



ELIZABETH MARTIN, CEO



A MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO

October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM), a time to celebrate the many ways people with disabilities strengthen our workplaces and communities. At Living Resources, this celebration connects directly to three of our core values: Inclusivity, Advocacy, and Empowerment.

Inclusivity means making sure everyone has a place and a purpose. Advocacy means speaking up for what's right and helping others find their voice. Empowerment means giving people the tools and confidence they need to reach their goals and maximum independence.

Over the past several weeks, members of our team have been living these values in action. In September and October, we met with our representatives leaders in Washington, D.C., and with state assembly and senate members here in New York. We also held a voter registration event to help the individuals we support and the greater public take part in the democratic process.



We strategically met with lawmakers before the upcoming New York State budget season so we could have real, one-on-one conversations about the incredible impact our services have on the lives of people with disabilities, their families and our community as a whole. We shared the importance of fair wages for staff, sustainable funding for programs, and continued support for people with disabilities and their families.

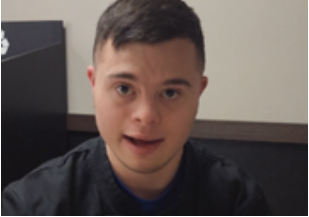
But advocacy succeeds most when all of us are actively engaged in communicating with our elected leaders. To get the funding and policy changes our service system needs, it takes every voice, and each of you play a part in helping our message be heard and acted on. Together, we can build stronger awareness, understanding, and opportunity for everyone



As we conclude our celebration of NDEAM, let's carry forward the spirit of inclusivity, advocacy, and empowerment every day, making sure every person has the opportunity to live, work, and thrive as a valued member of their community.

CELEBRATING NATIONAL DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT AWARENESS MONTH

HIGHLIGHTING INDIVIDUALS SUPPORTED BY OUR EMPLOYMENT SERVICES WHO HAVE FOUND THEIR DREAM JOB.



Joe H., a bright light in our College Experience Program (CEP) since 2021, is thriving. His enthusiasm for his classes makes them the most enriching part of his CEP journey. Outside of school, Joe works three days a week at Prime at the Plaza in Albany. We had a great chat with him about his life, his work, and his passion for athletics, including his role on the Mazzone Hospitality softball team.

Joe deeply values his supportive coworkers. Michaela, the Executive Chef and General Manager, calls Joe a "beacon of positivity" who uplifts the team, even in a stressful kitchen environment. Joe's contributions are invaluable: he stocks the cooler, prepares food (chicken, eggs, cucumbers), and handles grilling and deep-frying. Michaela hopes he'll never leave.

We are incredibly grateful to Mazzone Hospitality and Prime at the Plaza for creating an inclusive workplace that has helped Joe gain independence. We're thrilled to announce Joe will soon be moving into his own apartment with a roommate! We can't wait to see what he does next.

A longtime food service worker at Siena College, Phillip sought a summer job to fill his time when classes weren't in session. The renewed partnership between Living Resources and Dave & Buster's provided the perfect opportunity.

Since starting his summer position, Phillip has made significant strides in his prep tasks, independently mastering skills like using a food scale and a label machine—tasks he was initially hesitant to try. His dedication and positive attitude were quickly recognized, earning him the "Better Together" Award for July, just two months into the job. He continues to build independence by working on booking his own bus transportation.



Phillip's success story is a powerful example of inclusive employment. For Living Resources, it proves that the workforce is for everyone, and the support from their career counselor and job coach helps individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) achieve their career goals. This partnership shows the wider community the valuable contributions people with disabilities bring to the workplace.

This NDEAM, let's celebrate the talents and unique strengths of all employees and welcome their contributions with open arms.

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Cam Santos, a graduate of the Living Resources' College Experience Program, is thriving as an employee for the New York State Messenger Service in the Legislative Office Building at the NYS Capitol.

His job involves delivering messages across three buildings, a role he loves because he gets to meet interesting people. Cam's supervisor, Beth Bonesteel, shared that he started as an apprentice and "has worked out marvelously!" This career shift has significantly boosted his confidence.

Cam is not alone; fellow Living Resources participants Kadija (11 years) and Kathleen (14 years) also work for the Messenger Service, citing the great atmosphere and people as reasons they love their jobs.

