



LifeStream

45

45th ANNIVERSARY **ANNUAL REPORT**





Cover photo:

Adam Graves Photography,
Padanaram Harbor, South Dartmouth, MA

Inside Back Cover photo:

Adam Graves Photography,
The boardwalk at Horseneck Beach, Westport, MA
adamgravesphoto.com

LifeStream's 45th Anniversary Annual Report is dedicated to our employees who went above and beyond to ensure the safety and well being of our individuals during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Dear LifeStream Family, Friends and Supporters:



Bonnie Mello
President/CEO

Even after twenty-eight years of working at LifeStream, I could never have anticipated the challenges we would face over the past two years. Although navigating the issues that COVID-19 presented has been a herculean task for all, it has nevertheless provided me the opportunity to witness first-hand the incredible strength and dedication of our employees who went above and beyond to ensure the well-being of the individuals we support. This annual report, celebrating our 45th anniversary, is dedicated to our incredible team.

Despite the changes that forced the interruption of some of our programs, there was much that we were still able to accomplish. We opened two new community-based residences, launched our Assistive Technology and Remote Services programs, expanded our outreach to children with autism, and continued to grow our Shared Living services. Importantly, we have also initiated a strategic planning process to help us leverage our strengths and identify opportunities for growth.

What began forty-five years ago as a grass-roots effort from local families seeking quality care for their adult children with disabilities is now one of the premier non-profit human service organizations in southeastern Massachusetts, and one of the area's largest employers. Despite our growth, we are still committed to the early vision of those parents who fought so hard to enrich the lives of their children.

In addition to the outstanding efforts of our workforce, we are also grateful for the support of those we serve, their family members, our hard-working Board of Directors, and many others in the surrounding community. We are confident that they share our pride in what we've accomplished.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bonnie Mello".

Bonnie Mello
President / CEO

Staying Strong in Challenging Times

C OVID-19 was no match for the fortitude, commitment and creativity LifeStream employees demonstrated throughout the pandemic. During the most challenging of times, employees put the health and safety of the individuals they support as their number one priority. They went above and beyond to make sure everyone was engaged in activities, special events and interacting socially with friends, all while prioritizing safety.

One of the greatest demonstrations of the sacrifice our employees made was moving into the residential homes that experienced positive cases of COVID for a two-week period to provide 24/7 support. This sacrifice allowed for the continuity of care to the individuals in their home. Each member of the LifeStream community played a critical role to ensure the least amount of impact on those we support.

“Whether someone was residing in a group home, living with a family through Shared Living or Adult Foster Care, or living independently in the community, we worked hard to ensure that everyone’s mental health needs were met” said Lori Kydd, LifeStream’s Vice President of Operations. In the absence of family visits, active social lives and day program attendance, it was vital to keep everyone engaged and connected. LifeStream employees quickly pivoted their service delivery to a virtual platform, including social groups, virtual meetings with family, meditation, yoga, bingo, cooking demonstrations, community events and even hosting a virtual holiday party. The Community and Family division’s management team offered two virtual groups each day, offering various topics of interest to make sure no one was isolated or alone in their home. Supplies needed to participate in the virtual groups were delivered by the staff to the individuals. “All of these critical supports were delivered by staff simultaneously while they struggled with the challenges of keeping their own families safe during the pandemic” said Lori.

“I would like to thank each and every member of our dedicated workforce” said Bonnie Mello, LifeStream’s President/CEO. “Their dedication and commitment to providing a safe environment for the individuals we support is truly remarkable. All of the services they provided were inspirational, creative and compassionate. Our employees’ ability to make each day special, regardless of the circumstances, is incredibly humbling and is deeply appreciated. I am proud to be part of a team of people so devoted to the work they do.”

Our employees’ ability to make each day special, regardless of the circumstances, is incredibly humbling and is deeply appreciated.

Bonnie Mello, President/CEO



Within Corinne, Anna found someone who wanted to expand her family and share both her life and her home,

Heather Dextradeur, Director of Community and Family Supports.



