



## DePaul Gives Back

The outpouring of support and acts of service which DePaul has received throughout the years is truly heartwarming and impactful. Because of this generosity and kindness, our residents, clients, tenants and staff recognize that giving is a two-way street! Here are some of the ways DePaul has been paying it forward in recent months.



Seniors from Glenwell in Cheektowaga celebrated National Pet Day by baking dog biscuits for Standing Together Animal Rescue Service to comfort dogs waiting for their forever home. Pictured rolling out dough is Ron Janicki and pictured with homemade treats is Laura Whitred.



April 30th was National Adopt a Shelter Pet Day. Residents from the Knitting Mill Apartments in Perry brought a collection of donations for New Start Kitty Shelter in Castile and Wyoming County Animal Shelter. Pictured visiting a dog that was up for adoption is Ryan D.



Residents at La Rosa Villas in LeRoy created over 20 no-sew blankets for cats and dogs at the Genesee County Animal Shelter. Pictured tying off the fleece blankets are Penny Mensinger and Kim Maldonado.



Heritage Manor of Lockport raised \$455 and donated a variety of dog and cat food to Diamonds in the Ruff Animal Rescue with community support. The senior community also recently hosted a food drive with donations going to the Resource Council of WNY, Inc.



DePaul Properties, Inc. staff and Xerox's Tribo team of engineers helped clean up the Remember Garden in Highland Park in Rochester this May! Volunteers pulled weeds, spread mulch and spruced up the garden in time for the Rochester Lilac Festival.

Residents from Halstead Square in Rochester participated in the 17th Annual Canal Clean Sweep hosted by NYS Canal Corporation and Parks and Trails New York in honor of Earth Day. Victoria Proulx joined with volunteers across the state to preserve the environment and maintain the 400-mile Canalway Trail system and 524-mile Canal system.



**These activities and many more help DePaul residents, clients, tenants and staff foster a sense of purpose and connection while also giving back to a worthy cause!**

# Doing the Next Right Thing

Connecting with *Forgotten Ones*:

On Facebook @1stForgottenOne

On Instagram @f0rg0ttenOne

On Twitter @1stForgottenOne



**M**ike VanSlyke has lived with active addiction from the time he was ten years old until less than a year ago at 39 years old.

"I've done big things, stupid things, painful things, awful things, some good things, all kinds of things," he said.

Now 40, he's been sober since moving into the Batavia Apartment Treatment Program last August. Mike said he's been choosing to "do the next right thing."

"I've been horrible at taking my own advice my whole life," he said. "I think I'm smarter than my own advice. That's where I'm at now. I finally decided to [take my own advice] instead of telling other people how to live."

On April 7, 2022, Mike launched a peer-support network for those struggling with addiction, mental health, and/or coping with daily life called *Forgotten Ones* on Facebook, and now also on Instagram and Twitter. The Facebook page has 1,300 followers and growing!

Through *Forgotten Ones*, Mike is dedicating his time to being a 'Friend, Guide, Advocate,' as his contact card reads. He regularly posts positive, encouraging memes, shares his own story, and invites others to post their clean dates, doing his best to acknowledge milestones big and small.

"We'll always be there when you need us," reads the description on the *Forgotten Ones* Facebook page. "You matter!"

In addition, Mike has a phone number specifically for *Forgotten Ones* which people can call in crisis at any time of day. The hours on the Facebook page are listed as "always open." He may have just made dinner, but if he gets a call, message or email from someone in need of support, dinner waits.

"That one second could save somebody's life," he said.

Mike reassures those who reach out to *Forgotten Ones* for support that everything remains confidential.

"I don't ask them for anything except how old are you and what can I do to help you? For you to be happy, what does life have to look like? That's where it starts. We go from there."

There is only one requirement to those who call.

"You need to be willing to do things to get better," he said. "I won't spin my wheels. If you come to me and want help, I'll help, but if you're not willing, I can't do anything."

He envisions building a team of



volunteers in the future to better be able to serve those who seek support. Mike feels that people who seek out his help can relate to him because of his own personal struggles with addiction and mental health.

