

## MESSAGE FROM THE CEO



**Elizabeth Martin**

As July, a month synonymous with independence ends, I want to share what independence means at Living Resources. For us, independence is so much more than a word, it's our mission, a mission lived each and every day. Throughout this newsletter (and in all our newsletters) we share what independence means to the individuals supported by our agency and our committed and caring staff members.

For Norman, Danny, and Robert, independence means having the opportunity and support to get out into the community and visit local landmarks; for Liam, Canaan, Rashad, Meghan, and Elijah, independence means going to college and learning the skills necessary to gain greater independence and work, recreate, and live on their own; for Brian, Sara, Susan, Jorelle, and others, it means building a foundation of support that allows them to showcase their talents; for others, independence means

learning the joy of cooking, volunteering, exploring, or embracing their creativity as part of our artist community.

Though independence varies for each of us, it ultimately leads to a life of dignity and happiness. We are honored to support each person on their journey to independence.

### Thank you to our Event Sponsors

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*Barbara J. Bouchey*  
ASSET MANAGEMENT  
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## A WHOLE LOT OF TALENT

What do singing, dancing, comedy, puppetry, and Shakespeare have in common? They were all showcased at the 2023 Brain Injury Program's Talent Show this month. Participants rehearsed for months in preparation for their performances which can be seen on our YouTube Channel, @LRCAlbany

Although awards and prizes were given out after, they seemed secondary to the experience. Each performer has suffered a brain injury and attends the Living Resources Brain Injury program with the goal of establishing meaningful post-injury roles and relationships. The hard work that each person put into their unique performance and the support they received from their staff was obvious. Each participant has shown tremendous growth in conquering their challenges and serves as an inspiration to us all.



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## ADIRONDACKS ADVENTURES



Saratoga Day Community Opportunities Program (DCOP) participants spent the month of July finding some of the best summer destinations in the region! They took an excursion to Lake Luzerne to try river tubing with **Tubby Tubes** for the first time. Everyone enjoyed the delightfully relaxing experience of floating on the water and hanging with their peers! They continued their water adventures with the **Lake George Steamboat Company** on the Minne-Ha-Ha Paddlewheel Steamboat.



They spent the hour long cruise being serenaded by the calliope, enjoying beautiful views of the Adirondack Mountains and watching some parasailers explore the lake from above. Finally, they took on the quintessential summertime destination- Six Flags Great Escape. As always, they had a blast riding some thrill rides and eating some yummy foods while enjoying the sights and sounds of the park.







## CEP CELEBRATES INDEPENDENCE



One critical aspect of living independently involves being able to cook for yourself, a skill **Rashad** is quickly mastering. He has been referred to as the “Resident Kitchen Maestro” of the College Experience program and is known for the delicious bakes he makes for other students. Rashad works in the kitchen at Honest Weight Food Co-op chopping food and creating meals. He will soon be heading into his own apartment where he will continue to grow to his fullest potential, pursue happiness in the manner he determines, and live as independently as possible.

**Canaan** works on the College of Saint Rose campus in the Information Technology (IT) department and says he wants to help expand the program after he leaves. Like Rashad, Canaan is headed into his own apartment soon!



**Meghan** works at the YMCA after-school program where she tends to the children's needs and does activities with them. Meghan said she loves her job and plans to continue it when the school year starts. After a post-grad year, Meghan plans to continue onto C2L (College to Life) staying in Albany to remain connected with everything in the program.

**Elijah** works at Burlington in Crossgates Mall, where he is a great organizer! Elijah likes to host a variety of events, such as the women’s basketball games, and trips to Dave and Busters, Space Adventure mini golf, APEX bowling, and much more!



**Liam** has a passion for working with animals and a dream of becoming a zoologist. Toward this goal, the Living Resources employment services team has supported him with internships at Pet Supplies Plus and his current internship at the Mohawk Hudson Humane Society. In the fall, he will be heading to SUNY Orange in Middletown, NY, where he will be taking general education classes.

## INDEPENDENCE ON THE ROAD



A trip to Lake George as a College Experience freshman field trip? Sign me up! Prior to traveling to the summer destination, students planned all the details including creating (and sticking to) a budget.





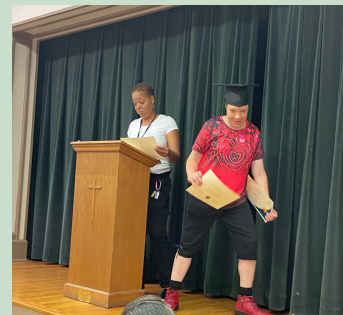
## COOKING UP SOME INDEPENDENCE



Some of our Schenectady Day Community Opportunity Program (DCOP) participants have been gaining Independence, self-esteem, and creativity in the most delicious way possible!

