

MESSAGE FROM THE CEO



Elizabeth Martin

In June 1969, New York City police raided the Stonewall Inn, a gay bar located in Greenwich Village. During the raid, police made arrests, roughed up patrons, and took some who were suspected of violating the state’s gender-appropriate clothing laws into the restrooms to check their sex. Those who were part of the LGBTQA+ community back then were regularly subjected to harassment, violence, and discrimination; violations of our country’s core principles of equal protection and the right of all citizens to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. The raid and subsequent protests at Stonewall Inn that month sparked the LGBTQA+ community to unite and galvanize the gay rights movement.

As with all movements to expand and protect civil liberties for marginalized communities, the civil rights path for the LGBTQA+ community has been neither short nor linear. After several years of steady progress for the LGBTQA+ community, we are witnessing very real and unnerving backlash in many parts of the country. This heightens the importance of this year’s celebration of Pride Month, which begins tomorrow.

Living Resources was founded during the aftermath of the 1972 Willowbrook expose by Geraldo Rivera, during a time when the state worked to correct the terrible wrongs of oppression, mistreatment, and abuse against citizens with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD). As part of what we do every day here at Living Resources, we strive to help our community and country live up to its core principles of equal protection and the right of all citizens (including those with I/DD) to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. But as in the words of Martin Luther King, Jr. – Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.

Therefore, we here at Living Resources stand in solidarity and support of the LGBTQA+ community and celebrate those on our staff and the men and women who we support who are part of the LGBTQA+ community. Happy Pride Month!

2023 CYCLING FOR CREATIVITY

Last year, Ed Brennan's Cycling for Creativity campaign raised over \$3,000 in support of Living Resources Programs. This year, he is cycling to raise even more!



Once again Ed Brennan, parent of one of our supported individuals Kelsey, has taken off on a solo, cross-country bicycle ride dedicated to raising awareness of Living Resources and our many programs. Ed's two-year goal is to ride his bicycle from Albany, New York to Albany, Oregon. This year's leg will be taking him through New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana,



Illinois, Iowa, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and ending in Fargo, North Dakota - a distance of nearly 2,000 miles. This tour will be self-supported and self-directed, meaning there will be no outside assistance, oversight, or directions.

Ed is encouraging people to sponsor him by the mile or through straight donations, with all proceeds benefiting Living Resources. Please join us in supporting his journey! <https://bit.ly/3uFWsaL>

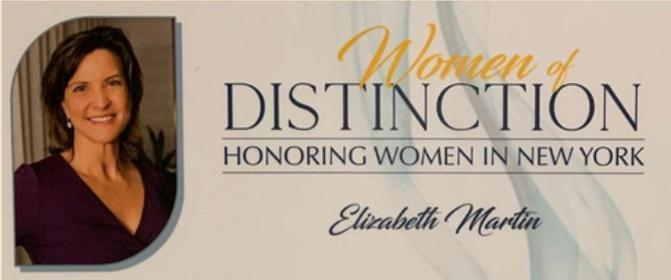


Follow Ed's progress by going to our Event Page:
<https://fb.me/e/3lrX6GPmw>





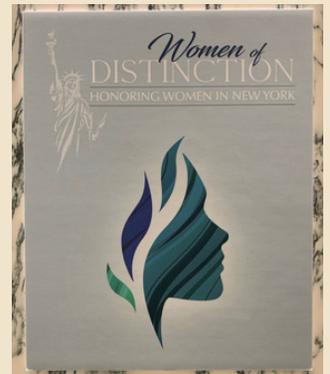
WOMAN OF DISTINCTION



Living Resources is proud to announce that our CEO, Elizabeth Martin, was named a 2023 Woman of Distinction. She was recognized by Senator Neil D. Breslin for her outstanding contribution to our community and celebrated at an annual reception at the New York State Capitol.

Her nomination states:

Elizabeth Martin is a strategic executive who is driven by mission, innovation, and excellence. She is the Chief Executive Officer of Living Resources, an Albany-based nonprofit that supports and empowers nearly 2,000 individuals with disabilities or other life challenges to live with dignity, independence, and happiness.



Ms. Martin joined Living Resources during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. An innovative leader, she helped the organization survive an extremely difficult COVID-19 infection surge, implemented successful pilot programs to address the workforce shortage, and led the agency through its first-ever comprehensive strategic planning process, setting organizational priorities and goals to position it for future growth and program diversification. Under her leadership, all of this was accomplished while also creating an organizational culture that fosters passion, change, and innovation to promote everyone's right to live self-determined lives as full citizens in

the community. Ms. Martin is also a steadfast advocate for disability rights, funding, and support.

