



Inspirations

WHAT'S IN A
DREAM?



SPRING/SUMMER 2022 EDITION



INSPIRATIONS MAGAZINE

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Springbrook is the leader in providing innovative supports for people with developmental disabilities. With locations across New York State, we offer support options that span all aspects of a person's life.



A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

WHAT'S IN A *Dream?*



Welcome to our spring/summer *Inspirations* magazine, What's In A Dream. Throughout this edition, you will find dreams imagined, dreams planned, and dreams realized—from the vision and commitment of our new commissioner of OPWDD, Kerri Neifeld, to the potential opportunities and dreams of all seven people who now call Blackstone Community Home their home.

At Springbrook, it is our job to listen, understand, and facilitate the dreams of people with developmental disabilities and their families. Without judgment and with clear communication, we develop a plan. Whether at an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) meeting for our students or an Individualized Service Plan (ISP) meeting for adults, together we dream, listen, set goals, and make a plan to realize dreams.

So what is in a dream at Springbrook? There is always potential, possibilities, purpose, plans, and most importantly, hope.

Hope for small things and big things; an apartment, a meaningful job, a trip to Disney, a reunion with family and friends. Dreams that your friends and family may share. At Springbrook, we come together to support those dreams. Our team of teachers, therapists, nurses, managers, and direct support professionals help to define and realize what is in a dream for each person, each home, and each family.

What is in our dreams at Springbrook?

Hmm...that will take more space than I have, but they are all found in our vision statement and realized today:

- Springbrook is a leader in providing innovative supports
- Our services support all aspects of an individual's life
- Our staff are highly trained, compassionate, and skilled

Which all leads to endless possibilities...

Keep Dreaming!

Patricia E. Kennedy

Patricia E. Kennedy
CEO



Patricia visits the residents at their new home, Blackstone Community Home and Century Sunrise Apartments, with NYS OPWDD Commissioner.



A Home OF MY Own

By Michael Basso

For many, owning a successful business is the culmination of a lifelong dream. People start businesses for many reasons — out of necessity, as a hobby, or as a retirement option. Paul and Mary Ann Egan started “A Home of My Own” not for any of the typical reasons someone might start a business. They started their business so that the future for their son, Ryan, is assured when they are no longer around. That is their dream.

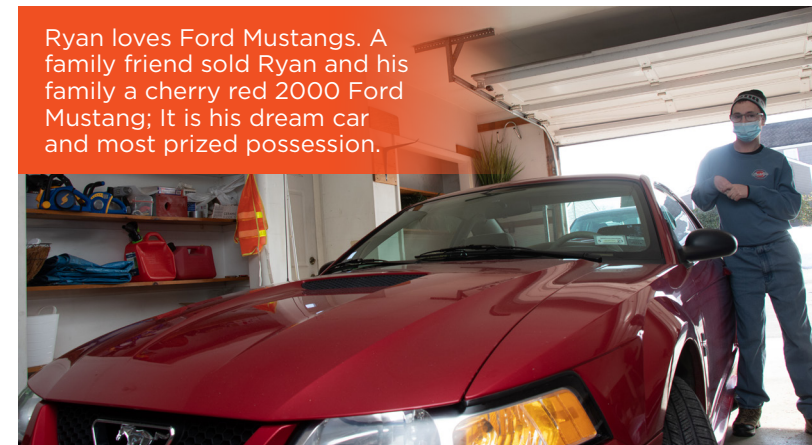
A Home of My Own is a nonprofit organization dedicated to creating self-sustaining homes for adults with developmental disabilities, giving them the opportunity to thrive on their own terms. The driving force behind all the decisions made for the business is that everything has to work when Paul and Mary Ann are not there. Paul jokingly compares the house operations to “the Prime Directive” for Starfleet, as in the science fiction show Star Trek. “You can’t mess with the natural order of other civilizations,” Paul said, continuing the Star Trek metaphor. In addition to their team of service providers, they have an added layer of accountability (nonprofit status, board of directors) that is working to ensure not only Ryan, but other participants as well, can be taken care of after their natural supports are gone.



Paul and Mary Ann Egan sitting in the “global headquarters” of “A Home of My Own.”



Ryan with his dad, Paul Egan.



Ryan loves Ford Mustangs. A family friend sold Ryan and his family a cherry red 2000 Ford Mustang; It is his dream car and most prized possession.



Residents of “A Home Of My Own” decorate their rooms with their favorite things.



The newly remodeled kitchen provides excellent lighting, lots of room for easy accessibility, and state-of-the-art appliances.



Paul and Mary Ann Egan enjoy a relaxing moment in their “Home of My Own.”

Ryan Egan is 29 years old and has cerebral palsy. Ryan is an affable young man that knows more about cars than a mechanic (we would wager) and loves to tell you about them. Besides cars, Ryan loves animals, especially his dog, Maggie. He also likes to bake and pick flowers to bring to friends, but not always in that order. Ryan lives at his “Home of My Own” house Sunday evening through Friday. He likes to go for walks in the park with staff and loves to visit fire or police stations. Paul says Ryan’s goals are to “be safe and secure and to have opportunities to interact with as many other people as possible.”

When not running “A Home of My Own,” Paul and Mary Ann Egan are local professionals; Mary Ann owns a flower boutique, and Paul worked at IBM for 34 years as an engineer and IT architect. They already had the entrepreneurial spirit when contemplating their concerns about Ryan’s future. With the help of Self-Directed Services provided by Springbrook, they devised a plan to set up Ryan for the rest of his life.

Ryan and the other two residents use SDS budgets to help pay for rent and ISS Transition Funds to furnish the home. Paul and Maryann use every dollar to make a beautiful, dignified home for the residents.

Michael Mihalko, Springbrook Assistant Director of Community Services for Compliance & Training, has worked closely with Paul, Mary Ann, and Ryan. Michael said, “A Home of My Own is a truly unique living opportunity where participants pull their services together to maintain their home, share staff, and build relationships. Their success comes from bringing multiple facets to the table such as the Fiscal Intermediary, Housing Navigation, Support Brokers, OPWDD, and great DSPs who have made this sustainable opportunity a reality.”

Self-Directed Services ensure that people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families have the flexibility to choose the supports that are right for them, and this includes working with businesses like “A Home of My Own” to facilitate this. Everyone has a dream, and everyone deserves a home of their own.

Paul says Ryan’s goals are to, be safe and secure and to have opportunities to interact with as many other people as possible.



OPWDD COMMISSIONER VISIT



DREAMING FOR *New York* STATE

By Kira DeLanoy

How are the dreams of hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers with intellectual and developmental disabilities supported? By hundreds of service organizations like Springbrook, which are supported and guided by the New York State Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD). This spring, OPWDD welcomed a new commissioner, Kerri Neifeld. In her months as Interim Commissioner and first few as Commissioner, Kerri Neifeld has taken a hands-on approach. She has visited service providers across the state to learn about the needs, criticisms, hopes, and dreams of people living with I/DD, their families, and the organizations that

support them. Commissioner Neifeld has also led the way on a new five-year strategic plan for OPWDD that will take effect in 2023.

The Statewide Comprehensive 5.07 Plan is, as the name implies, a comprehensive plan seeking to implement OPWDD's vision, "That people with developmental disabilities enjoy meaningful relationships with friends, family, and others in their lives, experience personal health and growth, live in the home of their choice, and fully participate in their communities." To the right are the three overarching goals outlined in the draft plan (seeking to address the challenges facing OPWDD and service providers now and in the coming years).

