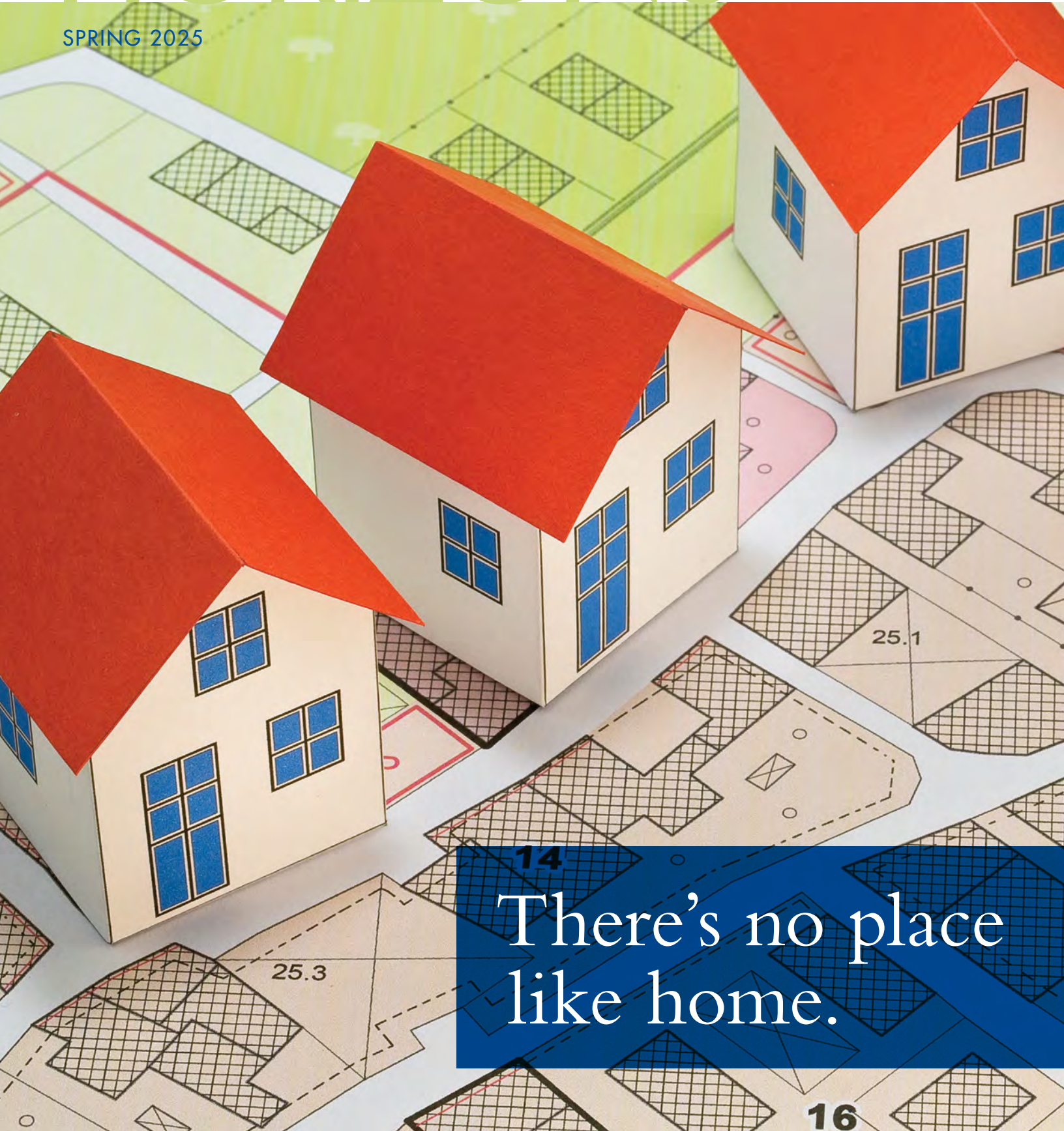


# HORIZONS

SPRING 2025



14  
There's no place  
like home.

## Letter from the President

Dear Friends,

Happy 2025 to each and every one in our community.

