



MESSAGE FROM THE CEO



Elizabeth Martin

As we wrap up 2023, I would like to take a moment to pause and reflect on our mission and vision for the future.

In 2022, we began the implementation of a three-year strategic plan. As part of this plan, we are beginning to experience a culture shift. A culture shift that began with us, how we communicate and provide our supportive services. We created an Independence Ambassadors workgroup that focuses on supporting individuals as they work to identify their personal goals, no longer assuming that we know the answers to what they may want or need. We are very excited to share that with this approach, along with the support of an OPWDD grant, a few of the individuals we support have now begun their own personal

independence journey by moving out of a group home setting into their own apartment with continued support from Living Resources. This is a major success!

It is these personal stories of the lives impacted each day by our supportive services that drive our mission home for me. I see individuals who are finding new levels of independence, being supported to live lives in a supportive environment, where they can learn, grow, and achieve more than even they may have thought possible.

As we enter the third year of our strategic plan, we will continue on our path that supports and empowers individuals with disabilities of other life challenging conditions to live with dignity, independence, and happiness. We deeply appreciate your support and thank you for joining us on this journey. Happy New Year!

INSPIRATIONAL OPTIMISM: SEEING A BRAIN INJURY AS A BLESSING IN DISGUISE

Molly, a participant in our Brain Injury Program, says her injury saved her life. She means those words deeply. Molly suffered an aneurysm and had to be rushed to the hospital for brain surgery. She lives with the aftermath but feels that if that sudden medical emergency had never happened, she might not be alive today. "I was going down a really bad road before," she explains, "I was drinking too much, doing drugs and stuff, so in that sense, having a brain injury brought me back to my family and got me back to seeing what was important in my life."

To Molly, those important things are the people she loves and her own happiness. Today, she has found her path forward and a level of independence that she is proud of. Molly is living in her own apartment and says she is grateful to all the people who've worked with her and supported her over the years, helping her get to this point. Molly says in her six years with Living Resources her confidence has grown and she has found community.



For almost 50 years, Living Resources has worked to support individuals with disabilities and other life-challenging conditions to live with dignity, independence, and happiness. We cannot do it alone. We need friends like YOU to help us empower individuals like Molly so they can thrive beyond what even they thought was possible! [Click here to donate!](#) We appreciate any level of support, every dollar helps!



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WELCOME WESTCHESTER: DCOP EXPANSION CELEBRATED WITH RIBBON CUTTING



Westchester County is going “Without Walls!” The Day Community Opportunities Program (DCOP) celebrated the grand opening of its new space at 280 Dobbs Ferry Road in White Plains with a ribbon cutting on December 4, 2023.

Individuals enrolled in the program, their families, caregivers, and community members were among those on hand for the ceremonial snip of the gold ribbon. DCOP teams plan to start rolling out of this hub in early January 2024.



“So far, we have eight individuals signed up, including one participant who will be trialing on high school breaks,” shares Alyssa Jackey, Assistant Director of DCOP South, “Westchester DCOP will be supporting the community with volunteer work at the Ronald McDonald House in Valhalla, Access Equestrian, St. Paul’s on the Hill Episcopal Church, Grace Church Ossining, Hillside Food Outreach, and Shames Jewish Community Center in Tarrytown.”

DCOP had already been operating in Albany, Columbia, Dutchess, Greene, Orange, Putnam, Rensselaer, Rockland, Saratoga, Schenectady, Ulster, and Warren

Counties before Westchester County was brought into the fold. The expansive program now offers a wide variety of activities and experiences to adults with disabilities across 13 different counties. Those enrolled enjoy participating in volunteer opportunities, artistic enrichment, and recreational adventures, all aimed at providing them with day-long experiences to help them develop skills and become integrated into the communities they call home.

At the ribbon cutting, a representative from New York State Assemblymember MaryJane Shimsky’s office was on hand to present Westchester DCOP with a Certificate of Merit, welcoming the program into the county.

All of the individuals who came to the ribbon cutting are excited to start program,” says Rob Scaccia, DCOP Intake and Development Coordinator, “One of them, Deanne Falcone, has her own website that she created that sells products that cater to folks who have ADHD and Autism. When asked how many days she wants to come to DCOP, she said very quickly and enthusiastically, ‘Everyday!’”





