



STRATEGIES TO EMPOWER PEOPLE "THE KEY"



Quick Blerbs

Have you turned in your ESOP plan beneficiary forms. Please make sure you get those forms to Jenny Havery as soon as possible. These forms are critically important.

If you need a new form, contact Jenny Havery at

Jenny.Havery@stepagency.com

Pay attention to the newsletter... You might find an Easter Egg, if you do! Message Jessica Rivera on ERSP where you found the Easter Egg and you will be entered win a \$50 Gift Card through a Raffle.

Get your find in by July 26th, 2023.

Final Deadline to enter items for the newsletter is the 19th of each month. If you are interested in including a writing or photo please reach out!

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Chief Operations Officer

By: Jacquie Foss

I wanted to take this opportunity to announce the promotion of Jay Kolvoord to Chief Operations Officer for Strategies to Empower People. Jay has been employed at Strategies To Empower People for the last 10 years, and over that time his commitment to excellence in the support of those with intellectual and developmental disabilities has exemplified the type of leadership that is critical to the success of those we support. The most important thing any leader can do is to lead with ethics and integrity, and that has been his driving force since he joined Team STEP.

As STEP moves into a new era of leadership it has been my personal commitment to identify a leader that can take the reins of the organization and not just lead it from where we have been but lead us into the future. I started STEP in 1992 with one primary focus, that each person with an intellectual and developmental disability has the right to an inclusive life of their own community. Service and supports have changed over the years and it requires a leader that can be nimble in addressing those changes. In his years at STEP, Jay has shown that capability. He leads with a personal vision that all individuals, regardless of their own complex needs, have a right to their chosen way of life. That is the future of STEP; a leader that looks to the future and can adapt and develop supports that exceed my vision from 1992.

Jay has been a leader in the development of our Enhanced Supportive Living, our Leadership Training track as well as in the leadership development of our management team. Jay has been instrumental in the implementation of our accountability-based management systems and our new learning management system, HireRoad.

As COO Jay will be responsible for the day-to-day operations of the organization. He will lead, develop, and hold STEP accountable to our primary vision of HeartRight Always. Your primary point of contact for programming will be Jay Kolvoord. My roll will focus on succession planning, advocacy, and mentorship. As a team our commitment will be quality of life for those supported by STEP and a passion for innovative, creative programming that meets the needs of those we support.

Please take a moment to congratulate Jay on his new position. We are, as always, stronger together.



Celebrating an Incredible Journey!

Time to announce and celebrate a truly remarkable individual who has been an integral part of our company since 2011. It is with a mix of joy and nostalgia that we announce the upcoming retirement of Ida Overton, who has dedicated an incredible number of years to our company's success. Their unwavering commitment, exceptional skills, and infectious enthusiasm have left an indelible mark on our team. As we bid farewell to Ida, we invite you to join us in celebrating their incredible journey and expressing our deepest appreciation for their contributions over the years.

Ida began her career at STEP in 2011 in Supported Living Services. Ida's ability to connect with employers made her a favorite.

During her time in SLS, Ida received numerous internal and external commendations including from emergency rooms personnel, ALTA regional center and stakeholders. Following this Ida took her skills into STEP's Independent Living Services program. Ida has always been willing to go the extra mile, whether it was moving goldfish in Tupperware to being the only advocate/support for someone in a hospital.

Ida always made her presence known, she would not stay silent, when it came to advocating for her employers.

Subsequently, Ida was always willing to train new ILS staff members and her famous saying always rings true "THAT'S ILS, YOU HAVE TO BE READY FOR ANYTHING!"

While we are sad to see her go, we know that her time here has left a lasting impression as she embodies the 5 Principles of our work:

- Flexible and Tailored Supports
- Always advocating for a Home of One's Own
- Ensuring employers are always a part of their community.
- Encouraging employers to make their choices known and self-directing their services.
- All the while of making relationships the core of her work.



New Talent Joins STEP!

We have some thrilling news to share with you all. Strategies to Empower People (STEP) is growing, and we're delighted to welcome new members to our team! These individuals bring valuable expertise and a deep commitment to our mission of empowering people and making a positive impact in our community.

Please join us in welcoming:

Sierra G - New SLS DSP

Miguel R - New SLS DSP

Richard J - New SLS DSP

Monet J New ESLS DSP

Samantha R - New ESLS DSP

Danielle M - New DSP

Angela S - New DSP

Tayah H - New ESLS DSP (transferred from SLS)

Delilah N - New North DSP

Clyde R - New North DSP

Valencia L - New CSP2

Quishayala F - New DSLS DSP

Alexandria A - New Program Support

Dena M - New ESLS DSP

Elva R - New Program Support

Cesily C - New SLS DSP

Nicole K - New Program Support

Sheryl B- New North DSP

David D - New SLS DSP

Shaila S - New DSLS DSP

These additions to our team will enhance our ability to support and empower individuals, creating a lasting impact in their lives.

