



OPPORTUNITIES
for INCLUSION

Where Everybody is Somebody

Formerly GWArc

Celebrating 65 Years!



Established
1956

OPPORTUNITIES for INCLUSION NEWS

September 2022

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Harvest
Breakfast
Is Back!
(see flyer inside)

And More!



Opportunities for
Inclusion is an affiliate of
The Arc of the U.S. and
The Arc of MA.

From Gabriel Vonleh, Chief Executive Officer

Hello! We hope you and your families are doing well and enjoyed the summer!

I'm pleased to provide these updates on what's been happening at Opportunities for Inclusion.

Group Supported Employment

participants spent the summer on break and will soon return to work sites at Brandeis and Bentley universities. They filled the summer with educational, recreation and community service activities. **CBDS**

participants spent time in the community every day, traveling to parks and other sites in Waltham,


Boston and beyond. Students in our **Transitions Summer Program** worked on educational activities, read a book together and performed community service, volunteering at the Salvation Army food pantry, Common Good Co. coffee shop and serving lunch at a local park in collaboration with the Waltham Boys and Girls Club. **Day Habilitation** participants enjoyed a trip to The Butterfly Place. All participants enjoyed a barbeque and ice cream socials outdoors, complete with music and craft activities. Most Recreation activities are now in person, including our Spring and Summer dances, which were lots of fun.

We recently renovated our kitchen, with the help of donated materials and services, and held a **Grand Opening celebration** on August 1. Waltham Mayor McCarthy cut the ribbon. We look forward to extensive use of the kitchen for program cooking activities, as well as inviting local chefs to teach cooking classes for participants, which will be recorded and broadcast on WCAC-TV, Waltham's cable channel.

We purchased the **Sparkle Brite Laundromat** on Moody Street in Waltham a year ago as a work skills training site for individuals. The laundromat also hosts a community food table for needy individuals and families in the community. We are grateful to the **Salvation Army of Waltham** for providing food donations.

We continue to celebrate our **65th Anniversary**, an amazing milestone. Our **50th Annual Harvest Breakfast** fundraiser will return on Sunday, October 23, 2022 after being cancelled for two years due to Covid! **See you at Harvest Breakfast!**

With humility and respect,


Gabriel Vonleh, MHA
Chief Executive Officer



Participants, staff, Waltham Mayor Jeannette McCarthy, members of our Board of Directors and community members celebrate the grand opening of our renovated kitchen. Photo by Chris Wangler, WCAC-TV.

Staff Happenings

Congratulations to Rhonda Fleming, Case Manager and Activities Coordinator, who celebrated 26 years of working at Opportunities for Inclusion in May. Rhonda was also recognized as an outstanding Direct Support Professional at the Arc of Massachusetts Direct Support Professional Recognition Reception in June.



Leo Sarkissian, Executive Director of The Arc of Massachusetts, thanks Rhonda Fleming for her outstanding work with individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities at a reception in June.

Congratulations to Marie Abelard, Direct Support Professional, who celebrated 22 years of working at Opportunities for Inclusion in August.



Marie Abelard receives a certificate in honor of her 22nd anniversary from Gabriel Vonleh, CEO. Marie is a dedicated staff member who cares about each of the individuals we serve.

Visit our website OppsforInclusion.org for updates on additional staff anniversaries and new staff.

Thoughts from Elise Hutton, Summer 2022 Intern, Waltham Partnership for Youth

This summer I worked for Opportunities for Inclusion as an intern. I had a great experience. I didn't know much about Opportunities before being hired (which I did through Waltham Partnership for Youth) but I was welcomed and quickly got comfortable working and interacting with staff and participants. I spent time helping in Marketing & Development, updating the website, working on a mailing project and preparing the 2023 calendar that showcases participant art work. I also spent time in program rooms helping with arts and crafts and other projects. Working with Opportunities for Inclusion's participants was a great experience that I won't forget. I learned a lot and made great connections with members of this kind community. I loved going on a field trip to The Butterfly Place with a group. Everyone had a nice time and it was a relaxing trip. Overall I loved the openness and variety in my job at Opportunities for Inclusion. If I had the chance, I would definitely come back next summer. I want to thank everyone involved for a fun, educational summer!



Elise, second from left, receives a thank you gift from participants on the last day of her internship. Elise is a sophomore at Waltham High School.

