We often find ourselves getting sentimental here at Morrissey-Compton Educational Center. How could we not? Ours is an organization that clearly makes a big difference in the lives of individuals with learning differences, and the love that is given back to us can be overwhelming.

Every day, our psychologists, educational specialists, and tutors see children discovering joy in learning, and gaining confidence in themselves, right before their eyes. We regularly receive heartfelt thank you notes from grateful parents and past clients. And in an uncertain economy, our donors remain faithful and generous, helping us reach our goals again and again.

All of this benevolence started 33 years ago with the dedicated vision of two local educators. And that is why on October 8, at our annual event to raise funds for scholarships, we will be celebrating our founders, Patricia Morrissey Ed.D., and Carolyn Compton, Ph.D., as Outstanding Educators during a dinner at the University Club of Palo Alto.

Back to Our Roots

Though Morrissey-Compton now calls Redwood City its home, Palo Alto is a most appropriate choice of venue, since it’s where Morrissey-Compton had its headquarters for 32 years.

Pat and Carolyn’s motivation for founding the agency in 1982 had to do with several events that occurred in the 1970s that impacted special education. In 1975, the Education for all Handicapped Children Act mandated a Free and Appropriate Education for all students.

continued on page 4
Dear Friends,

We had a busy summer at Morrissey-Compton. Our parents have become more aware of accommodation request deadlines for entrance exams and wisely scheduled testing appointments around their children’s summer activities. We also tested another class of entering college students who are requesting accommodations in college. For many of these young adults, we have followed their academic careers since early elementary school because they returned to Morrissey-Compton for additional services, such as educational therapy, psychotherapy, or follow-up evaluations. This year, we said our good-byes to students heading to UC Davis, UC Berkeley, Foothill College, Cal Poly, Stanford, University of Michigan, and Gonzaga, to name a few. If you have a high-schooler with learning challenges, read the article on page 9 by Erin Shinn, M.Ed. about what to look for in college programs.

Our Redwood City office was not the only place buzzing with activity. We completed our 33rd year of Challenge School this year at full capacity to rave reviews by students and parents. You can read about what happened at Challenge on pages 8 and 9. Our Half Moon Bay office was also quite busy providing services through our Outreach to Latino Families Program to prepare students for the coming school year.

I am very proud to announce that we are honoring our founders, Pat Morrissey and Carolyn Compton, at our fall fundraiser on October 8 at the University Club in Palo Alto. Each year, we select an outstanding educator that has made a significant contribution to the educational community on the Peninsula, and we could not think of better candidates. Not only did Pat and Carolyn have a direct impact on my training and knowledge of learning disabilities, they have also influenced several generations of special education professionals who work in the Bay Area and beyond. In the past, our fall fundraiser was a breakfast, but this year we decided to move the event to the evening to make it more convenient for parents. I would like to make this our most successful event to date as a tribute to Pat and Carolyn and their extraordinary careers. So I urge everyone whose lives have been touched by these wonderful women to request an invitation, if you did not receive one by mail already, so that you may attend the event. And although Pat and Carolyn are our guests of honor, we encourage our attendees to invite an education professional who has or had a significant impact on your child’s school career to also attend as your guest. We also invite any of our alumni students who came to Morrissey-Compton for help. We would love to see you and hear about what you have been doing since we last saw you!

Also in this issue, you can read about two new staff members who will help us increase services to the community, as well as our upcoming offerings in our Parent Education Program and our skill-building groups program. In addition, you can learn about our research program and the research assistants who are working behind the scenes to help improve our knowledge of how to help students with learning challenges.

Thank you for your support. I hope to see you at our fall fundraiser!

John T. Brentar, Ph.D.
New Staff Members Meet High Standards

We are excited to welcome two additions to Morrissey-Compton! Meet Adria Flores, Educational Specialist, and Dr. Laura Guthridge Chyou, Postdoctoral Fellow, the newest members of our highly-trained, dedicated staff.

Laura Guthridge Chyou, Ph.D.

