



### A MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO

Happy Spring! As we begin to finally enjoy warmer weather and budding trees, I'm filled with pride reflecting on the incredible growth and collaboration happening across our agency. This April we joined the global community in celebrating Autism Acceptance Month. This month is a vital opportunity to amplify the voices of the individuals we support and to champion a world where every person is celebrated for their unique talents and contributions – an effort that is core to our mission.

ELIZABETH MARTIN, CEO

As you read this month's newsletter, you will see how this commitment to fostering an inclusive world is woven into everything we do, from our artists being recognized at the state level to people we support reaching monumental career milestones. Our core values of Collaboration, Empowerment, and Inclusivity serve as our foundation, ensuring that as we progress, we remain a steadfast network of support for one another. Thank you for being part of our journey.

Together, we continue to prove that we are truly stronger when we work as one.

## We Are Excited to Announce Our Presenting Sponsor For The Fifth Annual A Tribute to Transforming Lives Fashion Show



*Barbara J. Bouchey*  
ASSET MANAGEMENT  
INCORPORATED



*Please join Barbara as a sponsor for the event of the season!*

Sunday, August 23, 2026 | Saratoga Race Course

## CELEBRATING MAURICE'S 70TH BIRTHDAY AND 25 YEARS OF SERVICE



At Living Resources, our Supported Employment Program (SEMP) is built on the foundation of empowering individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities to find meaningful work and build lasting careers. Today, we have a truly extraordinary story to share, one that defines the very essence of dedication and joy in the workplace.

This month marked Maurice's 70th birthday! While many might choose to spend their 70th relaxing at home, Maurice celebrated the milestone exactly where he wanted to be, at work. But the birthday candles are only part of the story. This year, Maurice also celebrates an incredible 25 years as a valued employee at Hannaford.

In an era where job-hopping is common, a 25-year tenure is a monumental achievement. Maurice has become a fixture of his local Hannaford, serving store patrons and supporting his team with a level of consistency that is nothing short of inspiring.

His supervisor, Candy, sums up his impact perfectly, "He comes to work every day with a smile on his face. We love him!"

Success stories like Maurice's are why we do what we do. Lori, a Living Resources Career Counselor, has had the privilege of supporting Maurice's SEMP goals for the last 11 years. "It's been a pleasure working with him," Lori shares. "Seeing his dedication to his job, the store patrons, and his fellow employees over the last decade has been a highlight of my career."

Maurice's journey highlights several key truths about inclusive employment. Reliability: Long-term employees like Maurice provide stability and institutional knowledge. Community: Work is more than a paycheck; it's a place for social connection and mutual respect. Potential: With the right support from programs like SEMP, individuals with I/DD can achieve decades-long career success.

Congratulations, Maurice! Thank you for showing us all what true commitment looks like. Your Living Resources family and your Hannaford team are so proud of everything you've accomplished. Here's to 70 years of life and 25 years of excellence!



We would like to extend our deepest gratitude to Hannaford for their steadfast commitment to inclusive employment. By fostering a workplace where Maurice has thrived for 25 years, Hannaford demonstrates the power of looking beyond a diagnosis to see the talent, reliability, and heart an individual brings to the team. Their partnership with our Supported Employment Program (SEMP) is a shining example of how local businesses can champion diversity, proving that when we provide the right environment, every employee has the opportunity to reach incredible milestones.

## A DAY OF MUSIC AND CONNECTION



At Living Resources, we believe that the best days are those filled with community, family, and great food. One recent Sunday was a perfect example of that mission in action, as Noah, an individual in our Residential Program, enjoyed a special day out with his dedicated staff member, Jess.

The highlight of the day began at the historic Proctors Theatre. The atmosphere was filled with excitement as Noah and Jess took their seats in the beautiful, gold-accented theater. They weren't just there for any performance, they were there to cheer on Noah's family as they sang in the choir!

The power of music and the pride of seeing loved ones perform made for a deeply meaningful experience. Looking at the smiles in the theater, it was clear that being part of such a vibrant local event was a memory in the making.

After the final notes faded, the celebration continued over dinner at Olive Garden. There's nothing quite like a warm meal and good conversation to cap off an inspiring afternoon. Between the famous breadsticks and a hearty bowl of pasta, Noah and Jess had the chance to relax and reflect on the beautiful performance they had just witnessed.



Days like this are more than just "trips", they are the building blocks of an inclusive, fulfilling life. Whether it's navigating the bustling Arcade at Proctors or choosing a favorite dish from a menu, these moments empower the individuals we support to engage fully with the world around them.

