

From the President



2010 marked TILL's 30th anniversary. Thirty years is a long time and yet it is only a moment in the landscape of history. 2010 was a year filled with celebrations of our accomplishments and a strong awareness that changes and opportunities for community based services for people with

disabilities have only just begun. Despite budget cutbacks and threats to our economy, TILL has continued to hold fast to our principles of providing services which center around individual needs and preferences; which recognize the value of our dedicated, professional employee workforce through benefits, salary increases and personal recognition; and which value our close relationships with families, friends, and funding sources.

The challenge ahead is to ensure that we continue to listen to the individuals we serve and adapt as their needs change. We have experienced the loss of several people who have been with the agency for nearly its entire history. We were honored to be part of their lives and to allow them to age in place in familiar, home surroundings. We will continue to be in the forefront of designing services for people as they age and to develop services which ensure the dignity and comfort which marks all of our services.

The skyrocketing growth of children being diagnosed with autism and with complicated behavioral needs has resulted in the expansion of our autism resource center and our specialized behavioral home and school based supports. Our vocational services continue to offer exciting opportunities for people through our food services component where over 168,000 lunches are prepared and delivered during a school year.

TILL residential services, which support unique needs ranging from people leaving nursing homes to those who need minimal support to learn skills toward independence, has flourished as we opened three new homes in the past year with two more expected in the near future.

Creating a large agency which is still able to offer personal attention to detail, recognizes each person's value, holds true to our mission and our love of innovation and not settling for the status quo, is the goal. We intend to enter into our 31st year and beyond with a continued emphasis on these goals.

Sincerely,

Dafna Krouk-Gordon, Founder and President, TILL, Inc.

Handle With Care

The Handle with Care Experience started in January of 2010. It started as an idea to encourage families, staff and individuals to express themselves and become involved at one of our holiday parties. It was just a song. A song we thought people would enjoy singing with us. It was a song that had some nice easy lyrics that would be easy for people to remember. Handle With Care had been recorded by a makeshift group of musicians known as the Traveling Wilburys. It was a song whose title and sentiment seemed to fit with TILL's philosophy and mission. And, it was a song that elicited an immediate response and sense of connection with the audience and the performers the minute they heard it.

Armed with this inspiration, John Stevens and Paula Aiesi began a journey that would involve the entire TILL agency over the next three months, and give birth to a video that was completed for our 30th anniversary celebration.

Recording the song uncovered some very talented musicians at TILL. John Stevens, Director of Special Projects, Tim Foley, Site Manager at TILL Central-Chelsea, Sherman Fox, STRATTUS Psychiatrist, Emma Bruns, Relief Staff, Tammy Scott, Administrative Assistant, Kingsley Brown, Manager of our Brookline Residence, and Tom Byrnes, a former TILL Softball Coach, banded together to produce a new version of the song. John and Paula then took to the road with a guitar and a video camera. What they recorded was an outpouring of emotion and spirit that was truly inspirational and a clear demonstration that, each of us, no matter what level of ability and talent we possess, can express ourselves in ways that are totally unique. The project is a demonstration of TILL's belief in the right and ability of all individuals to express themselves in their own unique and personal way.



TILL Breaks Ground

TILL celebrated its newest home in **Newton** with a gala open house with neighbors, families and DDS. Located on a lovely residential street, this fully accessible house is home to five women who have moved out of nursing homes as part of the Rolland Settlement agreement. The new community opportunities afforded to the women in their new home is best described by a letter sent by one of the resident's sisters:

"We had many questions and concerns and we were quite resistant to the idea of a group home, but it was the best decision we ever made for Michele. She is thriving. This is truly everything you said it was going to be and more."



Our Billerica residence moved to a beautiful new location in **Littleton** and celebrated with the official open house this October. The new home offers 4 bedrooms with an acre of private wooded surroundings and is part of TILL's mission to meet the changing needs of the individuals we support.

Soon to be...

On November 10, TILL broke ground for a new home to be built on **Austin Street** in Hyde Park. Three women currently living at one of our Hyde Park homes will join two new people when it is completed this spring. All three women were on hand for the ceremonial ground breaking along with Dafna and other representatives from TILL, DDS, local residents, the contractor and one family member in particular who has waited patiently for several years to see the new home take shape.