We appreciate our existing team members for their ongoing dedication. Together, we will continue to empower people, foster inclusion, and make a positive difference.

Join us in embracing this exciting new chapter in the journey of Strategies to Empower People.

Employee Referral Program



Current employees can receive the referral bonus for 2 events:

- They've referred a new employee who has successfully completed the 90-day Introductory period and is in good standing. This is a bonus of \$100.
- The employee they've referred has successfully completed one year and is in good standing. This is a bonus of \$250.
- An employee is not limited to how many referrals they can do.

Employee Spotlight

HeartRight: Going Above and Beyond

At Strategies to Empower People, we are committed to providing exceptional care and support to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Our employees are dedicated to making a positive impact in the lives of those we serve, and we are proud to spotlight our outstanding team members.

Marla L joined STEP in 9/1/2021. As DSP for the Deaf Unit. She has embraced her work and shown no fear without ASL and learning to communicate with deaf employers has been challenging and more rewarding in her work. Her employers LOVES her.

Marla loves to cook. And enjoy having her employers cook with her together. She makes her her work fun and make it more fun with daily activities. She really cares about her work and will contact her supervisor or manager with open ideas and suggestions.

She has shown HEART- RIGHT..... Always with her work ethic.



We would like to give a special shoutout to DSPs Raquel Pelayo, (hired 3/3/2023), and G'Andre Strickland (hired 9/30/2022) for their exceptional dedication, flexibility in picking up shifts, and innovative approaches in empowering their employers. To show our appreciation, we awarded them gift cards and made congratulatory phone calls filled with cheers and applause.

Your outstanding contributions are deeply valued and recognized. Keep up the fantastic work!

Let's give a round of applause to our exceptional supervisors, La Teshia Dartez (hired 2/9/2022) and Marcella Galarza (hired 8/26/2021)! Their unwavering dedication and hard work in supporting both their employers and staff have not gone unnoticed. We want to recognize their outstanding contributions and the positive impact they have made.

Congratulations on a job well done! Keep shining and inspiring us all!



Promotion Spotlight

Elevating Our Agency's Talented Team

We are thrilled to announce a momentous promotions within our agency that celebrates the incredible talent and hard work of our dedicated employees. Each day, bringing passion, innovation, and unwavering commitment to our mission, and it is with great pleasure that we recognize your exceptional contributions.

Introducing our Promoted Superstars!

Please join us in congratulating the following individuals on their well-deserved promotions:

Marissa Cereceres

It is with great pleasure that we get to announce the promotion of Marissa Cereceres to PCSF in the Central Deaf Unit. Marissa Cereceres has been STEP employee since June 2015. She started working as DSP and has worked with many employers in the Deaf Unit. She has been a DSP4 for two years and recently was promoted to PCSF.

Marissa is passionate about her work and always looking for ways to improve and support her team members. She is dedicated and many employers loves working with her.

During her free times, she loves to travel and enjoy hanging out with her friends.

Dayak Dashuwar

We are thrilled to share the wonderful news of Dayak Dashuway's promotion to the esteemed position of PCSF. Dayak has shown exceptional skills, remarkable dedication, and consistently exceeded expectations throughout their time with us.

Having been a valued member of the STEP family for one year, Dayak's commitment to ensuring the happiness and satisfaction of the employers they support has been truly commendable. They have demonstrated exceptional leadership qualities and a passion for fostering continued social relationships within the Deaf community through See ASL.

During his free time, he loves to play soccer, work out, walk, travel and cooking

Ashley Baxter

It is with great pleasure and pride that we announce the promotion of Ashley Baxter to the position of DSP 4. After two years of exceptional service, Ashley has successfully completed their supervisor course and demonstrated remarkable dedication, exceptional skills, and outstanding leadership qualities. Their unwavering commitment to our mission and the individuals we serve has been truly remarkable.

Elevating Our Agency's Talented Team

Gail Royster

Gail Royster is the new Program Manager 1 for Strategies to Empower People's Northbay SLS and Enhanced SLS Programs. Gail has over fifteen years of experience providing services and support to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Gail's vast experience includes a bachelor's degree in psychology from the University of the Cumberland's, and she's currently a few semesters away from her master's degree in clinical Mental Health Counseling. Gail experience with diverse backgrounds, and populations have embodied, Strategies to Empower People's mission to advocate and empower individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities to live a life that is inclusive, meaningful, and purposeful to them. Since her hire in 2022, Gail has held the position of Enhance Facilitator. When not at work, Gail loves to connect with nature, such as hiking, bike riding, and fishing. Gail is the proud mother of two with a daughter in college, and a son in high school.

Joseph Jackson

Today, we come together to honor and celebrate an exceptional individual who has dedicated 12 years of outstanding service to our agency. It is with great joy and pride that we announce the promotion of Joseph M. Jackson to the esteemed position of DSP4.

