Positively PATHFINDER

Hitting our Stride

STRIDER STORIES
WORKFORCE STRIDES
ANNUAL REPORT OF GIVING FOR 2017
Positively Pathfinder is the new marquee for our twice-a-year magazine. We feel it best reflects the stories and progress of Pathfinder Village. With roots going back to 1922, Pathfinder was founded in 1980 and developed through faith, vision and optimism centered in the potential of the human spirit.

This past year we continued along our story arc that emphasizes individual abilities, community, collaboration, and developing resources. It was a year in which we offered new options and opportunities for students, residents and day service members, all emanating within or from our vibrant campus. There were challenges too in 2017, but the mind-set in developing solutions was always focused on positive, sustainable outcomes.

As we continue in 2018, we will maintain this approach as we address:

- Workforce needs, given demographic shifts and the evolving responsibilities for Direct Support Staff.
- Pathfinder’s role as a preeminent human services organization, given the ongoing national discussion on community living and government funding.
- New ways that we can engage current stakeholders and new audiences, to grow our message of support of those with Down syndrome.
- How we may develop new pathways that meet the diverse needs of people with disabilities.

Thank you for your past involvement and adding your voice of support. We remain enthusiastic in our mission of service through your generous and kind donations. We are gratified that you share our continuing optimism.

With warm regards,

Paul C. Landers, M.Ed.
President & CEO
Biking is exhilarating and offers pathways to independence; learning to ride is one of life’s high notes. 2017 was an exceptional cycling year at the Village, punctuated by “Pathfinder moments” of connection and opportunity.

Our 2017 cycle story started when the Budai Family wanted to buy a balance bike for their daughter, Laura, now a senior at Pathfinder’s post-secondary program, Otsego Academy. Katherine Budai was shopping online and saw a sales ad for Strider Bikes, a global company with headquarters in Rapid City, South Dakota.

“I called to order one for Laura and while talking to the representative, I asked if the sale price was good for an organization. I thought Pathfinder might like them,” said Mrs. Budai. “As I told the rep about Pathfinder, she got excited and said they would like to donate some. That was an amazing offer!”

Balance bikes are similar to single speed bikes, but do not have the customary gears and pedals. The descendants of velocipedes of the 1800s, balance bikes are now popular in helping new riders learn how to coordinate as they balance, steer, and move forward.

Strider’s Education Specialist Lori Hodgin explained that through the company, she’s worked with many disability organizations, as well as families with loved ones with Down syndrome. She said, “Working for Strider has allowed me to go to many conferences and special events; these are more than ‘just conferences’ as there are always lots of families there enjoying the activities.”

“The families we meet love our bikes. The more we see how riding helps someone do something they weren’t able to do before, the more it pushes us to want to do more for people with disabilities,” added Ms. Hodgin.

The Strider Team then contacted Director of Admissions Kelly Meyers to make the donation. The shipment of 30 bikes arrived in
late January, and set into motion a chain of events: In March, the Otsego Academy students were joined by their peers from Colgate University for a bike assembly workshop, part of the program’s annual Leadership Week. The workshop was mentored by Peter Martin of New Lisbon, and Mike Reynolds of Woodland Cycles in Milford, both affiliated with the Central New York Cycling Team.

“I thought the workshop was really great and allowed students to try something they may never have experienced before,” said Mr. Reynolds. “Working with the students allowed me to answer questions, provide suggestions and feedback, and they saw a project through from un-boxing a bike to riding it around the gym.”

“Bikes are one of the strongest building blocks for any community,” he added. “The nature of cycling is social and creates bonds between those who identify as cyclists. I see people all the time who have never met before talking at events and at the shop about bikes. Cycling creates a common identity that pulls people together and makes them feel more connected.”

As winter snows melted, it was time to try out the Striders on the Pathfinder Bike Path. This paved track, a Rotary project built in the 1980s, offers an ideal place to ride. Through the spring, Pathfinder School children built their confidence and skills. Several students were able to use the bikes independently from the start, others learned through practice and watching others successfully glide on the bikes.

