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Richie McFarland Children's Center is a
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Let's Celebrate!

Celebrating the honor of sending inspired interns out into the field.

For the past several years, RMCC has opened its doors to interns from area colleges who have chosen a field of study within physical, speech and occupational therapy. Most recently, RMCC was excited to welcome Savannah Lacasse into the fold with the opportunity for her to shadow several of our seasoned therapists and gain hands-on knowledge that is simply not available in the classroom. Savannah had this to say about her experience.



Tell us a little bit about your studies at UNH and how you were matched with the internship at RMCC

I am a second year Master's student in Communication Sciences and Disorders at UNH. In the second year of the program, students are matched with full-time externships from area agencies. These placements are crucial to gaining independence as a clinician, experience and expertise, earning clockhours needed for licensure, and aim to expose students to what the profession is all about! Being that Early Intervention is considered a "specialty", there are only 2 sites. This can make getting an EI experience very challenging, and I am grateful to have gotten my 1st choice: **Richie McFarland Children's Center!**

How did your work with the children meet/differ from your expectations? What surprised you and what about your visits encouraged you/excites you about your chosen path of work?

Book knowledge is so vastly different than experiential learning. Upon beginning at RMCC, I had met or exceeded all the educational requirements for candidacy; however, the first time I saw syndromes in therapy that I had learned about in class, it was like I was learning from scratch! RMCC has taught me it's better to have education and an open, flexible mind than expectations; you can never know what to expect!

Perhaps the most rewarding part of my work at RMCC has been working within the family unit as a whole. I have had experiences working with children prior to RMCC, and its undeniable that I enjoy working with kids; I knew this about myself. However, I hadn't expected to earn the gratification and trust, as well as relationships, that I did with these families. It was extremely encouraging for me as a student to hear families tell me about the difference they were in seeing in their children, and applauding RMCC and their therapists. One family shared with me that their home was a happier place to be since their child had begun our services; with that comment, I was reassured again that I have chosen the right path of work!

What did you like about the culture at RMCC? What kind of observations did you make when shadowing the therapists during their work with the children and families?

It is easy to see what distinguishes RMCC from others; their therapists are invested in what they do, and do whatever is needed to help both the child and family. During my time at RMCC, I have seen therapists go above and beyond in so many ways: I have seen therapists become trained in entirely new techniques to better serve a child on their caseload. Numerous times, therapists would come to work early, stay late, or even come in on their day off to see a child at time that was best for the family. I saw communication and consults across disciplines to get all the needs of a child met. I witnessed Christmas gifts being given to families in need to make their child's Christmas special. Most importantly, every therapist I worked with at RMCC put the families' needs and wants first, every single time.

Any other thoughts/insights you would like to share?

The values, lessons, and opportunities I learned from my time with RMCC are above what any student could expect from a site. My supervisors not only provided information and education when I needed it, but always gave encouragement and helped me to learn my own style as a therapist. I hope my colleagues and future students alike receive the type of monumental learning that I did at RMCC!

★ Let's Learn!

Join RMCC is committed to the critical role of educating the community on the importance of early intervention in a child's life. The best way to do so is to be both present and accessible within the catchment area of service. This effort is met with the energy, enthusiasm and dedication of two part-time employees that make up the development office.

Jessica Carbonneau, Events Coordinator for the past seven years, organizes what have become well-known and highly anticipated events throughout the year; the Golf Tournament in June, Touch-A-Truck in October and Community Night in November. Funds raised through these events directly support the therapies children receive.

Nicole Johnson, Development Coordinator since August of 2017, is charged with the role of sharing the many stories that make up the heart of RMCC. Through the publication of the annual report, tri-annual newsletters and other marketing materials, Nicole works to help those not familiar with RMCC get a comprehensive understanding of the incredible impact early intervention therapies have on the life of a child experiencing developmental delays.

Both Jessica and Nicole work closely with volunteer committees; members of our community with a selfless dedication to the mission of RMCC and diverse skills and talents that help us realize our goals and keep the cost of development low.

