

Horizons

A Publication for Seven Hills Foundation
Affiliates, Friends & Supporters



SEVEN HILLS EXPANDS BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SYSTEM OF CARE

New center in Worcester expands access to services for children and adults in crises

WINTER 2021

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dr. David A. Jordan
President

Dear Friends,

Welcome to this edition of *HORIZONS*, our sample of the remarkable work undertaken by our 4,600 Seven Hills staff and those patients, clients, and students we serve every day.

This has been a challenging 24 months as we have worked 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to keep everyone in our collective Seven Hills family safe from

the COVID-19 global pandemic. Not in recent memory has the world—and our country—suffered under the challenges we face in fighting this deadly virus. However, our five Seven Hills Core Values of Respect & Kindness, Integrity, Teamwork, Innovation, and Service to Others have served to focus our work and re-instill among us our unwavering compassion and determination.

Across the 14 affiliate organizations that comprise Seven Hills Foundation, our dedicated workforce has continued to support each child or adult we serve ensuring that their basic needs are met and their safety is assured. They work to provide for both the physical healthcare needs and the emotional wellness of thousands in our care across Massachusetts and Rhode Island; and in eight developing countries through our Seven Hills Global Outreach affiliate. Working of COVID-19 and workforce shortages has only been possible due to the selfless work of our Seven Hills staff—all of whom put their work “on the line” each day.

“Leading” during this most difficult time takes vision, organizational skills, empathy, and selflessness to navigate us through. On page 19, I introduce you to four such leaders who have risen through our internal ranks to become Vice Presidents, replacing others who have retired or moved on to new opportunities.

I also want to recognize John Altomare, Esq., who will be stepping down as Chair of our Board of Directors at the end of December. John, much like his mother and father before him, has been a true champion of our mission and the vision we hold for Seven Hills Foundation. He has, over these past six years as Chair, been a confidante to me and a support to every aspect of our organization. Seven Hills will certainly continue our path of success as Dr. Charles Conroy assumes the role of Board Chair in January.

Now, more than ever, we need the best and brightest, the most determined drivers of compassionate care working throughout our amazing organization. Please join our work; get involved as a supporter, a volunteer, or as a member of our incredible team of staff. As always at Seven Hills Foundation & Affiliates, I can assure you that the best is yet to come!

Warm regards,

Dr. David A. Jordan, President
Seven Hills Foundation & Affiliates

HELP MAKE A DIFFERENCE



DONATE ▶ sevenhills.org

Your gift brings immediate Hope and Healing. Contact Kate Myshrall, vice president of advancement, to name Seven Hills as a beneficiary in your will, to learn how retirement plans make the most highly tax-efficient bequest to Seven Hills, or for ways to make a tax-deductible donation to Seven Hills, 508.983.1302 or kmyshrall@sevenhills.org.

CAREERS ▶ sevenhills.org/careers

Seven Hills takes pride on being the Employer of Choice! Join our talented team of dedicated and compassionate staff. Contact Ginger Lavalley, talent acquisition manager, at 774.262.7205 or glavalley@sevenhills.org.

VOLUNTEER ▶ sevenhills.org/get-involved

Share your time and talents! Contact Kelly Clifford, senior human resources generalist, at 508.755.2340 or kclifford@sevenhills.org.

HORIZONS WINTER 2021

Horizons is a newsletter published by the Advancement Office of Seven Hills Foundation. Please direct all content requests, comments, and questions to:

Jennifer Wentworth
Director of Communications
jwentworth@sevenhills.org

Kathleen Myshrall
Vice President of Advancement
kmyshrall@sevenhills.org

Peter Demko
Multimedia Communications Associate
pdemko@sevenhills.org

William Stock
Vice President for Government and Community Relations
bstock@sevenhills.org

Elizabeth Vittum
AVP of Development
evittum@sevenhills.org

Seven Hills Foundation
81 Hope Avenue
Worcester, MA 01603

508.755.2340 (T)
508.849.3882 (F)
508.890.5584 (TTY)
sevenhills.org

Dr. David A. Jordan, DHA
President
Seven Hills Foundation

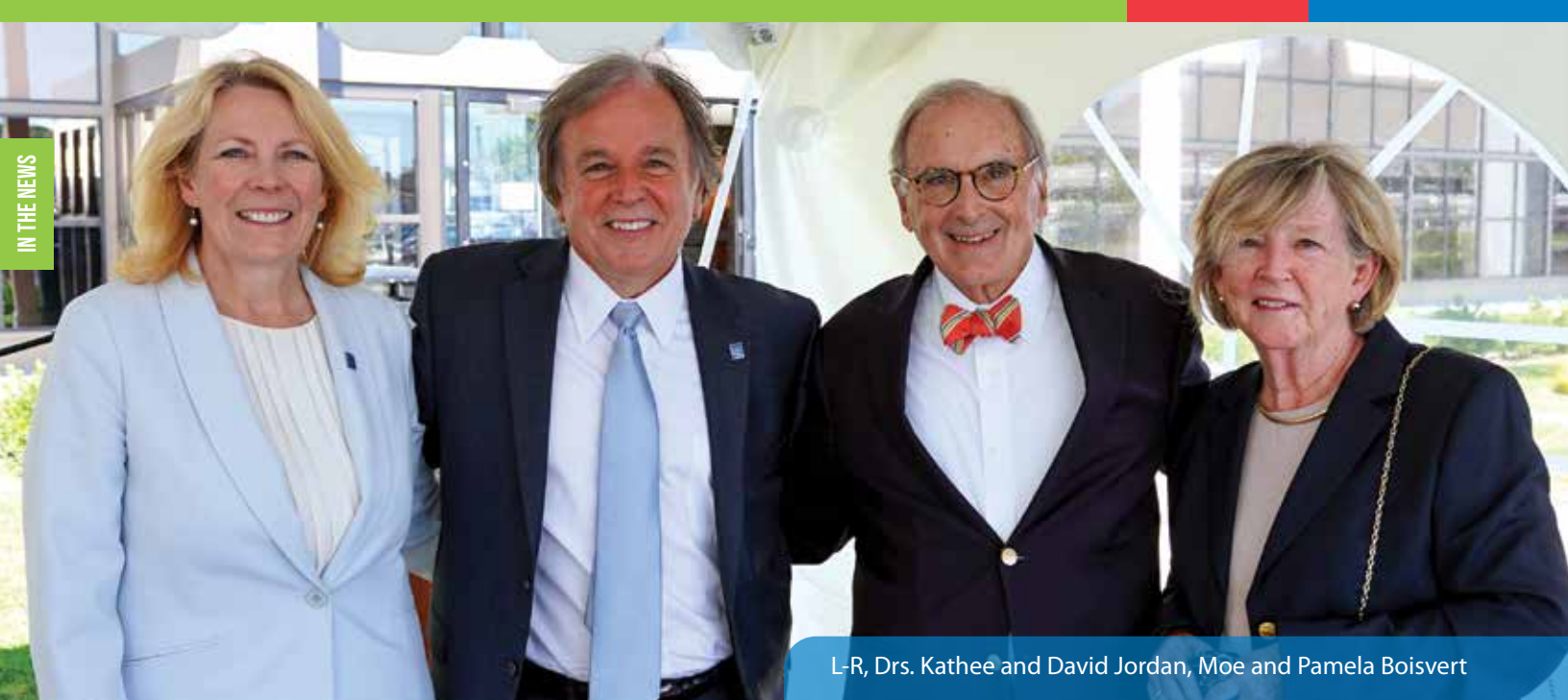
IN THIS ISSUE

IN THE NEWS

- 4 Expanding the Seven Hills Behavioral Health System of Care
- 6 Enhancing Access to Vaccines at Seven Hills
- 7 Putting with a Purpose
- 8 Expanding Child Care Resources to Families in Western MA
- 9 New Childcare Apprenticeship Programs
- 10 Brain Injury Clubhouse Builds a Community-Based Foundation for Growth
- 11 Hope and Healing through Seven Hills
- 12 Transition to Adulthood: It's a Team Effort
- 13 Chipping in to Be Well
- 14 Helping Seniors Age in Place
- 16 Inspiring Career and Leadership Goals through a Continuum of Academic Supports
- 18 Bigger Dipper's Sweet Success
- 19 Leadership Succession that Sustains our Vision
- 20 Granting Good Works!

SPOTLIGHT

- 22 Spotlight on Seven Hills



L-R, Drs. Kathee and David Jordan, Moe and Pamela Boisvert

EXPANDING THE SEVEN HILLS BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SYSTEM OF CARE

On September 20, 2021, Seven Hills Foundation & Affiliates held the ribbon cutting for its flagship **Seven Hills Behavioral Health (SHBH)** location at 135 Gold Star Blvd. in Worcester. With satellite centers in Southbridge and Milford, the expanded SHBH System of Care integrates the substantial clinical and operations expertise of three Seven Hills affiliates: YOU, Inc., Family Services of Central Massachusetts, and Children’s Friend. The SHBH System of Care is licensed by the Department of Public Health and Bureau of Substance Use Services and accredited by the Council on Accreditation.

The facility’s large Learning Center was named and dedicated to honor the legacy of Maurice (Moe) Boisvert, the former president of YOU, Inc., for his 40-plus years of growing programs that help our local youth. Moe spoke at the Grand Opening and expressed thanks to the clinicians and staff of the three affiliates for their collaborative effort to better serve the children and families of central Massachusetts.



