

# Sharing the Journey



October 2021

LIVING  
RESOURCES

## A Message from the Chief Executive Officer

Looking back at the month of October, National Disabilities Employment Awareness Month reminds me of how *independence* and *interdependence* relate to one another.



Elizabeth Martin

Our Living Resources Super Heroes work every day to support and empower individuals with disabilities or other life challenging conditions to live with dignity, independence, and happiness- **but they can't do it alone.** While our employment staff provide one-on-one assistance to those we serve, helping them find and maintain competitive employment, they can't do it without the cooperation of local business partners. As you read the stories of Kevin, Amy, Max, Anthony, Luke, Bridget, Maggie, and Richard, please keep in mind the extensive web of support involved in helping them to reach – and often exceed – their employment aspirations.

**We thank our business partners** for their commitment to focusing on their employees' abilities, not disabilities. We are grateful for their courage to believe in the value of those with disabilities and helping to remove barriers to work. You are pioneers and we appreciate you.

**We want to also thank all who have raised their voices** this month in favor of equal employment opportunities for people with disabilities, including College Experience Media & Activities Liaison Jesse Saperstein who spoke at a recent rally. We particularly thank Assembly members Thomas Abinanti, Chris Burdick, Latoya Joyner, and Harvey Epstein who championed a public hearing on Employment for People with Disabilities. Thank you for your vision and advocacy.



**Finally, we thank all our donors who support the Living Resources mission every day.**

Because of **YOU**, they work  
Because of **YOU**, they are transformed  
Because of **YOU**, they attend college  
Because of **YOU**, they are artists  
Because of **YOU**, they celebrate at home

We cannot do it alone and it is **friends like YOU who embrace our mission, become our partners, and guarantee that others are provided with a lifetime of supports to live with dignity, independence, and happiness!**

Because of **ALL OF YOU**, they soar!

YOU keep our beating!

Donate now to our Annual Fund

Click Here, or go to

<http://weblink.donorperfect.com/2021AnAp>



## Golf Tournament Was in Full Swing



Our annual golf tournament was a bit of an adventure this year. When our scheduled date approached, the weather turned foul with soaking rains. We made the difficult decision to postpone and we are so glad we did.

Our patience was rewarded with perfect weather on our rain date of October 8. We thank all who came out in support of Living Resources and our mission. We appreciate your flexibility and understanding, and are thrilled to have you as part of the Living Resources Family!





October is National Disabilities Employment Awareness Month.

We are happy to highlight the businesses that partner with us in our mission to help individuals with disabilities achieve independence and self-sufficiency through meaningful employment.

ACCESS-VR	Cheese Traveller	Grrreendog Grooming & Spa	Nine Pin Cider	Shop Rite
Albany Medical Center	Crossroads Industries	Hannaford Supermarkets	Niskayuna School District	Siena College
Albany School District	CVS	Helping Hands	Oliver's Brew Crew	Solomon & Solomon Law Firm
Albany County	C&W Cleaning Services at Emma Willard	Hilton Garden Inn	Our Lady of Mercy	St. Peter's Hospital
Amazon	Dog's Retreat	Hoffman's Car Wash	Panera Bread	Tender Care Child Center
American Eagle Outfitters	Dick's Sporting Goods	Home Depot	Paradise Travel	Teresian House
Baptist Health	Dunkin Donuts	Honest Weight Food Coop	PetSmart	The Center for Start Services
Bethlehem School District	East Greenbush Community Library	Hudson Valley Community College	Pet Supplies Plus	The College of Saint Rose
Bountiful Bread	Ebiz Docs	Image Data	Peter Harris	The Elliot of Troy
Burlington	Eco Kids	Janitronics	Phillips Hardware	Trans Tech
Burger 21	Empire Wine and Liquor	Jean Paul Spa and Salon	Pioneer Bank	Union College
Capital District YMCA	Evergreen Commons	Jewish Community Center	Price Chopper/Market 32	United Healthcare
Capital Milestones	FedEx	Kenwood Manor at Good Samaritan	Primal Butcher	Vent Fitness
Capital Region Food Bank	G Willikers	Marshalls	Samaritan Hospital	Walgreens
Care Design	Gatherer's Granola	Mercy Care for Kids	Schools Out	Walmart
Cavoli's Grinding Services		Mohawk Hudson Humane Society	Sherman Specialities	Warren Washington ARC
City Mission of Schenectady		NYS Government Offices	Shop and Save	West Ave Mobil Mart
				Zombie Planet

## America's Recovery: Powered by Inclusion

In honor of National Disability Awareness Month (NDEAM) we are proud to highlight some of our many individuals who have contributed to this past year of recovery through their employment.

