

1948-

70 Years of Building a World Where All People Know They Belong

-2018

QUARTERLY | Winter 2018

OUTLOOK Racker

www.racker.org

Supporting People with Disabilities



70 Years of Being Strength-Based

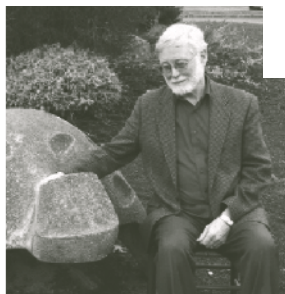


celebrating
70
years

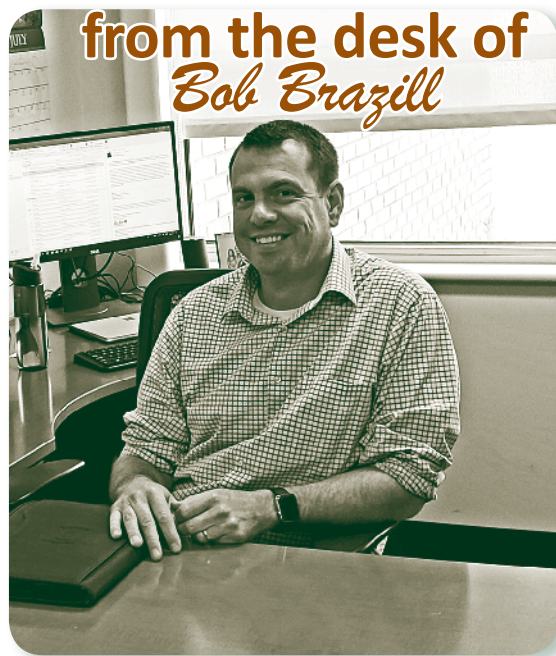


70 Years of Inclusion

70 Years of Belonging



Racker



leg·a·cy—something immaterial, as a style or philosophy, that is passed from one generation to another:

On October 2nd, Racker held a dinner honoring all past and present employees who have worked with the agency for 25 years or more. Back when the newest members of this group signed on in 1993, Racker was known as the Special Children's Center and Dr. Racker herself was the medical director.

I took up a place in the corner of the room and watched guest after guest arrive and be greeted by shouts and hugs. It was a little intimidating when I realized that if I added up all the experience in the room, it would total centuries of work towards a common goal. This was a group of people who, little by little, through their commitment and hard work, had made the world a better place together.

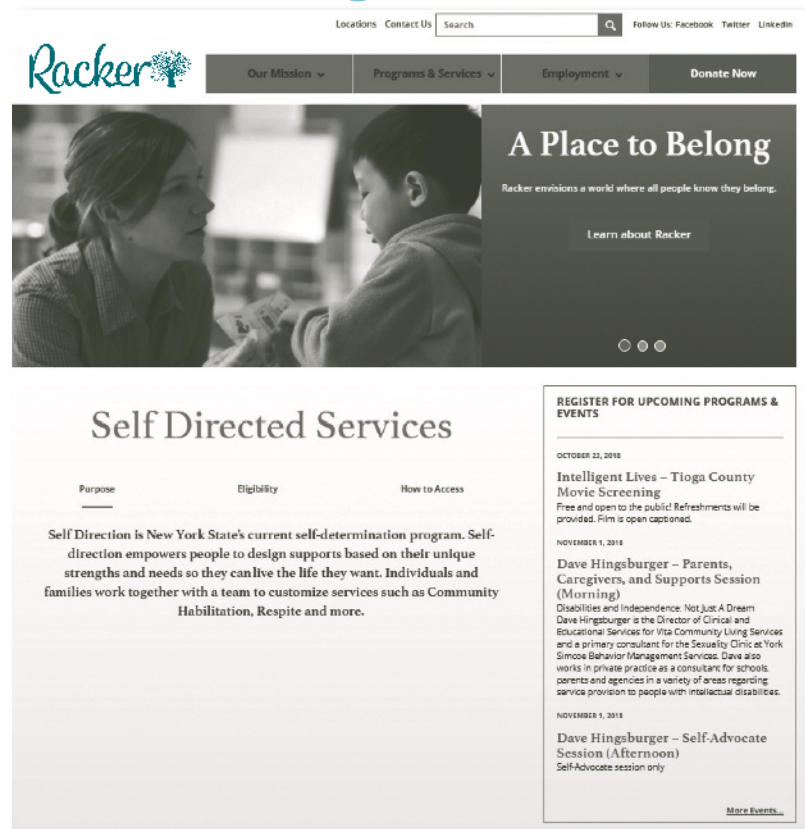
As a new employee, this was a powerful night. In my short time here, I've already been inspired countless times by the work done on a daily basis. That legacy of inspiration, starting with the founding families seventy years ago and continuing with Dr. Racker and with the people gathered in the room that night, is one of the things that makes Racker such an incredible organization. I'm proud to be even a small part of it.

