



SPRINGBROOK

Inspirations



SUMMER 2025 EDITION



INSPIRATIONS MAGAZINE is published twice a year by Springbrook in Oneonta, NY.

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Table of Contents

A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO	2
SELF-DIRECTED SERVICES	
Springbrook Expands in Onondaga County	4
THE SCHOOL AT SPRINGBROOK	
How One Art Therapist is Transforming Expression	8
FOUNDATION	
Day of Giving: Bright Futures Begin Today	12
WELLNESS	
Jessica Weston's Journey to Building a Career at Springbrook	14
KIDS UNLIMITED PRESCHOOL GRADUATION	16
INAUGURAL SPRINGBROOK CLASSIC: FAIRWAYS FOR FUTURES	17
DONOR DOLLARS AT WORK	18
GOOD NEWS ROUNDUP	22
THE SCHOOL AT SPRINGBROOK GRADUATION	26
SAVE THE DATE	27
IN LOVING MEMORY	28

Cover: Student riding horse at Athelas Therapeutic Riding, Inc, in Otego, NY.

Springbrook is the leader in providing innovative support for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. With locations across New York State, we offer service options that span all aspects of a person's life.



A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO



Summer invites us all to slow down and savor each moment. The warm sunshine, vibrant flowers, time with family and friends offer us renewal and joy. I encourage you to set aside distractions, just for a little while, and immerse yourself in this summer edition of *Inspirations*. My hope is that you will feel refreshed, uplifted, and reminded of all of the wonderful things that have taken place at Springbrook since our winter issue.

On the cover, you will see the pure joy of a Springbrook student mid-ride during a therapeutic horseback session. With his arms lifted high, a gesture of confidence and freedom, he is supported by Springbrook staff and caring equestrian professionals. This collaborative effort not only strengthens physical skills but also builds trust, independence, and a sense of achievement. The smiles shared in that moment remind us of the incredible progress that can be made when community and compassion come together.

As you turn the page you will read about our expansion into Syracuse. Springbrook's self-directed services now include housing navigation and employment opportunities. Our support brokers help transform dreams into achievable goals, empowering each person and family to chart their own path toward independence. Through our partnership with Syracuse University's InclusiveU program, we provide personalized guidance while ensuring students have full access to all aspects of campus life.

You will also read about our new Art Therapist, Tiffany Brznek, whose work gives people we support the opportunity to express themselves beyond words. Tiffany's approach encourages pride, confidence, and the discovery of one's unique voice through creativity.

I will let the rest of the magazine speak for itself, but I encourage you not to miss the stories of SUNY Oneonta certificate graduates, Jessica Weston's journey to building her career at Springbrook, and so many more stories of extraordinary accomplishments made possible by your support. Your generosity continues to transform good lives into even better ones, and for that, we are truly grateful.

As always, we are thankful for your support to making a meaningful difference in the lives of those we serve.

Patricia E. Kennedy
CEO

Summer invites us all to slow down and savor each moment. The warm sunshine, vibrant flowers, time with family and friends offer us renewal and joy.

- Patricia E. Kennedy, CEO





SELF-DIRECTED SERVICES

Springbrook's Self-Directed Services Expand in Onondaga County

Written by: Stephanie Curnalia

Springbrook is building a stronger, more inclusive Onondaga County—one person, one home, and one success story at a time. At the heart of this transformation is a belief in empowerment through personalized support. Whether someone dreams of attending college, being part of a community, or striving for independence with the help of Self-Directed Services (SDS), Springbrook is there to make it happen.

It all begins with Self-Directed Services—an approach that puts each person in control of the services and supports they receive. SDS empowers people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD)

to thrive in their chosen lifestyle, providing flexibility and freedom to customize everything from staffing and housing to community involvement.

“Everyone is really awesome. They work with you on whatever you need,” shares Kath Rebsame, who receives Self-Directed Services through Springbrook. “I love Springbrook.”

Services are coordinated with help from professionals like Neva Derewetzky, SDS Support Broker. “I work with Kath on her budget, which includes her housing subsidy, transportation, and utilities,” she explains. “I like to check in regularly to make sure she has what she needs.”

Everyone is really awesome. They work with you on whatever you need.

- Kath Rebsame

One Person, One Home, One Success Story at a Time.

InclusiveU at Syracuse University supports independence, education, and personal growth.

- Beckett Sorrentino,
Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) Coordinator

Springbrook's SDS team members like Community Habilitation Worker, Ashley Whitehead, plays an integral role in making each day meaningful. “Our days vary—sometimes we focus on shopping and discussing money goals. Other times, we go on walks. It all depends on what Kath wants to work on,” she says.

With new opportunities to join the SDS team and support people toward greater independence, Springbrook continues to expand its reach in the region—now with a new office space nestled inside downtown Syracuse's bookstore Parthenon Books. That same commitment to independence



Kath Rebsame & Ashley Whitehead

is embodied by InclusiveU, a comprehensive college experience at Syracuse University for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Offered through the Taishoff Center for Inclusive Higher Education, InclusiveU provides personalized support, flexible coursework, professional internships, and full access to campus life.

“InclusiveU at Syracuse University supports independence, education, and personal growth,” says Beckett Sorrentino, Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) Coordinator. “It prepares students for life beyond college.”



Syracuse University





SELF-DIRECTED SERVICES



Noah Weisman,
Student in InclusiveU Program



Syracuse and InclusiveU
Students



Dan and Matthew,
residents of Commonspace

Students like Noah Weisman are clear about the impact: "If you're a student who wants to be in this program, go for it."

As the InclusiveU program continues to grow, Jaime Gallardo, Assistant Director of Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) & University Partners, emphasizes the importance of having a strong, accessible presence on campus: "Having a central, accessible space on campus allows us to support more students, strengthen their presence at Syracuse University, and provide consistent, in-person support for both students and mentors."

