

FREE TIMES

Spring / Summer 2020



Family Residences and
Essential Enterprises, Inc.
Reach High | Achieve More

Celebrating Our Front Line Heroes

During this unprecedented time, FREE's heroes are showing their total commitment and dedication to the individuals we are privileged to support.



Sending Acts of Kindness



A Parents Thank You



DoubleUp

FOR FREE

Double Up For FREE!



FREEPOD Delivery Service
Launches

A Message From The CEO and President

As we continue to navigate our way through this unprecedented time, we wanted to provide you with an update on FREE's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. These are certainly challenging times. We struggle to maintain a semblance of normalcy in our lives as a pandemic we've never seen in our lifetime ravages our country, our state, our communities and our system. The COVID-19 pandemic has cost us friends, family, and colleagues. It has fractured our economy and has challenged us as providers to meet demands and conquer obstacles we never envisioned having to confront. However, it is a time that has also brought us together and we are confident the lessons learned are certain to make us even stronger in the future. We are New Yorkers. As Governor Cuomo says, we are family. As a family we support each other. We support our workers; we support the people we have the duty to serve, people who are vulnerable, people who need our kindness, protection, and guidance every single day. We deliver high quality services and supports to a population of people who depend upon us and trust us.

The realities of the fiscal challenges we face in New York State is real and we are not certain how it will directly impact our services, however, you can make certain that FREE, Inc. continues to advocate furiously and persistently to preserve the funding for all services at all levels of government. However, our traditional services will require a reinvention and alternative support models in an effort to adhere to all state required mitigation strategies/guidelines. We are in the process of determining how we can continue to provide day service opportunities that our men, women and families rely upon and value while installing all precautions that protect everyone's health and well-being. We know alternate models



Robert S. Budd,
CEO



Dr. Christopher D. Long,
President

of support can be implemented and look forward to sharing our new ideas with you in the very near future. We await information and guidance from our licensing government entities and appreciate your patience and flexibility during this difficult time.

We acknowledge that COVID-19 is very different; it impacts almost all aspects of our life. The breadth of the impact was unforeseen but we are confident we will prevail and we must look forward with hope, greater insight and see the many opportunities this pandemic has in store for us as a provider. Our utmost priority is the health and safety of our men and women and all our staff. We will get through this together!

Synergistically Yours,

We could all use a break from everything going on right now.

**SPECIAL
MOMENTS
IN
LIFE I
ENJOY**

So let's focus on your



#moments4smiles

Use the hashtag #moments4smiles on social media so we can share what makes you smile with others!

FOLLOW US

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facebook.com/moments4smiles/





Maplewood IRA



Carroll's Kitchen Staff

Sending Acts of Kindness

As the COVID-19 crisis continues, FREE is spreading cheer to some very special employees impacted by the virus. FREE is sending care packages to every employee who tested positive or lost a family member to the deadly virus. Care packages include gift cards and a note of encouragement and gratitude from their colleagues, all made possible compliments of FREE's Treasure Town initiative of Employees Helping Employees. Quarantined residences are also being surprised with care packages including fun activities. In addition, over 70 of FREE's residences received a delicious hot meal for the entire house by **Carroll's Kitchen**, the brainchild of Ryan Carroll. Ryan was working as a chef in New York City at the inception of the pandemic.



Babylon CR



Founded amidst the growing uncertainties in the hospitality industry caused by the spread of COVID-19, Carroll's Kitchen is your neighborhood non-profit virtual kitchen/food delivery service. The money from the daily meals and donations goes towards working to partner with other kitchens and organizations to put more chefs back to work and make more meals to feed Long Island.



Pineway IRA



Mastic IRA

Celebrating Our Front Line Heroes



FREE's amazing DSPs, nurses and all of our front line workers

are rising to new heights during the COVID-19 pandemic. During this unprecedented time, FREE's heroes are showing their total commitment and dedication to the individuals we are privileged to support. They have selflessly volunteered to work in quarantined residences not leaving the homes and putting our individual's health and safety first to care for them around the clock.

As we continue to find ways to celebrate and thank our front line heroes, we were energized by FREE's Thank You parade.



Just Because We're Stuck at Home Doesn't Mean We Can't Have Fun!

For all the scary things that have happened the past few months, we still have each other. Use this time to get closer with the people at home. The guys at our Mastic program have been waking up everyday with smiles on their faces & excited for each day. We hope you have as well!



Smiles, birthday cake, & Easter baskets is how Maplewood gets through staying at home.

As the weather is getting nicer, it's time to get out for fun activities!! Some of our PWW groups have been outside adding their own touch to their homes and shooting some hoops while at it!



Even though there's been more time to sit around and browse Netflix these days, our Westbury girls have been making sure they haven't been couch potatoes and kept active these last weeks.

