Cornell Men’s Hockey Coach Mike Schafer and Tompkins Trust Company CEO, Greg Hartz, went head-to-head in a virtual fundraising competition from June 15th to July 15th. In a tremendously competitive and close competition, it was Coach Schafer’s Team Big Red pulling out in victory. This competition temporarily replaced the annual hockey game traditionally held at Lynah Rink that features NHL stars, former Cornell hockey players and local celebrities.

The Virtual Face-Off launched with a draft of potential fundraisers, moderated by Topher Scott. Team captains picked their roster based on fundraising ability, as opposed to hockey skill. Every $1,000 raised was the equivalent of scoring a goal. With a final score of 49-49, it was only a hundred dollars separating the two teams. Generous sponsorship dollars and grants from the Triad Foundation and the Nolan Foundation contributed to the final total of $170,000.

The real winners are the individuals with disabilities and their families who receive services from Racker. We are humbled by the generosity of our community, and want to express our sincere gratitude to all 633 donors, all of our players and everyone who supported this event.

Thank you for your support during this difficult time! 🙏
My long-term relationship with the Racker organization has been a joy and privilege! I was first introduced to Racker through long time supporter and board member, David Dunlop. Little did I know what it would personally mean to be included in such a highly respected and relationally rich organization. I was “hooked” from my first board meeting as I observed the leadership skill of Roger Sibley and the caliber of talent that sat around the board table. From my first days in the organization I was impressed with the exceptional competency of the staff as well as the heart that the board had for the organization. Over the years, I would lament the retirement of a seasoned staff person, figuring that no applicant would begin to fill the shoes of the person who left. Wrong on all occasions! Racker attracts not only the brightest and the best but they attract those who serve with a heart for the individuals and families they serve.

Under Dan Brown’s empowering leadership, the organization has continued to thrive, even during these rough months with COVID. Challenges are mere opportunities. Team spirit is in the DNA of Racker. The vision and mission is carried with such excellence that it is considered one of the most respected nonprofits in our community and with its effective advocacy by staff and families who visit Albany, it has earned respect from elected officials.

The Roundtable Leadership is highly competent and absolutely trustworthy as it stewards the one of the most respected nonprofits in our community and with its effective advocacy by staff and families who visit Albany, it has earned respect from elected officials.

In my retirement years, I spent some time painting in the resident facilities which gave me up close access to both staff and residents. I often affirmed the staff as I observed how they treated some challenging residents with respect and dignity. They didn’t see what they did as a mere “job” but as a “calling” which accessed the best of their humanity in service to others and often with no thanks in return. I was grateful to make many friends over the years.

I was part of the process to see our vision/mission refined and what a wonderful smooth (and time consuming!) process; but the end result is excellent—envisioning a world where everyone knows they belong. I am so thankful to have belonged and to have served!

Gratefully,

Chuck Tompkins

DIRECT SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL RECOGNITION WEEK 9/13-9/19

Direct and Community Support Professionals at Racker and across New York State have faced an enduring and often challenging work place since Early Spring; close to 30 weeks! With already strict guidelines from the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities, new COVID-19 regulations and guidance dictate constantly changing work environments for all Racker staff.

September 13th-19th marks National Direct Support Professional Recognition Week. We thank the countless number of current and former essential workers that work the front line every day to support people with disabilities to achieve their goals and stay safe and healthy. Even as NYS first, and then the US, went into lockdown, essential Racker staff kept going into work, faced new regulations and setbacks head on, and developed new and creative ways to meet the needs of the people they support.

Not only do DSPs take great pride in the work that they do, and is what drives them to keep coming back (even through blizzards and states of emergency) but the individuals and families they support take an even greater pride in the work of DSPs. Building a world where all people know they belong and actively creating opportunities for people to be included in that world is more important now than ever, and we are thankful for the DSPs and CSPs who have shown us resilience and creativity in the midst of a pandemic. We are so grateful for you!*

Preschool Reopens for Summer

Racker’s Early Child Education Centers in Tompkins and Cortland Counties opened for a reduced capacity session this Summer. Strict guidelines, safety videos, and tracing protocols ensured that staff, families, and students were operating in a safe atmosphere for everyone involved, and without any loss to opportunities for education and success.

The session included continued remote opportunities via Racker’s Remote Learning channel on YouTube throughout the Summer, as well as dedicated in classroom learning for those that met New York State’s criteria for in person special education services. Safety protocols included robust cleaning and sanitizing, pick-up and drop-off protocols (written and video modeled) for children arriving with parent or school bus. Floor decals and parking lot signs helped maintain safety measures straight forward and easy to follow.

