

# FREE Times

## *Landscape Constructions Across the Island*

**F**REE, a leader in the field of human services dedicated to helping individuals of all abilities realize their full potential, believes that art therapy provides a powerful means for healing and communication for anyone, but especially for people who find it difficult to express their thoughts and feelings through spoken words alone.

*Landscape Constructions* was FREE's first professionally juried competition. More than 150 pieces, created by over 60 individuals, were made during a six-month period for this year's collection. There were 106 qualifying pieces put before an esteemed panel of judges from the New York art and business community, with a total of 53 pieces selected by the judges to be included in the exhibit.

The collection consists of two tiers of excellence, with tier one containing the first through third place winners, seven pieces awarded with honorable mention, and the next best 15 pieces; tier two contains the remaining 28 works.

The artists represented in this exhibit are the finalists whose quality of work rose high enough to have garnered entrance into this prestigious collection. Their courage and strength led them down the challenging path of self-rev-



elation and allowed them to talk to us through the hidden language of images, colors and symbols.

While the artwork is beautiful to look at, it is important to recognize the incredible depth of emotional release that took place over months of work with all of FREE's dedicated staff. It was their patience and commitment to stay the course and believe that these artists could reach high to not only see their healing image, but also commit it to a permanent form for all to share in their vision.

*(continued on page 14)*



# A Message From The CEO and President

It is with great honor and pride that Family Residences and Essential Enterprises, Inc. (FREE) recently announced that we have been awarded the coveted three-year Quality Assurance National Accreditation from The Council on Quality and Leadership (CQL). For more than 40 years, CQL has been a leader in raising the bar for human service organizations and systems to continuously define, measure and improve the quality of life of all people. Organizations that are awarded accreditation by CQL meet a stringent set of criteria and demonstrate an ongoing commitment to person-centered excellence.

The CQL Quality Assurance Accreditation process was an important avenue for all of us to re-affirm our commitment to providing the highest level of services focused on helping individuals with developmental disabilities to participate and succeed in today's society. Further, it served as an opportunity for our team to learn and obtain additional resources to continue to refine and improve the supports and services which allow the individuals we serve to live the lives they want.

When FREE first partnered with

CQL in 2015 to pursue accreditation, we undertook a rigorous process and launched a Steering Committee, led by our very own Javon Barnwell, who was charged with the responsibility to engage in an introspective process that included an examination of our practices, policies, overall culture and our commitment to person-centered excellence. Additionally, he and many members of the committee facilitated the accreditation visit, which included a culmination of a four-day visit by three CQL professionals. The CQL team met with self-advocates, administrative team members, direct support professionals and many other stakeholders who are members of the FREE family. The CQL team made it very clear that they were very impressed with the work and our ongoing commitment and pursuit of person-centered excellence they directly witnessed during their time with us.

We want to take the opportunity to thank all of the Valued Team Members who are a part of FREE for cultivating a vision that ensures each person we serve is heard and their dreams for how they want to live their lives are supported. Special thanks to the CQL Steering Com-



Robert S. Budd,  
CEO



Dr. Christopher Long,  
President

mittee, who is so deserving of recognition for their exemplary performance and steadfast commitment to achieving this extraordinary accomplishment; they include: Javon Barnwell, Lynda Foley, Kim Jaynes, Beth Peterson, Carolyn Leary, Christine Buckley, Diane Lonzisero, Jessica Gallone, Lisa McDonald, Tenneill Williams, Michelle Flood, Mike Minasi, Nicky Faranda, Stacie Lurch and Pat Hogan.

We are deeply gratified that an outside organization of distinction has recognized our commitment to providing excellent services and supports for the people we support! As part of this accreditation, we will continue to enhance our systems directly related to person-centered services and in empowering the people who receive support from us to make choices in how they live their lives ... where they work, where they live and how they create a community.

Synergistically Yours,

Robert S. Budd, CEO

Dr. Christopher Long, President



Every time you shop with AmazonSmile, a portion of your purchase is donated to Family Residences and Essential Enterprises, Inc. Buy the items you need and support a good cause at the same time! Type [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com) into your browser and select Family Residences and Essential Enterprises, Inc. as the charity!

The generosity of many Valued Team Members has offered Treasure Town the opportunity to support more than 950 Valued Team Members since 2009.

**Get Involved! Sign Up!**

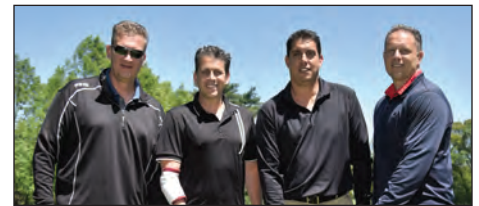
Application available on the Intranet or contact [TreasureTown@FamilyRes.org](mailto:TreasureTown@FamilyRes.org).





