

# CARDINAL CUSHING CENTERS CONNECTOR



All ages. All abilities. All together.

VOL. 2 NO. 1

A PUBLICATION OF CARDINAL CUSHING CENTERS

FALL 2013

## A place to call home

PAGES 4-5



Heidi Domos, left, and Emily Benson proudly show off their kitchen.

## ROCK SOLID

### Cushing banks on support from Rockland Trust

BY PAUL HALLORAN

Rockland Trust is a company "Where Each Relationship Matters." Nowhere is that more evident than its partnership with Cardinal Cushing Centers.

The bank supports Cushing in many ways, from sponsoring the St. Coletta Golf Classic, to giving Christmas presents to students. But the philanthropic



David Smith, Colleen Carr, Heather Barry and Jeff Smith of Rockland Trust play an active role at Cushing.

support is only half the story.

Some key members of the Rockland Trust staff play an active role in various Cushing initiatives. Chief Investment Officer David Smith has served on the board

of directors for the last three years. Senior Vice President Jeff Smith sits on the Development Committee, chairs the new Planned Giving Advisory Committee and helps run the St. Coletta Golf Classic, along with Investment Specialist Heather Barry and Investment and Trust Administrator Colleen Carr.

"The school has an incredible mission," Jeff Smith said. "You can't help but feel good about what you're doing."

"I've seen what the school can do for people," said David Smith, a Hanover resident. "I know people who work there and how strongly they feel about the cause."

There is also direct interaction between Cushing students and bank employees, from students conducting banking at a branch near campus, to planting flowers and selling their artwork, jewelry and baked goods at a pop-up store at bank headquarters. Volunteers from the bank's employee based volunteer group, RockCorp, have done painting and other work at Cushing.

"We have a lot of involvement at all different levels," David Smith said. "We try to help them with money and time. The need is there. We do our small part to try to fill

See **ROCKLAND TRUST** Page 7



**CARDINAL CUSHING CENTERS  
CONNECTOR**

A PUBLICATION OF CARDINAL CUSHING CENTERS

A PUBLICATION OF:  
**Cardinal Cushing Centers**

405 Washington St.  
Hanover, MA 02339  
Tel. 781-826-6371  
www.cushingcenters.org

**Jo Ann Simons**  
President and CEO  
jsimons@cushingcenters.org

**Jansi Chandler**  
Vice President of Development  
jchandler@cushingcenters.org

**Michelle Markowitz**  
Vice President of Admissions  
mmarkowitz@cushingcenters.org

**Laurie Maranian**  
Development Manager  
lmaranian@cushingcenters.org

PRODUCED BY:  
**PKH COMMUNICATIONS**  
pkhcomm@gmail.com

# Dedicated to changing lives, fostering hope and possibility



Change is in the air. You can feel it -- especially at this time of year, as the crispness of fall yields to the impending chill of winter.

At Cushing, change is a constant, and in a very positive way. I am often asked what we do at Cushing. I used to launch into a long and detailed explanation, but, over the years, I have refined the answer to a succinct, yet powerful, three words: We change lives.

If it sounds like a lot of responsibility, it sure is, but, thanks to an unfailingly dedicated staff and consistently generous cadre of donors, that's what we do -- every day.

This edition of the *Cardinal Cushing*

*Connector* provides a high-definition view of the work we do and, more important, the reasons for that work: the students and adults in our program.

You will meet four of our success stories, two students and two participants in our adult program, all of whom have been positively impacted by their Cushing experience.

We are fortunate to have partners who are committed to helping us advance our mission, some who have been with us for two decades and others who make a significant impact on a particular project. On Page 1 of this edition, you will read about our friends from Rockland Trust who support us on many different levels.

The center spread takes you inside a spectacular residence for five young women, made possible through the generosity of John and Pam Domos and a

score of businesses and individuals who helped make Bella Luna a reality. The new home was built with materials and labor that were donated, and love that was unselfishly shared.

We are not unlike other nonprofit organizations in that we rely on outside support to help us provide the resources that our students and adults need and deserve. Our annual giving program is appropriately named the Opportunity Fund.

Our students and adults are given the chance to create a meaningful life. Our benefactors are given the satisfaction of helping us change lives.

What could be better than that?

