



HOLIDAY  
FESTIVITIES

COMMUNITY  
OUTINGS

DSP OF THE MONTH

# THE EEDA READER

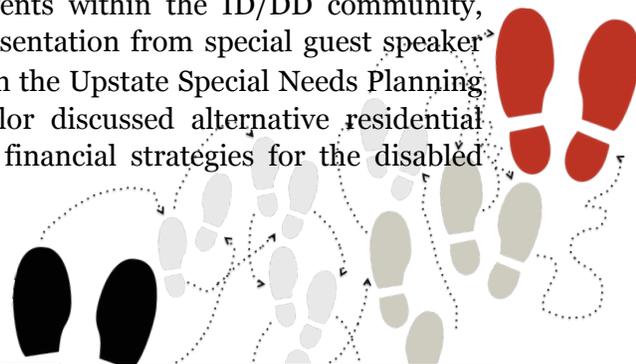
NEWS FROM EAST END DISABILITY ASSOCIATES, INC.

## DANCING THE NIGHT AWAY



November 8th, 2018 marked the first in a new series of dances scheduled at the Greek Orthodox Church of the Hamptons. Members and staff from EEDA's programs enjoyed desserts and danced the night away at the church's beautiful event space. Thank you to Annetal Spencer and Christine Proietti of EEDA's Community Habilitation department for putting together this great event!

EEDA also held its regular Family Advocacy Meeting at the church. Parents and family members gathered to discuss current events within the ID/DD community, and listen to a presentation from special guest speaker James Traylor from the Upstate Special Needs Planning Council. Mr. Traylor discussed alternative residential opportunities and financial strategies for the disabled population.



## A MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

As you browse the pages of this issue you will learn of the robust activities, celebrations, and happenings that added importance to the lives of the individuals we support and our community.



EEDA was fortunate to be chosen as the fundraising recipient of a Polar Plunge spearheaded by the students of Westhampton Beach Middle School. This is a great example of education in action. The teacher wanted the students to learn about social action and instructed them to work collaboratively exploring ideas, organization, mission, and support implementation. The purpose of this event is to bring disability awareness and community support. We are so proud of these young people who planned the event and will volunteer for the plunge, along with several

EEDA members. Local businesses including Hampton Coffee Company, Hampton Trading Company, and the Moriches Bay Project will be on the scene offering support and encouragement.

Sadly, we lost staff member Fran Fitzgerald in November. Although Fran was with EEDA for two short years, his impact on the organization will be felt for years to come. Fran's work in the community had a long reach, enriching our partnerships and internally building the management team. Fran was always with his faithful dog Rusty who accompanied him to work every day winning the hearts of all. We miss Fran, but believe he would be happy knowing Rusty still comes to work every day with his leash in my hand.

The New Year will bring new challenges and celebrations but some things remain the same;  
 the dedicated staff that do extraordinary work every day;  
 the valued community partners;  
 the creativity and skills of those with all abilities;  
 the passionate work of our board members;  
 and the support of our families.  
 This is what makes EEDA special.



*Lisa Major Fental*

## EEDA LOVES OUR DSPs!



Sahlise Cherry was nominated to be the DSP featured in the EEDA newsletter because of her hard work and dedication supporting the individuals in the Marion Lane IRA. Sahlise has only worked at EEDA for less than a year, but has been supporting the ladies and gentlemen at the Marion Lane IRA for six years. Sahlise has always been a caretaker. Prior to working at Marion Lane she was a pre-k assistant teacher for 18 years. Sahlise has been a staple for both the individuals and the staff at the house during the transition from Catholic Guardian to EEDA overseeing the daily operations of the IRA. Sahlise comes to work with a smile on her face and ready for whatever the day may bring. Sahlise's supervisors would like to thank her for all her hard work as she enriches the lives of the people who live at Marion Lane.

