



## SHARING THE JOURNEY



ELIZABETH MARTIN, CEO

### A MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO

This month marks an exciting moment for Living Resources as we officially launch our refreshed organizational values, a reflection of who we are, what we believe, and how we show up each day for the people we serve and support. These values were shaped by input from across our community and are designed to guide our decisions, culture, and mission as we grow.

While each value is essential, as we close out a month of celebrating Pride and enter July, Disability Pride Month, we are proud to lift up two that resonate deeply: Advocacy and Inclusion.

Advocacy is not just part of our mission, it is the spirit that drives us. Whether we are amplifying the voices of those with intellectual and developmental disabilities, promoting inclusive practices in the workplace, or engaging with policymakers to strengthen support systems, we believe that change begins when we stand up, speak out, and lift others.

Inclusion is about creating spaces where everyone belongs. As we honor Pride Month and prepare to celebrate Disability Pride Month, we reaffirm our commitment to ensuring that people of all identities feels safe, respected, and valued within the Living Resources family. This is more than a statement; it's a daily practice, one grounded in empathy, respect, and humanity. Our full list of refreshed values is included in this newsletter, and I invite you to read them, reflect on them, and carry them forward in your work and your life. Together, we are building not just a stronger organization, but a more inclusive, compassionate, and just world.

Thank you for being a vital part of this journey.

## A DAY OF LEARNING, CONNECTION, AND HEALING



The recent BIANYS conference was a special experience for our Acquired Brain Injury (ABI) Program members. They felt seen and valued, especially after a resonant session on navigating "emotional storms." It was also great to see them reconnect with fellow TBI survivors, strengthening their support network. Despite narrow, vendor-lined hallways (compensated by freebies!), the BIANYS staff were incredibly kind and responsive.





## WE'VE UPDATED OUR AGENCY VALUES

At Living Resources, we've always had a special job: to help people with disabilities live with dignity, independence, and purpose. And, over the past 50+ years, we've grown and we're helping more people than ever before, in many new ways. Our team is getting bigger, our programs are growing, and the world around us keeps changing. So, we asked ourselves an important question: Do our current values still align with who we are and who we want to be?

The answer was: **It was time for a refresh!**

After months of soliciting feedback from leadership, staff, supported individuals, family members, community leaders, and supporters, we're excited to share our refreshed core values. These updated values better reflect who we are and more clearly align with our strategic goals, acting as a guide as we move forward together. Our refreshed values are clear, strong, and focus on what's most important: people.

## REFRESHED CORE VALUES:



### ADVOCACY

We champion the rights, goals, and voices of those we support and the staff who provide that support. Our team ensures everyone is heard, valued, and empowered to reach their full potential.



### COLLABORATION

We thrive on teamwork, strengthening each other to achieve shared goals. Through mentorship, open communication, and mutual support, we create a culture where everyone can succeed.



### EMPOWERMENT

We promote confidence, independence, and self-determination. Our staff support personal and professional growth, fostering dignity and autonomy for those we serve. Through professional development, we ensure continuous improvement across the agency.



## WE'VE UPDATED OUR AGENCY VALUES



### EXCELLENCE

We are dedicated to continuous improvement and delivering high-quality services. Our staff embrace change and innovation to enhance support and create meaningful outcomes.



### INCLUSIVITY

We cultivate a welcoming environment where everyone feels respected, valued, and included in conversations, activities, and decisions. Our staff embrace equity to ensure a sense of belonging for all, regardless of differences.



### INTEGRITY

We act with honesty, transparency, and accountability. Our staff take ownership of their work, aligning actions with our mission and values.



### KINDNESS

We prioritize care, compassion, and respect in every interaction, fostering a culture of positivity and support for those we serve and our team.

## WHY OUR REFRESHED VALUES MATTER!

Each of you are part of a mission that's deeply human. These refreshed values ensure that every decision we make continues to reflect the heart of our work.

By putting advocacy, inclusivity, and empowerment front and center, we're reaffirming our promise to champion the dignity and independence of every individual we support. These values will also guide how we grow. As our programs expand and evolve, you can be confident we're staying grounded in principles that prioritize people, community, and continuous improvement.

As one team, we are united in building a future where empathy, teamwork, and inclusion thrive.