***"There are very few things in this world I haven't done or I haven't been through."***

Now Mike is rebuilding with the help, encouragement and motivation of friends, family and counselors like Lisa Glow, a Program Director at Horizon Health Services.

"When I think about the growth that he's made over the past ten years, he's finally at a place where he wants this for him, not because somebody else is telling him to get sober or stabilize his mental health," said Lisa. "He's finally taken everything he's learned, even when he hasn't wanted to hear it, and acted on it. He's finally really doing the work."

Lisa helped Mike find DePaul and the Batavia Apartment Treatment Program.

"They added stability and structure that he needed in order to get through the early part of his recovery," she said of the staff at the Batavia Apartments.

After moving in last August, he spent the first few days soaking in the feeling of being home and feeling safe in his own apartment.

"I can be alone in my apartment all the time, but there's always someone here," he said. "I'm the type of guy, I don't ask for a lot of help but if I know someone is in the

office, I'll find a reason to come out and talk."

Residential Supervisor Brianna Majors said Mike's passion and drive to have a positive impact on the lives of others and in the world has been an inspiration to not only his peers, but staff as well.

"Everyone's journey in life is a unique one," she said. "Life can take all of us through so many different twists and turns and can place unexpected obstacles in front of you. The direction that you choose to take with the cards you are dealt is where you learn the most valuable life lessons."

Within a few weeks of moving into the Batavia Apartment Treatment Program, Mike was diagnosed with lymphedema, a condition caused by a blockage of the lymphatic system which causes swelling in both of his legs. He finds it ironic that now that he has the motivation, drive and purpose to change his life around, he's got physical limitations preventing him from moving forward.

"I might not be alright from the waist down, but from the neck up, I'm the best I've ever been," he said. "That says a lot. Everything happens for a reason," he said.

Instead of getting mad about something he cannot change, he decided to take a friend's advice and turn a negative into a positive. That same friend is the one who sent him a computer, which allowed him to start *Forgotten Ones*.

"It's all motivation, everything, the good, the bad," he said. "I feel like the people who are in my life have deserved better from me ...I've never given them what they deserve."

And the next right move for Mike is to make it all count for something.

"This is going to be my life's work," he said.

# Walking for Mental Health

In honor of Mental Health Awareness Month celebrated in May, DePaul residents, tenants, clients and staff found a variety of ways to help end the stigma and raise money and awareness in support of individuals with a mental health diagnosis.



Residents and staff from DePaul's Recreation Program, the Carriage Factory Apartments, Elmgrove and the Neighborhood of the Arts (NOTA) Apartments participated in the National Alliance for Mental Illness (NAMI) Rochester's 10th Annual Gary Stern Memorial Walk for Mental Health on May 21, collectively raising over \$1,500! Pictured at the walk are Heather M. of the Carriage Factory Apartments, Justin Maldonado of Elmgrove and Mike of the NOTA Apartments.

Residents at DePaul's NOTA Apartments contributed to the cause by raising over \$100 toward the walk with a pie throwing contest! Pictured above, lower right, NOTA Medication Coordinator Sara Calderon is a good sport for a good cause!

# Mission In Action

From residential mental health programming to affordable, supportive housing, there's no shortage of examples of how DePaul's mission is being carried out each and every day in the lives of the many individuals who are building independence and thriving across New York State.



Cindy K. of La Rosa Villas in LeRoy slices green peppers for Philly Cheesesteaks after reaching Philadelphia in a "Walk Across America" activity! After setting a monthly goal location, residents track their daily steps and combine the total to "reach" each destination, concluding by sampling regional food.



The Knitting Mill Apartments in Perry have been hosting 'Meet the Artist' events featuring talent by residents. Pictured above is John and his *Cosmic Bodies* exhibit.

Residents of McKinley Square in Buffalo recently paid a visit to the Padre Pio statue at St. Margaret Parish! Pictured below, from left to right, are Residential Services Coordinator Giovanna Crawford, whose uncle in Italy made the monument, and residents Robert S. and Kim E.



