



SHARING THE JOURNEY



ELIZABETH MARTIN, CEO

A MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO

This March, as we recognize Developmental Disabilities and Brain Injury Awareness Month, we are reminded that behind every service at Living Resources is a story of resilience, growth, and possibility.

This year’s national theme, “We’re Here: Then, Now, Always,” reflects those journeys and reinforces the importance of protecting and investing in community living and inclusion.

Throughout this newsletter, those stories come to life. Individuals in our Brain Injury program remind us they are more than their brain injury, while our College Experience students show what’s possible as we celebrate their achievements.

They also underscore the importance of sustained funding, not only for services, but for the dedicated staff who make this work possible.

This month, we advanced that commitment by advocating for increased funding through legislative outreach, including our St. Patrick’s Day advocacy efforts, where we connected with policymakers to elevate the needs of those we support. We also engaged our broader community through the “26 for \$26” campaign, raising both funds and awareness to strengthen and sustain our mission.

Together, we remain committed to ensuring that every story continues; then, now, and always!

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A Tribute to Transforming Lives

A Day at the 1863 Club Saratoga Race Course

Presented by



Sunday, August 23, 2026

This event WILL SELL OUT!



MORE THAN MY BRAIN INJURY: CELEBRATING BRAIN INJURY AWARENESS MONTH

March is Brain Injury Awareness Month, and our Brain Injury Services Department has been busy writing their own brain injury journey stories. This month, and every month, they want you to know that they are so much more than their injury. Their collective message is clear. While an injury is part of their history, it does not define their identity. We want to thank Mike, Buda, Kylie, and Thomas for sharing their stories!



Since joining our program five years ago, Mike has made incredible strides following a stroke in 2014. For him, recovery has been about regaining the freedom to move and engage with the world. Today, he isn't just a program participant. He is a driver and an avid golfer who credits his progress to the steady encouragement of his family, friends, and the team here at Living Resources.



Buda has been a part of our community for about a year, bringing a vibrant energy focused on joy and humor. As a devoted father of two, his identity is rooted in his role as a parent and a motivator for others. He views the program as a second family where he feels truly understood, emphasizing that his primary goal is to uplift those around him every day.



**SCAN THE QR CODE TO HEAR FROM
MIKE, BUDA, KYLIE, AND THOMAS!**



MORE THAN MY BRAIN INJURY: CELEBRATING BRAIN INJURY AWARENESS MONTH



Kylie joined us in the spring of 2024 and offers a thoughtful perspective on life after an injury, viewing it not as “better” or “worse,” but simply as a different chapter. She continues to enjoy the gym and has even discovered a unique passion for competitive dog diving. While her early recovery was marked by confusion and fear, she has moved toward a place of deep acceptance, finding strength in a community of peers who share similar paths.



For Thomas, who joined the program in May 2025, life after his injury brought an unexpected shift toward becoming more social and outgoing. A dedicated worker with seven years of experience in the grocery industry, he is now setting his sights on a career with New York State. Whether he is hiking a nature trail or enjoying a long drive, Thomas finds security and confidence in the strong network of friends and family supporting his recovery.

Our community is made stronger by these stories of perseverance and personal triumph. We invite you to join us this month in recognizing that every individual is a world of potential far beyond any medical diagnosis.

At least
64 MILLION
adults report having experienced one or more TBIs in their lifetime.¹

11.4 MILLION
Americans over 40 with a history of TBI that caused loss of consciousness are living with a disability.²

There are
2.9 MILLION
TBI-related emergency department visits each year in the United States.³

These figures would be much larger if we had a comprehensive prevalence figure that took into account all forms of brain injury.



CELEBRATING OUR ACHIEVEMENTS: REFLECTIONS FROM THE COLLEGE EXPERIENCE

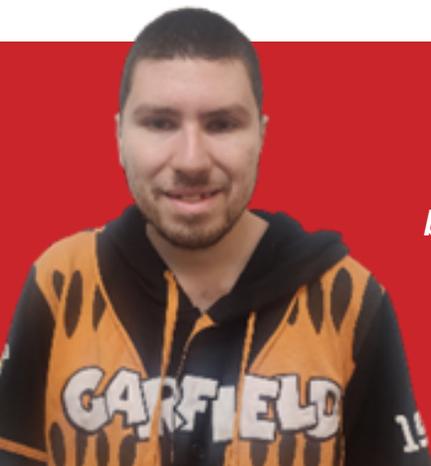
March is Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month, a time to celebrate the unique talents and perspectives of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD). At Living Resources, we are particularly proud of the students in The College Experience (CEP), a program designed to help young adults navigate the transition to independence. To honor this month, our students took a moment to reflect on their journeys and write down the achievements that make them most proud. Their stories are a powerful reminder that with the right support, every individual can reach their full potential.

While every student has made incredible strides, here are a few highlights from their personal reflections:



Julie, a current student in CEP, has embraced the challenge of navigating the world on her terms. She shared that one of her biggest wins was “doing the buses by myself.” Beyond physical independence, Julie is focusing on her internal growth: “I’ve been advocating for myself more often than I ever have in my early years,” she noted, while also working with staff to strengthen her mental health and coping skills.

