



The **Matty Fund®**  
**Epilepsy Resource Center**  
 Helping Others with Epilepsy  
[www.MattyFund.org](http://www.MattyFund.org)

June 2011

It's hard to believe that another school year has gone by! This year is particularly special as we celebrated not one, but two graduations in the Siravo home. Our oldest son, Joe, graduated from Northeastern University and our youngest son, Christopher, graduated from The Prout School – we are so proud of all of our boys! On June 11<sup>th</sup> we also celebrated a banner year at Matty's 5K Run/Walk with record numbers participating in the 5K and Matty's Mighty Dash! Over 100 children "competed" in Matty's Mighty Dash, and this year's teams were especially creative and enthusiastic. Teams Kibbe, Treavor, Ethan and Gracie stole the show! They are also a reminder of the important work that we do and the hope of each and every family for the future health and happiness of their children. So, in this edition of Matty Matters, we celebrate the children – their successes and achievements!

Our best wishes for a healthy and happy summer.

- Richard and Debra Siravo



**Matty Fund Milestones!**

Each year, since 2004, the Matty Fund has awarded scholarships to deserving high school seniors with epilepsy. We decided to highlight the journey of our very first scholarship award recipient, Kaitlyn Fitzgerald – and what a journey it's been! In 2004, Kaitlyn was a senior at East Greenwich High School and she applied to a number of colleges and a Matthew Siravo Memorial scholarship. She was praised by her high school teachers and coaches for her hard work to earn every grade and point (on and off the field); for her insight and leadership; for her keen sense of humor. She noted during the application process that her greatest inspiration and role model is her young cousin, Nicholas, who was also diagnosed with epilepsy at the age of one and lives with severe developmental delays. She was inspired to deal with the restrictions that epilepsy placed on her life, the toll from the side effects of strong medications, and the fear and paranoia of when the next seizure would come. From him, she drew strength to live a normal and active life. She made an important decision that would guide her future – that the way she managed her life with epilepsy is far more important than fearing it. The Matty Fund scholarship helped Kaitlyn with college expenses, and with the extra money she saved she had the opportunity to perform volunteer work in Costa Rica with extremely poor and disadvantaged children.

**Question:** Where is Kaitlyn today?

**Answer:** Cusco, Peru teaching English to school children!

**Kaitlyn's advice to other children living with epilepsy**

1. Make sure to take good care of yourself, never forget about your medical condition, but never let epilepsy control your life.
2. Take your medication daily and make sure to get a good night's sleep
3. Tell those around you that you have epilepsy and what to do in case you have a seizure, but continue to live your life the way you want to
4. Get involved in helping others, especially those with epilepsy...raise awareness
5. Accept your epilepsy, find ways to work around it, focus on what you can do

Some day Kaitlyn hopes to help in finding a cure for epilepsy, but for now she is enjoying life in South America, remembering her history, but focusing on the future!



**TJ Lynch**  
 Baseball - Hockey Star  
 South Kingstown  
 High School

**TJ Lynch** has lots of reasons to celebrate – he had a headlining junior year at South Kingstown High School in two varsity sports, baseball and hockey. He is about to enter his senior year and in May, 2011, TJ was officially pronounced seizure free after 3 years with no seizures. Congratulations to TJ and the entire Lynch family!

The Matty Fund will host a "Conversation with Linda" (TJ's mom) to talk about their family journey living with epilepsy. Stay tuned for more information.



Don't forget to register for "2011 Camp Matty"  
 Camp Matty is a therapeutic horseback riding camp for children with epilepsy  
 July 11<sup>th</sup> – July 14<sup>th</sup>  
 Call the Matty Fund Epilepsy Resource Center for more details and an application.  
 (401) 789-7330

**Gifts to the Matty Fund allow us to award scholarships & sponsor children for Camp Matty!**  
 To make a donation visit [www.MattyFund.org](http://www.MattyFund.org) or mail your donation to P.O. Box 5300, Wakefield, RI 02880