

A Message from the Chief Executive Officer

As 2020 comes to a close, I trust that we can all agree that it certainly presented many challenges but also opportunities.



Elizabeth Martin

- * Challenges as to how to keep everyone healthy and safe,
- * Opportunities to learn new ways of delivering services and programs, and
- * Together these challenges and opportunities allowed us to strengthen our organization and our bonds with each other.

Our work, however, is not done. We are anticipating and preparing for an equally challenging winter season with COVID spikes and quarantines, but the end is in sight and that speaks to HOPE!


If 2020 was a year of challenges, let's make 2021 the year of HOPE!

Happy New Year!

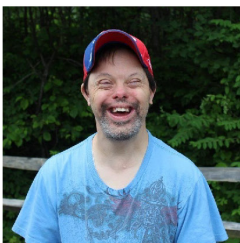
Welcome

2021

Looking forward to a New Year filled with gathering together with grateful hearts. Here's to a bright 2021, may it be a time of reunion between friends and loved ones alike!

From our  to yours!

Jennifer *Jodi*
Deneen *Gene*
Edith *Joel*
Love

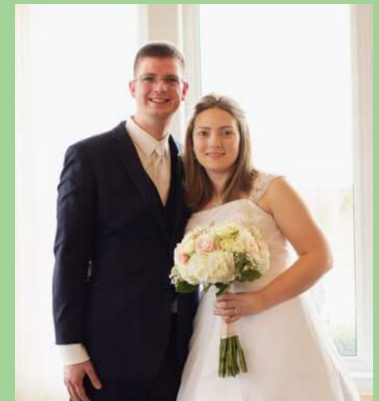


*photos taken pre-pandemic



Kevin & Lindsey, so happy together!

Kevin Steitzer and Lindsey Renko-Steitzer met just prior to the official start of their Living Resources' College Experience. Kevin was wearing a blue Nike sweatshirt and Lindsey fashioned a Saint Rose T-shirt. Kevin glanced over to Lindsey who immediately caught his eye. Kevin remembers telling his parents, "One day I am going to date that woman." By the following spring, that prediction came true, they met for pizza off- campus.



Through all their coursework requirements, internships and job positions, they managed to find time to build their relationship, which continued beyond graduation. On a warm spring day seven years after their first meeting, Kevin proposed to Lindsey at a local park where they often walked. Kevin and Lindsey were married two years ago, exactly one year from the day they became engaged.

They moved to an apartment complex and held down jobs but were furloughed due to the COVID shutdown. Since then, Lindsey and Kevin maintain a tight social life, keeping their interactions limited to visiting their respective parents, but mostly keep to "just us." Fortunately for them, "just us" includes the built in entertainment of Lindsey's emotional support dog, a cairn terrier named Minnie.



All this quality time has helped Kevin and Lindsey create a strategy for maintaining a healthy relationship. Kevin asserted, "Communication is huge. If we have a disagreement, we will get mad, but we know we love each other and that is never going to change." Lindsey continued, "We laugh at each other and are very comfortable with each other. It is what makes our relationship so good."

Any conversation about their love story eventually comes back around to the College Experience where it all began. Kevin extolled, "They teach a lot of important skills such as how to deposit a check, how to take the bus, and tips for food shopping so you do not pay too much." He said they learned to cook for themselves, touting a great recipe for the "best roasted vegetables, ever!" Lindsey says, "I would definitely recommend the College Experience because people with disabilities have one-on-one instruction for different subjects. You can take your time and if you need help, they will help you."

While Lindsey and Kevin both struggle with intellectual disabilities and supplemental challenges, with the help of Living Resources and The College Experience, this particular power couple has managed to build a happy life together. That's all anyone can hope for.