Cooking class participants showcased their skills at a recent graduation ceremony by independently preparing an amazing three-course meal. The banquet featured an appetizer of beef empanadas and salad, a main course of ziti with garlic bread, and a delicious dessert of strawberry shortcakes and cookies.

All this awesomeness didn't happen overnight. They have spent years honing their craft with Living Resources staff Shamile, learning kitchen safety, the mechanics of using a stove and oven, and how to prepare different food items such as meat and vegetables. Other essential life skills like making meal choices, budgeting, and planning have been developed, as well as the social aspects of sharing the kitchen with others in the group and taking turns with the different tasks.



The best part of learning to cook? The satisfaction of enjoying a delicious meal! Although class participants get to enjoy the fruits of their labor after each cooking session, graduation day took the experience to a whole new level. Parents and guardians were invited to the feast to celebrate their family member's achievements. Wearing traditional graduation caps to receive their certificates of accomplishment was the icing on the cake for the budding chefs. During their acceptance speeches, they expressed how proud and excited they felt when their families dined on their magnificent meal.

## TOUR OF THE STATE CAPITAL GROUNDS



What better place to celebrate the birthday of our nation than a tour of the New York State Capital grounds? The gentlemen who reside in one of our Albany residences recently took a trip to downtown Albany with one of their staff members. Norman, Danny, and Robert enjoyed the day by picking up some lunch at an area restaurant, touring around the Plaza, and posing for this great photograph. These great friends love the independence of getting into the community and look forward to these exciting trips!

Our residential sites offer a home environment, receiving support from as little as two hours a week to 24/7 based on their needs and abilities. Here, individuals engage in group learning experiences for the development of skills in daily living and have the opportunity to access their community for services and recreation. Learn more about our Residential Services at

<https://www.livingresources.org/services/residential-services/>





## EMBRACING THE ADVENTURE



The June 2023 Adventure Program is in the books what an adventure it was! They frolicked with exciting creatures at the Bailiwick Animal Park in Catskill, immersed themselves in Post-Impressionistic art at the Van Gogh Exhibit in Schenectady, had a “hole” lot of fun at Howe’s Caverns, launched into a luncheon cruise in Lake George, pedaled through the scenic Adirondacks, and much more. The spotty weather added to the adventure and made for some great stories when they got home!

The Adventure Program is offered to applicants who are 11 years old or older, live at home, and meet OPWDD’s eligibility criteria. The program takes place during breaks in the school year for holidays and fills the gap between the end of the regular school year and the start of summer school.

**NEW TO 2023**, we are offering two days in August! Individuals can sign up for August 23 and 24 to go to a water park and the Bronx Zoo. Looking for an adventure?? Go to

<https://www.livingresources.org/adventure-program/>



## FOR THE LOVE OF HORSES



Rensselaer County DCOP has a new volunteer site, **Stars and Stripes Stables** in East Greenbush! Participants moved and stacked hay and helped clean out a stall. They also had the opportunity to groom the horses, learning how to clean their hooves.

Everyone involved absolutely loved the experience. One of the participants said, “It was great and amazing! It was like a show I watch called Saddle Club. Everyone was so nice to us!”

Thanks to everyone at Stars and Stripes Stables for welcoming our group with open arms (and hooves!) Needless to say, we look forward to returning soon!







## A BEAUTIFUL DAY IN SCHENECTADY'S STOCKADE



The beauty of the day was undeniable and abundant, both in nature's manifestation and artistic representation. Last Saturday's Stockade Association Art and Nature Garden Tour gave attendees an opportunity to bask in a picture-perfect summer day while appreciating the handiwork of the historic neighborhood's talented gardeners and the botanical beauty they painstakingly cultivated.

The bucolic splendor of the nine private gardens, two public green spaces, and two historic church gardens were accentuated by artwork created by Living Resources Arts program featured artists; TJ Casey, Katie Kelly, Nick Lyons, and Gillian Mason who attended the show with their staff and family.



In addition, individuals from our Malta and Schenectady Art Studios participated in the Stockade Garden Show and had their individual artwork featured in various gardens. Many of these art students were in attendance with their families locating their own pieces, showing their support to their classmates, and finding inspiration for their next masterpieces. Their excitement was palpable as they meandered through the neighborhood, exploring its rich beauty with peers, staff, and other attendees.

As the anthophiles, floraphiles, and other "gardennerds" took in the sights and sounds of the day, they shared their admiration of the artists and their artwork, expressing interest in purchasing select pieces. TJ showcased his characteristic humility along with his paintings as he posed for a photo near a low rock wall. He shared that it was a very beautiful day, saying, "I'm just very happy to have my work displayed." Fellow artist Debbie enthusiastically announced, "I sold my picture of a kitty-cat. Isn't that great?"



We congratulate and thank each of our artists and their instructors for helping enhance the beauty of the Stockade Garden tour. To learn more about our art program, go to <https://www.livingresources.org/art-program/>



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