

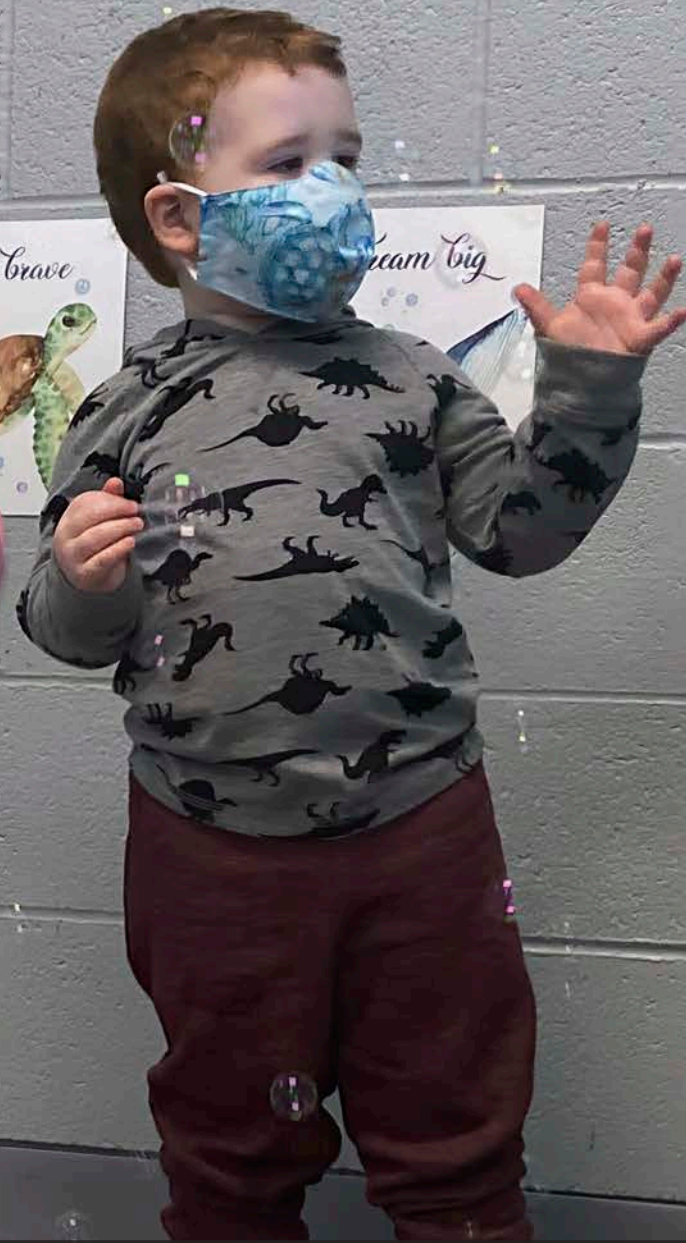
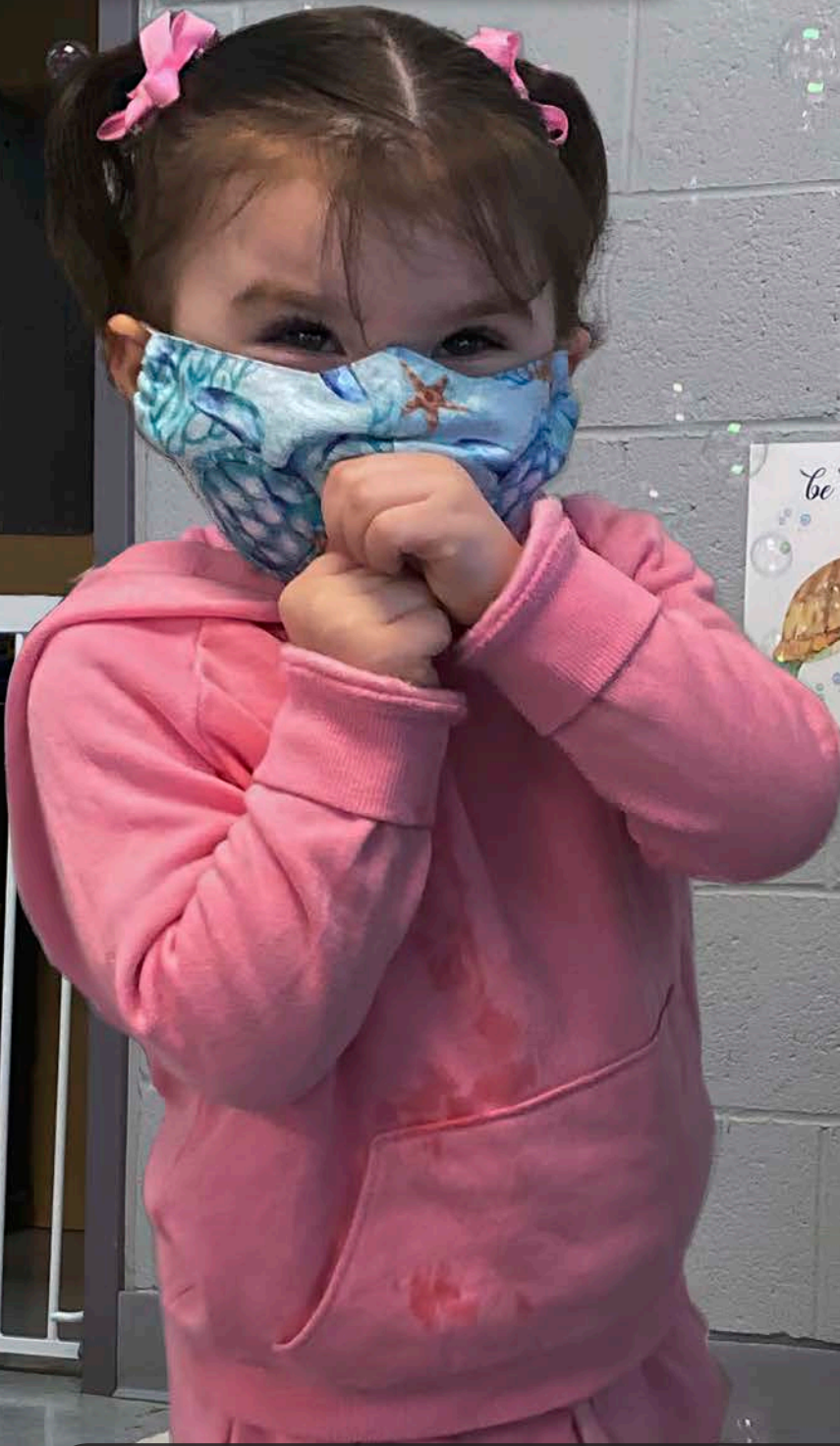
# OUTLOOK

