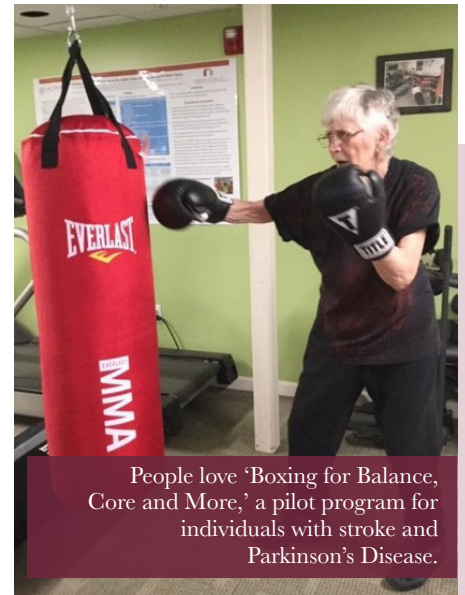


## RESEARCH ISSUE

### Research - the Foundation of SLI's Successful Wellness Program

SLI's Wellness Program began in 2013 as a small exercise research project with 8 participants – all residents from SLI homes. The aim of the research was to evaluate the impact of an intensive 6-week exercise program. The study results showed many benefits including improved strength and balance. From that research project grew today's Adaptive Exercise class - with over 60 active participants. In addition to exercise, the SLI Neuro Wellness Program now offers many classes for the brain injury community, including: Expressive Art, Boxing for Balance, Group Cognition, Interactive Drumming, Healthy Cooking, Horticulture, Music Appreciation, Yoga, and more. These classes have been developed to help maintain and improve the health and well-being of participants and, just as in our very first research project, we continually evaluate and modify each class to ensure the optimum benefit to participants.



People love 'Boxing for Balance, Core and More,' a pilot program for individuals with stroke and Parkinson's Disease.

### SLI and Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital Collaborate on Stroke Study



Beatriz and Intern Grace pushing ahead

Supportive Living, Inc. (SLI) and Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital are conducting a study on the effect exercise has on reducing cognitive decline for individuals who have suffered a stroke. The study is a continuation of SLI's research into the benefits of exercise and other interventions to help improve life for survivors of brain injury. SLI's role in the stroke study includes recruiting and overseeing participants between the ages of 45 and 75 who will attend a 12-week aerobic exercise class held at the SLI Neuro Wellness Center in Lexington. SLI interns provide one-on-one support to the participants. Study participants contribute critical research data and personally benefit from the opportunity to increase their stamina and strength in a positive social environment.

Beatriz, a 68 year old longtime Lexington resident, was eager to participate in the study. Beatriz suffered a stroke in 2004 and has been coming to the Wellness Center for the past two years. It is an important part of Beatriz's weekly routine. Beatriz's husband, Robert, explains that being in the Wellness

Center is a fun social experience for her. SLI interns provide encouragement which motivates Beatriz to work hard. Her favorite activity is the stationary bike, which is a key piece of equipment in the study. Robert adds – "being in the Center with other participants helps Beatriz feel less alone facing life post-stroke."

## Supportive Living, Inc. Board of Directors

*Our board of directors includes family members of survivors, business and community leaders, physicians, and professionals in the field of brain injury.*

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## March Update: Research and Recognition

March is **Brain Injury Awareness Month**, and we have chosen **brain injury rehabilitation research** as our awareness initiative. Research on the benefits of lifelong health and wellness programs has been the focus at SLI since 2011. This would not have been possible without the leadership of Dr. Laura Lorenz, SLI's first Research Director.

In 2011, the SLI Research Council was formed by four professionals, including Laura, who were interested in studying the benefits of long-term physical, cognitive, and social therapy for people affected by brain injury. The Council founders were united in the belief that survivors of brain injury can continue improving function if they have access to on-going rehabilitation.

The Council grew to 12 people who have, collectively, completed over 20 studies – many of which have been published or are under peer review. The Council has made, at latest count, 18 presentations at regional and national conferences. For eight years Laura, while conducting multiple research studies of her own, also coordinated the Research Council's activities. Laura took on a demanding new role in academia in 2017, yet still has her hand in on-going SLI studies.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, we honor and thank Laura for her tremendous efforts.

