

Sharing the Journey



March 2022

LIVING
RESOURCES

A Message from the Chief Executive Officer



Elizabeth Martin

Recently, my mom passed away and one of the things that keeps popping into my head is how important it is to live your best life. My mother certainly lived hers, she was a compassionate teacher and leader and together with my father, they taught me the importance of living your best life. My mom taught me that love and laughter often go hand in hand and each day I strive to bring her compassion, intellect, love, and laughter into everything I do.

At Living Resources, it is our mission to support and empower individuals with disabilities and other life challenging conditions to live with dignity, independence, and happiness, in other words, live their best life.

Throughout our newsletters, social media posts, etc., you hear the stories about how those we support are living their best lives. Whether they are cooking at home, checking out the latest venue, volunteering, supporting each other, and getting out in the community, they are out there and they are living life, it is important. Your support allows us to continue to provide these special moments, thank you!

Please remember each day is a gift to be treasured.

Saratoga Trunk
LADY'S FINERY



Benefitting

presents: World Class Racing, World Class Fashion, World Class Causes

A Tribute to Transforming Lives

A Day at the 1863 Club

LIVING
RESOURCES

and

building
on love

DAY AT THE TRACK * FASHION SHOW * BRUNCHEON

Sunday, August 21, 2022

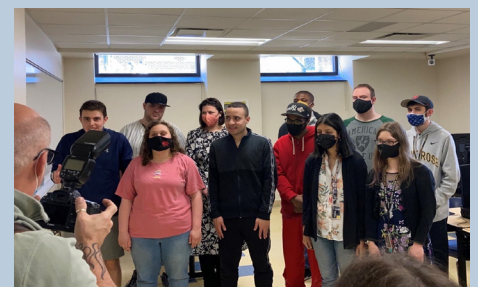
Click here to join!

1863 Club
Saratoga Race Course

Welcome Commissioner Neifeld



We thank NYS OPWDD Commissioner Kerri Neifeld for celebrating Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month with us by visiting our College Experience program at the College of Saint Rose and our Smart Home in Guilderland!

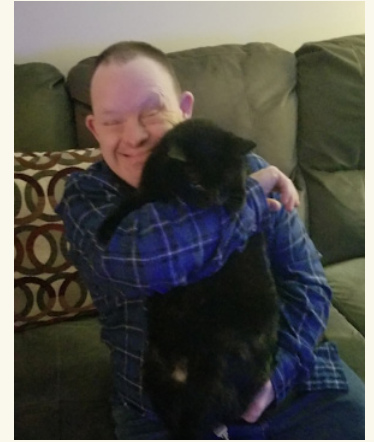




Rocking the Extra Chromosome!

He's a rescuer of animals, community volunteer, staff member, and sports fan, and he's living his best life. In celebration of World Down Syndrome Day, we are pleased to introduce you to Living Resources' very own Brian Bouchey.

Brian has been part of the Living Resources family for 22 years. He lives in a residence in Saratoga with two house-mates and a cat named Brady. Although all in the house enjoy Brady's company, he is Brian's cat, handpicked by Brian from the shelter about 10 years ago. Brian is proud to proclaim their special bond saying "I saved him!" And the feeling is mutual. Of all the humans that Brady interacts with, Brian is clearly his favorite- scratching his door when he wants special cuddles or something to eat.



Brian maintains a very active schedule. Every day he goes to Living Resources' Day Community Opportunity Program (DCOP) where he volunteers at area churches, food pantries, and city missions, and helps make food deliveries for Meals on Wheels. In the summer, he enjoys going to the Saratoga Spa State Park, where he delights in picnics, swimming, and games with his many friends. Currently, his favorite DCOP activity is boxing class. His face exploded with delight as he demonstrated the jabbing actions he has learned.



Being helpful makes Brian feel good. His excitement about helping out around his house paid off, literally, when he became a member of the Living Resources maintenance staff. His job duties include cleaning up the office, emptying the trash, and even shoveling snow.



During his downtime, Brian enjoys going for walks in the neighborhood and drives around the region, if the destination involves food, it's even better! He likes to kick back with a good Bill Paxton movie, (frequently quoting "Titanic" and "Twister") listening to Bon Jovi, and watching the Giants lose. A true fan of the G-Men, he laughs and says "Maybe Next year."

Brian cherishes his family time with his brother Steve and sister Barbara, who both live locally. Steve said, "Brian loves \$5 bills. He will always ask whenever I see him 'Steve, you got five bucks?'" This often leads to a road trip to spend all that cash. Laughter and music abound when Barb is around. A sisterly nudge is all it takes for Brian to become animated and sing karaoke.

We are thrilled to support and encourage Brian to greet every day with dignity, independence, and happiness and look forward to the adventures we will share in the years to come.