Springbrook plays a significant role in InclusiveU's success by providing mentors who support students both in and out of the classroom. These mentors help with academic work,

time management, communication, and navigating student life.

"Being a mentor has been one of the most fulfilling parts of my time at Syracuse University," says student mentor Hannah Abbott. "I've grown as a leader, and I've made lifelong connections." Her mentee, Sasha Soraci, agrees: "Hannah hypes me up. She knows me so well. When I'm not feeling like myself, she always says, 'You got this!'"

With about 100 participants each year and access to more than 120 university programs, InclusiveU continues to set a national standard for inclusive higher education.

For those ready to take the next step toward independent living, Commonspace offers a truly

It's such a unique atmosphere.

- Zachary Vincent, Residential Counselor

unique environment. Located in downtown Syracuse, these certified apartments combine independence with structure—providing around 20 hours of weekly support to help residents build life skills and confidence.

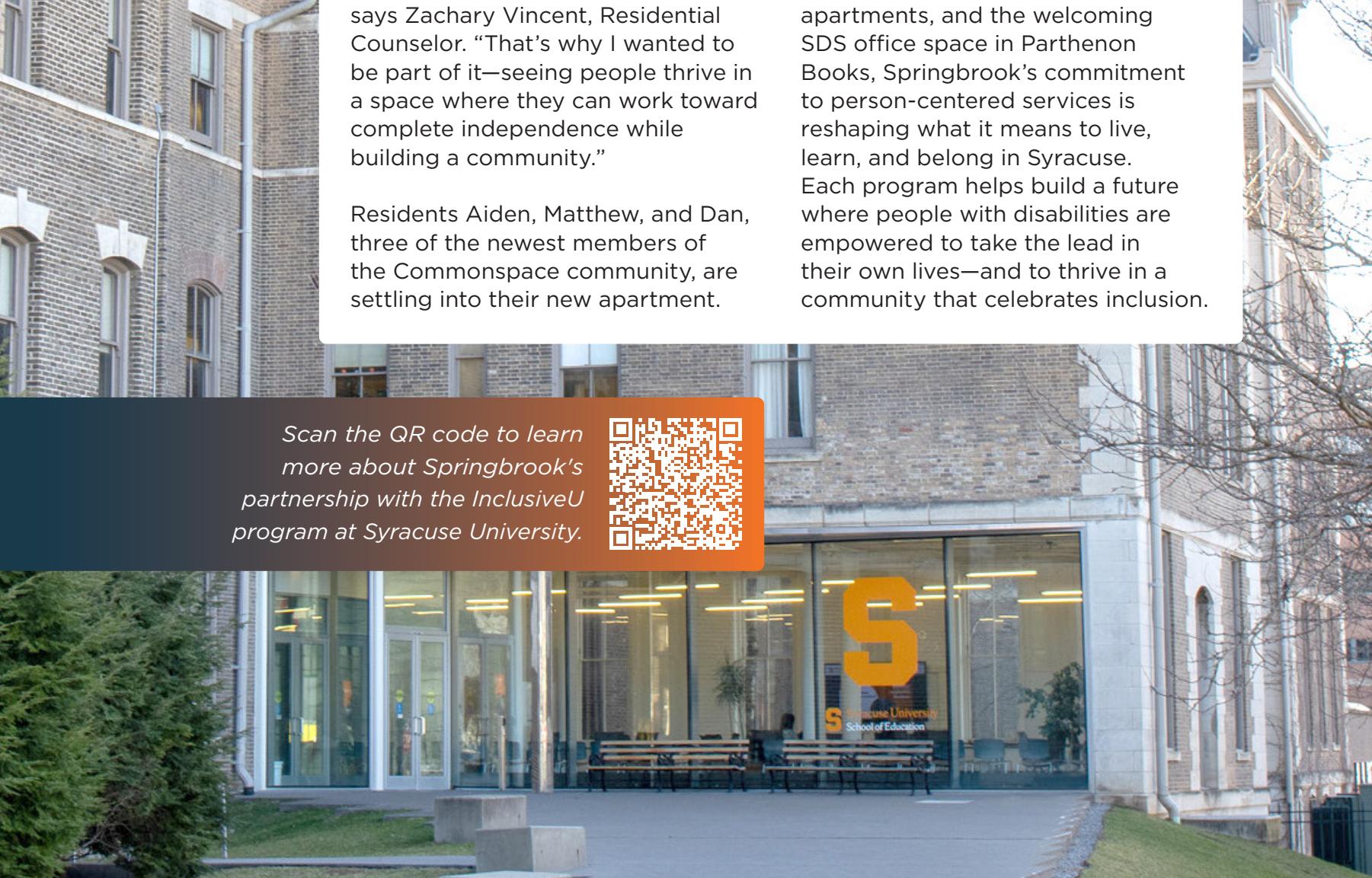
"It's such a unique atmosphere," says Zachary Vincent, Residential Counselor. "That's why I wanted to be part of it—seeing people thrive in a space where they can work toward complete independence while building a community."

Residents Aiden, Matthew, and Dan, three of the newest members of the Commonspace community, are settling into their new apartment.

"It's been great living on my own and being more responsible," says Matthew. The roommates are looking forward to making new friends and one day having apartments of their own.

From the collaborative spaces of Syracuse University to the community of Commonspace apartments, and the welcoming SDS office space in Parthenon Books, Springbrook's commitment to person-centered services is reshaping what it means to live, learn, and belong in Syracuse. Each program helps build a future where people with disabilities are empowered to take the lead in their own lives—and to thrive in a community that celebrates inclusion.

Scan the QR code to learn more about Springbrook's partnership with the InclusiveU program at Syracuse University.



