BIGGER DIPPER & ABILITYFEST: THE FULL SCOOP
Dear Friends,

Seven Hills Foundation is honored to have nearly 4,000 professionals who choose to share with us their talents and passion for their work. Our staff members are drawn to service—drawn to making a positive impact on individuals who look to us for support, companionship, healing, safety, and peace. I can think of no greater calling than to support someone in need. Our staff answers that calling each day and night—and do so with joy and determination.

In Massachusetts, one in ten people receive care through human services. Right now, our health and human services sector is in crisis, with over 178,000 unfilled positions in Massachusetts this year alone. A collaboration of the Provider’s Council, the UMass Donahue Institute, and UMass Dartmouth teamed to research and publish three reports examining the threats and identifying solutions to the human services crisis. This May, I chaired the research committee of the Provider’s Council that worked to bring forth a report titled, “HEALTH through HUMAN SERVICES.”

The following findings validate key contributions of the sector while underscoring the disparity in compensation for employees:

- Employment growth in the human services industry has added almost 74,000 new jobs in the last ten years, accounting for one third of the growth in employment in Massachusetts
- Human services jobs generated $4.6 billion in payroll in 2016
- Human services workers are nearly twice as likely as healthcare workers to earn below the 150 percent of the federal poverty level

Organizations like Seven Hills work tirelessly to recruit and retain quality staff members who want to work in human services. Seven Hills takes pride in our workplace culture, driven by our Core Values of Respect & Kindness – Integrity – Teamwork – Innovation – Services to Others. We offer robust benefits that dignify our staff while helping them achieve financial stability and a path to a professional career in the sector. We value and listen intently to our staff—as it is from them that our quality originates.

Seven Hills will continue research and education that identify barriers and construct solutions to ensure that trained and dedicated professionals are available to those in need.

Sincerely,

Dr. David A. Jordan
President

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The mission of Seven Hills would not be possible without the philanthropic support of our community. Donate to Seven Hills to make an immediate impact on the lives we have the privilege to support. Contact Kate Myshrall, vice president of advancement, at 508.983.1302 or kmyshrall@sevenhills.org to learn how to best support our work while making the best choice for your generosity. We work with each donor to tailor a giving plan that is right for you.

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Horizons Summer 2019

Horizons is a newsletter published by the Advancement Office of Seven Hills Foundation.

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The Massachusetts Care Coordination Network (MCCN) is a Long Term Services and Supports Community Partner (LTSS CP) operating in the northern, central, and southern regions. The Lead Agency is Seven Hills Family Services, under the Seven Hills Foundation provider network. Affiliated Partners are Advocates, Brockton Area Multi Service Inc. (BAMSI), Boston Center for Independent Living (BCIL) and BayPath Elder Services (BayPath). Experienced Material Subcontractors also support the work of MCCN, strengthening its ability to support specialized and hard-to-reach populations. MCCN will be celebrating its first anniversary this July.

MCCN provides care coordination to MassHealth members eligible through their insurance. Primary care physicians affiliated under one of the Accountable Care Organizations (ACOs) or Managed Care Organization (MCOs) collaborate with the Community Partners by referring their LTSS patients for care coordination. The intention behind the restructuring of the MassHealth program was to integrate the full health care needs of members with complex, lifelong conditions by supporting them with improved continuity and quality of care. MCCN LTSS CP supports ACOs and MCOs in achieving their care coordination and care management objectives.

MCCN supports members with complex LTSS; members with brain injury or cognitive impairments; members with physical disabilities; members with intellectual or developmental disabilities, including Autism; older adults eligible for managed care (up to age 64); and children and youth with LTSS needs.

MCCN performs outreach and engagement; LTSS Care Planning; Care Team participation; LTSS Care Coordination; Support for Transitions of Care; Health and Wellness Coaching; and Connection to Social Services and Community Resources, including Flexible Services. Our goal is to improve member experience and address social determinants that impact an individual’s stability and wellbeing.

In its first year, MCCN has been able to effectively and positively change many of its member’s lives through person-centered care. MCCN care coordinators meet with members to discuss their health and personal goals, and then collaborate with their primary care team at the ACOs/MCOs. They develop a personalized care plan to improve the overall wellbeing of each member. A first-year assessment indicates that the roles and responsibilities of the care coordinators are just as complex as the member’s individual needs.

One of the first supported MCCN members, Helen Bonnet, 59, lives with residual effects from a stroke and is in remission from cancer. Helen was elated after the initial call she received in July 2018 from her care coordinator explaining the program. Helen lives alone and, at the time, she was desperate for support. Her day-to-day tasks were becoming increasingly difficult due to extreme fatigue that made even scheduling a doctor’s appointment difficult. When Helen had to find a new optometrist this past October, she called her care coordinator who researched and narrowed down a list of providers in her area. Within a week, Helen had an appointment with an optometrist who prescribed her vitally important medication.

Helen was so thankful for the support she received from her MCCN care coordinator and expressed relief for not having to tackle the search for a new provider alone. “The only times I cry after my stroke are at the thoughts of losing my vision and not being able to do art,” Helen said. “Having had the help in finding a new optometrist so quickly, I can honestly say that without my MCCN care coordinator, I would have been lost. I am so grateful every day.”
MCCN is successful in providing professional staff that support member goals, coordinate care in a member’s language with respect to culture and individual needs, partner with member supports, and develop and guide person-centered goals with the member through individualized service plans. Knowing that the ability to create art is the motivator in Helen’s life is what made the care coordination for a new eye doctor so impactful.

Diane, 53, faced seemingly insurmountable challenges when she first met her MCCN care coordinator: foreclosure on her home after 30 years, estrangement from her children, battling depression, and living in isolation from friends and family. Diane’s care coordinator made an assessment of the resources available and went into action advocating for services. Diane’s desperate need for social connections was met with an arrangement to attend the senior center’s weekly cribbage games. Her care coordinator found a free legal resource to help with Diane’s housing, and has connected her with Fuel Assistance, SNAP, utility protection, and local food banks.

Jessica, 22, and her mother and guardian, Jane, have been working with an MCCN care coordinator since August 2018. Jessica, who has Down syndrome, had been enrolled in her public school until her birthday in March. Her mother worried about finding an appropriate new program that fit Jessica’s active and community-filled lifestyle. Their care coordinator researched and identified three potential day habilitation programs in their area and set up tours while supporting them during the transition. Jane and Jessica are so grateful for the support and resources their care coordinator was able to provide during such a stressful time. Jessica has successfully transitioned to her new program and early reports are positive.

“Through MCCN care coordination, growing numbers of MCCN members are reclaiming their lives—embracing newfound avenues to independence, socialization, and community... Through this project, we hope to create the tool to document our impact.”

