

Monarch School of New England

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**Monarch School**  
*of New England*

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**MONARCH SCHOOL COMMUNITY REPORT**

*Copywriting and Photography/Cynthia Tokos*

*Design/Susan Kress Hamilton*

*Printing/Phineas, Portsmouth, NH*

*The Monarch Way...*



*Unlimited  
possibilities  
for  
students  
with  
special  
needs.*

  
**Monarch School**  
*of New England*

The Board of Directors would like to commend the staff, students and parents for another successful year at the Monarch School of New England. We are so proud and honored to be working with such a highly dedicated team of people who care so deeply about providing world class programs for students.

This past year has been extremely busy for the Board of Directors and our Executive Team as we have been looking closely at the services we provide and what those services are going to look like going forward. With the ever increasing budgetary and funding strains placed on the public school budgets, educators are working hard to find ways to continue to provide the necessary services and programs their students must have to succeed.

Faced with this challenge and recognizing the changing educational environment, the Monarch School of New England is prepared to lead the educational system in the Seacoast with three new programs. The first program is the Chrysalis Program providing integrated services to students who require interventions over an indeterminate period of time. The second program is the Futures Program providing integrated services to students who require assessment and interventions for up to 24 months with smooth supportive transition to the mainstream. Our third program, the Monarch School Collaborative Team providing districts with on site support, technical assistance, program development and transition services through a team based approach.

We believe that this leading edge approach to Special Education will grow quickly and become the way of the future for public schools in providing high level and integrative programs.

Susan DeRoy  
*President, Board of Directors*

### **Vision**

The Monarch School of New England brings individuals with intellectual, physical, medical and behavioral disabilities into the mainstream of everyday life.

### **Mission**

The Monarch School of New England supports individuals with special needs so they can realize their greatest potential. In this nurturing environment, a comprehensively trained staff works one-on-one with each individual, uniquely integrating both education and therapy, to ensure successful transitions to school and the community.

### **Who We Are**

The Monarch School of New England, a leader in special education, began as a volunteer playgroup in 1968. Operating as a non-profit, 501(c)(3), the school is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors and is funded by the sending districts of children at the school.

With 35 years of innovation and experience, it has become a unique, comprehensive year-round school for students with severe physical, medical and developmental disabilities which include:

- Autism
- Behavioral
- Deaf-Blindness
- Developmental Delay 5-9
- Emotional Disturbance
- Hearing & Vision Impairment
- Low Incident Population
- Mental Retardation
- Multiple Disabilities
- Orthopedic Impairment
- Other Health Impairments
- Speech or Language Impairment
- Specific Learning Disabilities
- Traumatic Brain Injury

The Monarch School of New England serves parents and schools in southeastern New Hampshire and in southern Maine.

## **The Monarch Way**

*The Monarch School of New England's success is predicated on the belief that services can be more effectively provided through a cooperative approach and with a vast array of innovative, traditional and non-traditional programs. This approach requires collaboration and team work with parents, teachers, nurses, therapists, program assistants, education technicians, district personnel, community and other stakeholders. It is flexible and adaptable—the Monarch School can develop and carry out programs to fit the needs of students with special needs in any environment.*



The year 2007 has been remarkable! The Monarch School of New England (MSNE) has been propelled into the future as a result of a comprehensive two year strategic planning process that brought together the vision and innovative spirit of the Staff and Board. Combined with the resulting Business Plan we have also asked our community to tell us what they needed as the school moves forward. Our planning and our learning are taking the school in new directions.

In 2008 you will see new programs, services and strategies that are in response to the planning and learning. We will be reducing the length of stay to no more than twenty-four months for students through the Futures Program with supports and meaningful interventions that ensure success in the mainstream. You will see a Monarch School Collaborative Team that will work to bring our strategies to districts without an out of district placement. Additionally, we will be providing training and on-site, hands-on workshops for teachers, therapists and paras alike.

As Board President Susan DeRoy outlines in her remarks, we are now doing our work differently and we are doing that work in the community through shorter stays, collaborative work in school districts, consulting, training and teaching. The outcome will be that more children will be in the mainstream of everyday life and provided with meaningful programs, strategies and methodologies assuring overall success.