The history wall documents the progression of the collaborative agencies

The beautiful and newly renovated 24,000 sq. ft. clinic boasts state-of-the-art telehealth technology, over 90 clinician offices, sensory rooms, and group meeting space. The welcoming reception area includes a historical tribute to the three organizations that have joined their clinical expertise to expand care to our community.

Dr. Kathee Jordan, EVP/CEO of Seven Hills Foundation & Affiliates, addressed the crowd with the charge forward, “Our vision for our expanded Seven Hills Behavioral Health System of Care aligns with the March 2021 Baker-Polito Administration’s ‘Roadmap for Behavioral Health Reform,’ which calls for connecting people to treatment before there is a crisis and creating a single point of entry to a comprehensive range of services. This new center in Worcester, and satellite locations—from which outpatient, community-based, in-home and teletherapy services are managed—will provide expanded access to children and adults in crisis.”



Dr. Kathee Jordan speaking at the opening ceremony

The design of Seven Hills Behavioral Health is based on the premise of “no wrong door,” a primary driver in the behavioral health field. The Behavioral Health Centers prioritize same-day evaluation and treatment as a community-based alternative to emergency departments and provide:

- **Centralized referrals for supports and services across the organization**
- **Rapid access and intake**
- **Evidence-based, integrated mental health and substance use services**
- **Social supports including housing, employment, nutrition and healthy eating, education, and recovery services**
- **Health and wellness activities**
- **Support groups**
- **Case management and care coordination**

The work of the centers is also integrated with Seven Hills® DCF-contracted Family Resource Centers in Worcester and Southbridge; DPH-contracted HIV Prevention and Comprehensive Health Promotion Services in New Bedford, Fall River and Taunton; and DCF-funded Family Stabilization and Support Programs in both central and southeastern MA. These programs also provide a “front door” to information, resources, and referrals to expansive clinical case management, care coordination, and community support.

Leading the integrated strategy is **Anne Fine**, LICSW, Vice President of Seven Hills Behavioral Health. Anne has extensive clinical, program development, and executive management experience and has served in key roles at YOU, Inc. since 2005. She received the Association for Behavioral Health’s “Excellence in Administration and Finance” award in 2019, and is bringing her vision for care forward.

“The pandemic has exacerbated the shortage of clinical hours in Massachusetts, with record levels of anxiety, depression, and more across all ages. Our new system of care is working to provide better access by making our system as efficient as possible. We now have one referral system, one medical director, and one center to triage outreach for services. These efficiencies and the scale of our system has increased our ability to hire clinicians increasing our ability to get people to the right services, reducing the wait time and better responding to the current crisis,” said Fine.

The focus of Seven Hills Behavioral Health is on providing comprehensive person- and family-centered services that are culturally and linguistically competent and that help provide people of all ages with an integrated and holistic approach to accessible and quality care. Ensuring the quality of services is **Katie O’Brien**, LICSW, Senior Director of Behavioral Health and Quality, who brings over ten years’ experience with YOU, Inc. in clinical and program management roles, including accreditation functions and strategies. **Emily Swalec**, LICSW is the Intake Coordinator for Seven Hills Behavioral Health and responsible for implementing the streamlined intake and open access system. Emily has served in clinical management, operations, and technical training roles over seven years at the agency, including recently as Director of our Worcester Family Resource Center. Emily serves on multiple citywide and state committees focused on health-related social needs and is the ideal coordinator of this effort.



Dr. Betsy Cheyne leads a group at the Worcester clinic.

Dr. David A. Jordan, President of Seven Hills Foundation & Affiliates, aligned this growth with the mission of the organization. “Empowering people with significant life challenges so that each may pursue their highest degree of personal well-being and independence has been our hallmark for nearly 70 years. Expanding behavioral health care during this time of crisis is another example of how we continue to respond to the needs of our communities and our neighbors.”

ENHANCING ACCESS TO VACCINES AT SEVEN HILLS

Seven Hills Foundation & Affiliates rose to the challenge to safeguard participants and staff from COVID-19 by quickly and efficiently rolling out vaccine clinics at program locations throughout the state. The “**This Is Our Shot**” campaign was launched in January 2021, when Seven Hills partnered with local pharmacies and medical professionals to host on-site vaccine clinics at various program sites in order to enhance access to the vaccine at a time when finding available appointments out in the community were difficult.



“Providing this kind of access to staff and to participants who, because of behavioral health issues or their developmental disability, find getting shots difficult,” said Dr. Kathee Jordan, CEO of Seven Hills Foundation. “Hosting the on-site clinics in a safe space, where family members and staff could support participants, helped increase the number of people we were able to vaccinate throughout our organization.”

Since the pandemic started, Seven Hills has administered over 80,000 COVID-19 tests and over 10,000 doses of COVID-19 vaccine, once approved, to our staff and the community across Massachusetts and Rhode Island.

Our response to the pandemic has been comprehensive and far-reaching, as we worked with several pharmacy partners and state contracts to ensure the health and safety of our staff and supported individuals and their families during this time.

Our staff have been consummate Frontline Heroes throughout this uniquely trying time, placing the needs of our Seven Hills community first.

ENSURING RACIAL AND HEALTH EQUITY THROUGH COMMUNITY-BASED COVID-19 NAVIGATION SERVICES

Seven Hills Behavioral Health (SHBH) has been on the front lines since the beginning of the pandemic, providing COVID-19 testing, food, rent relief, and other forms of aid to those in need. As a key player in the Governor’s Office and COVID-19 Command Center’s **Stop the Spread** initiative, SHBH staff continues to test thousands of community members in southeastern Massachusetts while also connecting them to basic needs and critical community resources.

As the COVID-19 vaccine became available, SHBH staff quickly pivoted to administer it to populations in the southeast who are disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. The affiliate received authorization and funds from the **Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Bureau of Infectious Disease and Laboratory Sciences, Office of HIV/AIDS’ Community-Based COVID-19 Vaccine Access through Navigation Services**, for its staff—many of whom are bilingual, bicultural community health workers—to meet clients “where they were at” to administer the vaccine through the use of mobile health vans that helped to optimize access for community members most at risk for contracting COVID-19.

“Some people have barriers getting to a vaccination site, like finding reliable transportation, while other people may not be comfortable receiving a vaccine in traditional healthcare settings,” said Connie Rocha-Mimoso, director of community health services at SHBH. “We are fortunate to have this contract and access to new Mobile Health Vans so that we can reach those who need the vaccine most,” Mimoso said.



The SHBH Team was fortunate to receive a generous grant of \$42,000 from the **Amelia Peabody Charitable Foundation** at the same time the community-based vaccine rollout was beginning. SHBH purchased a brand-new Mobile Health Van with the funding and replaced an old van with additional funds received through the state contract, to distribute the vaccine and provide other behavioral health services to people living in the region.



PUTTING WITH A PURPOSE

On May 27, with an almost sold-out field, golfers participated in the 33rd Annual New Beginnings Charity Golf Tournament hosted by Highfields Golf & Country Club in Grafton, Massachusetts.

New Beginnings is the major funding source for the Community Connections program of Seven Hills Family Services, an affiliate of Seven Hills Foundation. This year, golfers and sponsors raised over \$50,000, 100% of which will support the program that connects over 1,800 individuals with disabilities and their families living in central Massachusetts.

The beautiful spring day included contests, raffles, a silent auction, and a delicious grilled lunch provided by J & J Tavern. Golfers took advantage of the ball launcher to improve their overall game and placement. Prizes were awarded to the teams that placed 1st through 4th and contests: longest drive, men and women; closest to the line; closest to the pin, men and women; and closest to the flag.



During this pandemic, Community Connections seamlessly adapted their programming to include virtual offerings in addition to safe in-person programs, when appropriate—from socially distanced flag football practices and walking clubs to virtual dance parties, fitness classes, and more!

Families from across our region have relied on Seven Hills in the past 18 months, now more than ever, to support their loved ones in pursuing activities that build genuine friendships and lifelong skills as pandemic-related isolation continues to impact the need for socialization.

Thank you to our Tournament Sponsor, General Mechanical Contractors, and all of the sponsors for their continued support of Community Connections.



A “snapshot” of Seven Hills CCR’s super staff, expanded to support families in Western MA

EXPANDING CHILD CARE RESOURCES TO FAMILIES IN WESTERN MA

The Massachusetts Department of Early Education & Care (EEC) recently awarded the contract for Child Care Resources in western Massachusetts to Seven Hills Child Care Resources (CCR), which is operated by its affiliate, Children’s Aid & Family Services (CAFS). As of July 1, Seven Hills CCR has completed their expansion into three new western MA locations, more than doubling its workforce to over 50 staff across the regions.

Child Care Resources has been in the central and metro west areas of Massachusetts for more than 40 years. With this expansion, CCR is now the Commonwealth’s largest resource of childcare provider information and referrals, and single point of access for childcare voucher management services. As a result, CCR has increased its childcare subsidies from \$5 million serving 4,200 children to over \$9 million serving over 9,000 children.

“We believe that our program has the professional expertise to meet the diverse needs of parents and childcare providers, and we are excited about now serving all of western Massachusetts,” said Kim Dion, assistant vice president & program director. “The community has been very supportive of this expansion.”

