

On July 29, 2011, Waban renamed the Child Development Center located on Route 4 in Sanford the Fraser-Ford Child Development Center, after Jan Fraser and Charlene Ford Ralston, two women whose leadership spanned almost 30 years at Waban and whose efforts resulted in amazing growth for Waban and the services provided for children and adults with developmental and other disabilities.

It is irrefutable that early intervention efforts made for children with special needs have the desired effect of putting a child on the road that will lead to many successes later in life. Over the years, thousands of children have received these types of services at Waban and have received individualized instruction from experienced, dedicated, and caring staff from whom they have learned to walk, talk, and gain the skills necessary for them to go on to kindergarten.

These efforts started in 1972 when, through the generous support of individuals, businesses and community organizations, a 16' wide by 100' long building was built on the Waban campus and a program for 3-5 year olds with special needs was established in the Child Development Center. In 1994, an Infant Toddler Program was added to the Child Development Center. This outreach program offered therapies, parent-child playgroup, case management and other family support services to children age birth to two.

By the mid 1990s, it was clear that there were many children who were in need but weren't able to be served due to a lack of facilities, and so a capital campaign was started, over \$117,000 was raised, and a 4,000 square foot addition with 4 additional classroom spaces was built.

Once again, it was the donations of individuals, businesses, organizations, and fund raising efforts of Waban's Annual Telethon that helped make this addition possible.

Fast-forwarding to today, there are 10 classrooms providing services to over 120 children from birth to 5 years old at the Child Development Center. These offerings include 3 full-day programs for children with autism, 4 half-day programs for children with disruptive behaviors and emotional and behavioral issues, and a variety of infant-toddler play groups and parent sessions. The outcomes have been incredible.

On Friday, July 29, in front of many individuals who had contributed to the process of making the Child Development Center a reality, Executive Director Neal Meltzer said, "For almost three decades, the guiding force and stalwart leaders for all this growth and service were two remarkable women, Jan Fraser and Charlene Ford. They refused to believe that children wouldn't succeed if given the chance. They refused to accept that children with special needs shouldn't have the opportunity to grow and learn. They refused to let financial pressures, nay sayers, or other barriers stand in the way of a driving commitment to help better the lives of others."

"They always saw the promise in the eyes of these children. They always felt the longing that parents had for someone to help them navigate the challenges that their child was facing. They always knew that, given the opportunity, those children could thrive and succeed."

Jan Fraser was Waban's Executive Director from 1979 until her retirement in 2006. Charlene Ford was right there beside her as the Assistant Executive Director until her

retirement in 2003. Both thanked Neal and Gervaise Flynn, current Assistant Executive Director, as well as the present Board of Directors, for bestowing the honor. Charlene said, "Although the building is named Fraser-Ford, we did not do this alone. We had dedicated staff who were the backbone of the program, parents who trusted us with their precious children, people from surrounding communities who donated so generously, a competent administrative and maintenance staff who took pride in their work, and board members who supported us and helped us raise the funds to renovate this building debt-free. I'm proud to say all these services have continued and are bigger and better today than I could have imagined."

Neal revealed the brass dedication plaque which reads, " Fraser-Ford Child Development Center, Named in Honor of Janice Fraser and Charlene Ford, In Grateful Recognition Of Their Leadership, Dedication, Unwavering Efforts, And Belief That Given The Opportunity All Children Can Succeed, July 2011". The ceremony was followed by tours of the facility for the family, friends and staff who attended.