2023-2027 OPWDD DRAFT STRATEGIC GOALS

Goal 1

Supporting people in the most person-centered ways

Improve OPWDD's supports and services for people with developmental disabilities throughout their lifespan by addressing gaps in services and ensuring supports are integrated, holistic, and are focused on individual need, offer choice, maximize independence, and increase community integration.

Goal 2

Promoting practices that strengthen the workforce and infrastructure

Advance the OPWDD system by investing in the workforce, updating the service system to better support efficient and sustainable service delivery, and increasing access to information.

Goal 3

Advancing systems change and innovation across the state

Explore new approaches and opportunities to reduce complexity and improve the system's ability to better serve people with developmental disabilities.





OPWDD COMMISSIONER VISIT CONT.



We encourage you to participate in one (or more!) of the many opportunities available this summer to comment on the draft strategic plan. Feedback will be collected by OPWDD throughout the summer, with a final draft planned for submission to the state in the late fall of this year. Make your voice heard!

Springbrook was thrilled to welcome Commissioner Neifeld in April for a tour of the Century Sunrise Apartments in Johnson City and the housewarming reception for the Blackstone Community Home in Binghamton, NY. While at Century Sunrise, Commissioner Neifeld took the time to sit and speak with the individuals who call Century Sunrise home. At the Housewarming Reception for the Blackstone Community Home, she was treated to a personal tour by Blackstone Resident Ronda Royster. She met residents, staff, friends, and family.

Thank you, Commissioner Neifeld, for this fantastic visit, and we look forward to years of partnership!

Scan the QR Code to visit <https://opwdd.ny.gov/statewide-comprehensive-507-plan>.

Make your voice heard!



LIFE, *Celebrated*

By Desiree Simpson

Thanks to better and expanded services for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD), people with I/DD are living healthier, more fulfilling lives, and are living longer as a result. In the past, it was expected that someone with I/DD would live a short life due to a lack of services, including access to medical appointments, therapies such as speech and physical therapy, and counseling, in addition to special education, and residential or home care with or without medical services. Today, people with I/DD have an average lifespan of 60 years, thanks to the continued growth of supports available, including those provided by Springbrook. Living a full life—a dream that many work toward throughout the entirety of their life—is attainable for so many and being aware of one’s options through the end of life is as equally important. As with every aging population, medical needs and complications become more prominent and more care may be needed, including the support for physical mobility and dementia. While health care needs are assessed on an individual basis, every person has the right to

care through the end of their life, which might include hospice or comfort care. Additionally, it is important that a person, and their family, have an understanding of the options available to advocate for their health and the assurance that their values will be upheld nearing the end-of-life and after. Springbrook is there to ensure that the people we serve have access to the healthcare they want, are informed of healthcare proxies and advance directives, and understand their right to plan celebration of life services.

STARTING A CONVERSATION

Starting a conversation about end-of-life care and celebration of life arrangements is difficult. However, with a myriad of resources currently available, this conversation doesn’t have to be as daunting as it may seem. In fact, it can provide relief to people and their family members because it will ensure that a person’s wishes prior to and after their death will be fulfilled. Preparations made in advance of someone’s death gives family, friends, caregivers, and loved ones the time that they need to meet the needs in health and comfort care of the dying and, when they pass, to





LIFE, CELEBRATED CONT.

grieve their loss without worry or stress of planning funerary arrangements. Choosing a health care proxy or health care advocate—someone close to the person who can advocate on behalf of the individual near the end of their life and after life and make decisions for medical treatments and interventions—is one important step to ensuring that a person’s wishes will be guaranteed when they can no longer advocate for themselves. Often, a health

care proxy is informed by and included in an advance directive, or living will. When creating an advance directive and choosing a health care proxy, a person can address questions like: Do I want more time with friends and family, or more time for activities that I enjoy? What do I want my healthcare team to look like? Do I want to be in my home or a healthcare setting near the end of my life? Do I wish to donate my organs? Do I want my body to be aquamated, cremated, or have a green burial? Having your care prearranged means that your values and beliefs will be upheld after death.

ASSISTANCE THROUGH THE DECISION MAKING PROCESS

Where appropriate, residential managers of community homes like Michele Mohrien, have sat down with residents and their family members or guardians, as well as a care management team to discuss end-of-life arrangements and assist in the decision making process for celebration of life plans and burial. Although Michele mentioned feeling uncomfortable when she first sat down with a resident to discuss their plans with a care management team, she found herself and everyone at the table at ease after a few minutes. This process allowed the resident to make decisions about their care and funeral plans, and removed this step from family or advocates after their death. Options were brought to the resident who consulted catalogues from local funeral homes, allowing them to pick their own coffin, from wood finish to color of the lining; as well as to advocate for their funeral arrangements.

ESTABLISHING A HEALTH CARE PROXY AND ADVANCE DIRECTIVE

Finally, establishing a health care proxy and advance directive can inform costs of end-of-life care and celebration of life arrangements.

DEMENTIA

Springbrook is doing their part to care for an aging I/DD population by training staff to recognize the signs of dementia, which affect this population at a greater rate and often earlier in a person’s life. Dementia is a broad term that is used to label neurocognitive decline that can affect things like memory and physical abilities, and impact a person’s day-to-day functioning. Recognizing signs early is important so that the person experiencing dementia can be assessed and given adequate treatment, like new skills training and strategies for continued independence, to maintain their daily routines and life. As soon as changes in behavior or skills are noticed, it is important for caregivers to notify a health care staff member and management.

POOLED TRUST SERVICE

In advance, the Pooled Trust service offered by Springbrook can help allocate funds for these needs; and, where financial needs are not met, the HELP Committee can assist. Additionally, pre-made payment arrangements for funeral costs not only takes the burden off of a grieving family, but arrangements are honored by other funeral homes in what is called an Irrevocable Burial Account or Funeral Trust if the place of internment is in another state, such as the birthplace or the location of the family of the deceased. Understanding one’s rights and the services that one has access to is important to fulfilling one’s living dreams and seeing one’s values and beliefs upheld. It is never too soon to think about your wishes and start a conversation with your family members, guardians, friends, or your caregivers about what you want at the end of your life.

“It is crucial for family members, advocates, and members of a care team to come together and put together all necessary resources and services for a person with dementia to ensure that their wishes are respected. End of life care can be easier for caregivers if an advance directive and health care proxy is in place, because without them, services are harder to obtain. Finally, it is important to know our loved one’s wishes and give them a chance to advocate for themselves.”

