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Journey to  
Successful  
Advocacy



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# Champions

Your support advances opportunities for all

## The Importance of Family Bonds

Alan and Suzanne Posner's Appreciation for Quality of Care

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Home is more than just a place to live. It's a place of refuge, of support, of belonging.

For Pat Posner, her home is an apartment inside one of Starbridge's residences. Pat keeps busy during the week, including volunteering and participating in an arts & crafts program. She loves to read and plays cards regularly. As much as she enjoys her weekday schedule, she says, "I love Fridays off because I need them to do stuff like laundry and cleaning my apartment. You know? I need that time."

Pat appreciates her closeness with her housemates and feels like she has made a lot of friends there. Still, she relishes the freedom of her own space: "I have my own apartment, and I can go to it whenever I want."

Pat's extended family lives in Boston. She travels at Thanksgiving to spend time with her brothers, their spouses and children. "I enjoy being with my whole family," she says.

Pat and her brother Alan are close in spite of the physical distance. Pat shares, "I love it when he calls me. We talk every Sunday morning. We get to talk about all kinds of things. We get to talk about personal stuff."



*Alan Posner and his sister Pat*

Family is a crucial connection for Pat, and for Alan and his wife, Suzanne. Alan and Suzanne have been generous contributors to Starbridge (and previously to LDA Life and Learning Services) since 2001. They actively promote both mental health and supports for people with disabilities.

Alan says, "We greatly appreciate that my sister is safe, involved in a multitude of activities, and treated with dignity. We have been extremely impressed with the agency's services, expertise, dedication, professionalism, and philosophy of caring."

Suzanne has worked as a psychotherapist for 50 years. Alan has been an attorney for 48 years. As an assistant attorney general for Massachusetts, in the late 1970s, he litigated the deinstitutionalization case ending state schools and developing community-based mental health housing. He has continued to practice civil litigation and family law, and has dedicated much volunteer time to mental health initiatives.

Alan and Suzanne have been married for 50 years, as well, and have children and grandchildren. In their spare time, they enjoy travel and spending time with family. Suzanne shares that Alan plays the trumpet "for his family, community groups, and anyone who will listen!"

The Posners' connection with Starbridge goes back a long way. Alan recalls, "My mother was very active in LDA in its early days in caregiver support groups and various other services. Pat has been involved with Starbridge and its predecessors for four decades. Our hope is that Starbridge can continue to provide such a high quality of help to those in need and can continue to expand its scope of care."

*Continued on inside page*

**BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND!**

## **Dr. Al Condeluci** **Belonging Matters**

Continuing the conversation about building relationships with and for children and adults with disabilities in schools and communities

May 19, 2018  
8:15am-3:30pm

The Strong  
National  
Museum of Play



Free to families and self-advocates!

More information at  
[www.starbridgeinc.org/events](http://www.starbridgeinc.org/events)

### **The Importance of Family Bonds –** *continued*

Starbridge President/CEO Colin Garwood appreciates the Posners' longstanding relationship with us: "When I came on board as Executive Director at LDA, I learned that one of Alan and Suzanne's priorities was supporting organizations helping people who have disabilities here in Rochester and in the Boston area.

Alan and Suzanne are passionate about recognizing people who take such great care of their sister and dedicate their generous contributions in honor of our residential staff. We value their partnership in helping create new opportunities for people we serve."

**Thank you, Alan and Suzanne, for your generosity!**

*Photo provided by Alan and Suzanne Posner*



## **One Dad's Journey to Successful Advocacy**



*Ron and Gavin*

Ron Knapp describes his early experiences advocating for his son, Gavin, as "stumbling in the dark." Planning meetings for Gavin where numerous professionals sat around a large table felt intimidating and caused Ron to sometimes get defensive.

Gavin, who is four years old, began receiving early intervention services at age

eighteen months to address speech delays related to hearing issues. A family member led Ron to Starbridge, where he learned about the Family Empowerment Series, designed to help parents build skills and knowledge to advocate effectively for their children and work collaboratively with their schools. Ron signed up for the series. He comments:

**"I wanted to be a voice for Gavin, to be informed on what was available for his education. Gavin needs to have the opportunity to be all he can be."**

Ron credits the Family Empowerment Series with helping him to become a more effective advocate for Gavin: "Knowing the rights of children was very valuable. Knowing who to contact when I did not have the answers was very valuable."

