



the sky's the limit

Reaping the benefits of global travel

“Some of the wonderful things to see on the trip were the teamwork and the caring each of you had for one another, with no differentiation between clients and staff,” said Dafna Krouk-Gordon, TILL’s Founder and CEO, to the group of individuals and staff she traveled with to Ireland and Northern Ireland in late spring.

TILL’s Education Through Travel (ETT), has long been a unique employee benefit – offering staff the ability to learn about human services in other countries while expanding their horizons. This combination staff-client trip, described as “a continuous journey of wonder” by Emily Amezquita, an assistant director of residential services at TILL, offered that rare combination of adventure, connection and learning.

Describing a day that began at the Giant’s Causeway along the coast of Northern Ireland, Emily said “the fascinating history of the interlocking basalt columns was matched only by the sheer scale of the landscape. Standing amidst those ancient formations was a profound experience. To cap off this incredible stretch of travel, today transitioned into a meaningful professional exchange with Praxis Care, to discuss our respective agencies and the vital services we provide.”

Eric, a traveler who works at ETC as part of the vocational training program, appreciated the opportunity to connect with his roots. “Seeing where half of my family is from is truly something special and something I won’t ever, ever forget.”

Next up for ETT: Separate trips to Denmark and Greece, Spring 2027

What color is your parachute?

“You’ve got to try things you haven’t done before,” Kerry says, explaining why she is about to leap from an airplane. The Summer Street Danvers resident is accompanied by her partner in fearlessness, TILL employee Penny Sanchez. Penny and Kerry are all about leaving their comfort zone – and skydiving is one they are about to check off their list. Their parasailing adventure last year was pictured on the January page of the 2026 TILL Calendar. When an instructor at Skydive New England in Lebanon, Maine, asks Kerry how she enjoyed their tandem jump, she sums it up with a mile-wide smile on her face and a single word: “AWESOME.”

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Friends, Families, and
Colleagues,

“The sky is the limit,” the wonderful theme of this edition of the TILLegram, guides many of our decisions and our overall attitude at TILL. We encourage the individuals we support to “think big, to dream.” We encourage our staff to ask themselves where they want to be professionally in the future and to work with us to help them get there.

Many of us entered the field - in fact created the field - before we knew such a human services field existed and with the idea that we knew no limits. We simply knew that what we saw in institutions had gone very wrong for many people. In 2026, I am proud of how far Massachusetts has come. Our state has been steadfast in its resolve to create and protect everyone's right to independence and full community integration. These are imbedded in TILL's core values. Society seems to be threatening those core values and TILL wants to be in the forefront along with colleagues and families ensuring that the rights achieved are not ones that can be taken away.

Whether we are encouraging someone to go skydiving because that has been her dream to do so, or encouraging literacy through reading, that is what our dedicated program and administrative staff do every day- support, encourage, assist, praise, enjoy together.

TILL is celebrating its 46th year and plans to continue our message that the sky is the limit. We don't know what is possible until we dream it, and then until we try it. We need to continue to be the voice for those whom we support. Families, individuals and staff have fought too hard to backtrack on the progress we have achieved together. It is up to us to keep aiming for the sky and not lose a single gain made since the social revolution of the '60s and '70s.

Thank you for being part of TILL.

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



cummings and goings

What's Ahead for the Final Grant Year

During the first two years of a grant from The Cummings Foundation, hundreds of individuals supported by TILL benefited from the programming it made possible. Technology classes teaching animation, internet safety, drones, photo and film editing and 3-D printing; hands-on experience in cooking, farming, and operating a cash register; and financial and academic literacy courses all provided important functional skills.

The final year of the grant program promises even more exceptional programming. Strattus Mental Health Services will organize two dinner series for Springboard Social Club members. One will cover topics such as how to handle ex-partners, sexuality/LGBTQ+, and internet dating/safety, and a second will offer yoga, breath work, sound baths, and stretching.

TILL on the Go will tailor internships for individuals ready to take the next step toward employment in the community, and ETC will continue its literacy classes. ETC's Bill Peterson will present a series of cooking classes for residents of the Commonwealth Avenue apartments, Creative Living Options (CLOs), and Microunits in Chelsea - focused on increasing independence around food, nutrition and cooking. TILL's Education Through Travel (ETT) will offer travel readiness classes, with topics like navigating airports, useful phrases, how to pack, and travel safety.

