

Education sets twins on road to success

Student Michael Smetona likes using a computer and playing sports. His twin sister, Megan, enjoys reading and art. At Bancroft School, each has gotten to focus on his/her individual interests and abilities — preparing the 21-year-olds for their own, unique paths after graduation in June.

“Bancroft has been able to tap into their particular talents and give them what they needed,” says mom Betsey Smetona.

“It’s wonderful,” says Megan of her time at Bancroft. “The precious memories [are] like a crown jewel...”

For instance, staff members have capitalized on Michael’s computer interest by teaching him to do research and play games on the Internet. And teachers have used Megan’s love of reading to increase her knowledge in many subjects, including world cultures and math.

“All the lessons we do require some kind of reading,” notes Megan’s



Graduating students Megan and Michael Smetona enjoy a moment together outside The Bancroft School. The twins have pursued their own, separate interests at Bancroft — from reading to computers, arts to sports — and will each follow a different path after graduation.

teacher, Nicki Hyder.

Plus, instruction focuses on practical skills. For instance, Megan has learned to apply math in the real world, through lessons on balancing a checkbook, paying bills, comparison shopping and the like.

Opportunities for development have gone beyond the classroom, too.

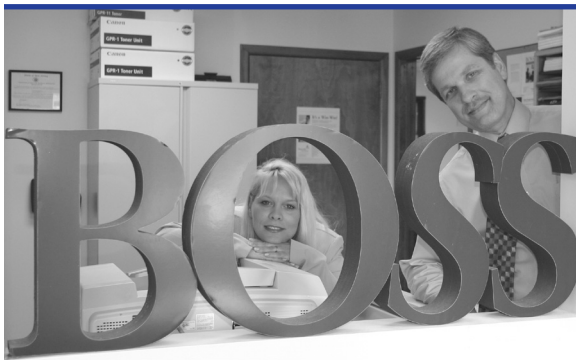
Michael has competed on Bancroft’s Special Olympics teams — including bowling and track and field — for many years. Megan has

performed on-stage and behind-the-scenes in Bancroft’s student opera since its inception in 2002, and she regularly participates in the annual art show.

“Bancroft has given them every activity a typical kid would get,” says Betsey.

Megan has been especially successful with her artwork, her mom notes, and recently sold nine drawings in a charity auction.

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Sign of success: Job coach Peter Birbilis (right) enjoys working at BOSS — Bancroft Office Support Services — where he and co-worker Delinda Ragan (left) help adults develop job skills.

Finding job satisfaction by helping others work

For Peter Birbilis, a college job has turned into a career. The long-time staff member had worked for Bancroft while attending Rutgers-Camden. After graduating, he joined an electronics firm for ten years. But “Bancroft was always in the back of my mind,” he says.

Today, Birbilis is a Bancroft job coach, helping adults with neurological disabilities learn employment skills, supervising their work, and providing the support they need to be successful in their job — and life.

“My satisfaction is seeing them satisfied,” says Birbilis. “I see how happy they are to get out of the house every day and have the opportunity to go to work.”

Birbilis’ job site is called BOSS — for Bancroft Office Support Services — a retail copy center in Voorhees. There he works with 19 adults — 10 to 12

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Different paths for graduating twins

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“Bancroft has really helped her develop that gift,” remarks Betsey. “It’s one of the ways she connects with people and the world.”

The twins’ needs have varied as much as their interests. For example, Michael has required help with verbal abilities, reading, and tolerating noisy environments. Megan needed to improve her social skills and reading comprehension.

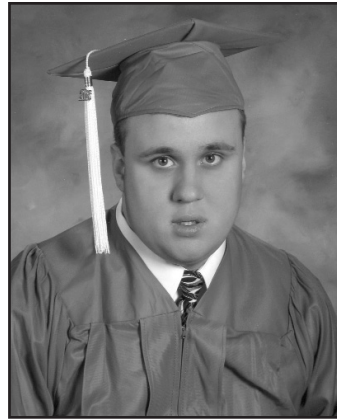
Each twin also has a different diagnosis, which affects his or her educational needs. While Michael has autism, Megan has Asperger’s syndrome — an autism-spectrum disorder with fewer mental delays.

