

# Clarke Speaks

SPRING | 2013



Clarke Schools for Hearing and Speech • Clarke Hearing Center  
Mainstream Services • Graduate Program in Teacher Education  
Early Intervention • Comprehensive Educational Evaluations



# Mission

Clarke Schools for Hearing and Speech provides children who are deaf and hard of hearing with the listening, learning and spoken language skills they need to succeed.

**clarkeschools.org**

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## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Welcome to the Spring edition of *Clarke Speaks*. As you read through these pages, I hope you feel as inspired as I do about the array of exciting new initiatives at Clarke. By expanding the boundaries of traditional service-delivery models,

we are helping infants, children and teens with hearing loss reach their full potential in ways that would have seemed impossible even a decade ago.

Gone are the days when families would have to travel to Clarke in order to access our expertise. Distance technology, combined with Clarke's early intervention and rapidly expanding mainstream services programs, our professional training and development offerings and our acclaimed master's degree program have now made it possible for us to provide support, guidance and therapy to people right where they work and live.

Clarke's innovative tVISIT program (page 4), allows our professionals to provide early intervention services to families via video – *regardless of location*. Our first webinar series has been a great success; the free live seminars present an array of topics specific to infant hearing loss to professionals across the country. More than 500 individuals registered for our first two sessions, and the series will continue over the next several months, after which a new series will be announced.

Our nationally renowned Smith College/Clarke Graduate Program in Teacher Education has also expanded its reach (page 16). Having already trained more than 1400 teachers of the deaf, this Northampton-based program began enrolling students in Clarke's Boston, Pennsylvania, and New York locations this past fall via videoconferencing.

The core of Clarke's mission has always been to prepare children for success in mainstream classrooms. Today, Clarke has a greater presence in public and private schools than ever before. On page 10, we've chronicled a day in the life of a Clarke itinerant teacher who travels from school to school to provide support to students of all ages, their teachers and school staff. Clarke's ever-expanding team of itinerant teachers represent a major shift in listening and spoken language education and embodies our commitment to serving the needs of children within their communities.

On page 8, you'll meet some of Clarke's youngest alums, who are thriving academically and socially in mainstream classrooms. And on page 12, you can read what parents, teachers, and students have to say about Clarke's new K-8 Program, a national model for mainstream inclusion.

Each one of the children, families, staff, volunteers and supporters on these pages makes the Clarke community the special place that it is. We are so grateful to count you among us as we change the lives of more children than ever before.

Bill Corwin  
President

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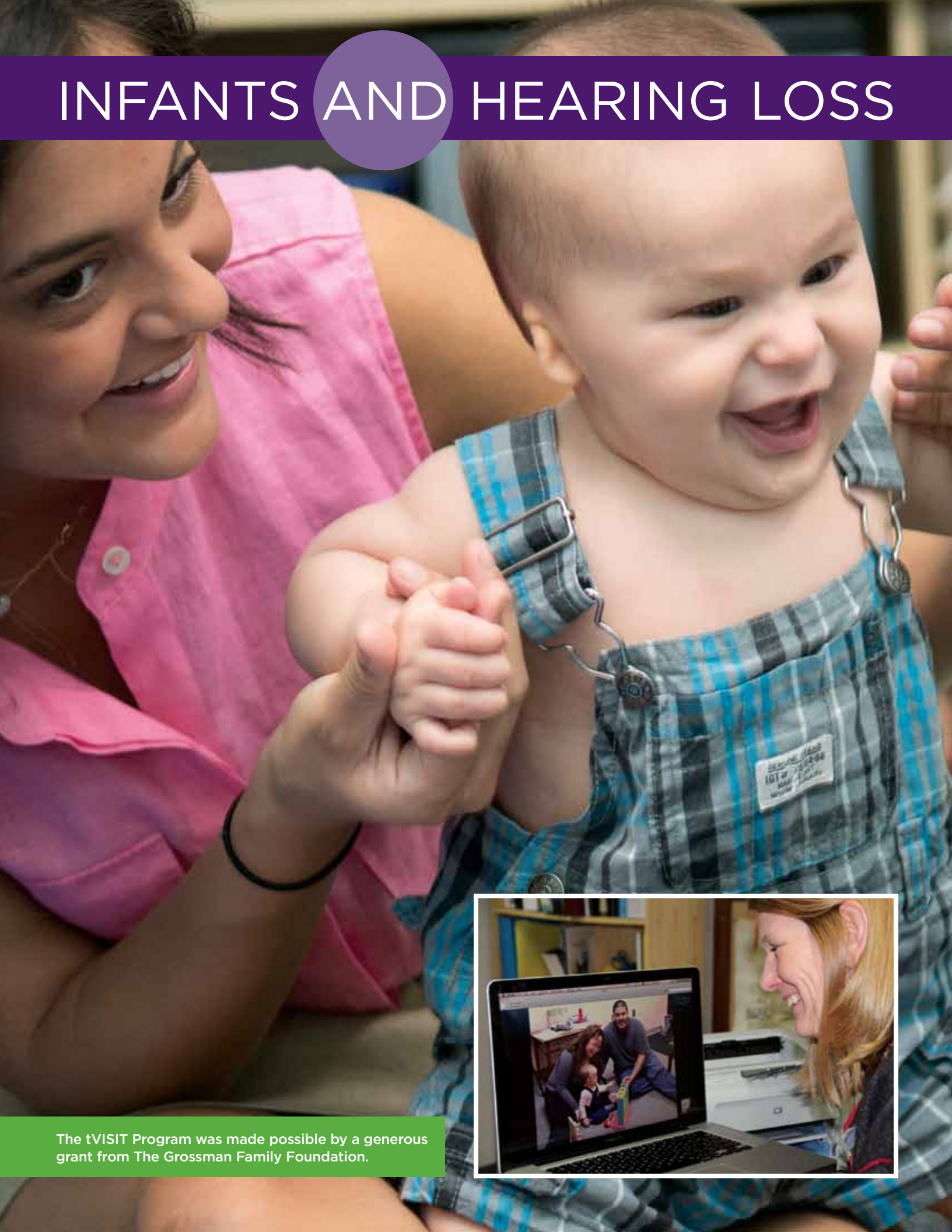
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# INFANTS AND HEARING LOSS



The tVISIT Program was made possible by a generous grant from The Grossman Family Foundation.