Child Care Resources receives funding from the EEC to make it possible for families to access childcare referral services at no cost to them. CCR also offers community resource information, a lending library for childcare providers, provider workshops, and assists qualified families with financial support.

“If the pandemic has taught us anything, it has exposed the critical need for affordable childcare. By providing subsidies to more families, we are getting people, especially women, back into the workforce.”

— Kim Dion

CCR’s parent counselors and billing specialists determine the eligibility for childcare subsidies by reviewing both financial and service needs. They maintain a database of childcare options, available to anyone looking for assistance.

“I am so thankful for the experiences I’ve had with childcare resources. Their willingness and pleasantness have made everything easy and not overwhelming. The ladies I spoke with, focused on making sure my childcare voucher for my child was completed. Instead of putting it off and getting to it next week they made it all happen quickly!! We need more helpful, willing KIND people in this world like the people at childcare resources.”—CCR Client



To learn more about Seven Hills Child Care Resources visit:
<https://www.sevenhills.org/programs/child-care-resources>.

NEW CHILDCARE APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMS

The Early Childhood Education workforce in Massachusetts is in crisis. The Department of Early Education and Care recently announced that the number of childcare openings in the system has decreased by 6,000. Contributing to the decrease include COVID-19 and low wages. The pandemic has impacted all female-dominant early childhood programs as the resounding effects of the pandemic have driven women out of the workforce and forced the closure of center-based classrooms and family childcare home businesses. The goal is to grow and stabilize the workforce, reopen slots, and make high-quality childcare more accessible for families.

In February 2021, the Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development (EOLWD) awarded funding to the Center for Childcare Careers (CCC) at Family Services of Central Massachusetts, an affiliate of Seven Hills Foundation, to implement a pilot Childcare Center-Based apprenticeship program in the Commonwealth. The initiative, Project Flourish, welcomed the inaugural class of 13 apprentices on June 23, 2021. Each apprentice is assigned a mentor during the program, which lasts 12-18 months. The apprenticeship begins with 150 hours of bilingual classroom training followed by 2,000 hours of “on-the-job” training with employer partners: YWCA of Central MA, ABC Child Care Bilingual Program, Children’s Nest Academy, Pakachoag Acres Auburn & Millbury, WCAC Head Start Webster & Southbridge, and Guild of St. Agnes Webster. With the success of the first cohort underway, the second cohort started on November 4, 2021.

“Our first cohort rapidly became a close-knit community, working collaboratively to learn the range of skills needed to offer high-quality education and care. The children they educate are already benefiting from the apprentices’ new working knowledge.”

— Leslie Baker, Workforce Development Coordinator, Family Services of Central MA



Project Flourish is a cost-effective model that supports and stabilizes the workforce while preserving cultural and linguistic diversity. Graduates receive an EOLWD Apprenticeship Certificate and the national industry Child Development Associate (CDA) credential. They are also eligible for Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care Teacher licensure or can use the professional development hours toward Lead Teacher licensure and earn up to six credits towards a higher education degree at Quinsigamond Community College.

The success of Project Flourish was the catalyst for CCC to apply to United Way of Central Massachusetts’ Community Challenge to replicate the model for Family Childcare Providers. This apprenticeship model was selected for funding in a competitive live proposal event held at the JMAC Worcester BrickBox Theater. Presenters Leslie Baker and Family Childcare Provider Llanet Montoya made the award-winning case for support. This newly funded model will allow CCC to: build child development knowledge and competency in unskilled, entry-level minority and immigrant workers, provide a career pathway with a range of options, provide a network of support and access to highly-qualified educators in a field that will benefit from retention and quality of care.



BRAIN INJURY CLUBHOUSE BUILDS A COMMUNITY-BASED FOUNDATION FOR GROWTH

Most members of a brain injury clubhouse tell you that they come to be with friends and for something to do that makes a difference. A lot of people with acquired brain injury have difficulty working and participating in their community. The clubhouse is a chance to be with others who understand brain injury and work for recovery. It empowers members to step outside of their comfort zones and work toward goals they might otherwise not consider.



The Seven Hills NeuroCare Brain Injury Clubhouse is a new service model that will soon open its doors at 589 South First Street in New Bedford, Massachusetts. The community-based, voluntary, member-directed program involves people impacted by an acquired brain injury (ABI) who are motivated to achieve their personal and professional goals. Directed by Jennifer

Adams, MPA, members work alongside staff to operate the Clubhouse, and each is dedicated to the other's success through the shared belief that the opportunity to work and have work-mediated relationships are restorative, provide a firm foundation for growth, and help build confidence, self-esteem, and independence.

Members set and achieve goals with the encouragement of their fellow members and staff. Throughout their day-to-day tasks, members' confidence and skills grow as they do the work of recovery and then the work of living their lives to the fullest. It isn't uncommon for a member's goals to help them in their personal lives. For example, working in the Clubhouse kitchen unit will help some members to be able to cook at home. Some members will learn to handle money more responsibly by working in the business unit. Experience in the maintenance unit will help some members complete chores on their own at home. All of the units provide opportunities to enhance a member's "return-to-work" skills. Additional Clubhouse supports include



health and wellness activities such as walking clubs and yoga or social and recreational opportunities such as support groups or cultural outings. Every unit and supplemental programming give members a sense of camaraderie and experiences to share with each other and to draw upon as their independence grows.

"We are really excited for the opportunity to partner with the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission to help provide survivors of brain injuries in Massachusetts with access to this essential service. The Clubhouse model is an important intervention with increasing evidence supporting the promotion of independence, productivity and community integration—the very benchmarks used to measure quality of life."—Dr. Jonathan Worcester, VP of Seven Hills NeuroCare

Funded by the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission, the new Seven Hills NeuroCare Brain Injury Clubhouse will work toward a set of standards from the **International Brain Injury Clubhouse Alliance (IBICA)** to ensure member involvement in all aspects of the program's operation. Referrals are received through the Statewide Head Injury Program (SHIP) and other supports are provided through braided funding from the ABI/MFP Waivers.

Seven Hills NeuroCare, Inc., was launched in 2015, to provide specialized services to adults with ABI and now operates 20 homes throughout central, metro west, northeast, and southeast regions of MA. SHNC is a regional leader in community-based supports for survivors of ABI and is excited to add the clubhouse model to extend its partnership with brain injury survivors in another community-based setting. The Clubhouse model focuses on a wider array of life and social skill domains, taking meaningful steps toward independence, productivity, and community integration.



Hope and Healing through Seven Hills Foundation!



Our work to connect people to the supports and services they need to **BeWell** is possible because of YOU.

Our care for our community's most vulnerable children and families helps them thrive.

Our support for people with disabilities or significant life challenges brings independence and joy.

Our network of services brings dignity, wellbeing, and peace of mind to our seniors.



Together with YOUR support, Seven Hills is delivering on our quest for our community to **BeWell**—here and now—when it is needed most:



HOPE through **HEALING**
Because of YOU.

Scan the QR Code or donate online
today at sevenhills.org

 **Seven Hills**
Foundation & Affiliates

TRANSITION TO ADULTHOOD: IT'S A TEAM EFFORT



It would be an exhausting challenge to find a student who wanted their education to last forever. For most high school students, the light at the end of the tunnel is nearly blinding, as plans are underway for college, employment, or alternative options. For students with developmental disabilities enrolled in special education, the light at the end of the tunnel can flicker as parents/guardians and the students, themselves, struggle with the journey through the Transition tunnel—the long and arduous process of methodically and legally transitioning to adult services through the Massachusetts Department of Developmental Services (DDS). Also known as Turning 22, this major milestone looms large on the horizon for any parent or guardian navigating the timeline of “To-Dos” that need to be done by the time a child turns 18—the “age of majority”—and the steps that follow to become eligible for the future opportunities DDS has developed to help them lead fulfilling and rewarding lives.

Fortunately for families in central Massachusetts, the Transition Planning Process is a team effort. Seven Hills Family Services (SHFS) has two DDS-funded Family Support Specialists with a concentrated expertise in Transition Services. Ida Avoryie and Eliana Agudelo are experienced in the nuances of transition protocol, from DDS eligibility to legalities and person-centered planning. Ida and Eliana are available to work one-on-one with parents/guardians during the steps in their child’s personal planning process. On a broader scope, they partner with area school districts to provide and guide supports for the process along the timeline. Individuals and families also have access to frequent live trainings, a library of archived material, networking opportunities, and connections to the latest resources at any of Seven Hills’ Family Support Centers.

Recently, the Transition Team approach was put to the ultimate test by coordinators, experts, and families alike: the first annual Transition Training Conference. First, the coordinators and experts collaborated as a team to develop the training

for a virtual platform. SHFS staff at the North Central Family Support Center and DDS Transition Department worked to identify the keynote speaker, presenters, agenda, and sponsors. Tireless effort was put into promoting the event through flyers, e-communication, and personal outreach. The result? 224 RSVPs—a resounding response to successful planning and promotion that underscored the profound desire families have to nail this transition timeline for the future success of their loved ones with disabilities.

“The incredible collaboration between SHFS and DDS yielded the best possible outcome in attendance—validating the need families have for information and community to help them successfully transition their loved one with disabilities into adulthood,” said Leslie Courtney, Vice President of SHFS.