Racker   
Supporting People with Disabilities

QUARTERLY | FALL 2021

WWW.RACKER.ORG

# BACK TO SCHOOL!



2021 COMMUNITY CELEBRATION WINNERS  
DSP/CSP APPRECIATION WEEK

RACKER RIVALS BIG RED RECAP  
SOUTHERN TIER WORKFORCE RALLY

# FROM THE DESK OF *Anne Schneider*



Anne Schneider, PT, DPT, C/NDT  
Director  
Clinical Services

**E**arly Childhood Services bravely navigated the COVID-19 pandemic. Our preschool programs provided in-person services since July 2020, making us one of the first in the state to provide full day, 5-day-a-week programming. Our staff also supported remote programming for children who were not able to return to in-person services. Staff would drive packets to homes and meet with families on their door step to ensure that the Racker connection remained and to provide support to families. We received grant money to be able to provide iPads to children and families so that they could increase access to remote learning. The offices of our Racker preschool were filled with fabulous remote learning packets. These packets weren't just a couple of worksheets to fill the need, these packages were filled with hands on activities that would truly meet the learning needs of our Early Childhood learners. Staff also posted videos, held Zoom classrooms, and provided virtual therapy sessions to support families in those times when COVID forced us into isolation.

**O**ur staff were able to provide opportunities for families to connect and learn how to support their child's needs with the Racker Speaker Series. These monthly Zoom meetings tackled topics like picky eaters, challenging behaviors, functional communication, safety at home, and more. These sessions were facilitated by our social work team and our speakers included speech and occupational therapists, special education teachers, local police department members, and community support services. Our physical and occupational therapists offered in person community classes, Yoga and Movement and Regulation, in the summer of 2021 to offer a bridge for families and children who hoped to improve their skills in preparation for the upcoming school year.

**R**acker Therapists provided in-person services. These services took place in schools, homes, day cares, parks, backyards, Racker sites, and even virtually to ensure that we were meeting all the needs of the families. And they did this all while managing their COVID PPE and being flexible with changing needs based on COVID's ugly spread. It was truly no child left behind.

**R**acker's evaluation team expanded their reach and capacity to meet the needs of children and families to ensure that children could be identified for services and meet the deadlines for the upcoming 2021/2022 school year. COVID impacted timelines and provider availability and Racker stepped in to fill that need for our community. We continued to provide best practice and quality evaluations while offering families a supportive ear. There were upticks in behaviors and lack of exposure and overall chaos in the lives of our community members. Our goal is to be sure to help families navigate their path out of COVID and identify when the concern rises up to an interventional need or provide strategies for families to implement on their own.

**M**y colleagues at Racker, this amazing team of therapists, have earned the respect and gratitude of everyone in this organization. I want to say thank you for your dedication to the families during such uncertain times. Your clients will carry the success of your resilience and expertise for the rest of their lives.