Carrol E. Stephens  
Founder, Board Chair

Peter J. Noonan  
President

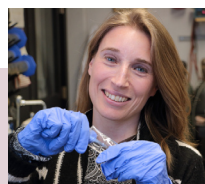


## A Message from the Board of Directors

### *Rachael, thank you for over 25 years*

2018 marked Rachael Dorr's final year as a member of the SLI Board of Directors. Rachael, a real estate attorney with expertise in affordable housing, joined the founding board to help create an affordable housing model which included proper long-term care services for survivors of brain injury. Rachael's long list of accomplishments to the organization are at the heart of our longevity and success. Rachael's gifts of time and financial support helped establish the solid foundation we have today. On behalf of the SLI Board of Directors, we thank Rachael for decades of significant service and generosity.

## Welcome Krystyn



Please join the Board of Directors in welcoming our newest member, MIT Professor, Lexington resident and traumatic brain injury survivor, Krystyn Van Vliet. Krystyn is a Professor of Materials Science and Engineering and Biological Engineering at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. SLI first came to Krystyn's attention through an article in a local newspaper. She was intrigued to learn about an organization focused on brain injury, with a residence and Wellness Center in her home community. After touring Douglas House and the Wellness Center, and learning more about SLI, Krystyn was moved to join the board in January.



## Residents and Research

Many residents from SLI's residential facilities (Warren House, McLaughlin House, Douglas House, Old Farm Rockport) participate in research studies and benefit from the experience. This is a win-win situation: Participants often see improved health and wellness outcomes, researchers have access to willing subjects. The studies have been varied, but the participant pool has been the same - adults with chronic moderate-to-severe brain injury. Below are examples of several studies:

- Investigate the effects of high-intensity exercise on endurance, mobility and gait speed
- Explore feasibility and effect of participation in a computerized cognitive exercise program
- Identify outcomes, supports, and barriers related to intensive exercise participation
- Evaluate the cognitive and related outcomes from participation in structured group activities
- Investigate nutrition related health issues and nutritional needs



## Capital Campaign & Wellness Center Update

Construction is well underway for the new SLI Neuro Wellness Center in Lexington and we anticipate a completion date in June. This new center will provide additional space for SLI wellness programming – as well as space for SLI's Research Council and research interns to meet and work. As we enter the home stretch of our Capital Campaign, we are incredibly grateful for the support of our donors and community! SLI donor and Douglas House neighbor, Rachel Van Emon shares her reasons for supporting SLI:

*"Douglas House and its residents are our neighbors. While there are many needs in the world to support, we feel strongly about giving locally to help our community right here at home. After a recent tour of Douglas House and the SLI Wellness Center, my husband, Curt, and I were moved by the tremendous care for residents, the expanding day programs for others, and the critical research that will continue to help people with brain injury."*

With anticipated grants and community initiatives, we are now just \$100K away from our goal. We hope you will join us for the ribbon cutting ceremony this summer.



## WANTED: Research Participants

Over the past 10 to 20 years research has proven that people living with chronic brain injury can improve functionality, once thought lost forever, with on-going therapies. However, we must build our case – we need more proof – to change policies that will provide these beneficial long-term services.

► To learn more about the important role you can play in research, please contact us at [info@supportivelivinginc.org](mailto:info@supportivelivinginc.org), or call 781-274-8711

## Old Farm Rockport *Celebrating 5 years*

Join us this summer, when Old Farm Rockport is in full bloom. Highlights include:

### **June 10 / Summer Camp -**

Offering Adaptive Exercise, Expressive Arts, Horticulture Therapy, Interactive Music.

### **July 26, 27 / Annual Garden Tour -**

The Rockport Garden Club has selected Old Farm as a site on their 2019 Tour. The gardens will be open to the public, so please come and enjoy!

### **August 6 / Annual Cookout & Concert -**

Tours of Halibut Point State Park, and more.



## **Yes, it's time to think golf!**

Please join us on June 24th

27th Annual Supportive Living, Inc.

## *Douglas Stephens Memorial* Golf Tournament

Andover Country Club

60 Canterbury Street | Andover, MA 01810

Registration is available online or  
by calling 781-937-3199

781-937-3199 | [www.supportivelivinginc.org](http://www.supportivelivinginc.org)

Supportive Living, Inc. is a non-profit organization with a mission to raise the quality of life for survivors of brain injury.



Supportive Living, INC.  
400 W. Cummings Park, Suite 6100  
Woburn, MA 01801  
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