Ava, 13, has Cerebral Palsy, uses a wheelchair, and is non-verbal. Ava’s mother was desperate to find appropriate services for her daughter, but did not know where to begin. Then, she received a phone call from MCCN explaining Ava’s eligibility for the LTSS program. Upon enrollment, they met Ava’s care coordinator, who was able to identify speech, feeding, and physical therapy services as well as locate an appropriate car seat for her. The care coordinator has successfully secured Ava’s services to her mother’s relief and profound appreciation.
Lillian has diabetes and is unable to walk on her own. She relies heavily on her sister to complete tasks like shopping, cleaning, and managing her medications. Lillian was looking for ways to receive support outside of her family in order to gain more independence. Her MCCN care coordinator was able to set up home delivery for prescription medications and food from her local food pantry. Her care coordinator also advocated for Lillian to secure new housing through the local housing authority.

Nicholas suffered traumatic brain injury from a ski accident and now uses a wheelchair. He owns a van that his personal care attendants can use to transport him, but one assistant does not have their license. When Nicholas was introduced to his care coordinator in September 2018, he expressed his frustration at how often he misses important appointments and therapy sessions because he has to rely on others to provide his transportation. His care coordinator connected him with PT-1 van services for his appointments, and paratransit to plan rides in the community. With his newfound independence, Nicholas expressed his readiness to re-secure guardianship from his mother and make his own decisions. His care coordinator educated Nicholas and his mother on the process, and collaborated with his nurse care manager from his designated ACO, and a State Housing Initiatives Partnership case manager to help make his transition as smooth as possible.

As an LTSS CP, MCCN is making a difference. Growing numbers of members are reclaiming their lives—embracing newfound avenues to independence, socialization, and community. MCCN is committed to advancing the independent living philosophy and recovery model of MassHealth enrollees with LTSS needs through person-centered care coordination, and we are working to create the tool to document our impact.

As MCCN looks ahead to the future, it is looking to improve outcomes of health, quality of life and cost outcomes for LTSS CP members.

To further understand the LTSS population—to look beyond the daily operation of care coordination—MCCN needed to tap into the voices and opinions of its members. The MCCN Consumer Advisory Board (CAB) was established to gain feedback on contract management and the provision of LTSS CP support. The Board, comprised of engaged MCCN enrollees, family members, and other caregivers reflects the diversity of MCCN’s populations from all three regions. The goal is to actively recruit passionate members to comprise three strong, regional advising boards.

It is important that the open dialog continues to grow between MCCN and its CAB through quarterly meetings that incentivize member participation. A member of the CAB spoke at the recent MCCN annual celebration and provided his perspective on the success of his LTSS CP experience.

As MCCN looks ahead to the future, it is working to improve health, quality of life, and cost outcomes for LTSS CP members. We plan to leverage data based on functional needs and the Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) in addition to other data points. MCCN’s goal is to establish an LTSS modeling tool in care coordination and navigation that contributes to our greater understanding of our members’ needs. This endeavor will ensure that best outcomes are achieved through a person-centered and integrated approach to care delivery.
The 3rd annual Seven Hills Assistive Technology (AT) Expo held on April 25, 2019, was a great success featuring the latest range of assistive technology by returning vendors as well as several new exhibitors including Microsoft, Clark University, ReQuipment, Easterseals, Logan Tech, Worcester Talking Book Library, and Tobii Dynavox.

The Expo opened with welcoming remarks by Lisa F. using her Tobii-Dynavox AAC device that she controls by using her eyes. Lisa put her work with Team Hoyt New England on display, and continued to communicate with attendees throughout the day using her AAC device.

The Seven Hills AT Program Team demonstrated the spectrum of AT interventions ranging from low-tech eye gaze boards to high-tech eye-controlled windows devices. The team also demonstrated their newly acquired ClassVR system, which was purchased for Seven Hills Family Services. ClassVR introduces a “standalone” Virtual Reality headset with a student-friendly interface, gesture controls, embedded educational resources, and simple-to-use teacher controls. This groundbreaking technology was designed to help raise engagement and increase knowledge retention for students of all ages.

For the past two years, the event was supported through the aid of WPI students completing their Interactive Qualifying Project (IQP). This year’s Expo was a tremendous success thanks to the support from Mass Academy student, Itihas “Iti” Sai Kommanavancha, who volunteered his time as the event’s project manager. Iti managed to fit us in between fulfilling his academic endeavors at Mass Academy of Math and Science AND applying to colleges!

Many volunteers from the community and Seven Hills Foundation provided their support to make this event possible. In addition, Apple sent two volunteers from their Marlborough store; and WPI students, working with us for their IQP, assisted throughout the day.

**ADDITIONAL AT EXPO HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDED:**

- A Make and Take table equipped for attendees to make low-tech AT from everyday materials, including an adaptive flashlight and stylus.

- Xbox One systems that Microsoft used to demonstrate their new adaptive controller, which allows people of all abilities to access the flagship entertainment system.

- 10 groups of Massachusetts Academy of Math and Science students demonstrating their STEM projects that are being designed for Seven Hills affiliates.
February 22, 2019, was a notable night for the 300 attendees of the Children’s Friend Miles-Lincoln Award Gala at Mechanics Hall in Worcester.

The biannual Gala features the Miles-Lincoln Award, which is named after Ms. Anstis Miles and Col. John Lincoln. In 1849, Miles founded The Worcester Children’s Friend Society, “... for the purpose of providing support and education of indigent children...” (worcesterhistory.org). The agency’s first major benefactor, Col. Lincoln, donated a big house that immediately became the first home in central Massachusetts for the children who had been orphaned or neglected and undertaken by the Society.

Renowned today as Children’s Friend, Inc., its award that represents the Miles-Lincoln legacy is the Seven Hills affiliate’s highest honor. It is presented to one or more people who have had an extraordinary impact on children and families in central MA. Their good work must also extend beyond the benefit of Children’s Friend to other organizations within the community.

The 2019 Miles-Lincoln honoree, Sue Mailman, has done all this and more. Sue is chairwoman and treasurer of Coghlin Electrical Contractors. The elaborate electrical work by Coghlin employees makes it possible for Children’s Friend to hold its Bigger Dipper ice cream festival at Elm Park each year. It takes a lot of wiring to keep ten freezers, all the lights, sound equipment, and inflatable games running at full blast.
Off the grid, Sue not only supports Children’s Friend. She is everywhere in Worcester—working with Worcester Public Schools, sponsoring major United Way of Central Massachusetts events, helping the YWCA, and serving on and chairing major not-for-profit boards and committees. It was Children’s Friend’s honor to recognize Sue’s contributions to our community.

The 2019 Miles-Lincoln Gala also provided an opportunity to thank the Worcester Country Club’s 2018 Lori Lajoie Annual Charity Golf Tournament Committee for its generous efforts on behalf of Seven Hills Foundation and Children’s Friend. Not only did they break their previous record for Seven Hills Foundation fund raising; they exceeded their goal of $200,000, raising a total of $228,000 for the new Children’s Friend building, The Ray and Coco Lajoie Center for Children.