Taylor DeCook
Assistant Behavior Specialist,
Community Homes

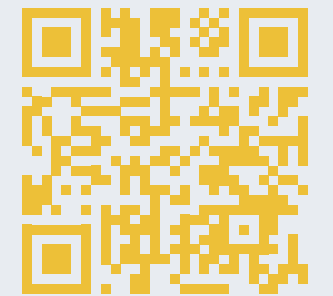
HELPFUL RESOURCES

Scan the QR codes below for helpful resources and to learn more about end of life planning and celebrations.

theconversationproject.org



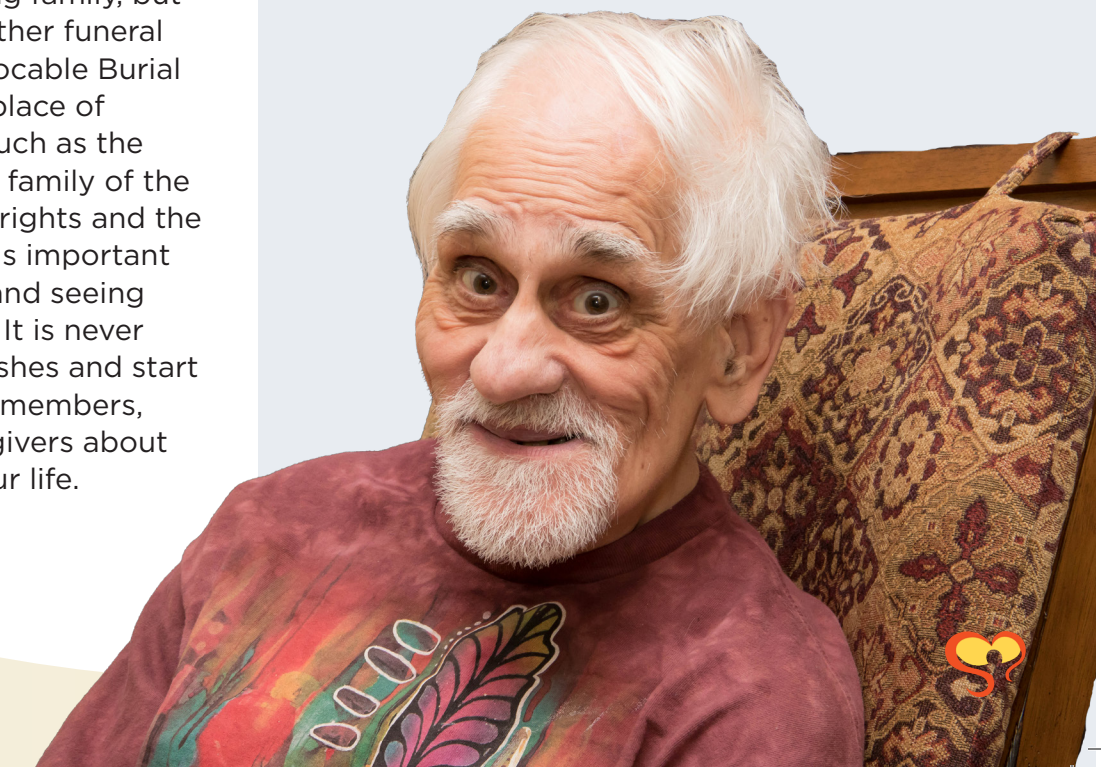
caringinfo.org



orderofthegooddeath.com



joincake.com





FINDING A NEW *Perspective*

By Michael Basso

Sometimes someone's dream can be simple. A person may dream of finding a new perspective—appreciating all of the little things. They may dream of getting a little respite. Respite is a short period of rest from something difficult. Like those available from multiple departments through Springbrook's Community Services division, Respite services provide temporary relief from the extraordinary demands of caregiving and help reduce stress for caregivers (often family). This service allows families to better meet the needs of their loved ones with an intellectual or developmental disability. Jeff and Donalu Emhof needed respite, and when they did, they turned to Self-Directed Services (SDS) by Springbrook.

Adoniram Emhof was born prematurely with a rare congenital heart condition called Tetralogy of Fallot (the-TRAL-uh-jee of fuh-LOW). The condition is a combination of four life-threatening heart defects at birth, requiring surgical intervention. Adoniram's first year and a half of life were tenuous, with two heart surgeries and intermittent oxygen use to ensure an adequate supply of oxygenated blood circulated through his body. At times

Adoniram would suddenly turn blue from lack of oxygen. His dad points out, "He was the only little boy we preferred to see pink rather than blue!" Adoniram had closed heart surgery at seven months, then open-heart surgery at 18 months. Despite complications and extended recovery from the first surgery, the open-heart operation went beautifully. Much to the surgeon's surprise, the little boy could go home after just four days in the hospital. "We had lots of people praying at our church. One elderly man later told us he had prayed that Adoniram would set a recovery record," explains Jeff.

“Donalu provided her son's day-to-day care and education at home through the COVID-19 pandemic. During this time, Donalu went through a cancer diagnosis and treatment. She, like Ado, was at high risk of adverse consequences of COVID, so they stayed close to home for nearly two years.”

After such significant surgery, everyone was thrilled to see them at church less than a week later. Donalu gratefully added, "We thanked everyone who prayed. It was quite a journey!"

Also diagnosed with Down Syndrome at birth, Ado, as his parents and friends call him, attended Springbrook's Kids Unlimited Preschool starting at four years old. After two years, he transferred to public school. Ado has apraxia of speech and movement, which complicated his integration into the public school setting. Apraxia is a neurological disorder in which an individual has difficulty making appropriate movements to complete tasks. In Ado's case, this included forming words. After only three months in public school, Donalu, who homeschooled Ado's four siblings through high school, decided to homeschool Ado. However, this effort was beyond the family's ability to manage. Therefore, in 2011 Adoniram's parents enrolled him in the Pathfinder Village school just a mile from their home in Edmeston, NY. Ado attended Pathfinder School for seven years. When he was 17, Ado decided he no longer wanted to attend school. He couldn't say, "I don't want to go to school anymore," he just refused to get out of the car. His parents returned him to homeschooling with a combination of services obtained through Springbrook Self-Direction and his local school district (which provides speech and occupational therapy). Ado will remain with these services until he is 21, at which time he will be provided with complete services from Self-Direction through Springbrook.

Ado is a bit of an introvert by nature. He rides a bike and drives the family lawn tractor. He has a great sense of humor and loves music, particularly southern gospel by the Gaither Vocal Band or Signature Sound. Ado takes drum lessons at Big Apple Music in New Hartford, NY, furthering his musical talent. He also enjoys playing acoustic and bass guitar. Ado participated in the Therapeutic Horse Program at Athelas Stables in Otego when he was younger. The family is planning to have him ride again.

Donalu provided her son's day-to-day care and education at home through the COVID-19

Ado showing off his drumming skills.





FINDING A NEW PERSPECTIVE CONT.

“Working with Ado is fun, but it takes patience. He has a great personality and a wonderful sense of humor.”

Cara Wust

SDS Respite Worker provided through Springbrook



pandemic. During this time, Donalu went through a cancer diagnosis and treatment. She, like Ado, was at high risk of adverse consequences of a COVID infection, so they stayed close to home for nearly two years. Donalu realized that she and Ado needed more community engagement. In December of 2021, the Emhof family was approved for SDS Respite Services. Once relieved by Springbrook’s Self-Directed Services, Donalu realized that the care she had provided for her son had been equivalent to a full-time job. SDS Respite Services was entirely new to the Emhof family and has helped Donalu appreciate that help is available for people in their situation. Donalu expresses, “Everyone’s life has meaning, including people with special needs. Not more meaning, but a fun lightness around them that you can’t see until you have help!” Jeff continues, “when you’re in the grind and don’t have respite, it’s hard to see the silver linings, but having a break from the everyday allows one to step back and see how wonderful it is. You truly appreciate it.”