There will always be children in need of developmental support and parents in need of answers. RMCC has been answering questions and caring for children for the past 46 years, and with the continued help of both Jessica and Nicole to raise funds to support the mission, RMCC will remain a strong and well-respected force in the community for many years to come.



Nicole Johnson and Jessica Carbonneau

★ Let's Understand!

Perhaps one of the most confounding realities of the human service industry is the lack of adequate pay afforded the very people providing critical and specialized services to those in need. While this unfortunate truth certainly affects the pay rate of RMCC's therapists, it has done nothing to negatively impact the quality of service or the heart with which each therapist consistently devotes to her work.

For the past ten years, our cherished therapists have continued to effect significant positive change in the lives of children and families, have worked longer hours addressing the growing complexities of children's needs and have kept continuing education a priority; all without changes to the salary scale. Peggy Small-Porter, Executive Director of RMCC was one of many leaders who advocated for this change during the most recent funding deliberations at the state level. We are happy to announce that the work of the advocates finally realized success and, although a small win in the scope of funding, the state has budgeted an increase in pay rate over the next two-year funding cycle.

★ Let's Take Action!

Calling all parents and caregivers! Have you heard of the Vroom app?

Designed by creators with a comprehensive understanding of the neuroscience behind the development of the brain, the VROOM app is a free download available in both English and Spanish. This ingenious app delivers daily, "age-appropriate, gender specific and personalized" tips that "help caregivers turn everyday routines into brain building moments." Parents and caregivers will learn how to turn otherwise mundane tasks into teachable, interactive moments with their child. "Daily Vroom tips promote brain development, language, early literacy and executive function skills." (<http://www.brainbuildingoregon.com/project/vroom/>) **This one is worth checking out for sure! To learn more, visit www.vroom.org.**

★ Let's Make a Difference!

Vote for Bangor Savings Bank Community Matters Grant RMCC is one of 45 nonprofits chosen to "compete" for a portion of \$100,000 that will be invested into the community. All it takes is your show of support with a vote for RMCC. Please visit...

Stop by and adopt a purple friend! RMCC's annual campaign continues through June of this year. A great way to give back is through the "adoption" of one of our purple pigs to your home or business. They are very low maintenance and only require loose change to stay happy. Stop by the office or email Nicole at njohnson@richiemcfarland.org if you are interested!

Visit our website. We've been working hard to update and create a website that is easy to navigate and comprehensive of RMCC's services. Please take a minute to log on to www.richiemcfarland.org and look around! **Like us on Facebook.** Every "like" is another list of friends being informed of RMCC's presence in the community. Please take a minute to like us and friend us as well so you can stay up-to-date on RMCC happenings.

Tell a Friend about us! Do your friends and family know why you support RMCC? Take some time to share!

Sign up to Golf! Our next golf tournament will be held at the **Golf Club of New England on Monday June 11th.** Check out our website for details!

★ Let's Take Action!

You can be a part of ensuring the Senate is well informed of the benefits of early intervention. All it takes is a simple phone call. Below is an example of a message you can leave with your Senator.

Hello, my name is Mrs. Smith. I am a resident of (town) and I am one of your constituents. I am the parent/caregiver of a child who is receiving early intervention and encourage you to vote to approve an increase in the budget for the Bureau of Developmental Services. Your support of an increased budget is critical to the comprehensive care our children need and deserve. Thank you for your time and your service.

New Hampshire's State Senators for our Catchment Area:

John Reagan—District 17: Northwood, Nottingham, Raymond, Deerfield **(603-271-4063)**

Martha Fuller Clark—District 21: Portsmouth, Newington, Newmarket, Newfields **(603-271-3092)**

William Gannon—District 23: Fremont, Brentwood, Kingston, East Kingston, Epping, Exeter **(603-271-3091)**

Daniel Innis—District 24: South Hampton, Kensington, Hampton Falls, Seabrook, Hampton, North Hampton, Stratham, Greenland, Rye, New Castle **(603-271-3077)**