Dr. Laura Chyou is a Bay Area native. She completed her B.S. in Psychology at Santa Clara University and earned her M.A. and Ph.D. in Counseling Psychology from Boston College in Chestnut Hill, MA. During her time at Boston College, Dr. Chyou conducted research on children’s peer relationships, particularly how children respond to interpersonal challenges within their friendships and how their response styles affect their social and emotional well-being. She also completed research examining the role of friends as bystanders and potential allies in dating violence prevention efforts among college-aged adults.

A central focus of Dr. Chyou’s clinical work has centered on understanding best practices in providing mental health services to underserved individuals, families, and communities. Dr. Chyou served as a co-facilitator and member of the Diversity Committees both at Boston College and at the Massachusetts General Hospital Health Center in Charlestown, MA. She also founded and co-chaired a consultation and support group for Spanish-speaking clinicians at Boston College.

Dr. Chyou completed her predoctoral internship at Lucile Packard Children’s Hospital at Stanford and Children’s Health Council in Palo Alto. She has strong clinical training and experience in working with children and adolescents experiencing depression, anxiety, ADHD, and traumatic stress. Dr. Chyou also enjoys working with young children in play therapy and assisting parents and families in supporting youth with mental health challenges. Dr. Chyou studied Spanish in college and throughout her graduate training. She has experience providing therapy and assessment services to Spanish-speaking children and families and is passionate about the importance of increasing the accessibility of mental health resources to the Spanish-speaking community.

Adria Flores, M.A.

Adria comes to us with years of teaching and tutoring experience. She taught first, fourth, and fifth grades in Mountain View and has also worked for several years as a tutor/educational specialist with a focus on reading and writing.

Adria earned her teaching credential at San Jose State University and a Reading Specialist credential at San Francisco State University. She uses several specialized programs, such as Step Up to Writing and Slingerland, and will be providing educational therapy in our Redwood City office three afternoons/evenings per week. Adria works with students in early elementary school through high school. Her primary areas of focus include: phonemic awareness, decoding, reading fluency, reading comprehension, writing mechanics, written expression, and study skills.
Unlocking Potential for All Families

As early as 1986, families in need of Morrissey-Compton’s services started requesting financial assistance for tutoring, diagnostic evaluations, and Challenge School. Clinicians provided services to some families out of their own pockets, and friends of the Center gave gifts, but the staff didn’t have the bandwidth to devote time to specific fundraising activities. However, as the number of requests for financial assistance increased, it became apparent that a plan for scholarships was needed.

In 1990, the John A. Inglis Scholarship Fund was established to provide financial aid for students to attend Challenge School. And in 1992, Morrissey-Compton received a gift of stock valued at $100,000 from the mother of a former client. Staff used it to buy a new computer, and deposited the rest in the bank. In 1994, again through the efforts of a client, Morrissey-Compton received a grant of $50,000 for operating expenses from the Flora Family Foundation. The following year, we were awarded $60,000 from the Foundation to establish an Endowment Fund to ensure the future of the Center.

All of the gifts raised through our Fall Event—approximately $100,000 per year for the past few years—are designated exclusively for our Scholarship Program. Scholarships are used to fund tuition for Challenge Summer School as well as diagnostic and treatment services for children with learning differences whose families would not be able to afford them without financial assistance.

Since then, Morrissey-Compton has expanded its programs to include psycho-educational evaluations, psychological evaluations, educational evaluations, psychotherapy, family therapy, group therapy, consultations, parent education classes, advocacy, and research, leading to today’s comprehensive suite of offerings for children and adults with learning differences. Under Pat and Carolyn’s direction, in 1999 Morrissey-Compton also joined Youth Education Advocates, now known as the Educational Rights Program. In this collaborative program, our educational consultants work with attorneys, social workers, probation officers, and teachers on behalf of foster children and youths in the juvenile justice system to ensure that these students are receiving appropriate educational services. These efforts won Morrissey-Compton the Legal Advocates for Children and Youth honor from the Silicon Valley Law Foundation in 2005.

Though Morrissey-Compton Educational Center now has more than 30 employees and serves hundreds of students a year, a part of Pat and Carolyn’s hearts will always remain in the two classrooms in the old Hoover School on Middlefield Road in Palo Alto where the agency had its humble beginnings.