In July of 2018, EEDA acquired the Marion Lane IRA through change of auspice from Catholic Guardian Services. The house is nestled in a private wooded neighborhood in East Hampton and is home to ten individuals, many whom have called Marion Lane their

home for the past 30 years. Some of the existing Catholic Guardian staff still work at the home, alongside new EEDA hires, giving the house much needed staffing stability. The home consists of the main house where eight individuals live, and an attached apartment that two gentlemen share. All of the residents are in a day program through IGHL, DDI, or Self-Direction. The residents are a family and are often seen together in the community taking advantage of all the East End has to offer, such as beaches, summer fairs and festivities, and the maritime areas of Sag Harbor. Since EEDA has come into the picture, the individuals and staff have expanded their recreational outings and social opportunities, joining the other EEDA IRAs for holiday celebrations, picnics, and the dance at the Greek Orthodox Church of the Hamptons.

Each issue, the EEDA Reader will recognize an exceptional DSP staff member from our programs. All nominations are from fellow DSPs!



**WHO WILL YOU  
NOMINATE  
NEXT??**

# HALLOW-EEDA



Halloween at EEDA is always fun. Staff and program participants always dress to impress (or scare), celebrate at the programs, and of course trick-or-treat at the main office. For the first time this past Halloween, Calverton Day Hab was transformed into a House of Horrors, inviting in brave souls to traverse the screams, creepy characters, and elaborate sets. Staff and program participants dressed up in their best costumes to terrify and delight through the spooky maze. A small donation was collected from those who could handle the ride, and given to the North Fork Animal Welfare League.





# JOHN V. BELTRANI MEMORIAL GOLF CLASSIC



On October 22nd, 2018 EEDA held its annual John V. Beltran Memorial Golf Classic at the Bellport Country Club. Despite the unseasonably cold weather, 98 golfers braved the chill and wound up having one of the most enjoyable and most successful golf outings yet. At the end of the day, the golfers were treated to a plethora of auction items to bid on, some great food, and a beautiful performance from the EEDA Creative Arts Program. Thank you to all who attended and everyone who helped make this event a huge success!



# NYAI LONG ISLAND DSP CONFERENCE



The annual Long Island DSP Conference hosted by the NADSP, was held on November 13th, 2018 at the Long Island Aquarium's Star Ballroom. The DSP Conference gives direct support professionals the chance to network, share stories, learn from one another's experiences, and celebrate their profession. It also gives them a break from their daily work as a DSP. This year's conference featured keynote speaker Lou Radja, a commanding presence and captivating motivational speaker who gifted an attendee a one

hundred dollar bill for participating. He spoke to attendees about how finding their "why" as a DSP would help them to help others. Lou Radja motivated listeners as he explained that finding their "why" would help them better help others. Event attendees were also entertained by an inclusive band from the Community Mainstreaming Agency, the Main Attractions, who later answered questions during a Q&A session. Speakers from the Regional Center for Workforce Transformation stressed the importance of DSPs advocating for themselves. Prizes were raffled off throughout the event and each DSP was given a certificate of appreciation. EEDA attendees included Christopher Pagano, Evelyn Daniels, Tyra Shepard, Krista Robinson, Maryann Iacono, Janice Hughes, Joy O'Shaughnessy, Matthew Kuriloff, and Annetal Spencer.

## LIFE SKILLS SYMPOSIUM

The second annual Life Skills for Independent Living Symposium was held on November 10th, 2018 at Stony Brook University. This symposium was a collaborative effort between the Stony Brook School of Professional Development and EEDA, FREE, YAI, AHRC, and SMILE. The first symposium took place in the fall of 2017, and this year there were 100 additional people attending, with an overall attendance of about 300. EEDA's own Joy O'Shaughnessy is the organizer and chair of this event, which is made possible through a generous grant made by the DDPC. The featured speaker for this event was John Maltby, the co-chair of the NY Housing Resource Center. John discussed advocacy, how to navigate the current system, and upcoming housing opportunities. What makes the symposium such a special event is that it's truly representative of everyone from our world. You'll find top executives, parents, direct support professionals, people with disabilities, self-direction staff, self-advocates, and people from a person's circle of support all networking in the same room. It's a rare opportunity for people in various positions to share their concerns about the future of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. With growing enthusiasm for this event and an increase in participants and supporters, we're looking forward to the future and all its possibilities.