# A Tribute to Transforming Lives

A Day at the 1863 Club • Saratoga Race Course

Sunday, August 17, 2025

*Presented by*



*Benefitting*



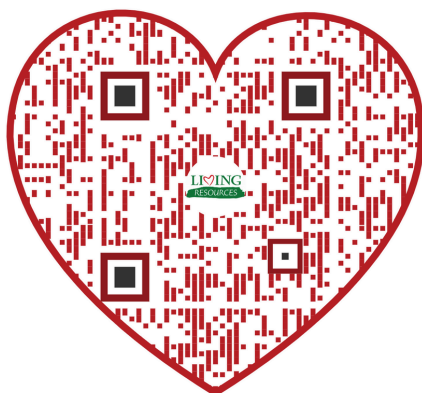
## Thank You to Our Sponsors!



*Barbara J. Bouchey*  
**ASSET MANAGEMENT**  
INCORPORATED



Tickets:







# HONORING BILL LYNCH: A LEGACY OF EMPOWERMENT



A memorial service was held at the Russell Sage Albany campus to celebrate the life of Bill Lynch, a beloved internship coordinator and adjunct professor for Living Resources' College Experience Program. Bill passed away in January 2025. The day was marked by the dedication of one of our dormitory rooms to Bill's memory. A plaque inscribed with his likeness and words of remembrance was unveiled.

After retiring from teaching in the Guilderland Central School District, Bill found his second calling at the College Experience Program. His friend, Peggy, shared how Bill discovered his passion for working with the special needs population during college. She recalled him volunteering at the Special Olympics as a "greeter." "When the first kid came across the finish line and gave me a hug," Bill had told her, "I thought, 'I can do this!'" Peggy smiled, adding, "He never looked back."

For twelve years, Bill was a mentor to College Experience students, teaching elective courses and working as the internship coordinator, supporting over 200 students during his tenure. Bill's didn't just connect students with jobs for income, he helped fulfill their passions. His coworker Jesse shared, "If someone liked airplanes, he found them a job working in the airport. If someone loved animals, he found them a job at a pet shelter." Georgia Sullivan, Assistant Grocery Manager at the Honest Weight Food Co-op, highlighted Bill's unwavering support, noting how he would accompany students initially, gradually reducing his presence as they gained confidence. Some of his interns found lasting careers at the Co-op, enriching the store with their positive attitudes and diligent work ethic.



Karen Bronson, Bill's partner of 30 years thanked the attendees for sharing their stories, expressing how the College Experience Program brought Bill immense joy. She then bequeathed Bill's treasured College Experience Yearbook collection, spanning from 2013 to the present, to Maggie Erlich, Living Resources' Employer Network Coordinator.

Kevin Baker, Assistant Director of the College Experience Program, stated, "Bill had a remarkable gift for seeing strength where others saw challenges. He opened doors, lifted spirits, helped countless people discover confidence, independence, and purpose. His legacy lives on in everyone he touched. He always made people feel seen and heard." Luke, a program graduate, aptly summarized Bill's influence on his life: "Bill Lynch empowered me to reach for the stars, to keep moving no matter what."

The profound impact of the day was evident. Pat, who traveled from Hempstead, Long Island, said, "When I heard about this, it was the first time I smiled since he died. It's so right. He just loved giving everyone the love that they deserved. I can't think of a better way to express what was important to him in his life."



## A LOVE FOR LIGHTHOUSES



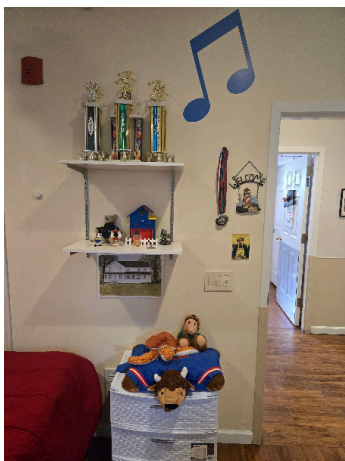
Lighthouses are beacons of light in the darkness, guiding ships through treacherous waters. They represent hope, strength, endurance, and the ability to overcome challenges in the face of adversity. Gary, who is 80 years old and has been an active part of the Living Resources family for 22 years, is, in many ways, much like the lighthouses he loves so much. His smile can brighten a room and bring comfort to all who are feeling lost or alone.

Gary lived with his family on their family farm until his mid-fifties. After the passing of his parents and his own health scares, Gary joined the Living Resources family, living in a residence not far from his brother Cliff. Today, Gary's room is filled with numerous representations of lighthouses- wall hangings, aprons, and paintings, many of which he painted himself. His love of lighthouses was inspired by a vacation to Cape Cod with his brother, Cliff. There, they saw many lighthouses and even climbed a few.