How One Art Therapist is *Transforming Expression*

Written by: Stephanie Curnella

When students enter into the art room at The School at Springbrook, they light up—not just because of the bright colors and buzzing creativity that fill the space, but because they know that with “Miss Tiffany,” art is more than just an activity. It is a language, a bridge, and a path toward self-confidence.

Tiffany Brzenk, who has served as the Art Therapist at The School at Springbrook for the past year, brings with her a deep belief in the power of creativity. “Art encourages people to continuously learn and communicate while understanding new coping skills,” she says.



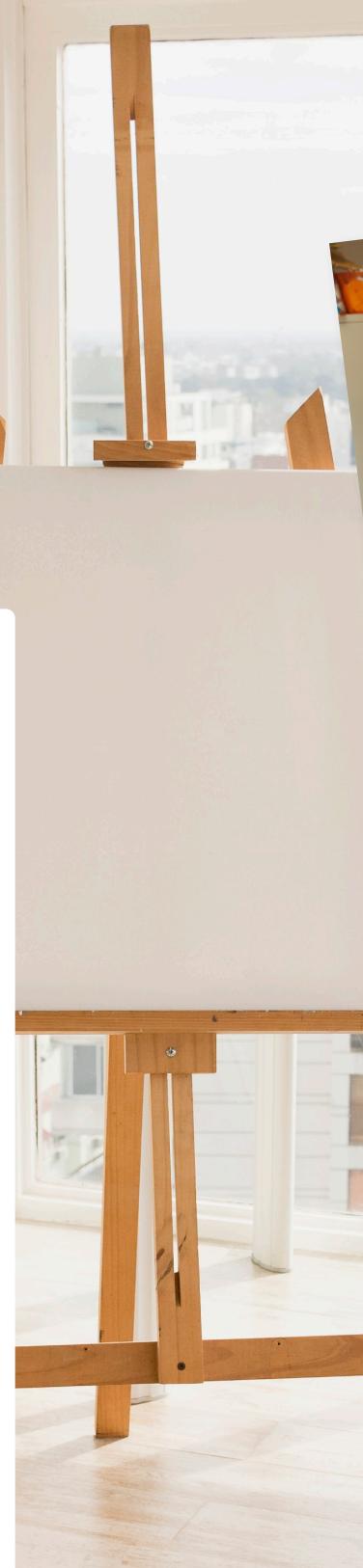
With a background in art therapy from Marywood University and a Master of Science from Florida State University, Tiffany’s foundation was shaped by real-world experience. During her graduate work, she interned in schools, rehabilitation centers, and nursing homes. It was during those experiences that she discovered her passion. “I knew I loved working with kids—especially kids who need a little extra support with communication.”

Her journey eventually brought her to upstate New York—close to her family—and to Springbrook, where she found her calling in the art room.

Art therapy, Tiffany emphasizes, is different from traditional art education. “It is less about the product and more about the process,” she explains. While art classes might focus on the final result, Tiffany centers her work on how the art is created, why it is being

The focus is doing what the students enjoy rather than following any specific curriculum.

- Tiffany Brzenk, Art Therapist



Students creating artwork for Springbrook’s Community Art Show at the Fenimore Art Museum

created, and what it can help reveal. “It is about expressing yourself without words,” she says, a concept that is especially powerful for the students she works with.

When she first arrived, she saw potential for more dynamic expression. Since then, she has expanded the program to include a wide variety of media—paint, sculpting clay, printmaking, and even action art. Tiffany shares, “The focus is doing what the students enjoy rather than following any specific curriculum.”

Tiffany’s approach is all about accessibility. She adapts art tools to meet each student’s unique needs: chalk holders, varied brush sizes, and even catapults for throwing paint. She incorporates American Sign Language (ASL), iPads, and extra time into her sessions. “Art is a tool for social-emotional learning, impulse control, and self-expression,” she says, and her classroom reflects that belief. Cross-curricular collaboration is also a key part of her practice.

When students in other classrooms were learning about Arctic animals, Tiffany researched related art activities to deepen that learning through creativity. Observations and partnerships with occupational therapists further inform her approach, ensuring that every session is rooted in student goals as outlined in their Individual Education Plans (IEPs).

One of Tiffany’s most beloved activities? Encouraging students to make the ugliest piece of art possible. “It is a great icebreaker,” she laughs. “It breaks down walls and shows students that art does not have to fit a specific mold.”

This philosophy resonated with a student who once lacked confidence and hesitated to participate. Through the freedom to create without fear of judgment, the student began showing up—and showing pride.

Her classroom has become a safe haven for students seeking more than just creative expression.



THE SCHOOL AT SPRINGBROOK

Students from art enrichment classes now actively seek her guidance through art therapy. "You can see their self-awareness growing," she says. Student favorites include "Splatter Art," which is when artists use paint-filled Easter eggs and marker spinners that turn everyday supplies into kinetic masterpieces.

A standout project, "Spectrum of Selfies," asked students to create self-portraits. In April of 2025, The School at Springbrook's students had their inspirational artwork showcased in the community Gallery Exhibit at the Fenimore Art Museum in Cooperstown, New York. Through vibrant colors,

expressive details, and personal inspirations, these works celebrate individuality and emphasize that disabilities—such as Autism Spectrum Disorder—offer unique perspectives on the world and the beauty within it. "You could see it on their faces—'Wow, I did that!'" Tiffany recalls. "It was a moment of pride and discovery."

Throughout May, Tiffany prepared for the Voice! 21 art show, in July, where students displayed their work but also learned how to price their pieces. "It gave more meaning to their creations," she says, adding that the show was an opportunity to build real-world skills and confidence.



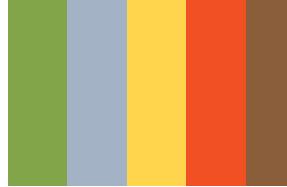
I hope the students feel confident in their ability to create art with little instruction.

