Racker celebrates 70 years of service with new name and logo!

See Dan's Note on Page 2 for more details!
milestone—an action or event marking a significant change or stage in development:

Racker is a place for milestones—first words, first steps, first jobs—and while we relish the incredible achievements of those we serve each and every day, it is the culmination of these successes that we recognize in 2018, with a year-long celebration of Racker’s 70th Anniversary.

As we looked at ways to mark this incredible milestone, we reflected on our past and began to plan for our future in the same way we always have—by reaching out to the communities we serve. One of the things we learned was that regardless of geography, relationship or affiliation, people primarily refer to us not as Franziska Racker Centers, or even Racker Centers, but simply—Racker.

Armed with this feedback and the blessing of Dr. Ann Costello, daughter of beloved, long-time medical director and agency namesake, Dr. Franziska Racker, we proudly unveiled our new name and logo earlier this year:

We are thrilled to announce the appointment of Sarah Tarrow as Director of Counseling for School Success. Sarah will succeed Mary Hutchens, who retired in February after four decades of service to Racker.

Sarah joined the Racker team in 1996 and has a demonstrated commitment to the Counseling for School Success Program. During her 20-year tenure, Sarah has served as a Day Treatment counselor, admissions counselor, led the continuing implementation of the Program’s technology needs, created systems to support accurate billing and participated in planning and program development.

Replacing a member of the Racker team with the knowledge, compassion, leadership and optimism that Mary embodied for 40 years was a daunting task. However, Sarah’s leadership and interpersonal skills, commitment to teamwork and community collaborations and loyalty to Racker’s vision and mission made her an ideal candidate and will undoubtedly, help to ensure a smooth transition for Counseling for School Success and bright futures for the children and families we serve. Congratulations, Sarah!
Racker recently recognized the commitment and service of long-time board member John Crosby by naming him Emeritus Director. John joined the Racker Board of Directors in 1997 and has been a steadfast supporter of our services and a tireless advocate for individuals with disabilities for more than two decades.

Outgoing Board President Eugene Yarussi was also recognized for his incredible commitment to Racker. Gene was instrumental to the success of our Making Room Capital Campaign. He has served on our Board of Directors since 2012.

We are delighted to welcome Mary Wright, RN to the Racker Board of Directors. Mary has held numerous positions during her 33-year tenure at Cortland Regional Medical Centers. A licensed nursing home administrator, Mary spent more than two decades working with the hospital’s nursing facility before become Vice President of nursing. She plays a key role in the day-to-day operation of the nursing units within the hospital and nursing home and brings a wealth of knowledge and commitment to individualized treatment and services to the Racker Board.

Mary lives in Cortland with her husband Darren. They have three grown children, Brett, Steve and Sara, and enjoy traveling and spending time with family. Mary holds a Bachelor of Science degree in nursing and is currently enrolled in Utica College where she is working toward completion of a master’s degree in healthcare administration.

Eugene Yarussi and John Crosby Board Members Honored

Welcome New Board Member

Hockey Legend Joe Nieuwendyk will once again join the Racker Rivals celebration!

Thank you to those sponsors who have already stepped forward to make Racker Rivals Big Red 2018 a success. Special thanks to our Title Sponsor Tompkins Trust Company.

More opportunities exist for businesses and individuals to sponsor at a variety of levels. For more information, please contact Perri LoPinto at 607-272-5891 Ext.234 or perri@rackercenters.org.

Don’t Forget to ROLLOVER your charitable IRA distribution!

If you are 70 ½ or older a great way to support Racker might also be a great way to save on your taxes. Your annual IRA distribution can be sent directly to support the causes that are important to you and won’t be counted as earned income – a win, win! For more information, talk to your financial advisor. Some restrictions apply.

Racker Rivals Big Red

Saturday, July 14th, 2018 at Cornell’s Lynah Rink

Join the teams comprised of celebrity NHL players, Cornell alumni players, local celebrity players, and student athletes as they compete on the ice to raise funds for Racker!