# DSP/CSP APPRECIATION WEEK

Last month, Support Professionals across the country were celebrated during Direct Support Professionals Recognition Week! From September 12-18, our Direct Support Professionals and Community Support Professionals were recognized for their hard work and dedication to their jobs. Racker's DSPs and CSPs are a committed, innovative, and driven group of staff, and we are so grateful for the role they play in Racker's vision of a world where all people know they belong. 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, they work enhance the lives of people with disabilities and families in our community.

One week of thanks will never be enough for these crucial members of the Racker community. Thank you to all of our DSPs & CSPs today and every day!  
Your work changes lives! 🌱



## SOUTHERN TIER WORKFORCE RALLY

On Tuesday, September 21st local provider associations, families, and regional legislators held a rally to support a funding increases for nonprofits serving people with disabilities. Led by Senator Fred Akshar, and representatives from Assemblywoman Lupardo's office helped to bring messaging forward to support an increase in wages for direct support professionals to advocate against cuts in programs and services.

Hosted by ACHIEVE in Binghamton, the rally took place at Otsiningo Park and was live streamed on Facebook. Attendees and participants were provided a call to action to contact Gov. Hochul's office with messages of support to increase funding for services and programs for people with disabilities across New York State. Provider associations lamented the staff crisis for direct support professional and community support professionals due to low wages. The important work of these professionals enhances the quality of life for the people they serve and the families they support. Staffing levels are all time lows due to COVID and low wages.

To quote Senator Fred Akshar: "DSPs represent the very best in compassion and dedication to serving families and individuals who need it most. It takes a special kind of person to serve the complex needs of our community's most vulnerable. You are the backbone of an entire segment in our community. It is time New York started treating you like that."

To support funding for people with disabilities, please visit Racker's advocacy page: [www.racker.org/advocacy](http://www.racker.org/advocacy) 🌱



## 2021 AL FELMET AWARD WINNER

# Emily Papperman

Emily Papperman is the 2021 recipient of the Al Felmet Award presented by the Cerebral Palsy Affiliates of New York State. This award recognizes a person in an organization whose achievements are an inspiration to others. As the current Racker Board President, Emily has inspired others with her leadership and commitment to the mission of Racker. She has presided over the board of directors during the COVID 19 pandemic and led with steadfast direction.

Emily's accomplishments were not only recognized by the CP Affiliates of NYS, but also by the board presidents that preceded her tenure. Nancy Malina served as board president from 2018 through 2020 and recognized Emily's inspiration with a letter to the award committee. To quote a section of Nancy's letter of nomination: "Early on in our acquaintance I became fully aware of her profound intellect and talents, as well as her magnanimous nature and willingness to share those gifts with her community. I am amazed by her fortitude, bravery and good spirit".

David Campbell served as Racker Board President from 2016 through 2018 and immediately recognized Ms. Papperman's ability to inspire those around her. "As board chair, Emily has used the opportunity to shape the board agenda, and identify ways in which the board can learn more about disability, cerebral palsy and the concerns of the people Racker serves and their families."

For those of us that work at Racker, Emily is a person we can always count on to help advocate for funding and speak up about the importance of our programs. The Al Felmet Award seeks to find one person in New York State who inspires people of all abilities. All of us are proud and fortunate to have a leader like Emily Papperman.



In our Residential Program, Regional Director Kim Belden was honored with the Staff Award at the conference. This award is given to a staff members who work exceeds expectations. Congratulations to Kim Belden!

## NEXT ISSUE:

# The Art of Racker



# COMMUNITY CELEBRATIONS

The Special Friend Award is given to a community member in each county in recognition of their support, service, and devotion to Racker and its ideals.

The Community Partner Award (Formerly the Brick Miscall Award) is given to a community member or organization in each county that works to improve the lives of people with disabilities and exemplifies our mission and vision.

The Inspiration Award is given to a staff member whose approach to work encourages and inspires enthusiasm in others to support the mission and vision of Racker.

The Mary Hutchens Award is given to a staff member who embodies employee engagement by helping team members be fulfilled in their work. This award was created in honor of Mary Hutchens, whose approachability, integrity, empathy, and optimism brought out the best in her team during her years at Racker.

The Franziska Racker Award is given to a staff member who in word and deed exemplifies the high standard of caring and dedication to the agency's mission that is our legacy from Dr. Racker.



## Sioga County

## Tompkins County

## Cortland County

Rebecca Smith

**Inspiration Award**

Courtney Rupert

**Inspiration Award**

Equinox Press

**Community Partner Award**

Wendy Gutman

**Inspiration Award**

Lyndsey Paulin

**Inspiration Award**

Nicole Coleman

**Inspiration Award**

Friends of Stewart Park

**Community Partner Award**

Brigitte Eckert

**Inspiration Award**

Rebecca Loiacono

**Inspiration Award**

Cornell Cooperative Extension  
Oneida County

**Community Partner Award**

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Dr. Monica Van Houten, Au.D.