*Jo Ann Simons is president and CEO of Cardinal Cushing Centers.*

**PROFILE:**  
Trevor Johnson

## Music man

BY MEAGHAN CASEY

Cushing student Trevor Johnson, 18, is no stranger to the Nashville music scene.

In 2012, Trevor was named the Rising Star Male Vocalist in his age category by the North America Country Music Associations, International (NACMAI). The annual NACMAI Country Music Week competition involves amateur competitors in various categories and in multiple age brackets from throughout the country. Contestants compete in front of a panel of music professionals at the Country Tonite Theatre in Pigeon Forge, Tenn. and are judged on quality of performance, stage presence and how well their material reflects their chosen music style. His parents, Dean and Ginny, also competed in the event. His father received the award for Instrumentalist of the Year, New Country, and his mother was awarded the title of Most Promising Female Entertainer, New Gospel.

A national award-winning country and gospel vocalist, Ginny earned her bachelor's degree in vocal performance from the Hartt School, University of Hartford and has appeared with many local choruses, including the Fine Arts Chorale and Chorus pro Musica. She has also performed in the chorus for the Opera Company of Boston and Boston Lyric Opera. She and Dean, a bass player, joined two guitarists in 2003 to form the country cover band, Ashmont Station. Ginny sings lead vocals for the band, which plays everything from bluegrass to traditional to new country.

In March, the Johnsons returned to Tennessee for the 2013 NACMAI Country Music Week, where Ginny was presented awards for Female Vocalist, Entertainer of the Year and Holiday Album of the Year, all in the New Gospel category.

"It was wonderful sharing that moment with my family," she said.

While traveling, they also visited the Kentucky Music Hall of Fame, the Lookout Mountain Incline Railway and the Smoky Mountain Opry.

Though Trevor had grown up in a home that fully embraced and celebrated music, he was not always as receptive to his parents' live performances -- nor was he the natural performer he is today.

"When I first started competing, it was too much sensory stimulation for him," said Ginny. "The fact that, in six years, he could go from hiding in another room to competing onstage is incredible."

In addition to competing NACMAI Country Music Week, Trevor has sung the National Anthem at Bridgewater State University and a Brockton Rox game and he has joined Ashmont Station for mini sets at Autism Speaks fundraisers.

Trevor, who is autistic, enrolled at Cushing in 2011.

"Cushing has been a great fit for him to have his music and chorus and individual attention," said Ginny. "It was a no-brainer to send him there. They've really been able to pull out the pieces of his individuality."

In agreement is Ginny's aunt, Dot Lucci, director of consultation for Massachusetts General Hospital/Aspire -- a program dedicated to providing children, teens and young adults with Asperger's Syndrome and related Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) with the knowledge and skills necessary to make social connections and develop independence leading to successful and fulfilling lives. Lucci performs the ASD Needs Assessment Protocol to assist systems in analyzing their service delivery to students with ASD; consults to schools on individual students and on program development and design; and conducts workshops and trainings.

"The staff members at Cushing understand Trevor and they're able to develop realistic plans for him," said Lucci. "I've seen him become happier and more relaxed. He's made so much progress in terms of language and behavior."



Trevor Johnson was named Rising Star Male Vocalist by the North America Country Music Associations, International.



# Shoppers' delight

## Students provide holiday goods



The Cushing Trader pop-up shop at the Derby Street Shoppes in Hingham offers visitors a wide selection of products.

From fresh flowers and pumpkins to holiday wreaths and seedlings, Cushing Greenery offers visitors a wide selection of student-grown and -cultivated products for every season.

Many Cushing students have been able to work at the greenery and test out their green thumbs as part of the school's vocational services, available to those ages 18-22. Students are encouraged to try several different career sites during their vocational training, not only to learn job-specific skills, but to develop an understanding of work and what it means to be a good employee and citizen.

If assigned to the horticulture program, students are responsible for planting flower and vegetable gardens, and selling seasonal plants, flowers, wreaths and trees to the public. The Cushing Greenery is open Monday – Friday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. and on Saturdays, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. It is located on the Hanover campus, off Route 53. Visitors can also find a selection of dried flower arrangements, and student-made artwork, jewelry, pottery, Christmas ornaments and decorations for garden and home at the Cushing Trader, next to the greenery.