Gary is a man of many passions, and while lighthouses might top the list, they're just one facet of a life lived to the fullest. In his prime, Gary was a formidable athlete. His room brims with trophies, testaments to his prowess as an avid bowler and a dedicated track runner with the Special Olympics. Beyond competitive sports, he was an enthusiastic and outgoing participant in Living Resources Day Community Opportunity Program, always eager to immerse himself in community activities and art instruction.

But time, as it does, brought changes. "No more," Gary declared, tapping his hip and shrugging. Hip surgery necessitated a slower pace, and a rolling walker became his new companion. His athletic spirit remains undimmed, it was simply rechanneled. These days, Gary is the ultimate armchair warrior, a die-hard fan of the Buffalo Bills, ready to hype them up at a moment's notice. He still laments their crushing loss to the Kansas City Chiefs in the AFC Championship game a few months back – a true back-and-forth, drama-filled showdown. But ever the optimist, Gary was quick to praise the Bills' effort, insisting they were "that close" to victory and vowing, with unshakeable faith, that "next year!" would be their year.



So, the next time you see a lighthouse, remember Gary – a beacon of resilience, enthusiasm, and unwavering optimism. In Gary, we see that same guiding light, a testament to the human capacity for joy, resilience, and the simple, profound power of just rejoicing in being alive.





## FUELING A DRIVE FOR INDEPENDENCE

Living Resources is thrilled to announce the arrival of a magnificent new van, a truly transformative gift that promises to unlock a world of expanded possibilities for the individuals we support! This beautiful instrument of independence, is all thanks to the generosity of the Haraden Family Foundation, presented to us during their recent golf tournament.



This incredible donation is a beacon of hope, aimed at profoundly empowering individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and those navigating brain injuries. It will drive them to a richer tapestry of community engagement and foster a deeper sense of independence. With this van, we eagerly anticipate witnessing increased confidence blossom, new friendships flourish, and the pure joy of self-reliance embraced by all who use it.



We have nothing but deep gratitude to Jeff and Steve Haraden, the entire Haraden family, and the Haraden Family Foundation for this generous gift, and are indebted to Lindsey, Tyler, and Dylan for being such gracious hosts during the golf tournament.

This gift is more than just a vehicle; it's a vessel for dreams, a catalyst for connection, and a testament to the power of community. It truly puts our participants in the driver's seat of their own lives.

## PAINTING FOR A GOOD CAUSE



We want to extend our sincerest gratitude to KeyBank for their incredible commitment to community service! We were absolutely delighted to welcome a dedicated crew of KeyBank employees to our main office in Albany for an afternoon of volunteering.

This amazing team generously donated their valuable time to help us revitalize the activity room for our Acquired Brain Injury (ABI) Program. Their efforts made a significant difference, transforming the space into a more vibrant and welcoming environment for the individuals we serve.

The time and volunteerism provided by the KeyBank team are truly priceless. Having a comfortable and inspiring place to participate in group activities means the world to the individuals with brain injuries who receive services here. It fosters a sense of belonging, encourages engagement, and ultimately contributes to their well-being and recovery journey.

We are touched by the generosity of community partners like KeyBank. Your dedication helps us continue to provide essential services and create a supportive atmosphere for those living with acquired brain injuries. Thank you, KeyBank, for your outstanding contribution and for helping us make a real impact in the lives of so many!





### DAY SERVICES AWARDS

The energy was electric. Everyone came prepared for a great time and that's just how we do it at the Day Services Award Ceremonies.

One by one, the names of program participants were called, and their achievements were met with thunderous applause. The awards were as varied as the individuals who received them, from writing their name or improving communication skills to showing respect, resilience in tough situations, saving money, being a great helper, or showing the paramount qualities of being caring and kind. One person was recognized for mastering interviewing skills and landing their first job, while another started their own business. Each person honored made their way to the front of the Columbia-Greene Community College's auditorium erupted wildly. Honestly, the Oscars have nothing on this day.

Incredibly, the applause grew even louder when outstanding staff were recognized for their efforts in helping those they support gain increased dignity, independence, and purpose. The house nearly came down when Michelle Bynoe was announced as the recipient of the prestigious Amanda Rivenburg Rising Star Phoenix Award. This award is presented annually in honor of Amanda Rivenburg, the former Assistant Director of the Day Community Opportunities Program (DCOP), who was tragically killed in the Schoharie limousine crash on October 6, 2018. This award is presented by Amanda's parents and serves to honor exemplary staff and keep Amanda's memory alive.