Even during a time like this we can't stop celebrating birthdays can we? No way! We've had great birthday parties, giving everyone a reason to smile!



A Parent's Thank You

Written by Marge & Steve Goldin



The Stoothoff IRA has always been a special and amazing place.

The families, with loose previous connections to one another, came together in the early 1990's to work on developing a group home for our sons as a "parent project" based on the formation of the Westbury home that had come before it. FREE was behind us all the way and after many delays and setbacks it opened in December 1999. Now in its 21st year, Stoothoff continues on with the same 6 men and families. They have all thrived in this environment and are proud to call Stoothoff their home.

Weeks ago, as the coronavirus was exploding all around us as a health and social distancing crisis, our son Brian became ill. At that time, when it was close to impossible to get a Coronavirus test, the nurse in the

residence was able to both locate a location nearby and a commitment to get Brian tested. Brian, who can be very oppositional, initially refused to be tested. But eventually he was coaxed into the van with two staffers and got the test done. Five days later we were horrified to learn that his test had come back positive. Stoothoff was on strict quarantine and Brian confined to his bedroom to sleep, eat meals and keep busy somehow.

Stoothoff is not set up with any kind of staff bedroom. All staff, even the overnights, come and go in rotating shifts and are expected to be awake and alert to assist the residents. Brian's positive test presented new challenges. Stepping up to meet that challenge were Kait and Chris who brought their toothbrushes and some clothing and, sleeping on couches, moved in for the week. They did this knowing in advance that a resident



Chris and Kait with all of the members of the Stoothoff IRA.

was positive for the virus and they came anyway. They deep cleaned and sanitized the house. They monitored everyone's temperature and watched for signs of illness. They kept everyone calm. It is no exaggeration to say that these two staffers were beyond terrific. The need for our son to be confined to his room was among the most frightening aspects of the ordeal for us. We were worried that without television in his room, Brian would be behavioral. Kait provided a book for Brian, which held his attention. At the suggestion of his brother and sister-in-law, we got him an iPad for TV, Facetime, music, games etc. During this week we called several times a day to check on Brian. Kait and Chris always answered the phone cheerfully and answered our questions. They helped Brian learn

how to use the iPad. (Shout-out to PC Richards for having what we wanted in stock and for curbside pickup.) Brian's illness was fortunately very mild and he fully recovered within the week. There is no really good way to thank all the DSPs who have put themselves on the line. We told Kait and Chris repeatedly how much we appreciated them and how grateful we are that there was a need and they met it. We sent over dinner. But somehow these gestures of ours alone aren't enough. In times of upheaval and crisis there are unsung heroes who come forward and demonstrate exemplary character in going above and beyond. Kait and Chris are two such individuals. We are forever grateful to them.

- Marge & Steve Goldin



Double Up For FREE

Our matching gift donor just made your generosity twice as important!

Family Residences and Essential Enterprises, Inc. (FREE) is incredibly grateful to **Marge and Steve Goldin** who have generously offered a matching gift for FREE's COVID-19 Relief Fund. Every dollar donated through Labor Day will be matched by the Goldin's, up to \$250,000! This means your gift of \$25 becomes \$50, \$100 becomes \$200, and so on - making your donation go twice as far! The financial impact of growing PPE needs, cleaning products/ services, technology, residential

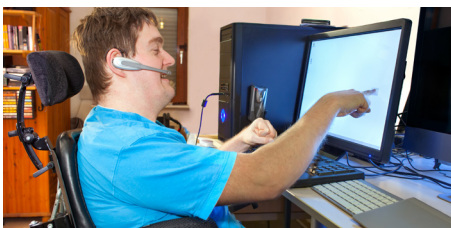
staffing and more has totaled more than \$500,000 in increased spending for FREE since the COVID-19 crisis began. The support of the Long Island community throughout these months has been crucial to ensuring the health, safety, and needs of those we serve with intellectual / developmental disabilities, mental illness and traumatic brain injury. As the decisions that will affect our vulnerable population continue to unfold, FREE remains committed to providing the highest



DoubleUp

FOR FREE

quality of supports and services. Our top priority is the well-being of those we are honored to serve and our dedicated team members. It is truly the compassion and generosity of others that allows FREE to continue our vital work.



Virtual Services



Personal Protective Equipment



Our Frontline Heroes



Emergency Cleaning

**Double Funds
Equals
Double Impact!**

How To Donate

To make a donation, you can visit our donation site at classy.org/campaign/double-up-for-free/

Text to Donate

Text "DOUBLEUP4FREE" to 44-321 to Donate!

