In September, more than 40 people ran or walked for Bridgewell’s team at the Flutie Foundation’s 5K for Autism: Dougie’s Epic Adventure at Belkin Family Lookout Farm in Natick. Ten members of the team participated virtually with the Flutie 5K Your Way option.

Over $4,200 was raised by the team and directly supports Bridgewell’s autism programs. The Flutie Foundation has supported Bridgewell for many years, including our Rosewood programs and most recently through our Family Support Center. More pictures on the Bridgewell website.

In October, Bridgewell held its annual Day of Giving, a community movement of generosity and a time to spread awareness of what we do, how we serve the community, and an opportunity for the community to support Bridgewell.

Through an American Red Cross Blood Drive at our headquarters and a service project with Newhall Fields Community Farm (NFCF) in Peabody, Bridgewell partnered with local nonprofits in the spirit of giving back.

The Day of Giving was a success! More than 30 people from Bridgewell, neighboring company JEOL USA, and members of the Peabody community donated blood at the drive and more than half were first time blood donors. The service project at NFCF was a busy day of volunteering, with more than 40 people from our day programs and recovery programs joined by Bridgewell staff. Projects included harvesting kale, collard greens and herbs while others separated wildflower seeds, cleaned onions and weeded and prepped the field for winter.

Thank you to the committed group of volunteers from Newhall Fields Community Farm and the staff from the Peabody Parks & Recreation Department for your partnership on this project, and thank you to Senator Joan Lovely and City Councilor Peter McGinn for swinging by to say hello at the farm! To learn more about Bridgewell Day of Giving, our services and how to support our mission, visit the Bridgewell website.

Bridgewell Teams Up with Flutie Foundation
Dear Friend,

As the Grateful Dead once said, “What a long, strange trip it’s been.” The past 18 months have been challenging, but the work of delivering on Bridgewell’s important mission moves forward. Our programs have been opening back up and restrictions are lifting, but we continue to adapt to ensure the safety of our staff and those in our care. We’ve decided to postpone our signature event, the Imagine the Possibilities Gala, until Friday, April 29, 2022. It was a difficult decision to make, but as we come out of this pandemic, we need to think of all the people in our community and do our best to keep everyone safe.

In other news, programming at Bridgewell is moving off digital screens and back in-person. Day programs are increasing their attendance, we’re growing new employment partners and more. It was a busy fall, with a Bridgewell team participating for the first time in the Flutie Foundation’s 5K for Autism: Dougie’s Epic Adventure, and our Bridgewell Day of Giving activities at our headquarters and at Newhall Fields Community Farm in Peabody. It was wonderful to see smiling faces working together to support the Bridgewell mission and other local nonprofits.

In the next few months, more exciting things will be happening. Bridgewell’s Center for Professional Development is lining up workshops on a variety of topics from trauma to creating autism friendly environments. New initiatives, such as our Turning 22 pilot program, featured in this newsletter, and a family supportive housing program, will further expand the breadth of our vital services. Be sure to follow us on social media, sign up for our emails, and visit the Bridgewell website often to learn more.

We are hopeful that the worst of the pandemic is behind us, and we are ready to leap into the future and grow as an organization. Thank you for being part of our community.

Chris Tuttle
President & CEO

**Empower Monthly Giving**

Empower hope and make a big, lasting impact with a small monthly gift to Bridgewell!

Bridgewell Empower Members are a special group of valued partners dedicated to helping empower people with life challenges to live safe, self-directed and productive lives. Empower Members make small automatic donations every month, which makes it easier for Bridgewell to plan long-term and offer vital, innovative programming to those in need of our services, such as community housing, day programs, outpatient treatment, and recovery services, as well as education and employment training. It’s an easy way to give regularly and feel great about the real, positive impact you are making on those we serve.

Visit [www.bridgewell.org/donate](http://www.bridgewell.org/donate) to quickly and easily set up your recurring monthly gift.

If you have any questions about the Empower Monthly Giving Program, please email bjgosselin@bridgewell.org or call 339.883.2112.

FROM THE CEO
Thank you, Cell Signaling Technology!

Thank you to Cell Signaling Technology, Inc. for providing a generous Community Grant to Bridgewell to help fund our sober living programming. Using a person-centered approach, Bridgewell works with those in our substance use disorder treatment programs to move into a sober, supportive and safe housing environment to continue their road of recovery through Bridgewell’s Affordable Housing programs.

Through collaboration with Bureau of Substance Abuse Services, Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the Lynn Housing Authority and Neighborhood Development, Bridgewell offers safe, clean, affordable housing units ranging from single room occupancies to one-bedroom apartments for men, women and their children.