During the conference, Keynote Speaker Cheryl Ryan Chan emphasized the empowerment of Human Community and the importance of self-care for individual family members who are navigating the transition journey with their child. Chan noted that the words “self-care” can be cringeworthy as they’re often suggested with good intention, but few who are at the receiving end of those intentions don’t have the time for self-care as they are trying to focus on the transition journey. In its place, Chan offers this advice: “In my opinion, the greatest act of self-care is summarized by three words: Find Your Peeps—Find Your People.” From Chan’s experience, reaching out to the close-knit disabilities community for support can offer an invaluable return in the form of wisdom from shared and learned experiences among many.

The circle of community available to families, guardians, and caregivers of children with disabilities is wide and welcoming, comprised of dedicated staff in health and human services as well as public schools. Resources are plentiful and evolving as new techniques and best practices emerge. The safety net is securely in place to fill in gaps and steady any unsure footing on the journey along the way.

Find your peeps; build your team; champion your child with disabilities into adulthood!

To learn more, contact one of SHFS’ Family Support Transition Specialists:

Ida Avoryie, 508-579-8786, iavoryie@sevenhills.org
Eliana Agudelo, 774-241-2520, eagudelo@sevenhills.org



CHIPPING IN TO BE WELL

Monday, September 27, 2021, dawned with the vibrancy of fall on full display as golf carts aligned and golfers alighted for the 46th Annual Lori Lajoie Charity Golf Tournament at the Worcester Country Club (WCC). The lush greens commanded the course with not one blade bearing witness to the havoc wreaked by Hurricane Henri and the pause it placed on the event that is traditionally held the third week in August.

Each year, WCC Members and their Guests line up to pay and play on the Don Ross-designed course, which is legendary for two signature reasons:

- It was the site of the first Ryder Cup Tournament
- It is the site of the longest-running charitable event of any golf course in the nation

For 45 years, “The Lori Lajoie” has raised over \$5 million for Seven Hills programs that benefit people of all ages in the Greater Worcester area. This year, golfers chipped in to help their fellow community members Be Well. The ongoing effects from the pandemic have devastated families, sidelining all sense of normalcy indefinitely. As a result, Seven Hills has answered the cry for a behavioral health system of care that addresses the emotional recovery efforts needed to get individuals, families—and the familiarity of their lives—back on track.

WCC Members perfected their swings of support, additionally funding a need for a sensory room at the new Seven Hills Behavioral Health hub at 135 Gold Star Blvd. in Worcester. To see the Members’ smiles on the course, at the dinner, and throughout the evening is to know this is a Club that Cares—for every child, adult, senior, and their families in the community to Be Well.



HELPING SENIORS AGE IN PLACE

Ten thousand U.S. baby boomers turn 65 every day. When they blow out the candles on their cakes, most will still be doing so in their own homes. When they make a wish? Statistics hint that for those celebrating this milestone, it could be “to age in place for as long as possible.”

For many seniors, that wish is coming true as their options for health provisions have expanded well beyond the once-predominant nursing home, and the more progressive and flexible Assisted Living model of care.

Seven Hills Foundation and Affiliates offers three different caregiving and companion options that meet the needs of seniors where they are most comfortable: at home.

HOME CARE PREMIER CONCIERGE SERVICES

For more than 60 years, Family Services of Central Massachusetts (FSCM), an affiliate of Seven Hills Foundation, has been steadily building its reputation as the premier provider of private-pay concierge **Home Care (HC)** services. Home Care’s industry-standard hallmark service line, companionship, extends to include assistance with laundry, light housekeeping, meal preparation, personal care, respite care, shopping, prescription pickup, and transportation.

Independent seniors may reach a point when daily activities require the assistance that HC services provide. The senior or a family member recognizes that light housekeeping and laundry, for example, are becoming a challenge to tackle on a weekly basis. Safety and stability issues may be hindering personal care or prohibiting trips to the pharmacy or out in the community.

Starting at just \$30/hour, FSCM Home Care meets seniors at four levels of need: Homemaking, Personal Care, Home Health, and Supportive Alzheimer’s/Dementia Care. No referrals are needed; the initial call by a senior or family member is followed up by an in-home visit with an HC nurse who assesses need and personal caregiving preferences. A minimum of two to four hours per week is required depending on location and other logistics.

As indicated in a Forbes article by Ben Schroeder, “The Future Of Healthcare Is Coming Home: Three Major Trends To Leverage For Startups,” the Home Care industry



Judy, a Seven Hills Home Care client for 18 years, shares a special bond with HC staff member, Loretta.

is surging with the healthcare trend that is shifting its focus from office to in-home visits. Every aspect of health—from prevention to diagnosis and treatment—is being evaluated to better meet peoples’ busy lifestyles and decrease the bloated costs of staying healthy. From telehealth to house calls, innovative solutions have a significant potential to ease the burden of well-being.

The benefits of weekly Home Care visits are factoring in to this promising shifts. Caregivers can quite literally have their fingers on the pulse of seniors’ health as they age in place. A weekly HC visit could detect the nuance of change in a person’s speech, memory, balance, and other contributing factors to more serious issues.

With this in mind, companies developing new healthcare models are realizing the value of complementary services like Home Care, and opportunities for partnerships are promising. While numbers are crunching around the viability of burgeoning “home-delivery” concepts, FSCM Home Care is maintaining its signature services for the past six decades: helping seniors age in place.

ADULT FAMILY CARE LIVE-IN CAREGIVING

When seniors reach a stage when it is no longer safe or in the best interest of their health to live alone in their home. At this point, seniors may qualify for **Adult Family Care (AFC)**, a residence-based care option through MassHealth. Seven Hills is the premier coordinator of AFC in Massachusetts, managing over 500 caregiver arrangements.

Seniors may live with caregivers who are family members or non-relatives. Person-centered support is provided by a team of professionals, coordinated through case managers and registered nurses during home visits, specialized trainings, and 24-hour supports.

To qualify for AFC, a senior must be:

- Unable to live alone because of a medical, physical, cognitive, or mental disability
- Require assistance with activities of daily living (ADLs)
- Eligible for MassHealth

To qualify for caregiving, an adult must be:

- A family member who is not a spouse or legal guardian, or non-family member who can provide live-in care.
- Able to devote the time necessary to provide personal care to ensure safety and well-being at all times.
- Thoroughly screened and complete the application.

SENIOR COMPANION PEER-TO-PEER VOLUNTEERS

Our **Senior Companion Program (SCP)** is a peer-to-peer model that matches a senior volunteer, aged 55 and over, to a homebound senior who could benefit from a weekly visit for companionship, socialization, activities such as playing games or encouraging hobbies, and more.

Senior Companions are recruited as part of the national AmeriCorps Seniors Volunteer program, and provide two to three hours a week, free of charge, to their clients. The volunteers work one-on-one on a regular basis, building relationships, lessening isolation, and curbing loneliness.

The SCP strives to keep seniors independent longer and provide assistance to family caregivers. The program currently works with 12 agencies throughout Worcester County that assign Senior Companions to their clientele.

To learn more, contact the following programs:

Home Care:

Marnie Dow, Director of Home Care & Long Term Supports, [508.756.4696](tel:508.756.4696) or mdow@sevenhills.org

Adult Family Care:

Leslie Courtney, VP of Seven Hills Family Services, [508.796.1866](tel:508.796.1866) or lcourtney@sevenhills.org

Senior Companion Program:

Joy Rehfeld, Director, [508.791.7783](tel:508.791.7783) or jrehfeld@sevenhills.org

**Senior Fraud
HELPLINE
800.297.9760**



VOLUNTEERING TO FOIL FRAUD

According to Mark Gill, author of the Comparitech article, “Senior Scam Statistics 2021,” reports of senior scams to the Federal Trade Commission rose from 325,000 in 2001, to 3.24 million in 2019. In one year, 2020, reports increased 47% to 4.7 million—and these are just the cases that are reported. It is estimated that 80% of seniors, aged 70 and over, don’t report fraud for reasons ranging from not understanding the reporting process, to shame and devastation. In 2020, the cost of these reported crimes against seniors was \$3 billion.

Scams are perpetrated by extremely persuasive criminals who excel at mimicking phone, email, and online communications in areas of vulnerability such as romance, the lottery, sweepstakes, and government/benefits. Scammers have the uncanny ability to blur the lines of reality with false promises that adeptly empty wallets, nest eggs, and retirement accounts. (Gill 2021)

HOW CAN SENIORS PROTECT THEMSELVES AND FOIL THE FRAUDS?

RSVP Volunteers of Central MA—part of the nationwide AmeriCorps Seniors Volunteers for people 55 and over—can help. Their **Senior Fraud Prevention** program operates two initiatives that take action against fraud:

- **Fraud Squad Players** are a touring group of volunteers who act out real-life fraud attempts to senior audiences.
- **Senior Fraud Helpline** volunteers are trained to identify the tell-tale signs of fraud and help seniors **Recognize, Resist, and Report** illicit activity. One call to [1-800-297-9760](tel:1-800-297-9760), 9am to 4pm, Monday through Friday could save finances, alleviate anxiety, and more.

Contact **Joy Rehfeld**, Director, at [508.791.7783](tel:508.791.7783) or jrehfeld@sevenhills.org, to learn more about senior fraud prevention and volunteer opportunities with RSVP.