# 25th Annual Golf Tournament

We could not have asked for a more beautiful day to host our 25th Annual Golf Tournament at The Mutton-town Club, sponsored by Liz and Bob Conklin. Everyone had a great time on the course and later enjoyed a spectacular dinner, complete with live music provided by Valued Team Members Greg Varro and Shane Fallacara. We would like to congratulate all who used their gifts and talents to ensure that this year's tournament was a great success!





# CQL Leadership Awards

Congratulations to our Valued Team Members who recently received CQL Leadership Awards. It is thanks to your superior efforts that the individuals we are so proud to support can achieve their dreams every day! To receive an award, each recipient was nominated by a colleague highlighting how they truly exemplify one of the 10 CQL Basic Assurances.

Jelissa Dacosta  
*Best Possible Health*

Diane Dignon  
*Natural Support Networks*

Rickie Furline  
*Staff Resources and Supports*

Alyssa Gobetz  
*Natural Support Networks*

Melissa Johnson  
*Dignity and Respect*

Jennifer Lacey  
*Safe Environments*

Adrienne Mogavero  
*Safe Environments*

Rich Morton  
*Natural Support Networks*

Rashan Umari-Stacker  
*Dignity and Respect*



If you have any questions or want to learn more, please send an e-mail to [CQLSteeringCommittee@FamilyRes.org](mailto:CQLSteeringCommittee@FamilyRes.org).

## Healthy Eating

### Energy and Cereal Bars

Some foods that you think are healthy may NOT be all they seem... Many consumer experts have raised concerns about the unhealthy ingredients in many health and energy bars. "I think one of the biggest misconceptions people have about 'healthy eating' is in thinking these so-called cereal or energy bars and drinks are a good choice, and MOST are definitely not," commented Lona Sandon, MEd, RD, a former spokeswoman for the American Dietetic Association, now known as the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. Experts say unhealthy ingredients "hide" even in the most healthy-seeming foods – those foods that appear to be healthy.

If you buy these "health" bars, check out the nutrition label – you might be surprised by the amount of sugar and saturated fat in each bar! Look out for tropical oils like palm oil or palm kernel oil, which add saturated fat. Also, beware – sugar comes in MANY forms: high fructose corn syrup, fructose, glucose, dextrose, honey, sucrose, brown sugar, turbinado, evaporated cane sugar... just to name a few. Keep in mind – four grams of sugar



equals one teaspoon of sugar. Also, just because a product has the word "grain" in it, doesn't mean it's a healthy "whole" grain.

According to dietitian Jessica Garay Redmond, when looking for a healthy bar, the top three things to check before you purchase any "healthy" bars are:

1. Choose a bar with less than eight grams of sugar
2. Look for ingredients you recognize, and the fewer ingredients, the better
3. Choose bars high in fiber and protein – they'll keep you feeling fuller longer

The bottom line is... be a smart shopper and always check the ingredients of the food you buy!!!

# FREE Gets REVved UP for the Elections

On July 13, FREE took part in the REV UP Campaign, created by the American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD), by hosting a forum at FREE's Old Bethpage location. The REV UP Campaign, which stands for "Register! Educate! Vote! Use your Power!", took place during National Disability Voter Registration Week, during the week of July 11-15.

"It is important to vote so we have our say with what happens with the government," commented Andrew V., an individual at FREE. "It allows us to express our opinions and have our voices heard."

Michelle Flood, Director of Advocacy at FREE, kicked off the event by speaking to all of the individuals and Valued Team Members about how there are more than 50 million people with disabilities of all ages living in communities throughout the United States, yet only approximately half of them voted in the last presidential election. It is estimated that around 30 percent of them wanted to vote but didn't, either because they weren't registered to vote, didn't know how to register to vote, could not make it to a handicap accessible voting site, or for many other reasons.

Andrew B., another individual with FREE and a member of FREE's Speakers Bureau, as well as an Advocacy Board Representative, explained to the crowd that we need to "elect leaders that will fight for us." He also commented, "I vote because my voice gets heard and the candidate who best represents me can get elected. It makes me feel proud as an American to get to vote because not everyone gets that opportunity."

Next up to the podium was Erin J., also an individual with FREE and a member of FREE's Speakers Bureau. She remarked that "we advocate for ourselves and for others," and went on to introduce Lisa Scott, President of the Suffolk County League of Women Voters (LWV). Erin had stated earlier, "I feel like when I get to vote it makes me feel invincible and I get to do anything. My feelings are getting heard and that is what is important."

Lisa took the time to explain to everyone about the LWV and what their mission is. "You should vote because you understand the issues," Lisa said. "We won't tell you who to vote for, but we



will help you to understand the issues. You, as a registered voter, have a responsibility to do so."

The event wrapped up with individuals and Valued Team Members registering to vote, with 12 new voters that day, totalling 117 people who have registered to vote through FREE's initiatives. "With politics, the government, and everything else that is going on in this country, it is critical for everyone to vote," commented Valued Team Member Mehreen

Azeem. "I registered to vote today because of this, plus I wanted to set a good example for the individuals we serve. We need to show that our votes do count, because whoever gets elected will determine how this country is run and how it affects us."