All of us at Crotched Mountain are bracing ourselves for change and uncertainty in order to best support the needs of people with disabilities. Our mission, which has shaped our impact for so many decades, continues because we are able to adapt to their changing needs. Now with change happening in Washington and in Concord, budgets and services that provide support to our most vulnerable friends and neighbors will likely be impacted. We hear from our community everyday their concerns and questions and we will do everything that we can to provide vital support.

As you can tell by the cover of this issue we're focusing on one of the most significant challenges facing New Hampshire: housing. It will come as no surprise to anyone that affordable—much less accessible—housing is hard to come by. Homelessness and poverty in the disability community in New Hampshire is endemic and widespread across all regions of the State.

Whether it's our Case Managers who work tirelessly to help adults with disabilities, chronic illness, and other unique needs remain in their homes or CMF Kids' emerging partnerships with organizations like the Keene Housing Kids Collaborative or our three accessible and affordable housing properties, Crotched Mountain Foundation supports hundreds of our clients to remain housed. Add to that, our Enhanced Family Care program, which matches adults with disabilities with home providers, and you can see the breadth of options and services that Crotched Mountain provides to support maximum independence and dignity.

We believe that everyone deserves the opportunity to live, learn, and thrive in their own communities—and their homes!

You will see that this year there are many exciting opportunities in front of us (some of which you'll read about in the pages to come) as well as many challenges to face. But with you by our side, and the collaboration with our partners and school districts, we are poised to lift up more children and adults with disabilities than ever.

Thank you for all you do to make this critical mission come to life!

Warm regards,



Ned Olney  
President and CEO



*PS: I wanted to share some sad news. At the end of last year we heard about the sudden passing of Jessica, mom to Carter, a little boy with Joubert syndrome who we had featured in a previous issue. Jessica was a passionate advocate for her son and greatly enjoyed the adaptive playground we had helped build in Milan. She will be missed and our hearts go out to Carter and his family.*





# SEVEN DECADES LATER, A CELEBRATION OF HOPE

## Seventy Years Ago, a Life-Changing School Opened its Doors.

Did you know that from 1955 to 1979, Crotched Mountain Foundation operated New Hampshire's only School for the Deaf? In fact, as early as 1940, we provided services to people with hearing impairments, helping to pay for auditory exams and hearing aids, providing referrals for medical treatment, and supported screening and treatment programs for preschool children.

Up until the establishment of Crotched Mountain School for the Deaf in 1955, New Hampshire was only one of three states in the nation without a school for the hearing-impaired. Twelve to fourteen students were enrolled that first year and the school offered twelve years of education. Crotched Mountain School for the Deaf reached its peak enrollment during the 1960s, with nearly 200 students.

We are proud of our history of stepping up to meet the pressing needs of the day, and we are proud of you for your committed and compassionate support. When you support our mission, you are taking part in a story that spans decades and we are so grateful that you have contributed your story to our growing saga. ■

# THE FACE OF PHILANTHROPY



## Celebrating Rocky's Rangers, Our Longest (Seven Decades and Counting!) Group Supporting Crotched Mountain Foundation

Phil DeCarolis recalls his brother Rocco's (Rocky) enthusiasm for Crotched Mountain Foundation in the 1950's and our reputation, even then, as the preeminent champion for children with disabilities. An avid outdoorsman, Rocky loved to organize hunting and fishing trips for family and friends.

As Phil says: "Rocky connected his passion for helping children with his love of the outdoors. Once a year, he gathered us together for a game food buffet to raise funds for Crotched Mountain. We became Rocky's Rangers."

