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

August 14, 2020

PAUL TORRES
Executive Director

Dear Individuals, Families, and AHRC Suffolk Team Members:

OFFICERS

JOHN SMITH
President

JOSEPH ZIFCHOCK
Treasurer

JOSEPH CASSARINI
Secretary

DIRECTORS

Deborah Pflieger

In life, each day brings new challenges, big and small. This seems especially true during a pandemic, layered with a tropical storm. However, each day also brings remarkable successes. We celebrate each success, no matter the size, because we know the precious effort that so many have invested in that end goal. These successful moments help motivate us all to keep striving forward. All of our programs continue to see so many accomplishments, big and small, every day.

Our Adult Day Services continues to gradually and carefully grow each week, with 34 individuals returning with family consent to Westhampton Beach day program from the Shoreham ICF this week. This is such meaningful progress and a true testament of resiliency. As we continue to welcome individuals back to programs, we have been offering tours of our sites so families can see for themselves how we have instituted COVID safety precautions. Family members are welcome to make an appointment to visit any open site, before or after program hours so as to limit interaction with individuals for everyone's health protection. For those remaining at home, our MY Choice virtual Day Hab is continuing to catch on and we have 40 people signed up and learning how to Zoom with us. If you are interested, but don't have an internet-compatible tablet, we may be able to lend you equipment to use to Zoom with us. Please contact your Day Hab location for information on a tour or for borrowing equipment.

Power was finally restored to our Saul & Elaine Seiff Educare Center on Monday evening and students and staff returned to school and remote instruction on Tuesday. Thank you and kudos to families, staff and community members who applied the pressure, worked their connections, galvanized the influencers and never allowed their stick-to-it-iveness to falter until power was restored. Due to the missed days caused by the outage, the summer session has been extended through August 20, with all days next week operating as remote instruction. The Educare Administrative team and AHRC Suffolk leadership continue speaking with families who have expressed concerns or have questions regarding the September Reopening Plan. Your voices and suggestions are being heard, and it is important to remember that the plan will be under constant review, in conjunction with new or evolving guidelines and mandates on a state level.

Many individuals living in our agency residences have been visiting their family's homes and are enjoying special time with loved ones. Residents continue to safely enjoy select community outings, including visits to a horse ranch, picnics and activities at local parks, shopping trips and getting haircuts and manicures. Creative and engaging in-home Day Hab services continue to be provided daily to all residents. Our Direct Support Professionals and House Managers continue doing a remarkable job of keeping residents and fellow staff safe and ensuring that all are following necessary health protocols. Residents and staff continue working together to explore safe ways to be engaged in their communities and to find activities and adventures to share together.

Even on my very first day here last August, I was in awe of the strength of the AHRC Suffolk family as a whole. It has been a remarkable year. We have seen many challenges, yes. We have also seen many, many successes. Great things can and will continue to be accomplished when we continue working together.
#InItTogether

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

Paul H. Torres
Executive Director



Are you a member of AHRC Suffolk? An active, strong membership provides our chapter with a louder voice to our elected officials when advocating for policies and services that directly impact and benefit individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Become a member **HERE**.

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)