Anita S. of the Packet Boat Landing Apartments in Lockport creates an edible arrangement using a variety of delicious fruits.



## DePaul Staff Make a Difference!

I love making clients smile and providing a community. We offer kindness, safety and inclusivity when it's needed most.



## DePaul Staff Make a Difference!

After personally overcoming some mental health challenges, what a gift it is to be able to support others who are on this same journey of building a better life for themselves!



# Why Choose Human Services?

DePaul recently recognized our staff for their dedication to working at a human services organization! Staff shared why they chose a career in human services and why they love working at DePaul. These and more inspiring responses can be found on DePaul's Facebook page. Consider joining our amazing team!



## DePaul Staff Make a Difference!

I've enjoyed working with a variety of individuals that, despite challenges, are striving to be their best selves.



## DePaul Staff Make a Difference!

Being able to work for DePaul, an organization that truly cares for staff and residents, is a rare and wonderful experience.



# Legalization of Marijuana and Implications for Health

National Council on Alcoholism and  
Drug Dependence - Rochester Area



## Just the facts, know the risks...

### Legal does not equal safe. Marijuana is an addictive drug.

Marijuana is only legal in  
NYS for those 21 and older.

- Did you know that THC (a psychoactive ingredient in marijuana) is infused in a wide variety of enticing edible treats?
- Edibles infused with THC are not only tempting to children but are often indistinguishable from actual food products!
- With increased access to a wide variety of edibles, there has been a corresponding rise in pediatric poisonings. Effects may include drowsiness/lethargy, loss of muscle coordination, agitation/irritability and confusion. More critical effects (especially for children under 3) may include coma, respiratory depression, single/multiple seizures.
- The effects of edibles take much longer to be felt, often 30-60 minutes. This delayed response may often lead to ingesting more in order to feel the expected effect.
- Parents, look for items that mimic actual food products, check labeling for the presence of THC. In case of accidental ingestion of THC edibles, call the NYS Poison Control Hotline at 1-800-222-1222.



[ncadd-ra.org](http://ncadd-ra.org)  
[www.facebook.com/NCADDRA/](https://www.facebook.com/NCADDRA/)

New York State enacted the Marijuana Regulation and Taxation Act (MRTA) at the end of March 2021, legalizing and regulating the use and possession of cannabis for adults ages 21 and older and paving the way for an influx of marijuana dispensaries and marijuana lounges throughout New York State. While this is being promoted as an opportunity for new businesses, it's important to recognize the potential risks and impact on our communities, families and youth.

### Despite legalization or medicalization, marijuana remains an addictive drug!

- Alcohol, nicotine (in the form of vaping) and marijuana are the top three drugs that most significantly place young people at risk. Marijuana is often the first drug teens try, but it is not the last!
- Data has shown that as the perception of risk of marijuana has declined, marijuana use has increased. Legalization has increased access and further decreased the perception of risk.
- The use of marijuana during pregnancy is an additional cause for concern. A growing number of women are being ill-advised to treat their morning sickness with marijuana. Marijuana use during pregnancy poses serious risks to the unborn child.
- Driving while intoxicated from marijuana is illegal. It is also illegal for any passengers in the vehicle to be using cannabis. Impaired or drugged driving jeopardizes the safety of all who travel on NYS roads and highways.

For more information on the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence - Rochester Area (NCADD-RA), a wide range of resources for parents and teachers, or to request a presentation on this and related topics, visit the NCADD-RA's website at [ncadd-ra.org](http://ncadd-ra.org) or contact Jennifer Faringer at [jfaringer@depaul.org](mailto:jfaringer@depaul.org) or call (585) 719-3480. The NCADD-RA is also on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/NCADDRA](https://www.facebook.com/NCADDRA).

# On a Roll with Recreation!

DePaul's Recreation Department in Rochester has been hosting creative, inventive and engaging experiences virtually, and more recently, with in-person activities in the community. A holistic treatment approach that emphasizes well-being, the Recreation program provides a wide-range of services including crafts, games, outings, seasonal sports, team experiences and more.

