The Journey of Friendship
Commitment to Our Mission:
Friendship Community is a Christian ministry cultivating capabilities of Individuals with Intellectual Disability and Autism.

Living Our Vision:
Impacting the World with Capabilities

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Chuck Condran, Dir. of Finance
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The Journey of Friendship is published quarterly.
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Friendship Community is a 501 (C)(3) tax exempt organization. Official registration and financial information can be obtained from the PA Department of State by calling 800.732.0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

Visit our websites for additional information:
FriendshipCommunity.net
FriendshipArt.net

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“Gratitude wakes us up to the goodness and beauty in life. But we have to choose it.” ~ Tamara Levitt

I have a dear Amish friend that said very naturally to me one day, “I am beholden to Ya, Gwen”, which I was not used to hearing. I smiled and asked her what she meant by that. I had done something nice for her and she was expressing her thankfulness or gratitude to me. I understood from her tone and body language that her gratitude was heartfelt. Gratitude is from the Latin word gratus, meaning “pleasing or thankful”.

Beholden can also mean obligated as well as grateful. I am blessed that my Amish friend and I have a caring and giving relationship as friends. We are not obligated to express kindness to one another, but we choose to do so. I believe that grace and gratitude make the difficulties in life bearable and the good things in life even sweeter.

I recently shared a meal with numerous Friendship Community Team Members at our August Anniversary Luncheon. I listened to such gifted, giving and warm-hearted people. Each expressed very serious and meaningful and wonderful life experiences that they had over the past year. It was such a delightful time that we shared together. I personally was so humbled and experienced such a deep feeling of gratitude for each Team Member and their uniqueness. As I told them how Grateful we are for each of them, I thought of how the many Team Members throughout our organization continually demonstrate such extraordinary qualities. Our Team is so blessed to serve others together and I am grateful for the respect chosen to be shown by each Team Member for each Individual, their families and other Team Members.

On behalf of our entire Friendship Community Team- We are truly Grateful for ALL of YOU who support our meaningful work, serving others each and every day.....

Gwen Schuit, CEO

Cover Art: “The Colors of Fall” by Dan Kahler
Meaningful Day Academy, an extension of Friendship Community, is an innovative and personalized program providing meaningful daytime activities for Individuals with differing abilities. Since 2014, Meaningful Day Academy is a licensed training facility which promotes community integration through volunteering, serving and establishing relationships with people who are not paid personal caregivers. In addition to not only learning new life skills and enhancing their current skill sets, Participants in this program also engage in recreational activities and enroll in continuing educational opportunities.

Recently, the federal government has required that at least 25% of the Participant's time spent within a day program must be community-based engagement. Between last minute changes in the schedule, unpredictable weather patterns and time management needs for medications, personal care, and other activities of daily living, it can be challenging to construct a successful program.

The key to success, according to Jeremy Detweiler, Program Specialist for Meaningful Day Academy, is having a unified vision. “For us, we want the Participants to get value in what they do every day. You can see there's magic here. You can see the Participants are thriving and it's because of the collaborative team work.”

Along with Jeremy, that team includes Crystal Freund, Program Coordinator, Claudia Palacio, Community Ambassador and a number of full- and part-time Direct Support Professionals serving 34 Individuals. "We have a really fun time here," Crystal states. “I love hearing the jokes or the one liners from out in the hallways. It makes my day." Claudia agrees. “You can hear the enthusiasm in everyone's voices when they arrive in the morning and greet each other. They're all happy to be part of each other's lives."

A true testament of this team and their willingness to impact the Participants' lives can be seen in the numbers for community involvement. While the regulation is for 25% community participation, Meaningful Day Academy is able to currently boast over 45% community participation! That's an increase of over 20% from last year at this time!

Success stories abound for Meaningful Day Academy Participants. One individual, prior to Meaningful Day Academy, refused to go out into the community and isolated herself in her room. After learning of her likes and interests, she was presented with an offer to help prepare and deliver meals for Meals on Wheels. She found her purpose and is now flourishing in her new routine! Two different individuals were offered jobs within the past two months, based on their exemplary volunteering experiences. At a local YMCA, a team of three individuals are constant figures at the front desk. YMCA members see them routinely and have formed bonds over time.

We are always looking to build more relationships with new organizations and create more success stories for the Participants. If you're ready to help us Impact the World with Capabilities, please contact Claudia at (717) 656-2466, ext. 1128 or mdanetworking@friendshipcommunity.net for more information!
T A K E  M E  O U T  T O  T H E  B A L L  G A M E!

V O L U N T E E R  A P P R E C I A T I O N  N I G H T
A T  T H E  L A N C A S T E R  B A R N S T O M E R S

On Tuesday, June 4, 2019, volunteers of Friendship Community descended on Clipper Magazine Stadium, Lancaster, to enjoy a barbeque buffet and a ballgame.

