

QUARTERLY | SUMMER 2021

OUTLOOK Racker

WWW.RACKER.ORG

Supporting People with Disabilities

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

SATURDAY AUGUST 14TH, 2021

CORNELL UNIVERSITY

LYNAH RINK • 4PM



WWW.RACKER.ORG/HOCKEY • FOR UP TO DATE RRBR INFO



RACKER RIVALS BIG RED IS BACK!

THE SIMS LAB @ SUNY CORTLAND

RACKER COMMUNITY NEWS

RACKER ADVOCACY 2021



“ Since 2014, Racker Rivals Big Red has raised over \$700,000 for Racker's Early Childhood Services while showcasing some of the world-class talent that has passed through our community. ”

Bob Brazill
BOB BRAZILL

Director
Community Relations and Development

RACKER RIVALS BIG RED

IS BACK!

I've been anxiously waiting to write this statement...Racker Rivals Big Red is back! Back to Lynah Rink! Back with your favorite players from the NHL, Cornell Hockey and local friends. On Saturday, August 14th we will resume our favorite fundraiser after a year of anxious anticipation. Cornell Men's Hockey Coach Mike Schafer will captain Team Big Red against Team Racker, captained by Tompkins Trust CEO Greg Hartz.

Since 2014, this game has raised over \$700,000 for Racker's Early Childhood Services while showcasing some of the world-class talent that has passed through our community. This year's roster will not disappoint. Headlined by Stanley Cup winners, NHL Hall of Famers and current NHL stars, Racker Rivals Big Red raises money to provide children with the tools to overcome obstacles. All players will compete on the ice and through the player pledging fundraising challenge detailed in this edition of the Outlook.

Our organization is so thankful for the friendship of Coach Schafer, Greg Hartz and former Cornell Captain Topher Scott. It was Topher who approached Racker with this idea in 2014 and has consistently helped provide organization and guidance throughout the years. 'Schafe' and 'Toph' reach out to their vast hockey network to bring in great talent for this game, and provide a showcase of hockey greats each year. With Greg's leadership, Tompkins Trust Company continues to be our title sponsor each year, and helps bring community partners to the game. All of this is extremely impressive, but let's not forget what they accomplished last year.

In 2020, Racker Rivals Big Red was a Virtual Faceoff that pitted Greg against Mike in a fundraising competition where every \$1,000 was the equivalent of one goal. Throughout June and July these captains brought out the best in their fundraising teams and entered the final day of the competition tied 50-50- over \$100,000 in player pledges. At the end of the day, it was Spencer Margaret, a star on Coach Schafer's team, who received the final pledge that pushed Big Red to the win. When combined with the generosity of local sponsors and private foundations, the game finished by raising a net total of \$170,000. All of this without dropping the puck for a face-off. We were humbled by the generosity of this community and so thankful for our many friends that fundraised or pledged their favorite player.

Our team is thrilled to bring this game back on the ice where it belongs. We will bring the lessons from 2020 to this year's game. Please follow our player pledging page and Racker's social media pages for updates. 🏒

WWW.RACKER.ORG/HOCKEY

THE SIMS LAB

at SUNY Cortland



CORTLAND RACKER PRESCHOOL has had the pleasure of working with Tim Davis of SUNY Cortland for many years in a variety of capacities.



Timothy D. Davis, Ph.D.

Tim first started working with Racker when he introduced some of our students and families to the Sensory Integration Motor Sensory/Multi-Sensory Environment (SIMS) Lab at SUNY Cortland. Some of our students have also attended SUNY Cortland's Challenger Program where they worked on adapted physical education activities with college students at SUNY.

The SUNY Cortland SIMS Lab provides a service to individuals in the community with sensory processing needs which can cause clumsiness, behavior issues, anxiety, and issues in school. SUNY has created a safe haven for families who experience these issues.

Last year, Tim Davis brought an exciting opportunity to the Cortland preschool. The "Sensory Fit" Families Project was developed as a partnership between Golisano Children's Hospital, SUNY Cortland Physical Education Department, the SIMS Lab, and the Racker Preschool in Cortland. The project purpose was two-fold. First, Racker families received free equipment to be used to promote sensory-based activities at home. Second, Racker therapists providing teleservices to families used and applied the sensory-based equipment in an interdisciplinary approach to meeting child goals.

This project came during the height of Covid at a critical time when our students were learning through remote instruction. Our families appreciated having opportunities at home because all children can benefit from appropriate sensory experiences.