INSPIRING CAREER AND LEADERSHIP GOALS THROUGH A CONTINUUM OF ACADEMIC SUPPORTS

Seven Hills Foundation provides comprehensive educational services that meet the diverse needs of middle and high school students as well as young adults. From preparing promising students for college, to helping those who've dropped out of a traditional high school but want to complete their degree, young people are encouraged to see and achieve their potential.



College-Access program students tour the campus of Northeastern University in Boston.



Dynamy Internship Year students experience apartment living in the heart of the city, and build friendships that will last a lifetime.

STAR STUDENTS ON THE RISE IN GREATER WORCESTER

The **YOU, Inc. Bruce Wells Scholars Upward Bound** and **Dynamy Youth Academy** programs are five-year leadership and **College-Access** programs that serve up to 145 promising, economically disadvantaged students from six Worcester high schools each year. The programs support students through four years of high school and the first year of college, motivating them to reach their full academic potential and preparing them for college success.

Core components of the program include extensive academic services, skill building and enrichment activities, assistance with understanding financial aid and the college-admissions process, college tours, and internship experiences. Students must meet high academic and participation standards, producing exceptional results. Over the course of the combined 50+ years of programming, 100% of our graduating seniors have been accepted to highly competitive colleges and universities each year, including Boston College, Harvard University, Tufts University, MIT, Cornell, the University of Massachusetts, Boston University, and many others.

Founded in 1969, YOU, Inc.'s **Dynamy Internship Year** is one of the most established and respected Gap Year programs in the country. Internship Year is a domestic, experiential gap year program for young adults, aged 17 to 22, who want to learn differently. Dynamy's mission is to challenge, support, and empower young people to discover their purpose in life and to practice their values. For a full academic year or a semester, students from across the country live and intern in Worcester—immersed in real-world activities, advising and mentoring, wilderness challenges, community service, and life-skills workshops. The program creates opportunities for young people to increase their focus, maturity, self-awareness, and critical-thinking skills as they explore their career aspirations and prepare for higher education.



STAR STUDENTS ON THE RISE IN NEW BEDFORD

Two Seven Hills **Educational Enhancement Centers** located in the New Bedford Community offer after-school academic support for elementary and middle school students at no charge.

Seven Hills **Talent Search** provides students at Keith Junior High and New Bedford High School with academic advising and assistance with the college application process, along with related workshops for parents.

In partnership with MassEdCo, the **Seven Hills Educational Opportunity Center (EOC)** in New Bedford is home base for a broad range of services that put income-eligible adults, and middle and high school students on a path toward higher education.

Since 1974, the EOC has provided free educational access services to adults who are typically first-generation college students. The center's multilingual staff provide career and financial aid advising to more than 1,000 individuals at eight service centers in the New Bedford area annually.

GEAR UP (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs) is designed to increase the number of low-income students who are prepared to enter and succeed in post-secondary education. The Seven Hills GEAR UP program serves a cohort of students beginning no later than seventh grade and follow the cohort through high school, at New Bedford's Normandin Middle School and New Bedford High School.



Dynamy Internship Year student, Trevor, working in the program's Think Tank.

YOU, Inc.'s **Career Pathways** program provides structured academic support to students who have dropped out of a traditional high school and want to attain a High School Equivalency (HiSET, formerly GED), or those who've graduated and are ready to explore occupational training opportunities. Students, aged 16 through 24, are eligible for enrollment at one of four conveniently located classrooms in Worcester County.



Kayla Murray is becoming well-established in her career pathway at Porter and Chester Institute.

“YOU, Inc. has helped me achieve every goal I wanted and more. Class was fun and uplifting, and they helped me with getting into college and applying for jobs. YOU, Inc. is the only reason I am where I am today.”

— Kayla Murray, former Career Pathways student and Porter and Chester Institute employee

The program offers small class sizes; structured academic supports; community service experience; work readiness and financial literacy workshops; college exploration and financial aid assistance; paid work experiences; remote learning support; and vocational training, which includes industry certifications for in-demand occupations such as Certified Nurse Assistants. Mentoring and connection to community supports further strengthen the program's success in helping students to achieve their HiSET and prepare for higher education or meaningful and self-sustaining employment.



BIGGER DIPPER'S SWEET SUCCESS

As the pandemic continued to prohibit large community gatherings—and based on last year's success—the annual Bigger Dipper event virtually kicked off on June 19, its traditional third Saturday of the month, with online ticket sales. Participants received coupons for their donations, which they could use at one of the 11 local participating ice cream vendors from July 15 through Labor Day, September 6.

The Virtual Bigger Dipper raised over **\$20,000** critical to the support of the **Seven Hills Behavioral Health (SHBH) System of Care**. As the premier provider, SHBH combines the expertise of three Seven Hills' affiliates leading the way in behavioral health services for children and families: YOU, Inc., Family Services of Central Massachusetts, and Children's Friend. The newly renovated, 25,000 sq.ft. outpatient facility located at 135 Gold Star Blvd. in Worcester, will enhance access and quality of care through centralized intake, family-friendly parking, state-of-the-art telehealth and technology, and unique therapeutic spaces.

Thank you to our sponsors who continued to support the Bigger Dipper tradition: **Steward Sponsors:** Digital Federal Credit Union, ELM Wealth Management Group of Raymond James.

Advocate Sponsors: Berkshire Bank Foundation, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts, Cornerstone Bank, Eversource Energy Foundation, People's United Bank, Raymond Quinlan & Jane Morgan, RSC Insurance Brokerage, Inc., TD Bank, Wegmans Food Markets, Inc.; **Friend Sponsors:** Alliance Energy LLC, AI's Rubbish Removal & Container Service, Laurence Morrison, National Grid Corporate Giving, Reliant Medical Group, Walmart Tobias Way Distribution Ctr 6490.



Thank you to our **ice cream vendors**—without ice cream, this event would not be possible: Christopher's Homemade Ice Cream, Coco's Tropical Ice, Cool Licks, Dairy Queen Grill & Chill of West Boylston, Froze-Zone, Gibby's Famous Ice Cream, Janine's Frostee, Mrs. Moriconi's, Pinecrock Dairy, Robbie's Place at Crystal Caves, and Swirls & Scoops.

LEADERSHIP SUCCESSION THAT SUSTAINS OUR VISION



Tim Johnson, MBA, Vice President of Seven Hills ASPIRE!, has been with the affiliate since March 2018. Tim started with Seven Hills ASPIRE! as Assistant Vice President of Community Based Day & Employment Supports, growing our employment services and expanding community opportunities across central, north central, and metro west Massachusetts. As Vice President, Tim oversees day programming, and supports more than 500 individuals with developmental differences across six physical sites and many community-based and partner employer locations. Tim has held a seat on the Leadership Council for the North Central Mass Chamber of Commerce, through which he received prior recognition as Ambassador of the Year.

Building and sustaining strong partnerships with the broader business community, Tim continually seeks to increase access, inclusion, integration, and employment opportunities for persons served by ASPIRE! He holds an MBA from Fitchburg State University, as well as a BA from Boston University.



Marissa Ruff, MS, Vice President of Seven Hills Rhode Island, joined Seven Hills in June 2006, as a Direct Support Professional. Over the last 15 years, Marissa has worked in Child & Family Services, Early Intervention, and Adult Services, most recently serving as Interim Vice President of the affiliate. Marissa is pursuing her Doctor of Education in Organizational Leadership and holds a Master of Science in Psychology. Marissa serves as the Chair for the YWCA Board of Directors and is an active participant in the Boston Women's Leadership Summit.

Marissa is committed to excellence at Seven Hills Rhode Island and Seven Hills Foundation by providing high-quality programs that encourage the empowerment of people with significant challenges so that each may pursue their highest possible degree of personal well-being and independence.



Anne Fine, LICSW, Vice President of Seven Hills Behavioral Health

Annie has been with YOU, Inc. for 17 years and has been instrumental in creating Seven Hills' new integrated behavioral health system. Annie has served in various roles at YOU, Inc. and Seven Hills, including Program Director, Director of Outpatient Services, Vice President, and most recently as Sr. VP/ Director of Clinical Services.

Annie earned her M.S.W. from Smith College, and a B.A. in English, Political Science from Allegheny College. Annie ran a Psychotherapy and Consultation private practice until 2018. She continues as an Adjunct Faculty member at Boston University School of Social Work, teaching courses that included Clinical Practice with Groups, Clinical Practice with Families, Clinical Practice with Adult Trauma, Treatment of Child Trauma, and Family Violence.

In the community, Annie serves on the Board and Steering Committee for the Children's Advocacy Center of Worcester County and as a Committee Member for the Worcester Institute on Loss and Trauma.



Cynthia Andrews, MSN, Vice President of Seven Hills Pediatric Center

Since 2004, Cindy has directed the nursing care for 83 children and young adults who have profound cognitive and physical disabilities along with complex medical needs at Seven Hills Pediatric Center (SHPC) in Groton, Massachusetts. During Cindy's 17 years, SHPC achieved ten consecutive years of deficiency-free survey findings, and 5-Star ratings with CMS.

Starting in the role of Charge Nurse, Cindy quickly ascended the ranks of leadership to Clinical Supervisor, Acting Director of Nursing, Assistant Director of Nursing, Director of Nursing, and Assistant Vice President. Now as the Vice President of SHPC, Cindy assumes leadership of both the Groton campus as well as Seven Hills Pediatric Center in Hopedale, MA.