"Voting is important because it allows you to pick somebody who is responsible to do the right job," FREE individual Lowell B. added. "It helps empower you."

As AAPD says, "We cannot rest on our past victories. We must build on the past and move forward using the power we have acquired. This power can be exerted if we make the disability vote count! Policymakers are influenced by large numbers of people turning out to vote in the primaries and the general elections. This reality is why we started the REV UP Campaign. Getting ... involved in influencing public policies is essential if these policies are to meet the real needs of people with disabilities to live in the community."





# Celebrating the Faces of FREE

## “VOICES”

By the Poets of Honor

We believe with all of our might;  
 No matter who we are; No matter where we are, there is a world out there and my voice will be heard.  
 Can I vote? Let me try.... My feelings of pride I cannot hide,  
 Free to be who I am, resisting the fears that capture so many, I break free and fight  
 Fight to stand, Fight to speak, Fight to believe  
 Fight to be a part of the world we know.

The importance of peace that joins us together,  
 Silence can no longer be an option on this journey  
 I speak for all whether weak or strong binding in unity for the ultimate harmony

I do belong, I do fit in, and my pace is my own  
 So let me in and let me stand, hear the voices.....

Respect my right to make my own choices; I need my time and space considered  
 Not being rushed or forced, just give me a chance  
 Pay attention to me when I talk, I don't want to be ignored,  
 Stop taking advantage of me, taking my kindness for weakness,  
 It's not cool being made to feel overlooked or left out,

Violating my privacy; rushed into every aspect of my life too fast,  
 Disrespecting my faith; or just not being nice,  
 My limitations, my challenges, my inabilities becoming your perks,  
 Tired of broken promises, lies, and being hurt,  
 Relationships, fears, controlled, deceived  
 People being fake, tacky and trying to take away OUR PERSONALITIES

Don't like being kicked out of life;  
 So tired of the labels, Stop.... let me in and let me stand,  
 I dream of an America where everyone can connect to my truth.  
 And hear my voice.....

*The Poets of Honor is a poetry club that was started in 2010, supported by Bridget Livingston, comprised of individuals who are a part of the Theater Day Hab program.*

## The HR Corner

This quarter, Human Resources is pleased to announce the rollout of iCIMS, a leading provider of innovative Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) talent acquisition solutions. iCIMS is an applicant tracking system which allows us to manage the entire talent acquisition lifecycle, for our entire applicant pool, within one system. iCIMS allows us to operate efficiently and effectively by centralizing all job postings, applicant profiles, and recruitment workflow processes within one easy-to-navigate software. We are now able to automate and streamline much of the recruitment

process, measure the quantity and quality of applicants who have applied, and make all vacant positions available to both internal and external applicants at the click of a button. Applicants can visit our website, select the career opportunities link, search recently advertised job opportunities, and apply directly to any position of interest. Hiring Managers can access iCIMS by visiting [www.FamilyRes.org](http://www.FamilyRes.org). Here, a Hiring Manager is able to create a requisition for their open position, begin to receive and review applicants, and schedule interviews immediately.

# Legally Blonde The Musical JR.

As Robert S. Budd, CEO of FREE, said, "It is a privilege to welcome you to the theatrical presentation of *Legally Blonde The Musical JR.*, performed by the talented and extraordinary FREE Players, which operates under the auspices of Family Residences and Essential Enterprises, Inc. I am proud to share that this is the 19th production by our very talented FREE Players."

The FREE Players are unlike any other theater group. This group combines the efforts of artists, actors and musicians that are differently-abled and create extraordinary productions of classic, full-length musicals and comedies. Members of The FREE Players participate in a one-of-a-kind theater arts experience that provides professional training in performing arts, set design, vocal training, lighting, sound and orchestration.

Katie M., who plays Elle Woods in the Delta Cast, is thrilled to be a part of this musical. She knew it would take a lot of hard work to master her role, but she welcomed the challenge. This is Katie's third performance with The FREE Players and she has enjoyed being a part of each show so far.



Jonathan F., who plays Emmett Forrest in the Nu Cast, is excited to be returning to the stage this year. In addition to being in shows with The FREE Players, Jonathan is also a part of The FREE Players Ensemble, the Drum Corps, the Community Chorus, Greeter's, and the Amazing Me Society Crew.

Karen A., who plays Vivienne Kensington in the Delta Cast, is



no stranger to the stage, having appeared in many FREE Players productions over the years. Karen would like to thank her family and everyone who helped her get to where she is right now. She is very excited to be playing this role.

Unfortunately there is not enough room to list everyone who helped make this production such a success, but we must thank Executive Producer Christine Scarpinato; Directors "The Dream Team 2.0," Shane Fallacara, Tricia Ieronimo, Jennifer Fazio and Indy Johnson; Music Directors Bridget Livingston, Dianne Afflitto and Jessica Gallone; and Choreographers Jennifer Fazio and Indy Johnson. To everyone that could not be listed here, we sincerely thank you for all of your hard work and want you to know it does not go unnoticed.

