



*Nathalie, Sevrin & Faith at the Annual Mayor's Holiday Party*

## FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

Hello, P2P community!

We hope that your 2024 is off to a wonderful start. We are excited for the year ahead and look forward to seeing you all at our upcoming events and programs - see page 5 for the dates to mark on your calendars now!

You'll see many familiar faces and names in the pages of this newsletter, but we're also so thrilled to share lots of the *new* happenings at P2P, from new residents and staff to our new Family Series. With your continued support, we are expanding and adapting our programs to meet the ever-growing needs of our community, always with our clients at the forefront.

We'd be remiss, however, not to acknowledge the harder news impacting our residents and families - specifically, recently announced State budget cuts, and the Boston Globe's Spotlight series on abuse investigations in state-licensed residential schools for children with Autism. As disparate as these topics seem at first glance, the unsettling reality is that they are two awful pieces of the ongoing Human Services staffing crisis puzzle.

P2P and our peer organizations are in a maelstrom of increasing demands and unmet community need, coupled with dwindling resources - financial, personnel, and client programs. It is only with your support that we are able to maintain the excellence that we have strived to provide for our clients and families since 1972, while supplementing our program with innovative offerings to ensure our clients' safety and quality of life.

As always, I welcome your input and am grateful for your partnership!

Warmly,



Brenda Noel, MSW, P2P Executive Director

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*Jamie Montgomery-Hyde celebrates his Auction win!*

## 2024 P2P Event Calendar

**NEW PROGRAM!**  
[P2P's Family Series](#)

**Lily Brooks is back as  
P2P's 2024 Team  
Marathon Runner!**

[Welcome New Residents!](#)

**Resident Spotlight -  
Nathalie Knits for NICU**

**In Memoriam:  
Barbara & Richard**

# HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS

P2P's houses were full of holiday cheer and activities this season! Residents decorated, celebrated together, and honored their holiday traditions by lighting the menorah, making ornaments and cookies, and visits with Santa!



The annual **Mayor's Holiday Party** was a terrific afternoon of friendship and community, featuring a festive luncheon, a lively singalong, and some impressive dance moves! We are grateful to the Newton Commonwealth Foundation, the Newton Commonwealth Golf Course, and musician Ken DoRosario for their hospitality and enthusiasm.

# WELCOME NEW STAFF

## Leah Andrews, Operations Manager

Leah began her career as a Program Manager at P2P in 2005. She then served as the State Director at LifeConnections and Director of Supports at WCI. Leah has also been a volunteer Big Sister for 14 years.



## Joy Mutyaba, Human Resources Generalist

Joy believes in the importance of supporting our staff and works closely with our Director of Human Resources to streamline processes and recruit top talent for P2P. Joy is also a graduate of Berklee College of Music.



# AUTUMN AUCTION RECAP



Over 200 supporters and advocates for P2P and the developmental disability community joined together on September 28 for an evening of celebration and renewed commitment to ensuring a strong future for our mission. Together, we raised an incredible \$221,000 in support of our programs. Special thank you to our Presenting Partner, The Village Bank!

Highlights from the evening included live entertainment by the Fenway String Quartet; spirited bidding for packages like trips to Istanbul and a VIP opportunity to see Taylor Swift's Eras Tour in Dublin; and the presentation of the Carol Beard Visionary Leader award to community member Jeff Behrens, and P2P staff members Michael Atkinson and Denis Ecwou. We are grateful to all who made this beautiful evening possible!

*Below, left to right: 2023 Carol Beard Visionary Community Leader Awardee Jeff Behrens with P2P Executive Director Brenda Noel; guests Sheila and Brent Gebel; 2023 Staff Leadership Awardee Michael Atkinson with Sen. Cindy Creem; guests celebrate.*



*Save the Date for the 2024 Autumn Auction!  
Thursday, October 10 | Brae Burn Country Club, Newton*

# OUR FUTURE IS TIED TO YOU



P2P's limited public funding is being stretched thin by the ongoing Human Services staffing crisis, increasing unmet community need, and inadequate community resources. Simply put, our future is tied to you! With your support, we have launched ambitious initiatives to combat the challenges that our program is facing and strengthen the network of services available for our clients.