- Tiffany Brzenk, Art Therapist

Tiffany shares, "The students felt confident in their ability to create art with little instruction," as a long-term goal for the students. Professionally, she is working toward licensure as a Licensed Creative Art Therapist—a challenging process that requires many supervised hours and a state exam offered only twice a year. Through this advancement, she also hopes to

advocate for more robust assessments in art therapy for the population supported at Springbrook. As Tiffany continues to shape her role at The School at Springbrook, one thing is clear: her work is as much about heart as it is about art. With every splatter, sculpture, and scribble, she helps students discover their voices—and the courage to use them.





FOUNDATION



SPRINGBROOK

DAY *of* GIVING

Bright Futures Begin Today

The room was electric, full of Springbrook employees, supporters, and board members who watched in anticipation as the fundraising total inched closer to the \$100,000 mark. With minutes to spare, the room erupted in applause and cheers. Springbrook's First Annual Day of Giving had surpassed its \$100,000 goal!

On March 25th through 26th, the Springbrook Foundation ran a 24-hour online fundraising event. Gifts of all sizes, from long-time supporters and new donors alike, collectively brought Springbrook to its fundraising goal. To make an even greater impact, Springbrook Board of Directors Chair, Bill Mirabito, and his wife, Karen pledged a \$100,000 match if the event reached its \$100,000 goal. Mr. Mirabito explained the reason for his donation, "Karen and I are passionate about Springbrook's mission. We are proud to provide

a \$100,000 match for the Day of Giving Campaign to ensure Springbrook can continue to carry out its great work for people with disabilities." In total, the Day of Giving raised \$225,616.00 with 313 donors!

The funds raised from this inaugural event went to several projects such as the Kids Unlimited Preschool (KUP) Playground and the Outdoor Accessibility Trail on the Oneonta Campus. Kim Johnson, Director of Giving, explains, "As we considered how best to allocate these funds, it was essential for us to be mindful of the diverse needs of the people supported by Springbrook, their families, dedicated staff, and the organization as a whole. Our goal was to ensure that each dollar raised would have a meaningful impact." This milestone in the Springbrook Foundation's work will have a lasting effect in supporting Springbrook's mission.

Written by: Shaina Gormley

313 Donors | \$225,616.00 *Total Raised!*

A portion of the total raised will support the development of the outdoor accessibility trail at Springbrook's Oneonta campus. This quarter-mile trail will promote health and personal growth for people participating in the Day Habilitation program, preschool students, teachers, and staff. Currently, people participating in the Day Habilitation program and therapy programs utilize the gym, hallways, and occasionally the parking lot for movement. These areas pose challenges to allowing for a full range of movement, as well as safety concerns. The new trail means that the physical therapy team can expand its outdoor offerings and incorporate outdoor activities regularly.

Throughout the course of the Day of Giving, donors helped Springbrook meet the many challenges that were set for the day that provided additional incentives and funding opportunities. These challenges provided additional funding opportunities and incentives to donate. A favorite challenge was the Pie Party Challenge sponsored by the Springbrook Directors. For every \$10 that a Springbrook employee donated, they received an entry into a chance to throw a pie into the face of one of the Springbrook Directors. The lucky winners drew lots of laughs the

following weekend at the Special Olympics Basketball Invitational, where the winners pied several members of Springbrook's leadership team. Everyone at the basketball invitational enjoyed the good-natured fun during half-time. Thank you to Seth Haight, COO, Hank Lobb, Director of Community Innovation, Jessica Weston, Director of Nursing, and Kevin Morris, Director of Facilities for being good sports and participating!

Above all, the success of the Day of Giving was made possible by the generosity and ongoing support of every champion for Springbrook. These donations help provide an improved, more accessible playground for the students at the Kids Unlimited Preschool, the only integrated preschool in Otsego County. People in Community Homes can enjoy engaging experiences and gain access to new opportunities through community engagement. Donations sustain the Springbrook Scholars program, ensuring that employees can pursue higher educational opportunities and maintain the best practices in their roles. These contributions ensure that Springbrook continues to create opportunities for everyone in our community to thrive because bright futures begin when we all have the support we need.



Interested in learning more?
Scan the QR code to see
videos on each project the
Day of Giving funded.



Staff enjoying the Pie Party Challenge



Written by: Shaina Gormley

Jessica Weston's Journey to Building a Career at Springbrook

Jessica Weston, Director of Nursing at Springbrook, begins her day in a community home, greeted by a chorus of smiling faces, warm hugs, and gleeful hellos, which set the tone for her day. It is in these first moments that Jessica is reminded why she does this work. While her role spans far beyond these morning greetings, her focus always returns to the people supported by Springbrook. Whether she is collaborating with staff to ensure medications and supports are in place, guiding students through the nuances of nursing care, or helping shape policies that define the future of medical services at Springbrook, Jessica brings compassion and purpose to every part of her day.

Jessica began her career at Springbrook as a Direct Support Professional (DSP) in 2003. She quickly found her passion for working with children and adults with disabilities. Shortly after beginning as a DSP, Jessica became a Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN), earning her license while working. Jessica found her passion, explaining, "I loved nursing and had found what I wanted to do the rest of my life." The hands-on experience she gained at the beginning of her career at Springbrook was invaluable.

Later in her career, she completed a Registered Nursing (RN) program, where she gained hands-on experience nearby at Bassett Medical Center. She quickly became the go-to nurse when a patient with intellectual and development disabilities (I/DD) entered the hospital, a role that reminded her daily of her true passion for supporting people with disabilities in medical settings.

Jessica continued pursuing her passion of caring for people with disabilities in Community Homes and the Day Habilitation program at Springbrook. It wasn't long until Jessica became the Director of Nursing, "It was an honor I never expected. I am incredibly grateful to work alongside a dedicated and compassionate team." Now, her days incorporate the hands-on care she loves while making a difference in planning Springbrook's future of medical care.