HEAR FROM CEP STUDENTS ABOUT THEIR ACCOMPLISHMENTS



Ray has been a part of the program for a year and a half, and his time has been marked by both practical and creative milestones. He is proud of mastering the bus system and making “actual progress” on a movie he is creating. Ray also found a sense of belonging through the Vernacular club, where he submitted writing and art to their magazine, all while honing his budgeting skills.

These stories represent just a fraction of the progress happening every day at CEP. Whether it’s Vanessa becoming a "pro" at living away from home, Gabriel learning to cook independently, or Gabby transitioning into a successful post-grad career, these achievements define what Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month is all about: inclusion, capability, and growth. As Gabriel shared, "I hope new students will learn new things too when they come to the program."



CELEBRATING OUR ACHIEVEMENTS: REFLECTIONS FROM THE COLLEGE EXPERIENCE



For Maddy, the very act of being a college student is a major source of joy. “I’m so proud of myself because I got into college” she wrote. Beyond academics, she has focused on building a new community, noting that she has “made new friends here” and that her parents share in her immense pride.

Check out the achievements other students have accomplished in the College Experience Program!

Gabe- *My name is Gabriel and here are the things I’d like to share that I’ve learned in this program. I’ve learned how to cook independently. I’ve learned how to take the bus all on my own. I’ve learned how to be mindful about shopping and to do comparison shopping. I’ve learned how to clean up after myself. I’ve learned how to attend special events. That’s what I’ve learned so far and I hope new students will learn new things too when they come to the program.*

Keerthana- *My new job is in two weeks. I will start working at the kitchen and am working at Our Lady of Mercy Nursing Care Center. My goals are more communication skills and ask for help when I need it. I am very kind. This will help me in the long run. I come in with a positive attitude because I want other people to care about me.*

Daryan- *Hi my name is Daryan. I have achieved a lot in CEP. I’ve learned how to take the buses and train. I’ve learned a lot in the classroom about different events going on around Albany and lots of other subjects. I’ve really enjoyed my time and learned here.*

Jimmy- *It was hard getting through high school. In CEP I have developed more life skills as well as cooking and cleaning skills. I’ve been cooking more and I’ve been doing a lot more things here.*

Gabby- *My name is Gabby. I started the College Experience Program in August of 2023. I am a post grad student now. Since my time here I have had two internships at FYE and the Albany JCC. I am currently working at Peter Harris Clothes in Latham. I really like it there. I was proud when I graduated from CEP last year.*

Vanessa- *Challenges I faced when I first came here were living away from my family and cooking my own food, and doing my own laundry, It took me a while but eventually I got it and now I am a pro! I improved on doing my own stuff in the last year because I didn’t know how to do much of this. I am very different today than who I was last year.*



MARCH ADVOCACY UPDATE



March has been a landmark advocacy month here at Living Resources. First, members of our staff, leadership, and supported individuals descended upon the New York State Capitol building for a rally in the War Room. The rally was attended by numerous agencies across the state, as well as members of the NYS legislature. Senator Patricia Fahy, chair of the Senate Disabilities Committee, spoke to the fired-up crowd and reconfirmed her support for the I/DD community. Assemblymember Santabarbara was also in attendance with his son Michael, who has Autism. The Assemblymember gave a spirited speech to the crowd, and the chants “Invest in Me, Invest in Us” could be heard throughout the Capitol building.

Just hours before the rally, both the NYS Assembly and Senate house budgets came out, and in them they are asking for a 4% target inflationary increase, up from the Governor’s 1.7% in her proposed budget. This is amazing news for the NYS I/DD community, and rally-goers were thrilled to hear it.



Later that week, DCOP groups from Rockland, Westchester, Putnam, and Orange Counties came together with staff and leadership at Rockland Community College in Suffern for the Rally In The Valley. Groups made their own signs and joined advocates from all across the state to have their voices heard and advocate for better conditions for individuals with I/DD and the staff that support them.



Also in March, our DCOP and CEP groups came to the Capitol and Legislative Office Building for another round of self-advocacy. Everyone was in a festive mood for St. Patrick’s Day, and enjoyed visiting with representatives and their staff, while asking them to support individuals with I/DD in the upcoming budget. For many, this was the first time they had ever interacted with elected officials, and while they were a bit nervous at first, they warmed right up to the task!

Advocacy isn’t just another word on a wall here at Living Resources. It is something we live and practice each and every day. We’re so incredibly proud of the self-advocates who showed up to have their voices heard. To get involved and start advocating for individuals with I/DD, visit our advocacy toolkit at <https://www.livingresources.org/advocacy/>.





HOW AMANDA AND JADE ARE FINDING STRENGTH AT DESTINY’S RIDE



Every Wednesday morning, regardless of the chill in the air or the frost on the ground, dedicated volunteers from our Columbia-Greene DCOP group head out to the stables at Destiny’s Ride. For two individuals in the program, Amanda and Jade, these trips represent much more than just chores. They are a testament to personal growth, hard work, and the powerful bond between humans and horses.

