

Mission Statement:

Life Enrichment Advancing People (LEAP), exists for the following purpose: To empower people with disabilities to lead joyful lives with dignity, independence, and autonomy by providing comprehensive and individualized supports. The fundamental operating principle followed by LEAP in providing services is to strive for each individual's fulfillment of:

*Physical Well Being

* Self Expression

*Experiences of Joy

October 2015



Celebrate Our DSPs!

by Darryl Wood

As LEAP turns 35, it becomes important to reflect upon our most valuable assets, our people, notably our strong core of Direct Support Professionals. Currently out of 187 employees approximately 160 are DSPs...around 86% of our workforce!

LEAP exists to help support people who are born with significant intellectual or developmental disabilities to overcome the functional and societal barriers to living a healthy and stigma-free life. In order to be successful in that role, purpose or mission, we need to have a motivated and enlightened workforce who give people what they need, but also encourage autonomy and self-development. These are tough skills to bring in or develop, but they are necessary and absolutely tied to the quality of the experience an individual or family has when it works with LEAP. At LEAP, we employ Direct Support Professionals to fulfill this role. Our DSPs are trained in the College of Direct Support, Medication Administration, relationship management, First Aid, and many other courses from Safety to American Sign Language.

One of the most important things we seek to cultivate is a culture of empathetic mindfulness, which we sometimes share with the slogan "Walk a Mile in My Shoes". This can really make people stop and think about the impact of their words and actions, and in so doing help them to choose the best way forward to overcome intricate situations that arise daily. When someone we employ has the whole package, we sometimes describe it as the "it factor". As in, they get it, they have it, and we want to keep it.

I am happy to say that we are fortunate to have many DSPs who enrich the lives of the people they support every day. Each year at LEAP, we take the time to honor these DSPs with a big celebration in September. Per Senate Resolution 245, the week of September 13th - 19th 2015 was National Direct Sup-

port Professional (DSP) Week. This year we held our big event at LEAP's Stone Soup Gardens on the 18th, where we fed, entertained and honored more than 200 employees, their family members and individuals supported by the agency. I could say so much more, but I'll let the pictures below and the ones on page 10 speak louder than words...



LEAP's Board of Directors 2015-16

Sherry Walrath, President, Strong, ME
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Reflections, and LEAP People in the Spotlight...

LEAP Awards Cordes-Taylor Scholarship to a student-employee for the Fall Semester

by Sarah Judd

Deirdre Gijantro is pictured here with LEAP's Human Resource Director, Sarah Judd. Deirdre is the recipient of the Cordes-Taylor Scholarship for the fall semester. The Cordes – Taylor Scholarship Fund was developed to recognize the outstanding contributions of two women who have demonstrated excellence to LEAP (Life Enrichment Advancing People) with many years of dedicated service in support of people with developmental & intellectual disabilities in Western and Central Maine. LEAP offers this scholarship to employees pursuing a degree in a related field such as: Rehabilitation, Nursing, Social Services, Community Health, Special Education, Occupational Therapy and many others. The Eligibility requirement for employees is that they have to be employed by LEAP for one year and have worked a minimum of 520 hours. If interested in the scholarship program, please contact your administrator or the human resources department. Congratulations to Deirdre who is pursuing a degree in Biology. We wish her the best of luck!



Staying Cool, Loving the Pool!

By Kim Levensalor

When life hands you lemons...Irene and Wendy choose to enjoy a hot summer afternoon anyway by relaxing in the shade, and beating the heat with a little splash or two!

We all celebrate my daughter's life!

by Connie Verrier

When Andrea was 2 years old we were told she would probably die before she turned 5. I'm very happy to say she had her 37th birthday in July. She lived with me (her mom and guardian) until 2001. It was the most difficult decision I have ever made to let her go into her own assisted living apartment. LEAP had started supporting Andrea before the move in our home, so I was familiar with staff.

Since that time, Andrea has grown into a wonderful young woman. She loves people and enjoys the outings she attends with staffers. She has developed independence, helping with household chores and many other aspects of her life. She truly likes all of her support staff and is always looking ahead to shift change. Also, through sign language classes that LEAP provides for staff, her communication skills have definitely improved the way she can connect with folks.

Her movies and magazines make her happy, as well as going to a restaurant or coming to visit me. I am thankful for LEAP and all that they do to provide Andrea with a caring, loving life. Here, Andrea enjoys a happy smile with Laurie Blake, LEAP's Community Supports Administrator.



According to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the age of Discrimination Act of 1975, LEAP does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, handicap or age in recruiting, hiring, training or promoting. We also avoid discrimination in admission or access to treatment in all programs and activities.

