

Sharing the Journey



April 2022

LIVING
RESOURCES

A Message from the Chief Executive Officer



Elizabeth Martin

April is Autism Awareness Month, or as I like to refer to it, Autism Acceptance Month - a campaign that highlights the many ways in which people with and without disabilities come together to form strong, diverse communities.

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. We celebrate Autism Acceptance every day by increasing awareness about how the individuals we support thrive in welcoming communities in our region. We are fortunate and thankful to have strong community partners that encourage environments where our individuals know that they are accepted and appreciated for all the gifts they possess.

As you read through this newsletter, we hope you share in the joy we feel when you read how the individuals we support are living their best lives. Your support allows us to continue to provide these special moments and we thank you!

WooHoo!

A huge shout out to our friends
and family at

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FINANCIAL GROUP, Ltd.

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A Tribute to Transforming Lives

A Day at the 1863 Club

Benefitting

LIVING
RESOURCES

and



DAY AT THE TRACK * FASHION SHOW * BRUNCHEON

Sunday, August 21, 2022

Click here to
Join!

1863 Club
Saratoga Race Course

April Showers Bring May Flowers

Spring is the time of year when everything grows and blooms to its fullest potential. At Living Resources, we want to plant a garden of hope as we support more than 1,900 individuals with disabilities every year to grow to their fullest potential. We are reaching out to YOU, our family and friends, asking YOU to join us by investing in our services and programs, planting these seeds of hope so our individuals can live as independently as possible.

From our hearts to yours, may your Spring be filled with hope, happiness, and growth.

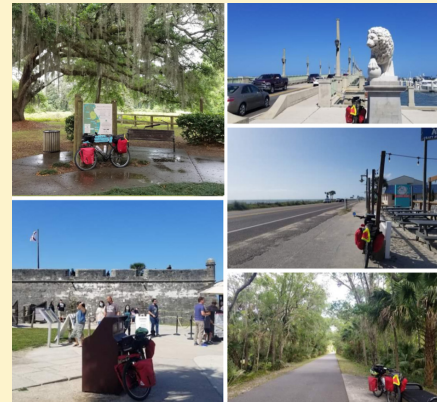
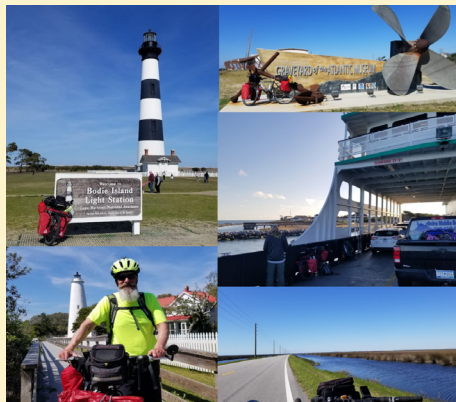
Click here to Donate:
<https://bit.ly/3MurHwz>



Cycling for Creativity

Ed Brennan, father to our supported individual Kelsey has been on a quest to raise funds for Living Resources while solo bicycling from Williamsburg, Virginia to Key West.

He has been giving us updates along his route which have been posted on our social media pages.



Thanks to all who have supported this campaign!

Rachelle and Phil Aron
Robert and Bonita Bailey
Edward Brennan
Salvatore and Veronica Casano
Mary Chen and Yong Li
Amy Cohen
Paul and Phyllis Cooney
Jean Corlew
Loretta and Michael Darcy
Michael and Norine Durkin
Roland Eberhard
Arthur Ferguson
Mike and Deborah Gilligan
Bryan Goldberger

Elizabeth Goodman
Matthew and Barbara Heineman
Timothy and Audra Higgins
Mark and Jane Levine
Paul and Dale Lukatschat
Mark Maniak and Margaret Bye
Peter and Patricia Ann Menditto
Phillip and Frances Nardi
Bernard Noonan
DJ Panetta and Susan Schell
Robert and Laura Rapp
Therese Rowcroft
Patrick Saum
Jeanine and Pete Scavullo

Norman Shenton
Frederick and Sylvia Sievers
Justin Smith
Barbara Soldani
Dr. Richard J. Steitzer and Kimberly Steitzer
Jean & Larry Teal
Clifford and Charlynn Tryon
Rosemary Vara
J. Carlos "Shawn" Viana
Joan Vroman
Thomas and Mary Ellen Windish
Lorenz Worden

Spring in Full Bloom



Spring was definitely in the air as individuals who reside in one of our homes in Schenectady County recently took an amazing road trip to the Brooklyn Botanic Gardens. Staff and individuals alike basked in the tranquil environment, taking in the warmth of the day and delighting in the rich colors and beauty of nature.