When our families asked for additional support, education, and advocacy to help them navigate a complex and outdated public system, we launched our **new Family Series**.



When day programs failed to re-open at full capacity post-pandemic, we looked to new programs like our **HI FIVE** functional fitness sessions to meet our home-bound residents' needs.

When it became clear that our state funding wasn't sufficient to pay our direct care staff fair and competitive hourly rates, we launched our **Campaign for A Living Wage**.



These new initiatives are an exciting and necessary first step as we begin to patch the holes and mend the frayed edges of our clients' support network as we once knew it. P2P has never shied away from a challenge. With your support, we look forward to continuing to stitch together creative ideas, innovative best practices, and committed partners to ensure a strong future for our clients, and our community.



To learn more about the impact that your support has on our programs, or to make a gift, please contact Meredith Wood, Director of Advancement, at [mwood@pathway2possible.org](mailto:mwood@pathway2possible.org).



## ★★★★★ LILY BROOKS IS BACK!

P2P friend, longtime supporter, current Board Member, and superstar team 2021 runner Lily Brooks is back and representing P2P again in the 2024 Boston Marathon! We can't wait to cheer for her on April 15!

# THANK YOU LILY!



# P2P'S NEW FAMILY SERIES PROGRAM

P2P has launched a new **Family Series**, aiming to provide support, education and advocacy to local families and caregivers of loved ones with cognitive and developmental disabilities. Each session will be designed to connect mission-impacted families, expand access to expert resources, and foster the exchange of firsthand knowledge. We hope the Family Series will provide the knowledge and resources needed to empower self-advocacy as families navigate an increasingly complex system and care for their loved ones.



*Juniper resident Joyce (right),  
with sister Linda*

The first event in the **Family Series** took place in November with an Author Talk by Pulitzer Prize winning author and journalist Jennifer Senior. Senior shared insights about her feature in *The Atlantic*, "The Ones We Sent Away," her account of discovering, in adulthood, that she had an aunt with developmental disabilities. What followed was a candid, emotional conversation about how society has historically treated individuals, and the impact that it has had on families.



*Executive Director Brenda Noel, left,  
with Atlantic writer Jennifer Senior*

In January, we hosted a **Family Series Listening Session** to discuss topics of interest for future P2P Family Series events. Through the suggestions and questions that came up in this conversation and digital survey, P2P is working with local resources and topic experts to plan subsequent sessions of this program, with the next slated for later this spring. To suggest additional topics, fill out our online survey (<https://pathway2possible.org/programs-3> under Family Series), or email [community@pathway2possible.org](mailto:community@pathway2possible.org).

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS!



Stay tuned for upcoming Volunteer Days or contact [community@pathway2possible.org](mailto:community@pathway2possible.org) for more information.

# WELCOME NEW P2P RESIDENTS!

Moving to Juniper was a big transition for **Kristin**. She is now happily getting to know her housemates and staff and Juniper now feels like home.

Kristin enjoys riding lessons, art and singing. She also has a keen interest in history and learning about new things, and recently started a day program at Gateway Arts.

*Kristin taking riding lessons with Glory.*



Webster house recently welcomed new resident **Will**. Will loves being active and can often be found playing basketball and tennis at the Boys and Girls Club.

He joins his mom monthly for rock climbing, and in the summer he enjoys kayaking! Will also works at Trader Joe's and attends the CHAI WORK day program.