This successful partnership highlights the power of an inclusive workplace. Living Resources believes meaningful employment is key to independence, and we thank the Legislative Messenger Service for setting a model of inclusion for all employers.

Zach is currently thriving in his third year of the College Experience Program, excelling in his coursework and building a strong social life. Outside of school, he works at the Bethlehem Public Library, where he's become an invaluable part of the team, shelving and organizing books. While getting the hang of his new role took patience, Zach is now a pro, fitting perfectly into the library's calm atmosphere.

Zach lives independently with a roommate and enjoys hanging out with friends and pursuing his love for trains. His story is a powerful testament to what's possible when we focus on an individual's strengths. We are incredibly proud of Zach and can't wait to see what he accomplishes next!



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to our annual appeal**



YOUR GENEROSITY KEEPS OPPORTUNITY ALIVE

ORANGE COUNTY DCOP ROARS AT THE BRONX ZOO!

This month, our Orange County DCOP group took an exciting trip to the Bronx Zoo, and it was a roaring success!

The highlight of the day was definitely the spectacular Dinosaur Safari. Our group got up close with the incredible, life-sized animatronic dinosaurs and pterosaurs, making them feel like they'd truly stepped back into the Mesozoic Era. The realistic movements and sounds of the giants of the past were a huge hit, providing thrills and fantastic photo opportunities. We heard the group was truly engaged, marveling at the scale and detail of the prehistoric creatures.

Beyond the safari, the group explored many of the zoo's fantastic exhibits, enjoying the chance to see wildlife from all corners of the globe. From the smallest insects to the largest mammals, every exhibit offered a moment of wonder and discovery.

Trips like these are so important for providing new experiences and fostering community among the individuals we support. A huge thank you to all the staff who made this adventure possible!



CELEBRATING JON'S SPECIAL DAY



There's nothing more heartwarming than seeing the joy that fills a room when friends come together to celebrate one another. These simple moments are what make life beautiful and create memories we hold onto long after the candles are blown out.

A few weeks ago, the wonderful ladies of Orchard took a short but meaningful trip to our Longmeadow residence to celebrate a very special birthday, their friend Jon!

Jon's birthday was a lovely reminder of how powerful friendship can be. The room was full of laughter, kindness, and genuine care as his friends gathered, not just for a party, but to show how much Jon means to them. When the cake came out, everyone joined together to sing, share smiles, and make the moment even more special.

It's often the little things, a shared slice of cake, a song sung a little off-key, or a hug between friends, that mean the most. That day, the smiles and laughter turned an ordinary birthday into something truly special. Jon's happiness was contagious, and everyone left with hearts a little fuller.

A SISTER'S LOVE: SHARING THE HEART BEHIND "ABOUT MY BROTHER"



This month, Living Resources was honored to welcome a very special guest: author Kathleen Mooney, the beloved sister of our resident, Kevin Mooney. Kathleen visited to share the love and inspiration behind her new children's book, *About My Brother*, a heartfelt story born from her own life growing up with Kevin.

When Kathleen was just seven and Kevin only two, a tragic accident left him with permanent disabilities. From that moment forward, their lives were forever intertwined in a story of resilience, compassion, and unconditional sibling love.

As they grew, Kathleen began to notice something painful: children her age often excluded Kevin or, worse, made fun of him. To Kathleen, though, he wasn't "different." He was simply Kevin, her little brother with the same joy, mischief, and longing to belong as every other child.

That tender perspective shines through in *About My Brother*. Written through the eyes of 8-year-old Kathleen, the book begins with a simple invitation to play, paired with a childlike "disclaimer" about her brother. From there, readers are gently guided from uncertainty to laughter, compassion, and, ultimately, acceptance as they discover Kevin's wonderful spirit.



During her visit, Kathleen read a moving excerpt recalling a snowy afternoon when neighborhood kids wouldn't let



Kevin join their snowball fight. In her warm, teacher's voice, she shared how moments like that stayed with her and how her years in the classroom inspired her to write the book. She realized that children often just need a little guidance and exposure to see the beauty in differences.

About My Brother offers both "windows and mirrors," a chance for children to either see themselves reflected or to step into the world of someone whose life is different from their own. It's more than a story; it's an invitation to important conversations about kindness, empathy, and inclusion.