Also this winter, Cushing will be opening a season-long gift shop at the Derby Street Shoppes in Hingham, featuring items from the Cushing Trader and wreaths from the Cushing Greenery. The outdoor shop will open Saturday, Nov. 30 and run through Dec. 21. Hours are Thursday – Saturday, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and Sundays, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. All money raised from sales at the holiday shop will be used to support the school's mission.



Student Eliza Drew is hard at work in the greenhouse.



Student Rebecca Haile shows off beautiful flowers.



Purchase your Christmas tree this year from the students at Cushing. The sale starts in early December.

**PROFILE:**  
Devin Wilson

## At your service



Devin Wilson enjoys working in food services.

BY MEAGHAN CASEY

Devin Wilson, 21, always has a smile on his face. And his mother, Dawnna McCormick, attributes his positive attitude in part to the culture at Cardinal Cushing Centers.

"He loves it at Cushing," said McCormick, who adopted Wilson six years ago. "He's grown and thrived."

Wilson, who is autistic, graduated from Cardinal Cushing School in June. He started out at Weymouth High School and transferred to Cushing three years ago.

"He had lived in residential all his life, so we wanted to shy away from that and find a day program that suited him," said McCormick. "When I walked into Cardinal Cushing Centers, everything felt right. It felt like home."

"I like being here," said Wilson. "I have good friends."

Wilson dabbled with culinary arts when he participated in the school's vocational program. He is now working full-time in the food services department as part of Cushing's Adult Services program. He is working with a job coach—as part of Cushing's collaboration with Best Buddies Jobs—to prepare for a career in the culinary field.

He also is taking advantage of Cushing's social and recreational activities.

"He wants to be involved in as much as he can," said McCormick.

During the evenings and weekends, Wilson plays basketball, softball and soccer at Cushing and swims on his own time for the Arc of the South Shore. He was also a member of Cushing's Comic Book Club and Student Council. Additionally, he has been involved in the Boy Scout program for many years and just recently earned the rank of Eagle Scout, the highest attainable rank in scouting.



# Extreme makeover



Emily Benson, Meredith Ortiz, Heidi Domos, Caroline Dane and Amanda Lederman show their appreciation for their new home.



Emily Benson shows off her bedroom.

# Family's generosity transforms residence

By PAUL HALLORAN

Heidi Domos and Emily Benson proudly take their visitors on a tour of the home they share with three other young women, and it immediately becomes apparent they are thrilled with their new residence – a second-floor apartment in a house on the Cushing main campus in Hanover. The place has been named Bella Luna – or beautiful moon – and it's

a fitting moniker because everything about it is beautiful, from the new furnishings to the modern kitchen to the spacious closets and bathrooms. “We love it,” Benson said. “We’re very happy here.” Who wouldn’t be? If you didn’t know better, you’d think you had walked into the model unit of a luxury condominium complex. The story of Bella Luna is one of parental love, professional

collaboration and incalculable generosity. It started with Domos’ parents, John and Pam, wanting to spruce up the home in which she and her roommates were living. They approached Cushing President and CEO Jo Ann Simons, who had a better idea. Simons showed them the Becker House, a home that had been completely renovated by Angela Becker in memory of her son, Michael, a beloved figure who graduated from Cushing and was in the adult program when he died at age 38.

“She wanted to do something for adults. It was an amazing renovation,” Simons said, noting Becker had spent \$250,000 on the project.

John Domos, who owns a general contracting business on Cape Cod, swung into action. He approached Jeff Plank, owner of Mid Cape Home Centers where he does a good amount of business. Domos told Plank what he wanted to do, namely a complete rehab of a unit that had formerly housed five Cushing students. Plank, who has a son with special needs, did not hesitate.

“He told John he had opened an account for him,” Pam said. “He got all the appliances and building supplies there.”

Mid Cape was one of more than 20 businesses and individuals that



Heidi and John Domos celebrate the finished project with state Rep. Rhonda Nyman.

ultimately contributed materials, services, money or time to the project, which cost about \$250,000.

“A lot of people I work with on Cape Cod were very generous,” John said. “People dropped what they were doing to get the work done.”

The renovations started on July 10 and in less than three months, Heidi, Emily and their roommates – Meredith Ortiz, Amanda Lederman and Caroline Dane – were settled into their new home.