Recognition for TILL PCA

Maria Garcia, a Personal Care Attendant for TILL, received the Paul Kahn Award for PCA service on October 13th in a ceremony at the State House. The award acknowledges the vital role that PCAs play in assisting with tasks of everyday living for thousands of Massachusetts residents.

Ms. Garcia has been a PCA for more than 10 years. In her letter of nomination, Maria was praised for going above and beyond the role of Personal Care Attendant and for helping the individual whom she supports to a full and enriching life in her community.

Maria was one of five honorees out of more than 7,000 registered PCAs and is one of the many dedicated employees who help carry out TILL's mission of community involvement. Congratulations and thank you, Maria.

New Space for Watertown Day Hab



The Watertown Day Hab and TILL Central will soon have a brand new building to be located at 264 Arlington Street in Watertown. We'll be spending the next 4 months building a beautiful new space which will give staff and clients a place to learn new skills, enjoy the neighborhood, and expand their interests. Staff and clients alike took hammer in hand and took the first swings to knock down the abandoned building which will soon be our new site, scheduled to open in April 2011.

Springboard Union

Stephen Cayon and Tracy Harmon were married on June 13, 2010. Stephen and Tracy are former members of TILL-Springboard, where they met and developed their relationship. TILL-Springboard is a social membership club, geared for people who need assistance in understanding and coping with social expectations and forming positive relationships. Many of the members do not have a clear diagnosis but rather fall into several categories of anxiety disorders, mental health needs, Aspergers and non-specified learning and cognitive disabilities. Stephen and Tracy are among several members whose relationships blossomed into marriage. We wish all the best to Stephen and Tracy as they begin their new life together.

If you know of someone who could benefit from such a club, please contact Amanda DeGregoria at Amanda.Dedegregoria@tillinc.org.



TILL Celebrates New Art at Billerica Day

The Art Connection and TILL worked together to transform our Billerica Day Program into a welcoming environment for individuals, staff and visitors. Through their art donation program, The Art Connection facilitated the donation of 17 original works of art by 14 well known artists for installation into our Billerica space. A reception was held on May 13th to showcase the new collection and to thank the artists.

Dafna Krouk-Gordon, Founder and President of TILL, commented, “The paintings and other original works set a wonderful tone for our space and our program with the addition of such vibrant color, imagery and creativity.”

A committee of TILL staff and Day Hab participants chose the art works from over 160 prints representing Boston area artists, Prilla Smith Brackett, Linda Clave, Laura Evans, Faith Hyde, Steve Klarer, Susan Makin, Shirley Patroll, Florence Putterman, Elizabeth Ryan, Janet Shapero, Maria Termini, Susan Schalb, Steven Trindale and Richard B. Williams.

Our Chelsea Program partnered with the Art Connection in 2008 to enrich their environment. We hope to “connect” next with our Hudson Day Hab.



TILL Games XVI



The 16th annual edition of TILL Games was held on Saturday, September 11, 2010 at the Reggie Lewis Track and Field Center in Roxbury. TILL Games began 16 years ago as a way for people of all ability levels to maintain a fit and healthy lifestyle as well as compete. This

intergenerational event includes individuals, staff, families and friends of TILL. Athletes begin formal track practices in late April each year.

One hundred seventy registered athletes participated in the event and showed their usual enthusiasm and competitiveness. The day kicked off with the 2 mile run, won by Springboard member, John Schaechter. The big hit of the morning is always the youth races which included a baby crawl. All the youngsters received rousing applause

from the crowd and thoroughly enjoyed the races. Next on the agenda were all the main events of the day. As always, our athletes gave their all, many improving their times from previous games.

The big event of the day is the 4X200 Meter Team Relay. This event has generated much interest and heavy competition. Six teams participated in this integrated event. This year's winners defeated last year's champs from the Brookline House. Congratulations to Silver Team members and winners of the 2010 TILL Games 4X200 Meter Relay, Aduwa Woghiren, Ruyter Bellevue, Behai Webster and Cindy Wadon for their victory in an impressive 1:10:32.

Thanks to all the volunteers who helped make the day run smoothly and thanks to our many “Friends of TILL Games” whose donations enable TILL Games to grow each year.



