



# FY 18 ANNUAL REPORT

85 Main Street, 2nd Floor, Watertown, MA 02472

617-926-1113

www.beaverbrookstep.org

May 15, 2018

## THE YEAR IN REVIEW

In FY 2018, Beaverbrook STEP, Inc. served 282 adults with intellectual, developmental and related disabilities and their families. With an operating budget of nearly \$16 Million and 350 full and part-time staff, we expanded our residential, day, employment, corporate guardianship and self-advocacy services and initiated many new people-first projects.

### A New Community-Based Paradigm

Last year, Beaverbrook STEP embarked on an agency-wide journey to address new state and federal policy as part of our multi-year strategic vision entitled “**Advancing Real Lives.**” STEP recognized that there was an urgent need to design and develop an innovative, creative and unique paradigm for services in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century—a paradigm that not only modeled how to transition traditionally delivered service models (24 hour residential services, group supported living, site based day services) to more self-directed service models (participant-directed, agency with choice, in-home supports, shared living and family supports), but also a model for innovative home ownership and creative living options that would meet the increasingly complex medical, clinical and psychological needs of adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

### Advancing Real Lives

Based upon both formal and informal feedback from all of our constituents—individuals/families, community leaders, volunteers, funding sources, self-advocacy groups, staff and local businesses—Beaverbrook STEP developed and advanced the following initiatives in FY 2018:

- ⇒ **Using Social Brokering techniques, STEP expanded community based activities, volunteer opportunities and friendships for the people we serve.**
- ⇒ Beaverbrook STEP further promoted person-centered, long-term residential planning and supports for adults with disabilities via:
  - “Self-Advocates: Building Homes Together” a program created for peer advocates interested in designing their own residential environments and personal supports;
  - Development of new Agency With Choice (AWC) services focused on advanced in-home family support services and life coaching for individuals with ASD; and
  - Using positive behavioral practices, expanded community inclusion services for adults with significant behavioral issues that have resulted in personal breakthroughs for many individuals served.
- ⇒ **STEP actively works with a group of Regional DDS providers developing creative services (for example, a Legacy Project), designed to expand and share resources that promote long term housing solutions, create flexible progressive in-home support services and expand Shared Living opportunities.**
- ⇒ STEP opened a new In-Home Residential Supports program for individuals needing less than 24 hour support; added a 4th Options Employment & CBDS site (Options Community Services in Belmont Center); and expanded Agency With Choice program services focused on advancing community inclusion through mentoring and companionship activities.
- ⇒ **Finally, critical to the success of STEP’s new paradigm is our continued commitment to: achieve total immersion of agency practices that support DDS Enhanced Positive Behavioral Management theory and practices; advance STEP’s Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and clinical social work supports; and working with our partners (Melmark New England and UMass Boston) provide continuing education that prepares staff for becoming a credentialed Registered Behavior Technician.**

## Beaverbrook STEP Receives \$100,000 Community Inclusion Grant from the Becker Family Trust

Page 2



Leo Sarkissian, Executive Director, The Arc of Mass.; Cynthia Haddad, Advisor to the Becker Family Trust; and Alex Moschella, Trustee, Becker Family Trust.

*“The level of staff commitment is amazing and should be applauded.”  
Beaverbrook STEP Parent*

## Beaverbrook STEP Services

**HOME SUPPORTS**  
24 Hour Residential Supported (<24 Hour) Living  
Shared Living  
Agency with Choice

**WORK, COMMUNITY & DAY SUPPORTS**  
Options Employment & CBDS  
Recreation & Social Services  
Clinical & ABA Services  
Family Support  
Elder Services  
Corporate Guardianship



## Beaverbrook STEP Awarded \$100,000 Grant for Self-Determination Project Self-Advocates: Building Homes Together



*Pictured above: Leo Sarkissian, Executive Director, The Arc of MA; Alex Moschella, Trustee, Becker Family Trust; and Virginia A. Connolly, Executive Director, Beaverbrook STEP at award ceremony.*

*On March 30, 2018, the Becker Family Trust and The Arc of Massachusetts announced grant awards totaling \$925,000. Grants were awarded for innovative, high impact projects benefiting individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.*



*Pictured to the right is Jessica Kirwan, Beaverbrook STEP Senior Director & Advisor to the Community Advocates Board with Cynthia Haddad, CFP, Partner, Special Needs Financial Planning and Advisor to the Becker Family Trust.*



Virginia A. Connolly, Executive Director of Beaverbrook STEP and Jessica Kirwan, STEP Senior Director & Advisor to STEP's Community Self-Advocacy Board attended the March 30th award ceremony, accepting a \$100,000 grant from the Becker Family Trust fund. The grant will fund a 2 year STEP project called:

**'Self-Advocates: Building Homes Together.'**

The overall goal of this innovative project is to design and create a flagship, self-directed support model for Advancing Real Lives for self-advocates in the Metro Boston Region. The **'Self-Advocates: Building Homes Together'** project addresses the Becker Family Trust's goals of Self-Determination, Social Inclusion and Supported/Shared Living.