My hat goes off to each and every person in the 25 Year Club. You are an inspiration to me and hundreds of other Racker employees that make a difference in the communities we serve. Congratulations to all of you! You have made a difference in thousands of lives.

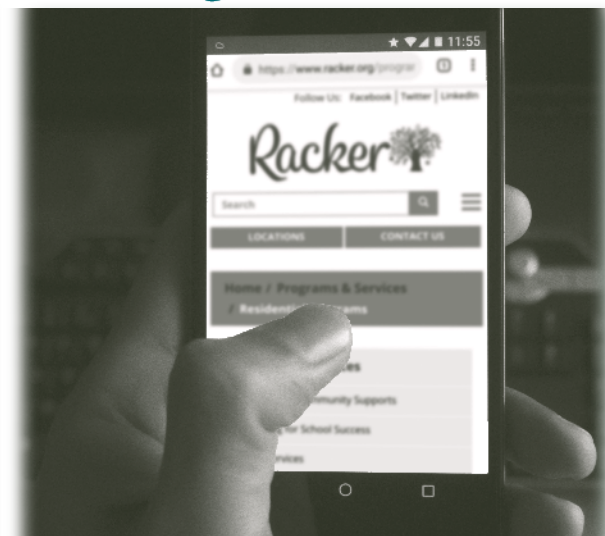
- Bob Brazill, Director of Community Relations and Development

Class of 1993 introduced on page 5...

Introducing our new website... *Racker.org*



Stay up to date and register for upcoming events at www.racker.org



A new website for a new era! Mobile usage, whether for entertainment, leisure, or even education, has taken the lead among most users in 2018! The new website at www.racker.org is sleek, easy on the eye, and works great on mobile! Newly redesigned menus are easy to navigate and find information relevant to those looking for services, or to those just curious about Racker history. The new site is home to everything Racker: service info, directions, employment opportunities, social media, stories of belonging, and so much more! 🌳

70th Anniversary and Community Celebrations

2018 was a tremendous year for the agency! We held celebrations in Tioga, Cortland, and Tompkins county in recognition of 70 years of service, and to honor just a few of the amazing people at the core of our mission! Thank you to everyone in attendance -- your support shows that our community is a team, and together we can Kick 'Dis' Out of Disability!

TIOGA



**70TH
CELEBRATION
AND AWARD
PARTIES WERE
HELD IN EACH
COUNTY!**

Racker presented awards to:

Tioga County

THE INSPIRATION AWARD
Gayle A. Pado - *Director of Family Resources*
Angila Ferguson - *Community Support Advisor*
Ronna Barnhart - *Administrative Assistant, Tioga County*

THE SPECIAL FRIEND AWARD
Jami Fabrizio - *Committee on Special Education Chair, Newark Valley Central Schools*

THE COMMUNITY PARTNER AWARD
Sue Michaels - *The Kitchen Store*

Cortland County

THE INSPIRATION AWARD
Rose Fox - *Teacher, Cortland Preschool*
Debra Rogers - *Shift Supervisor, Residential*

THE SPECIAL FRIEND AWARD
Cathy MacDonald - *Ph.D, SUNY Cortland*

THE COMMUNITY PARTNER AWARD
Cortland Community Center

CORTLAND



TOMPKINS



Tompkins County

THE FRANZISKA RACKER AWARD
Cecilia Campbell - *Director of Finance*

THE INSPIRATION AWARD
Amy Rasmussen - *Care Manager*
Mary Barhite - *Senior Direct Support Professional*

THE SPECIAL FRIEND AWARD
Paul Fairbanks - *Retired Director of Case Management, Elmira Psychiatric Center*

THE COMMUNITY PARTNER AWARD
Tompkins County Public Library, Youth Services Department

SPECIAL RECOGNITION AWARD
Honorable Barbara Lifton - *New York State Assemblywoman*





"Thank you...thank you very much!"