CELEBRATING TILL



In 1980, Toward Independent Living and Learning was founded with the purpose of developing options for a full and enriching life in the community to individuals with cognitive and physical disabilities. On May 8, 2010 TILL celebrated its 30th year of innovative programming, with a gala celebration at the University of Massachusetts Campus Center in Boston. Over 450 people attended the evening gathering that featured many tributes and a rich history of memories as we enter into our fourth decade of service provision.

photos and memories of the last three decades of the world and TILL history. The grand ballroom was transformed into a magical room filled with lights, sounds and a multi media slide show of TILL's services, employees, families and individuals who make TILL the agency that it is. Background music was provided by "First Take," a jazz duo, as the room became alive with animated conversation of remembrances and accomplishments.

Host Jim Brett, Executive Director of the New England Council, began the formal ceremonies by highlighting TILL's growth and range of services developed over the past 30 years. Keynote speaker Attorney Steven Schwartz, Director of Center for Public Representation, who has been involved in all the class action suits that began the wave of de-institutionalization in Massachusetts, gave a riveting account of this historic sequence of events. TILL's three Vice Presidents, Kevin Stock, Christine Sweeney and Linda Naclerio, made a surprise presentation to TILL's Founder and President, Dafna Krouk-Gordon. Assisted by three individuals who had formerly lived in Massachusetts State Institutions, they presented Dafna with framed prints and an autographed copy of the book, "Asylum, Inside the Closed World of State Institutions". The gift was especially poignant as it was the advent of deinstitutionalization that sparked Dafna to found TILL, 30 years ago.



Turns 30



A toast to celebrate 30 years of TILL preceded opening remarks by Dafna and testimonials by staff, families and individuals on their personal and unique experiences with TILL over the past 30 years.

The presentations concluded with a showing of "Handle with Care", a film orchestrated by Paula Aiesi and John Stevens.

Look for TILL's 30th Anniversary Slide Show on our website at www.tillinc.org and thanks to everyone who put so much effort into making it a memorable event and to everyone who is a part of TILL's services, past, present and future.

We Look Forward to the Next 30 Years!

Happy Anniversary

The following employees were invited to an anniversary breakfast to celebrate their 5, 10, 15, 20, and 25 years of service with TILL. This was held at the Westin Hotel in Waltham in August. Congratulations and thank you to the following dedicated and experienced employees:

Employees With 30 Years of Service

Dafna Krouk-Gordon

Employees With 20 Years of Service

Paula Aiesi Michael Marcolongo

Employees With 15 Years of Service

Sandra Cummins

Employees With 10 Years of Service

William Garland David Karaya
Patrice Leach Kathleen Weber

Employees With 5 Years of Service

Annette Alleyne	Timothy Jones
Ruyter Bellevue	Rolda Lawrence
Rahel Berhanu	Girtha O'Neal
Benjamin Blankson	Louna Philogene
Elizabeth Boakye	Gilbert Pierce
Karin Connolly	Binn-Tu Pierre
Heather Dalton	Carole Sullivan
Cliffon Downer	Marlene Thorpe
Solange Eugene	Norma Thorpe
Abigael Gibendi	Douglass Townsend
Theresa Guay	Herbert Uzochukwu
Deborah Harding	Lucy Wamichw
Wesley Hori	Norma Aubin

Annual Fund Donations

TILL and the individuals we support are most appreciative of the recent donations that have been made by the following generous people and companies during the period from January 1, 2010 to November 30, 2010.

TILL General Donations

President's Club

\$10,000 and above

Horace Nicholas & John
Werly- Saquish Foundation

Patron

\$2500-\$4999

Howard Reef
Kevin Meagher
Robert Rivers, President-
Eastern Bank Charitable
Foundation

Benefactor

\$1000-\$2499

Ed Wallack
Dafna Krouk-Gordon
Louis Cersosima-
International Order of
Alhambra
John & Steve Greene
Gustav Christensen
John O'Brien

Sustainer

\$500-\$999

Martin Ring-- *In memory of
Jeanette Ring*
Barbara Jackins
Thomas Larkin
Francis Vaughan