“I am a teacher.”

That same phrase was used by both Carolyn and Pat when each was asked to describe herself after the two were selected to receive a “Lifetimes of Achievement” award by Avenidas, a Palo Alto nonprofit, in 2007.

It’s true that Pat and Carolyn are teachers. But they are also accomplished academics and clinicians who have improved the lives of countless individuals with learning differences over the years, some of whom have gone on to become successful financiers, psychiatrists, lawyers, rabbis, and more.

Pat and Carolyn’s lives took parallel paths that led them to the same destination. Both grew up in the Midwest, Carolyn in Ohio and Pat in Nebraska. Each knew from a young age that
she wanted to teach, and each would be driven by a respect for all children and the belief that everyone can learn. Both completed their undergraduate studies at Midwest colleges, and both came to the Bay Area to earn Master’s Degrees in Special Education from San Francisco State. They stayed in the Bay Area to continue their graduate work, Carolyn earning a Ph.D. in Psychological Studies in Education from Stanford, and Pat completing her doctoral work in Education at the University of San Francisco. Both taught in classes in general education & special education. They met when they were teachers in the Palo Alto School District’s Learning Assistance Program, the first program on the Peninsula to provide services to kids with learning disabilities. And they had both decided to settle in Palo Alto, where they later founded the agency that would mean so much, to so many.

From CHC and SCC to Academic Distinction—and MCEC

From 1966 to 1975, Carolyn was an Associate Professor of Special Education at SF State, and in 1970 she joined the Children’s Health Council (CHC). Pat was a classroom teacher of special education from 1964 until 1970, and from 1970 until 1982, she served as Director of Special Education of South County Cooperative (SCC) in Menlo Park. After founding Morrissey-Compton Educational Center (MCEC), Pat focused on running the agency full-time while Carolyn split her time working between the agency and at the CHC in various capacities, including Associate Director, until 1997.

Through the years, each has also made her mark in academia. Carolyn served as a Clinical Assistant Professor in Child Psychiatry and Pediatrics at Stanford University Medical Center; authored A Guide to 100 Tests for Special Education in 1996; and, along with local physician Dr. Harry Hartzell, co-wrote an article for Pediatrics titled “Learning Disabilities: Ten Year Follow-Up.” Pat has also served as a college professor, teaching graduate classes in special education at the University of Alaska, SF State, San Jose State, and Notre Dame College in Belmont. She has written several papers on such topics as the language of curriculum and the long-term effects of the Slingerland program on students, and for a number of years was a consulting editor for the Intervention in Special Education journal. Additionally, Carolyn and Pat both hold Life Credentials in the Learning Disabled, General Elementary Teaching, and General Supervision specializations.

Where Are They Now?

Officially Pat and Carolyn have retired, but both stay involved with Morrissey-Compton as active members of our Board of Directors and Fund Development Committee. They are deeply committed to ensuring that the agency will continue to serve individuals with learning differences for many years. And we cannot think of two more worthy or appropriate choices to honor as our 2015 Outstanding Educators.
**ADHD Five-Part Series**  
*Janet Dafoe, Ph.D.*  
Saturdays, 1 to 3pm, Redwood City Office

**October 10: ADHD and Executive Functions (Grades 4-12)**  
Children with ADHD often have difficulty starting assignments, following directions, organizing projects, writing reports, remembering supplies, and turning in homework. This class will offer strategies to help your child become more organized and to understand his learning style. You will leave with specific ideas to help your child to maximize her success at school.

**October 17: Behavior Plans for ADHD Children: Managing Problems and Increasing Desirable Behaviors Using Rewards Instead of Punishments (All Ages)**  
Rewards and consequences can be used to reinforce the behaviors that you expect, while decreasing problematic behaviors. Behavior plans are used to teach and maintain many kinds of behaviors, such as doing homework and getting along with siblings. Learn how to set up an effective behavior plan.

