



A MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO



ELIZABETH MARTIN, CEO

Welcome to the September edition of Sharing the Journey! September is always a season of dynamic growth, connection, and reflection across Living Resources, and this month's stories highlight the incredible ways our community continues to flourish.

From our Joseph J. Morelli Memorial Golf Tournament to our ongoing advocacy work through community voter registration drives, we are constantly reminded of the power of active inclusion. Inclusion isn't just a goal, it is a daily practice. You

see it in our programs every day, whether it's the individuals we support on our Columbia-Greene DCOP exploring history and honoring 9/11 at the NYS Museum, local partners like Franco Di Roma Pizzeria opening their doors to teach practical life skills, or our Brain Injury Services Department gathering at Tawasentha Park to celebrate hope and resilience.

True empowerment happens when individuals are supported to live life on their own terms, whether that means mastering the CDTA bus system, making your voice heard at the ballot box, feeding giraffes at Animal Adventure Park, or dancing the night away at a Pitbull concert at SPAC.

None of these moments would be possible without the dedication of our Direct Support Professionals (DSP), community partners, families, and supporters. During DSP Recognition Week, we began presenting our DSP Values Awards to staff who bring our values to life each day. We look forward to highlighting the award recipients in next month's newsletter as we complete the presentations. Thank you for standing alongside us and helping the people we support live with dignity, independence, and purpose.

Joseph J. Morelli Memorial Golf Tournament



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LIVING RESOURCES HOSTS COMMUNITY VOTER REGISTRATION DRIVE



At Living Resources, Advocacy is at the heart of our mission. True inclusion means ensuring every individual, regardless of ability, has the platform and support needed to make their voice heard.

To turn that commitment into action, we recently hosted a Voter Registration Drive at our main office to help supported individuals, staff, and neighbors register, check their status, and update their

information ahead of upcoming elections.

To remove barriers and uphold this vital civic duty, we partnered with HeadCount, The Spina Bifida Association of New York State, and the Independent Living Center of the Hudson Valley. Together, our organizations provided accessible materials and hands-on guidance for every individual.

The event kicked off with a press conference where regional legislators and advocates highlighted the power of civic engagement. Speakers reminded attendees that when individuals with disabilities vote, they ensure community policies, services, and accessibility standards reflect their lived experiences—using their voices to drive real change. After registering at the HeadCount table, attendees enjoyed a sweet celebration at our ice cream social.

Voting puts you at the table. We extend our sincere thanks to our partners, visiting legislators, staff, and community members for turning civic duty into collective action and ensuring every voice is counted.





SHAVONNA HALL HONORED AT THE FOURTH ANNUAL DSP APPRECIATION LUNCHEON



At Living Resources, our Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) are the heart and soul of everything we do. Day in and day out, they bring compassion, dedication, and unwavering support to the individuals we serve. Recently, Capital Regional Pharmacy Services hosted its Fourth Annual DSP Appreciation Luncheon at the Marriott Albany, celebrating the incredible impact of DSPs across our region. We are thrilled to share that one of our very own, Shavonna Hall, was recognized as an outstanding honoree!

The event featured Senator Patricia A. Fahy as the guest speaker, honoring honorees from participating organizations who exemplify the highest standards of care, advocacy, and commitment.

Taking the podium to accept her award, Shavonna delivered an extraordinarily moving acceptance speech that brought tears to many in the room, including Shavonna herself. Reflecting on her journey, she shared that she has been with Living Resources for 10 years, starting her career here when she was just 23 years old.

In her speech, Shavonna reflected on what drives her every day. "I've worked with some phenomenal coworkers along my journey that understand the importance of an individual's rights, advocacy, supporting them with their goals each year, celebrating their birthdays, holidays, and being a part of those special moments."

Shavonna spoke about her core philosophy as a caregiver, prioritizing dignity, working as a seamless team player, and walking into work every day ready to make a meaningful difference. "I instantly get to work, walk in, analyze my environment, and say, 'How can I make a difference?' It makes me feel good. It keeps me motivated and proud."

Her heartfelt words remind us of the profound impact that dedicated DSPs have on fostering dignity, independence, and purpose for the people we support.

We couldn't be more proud to have Shavonna on our team. Her 10 years of service, her passion for advocacy, and her genuine love for the individuals she supports represent the very best of Living Resources.

Please join us in extending a huge congratulations to Shavonna Hall on this well-deserved honor, as well as our deep gratitude to Capital Regional Pharmacy Services and Senator Patricia A. Fahy for recognizing the vital work of Direct Support Professionals. Congratulations, Shavonna! Thank you for making a difference every single day.





HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE JOSEPH J. MORELLI MEMORIAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

Living Resources recently hosted the annual Joseph J. Morelli Memorial Golf Tournament at the beautiful Colonie Golf and Country Club in Voorheesville, NY. It was a sun-filled, memorable day bringing together golfers, supporters, and staff in celebration of our community and mission.

