



### • RAISING THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR SURVIVORS OF BRAIN INJURY •

"Today was my last day of the internship at Supportive Living. Thank you so much for this opportunity. It was one of the best experiences of my life. I learned so much and enjoyed working with everyone, both interns and residents. I will definitely be coming to visit over the school year. Thank you for giving me a summer I will never forget." Divya G. Supportive Living Intern '17



Front Row: Isaac Elder, Audrey Ellis, Ethan Sweeting, Rachael Zipper. Second Row: Serena Marecki, Sharla Keough, David Brodsky. Third Row: Sara Chojnacki, Rachel Korkodilos. Fourth Row: Lenka Serdar, Caroline Beck, Divya Ganesan. Top Row: Ryan Chinn.

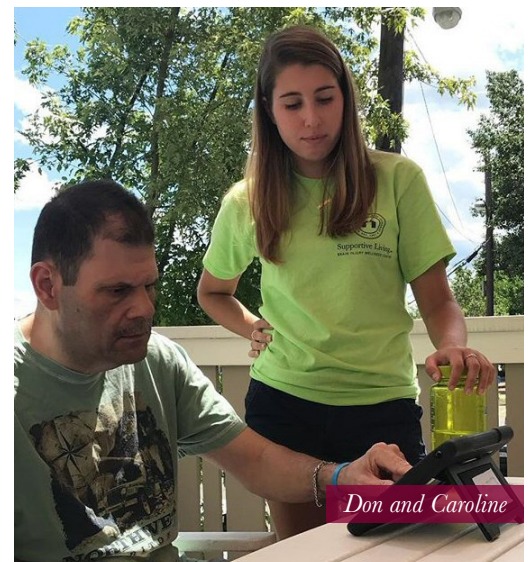
## Summer Camp 2017

Supportive Living has been fortunate (again) to have an outstanding group of college interns assisting with the multiple activities in our Summer Camp program. This summer we hosted 12 students, and from the first day they brought an energetic and infectious spirit. These students, who spend at least 30 hours a week with us, come eager to learn about brain injury. In addition to their hands-on activity, each student's internship requires work on one of four project teams focused on different topics. They have written about their projects and their own stories in the following pages.

## Summer Camp *Personal Stories*

### CAROLINE BECK | UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA

At first, I was nervous to be around people who, to me, were different, and I think this is how many people react to individuals with brain injury. In my internship I learned that a brain injury can eventually become just one part of who a person is, rather than defining a person. I've now met with many people who have taken their injury and incorporated it into their identity instead of letting it define them. I've grown to respect them and the accomplishments they are making each day just by getting up and coming to the wellness center and group activities. I'm closest with Don because I do fitness with him and I also work with him on reading. He has opened up to me a lot about his past during our one-on-one time. It is so important to the residents to feel heard and cared about. Don has had a difficult past and just having someone to joke around with seems therapeutic for him. It helps him talk, laugh, and be active with people who will push him to be a little bit stronger every day. Additionally, I made an amazing friend in the process.



Don and Caroline



## Board of Directors

Our board of directors consists of concerned citizens from the community who are committed to the mission of Supportive Living. They include family members of survivors, business leaders, physicians and professionals in the field of brain injury.

Carrol Stephens | *Chairman*

Peter Noonan | *President*

Deborah Caldwell | *Clerk*

Rachael Dorr, Esq.

Darryl Fess

James J. Harris

Tim Kelliher, MD

Peter Robbins

## Summer Update

We are very proud of the students who choose an internship at Supportive Living. They come here knowing they will be working with individuals disabled by brain injury, but most come unsure of what brain injury really is. Then they learn.

Our interns are not just here for summer camp as the Supportive Living intern program runs year-round. This fall we start the "Class of 18" with 15 new interns. They are here to assist with our various health and wellness programs while witnessing first-hand what life is like living with chronic brain injury.

While the students are learning by assisting, our residents and survivors from local communities benefit. Their assistance allows everyone to participate in some healthy activity. Equally beneficial are the relationships that develop between interns and participants. These students are a key element in keeping a positive, energetic, and fun environment.

We are also fortunate to have developed relationships with a number of professors and clinicians from area colleges, universities and medical institutions working to better understand chronic brain injury. Together we have created research projects to evaluate the benefits of our physical, cognitive, and social fitness programs. This applied research has led to improved health and function in program participants.

None of this work could be accomplished without financial support from foundations, organizations and individuals. On behalf of all our residents, program participants, and interns – we thank you for your support.

