

An Invitation to the Kentucky Derby

Champagne & CHAMPIONS

It's been a long, COLD winter but here at LifeLinks we've been thinking about Spring. Specifically, we are looking forward to **Saturday May 3rd** when we will host our 2nd Annual **Kentucky Derby Party** at the UMass Lowell Inn & Conference Center. We invite you to join us to watch the 140th 'run for the roses' live on large-screen TVs and to 'bet' on the winners for cash prizes! Enjoy hot hors d'oeuvres and special derby cocktails while listening to the music of the Dick Carpentier Quartet. And be sure to enter the **Best Hat** or **Best Dressed** contests and take a chance on fabulous raffle prizes!

Last year's party was an exciting evening that was not just a great time, but also raised funds that enabled us to provide opportunities for individuals supported by LifeLinks to meet new friends, learn new skills, and fill their lives with more fun! This year, proceeds from the Kentucky Derby Party will be used to benefit our **TechLinks Program** – providing access and acquisition to assistive technology. **TechLinks**

addresses an often overlooked and unmet need for the individuals we support. Some of these life changing technological breakthroughs include speech generating devices that give a voice to people with limited or no ability to communicate; one-touch switch devices that allow people to control electronic equipment in the kitchen; screen reading software that enables a person with low vision or blindness to use a computer. Truly amazing!

The Kentucky Derby has long been called "the greatest two minutes in sports". When you add that kind of excitement with the opportunity to profoundly enhance the lives of people with developmental disabilities through assistive technology, the place to be on Saturday, May 3rd is the **LifeLinks Kentucky Derby Party!** Invitations will be mailed in early April or go to our website, www.lifelinksinc.net to get all the latest information. I hope to see you there!

 CEO

Did you know?

- LifeLinks' CEO Jean Phelps has been promoted to **Fellow of the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (FAAIDD)**. This honored status is bestowed upon only a select few, in recognition of their outstanding work and passionate commitment to people with developmental and intellectual disabilities. Congratulations Jean!
- LifeLinks will celebrate its 60th **"Diamond Anniversary"** in 2014. Look for celebration details in the coming months.
- The LifeLinks Healthy Lifestyles Program recently awarded Certificates of Achievement to more than 20 of our residents who participated in the first ever **LifeLinks Boot Camp**. Each of them improved their time to complete a course of vigorous physical activities! Great Job!
- The weekly schedule for the LifeLinks Day Habilitation Program is posted online at www.lifelinksinc.net. Look there for coming events, weather related closings, and more!

Below: l-r: Will Soucy, Becca Rausa, Angelo Sakelarios



Below: l-r: Tiffany Ross, Amy Young, Michele Robbins



Holiday Party Held on Dec 7th

LifeLinks held its annual Holiday Party on December 7th at Lenzi's in Dracut. More than 370 guests enjoyed a delicious full course dinner while dancing to the music of DJ Ray Tremblay. This LifeLinks holiday tradition is a MUST GO event for hundreds of people with developmental disabilities, regardless of their mobility, their dietary needs, or their ability to pay. We couldn't do it without the support of these generous donors and dedicated volunteers. Thank You!

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LifeLinks' 59th Annual Meeting & Awards

LifeLinks held its 59th Annual Meeting and Award Ceremony on October 28th at the Chelmsford Center for the Arts. Guests were treated to a delicious appetizer buffet and drinks as the results for the past year were announced, aligned with the theme of "A Full Life". The highlight of the evening was the recognition of those who clearly demonstrated their commitment to making opportunities for a full life a reality for people supported by LifeLinks. Awards were presented to family member **Janis Popkin**, LifeLinks employees **Melissa Curley** and **Eileen Lee**, and to **Helen Daigle** and **Ann MacDonald**, individuals who receive services from LifeLinks. Special recognition was given to employees from **Brady People ID** in Billerica, selected as "Volunteer of the Year" for their outstanding service in our Day Program. And finally, the 2013 CEO Award was presented to **Michele Robbins**, a 20+ year employee who

