

MESSAGE FROM THE CEO



Elizabeth Martin

As I look back on memories made during Thanksgiving dinner and start to get into the holiday spirit that December brings, I find myself reflecting on all that I am thankful for during this season of giving.

I am thankful for all of the direct support professionals and other staff members who make Living Resources the incredible agency that it is. They work so hard, with such care and passion. This month, I attended a rally held at the State Capitol and stood side-by-side with so many others, demanding that Governor Kathy Hochul pay attention to the urgent need for more funding for organizations that support individuals with disabilities across New York. The work that DSPs do is so so wide-reaching, so valuable, and so impactful, they deserve to earn a living wage. I won't

stop fighting until they do. I am also thankful for all of the individuals and their families who put their faith and trust in us, day in and day out.

Finally, I'm thankful for the many people and organizations that support our cause, helping to make it possible for us to truly meet individuals where they are and support them as they pursue a future of their choosing. As we embark on the season of giving, I humbly ask that you consider supporting our Annual Appeal. Every dollar counts and is deeply appreciated. I wish you a wonderful holiday season!

OUR 2023 ANNUAL APPEAL IS UNDERWAY

Your Support Is Key To Our Heart!

Because of **YOU**,
they have a creative
outlet...



Because of **YOU**,
they work at careers
they choose...

Scan, Click, or Visit
livingresources.org
To Donate

Because of **YOU**,
they achieve new levels
of independence...

Because of **YOU**,
they explore, learn,
and volunteer...

Thank
you!

Because of **YOU**,
they attend college...





20 WONDERFUL YEARS OF GROWTH WITH LIVING RESOURCES



Friends new and old recently gathered at the Regency Park Apartments to celebrate a meaningful milestone in Alice Brocci's life. Alice has been receiving supportive services from Living Resources for 20 years and chose to celebrate with everyone who has supported her over those two decades.

Alice's Living Resources journey started with our Day Community Opportunities Program in Rensselaer County when she was 21 and living at home. She then took part in The College Experience, moving into the dorms and learning new skills.

Next, it was on to enjoying her own apartment with the assistance of our Supportive Living Program. Each step brought her new levels of independence. Reflecting on just how far she's come, Alice said, "I've made a lot of progress. I was really quiet and had bad anxiety. I had a hard time speaking up for myself." Direct Support Professionals helped her gain confidence, practicing self-advocacy skills in small groups and in real-life situations. Alice is proud that she is now able to do her own laundry, cook healthy meals, and is happily employed at McDonalds.



Since 1974, Living Resources has been dedicated to supporting and empowering individuals with disabilities or other life-challenging conditions to live with dignity, independence, and happiness. We cannot do it alone! When friends like YOU embrace our mission and become our partners, YOU guarantee that individuals like Alice live their most independent life!



Click or scan to donate to our Annual Appeal!



We are deeply grateful for any and all support!



LIVING RESOURCES GETS LOUD!



Rousing chants of “Three point two!,” “Invest in Me!,” and “No Staff, No Services” echoed from the war room into Governor Kathy Hochul’s office at the Capitol building in Albany. Disability advocates from across New York gathered on Wednesday, November 15 to make their voices heard and demand that the Intellectual/Developmental Disability (I/DD) community be made a priority in the next state budget.

Dozens of members of the Living Resources family, from leadership team members and direct support professionals (DSPs) to supported individuals and family members, were among the hundreds of people wearing orange, holding up signs, and listening to speakers.

Senator Jake Ashby (R-Castleton), Assemblymember John McDonald (D-Cohoes), Assemblymember Mary Beth Walsh (R- Ballston), Assemblymember Patricia Fahy (D-Albany), and Former Assemblymember Tom Abinanti (D-Pleasantville) spoke before the crowd, pledging that they will continue to be allies in the fight for increased wages and added supports for agencies and DSPs across New York.



The event was organized by New York Disabilities Advocates (NYDA). Organizers say more rallies are being planned in the months ahead and our Living Resources team plans to be there, to continue our advocacy efforts. To keep up to date on future events, follow our Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter pages.



Top Advocacy Items

- 3.2% Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) in reimbursement rates to help keep up with inflation
- Direct Support Wage Enhancements (DSWE) to help us give meaningful pay raises to DSPs

FUNDRAISING PROFESSIONAL OF THE YEAR



A well-deserved congratulations goes out to Deneen Palmateer, our Associate Director of Communications, Development, and Community Engagement! Deneen was recently honored as Fundraising Professional of the Year by the Hudson-Mohawk chapter of the Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP) at its annual Philanthropy Day Awards.

The AFP is a leading organization focused on nurturing the spirit of giving through seminars, mixers, job banks, and more. Each year, the chapter’s board and members nominate and vote for individuals, groups, and organizations that make impactful contributions in their communities and pave the way for future philanthropic endeavors. We appreciate your dedication, Deneen!





TALENTS TAKE CENTER STAGE



Participants in the Rensselaer County Day Community Opportunities Program (DCOP) wowed with their singing, dancing, and hula-hooping skills at a spectacular talent show! About a month’s worth of practice and preparation went into the applause-inspiring acts.

