

Portraits of Progress

Newsletter

Summer 2016

Our goal since 1970 is to provide a variety of services, ranging from vocational, educational, and residential, to adults with intellectual disabilities!!



44 Morris Street
Webster, MA 01570



Our 400 employees are now providing supports to approximately 350 individuals throughout Massachusetts

Save the environment, save a tree, and save the company cost by requesting to have your copy of "Portraits of Progress" sent to your own personal email address. If interested, please send an email to the address listed below:

life-skills@life-skillsinc.org

We thank you in advance for your continuous support!



From the desk of the Executive Director: J. Thomas Amick

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CEO

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Residential

Welcome to all of the new staff who are committing their time and talents to making the lives of the individuals that we support better and more meaningful. I hope that you find your career choice of Human Services to be rewarding and long-standing.

The summer months are flying by and soon, September, we will once again be hosting our annual staff appreciation dinner. This is where we honor staff who have worked at Life-Skills for 5, 10, 15, 20, and more years. For all of you who will be celebrating this September I hope that you will make every effort to attend the dinner to receive a well-earned award. The Board of Directors and I thank you for your dedication and service to the individuals we serve and hope that you will continue to provide the valuable services that you provide for many more years.

This year's 14th Annual Golf Tournament was a big success, we had a beautiful day, tremendous response from our sponsors and the weather was beautiful. A special thank you to the Bartkus family for once again assisting Life-Skills to have an outstanding tournament! This year we welcomed back a few foursomes who missed last year's tournament, and missed a few friends who were unable to attend. Our plan is to have a 15th Tournament, so watch your email and/or your mailbox for an announcement regarding the date for next year's tournament.

You may have noticed that there are a great number of maintenance projects moving forward in our residential homes and our Day Habilitation programs. There are always a number of things that need repair, or replacement, however there are even more things that are more cosmetic or that you

may not notice on first examination. This summer we will complete the final installations of generators in all of our residential homes. No longer will storms and resultant power outages be cause for concern or competition with the surrounding community for rooms at local hotels; everyone will be able to remain within the comfortable surrounds that they are accustomed to. Houses are being painted, flooring installed, new smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors are being installed and updated. Everyone's safety and comfort is being evaluated and changes are being planned.

We have now completed our solar panel installations in all of the residential programs that we own and that were eligible for the installation.

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<https://www.facebook.com/lifeskillsincorp>

Please visit our new site and let us know what you think!
www.life-skillsinc.org



building brighter futures since 1970

LifeSkills, Inc. is an accredited non-profit corporation providing a wide variety of services to individuals with intellectual disabilities, physical, and emotional disabilities throughout Central and Western Massachusetts. Formerly known as Southern Worcester County Rehabilitation Center, Inc., we have served area citizens for over 45 years, and currently offer Residential, Day Habilitation and Community Based Day Support programs in Andover, Southwick, Middleburg Heights, Greenfield, Lenox, Lenoxville, Southwick, Southwick, Middleburg Heights, Middleburg Heights, and Middleburg Heights.



From the desk of the Executive Director: J. Thomas Amick

Continued from page 1

We have partnered with Solar City to provide green sustainable energy to our homes. We have locked in long term rates and guaranteed a long term savings on the cost of electricity. It is another of Life-Skills goals completed and helps us to feel that we are being better partners with the environment.

I want to extend a special thank you to Joe Daniels and Terry Ober for the excellent work that they are doing and for their thorough planning in regards to securing bids on the work that needs to be done across the agency. Maintenance is

a huge project and the management of the associated priorities is just as huge. I hope that everyone will take the time to extend a "Thanks" when you see them working in your house or day program.

I also want to acknowledge the excellent work of our Safety Coordinator Les Weatherell. Les has spent many hours examining the many aspects of safety in our programs and vehicles and has designed a very comprehensive and effective tool and plan for the regular checking, replacement and upgrading of the numerous safety

systems that are in place in Life-Skills programs. Les has a regular schedule for visiting the programs to ensure that all of the individuals and staff are safe in their programs and that we are up-to-date on every aspect of safety.

Many other changes are being planned and considered so it promises to continue to be an exciting time at Life-Skills.

