



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



Families, Providers concerned about the impacts of the SIS on safety and quality of life

by Darryl Wood

While only a small percentage of Mainers are born each year with developmental disabilities severe enough to require around-the-clock care, state-wide, the numbers are significant enough that thousands of Maine families are impacted in one way or another. In many cases, it is not possible for a family member to provide around-the-clock, specialized care to their loved one. Many eventually come to the gut-wrenching conclusion that they need help, and that is where providers like LEAP come in. Since opening our doors in 1980, LEAP has worked diligently to provide individualized supports to people in a homelike setting. In fact, one of our key quality indicators is “does someone feel comfortable in their home; do they feel ownership and a sense of belonging?”. These concepts do not translate easily in a group home environment, even in the best of situations. Besides hiring and training quality staff, one of the ways we do this is to try to match people with others who may complement their lifestyle. For instance, if one is a very loud, energetic person, they may not fit together well with someone more quiet and contemplative. This is a very important consideration and while we are not perfect at it, we are always trying to move in this direction.

For the past couple of years, DHHS has been working with providers on a new reimbursement model based on a “score” or rating that is assigned to everyone after an assessment interview. While we providers have literally dozens of unanswered questions related to the Supporting Individual Success (SIS) process, a couple of significant concerns with the process come immediately to mind. First, based on many provider projections across the state, people with the most significant needs,

those who rate a 4 or 5 on the SIS scale, will not have adequate staffing to monitor and provide the services they require. This is a safety issue, and some providers are not willing to compromise on safety and lose money doing so. This means that people may be discharged to go where? Any other backup plan will be far more costly, and a disservice to the individual in need of supports. Secondly, providers will be forced to consider grouping people based not on their needs or desires, but on a cost formula that allows the home to at least break even. This raises other issues around quality of life and challenges related to incompatible people living in the same environment, which flies in the face of everything the provider and advocacy community has been working on for years.

For these reasons and many more, LEAP and many other families, providers and advocates gathered for a public hearing on January 5th, and/or submitted comments about the proposed rules before a January 15th deadline. We oppose the SIS until we can get specific answers to the dozens of detailed inquiries we have made searching for information points. Imagine trying to run a business, one that impacts hundreds of people’s quality of life, while not understanding how you are going to get paid to do it, or whether you can provide the necessary care safely and up to standards.

I can only speak for LEAP, but we are not opposed to any change that increases fairness and efficiency of the quality of services to the most compromised of all Mainers. At this time, there are too many unanswered questions to say that the SIS will or won’t be able to do this. As providers who know our business, we only ask that DHHS implement those considerations we know will impact the lives of supported individuals negatively. We have worked too hard moving forward to risk taking steps in the wrong direction.

LEAP’s Board of Directors 2016-17

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- Robert Lockwood, Vice-President, Industry, ME*
- Roger Condit, Secretary, Farmington, ME*
- Celeste Turner, Treasurer, Farmington, ME*
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- Lance Neeper, Ph.D, Farmington, ME*
- Darryl Wood, New Sharon, ME*
- Lynne Hunter, Wilton, ME*

Important People You Know in Our Communities...

UMF Art Workshop – Masterpieces from LEAP

by Kyla Wheeler

Caitlin Turner and Garrett Vogl from Anson Street are seen posing with their works of art created during workshops held at the University of Maine at Farmington. The collaboration was a project with the Rehabilitation and Art departments of the University to provide artistic opportunities to members of the Franklin County community. The two different workshops, that took place on two Saturdays in October, included working with clay and making wearable art. The works were shown at a reception open to the public held at Emery Community Art Center where the art was on display for all to see.



“Where there is art, there is **HOPE!**” (DZ)



Fall into Fitness 2015 Update

by Kyla Wheeler

During this autumn’s “Fall into Fitness” the individuals supported by LEAP had the opportunity to try some new activities! Nova Wagg, local belly-dancing teacher, offered a workshop on movement and color. People learned how to move and stretch in ways that aren’t typical for everyday modern life, as well as use colorful props to express themselves through dance. Also offered this fall, Ben Harvell, a LEAP DSP, lead a workshop on hula hooping. He gave a brief lesson in how to make your own hoop, then let everyone try hooping for themselves with ones he had already made.