After becoming an RN, Jessica recognized the need for education on caring for people with I/DD in a medical setting. Jessica knew that focusing on teaching best practices for delivering high-quality, person-centered care for people with disabilities was vital. This commitment



to education extends beyond Springbrook, where Jessica also mentors nursing students at Hartwick College, helping them gain a deeper understanding of how to best support people with I/DD. She often tells her students,

The best advice I can give is: don't be afraid to ask questions.

- Jessica Weston,
Director of Nursing at Springbrook

People with disabilities may communicate in different ways or need specific support to receive information and give informed consent for procedures. That is why it is crucial to ask the person receiving care and any support staff present how to best meet their needs. This simple, yet crucial, aspect of care ensures that people with disabilities can communicate effectively with medical staff and understand what is happening throughout their experience.

Jessica's passion for caring for people with I/DD has only grown! She is currently working toward her doctorate to become a Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (PMHNP). Her work at Springbrook sparked her interest in pursuing further education. She recognized the gap between behavioral health and mental health and wanted to have the



education and experience necessary to mentor the next generation of nurses in this field. Her thesis will focus on mental health care for people with I/DD. Jessica is motivated to work in this under-researched field because she believes everyone, including the people with disabilities, deserves high-quality mental health care. Not only is she motivated by her passion for her work, but her family drives her to continue her education. Jessica explained, "I want my children to know that you should never stop growing and never stop learning. It doesn't matter how old I am, I am still going to push for my dreams." In 2027, when Jessica receives her doctorate, the Springbrook community will be there cheering her on, alongside her family!

Jessica's advice to anyone considering a career in this field of work is both thoughtful and powerful: "Approach this work with an open mind and a willingness to learn. If you are willing to grow personally and professionally, then this field will reward you in ways you never expected." Her passion for supporting people with I/DD shines through in every step of her journey. From becoming a Registered Nurse to now pursuing a PhD, Jessica's story is a testament to the meaningful growth that comes from welcoming new experiences and embracing the opportunity to make a difference.





Kids Unlimited PRESCHOOL

AT SPRINGBROOK

Congratulations to the Class of 2025!

Congratulations to the children at Kids Unlimited Preschool for their growth and achievements during preschool. After a year of learning to play and playing to learn, they are ready to embark on their next adventure.



Top image credit: Otesaga Resort Hotel

INAUGURAL SPRINGBROOK CLASSIC:

Fairways FOR FUTURES



A Heartfelt Thank You!

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who made the inaugural Springbrook Classic: Fairways for Futures such an unforgettable day! Held at the beautiful Otesaga Resort Hotel's Leatherstocking Golf Course, the event was filled with camaraderie and purpose.

Congratulations to the 2025 tournament champions: **Patti Canner, Kyle Hartough, Chris Pindar, and Nick Sobers**— and to all the contest winners! Your talent and energy lit up the course.

We are proud to share that together, we raised **nearly \$25,000** in support of Springbrook's initiatives! Here's to building a brighter future—one swing at a time.