In summer the bikes were used readily by many members of the Pathfinder communi-
ty, and they were an added draw for Camp Pathfinder participants. In August, the campers were joined by students from the Hamilton Association for Volunteering, Outreach and Charity Program (HAVOC) at Hamilton College in Clinton for a full afternoon of cycling, bike maintenance, and camaraderie.

The bikes were the vehicle for yet other collaborations as Pathfinder rolled through the year. The EDD Memorial Fund is a non-profit organization that offers adaptive sports programs to young people with disabilities, with program sites in Central New York, Vermont, and Eastern Pennsylvania. Working with students and instructors from the new Recreation and Sports Management program at the State University of New York at Delhi, the EDD Memorial Fund sponsored its first riding clinic at Pathfinder in September. The planning for the clinic also resulted in another donation by Strider in support of adaptive sports classes and programming at SUNY Delhi.

“This clinic turned out to be a really beautiful partnership,” said Gretchen Owens, the Executive Director of the EDD Memorial Fund. “Everyone was pleased with how the day went, how well the volunteers worked and how well the athletes did with the biking activities. It was a win for everybody.”

“SUNY is now using the bikes in their Adaptive Physical Education classes, and we plan on holding regular clinics with their students,” Mrs. Owens added. “This has really opened up doors for us; it will allow us to run more programs in new areas, and has helped build a relationship with a new group of volunteers.”

And so, through one family’s initial connection, an entire cycle of bike-themed events was put into motion, providing many ways for “greater good” organizations to collaborate. But the real rewards of our Strider year were centered in the natural friendships that clicked all through the fun and freedom of riding bikes.

Photos: Mike Reynolds and Theresa Clark bolt on a kickstand during the Leadership Week workshop; U.S. Representative John Faso tries out a bike during a Village visit; student Peter Suits and SUNY Delhi Volunteer Katelyn Lewis practice the walking motion used with balance bikes at the fall clinic.
These funds were established in tribute of the following people and organizations by generous donors so that the Village’s outreach and education center may assist families, friends and professionals who seek hands-on education, counseling, or research information on Down syndrome.

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Pathfinder scholarships help individuals with tuition payments, allowing them to continue on their paths of growth and independence. Our “work horse” fund is based on proceeds from The Otsega Hotel Seniors Open & Pro-Am. These funds include:

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"... that each life may find meaning."
Fournier joins Board

The Pathfinder Village Board has named parent advocate Elisabeth M. Fournier of Camillus, as its newest director.

“The entire Village will benefit from Mrs. Fournier’s professional expertise and experiences in the field of working with people with disabilities,” said Paul C. Landers, Pathfinder’s President & CEO.

Mrs. Fournier’s lifelong interest in working with individuals with disabilities took on a more clear focus after the birth of her son, Kyle, who has Down syndrome. Mrs. Fournier said it was relatively easy to provide him with programs and resources during his childhood; however, that changed as he reached adolescence.

“It became much harder to find educational resources, programs and services that were appropriate to understanding and responding to the dynamics of an individual with Down syndrome,” she said. During Kyle’s teen years, Mrs. Fournier created an individualized program for him centered in academic work, daily living skills development, and community involvement. Through her work, she found that there are many gaps in available programs. Her research also led her to discover Pathfinder Village.

“Pathfinder Village is a really amazing place! From the moment I toured the Village, I was drawn in...” said Mrs. Fournier. “This was the first time I saw programming that took into consideration the specific needs and dynamics of individuals with Down syndrome and other developmental disabilities.”

“I am very excited about serving on the Board.... I am passionate about creating and supporting the best possible programs and services for individuals with disabilities so they can have what we all want – happy and productive lives.”

A graduate of Syracuse University, Mrs. Fournier has spent most of her career as a training and development consultant, while also serving as a volunteer/advocate. She is married to Stephen Fournier, the Market President/Regional Retail Leader for KeyBank, Syracuse, and has two other children, Stephen and Natalie, both now in college.
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AND THE CHOBANI TENNIS CLASSIC

The Pathfinder Village Foundation announces two tremendous tournaments for September 4, 2018 that support our Scholarship Endowment. The Otesaga Hotel Seniors Open marks its 36th year, and begins with its traditional Pro-Am at the incomparable Leatherstocking Golf Course.