Dan Brown Receives CP Affiliates Award!

Racker’s Executive Director, Dan Brown, was honored at the annual **Cerebral Palsy Association of New York State Conference** with the *Daniel Wieder Leadership Award*. The conference was held on October 15th in Saratoga Springs.

Dan was nominated by Racker staff and selected as the 2018 winner in August. Upon acceptance of the award, Dan remarked about the need for higher pay for DSP’s; kicking the ‘dis’ out of disability, and included an Elvis impersonation thanking everyone “very much!”

The *Daniel Wieder Leadership Award* recognizes and individual whose high level of leadership has set a standard for others to follow and whose dedication has improved the quality of life for people with disabilities. The award honors those whose leadership embodies the values endorsed by all **CP of NYS Affiliates** and reflects innovative accomplishments which have garnered the respect of others working in their agency.

Congratulations to Dan for this prestigious honor!



Conference Selfie!

Pictured above: Tracy Abbott, Megan Kaminsky, Krista Robertson, Pat Montanez, Dan Brown, Cris Donovan, Cecilia Campbell

Tracy Abbott and Jean Libbey recognized with Staff Award

Two Racker staff members, Tracy Abott and Jean Libbey, were honored at the Cerebral Palsy Association Conference on October 16th in Saratoga Springs.

Tracy Abbott has an amazing ability to be able to relate to the people she supports, and is able to connect with both the family and person in ways that cannot be taught. Tracy’s patience, compassion and passion for the people she supports shines through every day. She is always working to find ways to better support the people she works with and ensures they always feel that they belong. As with everyone in this field, Tracy has been through some trying situations and she always remains positive and seeks understanding and guidance if she feels stuck. Tracy has a huge heart that drives her to continue to grow in her role as a Senior Community Support Professional.



Jean Libbey is always willing to help, go that little extra and has a positive attitude. She exemplifies what a Direct Support Professional should be, and puts her heart and soul into everything she does. She is also the kindest, sweetest person people will ever meet. She is a compassionate, caring and thoughtful individual.

Jean works hard and is an amazing coworker. She is always supportive of not only the residents but the other staff also. She often helps fill in the gaps and stays late whenever there’s a need. She helps keep everyone’s appointments and activities in order and shares the household shopping responsibility. She is always encouraging both staff and residents to do their best. Jean offers staff friendly reminders about things that need doing and thanks staff often for what they do. We are glad we have her as part of the team here at Racker.

Congratulations to Tracy and Jean! 🌟

CLASS OF 1993 RECOGNIZED

For the past five years, Racker has recognized staff members who worked at Racker for 25 years or more. These amazing staff members are treated to dinner with the 25 Year Club and their stories presented throughout the evening.

This year, there were five new inductees to the 25 Year Club:

Debbie Bray, currently a Program Director at TST BOCES began her tenure with Racker as a counselor in Cortland in 1993. She is best described by Sarah Tarrow: “Her ability to bring out the absolute best in her staff rests on her supportive and caring approach, coupled with high expectations and direct communication. Debbie’s sense of humor brings light and laughter into her friendships with staff and students alike.”

Barb Marmora is a preschool teacher at Wilkins Road. In her 25 years at Racker Barb has touched the lives of countless children and families. “As a teacher, Barb loves to sing and it has always been a key draw for the children as they’d sit around her enamored with her call and response songs. As a mentor, Barb showed her staff the way. She would teach them and guide their development.” – Cris Donovan

Pat Montanez came to Racker in 1993 as the Assistant Director of Residential. Her great work was crucial as Racker expanded the residential program under her supervision. Executive Director, Dan Brown, recalls Pat’s influence on the entire organization: “Pat is known for her ability to help the staff in Residential grow and find their niche within Racker. Key staff in our organization that have come out of the Residential program include, Dianna Betts-IT Director, Cris Donovan-Associate Executive Director, Brooke Malone-Director of Employee Relations and Engagement, Bill Reif-Accounting and AP Manager, Frank White-QE/Standards Specialist...you get the idea.”