I hope that everyone will continue to have a safe and exciting summer!

Highlights from Human Resources

Eileen Beringer

Opportunities don't often come along. So, when they do, you have to grab them.

Everywhere we go these days, we see "Help Wanted" signs. They are in front of stores, on job sites and even on signs nailed to trees! And we at Life-Skills, Inc. are right there with them. We, too, have lots of openings for caring people to work with our disabled individuals. You might wonder why anyone would choose to work in Human Services when there are so many other options available. I recently read an article written by an employee of an agency and what she wrote really stuck in my mind. Here's an excerpt:

When you apply for this job, they do tell you you'll be working to teach life skills. But what they don't tell you is while you're teaching someone, they'll also be teaching you. They have taught me it's OK to forgive myself when I

have a bad day. There's always tomorrow and a mess-up here and there doesn't mean it's the end of the world. They have taught me to slow down, to ponder, to take the time to just look around and take in this beautiful world and all of the simple joys we are blessed to encounter every day.

Yes, you can be a cashier at a retail store. You can serve coffee and pastry at a donut shop. You can drive a delivery van. Or maybe you can consider working with disabled individuals in a Human Services organization. Think about it. Please check out our website for the jobs we have available and how to apply. We are always looking for the right person to become part of our team.

Brodeur Ave

By: Diane Mioduszewski

Brodeur Ave would like to welcome Jody to the program.

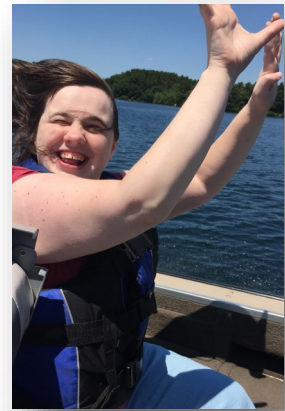
The individuals have been busy this summer. Bill celebrated his 67th birthday at Point Breeze with family and friends. Celia continues to go shopping and to the library. Jenny walks to Honey Dew daily for her favorite mocha ice coffee.

Morris Street Day Hab

By: Chalice Gomes



Here at MSDH the individuals enjoy a wide variety of activities during the summer. One of our most preferred activities is visiting Webster Lake. The individuals enjoyed a relaxing day in the sun (with the use of sunscreen). We tangled some fishing poles on shore, played ball, Frisbee and other activities throughout the day. Our Program manager Tony Yeulenski brought out his boat and everyone who was interested went on a boat ride and possibly caught some fish. Over 20 fish were caught to include bass, pickerel, yellow perch and bluegill. After a fun filled morning we sat around the picnic tables, enjoyed our lunch and talked with friends before returning to the program. Our team really enjoys these outings as it bring so much happiness to the group. We look forward to the next trip very soon!!!



Delaney Ave

By: Nancy Hill

The last couple of months have been extremely exciting for the ladies at Delaney Ave. Ashley turned the big 3-0 this July and is glowing from the excitement of turning another year older! Along with the excitement of her birthday, Ashley and Colleen were able to go to a double-header baseball game at McCoy Stadium and watch the Pawsox beat the Yankees. While there, they were able to pick out some awesome souvenirs to remember the joyous occasion. Colleen was able to visit some of her old classmates at an extravagant Itigashi dance accompanied by two of her amazing staff members. She was also able to enjoy spending some time showing off her fire fighter gear to the Thompson firefighters at their annual chicken dinner. Maranda, Ashley, and Colleen waited patiently in line for some delicious strawberry shortcakes at the annual Dudley Strawberry festival.

The ladies helped gather donations for the spaghetti fundraiser dinner and enjoyed eating the spaghetti and meatballs made by all the loving staff who helped make it all come together. Maranda was able to experiment with her hair by going to the hair salon and adding some fun colors like pink, purple, and blue. She was very happy to receive all the positive comments on how great it looked. Peggy was also able to get to the hair salon and try out a spunky new hairdo that works for her. Peggy was able to enjoy a nice relaxing lunch at her favorite spot, Cracker Barrel! She loves the steak with mashed potatoes and gravy there! These last few months have been so much fun as we are able to watch these ladies grow and excel into amazing young women. We can't wait to see what the next couple of months bring us!