Destiny’s Ride, a nonprofit dedicated to horse-assisted activities, provides a unique environment where individuals can build confidence and learn new skills. For Amanda and Jade, it has become a place of transformation.

Growth rarely happens without a few nerves, and for Jade, the journey began with a significant amount of hesitation. At first, the size of the horses and the busy energy of the stable were overwhelming. There were days when volunteering felt like a struggle.

But persistence pays off. Today, that initial nervousness has been replaced by genuine excitement. Jade no longer waits on the sidelines. She jumps right in, eager to get to work and connect with the animals. Seeing her transition from a cautious observer to an active, confident participant is an inspiration to everyone in the DCOP program.

The work they do at the stables is far from easy. Amanda and Jade are fully immersed in the daily care of the horses. Their Wednesday routine is packed with essential tasks such as ensuring every horse has fresh water and is properly fed, cleaning out stalls, and grooming the horses.

As the winter months settled over the counties, the work became even more demanding. While most people prefer to stay tucked away indoors, Amanda and Jade are out in the cold, facing the wind and the freezing temperatures.

Despite the biting air and the physical toll of farm work in the winter, their spirits haven't wavered. They continue to work hard, motivated by the knowledge that the horses rely on them. Their dedication proves that when you are passionate about what you do, even the hardest work feels rewarding.



At Living Resources, we are incredibly proud of Amanda and Jade. Their journey at Destiny’s Ride reminds us that with a little courage and a lot of heart, we can overcome our fears and make a meaningful impact in our community, one stable at a time.



ARTIST SPOTLIGHT: MEET CINDY



At Living Resources, we believe that every individual has a unique voice. For many, that voice is best expressed through a paintbrush or a colored pencil. Today, we are thrilled to feature Cindy, a dedicated artist in our Art Program whose vibrant spirit is as colorful as her artwork.

Cindy is a familiar face around the studio, joining us every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Her commitment to her craft is evident, but her creativity doesn't stop at the art table. Cindy also participates in the Living Resources Day Program on Tuesdays and Thursdays, staying active and engaged with her community throughout the week.

When asked how art makes her feel, Cindy's answer is simple yet powerful: "I'm happy I'm doing art. I like art class." That joy is woven into every piece she creates. Cindy doesn't limit herself to just one style. She loves to experiment with different tools to bring her visions to life, frequently using colored pencils, markers, and paint.

Cindy's progress is something she takes great pride in. Since joining Living Resources, she has noticed a significant increase in her independence, proudly stating that she now does "a lot of stuff myself."

Her hard work has led to an exciting milestone: two of her original pieces are currently for sale at our Artfully Unique gallery! One of these featured works is a stunning depiction of an angel with vibrant pink wings, a piece that was previously showcased in an art show. Her second piece, a landscape, was created some time ago, but remains a personal favorite of hers.

You can see Cindy's work, and the work of many other talented individuals, at our gallery located at 2005 Western Ave, Albany, NY. Every purchase directly supports the artists and helps us continue providing a creative outlet for the individuals we support.



VISIT WEBSITE





FINDING BALANCE: HOW OUR ROCKLAND DCOP STAYS ACTIVE AND ENERGIZED

At Living Resources, staying active is about more than just movement. It’s about building confidence, finding community, and discovering balance. Our Rockland DCOP group has embraced two very different but equally impactful ways to channel their energy and mindfulness throughout the week.



Every Monday afternoon, the group kicks off the week with high-energy sensory kickboxing sessions at Title Boxing in Nanuet. This ongoing activity has become a powerful outlet for individuals to release energy from the weekend and set a positive tone for the days ahead.

Under the guidance of our incredible instructor, Brian, individuals continue to build their strength, coordination, and discipline through structured jab and punch techniques. Brian brings unmatched patience and encouragement to every session, taking the time to assess each person's skill level and offering personalized feedback. Over the past two years, we have seen tremendous growth in focus and skill development. Brian goes above and beyond to ensure that every individual, regardless of pace or ability, feels included, supported, and successful.



To complement the intensity of our Mondays, we recently transitioned into a weekend mindset with a restorative yoga session. We had the absolute pleasure of welcoming the aunt of one of our individuals, who generously volunteered her time to lead the group through a calming experience.

Each individual was provided with their own yoga mat for comfort as they were guided through deep breathing, gentle stretching, and grounding movements. The session introduced soothing elements like lavender oils and the practice of "Namaste" to promote mindfulness. Individuals were encouraged to explore new poses and repeat positive affirmations, fostering both emotional awareness and inner calm.

Whether it is the rhythmic energy of the boxing ring or the peaceful stillness of a yoga mat, these activities offer our individuals a well-rounded approach to health. It was heartwarming to witness the group transition from the high-impact growth of the gym to a moment of collective relaxation and connection. By embracing both strength and stillness, our Rockland group continues to thrive and stay deeply engaged with their community.





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