

THE TILLEGRAM

Summer 2012

Toward Independent Living and Learning, Inc.

From the President



April Madness is a true testament to TILL's belief and commitment to full integration in one's community. We do not simply exist in a neighborhood; we become a part of it and, by doing so, we partake in its activities, we enhance the economics of a town by being consumers and, most importantly, we

feel a social responsibility to helping others. We exemplify this belief through volunteerism, raising money for causes which represent our programs' interests and by an awareness of our planet and its precious resources. The numerous volunteer efforts you will read about in this TILLEGram are but a few examples of how our programs reach out to their neighbors.

Each year TILL includes as part of its strategic plan a goal of improving our homes, our day programs and this year we included our administrative office as well. Our purpose is to keep up with individuals' changing needs as well as ensuring that we remain current with existing work and living trends and styles. We rely on our readers' generous support and donations which enable us to continue to beautify our spaces since our own public contract funds do not allow for any such upgrades.

This year entailed a major renovation of TILL's administrative office in Dedham, a facelift long overdue after 20 years in the same space. It required a masterful orchestration of moving offices to temporary quarters on the first floor and then back again. Everyone loves our new décor, furnishings and layout and feel more productive and efficient in our re-designed beautiful space.

Our unique International Ambassador Service Learning project is the first of its kind where individuals and staff form a working group where differences are minimized and everyone is encouraged to stretch themselves beyond their comfort zone. We are very proud of this program which promises to bring us to new and exciting places in the future. Our commitment to creating opportunities in which people with special needs view themselves as giving service to others rather than always being recipients of support is obvious in our service learning projects. We live, work and play with an awareness of the message we send to society about what people can do, not what they can't do. We look forward to working with you, our readers, as we continue to create new service models and exciting opportunities.

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

HUB Charity Golf Tournament

*H*UB International, a leading global insurance brokerage providing a broad array of insurance products and services worldwide, sponsored a charity golf tournament to support an endeavor of their choice. This year, TILL was very fortunate to have been chosen as the recipient of the funds raised from this charity event.

The 15th annual HUB International Charity Golf Tournament was held on June 11th at the Andover Country Club. 18 teams, supported by corporate sponsors, participated with all benefits going to TILL. We sent our own "fearsome foursome" to compete, including John Stevens, Director of Special Projects, Carol Morrell, RN at our Hudson Day Program, Brad Stokes and Ken Saleski, parents of individuals in our Union Street, Weymouth home.

The beautiful weather and surroundings at the Andover Country Club served as a perfect back drop for the enthusiasm and excitement for all the players.

Our fearsome foursome's impressive performance was followed by a delicious buffet luncheon, raffle and awards as a perfect ending for this day. We were thrilled to learn that this benefit raised \$24,000 for TILL. Thank you to everyone at HUB, to Kevin Meagher, our loyal HUB representative over our years of business, and to all the golfers who participated in the day.



Beautifying our Work, Home and Play Environments!

ur continued commitment to providing user friendly, attractive spaces resulted in several renovations and additions this year:

Dedham Office Renovations

Our administrative quarters have grown over the 20 years since we first moved in. A major renovation to reflect our current services was needed. It required a masterful orchestration of moving offices to temporary quarters on the first floor and then back again. We spent four months overhauling every inch of space for our administration, support services, and STRATTUS.

The 53 people who use Dedham as their primary office showed great spirit as they moved from one packing box to another and were happy to be resettled in our attractive new space in April.



Page Road Moves

Our Page Road home moved to a spacious new location on Elmbrook Circle, a quiet, picturesque street in Bedford. It offers ample parking, large bright living space, accessible bathrooms, hallways, back yard and patio. Everyone was thrilled with their new quarters and each person proudly selected their own rooms. They can't wait to show off their new home to friends and neighbors alike.



New Home in Danvers

We took over the operation of a North Shore home which we relocated to Forest Street in Danvers. Thanks to the ground work laid by TILL's Director of Residential Services, Ed Castelli, Assistant Director Sandy Cummins and Cluster Coordinator Tanya Amato, the four women made a seamless transition to their new home and agency. We look forward to working with their families as the home becomes part of TILL's growing family.

