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Serving Children and Adults with Intellectual and Other Developmental Disabilities for over 70 Years

July 10, 2020

PAUL H. TORRES Dear AHRC Suffolk Individuals, Families and Staff:
Executive Director

As New York begins Phase Four of reopening in some areas including Suffolk County, we remain aware that the Coronavirus pandemic is still quite a force in many other areas of the US. Areas outside of New York State have seen catastrophic spikes in positive cases and many have their hospital systems overrun, with tragic increases in lives lost. New York's list of travel restricted states has grown to 19, and extra caution needs to be taken in order for us to stay on a positive path.

OFFICERS

John Smith
President

Joseph Zifchock
Treasurer

Joseph Cassarini
Secretary

Our AHRC Suffolk frontline heroes have quietly and passionately, without pomp and circumstance, continued their life's service of giving and caring for our loved ones. We are extremely grateful for the Residential, Day Hab and Nursing staff who have selflessly and without hesitation worked with exceptional effectiveness to stave off COVID-19 in our residences. Through their efforts, and the efforts of all of our amazing staff, we are persevering in keeping the infection and spread of COVID-19 down. #InItTogether

DIRECTORS

Deborah Pflieger

We continue to plan for reopening of our day programs, using the great capacity of our thought leadership in Adult Day Services, while engaging a committee of parents on their concerns and ideas. We do not have permission or guidance from OPWDD on the reopening of site based services as of yet, but are preparing so we are ready once we receive word. Our Educare Center also continues to prepare for their reopening on July 20th. Vigorous cleaning is taking place each and every day, and social distancing measures inside and outside of the school have been put in place. We are looking forward to welcoming students back to a safe, clean environment.

The tireless efforts and professionalism of our essential and frontline staff also directly contributed to the success of our first OPWDD site visit this week. The team at Old Field received laudatory feedback for their detail oriented and proactive care in the home in the service of protecting against the coronavirus and its prevention. Our success as an agency is attributable to the vigilance and care of our staff.

The liberal access to cleaning materials and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) has been critical to supporting our efforts and has come at a tremendous cost. An exponentially greater investment has been in the Chapter's adherence to an extraordinary pay (or hazard pay) plan that is reluctantly and very gradually reducing over almost a four month period, recently coinciding with a sustained clearance of infection in our homes. Neither of these unprecedented costs are at all supported by our funders and have come as an unquestionable necessity, and yet at great hardship to the agency. This makes our COVID-19 Relief Fund even more essential than ever since the donations received through this fund can offset these costs. Donations to this fund help us directly fight this health crisis and are important to our success.

With summer in full swing, it is easy to forget that we are still fighting this pandemic. Beaches are crowded, pools are opening up, and people are outside enjoying the warmth and sunshine. Although it is a time to appreciate all of those things, we must still remain cautious and responsible in our actions, while still enjoying ourselves. It is through all of our actions that we will succeed and keep this virus at bay. With the creativity of the AHRC Suffolk team; the ingenuity of our staff, the adaptiveness and resilience of our individuals, and through the unwavering support of our families and partners, Suffolk will persevere.

Stay well, stay safe and thank you for all you do.

Paul H. Torres
Executive Director



Your gift to our **COVID-19 Relief Fund** helps us purchase personal protective equipment, provide expanded medical and mental health services, increase our technology, and so much more. To donate, visit www.ahrCsuffolk.org/covidrelief (donations, marked **COVID-19 Relief Fund**, can also be mailed to the address at the top of this page)