

JQ Jubilee Quarterly



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A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF JUBILEE ASSOCIATION OF MARYLAND



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Elaine Carney in Hyannisport, MA to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Special Olympics with Kennedy family members and Robin Roberts of ABC's Good Morning America.



Elaine Carney

Elaine's Story

By Elaine Carney
as told to Genevieve Leary

Growing up the neighborhood kids would tease me and call me names like retarded. I never liked it when they did this to me. One winter day when I was at my grandmother's house, I went to go play at the park with the rest of the neighborhood kids. While I was enjoying myself, some of the kids came up to me and started to pick on me. They would not leave me alone so I decided to take matters into my own hands. I decided to walk all the way home without telling anyone.

When my grandmother called all the kids in, everyone else came except me. This put my grandmother into a panic. She started to call everyone she knew except my dad because she knew how upset he would get if he knew I was missing. I was only six years old at the time. On my way home, a neighbor offered to take me in and let me wait at her house until my parents came home. She gave me some milk and graham crackers and I was able to warm up from the cold and feel safe. The kindness of this neighbor is something I have never forgotten.

During first grade, I had many difficulties and struggled to keep up

My mom reassured me that everything would be all right and that my disabilities would never stop me from being able to live a full life.



Tigest Alemu and Elaine Carney with Special Olympics athlete Loretta Claiborne

with all the other kids in my class. The teacher would not provide me much support when I would fail. Instead, she would tell me to redo the work, but without proper support, I never performed any better than my first attempt. By the end of the year, I had flunked out of the first grade. I spent what seemed like the whole summer taking these extremely painful tests that did not make much sense. This was not easy for me to understand. Thankfully, the following year my family decided to enroll me at Holy Spirit School where I was able to continue my education in a supportive environment. After Holy Spirit, I went on to Lt. Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr. Institute in Washington, D.C.

It was not until my pre-teen years that my mom sat me down and explained to me that I had disabilities. This was very hard for me to take in. I started to remember all the painful tests I had to go through after flunking out of first grade. My mom reassured me that everything would be all right and that my disabilities would never stop me from being able to live a full life.

I graduated from high school and then began to work a variety of jobs. Eventually, I started to feel a lot of

pressure from my friends to grow up and move out of my parents' home. So one day I decided to do just that. This was not an easy transition for me. My first set of roommates and the people who encouraged me to move out took advantage of my kindness and manipulated me in a variety of ways. I became stuck in this environment for two terrible years.

The majority of my '20s and '30s, I spent working all sorts of jobs. My favorite was working in a nursing home. I was also able to settle into a condominium in Rockville Town Center where I lived for years. I got a knock at the door and it was Jim, Jubilee's first Program Director. When he entered my home, he asked if he could use my phone. I told him it was somewhere in the kitchen, on the countertop. He told me he needed to call my brother, Tommy, immediately because my house was so disorganized. Once he got Tommy on the phone he told him, "She needs help right away."

Later that week, Dawn, a Jubilee Residential Counselor, came to visit me. When she arrived, she had brought along a friend, Holly, who loved meeting people. We took a walk that day and then started taking walks regularly together. This would be the start of a beautiful friendship.

At times, we shared the same residential counselor and our bond grew. Over the years, Holly and I would become inseparable until one day Holly asked me if I wanted to live together. I jumped at the chance to live with my best friend. We had such a wonderful time in each other's company. My favorite pastime with Holly was walking to McDonald's every chance we could get when there were no counselors around. I would treat my dear friend to an Ice Tea and Diet Coke. We enjoyed these moments of freedom and independence together, where we would walk, talk and have a ball with nobody around.

Tommy made the right decision by calling Jubilee, I really think he did. From the counselors to the activities to the friendships I have made, Jubilee was the right choice for me.



Brett, Mindy, and Joe Badin

Circle of Friends

By Steve Keener

We all depend on relationships and human interactions to meet our needs for connection and nourish our souls — with family, coworkers, teammates, members of our churches, and friends. These relationships are just as essential for the people Jubilee supports. Central to Jubilee's mission is responding to the loneliness experienced by many of the people we support and at the same time helping them find avenues to share their gifts with the broader community.

At Jubilee, there is a circle of friends around each home. It includes the people who live in the home, their families, the counselors who work in the home, and friends.

Please consider joining a Jubilee circle of friends. Each circle of friends is

connected to a single home. If you are not already connected to people supported by Jubilee, consider joining the circle of friends for a home close to where you live.

Those of us who work in the Jubilee office are also excited to be part of circles of friends. My family and I, for example, are joining the circle of friends for St. John's house in Silver Spring.

As part of these social opportunities, health and safety of the people we support will be important. Jubilee counselors will participate in all activities where their support is needed. For activities where counselor support is not needed, circle of friends members introduced by Jubilee must undergo a background check and health and



safety review conducted by Jubilee before activities are permitted without a Jubilee counselor present.

Jubilee's volunteer coordinator will maintain contact lists for each circle of friends to help members get in touch with each other for parties, collaboration, etc.

To learn more or to join a Jubilee circle of friends, please contact Monicquea Chance at mchance@jubileemd.org or 301-949-8628 ext. 170.