Throughout their time with STEP, Joseph has demonstrated unwavering dedication and passion while working with both our hearing medical unit and deaf unit. Their extensive experience and commitment to excellence have made a lasting impact on our agency and the individuals we serve.

Marcella Galarza

Marcella Galarza has been a STEP employee since August 2021. Marcela started working as DSP and has worked with many of our traditional employers. Marcella has been a DSP for a little under 3 years and recently was promoted to DSP 4. Marcella is passionate about assuring that the employers have a wonderful and beautiful life (community integration, making new friends)

During her free time Marcella loves to spend time with her family, at local restaurants, and BBQs.

Veronica Cummins

After an incredible 15 years of dedicated service as a DSP, Veronica has been promoted to the coveted position of DSP4 in February 2023! Veronica is very detailed-oriented and has done a wonderful job in her transition from a DSP to her supervisory position.

Please take a moment to celebrate the remarkable achievements of our promoted colleagues. Their success is a testament to the opportunities available to each and every member of our agency to grow, excel, and make a difference. We believe in fostering an environment where talent is nurtured and recognized, and we are proud to have such remarkable individuals as part of our team.

NEW HOME



Deaf Enhanced SLS facilitated a successful transition for Atif from his old house to a new one. This involved Person-Centered Active Support and the development of a Circle of Support, fostering a caring and equal relationship. Additional strategies and structured planning were implemented to enhance control and flexibility. We would like to acknowledge Atif's Direct Support Professional (DSP) staff for their support during the transition.

Atif had lived in his old house for over 20 years, and it was time for him to move out. The transition was successful thanks to the implementation of Person-Centered Active Support, which positively impacted Atif's quality of life.



After retrofitting his new home, our commitment was to ensure that Atif had the freedom to make choices and decisions for himself. To facilitate this, Atif's DSP staff communicated with him using pictures and a calendar, breaking down each week's schedule and allowing him to choose which days to visit his new home over a month.



Each week, Atif brought his own food, belongings, clothes, furniture, and other items of his choice to his new home. During his visits, which followed the principles of Home of One's Own, Choice and Self-Direction, Relationships, Community Membership, and Flexible and Tailored Services and Supports, Atif spent a couple of hours familiarizing himself with his new home.

NEW HOME



After several weekly visits, Atif independently brought a small chair and some of his favorite items to the STEP van. Although the movers were not scheduled for that day, Atif insisted on placing his belongings back in the van. Using gestures and pointing with his index finger, he instructed his DSP staff to bring these items to his new home. Together, they went to his new home, and Atif brought the small chair and his belongings inside, signaling his readiness to move in.

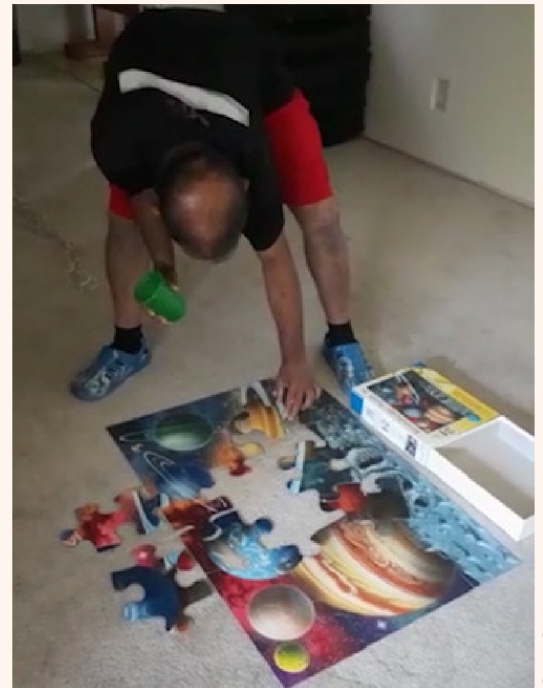


Throughout this challenging transition, our goal was to ensure that Atif maintained a safe, stable, and independent life in his rented home. The Enhanced SLS service supported Atif in making meaningful choices towards his personal goals, both at home and in the community.

We extend our sincere appreciation to our Enhanced Support staff members Brian Walters, Tuesday Doss, Ernest Carter, Marquawn Holmes, Art Tellander, and Bruce Smith. You have been invaluable members of our team, and we are grateful for your hard work and dedication. We look forward to continuing

our support for heroes like you in the future.

Atif's family would like to express their additional gratitude to Atif's support staff. Mrs. Shahida Shabbir, Atif's conservator mother, says, "Thank you to the support staff for facilitating Atif's smooth transition to his new house. Your role in supporting Atif is commendable, and we feel fortunate to have you in his life. Your caring and loving support mean the world to us."