Welcome to our newest staff members!

Brandon Monroe, Michael LeBlanc, Isaac Jacobs, Morgan Pooler, Victoria Hibbard, Tricia Norton, Kayla Balsam, Victoria Balsam, Abraham Darienzo, Logan Ross, Paul Fongemie, Jenica Couture, Dustin Wiggin, Maranda Lane, Jennesa Stevens, Patience Lopez, Amanda Leach, Heather Powell, and Elizabeth Buckley

We're glad you joined the LEAP Team!



Another summer memory...

By Laurie Blake

The season flew past so quickly,
but not before we captured
a few priceless moments.

Here, Bill V. celebrates
all that is best about
his meditative enjoyment
of fishing...



LEAP turns 35 in 2015!

Life Enrichment Advancing People (LEAP) was incorporated in 1980 as the Western Maine Association for the Retarded (WMARC). The organizing was necessitated because of the closing of Pineland and as new, community based options for individuals with Mental Retardation emerged. Now, as the language has evolved, so has the organization. From a few scattered "group homes", we have evolved to many settings in many neighborhoods, in home family supports and true person centered planning. Currently, LEAP continues to focus on its mission, which is empowering people of all abilities to lead lives with dignity, independence and autonomy by providing comprehensive and individualized supports. However, as we have evolved we want more: to give people a life worth living; to be an employer of choice with a quality and enlightened workforce; and to regularly "give back" to our communities by encouraging volunteer support of other socially beneficial organizations. We have come a long way in 35 years, and we have a lot to celebrate!



Our Mission and Values

At **Life Enrichment Advancing People (LEAP)**, our mission centers on empowering people of all abilities to lead lives with dignity, independence and autonomy by providing comprehensive and individualized supports.

Our foundational principle is to provide services that encourage well being, self expression and experiences of joy.

We carry out our mission by focusing on three main areas for support: maintaining optimum health, expanding communication options, and having many experiences of joy. This is done through emphasizing healthy lifestyles and autonomy, and providing opportunities for community participation.

LEAP supports people in small groups, **individualized apartments**, in various community supports, and through a small **community respite program**. We adopt an individualized and holistic approach to tailor our services to each person and family's goals and expectations.

***"We believe in the worth and dignity of all people.
We promote experiences of joy, wellness, and personal growth."***

Oxford Plains Speedway Outing

by Katrina Fay

A group of the people we serve had an exciting opportunity this summer to enjoy a field trip to Oxford Plains Speedway on July 12th, with big thanks going out to track owner, Jeff Shock. A great time was enjoyed by all, even those who didn't stay for the entire event. It was so uplifting to see the ones who did enjoy the cars; they were listening to every word the commentator shared! When the crew said these guests could go into the pit, they quickly pointed that fact out to staff, and went to get some close up looks. I think almost everyone came home with free stuff from a Napa sponsor, and they all loved it.

Staffers did well by providing lots of water, packed lunches, and sunscreen was applied frequently. Some staff members even got assistance from the people they were supporting to help apply it. Safety first, with fun running a real close second!



Celebrating 35 years of Wellness, Hope and Joy at LEAP!

In Remembrance - Ikey Davey

by Darryl Wood

Dennis "Ikey" Davey was a long time resident at LEAP's Our House home located on Anson Street in Farmington. He was known for "sparkling and twinkling", or showing his joy when exposed to moving objects, lights, flashes and bright colors. On July 29th, 2015, a group of friends met and dedicated the accessibility station at Stone Soup Gardens to Ikey, complete with the whirligig that we know would have entertained him when the wind was blowing. Ikey was reunited with his family while living at Our House, and became a frequent traveler to Warren for family reunions. When Ikey passed away in 2011, his family donated money which LEAP used to create an area rich in sights, sounds and movements. At right are pictures of the station and some of the folks who participated in the dedication. Keep on twinkling, Ikey...we miss you.



At Stone Soup Gardens, The Adventure Continues!

by Deelight Zitzelberger

It has been a robust growing season at Stone Soup Gardens this year...not only due to the largely cooperative weather, but to a fabulous and dedicated group of volunteers. Our organic garlic was a huge hit, and more will be planted soon for next year's crop. The popular and sturdy raised garden beds provided accessible growing opportunities for community members with mobility challenges. We're in the planning stages for next year's offerings as this season winds down so beautifully, and welcome your feedback. Current value-add products that will be researched in 'the quiet season' are apple ladders, garden boxes, and homemade food dehydrators. Please e-mail Deelight@leapcommunity.org with your suggestions, thanks!