Anna and Corinne Shared Living Journey

When Corinne's son graduated from college and moved to a place of his own, she suffered the effects of "empty nest syndrome" and was in search of a greater purpose. After learning of LifeStream's Shared Living Program, Corinne knew this was a path she was ready to take. LifeStream introduced Corinne to Anna, an individual receiving services through the Massachusetts Department of Developmental Services (DDS), and a great partnership was born.

"Within Corinne, Anna found someone who wanted to expand her family and share both her life and her home," said Heather Dextradeur, LifeStream's Director of Community and Family Supports.

Corinne and Anna have bonded and have a great connection. They do many fun activities together, including shopping, attending community events and hosting family cookouts. "Anna asks for my advice on dating, friends, jobs and more," said Corinne. "We really enjoy each other's company."

Heather also noted how much of an advocate Corinne has been for Anna. "Anna is very bright and very social, and she wanted a job where her skills would be used. With Corinne's involvement, Anna was able to get a job as a cashier at Lowe's, which she loves."

Shared Living is a residential option for individuals with disabilities that provides them the opportunity to live in private family homes with dedicated caregivers. Each individual plays an active role in planning their daily routine and receives services tailored to their needs. Clinical supports are provided to individuals and their caregivers by LifeStream's experienced professionals. Eligible caregivers receive a daily stipend and paid room and board, along with the rewards of helping others.

Additional information on the Shared Living program is available on lifestreaminc.com under Disabilities Services.

Home Sweet Home

Joey loves his cozy apartment where he resides with support from LifeStream's Residential division. He is very proud of the décor which reflects his personal interests and style. Joey was thrilled to have the opportunity to live in an in-law apartment within a larger residential program. This offers him the privacy of his own space, the companionship of his housemates, and the support from staff 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to live his fulfilled life.

"While we provide Joey with the additional assistance he needs, we also know how important it is for him to maintain a level of independence," said Christen Dern, LifeStream's Assistant Director of Residential Services. She noted that while adjusting to COVID-19 restrictions has been a challenge, staff have kept him busy with virtual cooking classes and other activities. "His real passion is anything related to airplanes, and he looks forward to future visits to Logan and TF Green airports. Joey has resumed participating in day program services, is safely participating in community events of interest, and looks forward to returning to work.

LifeStream currently operates thirty-one community-based residences in the Greater New Bedford and Fall River communities. Each resident plays an active role in everyday decisions and the overall management of their home.

"We work very hard to ensure that our individuals feel comfortable in their homes, stay connected to family and friends, and actively participate in their surrounding community," said Christen.

Additional information on Residential Services is available on lifestreaminc.com under Disabilities Services.



We work very hard to ensure that everyone feels comfortable in their homes, stays connected to family and friends, and actively participates in their surrounding community.

Christen Dern, Assistant Director of Residential Services.





Day Services Foster Greater Independence

LifeStream offers a variety of day programs to further support individuals' goals of attaining greater independence. They include Day Habilitation, Living Skills/Community Based Day Supports, and Supported Employment

Our three Day Habilitation programs provide individualized medical, therapeutic and daily living skills to meet the various needs of individuals with Developmental Disabilities, Acquired Brain Injury, Autism and those who are medically fragile. Janet and Leandra participate in LifeStream's Living Skills program which includes training for everyday needs such as health, nutrition, cooking and community integration. Both Janet and Leandra volunteer weekly at the Dartmouth

YMCA's Sharing the Harvest Farm, where they participate in farming activities with other community members. "Community involvement is so important to those we support," said Loren Gastall, Assistant Director of Day Support Services. "Not only does it connect them with neighbors and friends, it also provides them the gratification of giving back and being good neighbors, something we all value."

All Day Habilitation programs incorporate physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech and language pathology.

Our Supported Employment and Community Based Day Support programs provide individuals with training to help secure and maintain employment in local businesses, with a focus on community integration. Job coaching is provided to assist individuals with employment in their unique areas of interest. "We work hard at matching those we support with job opportunities that meet their interests, which is critical to long-term success for both the individuals and their employers" said Doug Hughes, Vice President for Clinical Services. "Working alongside others and earning a paycheck is very important to them, and a great source of pride."

Additional information on Day Services is available on lifestreaminc.com under Disabilities Services.



