

# JUNE 2022 NEWSLETTER



**ABILITIES PARTNERSHIP**  
OF THE HUDSON VALLEY, INC.

*In the Fall of 2021, we announced the affiliation of Abilities First and InFlight under the parent organization of Abilities Partnership of the Hudson Valley (APHV). Since then, leadership within both organizations has begun to merge operations and departments, with a focus on continued quality of services and stronger overall operations.*



**ABILITIES FIRST**  
an affiliate of  
ABILITIES PARTNERSHIP  
OF THE HUDSON VALLEY, INC.



**IN FLIGHT**  
INNOVATION for  
DEVELOPMENTAL  
ACHIEVEMENT  
an affiliate of  
ABILITIES PARTNERSHIP  
OF THE HUDSON VALLEY, INC.

*In keeping with this alignment, we will share news from both agencies in this monthly news publication, beginning July 2022. We look forward to broadening our readers' experience of our shared missions, celebrating our successes, and building a deeper connection within our communities.*



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## Congratulations, 2022 Graduates!

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Abilities First Community Partners Breakfast

Residential Services: Looking for a New Residence?

We Want to Hear Your Stories

Follow Us on Social Media

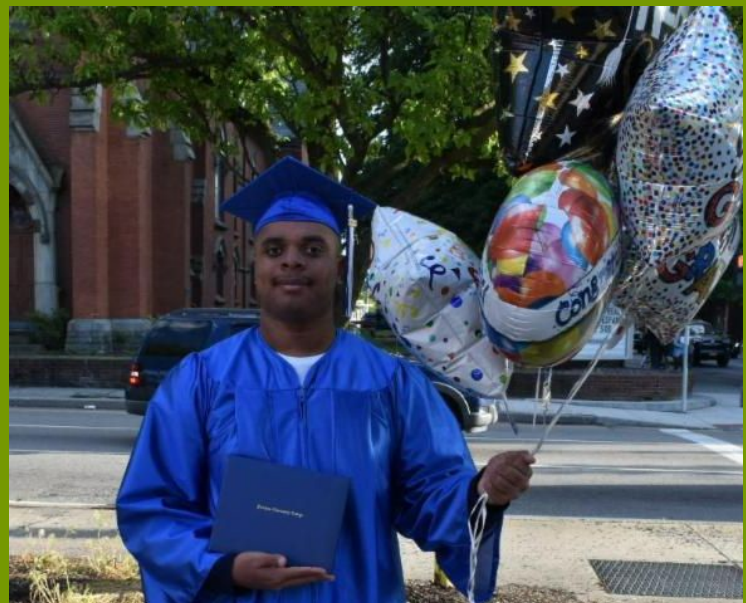
We're Hiring!

[Support FAFNY](#)

## June Holidays



The Abilities First UPK, preschools, and schools finished the year with many activities and graduations! Each of the programs make the end of the school year a fun and enjoyable time for students and teachers. Congratulations to all the graduates who are moving on to their next step!



*(Justin, graduate of DCC, posing for a graduation picture)*

Students Ashley, Dana, and Justin graduated from the ThinkAhead program at Dutchess Community College on May 19, 2022. The students completed a 2-year program focusing on job and life skills. They all persevered through remote learning for their first two semesters and were able to finish out the program on-campus in the second year. It was not an easy task, but they all made it happen.

**CONGRATULATIONS, GRADUATES!**

**Join Our 60th Anniversary Giving Society!**

YESTERDAY'S  
VISION  
TODAY'S  
COMMITMENT  
TOMORROW'S  
IMPACT



## Abilities First Establishes Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Accessibility (DEIA) Committee

In 2021, Abilities First engaged a consulting firm to assess our organizational culture related to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA), with the intent to address and diminish the impact of bias in the organization to create a safe and supportive workplace.

As part of that initiative, the development of an internal DEIA Committee was launched in the Fall of 2021, which was open to all employees.

In the months since its establishment, the committee has received training and attended presentations that helped provide insight into how to strengthen these areas of diversity, and how to best address DEIA incidents. The DEIA Committee also made efforts to spread awareness of this information in biweekly bulletins. The committee also developed this Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion tree to aid in the mitigation of DEIA incidents.

The DEIA Committee has established long-term goals as it approaches the end of its first year, and we look forward to what its members will accomplish and take action upon in the future.

**US**  
together **ACTION**  
**CHANGE** learn **TEACH**  
**MEET** weight **DISABILITY** religion  
**EDUCATION** open question **CLASS**  
**EQUALITY** political affiliation **DIVERSITY**  
sexual orientation **LANGUAGE** nationality  
**inclusion** **PRACTICE** unite **RACE** gender  
**EQUAL TREATMENT FOR ALL**



ABILITIES FIRST | AN OFFICE OF ABILITIES PARTNERSHIP OF THE HOBSON VALLEY, INC.

[Read more about the DEIA Committee HERE](#)

STAFF SPOTLIGHT

When a call for support was received, AF staff

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS



In April, staff members of the Abilities First School in LaGrange traveled to Ensenada, Mexico to serve medically-fragile children. They assisted a local physical therapist who is living on a ranch designed to meet the needs of these children.

They are in the process of building a school for disabled children and adding therapy rooms that will allow children to receive therapies, education, and life skills training. The Abilities First staff members assisted in the development of these programs. Assistance was also needed to identify children in the community with special needs and provide support to their families. They do not currently have a system in Mexico to care for these individuals, and as such, the Abilities First team members were granted the opportunity to help create this service and support.