GRANTING GOOD WORK!

Seven Hills Foundation & Affiliates is fortunate to leverage grant support from numerous sources to strengthen and expand our work across our 14 affiliates located in Massachusetts and Rhode Island. Grants support programs or projects not typically funded through existing funding streams and provide us with unique opportunities to develop and implement innovative and creative initiatives that enhance the lives of people faced with significant life challenges. The following highlights recently funded projects:



Steven Kessler, AT Specialist at Seven Hills, works with a participant at the new Technology Lending Center

INNOVATIVE FUNDING TO PROMOTE SUPPORTIVE TECHNOLOGY

Seven Hills Foundation received a \$50,000 grant from the **Department of Developmental Services** to provide training in Supportive Technology to 125 Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) in our residential, employment, and day programs. Staff participating in the innovative initiative enrolled in Tech First Shift's three-course training, "Enabling Technology Credential." The training teaches basic enabling technology integration, distinguishes it from assistive technology, and discusses the benefits, uses, and examples for home, work, and community. Funds were also used to establish a new Technology Lending Center at Seven Hills where DSPs and individuals supported can experiment with different devices to determine their potential success.

HOUSING AND COMMUNITY MEDIATION SERVICES

The **Commonwealth of Massachusetts Office of the Attorney General** has awarded \$44,000 to the **Mediation program of Family Services of Central Massachusetts (FSCM)**. Mediation provides an opportunity for involved parties to have a conversation that leads to an agreement outside of court. FSCM mediators are trained volunteers who provide high-quality, confidential facilitation of the conversation, but do not make suggestions or provide legal advice. Mediation services are provided free of charge or on a sliding fee scale to clients throughout the greater Worcester area.



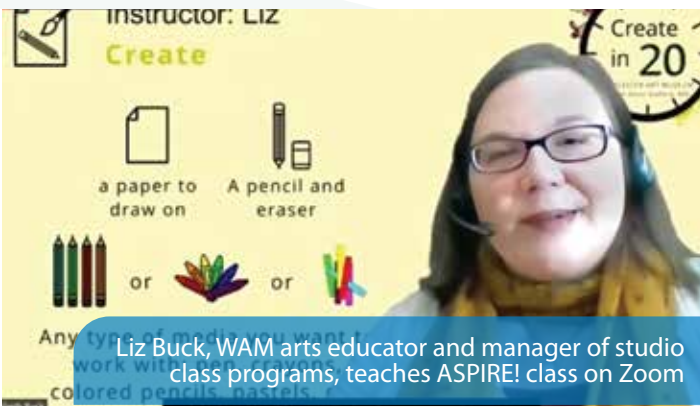
SHRI resident practicing on the court at his new home

TEAMING UP TO EQUIP TRANSITION-AGE YOUTH WITH RECREATIONAL SUPPORT

Customers Bank awarded a \$2,798 grant to support the transition of five youth to a **Seven Hills Rhode Island (SHRI)** residence for young adult males with developmental and intellectual disabilities and autism. The residence program provides guidance and support to the youth who have become legal adults. The generous funding from Customers Bank will provide two basketball hoops, two swing sets, and exercise mats to provide these young men with an outlet to reduce stress, and encourage activity, stimulation, and socialization. Adults with disabilities can use the swings to induce calmness and boost their moods as the back-and-forth motion helps them release endorphins and create better blood flow to their brains. We are sincerely grateful to Customers Bank for helping to enrich the lives of these young men.

SPECIALIZED CLINICAL STABILIZATION PROGRAM TO ADDRESS YOUTH AND ADOLESCENTS AT HIGH-RISK FOR SUICIDE

United Way of Central Massachusetts has continued their long-standing support for the most at-risk youth in our community with their most recent grant of \$20,000 for Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT). DBT, a program of the **Seven Hills Behavioral Health System of Care**, is an evidence-based treatment modality that has been adapted for adolescents and even young children, with the goal of moving clients from crisis to stabilization. DBT views suicidal and self-harming behavior as an individual's attempt to solve a problem that they feel is otherwise unsolvable. This vital treatment helps clients identify and replace life-threatening behaviors with more adaptive problem-solving strategies.



Liz Buck, WAM arts educator and manager of studio class programs, teaches ASPIRE! class on Zoom

CREATING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS TO INCREASE ACCESS TO THE ARTS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Seven Hills Open Door Arts and ASPIRE! programs have partnered together with the Worcester Arts Museum (WAM) to increase access to the arts through their “Connecting and Creating Through the Arts” program. Unibank has graciously granted \$2,500 to provide classes taught by talented WAM staff. During the program, aspiring artists with disabilities learn artistic techniques, explore WAM’s stellar collections, and create their own portfolios of work. Creating art has proven to be effective at enhancing independence, quality of life, social outcomes, and self-esteem for people with disabilities. In this generous way, Unibank is supporting their effort to gain access to and benefit from the arts.



National Grid© Deb Drew, left, visited the ASPIRE! interns at our Coes Park community integrated job site

PARTNERING TO IMPROVE EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

The National Grid Foundation has knit closer ties with the Seven Hills ASPIRE! Workforce Readiness & Employment Program through a \$20,000 grant. National Grid continues to show their passion for supporting workers with intellectual and developmental disabilities to lead productive lives and achieve their highest degree of independence and well-being. Individuals in the program are supported to work in the community and gain work experience and self-confidence to ultimately succeed independently in the workforce. This grant

provides oversight to paid internship opportunities for ASPIRE! participants in café management, community gardening, facilities maintenance, landscaping, and hospitality. Thank you, National Grid, for your continued partnership.

ADVANCING HEALTH EQUITY THROUGH COMMUNITY-BASED CONTRIBUTIONS

We’re excited and grateful to announce that **YOU, Inc.** is one of two Northeast recipients of a \$25,000 grant from **AstraZeneca’s ACT on Health Equity Community Challenge** to Actively Address Health Disparities. In its inaugural year, ACT is one part of AstraZeneca© long-term commitment to health equity and has awarded 30 nonprofit organizations across the country to support programs focused on community health and wellbeing and youth STEM education and career readiness—programs such as YOU, Inc.’s Upward Bound and Dynamy Youth Academy college access.

PROVIDING SINGLE-POINT ACCESS TO BEHAVIORAL HEALTHCARE

A recent **Hanover Insurance Group Foundation** grant of \$25,000 has been awarded to support the Whole Health Triage pilot program that will benefit the Seven Hills Behavioral Health (SHBH) System of Care, which provides comprehensive clinical services and streamlined connection to health-related social supports for children and families.

The Seven Hills’ Whole Health Triage pilot will provide a single point of entry for a broad range of behavioral health services for youth and families at one location—the newly opened flagship center at 135 Gold Star Blvd. in Worcester. The pilot will expedite counseling services via a rapid assessment process, place a dedicated care manager on-site to quickly connect families to wrap-around community supports, and expand evidence-based clinical trainings in areas of pressing need—including the commercial exploitation of children, significant trauma and grief, substance use, neuro-developmental disabilities and autism, and transgender health.

GIVING A LYFT TO BRING CHILDREN AND FAMILIES TOGETHER

Seven Hills Pediatric Center at Hopedale received a \$1,750 grant from the **Help A Little One (H.A.L.O.) Foundation** to support the Family Transportation program. Maintaining family connections, specifically through family visits, is a vital part of each plan of care for the youth with medical complexity living at Hopedale. Because Hopedale is not near a major transportation hub, the cost of family visits is a huge burden on many families. The Family Transportation program provides Lyft ride credits for families in need so they can visit their children.

SPOTLIGHT



SEVEN HILLS ASPIRE!

ASPIRE!'s new employment partnership with Affordable Interior Systems (AIS) in Leominster was recognized by the Boston Business Journal in August for meaningfully advancing community integrated employment for individuals with intellectual and developmental differences. Daily work groups of five to six participants each from ASPIRE! Devens and Worcester are working with the facilities teams at AIS to perform sanitizing, disinfecting, cleaning, and property maintenance services throughout their 100,000+ square-foot facility. AIS donated 4,000 masks and 20 thermometers to Seven Hills, as represented in the group photo, above, taken at AIS.

Community access increased in programs across the affiliate, supported by summer weather and safe outdoor access. Outings included attending a Worcester Red Sox game, the Southwick Zoo, hiking at Crystal Caves, and volunteering with the Regional Environmental Council. Expanded opportunities with partner employers and safe access to community resources provides encouragement for additional returns to on-site services and meaningful community socialization.



Perfect weather was on repeat and welcomed kids and families to the playground at



historic Stearns Tavern at Coes Pond Park on Friday, July 30, and Friday, October 8, when staff and participants from Seven Hills ASPIRE! hosted the first Kids Day Events. Parents and their children enjoyed free popsicles, music, games, and prizes as well as an appearance by Hey-U the Clown—Seven Hills own IT Associate, Myrle Francis—and a magician. Other complimentary activities included corn hole, face painting, and “Build your own Hat” from flexible glow sticks! Although the inside of Stearns Tavern is temporarily closed to the public, the Seven Hills Café window was open for business, serving an assortment of frozen treats, coffee, and snacks.