These past months since the last Newsletter have been very good to Day Hab1. We have begun to plan many of our summer trips. We have already ventured to the Aquarium in Mystic where we got to see the Beluga Whales and the Penguins as well as the other beautiful fish they have there.

Twin Rivers was good for some of us as well. We had a group of folks head down there to try their luck and had a wonderful day playing the penny slots and watching the different activities that go on in a Casino.

This Summer we once again look forward to the Zoo trips. This year we are heading back to Southwick Zoo. Although Roger Williams was easier access when we got there the distance made it too short a visit in the park as we had to turn around and come back soon after arriving. The folks here always enjoy the different types of animals they get to see. When the weather is nice, it is wonderful to be out and just enjoy the day.

Also at the end of the month, we begin our Kayak season. We will travel to Lake Quinsigamond for the program run by Universal Access and assist those who signed up with a wonderful Kayak experience.

Then as we sadly watch summer slip away we will look forward to the Fall days of changing colors, Apple Picking, Pumpkin Picking and Autumn activities.

We would like to wish Mikaela Canterbury farewell as she goes on to her next venture and wish her well.

Until next time Day Hab 1 wishes everyone well and a wonderful rest of summer.



By: Kim Lapworth

After years of perusing job boards and help wanted columns, analyzing the requirements and needed skills on career pages, I say it's time to look at the Bigger Picture.

There are so many cool jobs out there.... Jobs your high school guidance counselor never told you about. Jobs that may not require a conventional college degree. There is a plethora of certificate programs, training courses, trade schools, workshops and online courses just waiting to be discovered; an education direction that can be more accommodating and attainable.

And something else I've learned from years of job search..... Job satisfaction is REAL. But here's the thing, being happy at work has much more to do with the person than it does the job. I've seen some very

happy plumbers and some pretty miserable operations managers. So in spite of what that High School guidance teacher told you, that degree on the wall is not necessarily your ticket to happiness.

I'll never forget the look on my son's face when on a skydiving trip to celebrate his High School graduation and chatting with the diving team he learned that being a licensed diver is a REAL job. He actually felt cheated that no one ever told him that was an option.

So go ahead and ask about the guy who manages the concessions at Fenway, talk to the woman that runs the kennel with the dog walking service, sign up for that workshop you've been thinking about for the past year and introduce your daughter to the tech school that teaches airplane mechanics; the picture is Bigger than you thought.

Are you ready to get serious about finding work?!

**If you are currently receiving
Disability Benefits
You may qualify for free
employment services**

For more information, please contact:

Since 1970



Kim Lapworth
Employment Directions



Address: 44 Morris Street
Webster MA 01570
Phone: 508-943-0700 X2171
Fax: 508-949-6129
Email: voctrainer@life-skillsinc.org
Website: www.life-skills.org

Check us out!

Winchendon

This July Sharon K. from Winchendon Program spent a week at Camp Allen in Bedford NH.

Camp Allen was founded in 1931 by the Boston Lions Club as a young blind girls retreat. It changed in the mid 60's to include individuals of all ages with developmental and physical disabilities.

Sharon has been going for years and plans her week away when her brother also attends Camp Allen. They enjoy arts and crafts, swimming, walks in the woods, music and camp fires and schedule their meal times together.

Sharon gets very excited when her week to go to camp comes around, often letting everyone know "camps coming" or "going to camp" "got to get a haircut" and let me add, this often begins somewhere around February! Sharon had a great time and is looking forward to next year already.

Other trips Winchendon folks have enjoyed this summer are some great H.S. plays, softball games, Ecotarium in Worcester, and of course trips to the ice cream shops. Hope everyone is also enjoying their summer.

Best regards,
Friends from Winchendon Program

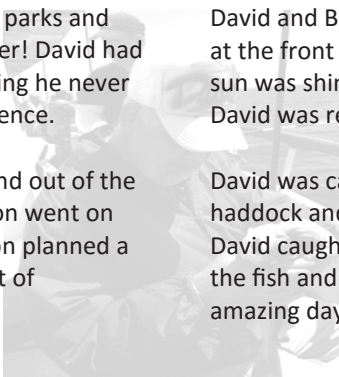
Summer time fun in north central

Summer time; time for BBQ's, swimming, parks and beaches, but not for David from 40 Boulder! David had planned one of his summer trips, something he never done before but always wanted to experience.

