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**Katie's House... Adjusting to the Times**

Our friends who have supported Katie's House since inception will recall that our original mission was to establish and manage an assisted living facility for young adult women with developmental disabilities. The home opened in 2007 and it was a learning experience. The administrative demands, of managing such a home, were daunting but we persevered. Since then, we modified our objectives and decided to assist other parents and guardians to set up homes similar to KH. We hope to fulfill our mission by establishing a series of mutually supportive but individually managed homes for adults with disabilities.

In 2008 it was time for Katie's House to re-invent itself, moving from principally a provider of housing to becoming a provider of programs aimed at enriching the lives of young adults with disabilities in the surrounding community. Thus our Center for Advancement was formed, with all of its associated programs.

We continued to meet with families to provide information on funding for adults with disabilities and continue to co-chair meetings for the Division of Developmental Disabilities. We believe parents learned a lot over the past year. Some went away encouraged and some were still overwhelmed. Those parents that were encouraged by what they learned will go on to the next step. In that regard, please read about Richard below. Katie's House will provide information and resources to help Richard's parents set up their own supportive housing, under the auspices of Katie's House. I'm sure that you will hear more about this effort in future newsletters.



**Meet Richard:** Richard is 24 and autistic. He is a friendly young man who works part time at a local supermarket stocking shelves. A few months ago Richard spent most of his free time watching TV because the parents could not find any meaningful activities for him, until they found Katie's House. Now he actively participates in KH programs, including sign, dance, cooking classes and The Friendship Group. Since joining these activities his mood and attitude improved greatly. Communications and social skills are the two areas that he needed to work on and this also improved. Donations to KH, helps to support the programs that gave Richard's life, a new dimension



**Unsung Hero Awards**

Anthony and Joseph from Signature Kitchens, Gwen Nagorsky, ASID Designer, and John from Reno Appliances (top left to right) were presented with Unsung Hero Awards for Outstanding Volunteer Services and furthering the goals of Katie's House at our annual **Every Bite Counts dinner**. They designed and donated the kitchen at Katie's House.



*We appreciate your support!!*



*Dancing with our Stars!!*

No need to watch TV to see great dancing... here our Dance Class learns how to Line Dance at our Holiday Party. Dancing is not only good exercise but it improves coordination and enhances social skills!!

*Besides it's fun!!*



*And We Can Sing Too!!!*

On the right is our Sign Language Class, signing the song "White Christmas" at our annual Holiday Party.



*But it's not all Play and no Work!!*

We know it's important to give something back to the community that gives so much to us... and it's also important to work cooperatively with other groups who are doing the same thing. The picture above is a local Girl Scout Troop that collected gifts for KH to be given to the Pediatric Oncology Department at St. Joseph's Hospital in Paterson. These wonderful girls also decorated Katie's House for the holidays and returned to help take those decorations down when the season ended.

*True love is neither Physical, nor romantic.  
True love is an acceptance of all that is, has been, will be, and will not be.*