Thank You to all of our Volunteers - for giving your time, your energy, your resources and your love to help “Impact the World with Capabilities”!
-Phil Horning, Volunteer Coordinator
Interested in becoming a volunteer? Belong to a civic group looking to make a difference in your community? Have a talent you want to share? We welcome your support and have numerous opportunities available! Contact Phil Horning at (717) 656-2466, ext. 1165 or phorning@friendshipcommunity.net for details!

Josh Doughty warming up for the first pitch.

STRIKE!

Lynn Allison, Friendship Heart Gallery Volunteer of the Year

Lynn started volunteering at the Friendship Heart Gallery in 2015 after she learned about it through friends whose son is served by Friendship Community. The Heart Artists get so excited whenever they see her. Lynn’s consistency and enthusiasm have been a huge blessing to both the Heart Artists and the Team at the Gallery and Studio.

Laurie Nejmeh, Friendship Community Volunteer of the Year

Laurie has a deep interest in supporting the Individuals and Team Members of Friendship Community. She has been an advocate for her daughter, Mary, as well as other Individuals and families who have been affected by disability. Laurie began serving on the Family Support Fellowship Executive Committee in 2011. In 2014, Laurie graciously stepped into the role of Chair. Laurie and her husband, Brian, were champions of the visioning team in the formation of the Meaningful Day Academy.

Red Run Mennonite Church, Denver, Friendship Community Church of the Year

This small but faithful church has given financially for over 20 years and has invited the Friendship Community Worship Team each year for the past 12 years.
Where There’s a Will, There’s a Way . . .

Do you know that you can make a generous gesture today that will impact tomorrow? It’s easy to create a lasting legacy that can accomplish your goals, take care of loved ones, and support the missions of your favorite charities, like Friendship Community. Making a provision in your Will enables you to make a difference in the lives of the Individuals we serve.

A bequest:
- Is a simple process
- Will not alter your current lifestyle in any way
- Can be easily modified to address your changing needs

To include Friendship Community in your Will or Trust, consider this sample bequest language . . .

“I give and devise to Friendship Community, (Tax ID #23-1892383) located in Lititz, PA, all (or state a percentage) of the rest, residue, and remainder of my estate, both real and personal, to be used for its general support (or for the support of a specific fund or program).”

More information can be obtained by calling me at 717-656-2466 ext. 1104 or by email at lspagnolo@friendshipcommunity.net.

Thank you for thinking of us,
Laurel Spagnolo
Director of Advancement

We Appreciate Our Direct Support Professionals

Accomplishments of Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) on behalf of the Individuals we support are at the heart of Friendship Community. Every day, DSPs share abundant love along with required skills related to direct care supports with the Individuals in their care to assist them to experience the most meaningful lives possible.

Individuals often express to others that they feel supported by the Team Members working with them and refer to them as being part of their ‘family’. Imagine the trust that an Individual must have in a person caring for their most intimate needs. Fulfilling the role of that trustworthy person for our Individuals is not only a responsibility, but it is a gift that our DSPs receive. At Friendship Community, it is truly evident that our DSPs are dedicated and compassionate, with a true desire to see Individuals with Intellectual Disability and/or Autism succeed.

We wish to express our sincere appreciation to all Direct Support Professionals, as we are blessed with a phenomenally talented Team! We are looking forward to celebrating National Direct Support Professionals Week during the week of September 9th!
Friendship Community Needs Your Help!

Oscar Wilde was quoted as saying, “And all at once, summer collapsed into fall.” As we say farewell to summer and welcome the majesty of fall, we turn our thoughts to making improvements before winter arrives. At Friendship Community, we have taken an inventory of furniture needs at each of our 26 residential homes. It’s time to go out with the old and in with the new.

The Individuals we serve with Intellectual Disability and Autism require and depend on durable, comfortable, safe and stain-resistant furniture. We are challenged with many needs at this time. Below is a sample list of what is needed now.

Will you please consider making a contribution to help fund this need?
Your support – no matter the size – will make a difference and will positively impact the care we provide on a daily basis.

New furniture will enhance the environment for the Individuals in their homes and improve the working atmosphere for Team Members. We can’t do this without you. There are many ways to give. Gifts of cash, checks or credit cards are immediate and can be made using the enclosed envelope. Planned gifts are also an option, including gifts through an IRA, charitable gift annuity, donor advised fund or a stock transaction. We’d be happy to answer your questions or describe these gift options in more detail. Just give us a call at 717-656-2466.

Thank you for your consideration!