Monday morning, David was up at 4am and out of the house by 5am. David and his staff Brendon went on the road to Gloucester. David and Brendon planned a deep sea fishing trip on a charter boat out of Gloucester MA.

David and Brendon arrived early and were lucky to be at the front of the ship. The weather was beautiful, sun was shining, and lots of sunscreen was applied. David was ready to catch some fish.

David was catching one fish after another, between the haddock and cod, David also caught a few wolf fish. David caught a total of 15 fish, had the boat crew filet the fish and he brought them home. David had an amazing day and said he cannot wait to do it again!



Trip to Gloucester

On a Thursday morning, David, David, Diana, Lillian and Georgie from 3 of our north central residences headed for a day trip to Wingaersheek Beach in Gloucester MA.

It was a hot summer day, sun was strong, and ocean was low tide. Wingaersheek beach was a perfect, wheelchair accessible beach with equipment to rent for those in wheelchairs, bathrooms, showers and concession stands.

Diana had never been to a beach or had her feet in the ocean. With the help of the staff that were with her, Diana was able to use the beach wheelchair to sit in the ocean, feeling the waves on her feet and legs. The smile across Diana's face was priceless!

Georgie was standing in the water with staff assistance and was saluting the captain as if he was on a ship. Georgie enjoyed sitting under the umbrella watching everyone along the beach.

Julie enjoyed lounging on the beach chair, enjoying the sun and listening to the waves.

David enjoyed being down in the water, the waves crashing against him, and dunking his head under the water. Listening to the sounds of the small ships and motor boats and hearing the children playing in the ocean and on the beach really enhanced his experience.

David enjoyed the beach, sitting on the blanket out of the sun. David was happy to take a day off from day program and spend time with his peers.

After a long afternoon at the beach, everyone enjoyed a nice fish and chip dinner at a local seafood restaurant. It was a great day with a bunch of laughs and great company!



Self Advocacy for North Central

North Central Self Advocacy Group is celebrating a year of self advocacy meetings this July!! The North Central houses meet once a month, each house has their turn to host the meeting. During the meetings individuals have the chance to see their peers, have some snacks, and discuss topics such as the Human Right of the Month and Safety Topics of the Month. This has been a great success! Great job to everyone who participates and helps facilitate the meetings!

Safety Awareness!

With the way of the world these days, we can find ourselves face to face with any emergency situation. How do we prepare ourselves when we come face to face with natural disasters, extreme weather, criminal activity/terrorism, and etc.?

The following information was taken from the mass.gov website:

MEMA is the state agency charged with ensuring the state is prepared to withstand, respond to, and recover from all types of emergencies and disasters, including natural hazards, accidents, deliberate attacks, and technological and infrastructure failures. MEMA ensures the Commonwealth's ability to rapidly recover from large and small disasters by assessing and mitigating threats and hazards, enhancing preparedness, ensuring effective response, and strengthening our capacity to rebuild and recover.



Go to mass.gov/MEMA/mobileapp or search for "Massachusetts Alerts" in your app store.

STAY CONNECTED WITH MEMA

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- facebook.com/MassachusettsEMA
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MASSACHUSETTS EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS GUIDE

**BE INFORMED
MAKE A PLAN
BUILD A KIT
GET INVOLVED**

Tips and information to help Massachusetts residents prepare for all types of emergencies.

Ready.Massachusetts
www.mass.gov/MEMA

WHY SHOULD YOU PREPARE FOR AN EMERGENCY?

DISASTERS HAPPEN Anytime...Anywhere

Are You Ready For the Next Disaster?
Is Your Family Ready?

