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

LEAP Gives Back

by Darryl Wood

At LEAP, we do a lot of things that are good for other people, and this is in addition to the 300,000 plus hours of direct care services we provide every year. For instance, we have an active wellness committee and program that believes part of spiritual wellness is “giving back.”

In the recent past, LEAP has supported the following local nonprofits in various ways: The United Way; The Children’s Task Force; The Franklin County Animal Shelter; The Autism Society; The American Cancer Society, and the list goes on.

While we love assisting other organizations to do better, we also like to give back to our own communities in ways that are unique to LEAP. On Sunday October 29th, LEAP hosted a Trunk or Treat event at the Farmington Fairgrounds. It provided a safe place for families to enjoy dressing up for Halloween and getting their candy fixes. It also got the LEAP team into creative mode, as more than a dozen LEAP teams decorated vans and had great fun interacting with friends old and new.

One participant sent along the following note “I wanted to drop you a quick note to let you know how much I (and my family) loved the trunk or treat. This was such an amazing idea and was executed perfectly. It flowed very smoothly and was a lot of fun. What a great way to get the people you serve interacting with the community and vice versa! I was happy to see a familiar face or two handing out the candy. I’m just beaming with pride for you guys on this one!”

That felt good, and that’s why we do it.

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Great works are performed, not by strength, but by perseverance.

~ Samuel Johnson

LEAP’s Board of Directors 2017-18

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LEAPers Support Franklin County Children’s Task Force Walk!
On Saturday, October 14th, a stalwart cadre of LEAP staff and people supported represented our community on behalf of children in Franklin County. Here, Debbie Bachelder, Joy Pierce, Kristi Iverson, team host Debbie Leclair, Megan Goodine, Jon Duley, and Nate Vallette took a smile break during this important awareness and fundraising event.

Sam Goes Lion King at DEW Haven
by Cynthia Knowles, DSP for WRD
Sam enjoyed a fun, sunny day at Dew Haven during a fun visit in mid-August. He showed particular interest in the lion enclosure by prompting staffers to sing ‘Hakuna Matata’. While staff sang, Sam danced & used sign language for "Dad" for Mufasa. Sam also enjoyed the deer, bears & tigers, as well as a 9-week-old lion cub that he wanted to hug. Here's to fun being an important part of wellness!

In a recent autumn decorating event, Andrea Verrier, Jesika Smith, Linda Stevens, Amanda Manning, Tarra Bernaiche, and Natasha McElmurry shared smiles and made memories while painting pumpkins!
Welcome to our newest staff members!

Sarah Carrozza, Kathryn Evans, Deborah LeClair, Allyson Hammond, Benjamin Ladd, Terry McCarty, Deborah McCarty, Sarah Meldrum, Jeffrey Irish, Ryan Ellis, Jesika Smith, Adrielle Frappier, Donna Greenleaf, Elizabeth Hinkley, Dustin Makinen, Kristin McPherson, Lisa Meader, Ryan Patstone, Jianna Pinkham, Orre’ Ann Robbins, Linda Austin, Ashley Cole, Baylee Gilboe, Marjolaine Grant, Lukas Kenison, Katherine Nile, Melody Sawyer, and Shirlynn Sears

We’re glad you joined the LEAP Team!

Training Spotlight - Certified Residential Medication Assistant (CRMA)

by Alfred Dufour III

Staff often need to administer and/or assist in use of medications. A CRMA works with people who need medications including elders, adults with disabilities, persons with mental illness, persons with intellectual disabilities, etc. Staff attend a 24-hour course, as well as pass a state exam and perform several supervised medication passes to receive a state certification. Certifications are renewed every two years by taking a refresher course, passing an exam & conducting a medication pass with our RN consultant, Tammy White, RN. Also staff attend in-service trainings to assist with medical treatments such as insulin injections, blood glucose monitoring, epi-pens, inhalers, nebulizers or C-Paps.

United Way Color Run

by Cristy Foss

The United Way Color Run was a success with 2 staffing groups, Stinchfield Hill and Davis Road representing Team LEAP. LEAP took 2nd place for fundraising for the United Way, and we so look forward to next year’s colorful event!

