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Determination + Opportunity = Employment Success

The Weight Loss Challenge • Board Member Lisa Stephenson • and more!

Champions

Your support advances opportunities for all

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Shirley Jung, In Her Own Words

Legacy LDA Board Member and Steadfast Agency Supporter

My first encounter with the Learning Disabilities Association (LDA) occurred when the part-time coordinator spoke at my first graduate course in 1975. She must have been very impressive because it was not long afterwards that I focused my studies on Special Education and Learning Disabilities in particular.

While all this was occurring, one of my sons was struggling with learning to read. He was frustrated and often asked, "Why is this so hard for me and so easy for everybody else?" Decoding was a struggle but his comprehension was terrific.

I became a Special Education teacher and worked for more than 30 years in the Rochester City School District at the elementary or preschool level, then in administration for the District.

From LDA, I learned the importance of knowing and following the requirements of the law in seeking support and help. As my son progressed in school, I learned how to request the appropriate services and supports he needed to be successful.

In the late 1970s, I joined the Advisory Council for LDA. We planned workshops and conferences for families and school personnel, and held fundraisers.

Being on the Board and participating in workshops and conferences was extremely helpful during those years. I loved the support of the staff and other volunteers. At one workshop, one of my co-board members commented, "Shirley, ten years ago, we were the parents out there!"

I served on the LDA Board for at least 20 years—as Secretary, Vice President, and President—and eventually the LDA Foundation Board.

My husband, Joseph, and I have three children and two grandchildren. We now live in Florida. Our son graduated from high school, graduated from college, and worked in law enforcement in Georgia for 22 years. He recently retired, and now lives near us.

I support Starbridge because my experiences at LDA showed me the importance of having support when you have to navigate through large organizations like school districts and other government systems.

I want other families to have the same opportunities I had – or better.

~ Shirley Jung



Former Monroe County Executive Bob King, Shirley Jung, and LDA members celebrate Learning Disabilities Association Month in the early 1990s

"Shirley was the consummate professional special ed coordinator. She was fair, consistent, and highly organized. Her in-depth knowledge of children with special needs was respected by everyone who knew her."

~ Cheri Riley, retired teacher and Starbridge Board member

"Shirley was an instrumental leader on our board, advocating for children and youth with learning disabilities to receive an appropriate education. Her passion, both professional and as a volunteer, continues to this day."

~ Colin Garwood, President/CEO of Starbridge

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passed the TASC (to earn a high school equivalency diploma). It was the best decision I ever made to go back to school."

Yasin then went to Monroe Community College for an IT certification program. While he was there, a tutor recommended he try getting some hands-on experience through an internship.

Yasin's vocational counselor at ACCES-VR, Michelle Bowman, connected him with us.

"On top of being determined, Yasin was always kind and patient with the process. One day I stumbled across a possible opportunity. When it was confirmed that the company would take Yasin on as an intern, I was so excited to tell him!"

Yasin's first internship was data entry for medical records, which he enjoyed. His supervisor reported that Yasin did a wonderful job and left great impressions on his coworkers and supervisors. At the end of the internship, the employer wanted to hire him full-time but did not have an opening in that department.

Instead, they found an opening in their imaging department. Yasin started his new job at eHealth Technologies on May 14.

When Yasin Gunay first met Leah Hecht, a Starbridge Prevocational Employment Counselor, he was sure of one thing: he wanted to work in Information Technology (IT).

After graduating high school with an IEP diploma several years ago, Yasin worked a number of places. As he recalled:

"I was working a lot of dead-end positions. It took me a while to figure out what I wanted to do. I decided I wanted to go to school. I went to BOCES and in 8 months I

Starbridge's YES Internship Program offers youth and adults a way to gain paid work experience in a career that interests them. Our counselors search for area businesses willing to provide structured internships. We support both interns and employers in making the most of the internship.

Leah Hecht recalled, "I worked with Yasin for quite a few months, trying to find him an internship related to computers. Neither of us knew how difficult that would end up being.

Leah said, "After everything we went through to find this internship opportunity, it felt like a win when he was able to get a full time job with benefits as a result!"

When asked if he had any advice for anyone else trying to find the right job, Yasin said:

"Keep plugging away. Don't give up. It took time but I kept going."

OCTOBER IS NATIONAL DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT AWARENESS MONTH

Starbridge provides support for youth and adults who are looking to gain work experience, search for jobs, or gain supports to succeed on the job. We also connect businesses looking to hire people with disabilities with qualified candidates well-suited to those openings. Have questions? Contact Ursula Nicholson, Director of Individual Consumer Services, at 585-224-7342.

What will be your legacy?

A **Legacy Gift** is a thoughtful commitment you can make now that will support people who have disabilities and their families in finding their way to the **hope** and the **how** for generations to come.

Join our **Champions Circle** giving society by making a legacy gift today. To learn more, go to:

www.starbridgeinc.org/LegacyGiving



Starbridge presents
FREE workshops
to support
school success
for your child

Learn more today!
starbridgeinc.org/events

THE WEIGHT LOSS CHALLENGE



If you have ever tried to make a major life change like losing weight, you know support can make a huge difference.

Nursing staff in our residential program monitor individuals' weight because of the relationship between excess weight and long-term health conditions.

In the past, nurses connected people who needed to lose weight with nutritionists and gym memberships. But, Rebecca

Lepel, Registered Nurse at Starbridge, noted that alone was not enough to make a significant difference.

Researchers say that social support – family, friends, and housemates – can make it easier to stick to a weight loss plan and reach long-term goals.

The team asked, "How can we change our approach so that people who need to lose weight have better support to succeed?"