Community involvement is so important to those we support

Loren Gastall, Assistant Director of Day Support Services

The Power of Community Partnerships

The New Bedford Community Crisis Intervention Team (CCIT) is a collaborative effort of law enforcement and community agencies that provides services for people experiencing a destabilizing crisis. LifeStream became a member in 2019 and is represented by Heather Dextrateur, LifeStream's Director of Community and Family Services.

LifeStream's participation in CCIT has been vital to several of the individuals we support, including one young woman with intellectual disabilities. On May 20, 2021, CCIT representatives were present at the Buttonwood Park Meeting Center to hear her story and celebrate her safety and the start of her new life.

At this meeting, Elizabeth Duffy, New Bedford area Director, Massachusetts Department of Disability Services (DDS), recalled being notified about a young woman whose caregiver had passed away unexpectedly, and who was placed in a home where she was at risk. After learning more about her situation and the dangers she faced, Ms. Duffy immediately

contacted Cindy Kolesinkas, DDS Outreach Coordinator and CCIT chairperson, and Sergeant Ortega from the New Bedford Police Department. At their request, LifeStream stepped in to provide her with housing and medical care with the assistance of other CCIT agencies.

The young woman who addressed the room on May 20th was far different from the one they would have met a year ago who was sad and frightened. She spoke clearly and confidently, with a smile from ear to ear. She began to sing, and asked the attendees to join her. They happily complied with broad smiles, and some tears of joy.

The collaborative effort of CCIT is a testament to the power of working together to bring about change. Forming relationships with health care providers, police officers, educators and social workers is essential to successfully address the growing needs of those in our community. LifeStream is proud and honored to play a role in this amazing endeavor.

CCIT representatives attending the May 20th meeting include (left to right): Cindy Kolesinkas, DDS Outreach Coordinator; Elizabeth Duffy, DDS Director for New Bedford; Heather Dextrateur, LifeStream's Director of Community and Family Services; and Sergeant Ortega, New Bedford Police Department.



Addressing the Needs of Children with Autism



Nathaniel has really grown and matured in the past few years.

Marcia Santos, Coordinator of Children's Services

As a child, school was not a comfortable place for Nathaniel. Diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) at an early age, he was bullied by other children and often acted out as a result. His grandmother, Pat, who has raised Nathaniel since infancy and legally adopted him several years ago, knew he had the potential to thrive in a different environment. With Pat's assistance and LifeStream's Department of Early and Secondary Education services, sixteen-year-old Nathaniel has done just that. "Nathaniel has really grown and matured in the past few years," said Marcia Santos, LifeStream's Coordinator of Children's Services. "We continue to assist him on improving his social and daily living skills, becoming more independent, and capitalizing on his strengths and interests. We're also trying to help Nathaniel become more involved with peer groups."

Given Nathaniel's struggles in the public schools, it was decided to enroll him at Cape Cod Collaborative Vocational, where he is able to develop his carpentry skills. "Nathaniel can fix anything!" said Pat. "He loves fixing things around the house, changing cabinet knobs, replacing car parts and more. With LifeStream's support, Nathaniel has found something he really enjoys and he is so much happier." In addition to his busy school schedule, Nathaniel also works part time at Market Basket.

Marcia emphasized the important role that Pat has played in Nathaniel's journey. "Her consistent love and support have been key to his success. She never wavered in her belief in Nathaniel's abilities and has worked hard to ensure his quality of life. His future is very bright as a result."

LifeStream has seen a growing need for Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) services and positive behavior supports for children with Autism, according to Doug Hughes, Vice President for Clinical Services. Under the Affordable Care Act, ABA services are covered by most health insurance plans for children up to twenty-one years of age with a medical diagnosis of ASD. LifeStream plans to expand both in-house and out-patient services to children and their families in the New Bedford and Fall River areas.

LifeStream has trained clinical staff, including a Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA), a Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker (LICSW), and a Licensed Mental Health Counselor (LMHC), all with an expertise in this area. "There are so many children diagnosed with ASD and a shortage of organizations qualified to address their needs," said Doug. "We are grateful for the opportunity to help many more children and their families in the near future."