**November 7: Advocating for Your ADHD Child at School (All Ages)**  
Learn how ADHD impacts children in the classroom and what services and accommodations will enable your child to succeed. Understand your legal rights and how to proceed effectively through the complicated process of assessments and meetings.

**November 14: Classroom accommodations and IEP goals for Executive Functioning Difficulties (Grades 4-12)**  
One of the hallmarks of ADHD is having difficulty with executive functioning (EF). This class will focus on specific difficulties that children experience in the classroom, and provide suggestions for effective interventions. Learn about specific accommodations and goals for specialized instruction obtained through IEPs. Class content will apply to any child with EF weaknesses, not only those diagnosed with ADHD.

**November 21: Individual Education Plans (IEP) for Students with ADHD (All Ages)**  
Bring your child’s IEP and Dr. Dafoe will choose several samples to discuss with the group. You will learn how goals, accommodations, and modifications can be best tailored to your ADHD child’s needs. To ensure confidentiality, we ask that you eliminate or cover the student’s name on the documents being presented.

**Redwood City**  
595 Price Avenue, 94063

**Parenting an Emotionally Sensitive Child (All Ages)**  
*Erica Ragan, Ph.D.*  
Wednesday, October 28, 6:30 to 8pm  
Difficulties regulating intense emotions can lead to increased anxiety, depression, and conflict with parents, teachers, & peers. We will discuss emotional sensitivity in children and teens, and the ways in which parents can help children learn ways to self-soothe more quickly and effectively.

**Connect to Correct: The Importance of Emotional Connection in Parenting (All Ages)**  
*Cassandra Golding, Ph.D.*  
Tuesday, November 3, 6:30 to 8pm  
Children thrive on their emotional connection to parents. This connection, from infancy through late adolescence, is the best vehicle for emotional intelligence, security, academic success, and personal relationship health. Learn about attachment concepts, basic brain development, and the emotional brain system. Strategies for establishing and deepening emotional connections with your children will be presented.

**Friendship Matters: Helping Children Establish and Maintain Healthy Friendships (Grades K-12)**  
*Laura Guthridge Chyou, Ph.D.*  
Thursday, December 3, 6:30 to 8pm  
See class description on next page.
**Classes Fall 2015**

**Half Moon Bay**
840 Main Street, Suite B2, 94019

**Friendship Matters: Helping Children Establish and Maintain Healthy Friendships (Grades K-12)**
Laura Guthridge Chyou, Ph.D.
Wednesday, October 7, 6:30 to 8pm
This talk will focus on exploring the important role that friendship plays in child development. We will discuss common challenges that occur within children’s friendships and various strategies and skills to help children and parents alike navigate these difficult issues.

**How Does Executive Function (EF) Affect Learning? (Grades 6-12)**
Surina Basho, Ph.D.
Thursday, November 5, 6:30 to 8pm
In this presentation, an overview of EF and how it affects learning will be discussed. Examples of strategies for students with EF challenges will also be presented.

**Groups for Kids**

**Fall Groups for All Ages**
Morrissey-Compton’s ongoing skill-building groups take place at our Redwood City office (595 Price Avenue) and are for kids who struggle with issues such as making/keeping friends, impulse control, anxiety, emotion regulation, and managing stress. There are typically three to five boys or girls in a group who are close in age and have similar challenges and goals. **Starting in mid-September**, we’re offering the following groups:

**Social Skills: Making and Keeping Friends**
**Middle School boys: Mondays, 5 to 6:15pm**
Grades 4 & 5: Tuesdays, 4:30 to 5:45pm
Grades 3 & 4: Wednesdays, 3 to 4:15pm (Meets in Palo Alto)
Grades 3 & 4: Wednesdays, 4:30 to 5:45pm (Meets in Palo Alto)
Grades 1 & 2: Thursdays, 4:30 to 5:45pm
For children who have difficulty navigating the social dynamics involved in peer relationships. Topics include active listening, perspective taking, reading social cues, noticing feelings in themselves and others, understanding how their behavior affects others, and problem solving with peers.