Wellness



Fun WOW Activities Lead to JOY!

by Tony Bolens

WOW is in full swing, and so were the arms and legs several of us as we danced the night away (and a few calories) to “Sweatin’ to the Oldies” with Richard Simmons!

We had 14 people show up to the event on a cold winter evening, but only these few stuck it out ‘til the end of the video and here they are!

[Photo credit: Kyla Wheeler]

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!

Elizabeth Buckley, Christopher Grant, Lisa Heath, Jocelyn Wheeler, Rose Redman, Nicole Osborne, Rebecka Kennedy, Samantha Bachelder, Connor Savage, Maranda Currier, Courtney Drexel, Luanne Trenoweth, Kala Wilbur, Samantha Gray, Darlene Frost, Logan Heintz, Bram Tooker, Erica Baxter, David Dean, and Alfred Dufour III

We're glad you joined the LEAP Team!



Rotary Festival of Trees Christmas Fundraiser

by Darryl Wood

It's a joy to share that LEAP had one of the best trees at the annual Festival of Trees event last month, and it raised \$375 toward the good and important community-building work of the Farmington Rotary.

This tree generated lots of positive buzz about it all day and on through the evening. Peer Cheers to all who helped make it happen!

Seen here are the LEAP Christmas Tree masterminds: Katrina Fay, Summer Fay (seated), Carrie Gilbert, Kimberly Levensalor, and Marsha Allison.

Lura comes to Weld Road

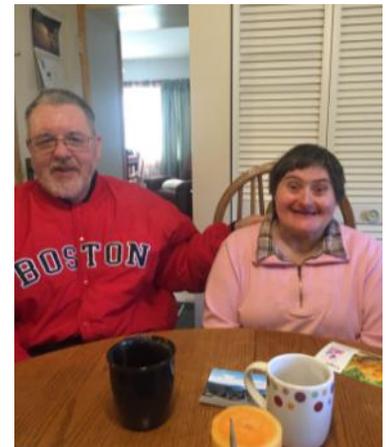
by Matthew Levensalor

Hello from Weld Road! This quarter was a roller coaster for the staff at WRD in Wilton. Sadly, we lost our beloved Denise on September 16th. With grieving hearts, we looked for a new housemate. Fortunately, we soon found a person in need of service and supports.

Lura, from the Rumford area, was a good match for us. During the meeting between her and Michael, the perfect gentleman had big smiles, and high hopes for Lura. She appeared enthused to meet him as well!

Lura moved in on November 2nd, and has adjusted well to living in a LEAP program.

Her bedroom has been decorated with personal items, and she enjoys use of the house as well as she did in her prior home. A warm welcome, Lura, to the LEAP community!



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."***

Meet Andrea!

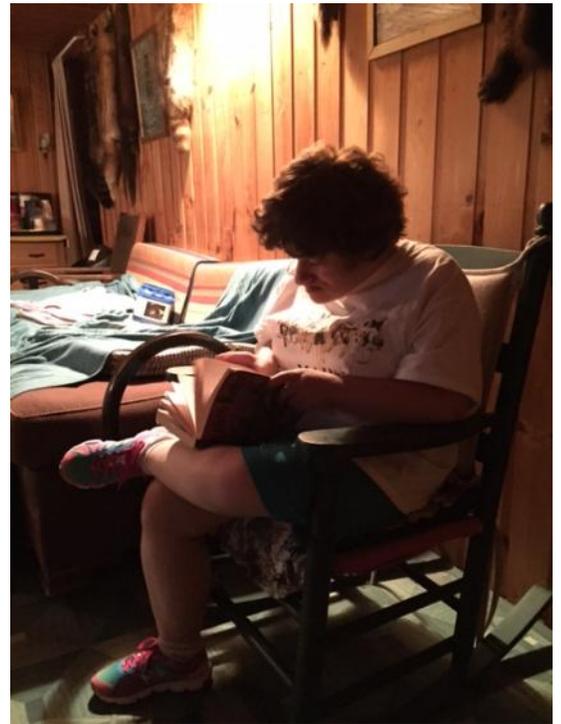
by Alexa Wyman

Andrea has been with LEAP since 1999. She lives in her own apartment and receives support from LEAP DSPs. She goes to the WorkFirst day program three times a week, where she gets to engage in fun activities with friends and learn new skills.

