

## CEO Letter

I know that 2013 is not an election year, but you **CAN** vote for LifeLinks this summer. That's right – cast your vote for LifeLinks and you could help us win a \$1,500 grant from Jeanne d'Arc Credit Union's **'We Share a Common Thread' Foundation**. It's easy - go to our website, **www.lifelinksinc.net** anytime before September 30th and follow the link to give a click for LifeLinks. Only one vote per person is allowed so, spread the word to your friends, co-workers and family members. Every vote counts toward helping LifeLinks provide more to the 500+ individuals and families in our service network.


As you browse through this edition of LifeLines, I think you'll agree that the spring and summer have been quite busy here at LifeLinks. We hosted our very first gala fundraising event – a fabulous Kentucky Derby Party. We added some new faces to our Board of Directors and to our Day Habilitation Program. I also had the honor to present graduation certificates to 8 dedicated, hard working employees in our Direct Support Apprenticeship Program.

Finally, I am extremely proud to announce that LifeLinks achieved a phenomenal score of 99% on our recent survey by the DDS Office of Quality Management! The Office of Quality Management is responsible for coordinating the many activities that DDS engages in to assure and enhance the quality of services to individuals with developmental disabilities. The outstanding results from their survey of our residential, shared living, and independent living programs confirm that LifeLinks consistently upholds its longstanding mission to provide the highest quality services and supports. My thanks and congratulations go out to our

staff for this accomplishment and for their work every day of every year to ensure that quality of care is Job #1 at LifeLinks! Happy Summer!

 **CEO**


\*\*\*\*\*



'Give a Click' for LifeLinks!

You can help LifeLinks win a  
**\$1,500 Grant**  
from  
**Jeanne d'Arc Credit Union's  
'We Share a Common Thread'  
Foundation**

Go to [www.weshareacommonthread.org/Give-a-Click](http://www.weshareacommonthread.org/Give-a-Click)  
Before September 30, 2013  
To cast YOUR VOTE for LifeLinks!



\*\*\*\*\*

## Kentucky Derby Party – Fun for All!

LifeLinks hosted its first annual Kentucky Derby Party on Saturday, May 4th at the UMass Inn & Conference Center in Lowell. Thank you to our guests, donors and these sponsors, who helped us make this event successful and so much fun!

- Eisai USA Foundation
- Enterprise Bank
- The Gem Group, Inc.
- Long-Term Pharmacy Solutions
- Lowell Five
- Shields & Company, Inc.
- StaffLink
- Advanced Technology Marketing, Inc.
- Law Offices of Peter V. Lawlor
- Fred C. Church Insurance
- Alexander, Aronson & Finning
- Sovereign Bank
- Harvard Pilgrim Health Care
- Lowell General Hospital
- Practical Solutions
- Renee & Will Soucy



**Above: L-r: Heike Petermann, Becca Rausa**



**Above: L-r: Danielle Robbins, Francisca Valdez**



**Above: L-r: Evan & Mara Ricker**



**Above: L-r: Rachel Ward Sullivan, Simon Waruhui, Anabel Polanco**

## Graduation Day at LifeLinks

Eight LifeLinks employees earned certificates of achievement in the Direct Support Professional Apprenticeship Program at a graduation ceremony held at our Mill Road office. Jane Gathura, Janet Koome, Jacob Plange and Joe Yeboah each received certification from the US Department of Labor's Office of Apprenticeship Training for completing the entire program and who are now Registered Direct Support Professionals. Intermediate awards were given to Joseph Gathira for completing Level 2 in the program and to George Ajwala, Barbara Dean-Amodu & Esther Karanja for completing Level 1. All the graduates support individuals living in LifeLinks group residences.