At these events, Rocky enjoyed raising funds using a "Kangaroo Court" whereby attendees were charged with infractions of hunting and fishing rules. After some good-natured ribbing, the accused were invariably found guilty

and issued small fines—with all "court" proceeds benefiting the children and adults with disabilities served by Crotched Mountain Foundation.

Tragedy struck during a group fishing trip to Moosehead Lake in Maine in 1964. A sudden storm capsized the fishing boat carrying Rocco, his wife Mary, and her parents, Sam and Dorothy McLaughlin. Though Mary survived, Rocky, Sam, and Dorothy perished.

Friends and family members continue Rocky's traditions to this day.

"It was very hard at first, but we kept the hunting and fishing trips going, and for around seventy years, Rocky's Rangers have continued their annual banquet." As Phil said, "It's great the



tradition continues. We have fun and feel good about supporting a cause that was near and dear to Rocky." And, by adding a little extra to their fines, the rangers have boosted total giving to over \$80,000.

Every year, Rocky's Rangers honor the passing of their founder through regular, annual giving. Their steadfast support of Crotched Mountain throughout the decades symbolizes the powerful impact created by sustained giving. Even a small gift, made regularly over time, adds up. These gifts help create life-changing successes for this region's most vulnerable children and adults. We thank you, Rocky, and all of your rangers! ■



## HOW YOU CAN CREATE YOUR LEGACY

### Your Will or Trust

A gift to Crothed Mountain Foundation through your estate helps you pursue your financial goals while also benefiting Crothed Mountain's people and programs.

### As a Beneficiary in other Financial Assets

Your retirement plan, life insurance policy, or annuity is another way to create your perpetual legacy.

### Life Income Gift

Charitable Gift Annuities are tax-smart ways to create income for you and your family for life while leaving a future gift supporting people with disabilities.

### A Charitable Lead Trust

Give a gift of fixed annual payments to Crothed Mountain Foundation while leaving assets to your family or other heirs all while reducing applicable taxes.

### Use your IRA

Are you required to take a minimum income distribution (RMD) as taxable income? A qualified charitable distribution (QCD) directly to Crothed Mountain Foundation is not taxed as income. Crothed Mountain Foundation's ID number is 02-0222168.

### Use Appreciated Stock

Stocks held for more than a year and gifted directly to Crothed Mountain Foundation are a great way to avoid capital gains taxes.

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It's easier than you think! Contact Kevin Harte at **603-831-8424** or email [kevin.harte@crothedmountain.org](mailto:kevin.harte@crothedmountain.org). You can give securely online at [crothedmountain.org/donate](https://crothedmountain.org/donate).

*Information contained herein is offered for general information purposes. Your personal circumstances, state laws, and other factors may impact results. It is always recommended you consult with your financial advisors before any important financial decisions.*

## The Harry Gregg Foundation Is Here to Help

As one of the few charitable foundations to provide funds directly to individuals, the Harry Alan Gregg Foundation has made over 8,000 grants totaling more than \$3 million.

Opportunities for grant support include home modifications, educational services, adaptive equipment, therapeutic recreation, medical bills, and technology. The Harry Gregg Foundation strives to help improve a person's quality of life by providing funds that will enhance their independence. ■

Learn more about the grants that are available and the deadlines to submit applications at: <https://harrygreggfoundation.org/>

Harry Gregg  
**FOUNDATION**



# "TREE"

## How One Word Brought Light to a Family of a Child with Autism

When Grant was 11 months old he said his first word: “Mama.” Soon after followed “Dada.” Brandy, Grant’s mom, and her husband were, of course, ecstatic, as parents would be when their young child hits an important developmental milestone.

But then—there was nothing. No more “Mama,” no more “Dada,” no more words. Grant went radio silent.

As crestfallen as she was, Brandy half-expected something like this to happen with her son. One month before he said his first word, she began to notice behaviors, sign-posts that pointed toward a possible autism diagnosis. He would tiptoe walk, fixate on things, and stiffen up when he’d get excited.