# Clarke is reaching more children with hearing loss, their families and the professionals who serve them than ever before. Recently, thanks to a generous grant from The Grossman Family Foundation, that number has the potential to increase exponentially.

Many families living outside large metropolitan areas, or those with other transportation challenges, have long been unable to access Clarke's critical intervention services. Distance, travel time, and health challenges precluded many children from receiving ongoing services. But tVISITs (Telepractice Virtual Intervention Services for Infants and Toddlers) have changed all that.

Launched last spring, the tVISIT program enables early intervention professionals to videoconference directly with parents and children using simple technology consisting of a computer and a webcam. Interacting in real time, a Clarke professional coaches parents and helps them apply effective and engaging strategies that promote listening and spoken language development.

Ken Riley's daughter, 18-month-old Kayla, has been receiving tVISITs for several months from professionals at Clarke Boston. "In the first session," Riley says, "Kayla engaged right away with the teacher on the screen. She even checked *behind* the monitor to see where the teacher was!" Little did Kayla know that her teacher of the deaf was miles away.

The program is a collaborative effort between Clarke and the Capital Region Educational Council (CREC) Soundbridge in Connecticut. tVISITs fill a critical need not only for families with children who are deaf and hard of hearing, but *also* for

the professionals that serve them. Families receive critical early intervention services that they would not otherwise be able to access, and professionals gain specialized knowledge through a series of free educational webinars.


Barbara Hecht, Director of Clarke's Boston-area campus, explains: "As we move from a center-based model to a family-centered coaching model, tVISITs are increasing access to expert services and closing gaps in state early intervention programs. The program is improving professional practice and addressing the significant shortage and insufficient training of specialized professionals. The benefits to families and the potential systems change we expect from these distance services are quite significant."

Hecht points out that distance is not the sole factor that prevents families from gaining access to services. "Last year," she recounts, "one family stopped their son's face-to-face early intervention services because it was too overwhelming to schedule the trip with all of his many medical visits. However, once we explained this new program to the family – and they understood that they did not need to travel to yet *another* appointment – their son began to receive speech and language therapy at home, via their computer. Additionally, the parents were reconnected to a network of

professionals that they had come to trust and rely upon."

Hecht and her team are mindful of how valuable the program is to the field of listening and spoken language education, so each session is recorded and itself becomes a highly useful tool for educational review and commentary. The team is also aware that many families may not be able to afford the necessary technology to use tVISITs, so those families are provided with video-enabled laptops and/or short-term Internet access through The Grossman Foundation grant.

Included in the tVISIT program is another exciting tool designed to increase the number of professionals who can gain valuable insight from Clarke's nationally renowned educators: Clarke's first-ever webinar series. The first of four seminars, *Childhood Hearing in the 21st Century – An Introduction to Recent Discoveries in Infant Hearing Loss*, featured Clarke staff Janice Gatty, Ph.D. and Barbara Hecht, Ph.D., and Elizabeth Cole, Ed.D. from CREC Soundbridge. More than 200 registrants participated, 90% of whom cited an increase in knowledge of the topic after the session. The second seminar, *From the Ears to the Brain: Auditory Perception In Infants and Toddlers and the Development of the Listening Brain*, had over 300 registrants. Archived versions of the webinars, as well as transcripts from the live captioning, are available for viewing on Clarke's website ([www.clarkeschools.org/edresources](http://www.clarkeschools.org/edresources)).

Summing up the program, Hecht says, "tVISITs have proven to be a smart and cost-effective strategy on all fronts. Families gain access to services they so desperately need, and professionals gain access to some of the most sought-after leaders in their field. It's a perfect fit." 





# PRESCHOOL:

The fact that a listening and spoken language program *with highly trained and skilled staff* exists right in the city of Philadelphia, is a dream come true.

# A BRIDGE TO THE MAINSTREAM

“It surpassed all of my dreams.” So says Shatawn Mims, beaming mother of four-year-old Taj, when describing her first visit to Clarke’s new preschool.

For families like the Mims, the fact that a listening and spoken language program – with highly trained and skilled staff – exists right in the city of Philadelphia, is a dream come true.

Judy Sexton, Director of Clarke Pennsylvania, explains: “For over a decade, Clarke’s Bryn Mawr location has provided Early Intervention services to children throughout southeastern Pennsylvania. But when children living in the city of Philadelphia reached the age of three, they lost access to Clarke due to limits on funding for out-of-city programs. I’ve seen many, many families who were forced to discontinue the listening and spoken language educational route they had so carefully chosen for their child. I knew we had to find a way to change that.”

Sexton was determined to provide these families with the same opportunities as all other Philadelphia residents. So, together with her colleagues, she formed an innovative collaboration with Clarke, La Salle University, and the family-centered social services agency, CORA (Counseling or Referral Assistance). A site was chosen on the campus of La Salle University, and the Philadelphia-based Farber Family Foundation provided funding to renovate the space to meet Clarke’s rigorous acoustical and educational standards.