Michael has worked in a local restaurant with Bancroft’s support, and now assembles products in a campus workshop. “His vocational skills have really grown,” says teacher Holly Blackiston. “He gets supplies on his own; he likes to clean up after everyone.”

“Michael’s become more independent than I thought he would be,” says Betsey. “He’s more verbal, spontaneous and social.”

Megan came to Bancroft with many abilities, but she was often overly friendly and talkative. “We give lectures on appropriate behavior,” says Hyder. “At work versus social situations; with people we’re familiar with versus acquaintances.”

Such skills have put Megan on a positive path, with a



Michael and Megan Smetona will graduate from The Bancroft School in June. With twins in the program, “you really get to see how much [Bancroft] taps into the individual,” says their mother, Betsey. “This place is a blessing.”

full life of friends and activities. She also holds multiple part-time jobs: She works at a local CVS store and for Bancroft’s food services department. Plus, she helps out at Haddonfield’s Markeim Art Center — where she’s compensated in free studio time.

Megan credits her teachers with much of her work success. “They teach us organization, cooperation, minding your manners, being punctual,” says Megan. “They keep things stress-free.”

After graduation, the twins will continue living at home with their family. Megan plans to stay on at CVS, where she’s worked for three years. Michael will further his education and training at Bancroft’s Jacob Schaefer Center, a Cherry Hill-based day program for adults.

“I’m very proud of them,” says Betsey. “They’ve achieved so much, and it’s due to Bancroft.”

Helping adults work

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at any given time — as they produce presentation binders, organize large mailings by zip code, make personalized calendars with customers’ photos, and more.

Birbilis is especially proud that most of BOSS’s work is done by people with disabilities. “It says a lot about what’s possible with the people we serve,” notes Birbilis, who returned to Bancroft in 1993.

Marijke (Ma-RAY-ka) Businger says Birbilis’ encouragement helps her daughter learn. “Peter never loses his patience. He taught Anna how to e-mail me messages, how to answer the phone properly. He’s guided her with money management.”

Another woman with many challenges can now handle almost any task in the store, notes Thom Kent, Birbilis’ program manager. “That’s a direct result of really good job coaching.”

Ever modest, Birbilis turns the spotlight back to his employer: “I’m just happy that organizations like Bancroft exist to help people who need their help.”

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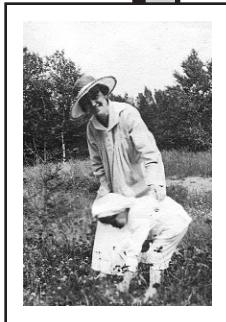
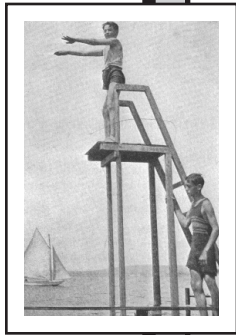
THE BANCROFT CAMP
Owl's Head, Maine

Dr. E. A. Farrington

This letter, written in 1926 to then-president Dr. Ernest Farrington, refers to Bancroft's former camp in Owl's Head, Maine. Founder Margaret Bancroft acquired the 28-acre, oceanfront property in 1904. The entire organization moved there each summer until the advent of air-conditioning. People served by Bancroft still vacationed at the property until Bancroft sold it in 1998.

This is such a beautiful place! Doctor Farrington and Miss Cooley give it an atmosphere of real home and family life. They are sincerely interested in all the children who are entrusted to their care and accomplish wonders with children of retarded mentality and with those suffering from nervous disorders. Many of the children in this camp are quite normal in appearance and it is surprising how much like a camp for normal children this is. They have all sorts of progressive emblem awards for swimming, tennis and the like. There is a delightful Council Ring in the woods where every Sunday night, Doctor Farrington tells an original adventure story. Much to the delight of the children, this story is continued from week to week till the end of the season. The children give plays. Excellent riding horses which are owned by the camp. Overnight hikes and trips. Regular school work is carried on during the morning. This is one of the most delightful camps I visited. It will be a pleasure to recommend it.