### NDEAM: Keeping the Supply Chain Moving

The isolation of COVID 19 helped Kevin look inward and discover that he had more potential than he previously thought and summon the courage to pursue more challenging opportunities. Kevin started working at the Albany Med Warehouse, which provides Albany Med and its practice sites with inventory to restock their locations with needed supplies. There, Kevin does a great job locating and picking out the required items, and is always spot on with his order fulfillment. **He is proud that he is helping make sure that people get the medical care they need while earning a paycheck** so that he doesn't have to rely on the government to pay his bills.



Kevin feels very well supported at Albany Med. His supervisors trust that he will do his assignments correctly, and he is comfortable asking for help when needed. Kevin said, "I have more responsibilities now than I ever have before and am happier now too."

Heather McNeill, Warehouse Manager - Supply Chain at Albany Med said, "The warehouse team has enjoyed the partnership with Living Resources, job coach Koryn, and the interns, providing hands on training for career opportunities in warehousing and supply chain. Kevin is a bright young man and we are happy to have him on our team at Albany Med."

Thanks to his disability employment team, Kevin is now thriving, both personally and professionally.



## NDEAM: An Important Part of the Team



Amy and Max are both graduates of Living Resources' College Experience Program. Amy, who graduated in 2015, had a steady job working with children in an After School Program until COVID arrived in early 2020. Her unexpected furlough empowered her to try something completely new. Max, who graduated from the College Experience as an enhanced senior last year is new to the supported employment scene.



They feel fortunate to be working at Sherman Specialties, a warehouse that prints messages on party favors and other "swag." Supported by Living Resources job coaches, they work to fulfill orders by locating the needed boxes, opening them and removing items for printing. The customized items are then returned to them to be packed for shipping. Amy and Max both love the repetitive nature of their tasks. Amy, who has 22q Deletion Syndrome says that since she started this work, she has seen tremendous improvement in her fine motor skills both at work and at home.

Amy and Max fit in beautifully to Sherman's Specialties' upbeat culture. **They are not seen as individuals with disabilities, but equal parts of the team.** Initially, they were assigned to work together to support each other in their employment journey. This extra level of reassurance wasn't needed for long. Soon, they were so comfortable in their working environment that they branched out into separate responsibilities and shifts. Max said, "I like how friendly it is there. It doesn't really feel like a job, just something I truly enjoy. Amy has developed a taste for the staff's sense of humor. "Sometimes it takes me a little bit to realize they are joking, but then I get it," she laughed. Most importantly, Amy and Max are essential to the success of Sherman's. Their team recently moved 450 pieces in one day, earning the gratitude of all. Afterward, she was proud of her contributions saying, "I was so tired, but in a good way, you know?"

## NDEAM: Grrreat Job at Grrreendog

Living Resources College Experience Program (CEP) has two student interns at Grrreendog Grooming & Spa, Anthony Goetke and Luke Stevens. Both students have spent time learning about canine behavior with the daycare and training groups. They have shown incredible growth in their understanding of the importance of body language and confidence directing the dogs in various different enrichment activities! Anthony enjoys spending his internship days with the "big dog" class, and Luke has begun to split his time between the "little dog" class and the bathing room. Luke, recently learned about brushing from Grrreendog owner Sundance Lev (as pictured right)



Sundance is no stranger to Living Resources! Back in 2012, former CEP student Bill Fitzpatrick started his Grrreendog Journey as an intern with job coach William Lynch. Bill was hired by Sundance shortly after and has worked with the Grrreendog team ever since! These days, Bill acts as a Facility Tech helping to oversee the upkeep of the daycare and building. He also helps out in the bathing room. Sundance also recently hired two more individuals working with our Employment Team, Jessica Lounsbury and Destiny Tribley, who have just started learning the morning daycare and bathing routines!

Thank you Sundance and the Grrreendog family for being such wonderful employment partners!



## NDEAM: Tending to Babies at Tendercare

Living Resources College Experience Program (CEP) Student Bridget Mulligan began her internship with Tendercare Child Center in Guilderland this September and is loving her time working in the infant room! Bridget has been a big help in the infant room, preparing bottles, learning how to support children in developing balance and fine motor skills, and putting the infants down for naps. Together, the team brainstorms and executes festive art projects for the children's parents. She says, "I love it here, I like working with the babies. Everybody's nice and friendly."



