



NEEDS

North East Educational and
Developmental Support Center

W I N T E R

NEWSLETTER

Update From The President

Hi all. 2023 was a very busy year for all of us at The NEEDS Center. Along with the oversight and management of our existing homes and programs, we focused on a good deal of new development throughout the year, opening 6 Group Residences throughout Massachusetts, and a new day program located in Beverly, MA.

The main reason that we had so much expansion was that Massachusetts implemented a time-limited financial incentive for new homes, and we decided to do our best to take advantage of this opportunity. This expansion project has enabled us to add a number of new positions, and to increase staffing for our front-line workers. The expansion projects necessitated the hiring of a large number of new staff members, and has been quite the undertaking for all of us. We have 2 new residential new developments left to open (one in Danvers, MA, and the other in Orleans, MA), and a new Day Program in Hyannis Ma. Once these projects are completed we will be taking a well-deserved break from adding new homes and programs.

2024 marks the 10 year anniversary of The NEEDS Center, and we will be celebrating this milestone with several events throughout the year. The first large event will be our first ever fundraising Gala on April 6, 2024 at Ipswich Country Club, in Ipswich, MA. We hope that you will join us if you are able to.

Please enjoy this edition of the Newsletter, thanks for reading.

Jim Sperry, President and CEO

The NEEDS Center

jsperry@needsctr.org

978-216-0315



New Developments

2023 was a very busy year for new developments for the NEEDS Center, and our expansion projects are winding down as we have headed into 2024. We will be opening the following projects in 2024:

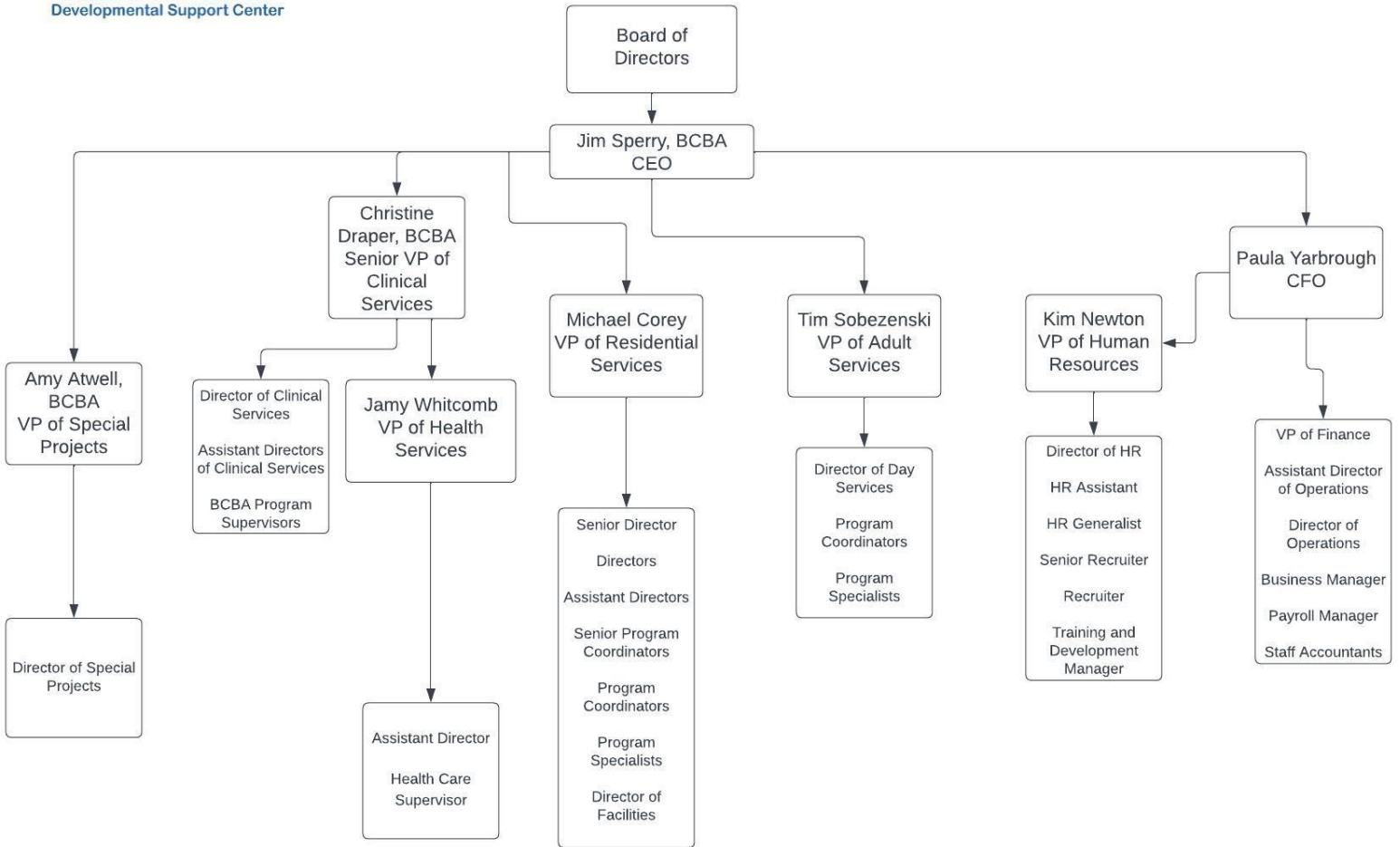
- New Hyannis CBDS Day Program 4/2024
- New Danvers Home 4/2024
- New Orleans Home (Date TBD)