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.”
Lisa Heath is a Direct Support Professional at LEAP’s Community Supports AV program in Farmington. She has been working for LEAP for 2 years this October. Lisa starting working in human services as a CNA in nursing homes. She applied to LEAP because her aunt spoke so highly of LEAP and our mission. Lisa loves that LEAP puts an effort forth to ensure people have access to the community. She takes pride in being able to acclimate individuals to different environments and provide them new experiences.

For the last couple of years, Lisa has had the privilege of attending the ASL M.A.D. Experience with the individual she supports. She really enjoyed that this allowed the individual to connect with other people who signed and helped build a bridge to the deaf community for them.

Lisa looks forward to continuing to have a job that helps and teaches people. She has aspired to have a job in human services all her life and understand the dedication it takes. Lisa says, to be successful at this job, you need be kind and understanding. You need to work on building relationships that helps the individual learn and thrive. It’s equally important to focus on taking the individual out and helping them build relationships in the community.

Her manager describes her as calm and always ready to participate in new and regular activities. She also demonstrates a great use of facial expressions, finger spelling, getting the message across and using humor, all while using American Sign Language. Lisa also understands and actively practices advocating for the rights of individuals. Professionally, Lisa always completes her documentation on time, has excellent attendance and is very knowledgeable with CRMA skills.

Outside of work Lisa likes the make crafts. Currently she is working on making a new blanket for the staff bed to match their new comforter set. Lisa displays good independence which is key with one-on-one programs and works well with the team and picks up additional shifts on a regular basis. She has great suggestions and communication skills with the individual she supports and her team. Lisa’s peers describe her as a team player who is very knowledgeable, thorough and kind.

Community members participating in the United Way’s Days of Caring gather at Stone Soup Gardens, to learn more about LEAP services and our role in advocating for increased accessibility for people of all abilities.

The Stone Soup Gardens property includes residential housing for 4 individuals at Oliver House as well as accessible gardens and trails.
LEAP DSP of the Month for September 2017 - Anne LeBlanc!

by Kristi Iverson

Anne LeBlanc is a Direct Support Professional at LEAP’s Weld Road program in Farmington. Her manager describes her as a positive influence on the people she supports and her team. Anne not only works at LEAP but also supports individuals at Work First Inc. She regularly encourages people to exercise their rights and speak up for themselves. In her years in human services she has supported people during their passing, and for others, the passing of their loved ones. Throughout all she maintains her encouraging spirit and continues providing positive and professional supports.

Anne stumbled into the field of human services 19 years ago. She was looking for something different to do and fell in love with what she saw. She started working for LEAP when a position came available to work with a person in their own apartment receiving in-home supports. When it was time for this individual to move into a different LEAP setting she traveled with them. After 7 years of working with this individual, she couldn’t imagine not working with them. She believes that she will stay with LEAP and WFI until she chooses to retire.

Anne states that she loves working for LEAP because she knows that the LEAP way is to treat all people as people first. When she first started with LEAP her individual needed assistance with making healthier food and drink choices. She knew she was making a difference in their life when the individual voiced that they needed to make better choices because it would improve their health. They also stated that even though they don’t always agree with her suggestions, they knew that Anne was looking out for their best interest. Anne confesses that she works a lot, but in her free time she loves spending time with her pug Ellie Mae and her grandson.

Anne is also a great team member picking up shifts to help peers in need of time off, trading shifts to avoid overtime and increasing her role at LEAP to become full-time, despite working long hours at Work First during the day. Anne’s peers describe her as having a great attitude with the people she supports, energetic, fun, hardworking, sensitive and cooperative. She is known for her blunt and straightforward style while also accepting people for who they are, greeting peers with smiles and a big heart. Everyone around Anne knows she loves her jobs and being able to support the individuals in her care. They also know to never mess with her coffee or ice cream!

Housemates Natasha M and Abigail F took a trip to attend the concert “I Love the 90’s” in Gilford, NH.

Here, they are relaxing before they spend the rest of the night singing and dancing the night away!
Because Kindness Rocks
by Nina Thomas

This ongoing wellness event is to get kids, adults, families, everyone out into the fresh air and have fun! Get a rock, paint it and hide it so another person can find it... (this means hiding it anywhere along LEAP’s Stone Soup Garden trail).