Together they enjoyed their packed lunches and this delightful day trip.



Making His Own Path



Christopher Curren is enjoying his college years- attending classes, working, and enjoying a full social life, but his educational journey was different from many of his peers. Christopher was diagnosed with autism when he was 18 months old after his parents noticed that he and his twin brother Daniel were progressing at different rates. He benefitted from early intervention and special education preschool before attending public school in Voorheesville. His mother Kathy said that he thrived in that “love bubble” where Chris was warmly regarded as the “mayor.” His passion for sports was nourished by a community that welcomed him, not only as an integral part of the football team where he became both manager and chief motivator, but as a ball boy for the girls’ varsity soccer team.

As Chris grew, it became apparent that his educational needs would be better served by the South Colonie High School’s work-based learning program. He set off to the much bigger school environment where the combination of classroom learning and internships provided him with more opportunities for challenges and growth. Here, Christopher joined Best Buddies and discovered the joy of playing sports on the school’s Unified team.

When Chris’s twin brother was accepted into college, it seemed like their paths would truly diverge. While Daniel made plans to attend Springfield College for sports journalism and communications, Chris feared he would be left behind. He lamented, “I was getting too old to stay at Colonie.” That’s when his parents researched higher educational opportunities for Christopher and found the perfect fit. Living Resources’ College Experience is a residential non-credit certificate program designed for students with developmental disabilities and hosted by The College of Saint Rose.



Now a College Experience senior, Chris enjoys learning about cooking, personal finance, and health and wellness. He did an internship at Empire Wine Warehouse where he assembled wine sleeves and boxes, among other activities. Always ready for something more challenging, he recently started working at McCarroll’s Village Butcher in Delmar where he can be found in the kitchen doing food prep or enjoying the fruits of his labor by purchasing a delicious breakfast sandwich.



In his spare time, Chris is excited to partake in the many social events that take place on campus and in the surrounding area. He recently attended Albany’s annual St. Patrick’s Day Parade with fellow College Experience students and had a blast!

Chris will graduate from the College Experience, attending the College of Saint Rose graduation ceremony this May. As a true “lifelong learner,” he plans to return for a post graduate year at College Experience this fall. As his mother said, “The kid’s a rock star. We just follow his lead!”





Life and Love on the Spectrum

Live every day like it was your birthday- Paris Hilton



Who loves monster trucks, the Yankees, spending quiet time with his wife, and recently celebrated his 66th birthday? This guy!

Norman Steves, who has autism, has been part of the Living Resources family for 20 years. His recent birthday was filled with so much awesomeness; it couldn't be contained to one day! On the last day of his 65th year, his care coordinator stopped by with ice cream and toppings so the whole house could enjoy sundaes. Then, on his big day, Norman chose to celebrate with an old-fashioned pizza party. He requested pepperoni pizza and breadsticks from Little Caesars and chose a vanilla cake with white icing for dessert. His staff surprised him

with gifts of movies, gift cards, a watch, and cologne. And the fun will continue with a date night at Delmonicos in the near future.

Norman is an active self-advocate and member of his community. Going to church is very important to him- he is an active member of the Mohawk Valley Church of Christ where Living Resources staff member Vinessa takes him to Sunday services and a fellow congregation member takes him to bible studies. In his younger days, Norman maintained a job at Hannaford on Wolf Road, traveling there and back independently by bus. He said, "I did bagging in the front end for 20 years and got a jacket for that."

Although he got much satisfaction in his work, retirement had its own rewards. Norman began attending Living Resources' Day Community Opportunities Program where he met the love of his life, Donna Marie. Norman remembers, "She sat at the table by me. She was very nice to me." His house supervisor Muneera shared, "Their relationship grew into something very beautiful." After nurturing their relationship for two years, Norman and Donna Marie tied the knot in September 2019. Their respective staff members got together to host a commitment celebration with all the bells and whistles. On a picture-perfect day, Norman and Donna celebrated their love by exchanging rings and vows during a beautiful ceremony witnessed by friends and family. Afterward, they celebrated with a catered dinner, wedding cake, and a D.J. for dancing.



They decided to continue living in separate houses, but that doesn't hinder their relationship in the least. The lovebirds continue to speak on the phone twice a day and see each other every Saturday night. Norman said, "I just like being with her. I sit there and look at her, she has nice earrings. When it's time to leave, sometimes I give her a kiss on the cheek, she likes that. Then, I call her to tell her I got home OK."

Norm has everything most people could only dream of – he has had a fulfilling career, is happy in his retirement, is loved and in love, and looks forward to the adventures of tomorrow. He is living his best life.





