

Signs of Independence



“From the Beginning, OSCIL was there...”



“John” (not is real name) was referred to OSCIL for Nursing Home Transition Services in August 2020. He is middle aged and has a Spinal Cord Injury and had recently undergone surgery on his neck. With assistance from OSCIL’s Nursing Home Transition Program, he was able to return home and live independently, while receiving home-based community services.

OSCIL ‘s AT staff were able to assist him in advocating for necessary durable medical equipment through his medical coverage and the local Mason’s chapter. He was even able to take part in our YMCA partnership and attended gym sessions on a weekly basis which enabled him to socialize and regain strength and some mobility. During COVID 19, OSCIL assisted him to address food insecurity by helping him to obtain a gift card for food and sanitary supplies.

In 2022, “John” had a change in his medical coverage, which caused a lapse in services. OSCIL stepped in again and helped pay for personal care attendants through our emergency funds. Without our assistance, he would be at risk for re-hospitalization. During this period, he was active in the community, living in his home and participating in our monthly support group for those with Spinal Cord Injuries.

In May, “John” had a medical set back and was hospitalized and then sent to a rehabilitation facility. OSCIL staff worked with him during this difficult time. The Nursing Home Transition Coordinator worked alongside DHS, and our Peer Support staff to again coordinate in-home services, assist him to obtain a hospital bed, an additional bed rail and slide board. “John” stated he was grateful for all the supports, and commented *“From the beginning OSCIL was there and has never left.”*

With the assistance of our dedicated staff and community-based partners, “John” is once again at home in the community that he knows and loves and is surrounded by his friends. He was so inspired by the assistance he received and with the knowledge he had gained about resources that he started a quarterly publication for individuals with disabilities. He is dedicated to *PAYING IT FORWARD!* - Submitted by Michelle Machado IL Coordinator



Highlights from the Quest for Independence Summer Camp 2022

The first annual *Quest for Independence* camp was a great success. Eleven young people spent 5 days and 4 nights at beautiful Camp Canonicus in Exeter. The campers had fun paddling around the lake, riding bikes, painting, and more. Not only were they having a great time but also working on their Independent Living skills, making lasting friendships, and tapping into the supports and resources the OSCIL community has to offer.



Campers go grocery shopping!

The week's itinerary was jam-packed with great opportunities to learn and grow. One of the first skills worked on was grocery shopping. Campers learned about nutrition before collectively making a shopping list and heading out to buy food for the week. They helped with preparing several meals throughout the week. Whatever was left over was donated to people experiencing homelessness. Campers developed important skills and made a positive impact on their community!

OSCIL teamed up with some amazing organizations and agencies. Counselors from ORS held an Employment Workshop to help with resume writing and job interviewing skills and more.

Also, Rob Rock, Director of Elections in RI, visited us to demonstrate a brand-new accessible voting machine. He shared instructions on how to use it and showed all the features it has that make voting easy for anyone of any ability. Campers then had a chance to cast a practice ballot. Thanks to Rob, everyone will be more familiar and comfortable with using the machine when election time comes.

Representatives from "Bike On" joined us too. They are a local company that sells adaptive bikes for people with disabilities. They came equipped with a variety of bikes. Some campers had never ridden a bike before. Others hadn't ridden in years or had bad past experiences. But everyone pushed their comfort zone and tried something new. Some enjoyed it more than others, but everyone was glad they tried it and enjoyed being outside in the woods with good company.

Singer/Songwriter Mark Cutler held a songwriting workshop and we all wrote a fantastic song about camp we titled "*Straight From The Heart*". Everyone proudly contributed



Trying out a new bike from Bike On!

Continued

and on the last day of camp we all performed the song together at our talent show. The songwriting workshop and the talent show helped foster creativity, build self-confidence, and helped campers identify their strengths. We truly had a very talented group.

House Speaker Joseph Shekarchi and Representative Julie A. Casimiro invited us to the Rhode Island State House where we were given a tour the stunning marble structure and learned some of its history. We then convened in the House Chamber where campers had the opportunity to voice their opinions on Bills that affect people with disabilities which were voted on last session. It was a great experience that everyone enjoyed and learned from.



Campers and staff on a bus trip!

Tina Pederson, from *Real Access Motivates Progress* or RAMP led an empowering discussion on defying stigma, overcoming adversity, and how to be an advocate for people with disabilities. She has made some outstanding achievements and we are grateful she visited to share her story.

We are grateful to everyone that attended and to everyone that helped make the experience so special! To see everyone’s’ progress and how they overcame challenges throughout the week was astonishing. Some that were scared to sleep away from home at first did not want to leave at the end of the week. Others that arrived a bit timid emerged with new leadership skills. Everyone had a blast and learned important life lessons that will guide and assist them with the daunting transition into adulthood. Quest for Independence 2022 came “Straight from The Heart”! - Submitted by Josh Conti, Youth Transition IL Coord.

Upcoming Lunch and Learn Workshops 12-2 pm

October 26—Topic: Vision Awareness Month—Documentary “Going Blind”

November 30—Topic: South Coast Fair Housing (Tentative)

December—No Workshops

In-person: 1944 Warwick Avenue, Warwick/Via Zoom: Meeting ID#897 862 149

Advance registration required for In-Person attendance—Contact Heather Schey at heather.schey@oscil.org or call 401-738-1013. Space in limited.

ASL Interpreter and captioning will be available.



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2022 Newsletter

Your Go-To
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Disability
Services,
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&
Information!



Return Service Requested

Women with Disabilities Support Group—Building a Community

OSCIL's *Women with Disabilities Peer Support Group* has created a wonderful opportunity for women with disabilities to share and receive support from others who experience similar challenges. Part of the group experience is to learn from each other and learning how to be self-advocates. Learning to advocate not for just themselves, but for the rights of people with disabilities.

The group meets on the first Tuesday of the month from and begins with some light refreshments and time to relax, then they participate in an ice breaker, which is a brief activity to get to know each other a little better. After the ice breaker, it is time for some crafting creations. This part of the meeting brings a great amount of fun and the sense of productivity. Some of the activities have included making flower arrangements, cupcake decorating and drop painting. The crafts are completed by the end of each meeting and ready to be taken home. The last portion of our meeting time is dedicated to bring support and encouragement to all in attendance.

Peer support means so very much to all who have been attending. A participant shared “Women’s group uniquely enhances the lives of women with disabilities.” There are moments where a person needs some encouragement, or advice and some knowledge about resources that they are not already aware of... everyone shares personal experience of what best worked for them. It is a great sense of community and at the end of each meeting participants share how excited they are for the next month’s meeting! - Submitted by Heather Schey, Advocate & Lunch & Learn Coordinator.



Enjoying a snack!