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SO MUCH TO CELEBRATE!

Whether it was a celebration of spring, birthdays, both, or something else entirely, no one really knew, and it honestly didn't matter. If there's one thing that the staff and participants of Living Resources' Acquired



Brain Injury Program (ABI) have learned, it's that life is short and you never really need a reason to have fun. All program participants have suffered brain injuries at some point in their life due to accidents or medical emergencies.

They came to Living Resources' ABI to establish meaningful post-injury roles and relationships, overcoming their obstacles with the support of fellow survivors. While we offer care coordination, life skills training, fine arts instruction, and more, most participants take particular delight in the social events that take place in the community because it is here that they can put their hard work into practice in a festive environment.



They gathered at the Draper Avenue VFW greeting friends and family with handshakes and warm embraces. They enjoyed a late-day meal with tunes played by a D.J. and the music of laughter in the background. Those with recent or upcoming birthdays were called up to the front and serenaded with the traditional birthday song. Afterward, everyone danced the night away.



CELEBRATION FOR GRADUATION!!!

The sense of pride and self-accomplishment was so strong, you could feel the excitement before the door was opened. Maybe all the obstacles they overcame made the victory sweeter. If you ask most college students about their scholastic journey, they will tell you about their accomplishments, struggles, high points, and disappointments, but for most of them, graduating was always a foregone conclusion. For many students with intellectual disabilities, however, participating in a college program is frequently thought to be improbable, and walking across a stage wearing a cap and gown in a full college graduation ceremony is considered unrealistic. This is where The College Experience comes in.



The two-year certificate program, developed by Living Resources and hosted by The College of Saint Rose, provides young adults with disabilities the support, skills, confidence, internships, and work experiences they need to gain independence and live engaged, productive, and happy lives.



At their pre-graduation party, the graduates discussed the skills they have gained. One mentioned that she learned about nutrition and can now cook for herself. Another said they learned to independently travel around the Capital Region through the Capital District Transportation Authority bus system. A third has gained financial literacy and can now manage his bills and rent. They all talked about their internships and the skills they gained, which they plan to use to secure meaningful jobs.

Just as importantly, The College Experience students have changed their outlook on life. They have learned to believe in themselves and to never give up. One graduate said it best, "What am I proudest of? Everything!"

Focusing on the following day's graduation ceremony, a senior beamed saying, "I've been in school since I was 4 years old. It was hard in the beginning, but this dream is coming true!" Another delighted, "My family is here and they are so proud!" Looking further into the future, some seniors have their sights on future employment and/or post-graduate work where they will further hone their skills.



We congratulate the graduates on this milestone and wish them all the best for the future. In the words of Dr. Seuss, "You're off to Great Places! Today is your day! Your mountain is waiting, So ... get on your way!"



A Tribute to Transforming Lives

A Day at the 1863 Club Saratoga Race Course

August 20, 2023



Presenting Sponsor:



[Click to join!](#)





BABY GOATS (DOO-DOO, DOO-DOO)



When was the last time you got to hold a baby farm animal? The participants of our Saratoga Day Community Opportunity Program did this month! The team took advantage of Indian Ladder’s Baby Animal Days to have an up close and personal experience with chicks, bunnies, lambs, goat kids, pigs, and more.

Farm staff was there to facilitate the experience, handing the animals to the participants for petting and photo opportunities. While the whole trip was as exciting as it was informative, they particularly enjoyed feeding the chickens and holding baby goats! They even hopped on an old-fashioned truck for a fun photo opportunity!



You could say that the trip to the farm was really great for everyone’s “moo-d!” The group would have loved to stay at the farm until the cows came home, but leaving didn’t stress them out. They know there will be more exciting adventures soon.

HOUSE OF BRICKS



American Filmmaker Christopher Miller once said, “With a bucket of Lego, you can tell any story. You can build an airplane or a dragon or a pirate ship – it’s whatever you can imagine.” His appreciation of the iconic plastic blocks runs so deep that he co-wrote and co-directed the 2014 computer-animated adventure comedy film The Lego Movie.

And he’s not alone in his love of LEGO® blocks. Members of the College Experience Alumni Activities Club joined thousands of others who explored the BrickUniverse Lego Fan Expo as it stopped at the Washington Avenue Armory in Albany in its travels across the country. As Mia, Rob, Anna, Bill, and Jesse viewed the small-scale LEGO® skyscrapers and models displaying pop culture in all its glory, they reflected on the sculptures that took countless hours to create by the LEGO® master artists. Although they were fascinated with all the sculptures big and small, their favorites were the Ghostbusters and Scooby-Doo scenes.