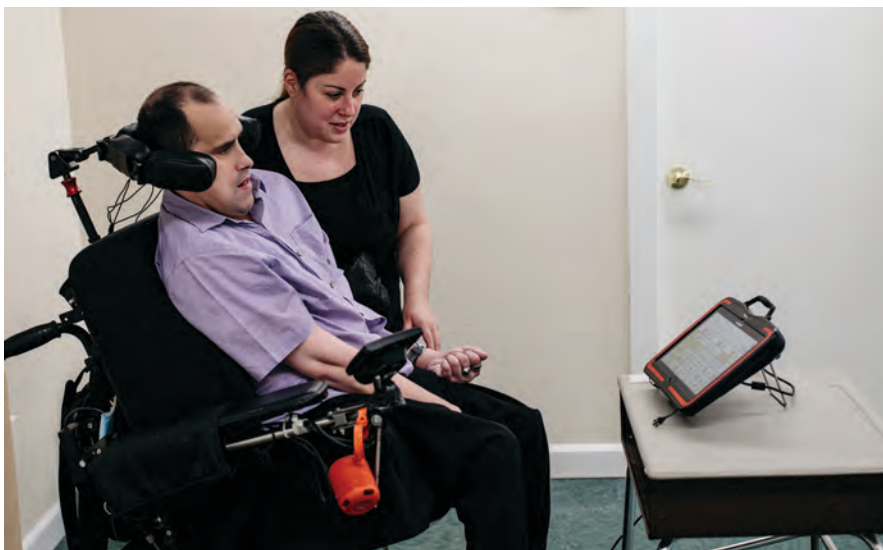
Additional information on Autism Services is available on lifestreaminc.com under Disabilities Services.

Nathaniel and his grandmother, Pat





LifeTech provides access to devices to assist with everyday tasks.



Tim is able to communicate with a staff member at Mill Road using the Accent 1200 speech generating device.

Fostering Greater Independence Through Technology

LifeStream's Assistive Technology (AT) Program was launched to provide greater access and knowledge of technology for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and/or autism. Through the award of several contracts from the Department of Developmental Services, we recently added three components to this program with the primary goal of increased self-sufficiency, technological equity and enhanced abilities for people with disabilities in all aspects of life. The three service components are: the LifeTech Program; Assistive Technology Services (ATS); and Remote Support Services (RSS). In addition to the hundreds of individuals supported by LifeStream, some of these services are also available to the larger community of people with disabilities and their families living in the greater Fall River and New Bedford areas.

The LifeTech program offers resource information on the assistive technologies available to foster independence. The website can be accessed to find tutorials on how to use the devices for the utmost benefit. A lending library allows for the temporary loan of equipment for the user to determine if it meets their needs before making a commitment to purchase.

Individuals wishing to gain more independence can be referred to the ATS Program. This will allow for a comprehensive assistive technology assessment for equipment that would allow for further growth and independence. Services include providing access and training of devices to assist with everyday tasks such as getting dressed and meal preparation,

as well as technical devices such as computers, tablets and smart phones. LifeStream will help to secure and maintain the identified equipment and train individuals, caregivers and staff.

Individuals living alone or with family seeking to utilize technology to replace or reduce the reliance upon family support or traditional staffing can be referred to the RSS program. Following a comprehensive assistive technology evaluation, individuals' homes will be equipped with devices and sensors designed to monitor and provide safety while remaining independent. Live backup is always available should the need arise or for emergency situations.

"LifeStream's AT program aligns perfectly with our mission of fostering independence and improving the quality of life for our individuals," said Melissa Pepin, Director of Assistive Technology and Therapy Services. "The need for enhanced technology services was made even more evident as we dealt with the Covid 19 restrictions. Technology was crucial in keeping the people we support engaged and connected to our staff, our services, and their family members."

Additional information on Assistive Technology and LifeTech programs is available on lifestreaminc.com under Disabilities Services.



Melissa Pepin, Director of Assistive Technology and Therapy Services, is shown receiving the 2019 Innovation Award from the Association of Developmental Disabilities Providers (ADDP).

The need for enhanced technology services was made even more evident as we dealt with COVID-19 restrictions.

Melissa Pepin, Director of Assistive Technology and Therapy Services

Katie successfully completed the CIES program and found a position as a Billing Specialist.