Strikes Victory at Deaf Bowling Tournament



We are thrilled to share the inspiring story of Gene Hull, a passionate bowler who recently participated in the exhilarating Deaf Bowling Tournament held by the Pacific Coast Deaf Bowling Association in Portland, Oregon. Gene, along with his skilled teammates Willys, Craig, and Lito, showcased their talent and made the tournament an unforgettable experience.

With years of dedication and commitment to bowling leagues, Gene's average game was an impressive 141 prior to the tournament. This year, he went above and beyond, working tirelessly to save money and make his dream of competing in the Portland tournament a reality.

Gene's journey wouldn't have been possible without the unwavering support of his loving mother, Roberta, who stood by his side and played a crucial role in making his dream come true. The love and encouragement from his friends and family made all the difference in his pursuit of excellence.

Throughout the tournament, Gene not only demonstrated his exceptional bowling skills but also formed new friendships and rekindled connections with fellow bowlers. With the taste of victory fresh in his mind, Gene has set his sights on the next challenge. His goal is to compete again next year in Las Vegas, where he plans to further enrich his bowling journey by exploring new destinations and meeting fascinating people along the way.

Congratulations, Gene, for making your dreams come true and inspiring others with your determination and passion. Your journey is a testament to the power of perseverance and the joy that comes from pursuing one's passions. We eagerly await your next triumph on the lanes!



Disability Pride Month

July is a month of empowerment, unity, and celebration as we come together to recognize Disability Pride Month. This meaningful occasion coincides with the anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), a groundbreaking legislation that champions the rights of individuals with disabilities and promotes inclusivity in all aspects of life.

The ADA shattered barriers and ushered in a new era of equal opportunities. However, the journey towards complete acceptance and inclusion is far from over. During Disability Pride Month, we take the opportunity to pay homage to the rich history, remarkable achievements, unique experiences, and ongoing struggles of the disability community.

It is a time to embrace and showcase the true essence of disability pride, shedding light on the accomplishments and strengths of individuals with disabilities. Through inspiring stories and heartfelt testimonials, we celebrate the resilience, creativity, and indomitable spirit that define the disabled community.

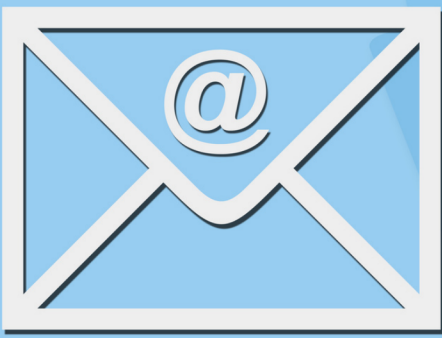
Disability Pride Month serves as a platform to amplify voices that are often unheard, to challenge misconceptions, and to advocate for the rights and needs of people with disabilities. By raising awareness about the challenges they face in their daily lives, we strive to create a more inclusive and compassionate society for all.

Throughout this month, join us as we highlight the achievements and contributions of disabled individuals, showcase their talents, and share their inspiring journeys. Let's stand together in solidarity, promoting understanding, empathy, and support for one another.

In embracing Disability Pride Month, we embark on a transformative journey towards a world where disability is not a barrier, but a source of strength and diversity.

Together, let us celebrate the beauty of differences and work towards a future where every person is valued and respected, regardless of their abilities.





Newsletter



At our newsletter, we believe that the power of community lies in the diverse perspectives and talents of its members. We cordially invite you to be a part of our upcoming editions by contributing your unique creations, thoughts, and experiences. Whether you have a delicious recipe to share, a heartfelt poem, an exciting event announcement, or any other compelling content, we would be thrilled to feature it in our newsletter.

Recipe Share: Have you mastered the art of culinary delight? Share your favorite recipes, cooking tips, or even a food-related story with us. Let's explore the world of flavors and create a collection of delightful dishes that our community can enjoy.

Poetry Corner: Are you a wordsmith who can weave emotions into beautiful verses? Share your heartfelt expressions, reflections, or even short stories through the power of poetry.

Event Announcements: Do you have an exciting event coming up? Whether it's a local gathering, a virtual workshop, or a community initiative, let us know! Our newsletter is the perfect platform to spread the word and engage a wider audience.

Community Inclusion: We celebrate the strength and richness of our community's diversity. If you have stories, projects, or experiences that highlight inclusivity, equity, and community building, we want to amplify your voice. Let's inspire and empower one another through our shared journeys.

Your Ideas: We value your input and ideas! Do you have suggestions for improvements or new sections? We're all ears! Your feedback helps shape the content and ensure it resonates with your interests and aspirations.

To submit your contributions or express your interest in being featured, please reach out to Jessica Rivera, our dedicated newsletter coordinator, at Jessica.Rivera@stepagency.com.

Remember, our newsletter is a tapestry of voices, stories, and experiences, and it's your participation that makes it truly extraordinary; which can include anything Message if you have any questions! Together, let's create a vibrant and engaging platform that reflects the richness of our community.