Although The FREE Players have successfully wrapped up yet another production, keep an eye out for their next hit, coming soon to a theater near you.





# Network Happenings

A few months ago, CGS' Day Habilitation program started a photography seminar after one of our individuals verbalized a desire to learn more about photography. The group responded very well to the opportunity and it has truly been an amazing experience for all involved. Veronica Garcia, Day Hab Coordinator, developed a relationship with Martin Bentsen, founder of City Headshots, a professional photography company in New York City. Through this relationship, Martin and his team facilitated a mini lesson and provided guidance to the participants on how to make photography a hobby and/or career.

One of their team members took the initiative to blog about his experience with CGS and our participants. It's great to see how just a few hours can impact someone's outlook on the population we are privileged to support!

Damion, from City Headshots, wrote the following, entitled "Heart Shots," on June 8:

"I had the pleasure of volunteering at CGS, speaking to special needs adults about photography. When Martin mentioned he would be attending the forum I immediately jumped at the opportunity, but I had no idea how the experience would affect me moving forward.



## Contemporary Guidance Services, Inc.

*Specialists in Self Directed Rehabilitation and Vocational Services*

"The room was filled with about 50 to 60 people and initially I didn't know what to expect. I knew we would be facilitating, but I didn't know how they would respond. But honestly, they were the most loving and genuine people I had ever met in my entire life! They were so warm and inviting. At one point I thought I was going to have to excuse myself from the room because I became so overwhelmed with emotion. It's changed my outlook of this world and has inspired me to be a warrior for the disadvantaged. It's amazing how differently life can appear sometimes once you adjust the lens (no pun intended). After, the supervisor kept thanking us for coming and informing us how much they all enjoyed learning about photography.

"It was a truly humbling experience and I'm grateful to have met such beautiful spirits! As you can see in the picture, I was uber excited to be there. If there is an organization you are passionate about and want to give your energy, please do. It's complete-

ly changed my perspective and I feel like a better person because of it."

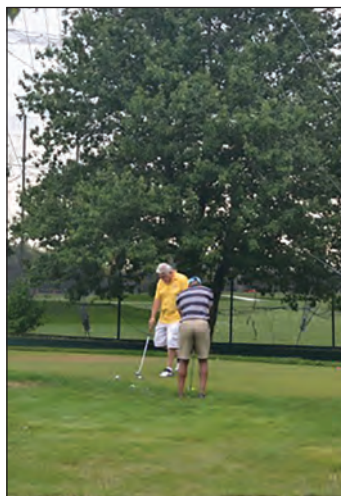
City Headshots also provided free headshots for the students that are actively seeking employment. These headshots will be added to their LinkedIn accounts. The boost of self-esteem this event gave the students was remarkable.

**CITY HEADSHOTS**  
IT'S ALL ABOUT EXPRESSION



**PRONTO**  
of Long Island Inc. *People helping People*

Pronto didn't let the thunderstorms get them down during their golf outing! Despite the rain, some golfers were able to play a few holes before sitting down for a spectacular dinner at Bella Verde.







It is with great honor and pride to announce that The Rehabilitation Institute, Inc. (TRI) has been named member agency of the year by the New York Industries for the Disabled (NYSID).

The NYSID Preferred Source Program was established in New York State via Article XI, Section 162 of the New York State Finance Law to advance special social and economic goals by granting organizations serving certain constituent populations, such as workers with disabilities, the opportunity to supply goods and services to New York State agencies, political subdivisions and public benefit corporations without the requirement of competitive bidding. Under the legislatively-mandated New York State Preferred Source Program, NYSID acts as a "virtual storefront" for a statewide network of 164 community rehabilitation agencies and private sector business partners to employ skilled people with disabilities in production facilities and community-based jobs.

Please join us in congratulating Andrew Cohen, Frank Armone and their extraordinary team at TRI who are responsible for the oversight of more than 40 NYSID contracts employing hundreds of people throughout the Long Island community.



On July 22, FREE, in partnership with KiDS NEED M♥RE and Rock & Roll University, held a music festival called FUZZfest for children with cancer participating in the KiDS NEED M♥RE summer camp at Saddle Rock Ranch in Middle Island. Bands from Rock & Roll University, a children's music school located in Hauppauge, performed for the children at the camp. The bands are comprised of children ranging from 8 to 18 years old.

FREE is partnering with KiDS NEED M♥RE by donating the use of Saddle Rock Ranch to the agency for their summer camp, which runs for five weeks. KiDS NEED M♥RE provides services to families who have children with cancer, and their siblings. The staff is comprised wholly of volunteers who are either family members or cancer survivors who use their life experiences to help the children battle their affliction.