ASPIRE! held a “Tournament of Pumpkins” in October. Each day, program plus remote services had pumpkin decorating contests onsite then the grand tournament occurred during a Zoom class when the grand winner, top left in photo—Group 2 at Worcester Day Habilitation—was chosen.

The first occupational therapy class of the MCPHS University Worcester campus started this fall. ASPIRE! has connected with the new department and will have two cohorts of students running 12-week health and wellness sessions for some of our Adult Day Health and 799 Day Habilitation participants. Sessions start in January. Students came to the two sites to meet people and to gain info to start their planning for the sessions.

SEVEN HILLS BEHAVIORAL HEALTH (SHBH)

There seems to be a time in everyone’s life when challenges and obstacles are present—at times they can be especially difficult. Working through these challenges often affects us both at home and at work. It can affect our families, our jobs, and our well-being.

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) of the Seven Hills Behavioral Health System of Care is a company-sponsored benefit to help employees and their families/household members. The EAP provides information and referral services, evaluation, and short-term counseling at no cost to the employee.

EAP Counselors are licensed professionals who are experienced and knowledgeable in handling personal problems, such as relationship/family Issues, alcohol/substance use Issues, stress/anxiety, grief and loss, divorce, parent issues, work problems, financial concerns, and anything else of concern!

EAP Counselors work with you to determine the nature of the problem and offer solutions to determine the best course of action to resolve the problem.

EAP services are provided quickly, locally, and confidentially! Day and evening appointments are available. An EAP Counselor is available for support and crisis calls 24 hours per day.

Emily Swalec, LICSW, is the new Intake Coordinator for Seven Hills Behavioral Health. Emily has served in clinical management, operations, and technical training roles over seven years at the agency, including recently as Director of our Worcester Family Resource Center. Emily serves on multiple citywide and state committees focusing on health-related social needs. Emily is responsible for implementing the new **Rapid Access and Intake Model** at SHBH. When families seek behavioral healthcare for their child, they're often forced to approach multiple providers due to the scope of services needed and face long wait times for care. In addition to a new single point of entry for a broad range of behavioral health services for youth and families at one location, the rapid assessment process and tool helps connect clients to expedited behavioral health counseling and other wraparound community supports and primary health care based on their most immediate need.

SEVEN HILLS COMMUNITY SERVICES (SHCS)

SHCS Direct Support Professional, **Enroy Wright**, was honored at the Massachusetts Provider's Council Annual Convention and Expo as the **Gerry Wright Direct Service Employee of the Year**. Enroy has been supporting the residence in one of our homes for twenty-four years. They have grown together and shared many milestones. Enroy embodies the Seven Hills Core Values of Respect and Kindness, Service



to Others, and Teamwork. He is a role model to co-workers, supervisors, and to the men he supports. His dedication to the mission of Seven Hills is unparalleled. Seven Hills Foundation & Affiliates is profoundly grateful to Enroy for his years of dedication to the people he supports and proud of all he has accomplished to receive this accolade.

Now more than ever, it is important for us to ensure that our "Seven Hills Community" stays connected. One of the ways that we have done this throughout the pandemic is by hosting "**Remote Social Groups with a Purpose**." For nearly a year and a half, Chelsea Mahoney, an SHCS Registered Behavior Technician, has been hosting a weekly dance party. Throughout the year, she has hosted theme nights and takes special requests. The dance parties provide a social outlet as well as a workout and have become a highlight of the week for many. This is just one example of programming that began as a reaction to the pandemic but has become an important part of SHCH supports.

SEVEN HILLS FAMILY SERVICES (SHFS)

Seven Hills Family Services is proud to host another year of **Creative Minds**, an Art, Music, and Community Program for Survivors of Acquired Brain Injury. The program has been hosting in-person Art programs at Worcester Art Museum beginning in September and continuing monthly through June 2022. Sessions include a meet & greet brunch, followed by a short museum tour & 1-hour art session. Please contact Noreen to join one or all of our free sessions. For its **Music** venue, Creative Minds has been hosting free ZOOM Jam sessions with Lauren Carey starting in September. **Community Outings** are in the works and are to be announced soon. Past outings have included arena baseball, Tower Hill Botanical Gardens, a comedy

night, and the Trans Siberian Orchestra at the DCU Center.

The **Just Us Girls** program of SHFS was initiated 12 years ago by Dianne Young, who sought to create a fun, meaningful and inclusive social opportunity for her daughter, Kerianne, and other girls who shared the challenges of developmental disabilities. The goal of Just Us Girls is to build, strengthen and support the development of healthy, confident girls. The group meets two Saturdays per month from September to May, and is funded primarily by the United Way's Womens Initiative grant.

Today, Just us Girls' popularity, importance, and demonstrated success, has expanded to include **Just Us Women** so that young women—like Kerianne, now—can continue to develop personal growth and friendships—while learning important lessons that evolve throughout both programs, such as self-determination, money management, bullying, career exploration, and personal safety.

Just Us Women is held one Friday per month from September to May. Enrollment for both programs is ongoing and can be made through the Recreation Department at [508.796.1861](tel:508.796.1861).

SEVEN HILLS GLOBAL OUTREACH (SHGO)



Since 2010, Seven Hills Global Outreach has partnered with local nonprofits in eight developing countries to support

schools, medical clinics, birthing centers, clean water projects, and micro-financing efforts designed to uplift people out of abject poverty.

Seven Hills recently sent a crate filled with medical supplies and computers to its partner in Sierra Leone to help track and address the outbreak of COVID-19 in that country.

“Amid a seemingly unending global pandemic, it’s critical not to lose sight of how this indiscriminate virus is plaguing many impoverished, resource-starved populations abroad. America knows too well the pain and suffering caused by COVID-19 and its variants. However, for unprepared communities where even simple cloth face coverings are scarce, a COVID-19 outbreak is devastating,” said Dr. David A. Jordan, President of Seven Hills.

In addition to 23 laptop computers and tablets preloaded with medical reference texts, the shipment to Sierra Leone, sponsored by Seven Hills, contains personal protective equipment (PPE) including nitrile exam gloves, medical gowns, and face masks to assist local medical personnel in the care of over 17,000 individuals supported in the rural central region of the country. Jordan and Peter Demko, Multimedia & Communications Associate, who served as the project facilitator, hope this single shipment of pandemic supplies will be the first of many being sent from SHGO in Worcester to its partner areas around the globe.

SEVEN HILLS NEUROCARE (SHNC)

SHNC’s commitment to new program development continues with the celebration of a major milestone—the opening of its 20th residential program for adults with acquired brain injuries (ABIs) and complex neurodevelopmental

disorders. The affiliate has been working with DDS to identify gaps in the system of care and developing programs to support regions with people in need. With planned openings in the northeast, southeast, and central regions, It is quite clear that SHNC’s partnership with the Commonwealth will continue to yield opportunities to further support the rehabilitation of adults with post-acute ABIs and complex neurodevelopmental disorders for years to come.

Ashley Dexter, Residence Director at SHNC’s County Road program, is driven to develop innovative and creative activities that engage and enliven participants. For “County Road Eats,” Ashley, her team, and participants travel to different local restaurants, savor their fare, and write a review as a group. On “County Road Drive-In Nights,” the County Road Crew invite friends, family, and other programs to their residence for dinner and a movie, and cookouts. Ashley is committed to helping County Road residents reclaim their lives through impactful programming and setting meaningful, achievable goals. Through her enthusiasm and positivity, Ashley has developed a team of staff who are strong, collaborative, and passionate about their work and their participants’ progress.

SEVEN HILLS PEDIATRIC CENTER (SHPC)

The Department of Education completed its licensure review of **Seven Hills Academy at Groton** with no findings! The Academy’s Director, Monica Kleeman, diligent worked toward program excellence, which was reflected in the review. Over the course of the last two years, Monica has stabilized staffing, enhanced curriculum, and brought a level of energy to the Academy that is exciting and sustainable.

COVID-19 has made teaching the students a daily challenge. When children are restricted to their rooms, the Academy teachers work with the aides to provide in-bedroom learning. Because of this flexibility, children were able to receive educational services throughout the last 18 months. DESE made special note of this flexibility in their closing comments. Congratulations to Monica and her staff for their outstanding achievement!



October brought an array of outdoor activities for the **Academy** and the **Adult Service Program**. Children and young adults participated in Field Day, which included a sensory obstacle course, duck races, and a parachute drop.

The Nashoba Valley Concert Band performed to the delight of all the residents and some family members. They were able to enjoy the warm fall air outdoors, appreciate the music, and interact and engage with band members.

Seven Hills Pediatric Center at Hopedale staff have been doing a great job keeping the residents content and entertained while visits are at a minimum. We have celebrated birthdays, held movie nights, and howled through



a Halloween party. All of the children dressed up for Halloween—as Santa, Where’s Waldo, Thing 1 & Thing 2 from Cat in the

Hat, Minnie Mouse, a Ninja, Mario & Luigi from Mario Kart, a shark, and a Pokemon. The kids are currently working on arts and crafts projects to decorate the house for the holidays. A special invitation to Santa is also in the works. Rumor has it he may make a live appearance!

SEVEN HILLS RHODE ISLAND (SHRI)

Throughout the pandemic, the **Early Intervention** program has fully embraced telehealth as a successful service delivery model alternative to meeting infants and toddlers with their families “in real life,” where the program’s work is typically focused. A hybrid home visit model has been adapted to continue to engage in virtual visits as well as in-person visits as appropriate. Families have been responsive to the hybrid approach, which is allowing program staff to see families and keep everyone safe and healthy.



