

## 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 Machemer, 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).