“The girls are happy where they are,” Pam said. “It is a feel-good place.”

The home features five bedrooms – each painted according to the wishes of the inhabitant, and featuring a double-door closet – two full bathrooms, a kitchen and dining area. It was designed with the needs of the five young women in mind, or as

John Domos put it, It was built as a home for life.”

Simons stressed that the home symbolizes more than just a new apartment. “People have rallied around the gift of Heidi,” she said. “She has impacted dozens of people who wanted to show their love for her. She was the catalyst for making this happen.”

Pam and John Domos are pleased that it is not just their daughter who is benefiting from the generosity of everyone who contributed to making Bella Luna what it is today. In one way, they consider it a token of their appreciation for what Cushing has done for their family.

“From the moment we stepped on campus we knew this would be a great place for Heidi,” Pam said. “We have nothing but gratitude for what Cushing has done for Heidi.”

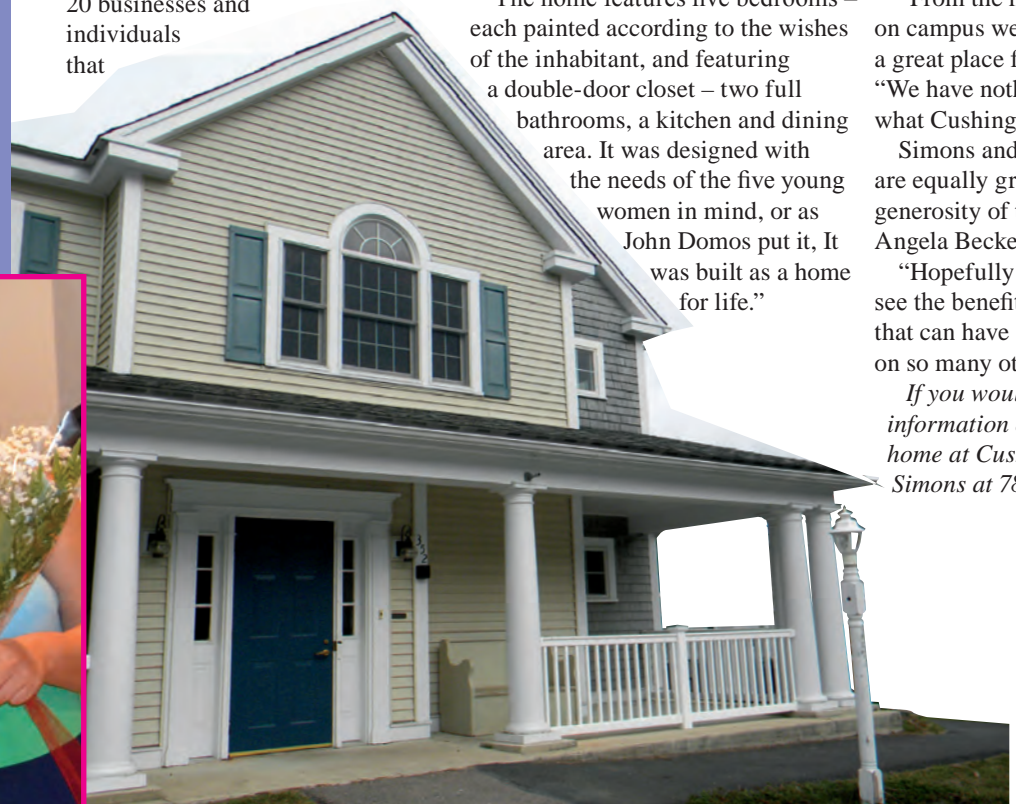
Simons and the staff at Cushing are equally grateful and hope the generosity of the Domos family and Angela Becker will inspire others.

“Hopefully somebody else will see the benefits of making a gift that can have such a lasting effect on so many others,” she said.

If you would like more information on transforming a home at Cushing, contact Jo Ann Simons at 781-826-6371.