The Gala itself was also a phenomenally successful fund-raising event. Cash sponsorships totaled more than $100,000. A list of sponsors, to whom Children’s Friend and its clients are very grateful, is found in the box insert. The silent and live auctions ranged from tickets and limo service to the Red Sox season opener, to Rolling Stones tour tickets, vacation home stays, a private fishing trip, beautiful jewelry, and more that were competitive, fun, and profitable. The evening—and the fund raising—culminated in a moving Children’s Friend video, in which clients gave compelling testimony to the impact of Children’s Friend on their lives. Attendees were inspired to donate more than $25,000 to support mental health, adoption, early education, and grief support programs.

Entertainment by the Joy of Music Jazz Ensemble during cocktails set the tone for the event. The centerpieces, elegant dinner, candlelight, laughter, and the triumphal cheers during the live auction, all made the 2019 Miles-Lincoln evening a Gala to remember.

**THANK YOU TO THE MILES-LINCOLN 2019 SPONSORS**

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- Michael & Dorothy Tsotsis
- UniBank
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- Webster Five
- Worcester Business Journal
- Worcester Railers
Peels of children’s laughter welcomed the guests attending the dedication of The Ray and Coco Lajoie Center for Children on Thursday, May 30. The laughter echoed throughout the newly renovated Children’s Friend facility on Pleasant Street in Worcester, reminding all those present the precious reasons why they were there: to honor the legacy of Ray and Coco Lajoie, and dedicate a bright future for the children and families who attend the affiliate’s programs.

Married 63 years, Ray and Coco Lajoie were a formidable team, raising awareness for children with disabilities after their daughter, Lori, was born with a developmental disability. Despite their challenges, the unflappable couple forged ahead: Ray as the golf pro at the Worcester Country Club (WCC) and Coco seeking care for Lori and finding the perfect fit at Seven Hills. Together, they inspired the WCC Membership and the annual golf tournament in their daughter’s name, the Annual Lori Lajoie Charity Golf Tournament. For 42 years, Ray and Coco championed the Tournament and raised more than $5 million for children and families in need. The partners for life passed away in February 2018—within a day of each other—thus passing the torch of positive impact on through the Lori Lajoie.

Since then, the torch is burning brighter than ever! To recognize the phenomenal support for the Lori Lajoie and its legacy, Seven Hills announced that it was naming its new Children’s Friend facility, The Ray and Coco Lajoie Center for Children. WCC members rallied behind Seven Hills’ targeted capital campaign raising $228,000 toward the Center, which now fully operates the Adoption and Family Services program and the Early Learning Center.

The Dedication served to unite and celebrate all those who supported the campaign. Dr. David A. Jordan, President of Seven Hills, reinforced the Center’s positive impact. “At the Early Learning Center, we nurture children—from infants to children ready to enter Kindergarten—kids whose families have entrusted Children’s Friend to help them thrive, and our Adoption and Family Services program is expanding so we are so grateful for the outpouring of support from the community to make this Center a reality,” Jordan said.

Dr. Jordan recognized the commitment of the Campaign Committee who helped open the doors to the new Center. “As we embarked on our construction, we called on our champions—Mark Fuller, Ray Quinlan, David Woodbury, Bob Oriol, and Peter Stanton—to connect to the community and make the case for support. They succeeded by surpassing our goal and raising over $850,000.”
Murphy Sisters’ Memory Lives on in Sierra Leone

Seven Hills Global Outreach (SHGO) has been able to fulfill its humanitarian mission in eight countries due to the generosity and support of individual donors, private businesses, charitable organizations, and other NGOs. Over the last 10 years, one such organization—the Murphy Sisters Foundation (MSF)—has exemplified a remarkable spirit of selfless giving and philanthropy.

In 2005, a tragic automobile accident took the lives of Chris and Michelle Murphy’s two daughters, Meghan and Shauna. To honor the sisters’ legacy of love and kindness, the Murphys began dedicating their lives to raising awareness about the dangers of drinking and driving. However, upon learning about SHGO and its grassroots development projects, they recognized an opportunity for their foundation—and their daughters’ memory—to make a meaningful impact on a global scale. Now with a dual purpose at home and abroad, MSF channeled a focus toward helping the poorest of the poor in Sierra Leone. In alignment with SHGO’s Zion Ministries partnership, funds from MSF have been directed, in part, to several projects in the Sierra Leone’s southern region of Bo:

- The Murphys traveled to Sierra Leone with Dr. David A. Jordan in 2012, to dedicate the first church constructed in the bush region. Chris and Michelle’s handprints were cemented in the concrete foundation—a tangible and perpetual testament to the lives of Meghan and Shauna.
- The first birthing clinic at the Bandawa Campus enables women from the local villages to access desperately needed maternal health services before, during, and following the birthing process.
- Four new classrooms built at the area’s first primary school accommodate an additional 120 students. The children attending the Murphy Sisters School are the first generation to receive primary education.
- A laboratory at the medical clinic on the Bandawa Campus allows for testing of blood type, HIV/AIDS screening, and a host of other screenings.
- A container of medical and school supplies was shipped to the region to reinforce operations.

For the people who live in the 26 villages surrounding Bo and Bandawa, the Murphy Sisters Foundation has ensured access to clean water, proper sanitation facilities, maternal and infant health, basic education, spiritual support, and the promise of oral health. Their gifts have laid the foundation on which thousands of lives can now be significantly enriched.

100% of donations to SHGO through the Murphy Sisters Foundation go directly to support critical needs. The generosity of donors to the Murphy Sisters Foundation continues to save lives of the poorest of the poor a world away.
The gift of life-saving clean water continues to flow from friends in Texas across the globe to the rural, impoverished areas of Sierra Leone in West Africa. This gift has saved thousands of people who no longer have to drink from polluted rivers and streams, and instead have an accessible hand-dug well in the center of their villages.

Ten years ago, a group of committed and compassionate parishioners from several churches in Garland, Texas, were introduced to the work of Seven Hills Global Outreach (SHGO). They decided to get involved helping those without basic necessities—a world away. The group of churches formed a 5K road race in their community with the intent of educating people around the need in Sierra Leone and raising money to finance the construction of wells. With nine Running 4 Clean Water events completed and over $120,000 raised, 23 wells and 27 toilet sanitation systems are saving the lives of over 11,000 people in the Bo region of Sierra Leone. In the villages that have a well and toilet system installed, there has been an 80% decline in infant and child mortality under age five, and a precipitous drop in documented cases of diarrhea and related gastrointestinal disease. The incredible commitment of the Garland religious organizations has also educated a community on the needs of villages and how their members’ efforts have resulted in incredible success through their partnership with SHGO and Zion Ministries.

The SHGO/Zion Ministries partnership extends its profound gratitude to this year’s participating organizations:

New World United Methodist Church
Islamic Association of Northern Texas
Buckingham United Methodist Church
Axe Memorial United Methodist Church
First United Methodist Church Garland
Life-Well Church
In 2008, Seven Hills Global Outreach (SHGO) was established through the initiative of Seven Hills’ diverse staff to support their home communities, and uplift populations facing significant life challenges in these developing nations around the world.