On the same day, tennis enthusiasts will play in a round robin tournament, the Chobani Tennis Classic, at the Cooperstown Country Club to raise additional funds. After a fun day on the lake side courts, participants are invited to the awards banquet at The Otesaga Resort Hotel. Register today!

For Information visit the web: pathfindervillage.org/get-involved/tournaments or www.otesagaseniorsopen.com

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Paul Landers, Charlie Kieler, John Leon and Jon Hansen were the Flight A Finalists at the 2017 CHOBANI Tennis Classic.

2017 CHOBANI JUNIOR TENNIS CLASSIC & FLIGHT B TENNIS FINALISTS: Junior Tournament Winners: Gunther Weldon and Aiden Spencer; David Fenner and John Kelley; Classic Flight B Finalists: Dan Slosek, Cindy Draper, Patrick Kinley and Bob Poulson.

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Senior Golf Pro Mike Hamilton offers some golf tips to Grant Stubbs, who was on the first-ever Pathfinder Village team at the Pro-Am in 2017. Andrew Hyman, Shawn Acre, Gary Gelatt, and Rose Stubbs were also on the team.
Friends & Family Weekend!

We hope that you will join us for a wonderful gathering of Pathfinder friends and family members this October. We are planning an exciting and fun-filled weekend, so that it is a special time for you to visit with your loved ones, learn about best practices and new programs, and more! Watch our Pathfinder Village website and Facebook page for the latest news and events regarding Friends and Family Weekend 2018!

To learn about sponsorship opportunities, please contact:
Paul C. Landers | (607) 965-8377 ext. 102 | planders@pathfindervillage.org
Bernard Turi and Richard Creeden from the Utica National Group Foundation present Paul Landers with a check for the Mill Creek Adult Day Services Project. The Nursing and Program Office Project was started in June 2017, and is expected to be completed in Summer 2018.

"... that each life may find meaning."®
Across industrial sectors, there’s a growing need for work-ready employees. Pathfinder Village, which is proactive in its policies for attracting and training staff, has recognized this trend for over a decade. Late last year, the Village formed a task force, the CNY Human Services Workforce Initiative (CNY-HSWI), with area business and non-profit leaders to define concerns and develop solutions.

The CNY-HSWI group will take a three-pronged approach—suggesting legislative policy; identifying alternative workforce sources; and developing training models—and has formed sub-committees to explore these topics. The task group was started after the Kennedy Willis Center's 2017 Workforce Summit at Pathfinder Village last Oct. 20: Over 200 attendees listened as national experts cited current trends, and explained how 30 years of declining workforce participation has reached a critical stage in healthcare and developmental services.

“The Summit delineated issues faced by employers, and shared solutions that well-regarded agencies are turning to,” said Helen Stepowany, the recently retired Sr. Director of the Kennedy Willis Center. “The direct care segment is the fastest growing sector in the economy, and an additional 1.6 million Direct Support Professionals (DSPs), will be needed by 2022 to support people with Down syndrome, autism, and dementia.”

The successful Workforce Summit and other steps taken by Village management have illuminated paths others may use to hit staffing goals: Summit presenters Helene DeSantos of the NYS Office for People with Developmental Disabilities, and Chobani Founder Hamdi Ulukaya discussed hiring non-traditional workers—those with non-cognitive disabilities or refugees—as partial solutions.

Pathfinder has worked since 2016 with the Mohawk Valley Resource Center for Refugees, Utica, and has hired several women, originally from Burma, as Residential Aides. These young adults, who also are continuing their education, provide ongoing supports during weekend shifts at Pathfinder.

“These staff work each Saturday and Sunday, focusing on residential services—they’re assigned for half shifts in two of our homes each day,” explained Taylor Brose, Director of Residential Services. “They may help with housekeeping, but they also spend a lot of one-on-one time with people—going for walks, doing sensory activities and skills exercises, or helping with self-care. This gives value-added time to residents, and has allowed for more flexibility and responsiveness by higher-level Direct Support Staff, who are focused on specific habilitation needs for people.”

In a parallel development, Mr. Brose and the Residential Team are refining a tiered credential program for Direct Support Professionals: Last spring, 15-plus staff earned their DSP-2 credential after

Marc Rosenberg unloads the dishes at Hudson House, fulfilling one of his goals. Residential Team members provide coaching in key skills in support of individuals’ growth.
finishing online courses, skills assessments, and case management requirements. This spring, a new DSP-3 level will launch to train staff in aging-specific supports.

