



## Our Year In Review

### Volunteers and Supporters Make A Difference

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MyGOAL had a very successful year again and this could only happen because of the continued support and generosity of our volunteers, sponsors and donors throughout the year.

This year, we had new trainings, workshops, our monthly support groups, our annual bowl-a-thon, Mother's day party, Gala and Holiday Party. We also continued our global initiatives in Ghana. All this was made possible due to your generosity. Your time, donations and prayers continue to make our job effortless and gives us renewed strength to help many families.

Our special thanks to Saint Peter's University Hospital, RCCG Agape House of Worship, Target, Focus Autism, Church & Dwight & Laveroff Farms, who are just a few of the companies who sponsored us.



You generous donations made it possible to award four \$1000 grants to four families and \$250 mini grants to 8 families to support their children in accessing resources. We were also able to give out toys to over 50 kids at our holiday party.

We would be remiss if we didn't point out our individual sponsors and over 75 volunteers in our various events this year.

As we approach the new year, we ask for your continued support, donations as we journey along the world of autism and changing the many lives we meet through our resources, support groups and events.

Please consider making a donation to sustain helping our families with Autism. To donate please visit our website at [www.mygoalautism.org](http://www.mygoalautism.org) or send to MyGOAL Inc. P.O Box 531, Monmouth Junction. NJ. 08852



### A life transformed... Germaine & Tray's Journey

MyGOAL sat down with Germaine Sr M<sup>c</sup>Eachern and Tray Kearney who are parents to 3 year old, Germaine who was just recently diagnosed with Autism. They generously share their story...

*When was Germaine diagnosed with Autism?*

**Germaine Sr:** November 12, 2012

Tray: We knew he wasn't

making his milestones, so we made a couple of phone calls and they advised us to go to early intervention to see if he improved. He made some improvements, but he is still non-verbal. His Dad was very adamant about finding the correct facility, and the right doctor to get him diagnosed and he actually found the doctor.

**Germaine Sr:** Dr. Barbie Zimmerman Bier. The one thing that meant a lot for us was to figure out what was wrong with him, and how to combat it. If you don't know what is wrong with him,

you don't know how to fix it. You don't know if he's getting better or he's getting worse and we had no answers so we came down here to reach out to people who can help us or at least point us into the right direction.

*How did you hear about MyGOAL?*

**Tray:** My friend Amanda ( of The GEM Project) invited me to your Gala but I could not make it and I thought she knew that my son was

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MyGOAL Inc.

## Our Mothers Visit Ghana, Garner Media Attention

For additional information or to make a donation, please contact:

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My Gateway to Overcoming Autism in Life Inc.

Our Mothers and Doctors Lorell Levy, EdD, West-Windsor-Plainsboro School District, Genevieve Kumapley, PharmD, Saint Peter's University Hospital, and Barbie Zimmerman-Bier, MD, Saint Peter's University Hospital - each the mother of a son with autism - headed to Ghana in the battle against developmental disabilities. They were joined by Miss Osei, a Ghanaian native and an occupational therapist, who is the President of Raising Hope, a non-profit organization dedicated to providing resources that enhance quality of life for orphans and children. There, they trained parents, educators and public health officials in the early identification, therapeutic interventions and supportive strategies for the treatment of children with autism. The eventual goal of the mission, is the establishment of the Haven International Center for Special Education, an autism and developmental disabilities treatment and training center in Ghana.



Their efforts have not gone unnoticed. Upon their return, they have been interviewed by ABC, NJ-TV, My Central Jersey, and the Trentorian. Please visit our new Facebook Haven International page at <https://www.facebook.com/AutismAfrica> to find out more about this journey.

## Germaine and Tray's Story... A Life Transformed

delayed but she didn't. I came once to a support group. And have been coming ever since. I came home and told my husband, and you have to come and he followed me the next week and now we are family.

**Germaine:** My experience in the first meeting, was just to see how people interacted and it was a lot better than I thought. Then I met Robert Kumapley, and his story of being a father and coping with it. You come across some men where it really bothers them because we have expectations for our sons It never really bothered me, for me having a son was the greatest part of it, but what was more important to me, is figuring out how to help him. Along the way you talk to people going through the same thing that you are going through, having felt like you are on an island by yourself and wondering are we stuck to do this alone? My goal was to find some type of help so we don't feel alone down here.

**Tray:** And we found MyGOAL. We are just happy for the help and just knowing there is a support system. Dr. Genevieve is going through this with her son, and its so much easier to deal with someone who has gone through this from 18 months, like when we started noticing the change in Germaine.. Getting advise from her is key

*How is MyGOAL helping you understand your child and Autism better?*

**Tray:** Just giving us different advice on how to communicate with him or the different food we were feeding him and the different Vitamins. Like after my first meeting, I came home to my husband and told him we shouldn't be giving him Pizza, that the gluten might be the cause of his stomach ache which was what Genevieve had talked about and we immediately noticed a difference.

**Germaine:** Especially with his crying spells,

he used to wake up in the middle of the night just crying and we couldn't stop him and that threw us off guard and since we changed his diet, he's not had any more crying spells..

*What is your advise for new parents?*

**Tray:** Get help early, don't be embarrassed and when you notice a problem, get help immediately. Kids learn at different paces, even those who are not on any spectrum, so accept them for who they are and find a group. Groups help!

**Germaine:** Embrace the condition of your child, instead of denying it and become knowledgeable of it, because you only can help if you know what's going on. And to Fathers, Don't be afraid. It doesn't change the fact that he is your son, you can't put your expectations upon him, enjoy him, what he can give and what he can do and that's God gifts in itself.