TILL became qualified to apply for the grant two years ago when the Cummings Foundation expanded eligibility to include Norfolk County. TILL was selected as one of 150 local nonprofits sharing \$30 million in grant funding and will receive \$225,000 over the three-year grant.

“The Cummings Grant has been a perfect fit for our innovative approach to human services. The number of significant initiatives this one grant has supported, and the number of individuals who have benefited from it, has exceeded our expectations,” says Dafna Krouk-Gordon, TILL's founder and CEO.



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| this & that

PITCHING IN TO FEED AMERICA

Manager Linda Belcher-White and four residents from TILL's Chelsea Micro Units signed up for a Saturday shift at the Greater Boston Food Bank, and now they can't wait to go back. In just a few hours, they packed 2,234 meals, which will feed 8,407 people. Impressive!



WALKING AND WHEELING TO FIGHT HUNGER

Springtime rain could not dampen TILL's spirit at the annual Walk for Hunger at Boston Common in May. About 60 residences came out to the Common to support Project Bread's fight against food insecurity in Boston, turning in money they raised before heading out to walk and wheel the loop around America's oldest park. This was TILL's 26th year participating in the walk.



INTERNS EXPERIENCE HUMAN SERVICES AT TILL

In early August, TILL's summer interns gathered at the Massachusetts State House, along with 219 other interns, for the 35th graduation ceremony of the Urban Youth Program, an initiative of the Massachusetts Department of Developmental Services. Our 20 interns worked in – and excelled at – programs throughout TILL, including day and residential programs, and the Dedham office. It was our pleasure to introduce them to the field of human services. **Read excerpts of a speech delivered at the State House by our Technology Intern Rafael Mego – page #5.**



PARTNERING TO PROMOTE INCLUSIVE LIVING ON THE VINEYARD

Island Autism is one very large step closer to welcoming new residents into its first home on Martha's Vineyard, which will support adults with autism to live safely and independently in the community. TILL has lent its expertise to this effort, guiding the group through the MA DDS licensing process and now ready to assist with referral and placements. As Island Autism says, "the best is yet to come."



NEW HOMES OPENING SOON

The number of TILL's group homes is about to increase by two. The homes, both in the DDS Southeast Region, are scheduled to open later this fall and early Spring 2027. We look forward to welcoming individuals and staff to Aldrich Road in Bridgewater, and Woodrow Lane in West Bridgewater – where expert support and a close knit community await.



CHAMPIONS ON AND OFF THE FIELD

After an undefeated season, the TILL Vipers faced The Guild Futbol Club at Gillette's practice field for the championship game. Although The Guild came away with a 6-1 win, the Vipers played hard and gave it their all until the final whistle. Thank you to all of the soccer players for an extraordinary season. And thank you to the TILL superfans who didn't miss a game. **Learn more about MVP Henry Ojambo on page #11.**





Legion Post 155 in Dedham, were like a retreat: decorative pops of purple, copious swag, a smorgasbord of breakfast, lunch and desserts. Yet for all the food and fun, perhaps the most inspiring part of the conference was when staff shared some

of their personal stories, including hardships they overcame and the difference their work has made in their lives.

The death of her brother in South Africa led Arlington RSP Jovita Kokutessa to work in human services. Phoebe Ashaba from the Cresthaven home in Burlington said her 105-year-old grandmother “taught

towering challenges, rewarding results

First DSP/RSP Conference Provides Front-Line Staff with Camaraderie, Inspiration and Fun

The typical workday for professional caregivers is filled with surprises, but rarely do their tasks require 20 spaghetti sticks, one yard of tape, another of string and one marshmallow. Yet for residential and day support staff who attended TILL's First DSP/RSP Conference in June, these were some of the tools of the trade for a joyful, moving, thought-provoking and energizing meeting.

The Marshmallow Tower Challenge - to create the tallest, free-standing structure - sparked a friendly rivalry between teams. Beyond the funny moments, participants reflected on the parallels with their day jobs in accomplishing the task: the need for communication, planning and teamwork. Participants at some tables worked independently or split off into pairs; others figured it all out as one group.

Community Connections Assistant Director Kingsley Brown, the co-facilitator for the day, offered several takeaways from the exercise.

“Patience has to be one of your biggest attributes,” he said as some of the towers wobbled. “Pay attention to every form of communication: body language, verbal, non-verbal, through a device.”