You can also use small objects, glue them on the rocks and then paint. Use your imagination and have fun.

There is only one guideline — Use Only POSITIVE & KIND words, thanks!

- Find a rock & paint it
- Clear coat it to protect it from the weather
- Keep your 1st rock or hide it so other people can find it
- When you find a rock, you can keep it or re-hide it in another spot
- Please feel free to come and join in on the fun along the trail!

For More Ideas: http://www.timesrecord.com/node/1165632

At right, our friend Ross B. shows the simple happiness of expressing his artistry, before taking a wellness walk (and hiding his rock) on the SSG trail!

Eagle Scout Project on LEAP’s Stone Soup Gardens Trail
by Megan Goodine

Shout out to Nick Lombardi, Life Scout from Troop 518 in Wilton! In August, he completed his Eagle Scout Project along with 20+ volunteers on the new spur of LEAP’s Fit Trail. They dug ditches, put in 6 culverts, lugged slate rocks and wood chips to work on drainage and accessibility. Hard but successful work! Yay, Nick! We appreciate your work and community service.
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 considering becoming one of our Sustaining Partners, please accept our ongoing gratitude for the power of your quietly meaningful gifts. As you reflect on 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!

If I look at the mass, I will never act. If I look at the one, I will.
~ Mother Teresa

JOY

At the end of a recent work session on the Stone Soup Gardens trail, Sara H and Meg G got to take Doug on a Joy Ride! Lots of belly laughs with our heads back, feeling the breeze!
Everyone loves our great summer & fall weather in Maine, and the SSG trail is just waiting for you to come enjoy it too...

#leapcommunity  #JOY  #wellness
Our current Featured LEAPER is Mr. William Viers. He was born in the summer of 1956, and most of us simply know him as “Bill”. He’s a great member of our community and you’ve probably seen him out shopping at the local grocery stores, enjoying music at events and/or participating in one of the many activities hosted by LEAP. He regularly visits Stone Soup Gardens, and loves sitting on his swing at home while enjoying the outdoors.

His typical day begins with shaving, enjoying the smell of his coffee, packing a lunch and anticipating his work day. He attends Work First five days a week, and works at “Touch of Class” thrift shop, buttoning and preparing clothing to be displayed for sale. When Bill comes home from work, he likes to relax and unwind by sitting in his recliner listening to his favorite television show “Bonanza”, or quietly reading one of his books with his fan on.

Other favorite activities are attending church and concerts at the gazebo. He also loves to collect key chains and small trinkets to hang throughout his apartment. Woodworking is a special hobby; he loves the feel and smell of the wood and has several handmade toys and other one-of-a-kind items that are used for decorating during the holidays.

Music is also a big part of Bill’s life and he can sometimes be heard playing different songs on his organ, accordion and acoustic guitar. He’s often invited by his community to play for others. He has a full library of songs, with a few of his favorites being “You are My Sunshine” and “Ring of Fire”. He loves it when people cheer for him, and is almost always willing to play another. Not only does he play the melodies, but singing along is another part of the fun for Bill.

Bill recently was donated a 2nd Braille machine and has begun writing new pieces every week. He can write stories, make cards for family and friends, and especially enjoys writing to his sister, Judy. With his writings, he can express himself, and simply enjoys being able to read back the things he has written. The satisfaction of completing a piece makes him proud, and examples can be found hung around his apartment. With help from Bill, we as staff are also learning how to use the Braille machine.

One of the many events Bill enjoyed this summer was the 4th of July parade in Farmington. He was so excited once the band started playing, sitting, tapping his feet and singing along with some familiar tunes. The loud sirens, marching band and other festive sounds made him so excited and he tried to imitate many of the sounds. He happily greeted friends and coworkers who stopped to say Hello as he walked through town, excited to have spoken to each one of them.