Cara Wust, the SDS Respite Worker, provided through Springbrook, gives much-needed relief to Ado’s family while helping Ado interact more in his community and meet his service goals. Cara helps Ado communicate using his iPad with software that helps him express his wants and needs. Their time together includes trips to the New Berlin library to pick out movies. Cara comments, “Working with Ado is fun, but it takes patience. He has a great personality and a wonderful sense of humor.” Ado loves going to Five-Guy’s restaurant most of all. During a recent visit to Five-Guy’s with

Cara, the cashier stated that there was no need to pay because an anonymous patron had already paid the bill. Small acts of kindness, like this one, warm Donalu’s heart and make her realize how essential Respite Services are. With Respite Services, she can appreciate these acts of kindness in the moment, not after the fact.

The budget that the family built and had approved through SDS allows them to have a membership at the Clark Sports Center in Cooperstown, NY, where Cara will be taking Ado for swimming and bowling. Because of COVID, they have not used all SDS services yet, but they know that more is there for them when they are ready. Shannon Spooner, the Emhof’s Fiscal Intermediary through Springbrook, was able to connect them with Cara. Shannon knew Cara had additional availability and lived only a mile from the Emhofs. Donalu added, “This is a small community, and Cara already knew our family. It was a great fit!” Cara’s transition to providing respite was seamless. She has been a vital resource to the Emhof family. Donalu had not realized the enormity of providing for Ado’s special needs until everything seemed overwhelming. “Cara has helped me look at how to help him be more structured, a fresher perspective.”

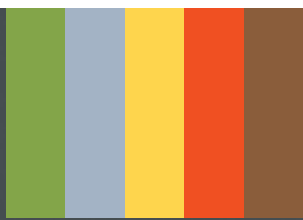
Adoniram has a strong affection for his family, including his two adult brothers, two adult sisters, and his two dogs, Sam and Reny. He is affectionate with his new niece and loves when one of his siblings comes home for a visit. Those visits are like his dreams coming true. For Ado’s parents, rest from the demands of providing for all of their son’s needs is their dream come true. Dreams are essential, but sometimes you need a little respite to realize them.

“This is a small community, and Cara already knew our family. It was a great fit! Cara has helped me look at how to help him be more structured and have a fresher perspective.”

Donalu Emhof

Adoniram’s Mom





MEET THE *Residents*

By Tamara Sines

The opening of Springbrook’s newest Community Home—Blackstone—was a long-awaited dream come true for the many people involved in the process. Due to health concerns and supply shortages from the COVID-19 pandemic, Blackstone move-in took about two years. But even these unforeseen circumstances couldn’t stop that dream from coming true! On March 23, 2022, the Blackstone Community Home opened its doors to residents and staff. The home is special for many reasons, not least of which is the amazing people who live there. But also because it fills a very real need for housing that reflects the needs and desires of young people transitioning from school-aged programs, or those ready for more independence.

On a recent visit to the home, it was clear that although the process of getting Blackstone move-in ready was long, it was definitely rewarding. The smile on each resident’s face showed excitement for new opportunities. The staff were equally eager to share their enthusiasm. When asked what excites her the most, Kaitlyn Andrews, Assistant Director of Community Homes for the Binghamton Region, responded, “All of the residents have so much

potential and they can reach that by being here. The team, the area, and the opportunities that come with the city will all make it possible.” Blackstone is Springbrook’s second Community Home located in the greater Binghamton region.

The City of Binghamton offers ample opportunities to explore and find new and meaningful experiences outside of the home. Residents enjoy taking trips to go shopping or try different take-out foods. In addition to experiencing more from the city, the neighborhood location and appearance of the Blackstone house are important. The house is integrated into the residential community and looks like any other house on the street. This seamless integration allows the residents to be a part of the community and explore the neighborhood just as anyone else would. Christy Skope, the House Manager shares, “Homes operated by Springbrook look like anyone else’s would. This place feels like a second home for me; therefore, it never feels like work.” But walls, windows, and doors are just the beginning. Christy and Kaitlyn are looking forward to hitting the ground running on helping each resident reach new heights and accomplish their dreams.



BRIAN BEILBY



ERIC FISH



COLIN GOWLAND



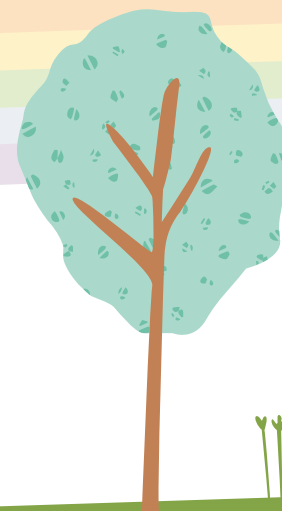
RONDA ROYSTER



CHRIS LUIS



JOSEPH TAGLIARINI





BLACKSTONE COMMUNITY HOME CONT.

SHARING THEIR DREAMS

Gaining independence is a dream that resident Ronda Royster is working to achieve. Moving to the Blackstone Community Home has elevated Ronda's mindset about her own capabilities and opportunities. The move has encouraged her to reach new goals. When asked why this move to Blackstone is a dream come true, Ronda shared, "We love what we do here and we love what we have here in Binghamton. I love everything about it. I love being with the staff, and I love hanging out with my housemates." Ronda and her housemates enjoy exploring their community. The group will take walks around their neighborhood, chat with neighbors, explore downtown shopping, and play card games and board games. Ronda shares, "It's like one big family. We love just hanging out with each other and enjoying the house."

Learning and growing through life experiences, like taking a walk around the block alone, is helping Rhonda gain the independence she desires—independence that will help her achieve her next goal of moving into a supervised apartment and working at the beauty supply store, Ulta. When asked how the Blackstone Community Home differs from her experience as residential student at The School at Springbrook,

Ronda said, "We get treated like an adult here. You are more independent. I am a growing, independent young woman who gets treated that way here."

Rhonda is not the only resident at the Blackstone Community Home that dreams of dipping their toes into a profession. Eric Fish is also working on gaining his independence in the effort to work at Walmart or Target. Eric shares, "Living at the Blackstone House is very important. I am advocating for myself to achieve my dreams." Eric enjoys walking around the community and taking in the beautiful houses and gardens in the neighborhood. He currently walks with his housemates and support staff but aspires to gain more independence so that he can walk alone. Eric has also been working toward taking public transportation, such as a bus or Uber, without assistance. Eric is also looking forward to meeting new staff members and housemates and is looking forward to a romantic relationship. To help make Blackstone a home, Eric's goal is to create some vegetable and flower gardens in the back for all the staff and housemates to enjoy!

Like residents, the staff members at the Blackstone Community Home are looking forward to the endless opportunities this dream home will support. Direct Support Professional (DSP), Sarah, is excited to get to know the residents and experience the new house with them. Sarah shares, "I am excited to help each resident grow into their own person and give them the best experience possible." Sarah is also a DSP at the Sweet Briar Community Home, which is also located in the Binghamton area. Sarah would like to use some skills she learned at Sweet Briar to help in making the goals of the residents at Blackstone come to fruition. Sarah shares, "I would like to assist the residents in establishing

Steven with his advocate at the Blackstone housewarming reception.

Ronda shared, We love what we do here and we love what we have here in Binghamton. I love everything about it. I love being with the staff, and I love hanging out with my housemates.

a routine to help them have the best quality of life possible and succeed in anything they want to do." In addition to helping the residents achieve their dreams, Sarah is working on becoming a certified nurse. Becoming a certified nurse will allow Sarah to, "help each and every person that I can!" We are excited to see Sarah accomplish her dreams while assisting residents in reaching their full potential.