Another assignment, The Blind Drawing Challenge, starts with partners seated back-to-back. One is handed a blank page and a pen. The other receives an abstract line drawing and, in ten minutes, must describe it so that their partner can recreate the drawing without seeing it.

“Has anyone ever spoken to an individual from a different room?” the other facilitator, Director of Learning and Engagement Jen Polischuk, asks as the originals are held up next to the recreations. Some individuals, she points out, are dealing with factors like noise and sensory issues. One DSP notes the challenge of working with non-verbal individuals.

In some ways, the day's events, held at the American



me patience and love.” Former Residence Manager Ana Marte returned to TILL to “be surrounded by like-minded people.” Now, as Human Resource Manager, she helps find more of them.

Several staff members made career transitions from very different fields. Sebastiane Lwanga, an RSP at the Cresthaven residence, was an accountant. Back home in Uganda, Sebastiane, who ran to be a member of parliament, became acutely aware of the income gap. RSP Daniel Ohabuenyi who works nights at the Jewett Street house in Watertown, worked in civil engineering and noted that where he grew up, there was no structure or support for people with disabilities. Human





services, he said, “would have been the last thing on my mind” if not for TILL. “I’m very grateful to be part of this community.” Millan Nankunda, a DSP at TILL Central Billerica, was an engineer but decided she needed to “channel my passion to something else” following the birth of a child with Cerebral Palsy. In her home country, she explained, if you have a child with a disability, you are often stigmatized.

Following these heartfelt and uplifting testimonials, attendees watched The TILL Living Legacy Project video chronicling the stories of individuals and family members – a poignant reminder of why they do what they do.

The idea for a DSP/RSP Conference was inspired by the two-day DDS conference for direct care staff on the Cape, which Jen usually attends with a few staff members. “So,” Jen said, “I thought why don’t we create our own. I decided to create a day for them not only to build new skills but to network, share ideas, stories and celebrate and recognize all the work that they do.”

In many organizations, in-service training and staff retreats are reserved for leadership. At TILL, every role matters and direct care is the backbone of the agency. Judging from the reaction of DSPs and RSPs who attended, the conference was a hit and hopefully, a harbinger of a new annual tradition.



a summer intern finds his future

Rafael Quiroz Mego, a summer intern through TILL’s partnership with Massachusetts DDS’s Urban Youth Collaborative (UYC), vividly recalls taking his first solo off-site trip. An IT intern, Rafael was assigned to resolve Wi-Fi issues and ensure reliable internet access at TILL’s Hollis, NH, residence. Here, he thought, “the true weight and value of my work hit home. What felt like standard, routine connectivity fixes I might do at my own house were critical priorities in that space. Fixing that connection meant ensuring residents could stay connected and entertained, while vital administrative operations could continue without interruption.”

Such big-picture thinking made Rafael the ideal choice to deliver an address at the annual State House ceremony in August. The internship included social outings for the 20 interns working in different departments throughout TILL to get to know one another. But they also visited

TILL Farms and several residences to immerse themselves in its culture and the human services profession.

“When I started my internship back in June, I’ll be honest: I had a fairly surface level understanding of what it took to work on an IT team,” Rafael recalled in his State House speech. “I thought of it strictly in terms of coding, wires, and screen time. Going into this experience, my primary goal was to gain hands-on experience, build my resume in tech, and put my degree focus to practical use. However, working with TILL has completely shifted my perspective on technology—and redefined how I see my own role in the community.”