The LifeLinks Direct Support Professional Apprenticeship Program is certified through the US Department of Labor and is the only one of its kind in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Students work with experienced mentors to achieve competency in more than 250 job related concepts. In addition, they must fulfill 420 hours of training, including completion of a Certificate in Human Services at Middlesex Community College. Each student is required to fulfill a total of 3,000 hours over the course of the 3 level program, receiving wage increases upon the completion of each level. Many of the participants juggle their studies with multiple jobs and family responsibilities, demonstrating a deep commitment to enhance their skills and to provide a superior level of care to individuals supported at LifeLinks. Congratulations to all the graduates! We are proud to have you on our team!

### Right:

Front row l-r: Esther Karanja, Joseph Gathira  
Back row, l-r: George Ajwala, Barbara Dean-Amodu, Jacob Plange, Janet Koome, Joe Yeboah



## Board News

The LifeLinks Board of Directors announces the recent appointment of Donna M. Deveau of Lowell. Donna brings to LifeLinks more than 15 years' experience as a fundraising professional. In her current position, Donna is the Director of Development at Home Health Foundation, parent company of Home Health VNA, Merrimack Valley Hospice and HomeCare, Inc. She previously held the position of Annual Giving Manager at Lowell General Hospital and established the first development program at Lowell Catholic High School, where she also served as director of alumni communications, public relations and admissions.

Donna earned a BS in Business Administration/Accounting and a Masters degree in Educational Administration from the University of Massachusetts-Lowell. Active in community efforts, she is a current and past board member of several organizations including the New England Association of Catholic Development Officers, Ste Jeanne d'Arc School, Rape Crisis Services of Greater Lowell, and the SJA Summer Youth Association. She is an active member of New England Association of HealthCare Philanthropy (NEAHP), the Greater Lowell Chamber of Commerce, the Haverhill Chamber of Commerce, and regularly volunteers for various local nonprofit projects. Donna is a life-long resident of Lowell and together with her husband,

Stephen, is the proud parent of Kristen, Thomas, and Justin. Welcome Donna!

**Below:** Donna M. Deveau



## Day Hab Happenings

- Please join us in extending a warm welcome to Shawn Nault, our new Director of Day Habilitation Services. Shawn earned his Bachelor's Degree in Social Work, Sociology & Spanish from Gordon College, Wenham MA. He joined the LifeLinks team in April and brings with him more than 20 years' experience working with adults and children with developmental disabilities. His career has been dedicated to helping people achieve full participation in all aspects of their lives - providing innovative services to children, youth and adults, hand in hand with their families. Welcome to LifeLinks, Shawn!



**Above:** Shawn Nault



- LifeLinks once again welcomed a group of young interns who are working directly with individuals in the Day Hab Program through the Summer Urban Youth Program. This year 16 young adults are getting well-paid summer employment along with real world, hands-on experience in a fun and interactive setting. Participants gain an appreciation for the types of careers offered in the field of Human Services and develop meaningful relationships with the individuals receiving services, the LifeLinks staff, and each other. At the end of 8 weeks, interns graduate from the program and take their summer experiences out into the world with a new appreciation for people with disabilities and LifeLinks benefits from extra help during the busy vacation season.

- The individuals attending the LifeLinks Day Hab Program showed their support for the students affected by the shooting tragedy at Sandy Hook Elementary School by participating in the Snowflakes for Sandy Hook Project. The project began when the Connecticut Parent Teacher Association asked for snow in a nationwide news release requesting hand made "Snowflakes for Sandy Hook" to create a Winter Wonderland at the new school the kids were moving to. LifeLinks' individuals went to work - making dozens of snowflakes and sending them to Sandy Hook, adding to the overwhelming numbers they received from all over the world. LifeLinks was proud to be a part of the project's success.