Juneteenth: A symbolic day of Freedom

By: Lydia Edinborough

As we talk about this Freedom Holiday, today is also a time to reflect on the horrors of slavery beginning with the abduction of human beings during the Transatlantic Slave Trade.

On their journey through the dangerous Middle Passage and its shark infested waters, Africans were held in deplorable, inhumane conditions shackled to each other in their own feces, urine, and vomit and also subjected to beatings and rape. Sharks became so conditioned as to where to find food they followed slave ships from Gori Island knowing eventually slaves who were sick or had died would be thrown overboard. During revolts slaves would also be thrown overboard or would jump overboard.

When they arrived in the Caribbean, our ancestors were taken to slave markets, literally stripped of all dignity, separated from their family members, and sold by auction to the highest bidder – ultimately destroying families, separating children from their mothers and fathers and husbands and wives from each other. Unfortunately, the atrocities inflicted on our ancestors continued on plantations where they were treated like animals or livestock and forced to work every day from sunrise to sunset.

Willie Lynch, a consultant to slave owners, traveled from his plantation in the Caribbean to teach slave owners in America how to “season a slave” by psychologically controlling them through fear, distrust, and envy. The most rebellious slave or informal leader would be taken up front while all slaves on the plantation looked on and would be chained to two horses, arms to one horse and legs to another horse. Then the horses would be whipped in opposite directions. Others would be tarred and feathered, oil poured on them and set on fire to send a message so all other slaves on the plantation would conform, comply, and not get out of line. Women were forced into the role of patriarch and matriarch, protecting their sons and men conditioning them



to work the plantation. Because of this conditioning slave masters realized it was easier to get things done through the mothers to keep the men in line. And here we, as Black women continue to forever be the outspoken protectorate of our sons and men – never knowing if we will see them again each time they walk out the door.

Slaves, our ancestors, were considered chattel or property (no more than livestock) and merely pawns in an economic game of debauchery (or excessive indulgence in sensual pleasures), crossbreeding, interracial rape, and mental conditioning of an entire race.

Juneteenth: A symbolic day of Freedom

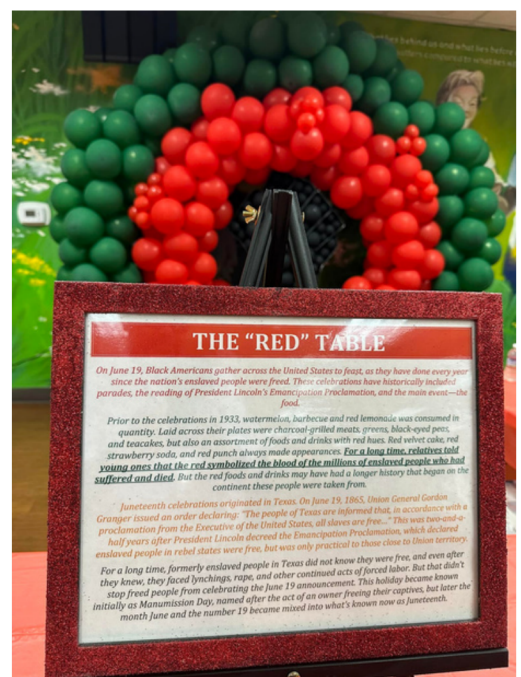


In the early 1800s when the Transatlantic Slave Trade ended and acquiring slaves was no longer an option for colonial powers, they found other ways of increasing slave labor. Sex farms or breeding farms – have you ever heard of them? Well, this would become the beginning of genetic engineering in America. After the Transatlantic Slave Trade ended slave owners capitalized on the wombs of enslaved women relegating them to no

more than livestock. Those women were expected to have 4-5 pregnancies by the age of twenty. Within weeks of delivery enslaved women were expected to be pregnant again – ALL THROUGH RAPE. House slaves were also victims of these rape pregnancies.

Since slaves were considered chattel or property, slave owners were able to mortgage them as properties to banks. Even the U.S. Supreme Court sanctioned our ancestors, enslaved human beings, as property. In the Dred Scott v. Sanford decision, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled on March 6, 1857, that having lived in a free state and territory did not entitle an enslaved person to his freedom. In essence, the decision argued that, as someone's property, Dred Scott was not a citizen and could not sue in a federal court. That decision also ruled that because Scott's ancestors were imported into this country and sold as slaves was not a citizen. On May 18, 1866, the U.S. Supreme Court in Plessy v. Ferguson upheld the legality of racial segregation in America. That decision was not overturned until 1954 by Brown v. Board of Education.

We are a proud and strong people. Know American history. Know your place in American history! There is no excuse today. Information on our history is only a Google search away as well as Instagram, and other social media. Our ancestors are not the only source that detailed our history. The crew of slave ships documented their involvement in slavery. The folks who sold our ancestors in slave markets documented their involvement in slavery. The slave owners documented their involvement in slavery. Investors in building slave ships or caravels documented their involvement in slavery. Accountants documented their involvement in slavery. Banks documented their involvement in slavery. Hell, Willie Lynch documented his so-called “secrets of how to season a slave.”