Each year, Dr. David A. Jordan travels with Seven Hills’ staff members and students to meet with various partner organizations. In January 2019, Dr. Jordan traveled with Peter Demko of the Seven Hills Advancement Department; Isaac Croteau of Stetson School; and Carmen Wise, a Clark University student, to Sierra Leone and Kenya to learn more about SHGO’s work and assess critical needs.

The SHGO team began their journey in Sierra Leone, home to 7.88 million people—81% of whom live in abject poverty. It was in this West African nation in 2010, that SHGO established its longest running and most intensive partnership with the grassroots organization, Zion Ministries. Founded by Pastor Michael Kanu and his wife, Cynthia, in the south-central, rural region of Bo, Zion Ministries—in partnership with SHGO—supports 28 remote villages and more than 15,000 individuals through economic, educational, vocational, spiritual, and healthcare services. The impact of this partnership’s work is most evident in the Bandawa region of Bo, where, in 2011, SHGO and Zion Ministries opened the Bandawa Medical & School Campus. Since then, this centrally located campus has provided thousands of men, women, and children with vastly improved access to health care and education.

The SHGO team spent the next five days touring six of the rural villages in which SHGO and Zion Ministries have introduced clean water wells and improved sanitation facilities. In all, SHGO has enabled 18 villages to install clean water wells and village toilets. In each village, the men have hand dug 8-foot diameter holes, each 60 to 90 feet deep, using only a bucket and a rope pulley. The Zion-SHGO medical team on the ground has confirmed that the child mortality rate is reduced by approximately 80% in each village equipped with a new clean water well and village toilet.

The SHGO team next traveled east to Kenya. In contrast to Sierra Leone, Kenya has emerged as East Africa’s economic and financial hub over the last decade. A healthy tourism industry, foreign investment, and the government’s prioritization of commercial construction and road building, have given rise to a growing middle-class. Unfortunately, this rapid economic development has also contributed to severe economic inequality between the rich and poor in Kenya’s capital city of Nairobi. This striking contrast between socioeconomic classes became immediately evident as the SHGO team entered Kibera—Africa’s largest and most densely populated slum.

It is here that SHGO has partnered with three groups to uplift and support the most vulnerable residents of Kibera. The Bethel Children’s Centre and its primary school; Children’s Garden Home, School & Rescue Centre; and FOCUS Dream Center have made it their mission to support the children living in extreme poverty. The lack of clean water and no sewage, garbage, or sanitation systems have created an environment in which disease runs rampant and over 700 children are orphaned as a result of the death from HIV/AIDS. SHGO supports its Kenyan partners’ initiatives, which include programs to nurture and educate the growing population of impoverished children. Despite the torrid conditions in which the partners help the poorest of the poor, the SHGO team was grateful for the incredible level of kindness and hospitality received from everyone they met.
On May 24, Highfields Golf and Country Club in Grafton, Massachusetts, was host to the 31st Annual New Beginnings Charity Tournament and the 120 golfers who played to raise funds in support of the Community Connections program of Seven Hills Family Services (SHFS).

Seven Hills’ Special Olympics Golfer Paul Peraino made the ceremonial first putt to kick off the festivities. The beautiful day included golf contests, raffles, a silent auction, and an impressive golfer’s buffet hosted by the John Henry Tavern at Highfields. Thank you to our Tournament Sponsor, General Mechanical Contractors, for its continued support of Seven Hills.

The Community Connections program offers community choice—the independence to pursue activities from Special Olympics competitive sports, to wellness classes like yoga and line dancing, as well as a wide range of classes centered around creativity and the arts. Most important, Community Connections provides opportunities to build friendships and a social network for children and adults with disabilities.
On Friday, June 14, 2019, Seven Hills’ Stetson School affiliate celebrated the culmination of many years of hard work for eleven youth. These young men proudly walked across the stage to accept their diploma in front of family and friends, and received a well-earned round of applause from all those in attendance. This momentous event in the lives of these young men is the result of a tremendous amount of hard work and dedication on their part, as well as that of their family, staff, and teachers. A number of graduates gave speeches and each of them highlighted their connection with the Stetson staff, noting that those who believed in them gave them the perseverance to carry on through thick and thin.

“I testing, especially MCAS is hard for me, making me really anxious and I never thought I could pass all the subjects,” one student said. “Three of my teachers told me I could and gave me the confidence to work hard and I passed! Once I heard I passed I looked to the sky and knew that my dad would be proud of me. Now I could graduate and I am proud of myself and my family is proud of me!”

Another theme consistent throughout the ceremony was each youth’s next step. While a number of graduates are planning on enrolling in college courses next semester, some have already found gainful employment using the skills learned at Stetson. The life skills they learned resonated with the students as they reflected on their time at Stetson. One student shared, “When I found out that my father had passed away, it was a huge moment in my treatment. The staff at Stetson showed great empathy for me, and it opened my eyes that people really cared about me. I realized that I was here because of my own behaviors and it helped me commit to finishing my treatment and my education so I can now move forward to be a productive adult and pursue my dreams.”

Education Director Carrie Lehmann and Vice President Joe Allred shared personal anecdotes on each graduate. The event was capped with each graduate receiving their senior photograph and a gift bag curated by their education team.

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Dr. Fredrick Areba
We are proud to recognize Dr. Fredrick Areba, of Seven Hills Community Services (SHCS), for having earned his Doctorate in Business Administration from Grand Canyon University. His recently published thesis, "The Role of Managers’ Workplace Spirituality in Mitigating Fraud and Unethical Behavior," was developed after conducting many focus groups in his native Kenya. While working as a long-term overnight direct support professional for SHCS during the evenings for the past six years, Dr. Areba was able to earn his master’s degree and, just two months ago, defended his doctoral dissertation.

Allie Rothschild
Allie Rothschild successfully defended her doctoral project study titled “Using Participatory Action Research to Increase Job Satisfaction and Decrease Turnover Among Direct Care Staff in Human Services Agencies.” Rothschild conducted an in-depth analysis of job satisfaction among multiple staff teams in Seven Hills Community Services to learn more about staff retention and turnover. Over the course of her study, Allie analyzed trends in over 1,000 pages of focus group transcripts. Dr. Luiselli, of the Seven Hills Research Center, and Dr. Jonathan Worcester and Dr. Joseph Ricciardi of Seven Hills NeuroCare, participated on Allie’s committee or in a consultative role. Congratulations, Dr. Rothschild!

Karen Reynolds
Seven Hills is very pleased to announce the appointment of Karen Reynolds to the position of assistant vice president for Seven Hills Community Services’ central region. Karen has worked for Seven Hills in a variety of positions for more than 39 years. She has developed a deep knowledge of the services and has forged relationships with the people we support, their families, our funders, and her colleagues.

Kerrie Finnegan
Kerrie Finnegan is the new assistant vice president for Seven Hills Community Services’ Southeast Region. Kerrie was previously an area director for Seven Hills Community Services on Cape Cod. She is returning to Seven Hills after a short time at the May Institute. Kerrie started her new role on June 17. Welcome back, Kerrie!

