Greetings from Gabriel Vonleh, New CEO

Hello, and I hope you enjoy reading our latest newsletter!

First, an introduction. I am honored to join Opportunities for Inclusion as Chief Executive Officer. I bring 25 years of experience within state government and community health centers, as well as energy and enthusiasm about our bright future.

I look forward to meeting and getting to know families, community members, local business owners and supporters of Opportunities for Inclusion in the very near future.

I invite you to join me, staff members and members of our Board of Directors at one of our upcoming Open House events—to be held on Thursday, April 4 5:30-7:00 PM at 31 Woodland Road, and on Tuesday, April 9 10-11:30 am at 56 Chestnut Street. This will give me an opportunity to meet you and hear your ideas about this remarkable organization, and to share more about my background and answer any questions you may have. Light refreshments will be served. We hope you can join us.

Our organization’s purpose is to serve the intellectually and developmentally disabled; to ensure that these amazing individuals are fully integrated in their communities and have a balanced lifestyle. We consider ourselves privileged to serve this population that has so much potential to teach us all respect, patience and dignity for humanity. Our 62+ year history is deeply rooted in compassion and dedication to others. We believe that the total involvement of our families, participants and community as a whole will guarantee overall success.

I am grateful for the resourcefulness and dedication of our staff and the exceptional value they bring to the organization. We also value the input of our participants, family members, community members and business partners as we move forward.

I look forward to meeting you soon. In the meantime, please be in touch to share your thoughts. You can reach me at 781-899-1344 x4112 or gvonleh@OppsforInclusion.org.

With humility and respect,

Gabriel Vonleh, MHA
Welcome to Leslie LeBlanc, Director of Employment, CBDS & Transitions

Welcome to Leslie LeBlanc, who joined Opportunities for Inclusion as Director of Employment, Community Based Day Supports and School to Work Transitions (ECB) in January.

Leslie brings 21 years of experience in Human Services, working with individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, most recently as Director of Community and Vocational Services at Grow Associates, Inc. She has extensive experience with Employment and Community Based Day Supports programming.

Leslie holds a BA in Human Services from the University of Massachusetts Boston.

Congratulations to Opportunities for Inclusion staff members who celebrated employment anniversaries in the past year:

Day Habilitation:
- Mary Leo, Senior Case Manager - 32 years
- Rhonda Fleming, Case Manager - 22 years
- Marie Abelard, DD Assistant - 18 years
- Peter Cohn, Case Manager - 8 years
- Inrick Philogene, DD Assistant - 7 years
- Michael Grimes, Case Manager - 6 years
- Christine Dressler, RN, Health Coordinator - 4 years
- Liz Cavano, Case Manager - 3 years
- Karen Irving-Williams, Case Manager - 3 years
- Clotilde Augustin, DD Assistant - 1 year
- Glenroy Williams, DD Assistant - 1 year

Community Based Day Supports (CBDS):
- Amy Kingsbury, Case Manager - 8 years
- Patricia Kelley, RN, Health Coordinator - 2 years
- Mark Sewankambo, Case Manager - 2 years
- Tracy Wypych, Case Manager - 2 years

Group Supported Employment (GSE):
- Dan Sensale, GSE Site Supervisor - 9 years
- Ambrose Ojimba, GSE Site Supervisor - 1 year

Adult Family Care (AFC):
- Barbara Dunker, Director of AFC - 5 years
- Joann Corbelle, RN, AFC Nurse - 3 years
- Camille Grimes, AFC Care Manager - 2 years

Administration:
- Marisol Hernandez, Director of Administrative & Personnel Services - 22 years
- Dorcas McCall, Administrative Assistant - 3 years

Marketing & Development:
- Joanne Raymond, Director of Marketing & Development - 7 years

Recreation:
- Michael Mullins, Recreation Manager - 3 years

Congratulations also to:
- Camille Grimes and her husband Jason on the birth of their son Tyler Matthew in November

Welcome to:
- Jillian Russo, Lesley University student intern, who is spending one day a week in our Day Habilitation program during the Spring semester

Welcome back to:
- Bentley University Service-Learning students who are resuming volunteering in our Day Habilitation and CBDS programs for the Spring semester.

We celebrated Valentine’s Day with a Participant and Staff Pizza Party. Above, staff members enjoy a pizza lunch.
Employment Program Success Story

Congratulations to Kristina Smith and Yves Vincent, participants in our Individual Supported Employment (ISE) program, who were recently hired as independent employees by Chartwells, the food service provider at Lasell College. Kristina works at Lasell’s dining hall as a cashier and in the dish room, and Yves works in the dish room.

“Kristina and Yves are great employees, very hard working, reliable and flexible,” their supervisor said recently. Prior to being hired by Chartwells, Kristina and Yves worked at Lasell but were paid through Opportunities for Inclusion. They are now Chartwells employees with benefits.

When asked about his favorite part of his job, Yves said “Everything!” He especially enjoys refilling ice and milk dispensers.