Juneteenth: A symbolic day of Freedom



Everyone who played a part in this dehumanization of human beings documented their involvement in slavery. Now they want to erase history – a large part of American history.

Funny how Juneteenth National Independence Day was passed by Congress unanimously while some of those same characters continue to suppress our Nation's access to its history. As Ron Desantis, Governor of Florida, says "Florida is where woke goes to die."

Remember brothers and sisters, the George Floyd Act still has not been passed and continues to gather dust in Congress. To quote Harry Belafonte, "You give them a little piece of the action so they forget what they are fighting for." Let us not forget what we are fighting for. We were not and are not just fighting for a holiday, it is much bigger than that.

So here we are, what does Juneteenth commemorate? – A blip or speed bump in history. Juneteenth commemorates June 19, 1865, when Union Major General Gordon Granger and his soldiers brought news of freedom to enslaved Black people in Galveston, Texas, some two months after the Confederacy had surrendered; and 2½ years after the Emancipation Proclamation by President Abraham Lincoln freed slaves in the Southern confederate states, and 2 months after the assassination of President Lincoln. Let us remember that day was not the end of slavery in America. The truth is it would be 6 more months before the 13th Amendment to the Constitution was ratified on December 6, 1865, before enslaved people in ALL of the United States were free.

Opal Lee, known as the grandmother of Juneteenth, on that first federal holiday said, "I'm hoping that Juneteenth will not be about festivals but that it will be about uplifting each other."

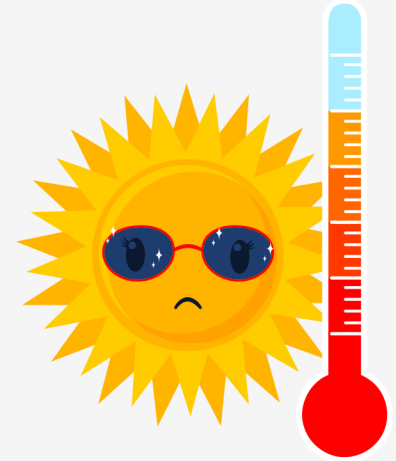
I leave you with this quote from Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.: "If cruelties of slavery could not stop us, the opposition we now face will surely fail. Because the goal of America is freedom, abused and scorned tho' we may be, our destiny is tied up with America's destiny."

Remember to uplift each other each and every day!!!



Stay Cool and Healthy: Beat the Heat

As the scorching summer days continue, it's essential to take extra care of your health and well-being. We want to ensure you stay cool, hydrated, and safe in the face of rising temperatures. That's why this month's newsletter is dedicated to providing you with some valuable tips on how to beat the heat and enjoy a healthy summer.



Hydration is Key: When the mercury rises, it's crucial to stay hydrated. Drink plenty of water throughout the day, even if you don't feel particularly thirsty. Avoid excessive intake of sugary or caffeinated beverages as they can contribute to dehydration. Opt for refreshing options like fruit-infused water, herbal iced teas, or electrolyte-rich drinks to replenish essential nutrients.

Dress Smart: Choose lightweight, loose-fitting clothing made of breathable fabrics such as cotton or linen. Light-colored outfits help reflect sunlight rather than absorb it. Wearing a wide-brimmed hat and sunglasses can provide additional protection from the sun's harmful rays.

Seek Shade: Avoid unnecessary exposure to direct sunlight, especially during peak hours when temperatures soar. If you need to venture outdoors, plan activities for the early morning or late afternoon when it's typically cooler. Take breaks in shaded areas, use umbrellas, or seek refuge in air-conditioned spaces.

Stay Cool at Home: Ensure your living space remains a cool oasis. Close curtains or blinds during the hottest parts of the day to block out sunlight. Open windows and use fans or air conditioning to maintain comfortable indoor temperatures. If you don't have access to air conditioning, consider visiting public places like malls, libraries, or community centers that offer cooling facilities.