Dr. David A. Jordan congratulates Dr. Fredrick Areba

See.
See the Possibilities
Believe.
Believe in Your Abilities
Achieve.
Achieve Your Dreams
Rhodesia (Rose) Caraballo works at a Seven Hills NeuroCare (SHNC) home that provides 24-hour, post-acute rehabilitation services for adult women with acquired brain injuries. A primary goal of the SHNC affiliate of Seven Hills is to help individuals reconnect to their life as much as possible before they sustained a brain injury.

Carrie O’Shea, who resides at the home, suffered a severe traumatic brain injury from a motor vehicle accident. Her injuries included multiple fractures, and damage to both the cortical and subcortical structures of her brain. The damage resulted in deficits to her memory, executive functioning, visual abilities, and overall ability to learn new information.

“\textbf{A primary goal of the SHNC affiliate of Seven Hills is to help individuals reconnect to their life as much as possible before they sustained a brain injury.}”

Before the injury, Carrie was a hairdresser and a model. One of her goals in recovery is to reconnect with modeling. Recently, Rose decided to take this goal and run with it. In two months, she planned a full photo shoot for Carrie, working hand-in-hand with her every step of the way. Together, they shopped for outfits and accessories. Rose used her negotiating skills to hire a professional photographer who discounted the fee down to $50 for the entire shoot and edited photos. A local clothing designer donated an outfit, and a local makeup artist provided a professional makeup session for the day of the shoot. Next stop, Boston, for the professional shoot! Rose assisted Carrie through several clothing changes and helped as needed during the photo session. The experience exceeded expectations and provided a powerful illustration of Carrie’s inner strength, motivation, and commitment to her own personal growth.

“\textbf{Carrie is reclaiming important aspects of her life, and SHNC thanks Rose for her determination, creativity, and dedication to helping Carrie achieve her goals.}”

The photo shoot was a big step toward Carrie’s goal of modeling in the future. With encouragement from her Seven Hills’ staff, Carrie is reclaiming important aspects of her life, and SHNC thanks Rose for her determination, creativity, and dedication to helping Carrie achieve her goals.
GRANTING GOOD WORK!

Seven Hills Foundation is fortunate to leverage support from numerous sources to strengthen and expand our work across our 12 affiliates. Funds raised support programs or projects and provide us with unique opportunities to develop and implement innovative and creative initiatives that enhance the lives of people faced with significant life challenges. The following highlights cover recently funded projects:

VSA MASSACHUSETTS’ OPEN DOOR GALLERY PRESENTS PRISMS: PERSPECTIVES ON HIDDEN DISABILITY ART EXHIBIT

The Massachusetts Cultural Council is supporting VSA Massachusetts (VSA MA) with a Cultural Investment Portfolio contract of $8,600. These funds will assist VSA MA in projects such as the art exhibit, Prisms: Perspectives on Hidden Disability, currently on display in their Open Door Gallery in Boston. The exhibit offers artistic explorations of four artists’ experiences with disability. Tyler Cala Williams, Arielle Gray, Bethany Murray, and Rachel Bird will each be given three months to show their work and tell their stories to open a dialogue between the disability community and the broader community. Each exhibit will open with a reception and opportunity to convene the local community to discuss and experience the artwork alongside the artist. The exhibits will include a forum with the medical community to discuss chronic pain, a street photo shoot open to the community, artist talks, and art-making sessions. Please visit vsamass.org for reception dates and openings.

CREATING SPARKS WITH THE HANOVER THEATRE CONSERVATORY

The Greater Worcester Community Foundation’s Creative Sparks grant program has awarded Seven Hills ASPIRE! a $7,500 grant toward the implementation of a new creative movement dance program for ASPIRE! participants. The goal of the program is for the participants to become more active, and increase self-esteem and community interaction in a fun and safe environment. At the Hanover Theatre Conservatory for the Performing Arts, they are taught by instructors from the Conservatory’s dance faculty. For individuals with disabilities that have limited mobility, the class is a unique way to increase activity, leading to improved coordination, flexibility, balance, and quality of movement. At the same time, dancing provides the opportunity for participants to interact, build confidence, and increase self-esteem all while having fun!

The Creative Sparks grant program at the Greater Worcester Community Foundation, supported by the Barr Foundation, aims to empower the Worcester arts and culture sector to activate under-served populations and amplify voices that are often left unheard. Seven Hills is extremely grateful to the Foundations and to Worcester State College graduate student, Anne Lane, for her tremendous efforts in helping to secure this funding on behalf of Seven Hills.
Growing a Love for Healthy Eating from the Navigant Credit Union

Navigant Credit Union has generously granted $2,500 to Seven Hills Rhode Island (SHRI) toward hydroponic gardening equipment for its wellness and therapeutic arts programming. Partnering with instructors from ALC Consulting and Design from Warwick, RI, individuals will be immersed in the world of hydroponics gardening while also learning the importance of healthy living and eating. Classes will focus on identifying healthy foods, the USDA My Plate, the ins and outs on sugar, and conclude with a harvest party.

Thank you so much to Navigant Credit Union! SHRI is excited to start growing nutritious foods and learning how those foods can benefit our health.

SWINGING INTO SUMMER THANKS TO THE NASHOBA VALLEY COMMUNITY HEALTHCARE FUND

The Community Foundation of North Central Massachusetts and the Greater Lowell Community Foundation have awarded $6,663 to Seven Hills Community Services (SHCS) through the Nashoba Valley Community Healthcare Fund. These generous grant funds will give individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities living in one of the SHCS group homes in North Central Massachusetts a reason to be outside and enjoy quality time in the fresh air with the purchase of a WhisperGlide wheelchair-accessible glider swing. Designed to encourage socialization, the WhisperGlide allows participants on the swing to be able to enjoy the outdoors and interact with their families and friends while sitting safely in their wheelchair.

SHCS is so grateful to the Community Foundation of North Central Massachusetts and the Greater Lowell Community Foundation for this wonderful award—just in time for summer!

GROWING A LOVE FOR HEALTHY EATING FROM THE NAVIGANT CREDIT UNION

Children's Friend Clinicians Receive Dialectical Behavior Therapy Training

Children’s Friend (CF) has received $10,000 from the Reliant Foundation and $18,000 from the United Way of Central Massachusetts to provide Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) at the CF’s Ellsworth Child and Family Counseling Center. DBT provides children who are engaging in dangerous and self-destructive behaviors with the skills to respond to triggers that might initiate harmful actions. This generous funding will be used to send clinicians from the Ellsworth Child and Family Counseling Center to receive training in Dialectical Behavior Therapy at Behavioral Tech in White Plains, NY.

With the continued support of the Reliant Foundation and the United Way of Central Massachusetts, Children’s Friend is able to grow its DBT team and provide these much-needed therapies to children who are in distress. We are so grateful to both foundations for their generous award.

