



Sharing the Journey

November & December 2021

LIVING
RESOURCES

A Message from the Chief Executive Officer



Elizabeth Martin

We entered 2021 with hopes that by the end of the year, we would be unmasked and the Coronavirus would have run its course. Unfortunately, that did not happen. Much like all of us, the virus pivoted and changed in order to remain effective.

What did happen though, is that we all became better change agents. We adapted, recreated, improved and enhanced the way we live, work, and deliver services/supports. We learned that good health should not be taken for granted and that our wish for good health, is not only for ourselves but for all those around us.

I personally learned that I am fortunate to work with a team that refuses to give anything less than 100%. I am exceptionally proud of the Living Resources family and how we have continued to weather this pandemic storm, while also supporting and empowering individuals with disabilities or other life challenging conditions to live with dignity, independence and happiness.

But, we didn't do it alone, we called upon our village to make it happen and you were there!

Each of you plays a pivotal role in the success of Living Resources each day. Whether that role is as an individual, family member, employee, supporter, donor, colleague, vendor, or friend, you were there. You are important, you matter to us, and we appreciate you!

Cheers to a healthier 2022!

2021 Annual Matching Campaign



Beloved Price Chopper employee celebrates 30 years at Wilton store



Local Woman Celebrating 30 Years on the Job

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Keep our



Beating!



Virtual Therapy, Real Results

In these days when stress is high, we all need a little escape. Thanks to a generous grant from CDPHP, Living Resources has purchased a virtual reality platform- software and two headsets- from Psious. Through this technology, we can provide immersive mental health services to individuals with intellectual and developmental disorders.



These innovative sessions use virtual reality to create calming settings, called environments, to bring a deeper awareness of the present moment, while calmly acknowledging and accepting one's feelings, thoughts, and bodily sensations. For example, one environment showed a three dimensional tree swaying in the breeze with leaves gently

falling. Through the program, individuals are prompted to choose a leaf and follow its path to the ground. In this way, they practice breathing deeply, centering, and relaxing.

Once our individuals have more experience with using the technology to experience calming sensations, a licensed mental health professional will be able to use virtual settings to gradually, mindfully confront situations for which they feel fear or anxiety. For example, someone might utilize the environment of an elevator address a fear of closed places. To the best of our knowledge, Living Resources is the only agency in the state that utilizes Virtual Reality Therapy to assist those with intellectual or developmental disabilities.



Assistant Director of Clinical Services Stephanie Fisher said, "We greatly appreciate CDPHP for bringing this innovative technology to us through their grant! Through virtual reality, our individuals are able to have an immersive experience where they can take abstract concepts they learn in group, such as mindfulness and calming exercises, and apply them in a new way. Using virtual reality in individual therapy, they can process what they are thinking and feeling with the therapist in that moment. It ties in all those concepts together."

Spreading Cheer in Ulster County



Ulster County Day Community Opportunities Program groups were spreading cheer, singing loud for all to hear! They went to a local shopping center to sing carols and hand out reindeer candy canes that they created!

They wish everyone Happy Holidays and a Merry Christmas!!!



Loving Her Independent Life



It is not easy to bring the goal of being completely independent into reality. It is a loftier goal when you have an intellectual disability. But Lonika, who graduated from our College Experience program is one determined young lady. She began interning at the Honest Weight Food Co-Op as part of her senior year experience. Craving independence, she walked from her dorm near the College of Saint Rose to the Co-op, a distance of over a mile. She then got to work diligently washing dishes. After a while, she expressed interest in learning other tasks. Her supervisor was very supportive

of this desire and introduced her to a variety of housekeeping jobs, which she learned quickly.

Upon Lonika's graduation from the College Experience in 2019, her solid work ethic and bright personality earned her a part time job offer. According to Food Service Manager Dan Hurlbut, Lonika has shown continual interest in growing. She quickly branched out to food preparation, finishing dishes, making salads, checking in orders, and other essential responsibilities. Her willingness to help out anywhere she was needed was, in Dan's words, "refreshing."



Aided by Living Resources Employment Services, Lonika thrived in the family- like atmosphere of the Co- Op. She easily interacted with everyone in the store, eagerly picking up shifts for her co-workers when they called out. Before long, she had worked herself up to full time hours. Ultimately, Dan decided to make it official, offering her a full time position. Lonika said, "I had to give it some thought. I didn't want to lose my benefits, but my staff helped me see that I would get enough money to pay my rent, food and everything else on my own."

During this process, Lonika discovered that living with a roommate isn't for everyone. Her Living Resources staff helped her to secure an apartment at the Lionheart Residences in Cohoes. In order for this to work, Lonika would have to master a difficult bus routine involving a transfer to a second bus. She said, "It was the thing of remembering how to get to the bus stop and where to get off." Her staff supported her throughout her learning process and the effort was well worth it. Lonika now travels on her own and revels in her independence, saying, "having my own space with peace and quiet feels good." She enjoys listening to music, is learning to cook a wider variety of meals, and recently adopted a kitten named Billie.