Stay Cool and Healthy: Beat the Heat

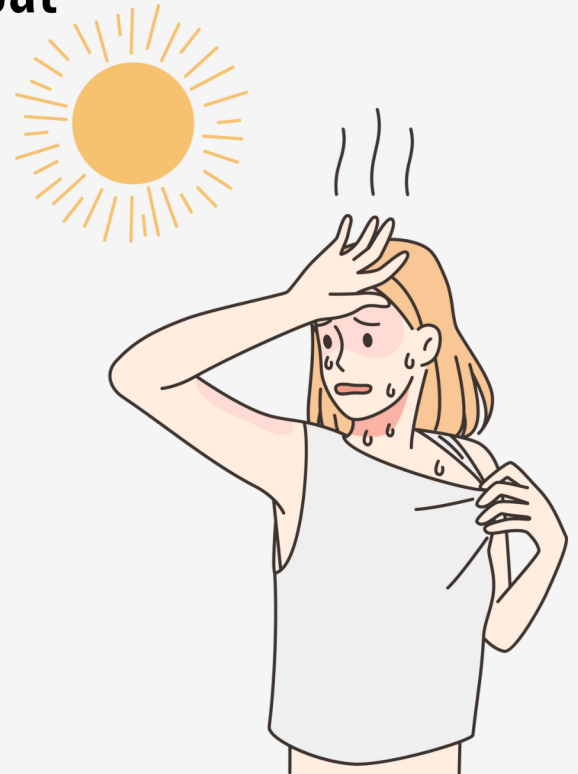
Beat the Heat with Water: Make use of water to cool down. Take refreshing showers or baths using cool water. You can also use wet towels or misting sprays to cool your skin. Create DIY fans by placing a bowl of ice in front of a fan for an instant cooling breeze.

Healthy Eating: Opt for light and refreshing meals during hot weather. Enjoy a variety of seasonal fruits and vegetables that have high water content, such as watermelon, cucumbers, and citrus fruits. These hydrating foods help replenish essential vitamins and minerals.

Outdoor Safety: If you plan to be active outdoors, take precautions to avoid heat-related illnesses. Apply sunscreen with a high SPF, wear a wide-brimmed hat and UV-protective clothing, and use insect repellent to prevent bug bites. Take frequent breaks in shaded areas, and listen to your body—rest when needed and never push yourself beyond your limits.

☀️ **Community Care:** During heat waves, it's crucial to look out for one another. Check on elderly neighbors, friends, or relatives who may be more vulnerable to the heat. Offer assistance, share these tips, and encourage them to stay cool and hydrated. Together, we can build a resilient and caring community.

Remember, staying cool and healthy is the key to enjoying summer to the fullest. We hope these tips will help you beat the heat and embrace the joys of the season. Stay tuned for more health and wellness updates in our next newsletter.





HOROSCOPES

By: Michelle Kebabjian

ARIES
MAR. 21 - APR. 19

A big shift is on the horizon, encouraging you to take immediate action. Of course, there are times to deliberate and carefully consider your next steps... but now is not that time.

TAURUS
APR. 20 - MAY. 20

It is time for you to accept your role as a Leader. Through guiding & encouraging others, your own star will only shine brighter.

GEMINI
MAY. 21 - JUNE. 20

Now is the perfect time to declutter your life- both figuratively and literally. Be thoughtful about how you spend your time and be discerning when choosing with whom you spend it.

CANCER
JUNE. 21 - JULY. 22

Blessings are flowing in all directions for you now, Cancer- believe you deserve the best, because you do! Creative energy surrounds you now, so ask for what you truly want- then sit back & get ready.

LEO
JULY 23 - AUG. 23

Reframing your definition of success is of high importance right now. Stay open minded- consider that there are many ways to feel successful in your life, not just the one you believe in the most.

VIRGO
AUG. 23 - SEP. 22

Give yourself permission to have some fun, Virgo- lots of fun, in fact! The joy you experience will give birth to immense creativity, and your life will blossom even further.

LIBRA
SEP. 23 - OCT. 22

This is a time of great power for you, Libra. Let the world hear your voice- standing up for yourself and others will only make you stronger.

SCORPIO
OCT. 23 - NOV. 21

Though it may seem like chaos, the energy swirling around you now is the energy of rejuvenation and growth. Sometimes the best way to find what you lost is to discover it while cleaning up the mess you made.

SAGITTARIUS
NOV. 22- DEC. 21

Your spontaneous nature will serve you well this summer, Sagittarius. Just remember- a little bit of structure and forethought can go a long way toward making the most of the fun.

CAPRICORN
DEC. 22 - JAN. 19

A time of rapid growth is before you now, so take a deep breath and face it head-on. Remember that the way to defeat Fear is to ignore it; to shout YES, when it wants you to say No.

AQUARIUS
JAN. 20 - FEB. 18

Take some time for mental relaxation in the coming days & weeks. Your Spirit will thank you for proactively making some space to pause, reflect and breathe.

PISCES
FEB. 19 - MAR. 20

If two fish swimming in opposite directions describe more than your sign, Pisces, there's good reason- your head & your heart are at odds right now. A little spiritual retreat will allow them to sync their energies again.

Activity Page

Find the word in the puzzle

Words can go in any direction.