As we go forward we will continue to expand and refine our diverse, innovative array of approaches, doing everything possible to provide the best possible programs for school aged students with special needs.

Alan Reed-Erickson  
*Executive Director*



## Why We Are Unique

Rooted in the belief that each child deserves an environment in which they can flourish, the Monarch School of New England designs programs based on the individual needs and capabilities of each student. It all begins in the classroom.

Kate Sisneroz is a teacher at the school. “Education is the basis for working with each child—it is the first priority.” Lessons are aligned with the Frameworks and Standards of the New Hampshire Department of Education. The school’s programs in conjunction with the Monarch Curriculum® integrates special educational, behavioral, therapeutic, social and vocational programs in both school and community events.

In support of a child’s learning experience, an interdisciplinary team of professionals develop an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for each student. These written plans help provide direction through long-range goals and a vision statement for each child’s future.

Yet it is more than what is on paper that helps set the Monarch School apart.

Students here are seen for their *abilities*, not for their disabilities—for their capacity to learn and to grow. Mark Bullard is an Occupational Therapy Assistant at the school. “I think we recognize that each student has strengths, even if it’s not readily apparent. And it’s up to us to find out what they are. Once we determine where the student’s strengths and interests are or what motivates them, we can build on that.”

Teachers, Education Technicians, Program Assistants, Nurses, a Behaviorist, Occupational Therapists, Physical Therapists and Speech & Language Pathologists are all involved in supporting a child’s learning. It’s a team approach in which the needs of the whole person are addressed. A key strategy is the education technician—they are a student’s constant companion throughout the day, ensuring that the skills learned in one area are carried over to another.

Physical Therapist Colleen Schank states it best: “I think everyone’s role here is that we’re all learners and

we’re all teachers. So I’m learning from the Teachers, the Occupational Therapists, and the Speech Therapists, trying to see what they do and how they do it. When I’m working with a student, I’m trying to teach everyone what I would like to see that student do and different ways they can approach the situation so that a student can have a more holistic, integrated approach. It’s like they (the children) are getting therapy 7 hours/day. We have a full-team approach working on goals and objectives, with the idea of supporting a child’s education. So in essence, we’re looking at the whole child, the child’s whole day and how we can facilitate the child to interact with his environment to the best of his/her ability.”

**T**his Community Report presents four examples of how we do our work. In these pages, you will meet Diane and Alex, Kathy and Hunter, Elaine and Daniel, and Amanda and Samantha. Learn about the unlimited possibilities the Monarch School of New England provides its children. . . and the people that make it happen.

Alex is a gentle, 10 year old boy who is a very sensory-seeking child. Comforted by touch, it is sound and loud noises that challenge him.

Diane McManus is Alex's teacher. For 6 years, she has been part of the interdisciplinary team of educators, therapists and education technicians that work with him at the school. "Alex is fortunate to be here because we do recognize his needs—and we work on those while we're continuing to work on other things like academics and related therapies. Because our therapists are so supportive of the academics, we can find ways to satisfy his needs so that he can focus on the bigger picture: learning."

Children with sensory issues are challenged by learning because they are focused on the "internal stuff"—what's happening with me, do I feel good about what's happening to me. For learning to occur, that has to be dealt with first. "So for example," says Diane, "if you had an ant walking around on your leg, you're not going to focus on a math problem. You're going to focus on getting that ant off your leg." Alex's internal 'ants' are unknown, but very much present. "Because we recognize that—we see that as part of who he is—we try to balance who he is, his personality, with learning about what he needs to live in the world."

For Alex, as with all the students at the Monarch School, the classroom is where it all begins. Lessons are aligned with the New Hampshire Framework—our goal is to help students be as typical as they can be to fit into society. This means students are learning the same things that other kids their age are learning, but modified to meet their needs. So for example, "if Alex is working on a unit on sound energy, we find ways to create sound. We made guitars out of tissue boxes and elastic—now we're talking about this sound and it's something that's interesting. We can create sound and Alex can hear it. Now you can talk about the ear and how it works. And you can illustrate this. We do hands-on work...it's all about finding ways that help a student like Alex to learn."