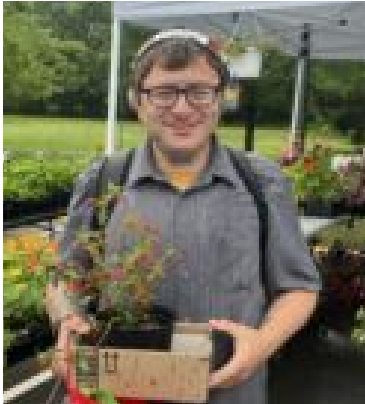
As the ceremony concluded, the room buzzed with a shared sense of pride and renewed purpose. The day was a beautiful testament to the power of community, celebrating every achievement, whether big or small, and ensuring Amanda's inspiring spirit continues to guide their work.





## CATCHING UP WITH COMMUNITY LIVING

Our Community Living folks have been BUSY! The summer vibes are in full swing here in our Community Living program, and we're having a blast with all the amazing activities! Just ask the adventurous duo who, along with QIDP/Manager Emily, kicked off the season with a day full of laughs and surprises on Saturday, June 7!



First they had a blast exploring the Farmers Market at The Crossings, hunting for quirky finds and thoughtful gifts. Then it was off to Colonie Center for some retail therapy, where they bonded over shared interests, and even had a surprise encounter and some play time with some fashion-forward pups strutting their stuff in a doggie fashion show!

Next up, a day filled with joy and connection unfolded for another Community Living group at Apex Bowling in Crossgates Mall. Laughter echoed through the alley as they shared strikes, spares, and plenty of heartfelt cheers. More than just a game, it was an evening of genuine

camaraderie.

The air buzzed with encouragement, each bowler lifting the spirits of their friends, offering high-fives and support when a ball didn't quite hit its mark. While their competitive spirits shone through in close scores, a deeper connection was clearly forming. What began as individual outings transformed into something truly special. By the end of the night, pins weren't the only things falling; barriers were too, replaced by the warmth of new friendships. It was a beautiful reminder of the power of shared experiences and the joy of coming together.



But the fun doesn't stop there! We recently had an absolutely fantastic time mini-golfing at Pirates Hideout! Everyone put in their best effort, aiming for that elusive hole-in-one. Two lucky participants even managed to sink that perfect shot!

Beyond the friendly competition, the group really focused on getting to know each other. They chatted about their interests and hobbies, and there was no shortage of cheers and encouragement whenever someone made a great shot. But the real "treasure" of the day was a heartwarming discussion about how mini-golf mirrors life itself.

They talked about the importance of never giving up, even when things get tough, and how crucial it is to have friends who support you, especially when you lose your "ball in the bushes." They also realized the value of trying new approaches to reach your goals, even if it means a "trick shot" through the rocks. Most importantly, they agreed that the ultimate goal at the end of each day is simply to have fun. And, of course, they all decided that sometimes, an ice cream at the end of a long day is the perfect "cherry on top."





## STRIKES, SPARES, AND SMILES: THE LIVING RESOURCES END-OF-YEAR BASH



What a truly special day it was for the students of the Living Resources After School Program! On Thursday, June 5, we gathered for our much-anticipated annual end-of-year celebration, and this year's party was infused with an extra layer of joy and excitement. Instead of our usual gathering at the main office in Albany, we embarked on an unforgettable adventure to Kingpins Alley in Latham, transforming our celebration into an afternoon filled with strikes, spares, and endless smiles.

The energy at Kingpins Alley was absolutely infectious. Our students, brimming with enthusiasm, each bowled two exhilarating games, showcasing their skills and cheering on their friends with heartwarming camaraderie. The air was filled with laughter and friendly competition, creating a vibrant atmosphere that truly captured the spirit of our program. And of course, no bowling party would be complete without some delicious fuel! Everyone savored mouth-watering slices of pizza, sharing stories and laughter over a shared meal.



This annual party is so much more than just a celebration of another school year coming to a close. It's a cherished tradition that brings together students from all seven of our program sites. It's a beautiful opportunity for them to connect, reinforce friendships, and forge new bonds, creating a sense of unity and belonging that extends beyond their individual program locations. Seeing their bright faces, their genuine happiness, and the easy way they interacted with one another was a powerful reminder of the incredible community we've built together throughout the year. It was a day to celebrate not just the end of classes, but the growth, resilience, and wonderful spirits of every single student in the Living Resources After School Program.



[\*\*CLICK HERE TO READ MAY'S NEWSLETTER\*\*](#)