“I worked hard to get him diagnosed, to get him into services.” Brandy recounts. “We were told that he was too young, but I insisted. It was an ordeal.”

Eventually, Grant received an autism diagnosis, and as relieving as it was to attain it, Brandy knew that everyone’s world was about to change. The diagnosis brought clarity—but uncertainty soon followed.

“I’m obviously going to always love my son, no matter what,” she says, “but I knew our lives were going to change. There was relief as we knew intervention at an early age is so helpful. But at the same time it brought a lot of stress, trying to figure out how to pay for all the therapies Grant needed.”

And those therapies are extensive: Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) therapy, Speech therapy, and Occupational therapy. The good news? Over the course of nearly three years of these intensive support and early interventions, Grant has come a long way.

“We definitely see the improvements,” Brandy says. “He’s a happier kid because he’s receiving these services, whereas, before he was getting frustrated because we didn’t know how to help him.”



This progress came with a price. Each therapeutic visit requires a copay, multiple visits throughout the week cascade these fees. As the fiscal pressures mounted, the anxiety compounded.

“It’s just it’s very stressful because you just want to do everything you can for your kid,” Brandy says. “And sometimes you don’t know how you’re going to do it.”

Enter...Logan’s Giving Fund for Autism, an initiative of Crotched Mountain’s CMF Kids program. Responding to the growing need for support of families of children with autism, CMF Kids created this special Giving Fund to relieve the pressure parents like Brandy were feeling on a daily basis. Families who apply and are approved receive substantial financial support to offset their copays and the service providers are compensated directly.

Since last year, when the program kicked off, 36 family resource awards totaling over \$118,000 was distributed to providers on behalf of children with autism. Brandy’s family was one of the recipients and its impact cannot be overstated.

“I can’t even put into words how much we appreciate this,” she says. “It just relieves pressure for families, so you don’t have to make decisions between therapy copays and maybe Christmas presents or a new coat. It makes a huge difference.”

And her reaction when she found out she had been approved for the award? “I’m not much of a crier, but I cried.”

For over two years, since he first uttered “Mama” and “Dada,” Grant had been nonverbal. But recently he has begun to say a few words, which is, as Brandy says, “amazing.”

“When he speaks, he lights up,” she adds. “He smiles to himself when he says something and he sees that we can understand him.”

One night close to this past Christmas, the family was sitting in the living room. Brandy is holding Grant’s four-month-old brother. The house is unusually quiet, peaceful. The Christmas tree is lit up and decorated. This holiday is particularly special because five months earlier, when Brandy was giving birth to Grant’s brother Lane, she sustained a placental abruption, and mother and son almost didn’t make it.

So, amidst that silent night, as the family just sat in the quiet and stillness, Grant got up, pointed to the Christmas tree and said: “tree.”

With that, a simple one-syllable word brought delirious joy to a family, a reminder of the distance their special little boy has traveled, and the gratitude for the gift given by the supporters of Crotched Mountain that made that journey possible in the first place. ■







# HEARING AND THE HENDERSONS

To get to Eugene and Hazel Henderson’s house in Barrington, NH, you’ll have to take the well-traveled Route 125 in New Hampshire, a road that weaves its way through the most populous centers in Strafford County. It’s the connective tissue of this area of the Granite State and the fact that the Hendersons—lifelong Stafford county residents (80-plus years and counting!) live right off this thoroughfare is apropos. This is their neck of the woods; this is their home.

The married couple keeps a cozy home in their 55+ community. They are in their “his” and “hers” easy chairs, watching the evening newscast, their walkers by their side. This isn’t terribly surprising, considering Hazel is 87 and Eugene is 86. They certainly aren’t as agile as they used to be, but whatever physical capability has ebbed away over the decades the two are still as sharp as a tack.

They can reach back into their memories with ease to summon answers to the questions of how they first met (at a church youth group), how they recognized each other (Eugene’s aunt was Hazel’s best friend in school), and various anecdotes from the days working in the same shoe-making factory.