The morning began with registration and a delicious breakfast, setting a warm and welcoming tone for the day. Before golfers took to the course, attendees gathered for a brief opening ceremony featuring a moving presentation from Donald H., the father of one of our College Experience seniors, Maddy.

Donald shared how the College Experience program, along with dedicated staff support, has enabled Maddy to reach her full potential. Today, Maddy is a master at navigating the CDTA Bus System and has honed essential life skills to thrive in the adult world. Donald and his wife, Cathy, expressed their immense pride in Maddy's achievements and reaffirmed their deep belief in the mission of the College Experience.

Following breakfast and the morning presentation, teams loaded up their golf carts and headed out under bright, sunny skies.

Throughout the course, golfers participated in a variety of fun games and challenges. One crowd favorite was the dice game, which gave teams a chance to subtract a point from their final score. The putting contest also brought out plenty of friendly competition, with participants battling on the green for exciting prizes, including gift cards, beverages, and custom Living Resources branded merchandise.

The real show-stopper of the day was our incredible raffle. Golfers purchased tickets for a chance to win an array of fantastic prizes, wrapping up an exciting and successful day on the links.

We also saw some incredible skill out on the course! Congratulations to all of our tournament winners:

1st Place Team: NFP Team

2nd Place Team: Janitronics Team

Longest Drive (Women): Abby Harris

Longest Drive (Men): Pat Seebald

Closest to the Pin (Women): Elizabeth Martin

Closest to the Pin (Men): Dan Lowenstein

Thank you to everyone who attended, participated, and supported this year's Joseph J. Morelli Memorial Golf Tournament! Your involvement directly impacts the lives of the individuals and families we support.



HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE JOSEPH J. MORELLI MEMORIAL GOLF TOURNAMENT





COLUMBIA-GREENE DCOP HONORS 9/11

This month, individuals from Living Resources' Columbia-Greene Day Habilitation (DCOP) program took a meaningful trip to the New York State Museum in Albany to learn about and honor the events of September 11, 2001.

While some of the individuals we support were familiar with 9/11, others were eager to learn more about its significance. Together, the group explored the museum's dedicated exhibition, watched an informative short film, and discussed the lasting impact of that fateful day.

Seeing the historical artifacts up close—including pieces of steel from the towers, recovery vehicles, and remnants from the aircraft—brought the history to life in a powerful way. The individuals we support showed immense curiosity, thoughtfulness, and deep empathy for everyone affected by the tragedy.

It was an educational and deeply moving experience that underscored the importance of remembrance, unity, and community support.





MORE THAN A SLICE: HOW FRANCO DI ROMA PIZZERIA IS BAKING INCLUSIVITY AND KINDNESS

There is something extraordinarily powerful about gathering around food. For the individuals participating in our Day Community Opportunities Program (DCOP) in Orange County, a weekly tradition at a local restaurant has become a highlight of their routine, and a masterclass in true community inclusion.

Every week, the team at Franco Di Roma Pizzeria opens their doors to the individuals we support. The owner, Franco, doesn't just offer a warm welcome. He invites our guys behind the counter, handing them flour, sauce, and dough, and personally teaches them how to craft their very own pizzas, entirely free of charge.



What might seem like a simple gesture of hospitality is actually something far deeper, a tangible act of empowerment, collaboration, inclusivity, and kindness.

Creating an inclusive community doesn't require grand gestures. Often, it begins with a simple decision to welcome everyone to the table:

Empowerment Through Learning: When individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) or brain injuries are given the space to learn practical skills, confidence follows. Learning to stretch dough and select toppings allows the individuals we support to experience the joy of creation firsthand.

Collaboration & Mentorship: By guiding and mentoring these pizza chefs, Franco Di Roma demonstrates active collaboration, bridging gaps and fostering genuine relationships built on mutual respect.

Inclusivity & Belonging: Inclusivity is about active belonging. By opening his kitchen week after week, the owner creates an environment where our individuals feel valued and expected.

The Power of Kindness: When a business gives its time and heart without expecting anything in return, it inspires the whole community to make space for others.

At Living Resources, our mission is to empower individuals to live with dignity, independence, and purpose. We extend our deepest gratitude to Franco Di Roma Pizzeria for their ongoing dedication to our Orange County DCOP participants.

Stop by Franco Di Roma Pizzeria or call (845) 342-3552 to support the local businesses that uplift our community!



A LOOK BACK AT THE BRAIN INJURY AWARENESS PICNIC

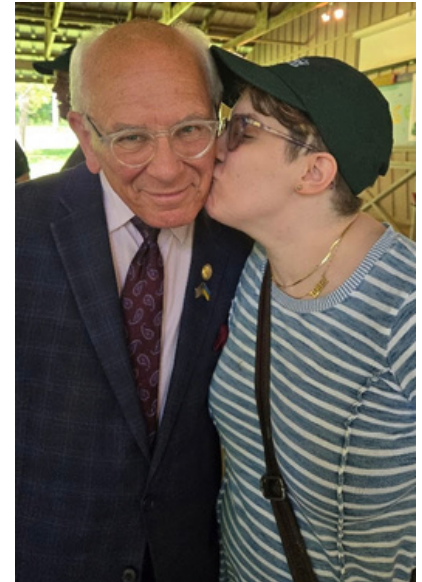


Recently, individuals, families, advocates, legislators, and community partners gathered under the summer sky at Tawasentha Park in Guilderland, NY, for the annual Capital District Brain Injury Awareness Day. Hosted by the Living Resources Brain Injury Services Department, the event was a powerful celebration of resilience, community, and hope.