Bill started fishing regularly this summer at the “Fish & Fun” site at Titcomb Hill. He joins other friends there, takes a picnic lunch, and boy does he catch fish! He would probably like it if you joined him on a Sunday afternoon before the snow flies, too. It can be hard to sum up someone in such a short article, but the easiest way to describe Bill is that he’s simply a good man. He is always willing to help and is very independent. Whether cooking dinner or taking out the trash, Bill takes pride in being able to help do things for himself and taking care of his home. Our communities can always appreciate more friends & neighbors like that!
Keep House Happenings!
Keep House recently hosted a wellness event at Screw Auger Falls in Grafton Notch State Park in Newry. Alfred, Megan and Elaine enjoyed strolling down the walking path toward the falls, as did Roger! Also, Stephen Dean “Posing with Pumpkins” at Keep House...

Good Things Happen
by Darryl Wood
LEAP’s mission includes the words “Opportunities for Joy”. Every year we provide lots of these joy opportunities. Another thing I have noticed is that when you get good people together for a common cause, “good things happen.” Below, at the recent opening of an extension of our trail system, Dominic showed up to do the accessible part of the trail, while the rest of us planned the longer woods walk. Next thing you know the LEAP team is pushing and carrying Dom and his chair through the trails. It was pretty neat to be a half-mile up in the woods with a smiling guy in a wheelchair! #goodthingshappen

The Anson Street crew enjoyed a western mountains leaf-peeping tour on a recent weekend. Here, Jon D, Caitlin T, and staffer Olivia Fahn are wreathed in smiles as they celebrate the best of autumn beauty in Maine!

Photos courtesy of Olivia Fahn

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!
We’re All About Advancing a Life of Health, Wellness & Joy!

Karaoke Costume Ball 2017

On October 25th, LEAP held our first wellness event at the new Training Center in Wilton, and from the smiles shared below, it was a total blast!
TEAM LEAP FROG
by Alfred Dufour III

“Special Olympics Maine’s mission is to provide year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities, giving them continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy and participate in a sharing of gifts, skills and friendship with their families, other Special Olympics athletes and the community. In Maine we serve over 3800 athletes and offer events at the local, state, national and international levels.

Special Olympics Maine's vision is to transform communities by inspiring people throughout the world to open their minds, accept and include people with intellectual disabilities and thereby anyone who is perceived as different.

“Special Olympics Maine’s philosophy is founded on the belief that people with intellectual disabilities can, with proper instruction and encouragement, learn, enjoy and benefit from participation in individual and team sports. Special Olympics also believes that through millions of individual acts of inclusion where people with and without intellectual disabilities are brought together, long-standing myths are dispelled, negative attitudes changed and new opportunities to embrace and celebrate people with intellectual disabilities are created.”

~ As shared on the Special Olympics Maine website, here: https://www.somaine.org/who-we-are/our-mission/

LEAP has now started our own team. We currently have coaches qualified in track and field events, and will be adding more sports as interest is identified. Maine currently has over 60 regional and state events every year.

Special Olympics Horseback Competition 2017

There were 75 riders that attended this event this year to celebrate their 20th year of competing. The group of special Olympians were watched by several volunteers, law enforcement, friends and family. This event judges the riders and drivers on how well they can handle the horse, follow instructions of the task they want the horse to do and of course expect everyone to have fun. The rider with help from their coaches decide before the event if they want to have a walker with them or do it on their own. Most of the riders will do the main course and then they do a trail ride of 5 step obstacle course.

Three out of the four riders that competed from LEAP are from the Salus Equito Therapeutic Center provided by Debbie and Jim Farley. These three riders rode Western style; Caitlin Turner (left) placed 1st in her heat, Amanda Chubbuck (right) placed 3rd in her heat, and Scotty Brown (center) placed 4th in his heat. This group holds numerous fundraisers throughout the year to help raise the funds for them to take lessons and possibly spend the night down by the fairgrounds the night before the long day of competition. Ross competed from another group that also attends. He placed 2nd in his heat of English style riding.
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. Our mailing address is 313 Farmington Falls Road, Farmington, ME 04938

___ 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: ____________________

Name: ________________________________
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_______________________________________
Phone: ( ) ____________________________  E-mail: ____________________________

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~ Lori McKenna

“I know you got mountains to climb, but always stay humble and kind.”