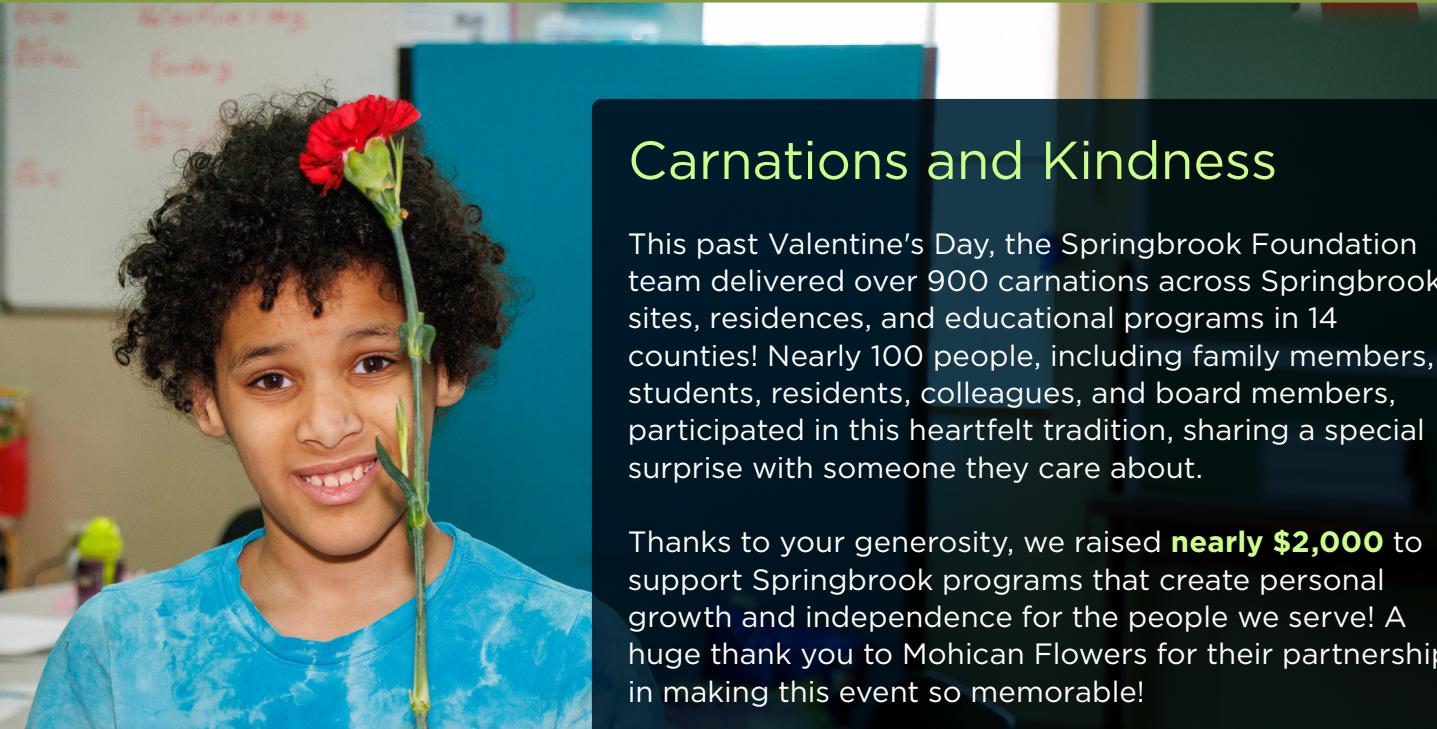
DONOR DOLLARS at Work

Thanks to the support of generous donors and our community partners, Springbrook can offer lifetime support to the people who choose our services. Your donations go toward providing additional activities, therapeutic and recreational equipment, and support for educational programs for employees. With the continued generosity of donors, Springbrook provides support for a lifetime.



To make a gift, scan the QR code to visit www.springbrookny.org/giving or text SPRINGBROOK to (607) 400.8008 today!

Written by: Stephanie Curnalia / Curated by: Tamara Miller



Carnations and Kindness

This past Valentine's Day, the Springbrook Foundation team delivered over 900 carnations across Springbrook's sites, residences, and educational programs in 14 counties! Nearly 100 people, including family members, students, residents, colleagues, and board members, participated in this heartfelt tradition, sharing a special surprise with someone they care about.

Thanks to your generosity, we raised **nearly \$2,000** to support Springbrook programs that create personal growth and independence for the people we serve! A huge thank you to Mohican Flowers for their partnership in making this event so memorable!



A Slam Dunk Success

What an incredible day at SUNY Oneonta for the 10th Annual Springbrook Scorpions Basketball Invitational! Athletes from across the region brought their A-game in a round-robin competition, skills event, and medal ceremony. The energy was high, the sportsmanship was inspiring, and everyone had a blast. CEO Patricia Kennedy and COO Seth Haight kicked things off with a heartfelt opening ceremony. Selected staff had the opportunity to pie Springbrook directors and COO Seth Haight in the face at halftime of the first game, making for a hilarious and memorable moment!

Division 1 Champions:

- 1st Onondaga Cougars
- 2nd Genesee Valley Cavaliers
- 3rd Springbrook Black
- 4th Uncle Sam Slammers

Division 2 Champions:

- 1st Broome Tioga Panthers
- 2nd Genesee Valley Cavaliers
- 3rd Saratoga Wildcats
- 4th Schenectady Patriots

Division 3 Champions:

- 1st Ithaca Mustangs
- 2nd Onondaga Wildcats
- 3rd Springbrook Orange

Springbrook Skills

1st
Daniel Cerosaletti
Elijah Ortega
Patrick Campbell

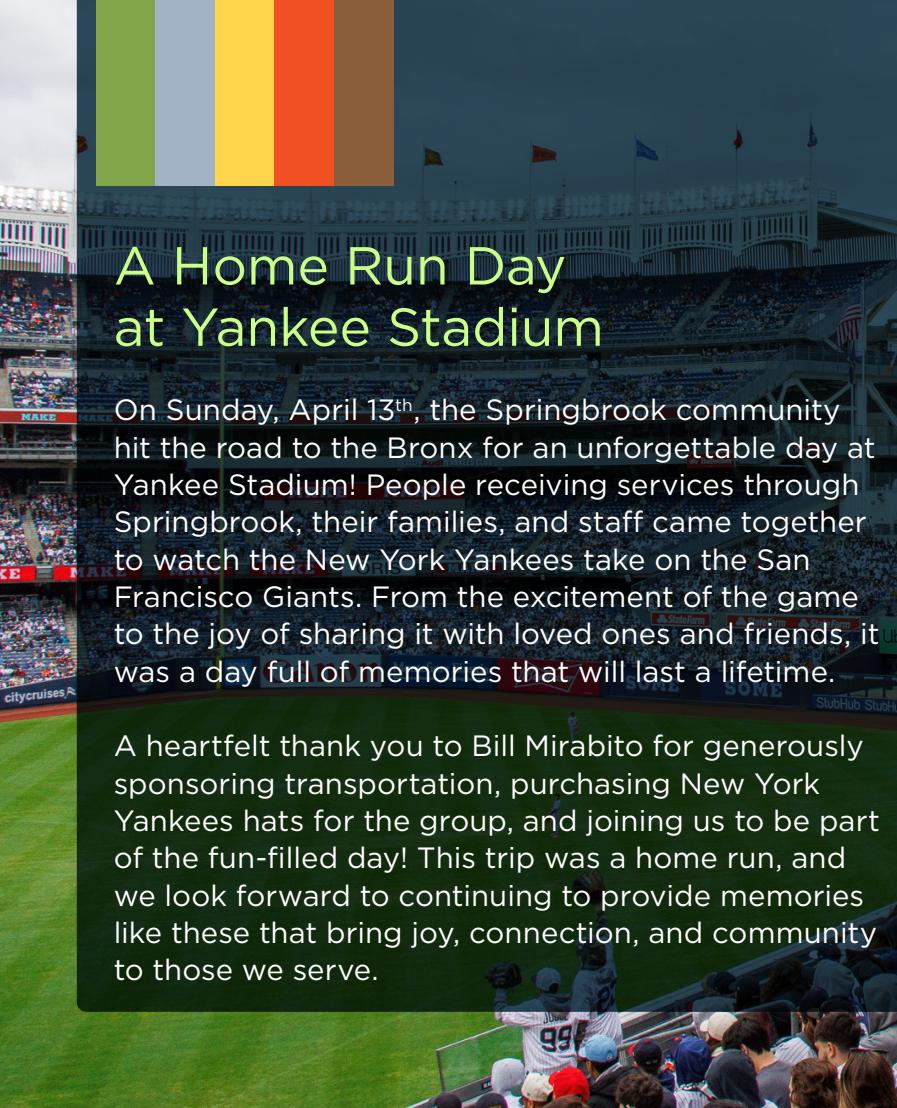
2nd
Clyde Cross
Dylan Corrado
Melanny Marcano

3rd
Princess Arberry
Jack Seeley
Ed Palumbo
Phil Manfredi

Diamonds and Denim 2025 Prom

The School at Springbrook's Diamonds and Denim-themed prom, was held on Friday, May 9th! The sparkling decorations and stylish attire brought the theme to life, creating a night to remember. Students enjoyed an evening filled with dancing, snacks, and laughter, making unforgettable memories.





