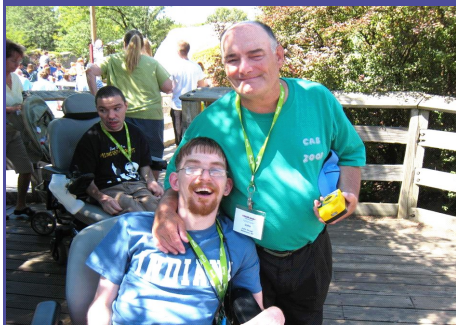


BEAVERBROOK STEP

NEWS

October 2016



Beaverbrook STEP, Inc.
Enriched Lives.....
Enlightened Communities
85 Main St., 2nd floor
Watertown, MA 02472
(617) 926-1113
www.beaverbrookstep.org

A private, non-profit corporation dedicated to enhancing the quality of life of individuals with developmental disabilities in Belmont, Waltham, Watertown, Brighton, Brookline & surrounding communities.



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REAL LIVES/COMMUNITY INCLUSION

Dear Beaverbrook STEP Friends and Families,

We have had a very busy and productive summer at Beaverbrook STEP culminating in our flagship Block Party BBQ event held on Wednesday, September 14, in the parking lot of our main office at 85 Main Street in Watertown. This hugely successful annual event sponsored by our Community Advocates Board (CAB) and Family Support Group, brought together over 250 individuals served, family members & guardians, staff, local business owners & employees, neighbors and friends who shared great Fireflies food, dancing, Zumba, Barn Babies and conversation. It was an excellent celebration of community inclusion in the heart of Watertown Square!!

Construction to renovate our new property on Waverley Street in Belmont continues. This beautiful building, located a block from Belmont Center, will serve as a 4th location for our Options Employment and Community Based Day Services. The renovations also provide accommodations for additional community education services and Autism Spectrum supports. Additionally, there is a large, separate residential apartment for individuals needing less than 24 hours support. At present, STEP has secured all of the necessary building permits and negotiated contracts for construction and landscaping. The work is progressing and we hope to fully occupy the space by the end of this year.

STEP is also very proud of the results of our DDS Survey and Certification process held during a 2-week period at the end of August. As you will read in this newsletter, Beaverbrook STEP was awarded a full 2 year certification with overall scores of 100% for Options Day Services and 95% for all Residential Services.

STEP continues to move forward with our 'Real Lives' initiatives including:

- ⇒ Expansion of staff and staff training supports for our Positive Behavioral Supports initiatives;
- ⇒ Expansion of our Options Employment and Community Based Day Services to fulfill the "Employment First" goals; and
- ⇒ Expansion of inclusive residential services and Autism Spectrum supports comprised in part by shared living, independent living and specialized services.

As always, we welcome your input and comments as we continue to create new and innovative approaches to fulfill the vision of true community inclusion as inspired by Real Lives legislation.

Sincerely,

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

Real Lives/Community Inclusion



As part of Options Community Based Day Services program, staff continuously develop opportunities for participants to engage in local community activities, events and services. Our 3 program sites are strategically located in central business areas allowing easy walking access to stores, recreation and entertainment venues, libraries, YMCA's, government offices and financial institutions. Also key to the success of Options Day Services is access to public transportation to facilitate community inclusion, allowing individuals served to develop new friendships with non-disabled citizens, find local jobs and volunteer their services.

For example, STEP's consistent use of the Watertown Public Library, was noticed by library staff and served as a catalyst for their "Library Insiders Program." A pilot program designed to engage our participants with library staff and resources was developed with Beaverbrook STEP's Options Day Services in the fall of 2015. It has proven to be a most successful initiative; monthly sessions bring library staff, resources and Options participants together for art projects, science activities and games.