“The DSP-2 program offers upward growth, with pay incentives, and more responsibilities and more contacts with individuals’ families,” said Mr. Brose. “We lean on these staff to help develop person-centered goals for residents. They are our ‘go-to’ people.”

As part of their duties, DSP-2s serve as case managers for several individuals, and use a Pathfinder-developed survey tool each quarter to discuss a resident’s goals, safety awareness and home environment, day program options, leisure and enrichment interests, friendships and community access. This tool helps document services in compliance with HCBS Waiver mandates. Additional staff self-assessment tools have been developed, in concert with New York’s DSP annual job evaluation, to guide staff as they meet skill targets and job requirements. Collectively, these tools are a framework for mentoring employees and in providing better services for people with disabilities.

To attract new workers into the field, Mr. Brose has sought out his colleagues at the Otsego Northern Catskills Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES), Milford, to develop a DSP-2 certification program for high school aged Certified Nursing Assistant students. Although not formalized yet, this project hopes to bring CNA students to Pathfinder for field observations and specialized training, like Hoyer Lift usage or Medications Administration. Following the successful completion of their BOCES program, these students will be presented with the DSP-2 credential at graduation. They then can immediately transition to full-time employment in human services.

Along with these measures, the Residential Team has reached out to other high school students, especially those who may not be able to go on to college after graduation. In these discussions, direct support work is framed as a first-step in a rewarding human services career—one that has competitive wages and benefits, growth potential, flexible schedules, and personal rewards through staff-client relationships. Direct support can also be a stepping stone into continuing education, as young workers learn about many professions that intersect with direct care, like nursing, psychology, special education, OT/PT, medical and technology supports, and healthcare administration.

Pathfinder’s tiered DSP approach reflects how direct care is evolving into a para-profession. At the 2017 Workforce Summit, presenters emphasized that over two decades, in response to changing standards, DSPs are now better trained and possess wider ranges of skills in healthcare supports, digital documentation, and in fostering community access for people with disabilities. The presenters also encouraged staff mentoring and recognition as key ways to retain and develop staff, lower costs, and maintain quality residential programs.

At the 2017 Workforce Summit, presenter Dr. Amy Hewitt of the University of Minnesota-Minneapolis’ Institute on Community...
Integration encouraged valuing the role of DSPs: “We need to recognize the ‘Scope of Practice’ of what DSPs do, and stop thinking of them as ‘care givers.’ They are interdisciplinary professionals, who on any given day may be providing skilled nursing care; teaching daily care and other key skills; providing OT, PT and speech therapy supports; and acting as drivers and coaches to more than one person who has an intellectual disability.”

The 2017 Workforce Summit, attended by representatives of education, health care and business agencies, was organized by the Kennedy Willis Center. Cosponsors included The Arc Otsego, the Otsego County Chamber of Commerce, The Bonadio Group, Gates-Cole Insurance, and NYCM Insurance.

Chobani Founder Hamdi Ulukaya and Acting Deputy Commissioner Helene DeSantos of the NYS Office for People with Developmental Disabilities were among the featured presenters. Other speakers were: John Raffaele, National Association of Direct Support Professionals; Amy Hewitt and Barbara Kleist of the University of Minnesota-Minneapolis; Douglas Bauer, The Clark Foundation; Melinda Mack, New York Association of Training & Employment Professionals; Bethany Toledo, Ohio Alliance of Direct Support Professionals; Mark Davis, Ohio Provider Resource Association; Ann Hardiman, Carol Napierski, and Kirsten Sanchirico, of the NYS Association of Community & Residential Agencies.

Summit recommendations included:
- developing common credentials across New York’s care agencies to streamline hiring & training practices;
- hiring non-traditional workers; delineating levels of residential services to match worker skill sets;
- integrating emerging technologies to build people’s independence and community access;
- working with New York’s new Regional Centers for Workforce Development to cultivate workers;
- re-aligning Labor Department categories to create one reflective of DSPs contributions to the economy.
- establishing equitable pay/benefits packages, such as New York’s Be Fair to Direct Care Campaign.