Both are graduates of Waltham High School. During high school, Kristina participated in our School to Work Transitions Program, which helps high school students develop job skills and social skills, and gain work experience so they can successfully transition from school to productive life in the community.

Moving to independent employment meets a goal we have for many of our Employment participants. Kristina and Yves will continue to receive job coaching/support as needed from Opportunities for Inclusion while working independently. They take pride in their work and in earning a paycheck, and their families are very proud.

Group Supported Employment Update

Group Supported Employment (GSE) participants took part in many educational and fun activities during our December/January Semester Break program while Brandeis and Bentley University work sites were closed. Activities included: learning about money and banking, daily exercise sessions, visits to Boston and the Burlington Mall, and volunteering for community service projects, including delivering socks and hats to the Community Day Center of Waltham. Brandeis Buildings & Grounds GSE crew members continued working during the break.

Watch City Self Advocates Activities

By Jessica Crisafulli

In October of 2018 we had a volunteer make mystery bags with us. Her name is Marilyn Lefort, and she volunteers to teach us line dancing and helps us with Watch City Self Advocates. We also had a dear friend who helped us, Bernadette Bourque.

In November, we had a person from the MSPCA talk to us about how to take care of a pet. In November of 2018 we did ballots for President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary. In December we revealed the votes for Watch City officers and for 2019 the President is Cameron Mallet, I am Vice President, Sheila Hernandez is Treasurer and Danny Powers is Secretary.

This month, Gabriel Vonleh, new Opportunities for Inclusion CEO, attended our meeting to introduce himself, meet our members and learn what we do.

Above, Watch City Self Advocates members at their March 2019 meeting with Gabriel Vonleh, new CEO.
Here’s What’s Been Happening….

Our 48th Annual Harvest Breakfast Was a Success!

From the original “Pancake Harvest” in 1971 to “Harvest Breakfast”, 2018 marked 48 years of our signature community fundraiser!

Our **48th Annual Harvest Breakfast on October 21** was a great success! We hope you were there! The event featured a delicious buffet breakfast and capacity attendance. DJ Rich Profita, DC the Clown, the Magic of Ryan Lally, Sparky the Fire Dog, selfie photo booth, face painting, line dancing, silent auction, mystery gifts and participant-made crafts at the Holiday Boo-tique all added to the fun.

Our thanks to **Embassy Suites Boston/Waltham** for generously hosting (for the 17th year!) and to our generous event sponsors:

- **Gold Pancake**: Belmont Savings Bank, Coastal Capital Group, Park Lodge Hotel Group
- **Media Sponsor**: WickedLocal

Thanks also to our generous advertisers and auction and mystery gift donors. Visit our website [OppsforInclusion.org/harvest-breakfast/](http://OppsforInclusion.org/harvest-breakfast/) for a complete list.

Please patronize our sponsors, advertisers and auction/prize donors and thank them for supporting Opportunities for Inclusion!

Day Habilitation participants learned to take care of and interact with horses during a series of equine assisted therapy sessions at the BINA Farm Center this fall. Above, Melinda N. enjoys feeding Jaxon. This program was funded by a grant from the Bessie Pappas Charitable Foundation.

At left, Waltham Mayor Jeannette McCarthy (center) enjoys Harvest Breakfast festivities with Jessica C. and John S.

At right, Sparky the Fire Dog visits with Harvest Breakfast guests.

Stacey Tully, Executive Director of Healthy Waltham, conducts a fun exercise session set to music with CBDS participants at Woodland Road in March. Funding for a series of exercise sessions was provided by a grant from the Belmont Savings Bank Foundation.
Our thanks to McDevitt Middle School student council members, teachers and staff who brought us lots of holiday cheer and enthusiasm in December! Students performed holiday singalong concerts in two program rooms and distributed holiday cards they had made. This is the 12th consecutive annual holiday visit by McDevitt students. Music teacher Kevin Coyne accompanied on guitar.

The Artists of Opportunities for Inclusion

Arts programming is a vibrant activity! At left, CC King, artist-in-residence, works on an art project with Earl W. and Rhonda Fleming, Case Manager (on right).

At right, CBDS participants in front of our art display at the Waltham Public Library. The display was in place for the month of February. We were also proud to host an art display at the Waltham Mills Artists Association Open Studios in November.

Annual Meeting 2018 - Community Recognition Awards

Battaglino Family members Maia Aucoin and Leah Battaglino Cosby (left and 2nd from left) pose with Cara Malone, Tracy Malone-Black and Adam Maher following the presentation of the John L. Battaglino Award of Excellence in memory of Russ Malone. A former Board President, Honorary Trustee and strong supporter of our agency, Russ Malone passed away in September.

Bud LaCava presents the “Rags” LaCava Community Service Award to Kaitlyn Riley, longtime volunteer and new Board Member.