This past fall, after much planning and hard work, Clarke’s new Philadelphia preschool opened its doors. Housed on La Salle’s West campus, this shared space with CORA enables children to learn in separate classrooms with highly skilled teachers of the deaf. And, in keeping with Clarke’s goal of preparing children for mainstream classrooms, students also interact and have time with their hearing peers in classrooms, an outdoor play area, and a shared multi-purpose room. They

also participate with CORA students in before and after school programs.

Bruce Brownstein’s son attends the new school, and he has been impressed from the beginning. “It is impossible to overstate the positive impact this has made on our son Daniel,” he says. “Having access to such skilled Clarke staff in a wonderfully supportive learning environment has made a huge difference in his life. Developing spoken language skills is something we take for granted. But for Daniel it is a privilege made possible by Clarke and all those who worked so diligently to have a Clarke school here. Having Clarke in Philadelphia has not only benefited my son,” underscores Brownstein, “but the school and its educators are invaluable to the well-being and development of our entire family.”

Sexton recalls a recent conversation she had with the Brownsteins. “While Daniel’s speech had improved dramatically, his parents were apprehensive when they learned that he would be ‘interviewed’ as part of the mainstreaming process to kindergarten. That apprehension turned to joy when, at the first interview, Daniel walked right in, outstretched his hand and said, ‘Hi. My name is Daniel, nice to meet you.’ The look on the principal’s face was priceless!”

Each day, Sexton hears from families about how Clarke has transformed their lives. A parent recently wrote: “*When Mason first got his hearing aids, he wasn’t speaking words or receptively understanding even his name. Thanks to Clarke, all that has changed: Last night, he slept through the night in his big boy bed. This morning, he requested what he wanted to wear, what he wanted for breakfast, and called the kittens downstairs for ‘bfast.’ And earlier, when he and I sang along to the ‘Twinkle Twinkle’ YouTube video – and Mason sang every single word – small tears of victory fell down my face. I am amazed. Thank you Eli, Kate, Carla, Judy and Jeana and the whole Clarke team for the amazing work you do.*” 🌱

This program was made possible by a generous grant from the Farber Family Foundation.

# Clarke's Little



“When **Olivia** first came to Clarke with profound bilateral hearing loss at age three, she had been recently implanted with a cochlear implant and was hardly speaking. Not only did Clarke help her learn to listen and talk, but they also provided her with a love of learning, incredible confidence and an unbreakable bond with my husband and me. She flourished in small classrooms with teachers who challenged and encouraged her.

Today, Olivia is thriving in second grade. She is reading two grade levels above her hearing peers, and charming everyone she meets. She listens to her iPod, sings, dances, skypes, and makes movies with Webkinz. She loves art, music and gym, and her speech needs are few.

It's an honor to be a parent, especially to a child with hearing loss. The possibilities and dreams can be limitless. Our kids will change the world, and everyone whose lives they touch. Olivia is a confident, happy girl with BIG dreams, and it's exactly what *we* dreamed for her – hearing or deaf.”

**Michelle Lampley**  
Clarke Bryn Mawr parent



“We were very nervous when **Zachary** began first grade in a mainstream school. But within the first few days his teacher called to tell me how impressed she was with Zach. On his own initiative, he had explained to his classmates about his hearing loss, his cochlear implant, why he needed it, and how the doctors put it in. He even let each student feel the slight bump in his head!

Clarke always taught kids to be proud of who they are and advocate for themselves. And Zachary does just that! Clarke also prepared him very well in reading, spelling, grammar and writing. While striving for excellence and very motivated, he is still silly, loves to make people laugh and has recently been invited to join the competitive karate team.

At one time it was hard to imagine a life outside the Clarke family. But it is *because* of Clarke that Zachary is thriving in the mainstream. And for that, our family cannot thank Clarke enough.”

**Mia Lucero**  
Clarke Jacksonville parent



“At just a month old, **Mira** was diagnosed with sensorineural hearing loss in both ears. She attended kindergarten and first grade at Clarke, which laid a foundation for language and instilled a sense of confidence in her. Now a third-grader in her hometown school, she is thriving academically and socially.

In addition to reading, Mira loves to dance, and when she's in class, her practice studio uses her school's FM system. At school, Clarke Mainstream Services provides guidance to her speech pathologist and helps school staff understand how much work it is for Mira to learn to listen.

When Mira gets invited to sleepovers, I am always amazed how she and her friends work together to make their games more inclusive. For instance, since Mira removes her implants while swimming, they all splash instead of shouting during *Marco Polo*.

Our advice to parents: try not to get overwhelmed. Take it step by step, and use all the resources you have. We feel our daughter is getting just what she needs, and we couldn't be happier!”

**Mike & Leah Filipkowski**  
Clarke Northampton parents



# Mainstream Learners



“My sons are identical twins. Although Thomas is hearing, and **Will** has bilateral cochlear implants, they’ve been in school together since their very first day of preschool.

When we first brought Will to Clarke’s Parent Infant Program at seven months, we found a community that understood us. And right away, I knew that everything was going to be alright. Clarke taught us everything about this new world, and I always felt that I could ask questions about alternative therapies and receive unbiased, clear answers about *all* of the options available to us.

Today, Will loves to make people laugh and be the center of attention and wants to be a scientist when he grows up. He plays tennis and practices karate with his brother, and each of them has their own group of friends.

My sons, one hearing and one not, are living the same kind life. It’s proof that anything is possible if you take advantage of available resources.”

**Tracy Boland**  
Clarke Boston parent



“**Kevin** received his first cochlear implant at nine months old, and his second at three years. Upon starting Clarke, we immediately noticed a difference in his speech and it was so wonderful to hear him talking!

