

THE TILL EGRAM

Winter 2020

Toward Independent Living and Learning, Inc.

TILL was founded in 1980 with a mission to create community based residential, vocational and support services to help people reach their full potential and attain an optimal quality of life. Forty years later, our commitment to person-centered services supporting the self-direction and personal choice of those whom we serve remains as strong as ever, as defined in our mission:

Toward Independent Living and Learning (TILL) is committed to working with individuals and their families to create meaningful lives, connected to one's community and all that it has to offer. We realize this mission through individualized residential, vocational, therapeutic, and support service opportunities, ever growing, learning and changing together with the individuals and families we support. Central to all of our services is the recognition of each person's right to self-expression and self-determination in managing their life.

Our vision is to create partnerships with people seeking services, with families and caregivers, advocacy groups, policy makers and other service providers; to respect the creative, entrepreneurial and professional talents of our staff through teamwork; to recognize



the dignity and rights of those requesting services; to acknowledge the value and expertise of the community and caregivers; and to provide leadership in the development of community services. We pride ourselves on innovation, attention to detail, and on accepting nothing less than excellence in the delivery of our services. We are committed to creating a professional environment that is exciting, dynamic and supports people through all stages of life.

TILL recognizes that an invaluable resource lies in its workforce and is therefore committed to creating a work environment that expands learning, offers career growth opportunities, and satisfaction in knowing that each of us can and does MAKE A DIFFERENCE in someone else's life.

TILL Named to Top 100 Women-Led Businesses for the 5th Consecutive Year!

For the fifth year in a row, TILL was recognized as one of the Top 100 Women-Led Businesses in Massachusetts, by the Commonwealth Institute. Dafna Krouk-Gordon, TILL Founder and President, celebrated with staff and business associates at the early morning breakfast at the Boston Marriott, Copley Place. Thank you to all TILL employees for the team effort that made this honor possible.



Connecting You To Care

We are excited to announce that Rewarding Work will soon have a whole new look! Our all-new website will make it easier for employers and caregivers to connect with each other with mobile friendly and accessible functionality.



RewardingWork

Connecting to Care

Its intuitive features make the website easy to navigate, and user "dashboards" organize account information and tools all in one place. Rewarding Work, an affiliate of TILL, is currently available in MA, CT and KS, and provides information and resources specifically for our state partners. Our new logo – sharing TILL colors – completes our fresh new look. Thank you to our partners at Bartlett Interactive for their help in creating this beautiful site. www.rewardingwork.org

From the President



Dear Friends,
Families, and
Colleagues,

Four decades is a long time, yet a mere moment given how much more needs to be done to change society's expectations and perceptions of

people with specialized needs.

It has taken the dedication of so many to accomplish change over the past forty years, when the shift to community based services began. Together we have moved mountains, unthinkable when large institutions were the only alternative.

TILL, which operates over 68 residential, vocational, clinical and support sites, is committed to supporting people as they stay in our programs and age in place, and to developing new models of independent living and learning as new people join us.

We are fortunate to have many creative staff who have "grown up with TILL." Over the next decade, TILL will contribute to the effort to elevate the image and importance of the field of human services so that competitive benefits, pay, respect and professional opportunities are the norm, not the exception.

To the people we support, who teach us as much as we teach them, and to the families and professionals who transform lives, thank you. I look forward to a great new decade.

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

Stay In Touch

Email info@tillinc.org to receive important news via email, update your mailing address or find out more about TILL's services. Keep up with the news, events and more: like [tillinc](#) on Facebook, follow [@tillinc](#) on Twitter, and [@till.inc](#) on Instagram.



TILL Receives Community Investment Grant

Our business partner, Michael Ward, Principal at One Digital, presented Chris Sweeney, TILL's VP of Human Resources, with a check from Blue Cross Blue Shield's Community Investment Program. Each year, BCBS offers its support to selected non-profit organizations through this grant program. Thank you!



HR Excellence

TILL has once again received 100 percent compliance in a CORI audit conducted by the Commonwealth of MA Division of Investigations for DDS. Thanks go to Chris Sweeney and her HR team for achieving excellence year after year!

Have You Seen Us?