Andrea communicates using American Sign Language and all of her staff has monthly lessons/training in using ASL. She has a different sign for everyone she knows, and likes to share that often with people that she sees in the community.

Andrea is very curious about the world around her and loves to learn! She is currently working on daily living skills such as managing money, appropriate interactions with people in the community, and respecting personal space between herself and others by using handshakes or fist bumps to greet people. She is always learning new signs, and practices other daily living skills on a regular basis.

She loves to stay busy and attend events in her community. Some of her favorite activities are swimming, volunteering at the animal shelter, dancing, cooking, having picnics outside, and shopping around town, especially at local thrift stores. Andrea is full of life and spirit, and those who know her would describe her as outgoing, caring, and lots of **fun!**



To learn more about this wonderful young woman's life, please visit:

<http://www.leapcommunity.org/article/we-celebrate-andreas-life>



Maine State Museum Adventure

By Kyla Wheeler

Luke and Arlene from Industry Road took a break in the middle of a day full of errands, to check out the Maine State Museum.

Both particularly enjoyed the animal displays, especially the live brook trout...and the scene of a skunk spraying a predator!

Celebrating 35+ years of Wellness, Hope and Joy!

Trail Use and Progress Update – Stone Soup Gardens & Fit Trail

by Darryl Wood



With the arrival of winter (finally), we want to remind everyone that the trail system at Stone Soup Gardens will be open for snowshoeing all winter long.

This year, we are maintaining an area for sledding as well.

With the new sign at the end of the driveway and adequate parking, we hope you take advantage of the beauty and activities available in the great outdoors.



*What good is the warmth of summer,
without the cold of winter to give it sweetness...*

~ John Steinbeck

Volleyball Wellness Event

by Matthew Levensalor

These fun wellness events have been hosted at Academy Hill School in Wilton. On this evening, Michael D came, along with several DSPs (Michael LeBlanc, Jessie Cunningham, Charlotte Tyler, Joy Pierce, Karen Fernald, and Wanda McLeod).

Each Direct Support Professional brought 1-2 guests, which amped up the fun-factor and made the event extra wonderful.

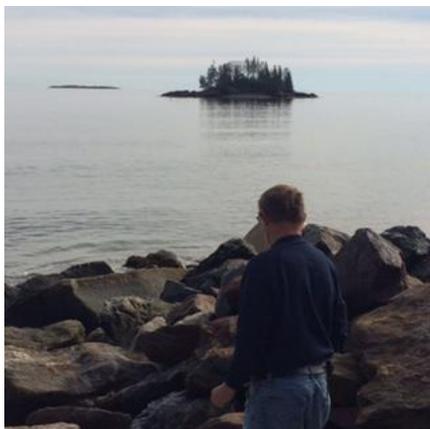
We were active, had a great time, laughed a lot, and had no injuries...everybody wins!



Ken's Coastal Excursion Day!

by Katrina Fay

We love being able to support Ken with activities that promote wellness and joy in his life. Here, he enjoys a great cup of java in Rockland while taking in the serene beauty of Maine's coast.



Halloween at Franklin Heights

by Kristi Iverson

Halloween at Franklin Heights was a hit this year, with everyone getting in the spirit of the season with their own flair. Peter enjoyed rolling around in his own racecar for the day, while Ryan attended the Halloween dance in his Pooh Bear costume. Maureen looked very sleek in her Boo Kitty outfit, and Bob dressed in his favorite ensemble, the classic cowboy.



FCAS Strut for Strays

by Matthew Levensalor

As we often do, LEAP loved giving back to an important partner in our community on Sunday, October 11th. A group of managers, DSPs, family, friends, and our HR Director all participated in the 2nd Annual Franklin County Animal Shelter "5k Strut for Strays Run or Walk Event". We were even joined by two pugs and a mutt! All told, the LEAP team donated \$180 toward this worthwhile and important cause, and the day could not have been better.