Severe Weather and Extreme Temperatures
Hurricanes and Tropical Storms • Flooding
Earthquakes • Fire • Power Outages
Terrorism • Cyber Disruptions
Health Emergencies



Prepare Now

- Plan for your family's safety
- Protect your property
- Know your neighbors and be ready to help in an emergency
- Build your community's resilience

Visit: www.mass.gov/MEMA for more emergency preparedness information

EMERGENCY KIT SUPPLIES

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Water - 1 gallon per person per day for 3 days | <input type="checkbox"/> Food - 3 day supply of nonperishable foods that do not need cooking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tools | <input type="checkbox"/> Radio - (battery-powered or hand crank), NOAA Weather Radio and extra batteries |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Flashlight and extra batteries | <input type="checkbox"/> First Aid kit |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Diapers, wipes, baby food, formula, if needed | <input type="checkbox"/> Pet food, supplies, tags and crates, if needed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prescription medications and extra eyeglasses | <input type="checkbox"/> Moist towelettes, garbage bags, soap, hand sanitizer, and other personal hygiene items |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Copies of important documents and IDs (and cash) | <input type="checkbox"/> Cell phone & charger (auto or solar charger may also be needed if power is out) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Place all items in a portable, watertight bin and store in an easy-to-access location. | |
- For complete list go to: www.mass.gov/mema/ready

BE INFORMED

Know your hazards:

Learn the types of disasters and emergencies that may occur in your area:



Receive Emergency Alerts

- Sign up for your community's emergency alerting system
- Download Massachusetts Alerts: a free app from MEMA that delivers location specific weather warnings and emergency information to your smart phone
- Have a battery operated radio to monitor news broadcasts and weather forecasts
- Call 2-1-1 during a disaster to receive non-emergency information

Know Your Community's Plans

- Know your community's evacuation routes and shelter locations
- Know Your Zone. If you live or work in a coastal community, learn whether you live in a hurricane evacuation zone. Visit www.mass.gov/knowyourzone.

HAVE A PLAN

Develop A Family Disaster Plan:

Make a plan with your household members: know what you will do, how to find each other, and how to communicate in an emergency.

- Decide where you will meet in an emergency. Choose two locations: one place right outside your home and another outside your neighborhood.
- Identify exit routes from your home and neighborhood.
- Share phone numbers and email addresses with family members, and know how you will communicate. Identify an out-of-state friend or relative that household members can call.
- Plan for everyone's needs, especially people with medical needs or disabilities, seniors, children and pets.
- Know what to do if you must evacuate: know where you will go, what you will take with you, and how you will get there.
- Know what to do if you must shelter-in-place. Locate the safest locations in your home and place of work, and know what supplies you will need to be comfortable for up to 3 days.
- Share your plan with household and family members.

BUILD A KIT

Build Your Emergency Kit Now.

Emergencies and disasters sometimes happen without notice.

Use the Emergency Supplies Checklist in this Emergency Preparedness Guide, and consider the following:

- Keep your supplies in an easy-to-carry kit that you can use at home or take with you in case you must evacuate.
- Keep a kit in your car as well.
- Have enough food, water, medicine and other supplies to last for at least 72 hours.
- Include supplies for all members of your household, including seniors, children, people with disabilities, and pets.
- Include supplies in your kit to help you manage without basic services such as electricity, gas, water, sewerage and telephone.
- Collect and safeguard critical documents: financial and personal records, identification papers. See www.ready.gov/financial-preparedness.

Visit www.mass.gov/mema for a full list of supplies to include in your emergency kit.



GET INVOLVED IN YOUR COMMUNITY

Invest in your community's resilience and help it prepare for the next disaster.

Volunteer

Volunteer with a recognized disaster volunteer organization in your community.

Ask if your community has a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), Citizen Corps program, or other volunteer opportunities.



Donate

Make a contribution to one of the many non-profit organizations that are members of the Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters (VOAD). (www.massvoad.org)

Know and Help Your Neighbors

During an emergency or disaster, check on your neighbors, particularly if they are elderly, have medical issues or disabilities, or do not speak English.



Remember: In any emergency situation: you are your best defense mechanism. *So remain calm, think smart, and act fast.*

Creating A Positive Environment



Positive Behavior Supports (PBS) at
Gardner Day Hab (GDH)
By Justine McDonald, Behavior Specialist
with special thanks to all the Direct Care Staff at
GDH!