Once these new projects are opened, we plan to take a break from new expansion projects for at least 12-24 months.

Organization Structure



NEEDS Center Organizational Chart



A DEGREE MAY BE CLOSER THAN YOU THINK!



DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES SERVICES Certificate Program

Do you have the drive to make a powerful,
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A career in disabilities services may be your calling!

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- Credit for prior Learning
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- Pay as little as \$50 per course for eligible students
- Earn a Certificate in 1 Year

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make earning your degree attainable!**

Contact **Erinn Gilmore** to find out more information
egilmore@northshore.edu

**NORTH SHORE
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www.northshore.edu

A Decade of Making a Difference

The NEEDS Center Gala is fast approaching! On Saturday, April 6th, you are invited to join us at the Ipswich Country Club as we celebrate a decade of making a difference! This gala promises to be a night of celebration, reflection, and hope for the future. As we commemorate ten years of growth and progress, we want to express our gratitude for the countless individuals we have been able to support over the years. We hope you will join us for an evening of cocktails, silent auction, awards, sit down dinner, and some dancing!

If you would like to become a sponsor of our gala or learn more about how to get involved, please contact us at galainfo@needsctr.org or (351) 322-5272.

If you can't join us at our Decade of Making a Difference-Gala but still want to support our organization, please consider purchasing and sponsoring a single ticket for a NEEDS Center staff member! Your generosity ensures that a dedicated staff member will get to enjoy this special event.

You won't want to miss out on this milestone celebration!

www.needsctr gala.org

Celebrating
10 YEARS
NEEDS
North East Educational and
Developmental Support Center

SATURDAY, APRIL 6TH 2024
6:00 PM - 10:00 PM
IPSWICH COUNTRY CLUB
148 COUNTRY CLUB WAY
IPSWICH, MA 01938

For more info, visit
needsctr gala.org



Corporate Compliance Corner

It has been busy with lots to come at NEEDS Center in regard to audits and accreditations! Here are some updates:



On the heels of CARF we have QUEST (DDS Office of Quality Enhancement) coming in April / May for our 2-year review. What is QUEST you ask

The vision of the Office for Quality Enhancement is to promote the continuous improvement of the quality of individuals' lives through licensing and certifying providers, overseeing the implementation of important safeguards, and serving as a catalyst for positive change by providing technical assistance and consultation to people within and outside of the Department.

This review involves both a self-assessment and a targeted on site review.

With 2023 come and gone, we are excited to also present our 2023 Annual Report. This report displays all our success from 2023, with updates from all our programs (residential, day, international) along with financial updates and so much more. Please take the time to peek and see for yourself. You can find a copy of this report on our website or you may scan the provided QR Code below.



ANNUAL REPORT

2023



North East Educational and
Developmental Support Center

Corporate Compliance Corner

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You may remember from the previous newsletter that CARF was coming for a visit. We are proud to announce that NEEDS Center received another Three Year CARF Accreditation which is valid until October 31, 2026! This would not have been possible without the support and dedication of all our staff.

Top Marks!