World Down Syndrome Day



March 21





Cycling for Creativity



Calling Ed Brennan an avid cyclist is an understatement. Ed has been using his vacation breaks to attempt a solo cycling journey from the Northeast corner of the States to the Southeast tip. As of 2021 he had succeeded in pedaling from Maine to Washington, D.C. Last September, Ed planned on taking Amtrak to D.C. and riding his bike from there through North Carolina.

Hurricane Ida wiped out train travel, so Ed pedaled from his Albany home to Southeast Virginia.



Now, Ed is back to finish what he started. He will begin in Williamsburg, Virginia, on April 1, 2022, he aims to reach his destination of Key West, Florida by early-May. His journey is self-supported and self-directed, meaning that there is no nearby assistance, oversight, or set directions apart from Ed's own will.



The only thing more expansive than his will to complete this quest is his love for his daughter, Kelsey. A 33-year-old woman with developmental disabilities, Kelsey, is a member of the Living Resources family. She lives in one of our residences, attends our Site-Based Day Program, and takes classes in our Arts Program.

Ed has decided to metaphorically bring Kelsey along with him to complete his journey, dedicating this leg of his journey to raising awareness of Living Resources and our Arts Program. He is encouraging people to sponsor him by the mile and accepting straight donations- all proceeds benefit Living Resources.

Donate through our link <https://bit.ly/3uFWsaL> or by check made payable to:
Living Resources Foundation/ Cycling For Creativity
300 Washington Avenue Extension, Albany, NY 12203

Follow Ed's journey on our Facebook Events page! <https://fb.me/e/2Z4mrBA6F>

Please join us in supporting Ed's Journey!

To sponsor Ed by the mile for any distance you choose,

CLICK HERE

If you would like to Sponsor Ed by state, some suggestions include;

North Carolina - \$478

South Carolina \$307

Georgia \$162

Florida \$586

College Experience In the News



We thank Spectrum News for helping us celebrate #DevelopmentalDisabilityAwarenessMonth with a fabulous segment about our College Experience Program! Living Resources is proud to be able to provide diverse educational pathways to individuals with developmental disabilities at The College of Saint Rose through our College Experience Program.

CLICK HERE TO WATCH



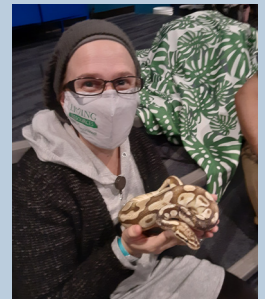
Women Supporting Women to Conquer Fears

A fun trip to the Aquarium became an opportunity for encouragement and empowerment from the sisterhood. A few years ago, Daryllyn Ward, a staff member of Living Resources' Albany Supportive Living Program started a women's group with her ladies, giving them an opportunity to talk about their struggles and support each other. Since then, Daryllyn, who is now the program's Residential Habilitation Manager has noticed a growing bond between the participants and increased confidence within each of them.



Alice suggested that the group visit the VIA Aquarium to see the stingrays up close, so Alice and Jessica took off with Daryllyn for an afternoon "Under the Sea." When they approached the stingray touch tank, Jessica noticed that Alice was feeling apprehensive. Jessica had experience with the stingray tank and demonstrated holding her relaxed hand near the top of the tank. Stingrays swam just under her hand, rubbing against it as they passed by. After a while, Alice became comfortable enough to try. When she did, she delighted in feeling the stingrays' soft, smooth bodies dance under her hand.

Jessica shared that her own anxiety was a bit high at that moment but, "Instead of feeling anxious, I started feeling happy knowing I was being a good support." Alice was grateful for Jessica's encouragement. She said, "It feels good knowing I have such a good friend who could help me overcome my fear." Daryllyn couldn't have been prouder of their ability to work through the moment together. She was honored to step back and watch the magic of the sisterhood unfold.



Daryllyn felt empowered by Jessica's support of Alice at the stingray tank and decided to follow her example by holding a snake! To learn more, Go to www.livingresources.org/women-supporting-women-to-conquer-their-fears/

Part of the Family

"The purpose of life is not to be happy, but to matter – to be productive, to be useful, to have it make some difference that you have lived at all." – Leo Rosten



A group from our Day Community Opportunities Program relishes being productive and making a difference at the Main Street Community Center in Windham NY. They spend 2-3 hours a day, a few days a week helping organize activities and doing housekeeping. One favorite activity to assist is BINGO. The unique talents of our individuals shine as one person selects a ball with the number and letter, another reads it and a third announces it to the group with conviction. Rachael said, "I enjoy doing bingo and making cards." Aryiana agreed, saying, "I love the community center, I love helping Deb do stuff."

Once, the group helped assemble a miniature picnic table for squirrels using wood cut-outs and allen wrenches. They then put birdseed on the table attracting birds and squirrels and watched nature's beauty unfold. Matt said "I like feeding the birds and chipmunks. I like to watch them eat while I eat."