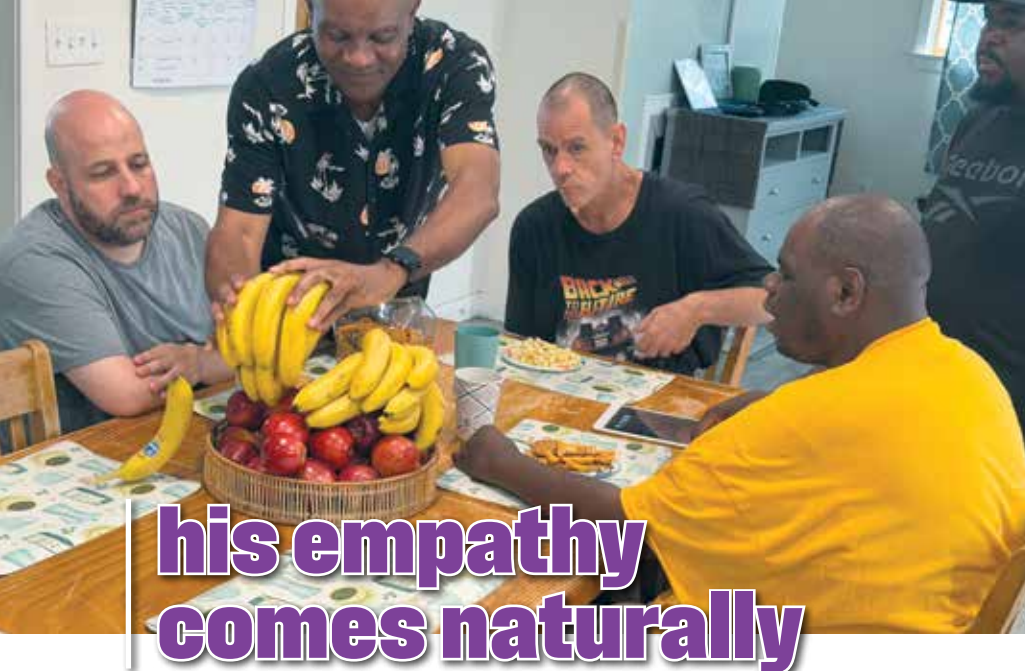
One of the greatest influences on Rafael’s career interests was his father who worked as an IT technician for Boston Public Schools in Allston where Rafael was raised. A senior at UMass Boston majoring in IT, he can draw a straight line between his summer internship and his future.

“The Urban Youth Program hasn’t just given me a summer job or a line on my resume; it has given me real-world, professional development that cannot be replicated in a classroom,” Rafael told the State House audience.

“It proved to me that young people with technical, administrative, and specialized skill sets have a vital place in the mission of human services.” What makes Rafael confident that his summer internship equipped him so well for a career in the field?

“I actually recently received a return offer from TILL to stay with the team which is very exciting,” he wrote. “Now having secured a job on the brink of graduating from UMass Boston, it takes a heavy weight off my shoulders as I continue to grow.”

And, for TILL, the prospect of Rafael in the pipeline means another stellar addition to its IT team.



his empathy comes naturally

Hale Street, Hyde Park: For Ebere Nwafor, compassion suggests a career path

In the Igbo culture of southeastern Nigeria that Ebere Ralph Nwafor is from, one's name carries a deep meaning. Eberechukwu, a unisex name often shortened to Ebere, means "God's mercy."

"Looking back," he reflected, "I believe my name has profoundly influenced my character. From an early age, I found myself deeply affected by the suffering of others. Family members often teased me because I would become emotional whenever I saw someone in pain, being mistreated, or living with a disability. At the time, I did not know the word empathy, but I was already living it."

Ebere is the sixth of seven children, the youngest son in a family with four boys and three girls. His mother operated a catering business at a community high school, and everyone in the family shared responsibilities. During school holidays, Ebere would stay with his grandmother, who had a disability, helping with household chores, running errands, and spending time with her. While many of his cousins avoided the extra responsibilities, Ebere enjoyed staying with her. "Those experiences

taught me compassion, patience, and the joy of serving others," he recalled.

Even working in a laboratory-based role as a medical microbiologist in Nigeria, Ebere interacted with patients experiencing pain and uncertainty. "Whether assisting during blood collection or reassuring patients while they waited for test results, I found myself naturally drawn to encouraging and supporting people during difficult moments," he explained.

Outside of work, he regularly visited a close friend recovering from a stroke, helping him with daily activities, and keeping his spirits up. Yet despite his compassionate nature, Ebere never imagined that caring for others could become his profession. When he moved to Massachusetts, Ebere discovered that his Nigerian degree would not immediately qualify him to practice microbiology so he enrolled in a medical assisting program. In 2023, while exploring new opportunities, a friend introduced him to TILL.

Ebere, who often goes by Ralph at TILL, worked in several residences before transferring to Hale Street in Hyde Park where he supports five

individuals with diverse needs.

"Over time, I developed meaningful relationships with the people I support," he wrote. "Their resilience, unique personalities, and daily challenges inspired me to make Human Services my long-term career."

Initially, Ebere found the most significant challenge was the transition from task-oriented thinking to person-centered support. He credits Hale Street Residence Manager Andrew Coleman for creating an environment where he could learn without the fear of making mistakes.