Upward Bound Students Hit it Hard!

by Darryl Wood

On July 24th, this bumper crop of future LEAP employees worked their heads off all afternoon, weeding at Stone Soup Gardens... all high energy, fun, and hard-working -- my faith in tomorrow is officially restored! This outstanding group of young leaders includes Veronica Manasco, Faithanne Gould, Keenan Martin, Dominic Meader, Cecil Madrid, Damien Laughlin, Nick Pelletier, Devin Mercier, Tamera True, and UMF staff member, Holly Tripp. Many thanks to you all for a memorable summer!



Oliver House News

by Jane Shaw

Hello to all, from your friends at Oliver House. We have had a great summer, and it is hard to believe it is autumn already. This summer, our staff helped celebrate the 4th of July by hosting a "Family Fun Day". Even though the weather did not cooperate, we enjoyed our luncheon in the new addition on our garage.

Once again, we were able to enjoy the music by Bill Lake, "The Singing Cowboy", and a couple of the talented individuals we support joined in as well. It was awesome, and a good time was had by all!

A couple of other fun activities we were able to provide: assisting one of the people we serve on his first canoe ride down the Sandy River, with the help of staff, and the Oliver House gang enjoyed a day together at Reid State Park. The garden area has been busy throughout the summer months, with lots of people enjoying the garden area as well as walking the fit trails at the Stone Soup Gardens. We hope your summer was as fun as ours!





Gray Wildlife Sanctuary Visit

by Cristy Foss

Staff and the individuals we support went to the Gray Wildlife Refuge in early August for a fun picnic lunch, and ambled around the sanctuary to enjoy seeing all the animals.

Franklin Heights Feature Facelift!

by Kristi Iverson

Franklin Heights received a long awaited facelift this summer. The retaining wall that used to line our driveway was composed of flagstone, and had been slowly falling down over the years. This year it was identified as a safety issue by LEAP's safety team and after over 20 years it was finally it's time to be replaced. In just a couple of days of shuffling our cars around and watching where we stepped, our new retaining wall was completed! Even neighbors have been stopping by to take a look and compliment the work. We are all very thankful for our new upgrade!



<< Before...

...After >>



How Can I Be a Hero?

by Deelight Zitzelberger

Everyday heroes are all around us, and we even get to hear about them on the news once in a while.

Usually, though, the people doing the greatest good in our communities
are acting outside the limelight...on purpose.

Because LEAP is a nonprofit, we rely on sustaining relationships with citizens from all walks of life.

So, your planned giving makes a difference in the quality of life for the people we serve,
as many of their daily living needs are not Medicaid-funded.

If you are already one of our monthly partners, it's hard to fully express
our ongoing gratitude for your quiet and meaningful service.

As you are considering where your own giving budget may have the greatest impact at the local level,
please do visit <http://www.leapcommunity.org/about-us> for more information,

or contact Darryl@leapcommunity.org with any questions.

Our family of faithful donors will always have room for YOU!

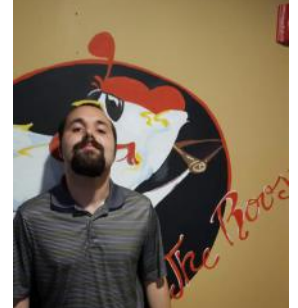
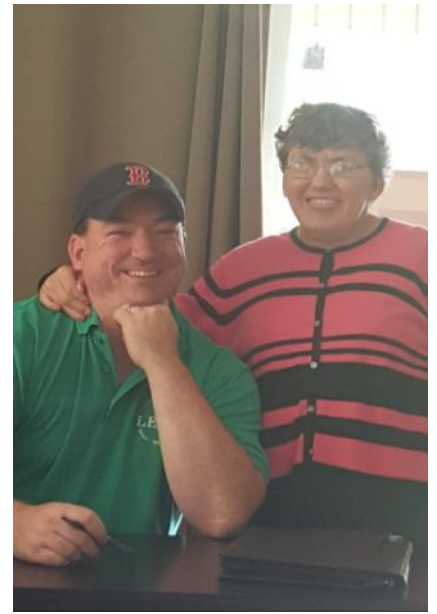
Please help us save trees and printing costs by subscribing to our e-newsletter at www.leapcommunity.org
Our pledge is to **never* sell, rent, or otherwise make your e-mail address available to third parties.*

On Celebrating Individuality

by Tony Bolens

Alice plays by her own set of rules, and dances to the beat of her own drum. She's a nonconformist if there ever was one, and we love her for it. One of the ways Alice chooses to express herself is by speaking her mind...even to the point where she does not use people's names, but gives them a new name once she gets to know them. It is a bit of a rite of passage at Davis Road, getting a name from Alice.

