



BOSTON

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# Bridgewell Receives \$25,000 Naming Gift from the Kayem Foundation

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*Funds will be used to refurbish the sensory room at Bridgewell's Boston Street Day Habilitation Center*

**Bridgewell**, a nonprofit providing social and human services that empower people with disabilities and other life challenges to live safe, self-directed and productive lives, **today** announced it received a \$25,000 naming gift from the Kayem Foundation. Funds from the gift will be used to replace equipment in the sensory room at Bridgewell's Boston Street Day Habilitation Center, which was damaged in a flash flood in 2017.

Bridgewell's sensory room serves as a therapeutic space that facilitates the learning and practice of self-modulation and stress management skills. The room offers users the opportunity for self-discovery and meaningful therapeutic activities through touch, sound, vibrations, color and light. This has proven to be effective in improving concentration, eye-hand coordination and motor functions for individuals with developmental disabilities, dementia, autism or other conditions. In times of crisis or potential crisis, the sensory room is a comforting space for de-escalation and prevention where individuals learn safer and healthier ways to regain self-control.

"The sensory room is invaluable as it serves as a safe and supportive space that positively affects individuals' ability to communicate with the world around them," said Christopher Tuttle, interim CEO of Bridgewell. "We thank the Kayem Foundation for their generous gift to restore vital resources to the room, and for their continued support of Bridgewell and its services."

The \$25,000 contribution will be used to purchase materials and sensory equipment needed for activities that employ the use of touch, sound, vibrations, color and light. It will also be used to create a memory tree in the spirit of Thomas Monkiewicz, a long-time day program participant who was a fixture within the Bridgewell community from 1976 until his death in 2017. The memory tree will honor the lives of former program participants who have passed on, including Thomas, who is remembered fondly by the Bridgewell team for his infectious spirit and warm personality.

"Thomas was a member of my family who benefited greatly from the services that Bridgewell provides, including the sensory room, so I'm thrilled we're able to help restore a space he enjoyed so much," said Patrick Monkiewicz, CFO, Kayem Foods, Inc. "This gift also serves as a way to thank the Bridgewell staff for all they did to support Thomas, and all they currently do for individuals attending the Boston Street Day Habilitation Center."

### **About Kayem Foods**

Kayem Foods, founded in 1909, is the largest meat processor in New England and is expanding its presence throughout the East Coast. Owned and operated by the same family for more than 100 years, the company manufactures **Kayem Franks, the #1 brand of franks sold in New England. Best known for its Old Tyme Natural Casing franks, Kayem produces over 100 varieties of hot dogs and 300 varieties of deli meats, sausage and dinner hams under the Kayem, *al fresco*, Schonland's, McKenzie, Triple M, Genoa, Jordan's, Deuschmacher, Kirschner and Essem brands. For more information, follow @KayemBrand on Twitter, "like" [Kayem on Facebook](#) or visit [www.Kayem.com](http://www.Kayem.com).**

### **About Bridgewell**

Bridgewell is a nonprofit social and human services organization dedicated to strengthening communities. Headquartered in Peabody, Mass., Bridgewell empowers people with disabilities and other life challenges to live safe, self-directed and productive lives. Bridgewell delivers support through community housing, day programs, outpatient treatment, recovery services, education and employment training. Bridgewell's staff of more than 1,400 professionals serves approximately 6,300 people and their families. Bridgewell is accredited by the Commission on the Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) and fully licensed by the state. For more information, visit [www.bridgewell.org](http://www.bridgewell.org).