"Rather than simply completing a task for an individual, Ralph explains what needs to be done, provides encouragement when necessary, and gives the person an opportunity to participate and make choices," Andrew wrote. "His approach is supportive without being overbearing, and he recognizes that even everyday activities can be opportunities for individuals to build confidence and independence."

Ebere hopes to earn a bachelor's degree in Human Services and grow into a Program Manager role, with a particular interest in supporting individuals with behavioral needs. Indirectly, his new career path was a reaction to growing up in Nigeria.

"I witnessed how individuals with disabilities were often misunderstood or stigmatized because community support systems were limited," he recalled. "Working at TILL has shown me another way—one where individuals are respected, supported, and empowered. Today, I see those same qualities reflected in my work. Showing kindness, treating people with dignity, and supporting individuals with empathy are not just part of my job—they are part of who I am. Being an RSP has allowed me to live out the meaning of my name every day."



beyond “one size fits all”

Millan Nankunda Customizes Caring

When Millan Nankunda, a DSP at Billerica TILL Central, first visited the US from Uganda nine years ago, it was for personal reasons. Her son was born with Cerebral Palsy in 2010 and she attended a program in New York enabling individuals to communicate using pictures. After the training, Millan began researching how to communicate with her son and training other parents who have children with Developmental Disabilities.

Back home, Millan had worked as a systems engineer for tech companies. Her undergraduate degree was in IT and she enjoyed technology but thought of it more as a hobby than a career. Four years ago, she fled her home nation following governmental upheavals there and moved to England. Her reasons for leaving were ostensibly political but there was also a personal motivation. Giving birth to a child with a disability in her native country was often attributed to superstitions such as a belief in witchcraft or the assumption that it was punishment for adultery during pregnancy.

“It can be stigmatizing not only to you as a parent but also to the child, who is segregated from other children,” she explains.

When Millan moved to the US in 2023, she trained as a CNA and

began to work with the elderly who had cognitive impairments like dementia and Alzheimer’s. She was interested in pursuing a job serving individuals with Intellectual Disabilities and a colleague with TILL recommended she apply for a position. She joined TILL in 2024 working for Billerica Day Hab, then transferred to Billerica TILL Central the following year.

“One of the reasons I chose to work in Human Services, specifically IDD, was because vulnerable people are often abused or neglected,” Millan explained. “Having witnessed similar challenges with my child at school, and the cry of other parents, I felt the empathy to be a teacher, a mentor and voice to these vulnerable individuals.”

Even for someone with personal experience, working with an IDD population had a learning curve. For Millan, it was getting up to speed on the wide spectrum of disabilities—a recognition that “each disability has a different and unique learning profile on how a brain processes, retains and retrieves information thus requiring a person-centered approach for growth and adaptation.”

Her colleague, DSP Shariat Makanga, observed Millan supporting an individual who was feeling anxious about trying a new community activity.

“Instead of rushing or making the decision for him, she knelt to his eye level, calmly explained the options, gave him time to process, and validated his feelings,” Shariat recalled. She said, ‘We can try for 5 minutes, and if you don’t like it, we can leave – your choice.’ That small moment of giving him control completely changed his response and he ended up participating happily.”

To Shariat, Millan “doesn’t just provide support – she empowers individuals to make their own choices and celebrates their independence, no matter how small the step may seem.”

It has been a busy time for Millan. In June, she rescued an individual who was choking by using abdominal thrusts, then accompanied them to the hospital for comfort and to provide hospital staff with important medical information. In July, she was recognized with TILL’s Above and Beyond Award for her “quick thinking and calm response.”

Millan also participated in TILL Pathways, a 14-week training offering three free college credits and a \$4,200 financial stipend. “When the opportunity to apply for Bay Path came up, I felt that combining Millan’s years of hands-on experience with the opportunity to build a strong foundation through structured and formal learning was a way to strengthen her abilities,” Millan’s supervisor, TILL Central Billerica Senior Program Manager Naoko Conway, explained. “Millan often says, ‘As DSPs, we are teachers. Our job is to help people reach their full potential.’ I believe this could become a key that opens the door to the next step in her professional growth.”

Millan was part of the inaugural cohort, which began in January. “The program was a game-changer,” she reports. “I am already applying these person-centered approaches daily at TILL.”

Her motivation for pursuing the career development opportunity with TILL Pathways was the same as her reason for making the transition to human services.