Today, Kevin is a third grader at a public school, and loves it! He is always participating in class and has a ton of energy. He loves physical education, math and dancing and is fluent in Spanish and English!

When my daughter was born earlier this year with hearing loss, the first thing we did was contact Clarke. The environment is so kind, they are so good with the kids and I feel totally comfortable with them. When I see how well Kevin is doing, I just know that it is all going to be okay and that my daughter will have the chance to be a typical kid just like her hearing peers. I feel really grateful to Clarke for that.”

**Mercedes Ramos**  
Clarke New York parent  
🌸

“At one time it was hard to imagine a life outside the Clarke family. But it is because of Clarke that Zachary is thriving in the mainstream. And for that, our family cannot thank you enough.”



# Clarke's Mainstream Services

## A typical day in the life of an itinerant teacher of the deaf,

says Sam Domingos, is anything but typical. "My students could be in preschool or high school, or anywhere in between. Some students I see once or twice a week and others I see every day. But that's also what I love about it – every day is new and different."

As an itinerant teacher with Clarke Mainstream Services, Domingos works with as many as ten different schools each year providing support to students with hearing loss. She also works closely with classroom teachers and parents to ensure that students are staying on track in mainstream settings. "We see it as a collaboration.

happens at earlier ages than ever before, with many children mainstreaming as early as kindergarten.

While students can thrive in mainstream classrooms, it is vital that each child receive the personalized language and learning support they need to succeed. Through a variety of customizable services, Clarke teachers of the deaf work with students, parents and school professionals to provide information, support and teaching services. They meet regularly and confer with one another about strategies and challenges.

The range of mainstream services for families who have chosen a listening and spoken language path for their children who are deaf and hard of hearing, is growing, and growing fast. Decades ago, 80% of children who were deaf and hard of hearing attended special schools

For older students, we are usually focusing on strategies that help them manage their own work, including homework, and stay on top of the curriculum." The key, says Sam, is being able to adapt. "We have to be able to relate speech and language to curriculum, and to be able to teach language through math or history."

For itinerant teachers, working with students in neighborhood schools often means traveling far distances. "But," says Domingos, "I don't mind the travel and I like getting to visit new towns. And," she laughs, "there are tricks to getting things done, like knowing all the WiFi hotspot locations where you can pull over and dash off a quick e-mail!"

Though she didn't originally intend on a career in education, Domingos says she couldn't imagine doing anything else. "I

The range of mainstream services for families who have chosen a listening and spoken language path for their children who are deaf and hard of hearing, is growing. And growing fast.

Clarke's role is to help, to guide, and also to get feedback. Input from teachers and families is crucial."

*Mainstreaming* is a term used to describe the integration of children with hearing loss into mainstream public or private school classrooms so they can learn alongside their hearing peers. This now

for the deaf. Today, over 80% attend – many of them, with support from places like Clarke – mainstream schools alongside their hearing peers.

The nature of the work, says Domingos, depends on the age and individual needs of the student. "Younger students may need more help with their equipment, and with speech and language support.

have a unilateral hearing loss myself, so I always felt connected to the field. And when I thought about the things I loved doing, they all came down to teaching."

The best part of her job? "I love watching students grow and develop self-confidence.

*continued on page 26*



# CLARKE'S K-8 PROGRAM:



“It’s just like talking to any other kid.”

# THE BEST OF BOTH WORLDS

## “Thanks to Clarke, Austin now has the best of both worlds.”

While learning in a structured, small environment with teachers of the deaf, he is also experiencing the faster pace and louder environment of a mainstream school. All other aspects of his life take place in the mainstream. And now, so does his education. We couldn't be happier.”

That's Angela Moorehouse talking about her son, a first-grader at Clarke's brand new K–8 Program, *Bridge to the Mainstream*. Launched at Leeds Elementary School at the beginning of this school year, the program is a national model of innovation and inclusion for students who are deaf and hard of hearing. Clarke students alternate between their own class time and shared time at lunch, recess, gym, art and music classes with their hearing peers.

“One of our central goals,” explains Clarke President, Bill Corwin, “has always been to help students transition to mainstream schools in a more fluid and efficient manner. This program does just that.”

“We essentially picked up the Clarke K–8 program previously held on the Northampton Campus and moved it to Leeds. Renovations enabled classrooms to maintain the same state-of-the-art programming and small class sizes. The Clarke curriculum and programming have remained the same, and students are receiving the same individualized speech and language therapy, on-site audiological support, and superior instruction from masters-level teachers of the deaf.”

Corwin notes that, “Because of advances in assistive technology and screening of newborns at birth, the trend is to mainstream at younger and younger ages. Not only did we want our students to have more interaction with hearing kids, but we wanted them to be able to gradually experience the joys and inevitable challenges of a mainstream environment – all while under the supervision of Clarke staff.”

Children in the older grades travel in a Clarke van to the JFK Middle School to share classes with their hearing peers. According to Clarke lead teacher, Kathi Shea, “Our kids have been met with warmth and genuine enthusiasm. They work in groups, give presentations in front of classes, and JFK's technology teacher has already asked if Clarke students could be there full-time!”

Shea explains that, “Many of our students speak so well that often people forget that they have hearing loss. Because of that, a major challenge for Clarke students is learning to express their needs when they're in classes with hearing students. This ‘bridge’ at Leeds helps us provide them with those strategies so they can advocate for themselves in ways that are effective and comfortable.”

Clarke teachers have led training sessions about hearing loss for Leeds teachers, who now routinely wear FM transmitters around their necks when Clarke students attend their classes. In turn, Clarke students have gone into the classroom to “teach” their new friends about the workings of cochlear implants. Shea recounts, “In a second-grade art class, Clarke students stood at the front of the room, turned their backs and answered questions. When they took off their implants and could no longer hear those same questions, the typically hearing students really got it.”