Tim Garvin, United Way of Central Massachusetts President and CEO, and Karen Ludington, Children’s Friend Vice President

SPOTLIGHT
Bringing community together for two important causes was the order of the day on June 22, when thousands of supporters descended on Worcester’s Elm Park for the BIGGER Dipper and AbilityFest. The day started with the traditional AbilityFest Murphy Mile Walk, celebrating the abilities of us all in an inclusive stride around the historic park. Our 400 walkers then walked or rolled into the festivities of the BIGGER Dipper All-You-Can-Eat Ice Cream Festival, enjoying the donated ice cream of 10 local vendors with more flavors than you can count—but all you can eat! The full day of live entertainment included Chuck & Mudd, and the JOMP students kept the party going while children took part in a park full of games and activities. The proceeds from the BIGGER Dipper and AbilityFest support programs serving children and families of Children’s Friend as well as the Community Connections program of Seven Hills Family Services.
SPOTLIGHT

SEVEN HILLS ASPIRE!

ASPIRE! programs have held monthly participant advisory council meetings in 2019, which have been a great source of volunteer and activity ideas, as well as curriculum feedback. On April 24, the ASPIRE! leadership team held an open “town hall” meeting for parents, persons supported, and other stakeholders, with a focus on electronic communication through targeted social media platforms.

Construction continues at the historic Stearns Tavern on Coes Pond, where ASPIRE! will operate a Café Seven Hills for the public enjoying the beach and playground. This partnership with the City of Worcester will facilitate job training and placement opportunities for adults with developmental disabilities, while assisting the City in providing amenities at the park.

The different programs within ASPIRE! continue to demonstrate commitment to creativity and quality in services. The Adult Day Health advisory group recently recommended a series of changes to daily dining options, while the Devens participants convened to advocate for upgraded and expanded music therapy supplies. The 799 West Boylston nursing team made a big push to update all records given new regulations, while staff piloted a unique clinical skills group for persons supported. At Goddard, a variety show in honor of Dr. Seuss was a big hit. At Goddard Community Based Day & Employment Supports (CBDES), a new partnership for dance programming at the Hanover Theatre has folks excited, while those in Milford were thrilled to loom hats for donations to the Dana Farber/Brigham and Women’s Cancer Center at Milford Regional Medical Center. The Devens CBDES participants look forward to a new paid work opportunity with Bio-Techne, a large manufacturer in the area. We are also thrilled to announce a partnership with VSA Massachusetts, in which an arts coordinator will work jointly in both affiliates expanding our commitment to creative arts.

SEVEN HILLS BEHAVIORAL HEALTH (SHBH)

On April 3, the Southeast Tobacco-Free Community Partnership joined youth and adults from across Massachusetts for Kick Butt’s Day at the State House. Three youth groups from southeastern MA attended the event, and met with lawmakers including Representative Antonio Cabral, Representative Christopher Hendricks, and Representative Shaunnna O’Connell. Youth expressed their concerns about tobacco and vaping in their communities and schools. They emphasized the harm of vaping, how sweet flavors including mint and menthol attract youth to vaping, and how the tobacco and vaping industries continue to target youth.

The Community Partnership accepts many requests for vaping education presentations. The Partnership recently presented to school resource officers at a Southeastern Massachusetts Law Enforcement Council meeting, to representatives from vocational high schools at a Massachusetts Vocational Education Association statewide conference in Foxborough, to foster parents and social workers at the Department of Children and Families in Fall River, and to parents and staff at a number of high schools and middle schools across the region.

The Community Partnership addressed vaping on two local cable access programs: Healthy Kingston and Foxboro Central. During both interviews, the Community Partnership spoke about the dangers of vaping, the harmful chemicals in vapes and e-cigarettes, the effects of nicotine on the developing youth brain, and provided resources for parents, schools, and other adults who work with youth.

The recovery-oriented Psychiatric Day Treatment Program offers intensive group therapies and focused activities in a supportive environment to enable adults with chronic mental health conditions and co-occurring disorders to acquire realistic and adaptive behaviors, as well as the attitudes and skills needed for independent functioning in the community. Some clients participate in volunteer work designed to build competency, self-esteem, and community development. On average, 29 clients attend the program on a daily basis. Spring activities included a St. Patrick’s Day Party and Easter Egg Hunt. The clients enjoy giving back to the community and have been volunteering at Buzzards Bay Coalition. United Way is scheduled to run a “Budget Your Bucks” group series and plans for summer outings are in the works.

SHBH Clinical Coordinator Alex Humphrey is a hero! During a routine outing at a restaurant, one of the program’s clients began choking. Alex immediately
stepped into action, performing the Heimlich Maneuver and dislodging the food successfully. Alex’s ability to step up to the plate in this capacity was notable. Alex contributes to the SHBH team in many exceptional ways and brings a great deal of creativity to the Group Development Program. A naturally outgoing person, Alex is passionate about the success of clients’ treatment endeavors. She has an outstanding work ethic and remains flexible around last-minute schedule changes—continuing to prove herself an invaluable SHBH point person.

SEVEN HILLS COMMUNITY SERVICES (SHCS)
In early 2019, Seven Hills Community Services opened a new home in Fitchburg that supports five men and women with significant medical needs. This is the fifth SHCS home that offers twenty-four hour nursing, and now supports two people who have transitioned from the Seven Hills Pediatric Center into adult residential services.

A home in Hyannis supporting three men has received extensive renovations. One of the men has lived at this address for many years. As his needs changed, he was facing the likelihood of having to move. Through the strong advocacy of his support team led by Area Director Brittany Ashley, SHCS was able to build the supports he needed into the current home. He now has two housemates and twenty-four hour staff support.

It is important that the people we support have opportunities to participate fully in their communities—taking advantage of community opportunities, especially those that involve giving back. This April, National Grid sponsored an Earth Day initiative to clean up the streets of Worcester. A few people we support volunteered to participate. They started their cleanup efforts at 1 West Boylston Street and turned around at 147 West Boylston Street, resuming their cleanup across the street.

Volunteers were thanked not only for cleaning the earth, but also for educating others. Motorists and passersby beeped their horns to cheer them on. Following the cleanup, National Grid treated volunteers to a cookout that included music and a celebration of the earth.

The Pathways Project helps break down barriers to community membership. It is a challenge for people with developmental and physical disabilities to participate in so many of the activities that others do easily. “C” is a woman supported at one of our homes for people with complex medical needs who require twenty-four hour nursing. She has always loved skiing, but in recent years, her physical and health challenges have kept her off the slopes. The Pathways Project helped C’s team focus on her desire to ski and made it possible for C to ski once last year. After seeing how much she loved the freedom of the mountain, those who support C wanted to ensure that she had more opportunities. Patty Tremblay, the registered nurse for the home, made sure that this could become a regular winter activity.

Pathways provided scholarship money to C and Patty committed to being her escort. This year, C was able to ski six times through the Crotchet Mountain Assistive Recreation program, using adaptive equipment. Her mother, sister, and niece were all able to join in the fun. Now that she has broken the barriers to skiing, C is signing up for bicycling!