“I wanted to move beyond a ‘one size fits all’ approach and truly understand how to help individuals grow based on their needs.”

Millan says she does not miss sitting behind computers all day and in her present role, she has discovered a real niche. “I have found PURPOSE!” she exclaims.



An Artist Talk Brings TILL Wave Gallery's "Generations" Exhibit to Life

"You see it so differently when you know the story," observed Dale Belcher, a curator of "Generations," the exhibition "exploring family, history, age and legacy through artistic voices" at the TILL Wave Gallery this past summer. Dale, whose work is represented in the show, referred to an artists' talk in August which provided a unique and intimate perspective on their artistic process and the story behind their work.

Robin Jones typically describes her art, including work exhibited in past WAVE Gallery shows, as "bright" and "whimsical." The print in this show, titled "Where It All Began," is a departure both in the artist's technique (cyanotype printing) and the more muted tone. The central image recalls the Greenwich Village location where her grandparents met.

"When the call for art for the Generations show came up, I knew I had to tell the story of my grandparents in their early days of dating," Robin explained.

Robin visited their apartment with her daughter Courtney who was then a college student and took the photo of the Jones Street sign.

"Nine years ago, I lost my daughter to a rare form of cancer when she was

just 25," she continued. "This piece, 'Where it All Began,' is a tribute to the beginning of my family as much as it is to Courtney. I created a negative from her original photo and picked some of her favorite wildflowers along some of my nature walks and created the print."

Another artist, Florinda Freda, created a family tree tracing the origin stories of her great grandmother, grandmother, and mother from Italy to the US. The photos in the collage morph from black and white at the trunk to color in the top branches with transformational images like a caterpillar and butterfly. Florinda told guests that the work, titled "Rooted in Hope," is meant to convey "change, transformation and hard work."

Multigenerational women are also the subject of "Matriarchy" by the Nigerian American artist Tobelliot. Traditionally, he would sketch in pencil. For this image, he chose ballpoint pen, an "unforgiving, deliberate medium" which "mirrors the enduring imprint of these women, whose roles often exist between visibility and reverence."

One of the inspirations for the exhibit's theme was the work of

historian Dahlia Mann which traces her family's journey across six generations through Iraq, Syria, Turkey, Hebron, Jerusalem, and Egypt before arriving in the US.

Filling in for Dahlia, who was sidelined by a virus, her sister, Dafna Krouk-Gordon, described their family's exile from Egypt.

"We had a small window to get out as the riots were going on in the streets and the passports were very hard to get," she recalled. "I remember a suitcase for each of the four of us and I believe my sister even kept her suitcase."

Among the few possessions her parents brought were albums with the photographs that Dahlia integrated into her art. "Generation to Generation represents the mosaic of my family's journey through six generations," she wrote.

Exhibitions at the TILL Wave Gallery are typically organized around a theme and "Generations" clearly provided fertile ground for the artists whose work was selected for this show. Each artist's talk lent another dimension to the work, its inspiration and the creator behind it.

Visit tillinc.org/about/news for more story photos. Coming up at the Gallery (9/24-11/20) is AFTER IMPACT, an exhibit honoring the 25th anniversary of 9/11.



| what's new in New Hampshire?

Building Plans, Tug of War, Snail Mail & More...

A sure sign of TILL's presence and growth in New Hampshire is the recent purchase of property in Merrimack. This new site will be a mixed-use property, housing Cravings' brand new commercial kitchen, gift shop and café, and vocational training, as well as the Broad Street, Nashua, residential office. Training and innovation space will be a hallmark of the complex, which will include living space for our group home residents, currently in Hollis, with room for expansion.

In Nashua, **Cravings Cafe & Gift Shop** had an active summer, featuring cooking, crafts, coffee

hours, volunteering and field trips. A new subscription service called the **Snail Mail Club** offers a welcome reprieve from the digital world for people who love receiving "real mail." Individuals make all of the items in the subscription box including handmade cards, bookmarks, pins and more – and mail to monthly subscribers.

"When I arrived home, I found this wonderful envelope from my Snail Mail Club waiting for me," one individual shared. "It was so thoughtfully put together and truly made my day."

Back in the kitchen, the Cravings' Cuisine team took on its sixth school

lunch contract with the addition of the **Academy of Notre Dame** in Tyngsboro, MA, and look forward to a busy school year.



