A partnership between The Massillon Garden Coalition and echoingU of Northeast Ohio opened doors for eU students to work with professionals and community members. Together, they created a high producing garden and eU students were at the forefront of donating produce back to those in need.

The project stirred a passion in eU student Tye. He was inspired to research garden techniques and irrigation methods that resulted in a healthier and larger harvest. The experience helped Tye and others learn valuable employment skills while enhancing their quality of life.

The Massillon Parks & Recreation Center welcomes eU students who are inspired to focus on developing healthy habits. Currently there are several students who have made a commitment to hold each other accountable and consistently use the weight room and gym. Side-by-side with other community fitness enthusiasts, the students workout on treadmills, stationary bikes, and test their skills on the indoor rock climbing wall. Each week they celebrate their small and large victories.

Over the summer, Utopian Bizarre, a unique shop that includes work from local artists and an art room for classes, worked with eU students to produce art for their Ability Garden. Students enjoyed interacting with customers and were enthusiastic about explaining their project and its purpose.

For many, gardening is a favorite pastime and can bring countless hours of joy. But for people with disabilities, it may not be all that simple. Navigating a wheelchair or walker through narrow and uneven paths can be a source of frustration and often an impossible task. The gardens at Echoing Hills are adaptable for those who are seated or standing, wide enough to accommodate wheelchairs and walkers, and tall enough that bending and stooping are kept to a minimum.
There is a story in the New testament that I have shared many times as part of my work at Echoing Hills. It is the story of four men carrying their paralyzed friend to a house where Jesus was staying. Finding no room to get near Jesus, they carried their friend up to the roof, cut a hole in it and lowered him down, into the presence of Jesus. These four friends were the reason this man had access to the power of Jesus.

In this newsletter, we focus on our commitment to improving the lives of people with disabilities through access to things that are important to them. This story reminds us that sometimes access to the community takes the support of very important people in our lives. It may be friends, family members, or people who work in this field, and have chosen this as their profession.

So this newsletter not only celebrates the importance of having access to all the opportunities our communities have to offer, but it also celebrates the people that are willing to give of their time, compassion, and creativity to assist those who need a little extra help.

In September, we celebrated National Direct Support Professional (DSP) week. These are the people that we refer to as the hands and feet of Jesus. But, in many ways, they are also the hands and feet of these four people in the story above, who would stop at nothing to get their friend into the presence of Jesus.

Thank you to our great DSPs, and to all of our employees around the state! You are the ones making the difference in the lives of the people we serve!

Buddy Busch
President & CEO

It’s very important to ensure that the people who will be caring for or assisting your child after you are gone know how important Camp Echoing Hills is to your family. You must leave guidance that camp is important. The next step is to ensure there is proper funding for it. A trust is an excellent way to ensure that funds you leave can be used for camp. A memorandum of intent is a great way to communicate not only your desires about camp, but also all of the other hopes, dreams and desires you have for your child and their life after you are gone. If you have questions or would like to know more about special needs estate planning, please contact Resch, Root & Philipps, LLC at 614.760.1801 to schedule a personal consultation.
Although Kyle was born with cerebral palsy which caused debilitating pain, he enjoyed giving back to others. Kyle was actively involved in his community. At Camp Echoing Hills, Kyle had an infectious smile and amazing laugh. While Kyle felt he was the blessed one in his relationship with Camp Echoing Hills, the truth is we are blessed to have known him. He felt like royalty on this earth, but he is now true royalty in the presence of God.

“We thank Camp Echoing Hills for giving Kyle a wonderful retreat where he felt free and able to enjoy life through your organization.
The Gosset Family
Trish Riley, The Dietary Director at Echoing Hills Community Living of Central Ohio, not only prepares breakfast and lunch, but also helps out in the dining room assisting individuals who reside at Echoing Hills.

Autumn lives at Echoing Hills and has a rare disability known as Rett syndrome. She is non-communicative by most standards, but to those who know her, Autumn’s body language lets you know how she feels. Trish helped Autumn as she needed someone to handle her utensil and feed her.

Trish noticed Autumn making a repetitive gesture with her hand, touching the table and bringing her hand to her mouth. Repetitive hand gestures are common for those with Rett syndrome. Trish thought why not take this repetitive motion and use it for something positive. Trish found an adaptive spoon she thought would work for Autumn. Within two short months, Autumn was feeding herself.

Autumn has since learned to drink on her own. There might be the occasional spill or dribble, but that doesn’t matter to anyone. Autumn still receives fluids through her “G” tube, but now she can also enjoy a beverage on her own!

Autumn’s story illustrates how Echoing Hills goes far beyond assisting with basic and daily needs. We strive to educate, enrich and add quality to each life.

What we do at Echoing Hills goes far beyond assisting with basic and daily needs. We strive to educate, enrich and add quality to each life.