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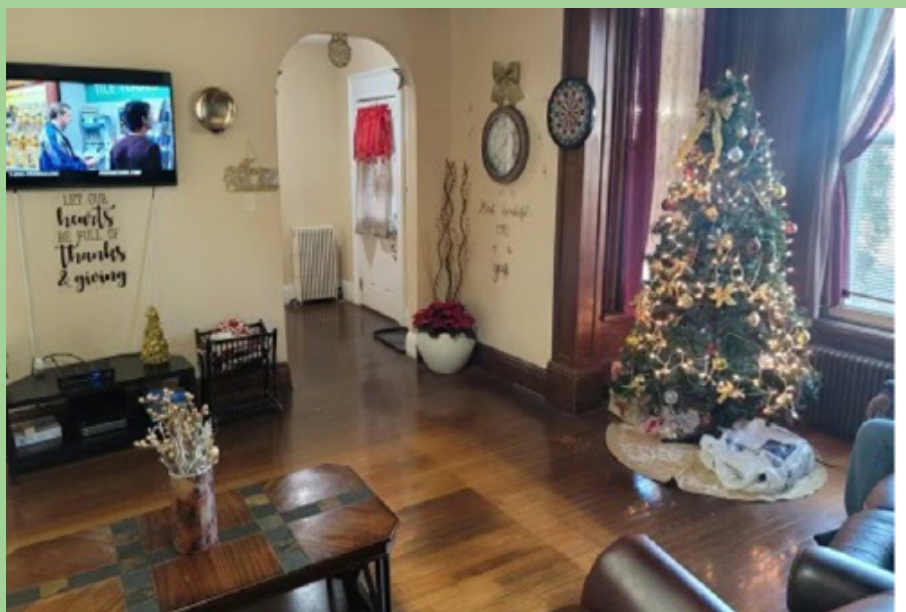
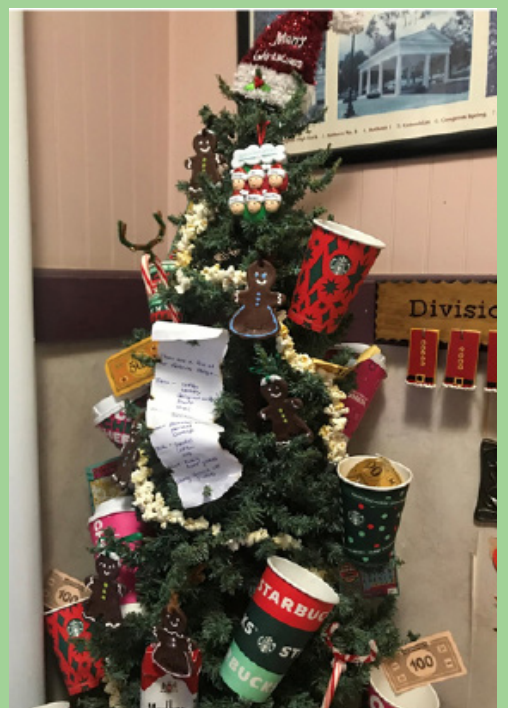




Deck the Halls!

If 2020 brought us any positive benefits, it was in the creation of new traditions. Our Residential Program issued a Christmas Decorating Challenge! All in the program were encouraged to be involved in the decorating of their house with creative homemade crafts and ornaments. Now, our residential team is always up for a challenge and the GAME WAS ON!

Here are just a few of the many photos we received showing success to the contest. It wouldn't be a challenge without judges and prizes, but lets be honest, all who participated were winners. They enjoyed the fruits of their labor all season long!



Merry and Bright!



Every year, the Living Resources office staff look forward to visiting the various programs to chat with our individuals and deliver holiday cheer. Sadly, this year, COVID regulations prevented in-person visits, but true to the spirit of 2020, we came up with a new plan.

The result was an explosion of Yuletide joy among our entire Living Resources family. Office staff who were decked out in their “ugliest” Christmas sweaters, elf costumes, and other festive attire executed a spirited Christmas car parade at a safe distance from individuals in their cars and vans.

Retired CEO Fred Erlich (aka Santa Claus) was among those in attendance bearing goodies from his workshop in the northern-most region of the world and greeting our individuals. The magic was as real as it gets.