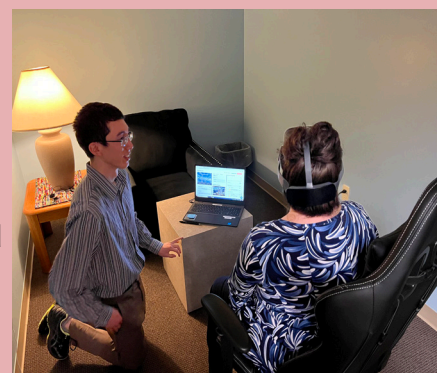
Welcome Shiela Brazie



We were delighted to host our NYS Office for Persons With Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) regional office team leader, Sheila Brazie at our main office in early April. She came to have a firsthand experience of the virtual reality (VR) platform we are pioneering to augment our behavioral health services for individuals living with intellectual/developmental disabilities. The VR program was developed by Psious and purchased last year through a grant from CDPHP.

Ms. Brazie was given an immersive experience of a mindfulness environment followed by a full review of the platform, including evaluation tools and summaries of the progress our clients are making. While here, she also learned more about our Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) group where we guide our individuals in learning to live in the moment, develop healthy ways to cope with stress, regulate their emotions, and improve their relationships with others.

Ms. Brazie was impressed by our unique use of the combination of VR and DBT as an innovative approach to promoting resiliency and skills needed to navigate daily challenges and manage anxiety related to day-to-day stressors. Later this month, we will be giving a presentation on the exciting use of these therapies at the NY Alliance for Inclusion and Innovation's Annual Conference.



January - April 2022 Memorial Gifts

In Honor Of Judy Blood

Kimberly and Robert Rogers

In Memory Of Jean Brennan

Edward Connolly

In Honor Of Len Bush

Jackie Lieberman

In Honor Of Fredrick Erlich

Aaron Lieberman

In Honor Of Emily Hickey

Elaine and Dan Hickey

In Honor Of Mohonasen Asp Staff

Elaine and Dan Hickey

In Honor Of Rob O'Donnell Manual PT Associates

Brea Garahan

In Memory Of Eileen "Cookie" Pierce

George Deyo

Mary Leist

Gabrielle Michalski

Mary Ellen O Connor

Kathleen Rankin

Jeffery and Carol Tymann

John and Mary Ellen Walsh

In Honor Of Dan Ritzenberg

Aaron Ritzenberg

In Honor Of Jesse Saperstein

Ilene Chouinard

Tara Fappiano

Albert W Johnson

Susan Lieberman

Alison Miller

Stacy Scheile

Maureen Zupan

In Memory Of Harry & Irma Weiss and Peter Razanousky John and Lisa Razanousky



College Experience Senior Spotlight

In continuing our series highlighting our College Experience Seniors, we present Anthony, Kendall, Bridget, Jacob, and Chez!



Anthony is interning at Grrreen Dog Daycare where he has been training and cleaning up after the dogs for the past two semesters. He says his favorite class in CEP has been Historical Figures, and that he's excited to head to Transitions next year and live with a fellow CEP alum.

Kendall is currently interning at Schools Out where she helps with games and cleaning. Kendall says she has loved learning how to be more independent and cooking healthy meals for herself through CEP's hands-on cooking class. She is also a member of the St. Rose Golden Knights Dance Team! Next year Kendall will head to Transitions.

Bridget is interning at Tendercare Child Center where she helps take care of the babies and toddlers, changing their diapers, and feeding them. Bridget has already been offered a position to work there after graduation in May! Bridget says she has learned a lot in CEP and is happy to be taking a Learners Permit elective to help her obtain her permit.

Jacob is interning at FYE this semester after interning at Zombie Planet comic book store last semester. Jacob helps put inventory out on shelves like Funko Pop collectibles, DVDs, and clothing. He says his favorite CEP class is Community Involvement because he likes to learn about what's going on in the community of Albany. Next year Jacob will be back here to explore more internships.

Chez is in his second semester interning at Honest Weight Food Co-Op where he does housekeeping, stocking, and fronting items. He says one of his favorite CEP classes is Current Events and likes spending his time listening to music. Next year, Chez will be headed to our Transitions program.

LIVING
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PRESENTS

DAY SERVICES AWARDS

FRIDAY, JUNE 3, 2022

We would be honored if you would join us as we recognize some of the wonderful achievements of the participants from our Day Services programs.

11AM - 2PM
ELM AVENUE PARK
LARGE PAVILION
261 ELM AVENUE
DELMAR, NY 12054