- Peter J. Noonan, President

***"I look forward to seeing the interns every day. I have two of them helping me exercise today – they keep me motivated. They want me to improve, and they make it fun" – Supportive Living resident***



*Carrol Stephens, Supportive Living Founder and Isaac, a summer intern.*

## With Sympathy

This past July Marjorie McDermott, a long-time resident at Supportive Living's McLaughlin House in North Reading passed away. Prior to her brain injury in 1988 Marjorie was an accomplished singer, teacher, cook, gardener and more. Marjorie continued to tutor elementary students in reading and singing even after her injury while living at McLaughlin House. Her accomplishments were only outnumbered by the outpouring of sympathy notes from her family and friends from all over the country. Our condolences to the family and friends of Marjorie. We all miss her.



*Marjorie*



## Summer Camp *Personal Stories Cont.*

### SARA CHOJNACKI | UNION COLLEGE

As a Neuroscience major I have been learning about the brain and brain injury, but seeing firsthand how a brain injury affects a person gave me a whole new meaning to what I've been studying. It helped me see the importance of learning more and to better understand how to help. One of my takeaways from this internship is to try to get to know people more. Many of the residents at Supportive Living have incredible stories to tell, both of their lives before their injury and their stories of recovery. I've truly been inspired by many of these people and I hope to be involved in this discipline in the future.



*Sara and George painting*



*Lenka and Bobby*

### LENKA SERDAR | CORNELL UNIVERSITY

I have formed a close bond with Bobby from Douglas House, who suffered a TBI in a car accident. We like to talk about the Red Sox, food, and family. Bobby has a great sense of humor and has been improving so much since we started the fitness program. He can now walk 10 minutes without his cane using good form! These relationships are extremely important for the resident because we become friends in addition to the trainer-athlete relationship. I think it is important that the residents interact with young people who are energetic and positive. The relationship is also important for me to gain a better understanding of their injury and the personality of the resident before and after their injury.

### DAVID BRODSKY | CORNELL UNIVERSITY

I worked on the Healthy Home team project, where we sought to better understand the living environment at Warren House, and specifically the living space arrangements for residents and staff, wall color and lighting. The lower level at Warren House includes open areas for group activities as well as housing staff offices. Residents also eat most of their meals in this area. Through interviews and literature reviews we concluded that a simple change to the wall color here would be beneficial for residents and staff alike. Residents chose the color and then helped the team paint. Informal results are positive and the team hopes to conduct a follow-up survey to better test mood and cognition improvements as a result.



*Ben and David*

## DIVYA GANESAN | BRANDEIS UNIVERSITY

I usually do fitness with Lisa, so during our time together not only is she moving around and working on her physical fitness, she also has someone to talk with and tell stories. Lisa loves talking to people, especially new people because she has so many stories to tell. But the relationship has been important to me too because I get satisfaction from helping Lisa with her fitness. She has started walking faster, and with assistance, can now walk without her walker, which she found difficult when we started working together.



*Divya and Judy*

## SHARLA KEOUGH | BOSTON UNIVERSITY

I was terrified to work with people with brain injury because I had no idea of what to expect. I was afraid of accidentally hurting someone in the wellness center or not being able to understand someone. I am so thankful for this internship which completely changed my expectations. As a future pediatric nurse practitioner, I will take what I have learned at Supportive Living into my career. I now have an interest in working with people with disabilities, and I would like to continue to spread awareness about the accomplishments of people with disabilities.



*Teri and Sharla*



*Rachael and Ben*

## RACHAEL ZIPPER | BOSTON UNIVERSITY

I had a blast getting to know the residents and have learned many life lessons from them in my internship. I hope to have helped make their day or even life happier and better as well. This hands-on experience and interactions with the residents will help me with my patients in the future as a PA to a neurologist. I will also use the positive outlook on life that these residents have given me to always see the good in my life and in my future patients.

## ISAAC ELDER | VILLANOVA UNIVERSITY

I worked on the Resident Nutrition team project which implemented the recommendations from a nutrition needs assessment conducted at Supportive Living residences in 2016. This included creating and implementing in stages a pilot menu to ease residents into the new meals, as well as preparing meals during healthy cooking classes. These Friday morning cooking classes included residents in the preparation of their healthy meals and it excited them to eat what they had created together.