We are so grateful to Kathleen for sharing her family's story, and Kevin's shining spirit, with our community.

You can purchase the book directly from the author's website at <https://www.kathleenemooney.com/about-my-brother> or on Amazon at <https://www.amazon.com/About-My-Brother-Kathleen-Mooney/dp/B0F2377HGM>

FALL FESTIVITIES

The air has turned crisp, the leaves are showing off their fiery colors, and Fall is officially here! This season of bright colors and cozy days has brought so many wonderful opportunities for the individuals we support to celebrate, connect, and express themselves.



The fun started with our Saratoga Day Community Opportunities Program (DCOP) group, who embraced the season with a trip to Bowman's Orchard in Rexford. There's something magical about a day spent in an orchard, and our group enjoyed every moment. Together, they wandered the sunny grounds, picking apples to take home. But the real highlight was the wagon ride at the start of the day. Everyone piled in, laughing as the fresh air blew past them. It was the perfect start to a joyful outing, full of smiles and memories under the beautiful Upstate New York sky.

Meanwhile, the ladies at the Orchard residence have been getting creative to welcome the season into their homes. Nothing says "cozy fall" like festive decorations, and they spent time painting pumpkins to add a personal touch. This activity wasn't just about decorating, it was a chance to show off their creativity. Instead of the usual orange, pumpkins came to life in bold colors like purple, pink, and black. Each pumpkin was unique, reflecting the personality and imagination of its painter. Seeing the pride they take in decorating their spaces is truly heartwarming.



Warren DCOP has been busy taking in the fall festivities as well. This month, they headed to the park to enjoy the crisp weather and made their very own fall-themed windsocks! They also spent time identifying green items in nature, and coloring fall-themed coloring sheets.

We are so grateful to see the individuals we support enjoying this beautiful time of year. Moments like these, ones filled with fun, connection, and creativity, enrich their lives and ours.



CELEBRATING OLYMPIC WINS AND THE SPIRIT OF INCLUSION



The spirit of courage, joy, and determination was on full display this month as a dedicated group of individuals supported by Living Resources traveled to Glens Falls, New York, to compete in the 2025 Special Olympics State Fall Games. This annual event is much more than a competition; it is a powerful demonstration of the potential and unwavering spirit of athletes with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD).

This year's Fall Games featured seven exciting competition sports: bocce, cross country running, cycling, equestrian, golf, soccer, and softball. For our athletes, the chance to train, compete, and connect with peers is an invaluable experience that extends far beyond the final score.

We are bursting with pride for the Living Resources competitors who represented us with exceptional skill and sportsmanship:

- Phil demonstrated laser focus and talent on the green, competing in the golf portion of the games. His hard work paid off in a big way, as he took home a magnificent gold medal!
- Tor, Catherine, and Bobby all took the field to compete in softball. Their teamwork and dedication shone brightly as they battled through the championships, ultimately securing an admirable fourth place finish.



We offer our heartfelt congratulations to Phil, Tor, Catherine, and Bobby! Your athleticism, focus, and camaraderie are truly inspiring. You embody the best of the Special Olympics movement.

CONGRATS TO OUR VALUE AWARD WINNER!



Congrats to Kim H. for winning the DSP Value Award for **Kindness**! Kim's coworkers write: "Kim works with people on her caseload that require a lot of patience and understanding on a daily basis. Kim is welcoming to everyone and will support anyone that needs support. Kim assists with the group outings and will provide staff with any helpful resources. Kim works hard to ensure that the people she is working with are safe and are having fun. Kim volunteered to assist the people we support with learning how to crochet."

THANK YOU FOR SPRUCING UP OUR SPACE!

A huge thank you to the folks at Regeneron who came to put a fresh coat of paint on two of our beloved residences as a part of their 9th annual Day For Doing Good. A yearly tradition, Regeneron employees worldwide participate in the annual day of giving back. We're so grateful to the team who came to Living Resources. You've given the individuals we support a bright and cozy place to call home. Your time and dedication to the task means the world to us, and we can't thank you enough for volunteering.