It is obvious: these are two older adults with diverse needs who

need just some support to remain independent and in the home they have shared for the past 20 years.

And that makes them a perfect fit for Crotoned Mountain Community Care (CMCC). As recipients of Crotoned Mountain’s CFI (Choices for Independence) Case Management program, the Hendersons receive that support through their Crotoned Mountain case manager, Nora.

“Our case managers are tireless advocates for their clients,” says Kara Nickulas, Executive Director of Adult Services for Crotoned Mountain Foundation. “Staff like Nora bring compassion and expertise to their jobs every day all in support of people like the Hendersons who need that extra help to keep them in their homes and out of nursing homes.”





As their primary service coordinator, Nora visits the Hendersons regularly to assess where Eugene and Hazel's needs are. She then connects them to the various outside agencies who provide services like housekeeping and physical therapy.

"Nora calls and checks on us," Hazel says. "She wants to know if there's anything we need and to see how we're doing. It's a good, good organization."

Throughout the years, the Hendersons have benefitted from home modifications, sourced through a combination of CFI funding and CMCC grants that are designated to enhance independence for CFI clients. This includes an accessible ramp, newly built to allow Hazel and Eugene to get in and out of their home, a near-impossibility when it was just steps.

Now, Hazel is able to stay active and walk throughout the neighborhood on warm days—a routine that she treasures and will happily do as long as she is able ("I just love to walk," she says).

Recently, CMCC secured a life-changing support for the Hendersons: hearing aids. For a while, Eugene and Hazel were sharing one pair of hearing aids (one each). (As you might imagine, this was not ideal and led to plenty of miscommunication and general discord.)

"We just couldn't hear each other," Eugene says.

Partnering with the Lion's Club, Nora arranged for two new—and complete!—sets of hearing aids for the couple. The difference in auditory function was such an improvement it was almost jarring, like emerging from a bubble filled with bus station loudspeaker static into a crystal clear hearing environment.

"I could even hear Eugene walk across the floor to his desk," Hazel says. "I said, 'Oh my goodness, I hear your feet shuffle.' He said, 'As well you should!'"

That's what it takes for the Hendersons to continue living their lives on their own terms, in their own home, in the community they have loved their entire lives. Just some support. Just some people like Nora and the other case managers to connect, to coordinate, to care.

Hear that? It's the sweet sound of independence. ■

## Did You Know?

**CFI offers the opportunity for people to have a choice between nursing home and staying at home with family in their community.**

**CFI saves taxpayer dollars! Home supports and services are much less expensive than a nursing home.**

**Nursing home beds are scarce in New Hampshire making the CFI program very important to maintaining health and safety.**

## Volunteers Wanted for Spring Clean-Up at the Accessible Trails

April 26, 2025

Help prepare our accessible trails this spring! Come for the whole day or for just an hour—any time you can spare to help our trails open as soon as possible.

Sign-up at  
[cmf.org/trail-cleanup](https://cmf.org/trail-cleanup)

Thank you for making  
a difference.





# SAFE AT HOME

## Crotched Mountain's HUD Properties Bring Stable, Affordable Housing and Enriching Community Experiences to Our Most Vulnerable Neighbors

Meet Elaine, a resident of McIntyre School Apartments in Whitefield, NH. Since June 2020, Elaine has brought warmth and joy to her community, often found enjoying peaceful moments in her rocking chair, sipping coffee, and reading. In particular, she looks forward to the frequent visits from her son, George, who stops by almost daily and the weekly community breakfasts held in the McIntyre auditorium (a prime spot to connect with her neighbors and share in the camaraderie of the building). What does all of this add up to? In one word: home.