## Bella Luna donors

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| Mid Cape Home Centers<br>Dennis                          | Granite World – Harwich                     |
| MegRyco – Plymouth                                       | Bob’s Painting - Harwich                    |
| Rockland Trust   | Summitt Insulation<br>Harwich               |
| John C. Domos Carpentry<br>Harwich                       | Bellew Tile – Rockland                      |
| Gregory Tile Co – Marshfield                             | Harwich Paint and Decorating<br>Harwich     |
| Cape and Islands Glass<br>Orleans                        | Off Shore Plastering<br>Yarmouth            |
| Shiretown Glass and<br>Home Improvements<br>Plymouth     | Botello Lumber<br>Mashpee                   |
| Kurt Wyatt Plumbing<br>and Heating<br>Manomet            | Bang and Olfson<br>Boston                   |
| Richard Clayton Plumbing,<br>Heating and Air<br>Plymouth | Dave O’Neill<br>Cushing Centers electrician |
| Becca and Tom Ahrensfelt<br>Harwich                      | AirTech - Chatham                           |
|  | Robert and Candace Domos                    |
|  | Susan Benson                                |



Cutting the ribbon at Bella Luna were, from left: Emily Benson, Amanda Lederman, Pam, John, and Heidi Domos, Caroline Dane, Rep. Rhonda Nyman, Jo Ann Simons and Meredith Ortiz.



# Cushing couples find love at work

By MEAGHAN CASEY

Among its core values, Cardinal Cushing Centers is dedicated to fostering a sense of family and community through caring relationships, kindness and friendship. For a number of employees, creating the bonds of family life has become more than just a professional responsibility; it has transformed their personal lives as well.

One such couple, Danielle and Jeff Silverberg, connected on an annual student trip to Disney World in 2008 and married in 2010 – two years to the day of their first date.

“We do a good job of keeping our separate roles on campus, but a lot of the students and residents know we’re married and I think they appreciate seeing familial role models,” said Jeff.

Jeff, a residential house manager, started at Cushing in 1994, working overnight shifts in the residential program. Danielle, the director of Health Services, was hired at Cushing as a nurse in 2004. Both work at Cushing’s Hanover campus.

“We both have the same interests and a passion for working with this population,” said Danielle.

“I think there’s a certain chemistry and closeness among all of us,” said Jeff. “It truly is a privilege to work here.”

Linda and Nick Santacroce, lifelong Weymouth residents, grew up just half a mile from one another, but never crossed paths until they met on the campus of Cardinal Cushing Centers. They married in 1996.

Linda started at Cushing in 1986 as an assistant and for the past 20 years has served as an art teacher at Cushing’s St. Coletta Day School in Braintree, which serves students ages 3-22. She tries to connect with her students through art and sensory activities.

Nick, who has worked on the Braintree campus as a teacher’s aide for the past six years, celebrated 34 years at Cushing this fall. He started out working 48-hour weekend shifts in the residential program on the Hanover campus. In 1993, he and Linda were assigned the same 24-hour shift,

Friday at 8 p.m. to Saturday at 8 p.m., when Linda was taking on additional weekend work. They worked together for more than three years in the same house.

“It was a shift with younger students, so they were in bed by 9,” said Nick. “I think the kids had a sixth sense, helping us to get together and giving us those uninterrupted two hours a night to talk.”

“We found we had a lot of common interests and just enjoyed spending that time together,” said Linda.

Nick, 79, plans to retire next year and enjoy some of his favorite pastimes, such as skiing and hiking.

“I’ll miss the kids, but at least I’ll always have a good excuse to stop in and visit,” he said.



Nick and Linda Santacroce were married in 1996.



Danielle and Jeff Silverberg were married in 2010.

## Summer program is fit for a King



Dylan King, far left, with his sister Katie and brother John at Cushing’s 49th annual Springtime Gala.

By MEAGHAN CASEY

Throughout the evenings, weekends, summer months and school vacation weeks, the grounds of Cardinal Cushing Centers come alive with students from all different schools and communities, coming together to enjoy the social and recreational activities the organization has to offer.

This past summer, 10-year-old Dylan King, a student at Alden Elementary School in Duxbury, was one of those participants. King, born with Down syndrome, attended Cushing’s week-long summer program in August. The camp featured a variety of physical, social and cultural activities on and off campus. Activities vary from session to session, but include swimming, bowling, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Special Olympics, fitness, cooking, therapeutic

rhythmic arts, yoga, fishing, hiking, dances, proms, boat cruises and more.