## Saddle Rock Ranch

**KiDS NEED M♥RE**  
Motivational Recovery Environments, Inc.



FREE and KiDS NEED M♥RE want the camp at Saddle Rock Ranch to provide a respite for families and give the children the most amazing experience possible by providing arts and crafts, sports, music, large and small animal experiences, and of course, therapeutic horseback riding.

**ADELANTE**  
of Suffolk County, Inc.  
A Multiservice Community Resource

Adelante recently celebrated their 50th Anniversary Gala on Cinco de Mayo at the Watermill in Smithtown. We are so proud of all they do for the community and look forward to many more years of service and success!





# Upcoming Events

## Family Advocacy Quarterly Meeting

Tuesday, November 15, 2016

7 p.m. – 9 p.m.

FREE

Old Bethpage

## 13th Fight for Charity

### Main Event

Monday, November 21, 2016

6:00 p.m.

Hilton Long Island

Melville

## 40th Anniversary

### Celebration of Life Gala

Thursday, October 19, 2017

6:30 p.m. – 11 p.m.

Bourne Mansion

Oakdale



# FREE To BE/Speakers Bureau

## FREE's Advocacy Groups Present Two Workshop Sessions at the LI Regional SANYS Conference

The Self Advocacy Association of New York State presented "30 Years of Speaking Up and Creating the Future We Want" at the Long Island Regional Conference on June 2 at the Melville Marriott and was attended by many self-advocates from across the Island. FREE To BE and the Speakers Bureau were asked to facilitate workshops at the conference this year.

FREE To BE is a community of men and women dedicated to socialization, advocacy and education. We provide a safe space for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender individuals, families and friends. Individuals from FREE and East End Disability Associates (EEDA), and staff members, both gay and straight, facilitated a panel discussion, shared their personal stories and encouraged self-advocates to participate in a Q&A session after the workshop. The individuals who presented included Dennis M., Angel A., Monique M. and Jennifer S. from The Family of FREE Network, and John G. represented the Eastern Long Island GSA, sponsored by East End Disability Associates. An engaged, interactive Q&A session followed the presentations, and the workshop received positive feedback from the participants. FREE To BE and the Eastern Long Island GSA have been invited back this year and are excited to be presenting a workshop on LGBT advocacy groups at the September Statewide Conference in Albany.

The mission of the "FREE Your Mind" Speakers Bureau is to share their gifts and talents as contributing members of the

community. In that spirit, members and staff presented an Advocacy Family Feud. Workshop attendees were invited to play an interactive advocacy game based on the television show. Participants were surveyed on topics such as: "What is the most important quality you'd want in your Direct Support Professionals?" and "What basic assurance/right is most important to you?" The individuals who presented included Andrew B., Joe M., Erin J. and Ajay A. The Advocacy Family Feud was enjoyed by all contributors and received many kudos on a fun-filled, informative workshop.

A great day was had by all the self-advocates, loved ones and staff members in celebrating advocacy on Long Island. Congratulations and thank you to the SANYS Team for another fabulous conference!





# 25th Annual Dinner Dance



More than 750 individuals, family members, board of directors and staff had an absolute blast at this year's Dinner Dance at the Crest Hollow Country Club.

Aside from being a fun-filled night, we also had the chance to witness dreams come true. The wonderful music was provided by Spin DJ Academy, who helped our individuals, Luke R. and Eric L., to reach their goal of being the DJs at a big event! Also, Ashley J. and Valued Team Member Ira Dunne shared a very special slow dance after months of ballroom dance lessons. Ashley uses a wheelchair, but her love for dance gave her the strength to stand up and move gracefully through the entire song!





# Fancy FREE Gets Creative

Looking to have some fun and be artistic? Be sure to check out Fancy FREE's Paint Night with Lori. For a very reasonable price, Lori will guide you on a journey of how to create your own painting, and she provides all the supplies.

If relaxation is more your thing, look into Yoga with Debbie, where you can heal your body and your mind. Quiet your life with a night of yoga and meditation led by a certified yoga instructor. Don't have a mat? Don't worry – one will be provided for you.

And just in case you are in the mood to belt out a tune, Fancy FREE will now be hosting karaoke on certain nights. To find out when any of these events are, which are all open to the public, visit [FamilyRes.org](http://FamilyRes.org).

Besides all of the wonderful events that Fancy FREE hosts, the individuals that attend Day Hab at Fancy FREE also create beautiful products that are for sale for a limited stint and unique to the time of year. Most recently, they created these innovative pencil holders for back to school.

FREE would also like to take a moment to congratulate Diane C.! She finished her training period and is now our official Fancy FREE Product Developer. She will be in charge of

beaded keychain, bracelet and necklace designs, as well as coming up with new ideas for items for us to sell! She also is a participant in Day Hab and has another retail job. Does this girl work hard or what? Congratulations again, Diane. We look forward to seeing what cool patterns and ideas you bring to the business.