We were pleased to be awarded a new "Rolland" home, part of the state's implementation of the settlement agreement to reduce the numbers of people inappropriately placed in nursing homes. We are currently undergoing the renovation of a house in Burlington, which will be a home to five people when it is completed with a new 3 bedroom addition and 2 handicap accessible bathrooms.



TILL-New Hampshire Creates a Splash

TILL-NH held the first of its “Really Fun Events” on June 23rd at the New England Aquarium in Boston. The kick-off event was attended by over 25 individuals, family members, providers and staff. Everyone enjoyed the “Touch Tanks” at the aquarium, which was fun for everyone as they interacted with sharks and rays.

Beach Day at Hampton State Park was enjoyed by 12 families and friends as people swam in the ocean under beautiful blue skies. Jonathan and Theresa couldn't get enough of the water and had to be coaxed to join everyone for a beach picnic, Frisbee football, boogie boards and capturing crabs on the bottom of the ocean floor only to be surprised as they learned that crabs really do bite. These were just some of the activities in this great beach, fun filled day.

It was a perfect ending when Teri casually mentioned that she wanted an ice coffee on the way home, which started a contagious thirst with everyone insisting that they had to end this perfect summer day with this refreshment.

The friendships and connections which have resulted from these outings are great to see. We hope everyone will join in at the upcoming events including plays at the Palace Theater in Manchester, Fisher Cats Baseball and bowling.



New Manager for Springboard



TILL is pleased to welcome Dale Belcher as our new Springboard Manager. Dale's experience in working with many of our individual support clients, coupled with his warm personality and enthusiasm will help Springboard grow to the next phase of the club with attention paid to incoming junior members as well as alumni members.

Springboard is a “member's only social club” for individuals with learning disabilities and Aspergers Syndrome. Started by families who were frustrated with the lack of opportunities for their children to meet others like themselves with similar interests, Springboard has become an invaluable support to

so many. TILL took over the operation of Springboard in 2000 at the request of parents to help it grow beyond their volunteer efforts. It currently serves over 110 members, offering a wide range of social and networking opportunities. Springboard is not an activity club where people go to be entertained but rather a club where members learn to create their own entertainment, to follow their own interests and make social connections. As many families and members repeatedly express the value of it in their lives:

“I don't know what I did before Springboard. Now I have a life and friends of my own.”

Check out our new Springboard website which you can access through www.tillinc.org and click on the Springboard tab.

April Madness 2012 - "Do You Believe In Magic"

The 13th TILL April Madness came to a close this June.

This agency wide contest, designed as a scavenger hunt with a unique community theme each year, inspires our staff and individuals to work as a team to find creative ways to connect to their communities and expand their social and recreational networks. A packet of challenges or "quests" serve as a guide to each year's contest. 2012's theme, "Do You Believe in Magic" proved that our programs not only believe in magic but can create it as well. Among the many wonderful accomplishments this year was our ongoing support of Project Bread's Walk for Hunger. 47 TILL homes participated in the May 6th event and they collectively raised over \$3300 to fight hunger.

Other volunteer efforts included aid for numerous local food pantries, animal shelters, libraries and support for our troops overseas, along with our consciousness about our inter-dependent relationship with the environment; our programs paid 260 visits to Audubon Nature sites throughout Eastern Mass.

Teams went rock climbing, kayaking, horseback riding, ran a carnival, visited New York City and Niagara Falls, helped clean up the planet with Earth Day Activities and reached out to each other for lunches, dinners and celebrations.

It culminated with two Cultural Festivals held in June. On June 3rd at UMASS Lowell the audience was treated to a performance of a traditional



Kenyan Dance by Sapere Clan, a dance troupe composed of TILL staff, choreographed and initiated by direct support staff.

Each year, our last quest is called WOW. The quest simply requires that when we look at the presentation, our reaction is... Wow! Well we were indeed WOWed this year, with trips to Niagara Falls, Magic Shows, the Cirque de Soleil and kayaking among the many amazing activities.

This year's Best In Show, overall winner went to the staff and individuals at our Peabody Home.

Our Day Program Festival was celebrated on June 20th at the Billerica Day Hab. TILL Central-Billerica won the honors in their category, and Cluster 3-Billerica took best Day Program Cluster. Overall Day Program went to Billerica Day.