**Stop, Relax and Think: Managing Impulses**
**Grades 2 & 3: Mondays, 3:30 to 4:45pm**
Some children need extra support to improve self-control, recognize emotions in themselves and others, and understand how their behavior affects their peers. Children will practice listening skills, and strategies to slow down and think before speaking or acting.

**Conquering Anxiety and Worries**
**Grades 2-4: Tuesdays, 3:15 to 4:30pm**
This group will help children identify their fears and understand how to manage anxiety. Children will learn to recognize the situations that trigger their worried feelings, and will practice strategies to help decrease their anxiety.

**Girl Drama!**
**Middle School Girls:**
**Thursdays, 4:30 to 5:45pm**
Middle school can be a very stressful time for girls, as they navigate the many social, emotional and physical changes that come with adolescence. Girls will explore friendship challenges, such as dealing with exclusion, bossy girls, and teasing or feeling like they just don’t “fit in.” This group will focus on building self-esteem, confidence, and self-advocacy.

**Groups are filling up, so register today!**
Based on interest and need, new groups will also be formed at different times. For more info or to register your child, email Sue Garber, M.A. at sue.garber@morrcomp.org. Please include:

- Your name and contact information
- Your child’s name, DOB, age, and grade
- The group that you are interested in potentially joining

**Bring a Speaker to Your School, Parent Group, or Other Organization**
We offer a variety of subjects for you to choose from, or you can request topics customized to fit your needs. **For info, contact Sue Garber at (650) 322-5910 or sue.garber@morrcomp.org.**
Challenge Summer School just celebrated its 33rd year! This year, 68 students, those just completing kindergarten to those completing 6th grade, joined us on our journey, “Around the World in 20 days.” Each class represented a country from a different region of the world and learned about the history, culture, and traditions of those countries through their daily reading, writing, and vocabulary development lessons. It was wonderful to see the students share their newfound knowledge with other classes and their families. We even had one class teach us a fun Australian game called “Net Ball,” which quickly led to friendly competitions that pulled in students, teachers, aides, and even some parents and caregivers. What fun!

**Unique Rewards**

New and returning students alike enjoyed participating in the Challenge traditions that make every summer extra special. Each day the “Yellow Shirt” (shown at right) was awarded to a child who had “taken the lead” in one-way or another. Like the lead cyclist who wears yellow in the Tour de France, this student is recognized for their leadership by wearing the Tour de Challenge shirt for the school day. Some ways students earn the yellow shirt are by helping others, making a new friend, trying a new approach to an academic or athletic task, or by giving extra effort in the classroom.

**Joy, Togetherness, Achievement**

Another popular tradition, our talent show, had over 25 acts and included singing, dancing, gymnastics, magic shows, comedy acts, and even a comedic skit written by, acted in, and directed by our students. During our final two weeks, each student participated in friendly competitions, two academic and two non-academic, with events ranging from track and field to art. Students were recognized for these achievements, as well as for effort, spirit, and leadership, at our end-of-the-year award ceremony and celebration.

With all the fun we had amidst the learning, it was bittersweet to celebrate the end of our summer together. We ended not with goodbye, but with a “See you next summer!” as Challenge School's Successful Summer Adventure

*by Ashley K. Koedel, M.A., Director, Challenge School*

Students look forward to each day’s flag ceremony, where some get special recognition from staff (including Director Ashley Koedel, shown above) and everyone comes together for fun exercises.

The Challenge Agenda focuses on overall wellness, including physical activities.
It is hard to believe that the new school year is already in full swing. For many juniors in high school, it is time to start thinking about the next step: university—and all the related questions. In state or out? Massive campus or a small student body? Public or private? By this time, several seniors in high school have thought about these questions and are beginning the application process—filling out forms, writing personal statements, and gathering letters of recommendation. It is of particular importance for students with learning, attentional, and/or emotional differences to explore disability resource centers when it comes time to researching and choosing a college or university.

Students with Individualized Education Plans, Section 504 Plans, or those only now being diagnosed can often get support in the form of accommodations at the college or university level. Accommodations can vary, from extended time on tests and copies of lecture notes to priority registration and access to text-to-speech software. Disability resource centers are where students go to seek out such accommodations, and often, additional supports such as study skills workshops or writing tutoring.