Community Support in Health and Fun!

by Darryl Wood

The staff and doctors of Western Mountain Chiropractic and Sports Injury are in the middle of a FUNdraiser for LEAP. Any customer that wears Patriots gear to an appointment, the staff makes a donation to LEAP. Bonus- If the Pats win the Super Bowl the office will donate an additional \$100! At right, WMC staff Tim, Tyler, Bethany, Devin, Cheryl and Sue sport the team colors proudly, and for a good cause. Go Pats! Go LEAP!

Dr. Tyler Barnes of Western Mountain Chiropractic & Sports Injury states, "LEAP, Inc. was chosen as the beneficiary of this fundraiser because of the agency's commitment to providing direct support for local residents who are in need of individualized resources. These are resources that would not readily be accessible without the help of a non-profit like LEAP. In addition, LEAP facilitates many initiatives and programs that advocate the promotion of health and wellness. This effort directly benefits the folks they support, the employees of LEAP, and our community as a whole. The mission of our office here at Western Mountain Chiropractic & Sports Injury supports LEAP's effort and we hope this donation helps them in working towards a healthier and happier community."



I Can 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 thinking about becoming one of our monthly partners,
please accept our ongoing gratitude for the power of your quietly meaningful gifts.

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 giving options,

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.

A Busy Autumn at Town Farm Road 1

by Kimberly Levensalor

Wendy and Irene had a busy fall season, with crafty projects and adventures galore! As seen, it was hard to decide whether they had more fun getting their pumpkins ready for visitors, or going on their own excursion to Santa's Village...



The measure of a man, or woman,
is not so much what they have accomplished,
though that has weight.

It often is much more though
what that man or woman has overcome
to accomplish what they have.

- Leif Gregersen, *Through The Withering Storm*

Can't help but reflect on the recent holidays we've just celebrated, and how much richer our memories become when colored with thankfulness... best wishes for a wonderful 2016 from your friends at LEAP!



The wondrous tools of social media

by Deelight Zitzelberger

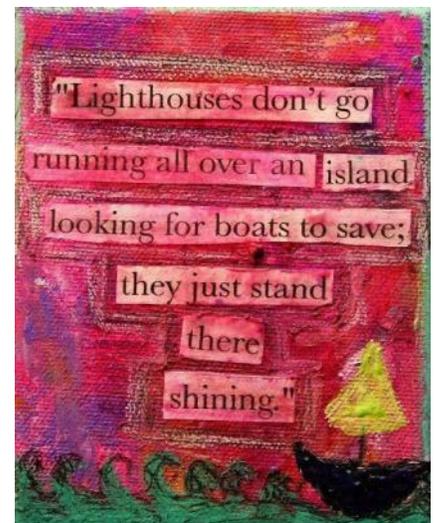
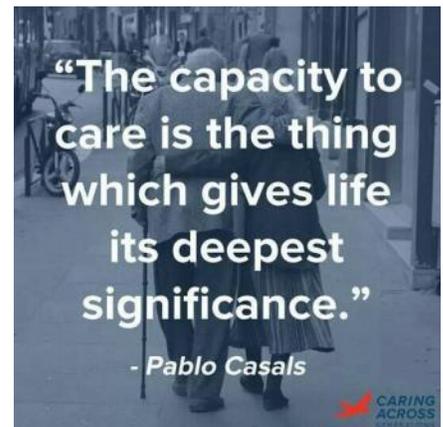
When it comes to our individual approach to daily living and relationships, it is remarkable to think about how much these have changed in the last decade with the advent of numerous social media channels.

The remarkable part is that for many people including those on the developmental spectrum, your life and relationships may be potentially enriched by the use and enjoyment of these channels, or use of the web in general.

Along with relationships and enjoyment, one aspect that I love is all about education/enrichment and advocacy in our communities. There is no greater joy than knowing that we can build bridges of understanding and inclusion with warm face-to-face smiles and shared community activities, or by promoting the things we believe in and share on our Facebook page and Pinterest boards.

For more, please do visit us and engage in the conversation, here: <https://www.facebook.com/LEAPCommunity/>

And here... <https://www.pinterest.com/leapinc/> See you soon!



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!

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.

___ Yes, I want to support the people at LEAP. Please have someone contact me at: _____

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

___ \$25.00 ___ \$50.00 ___ \$100.00 ___ \$500.00 Other: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: () _____ E-mail: _____

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

Designee Agency



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LEAP
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