Here are some highlights from the past few months with Recreation!

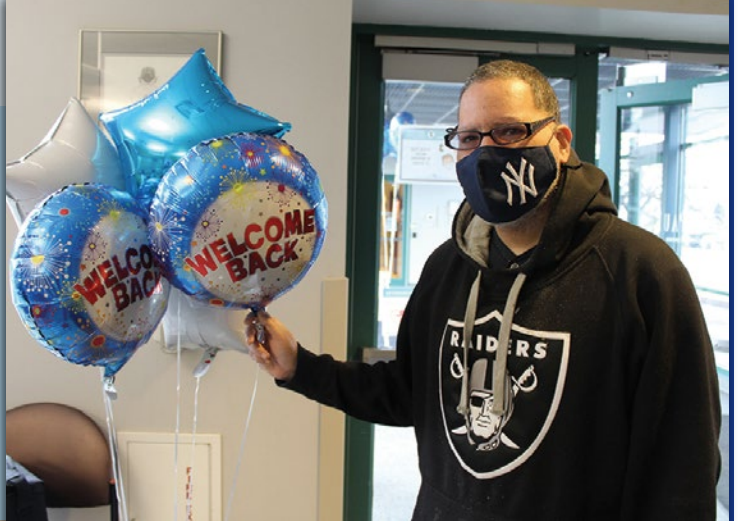


Mike H. of Ridgeview Commons entertained during a recent Day Program, playing songs by Guns N' Roses and Poison on his guitar.



Brandon H. of Elmgrove poses for a photo with the Easter Bunny during Recreation's Spring celebration.

Bridges for Brain Injury, Inc. Wildlife Rockstars visited DePaul's Recreation Department with their Superheroes animal program. A volunteer is seen here with a Eurasian Eagle Owl.



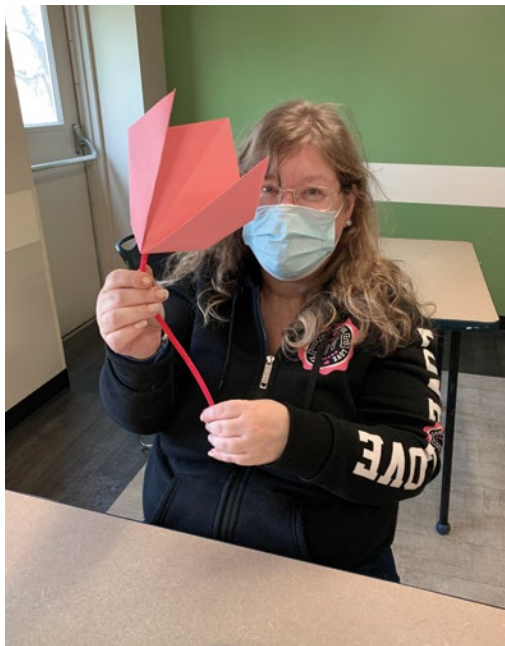
Louis Welch of the Carriage Factory Apartments celebrates the reopening of DePaul's Recreation Department Day Program!



Heather M. of the Carriage Factory Apartments snaps a selfie with 'The Moose' during an outing to a Rochester Americans hockey game.



William G. of Parkside poses for a photo with Mittsy the mascot while cheering on the home team at the Rochester Red Wings' opening game.



## DePaul Diversity News

May honored the historical and cultural contributions of individuals of Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) descent in the United States. DePaul's Reintegration Support Team (DRST) celebrated AAPI Heritage Month learning about Asian food, including making bento boxes and Asian salad. In other groups, residents learned about origami. Pictured at McKinley Square in Buffalo with an origami tulip is Amy D. and Nicholas Cicero with a crane.

# Three Cheers for Volunteers

The third week of April was National Volunteer Week. DePaul appreciates the many contributions of time and service which brighten and enrich all of our lives! Here are just a few examples of gifts of service around our agency over the last several months.



International concert pianist Dane Noble-Rosema dazzled Westwood Commons in North Chili with his solo piano compositions! Also at Westwood Commons, school counselor Miranda Merton and students from The Norman Howard School volunteered to help residents with an Easter craft.