The project is designed as a viable, comprehensive and unique partnership among Self-Advocates, Beaverbrook STEP and STEP's extensive cadre of community businesses and organizations. STEP will accomplish the goals of the project by leveraging our strong, long term, community partnerships with local realtors, financial institutions, architects, health care providers, affordable housing groups, government officials and social service agencies. STEP will also use services provided from our formal affiliates, Melmark New England and UMass Boston.

A major component of the project will provide supports and guidance to Self-Advocates as they organize their own working groups. The mission of the **Self-Advocates: Building Homes Together** group is to create, develop and finance a personal home vision for each member. This vision could include home ownership and/or other creative living models. With support from Beaverbrook STEP staff and fellow group members, including conveyancing and trust attorneys, each individual will self-determine the type of housing, support services and service delivery method they want to make their community living vision a reality.

This exciting project reflects STEP's mission and philosophy of Advancing Real Lives. Stay tuned for further information as the project progresses.

## BEAVERBROOK STEP'S RENOVATION CREATES ADDITIONAL ACCESSIBILITY

One of the major goals of Beaverbrook STEP's Advancing Real Lives strategic initiative involves the continued expansion and development of residential services that meet the ever changing needs and life circumstances of the adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities whom we serve. As individuals age they often become less mobile. Whenever possible, STEP addresses this need by making each person's home more accessible with home renovations such as construction of a handicap ramp or installation of a handicap accessible bathroom. Our goal is to allow individuals to 'Age In Place' in their own homes when ever possible.

STEP also expands many of our existing 24 hour residential programs, either building out additions and/or renovating exiting interior space to accommodate adults with limited mobility. Our latest project is an expansion to STEP's residential program located at 387 & 389 Belmont Street, Belmont. The first floor will soon have an additional accessible bedroom to accommodate a resident who now requires a wheelchair accessible living environment.



387 & 389 Belmont Street, Belmont, MA

## Ellen Burns Wins ADPP 2018 Annual Calendar Cover Award!



Boston Moonrise  
by  
Ellen Burns

The Association of Developmental Disability Providers (ADPP) recently announced that Ellen Burns of Beaverbrook STEP was the winner of its 2018 art contest. This annual competition is held to determine the cover artwork for the ADPP Legislative Calendar.

Ms. Burns reports that she loves art and enjoys creating it. She also is at her best when mixing colors and making jokes with her friends in front of an easel. Her piece entitled *Boston Moonrise* will not only be on the ADPP calendar, but will also be displayed at both the 2018 ADPP Legislative Luncheon and the 2018 ADPP LEAD! Conference & Expo.

## Beaverbrook STEP Expands Corporate Guardianship Program

Last year, Beaverbrook STEP's Corporate Guardianship and Conservator Program exceeded all of our expectations. STEP ended the year with 35 referrals in process. In response to this unanticipated growth, Beaverbrook STEP added staff resources to the program in FY 2018. We have also applied for several foundation grants to fund our program expansion.

STEP assigned a part-time assistant to support STEP's Program Directors and Advisors as they processed current and new referrals to the Corporate Guardianship program. Activities include:

- ◆ Recruit, screen, complete background checks, approve and train new Guardians;
- ◆ Match each individual with an appropriate Guardian/Conservator/Rogers Monitor;
- ◆ Monitor services in place;
- ◆ Provide resources to assist individuals with accessing community services; and
- ◆ Prepare and complete all administrative documents, financial and Court reports.

STEP also will hold another 2-day training session for Guardians/Conservators/Rogers Monitors this fall. We anticipate another successful year of growth for the Corporate Guardianship program.



## Joe O'Connell Receives Recognition Award



Members of The Arc's Government Affairs Committee celebrate with fellow member and self-advocate, Joe O'Connell (center), who recently was given awards of recognition by the Speaker of the Massachusetts House, Robert DeLeo and the Sherriff of Middlesex County, Peter Koutoujian for his completion of the Citizen Advisory Training course with the Sherriff's Department.

Beaverbrook STEP, Inc.

*Enriched Lives...Enlighted Communities*

## Contact Us

Beaverbrook STEP, Inc.  
85 Main Street, 2nd Floor  
Watertown, MA 02472  
(617) 926-1113

[www.beaverbrookstep.org](http://www.beaverbrookstep.org)

Virginia A. Connolly, MEd, LCSW, LMHC  
Executive Director

Serving Communities in Eastern MA  
Including: Arlington, Belmont, Boston,  
Brighton, Brookline, Cambridge, New-  
ton, Waltham, Watertown

Affiliated with:



PLACE  
STAMP  
HERE

Beaverbrook STEP, Inc.  
85 Main Street, 2nd Floor  
Watertown, MA 02472