Employment & Training Maintains Momentum

The need for healthcare providers has never been greater, and LifeStream serves an important role in this regard.

Shai Spinola-Ramos, CIES Program Coordinator.

As the primary provider of the Comprehensive Integrated Employment Services (CIES) program for the Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA), LifeStream has a long tradition of successfully assisting economically challenged people in New Bedford and surrounding towns to find and maintain employment. The program got off to a busy start in 2020 but with the onset of COVID-19 LifeStream needed to make some adjustments.

“Since most of our DTA placements are in nursing facilities or in residences for those needing care, many of our clients were deemed essential workers and continued to work,” said Shai Spinola-Ramos, LifeStream’s CIES Program Coordinator. LifeStream developed a six-week online curriculum to address the daily needs of the clients who were not working during the pandemic. This included workshops on child care, in-home schooling, SNAP benefits, EBT cards, budgeting and nutrition. “We also contacted all of our clients by phone on a weekly basis just to check in and make sure they were okay.”

LifeStream recognizes that healthcare employment is not for everyone and a significant number of CIES clients choose our Career Exploration component where placements are matched to their skills, experiences and preferred locations.

For Katie, the mother of five children, the six-week program and interaction with LifeStream staff was integral in staying grounded and preparing for entry into the workforce. “I found the program really helpful, and I really appreciated the support and having someone to talk to,” she noted. Katie recently started a full-time job as a Billing Specialist and looks forward to becoming successful in this new career path.

With COVID-19 restrictions easing, LifeStream is seeing increased interest in their Certified Nurse Aide/Home Health Aide training programs. In 2020, Employment & Training moved their offices and classrooms from downtown New Bedford to LifeStream’s former administrative offices on Myrtle Street. “This has been great for both clients and staff,” said Shai. “It is much easier to get to, has better parking, and is a space that’s completely devoted to our programs. The need for healthcare providers has never been greater, and LifeStream serves an important role in this regard.”

Additional information is available on lifestreaminc.com under DTA Jobs Training.

Students participate in a CNA training class at the Employment and Training office at Myrtle Street in New Bedford.



Honoring the memory of Armond Nicolaci

Two of LifeStream's homes in New Bedford are undergoing some wonderful remodeling projects thanks to the generosity of Pat and Huguette (Hugie) Nicolaci. These two homes, built in 1981, were among the first in the community to serve adults with disabilities. Armond Nicolaci, the son of Dominique and Lidia Nicolaci, one of LifeStream's founding families, was one of the first residents to live in one of these homes.

Some of the remodeling projects include upgrading two handicap-accessible bathrooms, replacing lighting fixtures, painting the interior of the home, new flooring, and a new outdoor patio/pavilion to be enjoyed by the individuals in both residences.

"Allocating the appropriate funding for maintenance of our numerous properties has become challenging, especially in light of the additional financial strain brought on by necessary COVID-19 safety measures. We are extremely grateful to Pat and Hugie Nicolaci for this very generous donation", said LifeStream

This will greatly enhance the quality of life for those who currently reside in the homes.

Bonnie Mello, LifeStream President/CEO

President/CEO Bonnie Mello. "It is a wonderful tribute in memory of their nephew Armond. This will greatly enhance the quality of life for those who currently reside in the homes."

Pat and Hugie stressed the importance of improving the quality of life for the individuals living in the homes, as well as thanking the employees for their dedication and commitment to providing quality care.



Become a LifeStream Donor

As a 501(C)3 non-profit organization, LifeStream is funded primarily by government agencies at the federal and state levels. We are grateful for private donations to be used in the preservation of existing facilities, new programs and additional services for the hundreds of individuals we support. If you are interested in becoming a LifeStream donor, and would like additional information, please contact Bonnie Mello at bmello@lifestreaminc.com. Many thanks for your support!

Message from the Chairman of the Board



Timothy Warren, Chair
Joined 2011

As a member of LifeStream's Board of Directors, I want to express my admiration for how well the organization met the many challenges of the past year. Despite COVID-19's impact, LifeStream employees went above and beyond to ensure the safety and well-being of the individuals they support. In the absence of in-person programs and activities, employees' creativity allowed individuals to stay active and connected with family and friends.