Lonika's journey can be summed up by Brazilian soccer player, Pele, who said, "Success is no accident. It is hard work, perseverance, learning, studying, sacrifice and most of all, love of what you are doing or learning to do." Lonika's desire for continual growth, coupled with the support of her Living Resources staff and the inclusive workplace environment of the Honest Weight Food Co-op has helped her to secure a full time job and an apartment of her very own. She is well on her way toward achieving her goal of total independence.



Greeting the Season



The ladies who reside at one of our houses in Schenectady had a fabulous night out at the Schenectady Christmas Parade on the Saturday before Thanksgiving. The women wore matching Santa hats as they enjoyed floats, dancers, and bands. Although it was a cold night, they were thrilled to attend to parade with the rest of their community.

The theme of this year's parade was appropriately "Superheroes." We join in this theme by taking a moment to praise our hard working Superhero staff! Thank you for all you do support and empower individuals with disabilities or other life-challenging conditions to live with dignity, independence, and happiness!



Art Students Create Mural

Our art students were thrilled to be invited to help paint a mural for our new friends, Bring On The Spectrum! It was exciting to watch the BOTS mural being created from start to finish. Thanks to our three artists Denise, Theresa, and TJ for lending their talents to this beautiful piece of art. Theresa was even interviewed for Spectrum News! Thanks to our new friends at BOTS for allowing us to participate in the process. We look forward to more collaborations with Bring On The Spectrum in the future,



Sharing the Sweetness of the Season

Our Day Community Opportunities Program invited all Living Resources staff to send each other tokens of comfort and joy this season through Candy grams. Then, our ever-innovative DCOP Super Heroes guided their participants in the process of creating cheerful holiday crafts with candy attached.



These gifts were cheerfully delivered by eager elves in the week leading up to Christmas. Maria, pictured left, was thrilled to be able to make the rounds and looks forward to the next opportunity to spread a little happiness.

One of our staff members, Lisa, even ordered a Candy gram for her son, Joe, who lives in one of our Residences. She said, "We decided to display the adorable snowman DCOP made along with the printout of the Holiday card from me and my husband to Joe by placing in a frame hanging in Joe's bedroom. We thought it looked so nice and wanted to share."





Deliveries of Christmas Cheer



Some of Santa's elves visited our residences bringing gifts of wreaths and goodies.

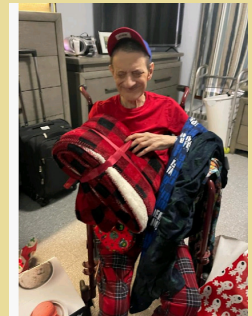
We visited with the individuals and shared our gratitude to the house staff for all the hard work and loving care they give every day of the year.



COVID Can't Stop Christmas

Like many families across the state, our residence in Mahopac had a positive COVID case for Christmas. Our Super Hero staff made sure that Christmas arrived on cue with joy and fanfare as always. "It came! Somehow or other, it came just the same!"

We thank our Direct Support Professionals for making sure that our individuals experience the warmth of the holidays



September to December Memorial Gifts

In Memory Of Emily Durand

Catherine and Peter Butryn

In Honor Of Reed Grontas

Ms. Brenda Szydlo and
Robert White

In Honor Of Cory Henault

Kevin and Kathleen Henault

In Memory Of Stephen M. Iavarone

James Tynan

In Memory Of Clyde Allan Johnson

Kathleen Belmonte
William and Catherine D'Ambro
Jesse Hawkins
Elizabeth Kadatz

In Honor Of David Lieberman

Harold and Valerie Solomon

In Memory Of Dr. Robert Lieberman

Susan Lieberman

In Memory Of Regina Lombardo

Louisa Lombardo and James Dillon

In Honor Of Christopher Long

Traci Cornwell and Kaylle Tedesco

In Memory Of Anthony Maggio

Thomas and Bernadette Bompensiero

In Memory Of Anne Murphy and Kevin O'Brien

Kathleen O'Brien

In Memory Of James Riccardi

Mary Ann Mahoney

In Memory Of Amanda Rivenburg

Ted and Dolores Correll

In Honor Of Laurie Stein

Susan Lieberman

In Memory Of Jeanne Vaill Conboy

Laura and Con Chapman
Christopher and Suzanne Desorbo

In Memory Of Harry & Irma Weiss and Peter Razanousky

Lisa and John Razanousky

In Honor Of Patrick and Taia Younis Family

Craig Breed



In the Christmas Spirit with CAP COM FCU



We enjoyed getting into the holiday spirit with our dear friends from CAP COM Federal Credit Union. This holiday season, they brought a little extra holiday joy to over 100 individuals supported by Living Resources. Using their own funds, this amazing staff reviewed the holiday wish lists, went shopping, and wrapped these beautiful gifts!



We thank each CAP COM staff member for their generosity!

With Gratitude to our Annual Appeal Donors!

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