There is much research available demonstrating the benefits of using sensory-based activities at home and creating sensory-rich environments for ALL children. However, for children who struggle with sensory regulation (the ability to manage sensory input from the environment around them), the world can be a scary and challenging place. Small changes to daily routine, adjustments in textures (e.g. food or clothing), demands of fine and gross motor activities (e.g. playground, toy, or rules), and social expectations are often overwhelming for those children, causing chaos and meltdowns that can significantly impact home and family life. The project understands how hectic and chaotic life can be for child with sensory integration difficulty. Therefore, the goal of the Sensory Fit Families Project was to provide sensory-based activity suggestions that could fit easily into the daily home routine and the routine of the teleservice provider(s) working with the child.

The project provided items such as: a *spooner board* for balance/ vestibular, sound steppers for proprioception, a box of tactile fun activities, and a Vinyl Rollout from *Fit and Fun Playscapes* to do obstacle course activities.

We never would have been able to provide these wonderful sensory kits and opportunities without the excellent leadership of Tim Davis and the help of our partners at Golisano Children's Hospital, SUNY Cortland Physical Education Department and Sensory Integration Motor Sensory/Multi-Sensory Environment Lab.

Racker hopes to continue and grow our collaboration for years to come. 🌱

By: Sonia Ferro, Cortland Early Childhood Director



RACKER RIVALS BIG RED

Pledge your favorite player! Every pledge will support children with disabilities in our community.

Name _____ ☐ This gift is anonymous

Billing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

PAYMENT TYPE ☐ credit card (enter information below) ☐ check enclosed (make payable to Racker)

Please bill my: (circle one) VISA / MASTERCARD / DISCOVER / AMEX

Card number: _____ 3-digit security code _____

Name on card: (please print) _____

Expiration date: _____ Signature: _____

**Please return completed form (this full page) along with payment to
Racker, 3226 Wilkins Road, Ithaca, NY 14850.
Or make your pledge online at www.racker.org/hockey**

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____ Alyssa Gagliardi | <input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____ Nick Rock |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____ Brandon French | <input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____ Shane Talarico |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____ Tony Eisenhut | <input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____ Brad Chartrand |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____ Mike Schafer | <input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____ Anthony Angello |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____ Pat Ouckama | <input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____ Sean Schmidt |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____ Andy Iles | <input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____ Dustin Brown |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____ Joe Palmer | <input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____ Ben Syer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____ Sean Flanagan | <input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____ David Iles |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____ Matt Hedge | <input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____ Paul Zarach |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____ Tom Turck | <input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____ Roger Dennis |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____ Danny Walcott | <input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____ Alex Green |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____ Ben White | <input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____ Jess Campbell |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____ Brian Myers | <input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____ Edith Racine |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____ Scott Pronti | <input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____ Joe Nieuwendyk (honorary coach) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____ Greg Hartz | <input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____ Arthur Mintz (announcer) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____ Eric Eisenhut | <input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____ Dan Brown (honorary referee) |

PLAYING HOCKEY • SUPPORTING PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES



AUGUST 14TH, 2021 - ALL PROCEEDS FROM THIS YEARS RACKER RIVALS BIG RED exhibition game will be put towards the much needed areas of our various Early Childhood Services. While we offer many support opportunities for people with disabilities through every stage of their life, our Early Childhood programs are the most underfunded.

An investment in Early Childhood programs can reduce the need for additional services later in life and sets the stage for continued success.

Our Preschool Special Education, Early Intervention, Evaluation, and Clinical Services help children of all abilities develop the skills they need to build healthy relationships, achieve future school success, and gain confidence. Racker professionals, working together with individuals' families, help provide the tools and resources needed to best support and encourage children at home and in the community.

These programs are life-changing for children. Unfortunately, our Early Childhood Services program runs at a remarkable

deficit. Year after year, state funding for these programs continues to fall short of the need.

Your support for Racker Rivals Big Red helps provide essential funding for the Early Childhood programs and makes a huge difference to the children we serve. Whether it's pledging a player, sharing the message, or even volunteering – **WE THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!**

Thank you to all the sponsors that have already stepped forward to make this years Racker Rivals Big Red one of the best yet!



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RACKER COMMUNITY NEWS



Opportunities for safe social connections, near-endless occasions to develop skills, and exciting tours of community locations are just a few of the things that make Racker's Virtual Activities so special. Not only have these activities helped bridge the gap during a time when social distancing was necessary, but they helped to create an invaluable sense of community, ensured continuity in programming, and helped develop relationships and strengthen a sense of belonging.

