

WINTER
2016

CUSHING Community News



A Message from Vice President of Development: *Jansi Chandler*

Dear all,

We hope this e-newsletter finds you well and fully enjoying the magic of the holiday season! Amongst all the merriment, we would like to take a moment to extend our warmest thanks and appreciation to everyone who has generously contributed to The Opportunity Fund this year.

When you choose to make a gift to us at Cardinal Cushing Centers, your donation truly has an impact. Without the Opportunity Fund we would not be able to:

- Provide employment experience and reliable transportation
- Athletic uniforms, school dances, and Smart Boards
- Create friendships, foster life skills and independence
- Make dreams come true.

There's still time to make a contribution before 2016 comes to a close. I hope you will consider making a gift this year to help open new doors for people with disabilities and their families.

Wishing you and yours a happy and healthy holiday season,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jansi".



Sharing Not Just A House but A Home

When Margo attended Cushing's South Shore Industries (SSI) program, she made friends, gained skills and made a connection that would change her life. Karen Cooper, a mother of three living in Abington, met Margo through the SSI program. She knew that Margo had a father and sister who cared deeply for her and that she lived in a nearby group home. Karen and Margo formed a connection that led to Margo moving in with Karen and her family.

Shared Living is a supported living arrangement where an individual, couple, or family share their home and life experiences with a person with an intellectual or developmental disability. Shared Living arrangements closely replicate a private home experience. Through this program, Cardinal Cushing Centers provides a case manager who offers support, makes monthly home visits and provides respite care.

Margo is very much a part of Karen Cooper's family now and has been for the last 12 years. Favorite past times include camping trips, cruises, vacations and holidays. Margo's father and sister are still an integral part of Margo's life and are happy with the way she has flourished. Lovingly known now as "Auntie Margo," it is true that there is no place like home.

If you are interested in learning more about Cushing's Shared Living program, contact Megan Gajewski at MGajewski@cushingcenters.org



Happiest of Holidays

As most of us do, many of Cushing's students love the holidays because they go home to spend time with family and friends. This, however, is not the case for all of our students. For some, Cushing is their home and their holidays are spent here with staff and other students.

When a group of parishioners at St. Mary's Church in Hanover learned about these students, they wanted to do something. Together they raised money, shopped for gifts, rallied volunteers and put on the best Holiday Party they could as a way to brighten the spirits of these students. That was 16 years ago...



All these years later the same group, led by Luke and Karen Dillon, continue to throw one of the best holiday parties for Cushing students with some of their favorite traditions including live music, the limbo and a visit from Santa!

Each student receives a gift bag that includes gear from Boston sports teams, the latest electronic device, a musical instrument and many other fun treats. But their generosity doesn't end there. Knowing that Cushing's staff members work so hard all year long, they give each staff person at the party their own present....a gift card to treat themselves to something nice.



"We love this tradition. It has been a special part of our family's holiday for years" states Karen. "We have so much fun as a group figuring out the gifts each year and then doing the shopping." For Luke, some of the joy comes in raising the dollars. "There are so many generous people and businesses in this community. When they donate and then come to volunteer at the party it is such a moving experience. I feel like I am giving them a gift as well."

What a wonderful way to spend the holidays.

Holiday Tradition



The holidays are all about the traditions we have with our family, friends, and loved ones. At Cushing, we also have many holiday traditions that our students look forward to. Many of our community members help us make sure these traditions are able to continue for many years to come!

One such supporter that we are thankful for is Bank of America. For the past 28 years, Bank of America brings all of their staff from their Rockland branch to

the Braintree St. Coletta Day School for a Christmas party. The bank staff brings cake, ice cream, and their best Christmas sweaters to get the students in the holiday spirit. They also sing carols for the students, who are always happy to join in for a singalong! Of course, no Christmas party would be complete without a visit from Santa Claus. Each student gets their name called by Santa, and they get a chance to talk with Santa and receive a gift.

Like all of our supporters, the staff from Bank of America are always incredibly kind and understanding. We look forward to celebrating with them again next year!

