

## EMBRACING A NEW BRAND



Staff members and students at the elementary school erupted in cheers as their agency's new name – Pillar Care Continuum – was announced to the assembled group.

It was a scene repeated across the agency as the new brand was revealed after more than a year of anticipation. Both staff members and program participants all received some Pillar Care “swag,” including tote bags and t-shirts. **“Change creates opportunities,”** said Pillar Care CEO Purna Rodman Conare. **“And this was an opportunity to generate anticipation and excitement among everyone we serve and everyone on staff. It was a lot of fun for everyone and a great way to introduce the new name.”**

Pillar Care is also finalizing work on two new websites – [pillarnj.org](http://pillarnj.org) will provide information on all of the agency's programs and services and [pillarschoolsnj.org](http://pillarschoolsnj.org) will be dedicated to Pillar Elementary School and Pillar High School (formerly Horizon Elementary and Horizon High School).

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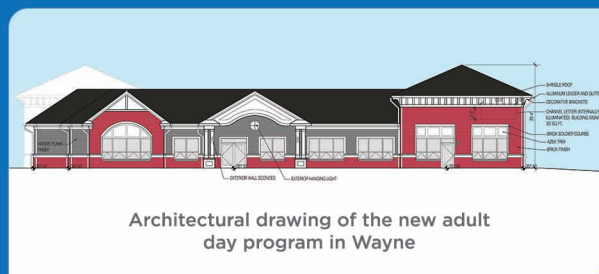
The new name and logo were also introduced to supporters at the agency's annual Steps to Independence Celebration as well as to other stakeholders through emails, mailings and social media outreach.

## WORK TO BEGIN ON NEW DAY PROGRAM

Pillar Care will soon break ground on a new building for its adult day program in Wayne. The new site is at 516 Hamburg Turnpike, just a half-mile from the program's current location.

The new 14,000 square-foot facility is tailored to the program's unique needs. It is also larger than the current program space, which will allow the agency to serve more adults.

“We're exciting to be moving forward on this project,” said Purna Rodman Conare, President and CEO of Pillar Care. “There are adults with severe disabilities and medical challenges who need access to programs such as this, and meeting that need is central to our mission.”



Architectural drawing of the new adult day program in Wayne

# MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT & CEO



## PILLAR CARE CONTINUUM'S BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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I am pleased to present you with the first newsletter ever published under our new name, **Pillar Care Continuum**. Since announcing our new name in late October, we have been working to update everything from internal forms and signs to our vans and websites. It is a very involved process and a number of projects will likely last for several more months. We are grateful for how supportive our families and staff members have been and how positive everyone has been about the new brand.

You will read in this issue about the success of our recent Steps to Independence fundraising event. We are deeply grateful to Mike Petillo for setting an all-time fundraising record for our organization. We are also thankful to our event committee for all of their hard work and to our co-chairs - Clark Macheimer, Barry Mandelbaum, Kelly Marx, Phil Monaco, Bob Murray and Barry Ostrowsky- for their continued leadership and support.

This issue highlights a number of areas of growth around the agency. In Wayne, we will soon begin construction on a new site for our day program for adults that will provide space better suited to our programmatic needs as well as room to serve additional participants. Our elementary school has introduced the use of virtual reality to support our students and we will soon bring this technology to our day programs for adults. And we have just hired a Board-Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) to strengthen our support services for program participants with behavior challenges. Thank you to all of our staff members who work so hard toward our ongoing improvement.

**Enjoy the issue!**

Warmly, Puma Rodman Conare

## CONTACT US

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**PLEASE NOTE OUR SITES HAVE CHANGED!**

[pillarnj.org](http://pillarnj.org) | [pillarschoolsnj.org](http://pillarschoolsnj.org)



# PETILLO SHATTERS ALL RECORDS EVENT RAISES \$1.4 MILLION



Honoree Mike Petillo (center) with event co-chairs (from left to right) Clark Machemer, Kelly Marx, Bob Murray and Phil Monaco

More than 400 guests packed into the Crystal Plaza on October 23rd to honor Michael Petillo at the agency's Steps to Independence Celebration. The event was the most successful fundraising event in the more than 65-year history of the agency, raising more than \$1.4 million.

"Mike really connected with our students and our mission," said Kelly Marx, longtime Pillar board member and a co-chair of the event. "And it showed in the months of hard work he invested to make this such a stellar event."

The overhead for the event was less than 7%, so more than 93% of the monies raised will support the agency's programs.

"While we raised a great deal of money from the event, it was about more than fundraising," said Clark Machemer, Vice Chair of Pillar's board and a co-chair of the event. "Mike helped us to connect with new friends in the community and those are relationships we hope to maintain for a long time to come."



Mike Petillo (center) with speakers Jo Ann and Matt Gittleman. The Gittlemans shared the story of their son, Joseph, who attends Pillar Elementary School.



John Crimi led the text-for-a-cause segment of the program, raising \$300,000 to support a range of projects (see list p. 6).