M. Mercer Kendig



Professional presentations focus on autism, brain injury

One way Bancroft continually improves its services is by exchanging new information and research with other professionals.

In May, for instance, staff members made the following presentations at the conference of the Association for Behavior Analysis International in Chicago:

- *Teaching Children with Autism a Generalized Repertoire of Offering to Share* by Denise Marzullo, Dawn

Buffington Townsend (of the Institute for Educational Achievement), and Sharon and Kenneth Reeve (both of Caldwell College).

- *Assessing Sensitivity to Changes in Unit Price* by Frances A. Perrin, Patrick R. Progar (of Caldwell College) and Ralph Spiga (of Temple University).

Bancroft professionals also will provide six poster presentations on such topics as

delayed reinforcement, self-injury, teaching self-help skills and more.

In addition, Daniel Keating, Ph.D. spoke at the Brain Injury Association of New Jersey's annual seminar in May. His talk was titled "*Behavioral Changes Across the Lifespan.*"

For more information, contact Eric Eberman at (856) 429-5637, ext. 462.

Your legacy – Bancroft’s future

Has Bancroft helped you, your family or friends? Do you want to help ensure the organization continues to assist other families for many years to come?

A bequest to Bancroft is an ideal way to leave a lasting legacy — as Margaret Bancroft did when she founded the organization 125 years ago.

Such a “planned gift” can increase Bancroft’s endowment — the nest egg that safeguards the organization’s future.

“Bancroft’s 125th anniversary is an especially meaningful time to invest in our next century and beyond.”

— Toni Pergolin, Bancroft Chief Executive

The endowment consists of gifts that are maintained intact, and invested to create a source of income for Bancroft. The principal is kept forever or for a designated time period — based on the donor’s instructions — and the interest it generates can be used for current expenses.

A planned gift is a personal decision with both potential tax benefits and legal considerations, so your attorney and accountant should be consulted. To learn more about planned gifts to Bancroft NeuroHealth, please contact Heidi Rixman, donor relations manager, at (856) 429-5637, ext. 461.

FAQs on placing Bancroft in your will

What is a planned gift?

A planned gift simply means that you make arrangements now to contribute to Bancroft at a later time. One of the most common ways to give a planned gift is by adding Bancroft NeuroHealth to your will.

By doing so, you can leave a lasting legacy that will support Bancroft’s mission in perpetuity. In other words, a planned gift to Bancroft creates a permanent source of income to help children and adults with developmental disabilities, brain injuries and other neurological impairments.

How can I make a difference?

If you cannot make a substantial gift during your lifetime, a planned gift is another way to make a lasting difference in the lives of persons served by Bancroft. Through careful tax planning and the passage of time, planned gifts generally allow you to make a larger contribution than would otherwise be possible.

What is a charitable bequest?

A charitable bequest is a distribution from your estate to a charitable organization such as Bancroft, through your will. Donors must use very specific language to communicate how their assets are to be directed, in order to successfully carry out their final wishes. Among other issues, be sure to name the recipient accurately in any bequest. (In our case, the full name would be Bancroft NeuroHealth.)

How can a bequest be left to Bancroft?

You may name Bancroft NeuroHealth as the beneficiary of a percentage of your estate, or of a set dollar amount, or of a particular asset. Your estate is entitled to an estate-tax deduction for the full value of your bequest to Bancroft. If you wish to benefit Bancroft through your will, your attorney can advise you on how best to do this.



Gala coming to grand old site

Organizers of Bancroft’s Butterfly Ball have chosen a landmark setting to mark a major milestone.

This year’s gala will be held at Philadelphia’s Ritz-Carlton hotel — a stately Greek Revival building with a dramatic rotunda, just a few steps from Philly’s historic City Hall.

Scheduled for Saturday Nov. 8, the event will conclude the year-long celebration of Bancroft’s 125th anniversary.

“It’s a really interesting venue,” says ball organizer Hilda Bacon of the 100-year-old edifice, which was initially a bank. “The lobby has an opening in the floor, and you can look down into the dome of the ballroom.”