- Individuals in Room 4 of the Day Habilitation Program were the lucky recipients of a thoughtful donation made in memory of one of their peers who passed away earlier this year. Chris Cournoyer was supported in Room 4 for many years and his Mom, Diane Falls, asked friends and family to honor Chris by making donations in his name specifically for Room 4. The individuals in Room 4 require



**Above:** *l-r: Suzanna Howard, Naina Adhikari*



intensive medical and clinical support by skilled staff utilizing sensory-based programming to increase their awareness of their surroundings, attention to task, and communication. With the funds received, LifeLinks purchased a variety of colorful and visually interesting mobiles, providing soothing sensory integration and enjoyment for individuals in Room 4. Diane and her husband Jim volunteered to hang the mobiles from the ceiling in the program room and in personal care rooms. "LifeLinks' Room 4 was a safe and nurturing place, not just for my son, but for his family as well" said Diane once the mobiles were in place. "Chris always received excellent care and attention here." All of us thank Chris' family and friends for their donations and for helping us keep his memory and spirit alive at LifeLinks.






**Above:** *l-r: Diane Falls, Emily Blaisdell, Laura McCarriston*

## Announcing – Free Online Accessibility for the Disabled!

It is no understatement that the Internet has significantly changed our lives. The amount of information, entertainment, convenience, and socialization that is now available with a quick click of a mouse was mostly unimaginable just 25 years ago. For people with disabilities, the Internet can still be beyond reach. For them, issues related to impaired vision and hearing or limited reading and motor skills present significant challenges to accessing the online world.

Since our founding in 1954, LifeLinks has been committed to providing support for the disabled. We are excited to announce that in alliance with eSSENTIAL Accessibility™ LifeLinks has joined a global Disability Community Involvement Initiative launched in association with leading advocacy groups for people with disabilities. The LifeLinks website, [www.lifelinksinc.net](http://www.lifelinksinc.net), now features an interactive icon to enhance online access for people with disabilities, including developmental disabilities. Anyone who finds Internet use prohibitive in regard to typing, moving a mouse, or reading may download the free eSSENTIAL Accessibility™ software at our website – providing online tools needed to navigate the web more easily. Look for this eSSENTIAL Accessibility™ icon on our website pages or at our RESOURCES tab.



If you have trouble typing, moving a mouse or reading **CLICK HERE** to download this assistive technology app free of charge. Features include a hands-free movement tracking system, onscreen keyboard with word prediction, a page reader and other customizable options.

LifeLinks is proud to be a founding member of this Disability Community Involvement Initiative, creating a more inclusive, equitable and accessible world for all of us.



285 Mill Road • Chelmsford, MA 01824

Linking lives to opportunity since 1954

NonProfit Org  
US Postage  
**PAID**  
Lowell, MA  
Permit No. 25



## Save these

September 13, 2013 – Movie Night  
September 20, 2013 – LifeLinks Dance  
October 25, 2013 – Halloween Dance  
December 7, 2013 – Annual Holiday Party

## Dates!

### LifeLinks

#### Board of Directors

Peter V. Lawlor, Esq. *President*  
Steven D. Geoffroy, R. Ph, *Vice President*  
Pamela Anastasi, *Secretary*  
James G. Cullen, *Treasurer*

Anna Bucciarelli  
Donna Deveau  
Frank C. Hassett  
Patrick Kimera  
Marybeth Massimino  
Angelo Sakelarios  
Judy A. Salkovitz  
Will Soucy  
Pär South  
Timothy White

#### Chief Executive Officer

Jean M. Phelps

#### Administrative Offices and Day Habilitation Program

285 Mill Road  
Chelmsford, MA 01824  
978-349-3000

[www.lifelinksinc.net](http://www.lifelinksinc.net)



**Help Us to Support People  
with Developmental Disabilities**

**Please detach and return with your contribution to:**

LifeLinks, Inc.  
285 Mill Road • Chelmsford, MA 01824

**Or give securely online at our website [www.lifelinksinc.net](http://www.lifelinksinc.net)**

I want to make a tax-deductible donation to LifeLinks, Inc. in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Check Enclosed     Mastercard     Visa

Card Number \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration \_\_\_\_\_ CVC/CW# \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/Town \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

I would I would like to make my gift in the name of \_\_\_\_\_

I would I would like to make my gift in memory of \_\_\_\_\_

Please Notify \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/Town \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

**Thank You!**