Aspiring to help others grow and reach their full potential is a common aspiration among the staff at Blackstone. Steve, the Assistant Manager at the house, looks forward to helping the residents grow and become more independent. When asked how working for Springbrook helps accomplish his dreams, Steve shares, "It gives me a chance to give something back. I love watching the residents smile and try new things." The most exciting part about working in the Blackstone house for Steve is the opportunity to see each resident try something new, or learn a skill that gets them to the next level of their life. Steve aspires to support residents in accomplishing their goals, no matter the challenges that may get in the way. Blackstone is a dream come true for Steve because it is a new opportunity to see people advance toward independence. Outside of Springbrook, Steve aspires to buy an RV with his wife and travel the country. We are looking forward to the new heights the residents at Blackstone will reach with the support of Steve!

The Blackstone Community Home is more than just a house; it is a beacon of growth, dignity, and opportunity. Residents are achieving their dreams with hard work and determination, while also enjoying the company of their housemates and staff. Eric shares, "This is the best house I have ever been in. I have come a long way. Good job everybody!" We couldn't have said it better ourselves!



Chris does laundry with Christy's help.



Eric poses for photographer, Luke.



Sarah shares her thoughts with story author, Tamara.



Ronda shows off her bright yellow room. She chose the color herself and decorated the room with photos of her family, friends, and many achievements.



Eric shows off his impressive collection of hats.



WHAT'S IN A Dream?

DREAMS TAKE MANY DIFFERENT FORMS:

By Michael Basso, Kira DeLanoy, Emily Falco, Tamara Sines, and Desiree Simpson

One might have vivid dreams of flying while sleeping or daydreaming of a beach on a cold January afternoon. More than this, though, are the waking dreams we have for the future and aspirations that we share with one another every day.

For this edition of *Inspirations*, we asked people we support in various programs across our organization and Direct Support Professionals to share their dreams with the Springbrook Community. From day-to-day goals to dreams of the future, the stories shared here showcase the strength, passion, and joy of Springbrook's vast community.

Brian's Dream



EXCITED FOR WHAT'S NEXT

Moving to the Blackstone Community Home is a long-awaited dream come true for Brian. He was so excited to move into the new house that he packed up his belongings three months before the move. Living at the Blackstone Community Home allows Brian to live independently and privately. Brian also enjoys living in Binghamton and knows the area well. When asked what he dreams of achieving next Brian shares, "I would like to get a job at an animal shelter. I love dogs and I love cats!" The move to the Blackstone Community Home is a dream come true for Brian in his quest to gain more independence.



Anna Stathoudakis

EXPANDING HER CAREER

Springbrook has been helping Direct Support Professional Anna Stathoudakis shape her goals and accomplish her dreams since her first day as a classroom volunteer in 1996. Moving from her volunteer work at The School at Springbrook Kids Unlimited Program, Anna transitioned into her role at The Springbrook Capstone DayHab program. In October 2001, Anna took a position as an overnight Direct Support Professional at the Morris House where she continues to support residents to this day.

As Anna has grown in her career, her dreams and goals have remained the same. Anna dreams of continuously learning and experiencing as much as possible, both in her career and in her personal life. Anna has found that she learns and grows through the residents she supports, sharing, "Knowledge and experience to do my job well is everything. The way that knowledge is gained is through experience, one resident at a time. The resident and I learn from each other and with each resident, our experience grows richer and richer."

Anna is mindful of doing her job correctly and is always looking to learn new ways to help the residents. A gratifying feeling Anna experiences while working with the residents is when communication starts out as a mystery, then, through understanding gestures and vocal exchanges, she solves the mystery and understands what the resident is asking for. Not only does this make Anna happy, but it lights up the resident's face. In these moments, Anna feels like she is accomplishing her dreams of making Springbrook a comfortable and safe place for the residents she supports.

Helping to make the resident's dreams come true is also a large part of Anna's aspirations. In assisting the residents in accomplishing their dreams, Anna is experiencing and learning

alongside those she supports. Anna strongly believes that the better we understand each other and the things that we want, the happy and healthier our time together becomes. Anna shares, "The resident's dreams coincide with their needs essentially. I would imagine that their dream is to be as happy as possible." In order to see to the needs of the residents, Anna supports them by ensuring they have a clean home, healthy meals, ensuring all safety needs are met, privacy, individuality, and helping them grow into their individuality, their rights, and also chances to participate in the community. To form a bond with the residents is to get to know and understand what each of them aspires to become or create.

Inspiring and assisting the residents in accomplishing their dreams has been important to Anna since the start of her career. Anna was given that same kindness and guidance by Katherine Yager, the woman who hired Anna 26 years ago. Katherine's positive and upbeat personality inspires Anna to be the same beam of light to the residents she supports and the people she works with. Anna shares, "Katherine always had nothing but good things to say and was full of encouragement. She always had a hug and a big smile for everyone. I still think of her often and miss her deeply."

Anna continues to follow her dreams of gaining knowledge and experience in her job through the residents she supports, and the coworkers who guide her. Outside of Springbrook however, Anna dreams of traveling. Her next travel goal is to take a cruise around the world. Anna is fulfilling her travel aspirations this year by taking a trip to Greece to visit her friends and family. We wish Anna the best time on her trip to Greece and hope she continues to learn and experience as much as she can at Springbrook and in her free time!





WHAT'S IN A DREAM? CONT.



Debra York

WITH HEART AND COMPASSION

Sometimes the fear of failure can make people reluctant to follow their dreams, but if you're anything like Debra York, you can accomplish your dream at Springbrook with a little heart and compassion.

Deb's dreams are to help people with disabilities, take care of her family, and be outdoors as much as possible in upstate New York. Deb is a Day Habilitation Assistant currently working at Springbrook's Walnut Street Community Home.

Deb grew up in Hartwick, NY, and attended Cooperstown High School. She's held many jobs over the years, starting out in private home healthcare for people throughout Otsego County. She then joined the US Air Force, but soon realized it was not for her and was honorably discharged. After that experience, she worked helping the elderly at the Clara Welch Thanksgiving Home in Cooperstown for more than eleven years. From there, she went on to work at The Arc's day habilitation program, and then became a student personnel officer at Job Corps. She knew of Springbrook, and in 2008, started working as a residential aide in Community Homes, shortly switching to day habilitation, a position she still holds 14 years later!

Until the COVID-19 pandemic, Deb worked directly with the day habilitation participants at the Oneonta Campus, many of whom are also residents in Springbrook's Community Homes. When Springbrook switched to Home Units to combat the spread of COVID-19, Deb went to work at Walnut Street.

"We work on daily goals to enrich their lives," said Deb, explaining her role in the home as a day habilitation assistant, "[We work to] make their lives easier, and help them do better!"

Deb does not have a lot of spare time. Aside from her job at Springbrook, she has a family care home for people with disabilities at her own residence, where she cares for people with intellectual and/or physical disabilities. The people who need her help are assigned to her home by OPWDD through Broome County. Deb says they become like family to her, and when they move on, it can get hard. But Deb just takes on more. She also does respite for three children through Springbrook and OPWDD.

Deb York really lives the life of someone who compassionately cares for others. When asked about a favorite author or movie, Deb, a self-described "workaholic," says, "I don't have time to read or watch television." When she does manage to squeeze out some time for herself, Deb likes to camp with her husband at Gilbert Lake in Laurens, NY. She loves the outdoors, and any place she goes usually involves camping. The place she has most loved to visit is Cades Cove in Tennessee.

