

For Immediate Release

Syracuse, New York

Paying It Forward

Take yourself back to 2000, it was a time when landlines were still a requirement, Facebook didn't exist, and the thought of communication being limited was unreal. The reality though is sixteen years ago; we couldn't share every detail of our life on over 500 Social Media platforms, nor did we ever realize that not everyone communicates the same.

For one Central New York family, the realization of different forms of communication came in 2000 with the birth of their third son. Graham Tresness, a nonverbal communicator with Cerebral Palsy is the son of Gregory Alan Tresness and Barbara Huntress Tresness based in Central New York.

While, the Tresness family searched long and hard for a way to communicate with their son, it would take years to find an answer. The first part of that answer came during their first trip to the Bahamas for the Upledger Institute's Dolphin Assisted Therapy Program.

According to Barb, "During the first trip we took to the Bahamas in 2004 to work with the dolphins, our lives changed." Since 2004, the Tresness family has been on quite a journey. Barbara has become an author, disability advocate, Craniosacral Therapist, and founder of CHAT Collective. Graham the youngest child serves as the inspiration behind this work as they help the world better understand communication challenges.

Barbara's memoir, "[Beyond a Charmed Life: A Mother's Unconditional Love](#)" was featured on Amazon in the Top 100 books for Special Needs along with the 2016 American Library Association Conference. It is available for purchase through Amazon, Barnes and Noble in print or ebook format. Barbara has also written a guidebook on the communication challenges of our world: "[Everyone Communicates: Learn How to Talk to Me!](#)" The guidebook to communicating and socializing with Non Verbal and Limited Communicators is also available on Amazon, Barnes and Noble, in print and ebook format.

For Barbara, her greatest joy comes in giving back to a program that provided hope when nothing else could. In an effort to make a difference in a child's life and pay acts of kindness forward, the Graham Fund was created with the intention of providing funds for children who might not otherwise be able to attend the Dolphin Assisted Therapy Program. "It is my wish to help children in the hope that others will experience what we did- a journey of healing and hope" shares Barb.

In 2015, Barbara had the honor of awarding a scholarship fund to one of her first clients. In August 2016, that family will travel with Barbara to take place in the Dolphin Assisted Therapy Program in the Bahamas.

To help continue the mission, please consider donating to the [Graham Fund](#) through the [Dr John E. Upledger Foundation](#).

To connect with [Barbara Huntress Tresness](#) or to learn more about her work, visit [CHAT Collective](#) or find her on [Facebook](#).

Recent Media highlighting Barbara's journey can be found at [Syracuse Woman Magazine](#) and [WCNY Cycle of Health](#).

Attachments include: Dolphin Photo from previous therapy sessions.

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