Bridget is a natural with the babies! **She made such a great impression with the staff at Tendercare that she was offered a position** by the Director, Rose Farruggia. As part of the hiring process, Bridget has been learning more about early childhood development and safe practices in childcare through virtual training classes and finds them very interesting!

Rose shared that as an employer, she has had a great experience working with the Living Resources Employment team and job coach. When asked about Bridget, she said "She's a really great fit, and she has a lot of knowledge." Bridget is pictured in the infant room, which she helped decorate for the season with her mentor Edie.

## NDEAM: This is my Home

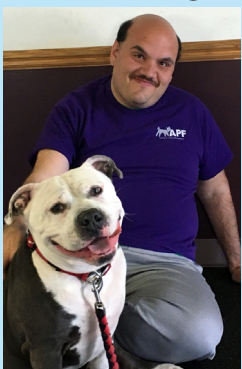


Maggie Kamburelis has been working at Emma Willard School through Cushman & Wakefield as a part-time cleaner. She has been cleaning classrooms, restrooms, changing trash bins, mopping, and performing other maintenance duties with much enthusiasm. During the initial stages of the COVID-19 pandemic, the work was particularly tough, but she approached it with a positive attitude. She wanted to make sure that everything was clean for the next day.

This month, Maggie's outstanding work was recognized. **She was named Employee of the Month** and was honored with a gift card. Her supervisor Enrique said "Everybody loves her and she loves this place." Maggie said, "This is my home. This is my family."

## NDEAM: Barking Up the Right Tree

Richard has been part of the Living Resources family for 15 years. His favorite activity is volunteering with his Community Habilitation staff at the Animal Protective Foundation (APF). Before the pandemic, he helped them close the shelter on Thursdays, and returned on Saturday morning to assist with dog training classes. In the early part of the pandemic, in-person Community Habilitation support of individuals with disabilities was suspended. Richard said he missed spending time with his friends at the APF, those with and without fur.



When he returned to the APF, he did a fantastic job feeding dogs and cats their dinner and checking on them at the end of the day. Volunteer and Operations Manager Hannah Deraway said it was clear Richard was ready for his next step! **He was promoted to a new role** of Kennel Cleaner at the Spay and Neuter Clinic. Hannah said this role is essential to the operation of their clinic. "Without kennel cleaners, Vet staff would not have time to outcome patients and be prepared for another day of surgeries." Richard was thrilled with his promotion and learned his new duties quickly.

Richard's positive, warm and welcoming attitude is appreciated by staff and clients alike. His uplifting attitude is infectious to others.

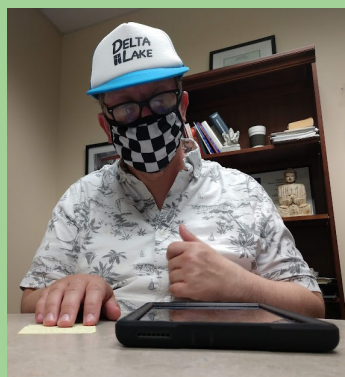


## AVAIL to the Rescue!

How do you cope with frustrating situations? Many of us have difficulty, particularly with the increased stressors that are associated with the lingering COVID 19 pandemic. Thanks to a grant from SEFCU, Living Resources has a new tool to support the mental health of our individuals with Intellectual/ Developmental Disorders (ID/D).

Avail software uses smart devices as a platform to teach life skills through personalized, step-by-step digital prompts. It can be used in a variety of contexts, including independent living, employment, education, and clinical settings. Over the past few months, Avail has been used by Living Resources' Clinical team to help individuals learn how to use coping mechanisms when they feel anxious or angry. The Employment Department has used Avail to help individuals learn and perform their job duties. The aim of this unique tool is to allow individuals to independently perform tasks that they were previously unable to do without the help of support staff.

James lives in a Living Resources residence and attends our day programs. He was excited to be invited to utilize the Avail software. When asked what skill he wanted to learn, James described behaviors he does when he gets angry and asked for help in learning new strategies to stop these behaviors from occurring. James' team suggested several strategies and James decided on one that he would like to try first. They showed him how to operate the tablet and walked him through all the steps of the program, one by one. James cheerfully demonstrated each step, saying the software was easy to follow. Together, they decided on a schedule for James to practice this calming technique. He is optimistic about utilizing the Avail software to reduce the intensity and frequency of the emotion and the resulting behaviors.



Miranda works at America Eagle Outfitters in Crossgates Mall. In addition to performing light cleaning around the store before it opens up to customers, she processes returned items. This involves hanging and steaming clothes, putting them out on the sales floor, and returning items left in the fitting rooms. Miranda uses Avail to help her sequence the proper folding and hanging of clothing. When she's unsure how to fold a specific article of clothing, Miranda can refer to Avail rather than her Job Coach or worksite supervisor. Without Avail, she was unable to complete her folding tasks independently. After using it just once, her independence increased to 29%.