A Home Run Day at Yankee Stadium

On Sunday, April 13th, the Springbrook community hit the road to the Bronx for an unforgettable day at Yankee Stadium! People receiving services through Springbrook, their families, and staff came together to watch the New York Yankees take on the San Francisco Giants. From the excitement of the game to the joy of sharing it with loved ones and friends, it was a day full of memories that will last a lifetime.

A heartfelt thank you to Bill Mirabito for generously sponsoring transportation, purchasing New York Yankees hats for the group, and joining us to be part of the fun-filled day! This trip was a home run, and we look forward to continuing to provide memories like these that bring joy, connection, and community to those we serve.



Birds, Blooms, and Beautiful Creations

Bobby Sharp of Bobby Sharp Glassworks led an incredible glassmaking session where community members and people receiving services at Springbrook came together to create stunning glass birds and flowers. The atmosphere was filled with laughter, encouragement, and artistic energy as participants in the session cheered each other on and walked away with unique glass creations.

Sharon Larson, who attended with her son David, shared: "I had an incredible experience

with Bobby Sharp Glassworks, thanks to the wonderful guidance of Corrine. She was kind, patient, and ensured that David and I truly enjoyed the process while learning about the intricate tools used for molding glass. I can't wait to share my artwork with friends and family, and I'm excited to return for more classes, especially in glass bird-making! A huge thank you to Springbrook for organizing this amazing event. Bobby is an incredible person, and I never imagined glassmaking could be so much fun!"



Let's Play Ball

Team members of all ages and programs stepped up to the plate for an unforgettable three-day tournament with Casey's Clubhouse! Whether seasoned baseball fans or first-time players, the joy, energy, and sense of community were infectious.

There was no shortage of smiles and laughter—especially when player Derek Jackson stepped up to the plate each time saying, "Watch this, I'm going to hit the ball to that roof over there."

Another highlight came from Ava Concannon, who enthusiastically shared, "I want to do this again!" after the event. Casey's Clubhouse is dedicated to creating inclusive and accessible baseball opportunities for people of all abilities, promoting teamwork, confidence, and love of the game.



Reining in the Possibilities

Every Tuesday afternoon, five students from The School at Springbrook arrive at Athelas Therapeutic Riding, Inc. in Otego, NY. With the help of dedicated staff and therapists, they are greeted by warm smiles and gleeful whinnies. Sessions include therapeutic movements like reaching overhead, clapping, and stretching—each designed to improve strength and balance.

It is a therapeutic experience made possible through scholarships funded by the Springbrook Foundation. These scholarships give students with intellectual and developmental disabilities a life-changing opportunity—therapeutic horsemanship.



GOOD NEWS

Roundup



Scan the QR code to sign-up for the Good News Roundup (GNR) and get a little joy delivered to your email inbox every month! The GNR is full of good news and important Springbrook-related information.

Written by: Stephanie Curnalia / Curated by: Tamara Miller

Spectrum of Selfies

Students from The School at Springbrook had their artwork featured in the Community Gallery Exhibition at the Fenimore Art Museum in Cooperstown, NY, throughout April.

Guided by Art Therapist Tiffany Brzenk, students created self-portraits for the exhibit titled Spectrum of Selfies—a powerful mixed media collection that celebrated individuality and creative expression. The pieces incorporated vibrant colors, favorite characters, and expressive features, reflecting each artist's unique personality. The exhibit aimed to highlight that disabilities, such as Autism Spectrum Disorder, offer new ways of seeing the world and contribute to its beauty.

Also on display in the museum's Young at Art exhibit were award-winning works by Brayden Butler and Dustin Rheel, both students at The School at Springbrook.



Building Bright Smiles at Kids Unlimited Preschool

We were so grateful that the New York Dental Hygienists' Association (NYDHA) and the Central Region Component of the New York Dental Hygienists' Association brought an exciting and educational experience to Springbrook's Kids Unlimited Preschool (KUP) classrooms in celebration of National Children's Dental Health Month.

The students had a fantastic time learning about the importance of oral health through engaging activities, interactive lessons, and fun games designed to encourage positive dental habits. The dental hygiene student volunteers did a great job making learning about oral health fun and approachable. Through their guidance, the preschoolers gained confidence in caring for their teeth and are more excited than ever for their next trip to the dentist!



Springbrook DSP Graduates Celebrate Milestone Achievement

On May 13th, more than 20 Springbrook employees graduated from the Direct Support Professional (DSP) I and II Microcredential program at The State University of New York at Oneonta, also known as SUNY Oneonta—a major milestone in earning college credit and national certification!

This powerful workforce training program—offered through a partnership between SUNY and the NYS Office for People With Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD)—gives DSPs the chance to gain professional recognition, college credit, and grow in their careers. SUNY Vice Chancellor, Chris White shared: "The work you do as direct support professionals builds

communities, and the world needs more people like you." Springbrook's Associate Director of Talent Development, Mat Harby-Conforti, added: "It's incredible to see the first cohorts complete both SUNY courses and NADSP certifications. I'm so proud of our staff and hope more take advantage of this rare opportunity for free education and credentialing!"