Sue Thomas started as a counselor in Cortland and quickly transitioned to a Senior Clinician role. As an innovator, she recently developed animal-assisted therapy and outdoor education into a new collaboration with Orenda Springs Experimental Learning Center, allowing OCM BOCES student to learn and grow in new ways. “Sue is a warm and caring leader who creates an exceptionally supportive and nurturing space for her staff, while balancing the administrative demands of documentation and program accountability.” –Sarah Tarrow



Left to right: Marcia Vann, Pat Montanez, Susan Thomas, Debbie Bray, Barbara Marmora

Marcia Vann became a member of the Special Children’s Center family as a part time Residential Counselor. With a naturally supportive demeanor, Marcia developed the reputation as the go-to-person for updates and help with difficult situations. Pat Montanez reflects: “We couldn’t imagine the program without her and she apparently couldn’t either. So when she decided to retire from her fulltime team director position at the end of 2017, she proposed working a few hours a week as the programs fire marshal. I couldn’t refuse her offer.” 🌟

25 YEAR CLUB

Employee	Hire Date
Ronna Barnhart	2/1/1988
Carolyn Bartell	8/25/1980
Caroline Bennett	1/3/1985
Christina Benton	3/6/1989
Deborah Bray	11/22/1993
Nancy Bruce	9/22/1992
Alison Bryan	9/1/1984
Susan Budney	9/10/1990
Susan Canfield	2/4/1985
Patricia DeMatteo	10/11/1988
Sheryl Edwards	1/5/1987
Nancy Emerson	7/5/1979
Magdalen Gillard	10/1/1979
Amy Haefner	9/17/1990
Jaye Hale	10/1/1983
Marion Hallam	8/17/1987
Beverly Hartz	2/1/1984
Marie Hedge	9/6/1988
Susan Hirschberger	9/15/1978
Mary Honeywell	9/17/1984
Janie Hughes	9/3/1991
Mary Hutchens	9/6/1977
Karen Kilgore	10/15/1991

25 Year Club continued on page 7...

Let's Hear It For Our Super Heroes!

When Kailey first came to the Racker Preschool she could barely hold herself upright, no less stand. By the time she graduated our preschool, she was flying down the hallway! She is one of our Super Heroes.

Racker has been providing services to people with disabilities and their families since 1948. Throughout the years, we have relied on our friends to help us do this important work. Your annual support and friendship has truly made a difference for so many. You are a Super Hero too.

But as we look to the future, we know that there will be many people with disabilities yet to come that will need our help. We need to plan and be ready for them.



That is why we are inviting you to join our 70th Anniversary Planned Giving Drive

Throughout our history, planned gifts have allowed us to be agile, to address critical issues, and to achieve important goals that support our Vision - A world where all people know they belong - including Super Heroes!

Help us to build and sustain Racker for future generations to come.

Call Perri LoPinto at 607.272.5891 x 234 or send in the attached card to learn more. Thank you!



"Having Racker in our community makes it a better place for all of us. The Vision of a world where all people know they belong, speaks directly to me. I want to make sure this Vision can continue." —Joe Thomas



Make a planned gift and help the Super Heroes of tomorrow...

NDT/Bobath Certificate

Congratulations to Kellie Hummel and Anne Schneider, physical therapists for completing the NDT/Bobath Certificate Course in the "Management of Treatment of Children with Cerebral Palsy and other Neuromotor Disorders".

The course provides an in-depth framework for observing and analyzing movement, and developing treatment plans for children with motor concerns. Anne and Kellie had six months of on-going learning, training, and hands-on practicums.

Their participation in this world-renowned training was supported in part by the Scriber/Cash fund. Kellie remarked "the coursework has added so many layers from which to draw from, both in problem solving during evaluation of a child, as well as in treatment." They are already sharing and collaborating with our therapists using their knowledge.

We are so thankful for Scriber/Cash fund which gives us the ability of offer our therapists this type of experience.

