

Sharing the Journey

February 2019



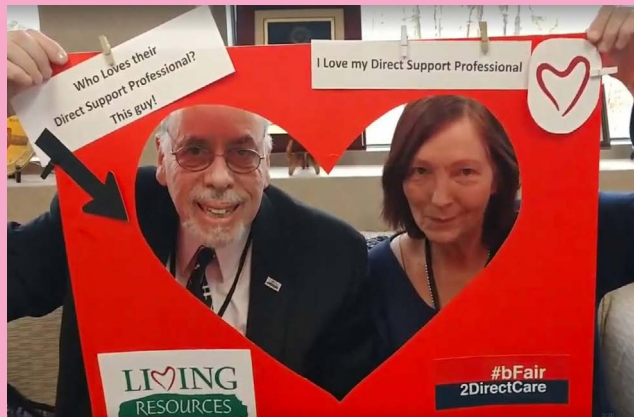
A Message from the Chief Executive Officer



Fredrick W. Erlich

When I think of the month of February, the word **HEART** comes immediately to mind. At the **HEART** of Living Resources are the individuals we serve and the staff who give of themselves each and every day to ensure that the best care and services are received by those we serve. Without our passionate and committed staff, our mission of providing a safe and nurturing environment which allows our individuals to become as independent as possible would be just a mission, not a realization. They are the **beating HEART** of Living Resources.

Did you know that more than 20% of the 800+ staff members at Living Resources have been with us longer than 10 years? Why? Well, it is certainly not the money, we continue to advocate and fight for a living wage for our Direct Support Professionals. So, what keeps them here? It is **their HEART**, their dedication, passion, and commitment to making a difference in the lives of others. I feel blessed that together with our staff, supported individuals, families, friends, and supporters, we are **LIVING RESOURCES FAMILY!**





Living Resources ROCKS!

The Brainwaves, a rock band which is part of Living Resources' Acquired Brain Injury Program, performed a coffeehouse event at the Jewish Federation of NENY in celebration of Jewish Disability Awareness and Inclusion Month (JDAIM).

They performed covers of well-known songs such as Proud Mary and 99 Red Balloons, to the joyful and appreciative applause of their hosts. The band members were extremely excited to perform in their first "real gig"- which they defined as performing as a featured act, not a warm up band.



The Brainwaves currently consists of Victoria, Reeshma, Joshua, Felicia, and Jerry. **Victoria** has been with The Brainwaves longer than she can remember. She initially started out on percussion but with praise and encouragement from her staff member Roxanne, Victoria can now be seen singing with the group. Victoria enjoys "spending time with other brain injury survivors." She also likes "when the audience applauds for our songs, it makes me feel good."



Reeshma has been with the Acquired Brain Injury Program for 15 ½ years." Life after injury was difficult. She had a 3-month old daughter to care for and she didn't have much of a sense of humor. She credits her staff Joan with helping "get myself together." Reeshma says participation in The Brainwaves is "not that easy, but once you get to know the music and words of the songs, it relaxes the soul. It makes you the happiest person, it calms your mind and relaxes it, like the wind blowing over the beach."

Jerry is The Brainwaves' percussionist. He has been playing with the group for approximately three years. Prior to his injury, he had been playing in bands since high school. He says percussion "makes the music sound better." Not only does he love playing music with the group, he enjoys the hard work of setting up the equipment and breaking it down after they are done for the day. He has a strong connection with his bandmates. He calls them his family because they "all get together as one."

Joshua has been a vocalist with The Brainwaves about a year and a half. Prior to joining the group, Joshua sang karaoke in the community on his own. He says that everyone in the group has more skills than is immediately obvious. The group bonds together over their music. "When we sing songs, people get happy."

The Brainwaves' newest member **Felicia** also sings vocals. "Felicia means 'happy' and that describes me." A self-described Karaoke Queen, Felicia has always loved music. Felicia experienced four mini- strokes which affected the nerves and muscles in her throat, and it seemed that she would not be able to sing anymore. But singing with the group is great exercise and makes her very happy. "I enjoy learning how to sing again and having this group as my new family."



Share the Love Valentines Day Event



Phat Dog, the non-profit dog biscuit company run by College Experience Students, was on site at the Living Resources' main office on Valentine's Day.



At Phat Dog, the students spearhead everything from the advertising to the actual baking of the product. Phat Dog biscuits are all-natural and are prepared with no preservatives or chemicals.