The joy of creation wasn’t just limited to the master sculptors. The event also featured LEGO® building zones for inspired attendees to tell their own stories. There were also brick merchants selling all manner of LEGO® related items for those wanting to bring the magic of the day home with them.

Our Alumni left the BrickUniverse Expo with smiles on their faces, and the knowledge that although the box may say “Ages 7 to 14,” nobody is too old to play with LEGOs.





STAR WARS SYMPHONY WAS SPECTACULAR!



A short time ago, in a galaxy not too far from here, staff and individuals from Living Resources hopped aboard a transport ship to Endor and back! This was all thanks to Broadview Federal Credit Union who provided thirty tickets to the Living Resources Family to see David Alan Miller and the Albany Symphony perform John Williams' iconic music from Star Wars.



When they entered The Palace Theatre, they were greeted by members of both the Alliance and the Resistance, including the timeless Princess Leia, the Force Strong Rey, and some not-so-menacing Storm Troopers (one was a little short to be a Storm Trooper and could have been Luke Skywalker in disguise.)



Conductor David Allen Miller was a delightful interplanetary guide. His passionate style of speaking with the audience was engaging, personable, and educational, sharing Star Wars lore and trivia as well as classical musical terms and themes. The fans embraced each selection but cheered the loudest when the orchestra changed themselves into the Cantina Band, playing their iconic, upbeat, swinging tune.

Thank you, Broadview for a night that was out of this world!

UNDER AND OVER THE SEA

The residents of one of Living Resources' homes in Schenectady have been living their best life on the water and under the sea! The group of staff and residents started the month with a luncheon cruise on Lake George. They learned the engaging history of the area through the narrated tour of Lake George while taking in the fabulous scenery. They then enjoyed a delicious buffet meal before they took to the dance floor to shimmy to the live music. There was even a dance contest, and one of our individuals won first prize!



They had such a blast, they plan to return for a sunset/dinner cruise next month.

Continuing with their ocean adventures a few weeks later, the whole group packed up their vans and went to SeaQuest Connecticut, a 20,000-square-foot indoor aquarium for a "deep dive" under the sea. They marveled at the up close and personal experience with all the animals.





CDPHP WORKFORCE TEAM CHALLENGE



Team Living Resources arrived at the Empire State Plaza on a glorious evening for the 2023 CDPHP Workforce Team Challenge. Our theme was "Breaking Barriers Since 1974" honoring our mission statement of supporting and empowering individuals with disabilities or other life-challenging conditions to live with dignity, independence, and happiness. We were roughly 20 members strong, and what we lacked in size was made up for with enthusiasm. Some ran for a competitive time, others walked for fitness, all had a great time.



ECO WARRIORS AT WORK

“Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It’s not.” – Dr. Seuss.

It is May and we can see the grass growing, flowers blooming, and trees filling out their leaves. Unfortunately, we can also see the trash that litters our parks and roadways and the briars that have started to crowd out the native plants. To combat this, Parks and Trails of New York joined forces with the Department of Environmental Conservation and other agencies for #ILoveMyParkDay.” Some of our supported individuals joined the more than 5,000 volunteers to beautify and celebrate New York’s amazing state parks, historic sites, and public lands through park cleanup, trail and wildlife habitat restoration, gardening, and more.



One of our supported individuals, Gary, and his staff member Joe shared their experiences cleaning up the Bennington Battlefield Park in Hoosick. After pre-registering, they excitedly headed over to the Bennington Park pavilion. They each received a red T- shirt indicating their status as official volunteers, which Gary really loved. Then they were given the choice of activities and chose to do trail clean up. A park representative explained all that was involved in that task, showing them how to remove invasive species and cut down plants to widen the trail. Then they got to work completing a full mile of maintenance and beautification. Afterward, they returned to the pavilion where they mingled with other volunteers and enjoyed some refreshments.



Gary and Joe were both so energized by their efforts that they took a drive to view sights in Bennington, Vermont. They celebrated their accomplishments with a nice lunch and then visited a farm where Gary communed with the animals. They ended their adventure with a visit to the Big Moose Deli & Country Store in Hoosick, which Gary loved – especially when the owner gave him a free soda!

Both eco-warriors had an amazing day and said that they would like to do it again!

[Click HERE to read April's Newsletter](#)