Volunteers:

Peter Baker	Peter Lawlor
Jeff Boldi	Lisa Manzi
Elizabeth Caron	Maria Marlowe
Jim Cullen	Laura McCarriston
Carol Cullen	Carol Midey
Matt Cullen	Shawn Nault
Carl Forbes	Heike Petermann
Jeanne Forbes	Mai Phan
Sherry Frechette	Jean Phelps
Joseph Gathira	Justin Phelps
Dianne Keele	Megan Picillo
Amy Lanteri	Greg Picillo
Nick Lanteri	Caroline Potter
Joe Largy	Heather Shea



Above: l-r: Colleen Ferreira, Carrie Shaw, Julia McNally **Below:** Dennis Pratt & Santa



Below: Claude Caires



was honored as a role model for her dedication to supporting people with developmental disabilities. The 2013 Annual Report was distributed at the meeting and is available online at www.lifelinksinc.net. Congratulations to all!

Love Happiness Fun Security Acceptance
 Comfort Belonging A Full Life Friendship Independence

LifeLinks Hosts Human Rights Awareness Night

At LifeLinks, the preservation and protection of the human rights of individuals served are central to everything we do - from our Human Rights Committee that meets regularly to oversee the program, to the appointment of human rights officers in every home and program, to the ongoing human rights training required for all staff.

That commitment extends to ensuring that the individuals we support are also well informed about their rights. "Human right of the month" training is conducted in each of our 17 residences to reinforce the importance of each person's rights, culminating in our 2nd annual Human Rights Awareness Night held recently to exhibit how the individuals in our group residences have understood and adopted their rights. Groups competed to present a depiction of a right in the form of colorful posters, creative displays, or interactive exhibits. Awards were presented and refreshments served. Family members were invited to join the festivities and gain a better understanding of human rights. It was an enjoyable evening where people socialized with friends and staff they may not see on a regular basis.

The value of the LifeLinks Human Rights Program was recognized by the Brady Corporation Foundation in the form of a \$2,000 grant. These funds will be used to enhance human rights training and to help make the 2014 Human Rights Awareness Night even better!



Above: Scott McIlvenna & Barbara Dean-Amodu

Hannaford Health Hero – Donna Niven

LifeLinks Volunteer, Donna Niven, was recently named a Hannaford Supermarkets Health Hero! This recognition supports Hannaford's commitment to health & wellness by recognizing outstanding individuals involved with Massachusetts non-profit organizations for their commitment to inspiring others to lead and maintain healthy lifestyles.

Donna has been a volunteer at LifeLinks since 2011. Over the past year she took a leadership role in the LifeLinks Healthy Lifestyles Program, a fun yet effective project to encourage adults with developmental disabilities to adopt healthy habits. Since its inception, Donna has been an avid, faithful coach and mentor to our participants for 1 to 2 hours each week. Donna accompanied folks on weekly walks as they strived to complete our 26.2 mile Disney Marathon and Triple W walking

challenges. She led dance and hula hoop classes and assisted in the preparation of healthy snacks for each session. She was instrumental in acquiring a grant from her employer, Brady People ID of Billerica, to roll out a cooking class where individuals participated in shopping, preparing, and eating healthy foods. She took on the role of coach in the LifeLinks Boot Camp - a timed course of physical activity with the objective to complete it in less time each week. As a result, the adults supported by LifeLinks know more about healthy choices and have dropped pounds! Adding fun and good friends like Donna to the program proved to be an effective way for people to learn important concepts for better health. Hannaford honored Donna and other 2013 Health Heroes at an awards ceremony at the end of January. Thank you, Donna! And thanks to Hannaford Supermarkets for this honor!

Below: Donna Niven



Save These Dates

**March 28th –
LifeLinks Dance**

**May 3rd –
2nd Annual Kentucky
Derby Party**



Above: Dancing fun!



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Thank You!