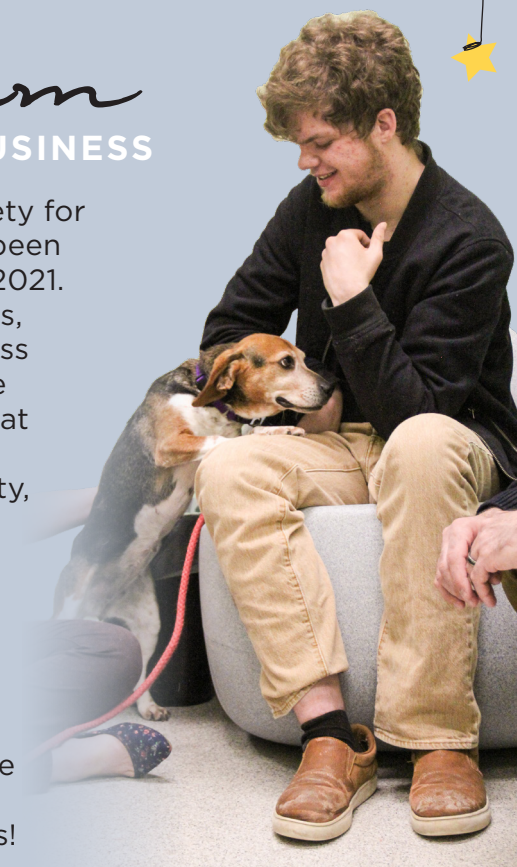
Deb York lives a selfless life. She loves her family and the residents of Springbrook, and she is living her dream by empowering others to have their own. Stephanie Patrick, Residential Manager at the West Oneonta Community Home, shared, "When I was the manager at Walnut Street, I enjoyed working with Deb. She is a hard worker, the residents love her, and I probably would've been lost without her. She went above and beyond every day. She ensured that everyone always had something to do and kept them busy with things like crafts, cooking, gardening, or going to the farm to see the animals."

Thank you, Debra, for all that you do, in helping to make possible the dreams of so many people at Springbrook.

Walker's Dream

BEING READY TO TAKE ON THE FAMILY BUSINESS

Walker is currently volunteering at the Susquehanna Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA). Walker has been volunteering at the Susquehanna SPCA since September 2021. He is working on becoming more comfortable with animals, specifically dogs and cats. Walker's mother is in the process of opening an animal kennel and hopes that Walker will be able to work with her after he graduates from The School at Springbrook in four years. Walker helps the Susquehanna SPCA by cleaning windows and doors, sweeping the facility, and socializing with dogs and cats that are waiting for adoption. Walker was afraid of the animals before coming to the shelter. Now, he is more comfortable with the animals and enjoys petting the dogs and playing with the cats and kittens. This opportunity is not only great for Walker, but also for the animals with whom he interacts. The more time the animals get to play and socialize the better it is for them. We are excited to see Walker continue to grow more comfortable with the animals he interacts with, and to see all of his amazing future accomplishments!



Katie's Dream

A NEW HOME!

Katie Baker, a former student and graduate of The School at Springbrook has been dreaming of her new home for some time. With much perseverance, her wish is finally being granted. Katie is moving to her new home—right across the road.

Katie can see where she'll be living from the window of her current bedroom and has been looking forward to this move ever since she graduated from The School. Now an adult, Katie is excited to meet new people with the potential to make new friends. She is a socialite at her current home, where she acts as greeter at the door and welcomes everyone, including fellow residents and staff. Katie does this with her pal Puppy, a stuffed animal that she dresses each morning, and who is always by her side. This is something that she expects they'll continue to do; in addition to singing along to her favorite Christmas songs. Eager to move in, Katie has plans for how she'll decorate her new room, which includes a few posters of her favorite country music star, Luke Bryan, and the addition of a new bed. For Katie, this move means attaining a dream that she has been waiting on for some time, and now that it's coming true for her, Katie is excited to share it with you.





WHAT'S IN A DREAM? CONT.



Ryan's Dream LIFE AFTER THE SCHOOL AT SPRINGBROOK

Helping to make dreams come true for the people we support is central to the Springbrook ethos. Ryan, a student at the School at Springbrook's Golisano Center for Autism is working hard to achieve his dreams, and live life to the fullest. Ryan's biggest dream is to find a job after he graduates from The School at Springbrook. Ryan is currently working on a variety of skills to aid him in becoming as independent as possible. Each morning, Ryan collects the attendance for the school. Ryan will travel to all three levels of the school to retrieve the attendance sheet for each classroom. On the side of each classroom door, a teacher will leave the attendance count for the day. Some teachers even pop their heads out to say "Hello" to Ryan as he walks by. Once the attendance is collected for each classroom, Ryan will swiftly make copies for the nursing department and the school cafeteria. He then emails copies to the necessary school staff. Ryan finishes his task by hand delivering the hard copies to the cafeteria and the nursing department. Next year, Ryan hopes to be working in the community. With his growing skills and determination, Ryan is on track to accomplish his goals!

Chris's Dream BOXING, BASKETBALL, AND SUMMER FUN

Chris is accomplishing his dreams and making new friends at the Blackstone Community Home! Chris is overjoyed about his recent move to Blackstone because it will enable him to, in his own words, "do what I like on my own!" His favorite part about the move is having fun with his new housemates, who have all quickly become friends. Chris enjoys going on walks and rides as a group. When asked how important the move to Blackstone was for him, Chris shares, "Very! I was excited to move to this house because it is closer to my family." Chris aspires to get a YMCA membership so that he can play basketball and take boxing lessons. Chris is excited about the opportunities Blackstone has to offer and is looking forward to spending the summer hanging out on the back porch with his housemates.



Nakkia Jefferies A DREAM TO HELP OTHERS

Nakkia Jefferies' dream is to always help people because she loves doing it. Nakkia is a community day habilitation direct support professional (DSP) and Paid Neighbor for several tenants at Century Sunrise Apartments in Johnson City, NY. Century Sunrise was established in 2019 as a revitalization project in which 26 of the 105 apartments would be designated for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). Springbrook is the in-house service provider for the apartments and offers Self-Directed Services to the tenants there.

When asked about her goals, Nakkia doesn't talk of advancement, or more money; she simply strives to be a better individual. "I am a work in progress. If I can aspire to be better, I can inspire others to be better and that is best for all. It is my truth!" she said. Nakkia embodies this philosophy working at Century Sunrise. "I love [the people I support], serving them and learning! I am not teaching them; they are teaching me to be my higher self." Honest, bubbly, and wise, Nakkia is spiritual, but not religious. "You speak existence into others, and that's how I live my life!"

SDS has many resources in the community that encourage individuals to do what they want to do. Nakkia is particularly fond of the self-advocacy program. "Self-advocacy teaches you to say what you want and be yourself; to be independent," she said. "If you want to knit,

go knit! If you want to go swimming, get into shape, they will get you a gym membership! It's about self-direction—the name is perfect if you want to do this for yourself."

Individuality and diversity are among the other things Nakkia loves about Springbrook. She regularly attends self-advocacy meetings with the residents at Century Sunrise. She appreciates how every person brings their own sassiness and is different and unique. "They are as capable as you or me. I try to bring out their individuality, I advocate for them and try to leave marks everywhere I go, that is my goal," Nakkia said.

Outside of work, Nakkia is quite the singer. In fact, she travels across the world, singing with incredible artists.