Finding a suitable home for individuals of transitional age—youth and young adults who have aged out of their state’s youth custody program—can be a complex and daunting task for everyone involved. Such was the case for four young men who suddenly found themselves without a place to live. Enter Seven Hills Rhode Island and the staff who made it their mission to provide housing for the gentlemen: Noel Roy, Facilities Manager; Riley Raimond, Clinical Director; Russell Remillard, Facilities; Isaac Adusu, Residential Director; Michael Luo, Team Supervisor;

and Bob Marcil, who came out of retirement to contribute his talents.

The team approached the state with an ambitious plan and negotiated the technical details. They received approval to move forward provided the transition would be completed within a very tight timeline. With no time to waste, the six staff set to work on their critical mission to ensure that a comfortable home was available for the youths by August 2. After five months of persistence, teamwork, and good old-fashioned sweat equity, the house was not only livable, but beautiful. The well-being of four young men, once uncertain, had been secured.

The entire Seven Hills community would like to express its thanks to the team for their vision and tenacious dedication to ensure that four gentlemen have a home.

STETSON SCHOOL

At the Barre, MA campus, the Referrals and admissions continue to be strong within the residential education program with 75 referrals and the Harrington Way group home referrals were also up with 10 in the last quarter. There is an increasing demand for our services and community of care, especially through the pandemic.

In September we were able to hold our Annual Staff Appreciation Day which included remembering the late Todd Dickie, former Assistant Vice President of Stetson School. Our community dedicated one of his favorite spots on campus in his honor, the campsite, which is now known as “Todd’s Place.” Throughout the day staff got to come outside under a tent and enjoy a delicious spread provided by our food services department. The dedication event involved staff, students, and Todd’s family sharing stories about Todd around

the campfire. It was truly a special day at Stetson and perfect way to honor Todd.

This year the Halloween haunted house put on by a group of dedicated staff was one for the record books! The squeals of terror and delight at the same time from the boys was so much fun to witness. There were many requests of “Can we go again?!” There was also lots of fun with campus trick or treating and showing off costumes. It was great to see!

Summer festivities wrapped up with a spirited Festival Day and Project Fair. We celebrated the Summer Olympics with fun in the sun and even a Zoom interview with former Gold Medalist, Mark Spitz! Our students showed off their summer projects in areas of Robotics, Solar System, Harry Potter, Anime, Olympic History, Medieval Times, Adventure, and Life Skills.

CHILDREN’S AID & FAMILY SERVICE (CAFS)

The children at the Child Enrichment Center in Fitchburg has a busy fall working with favorite lessons on apples, applesauce making, and the turning leaves. All great hand-on learning topics that celebrate the change of season.



The Center is preparing for their Holiday Fair fundraiser event on December 18, with fun holiday activities, raffles, crafts, baked goods, and local vendors exhibiting their wares. This community celebration will raise funds to purchase new books and supplies for the early education classrooms.

FAMILY SERVICES OF CENTRAL MASSACHUSETTS (FSCM)

The **Mediation Department** has recently partnered with the Worcester Housing Authority as a training provider under a 3-year agreement for their Resident Opportunity and Self-Sufficiency (ROSS) Program. The ROSS program seeks to offer training and skill-building to residents on various topics, with the intent of improving their experience as tenants. Our trainings will focus on conflict resolution. training.

The Department is in the startup phase of developing a Re-entry Mediation Program, which helps incarcerated persons, who are about to be released, mediate with family or community support members to assist in transition with the goal of reducing recidivism.

Staff from the **Senior Companion and RSVP Programs** attended the **Sheriffs Annual Senior Picnic**, on August 21, 2021, and distributed over 600 branded marketing bags loaded with specialty items promoting the programs.

The annual picnic is sponsored by the Worcester County Reserve Deputy Sheriff's Association and hosted by Worcester County Sheriff Lew Evangelidis.

According to Nicole Shih, who reported for the Worcester Telegram & Gazette on the day of the event, when Evangelidis was elected in 2011, he started the picnic as a traditional sit-down meal at the SAC Park for over 1,000 seniors who converged from across Worcester County. In this 11th year, COVID-19 forced a break in tradition to a Drive-Thru format, which started with a complimentary car wash. As drivers exited in their buffed and shiny vehicles, they were offered food and goody bags from local businesses.

FSCM was proud to represent its programs at such a grand celebration of the seniors in our community!

The **Retired and Senior Volunteers Program (RSVP) Fraud Squad Players** have eight scheduled presentations at area senior centers and senior housing. The Players are a touring group of volunteers that perform senior fraud scenarios that educate their senior peers on the current scams and frauds that are circulating, and how they can Recognize, Resist, and Report them.

The **Summer Literacy Initiative (SLI)** is a long-running, highly successful program designed to mitigate summer learning loss in early childhood. The program is a collaborative effort among Worcester Public Schools, Worcester Parks and Recreation, and several summer camp providers throughout Greater Worcester. It is developed and coordinated each year by **The Center for Childcare Careers (CCC)** of FSCM. Each summer, between 500 and 700 children participate in the program. This year, it was made possible through the generosity of the United Way of Central Massachusetts.



Due to the pandemic, CCC had to work again under the three models established last summer: teachers working with children and staff at their open sites, teachers providing remote instruction to children at their sites, and teachers providing remote instruction to children at their homes. The three models were developed based on the comfort, ability, and capacity of each

out of school time provider, in addition to each individual site's accreditation and licensing requirements. Despite the workaround, this was one of the most successful summers on record. Students were able to gain more access to the literacy teachers, benefited from individualized tutoring sessions, and one of the summer programs received a visit from the Worcester Poet Laureate and the Worcester Youth Poet Laureate made a visit to one of the summer programs.

OPEN DOOR ARTS (ODA)

Open Door Arts **COOL Schools** partnered with 9 Boston Public Schools this year, serving approximately 1000 students aged 3-21, of whom approximately 550 have a wide range of disabilities. We provided between 16 and 36 weeks of arts-integrated instruction in visual arts, music, dance, drama and fashion design to each student. Programs were fully virtual due to Boston Public School restrictions, and we provided every student in our programs with a quality art supply kit so they can meaningfully participate in art making during virtual instruction. We were proud to welcome three new schools this year: the Higginson Elementary School, the Higginson/Lewis K-8 School, and the West Zone Early Learning Center. We will be adding two new schools during the 2021-2022 school year, the Ellis Elementary School and the Warren/Prescott K-8 School, both in Boston. We provided extensive professional development and coaching to our teaching artists.

In late September, ODA delivered the "SPEAC" (Supporting the Processing of Experience through the Arts during Crises) **Professional Development** series to new cohorts in Boston and Springfield. SPEAC was developed in partnership with the Eliot School of Fine and Applied Arts and Wheelock Family Theater at BU

last summer, and offers comprehensive training on inclusive, anti-racist, and trauma-informed teaching practices for arts educators.

Open Door Arts provided Professional Development trainings and follow-up consultancy supports to arts and culture organizations looking to improve their capacity to implement inclusive policies, practices, and programs. ODA worked with the New Repertory Theater, Celebrity Series of Boston, the New Art Center, and the Worcester Art Museum Education Department. The affiliate will begin a yearlong consultancy project with Celebrity Series of Boston following a successful first workshop. Additionally, ODA has been contracted by the Mass Cultural Council to support them in the redesign of the curriculum used by their Universal Participation Initiative.

YOU, INC. (YI)

YOU, Inc., has entered a partnership with William James College, to offer a **Community Health Workers (CHW) Training Program**, funded by the Health Resources & Services Administration (HRSA). The year-long work placement and training program is for individuals who are committed to working as paraprofessionals—(e.g., mental health worker, peer support counselor/specialist, community health worker, outreach worker, substance abuse/addictions worker, youth worker, recovery support specialist, recovery coach/guide, etc.—with children, adolescents, and transitional-aged youth in integrated behavioral health and primary care settings. The service-learning program aims to reduce critical gaps in access to behavioral health and substance use services in Massachusetts and throughout the New England area.

Participants in the CHW Training Program will be placed at work sites in unserved and underserved communities to complete a year-long, full-time experiential training. The program will be comprised of two tracks: in Track 1, three to four students will be recruited annually to serve as paid YOU, Inc. employees. In Track 2, YOU, Inc. will recruit current employees who want to pursue a BA or CHW certification.

The goal of the program is to address the behavioral health workforce shortage felt acutely by community-based and human services organizations with more trained and culturally responsive providers as well as innovative workforce development programs that support existing employees and attract new talents to the field.



CORE VALUES

Respect & Kindness | Integrity | Teamwork
Innovation | Service to Others



81 Hope Avenue
Worcester, Massachusetts 01603

Non-profit
Organization
US Postage Paid
Worcester MA
Permit No. 723

MAILING CHANGES?

If you are receiving duplicates, have a change of address, or wish to be removed, please contact Jennifer Wentworth at 508.983.1304 or jwentworth@sevenhills.org

sevenhills.org

Say "YES" to a career
creating SMILES!



Apply Online:
sevenhills.org/careers



Why Seven Hills?

*"Every day I get to do something I love and
make an impact on people's lives."*