

# Sharing the Journey

July 2020

LIVING  
RESOURCES

## A Message from the Chief Executive Officer



Last year, I announced that after 46 years, I would be retiring at the end of December 2020. Since this announcement, the Board created a search committee and search firm to assist in locating a successor. **After this extensive search, the Board of Directors is excited to announce and welcome Elizabeth Martin as our next CEO effective September 1, 2020**



I am pleased to have someone with her breadth and depth of experience to carry on the mission of Living Resources. Elizabeth has been the Chief Executive Officer for Consumer Directed Choices, Inc. (CDChoices) since 2012. Prior to her career at CDChoices, Elizabeth was the Director of Administration at the Albany County Department of Social Services.

Living Resources Board President, Kevin Tully shared that "at the heart of our search was locating the right candidate to maintain Living Resources core values in providing exceptional services and programs for our individuals."

Elizabeth Martin said that she is "looking forward to joining this amazing organization that for 46 years has been living their mission to provide programs, services, and supports which allow individuals with developmental disabilities and brain injuries lead their best life. This is an incredible opportunity to continue to build on the legacy created by Fred Erlich and the Living Resources family."

**Please help me give Elizabeth a warm welcome!**

**11th Annual Golf Tournament**

**Register Today!**

Friday, September 25th, 2020 at 8:00 AM  
Colonie Golf & Country Club • Voorheesville, NY

Title Sponsor  
**Marshall & Sterling**  
INSURANCE



# Thank you to Everyone who donated to our COVID 19 Appeal



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## Living Resources celebrates Independence Day every day!

Throughout the pandemic, the Living Resources Superheroes have continued to support our individuals on their personal journeys to independence through virtual visitations, phone calls, social media posts, and weekly drop offs. On Wednesday, July 22, we began the process of safely reopening our day programs and services on a limited basis.



**Our Super Heroes and those they support have been excited to see each other, compare face mask designs, and catch up on all that has happened these many months of separation.**

**It feels great to be together again, living our most independent lives!**

We invite you to help us celebrate this long-awaited re-opening by supporting our **Independence Day Every Day Campaign** Your support makes a difference.

You are an important part of the Living Resources Independence story.  
Help us write a new chapter in our history book!

**[Click Here to Support the Independence  
of our Individuals](#)**



## Healing Power of a Garden



Jon Carroll and Kevin Mooney are expert gardeners who learned their craft the old fashioned way; with a shovel, some dirt and a lot of hard work. The individuals in our Longmeadow residence typically spend their daytime hours active in their various Day Program settings, but the Pandemic brought that to a halt. As a result, Kevin's father



Brendan has offered a variety of activities to the house. He provided a cook book so everyone could bake cookies together, a dance DVD for exercise, and, when the weather became cooperative, he proposed planting a garden. This garden, which Brendan described as "nothing big – just a nine-foot square plot where we put in a couple of plants" has turned into something much more than meets the eye. It is a kingdom of sorts where Jon and Kevin reign as caretakers and defenders against a horde of rabbits.

As Jon tells it, "There was a garden last year, but nothing came up. This year Kevin's dad brought the seeds and stuff over, and put up a fence to keep the rabbits out. We got some shovels and had to turn it over, weed it out, and dig the holes. It took forever to do – one whole day! It's a really big garden! We just started it and something is coming up already. We have parsley, basil, and some other things in there. I'm taking care of it every day – watering, weeding, cleaning up the yard, and chasing the rabbits away." And there are so many rabbits to contend with. Jon is not afraid to advocate for himself and his garden. He tells the rabbits, "Get out of here, that's our garden. You're not going to get in there. It's our food, not yours."



House staff Jill Telford said the garden has been good for everyone at the house to focus on, something they can maintain and watch grow. The house residents are engaged in the science of the growth cycle and learning the step – by- step process of gardening. She is excited that there will be something tangible to see at the end, that everyone in the house can utilize. The lettuce, chard, basil, mint, cabbage, peppers, and other plants will make for nice salads all summer long. She feels the process of planting, maintaining and harvesting the crop will boost their self-confidence.

The residents of Longmeadow have even begun giving their cotton- tailed neighbors food offerings in the form of carrot and celery scraps. Jill says the rabbits enjoy the pre-cut and harvested treats which distract them from the growing garden. She educates her individuals about honoring the ecosystem. "We have respect for the wild life and strive to live amongst each other peacefully."