Delicious food, parachute games, a water balloon toss and the "clients v. staff tug of war" – with a win to the individuals – are a summer tradition at Cravings' annual cookout at Greeley Park.



| ETC's got talent

ETC ended August on a high note – staging its first talent show in front of a standing-room-only audience in Hyde Park. There was no shortage of talent as contestants sang, danced, played guitar and rapped their way into the audience's heart.

When asked how the talent show came about, Program Manager Gina Shulimson said that Aytan, one of ETC's program participants, loves to sing and dance, and she often thinks "he really has a good voice." Gina

approached Day Support Professional Diane Dixon with the idea of a talent show, and Diane offered to produce and direct it.

"She made it a really professional performance," Gina says. "We held tryouts because we wanted to showcase the best of the best. We were proud of the people who were not chosen to perform but had the gumption to try out. And we were all very proud of the performers and of course the excellent MC."



Kudos to the performers, the director and MC, and to judges Paula Aiesi and Kingsley Brown. Special thanks to the audience of families, ETC and Cravings staff and individuals, Dedham staff (and its amazing Transportation Department) and to MA DDS Service Coordinator Lisamarie Spriggs. Congratulations to performers Abbie and Aytan, who both earned the Golden Buzzer!

donations

We sincerely appreciate the generous donations made by our families, friends and supporters over the past year.

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Mark and Migdalia Post
Scott Ritvo & Pauline Keshishian
Joseph & Shirley Quirk
Joseph Richardi
Malcolm and Mona Roberts
In honor of Tabia Roberts
John Scileppi
Rochelle Senator
Jodi Smith
Barbara Tuttle
Karen Wilson
Zoe Zagroba

SPECIAL DONATIONS

In memory of Brian Chaisson
Richard Goldrick
Gail Keith-Fine
Framingham Fraternal Order Of Eagles
#894

In memory of John Froio
Pamela and Jeff Brown
Arlene and Joseph Ceppetelli
Corey Cronin
Louis Michael Delena
Jennifer Farrell
Susan Perez

In memory of Les Gordon
Dafna Krouk-Gordon
Brooks and Patty Mostue
Joe and Harriet Uretsky

In memory of Rita Hassett
Patricia Duffett

Deborah Baldwin & Paul Crist
Linda Sullivan & Amy Erickson
Marie Nolan
Thomas Farrell

In memory of Amelia "Millie" Kennedy
Paula Bagge
Kathy Belmont
Barbara Christopher
Marie Deluca
Laurie Hall
Theresa Miller & Peter Iafolla
Lisa and Michael Nagel
Barbara O'Malley
Wayne and Mary Jane Simpson

In memory of John Patrick Matthews
Eckel, Hoag and O'Connor
Joanne Hardin
Robert Maggi
Alexandra Matthews
Edward Matthews
John Matthews
Laura Matthews
Maureen Matthews-Beal
Courtney O'Connor
Mary Jeanne O'Connor
Anne Sterling
Joe & Harriet Uretsky

In memory of Juergen Nordhausen
Acton Garden Club
David Barr
Elizabeth Bollier
Nancy Crampton
Joan Davies
Wayne Davis & Louise Hara
Anne Debenedictis
Sally Dietrich
William & Sue Evans
Richard & Gail Freeman
Michelle Gauthier
Cassandra Goldwater
Judith Hitz
Corinne Kenny
Theresa Kenny
Daniel Kruschwitz
Pamela Lamson
Collin Lynch
Heather Makris
Sally McKittrick
Patricia Meleedy-Rey
Elizabeth Nordhausen
Rheta Roeber
Allan Sgroi
Helen Webster

In memory of Janice Rumpf
Patricia Holmes
Karen Kubel
Kathy Sadowski

In memory of Jane Sullivan
Donald Bates
Timothy & Anne-Marie Davies
Catherine Dekow
Judith Hogan
Joseph & Ellen Rose
Robert & Kim Rose

remembering friends

In memory of Sally O'Malley

Mary Angelico
Leigh Barcham
Mary Devaney
Michael Ferzoco
Amy Jones
Bernardette Meaney
Marjorie Neylon
Jennifer O'Malley
US Foods Legal Team

In memory of Tom Larkin

Michael Barrett
Charles Bradley
Charles Flaherty
Ilsa Gottlieb
Marilyn Hazel
Joan Kaufman
Judith Kotanchik
Sondra Langer
James and Taylor Marino
Karen Marino
Mary & Jim McMackin
Joanne Nelligan
Third Middlesex Area
Democratic Club