This month, the students sold handmade dog toys and pillows, as well as two varieties of dog treats, "Breathe Busters" and "Amanda Panda Paws." The later were created and named in memory of

former staff Amanda Rivenburg, who perished in the Schoharie Limousine accident last year. The group donated part of the profits of their sales to Amanda's favorite Charity - Out of the Pits, Inc. Dog Rescue in her memory. Two therapy dogs and their handlers from Therapy Dogs International were on hand at the event to "Share the Love" with all who stopped by. The kisses were free!



Chowderfest



Living Resources Arts, located at 70 Beekman Street in Saratoga Springs was among 96 vendors that participated in Saratoga's Annual Chowderfest. A highly anticipated event, Chowderfest features restaurants offering their own unique variation of chowder, for \$1 per cup.



There was a reported record breaking crowd of 40,000 people at the event

this year. Living Resources featured an utterly delicious Cauliflower Chowder created by Graham's Lansingburgh Café. Afterwards, Living Resources Arts hosted live music by Rebecca Foxx and Honey Suckle Vine.

"More than 100 people braved to cold weather to enjoy our warm chowder" said Marcus Anderson, art instructor at Living Resources Arts. "In addition to familiar faces, many first time visitors had an opportunity to learn about our classes as well as our students and their work."



LIVING RESOURCES RECEIVES THE GOLD!



Living Resources has been awarded the **Gold Award** for Health Leadership Excellence by Mainstay/My25 for their substantial commitment to the health of all supported individuals.

Mainstay and its choice-based My25 programs are the primary accelerator within the human services industry regarding health outcomes improvement related to overweight/underweight status, diabetes, hypertension, associated chronic conditions, and social determinants of health.

DCOP Corner

Love

By: John Schwartz

Love is about kind hearts, Be sure to use your smarts!
Make everyone feel happy inside, Hugs & candy give people pride.
Joy to somebody who's down, Make the frown go upside down.
Give a card to your Dad or Mom, A box of chocolates are for a guy named Tom.
Love is about kind hearts, Be sure you use your smarts!
You never know who's in love if you see Love that's a message from above!

Movie Review **Frozen**

By: Amber Scavo

This was such a good movie. I loved the theme of the two sisters learning about bonding and love. Queen Elsa is my favorite character. Elsa accidentally hurts Anna with her powers twice--once when they're kids and another time when they're adults. An evil duke sends his men after Elsa to lock her up, so Elsa leaves so that she doesn't hurt anyone with her powers anymore. Elsa uses her powers to build a magic ice castle to live in. Anna sets out to find her sister because even though she is powerful, Anna, still loves her sister very much and wants to help her. On her path, Anna, finds her true love. At the end of the movie the sisters find each other and Elsa is forgiven and returns home. I would recommend this movie to my friends and family to watch. Also there is a game called "Frozen free ball" that you can get on your phone to play.



The Albany South Day Community Opportunities Program took part in a Canvas painting activity at Art in Mind Creative Wellness Studio. We love how all the art was driven by the individual and no two pieces were the same. Great work everyone!



Employer Highlight: Teresian House

The Teresian House has been a great partner to Living Resources Supported employment. We have been able to fill each other's needs well. The Teresian House needs part time food service workers that are kind to residents and are reliable. The individuals we work with need a supportive environment with clear, but meaningful tasks. Living Resources' supports at least nine individuals that are employees of the Teresian House. These individuals play a variety of roles including prepping meals, bringing up the meals to the floors, serving meals to the residents, serving meals in the dining room and cooking breakfast to order. They have established wonderful relationships with many of the residents and feel very invested in their jobs. Due to this feeling of providing value, many of our employees have been there for many years and have no plan to look for other employment.

The Teresian House has also provided many volunteer learning opportunities for the students of the College Experience. By having this volunteer experience helping with recreation and serving meals, our students and their job coach have been able to determine if a job in elder care is a good fit. The Teresian House has hired a few of these individuals upon graduation, which works out well for both parties!

Meet Tori



Tori has gotten to know the residents on her floor at the Teresian House and she is a valued part of the team. Tori has always wanted a job in elder care. She started off as an intern through the College Experience in September 2016. As an intern she proved her skills by assisting in the activities department and by serving meals during lunchtime. Tori has been an employee of the Teresian House since July 2017. As a Neighborhood Assistant she serves dinner to residents and cleans up after the meal. Tori is kind and friendly with the residents and remembers everyone's name.