A huge thank you to Jess for supporting Noah on this wonderful Sunday! We are so proud of the bonds our staff build with the individuals in our programs and the ways they help make every day a little brighter.

# PROCTORS

## REAL TALK, REAL CAREERS: CEP ALUMNI SHARE LESSONS IN NAVIGATING EMPLOYMENT



It was a full house at Sage College in Albany this semester as 11 alumni from the College Experience Program (CEP) returned to where it all began. Across two Mondays these graduates sat down with the current freshman employment class to pull back the curtain on what it's really like to navigate the workforce.

The panels featured a diverse group of voices, including Tor, Catherine, Canaan, Andrew, Bill, Brendan, Michael, Kaylee, Amy, Sunny, and Abby. Together, they shared a raw and inspiring look at their professional journeys, proving that success isn't always a straight line, it's a series of experiences.

One of the most relatable moments came from Megan, who shared a story about ambition and balance. In an effort to increase her earnings, she took on a second job at The Dollar Tree. Ultimately, the role conflicted with her primary position, and she decided to move on. However, Megan didn't view it as a failure. She was proud of herself for trying something new and emphasized how her job coach helped her navigate that difficult conversation about availability with her employer. Her takeaway? It is always worth it to explore your options.

A recurring theme throughout both panels was the vital role of the Living Resources job coaches. The alumni were quick to point out that a job coach is much more than just a search assistant. They are partners who help you communicate with supervisors when things get complicated, advocate for new responsibilities or a schedule that fits your life, and find encouragement during the tough days of a job search.

Michael offered a powerful piece of advice regarding this partnership: "If your job coach isn't right for you, you need to advocate and ask for a new job coach." His message was clear: you are the driver of your own career, and you deserve a team that helps you shine.

For many students, the pressure to find the "perfect" career right away can be overwhelming. Amy helped ease those fears by sharing her own resume, which includes everything from hospitality and food service to retail and bakery work.

"You need to try a lot of different jobs before you find the right one," Amy told the freshmen. "Just think of each one as a new experience, a chance to learn new skills and meet new people. You will land where you are supposed to be."

The energy in the room was a testament to the strength of the CEP community. The alumni didn't just share stories; they stepped into the roles of mentors, offering a roadmap for the students following in their footsteps. They left the sessions eager to return for future panels, proving that once you are part of the College Experience, you are part of a lifelong network of support.



# CELEBRATING OUR ACHIEVEMENTS: LIVING RESOURCES ARTISTS SHINE IN STATEWIDE DIGITAL GALLERY



March was Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month, a time to celebrate inclusion, highlight the contributions of people with disabilities, and, most importantly, amplify their voices.

This year, the NYS Council on Developmental Disabilities (CDD) invited self-advocates from across the state to submit their work under the theme "Celebrating our Achievements." What began as a one-time initiative has quickly grown into an annual tradition, providing a vital platform to showcase the importance of inclusion through creativity. With nearly 200 submissions from across New York, we are incredibly proud to announce that five artists supported by Living Resources were selected to be featured in this prestigious statewide showcase.

Art is more than just a hobby at Living Resources. It is a vital form of expression and communication. These five individuals shared their unique perspectives through diverse styles, ranging from whimsical pop art to intricate geometry.

Christina H. brings a sense of lightheartedness to the gallery with her piece, "Keep Calm and Drink Dunkin'". Her mixed-media work is a vibrant tribute to the simple joys of a favorite treat. Nearby, Cindy S. captures the thrill of success in her piece "Jackpot", using shimmering textures and glitter to illustrate the excitement of a big win.

Representing the complexity of the internal world, Gillian M. submitted a stunning mandala titled "My Brain". Her use of geometric symmetry and a balanced color palette beautifully reflects the intricate beauty of the mind. In a bold contrast of color, Sean F.'s "Sunflowers" radiates warmth and energy, utilizing thick, expressive brushstrokes that command attention. Finally, Tim P. offers a powerful interpretation of an American icon with his painting of the Statue of Liberty, using a sophisticated, muted palette and strong lines to evoke a sense of freedom and strength.

At Living Resources, we support individuals with I/DD and brain injuries in living fulfilling, independent lives. Seeing our artists recognized on a statewide level reinforces our mission. This gallery provides a space where the focus is shifted away from a diagnosis and onto the talent, vision, and hard work of the individual.

We want to extend a huge thank you to the NYS Council on Developmental Disabilities for providing this platform, and a heartfelt congratulations to Christina, Cindy, Gillian, Sean, and Tim. Your work reminds us all that "Celebrating our Achievements" isn't just a theme, it's a way of life.

