



Easter Seals Massachusetts Quarterly Newsletter

WINTER EDITION



Greetings!

As we enjoy this holiday season, I would like to share what I am grateful for here at Easter Seals Massachusetts...

I am thankful for all of the children, adults and families we serve every day. Nothing means more to me than seeing you empowered to live happy, successful and independent lives.

I am thankful for our supporters; by volunteering your time and money, you play an incredible role in helping us provide vital programs like our Youth Leadership Network and THRIVE mentoring program.

And lastly, I am thankful for our incredible staff whose tireless dedication allows us to not just survive but to be the leaders in providing services to people with disabilities throughout Massachusetts.

With gratitude to all, and to all a wonderful holiday season,

Paul Medeiros

For Award Winning Filmmaker, The Possibilities Are Endless

Ever since he was a little boy, Alexander Freeman has always known what he wanted to say. The trouble was, he couldn't express every idea, every word, the way other people could.

Alexander was born with cerebral palsy, and speaking is very difficult for him. But today, at 29, he is an award winning filmmaker having won the award for Best Documentary Feature for *The Wounds We Cannot See* at the 2016 Long Beach Indie International Film, Media and Music Festival in Long Beach, California.



How did Alexander get where he is today?

[Click here to read more of Alexander's success story.](#)

Elaine Olson Honored as Philanthropist of Distinction



Elaine Olson and her husband Sherman have been major supporters of Easter Seals MA since 2002. Since Sherman's passing in 2012, Elaine has been a big advocate of the Youth Leadership Network. Her amazing generosity has paved the way for Easter Seals MA to strengthen and grow so many services for children and adult's with disabilities.

On November 15, National Philanthropy Day, Elaine was honored by the Massachusetts Chapter of The Association of Fundraising Professionals for her incredible support of Easter Seals MA.

TJX Hosts Youth Leadership Network

On Thursday, November 17, Youth Leaders and TJX employees came together for a wonderful day of networking at TJX headquarters in Framingham.

The youth met with management and executives from across several departments and learned about career opportunities as well as what TJX is doing to ensure accessibility for all of their employees.



[Check out all of the photos from the TJX day here!](#)

If you or someone you know would be interested in joining Easter Seals MA Youth Leadership Network, please email Youth@EasterSealsMA.org for more information!



Youth Leaders Learn Coding at the Microsoft Store



Youth leaders gathered at the Microsoft Store at the Natick Mall for a tutorial in creating video games through computer coding.

Easter Seals MA provided transportation and dinner the youth were also given the opportunity to try out state-of-the-art virtual reality gaming! To see more photos and videos from the event, [click here!](#)

Accessible Martial Arts Pilot A Success

The Accessible Martial Arts Program, is a brand new program being piloted by Easter Seals MA for people with and without disabilities who want to learn and practice self-defense, stretching, exercise, and relaxation techniques.

Led by our very own President & CEO Paul Medeiros, we began piloting the program this past October and have enjoyed incredible success over the past three months. So much so in fact, that we are proud to announce that once the pilot program concludes in January we will be opening up to the public!

For more information please contact Patrick Remy, PRemy@EasterSealsMA.org.



Easter Seals MA Celebrates Passing of the Employment Bill



On October 27, in honor of National Disability Employment Awareness Month, Easter Seals Massachusetts was joined by Senator Barbara L'Italien, Representative James O'Day, the Boston Center For Independent Living, and members of the community who have been advocating for greater employment opportunities for people with disabilities, to celebrate the passing of the Economic Bill.

With the passing of the Economic Bill, this new legislation will require companies contracting with the Executive Offices of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to commit to hiring people with disabilities.

[To read the full press release, please click here.](#)

Tournaments, and Grants, and Checks, Oh My!

We are very excited to announce that we were one of this year's Dunkin' Donuts & Baskin-Robbins Community Foundation Grant recipients! Ann Donah our Director of Development, Amber McGourthy, one of our Youth Leaders, were proud to accept the \$15,000 grant on behalf of Easter Seals Massachusetts!



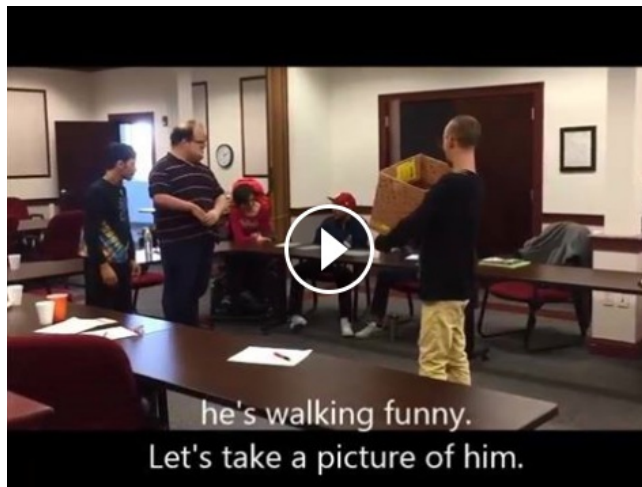
In addition, Easter Seals MA was proud to be named as one of the charities of choice for R.H. White's wildly successful inaugural golf tournament who presented us with a check for \$15,000! Many thanks to R.H. White for their incredible donation!



A big thank you also goes out to U.S. Tae Kwon Do Center Shrewsbury & U.S. Tae Kwon Do Center Worcester for their incredible donation of \$2,000. We are honored to have been chosen to receive the advertising proceeds from their 11th Annual U.S. Masters Tae Kwon Do Open & MA State Fall Championship!



Youth Leadership Network Defines Disability Culture



Last month the Youth Leadership Network created a video showcasing their definition of disability culture. Check it out above!

[To see more videos from Easter Seals MA visit our YouTube Page.](#)

Looking For a Few Good Mentors!

Male THRIVE is a mentoring program for young men with disabilities. In this mentoring program we are looking for males who are committed, patient, and have a great sense of humor.

In order to help these young men "THRIVE" we give them the opportunity to have a mentor with a disability and/or a career mentor who may or may not have a disability. The career mentors will have insight to the evolving workplace, and the disabled mentors will give insight into disability and culture.

We need strong men to show these young mentees that through hard work and dedication there are no obstacles or boundaries that they cannot overcome in daily life or in a work environment.

If you are interested in being a mentor or career mentor please contact Patrick Remy, Youth Services Coordinator: PRemy@EasterSealsMA.org or (508) 751-6417 for more information.

As we bid farewell to 2016 don't forget to consider making your year end tax-deductible donation to Easter Seals MA! In order to receive a charitable deduction for the 2016 tax year, online gifts must be completed by midnight on December 31, 2016.

[Click Here to Make a Donation!](#)

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