Join Us & Become An Employment Partner

Train your next leaders by hiring individuals with disabilities. It improves job morale and corporate culture, increases diversity in the workplace and helps give insight on how to better serve customers and employees with disabilities. [For more information about our Employment Services, Click here](#)

To become an inclusive workforce, reach out to **Maggie Erlich** at: **merlich@livingresources.org** OR call **518-218-0000 ext. 4616**

Staff Party: Dancing Through the Decades

In order to fight the winter blues, a “stress reduction party” was held for all staff at the The Red Lion Inn on Wolf Road in Colonie. The theme of the party was “Dancing Through The Decades” and everyone was invited to dress the styles of their favorite decade. CEO Fred Erlich and Associate Executive Director Steve Klein showed up as the Blues Brothers. Also spotted were flappers from the 20’s, Pink Ladies and greasers from the 50’s and Soul Train Dancers from the 70’s.





February Birthdays



Corrine Aviza
Alisa Banks
Sophia Banton
Tiffany Bravata
Katherine Bugbee
Mohini Busgeeth
Kaleb Catricala
Patricia Cellucci
Lonje Cooks
Alfred Cooley
Christina Copes
Steven Couse
Catherine Crowley
Richard Currao
Magdalena Diaz
Michael Dillon
Emily Durkin
Alison Farron
Elizabeth Fisher
Alexxis Gibbs

Amiee Gibson
Jamiyla Hills
Michelle Hiscock
Kristine Huether
Antoine Johnson
Craig Johnson
Neville Johnson
Shaquanna Johnson
Sharon Kendzierski
Patricia Laviana
Teresa Ledford
Scott Marshall
David Mcnutt
Ivy Moore
Darlene Peasly
Johanna Perez
Yahaira Ponce
Chriss Quatrone
Jennifer Rader
Marlene Reid-Shaw

Iise Rijssen
Nicholas Sampone
Thomas Savondranayagam
Charles Schramm
Kyle Selby
Mary Catherine Severson
Daniel Shadick
Rebecca Shepard
Richard Strilec
Kristin Sweet
Shanice Taylor
Trent Taylor
Patricia Turner
Rickie VanBuren
Susan Walker
Makeem Winter
Clovine Young-Shue

Anniversaries

Sonja Bell *
Lynn Brammer
Larry Bryan
Deserene Carroll **
Joanna Castaldo
Jessica Castaneda
Sabrina Cecil
Crystal Clark
John Colandrea
G Michelle Collis
Paige Denué
Teresa Edwards
Michael English ****
Stephanie Fisher
Debra Giagni
Joseph Glasby **
Dana Green
Shevonna Hall

Lateef Hamzat
Michaela Hindes
Emily Harrison
Abyesha Holman
Cathleen Hull
Jamell Jackson
Winston James *
Wesley John
Neville Johnson
Edwin Knuckles ***
Daniel Lawrence
Courtney Mason *
Brent Masterson
Robert Marcello **
James Mitchell
Jessica Morelli
Deneen Palmateer
Karen Palmucci ****

Ramona Ragnauth
Dexter Ramos
Charlene Saide ***
Maria Sampone
Lashe Saunders *
Iona Scarville
Mary Catherine Severson
Shannon Sperry **
Connie Snelling
Duanasia Tillery
Kelly Weiss *



Faculty Spotlight: Tom Regan



Tom Regan has been working for Living Resources in the Acquired Brain Injury Department for more than 11 years. He started as a structured day staff where he facilitated group classes for individuals with a Traumatic or Acquired Brain Injury. Tom then became an Independent Living Skills Trainer where he worked one on one with individuals, helping them re-learn tasks that they were able to do prior to their injury. He is now an Administrator in the department, doing essential behind-the-scenes work and also enjoys working hands on with his individuals when the opportunity arises. Tom says the favorite part of his job is easy to describe: "It's the people." He says his co-workers and the individuals he serves are some of the most up-beat people around.

The Acquired Brain Injury Program at Living Resources is designed to give individuals the means to regain control of their lives after brain injury through therapy, life skills training, peer support services and more.

SAVE THE DATE!

Here's a list of Upcoming Events you don't want to miss

Wednesday, March 6 – Ash Wednesday

Sunday, March 10 – Daylight Savings begins

Wednesday, March 17 – St. Patrick's Day

Wednesday, March 20 – Spring is in the air

Friday, April 5 from **12:00 - 2:00 p.m.** DCOP Awards Ceremony at the **Colonie Village Family Center, 2 Thunder Road, Albany.**

Thursday, May 2 from **6:00 - 8:00 p.m.** The third annual **ART of Independence.** This wonderful wine and hors d'oeuvres reception will be held at the **Fort Orange Club in Albany.** We know that there are many roads to independence, this year we will be highlighting the road paved with education and employment opportunities. More information to follow.



www.LivingResources.org

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