The Outstanding Community Leadership Award was presented to Nadene Stein, Ph.D, (right), Administrator of Pupil Personnel Services, for Waltham Public Schools’ commitment and support for our School to Work Transitions Program. Drew Echelson, Ed.D (at left), Superintendent, and Kathleen Horrigan joined Dr. Stein for the presentation.
Day Habilitation Update

Day Habilitation participants enjoyed many activities this fall and winter, including:

- Equine assisted therapy sessions at BINA Farm in Natick (see photo page 4)
- Art with artist CC King, music with James Jones, drumming with Mace Miller and pet therapy
- Delivering donations to local food pantries
- Baking and delivering cookies to say thank you to first responders (Waltham Police and Fire Departments)
- Adaptive exercise with Stacey Tully, Healthy Waltham

Opportunities for Inclusion

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Adult Family Care (AFC) Update

Our AFC Team will attend AFC Awareness Day at the MA State House on April 4. This event includes an AFC presentation followed by AFC staff visits to state legislators to advocate for the AFC program. Contact Barbara Dunker, RN, AFC Program Director, to find out more about this beneficial program and whether you or someone you know may qualify. Barbara may be reached at 781-899-1344 x4710, bdunker@oppsforinclusion.org

CBDS Update

CBDS participants had a busy fall and winter. Activities included:

- Delivering Meals on Wheels to Waltham residents weekly
- Shopping for and delivering supplies to local food pantries
- Exercising at Waltham YMCA and with Stacey Tully (see photo page 4)
- Art, music, drumming, pet therapy and karaoke
- Community service activities

We Remember with Love...

Allen Baker, longtime participant in our Day Habilitation Program, who passed away in March

Charlene Craig, longtime participant in our programs, most recently in our Day Habilitation Program. Charlene passed away in November.
Recreation Update

We are having a great time in our Recreation program as we offer a variety of activities for all interests! Highlights of Fall and Winter activities include trips to Boston’s Dreamland Wax Museum, Bentley Falcons Basketball, Northeastern Hockey, tour of Watertown Savings Bank, video games at Game Underground and more! Spring activities are underway—highlights include BC Baseball, Shriners Circus and Spring Fling Dance on May 8. Please visit OppsforInclusion.org/recreation-schedule/ for more information!

Recreation participants tour artifacts of the ancient world at Harvard’s Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology in January.

At right, the dance floor was hopping at our Valentine’s Day dance in February!

Brandeis Buddies student volunteers joined the conga line and everyone danced and sang to the music of DJ Rich Profita!

2019 Board of Directors

Welcome and welcome back to new and returning members of our Board of Directors!

2019 Officers:

Gerard Cosby, President
Harvey Fisher, Vice President
Joseph Chiarelli, Treasurer
Leah Igdalsky, Secretary

New Board Members:

John Barry
Siobhan O’Connell
Kaitlyn Riley
Tim Steele

Continuing Board Members:

Robbie Dembo
Peter Dixon
Kelly A. Hill

Immediate Past Co-Presidents: Marcia MacClary and John Peacock.
For more information about our Board of Directors, visit OppsforInclusion.org/Board-of-Directors.
Think Spring . . .
And Our Spring Appeal!

We’re hoping for an early Spring and that you will make a tax-deductible donation to help Opportunities for Inclusion continue to provide high quality care and services.

If you would like to make a secure donation online, please visit
OppsforInclusion.org/make-a-donation/

You may also donate using the enclosed donation envelope or send a check to:
Opportunities for Inclusion, 56 Chestnut St
Waltham, MA 02453

And if you have already made a donation, thank you!

AmazonSmile

Do you shop at Amazon? Try shopping at AmazonSmile (same products and prices), designate Opportunities for Inclusion as your charitable organization and we will receive .5% of your purchase price at no cost to you.
SAVE THE DATE!

“Spring for Opportunities for Inclusion”

WCAC-TV The Waltham Channel’s
SPRING 2019 AUCTION
to benefit Opportunities for Inclusion’s
programs and services for individuals
with intellectual and developmental disabilities

LIVE TV Auction

Tuesday, April 30, 2019
6-9 PM

Bid on great items while supporting us!

View on your TV or online at www.wcac.org

Opportunities for Inclusion (formerly GWArc), a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, has served individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities in the community for 62+ years.
Our tax id # is 04-2441728.
Questions? Contact us 781-899-1344 or admin@oppsforinclusion.org.
www.OppsforInclusion.org
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“Spring for Opportunities for Inclusion”
WCAC-TV The Waltham Channel’s SPRING 2019 AUCTION to benefit Opportunities for Inclusion

LIVE TV Auction
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Waltham residents can view WCAC-TV on these channels:

Comcast
- WCAC-TV - Channel 8 (Channel 7 without a cable box)

RCN
- WCAC-TV - Channel 3

Verizon
- WCAC-TV - Channel 47

WCAC-TV can also be seen by Verizon subscribers in the following communities:

Arlington  Lexington  Wayland
Bedford  Newton  Westford
Belmont  Stow  Weston
Harvard  Sudbury

Questions? Contact Opportunities for Inclusion at 781-899-1344 or admin@oppsforinclusion.org.
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