1. Families feel welcomed and supported by the NEEDS Center. Communication is responsive and provides the details of what is going on with a person served, including when issues are arising.
2. The organization is truly person centered in that it has taken the time to consider matching the individual served in terms of levels of care, interest, and activity level.
3. Family members spoke very highly of the need center services with many commenting that it is the best organization in the area and they are grateful for everything the organization does for individuals served.
4. The organization is recognized for strong, financial practices and activities.
5. The NEEDS Center has team-spirited administrators, who are individually and collectively talented, and committed to providing the highest quality of care possible while running an organization responsibly to ensure its sustainability.
6. The organization is recognized for stellar commitment to the health and safety of all of its employees and other stakeholders.
7. Residential services truly represent a homelike environment. Homes are comfortable and safe with many rooms decorated according to the wishes of the individual served.
8. The NEEDS Center is commended for encouraging, self advocacy and empowerment for the individuals served.

Welcome To The NEEDS Center!

We would like to take this opportunity to welcome our new staff members to The NEEDS Center!

Wiselene Alexandre-Program Specialist

Tonya Boilard-Program Specialist

Creig Boyd-Maintenance Facilities Technican

Monique Brandon-Program Specialist

Naomi Carter-Program Specialist

Tish Davis-Program Specialist

Hannah Devine-Program Specialist

Jannelle Gordon-Operations Coordinator

Stanley Horace-Program Specialist

Will Hoyt-Program Specialist

Jenny Joachin-Program Specialist

Kingsley Kingsley-Program Specialist

Matthew Majeau-Program Specialist

Abigail Maseka-Program Specialist

Terence Nkeng-Program Specialist

Abby Ogheneruemu-Program Specialist

Cyn Pagan-Relief Program Specialist

Kylie Rauth-Program Specialist

Jennifer Risser-Program Specialist

Sabrina Roberts-Program Specialist

Jessy Romeo-Program Specialist

Nancy Salomon-Program Specialist

Andrew Shumate-Program Specialist

Karen Soler-Director of Special Projects

Egbe Julius Sangaya Tambe-Program Specialist

Derus Thompson - Assistant Program Coordinator

Allan Werikhe-Program Specialist

Christal Wolfe-Program Specialist

Makye Woods-Program Specialist



Your Donation Makes a Difference

At the NEEDS Center, we are dedicated to empowering individuals with developmental disabilities to live as independently as possible. As a 501-c-3 non-profit organization, we rely on the support of generous individuals and organizations to supplement our funding and provide transformative experiences for those we support. Your contributions enable us to offer a variety of community activities, such as tickets to sporting events and vacations, creating cherished memories and a sense of belonging. Join us in making a difference by supporting the NEEDS Center today. Together, we can build brighter futures and foster an inclusive and compassionate society for all. Thank you for your generosity and belief in our mission.

To donate electronically please use the link below or scan the below QR code:

<https://needsctr.org/donations>



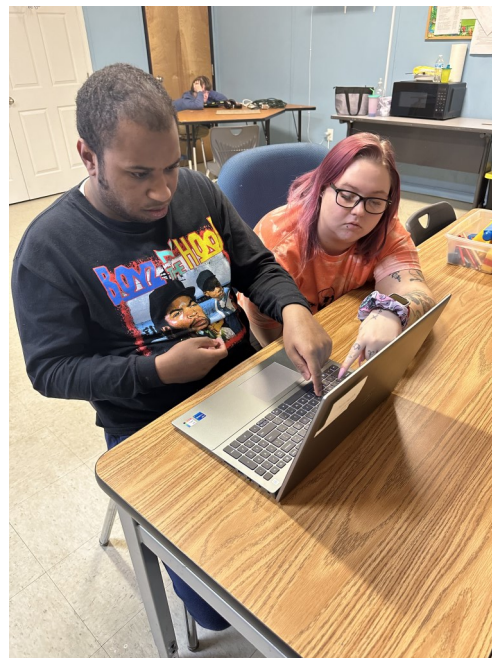
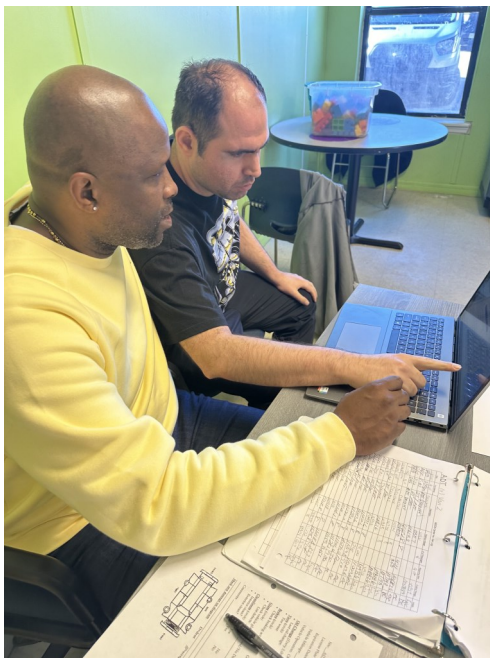
A Florida Holiday Tradition