Ron also learned how important it is to seek to understand others' perspectives and forge positive working relationships with them.

The first school meeting that Ron attended for Gavin after completing the Family Empowerment Series felt very different than previous meetings. Although he was admittedly nervous, he felt ready. He had developed a PowerPoint presentation to introduce Gavin to the committee. Ron received several compliments after the meeting about his presentation.

Equipped with new skills, awareness, and knowledge, Ron feels more prepared to work with the school team to ensure that Gavin gets what he needs to be successful.

Gavin is thriving in his current program, receiving the services he needs and showing constant improvement.

Notes Ron, "I am thankful to Starbridge for equipping me with the knowledge, resources, and support to advocate on Gavin's behalf and would highly recommend Starbridge to any parent no matter what stage of the special education process they are in."

## **THANK YOU!**

Support from donors like **you** makes a crucial difference for people who have disabilities and their families throughout our region!



# TIMOTHY MCCAULEY

## Board Member Profile

*Timothy McCauley joined the Starbridge Board of Directors in March of 2015. He lives in Irondequoit and works as a Certified Application Consultant for Fidelis Care of New York.*



### Do you have children?

I have three adult daughters – Ti'ona McCauley-Lauture, Lauren McCauley, and Nicole Ladner – and I'm claiming eight grandchildren. I can tell you that there is no prouder dad on this earth than I am of my three young ladies. They've all graduated from college and are doing very well in the accounting, engineering and legal fields.

### Do you volunteer for other organizations?

For most of my life I have been a volunteer somewhere in Rochester. From being the Co-Director of the Church's Children Choir... to being a Scout Master helping six Scouts from an inner-city Troop achieve the rank of Eagle Scout... to being the President of Rochester Black Business Association. Currently I am developing a Higher Learning Center at the First Genesis Baptist Church on Hudson Avenue.

### Why did you decide to get involved as a board member?

Colin Garwood invited me to join. Having grown up with a sister with Down syndrome, I had firsthand knowledge of the various challenges, concerns and opportunities that come with having a child with DS. However, in our home – with seven children and a dad who died when I was 13 – Jackie was treated no differently

than the rest of us. We all had chores, our day to do the dishes, and the job of keeping our rooms clean. We also all had our day to help Jackie with her studies. Back in those days, we spent hours upon hours working with Jackie doing "Hooked-On-Phonics". Her love was pure and sweet. With me being two years younger than she, I was there most of the time helping, protecting and watching. I was her little brother and her best buddy.

### What has your role as a board member involved?

I've had the opportunity to participate in various marketing efforts, the Incidence Review Committee and the Strategic Planning Committee.

### What have you gained or learned from the experience?

It may look like you're walking a journey with no end in sight but if you can help somebody today, then it's a day well spent.

### Is there anything you would like to say to someone who is considering contributing to Starbridge in some way?

Starbridge is in a unique position of having a management team with credentials, credibility and commitment. It is a privilege to support their efforts in serving our community.



Ryan Kimball and Matt Miller of Kickball League of Rochester (KLOR) stopped by to deliver a donation of over \$3400 from the league's 2017 summer teams.

Thank you to Ryan Kimball and Matt Miller for bringing thousands of people together to enjoy their sport while raising money to benefit Starbridge and other important causes in our community.

Thank you to all  
2017 sponsors!

**VISIONARY**  
**Faraci Lange**  
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## YOU Make a Difference!

The successes of Starbridge and the people we serve are made possible, in part, by the gifts we receive from **supporters like you**. We thank you for your support and hope you enjoy reading about the impact you have in the lives of many!



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## 2018 Community Award Winners:

### Advocacy - Navlette James



### Advocacy - Jeiri Flores



### Inclusion - Kathy Lee



### Rising Star - Ashley Donlon



### Outstanding Community Partner Sharon Pluta-DeGraff & David DeGraff

