



## OPPORTUNITIES for INCLUSION

*A New Name and a Bright Future*

Formerly GWArc

# OPPORTUNITIES for INCLUSION NEWS

September 2019

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#### Save the Dates!

#### Harvest Breakfast Sunday, October 20

8 AM - Noon  
(see insert)

#### Annual Meeting & Community Recognition

Awards  
November 18  
6-8 PM

#### Let's Talk Transition 6-Week Transition Support Group (see insert)

### Greetings from Gabriel Vonleh, Chief Executive Officer

Hello,

I hope you enjoy our September newsletter, which reflects a busy summer for our participants and staff. We are grateful for the many volunteers, interns and others who supported us this summer.

A few updates: We are planning to start a Family Forum to get input about our programs. We will be in touch with family members and guardians soon to invite you to participate.

Recently we received approval to provide additional services with a focus on the Acquired Brain Injury population and will be exploring development of Day Services, Adult Companion and Supportive Employment programs for this population.

We also now have a brand new smart conference room that will allow us to participate in web-based training for staff. Check it out the next time you are at Chestnut Street!

I hope to greet you at our **49th Annual Harvest Breakfast on October 20th** at the Embassy Suites, Waltham. Expect the same great family-friendly event with a delicious buffet breakfast, great music, dancing, magician, balloon artist, photo booth, silent auction, crafts for sale and a great community get together! See insert for our Harvest Breakfast ticket order form.

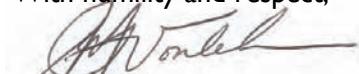
On November 18, please join us at the Embassy Suites for our **Annual Meeting, Community Recognition Awards and Salute to Staff**. We look forward to seeing you there as we recognize both staff and community members who have helped to make this a successful year.

See you soon at our annual community events and best wishes for a happy Fall season!



Participants in our Group Supported Employment and Community Based Day Supports programs enjoy our annual barbecue at Lake Cochituate in Natick.

With humility and respect,



Gabriel Vonleh, MHA  
Chief Executive Officer

## Staff & Other Updates

### Welcome to:

- **Paul Ghazali**, CBDS Case Manager
- **Lahens Merant**, GSE Site Supervisor
- **Kaycee Ozulumba**, CBDS Case Manager

Kaycee and Lahens have been hired as employees after working as temporary staff. Paul is a recent graduate of Holy Cross College.



**Paul Ghazali**  
CBDS Case Manager

**Lahens Merant**  
GSE Site Supervisor

**Kaycee Ozulumba**  
CBDS Case Manager

### We Appreciate Our Staff!

We marked the end of August with an **All Staff Appreciation Celebration!** Staff members gathered after program hours to enjoy pizza, games, raffle prizes and ice cream sundaes. Thank you to Rick Pizzi and Pizzi Farm for generously donating ice cream and toppings!



Rhonda Fleming, Day Habilitation Case Manager, and Kaycee Ozulumba, CBDS Case Manager, enjoy pizza and ice cream.



Camille Grimes, AFC Care Manager, was the lucky winner of a "Movie Night" raffle prize.



Above, left to right, Leslie LeBlanc, ECB Director; Debbie Pierre, Day Habilitation Director; and Gabriel Vonleh, CEO, scoop ice cream for staff members to enjoy.

### Congratulations to:

**Christine Dressler, RN**, who recently became certified to conduct Red Cross supported CPR training (we are planning to become a Red Cross CPR training site).

### Thank you to:

**Hobbs Brook Management** for donating two pairs of **New England Patriots game tickets** and a parking pass for staff use. We raffled off the tickets and two lucky staff members and their guests attended a pre-season game on August 29.

**Opportunities for Inclusion's logo, website address and phone number** have been installed on both of our vans, along with the tagline **"Making a Difference Since 1956"**. (See photo at right.) Look for our vans as they transport participants out in the community!



## Participants in the Community

This summer, participants in our programs spent time getting to know local businesses who are our neighbors in the community. This issue of our newsletter includes a spotlight on **The Tea Leaf** and **Paddle Boston**, written by **Lisa Dunker, Employment Coordinator.**

### **The Tea Leaf**

In August, Sheila, Pattie and Barbara, participants in our GSE and CBDS programs, visited Sally Collura at her cozy tea room and shop, The Tea Leaf, on Moody Street. Having come in early so the three ladies could interview her, Sally unlocked the front door and led them in. Barbara commented that the books and dark wood in the shop looked as though they were part of a fancy library, and Sheila asked about the pictures decorating the walls. Sally explained that the pictures are mainly prints of Victorian ladies and scenes, to go with the tea room's English style. Sally then pointed to one picture in particular—a photograph of her mother as a teenager, standing on strike for better working conditions outside the Francis Cabot Lowell Mill, just down the street from where her future daughter opened her own business.