Embracing 16 years of festive tradition for our Florida division! Our incredible community from Orange Park, FL, came together to deck the halls and light up the season by decorating a stunning Christmas tree in Green Cove Springs, FL. The joy and Christmas spirit were palpable as the people we support reveled in this annual tradition. Each night, the adorned tree will illuminate the holiday nights, casting a warm glow throughout the Christmas season.



Thank you Clay Electric Co-op!

We are thrilled to share that the NEEDS Center has been chosen as a recipient for the Operation Round Up Grant by Clay Electric Co-op ! A big THANK YOU to Clay Electric Co-op for their commitment to making a positive impact in our community. With their generous contribution, we're able to enhance our ADT program in Orange Park, FL by purchasing laptops and whiteboards, making a significant difference in the lives of those we serve.



We Love Disney

The people we support from all across the NEEDS Center enjoyed the magic of Disney World.



MA Repay

EOHHS has made an important update to the MA Repay: Human Service and Home Health Worker Student Loan Repayment Program. **Registration for this program is reopening on Wednesday February 14, 2024**, with the following updated program guidelines:

Applicants are now eligible to apply regardless of income level.

Prior to February 5, 2024, only applicants who earned less than 50% of their area median income (AMI) were eligible to apply. On February 5, 2024, EOHHS paused application registration to remove the income threshold as an eligibility requirement. Applicants who earn less than 50% of their AMI will still be granted preferential scoring, along several other criteria for granting preference to applicants, if the number of individuals eligible for loan repayments exceeds the available funding. The list of criteria is available in question 32 of the common questions document, which will include up-to-date information when the application is relaunched on Wednesday.

Applications will close at **11:59 PM EST on March 13, 2024**, *or once the award amounts requested by applicants reaches approximately twice the available award funding* for this program, whichever comes first.

Individuals who submitted their applications prior to February 14, 2024 will not need to resubmit their applications. If individuals registered (and received a unique application link) prior to February 5, 2024, but have not started or finished their applications, they may complete and submit their applications using their unique application link.

Program Overview

This program is designed for direct care human service and home health professionals licensed or funded by one of the 15 state agencies, including but not limited to certified nursing assistants, personal care attendants/aides, homemakers, companions, care coordinators, family child care providers and assistants working in home-based or community-based settings,

In exchange for a one-, two- or three-year service commitment, the program will provide **up to:**

Qualifying Degree Type	Full-Time Assistance Level	Part-Time Assistance Level	Service Commitment
Master's	\$30,000	\$15,000	3 years
Bachelor's	\$20,000	\$10,000	2 years
Associate's	\$6,000	\$3,000	1 years

Please direct all questions from potential applicants to the Massachusetts League of Community Health Centers at Contact (marepay.org).

In addition, you can visit <https://www.marepay.org/human-service-and-home-health> for more information.

Get To Know: Rosie

What activities do you like to do in the community?

Rose: I like to go into the community to go shopping and walk around the mall. I like to hang out with Diane when she is up to going out.

What is your favorite meal to eat?

Rose: My favorite meal to eat is spaghetti and meatballs

What is one thing you like about your home?

Rose: I like how big my room is.

What are some activities that you like to do at the residence?

Rose: I like to go for walks around the neighborhood every day, I also like to play cards in my room.



LPN Career Ladder Program

The Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS) is implementing a Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) Career Ladder Program, beginning in the Spring of 2024. The program will focus on supporting entry-level direct care workers currently employed by a skilled nursing facility (SNF) or a home and community-based services (HCBS) provider to become an LPN.

The goals of the LPN Career Ladder Program are to: (1) encourage career advancement for direct care workers currently employed in the health and human services field; and (2) provide a targeted intervention to address the critical need for LPNs in the long-term services and supports sector.