“I'm so proud of our students,” says Shea. “They are demystifying hearing loss in a way that an adult never could.”

Shea recently spoke with Mary Jo Nagle, a second-grade teacher at Leeds. “Mary Jo shared a great story with me about a student suggesting to her parents that they buy her a cochlear implant because during a particularly boisterous moment, she wasn't able to hear the teacher above the fray of the other students.” According to Nagle, “Acceptance has come quickly. When Clarke students come into the classroom it's powerful, and our kids are amazed at their skill level.”

Shea sees barriers being broken daily. Whether it's recess, or the field trip to the pumpkin patch, it's hard for teachers to tell which children have hearing loss and which don't. In the joint fifth-grade music class, Fred, who wears bilateral cochlear implants, was teaching some of his hearing peers to play the guitar. When those kids were asked what it was like to have Fred in their midst, one of the kids said, “He's fun. It's just like talking to any other kid.” 🌸

Shea smiles. “What could be better than that?”

*(Left: Leeds fourth-grader, Lila Findley, after reading to Clarke's K-1 class)*



## MEET THE STARK FAMILY



“Before we came to Clarke, every single speech report we received for our daughter had the word *delay* in it.

This year, the report was different. It said, *Chloe's on track*. I can't describe how happy I was to read those words.

It's been a long journey for our family. When Chloe didn't pass the newborn hearing screening, our pediatrician calmly reassured us that it was probably a false positive and that she should be retested in a few weeks. We waited two long weeks and returned to see a pediatric audiologist. Once again she failed. Now there was cause for concern.

As an MRI technician, I worried that some aspect of my work may have caused Chloe's condition. Eventually, after another round of tests, the audiologists told us that Chloe had a moderate to severe loss in her left ear and a moderate loss in her right ear. I burst into tears right there in the exam room.



# “I have Clarke to thank for uncovering the truth about Chloe’s hearing loss.”

Chloe was fitted with hearing aids at six weeks and we were referred for speech therapy at a well-regarded speech and hearing center in the city. We also completed genetic testing which revealed that Chloe’s hearing loss was due to a gene, Connexin 26, that my husband and I both carry. This genetic condition usually results in profound deafness, so we felt fortunate that Chloe had some residual hearing. Everything appeared to be under control.

But problems soon emerged. Chloe got frequent ear infections and her hearing checks regularly came back inconclusive. The center where she received speech therapy was always very busy and it was difficult to connect with the staff. Chloe was 18 months old and still not talking. I asked myself, *How can a child who has been in speech therapy since she was eight weeks old be falling behind?*

It was our Early Intervention coordinator who first mentioned Clarke. During the tour, I was immediately struck by the warmth and caring of the staff, and knew that it was the right place for our daughter. She began speech therapy at Clarke when she was two years old, and within the first week, Michele DiStefano, Clarke’s educational audiologist, began retesting her hearing.

We received eye-opening news: our daughter was totally deaf in her left ear and had lost most of her hearing in her right ear. Regular hearing aids would not be powerful enough. In consultation with the specialists at Clarke, we began to research cochlear implant surgery and, in July of 2011, Chloe received cochlear implants in both ears. Clarke guided us through the options, and provided the speech and language services needed for her to fully utilize her implants.

Within a year of coming to Clarke, Chloe has become a completely different person. She started out very timid and anxious with new people, and in new situations she would often hide behind one of her parents or sit and observe other children playing rather than engage. Today, she is outgoing, strong, and able to communicate and advocate for herself. In the classroom, she is known to be a bit of a teacher’s pet and a social queen bee. And when asked about her implants, she’s very happy to explain how they work and how they help her hear.

Clarke’s teachers, classroom assistants, speech therapists, and administration have all demonstrated tremendous dedication and personal attention. I can’t thank everyone enough for what they did for our family and for Chloe’s future.” 🌱

# The Smith College/ Clarke School Master's Program

**Sarah Ammerman, M.E.D., Ph.D.,** never thought she would end up at the Smith College/Clarke School Graduate Program in Teacher Education. But the minute she stepped into her first classroom with children with hearing loss, her mind was made up.

As an undergraduate at Eastern Kentucky University, Ammerman had developed a strong background in comprehensive deaf education. At the time, many families were beginning to pursue a listening and spoken language approach and her advisor suggested that she learn more about the field. Right away, she made an appointment to visit Clarke and meet with professor Alan Marvelli and then Clarke president, Dennis Gjerdingen.

*“The sounds of the students talking, joking, and playing hit me over the head. I had never heard deaf kids who sounded like this before. I had never seen deaf kids reading on grade level. I knew that working with these children was what I wanted to do.”*

After earning a Master's degree in Deaf Education from the Smith/Clarke program in 2002, Ammerman went to work at Clarke's Bryn Mawr, PA location. Memories of her first classroom experiences are very dear to her. She says that it was particularly rewarding to be a part of the (then) first auditory/oral school in the area – something that parents had been hoping for, for a long time.

Now in its 41st year, the internationally acclaimed Smith/Clarke M.E.D. Program has trained more than 1400 teachers of the deaf, working in all 50 states and 34 countries. The program focuses on a listening and spoken language approach for children with hearing loss who use cochlear implants and/or hearing aids. Students work with children at several academic levels, from preschool through middle school, both in the classroom and in the communication lab. They also have unique opportunities to develop personal relationships with children by participating in special school events, and students can participate in practica at four Clarke School locations in the Northeast. Although all M.E.D. students are required to be on the Smith campus in Northampton, MA during the two summer semesters, during the school year they have the option of attending classes in real-time via synchronous video technology. These students conduct their practica from Clarke's Boston and Pennsylvania campuses.