Gardner Day Hab is one of only two Life-Skills programs selected to pilot the implementation of Positive Behavior Supports within the agency. Universal Supports, the first of three tiers or levels of the PBS model is guided by the over-arching principle to *Create a Positive Environment*. The first step to understanding this principle that staff learned about during their Universal Support Training was that its meaning is specific to each program because of the differences that exist between each individual that attends our programs. Remembering that the program is really the individuals' Day Hab or home, not the staff members, should help us to ALWAYS focus on their involvement in determining what their environment looks like, sounds like, smells like, and feels like.

Creating a Positive Environment means asking the question, "how can I make this environment more functional for them?" For example, at GDH many individuals are overwhelmed by lots of noise, commotion and large groups. *Because of these negative environmental factors, we*

decided to hang sound absorbent tiles from the ceilings and place partitions in the large open program space to create smaller program rooms. This has made a dramatic difference in the dynamic and functionality of the program for both the individuals AND staff. People exhibit less challenging behavior, are more relaxed, communicate more clearly and effectively, participate in meaningful activities, and are a lot happier!

GDH thanks everyone who helped secure the funding for these changes and for working together to *create a positive environment* for the individuals who are happier now to come to their program to learn new things and have fun in the process. In turn, staff are also happier working in a quieter and more structured program.

Another positive change that has taken place at GDH as a result of Universal Supports, is staff being more intentional in giving the individuals a choice in how they would like their space decorated, arranged, etc.

For example, *one program room chose quotes for a "motivation wall" (picture above on the left) while another room painted the walls (picture above on the right)!* This has empowered the individuals and resulted in a lot of smiles!

Think about it, do you decorate your office or your locker? Do you choose a comfortable chair to sit in? Do you listen to music while you work or do you prefer silence? Do you adjust the temperature so you are comfortable? What if you DON'T do these things? You may feel frustrated, uncomfortable, or even become angry, setting the stage for an overall bad day. Take time to consider what a difference the environment makes in your day and let's try to make that difference for the individuals of Life-Skills Inc.

Mason Road

By: Leigh O'Brien

Summer is in full swing and the residents of Mason Road are lovin' it!

They kicked off the start of the warm weather season with a road trip to Cape Cod. Sure the waters were cold, but the sand was warm enough for nice long walks. The fantastic day was capped off with – you guessed it - ice cream! A great time was had by all.

Shortly after our road trip came an even bigger event- a new housemate! The past weeks have been spent getting to know our new resident, and I'm thrilled to say the individuals at Mason Road welcomed DH very readily. We look forward to future road trips with our new friend. It's wonderful to have a full house once more.



Francis Ave/Worcester 99

By: Jennifer Jarmulowicz

Loretta enjoyed a wonderful trip to Alaska in May where she was able to enjoy her cruise with a sightseeing trip on a whale watch, viewing the glaciers, relaxing, and dining aboard the cruise ship.

Sharon is excited about her upcoming day trips on a Cape Cod Canal cruise in August, and a dinner train trip through the White Mountains of New Hampshire in September.

Beth is planning a week off, doing day trips to Boston's Faneuil Hall, Foxwoods, Hampton Beach, a Spa day with manicure and pedicure, and Twin River Casino.

Crystal volunteered at HMEA's 15th Annual Walk, Run, and Family Day in May. She enjoyed being able to give back and seeing all the athletes, participants, and friends she attends program with.

In June, South Central Residential held a Pasta Fundraiser that the ladies enjoyed attending. I would like to give a special thanks to my entire team for their generous donations of items for the baskets from Francis Ave., as well as going above and beyond donating baskets entirely on their own: Caitlin for the baking basket, Chrysanthe for the Dunkin Donuts coffee basket, Jodi for the girls and pet baskets.

We celebrated Beth's birthday in May, and Kathy's birthday in June with celebrations for their family and friends to attend. Activities the ladies still enjoy participating in are going to Kasbar, church dinners, going to movies, and going to Claytime Pottery.

McGovern Lane

By: Maryanne Cann

The Gentlemen at McGovern said goodbye to David as he moved to Mason Rd. They are patiently awaiting their new housemate to move in. They have had the opportunity to meet him and have him over for dinner.

The guys are enjoying their new bathrooms that were recently redone.

The pool was also removed and the yard seems so much bigger.