For information on how Racker is planning safe reopenings for essential programs like Early Childhood Education Services, Clinical Services, Community Support Services, and more please visit www.racker.org/reopening

*Please support our ongoing commitment in supporting people with disabilities and their families!

FAMILY RESOURCE VIRTUAL ACTIVITIES

When New York State first shut down and many in person services for people with developmental and intellectual disabilities were shuttered or put on hold, Racker’s Community Services teams continued to provide in-person services throughout the pandemic for those who needed that level of support to maintain their health and safety. To reach those who were unable to receive in-person supports, and to provide additional opportunities for connection across the Racker family, the Family Resource Program team jumped into action and Virtual Activities were born!

The Virtual Activity format incorporates many favorite activities into a reoccurring ZOOM virtual conference. Some of the successful activities include: interactive Hands on Danielle - Learn and Practice American Sign Language; Other Voices In The 607 - Self-Advocacy Group; Bingo; Pantry Cooking; Dating, Relationships, and Disabilities - How to Have Confidence and Succeed; and so much more that rotate weekly. The schedule can be found weekly at www.racker.org/events

Thank you for your continuing commitment in supporting people with disabilities and their families!

Fashion Show

Three of our Wilkins Preschool graduates had a unique opportunity last Spring – they were in a fashion show at Cornell University! The kids were designs created by Julia DeNey, a 2020 Cornell graduate majoring in Fashion Design.

Julia started working with our preschool as the Philanthropic Chair for her sorority, volunteering her time at the preschool and learning how children with autism or other special needs struggle to find clothes that feel comfortable. As she worked on her fashion line for the 2019 show, Julia focused on sensory friendly clothing options that incorporated compression (linings, fidgets, tag-free shirts, and other adaptations to make clothes more comfortable and inclusive for children.

Based on her years of independent research, Julia has spent her time since graduation working on launching her own online clothing label that meets the sensory needs of children, called Senseational You. We are thrilled to see the fashion industry paying attention to these unique challenges, and even more thrilled that some of our preschoolers were able to participate!

Thank you for your continuing commitment in supporting people with disabilities and their families!
2019 Annual Report

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John & Ann Racker Costello
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For more information on how you can become a Racker Society Member call Bob Brazill at 607.272.5891 x 224

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Our special friends, who by their thoughtful actions and planned giving, have helped to build and sustain Racker for future generations.
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Fall 2020 9
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**Program Spotlights & Financials 2019**

**Early Childhood and Clinical**

- Racker provides school based mental health services for students attending the Turning Point programs at Tompkins-Seneca-Tioga and Onondaga-Cortland-Madison BOCES. In addition, we work with children, families, and schools to support students’ overall success in their home schools and communities.

**Community Support**

- The Community Support program offers a range of services in the community including Care Management, Family Resource, Self-Di&rection, Community Habilitation, Home Service, Respite, and more!

**Self-DIRECTION**

- Self-Di&rection empowers people to design supports based on their unique strengths and needs so they can live the life they want. Individuals and families work together with a team to customize services.

**Residential**

- Residential provides people with developmental disabilities of all ages a place where they can live and thrive. Our goal is to enhance the lives of participants by affording opportunities for lifelong community involvement in a nurturing environment.

**Public Support & Revenue**

- Residential Services $18,937,976.00 47%
- Children’s and Clinical Services $6,898,643.00 17%
- Community Support Services $5,797,520.00 14%
- Self-Directed Services $3,517,782.00 9%
- Counseling for School Success $3,152,617.00 8%
- Fundraising $1,327,952.00 3%
- Other Revenue $598,017.00 1%

**TOTAL**

$40,230,807.00 100%

**EXPENSES**

- Residential Services 49%
- Children’s and Clinical Services 19%
- Community Support Services 15%
- Self-Directed Services 9%
- Counseling for School Success 8%
- Fundraising 1%

**TOTAL**

100%

**FUNDRAISING**

- Children’s & Clinical Services, 19%
- Residential Services, 49%
- Community Support Services, 15%
- Self-Directed Services, 9%
You’re Invited to Racker’s Virtual Community Celebrations

Each county will have a week-long feature on our social media culminating with a live Zoom call celebrating the award recipients from that county!

For more information and to see a complete list of award winners, please visit racker.org/events and choose your desired county celebration.

**Tioga Celebration**
October 8
7PM

**Cortland Celebration**
October 15
7PM

**Tompkins Celebration**
October 22
7PM

Thank you to our Racker Champions who stepped forward to help make Racker Rivals Big Red - The Virtual Face-Off a success!

Racker Champions

Thank you to our Racker Champions who stepped forward to help make Racker Rivals Big Red - The Virtual Face-Off a success!