Furniture List (by location)

*Cedar Hollow*: Dining room set (table & chairs for 6)

*Clearview*: Sofa

*Conestoga Gardens*: Sofa

*Graystone Terrace*: 4 Kitchen chairs, Small office table, 2 Office chairs, TV stand, Sofa, 2 Chairs for living room, 2 Side tables, Coffee table

*Horseshoe Road*: Sofa, 2 End tables

*Fairview*: Cubicle storage for office, 2 Office chairs, 4 Outdoor patio chairs

*Horseshoe Road*: Dining room set (table & chairs)

*Lititz*: Kitchen table, 2 Recliners, Sofa

*Manheim*: 2 Office chairs, Sofa

*Miller Drive*: Sofa

*Mondale*: Sofa, 2 Living room chairs

*St. Stephens*: 2 Office chairs, Office desk, 2 Small filing cabinets

*Summerlyn*: Kitchen table, Sofa, 2 Office chairs

*Sweetbriar*: 2 Sofas, 2 Office chairs, Dining room set (table & chairs)

*Timberline*: 3 Living room chairs, Dining room set (table & chairs), 2 Office chairs

*Valley View*: 2 Office chairs

*Westwood*: Office chair, Love seat, Sofa
Individuals and Team Members went to the Wild, Wild West during this year's picnic held on August 12, 2019 at Neffsville Mennonite Church. Individuals arrived in their best cowboy (or -girl) get-up and decorated their tables accordingly. A fun time was had by all!
OUR NEWEST COLLABORATION
FRIENDSHIP HEART GALLERY +
PRIMITIVES BY KATHY
A new collection of home decor and gifts replicated from
the original art of the Friendship Heart Gallery artists.

VISIT US AT...
Steeple View Lofts
118 North Water Street, Suite 101
Lancaster, PA 17603
717.945.6904

The Shoppes at Bloomfield Village
235 Bloomfield Drive, Suite 111
Lititz, PA 17543
717.656.2466

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2101 Oregon Pike • Suite 300 • Lancaster, PA 17601
BCFGroup.net
Meet Sarah.

This is Sarah’s second round with Friendship Community; she began her journey as a Direct Support Professional at one of the homes in Lititz in the late 90’s before moving away from the area. Through hard work and determination, she has climbed the employment ladder to her current position of Program Manager for the Horseshoe Road household of four gentlemen.

Why did she choose Friendship Community? “Google,” Sarah said simply. “Friendship Community popped up on my search engine one day. I had a job, but being a single parent I was never home to be with my kids. I took a leap of faith, and it landed me here,” she said with a smile.

Every day is different for Sarah. Some days she’s driving an Individual to an appointment, while other days she’s up to her elbows in paperwork. Some days she’s putting together a training on communication in the workplace or bridging the generational gap between her Team Members. Some days have been more challenging than others; Individuals and Team Members have good days and bad days. But she wouldn’t change a single minute of the experience. “I’m just a humble servant. I’ve learned a deeper gratefulness for what I have been given and a deeper compassion for the people around me.” Regardless of what’s in store that day, Sarah believes the best part of her day is the minute she walks in the door. “I’ve formed awesome bonds with these guys, so when I open the door, I’m greeted by the biggest smiles. Sometimes Ted will even meet me in the driveway with his big goofy smile. Those smiles make everything worth it.”

Sarah has advice for anyone looking to work for Friendship Community. “You don’t have to be perfect. I’m certainly not, and the guys don’t care. Just be yourself and use the talents you were given.” She added, “you need to take one day at a time and learn to respect and trust the people around you.” A recent turnover of employees has led to some uncertainty in the home. “The guys need a stable environment with constant support and positive reinforcement. Most of my Team Members have been here less than 2 years, so there’s been a lot of change. We’re getting through it, as a family. I’m proud of my Team Members and their conscious efforts every day. And I’m proud of the Individuals too. They’ve really developed strong relationships with each other and with us. We’ve all come a long way; but we’ll keep on moving because that’s what we do here - have fun, be creative, live a little and laugh a lot.”

Meet the Guys of Horseshoe Road!

“Ted’s the jokester,” Sarah said. “He’ll walk by the office, flick my light switches on-off-on-off, then walk away laughing. Or he’ll tease me. He’ll reach out for a hand shake then look the other way.” Ted, a people person, loves to go out to lunch with his housemate Ron. He enjoys looking at magazines, especially ones about trains and other modes of transportation.

“Raymond’s the activity guy,” Sarah stated. “He’s always moving, always going, always doing something.” Raymond plays basketball, bowls in the Special Olympics and attends Activity Nights. He also assists around the house by making meals for himself and the other Individuals.

“Ron’s the music man.” Sarah added, “He loves to sing hymns, especially ‘Count Your Blessings’”. Ron loves chocolate milk and peanut butter cups. Ron was especially shy and nervous when he first moved into the house, often staying in his room. He and the Team Members have overcome great odds together; he now delights in his lunch outings with Ted.

“Anthony’s the deep thinker. He’s the one to sit outside on the porch and watch the animals from a neighbor’s nearby farm. He could do it for hours on end,” Sarah explained. Anthony also loves bright colors, dogs and cats, and could eat pretzels every hour of the day.
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City:__________________________________State:______Zip:_____________

Address:__________________________________________________________

Organization:_____________________________________________________

First Name __________________________ Last Name _______________________

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Friendship Community is participating!

On November 22, donate online at ExtraGive.org and your generous gift will be stretched by more than a HALF MILLION DOLLARS in stretch pool and prizes from the Lancaster County Community Foundation and sponsors. Help us go the EXTRA mile together!