Donations received July 1, 2025
through August 12, 2026

Pauline Anderson Thomas Larkin
Joanne Brooks Karen Lincoln
William Butts III Tanya Mahoney
Robert Campbell Sally O'Malley
Raquel Costa Jesse Perez
Jack Flynn Ann Reynolds
Stephen Gallant Paul Spakowski
Andrea Gaudette Jane Sullivan
Rita Hassett Robert Tobin
John Patrick Matthews
Richard Charles Roy

above & beyond awards

TILL's Professional Development Committee awards a certificate of appreciation to employees who have gone that extra step in the performance of their duties. From April 2026 through August 2026 they included:

Collins Badu
Residence Manager
Doris Road, Bedford

Renee Brunelle
Program Manager
Cravings, Nashua, NH

Caleb Garner
Assistive Technology Specialist

Deena Gulezian
Speech-Language Pathologist
Billerica Day Program

Millan Nankunda
Direct Support Professional
Billerica TILL Central

Peter Ruotolo
Day Support Professional
TILL on the Go



henry ojambo is heroes league first MVP

After another stellar regular season, the TILL Vipers came up on the short end in this year's championship game with a 6-1 loss. Yet there was cause for celebration, as one team member received a special distinction. Henry Ojambo, who joined the Vipers three seasons ago, has played soccer since he was 15. A Residential Support Professional who has been with TILL more than two years, he works at the Ashland residence and plays in the Bay State Soccer League with the Boston Cranes, an amateur community-based soccer club in Waltham.

So, when Community Connections

Assistant Director Kingsley Brown and Residential Services Administrator Ally Levesque decided to introduce the first ever MVP award to the player who scored the most goals within the regular season, it's not surprising that the trophy went to Henry - with an eye-popping 11 goals in regular season play. Asked to describe the most rewarding part of his victory, he said it was "seeing the individuals and staff come out to support the Vipers on game days" which "has always been my favorite part of playing on the team and in the league in general."

a pattern of growth at TILL Farms



TILL Farms served up a fresh and fun summer “Salad Day” with produce harvested and ingredients prepared by individuals at the farm. Dedham staff members were invited to tour the farm before building their own salads and topping them with

croutons made by Cravings Café & Gift Shop, and dressings prepared by Billerica Day Program.

This year, Farm Manager Katelyn Sheridan has also included value added goods to the farm’s offerings, which she says “have been a great learning opportunity for the individuals.” For example, this season’s harvest includes luffa, a plant they have dried and sold as natural “Loofah” sponges. Two types of pesto, pickles and beeswax products are snapped up quickly at the twice monthly Farmers Market in Dedham, and tomato sauces and salsas will be for sale in late summer.

Last year’s CSA (community supported agriculture) pilot program, which provided produce to a few TILL residences, has expanded this year to ten homes that receive weekly bags of produce on a subscription

basis. “This guarantees that the food we grow is going somewhere, and, might I say, somewhere that is close to home! It is great to keep it within TILL and support healthy eating,” Katelyn says.



gala-ry

Photos from Springboard’s Festive and Fun Annual Extravaganza

What was the best part of this year’s TILL Springboard Gala in August? Was it the setting, a ballroom at Spinelli’s in Lynnfield with massive chandeliers hanging over the dance floor and purple, white and green orchid centerpieces? The dinner, highlighted by a choice of chocolate mousse cake or vanilla cake with Chantilly cream frosting? The music, selected by DJ Dallas who was able to

play all of the members’ requests and had the entire room up and dancing right up until closing?

Ask any of the 95 people who attended and you might hear any or all. But for Springboard leader Nicole Leontakianakos, the most memorable moments were “watching everyone get dressed up.” A parent noted how “Everyone came together in such a natural and meaningful way,” while a member added simply, “We should do that every year for the gala from now on. That was a lot of fun.”



Members had the option to stay at Double Tree Hotel in Danvers after the dance and enjoy the Indoor Water Park of New England there the next morning. For Nicole, who has hosted her share of galas since becoming a Springboard leader in 2012, this year’s venue and D.J. were the best. Overall, she said, “It truly was a magical weekend.”

TILL SHOPS

Don’t forget to visit: tillshops.org
Handmade Gifts that Give Back!