For Diane, this is what sets the school apart: "we are able to recognize the needs of a student and work on them." For Alex, this means he can "continue to be the young man he wants to be." And that's a good thing.

*I walked through the doors of the Monarch School and felt it was a perfect place for him. The people are what make the school. They are there not just for Alex but for all of us, his family.*

NICOLE, ALEX'S MOTHER



**ALEX AND DIANE**



**HUNTER AND KATHY**

Hunter is a beautiful boy. One of the first things you notice about him is his light red hair and his big, brown eyes which when they rest on you, are dark and focused. Over the past year and a half at the Monarch School of New England, Hunter has learned to use power tools, write words and remain calm when working in a group...these are big accomplishments for him.

Kathy Perry is Hunter's Occupational Therapist (OT). Occupational Therapists help people become as independent as possible in their daily occupations. As part of a team, Kathy works to discover the skills and adaptations Hunter needs to function and learn in school.

As a child who is often over-sensitive to stimulation, part of Hunter's occupational therapy program includes a daily "sensory diet"—a nourishing diet of sensory activities which help him remain calm and feel good in his body throughout the day. "The Listening Program®" an approach which gently trains the auditory system to accurately process sound, is an option that might be part of Hunter's sensory diet. For short periods of time, Hunter could listen to selected classical music, which would help him with concentration, focus and perhaps more natural speech. As a certified Listening Program® provider, Kathy believes music is another tool that helps the pieces come together.

For Hunter, who enjoys putting things together and taking them apart, the ability to remain calm and

focused is a big deal. At school, it allows him to participate in woodworking class, which he really loves. (Norm, of *This Old House*, is his hero—one of Hunter's favorite pastimes is doing home improvement projects with his dad).

"Hunter is just a sweet guy...he's fascinating, he's curious about his world and wants to know how things work. He's got a great deal of potential. And as part of Hunter's team, it is my privilege to help him discover his talents."

*Hunter has excelled in both his speech and his mannerisms since he started at the Monarch School four years ago. The program and the staff are great.*

STEVE, HUNTER'S DAD





*What's unique about this school are the people who work here. They know in advance that they are working with a population that is challenged and have chosen to work with these kids. This makes a huge difference.*

DANA, DAN'S MOM

"I feel like I'm living my life. There is never a day I wake up and feel like I'm coming to work—it's all second nature to me. I really feel I was brought here. I came across the name of the school and it peaked my curiosity. I had been working in physical therapy with special needs children in an academic setting. There was an opening at the school in physical therapy and it seemed so perfect...I came on a whim and it has felt like home."

Elaine Deschambeault is a physical therapy assistant who has worked with Daniel for the past 7 years. Daniel is 19 years old.

"From a physical therapist's standpoint, your optimal goal is to restore as much function and independence in movement and activities of daily living as possible." For Elaine, it's also looking at the bigger picture and not just at a therapy session. The question is, "what is going to open up Dan's world with this activity?" Everyone works really hard to understand what he wants and needs. As a team, the education technicians, behaviorists, physical therapists, occupational therapists, speech therapists and teachers not only "reach out but reach into Daniel's world and have him come out and share that with everyone."