*Will enjoying an afternoon treat.*

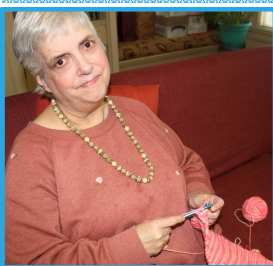
## RESIDENT SPOTLIGHT

### Nathalie Knits for the NICU

Jubilee resident Nathalie has been crafting coziness and comfort for babies in the NICU for more than 8 years! With her electric blue knitting needles and colorful balls of yarn, Nathalie knits blankets for Project Linus, and they in turn distribute the blankets to children in need.

Nathalie learned to knit by "watching her aunt knit a beautiful blue sweater," and she finds the activity rewarding and relaxing. Having also spent 16 years volunteering at Newton Wellesley Hospital, Nathalie developed a soft spot for the babies in the NICU. So, when her friend Kathy introduced her to Project Linus, she knew she would "want to do that and help out." Nathalie and her friend Kathy knit blankets as a team, with Nathalie completing blanket squares and Kathy weaving them together to create the final blanket.

Nathalie's creations come in all colors, shapes, and sizes. When asked why she wants to do this, she replied that she's "glad that what [she's] doing is good." Row by row and blanket by blanket, Nathalie is making a difference in her community.



## IN MEMORIAM



*Richard Vetstein*

**Richard** was a long-time member of our Independent Living Program. He was a caring friend and on special occasions, his friends could count on a phone call or a carefully chosen card. Richard made friends easily, often introducing new friends with entertaining stories. He also had knack for quoting perfect adages for any situation.

Richard was a dedicated employee at Whole Foods and Stop & Shop, rarely missing a shift. He loved exploring Newton's hotspots on his motorbike; celebrating his birthday at the beloved Brighton staple, Eagles Deli; and most especially music. His passion and knowledge of music, particularly for the Beatles, Beach Boys, and The Rolling Stones, was truly impressive!

**Barbara**, one of our longest Juniper House residents, holds a special place in the hearts of those who knew her. Known for her warm and welcoming nature, she had a vast circle of friends and was always quick to welcome new housemates. In her younger days, Barbara kept her housemates informed about current events and particularly enjoyed announcing the overnight fire drills to ensure everyone was prepared. Barbara's great smile and dry sense of humor endeared her to everyone around her.

Barbara was dedicated to her job in Boston, riding the bus from Newton Corner to Boylston St. in any weather.

Barbara loved her family and shared a special connection with her brother Dennis.



*Barbara Sepavich*

***Barbara & Richard will be greatly missed at P2P.***

## Independence

## Community

## Advocacy

## Meaningful Relationships

### Pathway to Possible

is committed to the free expression of choice and decision-making, enabling independence and developing self-advocacy skills for individuals and their families.

### Pathway to Possible

promotes community inclusion by providing individualized opportunities in a wide range of settings.

### Pathway to Possible

protects the rights of all individuals while promoting compassion, equality, respect, and community inclusion.

### Pathway to Possible

encourages and enables meaningful relationships among families, friends, neighbors, and co-workers.



Our mission is to provide housing, support, and advocacy for people with cognitive and developmental disabilities - and their families - while erasing barriers, building confidence, empowering independence, and expanding opportunities that enrich their lives and their communities.

#### Staff Leadership

Brenda Noel, MSW  
*Executive Director*

Lisa Baragwanath  
*Deputy Director*

Alice Clifford, BSN, RN, CDDN  
*Director of Health Services*

Paul Montgomery-Hyde  
*Director of Human Resources*

Meredith Wood  
*Director of Advancement & Community Engagement*

#### Executive Committee of the Board

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[www.pathway2possible.org](http://www.pathway2possible.org)

1301 Centre Street | Newton, MA | 02459 | 617-964-6860



Pathway to Possible relies on community support to ensure the highest standards of care & quality of life for our clients. To learn more about our work, or how your contributions make an impact, please email Meredith Wood, Director of Advancement & Community Engagement, at [mwood@pathway2possible.org](mailto:mwood@pathway2possible.org).