Before the Coronavirus shut everything down, Jon and Kevin attended Living Resources' Albany Site based program. They enjoyed helping deliver for Meals on Wheels and look forward to getting back to that. In the meantime, the garden is their happy place. As British biographer Jenny Uglow wrote, "We might think we are nurturing our garden, but of course it's our garden that is really nurturing us."



## Featured Artist: Nadine Nandkissore



Georgia O’Keeffe once said “I found I could say things with color and shapes that I couldn’t say any other way – things I had no words for.” Inspired artist Nadine Nandkissore, would certainly agree. She came to the United States from Guyana 20 years ago, when she was 18 years old, and has attended classes at Living Resources Arts Program since 2014. Her mother Mary said there were limited services for people with disabilities in Guyana at that time.



The family’s move here brought Nadine a tremendous opportunity for a colorful future.

Nadine loves keeping busy. Prior to the COVID pandemic, Nadine attended Living Resources’ Day Community Opportunities Program every day and attended art classes two evenings a week. Now, with the shutdowns, Nadine greatly misses attending art class in person. The art studio is where Nadine truly shines. She has a great rapport with her instructors, Rebecca and Sarah who encourage her eye for design and affinity for shapes and colors.



Art is an essential outlet for Nadine, where she can express her creativity. She has a passion for color, and she doesn’t adhere to conventional rules. When an instructor suggests a color, she says, “I don’t like that color can I use this one instead?”



When Mary sees her daughter’s art, she thinks the pieces are “mismatched”, but the teachers call Nadine’s color choices inspired. Indeed, her art has been featured in many art exhibits as well as on the side of a CLYNK truck which drives around New York state.

Art completes Nadine, consuming her thoughts. Mary says, “she is always bringing me things, saying, ‘Don’t you think this is beautiful?’” She has an eye for fashion, assembling her wardrobe stylishly, and always with a color palate that is uniquely Nadine.



We hope Nadine will follow the advice from Amy Leigh Mercree who said, “Be uniquely you. Stand out. Shine. Be colorful. The world needs your prismatic soul!”



## Hardworking and Dedicated!



Ashley Lawyer has been part of the Living Resources family for over seven years, receiving services from our Supportive Employment program. Her undeniable work ethic and hardworking frame of mind makes Ashley a valued employee at not one but two jobs!

During the Covid-19 Pandemic, Ashley began the year working at Image Data as a document prep specialist Monday through Thursday and on Fridays she worked at Hannaford Supermarket. Shortly after the Pandemic began, Ashley was furloughed from Image Data for several weeks, but rather than sit and wait for her office to reopen, she increased her hours at Hannaford temporarily, and worked 5-6 days a week. When asked if she would rather have waited, she said "I would rather be busy and not have to collect unemployment". Ashley's supervisors have both remarked that she is "hardworking and dedicated" and Candy, her manager at Hannaford, said "I wish everyone was more like Ashley!"

Ashley's work ethic does not end at the close of her shift. After work, she frequently helps her sister by babysitting her nephew. Also, the only time Ashley called out from work was in order to assist her sick grandmother.

Although her work atmosphere at both locations has changed for the foreseeable future, Ashley has adapted to the COVID-19 safety precautions well. Now back at Image data, her job description is much the same. She preps documents for digital files for clients, but her work area is now enclosed with Plexiglass and she must wear a mask at all times when working. She also has to take her shift breaks outside and has to pack her own food and drinks for those breaks since the water cooler is not operating. At Hannaford, Ashley wears a vest suggesting that customers socially distance, and she has to now use plastic bags, and if a customer brings their own reusable bags, they must pack their own groceries to cut down on the spread of Covid-19.



Ashley's job coach Lori Ira said that Ashley's initiative in advocating for herself and her commitment to working hard and always going above and beyond makes her an ideal employee and effective partner in job coaching.

## SAVE THE DATE!

Here's an Upcoming Event you don't want to miss!

**Living Resources 11th Annual Golf Tournament** will be held on **Friday, September 25, 2020** at the **Colonie Golf and Country Club**. All proceeds will benefit the many programs of Living Resources, including the **College Experience**.



[www.LivingResources.org](http://www.LivingResources.org)

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