When Pattie asked Sally what led her to open The Tea Leaf, Sally recounted a trip she took with her mother about 40 years ago to the Wenham Tea House in Wenham, MA. After enjoying that trip so much, they decided to visit all of the other tea rooms in the area. "It became our thing to do," said Sally warmly. A few years after that first tea outing, Sally felt inspired to enroll in tea school, which eventually led to her to open The Tea Leaf.

Sheila asked Sally what she serves at The Tea Leaf. Her specialty, Sally explained, is a three course afternoon tea service, which includes tea, scones, and sandwiches. Sally told the group that she serves lavender chocolate chip scones year-round, and also has various seasonal offerings, like blueberry, cranberry and apricot. Sally served the ladies Earl Grey tea and surprised them with her signature lavender chocolate chip scones with whipped cream and berry preserves. Barbara asked Sally if she knew of Opportunities for Inclusion, and Sally said she is aware, and that 30 or 40 years ago she used to film participants at Waltham's Moose Lodge dances for the Waltham Cable TV channel. Pattie remembered Sally filming and they reminisced as they had tea and scones. Pattie asked Sally what she loves most about running The Tea Leaf, and Sally replied that one of the best parts is that most of her customers become friends. After finishing the delicious tea and scones, the interviewers thanked Sally and said farewell.

### **Paddle Boston**

 This summer, a group of GSE and CBDS participants visited Paddle Boston on Moody Street. While it was too hot to go paddling as planned, the group enjoyed walking along the Charles River, and Alex, Sheila and Joey were able to conduct an interview with staff members to learn more about this local business. They learned that this location of Paddle Boston offers kayak, canoe, paddleboat and paddleboard rentals and lessons, and that single kayaks are the favorite among their customers.

Customers include everyone from tourists to people in the neighborhood who have season passes. They also learned that people can paddle six miles down the river, through Waltham and Newton to the Wellesley dam. The interviewers were especially interested to learn about the sorts of things that Waltham paddlers can see while out on the river, including fish, turtles, blue herons, ducks, swans and a bald eagle's nest about a mile and a half down the river. Paddle Boston in Waltham is located at the Moody Street Dam.



Left to right, Barbara G., Pattie F., Sally Collura and Sheila H. enjoy conversation, tea and scones at The Tea Leaf.



Kayaks are lined up, ready for rental.

## Here's What's Been Happening....



A beautiful view on a beautiful day! Thank you to Waltham Land Trust for providing park steward training to CBDS and GSE participants in August. The group hiked to Little Prospect summit in Waltham's Prospect Hill Park, picking up trash along the way. Sonja Wadman, Executive Director of the Waltham Land Trust (above, 2nd from right), and other Waltham Land Trust volunteers participated.



Day Habilitation participants and staff enjoy a day at The Butterfly Place in Westford, MA this summer.



Participants work on a collaborative art project with artist-in-residence CC King during a Recreation activity in June. A sculpture was created with branches and other elements of nature and was on display outside at Woodland Road during the summer.



Chris Kauffman of the Lexington Historical Society visited our Day Habilitation and CBDS programs in August to share artifacts from Colonial times. Above, Dianne A. learns about a bed warmer used in the 1700s.



Representatives from local businesses and nonprofits attended an Open House at Chestnut Street in June to learn more about our Employment Program and other programs. Above, Gabriel Vonleh, CEO, answers questions from attendees. Participants in our Group Supported Employment Program also spoke about what they enjoy most about their jobs at Brandeis and Bentley Universities.



Dana Michelsen, physical therapy consultant, and Michelle B., Day Habilitation participant, use our new therapy mat table. Participants can more easily transfer to this table for exercise and other therapies. Funding for the table was provided by the Waltham Disability Services Commission.

## ...in Photos!



Our ECB annual barbecue in August at Lake Cochituate in Natick was enjoyed by all! Everyone enjoyed a delicious lunch, games and beautiful weather. Above, participants, staff and volunteers gather for a group photo at the end of the day.



At right, John S. and Sam F. enjoy tossing a football around at Lake Cochituate.

At left, Recreation participants set sail at Piers Park Sailing Center in East Boston. They spent a beautiful July day learning to sail in the waters around Boston Harbor.



If it's Friday afternoon, it's music time in our Day Habilitation program! Above, participants and staff grab instruments and make music together.