In addition, the physical therapist/ranch in Mexico provides hippotherapy and horseback riding therapy for these children. Our team members learned more about this amazing technique for treating students like those we serve at Abilities First. They also run a wheelchair clinic and provide adapted equipment for students and their families.

Our team members brought wheelchairs and equipment with them that were donated by their own families and AFI for the children in Mexico who need them, and otherwise would have had no way of obtaining this equipment. The team was very excited for the opportunity to do something for people who are less fortunate than those living in America, and were extremely grateful to be going on the trip.

*Abilities First is pleased to partner with regional resources to support our families and programs.*



Hudson Gateway Realtor Foundation made a gift of \$500 toward the purchase of smocks for the Executive Drive Preschool in New Windsor. The much-needed smocks allow for greater participation in creative arts and exploration.



Thank you, Hudson Valley Office Furniture, for the donation of much-needed chairs!



The J.M. McDonald Foundation made a generous gift of \$5,000 in support of the impending Abilities First school expansions at the LaGrange and New Windsor schools.

**THANK YOU to our committed Board member Jeanine Agnolet!**



“In 2006, [I] joined Rehab Programs—now Abilities First. I have been an AF board member for the past 16 years, have served in various positions, and have seen great change. [And], as in all other things, I owe it all to my Mom!

My mother, Rose Agnolet, volunteered at one of the first social support groups for adults with developmental disabilities in the tri-state area back in the early '70s and showed her young family that each person she worked with had a unique role to play in this world. She instilled in us the importance of acceptance, respect, love, and mutual understanding.” - *Jeanine Agnolet*

*Abilities First is most grateful to Jeanine and her long-term commitment to the mission and the community!*

**[Read the full interview with Jeanine HERE!](#)**

-- UPCOMING EVENTS --

 ABILITIES FIRST  
**GOLF & TENNIS**  
CLASSIC 



**GOLF & TENNIS SOLD OUT!**

***Thank you for your support!***

We are most appreciative to DVM Industries, Inc. for its leadership and support as the Title Sponsor of this year's Abilities First Golf & Tennis Classic. In addition, we are most grateful to all our sponsors for making this year's Abilities First Golf & Tennis Classic, presented by DVM Industries, a sold-out event.

There are still cocktail reception tickets available for purchase. For more information on how to purchase cocktail reception tickets, as well as other ways to participate and support this fundraiser, contact Teresa Walsh at [teresawalsh@abilitiesfirstny.org](mailto:teresawalsh@abilitiesfirstny.org) or 845.485.9803 ext. 9394.



**DUTCHMAN'S LANDING PARK  
CATSKILL, NY 12414**

# CORNHOLE CAUSE

Prizes, Vendors, Food Trucks,  
Raffles, Live Music and More!

**AUGUST 20, 2022**

11 a.m. to 6 p.m.

[HTTPS://INFLIGHTINC.ORG/INDEX.PHP/EVENTS  
/CORNHOLE-CAUSE](https://inflightinc.org/index.php/events/cornhole-cause)



# Save the Date!

**NOVEMBER 29, 2022**

ABILITIES FIRST  
COMMUNITY PARTNERS BREAKFAST

Residential Services

**Looking for a New Residence?**



*Look no further! The Mews at Hopewell Junction is a great opportunity for income-based housing. Live as independently as possible with these beautiful, affordable apartments.*

**1-BEDROOM  
APARTMENTS**

**2-BEDROOM  
APARTMENTS**

## **WE WANT TO HEAR YOUR ABILITIES FIRST STORIES!**

*We are looking for stories over the past 60 years, ranging from our early Rehab Programs to the current Abilities First, Inc. Please let us know if you are willing to share your family or community's experience by emailing [Teresawalsh@abilitiesfirstny.org](mailto:Teresawalsh@abilitiesfirstny.org) or [Melissamccoy@abilitiesfirstny.org](mailto:Melissamccoy@abilitiesfirstny.org).*



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& ADULTS IN OUR COMMUNITIES

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***FOLLOW US!***

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For the latest in pictures, agency information, and

happenings, follow us on social media!



*We're Hiring!*  
**TEXT APPLY  
TO 855-912-1334**



## JOIN OUR TEAM!

We're hiring to fill a variety of positions, including Direct Support Professionals (DSPs), Teacher Aides, Teaching Assistants, and **MORE!**

Find out how YOU can begin a NEW career at Abilities First by simply texting the word "APPLY" to  
to  
855-912-1334, or visit our **CAREERS PAGE** for more info.

## Support the Foundation for Abilities First NY

To make an online gift to the mission of Abilities First, go to <https://www.abilitiesfirstny.org/make-an-impact/donate/>. For additional information about gifts, sponsorships, events, volunteering, or hosting a fundraiser, contact Theresa Walsh at [teresawalsh@abilitiesfirstny.org](mailto:teresawalsh@abilitiesfirstny.org) or 845-485-9803 ext. 1223.





# ABILITIES FIRST

ENRICHING THE LIVES OF CHILDREN  
& ADULTS IN OUR COMMUNITIES

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# FOUNDATION

FOR ABILITIES FIRST NY

*Philanthropic leadership to enrich  
the mission of Abilities First*

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## FAFNY & AFI BOARD LEADERSHIP



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