Sponsor

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Christine Paulson
James Ganota
James Herscot
John Brown
George White
Colleen Doherty
Arnis Berger
Julie Casanave
Patricia Soriano
*In memory of Eleanor P.
Reardon*

Supporter

\$100-\$249

Francis & Teresa Vaughan
*In honor of James
Cullinane*
Lenore Babbitt
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In honor of Kathleen O'Neil
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William Reid
Frederick Foppiano
*In memory of Eileen
Foppiano*
Kenneth Saleski
Sharon Kreder
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Margaret Spence
Robert Tobin
Richard Perlmutter
Dennis Harmon
Diane McCormack
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Tom Taranto
In honor of Mark Taylor

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In honor of Mary Ellen
James McGunnigal
Robert Lincoln
Maureen Wright & Bayada
Nurses
*In memory of Eileen
O'Meara*
James McGunnigal
Wayne Leigh
Joanna Chicko
*In honor of Cindy Anderson
& Gina Shulimson*
Joan Katz
Julian Wierzbicki
Marcella Brackett
Mary Lang
Ronald Roman
Josephine Corbosiero
Stephen Magazzu & Family

Orazio Magazzu
Pia Ferraro & Frank Mercurio
William Cohane
Josephine Cucinotta
Malcolm Roberts
In honor of Tabia Roberts
Michael Ekstrand

In memory of Leonard Grace

Rauni Moody
Robert Cavanaugh
Ronald Jordan
Raymond Shaw
Rosalene Tarvis
Christine Hammond
Stephen Niemi

In memory of Linda Tobin

Lars Jussaume
Patrick Burns
Kevin Carmody
Paul Boucher
Stephen Hall
Neil Cohen
Alana Brassard
Kenneth Lavallee
Richard Dastous
Kathleen Sheehan
Leon Descoteaux
Mary Lang
Paula Carr
Pauline Allard
Paul Kheboian
Carol Wesley
Louise Sigman

In memory of Debra Rowell

Michael Lindblom
Paul and Stephen Leclair
Burgin, Platner & Hurley Ins.
Agency
David & Aprille Lindblom
Phyllis Lindblom
Matthew Lindblom
Mary Ann Hunter
James Thomas

In memory of James Olson

John Welch
Stephen Hunter
Deborah Martin
John Jenkins
Rita Morison
Joseph Collins
Patrick Munroe
Joseph Watts
Vincent Walker
Richard Cosetta
Gerard Kupchunos
David Pothier
William Connolly
Helena Meade

In memory of James Cullinane

Glenn Cadagan
Richard Bowler
Richard & Dorothy
McSweeney
Ruth DiPietro
John Mulcahy, Jr.
Gilbert Miller
Ann Stanton
Paul Doherty
P. Ann & C. Gerald
Lohnes
William Kirchner

Friends of TILL Games Donations

Jerrold Yos
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Sally O'Malley
Martha Wilcon
Bernard Planeta / Yankee Corps
Joseph Ostiguy
Mark Granger

In Memory and Fondness as We Say Goodbye

Carmen Ortero - passed away on April 28, 2010. Carmen was a participant at our Watertown Day Program for many years. She came to our Beech Street, Roslindale home and then moved to our Gibson Avenue residence in Dedham. Carmen loved music, had a great sense of humor and a winning mischievous side that endeared her to everyone.

Joann Greene - passed away on May 18, 2010, following a hospital stay due to respiratory problems. Joann joined TILL at our Meadowbank Road, Billerica residence and then moved to our new Chelmsford residence. Joann was born in Lowell on August 20, 1943, a gentle presence with a sweet personality that everyone enjoyed.

Edna May Miller - who resided at our Meadowbank Road Residence in Billerica, passed away on September 11, 2010 at age 82. Edna's warm and winning smile and love of life brought joy to her housemates and all who knew her. She will be missed.

Stanley Featherman - passed away on October 31, 2010 at age 75. Stanley lived in a TILL Specialized Home Care life share placement in Milford, MA. Stanley lived most of his life in Framingham, where he was active in the community. He will be remembered and missed for his humor and generous spirit.