THANK YOU FOR MAKING LIVING RESOURCES YOUR CAREER CHOICE!



Dozens of dedicated employees who have been working at Living Resources for 10 to 15 years were honored on December 5, 2023 with tasty food, drinks, and a holiday gift of a green zip-up sweatshirt adorned with the Living Resources logo.



A breakfast and happy hour were hosted at the office on Washington Avenue Extension in Albany, giving those who have honed their skills for more than a decade the chance to meet, mingle, and share stories. CEO Elizabeth Martin was on hand, taking time to speak one-on-one with as many people as possible. She wanted to know what made these longtime employees so committed to their work at Living Resources.

Overwhelmingly, employees said they do what they do because of the individuals that they support and have grown to deeply care for over the years. They shared stories of high-fives, conversations, exchanged compliments, and welcome routines. They said these kinds of heart-felt moments of genuine human connection are things they could have never gotten from a corporate job or a role in a different industry.

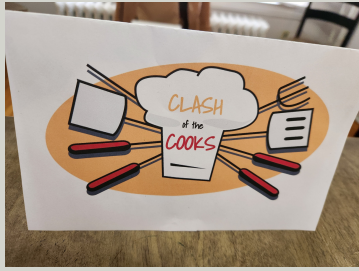


Congratulations to you all on a job incredibly well-done! We are so lucky to have you on our team.

- | | | | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|
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| | | Crystal Pease | | |



CLASH OF THE COOKS



Freshmen students in The College Experience were challenged to take part in a culinary showdown at the end of their fall 2023 semester!

Teams competed in "The Clash of the Cooks," putting their kitchen-know-how and ingenuity to the test as they made tasty quesadillas with original names. Some of the ingredients included ham, avocado, and even macaroni and cheese!

Teachers and fellow students served as judges, ranking the recipes on overall taste, presentation, and creativity. As you can see from all of the empty plates, everyone who got to taste these dishes was a winner!



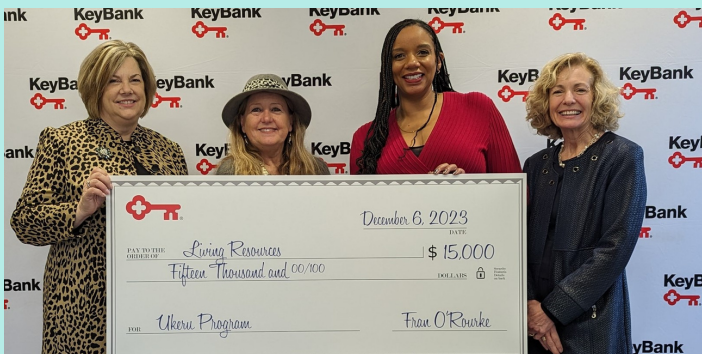
A STRONG SHOW OF COMMUNITY SUPPORT

We deeply appreciate each of the companies and organizations that give to our agency!

Your contributions make a huge difference and are put to very good use.



Thank you to Broadview Federal Credit Union for generously donating dozens of bags full of gifts to our organization! The individuals we support were thrilled to receive their holiday surprises.



Thank you to KeyBank for your generous donation! We are grateful not only for your financial support, but for all that you do for our region through your philanthropic efforts.



Thank you to the Enterprise Mobility Foundation for your meaningful contribution and for being a wonderful partner as we venture out into the community with the individuals we support!



THE SPIRIT OF THE SEASON



Yuletide cheer and tasty food was available in abundance at holiday celebrations across our agency! Please enjoy these photos from parties and gatherings hosted by our various programs, including Afterschool, Brain Injury, Day Community Opportunities, and Supportive Living.



For a more in-depth look at each celebration, head to our website or check out our social media pages!



**WE ARE STOMPING AND SLIDING INTO THE YEAR 2024!
BE SURE TO CHECK OUT OUR "CHA CHA SLIDE" VIRTUAL DANCE PARTY.
THE VIDEO WILL BE POSTED ON OUR FACEBOOK, TWITTER, AND YOUTUBE PAGES
ON NEW YEAR'S EVE!**

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