Your Voices Count - You

Thanks to your advocacy, the Massachusetts Legislature, in a veto and restored the Salary Reserve to the State Budget. employees earning under \$40,000 per year who are under employees in January 2013.

TILL Team Completes Service Learning Project in Costa Rica

Paula Aiesi led an eight person team to complete TILL's first Service Learning Abroad Program. The Program was funded by a grant from the Blue Hills Bank Charitable Foundation and the Saquish Foundation.



During our first Costa Rica trip in October, 2011, we laid the ground work for the trip. TILL would supply paint and supplies for renovation of a long neglected Community Center in Ujarras, which hadn't been touched for 20 years. Our ambassadors, together with local volunteers, completed this incredible task in 3, 90 degree days.

This service learning project is part of TILL's International Ambassador Program, which gives TILL staff an opportunity to travel to other countries to exchange techniques for improving the lives of individuals with disabilities. It is a unique opportunity to view other cultures and techniques in our profession of human services.

Meetings with local self advocacy groups from the Independent Living Center in Buenos Aires provided an opportunity to share examples of the struggle that we in the U.S. have had with disability rights and issues as well as hear their similar stories. We were struck with the similarities despite the differences in language and culture.

Our volunteer team included Paula Aiesi, Director of Community Connections, Dafna-Krouk Gordon, President and Founder of TILL, Flor Pueriet, Residential Coordinator, Nelsy Fernandez, Residential Manager and Margaret Nabukenya, Residential Support Professional, David Kirby and Chandler Rush, students from Lexington High School, and Katie Habif from our Brighton apartments were a part of the work group.

TILL values the educational and practical value of our International Service Learning Ambassador Program and will continue to expand and grow both projects.

It was an eye opening and educational experience for all involved. Flor described the trip as an unforgettable experience that opened up many doors. Nelsy emphatically noted, "If I had the opportunity to go again, I won't think twice. Helping others is what I like best about my job at TILL and the most rewarding part of the trip was the satisfaction of helping others."



Spoke and They Listened!
unanimous show of support, has reversed Governor Patrick's The Salary Reserve provides funding to increase wages of contract with DDS. Funds are expected to be available to



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 December, 2011 to June 30, 2012.

TILL General Donations

President's Club

\$10,000 and above

Sandra S. Dubner, Per Rep
Marjorie E. Roberts Estate
*For Leslie Pickering in Memory
of Marjorie Roberts*

Patron

\$2,500-\$5,000

Benefactor

\$1,000-\$2,499

Internal Order of Alhambra
Family Quarters
Sovereign Bank
Annual Cultural Festival
Carleton-Willard Village
Residents' Association

Sustainer

\$500-\$999

James Herscot
Community Connection

Sponsor

\$250-\$499

Barbara Jackins

Supporter

\$100-\$249

Irving C. Fisher
India Fuller
In Honor of Cora Fuller
Frederick J. Foppiano
In Honor of Stephen Foppiano
In Memory of Eileen Foppiano
Rosemary Stewart
Ruby Harrison
Memory of Daughter-in-law, Micka
Francis & Teresa Vaughan
In Memory of brother, Bill Cullinane
Andrew & Janice Krim
William N.D. Reid
Martin Adolphe
In Honor of son, Joshua
Sally O'Malley
For Chelsea Day Hab
Ronald & Irene Pickering

Shirley Duggan, Rep Payee
For Paul E. McElroy
In Honor of Paul McElroy
Adria Hodas
In Memory of Janice Cranje
Bradford & Andrea Stokes
HUB International Golf Tournament
Kenneth & Diane Saleski
HUB International Golf Tournament

Friend

Under \$100

Martha Wilcon
Mary Reardon
*Watertown Day Hab in Honor of
her sister, Joyce*
Robert & Jean Lincoln
James McGunnigal
Dennis Harmon
In Memory of Pamela Harmon
Mary Griffin
In Honor of Billy Mahoney
Bernard & Mary Jane Schram
Dorothy Nuzzo
In Honor of Bobby Nuzzo
William Morella
*In Memory of Marguerite
(Peggy) Cappola*
Peter & Carol Foley
Lionel & Betty Richard
In Memory of Stephen Bianco
Joan Mahoney & Kathleen Ferguson
In Honor of the Easton Res. Staff
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Quirk