Their solution: introduce an eight-week weight loss competition that included staff and housemates in teams. Each residence formed a team, competing to lose the highest percentage of weight. The prize for reaching that goal? A house party.

To include everyone who wanted to join the challenge, nursing staff adjusted competition goals for any person who needed to gain weight.

Rebecca sent weekly newsletters to the teams with updated standings, nutrition information, and increased step goals. Teams were enthusiastic about making changes – small or large – to reach goals:

- A staff member introduced 20-minute ab challenges, which anyone could join.

- Another staff member who runs regularly would accompany anyone else who wanted to run.
- Program staff started a twice-weekly walking group to empower individuals to begin meeting on their own.

In the end four of the five teams lost weight, and 65 people total participated. The Nursing team's hope was that 200 pounds would be lost. The final result: **240 pounds!**

The Nursing team has observed positive, promising changes:

- Awareness of healthy food choices, such as fruits and vegetables over fried foods
- Interest in ways to be more active, including using pedometers or other exercise trackers
- Empowerment of residents to ask staff to accompany them on a walk, rather than waiting to be asked to exercise

Beyond that, people have been encouraging friends outside of Starbridge to join them in being healthier.

That ripple effect has positive, powerful impacts on our community.

LISA STEPHENSON — Board Member Profile

Lisa is the Administrator for the Neuromuscular Disease Division of the Department of Neurology at the University of Rochester Medical Center. Lisa and her husband, Brian, live in Penfield, and have 8 nieces and nephews, and 4 godchildren.

How did you first hear about our organization?

My long-time friend and colleague Lori Barnard-Northrup had mentioned The Advocacy Center's many services and events to me. I attended a fundraiser for The Advocacy Center, where I had the chance to speak with staff and leadership and learn more about all that the organization offered. I ended up referring friends and family to The Advocacy Center so they could take advantage of the various workshops and services. It was a relief to be able to inform them of the agency since many of them felt at a loss for resources for their children, family members, and friends.

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

Having been a life-long advocate for my uncle, who happens to have a disability, I have learned the rewards and challenges of advocacy for individuals with a disability. My family has been the best example for me when it comes to being a

staunch, effective advocate. And I had a strong desire to let others know about the amazing work being done and what a difference the organization makes. I also was drawn to the agency's commitment to promoting inclusivity in any and all communities.

What has your role as a board member involved?

As board members we are charged with thoughtful consideration of the budget, strategic planning, and policy review. We also promote the many programs and initiatives of Starbridge and take an active role in fundraising and development events that are so vital to ensuring Starbridge's continued success.

What have you gained or learned from the experience?

I have learned how many wonderful people there are who are working tirelessly for people with disabilities. Their determination and unwavering support make a tremendous impact.



I have also learned the power of collaborations. Between my fellow board members, the staff, and those we serve, I have met so many people who are willing to share their experiences and have become true resources to me. These relationships have afforded me the opportunity to share with others, particularly those who may feel they have nowhere to turn. The best part is to be able to explain to someone else about *the hope and the how* that Starbridge offers.

Thank You, Kelly for Kids Foundation!



TIES Coordinator Marcy Hagen accepts the Community Grant check from Buffalo Bills legend and philanthropist Jim Kelly

The Kelly for Kids Foundation is known for supporting children with disabilities and children in need throughout western New York. Earlier this year, Starbridge was fortunate to receive a Community Grant of \$2,500 to purchase new drums for our TIES drum circles.

Starbridge's TIES (Together Including Every Student) program promotes the participation of students and young adults who have developmental disabilities in inclusive extracurricular and community activities.

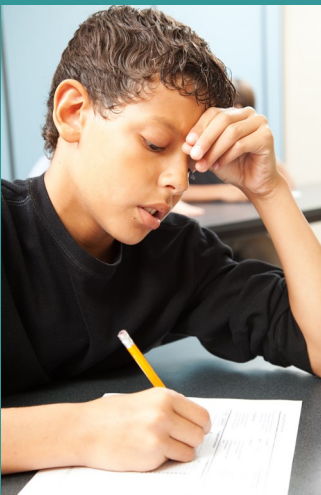
Drum circles are one of the most popular activities. Youth make music together under the direction of a trained drum leader and with support from a trained peer volunteer.

Kathy Costello, TIES Program Director, says the purchase of new drums not only allows more youth to participate in current drum circles, but also enables TIES to start up new drum circles in the western NY region.

On behalf of Starbridge, Krystyna Staub, Vice President, Philanthropy, said:

"We are grateful to the Kelly for Kids Foundation for recognizing the value of providing inclusive opportunities for students with disabilities to participate alongside their peers."

2018 EDUCATION CONFERENCE DYSLEXIA: WHAT IT IS & HOW TO HELP



December 6, 2018

8:00am-3:30pm

Hilton Garden Inn College Town
30 Celebration Drive, Rochester, NY

Do you suspect there are children with dyslexia in your classroom? Are you looking for new ways to help those struggling students? Is dyslexia a mystery to you?

Presenters Kelli Sandman-Hurley, Ed.D., and Tracy Block-Zaretsky of the Dyslexia Training Institute will be here in Rochester to help demystify dyslexia and provide practical tools to help teachers and families support children, ease stress, and clear the path to educational success.

You will leave with practical activities you can implement immediately in your classroom or share with your child's school team.

Fee: \$89/person, includes conference materials & continental breakfast

A limited number of scholarships are available for people who have disabilities, or their family members. Email events@starbridgeinc.org or call (585) 224-7248 to apply.

Learn more or register at
starbridgeinc.org/education-conference

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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