At left, Joseph U. cuts a pattern while Barbara G. looks on in our new weekly sewing class at Chestnut Street. The group is working on making pillows.

Chris Williams-Kalez, a clothing designer from Jamaica Plain (pictured at far left), is volunteer instructor for the class.



A trip to Canobie Lake Park is the highlight of our summer Recreation activities! Above, Sheila H. takes her friends for a spin on the Antique Car ride in August.

Adam Maher (far right), a member of our Human Rights Committee, talks with Day Habilitation participants about their human rights in August. Adam is a former member of our Board of Directors.



## Program Updates

### Day Habilitation:

- Participants and staff had a busy summer, with travels to The Butterfly Place, Friends of Endicott Park, Belmont Audubon, Dairy Joy, Drumlin Farm, Lizzy's Ice Cream, Waltham Public Library, Jordan's Furniture's Water-Fire & Ice Cream attraction, Marblehead Point, Beverly Airport and more!
- Day Hab and CBDS participants enjoyed music with James Jones, drumming with Mace Miller and art with CC King



Chris R. is excited to catch a fish at Billerica Veterans Memorial Park.

### Community Based Day Supports:

- CBDS and GSE participants enjoyed the annual end of summer cookout at Lake Cochituate!
- Participants delivered Meals on Wheels weekly and volunteered at Cradles to Crayons (filling backpacks with school supplies) and with Waltham Land Trust (park steward training in Prospect Hill Park). They also visited the Allston public library for adult coloring and travelled to Castle Island



CBDS and GSE participants and staff relax along the Charles River off Moody Street in downtown Waltham after interviewing the staff at Paddle Boston.

### Group Supported Employment (GSE):

- GSE participants on semester break this summer were involved in a variety of activities and volunteer experiences in the community and beyond, including visits to the Franklin Park Zoo, Boston Swan Boats, Game Underground Arcade, planting vegetables in our Waltham Community garden, Zumba at the YMCA, Mass Audubon Habitat Education Center, journal writing, karaoke and cooking group
- The Building and Grounds crew at Brandeis worked during the summer months. Bentley University workers had a short break and returned to work at the end of June

### Individual Supported Employment (ISE):

- Job coaching/development continued for several individuals who hold jobs in the community

### Adult Family Care (AFC):

- The team is supporting 49 caregivers and members. The team has also been attending numerous community events to build awareness and increase the number of members we serve
- Contact Barbara Dunker, RN, AFC Program Director to find out more about this beneficial program. Barbara can be reached at 781-899-1344 x4710, [bdunker@OppsforInclusion.org](mailto:bdunker@OppsforInclusion.org)

### Recreation:

- We had a fun and busy summer! Highlights include sailing at Piers Sailing Park Center in East Boston, a visit to the Seekonk Speedway, the musical "Six" at the American Repertory Theatre, Massachusetts Pirates Football and Lowell Spinners baseball
- Concerts on the Waltham Common were a weekly favorite all summer long!

## Waltham Partnership for Youth Summer Interns

We hosted two high school interns this summer in collaboration with Waltham Partnership for Youth. Our first experience employing high school student interns was a success! Hannah and William worked on a variety of projects related to Marketing and Recreation (updating our website, creating event flyers, soliciting items for our Harvest Breakfast Silent Auction) and also researched and downloaded interactive iPad apps that engage our participants and reinforce healthy eating and hygiene. When asked her favorite experience, Hannah



William Araujo works on a Marketing project this summer.



Hannah Flaherty, above right, reviews iPad apps with Brian D., Day Habilitation participant, and Debbie Pierre, Director of Day Habilitation,

## Transitions Program Update



Michael Bonnah helps serve lunch to children at the Whittemore Elementary School in Waltham.



Above, Transition students gather in their classroom space at Brandeis university. Front row, left to right: Michael Bonnah, Diane Miller and Stephanie Russo, Transitions Manager. Back row: Josh Coye and Gabriel Vonleh, CEO.

At right, students make lunch for their group with guidance from Stephanie Russo, Transitions Manager.

**Our Transitions Summer Program** was held at Brandeis University in July. Students experienced college campus life, read a book together, went on field trips, cooked a meal weekly and worked on communication, jobs skills and social skills. Students also served lunch at the Whittemore Elementary School daily through a partnership with the Waltham Boys & Girls Club.

As the program came to a close, Transitions students shared their favorite activities:

**Michael:** “Going to Whittemore School to help serve lunches to the kids. Also our field trip to Dave and Buster’s and cooking food like shrimp alfredo and spaghetti and meatballs.”