We would like to extend a sincere thank you for the show of support we received during our 9th annual East Meets West Health Fair & Business Bonanza fundraising event. The fair was great fun, well attended, and showcased a variety of conventional and holistic vendors and local businesses (many new and many returning faces).

We would like to extend our deep gratitude to the following sponsors for their generous support of this event:

Empower: Cam's Oil Service, Inc.; Commerce Bank; and Mass Mobility Vans, LLC.

Enable: iSmile PC, Affordable Dentistry; Bob Miller.

Enrich: Reliant; Viridian.

Special thanks to Dr. Robert Page, Brenda Page, and Page Chiropractic Health Center for your collaboration and generosity. And MANY thanks to our booklet advertisers, the American Red Cross, our vendors, volunteers, and visitors for such a great day!

Together with your help, we were able to raise over \$5,000, making this our most successful event to date! Money raised will benefit our vocational and job training programs, and will support the exceptional care Life-Skills, Inc. provides to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. **#buildingabrighterfuture**



HEALTH FAIR & Business Bonanza



Life-Skills, Inc. recently received a generous donation of \$700 from Page Chiropractic Health Center www.pagechiro.com in Webster, MA. The donation is a result of money raised from new patient sign-ups to their business from our East Meets West Health Fair & Business Bonanza where the appointment fee was waived in lieu of a donation to our agency.

Thank you Dr. Robert Page and Brenda Page for your generosity and continuous support of Life-Skills, Inc.

#buildingabrighterfuture

(Pictured from left to right: Dawn Lundquist, Dr. Steven Sawyer, Tom Amick, CEO of Life-Skills, Inc., Dr. Robert Page, Jean Tremblay, Katherine Hennessy)

When it comes to “*finales*”, whether it’s the end of a season, the last episode of your favorite T.V. show, or that difficult utter of the words “good-bye”, “fare-well”, and or “until we meet again; we can all agree that there are many mixed emotions and challenges that we face as that one chapter in our lives come to a close. Making decisions to move forward is not always an easy decision to make especially when something or someone has been a part of your life for many years. With that being said, I am sitting here to write my final editorial piece for the “Portraits of Progress” newsletter, which has been one of my most favorite and treasured projects as the Executive Administrative Assistant of Life-Skill’s, Inc.

As I reflect on the upward 10 years I have been here, there is so much to be grateful for! If it wasn’t for the individuals and managers or directors, I would not have had the ability to climb up the ladder of success! I would never have had the jumpstart I needed to spread my wings out to the challenges and rewards of working with Intellectually and Developmentally

disabled adults; nor would I have been bestowed with the honor of becoming the Executive Administrative Assistant of Life-Skill’s. With every step I have taken in this agency, I have learned so much, and will have so much to take with me as I move onto my next adventure! Thanks to the encouragement of my coworkers, I have learned how to combat my fears, to try new things, and to be experimental; which has enabled me to obtain more skill, knowledge, and creativity.

On a more personal level, I have seen so many people come and go both in my life and in the agency. I have experienced a lot of happiness, laughter, sadness, and tears. When I first started working here, I was 23 and single, and now as I depart; I am a month shy from 34 and happily married! Life is all about change; making changes and accepting them as they come no matter how difficult it may be. Life is full of paths and decisions we all have to make, but when in doubt – why rely on our own heart when we have a marvelous heavenly creator who listens to our prayers and answers them in

miraculous ways? As one of Jehovah’s Witnesses, I have always been a firm believer in placing my life into his (God’s) hands and believe very strongly that he is the one who has provided me with my job here at Life-Skills as well as the new job I will be starting effective in August. It is because of his direction, that I owe much gratitude and thanks to him and to each and every one of you for being a part of my life for the past 10.75 years! As this door closes and another door opens, I will always be able to look back and reflect on how it all started! Even though my work here is finished, I have only just begun!

In conclusion, I bid you each farewell and say thank you! Thank you all for your articles, pictures, and input that has made our wonderful newsletter what it is! Although this is goodbye, please don’t cry... I am only a drive away from here and someday in the near future, we will MEET again!

Take care!



Special thank you:

We would like to extend a heart-felt thanks to all of our supporters!

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