Art Therapy Sessions at Great Art Studio

For the past few months, a group of women from Bridgewell’s Women’s Program, Johnson Street, participated in art therapy sessions at Great Art Studio in Lynn with Mary Flannery, the gallery’s owner, working through a process of expressing themselves through art.

The women hosted a small private art show at the gallery in September and plans are underway to develop this into a larger recovery project for the community.

During the art therapy sessions, each artist created a “bundle of hope” to bring with them and display in their new home once they complete treatment. This artwork will serve as a reminder of their art therapy sessions and experience with Great Art Studio as well as Bridgewell’s Women’s Program, Johnson Street.

Imagine the Possibilities Gala

This year’s Imagine the Possibilities gala has been moved to Friday, April 29, 2022. Bridgewell appreciates the patience of our sponsors as we pivot and reschedule this event. In April, we will be honoring George Sonia of Lancelot Janitorial & Paper Products with Bridgewell’s Visionary Leadership Award. This award recognizes outstanding persons for excellence to a community, social cause, or to Bridgewell.

Over the years, George Sonia and his team at Lancelot Janitorial & Paper Products have been instrumental to Bridgewell’s efforts in providing the highest level of care to the people in our services. George has shown a deep commitment and contribution to our mission, and he and his team have truly gone above and beyond to help us operate as safely as possible through the pandemic.

The Imagine the Possibilities gala provides critical financial support that helps fund Bridgewell’s vital mission. We are looking forward to celebrating with you in April and making our Gala the most successful one yet.
At Bridgewell, our team delivers on our mission to inspire hope and empower people experiencing life challenges to achieve their fullest potential.

One critical area of need for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities is building independent living skills as they graduate, upon turning 22 years old, from residential educational environments. Bridgewell recently launched a pilot program in partnership with the Department of Development Services (DDS) designed to serve as a “bridge” model, helping individuals turning 22 transition from highly supervised environments with 24/7 direct supports, to living more independently in the community with fewer needed supports.

“There is a huge gap in support for individuals in this age group, and the need for skill-building among these individuals as they mature is massive,” said Andrea Ward, Bridgewell’s Residential Director of Individual Supports.

Based in Wakefield, the program provides participants with support on structuring an independent routine based on needs determined during a living skills assessment process. Bridgewell staff help participants create individual development goals and build independent living skills, such as meal planning and preparation, financial skills such as budgeting and paying bills, laundry, navigating the community, taking care of their health and coping strategies. Job skills training is also a key component of the program.

In addition to direct support from Bridgewell staff, program participants also benefit from cutting edge technology, including smart home technology and a care.coach digital platform, which provides a new channel of communication and care delivery in the home. The digital platform offers capabilities ranging from telemedicine to a 24/7 engaging avatar companion, all of which can be customized to meet a wide range of needs.

“Most young adults have the desire to live independently in their own space after they’ve finished school. I am excited to be part of this new Bridgewell service, supporting these young adults as they learn the skills to move into adulthood and live independently in their own space – whatever that may be for each of them,” said Jennifer Dinan, Bridgewell’s Residential Manager who oversees day to day operations of the program.

The program is intended for participants to be enrolled for 24-48 months with staff support, but then to “graduate” and be prepared to safely transition into the community, gain steady employment, and live as independently as possible. This is a new service for DDS and Bridgewell, with no other programs like it available in the North Shore area. Based on the learnings of this pilot program, we hope to grow and expand this individual support programming into other communities we serve in Metro North.
1. Team Bridgewell had over 42 team members, including those participating virtually like Chris, for the 2021 Flutie 5k for Autism: Dougie’s Epic Adventure!

2. Rosewood Day Habilitation Program in Billerica recently visited Salisbury Beach - it was a fun trip, but also an opportunity to learn about beach safety.

3. This summer, the Saugus/Wakefield Elks members hosted a BBQ for Bridgewell residents. Thank you to this group for being such great hosts!

4. Marisa from our Rosewood Day program recently learned how to make Haitian Meatballs and Pasta, taught by staff member Elta, who was excited to share her recipe.

5. Participants at Bridgewell’s Rosewood Adult Day Program made a thank you poster to show appreciation for Direct Support Professional Recognition Week in September!

6. Bridgewell residents recently enjoyed a night out at the North Shore Navigators game - on their own private roof deck!

7. A few lucky Bridgewell residents attended a meet and greet hosted by Big Time Wrestling – they met wrestlers Scott Hall and Kevin Nash.