Jim Cullinane - passed away on August 29, 2010. Jim began his connection with TILL in 1982 when he left Waltham's Met State Hospital as it was closing its last units. He lived in several TILL homes as his needs changed until his final move to our newly built home that was completed in August, 2010 in Burlington. Jim is survived by 12 nieces and nephews as well as many grand nieces and nephews. Jim will be missed by the many people whose lives he touched during his many years as part of the TILL Family.

Jim's sister and brother could always be counted on to be at TILL parties, celebration and sporting events. He will be remembered for his love of Irish jigs and his sense of humor. Jim will be truly missed.

Arthur Leary - passed away on May 10, 2010 at Good Samaritan Medical Center. Arthur originally attended our Westwood Respite Center until he moved to our Brockton Residence and then to our beautiful new home in Bridgewater. Arthur was a regular at our track and softball programs and everyone enjoyed his easy-going personality.



Above and Beyond

In an effort to recognize the fine work of many of our employees, TILL has instituted the Above and Beyond program. Over the past few months, we have already recognized some dozen employees for "Random Acts of Kindness" and going "Above and Beyond" in the performance of their jobs. These acts can be reported by email to aboveandbeyond@tillinc.org. Employees who earn this distinction are noted in the main conference room in Dedham with their certificate and also appear in our monthly employee newsletter, the TNN. If you know someone who has gone that extra mile in the performance of their job, let us know so we can share their story.

Employees who have been recognized for going "Above and Beyond" in 2010:

Fabian Ojoko - For fostering teamwork within his cluster

Aloys Gomwe - For his outstanding work and dedication in getting all TILL contracts out and renewed.

Elizabeth Waters - For her professionalism and sensitivity in engaging one of her participants in the day's activities.

Deb Fantasia - For working with her cluster participants on "Operation Write Home".

Penny Rickard - For the time she has spent training our staff.

Andrea Libby - For helping to clean up at TILL Games

Michelle Haley - For taking the initiative to start a weekly Art Club.

Ann Hewitt - For assistance in the creation of a weekly Art Club.

Rose Karaya - For all the extra work you do to help your co-workers

Donna Bonito - For the welcoming and professional atmosphere you have created in overseeing TILL's STRATTUS Mental Health Center

Ann Santorius - For your positive attitude and willingness to pitch in whenever needed.

Christa Contois - For the initiative you show in learning new resources.

Francesca Foti - For your responsiveness and one to one attention.

Marsha Hamilton - For extending a helping hand to a perspective TILL employee with car trouble.

Heidi Torries - For your positive and welcoming attitude when the HR Department places an intern at your program.

The Billerica Day Hab Employees
For hosting a Thanksgiving day celebration for the Individuals and their families.

The Newton Residential Employees-
For your wonderful work with one of our individuals.

The Mount Grove 1 Residential Employees
For the support and services you provide.

The Yemallo Drive, Brockton Residential Employees
For providing such a warm, stimulating, stable Residential Employees home.

Ask the Administrators

Communication is key to ensuring that information gets transmitted to all levels and locations of our agency. As one way of meeting this need, TILL began “Ask the Administrators” meetings. These sessions give our employees an opportunity to speak directly with our administrative staff about whatever is on their minds.

On February 1st, President and Founder Dafna Krouk-Gordon and Vice Presidents Chris Sweeney, Kevin Stock and Linda Naclerio met with 27 TILL employees at our Dedham office. After a delicious lunch provided by Panera Bread, the Administrators answered questions and engaged in a productive dialogue with participants. Questions ranged from paperless payroll, to maintenance, the budget and the future of TILL. Ideas were raised for rewarding long term employees, restructuring the TNN, our employee newsletter and updating relief lists.

Since February 1st, over 100 employees have signed up for the chats. We have varied the days, location and hours to accommodate schedules to make it possible for everyone to participate.

Subsequent sessions have resulted in implementing several new ideas suggested by staff and have proved to be a productive forum for the exchange of ideas and information. We plan to continue the meetings with some modifications based on the suggestions participants have offered. TILL has always believed in empowering our talented and dedicated employees and Ask the Administrators is one more way to keep the lines of communication open.

Return Service Requested

Dedham, MA 02026-2056

20 Eastbrook Road

Eastbrook Executive Park

Toward Independent Living and Learning (TILL), Inc.

THE TILLEGRAM

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