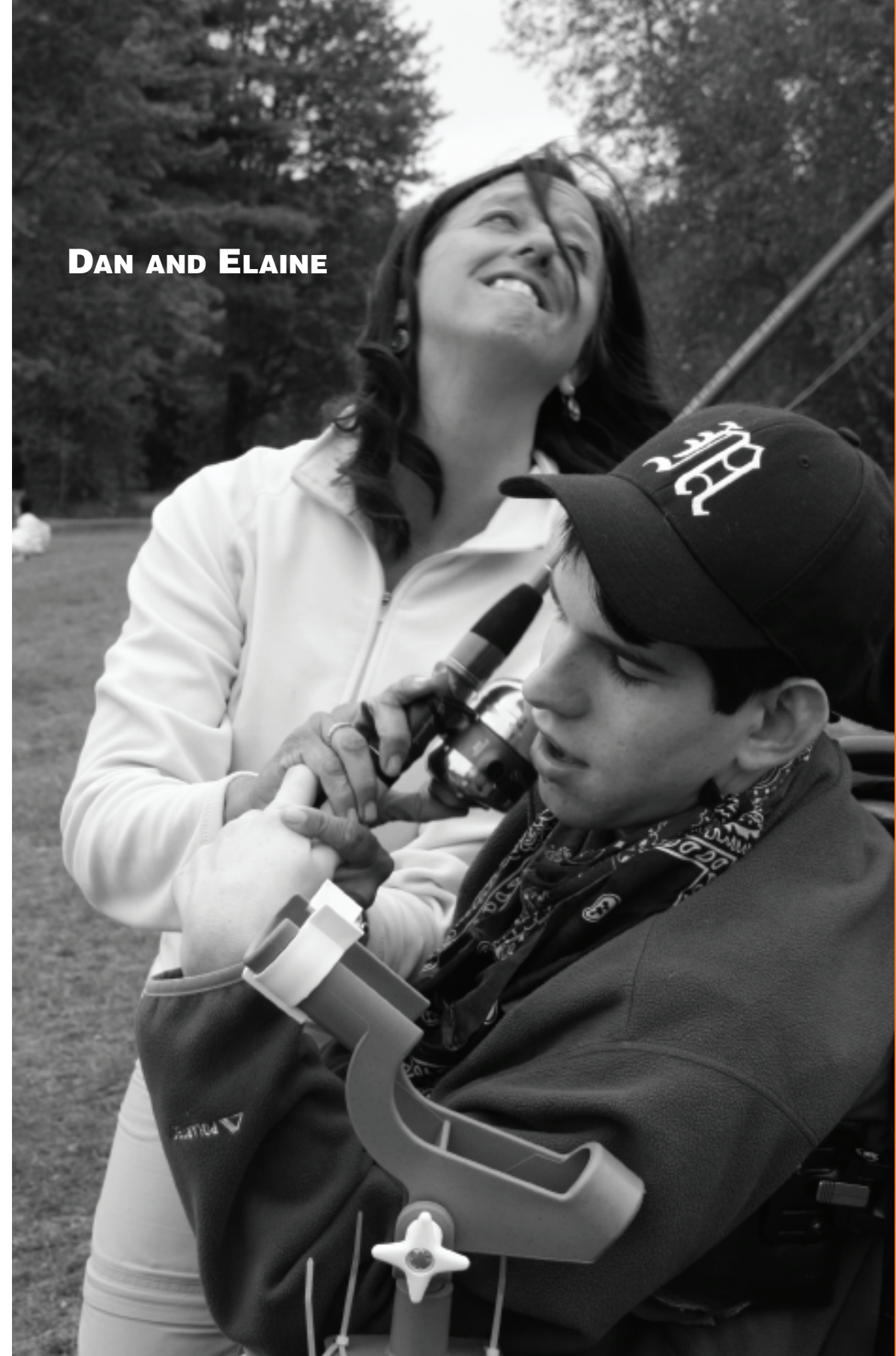
"No one of us has one vision for a child...it's a combined vision. It's like having the sun and the water and the nutrients—each one of us adds that to the child's vision to help them grow."

"For Daniel, one of our challenges has been his posture and keeping his head and trunk upright so that he can engage in the world. Our team developed activities that motivated Daniel to lift his head, helping to keep him upright and interacting with others. In physical therapy, we used equipment such as a stander, gait trainer, and an adapted bicycle to help get him and keep him out of his wheelchair.

Aquatics, hippotherapy and our outdoor recreational programs also facilitate independent function for Daniel, allowing him to find his place in both school and community."

The world is now his to explore.

## DAN AND ELAINE





## SAM AND AMANDA

Samantha is 16 years old, very social, outgoing, and personable. Her face lights up when she breaks out into a grin, which is often.

Sam has a great many things to say. She may be non-verbal, but has many ways in which she can express herself. She uses some words like “hi” and “bye,” makes sounds and uses gestures or signs. Sam also communicates by using a PECS (picture exchange communication system) book and a voice output device, called the “Hip Talker.”