FOSTERING CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY



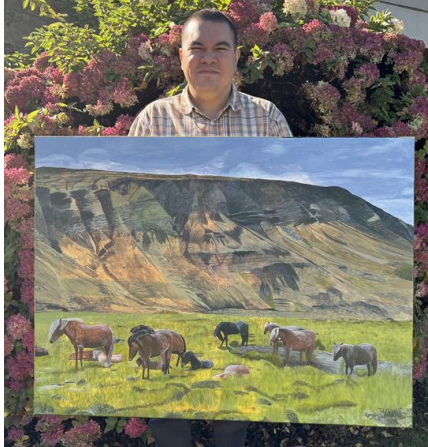
October 17 was a highly significant day for civic engagement at Living Resources. We proudly hosted a voter registration drive to empower the individuals we support, our staff, and the wider public to fully participate in the democratic process.

We strongly believe the right to vote is a fundamental right that must be fully accessible to all people, regardless of ability. This event directly supports our mission to foster self-advocacy and ensure the voices of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) are heard.

The drive, held at our main office, was a success due to our partnership with Headcount, a non-partisan organization dedicated to registering voters. Their expert representatives provided essential assistance with new registrations and updating existing information. We are thrilled to have helped remove barriers and promote accessible voting for everyone in our community.

ART-UM HAPPENINGS

October is here, and with the change in seasons comes a flurry of creative activity in the Living Resources Art Program! Our artists are working on some fantastic pieces this month, blending large-scale painting with seasonal crafts and practical, calming projects.



TJ has wrapped up a major piece that's sure to turn heads! He recently completed one of his large canvas-based projects, which was inspired by the beautiful Horses in Iceland. His dedication to detail and ability to capture the spirit of his subjects is truly inspiring.

Never one to rest on his laurels, TJ has already dove into his next artistic venture, which is shaping up to be another stunning landscape. We can't wait to see what natural wonder he brings to life on the canvas this time!

We also want to highlight the beautiful and functional piece created by Christina. Working closely with one of our instructors, Christina designed and meticulously hand-painted a rain stick.

When discussing her work, Christina shared that she loves playing the instrument to calm her down, noting that it sounds "exactly like rain." It's wonderful to see art not only as a means of expression but also as a tool for relaxation and self-soothing.



Just in time for Halloween, Nik has embraced the festive spirit! He worked with one of our talented staff members to create a wearable pumpkin head.

This is just the first stage of his project! Nik plans to make the structure more stable and then add some fun decorations the next time he's in the art studio. It's a fantastic, hands-on way to get into the spooky season!

CELEBRATING COMMUNITY AT THE GOLDEN HARVEST GALA!



What a fantastic night of fun, food, and dancing! The Golden Harvest Gala was a huge success, bringing together the wonderful communities of Columbia Greene DCOP and Dutchess DCOP for a celebration filled with laughter, connection, and joy.

The St. James Church in Chatham set the perfect scene, cozy, welcoming, and alive with excitement. Our amazing staff went all out,

serving up a feast that everyone raved about! Guests enjoyed favorites like stuffed grape leaves, Greek salad, meatballs, potato salad, and, of course, the famous Rasta pasta and creamy mac and cheese. To top it off, a refreshing homemade punch kept the night flowing.

Dessert was just as special, featuring a beautiful assortment of cookies baked by the individuals themselves during a cooking class earlier that week, a sweet highlight that everyone was proud of!



Then came the dancing, and what a party it was! Our fantastic DJ, Thomas Egan, our new intake coordinator, kept the energy high with music that had everyone moving. The smiles were nonstop, and even our CEO, Elizabeth Martin, couldn't resist joining the fun! Her dance moves lit up the room, showing that joy and togetherness are truly what Living Resources is all about.

A big thank you goes to Shawna Mui, Dutchess County QIDP, for handcrafting elegant corsages and boutonnieres that made everyone look extra sharp. The contests were a hit too, congratulations to our Best Dressed winners, Leigh Kenny and Leroy Rowles, and our Freeze Dance champs, Leigh Kenny and Amanda Covey!

No one left empty-handed, as everyone, staff included, took home a goodie bag to remember this wonderful night. The Golden Harvest Gala was more than just a dance; it was a celebration of friendship, community, and pure happiness. We can't wait for the next one!



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