**Diane:** “Reading Trevor Noah’s book *Born A Crime* and cooking on Fridays.”

**Josh:** “Cooking, shopping at Market Basket and our field trip to the Natick Mall.”



## Thank You to Amanda Kahn, Brandeis Student Volunteer!

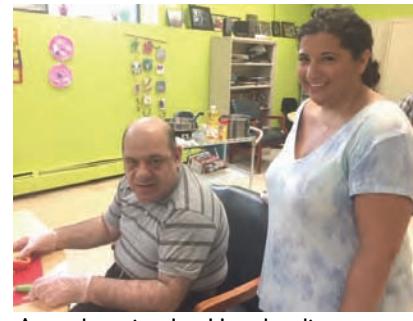
Thank you to **Amanda Kahn, Brandeis student volunteer**, who assisted in our Day Habilitation program with art, music, cooking and community trips throughout the summer. Amanda was a creative and enthusiastic volunteer. She shared her thoughts about her experience before returning to pre-med classes in late August:



Amanda helps Ken D. frost a cupcake the group baked.

“I am studying to be a doctor, and I believe it is really important to have experience working with individuals with developmental disabilities when going into a healthcare profession. I hope that my experience here will help me to better care for patients with developmental disabilities in the future.”

Her favorite memory? “Making peach cobbler with the participants. We had such a good time baking the dish, and everyone was able to help out. It was awesome to enjoy the dish we had made together that afternoon!”



Amanda assists Joe U. as he slices vegetables to make Shepherd's Pie.



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**Save the Date For  
this Milestone Event -  
Our 49th Year!**

**Sunday, October 20th**  
8 AM to Noon  
**Embassy Suites Waltham**  
**550 Winter Street, Waltham**

Bountiful Breakfast Buffet

Music by DJ Rich Profita

Line Dancing Magician

Balloon Artist Face Painting

Silent Auction Crafts And More!

**Shop at  
Opportunities for Inclusion's  
Craft Boutique!**

Join us at Harvest Breakfast on October 20th and get some holiday shopping done too! Our Craft Boutique will feature participant made crafts, including coasters and notecards with original art work and photography, sewing kits, potholders, aprons, Opportuni-Treats dog biscuits and more!

**Join Us!  
Annual Meeting  
& Community Recognition  
Awards**  
**Monday, November 18th, 6PM**  
**Embassy Suites Waltham**  
**Stay tuned for more details!**

**YOU Can  
Make a Difference!**

**Please help us continue to  
provide high quality care and  
services to individuals we serve.**

Please make your tax-deductible  
donation online at  
[OppsforInclusion.org](http://OppsforInclusion.org),  
**"Make a Donation".**

Or send a check to:  
**Opportunities for Inclusion**  
56 Chestnut St., Waltham, MA 02453

**Thank You!**

**Artists of  
Opportunities for Inclusion  
2020 Wall Calendar**

Our 2020 calendar, featuring amazing art work by participants in our programs, will be available for sale at Harvest Breakfast and at Opportunities for Inclusion for \$10 each.



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# Opportunities for Inclusion

## 49th Annual Harvest Breakfast

### Making a Difference with Your Support!

Sunday, October 20, 2019 8:00 AM - Noon  
Embassy Suites Waltham

#### Our Host



EMBASSY SUITES®

Boston/Waltham

#### Titanium Pancake Sponsors



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To order your tickets by mail, please return this form with a check to:  
Opportunities for Inclusion

56 Chestnut Street  
Waltham, MA 02453

For more information, call 781-899-1344 x4101, email [admin@oppsforinclusion.org](mailto:admin@oppsforinclusion.org) or visit [www.OppsforInclusion.org](http://www.OppsforInclusion.org)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Please consider donating tickets back to the agency that will allow participants and staff to attend who otherwise might not be able to! Thank you!

Number of tickets donated \_\_\_\_\_

All proceeds from Harvest Breakfast directly support Opportunities for Inclusion programs, serving over 300 individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families each year.

Opportunities for Inclusion is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

Number of Adult Tickets \_\_\_\_\_ x \$24 = \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Senior/Adult with Special Needs Tickets \_\_\_\_\_ x \$17 = \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Children under 12 Tickets \_\_\_\_\_ x \$12 = \_\_\_\_\_

#### SHARE A MESSAGE!!

Family/Friend Sponsor Message \_\_\_\_\_ x \$35 = \_\_\_\_\_  
(Your name and optional message of your choice will be showcased in our visual ad presentation.)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL ENCLOSED: \_\_\_\_\_

\$ \_\_\_\_\_