Ball co-chairs Barbara and Sheldon Berkman, DMD, will help lead the event for their third consecutive year. “They’ve been very successful in encouraging family members of people we serve to attend the ball,” says Bacon. “Their goal is to continue increasing that family involvement.”

Organizers also hope to raise \$125,000 this year — another salute to Bancroft’s anniversary.

Currently, the ball committee is developing the event’s theme and recruiting sponsors. “We want to make this anniversary-year ball our best yet,” Bacon says.

For more information, contact Bacon at (856) 429-5637, ext. 485, or e-mail hbacon@bnh.org.



Hit links, meet Eagle at June golf outing

Former Philadelphia Eagles tight end Ken Dunek is scheduled to appear again at this year's Bancroft Golf Tournament.

As honorary chair of the June 2 outing, Dunek will serve as auctioneer during the event's awards dinner.

"Ken is wonderful," says tournament organizer Hilda Bacon. "He brings his friends along, he tells funny stories. He helps make the night a lot of fun."

In fact, non-golfers can skip the links and simply attend the dinner and auction — which will offer sports packages, event tickets, merchandise and more.

Those who wouldn't miss a chance to play at renowned Tavistock Country Club near Haddonfield can choose morning or afternoon play. Golfers also receive continental breakfast and a buffet lunch, in addition to dinner.

As this year marks the tournament's 25th anniversary — and Bancroft's 125th — the event will feature a "heritage hole" with antique golf equipment and caddies in turn-of-the-century attire.

Proceeds will fund "Project: *Accessibility*," a new initiative designed to help the organization renovate and improve accessibility in its community group homes, allowing people to live as independently as possible.

To register or for more details, contact Bacon at (856) 429-5637, ext. 485, or e-mail hbacon@bnh.org.

Top: Sponsors of Project: *Accessibility* attend a recent reception for Bancroft's golf tournament, which will also benefit the group-home improvement initiative.

Bottom: Dr. Donald Praiss poses in period golf attire to help promote the tournament's "heritage hole." The Bancroft board member himself will make history as the only golfer to play in all 25 of Bancroft's tourneys!



Special thanks to the following sponsors who are donating funds, services and/or materials to the Golf Tournament and/or Project: *Accessibility*.

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Kids score for heart health

Student Zach Friedman practices his technique in Bancroft's recent "Hoops For Heart" fundraiser for the American Heart Association. About 35 Bancroft students ran drills — dribbling, passing and shooting — to raise money pledged by sponsors. Student volunteers from Rowan University assisted at the event, which netted \$465 for the charity.



Maggie visits The Bancroft School



History comes to life as founder Margaret Bancroft shares her story with Bancroft students Keith Pote and Rasul Carter (right). Portrayed by an actress/historian, the special-education pioneer also recently visited several Haddonfield schools, where she helped educate students about children with special needs. The presentations were part of Bancroft's 125th anniversary celebration.

Want to meet 'Maggie' too? Come to Bancroft Day on Oct. 18, where she's scheduled to appear!



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Upcoming Events

For additional information on the events listed below, please visit our web site at www.bancroftneurohealth.org, or call (856) 429-5637, ext. 668.

May 28	Clarence York Lecture Series Cherry Hill Public Library Cherry Hill, N.J.	June 3	Joyful Noise - National Anthem for the Camden Riversharks Campbell's Field Camden, N.J.
May 29	Bancroft Students' Original Opera Ritz Theatre Haddon Township, N.J.	June 8	The Bancroft School Prom Marion House Cherry Hill, N.J.
May 31	Joyful Noise - Singing for Children Performance Garden State Discovery Museum Cherry Hill, N.J.	June 14	Autism Speaks: Walk Now for Autism Bishops Gate Corporate Center Mount Laurel, N.J.
June 2	25th Annual Golf Tournament Benefit for Project: <i>Accessibility</i> Tavistock Country Club Haddonfield, N.J.	June 20	Bancroft School Graduation Haddonfield Memorial High School Haddonfield, N.J.