Nakkia is used to adventure and trying things outside of her comfort zone. On a trip to Puerto Rico, she conquered her fear of heights by zip-lining through the rainforest. Any free moment Nakkia gets she is on the road traveling or improving her mind by reading about cognitive and mental behaviors. She loves 90s movies and music and still jams out to alternative rock, but her heart lies with Jazz. If she had her druthers she would be on Half Moon Cay in the Bahamas, relaxing by the beach, listening to Brian Culbertson or Louis Armstrong, and just being peaceful.





WHAT'S IN A DREAM? CONT.



Sandra Shirkey

INVESTING IN HER FUTURE

Sandra Shirkey is using the Springbrook Scholars program to invest in her future and make her dreams come true. For the last five years, Sandra has worked as a Direct Support Professional for Springbrook. Starting her career as a DSP for the Glens Bridge Community Home, Sandra then moved on to the Wright House Community Home where she has been supporting residential students for the last two years. Sandra has always been a dedicated support provider aspiring to help residents learn, grow and form their own independence. Through the Springbrook Scholars program, Sandra is working on expanding her support practices by Mastering in Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) therapy.

By accomplishing her dream of becoming an ABA therapist, Sandra will be an asset in helping Springbrook better assist individuals in developing social and emotional skills. Applied behavior analysis is a type of interpersonal therapy that allows an individual to work with a practitioner one-on-one. The goal is to increase behaviors that are helpful and decrease behaviors that are harmful. Once she becomes an ABA therapist, Sandra will be able to aid the residents in growing language and communication skills, improving attention and focus skills, improving social skills and memory, and decreasing problem behaviors. Using her education, as well as her experiences as a DSP, Sandra is helping the residential students at Springbrook open up to their full potential and accomplish their own aspirations.

Being an active listener and supporting the wants and needs of the residential students is how Sandra assists the residents in accomplishing their goals. Sandra shares,

“Being that outlet and advocate that helps the residents with their independents and their needs is the most important job as a Direct Support Professional.” Each resident whether they communicate verbally or nonverbally will express what they want. By communicating with the residents she supports, Sandra establishes goals and takes steps to get the individual closer to accomplishing their aspirations. Sandra values the resident’s dreams because accomplishing those dreams supports them in forming their own individuality.

Not only does Sandra value the dreams of the individuals she supports but she is also inspired by their tenacity. Sandra shares, “Each resident strives to do the best they can without letting their disabilities define who they are.” This demonstration of persistence keeps Sandra motivated to provide the best support possible. Sandra’s drive to work with each resident in an effort to help them learn, grow, and move on to the next stage of their independence, comes from another person she is inspired by, her mom. Sandra shares, “My mom made me who I am today. She is always willing to help no matter the circumstances.”

With only two more semesters left, Sandra’s dream of becoming an ABA therapist has almost come to fruition. Sandra’s goal is to be hired by Springbrook as an ABA therapist. Outside of Springbrook however, Sandra dreams of traveling. Her next travel goal is to visit a beach and soak up as much sun and sand as possible. Her big travel aspirations are to travel to Greece and Italy. We wish Sandra the best of luck in her last two semesters of the ABA program! We hope she celebrates her accomplishments on the sunniest of beaches!



Charlotte's Dream

A DREAM 220,000 SQ FT BIG

Charlotte dreams big - think 220,000 square feet big. This is the size of the indoor water park, Kalahari, an African Safari themed resort, in the Pocono Mountains of Pennsylvania, where she decided she would take her most recent vacation. Charlotte is a water park enthusiast and has been working hard to make positive life changes to create more time for herself and to fulfill her bucket list. Kalahari checks off two of the bucket list boxes, which includes: one stay in a fancy hotel, and one trip to an indoor water park. Beyond her bucket list, Charlotte is concerned for the health and wellbeing of herself and her friends and has taken it upon herself to help organize social outings and meetups throughout the Spring and Summer seasons.

Planning for this most recent trip began a few years ago, with budget planning occurring about two months in advance; Charlotte had to reduce her spending habits dramatically and dine out less frequently. Having her care manager, Mary, and SDS coordinator Erin, near to keep her in check has been greatly beneficial to changing her habits for the better. Between the two, Charlotte has been able to shift her focus to

the things that she values most: her health, her friends and family, and staying engaged in her favorite activities. Together, Mary helped Charlotte create a dream board that she uses to list her dreams, so that she can see the experiences or items that she wants most and make a plan to save money for them. In the past, Charlotte admits she was a compulsive spender, but now, with Mary’s help, she is more aware of how money works and what it means to save: “Save, save, save,” she says with a grin, because it equals “fun, fun, fun.”

Before jetting off to Pennsylvania, Mary was able to secure discounted tickets to the waterpark; they packed lunches for their trip and scouted nearby grocers; and arranged Charlotte’s budget for food and drinks. All to keep costs down. After checking in to the resort, Charlotte and Mary made their way to the room and unpacked. But, taking no time at all, they made their way to the water. Charlotte and Mary did every waterslide that their bodies would physically allow, from the Elephants Trunk (270 feet of slide!) and the Kenya Corkscrew, to the Tanzanian Twister (a flume that can twist someone through at 40mph!) and the Wild Wildebeest. Needless to say, their day ended with some time in the hot tub and a drink (“A mocktail for Mary and one Passion Paradise and one Pirates Booty for me,” exclaimed Charlotte) at the swim-up bar. Charlotte was gifted a dress suit—thanks to a generous shop owner—for an evening of dining out, and although the famous buffet was closed, splurged on steak at the hotel steakhouse.

Charlotte and Mary assessed their time at the park and gathered that they spent about 10 hours in total between being in the water and walking the resort: “We walked so much that I lost weight!” retorts Charlotte. So what is Charlotte’s favorite part of the waterpark? The lazy river—which offers a well-deserved break from the twists and plummets of the waterslides. The swim-up bar follows as a close second. Now that she’s back home, Charlotte is determined to maintain her budget and save for her next trip. In the meantime, she will be volunteering in her community by assisting with the organization of social events and meetups in the area, to be with friends and to make new ones. Further, Charlotte hopes to connect with and inspire those around her by sharing her dreams and the tools that she uses to achieve them.





DONOR DOLLARS *at Work*

Donor time and talent make a significant difference in the lives of everyone in the Springbrook community through advocacy, donations, and volunteering. Donors enable us to carry out our mission of allowing people to live their lives as they choose. Without the support of innumerable contributors, family members, sponsors, corporations, and foundations, the work we accomplish and the quality of life we try to provide to our service beneficiaries would not be possible.



To make a gift, please visit our giving page or **text SPRINGBROOK to 243-725 today!**

Make a Difference for a Lifetime

At Springbrook, our mission is to make a difference for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities for a lifetime, just like we have for Michele Scanlon. Michele's journey with Springbrook began when she was just four years old at our Kids Unlimited Preschool Program. From there, Michele moved on to become a student at our GEMS School where she made many friends and participated in the Springbrook Scorpions Special Olympics team. After graduation, Michele chose to continue her journey with us by moving into Cook Street, a Springbrook community home, where she still lives today!



Celebrating the Gift of Communication with Livox!

Livox is a specialized communication technology that allows students with communicative difficulties the ability to express their feelings and wishes through an app on their devices. What makes Livox stand out from other technologies is its ability to create full sentences and be interpretative based on the student's favorite and most used phrases and requests. This makes conversations more expressive and natural. This is what Michelle Myers, Clinical Coordinator for Springbrook had to say about Livox:

"John is using Livox to answer "what" questions regarding the function of items. So far John has mastered 21 different targets for this goal. John primarily uses vocal verbal speech or manual signs to communicate, but Livox has been a great tool to use when someone doesn't understand his requests due to his articulation deficits.