She said, "The app has been helping me with the tasks I'm doing at work. I'm still learning and Avail is definitely helping me. It's easy to use and I like it." As Miranda learns and masters her folding tasks, Avail can be used to help her learn additional job duties and, hopefully, advance in her position at American Eagle Outfitters.



## Happy Birthday, Dolores!

Dolores Truxson has been part of the Living Resources family for fifteen years. Her Scodack manager, staff and housemates celebrated her 77th birthday in a big way. For her special day, Dolores was honored with a special birthday sash and crown fit for a queen. Balloons and streamers and all the festive details decorated her home, and of course we can't leave out the birthday cake! We all celebrate Dolores' 77 years of life and wish her many more years to come!





## Building with THE BEST!

**Building with  
THE BEST!**

2021 DSP  
Conference

**Capital Region Winner**

**DAVID LIEBERMAN**

LIVING RESOURCES



"David Lieberman works in our College Experience Program as an Educational Assistant. He is also a graduate of the program. David has an Autism Spectrum Disorder. Despite his disability, or perhaps because of it, David is an ideal Educational Assistant. He draws from his own experiences to help current students with their classes with empathy and understanding. He has an exemplary attitude, is dependable, always happy to help out anywhere he is needed..."

*Nominated by Deneen Palmeter*

**Congratulations** to Living Resources DSP David Lieberman for winning the **NY Alliance's Direct Support Professional Recognition Awards**, representing the Capital Region of NY!

David attended a formal award presentation at their Zoom conference and was given the opportunity for you to say a few words of thanks.

He received a certificate and a gift of thanks from the NYAll. He was chosen for this special honor from more than 175 nominations.

## In Praise of Residence Super Heroes

Janet Daniels called to express her deep gratitude to Living Resources and the staff at our residence in Ulster County for their loving care of her sister Joyce. She praised Tina, Desi, Paula, and Wayne (Big Dog) as well as Theirry, Owen, Nigel and Richie for helping Joyce live her best life.



Janet shared that the Living Resources staff have been Joyce's second family for over twenty years. They have opened up the world for Joyce and helped her work up to her fullest potential. Joyce has thrived in experiencing her greater Ulster County community. She has enjoyed getting out and going "everywhere," relishing sports, particularly basketball at the Boys and Girls Club and bowling. Through her Living Resources staff, she developed her artistic side by painting, coloring, and making necklaces for "everybody and anybody."

Even during the height of the pandemic when getting out into the community was on hold, her Living Resources family kept everyone engaged and happy. Their secret has been in planning and executing as many parties as possible. They celebrate everyone's birthdays, holidays, and even make up reasons to celebrate and be happy.

House manager Tina Marie said, "We didn't let COVID bother us. We stayed happy and celebrated everything we could."

Joyce has thrived in this environment. She is known for her joyful countenance- always giggling, laughing, joking, having fun and making people laugh. She is the life of parties who was always up for singing karaoke and dancing.

Janet thanks Joyce's Living Resources family for the past 20 years of laughter, light, and protection over her sister.



## 2021 ANNUAL APPEAL

**Because of YOU, they are transformed:** That is what Living Resources Brain Injury Services are all about. When a person experiences a brain injury, their life is inevitably changed. Their path to establishing a meaningful post-injury "new Normal" is similar to that of a caterpillar's metamorphosis into a butterfly.



**Because of YOU, they work:** Living Resources' Employment Program provides job coaching and employment services to nearly 200 individuals, helping them to succeed and pursue meaningful career opportunities.



**Because of YOU, they go to college:** Our College Experience program provides young people with an opportunity to go to college in an innovative manner by combining residential, academic, employment and community based programs that allows students to learn and build independence.



**Because of YOU, they are artists:** For nearly 25 years, our art program has been providing high-quality, person-centered art instruction for nearly 150 individuals ranging in age from 9 to 70+. We use a variety of media to promote independence and growth among our many versatile artists.



**Because of YOU, they celebrate at home:** Our residential program provides a home and supportive living to more than 300 individuals throughout the Capital Region. Providing them with the opportunity to live with dignity, happiness, and celebrate life's moments in a place they call home.



**Please donate today.**  
**YOUR contribution** ensures that all are given the opportunity to reach new heights and soar!



**YOU keep our**  **beating!**

**Donate now to our Annual Fund**

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