Mental Health Services in Response to the COVID-19 Crisis



In many ways Covid-19 has brought mental health to the mainstream. As the pandemic continues to disrupt our lives, the mental health consequences are emerging. Nothing in our lifetimes compares to the scope of the COVID-19 crisis. However, these stressful times have also positioned FREE to help in a very different way, by supporting the front line workers and managers within our own Network. Many of our front line Direct Support Professionals, Managers and individuals we support have been significantly impacted. To meet the mental health challenge of the COVID-19 pandemic, the valued team members in our Clinic, PROS, HCBS and other Behavioral Health Programs have volunteered their time to provide counseling and other supports to those within the Family of FREE Network. Our mental health professionals have visited FREE's community residences that have lost staff and individuals to the virus and have been an ear for those who just needed to speak with someone. These volunteers have been an invaluable resource for years and during these challenging times they are rising to the occasion to support our FREE family when they need it most.

FREE-POD Delivery Service Launches

In response to the challenge of getting food and supplies in a timely manner to our residences and to ease the burden on our DSPs especially those residences which are quarantined, FREE launched its own in-house FREE-POD food and supplies delivery service. Demand for grocery delivery has soared amid the coronavirus pandemic while the large service companies are finding it challenging to meet the

growing need. FREE-POD delivers door-to-door food and other essential household items and personal protective equipment to each of our homes, independent housing and individuals living with their families.

FREE's support staff are shopping and delivering food and essential supplies to over 90 residences in Nassau, Suffolk and Queens.



Family Advocacy

FREE's Family Advocacy Network is here to inform and support you! Come join us and share stories, ask for advice and listen to other families in a safe and relaxing environment. Listen to experts discuss important topics. Learn about new opportunities and changes in regulations that can affect your family member.

For More Information, Please Contact Mickey Michaels

Coordinator for Family Advocacy at FREE
Email: MMichaels01@familyres.org
Phone: 516-870-1694

Check [FamilyRes.org/events](https://www.familyres.org/events) for upcoming meetings.





#ForgottenFaces

People with I/DD are the pandemic's forgotten faces; their providers and direct support professionals the forgotten frontline. We cannot let these forgotten faces continue to go unrecognized. Lending your voice will create tremendous impact.

Forgotten Faces in the COVID-19 Pandemic

Direct support professionals are the invisible but essential workers who are caring for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities during this crisis.

They support the most basic hygiene, health and nutrition, connecting with loved ones, taking medications and more.

The American Network of Community Options and Resources (ANCOR), a national, nonprofit trade association representing more than 1,600 private community providers of services to people with disabilities, recently



launched #ForgottenFaces campaign to tell our federal government that they can no longer overlook people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and the essential providers on which they rely in its response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Funding is urgently needed to cover overtime and hazard/ heroes pay for Direct Support Professionals and Personal Protective Equipment, which are essential during this pandemic.

The good news is that our elected officials can make a difference in distributing federal resources to Medicaid programs. People with disabilities in New York State and the Direct Support Professionals on which they rely desperately need your support.

ANCOR Amplifier

The ANCOR Amplifier is your one-stop shop for taking action to support providers of services to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. To have your voice heard visit:

www.ancor.org/amplifier

Resourceful Team Members Preserve Shuttered Day Programs

In the interest of containing the spread of COVID-19, and to ensure the safety of all people with developmental disabilities and mental illness who participate in day program services, Personalized Recovery Oriented Services (PROS), and Home Community Based Services (HCBS), the NYS Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) directed the temporary suspension of day services and the NYS Office of Mental Health (OMH) allowed services to be run via telemental health by phone or video.

FREE's team members quickly used their expertise and creativity to develop remote instruction and telehealth service to replicate day program activities while our participants are at home. The activities not only give structure to the day but include many educational and fun projects to keep everyone positive, busy and learning something new every day.

Using Zoom **the Theater Day Program** has a Karaoke sing along, a favorite class, holds play practice for Mama Mia and has Fun Friday activities

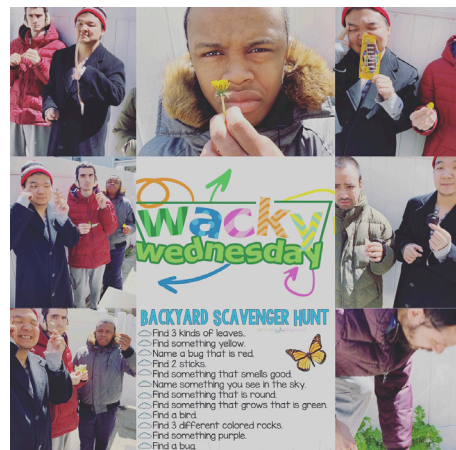


Team Teaching Tuesday keeps everyone engaged in meaningful activities while other residences are learning new activities.

with program members from FREE's Performance and Creative Arts program at Old Bethpage. They also hold classes on Money Management, American Sign Language, Acting, Vocal lessons, Science, History, Zumba, Yoga and Social Connection, an important class that allows up to 50 people at a time the chance to talk to their peers.