## From the Parents' Perspective



Our daughter, Barbara, became part of FREE in 1991. Looking back at her at age 22, and just having moved into a FREE residence, gives us some perspective. She couldn't have achieved all that she has without the help of a wonderful residential staff. She learned

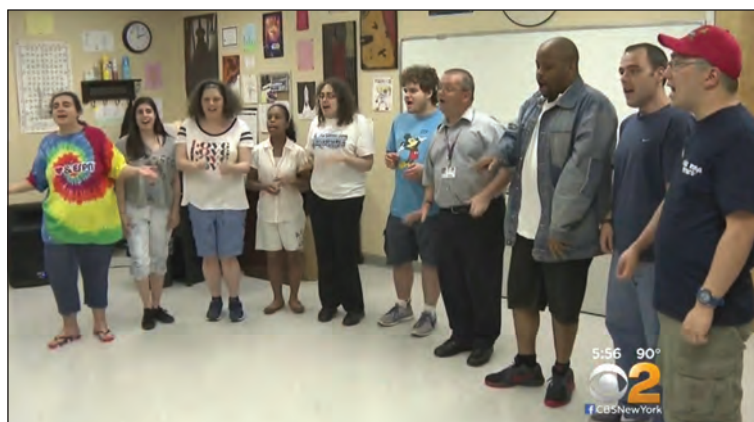
to do so much over the years – helping to prepare meals, to taking care of her belongings, to getting along with her roommates and friends, who eventually became much like a family.

One day, a counsellor brought her to a rehearsal of what was to become The FREE Players. The show was *Fiddler on the Roof*. Barbara began to sing. She knew most of the songs and the reaction was, "Where has she been until now?" So, what began as this timid, soft-voiced, young lady developed into a mature performer belting out "Adelaide's Lament" in *Guys and Dolls*, and in high heels, no less. There are just too many people to mention among the Theater Day Habilitation Staff who helped Barbara achieve what she did. Nor did it stop there. Barbara, of her own free will, joined the Drum Corps, and was recently on CBS New York, Channel 2 News – she was so joyful and competent in that segment.

A few years ago, Barbara also became a part-time receptionist at the Theater Day Hab. We're told that she takes this responsibility very seriously and does it well, adding her own little flair of singing the daily announcements from time to time.

When Barbara was a withdrawn, frightened, anxious and barely communicative child, we would never have dreamed that she would achieve all that she has. FREE has provided the setting, and the caring, dedicated and talented staff that has helped make all of this possible.

— Anne and Alan Sharkis







## What is Drum Corps?

Isn't Drum Corps just people playing the drums? It's true that drums are a big part of the activity, however drums are just one element of a MUCH bigger picture. Drum Corps is essentially a professional Marching Band that requires the musicianship of symphony, combined with the athleticism of a professional sport, mixed with the pageantry of a Broadway show. Our Corps is comprised of a Drumline, Color Guard, Front Ensemble (Pit) and a Drum Major.

The past few months have been extremely exciting for the FREE Players Drum Corps! They have been featured on CBS, FOX, ABC, PIX 11, FiOS1 and Newsday. They were also recently featured in OPWDD's July newsletter.

Additionally, our Corps has been thriving on social media! Our Corps' official Facebook page ([Facebook.com/FREEPlayersDrumCorps](https://www.facebook.com/FREEPlayersDrumCorps)) has skyrocketed to almost 12,000 likes, receiving thousands of comments and millions of views. With the success of their Facebook page, the Drum Corps expanded their social media presence, launching official Twitter ([Twitter.com/FREEDrumCorps](https://twitter.com/FREEDrumCorps)) and Instagram ([Instagram.com/FREEDrumCorps](https://www.instagram.com/FREEDrumCorps)) pages this past June. Our Corps has now established an international fan base spanning six continents.

We are thrilled to announce that in 2018 our Drum Corps (Drumline, Color Guard and Pit) will be performing in an exhibition at the DCI World Championships. Additionally, our Drumline will be competing in the Drumline Battle. The DCI World Championships will be held at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis, IN, from August 6-11, 2018.

The DCI World Championships is the largest event in the world for the Marching Arts Activity and has been called the "Super Bowl" of Drum Corps. The best of the best from the entire world gather to compete every year to decide who will become the World Champion. Thirty-thousand spectators are expected to be in attendance for the World Class Finals alone! The DCI World Championships is also streamed live in movie theaters across the U.S. every year.

We have launched a \$65,000 GoFundMe campaign to fundraise for our travel expenses. All money raised will be used to send our entire 65-member Corps, plus staff support, to Indianapolis to make history as the first special needs group to ever perform at the DCI World Championships. Former NYS Assemblymen Harvey Weisenberg graciously donated \$10,000 to help our Corps get started, but we still have a very long way to go. Please visit [GoFundMe.com/FREEDrumCorps](https://www.gofundme.com/FREEDrumCorps) to see how you can help.