Amanda Gebo is Samantha’s Speech-Language Pathologist. “People hear the word ‘speech’ and they think that since our students can’t talk, they don’t have anything to contribute. But not being able to speak doesn’t mean you don’t have anything to say. As part of the speech-language team, I am here to help Sam learn ways to communicate what she needs and has to say. Communication is key to being your own person and standing up for what you want in life.

As a Speech-Language Pathologist, we support our students’ communication into all aspects of their day. Communication does not happen in isolation; it goes on all day long. We develop and support communication in a variety of settings, including academics, social times, community and vocational times.

Initiating an interaction is a goal for Samantha, as opposed to simply making a choice. You can sit back

and wait for someone to come to you to offer choices ‘a’ or ‘b,’ or you can stand up, get someone’s attention and say ‘no, I wanted ‘c.’”

Samantha’s educational team works closely together to develop and support her expressive communication. This team includes occupational therapists, physical therapists, teachers, speech-language pathologists, families and education technicians. Sam has a close relationship with her education technician, Faith, who carries over all aspects of her program.

This lets Sam be who she is: a unique, fun, young woman who enjoys an opportunity to express herself.

*I love her being at the school. She looks forward to it every day. My hopes for her are that she be happy and that she continue to learn and grow.*

ANN, SAM’S MOTHER



Monarch School of New England, Inc.

**STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES AND CHANGES IN NET ASSETS**

	<u>2007</u>	<u>2006</u>
<b>SUPPORT AND REVENUE</b>		
Tuition	\$2,050,227	\$1,829,980
Direct Services	746,152	632,904
Grants	500	13,490
United Way	13,000	13,000
Food and Nutrition Services	9,430	10,313
Fundraising	5,546	6,470
Donations	10,813	5,997
New Investment Income	51,333	4,684
Other Income	4,698	471
Gain (Loss) on Dispositions of Assets		(5,481)
TOTAL SUPPORT REVENUE	<u>2,891,699</u>	<u>2,511,828</u>
 <b>EXPENSES</b>		
Program Services	\$2,164,769	\$1,944,029
Management and General	427,244	375,890
Fundraising	33,813	64,872
TOTAL EXPENSES	<u>2,625,826</u>	<u>2,384,791</u>
 <b>CHANGE IN NET ASSETS</b>	 265,873	 127,037
 <b>NET ASSETS, BEGINNING OF YEAR</b>	 <u>791,094</u>	 <u>664,057</u>
 <b>NET ASSETS, END OF YEAR</b>	 <u>1,056,967</u>	 <u>791,094</u>

An audited report is available upon request.

**Friends and Supporters**

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**STAFF**

**Related-Services**

Mark Bullard, AS, *Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant*  
 Elaine Deschambeault, AS, *Physical Therapy Assistant*  
 Amanda Gebo, MS, *Speech and Language Pathologist*  
 Amy Gordon, BFA, *Art Teacher*  
 Tom Grebouski, Ph.D., *Psychologist & Behaviorist*  
 Susan Lanzara, MS, *Speech & Language Pathologist*  
 Donna Marble, *Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant/Speech Assistant*  
 Kathryn Perry, MA, *Occupational Therapist*  
 Christina Richardson, BS, *Occupational Therapist*  
 Gabriella Roussos, BS, *Physical Therapist*  
 Colleen Schank, BS, *Physical Therapist*

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 Carol Wilson, *Education Technician*  
 Gina Xenos, *Education Technician*

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 Gail Hannigan, BS, *Finance Director*  
 Gail Henderson, BA, *Administrative Assistant*  
 Cathy Nanry, AS, *Food Service Director*  
 Tracy Jordan, BA, *Human Resource Administrator*  
 Alan Reed-Erickson, MHSA, *Executive Director*  
 Bill Sammis, MA, *Facilities Director*  
 Pat Spiller, MS, *Development Director*  
 Carolyn St. Onge, *Administrative Assistant*  
 Cynthia Tokos, MPA, *Community Relations Director*  
 Noreen Ward, RN, *School Nurse*  
 Ronda Wickham, BS, *Office Manager*