In Memory of Joseph Doyle

Marjorie Sullivan Turley
James & Barbara Ochs
District #1 Lacrosse
Eastern MA Lacrosse Officials Assoc.
Barbara Goldrick
Nancy Goldrick
Elaine Lombardozzi
Peter & Patricia Morris
Mary Bailey
Matthew & Joyce Viets
Lawrence & Edna Keefe
Clare McGowan
Ann Sweeney
Kathleen Begley
Diana Esposito
Eileen O'Brien
Paul & Lucille McGrady

Betty Reeves
David & Pamela Cunningham
Nicholas & Marie Accomando
Leonard & Joyce Levine
Judith Coyle-Fraser
Elaine Colarossi
Lucille Digravio
Frances Martuscello
MacKenzie & Helen Irvin

In Memory of Dolores Heywood

Raeann Fizer
Mary Collins
Alison Felix
David & Dora Manning
Jason Roberts Challenger League
Janine Tayag

North Shore Spring Gala

Stephanie Valente
Eleanor Faye
Janice Land, Rep Payee
for Meghan Lamb
John & Marie MacDonald
Elizabeth Warburton
Susan Staeker
Carmela & Jennifer Bumbaca
Gustav & Vibeke Christensen
Joyce Warburton
Kristen Patel
Farbre Sanders
Donna Tardiff

In Honor of Alden Road

Leigh A. Radtke
David & Judith Beningson
In Honor of Bill Flynn

Friends of Springboard

Elliot & Alma Ring
In Memory of Jeanette Ring
Courtney Forrester of
Sweet Cupcakes
Nora Bogot, Trustee
for Ida Davidson

**You can make your tax deductible
donation safely and securely by going
to www.tillinc.org.**

Above and Beyond

Each month, TILL's Professional Development Committee awards a Certificate of Appreciation to employees who have gone that extra step in the performance of their duties. Certificates are on display in a book in our administrative offices. Thank you and congratulations to all of our employees who have gone that extra step.

TILL recognizes the following employees with thanks for all of your efforts:

Ken Carter, I.T. Manager, and Chris Desjardins, Network Administrator, for their thorough preparation and hard work during the office relocation as they moved all of the voice mail and computer equipment to the first floor and for working so diligently with the contractors throughout the construction process to ensure that we were not down for even a minute - the true definition of seamless transition.

Nelsy Fernandez, Residence Manager of Alden Rd., and Tanya Amato, Residential Coordinator, were recognized by the Casanave and Flynn families. They wrote: "In celebration of our nearly ten years together we want to express our appreciation for having the perfect TEAM, under the leadership of Nelsy Fernandez and under the guidance of Tanya Amato. These women possess such a positive attitude toward their work and toward our sons that it is easily being reflected by the rest of the Alden staff. They regard Alden House not merely as their worksite but as an extension of their own homes. We feel this attitude is the reason our sons are so happy and content."

Margaret Ruhieu, Community RN, and Marvel Larose, LPN, Austin St.: The transition of a new individual to Austin St. would not have gone as well without their help! They put in extra hours, provided multiple trainings for staff, and provided clinical guidance for all.

Josefina Fernandez, Residential Support Professional, Burley St.: The ladies from Burley St. looked beautiful at the Spring Gala! She individually tailored more than six dresses on her own time and the ladies dazzled the event with pride! She danced with all the ladies at the Gala and made it a night to remember.

Annie Sartorius, RN, Hudson Day Program: For preventing a potential and serious medication error. Due to her keen eye and attention to detail, she noticed the pharmacy had given the wrong medication to an individual. She promptly fixed the problem with the pharmacy.

Tanya Gagnon, Residence Manager, 250 East Main St., Westboro and Winstine Pryce, Residence Manager, 250A East Main St., Westboro: Thank you for hosting a gathering for area legislators. Your pride as you led the tour helped our guests to understand what makes your program and TILL special and your focus on the individual's interests and accomplishments gave our visitors the opportunity to get to know the people whom they represent.

Andrea Gaudette, resident of Westboro: For welcoming your legislators into your home. She was a wonderful tour guide and self-advocate!

