon Jurman, Bancroft's senior director of early childhood and outreach services.

"This is the only daycare center in our area designed to meet the needs of children with developmental issues," says Jurman. "Many centers will not even accept children with autism or other challenges."

Another advantage: Because the program is inclusive, siblings with and without disabilities can attend the same center.

Activities are designed to help all children learn and grow, and include music, art, and periodic outings in the community.

### **Other benefits include:**

- Choice of full- or part-time schedules
- Structured activities throughout the day
- Higher staffing ratio than typical daycare centers
- Focus on building communication skills, including nonverbal methods
- Access to consultation services for behavioral challenges
- Accommodates early-intervention services in individual therapy rooms

For more information, call (856) 524-7453 or email [pried@bnh.org](mailto:pried@bnh.org).