The Board of Directors is particularly excited about the launch of the Assistive Technology and Remote Services programs. LifeStream was one of the first human service organizations in Massachusetts to formalize a program for these services, and we were thrilled with the Commonwealth's decision to make them available not only to those supported by LifeStream, but for individuals throughout the New Bedford and Fall River areas.

The Board of Directors is excited to drive our next strategic plan in 2022. With the support of our employees and community we are focused on building on our growth and success to enhance the impact on those we serve. Our future is as bright as ever and we look forward to partnering with key stakeholders in the coming years on this significant strategic plan.

This annual report is a testament to LifeStream's primary mission of giving every individual the opportunity for greater independence and quality of life regardless of abilities. Forty-five years after its founding, creating opportunities for success is still the driving force throughout the organization. I'm confident that the founding families would share my pride in LifeStream's current standing as one of the area's leading human service providers. On behalf of the entire Board of Directors I would like to express our sincere gratitude to all LifeStream employees for their commitment and dedication.

Many thanks for your continued support.

Sincerely,



Timothy Warren, CPA
LifeStream Board of Directors Chair

Board of Directors

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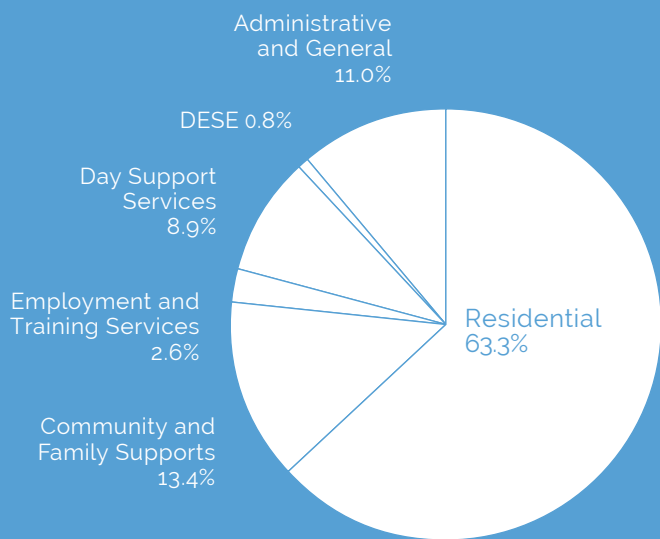
Excerpts from Independent Auditor’s Report on the Financial Statements

The following information has been excerpted from our June 30, 2020 financial statements audited by BDO USA LLP. A complete copy of the audit report and financial statements is available upon request.

BDO USA LLP
Boston, Massachusetts

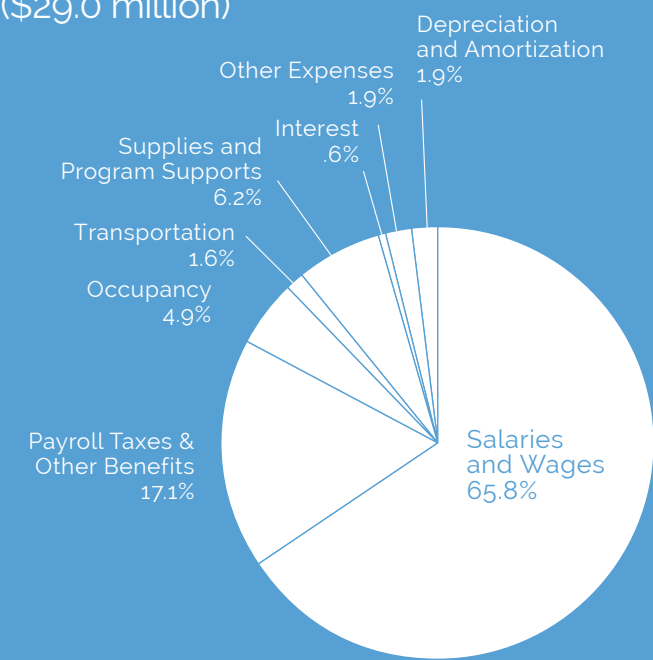
From Statement of Functional Expenses

Operating Expenses By Program (\$29.0 Million)



From Statement of Functional Expenses

Operating Expenses by Category (\$29.0 million)





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