**Franziska Racker Award**

Lillian Hwang- Geddes

**Special Friend Award**

Christopher Kiser

**Mary Hutchens Award**



# RACKER RIVALS BIG RED

## RRBR 2021 RECAP



Racker was able to return to the beautiful Lynah Rink to hold the 7th annual Racker Rivals Big Red in-person on August 14th, 2021. After a long year off, everyone was thrilled to safely gather to play hockey and raise money for Racker's Early Childhood Services!

Thank you to our players, sponsors, volunteers, and donors for making 2021 our best year yet.

We raised over \$178,000 to support the vital and critically underfunded early childhood program, bringing the total amount raised over the last seven years to \$910,000! Wow! Thank you to everyone who made this possible, but especially to Coach Mike Schafer, Greg Hartz, Topher Scott, Coach Doug Derraugh, Shane Talarico, and everyone at Cornell that helped us safely gather for a wonderful afternoon. See you next year! 🌲



### SPENCER MARGARET SEALS THE WIN FOR BIG RED

For the second straight year, Spencer Margaret gave Team Big Red the lead as the pledging competition came to a close. In 2020, it was Spencer whose final pledges gave Coach Schafer's team a victory with some very timely donations in the final minute. In 2021, she did it again with some very generous donations right before faceoff that gave Big Red a 2 goal advantage heading into the game. Congratulations, and thank you to Spencer!

Once again, the player pledging was a competition between Team Racker (Captain Greg Hartz) and Team Big Red (Captain Mike Schafer). The teams combined to raise over \$99,000, with Team Big Red winning the pledge competition by \$2,000. Following the game, Racker received word that the Cutting Family made an extremely generous gift in memory of Robb Cutting. This donation was split between both teams as Robb, Mike and Greg were all close friends. We are so thankful to Marcia Cutting and her family. To quote Greg Hartz: "Robb was a close friend and a longtime key member of the Toothless Bears. He was a leader in the community and there's no doubt he would be playing in the RRBR game and raising money for Racker - that's just who he was."

## TEAM CANADA WOMEN'S HOCKEY

On August 11, Topher Scott of The Hockey Think Tank moderated a Virtual Forum with Cornell Women's Hockey Alumnae Jaime Bourbonnais, Brianne Jenner, Rebecca Johnston, Kristin O'Neill, Jillian Saulnier and Micah Zandee-Hart.

These former Cornell players were preparing both for the World Championships as well as attempting to make the 2022 Canadian Olympic team. Shortly after our Virtual Forum, where they discussed leadership, teamwork, and resilience, the women took home the 2021 Women's Ice Hockey World Championship! Congratulations on the win and thank you again for supporting Racker! 🌲



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| Andy Boerman      | Spencer Margaret |
| Patrick Bohn      | Greg Miller      |
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| Brad Chartrand    | Joe Palmer       |
| Taylor Cianfarano | Scott Pronti     |
| Kevin Cole        | Edith Racine     |
| Cornell Pep Band  | Mike Richter     |
| Roger Dennis      | Nick Rock        |
| Doug Derraugh     | John Schafer     |
| Cristine Donovan  | Mike Schafer     |
| Eric Eisenhut     | Sean Schmidt     |
| Tony Eisenhut     | Topher Scott     |
| Frank Fetsko      | Kent Scriber     |
| Sean Flanagan     | Bob Shattell     |
| Tom Fox           | Mitch Stephens   |
| Brandon French    | Ben Syer         |
| Alyssa Gagliardi  | Shane Talarico   |
| Alex Green        | Tom Turck        |
| Greg Hartz        | Mitch Vanderlaan |
| Matthew Hedge     | Danny Walcott    |
| Myra Hubbell      | Ben White        |
| Andy Iles         | Paul Zarach      |
| Dave Iles         |                  |



# Racker RIVALS BIG RED

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*Thank You!  
 See You  
 Next Year*

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- |                                    |                  |
|------------------------------------|------------------|
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| Dan Kelly                          | David Williams   |
| Drew Kelly                         | Katie Williams   |
| Linda Kepford                      | Cheryl Yawman    |
| Christopher Kiser                  | Megan Yawman     |
| April Leiter                       | Eric Yetter      |
| Mike Leiter                        | Ruthanne Yetter  |
| Steve Lipinski                     | Sarah Yetter     |
| Yvonne Lomax                       | Dustin Zimmer    |
| Cornell Men & Women's Hockey Teams |                  |

FALL 2021

# OUTLOOK

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