Recent Grants and Donations

We are grateful for recent Grants and Donations:

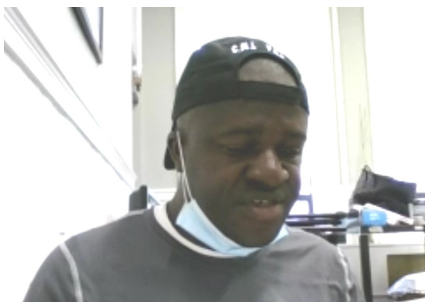
Common Good Co.
DCU - Digital Federal Credit Union
Jones Partnership Fund
Waltham Cultural Council
Waltham Lions Club

Waltham Rotary Club
In-Kind:
Majestic Marble & Granite - Canton
Instrata Premiere Interiors, LLC

JONES
PARTNERSHIP
FUND
FIRST PARISH IN WALTHAM

MCC
massculturalcouncil.org

Participants in Action



Alex N., a participant in our GSE Program, reads a presentation he prepared about Juneteenth. The presentation was part of our Celebrating Diversity initiative and was broadcast to all program rooms and participants in our Virtual Day Program.



The dance floor was hopping at our Summer Dance!



Day Habilitation participants tour The Butterfly Place. Edythe J. wrote a brief article about the trip: "On August 9, 2022 we went to the Butterfly Place for a field trip. It was located in Westford, MA. We rode in the van listening to music. Some of us fell asleep on the way to and from there. We had a great time. We saw butterflies of various colors and sizes. There were chicks playing with the butterflies. There was a gift shop. Many people were there with their families for an outing with their children."



CBDS Case Manager Eddy Chassedin works with CBDS and GSE participants on a cooking project.



CBDS participants enjoy a visit to Castle Island in South Boston.



Above, participants and staff collect food donations from Lt. Nicole Fullop at the Salvation Army.



Transitions students Keyla M. (left) and Gabriel M. (seated) volunteer at the McDonald Playground in Waltham with Lisa and Melanie (standing, rear) of the Waltham Boys & Girls Club. The students gave out lunches to children and families in the community this summer.



Artist Dan Dressler works on an art project with Mary M., Day Habilitation participant. This program is supported in part by a grant from the Waltham Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.



At left, participants deliver food donations to the community table at Sparkle Brite laundromat.

At right, individuals and staff volunteer at Cradles to Crayons, packing backpacks for children.





A 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization

Opportunities for Inclusion
56 Chestnut Street
Waltham, MA 02453

Phone: 781-899-1344

Fax: 781-899-2197

TDD: 781-899-8555

E-mail:

admin@OppsforInclusion.org

www.OppsforInclusion.org

Electronic Newsletter

To receive our newsletter and other updates by email, please send an email message to jraymond@OppsforInclusion.org, call 781-899-1344 x4147, or visit OppsforInclusion.org.



Scan with your smartphone to visit our website!



Opportunities for Inclusion is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities.

Live TV Auction Fundraiser

“Spring for Opportunities for Inclusion”, our Live TV Auction fundraiser with **WCAC-TV, The Waltham Channel**, was held in April and was a great success! Our thanks to Event Host, WCAC-TV, for donating their studio and staff for our fundraiser. The event was broadcast on cable TV in Waltham and eleven surrounding communities, and viewable on wcac.org and Facebook Live. Our thanks also to Waltham celebrities who helped host our event: Yolanda Cellucci; Anthony Avallone, former manager of Yolanda’s bridal salon; Gabriel Vonleh, CEO; Molynda Richards, Waltham Chamber of Commerce Executive Director; John Peacock, past Waltham Chamber of Commerce Executive Director; Siobhan O’Connell, Opportunities for Inclusion Board President; Mike O’Connell, local chef/wine connoisseur; Kelly Hill, “Waltham Watches” co-host; Phil McGrady, WCAC-TV producer and host; and special guest Waltham Mayor Jeannette McCarthy. We also thank our Event Sponsor, **Gelineau & Associates Real Estate**, and Food Sponsor, **Pizzi Farm**, as well as local businesses, board members, staff and community members who generously donated amazing auction items.



Siobhan O’Connell, Board President and Mike O’Connell (above left), and Yolanda Cellucci, Waltham Mayor Jeannette McCarthy and Anthony Avallone (above right) encourage viewers to call in and bid high on items during the Live TV Auction.

Congratulations to:

Renee Allain, Independent

Supported Employment, who celebrated 24 years of working at Walgreens in May!



Adam Maher, Independent Supported

Employment, for successfully advocating for a new stop sign at Plympton and Prentice streets in Waltham to improve safety in the community! The stop sign was installed in May.



Adam Maher (left) with City Councillor Sean Durkee.

YOU Can Make a Difference!

Please help us continue to provide high quality services to individuals we serve, with the COVID-19 supplies still needed.

Please make your tax-deductible donation online at

OppsforInclusion.org

DONATE NOW

You can make your gift in honor or in memory of someone and we will send an acknowledgement (without the amount) to the person(s) or family you designate. *Donations of any amount are welcome.*

Or mail a check to:

Opportunities for Inclusion
56 Chestnut St, Waltham, MA 02453

Thank You!