“He loved it,” said his mother, Nancy. “I’ve always lived on the South Shore, so I knew about Cushing; I just never realized it was an option for Dylan. It’s such a wonderful, supportive place and I couldn’t be more excited about the future of the organization.”

The Kings plan to enroll Dylan in upcoming programs during school vacation weeks, and again in the summer. They also plan to remain active in Cushing’s fundraising efforts. In June, the family attended Cushing’s 49th annual Springtime Gala at the Seaport Hotel, and all three children – Katie, Dylan and John—modeled at the event. Funds raised at the event go toward the development of student programming.

Where there’s  
a will,  
there’s a way

For many Cushing donors, the question isn’t whether to include Cardinal Cushing Centers in their will, it’s making the appointment with the right professional to start working on their overall plans.

To assist our supporters with this journey we will hold an estate planning seminar this winter. A panel of professionals will discuss the many issues to consider when determining your long-term plan and how your assets will be distributed.

For more information, or to be added to the invitation list, contact Jenna Gomes, Director of Planned Giving at (781) 829-1223 or [jgomes@cushingcenters.org](mailto:jgomes@cushingcenters.org).



**PROFILE:**  
*Sophie Nash*

# Second home

BY MEAGHAN CASEY

If home is where the heart is, Sophie Nash's heart was leading her to Cardinal Cushing Centers.

Sophie, 17, enrolled at Cushing as a day student two years ago. In June, she transitioned to the residential program.

"In the spring, she was telling us, 'I want to live with my high school friends. I want to be back at school,'" said her mother, Jody. "As a parent, it's hard to let go, but she was telling us this was the next step."

The residential program, based on a functional life-skills curriculum, provides students with concrete, hands-on experiences designed to increase independence by enhancing the skills of daily living, including: social skills, behavior management, domestic skills, hygiene, community living and leisure and recreation skills.

"She clearly knew what she wanted, so we had to listen," said her father, Tim. "She views Cushing as her home right now."

Sophie lives in a house with three other girls on Cushing's Hanover campus, where they have the opportunity to learn to cook meals, do their own laundry, keep their personal spaces tidy and enjoy time together. Her parents, who have been Hingham residents for more than 20 years, live



Tim Nash visits his daughter, Sophie, on campus.

about 15 minutes away, and Sophie goes home every other weekend.

"She's happy, and she has friends who care about her, and a whole community that cares about her, so I know we made the right choice," said Jody. "I truly feel this is the best of all worlds – that she is receiving everything she needs and more at Cardinal Cushing, but she still knows that we are her family and we want her to be a big part of that."

After school and on weekends, Sophie enjoys bowling and other recreational activities on campus. She started cheerleading this fall. "Something like cheerleading wouldn't have been a possibility for her at home," said Tim. "It's a gift."

Sophie, who has dealt with lifelong social and emotional disorders, including obsessive compulsive disorder, attended the Pilgrim Area Collaborative in grades 1-8, before enrolling at Cushing.

"Her class was almost all boys in middle school, so we wanted to look around and find a place where she would have female peers," said Jody. "Once we came out of the Cushing tour, we knew it was a fit."

Sophie will transition to Cushing's vocational program next year. The program, available to all Cushing students age 18-22, is designed to meet their individual talents, interests, abilities and needs. Opportunities include the on-campus bakery, recycling center, greenhouse, thrift store and retail store, among other sites. Students are encouraged to try several different career sites during their vocational training. Some students choose split programs and work in more than one area during the course of the week, while others choose to concentrate on one site at a time.

"The vocational services are a huge benefit of the overall program," said Jody. "It will help to prepare her for life."

## Cushing banks on support from Rockland Trust

**ROCKLAND TRUST:** From Page 1

that need."

"We get to put a face to the cause," Heather Barry said. "That makes it so much more meaningful."

There is a business relationship as well; Rockland Trust manages the retirement plan for Cushing employees.

The partnership between the bank and the school, which goes back more than 20 years, is even more meaningful for bank employees who have a personal connection to Cushing. David Smith's wife has an uncle who was one of Cushing's early students in the 1950s.

"They were city people from the South End of Boston," Smith said. "For them to be able to send their special-needs child to a school out in the country, and for him to have the kind of experience he had, it was life-changing."