“The sounds of the students talking, joking, and playing hit me over the head. I had never heard deaf kids who sounded like this before.”

– SARAH AMMERMAN

Ammerman believes that it was partly due to the important connections she made while at Smith and Clarke that helped her earn a fully funded position in a prestigious doctoral program at the University of Arizona. She credits many of her professors in Northampton for consistently encouraging her to collaborate with colleagues and present at regional conferences. In 2009 after five rigorous years, she graduated with a Ph.D. in Special Education, with a focus on deaf education and audiology.

Today, Dr. Ammerman works at the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio as an Assistant Professor in a program for teachers of the deaf. She has a fierce passion for her work and is constantly striving to stay ahead of the current research and provide her students with the most up to date curricula. She is also proud to still be a practitioner and, for at least six hours every week, works at a language lab with children of all ages. She values this time greatly, as it allows her to draw on direct experience in addition to academic theory when teaching.

Ammerman is also proud of her involvement in the Professional Preparation in Cochlear Implants (PPCI) program run by the Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia. PPCI is an intensive 8-week training program specifically for professionals who don’t have recent training or experience working with children who use listening and spoken language. This work of keeping practitioners up to speed on the latest audiological principles stems from her education at Clarke.

“At Clarke,” she says, “the teachers continually underscored the fact that in order to be a good professional, continued growth throughout your career is a must. I couldn’t agree more.” 🌸



### MEET GRADY CONGLETON '05



Currently, there are only ten certified athletic trainers with hearing loss in the entire country. Clarke alum, Grady Congleton, is looking forward to becoming the eleventh.

A senior at the University of Vermont in Burlington, he is pursuing a degree in Athletic Training, which focuses on the prevention, recognition, diagnosis, treatment, and rehabilitation of athletic injuries. He is already trained to handle emergency situations such as concussions, cardiac arrest and spinal injuries.

For such a young man, Congleton has an enormous amount of experience already under his belt. When not in class, Congleton photographs many UVM sporting events, and works with Burlington High School athletics. Previously, he worked with UVM men's lacrosse, St. Michael's basketball and lacrosse teams, and spent a semester observing the Burlington Fire Department Rescue Squad. After graduation, he'd like to secure a job at a high school and seek a master's degree. His dream job: to work with an NHL hockey team.

Congleton is one of Clarke's most committed alumni. He spends many, many hours volunteering as the editor of the Clarke School Alumni Council (CSAC) newsletter. Several times a year, he pulls together stories and photos about Clarke from around the world, connecting over 800 alumni. From 2008 to 2010, he worked as a counselor for Clarke's Summer Adventure Program (a two-week program in Northampton for children ages 9–14) and this past summer he participated as a volunteer.

After being diagnosed at 16 months old with moderate bilateral sensorineural hearing loss, it was discovered that Grady had a progressive bilateral hearing loss.



“Never doubt yourself.  
The key is to press on  
and never give up on  
your dreams.”

– GRADY CONGLETON ‘05

Today, Congleton is profoundly deaf in both ears. In 2000, he had surgery for a cochlear implant in his left ear at the Children’s Hospital of Boston, and continues to travel there for his mappings.

Congleton’s history with Clarke stretches way back to age three, when he entered the Northampton preschool program. Two years later, when his family moved to Eastern Massachusetts, he became a residential student and remained in that program until eighth grade. Some of his fondest Clarke memories are gym classes and after-school recreation with teachers Dennis Moulton and Diane Dostal. “Those two taught me the importance of having fun no matter if it is competitive or not. They also taught me how powerful athletics and recreation can be in managing one’s stress and mood in life.” To this day, he draws on those experiences, and is always eager to serve as a physical activity advocate for children as well as adults.

“My time at Clarke was lively, positive and enriching and they did a tremendous job in preparing me for middle school at Eaglebrook (Deerfield, MA). To me, Clarke is an incredibly special place--no matter the size of the campus. The buildings and grounds are beautiful and memorable, but it is the amazing people who have worked, lived, and attended Clarke that make it so special.”

Congleton’s life is busy and full, but he does make sure he has down time. When relaxing, you’re likely to find him curled up with his Kindle, reading everything from *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* to his favorite book, *Education of a Coach* by the late David Halberstam.

When asked for advice for children who are deaf or hard of hearing, Congleton doesn’t miss a beat: “Never doubt yourself. There are a lot of things that society will say that you can’t do, regardless of what your hearing loss is or how early you received your education. The key is to press on and never give up on your dreams.” 🌱



# Clarke's Comprehensive Educational Evaluation Program





# Cindy Forsythe is Clarke's K–8 School Psychologist, and a member of Clarke's renowned Comprehensive Educational Evaluation (CEE) Program, which operates out of Northampton, Massachusetts.

"We understand how kids with hearing loss think and feel," she says. "It's why we encourage schools to alternate classes, so these students can have listening breaks throughout the day. It's why we suggest that the 'lazy' child may instead have a hearing loss or language disability that is preventing them from learning. And it's why we always encourage parents to have their child evaluated, because the slightest bit of support can help a struggling student make enormous and sometimes immediate progress."

Since the early 1980s, families from across the country have brought their children to Clarke's Northampton location for a multi-day evaluation designed specifically for students in preschool through high school who are deaf or hard of hearing. Using an interdisciplinary approach that examines all aspects of a child's development, Clarke's CEEs provide parents and school districts with comprehensive data and practical recommendations to maximize a child's success in the classroom and beyond.