Racker's Virtual Activities has been an optimal learning environment for many in our Racker Community since May of 2020. While the activity schedule initially offered virtual content developed by Racker's Family Resource Program team, it has now grown to offer opportunities that incorporate content from external organizations. The many course offerings have supported life skill development including cooking courses, exercise regimens, and sign language – every course has been thoughtfully designed to be educational and skill building.

Today Racker is able to offer nearly twenty regular Virtual Activities, as well as exclusive opportunities each week. Whether it be the exercise class *Stay Active*, the self-advocacy group *Other Voices in the 607*, or virtual tours such as the *Metropolitan Museum of Art*, events are diverse and likely to assist with the achievement of any goal. In the future, our activity schedule will include in-person events as well as support participants in identifying opportunities within their communities.

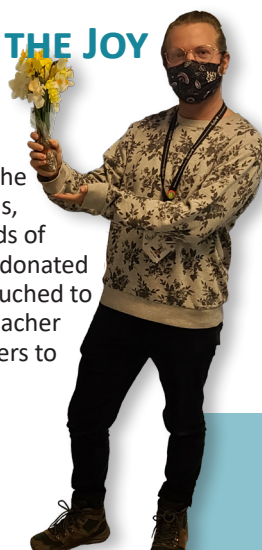
Racker's Virtual Activities calendar is posted on racker.org every Monday! Everyone in the Racker community including staff, friends and family are invited to join these activities where everyone can come together and succeed! 🌳

By: Dustin Zimmer, Senior Family Support Coordinator

OPERATION EXTEND THE JOY

Thank you once again to the incredible Daffodil Daze in Candor, NY. 2021 is the second year that they've donated stunning daffodils as part of their Operation Extend the Joy. Daffodil Daze has multitudes of daffodils, and their team of volunteers picks thousands of flowers to share with the community. They donated 72,000 flowers this year, and we were so touched to receive some. The flowers arrived during Teacher Appreciation Week, so we handed out flowers to all of our incredible preschool staff.

Thank you, Daffodil Daze! 🌳



CLAIRE VAN DEUSEN MEMORIAL

Earlier this spring, the Racker family lost a very important person – Claire Van Deusen. Claire began with Racker in 1995 supporting the residential program. Throughout the years, Claire supported a variety of departments and programs, and in 2012, joined the HR team as administrative support. Claire's presence at Wilkins Road was a constant for many years, assisting staff and visitors everyday. Her creativity could be seen throughout the building, from how she welcomed people into the reception area to how she supported staff, to the birthday signs she made, to the constant supply of candy available at her desk to anyone who stopped for a visit.

The next time you're at Wilkins, please take a look at the beautiful cherry tree and granite stools placed in her memory. 🌳



CHILD DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL GRANT

It is no secret that the coronavirus pandemic hit child care centers hard. Not only did centers completely close for a time, but once they reopened necessary restrictions limited the size of classrooms and required new PPE (personal protective equipment) and intensive cleaning routines for safety. Racker's preschools were no exception to this.

In response, our incredible community rose up to help. The Child Development Council of Central New York put together an "Intergenerational Campaign to Save Child Care". With the combined leadership of many local organizations including Cornell Academic Professors Emeriti (CAPE), the President's Council on Cornell Women, and the Community Foundation of Tompkins County, the Child Development Council has so far been able to offer Racker, in addition to many other organizations, several generous grants to offset our losses from this challenging time.

Racker is extremely lucky to be part of such a supportive community. Thank you to all those involved in helping make sure our child care community is here to stay for generations to come. 🌳

If you'd like to learn more about the Intergenerational Campaign to Save Child Care, please visit: www.childdevelopmentcouncil.org/adopt-a-classroom

WE HAVE CHILD CARE OPENINGS IN ITHACA & CORTLAND!
CALL OUR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION SERVICES TEAM AT 607.272.5891 (ITHACA) OR 607.753.9375 (CORTLAND)

Racker Advocacy 2021

LEGISLATIVE FORUMS

In the midst of the 2021 budget season, the Racker community had the opportunity to speak with our local New York Senators about the needs of our families and staff. These virtual discussions provided a forum for stories, questions and answers during an unprecedented budget season.