Volunteer Coordinator Deborah shared that our group makes a lovely addition to the community center, saying, "they are more than volunteers; they are part of the family."

Volunteering is Good for the HEART

Our Day Community Opportunity Program (DCOP) participants of Saratoga and Warren County love volunteering at the Open Door City Mission in Glens Falls, NY. Our teams have been volunteering there every week for many years, enthusiastically spending time in the kitchen performing sous-chef activities, serving food to guests of the mission, wrapping food for storage, and cleaning dishes. They have also become experts at COVID cleaning and disinfecting protocols, tackling common areas such as the dining room and restrooms.



Our individuals quickly became a welcome part of the Open Door Community. Lynn Figura, Open Door's Volunteer and Community Relations Manager said, "I love this partnership we have nurtured- it is so important to us, the folks we serve and, I believe, to those served by Living Resources."

Our DCOP participants are thrilled with the partnership, saying that volunteering at Open Door is the highlight of their week. Lynda said, "It's awesome because we make relationships with the people and

the other volunteers. They don't think of us having a disability." Charlie agreed, saying, "I like coming to the kitchen because I know I'm helping others." Katie added, "I like knowing I'm helping others." Toby said, "The Open Door Mission is fun because there are so many different things to do and learn while we are there."



Living Resources' is dependent on the collaboration of a supportive community to provide environments where they can thrive. We are happy that The Open Door City Mission is part of our family and we are part of theirs!

Breaking Barriers at Bring On The Spectrum

We were thrilled to participate in Bring On The Spectrum's grand opening on Friday, March 4! Participants of our Day Community Opportunity Program and art programs got to test drive the equipment in the sensory gym, paint, play games, and even take part in a small group exercise class.

The Formal Grand Opening ceremony included comments from Bring on the Spectrum's founder Lisa Audi, OPWDD Commissioner Kerri Neifeld, NY State Assemblyperson Angelo Santabarbara, Colonie Town Supervisor, Peter Crummey, and Living Resources Assoc. Executive Director, Jennifer Richard. The ceremony culminated when some of our participants officially opened the gym in spectacular fashion- by breaking through the golden wrapping paper that was covering the door.



Bring on the Spectrum is a brand new, 6,000 square foot community space & sensory gym providing social, recreational, and lifestyle activities for neurodiverse children, teens, and adults. Our individuals are excited that this facility is open and available for them to enjoy themselves, be themselves, and experience community!



Cooking Class Takes the Cake!

A delightful aroma and the sounds of excited voices alerted us to their presence- the Schenectady Day Community Opportunity Program (DCOP) cooking group had arrived at Living Resources Main Office. While they usually enjoy the warm hospitality of the kitchen at Schenectady's First United Methodist Church, the church had been unavailable for a few weeks so the group was flexible and changed their location.



Our Schenectady DCOP foodies always look forward to cooking day, enjoying every step in the process. Since there are four participants in this group, each member chooses one recipe a month for the group prepare and enjoy. The week before they make a given recipe, they plan a shopping list together. On cooking day, the group makes a trip to the supermarket. They

are prepared for important decision making since they have to stay within a \$25 budget. If they plan well enough and make thrifty choices, they can pick out ingredients for a special treat, such as last week's cookie sandwiches.

Once in the kitchen, they excitedly set up their supplies and begin working on their chosen tasks. Everyone plays a critical part in the preparation of the meal. When making Robbie's chosen entree of quesadillas, Shawayna pulled the meat off the rotisserie chicken while Vinique cut the vegetables. Robbie added the cheese and beans and Nadine cooked the rice.

While working, the group shared some of the safety rules they have learned. Robbie instructed, "never leave a knife in a sink. If someone else goes into the sink, they could cut themselves." Vinique demonstrated how to walk while carrying a knife, saying, "Walk with it down because if you walk with it up, somebody could whack into you."

The best part of the day is in the reveal and this group had a lot on their plate, in the best of possible ways. Everyone was thrilled to pause for photos with their culinary masterpieces. The meal hit the spot. Robbie nodded and proclaimed his quesadilla as "good."

The participants enjoy their session, soup to nuts. While Vinique enjoys finding out about new healthy recipes and Nadine said "I just like to cook," the joy of the group is not just about the food. Vinique said the magic of the group is in its leader. "We have our beautiful Kristen! When I was going through hard times with COVID, she was there to uplift and make everything better. She puts a smile on everybody's face." Kristen paused for a moment to absorb the heart felt words. She then shared that she enjoys reviewing each day's activities with her group. "They tell me, 'we had a really great day!' and I say 'I KNOW! We really DID have a great day!'" Nadine added, "Because we're fun!"



www.LivingResources.org

Click [HERE](#) to read February's Newsletter

Click [HERE](#) to Unsubscribe