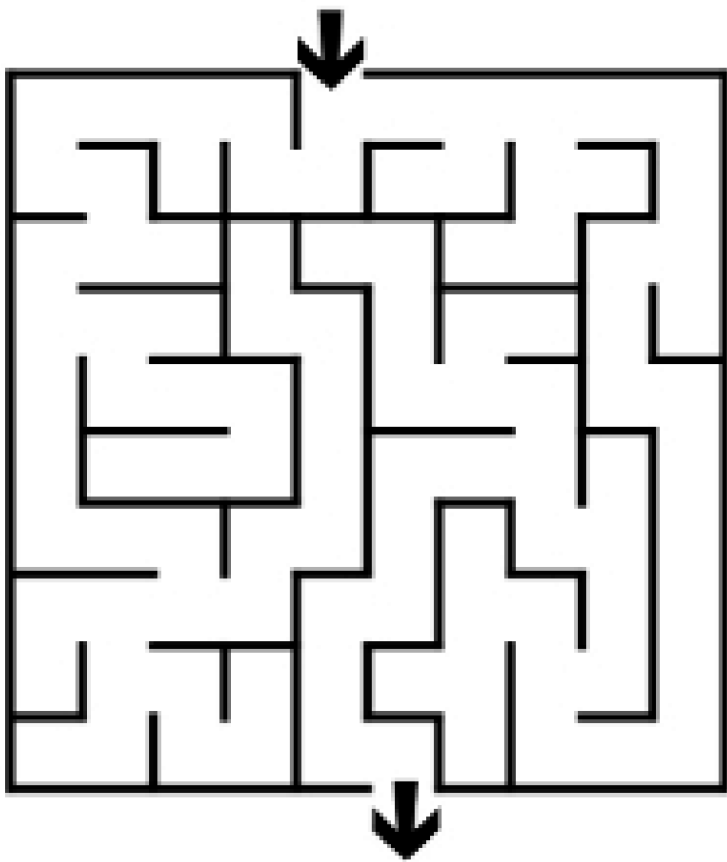
Words can share letters as they cross over each other.

S X H W Y O J V I Q E A Y S S
 T U A G R Y A R Y Z T F Q E D
 R D W G T K E N S L U B M N N
 A X X X U B S J K I I P S E E
 T N E M Y O L P M E O M D G I
 E R E M M U S P O W T I A S R
 G G R Q R U I K E T R S B F F
 I Y R V H J G R P P L V T H H
 E N E W S L E T T E R I I J E
 S U H Q N V I C D K Y S G T R
 M J T Y P M R N Y Q T G V H I
 J F A H M U A M Z O L Z W R T
 P L E U K I V L R C O R W X A
 R N W O U S P Y B E J R J K G
 Q L A P P L M R U J H M C G E

Words in the Puzzle

Employment Summer
 Friends Family
 Newsletter History
 Strategies Spotlight
 Empower Weather
 Pride Heritage

Sudoku



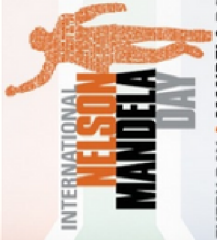
		8		5			6
	9		7	2		3	
	6	2	4				9
	7			5			6
			6	8	1		
	8			7			1
6					9	8	2
		5		1	7		4
8			3			5	

JULY 2023

DISABILITY PRIDE MONTH

Celebrating 33 years of the Americans with Disabilities Act

HAPPY Independence DAY



MAKE EVERY DAY A MANDELA DAY

Events listed below are open to all at STEP Employee's and Employer's * Questions call the office 916-679-1555

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
2 	3 National Stay out of the Sun Day 	4 4th of July STEP Office Closed County Club Bowling 3pm-5pm 	5 Med Track Training Disneyland Meeting STEP Office 2pm-4pm 	6 Carmichael Park Food Truck 5pm 	7 PAY DAY! Deaf Culture w/ Carl STEP office 3-5pm 	8 San Francisco Trip
9	10 New Hire Orientation National Kitten Day 	11 Supervisor Training County Club Bowling 10am-Noon 	12 Med Track Training National Simplicity Day	13 Plants w/ Melissa 10am - Noon STEP Office 	14 Happy Teacher's Day! River Cats Baseball 6:45pm \$27 (meet there) 	15 STATE FAIR MEET THERE! 9AM
16 BBQ Potluck Carmichael Park 2pm-6pm 	17 Swimming Cottage Park 11am 	18 Nelson Mandela Day County Club Bowling 3pm-5pm 	19 Med Track Training Happy New Year	20 1968: First Special Olympics Deaf Culture w/ Carl STEP office 3-5pm 	21 PAY DAY! Jamba Juice Loehmann Plaza 1pm-3pm 	22 National Hammock Day
23 Happy Parents Day 	24 PIONEER DAY 	25 NATIONAL HIRE A VETERAN DAY JULY 25 County Club Bowling 10am- Noon 	26 Med Track Training Myers Training DISABILITY PRIDE MONTH Arts & Crafts STEP Central 1-3pm 	27 National Creme Brulee Day	28 August Event Calendar Meeting 	29 National Chicken Wing Day
30 National Friendship Day 	31 Swimming Cottage Park 11am 	NOTES: Country Club Bowling: Cost \$1.50 BBQ: Maybe rescheduled due to heat, watch for announcement. If no announcement bring your potluck and join us!				