KP, a 20-year veteran at Davis Road, is lovingly known as "Poodles," a name she wears as a badge of honor. Other names she has given out are "the tall one", that is Sandy Osgood, another long-term staffer at Davis Road. "Freckles," belongs to two people, Megan Goodine, and Melisa Foss, both former staff supporters of hers, and now managers at LEAP. "Secretary" and "Secretary's sister" are two other staff members she has relationships with. I feel particularly honored, as she has bestowed on me a Ph.D, and I am now "Doctor Smith". ☺ Some people may find it disrespectful that she might refuse to use their name, but at Davis Road it is a way to celebrate who she is as an individual, and as for this doctor, I can appreciate that.



Open Mic Night at The Roost

by Kyla Wheeler

The entire crew at Anson Street have been putting their musical talents to the test and making lots of new friends all summer long. They've been attending Open Mic Night at a local bar and wowing the crowds with both songs they know by heart, and original numbers. Michael Hartford even graces the audience with his guitar skills.

To Our Event Sponsors and Faithful Supporters - We Can't Thank You Enough!

by Deelight Zitzelberger

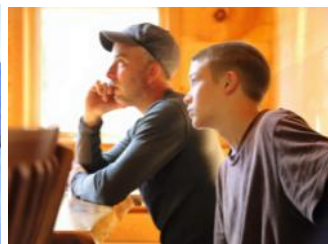
THANK YOU to our golf & silent auction supporters! By sponsoring and participating in LEAP fundraising events, you are making a substantial and sustainable difference in our communities. Specifically, with each gift of your presence and resources, you are helping adults with developmental disabilities and their families improve access to needed support services, build healthy long-term community connections, participate in wellness activities, and access other life-changing programs. *Each time you choose to give makes an impactful difference, and together we are investing in the lives of real people to make a lasting change in the quality of their future.* Again, thank you for becoming a member of our team.



by Joy Pierce

A group of people are gathered under a covered walkway at a fair. In the center, a man wears a cowboy hat and a dark jacket. To his left, a woman wears a bright green jacket. To his right, a man in a grey hoodie has his arm around the cowboy-hatted man's shoulder. Other people are visible in the background, some wearing hats and jackets. The walkway has a wooden floor and a white roof with exposed beams.

A woman in a brown jacket and black pants is walking on a dirt path in a forest. She is smiling and looking towards the camera. Behind her, another person wearing a blue jacket and an orange hat is walking. The path is surrounded by trees and green foliage.



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LEAP Celebrates Our Direct Support Professionals!

On September 18th, we held our annual DSP Recognition BBQ to formally and publicly share our deepest thanks to the men and women who work at LEAP program sites, and serve with hearts and hands the amazing people we all get to support. Board members, staff, and family members of all ages were welcomed to share in the fun, food, and music, and enjoyed the treasure hunt on the Stone Soup Gardens Trail as well.



Loving our part in maintaining and strengthening an authentically inclusive community...how about you?

To learn more about LEAP, please visit us at www.leapcommunity.org.
Don't forget to also look for us on Facebook, Twitter and Pinterest!

Industry Road Housewarming Party, and an Elvis sighting!

By Kyla Wheeler

After re-opening the Industry Road home in July, Arlene and Luke have been busy entertaining friends and family at their housewarming party. They recently even got a chance to see “EP Rock”, an Elvis Presley tribute band at the Skowhegan Opera House!



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Don't forget to also look for us on Facebook, Twitter and Pinterest!

A snapshot of what YOUR meaningful support can look like!

A Will to Seed Wellness, Hope and Joy into Our Communities

By including LEAP in your planned bequests, you can sow support for the needs of developmentally disabled adults in many western and central Maine communities. This is your opportunity to advocate and provide meaningful impact at the personal level for years to come. We hope that in considering your gift, you will contact our Executive Director, Darryl Wood, at 778-4817 x104. To learn more about other giving and monthly partnering options, please click the Donate Now button at www.leapcommunity.org. Your donations can help to fill the needs not covered by MaineCare & Medicaid Funding. Your support can be targeted to an individual, a program, a specific project, or a general donation. Together, we each can make a difference today and every day! LEAP is a 501 (C)(3) Charitable Organization.

___ I want to support LEAP. Please have someone contact me at: _____

I want to provide a tax deductible donation to the agency. Enclosed please find my gift of:

___\$25.00 ___\$50.00 ___\$100.00 Other: _____

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*Our pledge is to *never* sell, rent, or otherwise make your e-mail address available to third parties.*

*People don't buy what you do; they buy why you do it.
And what you do simply proves what you believe.
~ Simon Sinek*



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LEAP
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