The parade was followed by an afternoon Zoom chat with Santa and Mrs. Claus (CEO Elizabeth Martin) where everyone sang holiday songs, discussed their favorite holiday movies and traditions, and shared their hopes for a new year.



We thank all who worked to make this day come to fruition!





Party Like It's 2020!

Joe recently celebrated his 26th Birthday and his Super Hero Staff threw him an amazing party! Things used to be different. His parents, Lisa and John used to celebrate at Joe's residence with a group dance party in the living room followed by food and cake in dining room. But now, with the house's pandemic safety guidelines in place, they can only stay in the house entrance way, Joe's bedroom or backyard.



This called for everyone to come up with a different plan. Lisa arrived early to spend time with Joe. According to house guidelines, she opened his presents with him and helped him dress for a dinner party with his housemates and staff. It was a comfort for Lisa knowing that she could participate in the day in some fashion. She said, "It was a different kind of birthday, but still wonderful."

John was out of town on business, so the very thoughtful staff sent pictures and a video of everyone singing Happy Birthday to Joe. Lisa said, "We felt like we were there. That really meant so much to us!"

Since John left the state, he and Lisa needed to wait to see Joe again in person until they each received back a negative COVID test. Once that was complete, John and Lisa were excited to be able to once again visit with Joe.

Lisa summarized with praise for the residential staff who are caring for her son, "I just wanted to let you know how awesome our staff are and how much they care about our individuals and families!"

Here for the Holidays



Thanksgiving is usually a time for going home to be with family, but 2020 has had its own rules. The individuals we serve hunkered down to do their part in preventing the spread COVID-19. This meant a loss not only of the company of family, but of the traditional turkey dinner so Lindsey Ryan, manager of our Intrada Apartments and staff Bill Stanley hatched a plan. Bill connected with his friend Steven "Sully" Sullivan, owner of Old Bryan Inn and Longfellows in Saratoga. With barely any lead time, Sully agreed to supply Thanksgiving dinners for each of our eight individuals who reside at Intrada, free of charge.

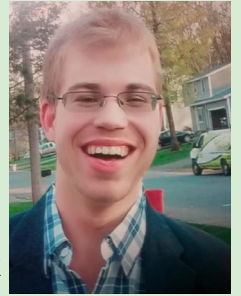
At Living Resources' Supportive Living Program, Jessica, Jennifer, and Dubois celebrated Thanksgiving together with their manager, Daryllyn. The day began by watching the Macy's Annual Thanksgiving Day Parade and the Annual Dog Show. At dinner, everyone shared what they were thankful for this year. Jessica said she was thankful for not getting sick with Covid-19, her family being healthy, and being able to work despite the pandemic. Jennifer is grateful for recovering from cancer and that she is healthy despite the Covid 19 pandemic. Dubois is thankful for staff coming in so they have a nice Thanksgiving and being healthy during Covid 19.



They all had a good time and stayed safe while gathering together. A special thank you to our Superhero staff that make a difference everyday

The show must go on!

"The show must go on" is an expression as old as time and applies even to times of a pandemic. Certainly, modifications must be made in order to ensure safety of the thespians, but with creativity, their talents can be allowed to flourish.



Our 2018 College Experience alumnus, Nick Williams engaged in his first Zoom performance with his peers at the Blue Horse Repertory Company. Nick helped perform the scenes from, "Revolutionary Road" and "Thor Ragnarok." For this performance, Nick developed his improvisational skills for some spontaneous moments and even learned an Australian accent for his part in "Thor Ragnarok."

We look forward to more performances from Nick in the future!

Ready for Retirement

After nearly four decades, as CEO of Living Resources, Fredrick W. Erlich has retired. We are grateful for his passionate and optimistic leadership over these many years. Dick Van Dyke once said, "Retirement means doing what you have fun doing." Knowing Fred, he truly found joy here at Living Resources, and we wish him continued joy as he approaches his next chapter in life!



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