Barry knows what a positive experience her sister, Leigh Ann, has had in the last six years, four as a student and two as an adult group-home resident. In addition, Barry's father works in adult services for Cushing.

"Leigh Ann absolutely flourished there," she said. "For her to have the confidence and opportunity to learn real work experience has been great. She

has had several job opportunities because of what she learned at Cushing. The school did wonders for her."

Barry, who served on the St. Coletta Golf committee for six years and the 2013 committee for the Springtime gala, said she especially enjoys the opportunity for bank employees to "adopt" Cushing students who do not go home for the holidays.

"Knowing we provide Christmas presents to kids who otherwise would not get presents is the best feeling," she said.

"We are grateful to have such great friends right up the street from us at Rockland Trust," said Cardinal Cushing President and CEO Jo Ann Simons. "Whether they are giving of their time and serving on our board and committees, hosting a bake sale in their local branches, or running one of our major fundraising events, the St. Coletta Golf Classic, Rockland Trust always has our mission on their mind and in their hearts. We could not do our good work without their help."



From left, Cushing students Kareem Ashu, Peyton Hatfield, Stirling Findley, Andrew Robbins, Maya Slwotzky and Tyler Beaudry visit Rockland Trust.



# CARDINAL CUSHING CONNECTOR



All ages. All abilities. All together.

**PROFILE:**  
Brent Yoshida

## Culinary delight

BY MEAGHAN CASEY

As a child, Brent Yoshida had a love for the culinary arts. His mother, Kim, fondly recalls the continuous presence of the Food Network in their home and how gift requests quickly evolved from a Little Tikes kitchen set to Cuisinart cookware.

Today, at age 26, Brent has found his calling in the kitchen of the Cardinal Cushing Centers.

Brent, a graduate of Cardinal Cushing School, is now a member of Cushing's Adult Services Residential Program and South Shore Industries (SSI). He is employed by the center's food services department, under the direction of Gerry Fanning.

"I try to give my employees like Brent all the skills they need," said Fanning. "We start out with dishwashing and sanitation and move on to food prep and baking."

Brent typically works a daily shift from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m., and brings the skills that he has learned in the kitchen back to his residence on the Hanover campus, where he lives with three other housemates. They have been together for the past four years.

"I cook for the guys all the time," said Yoshida. "I'm the best cook at the house, but they're really good guys."

Brent, who has fragile X syndrome—a genetic condition that causes intellectual disability, behavioral and learning challenges—enrolled at Cardinal Cushing School as a residential student at age 14. He had previously attended the Andover Public Schools.

"His behavior started changing as he got older," said Kim. "He was becoming more anxious and aggressive and he was the happiest and most comfortable with peers of his likeness."

The summer before starting at Cushing, Brent spent time at Camp Lee Mar, a private residential special needs camp in Pennsylvania for children and teenagers with mild to moderate learning and developmental challenges.

"We noticed he was so easy-going when he came back and a lot of his anxiety was tempered," said Kim.

She and her husband, David, were confident Cushing would be the right fit to meet his needs and help him reach his academic, vocational, social and personal potential.

"We looked at other schools, but we didn't feel like he would be getting enough socialization elsewhere," said David. "The Cushing staff is phenomenal. They're so dedicated to keeping the kids busy, which is important. There's always something going on."

"Cushing had everything we were looking for," said Kim. "We knew he needed structure, but he also needed

more than an 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. day. At Cushing, he had activities and friends – we never had to worry about him. He was happy from the start."

David, who is a partner at Yoshida & Sokolski, PC, a full-service, certified public accounting practice located in Burlington, has served on the Board of Directors of Cardinal Cushing Centers for three years. He previously served as treasurer and chairman of the Board of Directors of Special Olympics Massachusetts and was the past chairman of the Board of the Professional Center for Handicapped Children in Andover.

"It was my way of following Brent, to join the Cushing board," he said. "Cushing has given him so much and I look at it as another way for me to give back."

