

# FAMILY SUPPORT NEWS



## Everyone Counts!

January 31, 2014

Beaverbrook STEP, Inc.  
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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.

### Satisfaction Survey Results

#### *What do you like most about your services?*

- "My house is nice & I like the people."
- "I feel (I'm at) the right place"
- "Friends, housemates & staff."
- "Everything."
- "I love my home."
- "Staff are always good to me."
- "I like working, going to the Y and the library."
- "I love Healthy Living Group & going to Watertown Sq."
- "I receive the best care."

*STEP Individuals in Residential and Options Day Programs  
2013 Survey*

#### *What do you like most about the services at Beaverbrook STEP?*

- "Great staff that show deep concern."
- "The services are geared to each individual in the household."
- "The highest level of professionalism and caring."
- "Everything—they provide great services both day and residential."
- "Staff is great."

*STEP Parents and Guardians  
2013 Survey*

Dear Beaverbrook STEP friends and family members,

Happy New Year! We look back over the past year's accomplishments and forward to new opportunities for growth and productivity. In this issue you will read about STEP's achievements, along with our new activities for 2014 based upon our current vision, initiatives and goals.

In 2014, STEP will continue with our 'Everyone Counts: Renovation, Recreation & Education' strategic objectives to develop new, accessible residential programs, expand recreation & leisure activities and provide quality educational programs for staff and individuals. Additionally, STEP is forging ahead, developing new and creative collaborations with other organizations serving individuals with I/DD in order to assure that our strong and viable community based programs and services continue to meet the needs of individuals and family members, well into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

In 2014, the rolling out of the MA Chapter 257 rate setting system for EOHHS Residential and Day Services presents a new funding structure critical to providing quality services in the years to come. In a joint effort with other providers, STEP is also developing new data management systems and iCloud capabilities to improve services and to meet managed care standards associated with the Affordable Care Act.

Beaverbrook STEP continues to creatively respond to the needs of adults with special needs as they transition from special education to the adult service system. We continue to expand family support services and hourly supported living opportunities, responding to the changing needs of individuals throughout their lives.

Finally, STEP will continue to prioritize development of our most valuable asset—our workforce—establishing staff educational opportunities, fair and adequate compensation and staff appreciation activities focused on health and wellness. Enhanced training in health care, psychiatric services, case management, Positive Behavior Supports, Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA), family support and 'Aging in Place' strategies are all critical to assuring continued quality, state-of-the-art services.

In Year 3 of our "Everyone Counts" strategic plan, Beaverbrook STEP has identified 6 critical goal areas for our future growth and development:

- ⇒ Long Term Support Services
- ⇒ Managed Care Partnerships
- ⇒ Business Systems/Quality Assurance
- ⇒ Self Advocacy and Guardianship Advancements
- ⇒ Communications
- ⇒ Education and Clinical Expertise

Read more about our innovative initiatives on page 2. We will keep you posted as the year unfolds.

Yours truly,

Virginia A. Connolly, Executive Director

## **ACCOMPLISHMENTS 2013**

### **Residential, Individual Support and Shared Living Programs**

- ⇒ STEP remodeled 3 homes making them more fully accessible. Work continues to redesign 2 additional homes.
- ⇒ Individuals were able to participate in 2 vacations this year sponsored by the Community Advocates Board.
- ⇒ STEP has expanded its clinical services to include additional behaviorists, social workers and health specialists.
- ⇒ STEP has begun to provide i-Pad technology to enhance communication skills.



### **Family Support & Advocacy**

- ⇒ In 2013 over 200 self-advocates, family members and staff attended "Facing Our Challenges," a Legislative Forum co-sponsored by Beaverbrook STEP, over 400 attended our June and December gatherings.
- ⇒ Over 30 STEP members attended the 4 day national Self-Advocacy Conference in St. Paul, Minn.



### **Options Day Services**

- ⇒ The percentage of Options individuals employed increased to nearly 90% in 2013 with satisfaction at 97%.
- ⇒ The addition of meaningful, individualized activities and acquisition of part time employment remain a primary focus.

## **STEP Moves Forward with Innovation, Vision and Creativity**

Beaverbrook STEP is very excited about the new initiatives we are undertaking this year as we continue to further our mission, philosophy and strategic goals in 3 areas: Clinical Services, Self-Advocacy and Service Expansion.

### **Clinical Services**

STEP continues to enhance and develop our clinical services division to meet the needs of individuals served. Our Clinical Team is comprised of licensed and certified professionals in behavioral health, nursing and mental health.

- ◆ Our team includes social workers, mental health counselors, psychiatrists, psychologists, ABA clinicians all of whom provide highly specialized services to our growing population of individuals with complex and multiple support needs.
- ◆ Equally important, STEP's Clinical Team is also responsible for training our direct professional staff in implementing each individual's support and treatment plans, assuring effective and consistent service delivery.

### **Self-Advocacy Services**

Key to STEP's work on behalf of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities is the further advancement and strengthening of our Community Advocates Board (CAB). CAB members not only discuss, plan and initiate their own recreation, leisure and civic activities, but they also educate and support each other as self-advocates. Efforts focus on encouraging self-actualization, effective communication and positive social relationships to broaden the horizons of adults with disabilities. In 2014, STEP is committed to the development of a Guardianship Program that will also focus on supporting people so that they may retain their competency status. Other areas will include:

- ◆ Advancing members' participation in the State self-advocacy organization, MA Advocates Standing Strong (MASS), in order to further develop our State self advocacy system and effect positive change.
- ◆ Developing an entrepreneurial network to strengthen and improve representation for individuals with disabilities as they develop and support business, work and volunteer opportunities in the community.

### **Service Expansion**

In order to continue to meet future growth and expansion needs, STEP needs to:

- ◆ Acquire a third community-based location for our Options Day Services to address increased referrals. We are looking for a retail site that will accommodate a new business and have additional space for employment training activities, volunteer opportunities and community connections. The site must also be close to public transportation and conducive to promoting positive public relations for the Options programs.
- ◆ Re-locate our main office to enhance community access, visibility and business relationships, while providing additional space for our expanded clinical and education services, staff training program and office equipment.
- ◆ Explore the possible purchase of a new accessible residence for individuals who seek a more independent supported living arrangement (less than 24 hour supports).
- ◆ Develop and refine STEP's future program services, business and administrative systems to meet new funding and managed care initiatives, long term support service requirements and self-advocacy needs by incorporating proven, cutting-edge methodologies and trends.