In March, Seven Hills Family Services welcomed its new therapeutic recreation director, Bradley Ayotte. Bradley is taking over the reins from Jennifer Bergstrom who, after 17 years, has moved to the Advancement Department to support the broader Foundation and affiliates. Bradley has assumed the responsibilities related to all of SHFS’s extensive sports, recreation, and leisure activities enjoyed by children and adults with disabilities in the central MA region.

SEVEN HILLS NEUROCARE (SHNC)
Four men live in the Salisbury Street residence in Holden supervised by an all-male staff. Every time SHNC Vice President Dr. Jonathan Worcester visits the home, he is beyond impressed. The staff members have so much passion, energy, and enthusiasm for the work that they do. They are continuously entertaining or seeking a new activity for their residents.
Recently, the staff organized a birthday party for one of the gentlemen. There were about 35 guests and various types of food that the staff themselves prepared. A family member who attended the party expressed her gratitude and how pleased she is that her family member lives in this home.

Some may say, “Well, this is just a party…” But it’s really not—it’s like a party all year long with the staff and men who reside in the Salisbury Street home. Ebenezer and his team are incredible and deserve to be recognized for doing such a great job all year long…this team always stands out—the whole team is incredible!

Dr. Joseph Ricciardi, director of clinical services, and the SHNC clinical team have developed a new training curriculum for direct care staff: Mission, Population, and Rehabilitation Strategies. This full-day training for residence directors, assistant residence directors, and direct care staff provides an overview of our affiliate philosophy toward rehabilitation, pertinent information about post-acute neurological conditions in the people that we serve, and practical strategies to promote meaningful and person-centered rehabilitation outcomes. The training focuses on the specific conditions of the people in our care (particularly injuries impacting the frontal lobe that cause deficits in executive functioning) and offers case illustrations of rehabilitation strategies designed to promote engagement, participation, and personalized goal setting. Further, the Mission, Population, and Rehabilitation Strategies training will be offered as both a pre-service orientation for new staff and as a booster training for our more experienced staff. It is the goal of SHNC to offer the training multiple times per year, and to require it as an annual training managed through the Seven Hills Foundation Corporate College. Dr. Ricciardi and the clinical team have piloted the training in two out of three regions, receiving promising feedback that the training will have an overall positive impact by improving staff professional development, supporting staff retention, and further promoting participant outcomes.

Seven Hills Pediatric Center at Hopedale continues to operate at full capacity. Hopedale students finished the end of a very successful school year, with many of the students participating in the local collaborative day program. An influx of nursing, therapy, and educational students brings a seasonal energy during the school break for the residents and staff alike. The students are encouraged to stay on per diem at the end of the summer and come back during college vacations.

Seven Hills Pediatric Center at Groton held its first Spring Dance at the Hilton Hotel at Devens for residents over age 22. A grateful parent donated the space, food for staff, and DJ. The decorations were spectacular, and residents looked stunning as they jived in their wheelchairs with staff to the sound of the upbeat DJ. SHPC is grateful to Seven Hills Community Services and ASPIRE! Devens for the use of their vans to transport the 38 residents to the event. This was a tremendous team effort by all SHPC departments and Seven Hills’ affiliates!

The Seven Hills Academy at Groton teachers for SHPC residents under the age of 22 have completed their MCAS packages. This consists of 35 portfolios that reflect the individualized efforts of each and every child, which demonstrate their abilities rather than their disabilities.

Coordinators in the Day Program have instituted “WAY TO GO” awards to recognize direct support staff who demonstrate a Core Value—Kindness & Respect, Integrity, Teamwork, Innovation, and Service to Others. 3/29/19 was “WAY TO GO” day, when copies of all the awards were displayed—45 in all. It has been adopted as a weekly event by the management team.

Day Program coordinators have offered ongoing training on Professional Documentation, Self-Determination and Community Participation to the staff team in order to increase their skill sets. The team has revamped the onboarding process for new staff to offer more support during their first few months of employment. These efforts along with the Peer Mentor program, which started at the beginning of the year, are designed to support each direct support professional in order to offer the best quality support.

Early Intervention (EI) has included a screening tool to look at family stressors as part of intake. Staff received training around empathy/clinical interviewing skills, and the use of the screening tool began in early May.

During the school vacation week in April, the music therapist from Hands in Harmony came to Norwood Avenue to facilitate a “drop-in” music session for EI. Eight families—with parents and siblings as well as EI clients—participated in the music and movement group. Families, staff, and the music therapist all reported that this was a great opportunity for families to meet one another while experiencing the powerful impact music can have on children’s development.

Two children began services with very few skills, little to no compliance, and one had frequent aggressive behaviors making it difficult to transition. In the first six months of Applied Behavioral Analysis
ACHIEVED "ENCORE!" STATUS.

Each production, the partnership has been an excellent artistic production in June. The Repertory Company, based on the book by Roald Dahl, wrapped up the eighth season of this unique partnership. Participants from both the Children’s program and the Adult program were able to participate. TRAIN has opened so many opportunities for our participants. Each week they meet and rehearse for the play. Friendships are created, empathy is explored, and there are numerous learning opportunities. During this most recent production, a participant who is currently in his senior year of high school was able to work closely with Trinity’s director, Jordan Butterfield. Jordan allowed the participant to use his creativity and humor to adapt the script to meet the needs of the cast. He was able to use his time with Butterfield toward his senior project for graduation credits. As with each production, the partnership has achieved “Encore!” status.

TRAIN, SHRI’s partnership with Trinity Repertory Company, produced another excellent artistic production in June. The BFG’s, based on the book by Roald Dahl, encompassed the eighth season of this unique partnership. Participants from both the Children’s program and the Adult program were able to participate. TRAIN has opened so many opportunities for our participants. Each week they meet and rehearse for the play. Friendships are created, empathy is explored, and there are numerous learning opportunities. During this most recent production, a participant who is currently in his senior year of high school was able to work closely with Trinity’s director, Jordan Butterfield. Jordan allowed the participant to use his creativity and humor to adapt the script to meet the needs of the cast. He was able to use his time with Butterfield toward his senior project for graduation credits. As with each production, the partnership has achieved “Encore!” status.

CHILDREN’S AID AND FAMILY SERVICE (CAFS)

In June of 2018, the CAFS Family Day Care (FDC) Program began a unique partnership with Fitchburg Public Schools, the “Footsteps2Brilliance Initiative.” This Program is an early education learning tool that connects children to literacy, and family with child care programs and schools. CAFS’ Program has been extremely successful and we have been asked to add additional families starting next fall. The program is especially helpful for new home care providers who need guidance in the areas of curriculum development for their program. The addition of the van this year for transportation for children in FDC has been a huge success and has allowed us to fill all the slots we have for DCF children. Transportation with this population continues to be an unmet need.