Joshua is using Livox to label items in his environment. Receptive language skills have been difficult for Joshua in the past. With Livox he has made great progress with this. Joshua has used LAMP in the past with minimal success, so Livox has been a great asset for him."

This life-changing technology has been made available to Springbrook students at the Tom Golisano School for Autism through the generosity of non-profit organization, Someone Else's Child (SEC) which supports children's causes throughout the U.S. and Africa. We are truly thankful to SEC for their support of our partnership with Livox. We are excited to watch more students learn and grow while developing their ability to express themselves with family and friends through this innovative technology.

Early Child Access Coordinator, Jackie MacDavitt

This year we recognized the Black Family Foundation for their generous support, which allowed Springbrook to hire our Early Child Access Coordinator, Jackie MacDavitt! Jackie joined Kids Unlimited Preschool in October and helps families to access appropriate special education services for their preschool-age children.

Jackie is our liaison between school districts and parents as they navigate the individual evaluation process with their child. This involves having the child meet with a psychologist and with a speech, physical, and/or occupational therapist depending on their needs. It is a complicated process and usually involves multiple meetings in different locations over several weeks.

Since Jackie came on board, she has streamlined the team's scheduling so that more children can be evaluated. She also coordinates the clinical team's reporting, which assures that the school district can respond in a timely manner to determine what services are appropriate to the child's needs—these may include placement in a special education preschool such as Kids Unlimited, specific therapies, or other services. The result? Each week children are accessing evaluation services and their families are receiving assistance in finding appropriate supports to address their child's developmental needs.

The Black Family Foundation trustees have provided grant support for Kids Unlimited Preschool and other Springbrook programs for many years—even visiting in person to see them in action. We are fortunate to have partners like this who share our mission! Thank you!

Welcome, JACKIE!





DONOR DOLLARS AT WORK CONT.

The Parisian Foundation Promotes Active Play at KUP

Students at Springbrook's Kids Unlimited Preschool had a great time with their brand-new tricycles and helmets, thanks to a community grant from the Ricky J. Parisian Foundation. The tandem trikes promote active play and cooperation, and will be used year-round. This is a wonderful example of how our community comes together to make a difference!

Along with many in the Oneonta community, we were sad to learn that the Parisian Foundation's annual Pit Run is being retired. We want to thank that foundation's trustees, the many volunteers who ran this popular community event, and recognize the generous support Springbrook has received through their community grants over the years! In addition to this recent grant for Kids Unlimited, the Parisian Foundation has helped to fund the recent playground renovation, technology in our school, and the Scorpions Special Olympic program.



Aidan's HOPE

for  SPRINGBROOK

This past April we were fortunate to participate in Aidan's Hope for Springbrook. Organized by Aidan's mother, Dana Jackson, Aidan's Hope was a roller hockey fundraiser for autism awareness which raised \$3,370 for our organization! The turnout of the event and the support we received was truly touching. We are so honored to have such an active and dedicated community to help us reach our goals and further the Springbrook mission.



UPGRADES AT COOK STREET

Did you know that Cook Street Community Home, located in the Village of Worcester, became one of Springbrook's first community homes in 1986? Today, this charming Victorian-era mansion is home to 12 Springbrook residents.

There are many great things about Cook Street Community Home - it's spacious, with many bedrooms, ample shared areas, and sheltered porches for enjoying fresh air outside. But, like all historic homes it requires ongoing attention and effort! In the past few years, new energy-efficient windows were installed, the house received a new paint job, an exterior ramp was replaced and an accessible walkway added. Springbrook's top-notch facilities crew is now finishing up some flooring replacement work. Each of these projects was funded in part through grants from the Robinson-Broadhurst Foundation. We thank the Robinson-Broadhurst Foundation for their generous support which has helped to keep this house safe and cozy, and a credit to the neighborhood!



KIDS UNLIMITED PRESCHOOL'S ANGEL TREE PROGRAM

This past holiday season marked the 7th year of the Kids Unlimited Preschool's Angel Tree Program. Each year a tree is decorated with angel tags in place of traditional ornaments. Every tag represents a preschooler, coded to maintain confidentiality and detailed with the child's age, gender, gift requests or interests, and clothing and shoe sizes. Each angel's parent requested assistance so that they can make the holidays special for their little one. Every year our donors who participate in this program truly help keep the holidays merry and bright for all involved!!

A Valentine's Day Thank You!

This past Valentine's Day love was in the air at Springbrook—followed closely by the smell of carnations and chocolates! We're so grateful for our family members, friends, employees, and secret admirers who helped make the day a true celebration by purchasing valentine bundles. The bundles included carnations and chocolates created and distributed by the Springbrook Foundation. We'd also like to thank A Rose is a Rose Florist for generously donating more than 100 carnations to our cause! You all made the day extremely special. Thank You!





GOOD NEWS ROUNDUP



WHAT'S IN A *Dream*?

Featuring work from across the Springbrook community, including residents, students, and staff members, our annual art show brought everyone together to share their dreams and aspirations for the future. The show, titled "What's in a dream?" included a collaborative project featured across one wall of the gallery.



NYS DISABILITY OFFICER *Appointed*

New York Governor Kathy Hochul signed a bill to create the Office of the Chief Disability Officer to advocate for people with disabilities. Kimberly T. Hill, who has historically worked with disability advocates in the New York State Assembly, was appointed as the state's first chief disability officer.



FEEL THE *Rhythm*!

Thanks to a generous donation from Stewart's Gas Station, the students of The School at Springbrook have some awesome new drums to use during music therapy. These large, heavy duty floor drums are sturdy enough to handle years of enthusiastic use, and they are already being put to the test!

PUT ME IN, *Coach*!

The Springbrook Scorpions are back in action, with practices for basketball and track underway. Keep an eye out on our social media channels for opportunities to support the Scorpions!



NEW EMPLOYEE *Orientation*

Take a look at some of the newest members of the Springbrook team!



Would you like to work with us? Do you know someone who wants to start a career? Apply today!

HOME *Sweet* HOME

Blackstone—the newest residence in our Community Homes program—officially opened May 21, 2002. With seasoned management leading a vibrant team of staff—and Ronda keeping everyone in line— we expect this house to thrive!



BONUS FOR *Health AND Safety*!

Thanks to funds from the state, eligible employees received a \$500 bonus for being fully vaccinated and boosted against COVID-19. Thanks to all of our staff who work hard every day to keep the people we support safe and healthy!



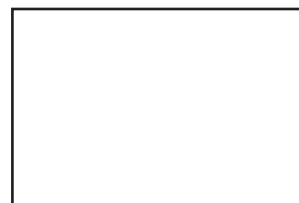
TOM SLICER *Racing to the Top*

On Saturday, April 23, Springbrook Alumnus Tom Slicer celebrated his running of the Boston Marathon at the YMCA with family and friends. Tom had an awesome time of 2:52:56, coming in 1,790th place among over 28,000 participating athletes. Tom is also a member of Southern Tier Connect, and you can read about his full journey to the race on the STC website! Congratulations, Tom!





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SpringbrookNY.org



MAKING THE DIFFERENCE FOR PEOPLE WITH
DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES **FOR A LIFETIME**