Take Flight to Belong



Circle of Courage collage and students from the Turning Point program at TST BOCES

Continued from page 5... 25 YEAR CLUB

Employee	Hire Date
Sally Lawrence	3/2/1992
Karen Legnini	4/25/1988
Cynthia Lilly	7/15/1984
Sally Manning	9/1/1986
Barbara Marmora	9/24/1993
Annemarie Mattison	3/17/1992
Patricia Meyers	9/1/1984
Patricia Montanez	1/4/1993
Cheryl Moore	3/6/1989
Barbara Murphy	7/11/1988
Mary Jean Palmiter	9/6/1988
Irene Petrovic	10/18/1990
Franziska Racker	1/2/1971
Andrew Rice	7/15/1988
Andrew Russell	9/1/1983
Susan Ruswick	7/1/1987
James Schafrik	9/20/1990
Sandra Schoenfeldt	1/9/1987
Jocelyn Scriber	1/28/1976
Roger Sibley	7/1/1979
Ann Siegle	9/5/1989
Cynthia Slattery	6/15/1988
Margaret Stoyell	9/7/1990
Pamela Talbott	10/31/1988
Steven Tanner	9/1/1982
Susan Thomas	11/22/1993
Marcia Vann	3/1/1993
Rose Wolf	6/15/1992

NEW BOARD MEMBER

Racker would like to welcome Teresa McNamara of Tioga County to the Board of Directors!

Teresa is a family law attorney with Legal Assistance of Western New York, who recently received the President's Pro Bono Service Award for the 6th Judicial District from the New York State Bar Association. She lives in Tioga County with her husband, 9-year-old son, and 7-year-old daughter.

Teresa volunteers with the Tioga United Way, and also serves on the board of Camp Ahwaga, a non-profit camp for students of all ages with special needs. Teresa first became familiar with Racker when her son attended our preschool in Owego. We look forward to Teresa's input and expertise this year.

Welcome to the Board of Directors, Teresa!

DYNAMIC CORE FOR KIDS

Goes to School - Early Childhood Services had the privilege of welcoming Shelley Mannell, PT and Julie Wiebe, PT for a three day Fall conference.

The conference addressed many issues that underlie a child's readiness to learn including posture, attention, difficulty sitting still, impulse control, clumsiness and more. Topics of discussion for the conference included the relationship of breathing and core stability to alignment, toileting, emotional self-regulation, sensory processing, attention, pediatric theory and more! Discussion of the need for the brain and body to move and the role of the contribution of breathing creates a practical approach to supporting the whole child at school and at home.

Meg Gillard, OTR/L commented, "The new research on the Anticipatory Core Muscle system was wonderful to hear. Shelley and Julie cited research and used slides to show lasting changes in children's function. They instructed us in rib cage and pelvic girdle alignment and a breathing technique, 'Blow before you Go', which utilizes the breath to activate the anticipatory core muscle system before a child moves."

One therapist remarked, "I don't think I have attended a conference before that was so easily applicable to such a huge range of kids and adults."

Another therapist said, "I am grateful to Racker for giving us the time and resources for this worthwhile investment to be shared amongst teammates and colleagues."

Dynamic Core continued on back cover...

Special Thanks

Delta Gamma Ithaca Alumnae Association



Karen Sieburgh, President of the Delta Gamma Ithaca Alumnae Association, presents Bob Brazill, Director of Community Relations and Development at Racker a check for \$500 to support programs for people with disabilities. Each year, the organization donates to a local charitable organization to carry out their national sorority motto of "Do Good." Racker is thrilled to be chosen this year! Thank you Delta Gamma!

WINTER 2018

OUTLOOK

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www.racker.org

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Dynamic Core for Kids Goes to School



Pictured top left: Julie Wiebe leads a breathing exercise

Top right: Therapists practice techniques
Bottom left: Misty Fearon, Kellie Hummel, Shelley Mannell (Presenter), Julie Wiebe (Presenter), Sheryl Edwards, and Bev Hartz

Hands-on lab experiences gave participants a chance to try the activities themselves, as well as on others.

Sally Lawrence, a Special Education Teacher stated that, "The Dynamic Core conference was one of the best I have been privileged to attend in my 26 year tenure at Racker. It was full of useful information that could be easily carried over to our preschool classrooms. The session was presented in a format that encouraged group learning and team spirit!"

Thank you to the Tompkins Trust Company Bridge Fund for their sponsorship of this conference which allowed over 100 of Racker Early Childhood staff the opportunity of learning, teaching and collaboration.

EDITOR Bob Brazill, Director of Community Relations and Development

DESIGN Joshua Skellett, Creative Content Strategist

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PHOTOGRAPHY Joshua Skellett, Staff, and Friends of Racker



United Way Member Organization