Tre Guay, Assistant Director of Residences; Tanya Amato, Residential Coordinator Cluster 2; Lana Magao, Residential Coordinator Cluster 3; and Flor Poueriet, Residential Coordinator Cluster 7: Thank you for making the Spring Gala one of TILL's finest moments! You danced, smiled and kept the positive flow of enthusiasm all night.

Anthony Weeks, Residential Support Professional, Melville Avenue:

For providing great support to the Glide Street residence! Not only did he willingly assist with medication administration at Glide Street each week, he provided training and support for the staff getting ready to take the MAP exam.

Meghan Willis, Clinician, STRATTUS Mental Health Clinic:

When seeking a senior level supervisor for STRATTUS@TILL, the goal is to secure an experienced clinician with strong clinical, supervisory and interpersonal skills; a commitment to ensuring ethical, quality care; and a team member invested in the clinic and parent agency. When STRATTUS hired Meghan Willis, LICSW, we hit the jackpot. Ms. Willis, who has been with STRATTUS since 2006, embodies the best qualities of a clinical team member but also goes over and above as a caring colleague. She is always there with the kind word, the handwritten note, the extra few minutes, the offer to do more, the willingness to pick up the slack and the just-right attitude to ensure that things get done and done well.

Ileana Ramos, RSP from Burley St.: When one of the ladies was recovering from surgery, she went out of her way to spend time with her both in the hospital and rehab. She truly cares about the individuals she supports.

Victoria Champigny, Residence Manager, School St., Acton went above and beyond providing care for an individual who has been hospitalized. She spent countless hours at the hospital to ensure the best care possible was being provided, while still performing her expected duties as a Manager. The individual's mother raved about her excellent care and concern for her son.

Tanya Amato, Residential Coordinator and Jennifer Ferris, Residence Manager, Lynnfield

The MacDonald family would like to express their heartfelt thanks and appreciation to Tanya and the staff responsible for making their daughter feel as if she has always been a part of the TILL family. The time and work they put into coordinating their daughter's move is unparalleled. The MacDonald family felt very fortunate to have you working so closely with them which resulted in making a smooth transition for their daughter.

Norma Thorpe, DSP, Watertown Day Habilitation Program has gone above and beyond with a participant of the Watertown Day Hab. Her calm and respectful approach has helped an individual participate in daily activities with his peers and taught him to express his needs and wants appropriately. She is a positive role model.

Svetlana Magao, Residential Coordinator for helping the Forest St. Residence in Danvers in a time of need. She went above and beyond to help cover hours in a house she does not oversee. She is a true team player - she looks out for others' as well as her own programs.

Rebecca Atinga, DSP; Kwame Boateng, DSP; Tiana Boykin, Site Supervisor Stacy Golden, Manager; Calvin Jones, DSP; Jason Klein, DSP; Sonia Rosado, DSP; Watertown Day Habilitation and TILL Central Programs.

Were recognized for the professional manner with which they represented both the Watertown Day Programs and TILL at the recent Art Reception. Aside from pitching in where they were needed, they made their guests feel welcome and explained our mission.

Above and Beyond *Continued*

Thien Simpson, RSP and Macharia Githui, RSP of Gibson Ave. for an outstanding job fulfilling the program needs and expectations. They showed great leadership and are an asset for the new employees of Gibson. They assisted them in learning daily paperwork, creating new recreational activities, administering medications and always looking out for what the individuals want or need on a daily basis. All of their dedication is greatly appreciated!

Stephanie Louis, RSP of Lexington for her flexibility many times during her time here at TILL. Whenever assistance with coverage is needed, she is so very willing to help. She has also assisted with coverage at other residences too. Stephanie's drive is visible day by day. She is willing to do what it takes to make sure that the individuals are happy. Recently, at social club, Stephanie was very willing to help individuals from the other home without any questions asked. Stephanie has been a great asset to the team here and all her hard work is appreciated.

Wesley Hori, Senior DSP, for going out of his way to provide a ride for his co-worker who lost her transportation. Wesley picks her up every morning and takes her home each day. Because of him, this woman has been able to get to and from work consistently.