"Sometimes," Forsythe says, "we see kids whose teachers don't realize they are capable of doing more sophisticated work simply based on the fact they can't understand that child as well as a typically hearing child. So, we are constantly asking, 'How do they hear? And based on that, why aren't they doing better?' The role of our team is three-fold: to be objective, to help parents navigate what can be a complex array of logistics with professionals, and ultimately, to help children reach their true potential."

According to Linda Findlay, Director of the CEE Program, Clarke's evaluations are unique on several fronts. To begin with, the testing is implemented by a team of seasoned professionals – a psychologist, an audiologist, a teacher of the deaf and a speech language pathologist – whose expertise is hearing loss in educational settings. Families are on site for two days, during which they have the opportunity to watch every interaction with their child through an observation booth. This visibility, says Findlay, is not so much for the parent's comfort, but rather so they can provide nuanced information about their children in real time to the testers.

Another distinctive component of Clarke's CEE is the significant amount of time families spend in an exit meeting with evaluators and, occasionally, representatives from their school district via phone or Skype. At this time, families are provided with a comprehensive quantitative and qualitative analysis addressing the effects of their child's hearing loss on not only their academic development, but on their audiological, language, speech and cognitive development as well. There is extensive discussion and families are encouraged to ask as many questions as necessary so that they feel comfortable advocating for their child upon returning home. In most cases,

even students with learning challenges can remain in a mainstream program with appropriate support services in place.

Forsythe explains that, "In grades one, two and three, the focus is on learning to read, to write and do math. Then there's a switch, and students need those skills in order to learn. At that point, they are no longer *learning to read*, *they're reading to learn*, and the acquisition of knowledge becomes dependent on students being able to fully grasp those concepts and subjects. If the foundation isn't strong enough, it's very hard to build upon it."

"This," Forsythe underscores, "is why it's critical to catch problems early on. And, it's why our team doesn't only work with families. We also have relationships with districts and special education personnel who don't have experience working with children with hearing loss."

"I've done trainings with mainstream educators, and they need to be particularly aware of catching learning issues early on. We can teach these educators that children with hearing loss have to work harder to listen, and consequently get tired sooner. Because a child is tuning out or acting out shouldn't necessarily mean that he or she should be diagnosed with ADHD. It could simply be that the child is fatigued and needs a break to reenergize."

Over the years, Forsythe has built relationships with many, many families. "There are children I first tested when they were six years old who are now in high school preparing for college. When I hear from their parents that our recommendations helped to improve their child's life in a very significant way, I know we've made a profound difference. To me, that's a real gift." 🌸

# SUPPORTING CLARKE



## You Make the Difference

Did you know that charitable donations support almost half of Clarke's costs? Generous individuals, foundations, civic organizations, and corporations make our life-changing programs and services possible. Each year, gifts are gratefully received from more than 1,500 donors who share our belief that children who are deaf and hard of hearing can learn to listen, speak, and succeed in mainstream schools and life, and should be given every opportunity to do so. Thank you!

Clarke Schools for Hearing and Speech is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. As an IRS qualified charity, gifts to Clarke are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

### CLARKE FRIENDS PUT THE FUN IN FUNDRAISING!

Crowds of Clarke families and friends turned out for the 2012 Walks For Hearing (see photo at right) and raised awareness and over \$25,000. SAVE THE DATE for the 2013 Walks!  
Pennsylvania, September 22  
New York City, September 29  
Massachusetts, October 27  
[new this year] Jacksonville, November 9

### CLARKE RUNS THE DISTANCE

Before it was cancelled due to Hurricane Sandy, Clarke had six runners in the 2012 ING New York City Marathon. OJ Logue, Director of the Clarke Northampton School Program, his daughter, Amanda, Nelson Daniels, Keith Andress, and Clarke Jacksonville alumna Haley Stallings and her mother, Dana (pictured at far right), raised over \$15,000. And, just to make sure that they get a chance to run for Clarke, the Stallings' family business is sponsoring the first Kilwins Ice Cream 5K Race and Fun Run in Jacksonville on March 2, 2013.

### GOOD TIME, GOOD CAUSE

Philadelphia knows how to have a good time for a good cause. Volunteer and former Clarke trustee, Jan Blynn, teamed up with *The Little House Shop* for a day of shopping to benefit Clarke, while parents, Caroline Linz, raised funds at Flemings Steak House's *Fashionably Late* event, and Marisa Kocak held an in-home shopping party featuring multiple direct sales vendors. In addition, online and in-store book fairs are being held



at *Barnes & Noble* stores near all Clarke Schools, and watch for news about upcoming *Clarke Nights* at some of your favorite restaurants.

## EARLY TREATMENT MAKES A DIFFERENCE

Early diagnosis thanks to newborn hearing screening, access to sound in infancy thanks to revolutionary hearing technologies, and Clarke's early intervention and preschool programs are changing the future for hundreds of children and families every day. But, there are many other children who are not getting the help they need, and we need to bring the power of these new opportunities to more children, in more places, and in more ways as quickly as possible. Innovation, collaboration, and expansion are essential and with support from over 150 major donors, and private and family foundations, we are launching several exciting new initiatives. To find out how you can become part of them, contact Bill Corwin, President, [bcorwin@clarkeschools.org](mailto:bcorwin@clarkeschools.org) or 413.582.1163. 🌱