On March 4th, we were joined by Senator Fred Akshar (52nd district) and Senator Peter Oberacker (51st district). During the forum, our representatives heard from Gayle Pado and her son Christian about staff turnover related to wage rates, and asked how they plan to advocate for a wage increase in the budget. Executive Director, Dan Brown, moderated the discussion and talked about how New York State rates are hindering our ability to find and keep staff.

Racker Board President, Emily Papperman started the second legislative forum with Senator Tom O'Mara (58th district) and Senator Pamela Helming (54th district) by describing her relationship with Racker since receiving services as a child. Racker Community Support Professional, Joanie Groome, spoke about a living wage for people in our industry and staffing difficulties related to the current wage rate. The senators also heard from families about access to services and the barriers the pandemic has created for people in our programs. The Mutolo family, Paul, Jennifer, and Andrew discussed the impact that Early Intervention services had on their son, and their importance to the community.

The forums helped raise awareness to the advocacy efforts of Racker and other human service organization around New York State. All four senators pledged to help the Racker community by supporting our fight for wage and rate increases for our programs. 🌳

You can help our advocacy efforts by visiting www.racker.org/advocacy



March 2021 Legislative Forum with Senator Akshar, Senator Oberacker, Senator O'Mara, & Senator Helming

HISTORY OF PRIDE MONTH

A message from Racker's Diversity and Inclusion Committee:

June is Pride Month for LGBTQ+ folks, so to continue our efforts in supporting diversity, equity and inclusion here are some facts:



ON A HOT SUMMER'S NIGHT in New York on June 28, 1969, police raided the Stonewall Inn, a gay club in Greenwich Village, which resulted in bar patrons, staff, and neighborhood residents rioting onto Christopher Street outside. Among the many leaders of the riots was black, trans, bisexual woman, Marsha P. Johnson — leading the movement to continue over six days with protests and clashes. The message was clear; protestors demanded the establishment of places where LGBTQ+ people could go and be open about their sexual orientation without fear of arrest.



PRIDE MONTH IS LARGELY CREDITED as being started by bisexual activist, Brenda Howard. Known as, "The Mother of Pride," a year after the Stonewall Riots, Brenda organized Gay Pride Week and the Christopher Street Liberation Day Parade. This eventually morphed into what we now know as the New York City Pride March, and from where parades and marches across the world evolved.



SPEAKING OF THE RAINBOW FLAG, it was actually gay politician, Harvey Milk, who asked a talented designer friend, Gilbert Baker, to design an all-encompassing symbol to take on San Francisco's Pride March in 1978. Sadly, Harvey Milk was assassinated along with Mayor, George Moscone, on November 23, 1978 in San Francisco City Hall by Dan White, a disgruntled former Supervisor, who was angry at Milk who had lobbied hard against having him reappointed on the Board of Supervisors.



BILL CLINTON WAS THE FIRST US President to officially recognize Pride Month in 1999 and 2000. Then, from 2009 to 2016, Barack Obama declared June LGBTQ+ Pride Month.

WHY IS ADVOCACY IMPORTANT?

New York State, people with disabilities and their families have rights and opportunities. However, people looking to exercise these rights or access available opportunities must be proactive, and that takes time and effort. Family members of people with disabilities should know that you must work to obtain what your family member with a disability and your family need. Research your rights and where to access the supports, services and opportunities you need and then actively seek out the appropriate officials, state agencies and other organization to obtain the supports for you or your family member. This frequently requires face-to-face meetings. You will sometimes need to be persistent in advocating for what you, your loved one and your family require.

A great starting point is to visit racker.org/advocacy or contact your Care Coordinator.

SUMMER 2021

OUTLOOK

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WWW.RACKER.ORG

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We're Hiring!

New Starting Wage!

Starting now through December 31, 2021, Direct and Community Support Professionals will earn up to

\$17 per hour!*

Plus we offer:

- ✓ Set Schedules
- ✓ Paid Leave
- ✓ Full & Part-Time Shifts
- ✓ Tuition Reimbursement
- ✓ Full Benefits
- ✓ Career Advancement Opportunities!



* CSPs working at least 10 scheduled hours per week and DSPs will earn a temporary base rate of \$15 per hour combined with a temporary Premium pay of \$2 per hour totaling \$17 per hour!
Relief DSPs and CSPs working less than 10 scheduled hours will earn a temporary base rate of \$14 per hour combined with a temporary Premium pay of \$2 per hour totaling \$16 per hour!

Racker



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PHOTOGRAPHY Racker Staff, Friends of Racker, Ned Dykes, SUNY Cortland