Our residential programs have also initiated a schedule of activities to put balance and routine back in everyone's lives. On Thriving Thursday seeds are planted in preparation for summer gardens, Team Teaching Tuesday keeps everyone engaged in meaningful activities while other residences are learning new activities such as karate, baking techniques, origami, jewelry making, painting, meditation and science experiments.

Our Traumatic Brain Injury Waiver Services through the Department of Health have successfully launched multiple tele-phonetic ZOOM sessions. **Our Structured Day Program** meets daily to discuss pre-vocational tasks, memory improvement strategies, labor



170th Street Ventured outside and found all the items on the backyard scavenger hunt and pictures of you all.

market news and current events in addition to developing a safe and trusted environment where our participants can socialize and share their feelings surrounding the current changes going on in the world and its impact upon employment. Daily participation has actually increased due to the engaging topics and convenience of the services.

Our NYS START Team (Systemic, Therapeutic, Assessment, Resources and Treatment) an initiative of OPWDD, has also been busy and created at home therapeutic activities and content for our YouTube channel that is now Live! Some of the topics include; Mindfulness, Yoga, How to recognize/cope with anxiety related to COVID-19, Lions Breath, meditation, exercise, self-care and social story for kids.

At **Terry's Place PROS**, staff showed their flexibility and ingenuity and designed new ways to deliver services. Thinking out of the box, they created remote ZOOM groups for the participants, utilized various apps and internet tools to engage individuals



On Thriving Thursday seeds are planted in preparation for summer gardens.



Westbury IRA

in music and art as a form of therapy, hold telehealth sessions even on weekends and are working with several PROS participants who were furloughed to apply for new positions at places that are still hiring. In fact, several individuals have been hired at some of the most needed positions in supermarkets due to the current demand. Lastly, the team has helped individuals re-enroll for summer and fall classes while supporting others who have just successfully completed their spring semester.

The HCBS team provides services that allow individuals to access treatment in their homes rather than in traditional day programs, such as a PROS. Since March, the team has worked diligently to ensure services have continued as individuals started to decline face to

face contacts. Staff have started to think outside the box and have provided services via apps that allow for video contact with interactive games. This has been a tool that has increased engagement with services for children. Additionally, staff have stayed focused on their client's goals and assisted in an individual applying and being accepted into a nursing program this fall. The HCBS team provides on average approximately 30 services a week. HCBS participants have vocalized their appreciation of the continuity of care they've received and are appreciative of staff's continued efforts.

A big thank you to the dedicated team members who consistently reach high and achieve more to provide the highest quality services for the individuals we are privileged to support.



The Theatre Day Program hosting Day Services over a Zoom Call

Fit With FREE



During this time of social-distancing, the #FitWithFREE Challenge presents an opportunity for everyone in the virtual community to support others in need! The purpose of the #FitWithFREE Challenge is to engage with others in fun and fitness while keeping safe social distance! Funds raised will be used for care packages for the individuals supported by FREE as well as the dedicated team members who continue their vital work everyday! Funds raised beyond the needs of these care packages will go towards FREE's programs and services.

To Participate:

- ✔ Register today, and encourage friends and family to join you.
- 🏃 Stay active! Go for a walk, run, bike, a home workout - anything active and socially distant!
- 🔗 Share your results on social media using #FitWithFREE and tagging @FREEFamilyRes
- ❤️ Share donation page on social media using #FitWithFREE and tagging @FREEFamilyRes for extra prize entry(s)!





Career Opportunities!

Become A Part of the FREE Family!

For More Information:

☎ 516 - 870 - 1670

✉ info@familyres.org

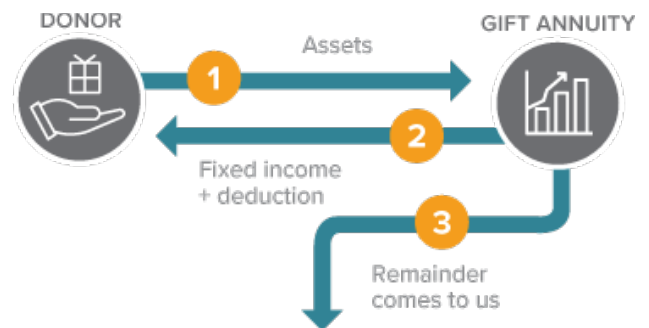
🌐 familyres.org

What Will Your Legacy Be?

Why You Should Consider a Charitable Gift Annuity (CGA)

You support our mission and now is the time to give back to say thank you! Charitable Gift Annuity payout rates are higher than most CDs and may give you more income than your other traditional investments. That means that you can make a gift to us and receive more tax-advantaged retirement income. The best news, with a Charitable Gift Annuity, your rates are locked in for life.

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



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