Recently, our Drum Corps performed their outer space themed program "Intergalactic" live. The Corps performed in an exhibition at Walt Whitman High School in Huntington for the USBands Gold Showcase on Saturday, October 8. The Event started at 5 p.m. and was held outdoors on the football field. Our Corps were joined by the Walt Whitman HS Marching Band Winds and Brass for their performance.





# Landscape Constructions Across the Island

(continued from page 1)

Over the years much has been written about the healing power of art as therapy and the creative process of spiritual self-expression, especially for individuals who may find it difficult to express their thoughts and feelings through spoken words alone. The images on view are a testament to this healing power, as these artists have embraced feelings of trust, hope and resolution, offering them an alternative to conflict and fear, which unfortunately characterizes much of the consciousness present in our world today.

On July 8, a Meet the Artists Reception was held at The LENZ Winery featuring these multimedia creations, and the exhibit was open to the public from June 30 through September 28. At the reception, awards were given to first place winner Anthony T., second place winner Peter B. and third place winner Diane E. Ed Regensburg, Director of Art Therapy at FREE, also presented certificates of recognition to the three judges: Wendy Lepkoff, of Wendy Interiors; Jim Perna, of Long Island Picture Frame & Art Gallery; and Mitchel Pilnick, Insurance Advisor and Advocate for the Visual Arts. A certificate of appreciation was also given to Jerol Bailey, Director of Sales at The LENZ Winery. Honorable mentions included artists Joseph S., Christine K., Steven B., James T., Gregg S. and Diane C. Also in attendance was Town of Southold Supervisor Scott Russell, who came to FREE's Old Bethpage location to present certificates of recognition to the artists involved with *Landscape Constructions*.

On July 28, a variety of people came to Jewel by Tom Schaudel to enjoy a delectable dinner paired perfectly with various exquisite wines from The LENZ Winery. The evening also included a limited release 2014 white blend wine from the North Fork of Long Island, as well as the debut of the label, designed by Peter B.





# Providing Hope for Our Future Leaders

Funding by the Zeitgeist Family Foundation and the Long Island Community Foundation (LICF) provides FREE the opportunity to partner with several foster care agencies (including Little Flower and MercyFirst), as well as local school districts, to work with foster care youth, ages 16-21, former foster youth ages 22-25, as well as other identified high school students, to offer work readiness training, apprenticeships/internships and summer jobs.

"When I first heard about this internship I was so excited that such an opportunity had presented itself, being that I want to become an attorney as my future career," commented Christian, from MercyFirst. "I decided to agree to this commitment of attending the internship. I came to this decision not only just to write something on my résumé, but also to gain the work experience I need to be successful in my life."

One of the programs is built into the school day, and builds workforce skills and knowledge through work readiness training, career exploration and internship opportunities. This is a co-teaching model program with a Career and Technical Educator, working alongside a professional member of FREE, to educate the students in this program. Students receive a certificate and small stipend at the conclusion of the program.

"My first day at FREE I was excited to learn many different skills like sending faxes, filing papers, using the computer and answering phone calls," added Christian. "These skills may seem like something you can practice at home, but it really is a skill you must practice at a job. It's a skill that takes practice to gain patience and how to deal with situations with other people. It takes a lot to actually have the patience



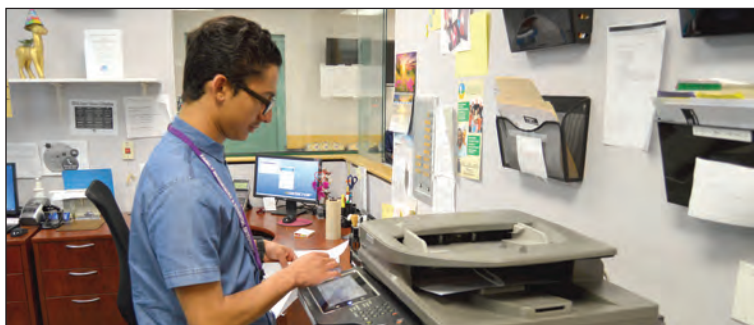
to talk to people while they are frustrated. I learned I must stay calm myself when dealing with people who are frustrated. This job takes a lot of skills because not everyone can deal with difficult situations."

"This experience helped me learn new and important skills for the job I want," noted Kimani, also from MercyFirst. "I want to be a pilot. I want to be a pilot because I love being in the air. Also, I like to travel around the world because I like to experience new things. I know that working in an office is different than being a pilot, but these skills I gained are helping me to get ready to be a pilot. Pilots need to be able to follow directions, speak professionally and to be organized. Interning at FREE provided me with the opportunity to learn these skills. This internship was great because now I know I have all these great skills to go on my résumé. For that I would like to thank everyone who helped me succeed in the program. Thank you to my supervisors, Ms. Karen, Ms. Sheena and Ms. Sandy, for bringing a great attitude to work

every day. Next, I want to thank Ms. Pat for selecting me for this opportunity. Lastly, I would like to thank the youth development team for encouraging me to learn new skills. Most importantly, I would like to thank my co-worker and friend, Christian, for helping me to succeed with this internship. This opportunity can help others because many don't know the basic skills it takes to work. I know this because I used to be one."