Musical selections ranged from pop-hits like Shania Twain’s “From This Moment On,” Mariah Carey’s “Honey,” and Shawn Mendez’s “Stitches” to holiday standards like “The Thanksgiving Song” and “Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer.” Rensselaer DCOP manager Amanda Doty says, “They really stepped out of their comfort zone and put their hearts into it.”



A MONUMENTAL MARATHON



Dora Butner, a 2021 graduate of The College Experience, took her grit and determination to the New York City Marathon on Sunday, November 5 and finished the 26.2 mile long race with a time of five hours and 49 minutes! That is a feat that those outside of the running-world can hardly dream of!

“The best part was crossing the finish line,” Dora shares, “It felt really good. There were more hills than I expected. I knew it was going to be tough, but I didn’t expect it to be as tough as it was. For the first 10 miles, I was just running. Then, I walked, then ran, then walked and ran again for the rest.”

To gain entry to the marathon, Dora collected donations to City Harvest, a non-profit that salvages food that would have gone to waste and delivers it to those in need in New York City. Dora ended up surpassing her fundraising goal and stood at the starting line having raised \$3,946! Dora says the best part of The College Experience was the friendships she made and many of those friends contributed to the success of her marathon fundraising campaign.

Congratulations on your athletic achievement, Dora. We are so impressed and inspired!





GALA FOR A GREAT CAUSE: SUPPORTING THE PRIDE CENTER



Living Resources was thrilled to be on the honorary committee for The Pride Center of the Capital Region’s 2023 Gala, which took place on Friday, November 17 at the Franklin Plaza in Troy. Devena Pressram, Living Resources’ Assistant Director of Administration, and Jesse Saperstein, The College Experience’s Media and Activities Liaison, were there for all of the delicious food, music, and of course, drag entertainment. The event was hosted by former RuPaul’s Drag Race contender Thorgy Thor.

Devena says the gala was inspirational, adding that, “Being present in a public setting where selfhood was highly promoted made me reflect on what we can do to replicate that here at Living Resources.” Both Devena and Jesse are part of Living Resources’ DEI Committee. Jesse says, “Attending the Pride Gala was an experience that I shall never forget and would happily welcome again! We have come a long way since the days when being ‘out’ was a certain lifelong sentence for ridicule, shunning, and even violence. At the Pride Gala, I learned that circumstances are still far from perfect, despite our progressive times. If people are still holding onto ancient prejudices, and toxic stereotypes, they should come to the party of a lifetime with the LGBTQ+ community!”



FROM CUSTOMER TO COMPANION: SHAPING A SHOPPING PLAZA SUPPORT SYSTEM

Kyle has learned he can build community and find a support system wherever he goes. He lives at a supervised Living Resources residence, but the Hannaford Plaza on Wolf Road in Albany has become a home-away-from-home. Lee, the owner of Capitol Cleaners, says his friendship with Kyle started quite literally with a bang. He was in his shop when all of a sudden Kyle ran in and told him, “Somebody hit your van!”



Sure enough, an accident had happened and thanks to Kyle’s alert, Lee was able to talk with the person responsible. Their friendship grew from there and now Lee thinks of Kyle just like one of the family. Lee invited Kyle over for s’mores and brought him back a T-shirt from a vacation to Maine. “He’s a good guy,” Lee shares, “We just bonded.”

“He knows who his people are,” says Emmy, manager at Bruegger’s Bagels. Kyle comes into the shop almost every day, so the entire staff has gotten to know him. They are always ready to lend an ear or share some advice. Kyle likes to share fun stories with his Bruegger’s friends and also ask advice when something is bothering him. “You never know what is going on in someone’s life and day and it’s not our place to judge,” explains Emmy, “It’s our place to serve our customers and make their day better.”



With support from Living Resources and advice from his friends in the community, Kyle is now getting ready to achieve new independence by moving from a supervised residence to a supportive residence. This means he will be living in his own apartment and exploring his new environment with support and encouragement from his Living Resources staff. He’s already started taking the bus on his own! While the workers on Wolf Road are happy for him and excited for his future, they hope his visits will continue and the relationships they’ve formed will remain just as strong. “He always says to me, ‘You make me happy,’” says Lee, “It makes me feel good to hear him say that.”



GIVING THANKS



The spirit of gratitude filled hearts and great food filled stomachs at the Brain Injury Program’s Annual Thanksgiving Celebration, held on Friday, November 17. Staff shared that the program is growing, and as socialization is a key component of the program, they were excited that more people than ever came together to enjoy a meal.



Every seat in the cafetorium was filled with program participants, their family, friends, and Living Resources staff members. All of the classic Thanksgiving fare was accounted for, like turkey, cranberry sauce, and mashed potatoes. Much of the feast was prepared by Living Resources staff, but participants and their families also brought dishes to share.

One by one, participants in the program spoke before the crowd about what they are thankful for. Andrew says that he is thankful for his parents, and everyone who stayed by his side during the bad times. “With patience and understanding, I was able to get back on my feet,” he shared, “My ultimate goal is to go back and do what I was doing before I got sick.”



Other speakers shared how thankful they are for the doctors, service coordinators, and other people who helped them get to where they are today. Jorelle is grateful for her family as well as all of the people she’s gotten to know through the Brain Injury Program. She says, “They are like my second family.”



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