*Isaac and the Friday cooking class*



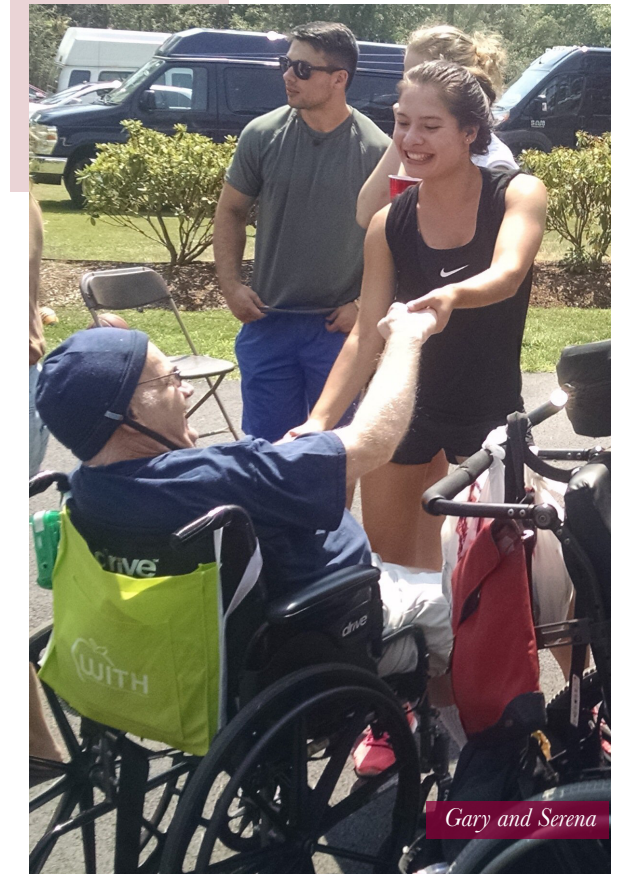


## RACHEL KORKODILOS | WELLESLEY COLLEGE

I'm interested in working in the public health sector eventually and my internship at Supportive Living showed me that there is a great need for improvements in access to and the quality of long-term care. I hope that when I go into public health I can carry these lessons and apply them to those who really need the help.

## SERENA MARECKI | COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

I worked in the Fitness for All project team which wanted to better understand the specific physical fitness needs of participants in the Supportive Living physical fitness programs and to explore alternative community-based facilities and services that could help to extend the benefits of physical fitness to more individuals with brain injury. We observed the specific exercise regimens, participation and barriers to participating in a facility-based fitness program for a selection of individuals. Then we visited several local community-based physical fitness centers to assess their willingness and readiness to facilitate a brain-injured population. We drew cautiously optimistic conclusions: that there are some options for people to transition from Supportive Living Fitness Programs and enter into local community programs. We received a positive response from the facilities we visited and all but one expressed enthusiasm for starting or expanding programs for individuals with brain injury. But there are still a number of obstacles to this approach, including transportation, cost of participation, adaptive equipment and experienced trainers.



## AUDREY ELLIS | WELLESLEY COLLEGE

The biggest thing I have learned about brain injury this summer is that no matter how much an injury may change someone's attention, patience, or attitude there is always a way to connect to another person's humanity. Having a friendship with someone with brain injury feels no different than friendships I have at school: there are shared interests, moments of happiness, some moments of tension or disagreement, but mostly lots of joking around. Before Supportive Living I understood how brain injury could cognitively change someone and how physical injury could carry into the rest of someone's life. What I didn't understand was how it is possible, with only a small amount of effort on my part, that genuine friendships could be made with people who have lived such a different life than I have.



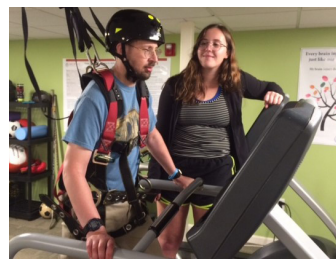
## ETHAN SWEETING | BOSTON UNIVERSITY

I worked with the Brain Injury Awareness team project that took on the task of raising awareness of brain injury and Supportive Living programs. We're happy to report that Supportive Living now has an active Instagram presence. But the bulk of our work was in producing a promotional video to convey the importance of interns and private donations to Supportive Living. Hopefully, our video will help to spread the message about Supportive Living and all the great work done here. During our interviews we learned a lot about the people involved with this organization, especially the interns. Their empathy, patience, and compassion help residents who benefit hugely from their one-on-one interactions.