McIntyre School Apartments is one of three HUD (Housing and Urban Development) apartment residences Crotched Mountain Foundation has sponsored since the early 1990s. In addition to McIntyre (for seniors 62 and older), Crotched Mountain manages Forest Avenue Apartments in Portland, ME (for adults with disabilities) and Greenbush Village Apartments in East Greenbush, NY (for adults with disabilities).

The average annual income for residents across all three properties is approximately \$19,500; on average HUD tenants pay \$350 per month as opposed to market rents in those areas that routinely exceed \$1,000. Tenant rent includes heat, water and electricity with onsite laundry available at each location as well as regular social events like community breakfasts, bingo games, even Halloween parties.

“For individuals on fixed incomes this is a welcome relief as their monthly living expenses become more predictable,” said Jon Dash, Director of Operations for Crotched Mountain Foundation. “Continuing our commitment to supporting people and children with disabilities and chronic conditions, our HUD communities provide a safe, welcoming and accessible environment for seniors and adults with disabilities.” ■

To learn more about Crotched Mountain's HUD properties visit [cmf.org/hud](https://cmf.org/hud).



# AWESOME OPPORTUNITIES (FOR EVERY KID)

## CMF Kids and Keene Housing Kids Collaborative Join Forces to Impact the Lives of Children in Low-Income Housing

CMF Kids is partnering with Keene Housing Kids Collaborative (KHKC) for a unique project to provide educational and enriching experiences to children with disabilities in low-income housing from the Keene area

“This partnership project is perfectly suited to the CMF Kids commitment to help children of all abilities live, learn, and thrive,” said Melissa White, Executive Director of CMF Kids. “With housing in New Hampshire such a challenge, we want to make sure these children, regardless of their housing and economic circumstances, can access similar enrichment activities as their peers. Of all the children enrolled in Keene Housing Kids Collaborative, 44% receive special education services. And the annual median income of the participating families is just over \$23,000.”

We took a moment to chat with Sally Malay, Executive Director of KHKC to speak to this new collaboration.

### How does KHKC impact the community?

KHKC empowers kids in low-income housing to build the skills, experiences, and confidence they need to break the cycle of poverty. By connecting families with out-of-school programs and community resources, KHKC helps bridge the opportunity gap, ensuring every child has the chance to thrive.

### What are the biggest housing challenges you currently see in the state?

New Hampshire faces a severe housing crisis, with a shortage of affordable rental units and rising home prices making it increasingly difficult for low- and moderate-income families to find stable housing. With vacancy rates at historic lows and wages struggling to keep pace with housing costs, many families are forced to make tough choices between rent, food, and other essentials.

### Describe your partnership with Crotched Mountain and CMF Kids

KHKC partners with Crotched Mountain Foundation and CMF Kids to provide inclusive, enriching experiences for children of all abilities. Through this collaboration, KHKC ensures that kids in low-income housing have access to adaptive recreation, outdoor adventures, and skill-building opportunities that foster confidence, resilience, and a sense of belonging.

With CMF Kids’ support, children can participate in Freedom Reins Therapeutic Horse Riding, where they develop coordination, confidence, and connection through equine-assisted activities, and Shaolin Studios Martial Arts, which helps build discipline, focus, and self-esteem in a structured and empowering environment.

KHKC is thrilled to partner with Crotched Mountain Foundation and CMF Kids because it opens up new opportunities for children of all abilities to explore, learn, and grow. This partnership aligns with our mission to break down barriers and provide enriching experiences that empower kids to build confidence, resilience, and a sense of belonging. ■





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Horizons Spring 2025



**Hit the beach and make a difference! Sign up your team today!**

Build your team of four or more for an exciting day of beach volleyball at the **2025 Winnepesaukee Volleyball Classic!** Music, food, and friendly competition, with all proceeds going to support Logan's Giving Fund for Autism - don't miss it!

**Saturday, June 7, 2025**  
Akwa Marina Yacht Club  
95 Centenary Ave, Laconia, NH

[www.volleyballclassic.org](http://www.volleyballclassic.org)