Heather Gardner, RSP; Jennifer Clark, RSP; Jacqueline Carey, RSP; Janet Billmyer, RSP; Lynn Barney, RSP; Yosief Assefa, RSP; Robin Diedrich, Residence Manager, all of the Maynard Residence

Because of their effort, the Maynard program has managed to use no overtime over the past few months! Their schedule flexibility and willingness to assist wherever needed has made this possible!

Tonia Harris-Hughes, RSP at Hamilton St. for helping while her manager was on vacation! During a phone outage, Tonia has gone above and beyond during this challenging time, using her own cell phone to call individuals' families with updates and give them the peace of mind of being able to contact her during her shifts. Tonia's independence in keeping the program running smoothly is greatly appreciated!

Terrence Wallace, RSP, and Marian Van Stone, RSP, of Ninth St. Stoughton were the dynamic duo while their manager was out of the country on vacation! Terrence and Minna supported one of the individuals through a hospitalization and another through a challenging benefits process. Both Terrence and Minna have taken it upon themselves to ensure that the residence is fully covered, checking the schedule and calling for staff as needed. They have even flexed hours as much as possible to reduce OT, without being asked!

In Memory and Fondness as We Say Goodbye . . .



Amy Fitzgerald - January 11, 2012

Amy Fitzgerald was a long time member of our Watertown Day Program. Amy is survived by many aunts and cousins, many by her side when she passed. Amy was born on April 3, 1972 and graduated from the Perkins School for the Blind in 1992. She was a Watertown Day for 5 years. She loved music, getting out in the community, and being pampered by having her nails and hair done. Her smile and positive personality will be missed.



Susanne Viegas - March 2, 2012

Susanne was the only child of Maria and Jose Viegas. She was born in Marlboro on September 18, 1972 and lived in Hudson all of her life. Susanne was a member of our Hudson Day Program. She loved music, looking at her books and any recreational activity, but especially April Madness activities.



Peggy Coppola - April 6, 2012

Peggy Coppola was born on September 6, 1960. Peggy lived in our Andover Street, Danvers residence. She originally attended our Billerica Day Program and recently moved to our Chelsea Day Program. Peggy had an endearing quality that touched everyone who met her. Peggy loved coffee, going out to dinner, small stuffed animals, purses, movies and holidays. She especially loved Christmas and would move her favorite chair when she felt it was time to make way for their Christmas tree. She was a regular participant in our bowling and track programs. Peggy often appeared to be "up to something" and many times she was. Peggy is and will be missed by the many lives she touched.



Janice Cronje - April 19, 2012

Janice was born on April 21, 1943. Janice resided at TILL's Andover Street, Danvers home. Originally a member of our Billerica Day Program, she eventually moved to our Chelsea Program with her friend Peggy. Since Janice's birthday fell during our April Madness contest, it became a tradition to bring a donation for the Walk for Hunger to her party and many hundreds of dollars were raised over the years for the walk. Janice passed just two days before her birthday and to honor this tradition, a party for her once again helped raise money for the Walk. Her family and friends also planted a tree at her home in her memory.



Girtha O'Neal - July 20, 2012

Girtha O'Neal passed away after an illness. She was a member of TILL's Family Support Service Team. Girtha was a skills trainer and her easy and friendly manner made her both welcome and effective in her job. Born in Ellisville, MS of February 28, 1941, Girtha will be missed by her colleagues and by the many whose lives she touched.



Marianne Fernades - August 11, 2012

Marianne only recently joined TILL when we took over the supervision of her North Shore home and moved her and her roommates into a newly renovated home on Forest Street in Danvers. Marianne was born on August 18, 1980, and though we only knew her a short time, we enjoyed her laughter and her smile. She loved spending time with her family and friends and will be missed by all.



Clara Winnier - August 12, 2012

Clara was born on May 28, 1918 and came to TILL's Ralph Talbot home in Weymouth in July, 2010 as part of the "Rolland" settlement. She exhibited a joy in the simple things of life. She loved to shop and bake and had a sweet tooth. During last year's April Madness, Clara was delighted with a spa day where she got the "full treatment". She also experienced kite flying for the first time in her life, and was so delighted with it that she managed to get three aloft from her wheelchair. Her sweet smile and zest for life will be missed.