## ADVENTURE AWAITS: A DAY OF DISCOVERY AT JUNE FARMS



There is something truly restorative about a day spent in nature, surrounded by fresh air, rolling hills, and the gentle company of animals. Recently, individuals from our Brain Injury Services Program at Living Resources headed out to June Farms in West Sand Lake for a day of exploration, connection, and a whole lot of smiles.

From the moment the group arrived, the atmosphere felt magical. One of the highlights was visiting the farm's famous "Hobbit House." Tucked into a grassy hillside with its iconic round wooden door and stone facade, it felt like stepping straight into a storybook. It provided the perfect backdrop for a moment of wonder and a few great photo opportunities!

Of course, a trip to June Farms wouldn't be complete without meeting the local residents. Our group had a blast interacting with the diverse animals on the property. We spent time at the fence line meeting the beautiful horses and feeding some friendly, curious equines some fresh grass. The shaggy, long-horned Highland cattle were a crowd favorite, looking majestic against the spring landscape. Scattered throughout the farm are unique sculptures, including playful bronze frogs that added a touch of humor and zen to the day.



To make sure everyone could enjoy the expansive 120-acre property comfortably, the group set off on a golf cart safari! A long line of carts wound through the gravel paths, carrying everyone past the barns and into the heart of the farm. Seeing the joy on everyone's faces as they waved from the back of the carts was a true testament to the power of community outings.

At Living Resources, days like these are about more than just a change of scenery. For individuals in our Brain Injury Services Program, these trips are vital for many reasons, including the bonds built between peers and staff by sharing new experiences. There is also a sense of empowerment the individuals we support get by navigating new environments and participating in community activities.

A huge thank you to the team at June Farms for being such welcoming hosts and to our dedicated staff for making this trip a seamless success. We are already looking forward to our next adventure!

## STRIKING GOLD: SUNDAY FUN AT THE BOWLING ALLEY



Sunday afternoons in East Greenbush have looked a little different lately. For the past month, the sounds of crashing pins and celebratory high-fives have filled the air as individuals from one of our Living Resources residences took to the lanes for a weekly bowling tradition.

Our residential program is designed to provide 24-hour support, but it's also about fostering independence, community, and, most importantly, having a great time. This bowling series has been a highlight for the house, giving everyone a chance to sharpen their skills, engage in some friendly competition, and enjoy the vibrant atmosphere of the local bowling alley.

While the scoreboards showed some impressive frames, the real win has been the camaraderie. Whether it's a perfect strike or a tricky spare, the group has spent the last few weeks cheering each other on and building lasting memories.

As this month-long bowling stint comes to a close, the final game was followed by a pizza party celebration! It's the perfect way to toast to a month of strikes, gutters, and everything in between.

While the bowling season is wrapping up, the momentum isn't slowing down. With the weather warming up, these individuals are already eyeing the diamond. Summer baseball season is right around the corner, and we can't wait to see them bring that same spirit to the field.

At Living Resources, we are proud to support these moments of joy and inclusion. Stay tuned for more updates as the individuals we support trade their bowling shoes for baseball hats!

# STRENGTHENING SAFETY THROUGH COLLABORATION



At Living Resources, our mission is built on the foundation of safety, care, and community. This month, we saw those values in action as team members from across the agency joined forces to meet new OPWDD safety regulations.

Effective April 1, 2026, all certified settings must maintain site-specific Emergency Preparedness Plans, including a three-day supply of essential provisions for every individual we support. Meeting this requirement for all of our residential settings, supportive living environments, and college programs was a significant undertaking, one that highlighted our core agency value of Collaboration.

This wasn't just a task for one house or one office; it was a cross-departmental mobilization. Staff from different programs worked side-by-side to pack and distribute kits filled with water, flashlights, and shelf-stable nutrition like canned tuna, applesauce, crackers, and MREs. By pooling our resources and time, we ensured that every location is fully prepared to provide a secure environment, no matter the circumstances.



We are incredibly proud of the teamwork displayed by Joe Sterling, Riki Gough, Myrissa Crossman, Clare Graham, Colleen Dergosits, Imran Mohamed, Brandon Condon, Eduardo Ramos, Maxwell Davenport, Tex Farrugia, Hazel Grant, Stacy Falcon, Miranda Thiesen, Karen Massey, David Pepper, and Carla Rodrigues.

When we collaborate across departments, we do more than just check off a regulatory box, we strengthen the safety net for the people we serve and prove that we are truly stronger together.



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