It is a new year, with many exciting opportunities ahead—and **we are hiring!** Keep a lookout for our new posters along the Commuter Rail in these towns: Ashland, Bridgewater, Brockton, Concord, East Weymouth, Framingham, Grafton, Lynn, Natick, Norwood, Readville, Salem, South Weymouth, Southborough, Wellesley, West Concord and Westborough.



We The People

Congratulations to artist Ricardo Coloma, whose work was selected for inclusion in the "We The People" exhibit at the Mosesian Center for the Arts in Watertown! The theme explored the narrative of what it means to be an American Artist today.



TILL Games

TILL Games celebrated its 25th year at the Reggie Lewis Track and Athletic Center on September 7, 2019, with over 200 athletes of all ages and all abilities challenging themselves and their peers in events including running, walking, and power or manual wheelchair races. A true TILL Family Event, our athletes include people supported by TILL, their family members and friends, and TILL staff, their friends, families, children/grandchildren, etc.

Thank you to the Friends of TILL Games for their ongoing support; our Team Members and Fans who make the day a true success, and the Athletes who inspire us all with their determination!



Running for Team TILL



Molly Giffen, an experienced and talented runner, completed the Philadelphia Marathon in November in just 3 hours! Cheering her on, on that blustery day, were her husband, Gary, and representatives from Team TILL.

While preparing for this race, Molly decided to share her run to raise funds for TILL, in honor of her son. Her fundraising page quickly exceeded her goals with the generous support of her family, friends, colleagues and fellow runners.

Team TILL, led by Kingsley Brown, Assistant Director of



Community Connections, traveled to Philly where they positioned themselves to cheer Molly on to her amazing finish time.

Thank you to Molly and her wonderful network of friends for supporting TILL's programs and service.



Global Connections

As part of our continuing exchange with the Neurekerode Community, in Braunsweig, Germany, Casey Boisvert, RN at TILL's Billerica Day Program, and Residence Managers Emily Amezcua and Caitlyn Plummer spent two weeks visiting and working in this large inclusive village. Neurekerode provides a variety of programs and supports to people with disabilities. Emily, Casey and Caitlyn were happy for the opportunity to reconnect with the Neurekerode staff who recently visited TILL.

Caitlyn, Casey, and Emily were warmly welcomed by the Neurekerode community and especially enjoyed re-connecting with recent visitors to TILL.

Go Ahead – You Deserve It

Have you checked out ETC Café and Gifts in Hyde Park and Cravings Café and Gifts in Nashua yet? These local shops not only stock just what you needed, but those truly unique items that you didn't know you needed – until now. Stop in for a luscious treat or that perfect gift at ETC Café and Gifts' new location at 1300 Hyde Park Ave. in Hyde Park, MA, and Cravings Café and Gifts at 64 East Pearl St. in Nashua, NH. Follow us @essenceofthymegiftshopandcafe and @cravingscafe.nashua on Facebook for news, special promotions and events.



Passing the Torch



Linda Naclerio, TILL's VP of Program Services, is retiring after a remarkable career in Human Services. Beginning at Dever State School at the age of 23, Linda has held a variety of positions at several agencies in Massachusetts, which has offered her a 360-degree view of the field.

Joining TILL in 2000, Linda was the Director of Day Services until becoming VP of Program Services in 2007, where she oversees TILL's Residential Services, Individualized Support Options, Health Services and Day Program Services in

addition to Quality Assurance and Systems Administration.

During her tenure at TILL, Linda has seen a major expansion of services and the development of new program models. She is especially proud of her involvement in the creation and implementation of TILL Central. Watching this program and the people involved develop and grow their skills has been one of the most rewarding aspects of her career, as she says, "it gives them a real purpose."

Ready to pass the torch, Linda says, "I can only hope that my years of mentoring and leadership has laid the groundwork for the next generation to carry on this important work."

Oh What Fun!

Here's to another fun and festive holiday season! Thank you to all our families, friends, and employees who made this season extra special in all of our programs, with a special shout out to Paula Aiesi and Kingsley Brown for their endless energy and good cheer during this busy party season!

Congratulations to our Dedham Ugly Sweater Contest Winners: Kevin Stock, Elizabeth MacEachin, Lisa Bastos and Tony Marmanides.



TILL's Autism Support Center thanks the many volunteers who made the annual holiday celebration possible



TRASE Afterschool program students thank TILL staff who participated in TILL's Giving Tree, coordinated by TILL HR. TRASE students appreciated their holiday gifts!