As part of the United Way Grant, Strengthening Families has presented a variety of events throughout Fitchburg, including Dinosaur Afternoon at the library and Bubbles in the town park. The events are well attended as they are interesting for the children and there is no cost for families to participate.

The kitchen staff at the Child Enrichment Center eagerly awaits the rebuild of the new kitchen where farm to table is the norm. Who would have ever thought there was a big demand for butternut squash soup from preschoolers!

The Washington DC Office for Child Care (OCC) conducted an audit of Massachusetts—the first state in the country to be audited under the new policies and procedures that are now required from the new Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) guidelines from the Federal government. As a part of this audit, the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) asked CAFS Child Care Resources (CCR) to host the OCC staff for an afternoon so they could see how things work “on the ground.” Andrew Eppich, director of field operations for EEC sent the following note to CAFS/CCR Assistant Vice President Kim Dion after the visit: I wanted to thank the three of you for your excellent performance yesterday during the Office of Child Care monitoring visit yesterday. You all did outstanding and spoke clearly and competently about the incredible work that Resources does every day on behalf of children and families. OCC just left, but during their final debrief with us today, they spoke extremely highly about their session with you and learned a tremendous amount from you about how the partnership between EEC and the CCR&Rs benefits the children of the Commonwealth. Thank you for taking the time and attention away from your busy schedules and spending it with us for a few hours.

CAFS CCR is expanding into Hopedale, with the new office at 54 Hopedale St., scheduled to open at the end of May.

CCR staff continues to train and assist providers in understanding the newest set of reimbursement rules issued by the EEC. CCR has also been very busy advocating on behalf of the Child Care Resources & Referrals (CCR&Rs). Kim Dion has spent a good part of the spring advocating for additional funding for vouchers for children in need. In April, CCR staff Marybeth Brown, Melody Rolon, and Yanaira Valenzuela attended a two-day summit in Washington D.C., hosted by Child Care Aware of America. It was a great networking opportunity, and one day was spent on the hill visiting with our Federal legislators. Several CCR staff attended Advocacy Day at the
Statehouse and spent time meeting with our state legislators on March 13. Kim Dion and Marybeth Brown attended an event hosted by Tufts University that addressed child care affordability with Nancy Pelosi and three congresswomen. The CAFS CCR Facebook page at Child Care Resources/Children’s Aid & Family Services has pictures of all three of these events.

**CHILDREN’S FRIEND (CF)**
The Ellsworth Child and Family Counseling Center offers special areas of service such as the Gender Wellness Initiative (GWI) and Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT). GWI provides families, children, and caregivers with counseling and other mental health services including addressing the needs of transgender and gender non-conforming youth and young people who are struggling with questions about their sexuality or identity. Numerous studies have shown that gender non-conforming children are at far greater risk of depression, school adjustment problems, bullying, suicide, self-harming behaviors, and substance abuse than their peers. It is incredibly crucial for this at-risk gender-minority population to be given the mental health help and support that they deserve. The GWI training is gaining popularity in the school systems and the number of requests for in-school trainings has far exceeded expectations. DBT provides training for adolescents with poor coping skills; the program includes group and individual therapy, parent groups, and telephone consultation.

Ellsworth’s Director of Clinical Services Dr. Johanna Sagarin and Children’s Friend Vice President Karen Ludington have been involved in the Trauma and Resilience Collaborative in Worcester. The project developed from a summit on childhood trauma that they helped to organize last September at the request of Senator Harriette Chandler. The outline of a pilot program was created, and Senator Chandler has proposed it for funding in the FY20 state budget. It will be a real challenge for her to get the funding. In addition, Dr. Sagarin and Karen Ludington have joined the Mayor’s Mental Health Task Force in Worcester.

Two members of the Stetson Clinical Department presented workshops at the Annual MASOC/MATSA Conference in April 2019. Kathleen Buckley, M.Ed., presented “Working with Youth with Sexual Behavior Problems,” an interactive workshop that explored real-life concepts of Problem Sexual Behaviors. Buckley’s presentation also explored intervention strategies and those that foster healthy development. Sally Gulmi, M.Ed., co-presented “Best Practice for Integrating Our Youth Into a School Setting While Understanding a Risk Management Approach,” which addressed the successful integration of youth in treatment in our public school system.

The Stetson Stingers basketball team went undefeated this season with players ranging from 14 to 18 years old dominating the court both home and away. The youth learned important lessons in teamwork and discipline, and it showed every game.

Eight youth participated in the CHILL Snowboarding Program, tackling the hills of Wachusett Mountain with the skilled instructors of CHILL. By the end of the six-week program, the youth had successfully snowboarded from the beginner slope to the summit and surpassed all expectations set by the instructors.
**VSA MASSACHUSETTS (VSA MA)**

The Open Door Galleries (ODGs) are sustaining a vibrant stream of exhibits in both Boston and at the Worcester Art Museum (WAM).

Ongoing at **ODG Boston** is “Prisms: Perspectives on Hidden Disability,” a series exploring hidden disability through the work and narratives of four artists with learning disabilities, mental illness, physical disabilities, and chronic pain. The work will be on display from March 2019-March 2020, and will feature a community event/program with each exhibit.

The ASPiRE! artists’ exhibit “Botanica Fantastica” is on display at the **ODG WAM** from July 17–September 19, and featured an opening reception on 7/24 from 11am–1pm.

In partnership with WAM, VSA MA has been leading an **Elements of Art** class for 12 ASPiRE! artists to experience sequential arts instruction for eight weeks in a WAM studio, led by a WAM educator. The success of the pilot class is showing promise to pursue a potential funding model to extend classes well into the future.

**COOL Schools** is partnering with 10 schools this year, serving around 1,700 students, aged 3-21, roughly 650 of whom have a wide range of disabilities. Approximately 80 teachers are providing 16 to 36 weeks of arts-integrated instruction in visual arts, music, drama, and fashion design. Inclusion is provided in some of our partner schools that would otherwise not experience it.

VSA MA continues to provide extensive professional development to our teaching artists, including individualized coaching sessions twice a year. We have established a new partnership with the Everett Elementary School in Boston this year, and with the Trotter Elementary School in Boston for SY 19-20.

The following **Professional Development** sessions support educators, teaching artists, and staff in cultural organizations to develop inclusive policies and practices:

- ArtsEmerson, Paramount Theater, Boston: Workshop and follow-up discussion on inclusive practices for administrators, ushers and front-of-house staff.
- National Arts Education Association Museum Education pre-conference, MFA, Boston: Session on inclusive practices in museum education.
- Arts Connect International Arts Equity Summit, ICA/District Hall, Boston: Presented and moderated a panel on disability and intersectional justice.
- Wheelock Family Theater, Boston: Second part of a series on inclusive teaching practices for theater educators.

**Opportunity Awaits.**

Join our team at Seven Hills! Apply online at sevenhills.org/careers • Email hr@sevenhills.org
Mailing Changes?
If you are receiving duplicates, have a change of address, or wish to be removed, please contact Jennifer Wentworth at 508.983.1304 or jwentworth@sevenhills.org.