The gathering brought together individuals from the Living Resources Brain Injury Structured Day Program, an initiative designed to connect adults after a brain injury to build strong support networks, develop skills, and engage in purposeful daily activities. As one of the program's survivors shared: "We want to educate people on the fact that life doesn't end after a brain injury. It takes more time and focus, but we CAN and WILL succeed! After today, we hope you realize and are closer to understanding some of the difficulties and challenges we face on a daily basis. A brain injury doesn't end a life, but it starts a new one."

The gathering kicked off with a social hour, giving attendees time to connect while browsing a raffle, stopping by community partners informational tables, and exploring a showcase of handcrafted artwork created by individuals in the program. The main program began with welcoming opening remarks from Lottie Dunbar. Attendees then heard directly from survivor speaker Jorelle P. and members of the Writing Group, who shared moving personal stories and creative reflections offering deep insight into their daily journeys and triumphs.

Keynote speaker Katherine Berryman-Cole, a dedicated advocate and leader committed to advancing the rights and quality of life for individuals with brain injuries and disabilities across New York State, delivered an empowering address. The formal program rounded out with special guest presentations and an awards ceremony honoring key milestones.



A highlight of the program was the Brain Injury Services Department chorus performing their rendition of "Somewhere Over the Rainbow," filling the park with a sense of hope and classic nostalgia. Their rendition added a heartfelt touch to the afternoon, capturing the spirit of resilience and new beginnings celebrated throughout the day.

Living Resources extends a heartfelt thank you to everyone who attended, volunteered, and supported this year's event. By taking the time to listen, learn, and stand alongside brain injury survivors, our community helps ensure that every individual has the support they need to thrive in their new chapter.



A DAY OF SMILES AND SAFARI ADVENTURES AT ANIMAL ADVENTURE PARK!



There is nothing quite like a day out in nature to bring people together, and our recent trip to Animal Adventure Park in Harpursville, NY was one for the books!

Supported individuals and dedicated staff members from both our Community Living and College2Life programs gathered from all corners of the Capital Region for a day of adventure. It was a fantastic opportunity to step out into the sunshine, connect with old friends, make new ones, and experience some unforgettable hands-on moments with wildlife.

From the moment they arrived, the excitement was contagious. Everyone spent the day exploring the park, hand-feeding goats, admiring the alpacas, hanging out near the capybaras by the water, and even getting eye-to-eye with the famous giraffes. Watching these gentle giants stretch down to greet visitors up close was an absolute highlight!

After walking the grounds, we loaded up for the Animal Safari drive-thru, and that's where the real chaos of fun began. Curiosity got the best of the free-roaming animals, who wasted no time walking right up to the vehicles to inspect their visitors. The close encounters brought endless laughs, wide smiles, and plenty of picture-perfect memories.

Beyond the feeding buckets and animal encounters, the best part of the day was seeing everyone build community, share laughs, and enjoy a vibrant day out together. Thank you to all the staff who helped organize and support this adventure, and to everyone who came out to make it such a memorable day!



A CELEBRATION OF JOURNEY AND JOY: LINDSAY'S NIGHT OUT AT SPAC



At our agency, every day brings new opportunities to champion the values that define us: Empowerment and Inclusivity. Recently, we celebrated a truly remarkable milestone that embodies both of these principles in full color and rhythm.

Lindsay C. had the unforgettable experience of attending the Pitbull concert at Saratoga Performing Arts Center (SPAC), surrounded and supported by dedicated staff. For anyone familiar with Lindsay's journey and the complex medical and clinical challenges she has navigated along the way, this was far more than just a night out. It was a powerful testament to her resilience, growth, and joy.

Empowerment means creating space for individuals to express their preferences, follow their passions, and take center stage in their own lives. Seeing Lindsay immerse herself in the energy of a live concert reminds us why personal goals and personal choices are at the heart of everything we do.

Inclusivity is about ensuring everyone has full access to the experiences that make life vibrant and fulfilling, from everyday outings to major community events. Thanks to the extraordinary care, thoughtful planning, and commitment of our staff, Lindsay was able to safely and seamlessly participate in an exciting milestone that boosted her quality of life and created lasting memories.

We extend our deepest gratitude to the team members who helped turn this dream into reality. Most of all, we celebrate Lindsay for her strength, her inspiring journey, and for showing us all what it looks like to live life to the fullest!