## *Colleges and Universities* that Supportive Living interns have attended include:

Brandeis University  
Bates College  
Bay Path University  
Bowdoin College  
Boston University  
Columbia University  
Cornell University  
Franklin Pierce College  
Gordon College  
University of MA Lowell  
University of MA Boston  
MCPHS University  
Merrimack College  
Northeastern University  
Regis College  
St. Michael's College  
Salem State University  
Union College  
University of Virginia  
Villanova University  
Wellesley College  
Wheaton College  
Williams College





# Residential Program *Update*



*Music teacher and students*

Each Supportive Living residence was host to at least one of the many summer programs. **Warren House** (Woburn) was home to the "Supportive Living Singers," where participants spent the summer creating a song telling their own story, and then performed them together at the end of the program. The "singers" were very proud of what they accomplished – as were their teacher, friends and families.

**Old Farm Rockport** hosted a Drum Circle, where a group gathers in a circle, each with a different drum or another percussion instrument. A facilitator guides the group to discover the rhythm that's already within them. Old Farm Rockport hosted these weekly drum circles for different groups of survivors from various Supportive Living residences. After a good session, everyone enjoyed a picnic lunch in the gardens, and then off to their next activity. Old Farm Rockport also hosted the annual Supportive Living Cookout and Concert. The band was GREAT!



*KJ enjoys a radish*

The Horticulture program has grown from a single garden in Rockport in 2015 to multiple gardens at each residence, and many residents were involved this year. One part of the program has residents growing their own vegetables, harvesting them, preparing them and including them in healthy recipes. As you can see – KJ is enjoying his fresh radish.

**McLaughlin House** (North Reading) was home to the cognition and arts programs. Creativity was the theme there and painting became the top activity. One of their recent projects was to paint rocks with inspirational sayings and pictures. The rocks were then distributed along a nature path at Old Farm Rockport.

**Douglas House** (Lexington) plays a very important role as the home-base for interns. The interns gather each morning at **Supportive Living's Health and Wellness Center** located at Douglas House and then head off to the location of their daily assignment. Douglas House also hosted nutrition, cooking and cognition programs. Over the summer a multi-week menu was created as part of one of the intern's projects and every Friday new meals were prepared and tested. Healthy eating is now part of the daily routine.



*Douglas House residents sailing*



*Painting at McLaughlin House*



## Philanthropy *Update*

Supportive Living's intern program – along with all of our health and wellness programs would not be possible without the ongoing financial support from individuals, organizations, and foundations. This year's Supportive Living Brain Injury Health, Wellness and Research Program Sponsors include:

<b>Platinum</b>	\$25,000	Virginia Wellington Cabot Foundation
<b>Gold</b>	\$10,000	Advocates
<b>Silver</b>	\$5,000	Boston Evening Clinic Catholic Health Foundation Dana Home Foundation and the Community Endowment of Lexington

One of the activities made possible by the Doug Stephens Memorial Golf Tournament is the annual Red Sox outing. Despite the prediction of rain, over 60 residents and staff attended. Covered seating at Fenway kept everyone dry while they enjoyed their favorite ball park foods, and waited for the rain to stop. The game was postponed but the rain didn't dampen spirits and a few weeks later many residents and staff ventured out for the rescheduled game. Attendees had fun both nights.



*Golf Tournament first flight*



*Residents enjoy Red Sox*



*Golf Tournament second flight*



*Carrol Stephens, Darryl Fess, John Brennan, Jennifer Orlando, Margo Casey, Bob Gillis - President Cape Ann Savings, and Peter Noonan*

◀ **Old Farm Rockport** hosted another festive cookout and concert on a perfect August day. Over 100 people enjoyed good food, fun and music. Special thanks to Cape Ann Savings Bank for sponsoring the event and to Rockport Music's Education and Outreach program for providing our favorite band, Ten Tumbao!

## Health and Laughter: *An evening with Loretta LaRoche*

Loretta LaRoche will join us for our annual fall fundraising event. Ms. LaRoche has been helping people deal with stress for over 30 years using her wit, humor and common-sense view of life. Join us for an evening of cocktails, dinner, fun and laughter, while supporting the mission of Supportive Living. For more information call 781-937-3911, email us at [info@supportivelivinginc.org](mailto:info@supportivelivinginc.org), or visit our website [www.supportivelivinginc.org](http://www.supportivelivinginc.org).

► *October 20, 2017*

Four Points by Sheraton  
1 Audubon Road, Wakefield, MA  
Reception 6:00pm, Dinner 7:00pm,  
Performance 8:00pm