Matt and Nicole (not pictured) from NY Project Hope played the guitar and sang for residents at Wheatfield Commons in North Tonawanda.

Sparkle, pictured right with Joshua O., and Twinkle won hearts at Ridgeview Commons in Rochester. The two therapy dogs owned by Linda, a volunteer with RocDog, really enjoyed all the attention!



Cooking with Don, husband of Activities Director Lesley Genovese, is a popular activity at Heritage Manor of Lockport. Pictured here, Don helps residents assemble a healthy and delicious cobb salad.



## Springing into Summer

With warmer weather and sunny skies comes a renewed sense of hope and a flurry of fun across DePaul.

Janice Blumrick soaks up some sun while flexing her green thumb with some garden therapy at Heritage Manor of Lockport.



Linda Clar of Westwood Commons in North Chili completes a patriotic craft project which she painted onto a wooden board.



Carol Nesmith of the Rochester View Apartments in Henrietta shows off a festive spring pot she painted with the help of DePaul's Recreation Department.



Bonnie Martin of Woodcrest Commons in Henrietta enjoyed an outing to Powers Farm Market where residents purchased jellies and jams, cookies, pies, grapes and peanut brittle, in addition to feeding the farm animals.



Christine Pruetz helps plant wildflower seeds for a butterfly farm at Wheatfield Commons in North Tonawanda!

# Age My Way

With Older Americans Month in June and National Senior Citizens Day on August 21, seniors living at DePaul Adult Care Communities across Western New York are demonstrating what it looks like to 'Age My Way' by staying active, engaged and involved!



Glenwell residents took a trip back to the 1930s and 40s with chocolate depression cake and items such as clothing patterns displayed by Marilyn Deans.



Woodcrest Commons residents enjoyed a scenic ride which included a stop at the Sri Vidya Temple, where Brenda Casey took a stroll.



Heritage Manor of Lockport seniors including Carmella Stanley took advantage of a beautiful spring day to take a swing at mini golf.



Wheatfield Commons senior Ruth Helfinstine gets up close and personal with the aquatic life during a visit to the Aquarium of Niagara.

## Celebrating Centenarians

Congratulations to some of the many residents in DePaul's care celebrating milestones in the first half of 2022, especially those seniors who are celebrating birthdays of 100 years or more!

Pictured clockwise below, Derna Siebel turned 107 in March at Westwood Commons in North Chili, and at Wheatfield Commons in North Tonawanda, Howard Biondi turned 101 and Bertha Shipton turned 100 in June.



Westwood Commons couple Bob and Betty Reber embark on a trip to the Rochester Lilac Festival.



**DePaul Community Services, Inc.**  
 1931 Buffalo Road  
 Rochester, NY 14624  
[www.depaul.org](http://www.depaul.org)

Non-profit Org.  
 U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
 Rochester, N.Y.  
 Permit No. 1323

## Cultivating Connection

**D**ePaul staff recently hosted a welcome picnic for current residents at the Port Byron Apartments in Port Byron! DePaul has taken possession of the building and Christa Construction is mobilized on the site. Work to relocate underground utilities has begun. Once constructed, the apartments will replace the current 39-unit Church Street Apartments with a new building featuring a total of 69 affordable apartments, including 30 apartments offering on-site housing specialist support services.



# DEPAUL *Details*

Mark H. Fuller, *President*  
 Amy Cavalier, *Copywriter*

Marcia Dlutek, *Editor*  
 Crissy Welzen, *Designer*



[www.depaul.org](http://www.depaul.org)

DePaul is a not-for-profit organization that provides senior living residential services, mental health residential and support programs, addiction prevention and support services, vocational services and affordable housing. To receive *DePaul Details* electronically, please provide your name and email address to Monica Bulger at [mbulger@depaul.org](mailto:mbulger@depaul.org) in DePaul's Communications Department.

Please direct comments to the Communications Department at [communications@depaul.org](mailto:communications@depaul.org) or call (585) 426-8000.