**Getting the Most Out of Life!**

2nd Annual Life Skills for Independent Living Symposium

**Join us for a full day of activities and educational workshops about living independently in the community with person-centered supports. People receiving I/DD services (self-advocates) may attend at no cost with one support staff/family member. For all others, the registration fee is \$50. Advanced Registration Required.**

**FEATURED SPEAKER**

**John Maltby** Co-chair of the NY Housing Resource Center, is a parent pioneer in independent housing. John will discuss new housing options, how to navigate current systems and advocacy issues arising from system change.

**SPONSORS**

Developmental Disabilities Planning Council | Stony Brook University | AHRC | EEDA | FREE | YAI | ISS INDEPENDENT SUPPORT SERVICES, LLC | Regional Centers for Workforce Transformation | Seeing beyond disability.

**LIFE SKILLS SYMPOSIUM**  
Saturday, November 10, 2018  
8:30 am to 3 pm  
Student Activities Center  
Stony Brook University

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**  
Details and registration at  
[www.stonybrook.edu/lifeskills](http://www.stonybrook.edu/lifeskills)



## **Westhampton Polar Plunge Rogers Beach, January 19th, 2019**



*to support*



*Your Challenge... Our Commitment*

**East End Disability Associates  
Admission at the Beach: \$10  
Event Opens: 12:00 PM**

**Purchase Tickets or Sponsor a Participant here:**

**<https://www.eed-a.org/polar-plunge>**



**Hampton Coffee Company will be  
providing us with hot chocolate and  
coffee!**

**If you have questions, please contact Kelly Russell at [krussell@whbschools.org](mailto:krussell@whbschools.org)**

Dear Parents & Caregivers,

EEDA's next Family Advocacy meeting has been scheduled for Thursday, February 14th, 2018. Light refreshments will be served at 6:00 PM, followed by the meeting at 6:30 PM at The Greek Orthodox Church of the Hamptons, 111 Saint Andrews Rd. in Southampton. This meeting will be held at the same time as EEDA's Valentines Day Dance, also taking place at the Greek Church.

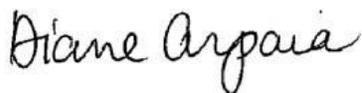
**The Family Advocacy meeting will feature a special presentation by Regina Brandow of Brandow Law.**

Brandow Law is devoted to working with clients on an individualized basis. The practice is concentrated on Estate Planning for persons with Disabilities and their families, including Elder Law. Mrs. Brandow is a certified hearing officer with the New York State Department of Education and an active member of the Surrogate Court Decision Making Committee. She also serves various organizations and/or boards including Nassau/Suffolk Law Services Advisory Council, and Estate and Special Needs Planning Committees.

Please take a moment to let us know if you'll be able to attend the meeting by visiting our <https://www.eed-a.org/advocacy.html>. Onsite respite services will be available during the meeting.

If you were not able to attend our past EEDA Family Advocacy Group meetings, we hope you'll consider joining us on February 14th at 6:00 PM in Southampton, for this special meeting.

Warm regards,



Diane Arpaia  
EEDA Board Member & Parent  
631-734-2862  
[DianeA@eed-a.org](mailto:DianeA@eed-a.org)



## BUNNY CARE AT THE 4H CLUB



Every week, a group from Calverton Day Hab heads over to the Dorothy P. Flint 4H Camp in Baiting Hollow to check on their angora rabbit pals. Courtney, Jakob, and Ray (pictured on this page) are there to ensure the health, safety, and happiness of the bunnies as they prepare for the cold winter months. The group makes sure their surrounding home is neat and free of clutter, preparing the grounds they live on for new growth come spring. Everything, including the rabbits, have their purpose. The land will be tilled for plants and vegetables, and the rabbits will have their silky fur transformed into useful products. The guys from CVDH take great pride in knowing that the animals are safe and happy because of all their hard work and dedication.



