



S P R I N G

N E E D S

N E W S L E T T E R

Update From The President

Thank you for taking the time to read our most recent edition of the NEEDS Center Newsletter. Over the past several months we have seen significant changes in how we have dealt with cases of COVID-19. We have had several cases among persons served and staff members over the past few months, but for the most part the cases have had mild or no symptoms, and we were able to keep our day programs open despite the cases. This is good progress compared to prior positive cases, and continues the overall positive trend that we have seen in this area.

Hiring continues to be one of our biggest concerns at the NEEDS Center, and within the human services sector overall. We have continued to see an increase in the number of qualified candidates and hiring has improved a bit overall. It is still a struggle, but we are managing to keep the homes and programs staffed, and continue to do our best to provide the best possible services and supports for folks.

We had our QUEST Survey recently, and it went very well. We received a 2-year license, which is the maximum that can be received. Look for more information within the newsletter.

As always, thank you to everyone reading this newsletter. The past couple years have presented us with unique challenges, but our staff members have risen to every challenge and we could not be more proud of everyone that works at The NEEDS Center. We are truly fortunate to have such an outstanding group of professionals at all levels of our organization.

Likewise the support and encouragement from family members and other stakeholders of the people we support has been an invaluable resource to all of us, and has helped more than you know.

Thanks!

Jim Sperry, President and CEO

The NEEDS Center

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New Developments

For the greater part of the last 2 years we made a conscious effort to turn down or delay any new projects that were available to our organization. Now that we are in a much better position in regards to COVID-19 we have once again started to entertain new opportunities to provide services and supports to people in need. Over the past several months we have opened 2 new homes, one in Methuen and the other in Boxford. We plan to open another residence in the fall in the town of Groveland.

QUEST

From April 13th - 19th team members from DDS' Quality Enhancement Team surveyed the NEEDS Center in our residences and day programs. This survey led to a 2 year licensure which is the maximum that can be received. We received a rating of Met for over 95% of all standards rated which is outstanding, and a direct reflection on the work of people at all levels of our organization. Some areas highlighted in the report include:

- An effective staff training system that ensured that its staff received all mandated trainings,
- An active Human Rights Committee (HRC) that is fully constituted and conducting regular meetings as outlined in the by-laws.
- The agency had implemented several systems to ensure that health and safety practices were consistently followed.
- All the homes were clean, well maintained and in good repair.
- The agency demonstrated strength in their understanding and knowledge of the persons supported and their unique needs, strengths and everyday challenges.

All in all it was a very positive report.

Welcome To The NEEDS Center!

We would like to take this opportunity to welcome our new staff members to The NEEDS Center!



Welcome VP of Special Projects



**Vice President of Special Projects,
Amy Atwell**

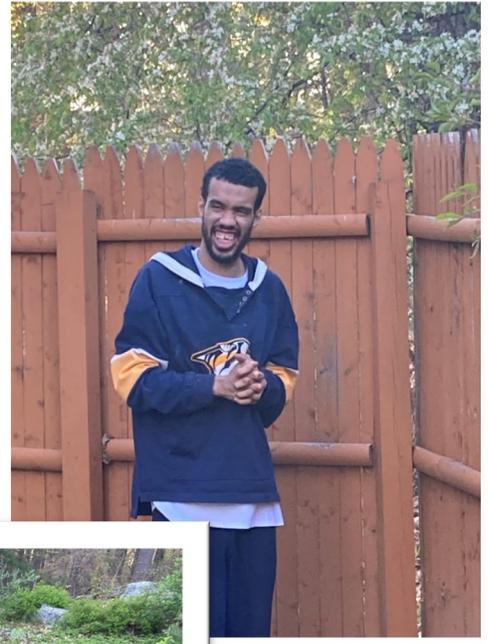
We are excited to announce the addition of Amy Atwell to the NEEDS Center Team. Amy is our new Vice President of Special Projects. Amy's career in special education began over 20 years ago right here in the Boston area. She spent 10 years in a residential program outside of Boston, in various roles while furthering her education.

In 2011, Amy had the once in a lifetime opportunity to move to the UAE to provide consultative services to families and schools not only in the Middle East but from London to India and everywhere in between. Amy finally made her way back stateside in 2017 to oversee the growth, operations and quality assurance of center based early intervention services in the Maryland area.

Amy has been with the NEEDS Center in a consultant capacity since 2020 and she is very excited to be able to take on a full time role. Amy considers herself to be a lifelong learner and loves being surrounded by those that have a similar passion for providing education, training and support to those that we serve. Once again, welcome to the team, Amy!

Spring is Here!

Spring is here and the guys from Rowley Court are excited to get back to enjoying the beautiful weather from the convenience of their home!



Staying Motivated

An Interview with Ryan Marcello

How have you been able to stay motivated during the pandemic? What types of activities do you engage in?