# PETILLO SHATTERS ALL RECORDS EVENT RAISES \$1.4 MILLION

## THANK YOU TO THE MEMBERS OF THE STEPS TO INDEPENDENCE COMMITTEE

### EVENT CO-CHAIRS

Clark Machemer, Crow Holdings  
Barry R. Mandelbaum, Mandelbaum Salsburg P.C.  
Kelly Marx, Past President, CPNJ  
Philip Monaco, Peerless Concrete Products Co.  
Bob Murray, Alston Construction  
Barry H. Ostrowsky, RWJ Barnabas Health

### COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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## THANK YOU TO OUR MAJOR SPONSORS FOR HELPING TO MAKE THIS EVENT SUCH A SUCCESS:

### EVENT SPONSORS (\$50,000+)

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Alston Construction  
GEMCO Constructors  
Kennedy Excavating  
Petillo, Inc.  
RWJBaranabas Health

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Kelly & Nancy Marx  
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Rockefeller Group  
Sterling Properties  
The Marvin Group  
Top Line Construction Corp.  
Valley

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## Funds raised during the text-for-a-cause segment of the Steps to Independence Celebration will support the following projects:

- ✔ Renovation of the Pillar Elementary School gym
- ✔ New sensory integration room for our Wayne day program for adults
- ✔ Furniture for our next two group homes
- ✔ Virtual reality equipment for our day programs for adults
- ✔ Smart boards for our school classrooms
- ✔ Support for our therapeutic play group for infants and toddlers with special needs
- ✔ Supplies for our art program for our Pillar Schools
- ✔ Support for our equine therapy for our elementary school students
- ✔ Thanksgiving food baskets for our families in need
- ✔ Headphones for iPads for our Pillar School students

## HONORING PILLAR STAFF

Pillar Care Continuum hosted its 2019-2020 Staff Appreciation Brunch at The Park Avenue Club in Florham Park on November 8th. The agency presented Years of Service awards (for 5, 10, 15, 20, 25 and 30 years) to staff members to honor their commitment to the organization.

The event featured keynote speaker Carolyn Russo-Azer, Director of Pillar's Early Intervention Program. Other speakers included Kent Dettlo, Director of Residential Services, Charlie Andrews, Director of Facilities, Jaimie Pasterick, Coordinator of Therapy for Pillar Elementary School, and Kathy Noziere, an occupational therapist with the Public School Therapies program.

**“Our staff members are what set us apart from other service providers,”** said Alicia-Ann Caesar, Director of Quality Improvement, Risk Management and Training. **“It is important that we recognize their dedication to our agency and, most importantly, to those we serve every day.”**



Ellen Schwartz, a physical therapist with the Early Intervention Program, was presented with her 30-year anniversary award by CEO Purna Rodman Conare.



Kamala Begega, Internal Service Manager with the Early Intervention Program, was presented with her 30-year anniversary award by CEO Purna Rodman Conare.



Robin Marlowe, a teacher at Pillar Elementary School, was presented with her 25-year anniversary award by CEO Purna Rodman Conare.

# TRIBUTE GIFTS

If you would like to remember someone with an “in memory of” gift or celebrate a special occasion with an “in honor of” gift, please contact the CPNJ development office at **(973) 821-8036**. We will notify the person of your choosing with a special card telling them that a gift was made.

## IN MEMORY OF

For: **Hughie Cannan**

By: Helene Jaffe and Brian T.  
Paula Kloza

## IN HONOR OF

For: **Wendy Marcus**

By: Adam Plissner

For: **Laura Missionellie**

By: Mitchell & Shari Caspert

For: **Amanda Macheimer**

By: Elaine Morales

## HOLIDAY CHEER



Santa (Bob Murray of Alston Construction) and his elf (Jeff DeOliveira of Alston Construction) visited with Pillar Elementary students to present them with toys donated by our generous volunteers.



Our friends from the Verona PBA visited Pillar Elementary dressed as characters from some of our students' favorite cartoons, movies and books. They also donated a bundle of new books to each classroom.

### Continued from page 1

In addition to Horizon Schools, all the agency's programs transitioned to the Pillar Care brand. **“One of the great benefits of our rebranding was that we could bring all of the agency's programs under a single, unified name so that those seeking services understand we are all part of the same agency,”** said Purna. **“What helps to differentiate us from many other organizations is that we serve people throughout their lives and this will help everyone better understand that.”**

The new brand will also help families understand that the agency does not serve only people with cerebral palsy. **“It was very difficult to explain to the family of a child who does not have cerebral palsy why that child should be served by an agency called Cerebral Palsy of North Jersey,”** said Teresa Hatch, who spearheads marketing for Pillar Schools. **“The new name allows us to define ourselves. We serve people with more than 100 different disabilities and we want everyone to know how inclusive we are.”**

## PILLAR STRENGTHENS BEHAVIOR SUPPORT WITH BCBA

Pillar Care Continuum hired Erica Waltner, a Board-Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) to support our steadily increasing number of program participants with behavior challenges. Erica has been working with individuals with developmental disabilities since 1995. She has a master's degree in Applied Behavior Analysis with an emphasis in Autism. She is working at both Pillar Elementary School and Pillar High School and serving as a consultant to the agency's three day programs for adults.



Erica Waltner, Pillar  
Care's new BCBA

In addition to being a BCBA, Erica has completed graduate classes in social work and continuing education classes to expand her knowledge of dual diagnosis, mental health, aging, and mood disorders. Prior to joining Pillar Care, she has worked in both the home and school settings. Her experience ranges from providing behavioral supports to children as young as two-years-old to adults well into their 80s.

**“This is a significant milestone in addressing the needs of those with behavioral challenges,”** said Pillar Care CEO Purna Rodman Conare. **“And we are committed to continuing to develop our behavioral supports moving forward.”**