Thanks to a \$706,455 grant from Governor Hochul's office, SUNY Oneonta is one of only six SUNY campuses chosen to expand this program—helping meet the growing need for highly trained DSPs in our region. Special thanks to SUNY Oneonta for providing photos by Gerry Raymonda.



The work you do as direct support professionals builds communities, and the world needs more people like you.

- Chris White, SUNY Vice Chancellor





Celebrating Earth Day

Students from The School at Springbrook in Mrs. Wendy's class took their creativity outdoors to celebrate Earth Day with a beautiful environmental art project inspired by international artist and environmentalist Andy Goldsworthy! Using sticks, flowers, rocks, and other natural treasures they found, the students collaborated to spell out "Earth" on the ground — a creative tribute to our planet.

While creating their masterpiece, the class collected trash around the area, doing their part to keep our environment clean.



Charlie's Plastic Project: A Story of Impact

Charlie, a student at The School at Springbrook, just completed the NexTrex® Recycling Challenge, collecting over 1,000 pounds of plastic waste—and earning a Trex® bench made from the materials he helped gather!

To celebrate his incredible work on this solid waste project, Stewart's Shops donated Charlie's favorite ice cream flavors for a celebratory ice cream social with friends. Charlie is already working toward a second bench, having collected 600 pounds of plastic so far!



Celebrating Juneteenth with Food and Fun

On June 19th, residents and staff came together at Sunshine and Snell House to celebrate Juneteenth with an afternoon full of food, fun, and lots of sun!

The grills were sizzling with hot dogs and hamburgers, while laughter filled the air with hand painting, chalk art, and even a few rounds of basketball. The weather could not have been better—sunshine, smiles, and a whole lot of joy made for the perfect day to honor freedom, unity, and community.



We've always had positive experiences with Springbrook—and most importantly, Jack is very happy.

- The O'Briens



Finding the Right Fit: The O'Brien Family's Experience with Springbrook

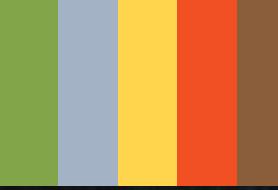
For the O'Brien family, finding the right support for their fun-loving son Jack was a top priority. At Springbrook, they found a place where Jack could thrive—discovering how much he enjoys his time in the pool, music rooms, while also maintaining a structured routine that keeps him happy and growing.

"Jack communicates better with us," they shared. "We've always had positive experiences with Springbrook—and most importantly, Jack is very happy." The O'Briens love staying involved and are hopeful that he will continue building on his communication and life skills.



Scan the QR code to learn more about Jack's journey at Springbrook.





Congratulations
to

THE SCHOOL AT SPRINGBROOK'S CLASS OF 2025 GRADUATES

We are incredibly proud of these outstanding graduates and their many accomplishments. They have worked diligently to achieve their goals and are ready to embark on their next adventures.



Hannah Cymbrak



Bethany Johnson



Josef Mazariegos



Dylan Namdar



Jake Wheeler



SAVE *the* DATE

UPCOMING EVENTS AT SPRINGBROOK



- 5K Miles for a Mission: Monster Dash

October 11th | Otsiningo Park, Binghamton, NY



- Springbrook Family Fun Day at Hard Rock Café and The Rockettes on Broadway

November 9th | New York City, NY



- An Evening of Music at The Morgan Library & Museum

November 10th | New York City, NY

- Unlock the Magic

December 6th | Oakdale Commons, Binghamton, NY

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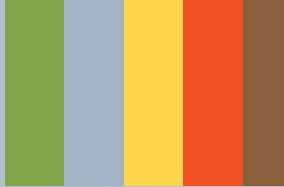


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IN *Loving* MEMORY

At Springbrook, employees take immense pride in getting to know the people they support to provide the best care at every stage of their lives. We treasure every moment we have shared with those who recently passed, from laughter to tears, our experiences, celebrations, and milestones. In this section, we commemorate the people we have lost and take a moment to remember the impact each has made on us and those around them. We are honored that they have shared their lives with us and will forever keep the memory of them in our hearts.



Nancy Johnson

07/12/1944 - 03/19/2025

Nancy Johnson, 81, passed away on March 19, 2025. She was born July 12, 1944, in Margaretville, NY. She is survived by her niece, Darlene Sweet, and her boyfriend, Randy Dolley of Stamford, NY.

Nancy's warmth and kindness made her a beloved grandmother figure at the Oxford Community Home. She was kind, caring, and could always bring a smile to someone's face. She loved chatting and listening to others, regularly asking staff about their families. If you visited Nancy, you might remember hearing Elvis Presley or Billy Ray Cyrus playing. Not only did she love listening to music, but she also enjoyed singing and playing her guitar often.

Although many might remember Nancy's distaste for winter, she

looked forward to Christmas every year. For Nancy, singing Christmas carols and seeing the happiness of others on Christmas morning made her forget the weather and embrace the joy of the season.

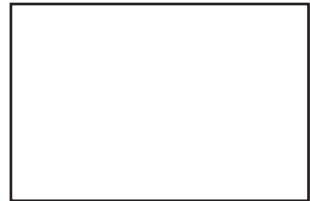
Nancy was always ready for an adventure. Whether it be a quick trip to the store or creating beautiful works of art, Nancy was always ready to join in with a great attitude on the next endeavor. She had a deep love for Jolene Schreier, or "JoJo," her favorite staff member and the person who knew her best. She loved to share with others that she "loves JoJo with her whole heart."

Everyone at Springbrook will remember Nancy for her love and kindness. She will be deeply missed.





105 Campus Drive
Oneonta, NY 13820
SpringbrookNY.org



MAKING THE DIFFERENCE FOR PEOPLE WITH
DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES **FOR A LIFETIME**

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