# OUT AND ABOUT IN THE COMMUNITY



**PUMPKIN PICKING WITH COMMUNITY HAB**



**FIREFIGHTER MUSEUM WITH DAY HAB**



**RIVERHEAD TRAIN STATION CLEANUP WITH DAY HAB AND EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM**



# EXPLORING THE CREATIVE SPIRIT



This fall, members of various EEDA programs participated in a pilot course created by the East End Arts Council, *Exploring the Creative Spirit*. This class was held during day program hours, eliminating the need for students to coordinate transportation. EEDA and the East End Arts Council shared the cost of these workshops, enabling twelve students passionate about art to attend six workshops free of charge. Students learned how to observe artistic details, converse about art, and create their own unique work using a variety of materials. The workshops ended with the students exhibiting their work in a show where they discussed art with their peers and local artists.



## Developmental Disability Direct Support Professional (DSP) Stabilization Funding

Not-for-profit OPWDD funded provider agencies deliver about **85% of the needed day-to-day services** to the more than 130,000 people with developmental disabilities in NYS. More than **90% of the funding to pay DSP salaries comes from the government** but years of government funding freezes and sparse increases means DSPs no longer earn a living wage.

Provider agencies can no longer compete with fast food restaurants and big box stores. **Stabilization funding is necessary to help these organizations provide a living wage for their 97,000 DSPs.**

### Requested 2019 - 2020 Funding

A commitment to years three and four of the living wage funding in the NYS Budget. This funding will help not-for-profit Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) agencies continue moving toward proper compensation for direct care workers for their hard work and dedication to those they support.

### Secured 2017 - 2018 Funding

The final 2017-18 NYS budget included funding for the first two phases toward a living wage. However, an additional four installments are necessary to fulfill a living wage.

### The Goal

Current low wages for DSPs have led to a crisis for attracting and retaining staff, destabilizing the workforce and threatening the ability of providers to sustain the supports people with disabilities and their families require. When the stabilization funding is fully implemented, average salaries for DSPs will be \$17.72 in the NYC/ Long Island region and \$15.54 in other parts of NYS.

### Living Wage Calculation

The living wage model is a market-based approach that draws upon geographically specific expenditure data related to a family's basic needs, such as food, child care, health insurance, housing, and transportation. The model shows the minimum full-time salary for meeting the basic necessities, without needing public assistance or suffering from housing or food insecurity.

**"BY LIVING WAGES, I MEAN MORE THAN A BARE  
SUBSISTENCE – I MEAN THE WAGES OF A DECENT LIVING."**

- FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT, 32ND PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

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## WELLNESS CORNER

The last Wellness Committee of 2018 brought food, holiday festivities, and the long awaited prize drawing for those who have had their annual wellness visit. Everyone who had their wellness checkup, 31 in total, received \$30 just for getting a checkup. Names were drawn from a hat (a Santa hat, of course) and prizes donated by the Cigna Wellness fund were given out. One lucky winner received \$500, and four winners received \$100 just in time for the holidays. Congratulations!



## COMMUNITY HAB HOLIDAY PARTY



On December 20th 2018, members and staff from EEDA's Community Habilitation Program all gathered together at the main office to celebrate the holidays. Everyone was treated to a holiday feast while they mingled and celebrated the season.



# HOLIDAY MAGIC AT DAY HAB





*East End Disability Associates (EEDA) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that provides supports and services for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.*

*EEDA's Mission Statement: "Your Challenge... Our Commitment. Dedicated to creating practical solutions and providing innovative supports to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities on the East End of Long Island."*

[www.eed-a.org](http://www.eed-a.org)



*Your Challenge... Our Commitment*

**EEDA  
Executive  
Staff**

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*Lisa Meyer Fertal*

**Chief Program Officer**

*Joy O'Shaughnessy*

**Chief Administrative  
Officer**

*Gus Lagoumis*

**Controller**

*Dara Gary*

**Director of Program Operations**

*John Hatton*

**Director of Self-Directed  
Services**

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