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

1971 Dr. Franziska Racker named medical director
1979 Roger Sibley becomes executive director
1980 Agency opens first integrated preschool
1985 Respite programs begin with launch of Rest-A-Bit
1986 Day Treatment opens at TST BOCES
1988 Turning Point program begins
1989 First residential home opens in Dryden
1994 Service Coordination Begins. Early Intervention formalized.
1999 Agency renamed Franziska Racker Centers in honor of Dr. Racker’s 28-year commitment and leadership to strength-based services
2000 Lighthouse program begins
2001 Parent Network Forms
2008 Agency celebrates 60 years
2019 Service Coordination begins. Early Intervention formalized.
Lipinski’s Share Holiday Spirit With Gift Basket Donations

Each year, we are awestruck by the generosity of Steve and Kathy Lipinski. The Lipinski’s annual gift baskets for families we serve who have experienced hardships during the year are so overflowing with food, toothbrushes and special treats that we are almost unable to carry them. Thank you Steve and Kathy for your ongoing support and for reminding us of what is truly important during the busy holiday season.

Seventy for 70: Planned Giving 2018

As we celebrate seven decades of service to individuals with disabilities and their families, we recognize—now more than ever—that our ability to meet the evolving needs of our community relies not on our legacy alone, but on the legacies of those who support our vision of a world where all people know they belong.

Our commitment to that vision is why we’ve set a goal of 70 new planned gifts in commemoration of our 70th Anniversary. Throughout our history, planned gifts have allowed us to be agile, to address critical issues and to provide access to early childhood, mental health, residential, clinical and community support services for thousands. Please consider joining planned giving supporters like Joe and Marney Thomas by helping us reach our goal of Seventy for 70!

“The vision of a world where all people know they belong speaks deeply to me. I want to make sure that this vision can continue. Serving on the board of directors confirms for me that the agency is well-run, financially sound and mission driven. Marney and I both feel confident that our planned gift will be well-used.” — Joe Thomas

To join Joe and Marney on our Racker Society or to learn more about planned giving opportunities, contact Perri LoPinto at 607.272.5891 extension 234 or Perri@rackercents.org.

Elks Major Projects, Inc Supports Sibshops

A big THANK YOU to New York State Elks Major Projects, Inc. for their generous grant support of Racker staff members, Jennifer Frank, home service director, and Elvia Morales, MSC, in their efforts to establish a Sibshops program at Racker for the siblings of children with disabilities. Of all of the people in an individual’s life, siblings will likely have the longest relationship with their disabled family member. Yet few programs focus on the development of this identity with young children—the ones who often have unanswered questions and concerns about this role. The Sibshops model was created by Don Meyer of the Sibling Support Project and is celebrated worldwide. These workshops bring together siblings between 8 and 12 years old for a recreational, fun and informative afternoon designed to meet their unique needs. In a Sibshop, siblings have an opportunity to connect through play and to receive peer support surrounding their unique questions and concerns. The Elks grant allowed Jennifer and Elvia to become trained facilitators and begin hosting Sibshops programs at Racker.

The grant allowed for Jennifer and Elvia to become trained Sibshops facilitators, and they are currently hosting informational sessions for families throughout the region in anticipation of Racker’s first Sibshop on April 14 at 10:30am.

We are excited to provide opportunities for siblings to connect and explore their relationships through this incredible program and are deeply grateful for the support of the Elks. For more information contact Jennifer Frank at 607-277-8020 ext. 500 or jenniferf@rackercents.org

#GivingTuesday 2018

Thank you to everyone who contributed to #NYGivesDay! Our #GivingTuesday online campaign helped support the purchase of an indoor play structure for our Cortland Preschool. Once purchased, the structure will help children in our integrated preschool program develop their gross motor skills while playing alongside their friends. It will also be a huge asset to the program during periods of inclement weather, when busy kiddos are unable to get outdoors to play. The online campaign netted $2780 toward the structure’s $10,000 purchase price.

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