Disability resource centers go by several names. At Stanford, the disability resource center is known as the Office of Accessible Education, and at University of Puget Sound it is Student Accessibility and Accommodation. Whatever the name, these centers can be hubs for students with learning differences, places where counselors understand their talents and needs, and can speak to navigating the university.

We recommend that our clients with learning and attentional differences put visiting the disability resource center at a university toward the top of their visit to-do list. Take a tour and sit down with a counselor. What is the feel of the center? Are they welcoming, supportive, and knowledgeable? Do they know which professors and programs are good matches for varying student needs? What are common accommodations afforded to their students? Answers to these and other questions can provide valuable insight regarding school fit.

Many of our clients are now juniors or seniors in high school. We wish them luck as they begin their searches and send off applications!
One of the goals of the Executive Function (EF) Research Program is to better understand the underlying cognitive factors associated with EF difficulties and to develop more effective interventions.

In order to do this, we have been building a database with the cognitive profiles (e.g., IQ, working memory, processing speed, etc.) of students with EF challenges.

Over the past year, many research assistants have volunteered their time to work on the EF Database as well as other research projects. I would like to sincerely thank our most recent research assistants (pictured below) for all of their hard work and dedication to the EF Research Program.

Current Research Assistants

Megan Fok, B.S.
Full-Time Research Assistant

Irene Vega, B.S.
Entered in Early Childhood Education at Cañada College

Jared Van, B.A.
Behavioral Instructor

Summer 2015 Research Assistants

Shira Woodlee, B.A., M.Ed. in progress
Learning Specialist

Aaron Gorelik
High School Senior

Deanna Kim, M.Ed.
Educational Therapist
Dear Readers,

My name is Aaron and I am a senior in high school with executive function (EF) difficulties. I was given the opportunity to intern with Dr. Surina Basho in the EF Research Program over the past couple of summers. While interning, I came to the realization that there is no platform for students with executive functioning difficulties to connect with one another and to empower each other. Therefore, I came up with the idea for the project, “Share Your Story.” We would like to invite students (of any age) to share their experiences about having executive function challenges. This can be in the form of a video, written or typed responses to questions below, a story, a photograph, a poem, or a drawing. Entries will be posted publicly on the Morrissey-Compton website for others to view.

Aaron’s photo is on the facing page. To see his story, go to www.morrissey-compton.org and click on Executive Function Research Program—Share Your Story project. You can also find directions for how to make and submit a video (if this is the option you choose). If you are under the age of 18 you must have a parent or guardian sign a consent form (online or e-mail Dr. Basho for the form). Please be advised that if you would like your entry to be anonymous on the website, do not submit a video. Also indicate on the consent form and on your entry that you want to remain anonymous. All entries can be sent to Dr. Basho at surina.basho@morcomp.org.

Suggested Questions and Topics

You do not have to answer all of the questions or topics in your entry, pick and choose the ones that you want to include:

1. What are executive function skills, in your own words?
2. What did it feel like when you found out you have executive function challenges?
3. Do your friends know you have executive function challenges? Why or why not?
4. What is something that frustrates you regarding your executive function challenges?
5. Describe one strategy (or more) that you use to help with your executive function difficulties.
6. How do you keep a positive attitude? How do you stay motivated?

Additional Topics You Can Use:

- Overcoming obstacles
- Pressure to succeed
- Bullying
- Grades
- Expectations of yourself or expectations from others
- Parents or Guardians
- Teachers

Upcoming EF Events at Morrissey-Compton

**EF Boot Camp**

Middle School and High School workshops are enrolling now!

Dates: Saturdays, October 17 & 24 & November 7 & 21
Location: Morrissey-Compton Offices, Redwood City

**EF Workshop For Parents**

Back by popular demand!

Date: February 27th, 2016
Visit morrissey-compton.org for updates.
It is the mission of the Morrissey-Compton Educational Center to enable children and adults with learning disabilities and school-related difficulties to achieve their goals by providing the highest quality diagnostic and intervention services in a supportive environment.