As a member of a circle of friends, you might:

- Come over for a meal. You're welcome to bring a dish or help cook.
- Invite people to your home or out for a meal.
- Invite people out for community events and activities.
- Celebrate birthdays and other milestones together.
- Volunteer to help with household needs.
- Watch (or play) sports together.
- Get to know other people who are part of your circle of friends, including the families of the people who live in the home.
- Be prepared to receive as much as you give.

Our annual Client Council Ocean City trip in September 2019 was a big hit with beach time, boardwalk and a BBQ enjoyed by 117 people who receive support from Jubilee.

2019 Ocean City Beach Trip



These discussions are asking us to sensitively think more deeply about how we can better use language to honor one another.



Call Me By My Name

By Steve Keener

"I am a human being. I don't want to be described by my limitations. I don't like being called an 'individual.' I want to be called Max." These are the words of Max Poznerzon, speaking at the Jubilee Client Council meeting on the evening of August 26, 2019. The topic of discussion was language. In a series of meetings over the last few months, members of the Jubilee community have been reflecting on how we speak. At this meeting, members of the Client Council were talking about how they want to be

described. In what was at times an emotional conversation, the message from those who shared was a preference to be called by name and not labeled as an "individual."

To those outside the disability services world, the way the term individual is used may sound strange. For example, you might hear a group of five people described as two staff members and three individuals. One of our publications, the Jubilee Insider, was previously captioned "a monthly newsletter for Jubilee staff,

individuals and their families." To those familiar with the term in this context, individual indicates a person with an intellectual disability.

The term individual was adopted by Jubilee and others for good reasons. Individual is a positive word, suggesting dignity and unique one-of-a-kind personhood. It also replaced negative language like "retardation" and "disability" and transactional descriptions like "consumer" and "client."

But these discussions are asking us to sensitively think more deeply about

*We want to spend more time sharing
common interests and celebrating gifts;
less time defining people by their limitations.*



Jubilee Community comes together at annual cook-out

how we can better use language to honor one another. What we have learned so far is that we want to do better at knowing and using each other's names. We also want to spend more time sharing common interests and celebrating gifts; less time defining people by their limitations.

In response to what we've learned, Jubilee team members are making an effort to move away from using the word individual as a designation for a person's disability. We are doing

our best to call each other by name. And when we use labels, we are trying to limit them to places where they are needed and descriptive in a way that matters in the context. When I talk to Jubilee's finance team about billing for support services, it makes sense to designate clients and staff members. When I talk to our program services team, it often makes sense to distinguish the counselors and the people they are supporting. But there are also many other times when a reference

to someone's diagnosis just isn't necessary. When Max and I share a meal, his diagnosis probably isn't relevant. For many of us, this way of thinking means a change in posture. It is not as simple as finding the new politically correct label. Rather, how can we be less transactional, more relational, and more human? This shift asks us to think and be intentional. Thanks to everyone in the Jubilee community who has contributed to this important conversation.

Jubilee is supportive of the changes Maryland is making to improve service delivery and fiscal responsibility. But Jubilee now needs more cash than ever before to maintain sustainability.

Help Sustain our Work as Jubilee's Funding Changes

By Steve Keener

If you are reading this, Jubilee has probably touched your life. If you are family or a friend to someone supported by Jubilee, you know how important our work is.

Jubilee urgently needs your financial support. Will you consider giving to help us reach our goal of raising \$1 million of unrestricted funds before July 1, 2020? This funding is needed to sustain Jubilee's work when our funding changes next year.

In seven short months from now, the state of Maryland plans to make a change in how it pays for the services Jubilee provides. State funding accounts for more than 80% of the money Jubilee uses to fund our work. Currently, Maryland pays Jubilee 2 to 4 months in advance for services. This allows Jubilee to use state funds to pay its employees who are providing the services. Beginning July 1, 2020, Maryland will change from a pre-payment to reimbursement model. This means Jubilee will need to use its cash reserves to pay staff while



Yoga in the park with Margie Billian, Travon Budd, Mindy Badin, Yoshiko Slater, Jared Ciner and Monica Stewart.

waiting for reimbursement payments. Jubilee is supportive of the changes Maryland is making to improve service delivery and fiscal responsibility. But Jubilee now needs more cash than ever before to maintain sustainability. To avoid borrowing to make payroll, we estimate Jubilee needs unrestricted cash in an amount at least equal to

2 to 3 months of operating expenses. Jubilee currently has about 1.5 months of unrestricted operating expenses. Our goal is to raise at least one additional month (\$1 million) of unrestricted cash before July 1, 2020. If you are able, please consider increasing your investment in Jubilee this year.

To give, please mail a check payable to Jubilee Foundation, 10408 Montgomery Avenue, Kensington, MD 20895. Or visit www.jubileemd.org and click DONATE.

Remember Jubilee Association of Maryland in your work-place giving!

United Way # 9829
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The Jubilee Ruby Society Members

Thank you to our Ruby Society members who have committed to including Jubilee in their wills, bequests, or other planned giving. Interested in learning more? Contact us at directorofdevelopment@jubileemd.org or 301-949-8628 x 125.

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Save the date for April 18, 2020 as we look forward to next year's premier event.

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