## MANY WAYS OF GIVING

- Businesses have ample opportunities to "do well by doing good" through Clarke's Corporate Partnership Program. Year-round high-profile events, professional conferences, family workshops, webinars, publications, special projects and more allow companies to get their message out while simultaneously supporting Clarke's life-changing programs.
- Outright gifts of any size can be made in support of all Clarke programs and locations, or just the ones you choose. Mail your check to our central office, 45 Round Hill Road, Northampton, MA 01060 or use our secure, fast, and easy online giving site at [www.clarkeschools.org/donate](http://www.clarkeschools.org/donate).
- Honor and memorial gifts are a proud tradition at Clarke. They are a very special way of paying tribute to the memory of a loved one, celebrating a milestone birthday or life event, or showing your love and support for a Clarke child or family.
- The Heroes of the Month Club, our recurring gift program, is an easy, secure and convenient way to support Clarke. You simply select an amount to be billed to your credit card each month, every-other-month, or quarterly. Recurring gifts reduce administration costs, allowing more of each gift to be used, and because your gift will be broken into smaller monthly amounts, a recurring gift may allow you to increase your yearly contributions.
- Many companies match employee and retiree donations, so that when combined with the major matching grant we have received from an anonymous donor, your gift to Clarke is quadrupled!
- Making a stock gift requires only a simple transaction executed by your broker at your instruction. You can leave your legacy through a bequest by will. Planned gifts such as a Charitable Gift Annuity or Charitable Remainder Trust are wonderful ways to support Clarke while receiving a life income. For more information, contact Jane Lennox, Chief Development Officer, [jlennox@clarkeschools.org](mailto:jlennox@clarkeschools.org) or 413.582.1182.



# NORTHAMPTON THEN AND NOW

## CATHERINE BARTLETT, M.D.



Catherine Bartlett's dedication to children who are deaf or hard of hearing and their families began over twenty years ago when she attended a symposium on early diagnosis of hearing loss at Clarke Northampton and witnessed how a deaf child's life could be changed by newborn hearing screening technology. In the eighties, newborn screenings were not common practice. Determined to change that, Dr. Bartlett collaborated with Clarke and Cooley Dickinson Hospital to

establish the first Newborn Hearing Screening Program in Western Massachusetts.

In 2009, the American Academy of Pediatrics named Bartlett a Pediatric Hero for her work to improve the lives of children with hearing loss, and she was honored at their national conference. Bartlett is a graduate of Albany Medical College in Albany, N.Y. and did her internship and residency at the Children's Hospital at the University of Washington in Seattle. She was a physician at Northampton Area Pediatrics from 1981 until her retirement in 2010.

In 2011, after serving for 15 years on Clarke's Board of Trustees, she assumed the position of Chair, succeeding Harley Sacks, Esq., who served as Chair since 2003. We have long been very grateful to have her as part of the Clarke family.

## CLARKE'S 145<sup>TH</sup> REUNION!

The 2012 Clarke Alumni Reunion, celebrating 145 years of Clarke, was a huge success, boasting the best attendance in our history! Over 400 alumni from the classes of 1939 to 2012 gathered for two days to share cherished memories and make new ones. There was a delicious BBQ at Look Park on Friday followed by a full day of events at Clarke Northampton on Saturday including a speech from the mayor of Northampton, alumni presentations, and a live auction hosted by former science teacher and current alumni liaison, Bob Storm. The weekend was topped off with a gala banquet dinner on Saturday night at the Clarion Hotel in Northampton. It was a fantastic weekend, and we look forward to seeing everyone at the next reunion celebrating our 150th Anniversary in 2017!

## A TIME TO CELEBRATE



*Clarke's 2012 Eighth-Grade Class*







# 145<sup>TH</sup> REUNION ROUNDUP



1958



2012



*continued from page 11*

I had a third-grader last year who was very anxious when other children kept asking about her hearing loss. So, we created a mailbox where they could submit their questions. The school's speech pathologist and I sat with this girl, read through all the questions and talked through her answers. Eventually, she became much more confident in talking about her hearing loss and advocating for herself. The whole process really brought everything out in the open. It wasn't long before we didn't need the mailbox at all." 🌱

## CONNECT WITH CLARKE!

OUR WEBSITE: [clarkeschools.org](http://clarkeschools.org)



FIND US ON FACEBOOK  
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# THE JOHN CLARKE LEGACY SOCIETY

One hundred and forty-five years ago, John Clarke dreamed of creating a school where children who were deaf could gain the learning and speaking skills they needed to succeed. His own gifts and bequest built that dream, and it endures today thanks in large part to bequests and planned gifts from those who followed

other events, and receive periodic special briefings from Clarke's president and trustees. With their permission, members' names are listed in publications and online, which serves as an encouragement to others. Requests for anonymity are always honored.

If you have already included Clarke in your estate plans, please let us know. We would like to thank you for your

"My attorney suggested that I might enjoy the act of giving my legacy gift today. Becoming a member of the John Clarke Legacy Society has been a very satisfying experience. My mother-in-law, Marion Wood, was a teacher at Clarke for many years and my gift honors her dedication to teaching children who are deaf and hard of hearing." — JOYCE GARE

in his footsteps. They have ensured Clarke's excellence for generations to come, and we invite you to join them.

The John Clarke Legacy Society honors and recognizes those extraordinary people who have provided for Clarke in their estate plans by means of a bequest, charitable trust, annuity, life insurance policies, retirement plans, and other vehicles.

Membership involves no dues or obligations of any kind. Members are invited to JCLS receptions, commencements, and

generosity, make sure the purpose of your gift is understood and documented, and welcome you as a member of the John Clarke Legacy Society.

To learn more about planned giving and the John Clarke Legacy Society, please visit our website, [www.clarkeschools.plannedgiving.org](http://www.clarkeschools.plannedgiving.org), or contact Jane Lennox, Chief Development Officer, [jlennox@clarkeschools.org](mailto:jlennox@clarkeschools.org) or 413.582.1182. 🌱





# FACES OF CLARKE





# Clarke Schools for Hearing and Speech

Established in 1867 as Clarke School for the Deaf

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