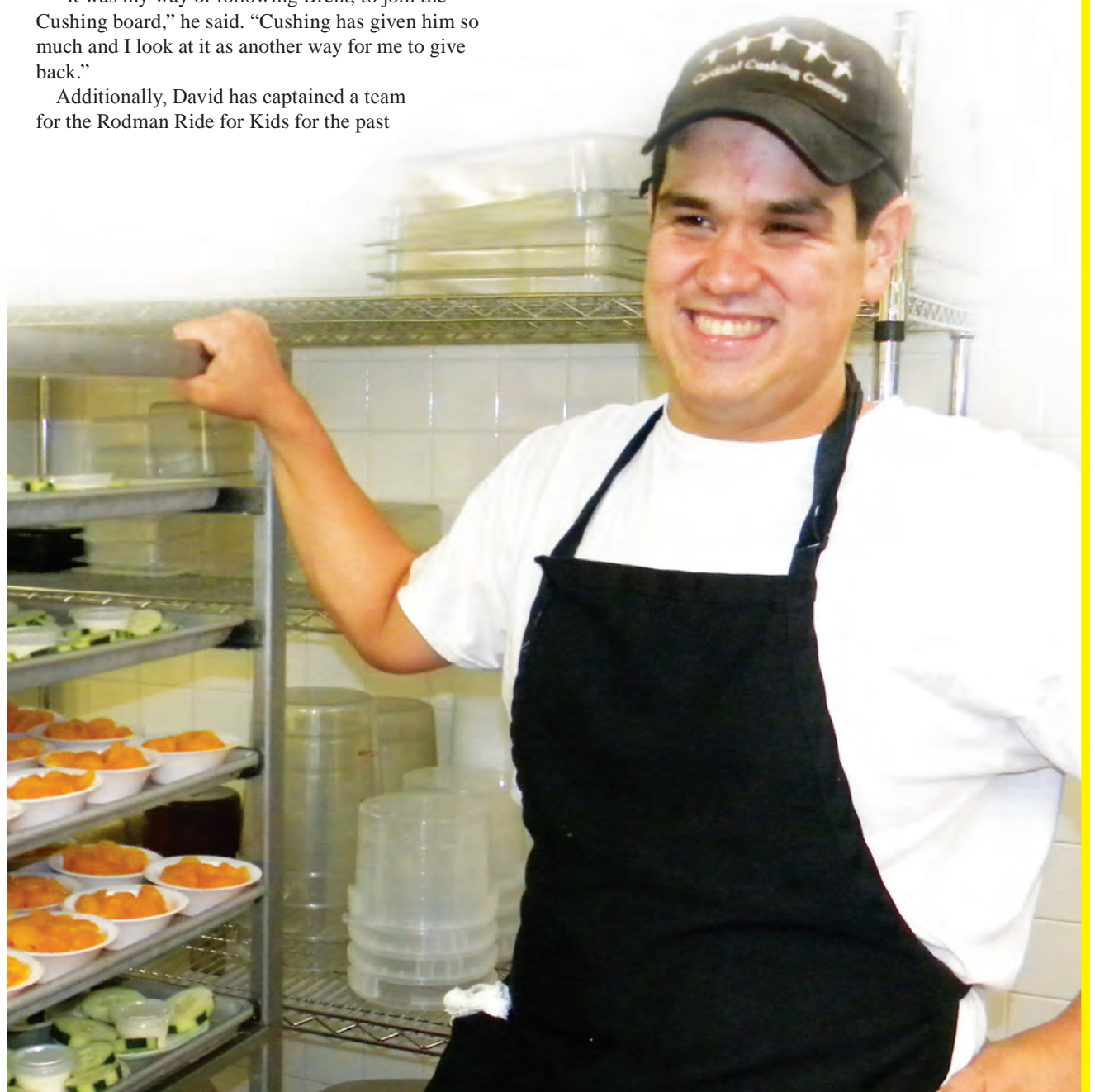
Additionally, David has captained a team for the Rodman Ride for Kids for the past

six years. He and "Brent's Team" members ride 50 miles to raise money for Special Olympics Massachusetts and Cushing Centers' Special Olympic programs. This year, Brent's Team raised \$20,000.

Brent has been very active on Cushing's Special Olympics bowling, soccer, flag football and golf teams. It has helped him to be physically active and gain the confidence of belonging to a team.

"I'm busy all the time," said Brent.

"He's involved in pretty much any and every activity," said David. "He loves Cushing, and for that reason, we love it."



Brent Yoshida is at ease in the kitchen at Cardinal Cushing Centers.