Another program assists the vulnerable age group of youth who are aging out of foster care to build skills and self-esteem in order to increase their chances at success as young adults. The youth, ages 16-21, are provided with 10 weeks of basic skills training related to work readiness and then connected with internships through FREE or Summer Youth Employment Program jobs. This program operates in the spring and summer.

"I didn't know that the job came with so many paper cuts," Christian joked. "Nobody told me that in the interview. The internship has given me a new focus on getting towards my goals. I would like to thank everyone that I worked with for helping me see that anything can be accomplished with practice and effort. First, I would like to thank the youth development team at MercyFirst, Ms. Elaine and Mr. Kevin for encouraging me to become better. Next, I would like to thank my supervisors, Ms. Karan, Ms. Sheena and Ms. Sandy, for helping me to achieve my goals and for coming with a positive attitude. Also, I would like to thank my boss, Ms. Pat, for giving me the opportunity to work at FREE. Lastly, I would like to thank FREE for opening up their doors to young teens to help them in gaining work experience."



# What Will Your Legacy Be?

Recently, FREE has been conducting ongoing seminars on the topics of elder care, estate planning, special needs trusts and charitable giving. While these may sound like completely different topics, all of them meld together because they are all part of the ongoing financial decisions you have to pay attention to. These meetings answer a lot of questions and demystify misconceptions about the aforementioned subjects. The one thought that everyone took with them is that whether you consider yourself wealthy or not, there are still decisions to be made which affect you and your families. That is why planning is necessary, and the best tool for planning is education.

Attendees also realized the tremendous financial needs which Family Residences and Essential Enterprises, Inc., and the National Foundation for Human Potential, face on a regular basis. That is why we always ask: Please consider leaving funds to FREE in your will. Remember, you do not have to fund the gift during your lifetime, and if your circumstances change, the funds are still yours to manage as you see fit.

For more information on upcoming seminars, or to ask questions or suggest topics, please call 516-870-1661.

These types of gifts also make you a member of the 1977 Legacy Society.

For information and help in determining the type of gift that would work best for your unique circumstances, please contact Nancy Cohen at 516-870-1612 or [NCohen@FamilyRes.org](mailto:NCohen@FamilyRes.org).



Nancy Cohen

The greatest use of life is to spend it for something that will outlast it.

— William James

## Speakers Bureau

The Speakers Bureau was established to empower the individuals at FREE by teaching them advocacy skills and to encourage the individuals to write and share their inspirational stories to educate others and to increase awareness of disabilities.

The “FREE Your Mind” Speakers Bureau includes presentations that foster understanding, respect, education and enlightenment. It will also provide presentations to school districts, colleges, professionals, families, recipients of services, and other groups on topics including, but not limited to, self-direction and empowerment, advocacy and awareness, the power of positive language, living with a disability, befriending the bully, and inclusion; customized presentations are also available.

To schedule a presentation, contact Claire Miller at 516-870-1645, or by e-mailing [CMiller02@FamilyRes.org](mailto:CMiller02@FamilyRes.org).

## The FREE Thinkers

The FREE Thinkers consists of individuals from FREE’s OPWDD Day Programs. They work closely with the Self Advocacy Association of NYS (SANYS) and are active in legislative action. They have traveled to Albany and NYSACRA for events to advocate for more funds and programs to help individuals and staff in the Human Service field.

For details, contact Michelle Flood at 631-273-1300, ext. 3503, or by e-mailing [MFlood@FamilyRes.org](mailto:MFlood@FamilyRes.org).

## Family Advocacy Group

FREE’s Family Advocacy Group was created by families with a mission to support our family members and each other. Family Advocacy meetings are held every quarter where we support families, share ideas and committee reports, and listen to informative speakers. We meet in FREE’s Old Bethpage location from 7-9 p.m. and dessert is always served!

For details, contact Mickey Michaels, Coordinator of Family Advocacy at FREE, by calling 516-870-1694, or by e-mailing [MMichaels01@FamilyRes.org](mailto:MMichaels01@FamilyRes.org).

## FREE To BE

FREE To BE is a community of men and women with disabilities who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT). The support network is dedicated to socialization, advocacy and education, while providing a safe, engaging space for LGBTQ individuals, families, staff, friends and allies. We have established a partnership with The Long Island LGBT Network. We provide inspirational guest speakers, workshops, open discussion, social events, and educational and support services. Meetings occur on the last Tuesday of the month.

For more information, contact Claire Miller at 516-870-1645, or by e-mailing [CMiller02@FamilyRes.org](mailto:CMiller02@FamilyRes.org).

### Family of FREE Network



Building Communities Together

FREE, headquartered in Old Bethpage, benefits more than 4,000 individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities, mental illness and traumatic brain injury and their families each year.



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