I have been able to stay motivated by keeping in contact with family, friends, and staying active.

I try to spend time with my housemates and staff. Sometimes we watch movies, go in the community, exercise, and go for walks.

During the Winter and Spring months, what activities were you able to participate in at Vincent Ave?

We went into the community, played games in the house, went for walks when it wasn't too cold, and would dress up for different holidays/activities.

Have you set any personal goals for yourself that you hope to achieve in 2022? If so, what are they?

I want to become more fit and try new exercise programs. I am looking to start Zumba classes and get back into boxing or other forms of martial arts, as I was before the pandemic. I also want to continue eating healthy and encourage my housemates to do the same.

We are aware that you exercise regularly and are interested in personal fitness. Is there any advice that you can offer for someone that is looking to improve their health and wellness?

I would tell them to never give up and try not to eat junk food. Sometimes it can be hard to resist certain foods but making healthy choices can be very rewarding! Sometimes when I feel tempted, I will choose something else, like a protein shake, and will feel much better about the decision.

Other than exercising and being active in the community, what other passions do you have?

I really enjoy music. Listening to music helps me relax and be myself. One thing that I am looking forward to is attending a live concert. There is an upcoming Rock concert (Rob Zombie) that I am hoping to attend. Music has been such a big part of my life and being able to attend a concert will make me feel normal again- looking past the pandemic and how things have been.

Staying Motivated

An Interview with Ryan Marcello

What do you think your peers and housemates would say is your most defining quality?

I think they would say that I like to joke around and laugh a lot. There are a lot of serious things going on in the world so we must try and find things that make us laugh so we can enjoy the moment. Over the last two years it has definitely been different, but I always find a way to make people laugh.

Pictured below, Ryan and Director of Residential Services Anthony Griffin training together.



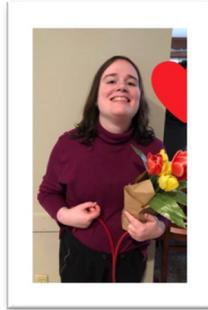
Easter Celebration

The ladies from Lakeshore got together with their friends from Homestead to commemorate Easter in the form of a big Easter Celebration!



Mother's Day

Mother's Day was a big event for the ladies from Parsonage! The ladies got creative and made cards and bracelets for their moms!



Memorial Day

Everyone commemorated Memorial Day differently this year. The people we support from Walden and Treble wanted to do a backyard barbecue, while the guys from River wanted to go to Canobie Lake Park! Regardless of how they chose to spend the day, everyone enjoyed the long weekend!



Diversity & Inclusion Committee

We are still actively collecting donations for the NEEDS to Give: Liberia Project. We are partnering with another non-profit organization, and we will be sending two staff members to Liberia to represent us. We will be holding a meeting on Tuesday June 14th at 12pm and we will be sending the link and meeting agenda out to our staff members soon!

Juneteenth is also around the corner, so we will be holding a Juneteenth celebration Monday June 20th at 12pm at the Rowley Day program. It will be a pot luck style celebration and we encourage everyone to bring a dish from your culture! If you would like to bring a dish, please reach out to Sophie or Patcheco and let them know! We have more festivities coming soon and we are looking forward to seeing you all!

Diversity & Inclusion Committee Co-Chairs

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+ Healthcare Corner +

JUNE 14TH IS WORLD BLOOD DONOR DAY—FACTS ABOUT BLOOD NEEDS

- Every 2 seconds someone in the U.S. needs blood and or platelets.
- Approximately 29,000 units of red blood cells are needed every day in the U. S.
- Sickle cell disease affects 90,000 to 100,000 people in the U.S. About 1,000 babies are born with the disease each year.
- Sickle cell patients can require blood transfusions throughout their lives
- The average red blood cell transfusion is approximately 3 units.
- A single car accident victim can require as many as 100 units of blood.
- Blood and platelets cannot be manufactured; they can only come from volunteer donors.
- The blood type most often requested by hospitals is type O.
- One donation can help save more than one life.

For more information visit

Redcrossblood.org



THE TIME TO
GIVE BLOOD

IS NOW

Stakeholders Meeting

We continue to offer virtual stakeholder meetings on a monthly basis. We thank everyone that has participated in these meetings, and encourage anyone else receiving this newsletter to feel free to join us as well. If you are interested in joining the meetings, but have not received an email invitation please reach out to Tim Sobezenski and he will add you to our email list. tsobezenski@needsctr.org.

Summary

Thanks for reading the spring edition of our newsletter – we hope you enjoyed it! As 2022 continues, we wish all of our staff, individuals, and stakeholders a happy spring! If you have any suggestions for making improvements to the newsletter, please contact Matthew Seidell via email at mseidell@needsctr.org.