The participating employee will attend an approved LPN educational program while they remain employed at their SNF or HCBS employer. The employer will work with EOHHS to reduce the employee's hours by at least 20 hours per week. The LPN Career Ladder Program will cover the costs of the LPN education program, replacement wages, educational support services, emergency funds, LPN exam costs and other related expenses.

The LPN Career Ladder Program is expected to begin with a Fall 2024 LPN class across multiple LPN educational programs.

The LPN Career Ladder Program will cover educational costs that are not covered by existing mechanisms, such as Pell Grants, Financial Aid, or Scholarships, ensuring that program participants can attend the approved LPN educational program free of charge.

Funding

The program is funded with \$6,000,000 in total support from the federal and state resources.

Participating Employer Responsibilities

Employers will enter a contract with EOHHS's LPN Career Ladder Program vendor that ensures:

An employee has a flexible schedule to allow the employee to attend LPN classes and corresponding activities;

An employee works a schedule reduced by at least 20 hours per week from their standard working schedule when school is in session; and

If an employee becomes licensed as an LPN and returns to work for the employer, the employer will pay into the fund a percentage of the employee's program costs, only while the employee remains on the employer's payroll, for up to 4 years.

More information will be available in the Spring of 2024

Holiday Potluck

Highlights from the Holiday Potluck at the NEEDS Center! We are filled with gratitude for the wonderful moments of joy and laughter shared during our recent festive gathering. A heartfelt thank you to our incredible community for making this event truly special!



Thank You Flutie Foundation!

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the Doug Flutie, Jr. Foundation for Autism for their incredibly generous contribution to the NEEDS Center! Their unwavering support is truly making a tangible difference in our community. We also want to express our sincere appreciation for the unforgettable day of joy and excitement at Get Air Sports Trampoline Park in Orange Park, FL. It was an experience cherished by all!



NEEDS Winter Formal

We're thrilled to share the heartwarming success of the recent Winter Formal hosted by the NEEDS Center! The evening was a true testament to the power of community and inclusion as our attendees, adorned in their finest attire, danced the night away with smiles that lit up the room. Laughter, joy, and a sense of belonging filled the air, creating unforgettable memories for all who attended. It was a celebration of friendship, empowerment, and the beauty of diversity. We extend our deepest gratitude to everyone who contributed to making this event a resounding success, from volunteers and staff to supporters and attendees. Together, we continue to create moments of happiness and connection that enrich the lives of those we serve. Thank you for being a part of our journey!



Night to Shine

We're absolutely thrilled to share the incredible success of the recent Night to Shine event, sponsored by the Tim Tebow Foundation, which brought together the Jacksonville community in a beautiful display of love and inclusion. Over 1,000 individuals were treated to an unforgettable prom night experience filled with laughter, joy, and cherished moments. From glamorous attire to dance-worthy beats, the evening was a celebration of each individual's spirit!



Diversity & Inclusion Committee



Sopheaklizabeth So
Assistant Director of
Residential Services
sso@needsctr.org

Due to the many changes in the company, we are currently still in the process of building a new committee and we are looking for new members! If you are interested in joining the committee, please reach out to Sophie So! We are welcoming new ideas and topic discussions, so please bring your thoughts and opinions. We are planning to resume quarterly meetings in March, and I will be reaching out to everyone with a date and time soon!

+ Healthcare Corner +

Spotlight on Cellulitis

Cellulitis is a common bacterial skin infection that causes redness, swelling, and pain in the infected area of the skin. If untreated, it can spread and cause serious health problems.



What are the warning signs of cellulitis?

- Fever with chills and sweating.
- Fatigue.
- Pain or tenderness in the affected area.
- Skin redness or inflammation gets bigger as the infection spreads.
- Skin sore or rash that starts suddenly and grows quickly in the first 24 hours.
- Tight, glossy, stretched appearance of the skin.
- Warm skin in the area of redness.

Cellulitis is caused when bacteria, most commonly streptococcus and staphylococcus, enter through a crack or break in the skin.

Suspected Cellulitis needs assessment and treatment by a healthcare provider so it can be treated quickly to avoid spreading.

Using a dark colored permanent marker to outline the area of infection (pictured here) is a good way to determine if the infection is spreading, and to what part of the body.



Jamy Whitcomb
Vice President of
Health Services

Closing Summary

Thanks for reading the Winter edition of our Newsletter – we hope you enjoyed it! We look forward to another great year in 2024. If you have any suggestions for making improvements to the newsletter, please contact Matthew Seidell via email at mseidell@needsctr.org.