Additionally the Central New York Human Services Workforce Initiative Goals for 2018 are:
- to develop a high school recruitment model for career paths in human services.
- to strengthen collaborations with school districts.
- to create work-based learning opportunities/internships; and use project-based learning approaches.
- to engage key legislative, education and business partners; to develop and distribute position papers on workforce goals.
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The Splash Path 5K & Fun Walk is an inclusive community event that raises funds to benefit Pathfinder programs that, in turn, benefit our entire community. In its first year, event proceeds helped build the Pathfinder Walking & Fitness Trail; the fifth annual Splash Path proceeds will be invested in a new Mobile Market initiative to create satellite markets for Pathfinder Produce, our weekly fresh fruit and vegetable market.

Splash Path 2018 is on May 19. Sign up today to take part in this colorful celebration of Pathfinder Village!

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Register online now at splashpath.racewire.com.

Splash Path is on Saturday, May 19, 2018

"... that each life may find meaning."®
Karen Miyazawa takes Ethan Spaeth’s handprint as Kathy Sellards helps keep his hand steady. The Pathfinder prints will be part of the Hand Stamp Art Project, a series of impressions from around the world that will be shared at the 2020 Tokyo Paralympics. Karen and her father, Ken, are disability advocates on the main island of Honshu.
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Stephanie Beams, RN, Director, Health Services
Paula Schaeffer, Director, Enrichment Programs
Irene Valmas, IT Systems Administrator

sedessi mmortan umenati, sigitio-
stre ad facchus; Catam res ad dees
ad si sente, utum tum eriondet ex
mentes, nulaber
Pathfinder Village endures through the constancy of its families and donors. The contributions of Board member Nancy Mirabito (1955-2017), her mother, Mary Jean Jacobi (1924-2004) and step-father, Martin Jacobi, MD, (1909-2005) were remarkable for how they helped shape and nurture the Village.

Mrs. Mirabito followed in her parents’ footsteps as a dedicated volunteer. She passed away in October 2017 after serving on the Pathfinder Board of Directors for 11 years. She cared deeply about the Village and its outreach programs, lending her insights as the mother of a child with disabilities and through her experiences as an educator.

In tribute to Mrs. Mirabito’s service, the Boards established an endowed scholarship chair in her memory. “This chair is part of the larger scholarship fund which assists families so that their loved ones can call Pathfinder home.”

He continued, “The scholarship program also helps students attend Otsego Academy, our innovative post-secondary education and vocational training program.”

As part of her commitment to building scholarships, Nancy and her husband, Dennis, were longtime participants of The Otesaga Hotel Seniors Open & Pro-Am. This tournament, launched in 1983, has raised over $2.7 million, and was one of the many accomplishments of Mrs. Jacobi, who was the Founding Chair of the Pathfinder Board of Trustees.

Upon her death, the Foundation Board commemorated Mrs. Jacobi’s service with a resolution that said, “Mary Jean was a gracious leader whose commitment to those who have disabilities will never be forgotten.”

Dr. Martin Jacobi, also served as a Foundation Trustee for nine years. He was a well-loved physician who served the region since 1937, and was said to have delivered over 8,000 babies in his distinguished career. As a Trustee, he was dedicated to improving the lives of people with Down syndrome, and was especially committed to the founding the Kennedy Willis Center at Pathfinder Village.

Contributions in memory of these Visionaries to the Nancy Mirabito Endowed Scholarship Chair can be mailed to Pathfinder Village Foundation, or made online through a link from the Pathfinder Village website at pathfindervillage.org.
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In memory of Village artist, Jon Hartman.
In Memory of our Loved Ones

Richard Bachand
1959-2017

Jon Hartman
1959-2018

Paul Kammerer
1964-2018

All of us at Pathfinder Village extend our deepest condolences to the families of Richard, Jon and Paul, who enriched our lives and campus immeasurably. These individuals were members of a remarkable generation that, along with their families, were advocates for recognition and greater access in our communities. In their own quiet ways, each was a pioneer for progress. We miss them at the Village and will remember them always.

... that each life may find meaning.
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Keep your face to the sunshine and you cannot see a shadow.

~ Helen Keller