



A Newsletter from The Douglas Center: August 2022

Coming Together to Quilt a Visual Symbol of Inclusion

The Douglas Center is excited to announce the debut of our Community Quilt project symbolizing inclusion and diversity. This project was created during our recent AbilityLab event, which was a part of the Coming Together 2022: Sharing Experiences of Disability program. The public was invited to our center for a hands-on experience showcasing what many of our participants experience at our center as they work to develop and focus on their ABILITIES. Throughout the day, tours of our center were given in addition to the opportunity to participate in several hands-on activities available. One of these activities included painting and decorating a quilt fabric square which would then become a part of our community quilt display. With simple elements such as paint, fabric, glue, Scissors, etc., our program participants and staff members of The Douglas Center along with members of the community, crafted images onto fabric squares to create a beautiful feast of expression and imagination. Each fabric piece holds a story, a meaningful inspiration that comes together to form a visual symbol of inclusion.

The Douglas Center quilt of inclusion will be debuted at The Douglas Center during the month of August 2022 and will then travel to surrounding communities of Skokie, Niles, Lincolnwood, and Morton Grove.



The Douglas Center Key Partner in Coming Together 2022:



The Douglas Center debuts Community Quilt of Inclusion

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The Douglas Center Closing Schedule

- In-Service Day: August 26th
- Labor Day: September 5th
- Columbus Day: October 10th
- Thanksgiving: Nov. 24th & 25th

About Patchwork Quilting

Patchwork quilting dates back as far as 5,000 years ago (3,400 BCE) in ancient Egypt and has been found in all cultures across the world. Generations of people have taken fabric remnants and recycled them giving them new life and new meaning. This art form has a rich past. Throughout history these fabric fragments held a story of the family history and were used to pass on knowledge to younger generations. In the U.S. abolitionists secretly used quilt patterns as codes to help slaves navigate the South to the North searching for a better life.

The Douglas Center was honored to be a key part of Coming Together 2022. Although the 13-year program has officially come to an end, our center looks forward to continuing to work with the organizations that have participated in the Coming Together program as they work to transform this tremendous project.

The Douglas Center “Flowers from the Heart” Returns!

The Douglas Center is excited to announce the return of our “Flowers from the Heart” program. This program which debuted in January of 2020 had been sidelined due to Covid-19. This initiative provides our program participants with special needs the opportunity to create beautiful floral arrangements and personally deliver surprise moments of cheer and gratitude to residents of local nursing homes, assisted living & rehabilitation facilities and to our community partners including police and fire departments, libraries, legislators, etc.

Each week The Douglas Center will rescue slightly spent blooms for repurposing and recycling from local businesses and retailers. Our participants work to clean and prep the recycled flowers and transform them into stunning floral arrangements. Each arrangement carries a card that contains the name of the business that donated the flowers and The Douglas Center program participant that created it.



Once completed, participants load up our van with their beautiful “Flowers from the Heart” arrangements and set out to personally deliver them to the happy beneficiaries! The JOY these flowers bring is priceless!

Prior to the onset of Covid-19 our participants had delivered floral arrangements to Alden North Shore Rehabilitation, Skokie Police and Fire Departments, Skokie Mayor George Van Dusen and Vicky Varga, Niles Township Community Clothing Closet, Skokie Public Library and The Lieberman Center.

“We are so excited to be able to resume this program,” stated Rifath Khan, CEO. “Our “Flowers from the Heart” program is an opportunity to provide our participants with additional skill-building as well as a meaningful way to give back to the community.”

Would you like to help us in this venture? Here’s how...

Bud Vase donations: If you would like to donate bud vases, contact us to arrange for a drop-off time at The Douglas Center between 9 am and 3 pm, Monday through Friday

Spread the word: LIKE our Facebook page and share our “Flowers from the Heart” posts

Make a donation to The Douglas Center via our website: www.thedouglascenter.org

The Douglas Center Hosts Annual Picnic for Program Participants

The Douglas Center staff and volunteers hosted our Annual Picnic for program participants on Friday, August 5th at Bunker Hill Forest Preserve. Festivities included a wonderful lunch, entertainment, nature walks and many prizes. The festivities really began to rock with the appearance of Hugo Elvis: Tribute Artist. Hugo Colins, entertained with his dynamic tribute to the legendary Elvis Presley. His mastery of the choreography, authenticity and musical talent is a wonderful and rockin’ tribute to the great Elvis Presley.



Happy 60th Birthday, Willie!

Another highlight of day was the celebration of the 60th birthday of one of our long-time participants, Willie. Willie’s parents joined in the festivities with a birthday cake that was enjoyed by everyone!

Each year our participants look forward to this summer event, especially this year after the challenges of the Covid pandemic. A great time was had by all!

To view a peek of Hugo Elvis, [CLICK HERE](#)

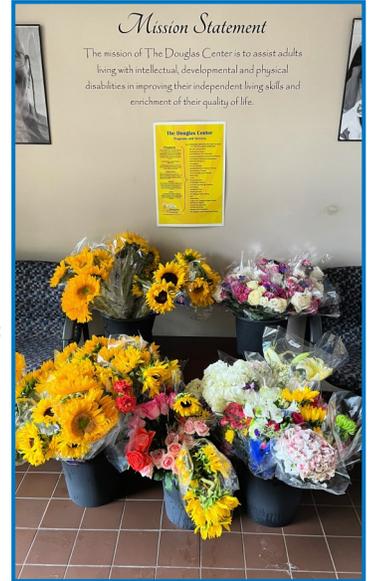


Rockin’ with Hugo Elvis!

A Community Collaboration of The Heart

Program participants of The Douglas Center’s “Art From The Heart” Creations program recently initiated a community collaborative project in support of the hospital staff members who treated the injured and hospitalized after the Highland Park shooting. Our participants created greeting cards for the injured victims at Highland Park Hospital; members of the MCC (Muslim Community Center) created the sentiment for each card; and Mariano’s of Skokie donated the flowers given with each of the cards. On Tuesday, July 18th, Omar Khan, Director of Health and Wellness, presented these gifts to the office of the Assistant Vice President at Highland Park Hospital (member of NorthShore University HealthSystem) to be given to hospital staff members.

The Douglas Center and our program participants are grateful for the opportunity to bring a little “Joy” to the lives of those who were wounded in this devastating event and to the hospital staff. We are deeply grateful to our partners who participated in this project: MCC Academy and Mariano’s of Skokie. “Our hearts are with those who suffered such trauma from this horrific event,” stated Rifath Khan, CEO. “Highland Park Hospital holds a special place in our hearts. The hospital gift shop has carried art products from our “Art From The Heart” Creations program. We are delighted to be able to give back to a member of family of retailers.”



The Douglas Center prepares to deliver gifts to Highland Park Hospital staff members.



Fishy Friends: The Local Fish Store Donates Fish to The Douglas Center

Newly opened “The Local Fish Store” recently donated fish to The Douglas Center on-site aquarium. For several years, The Old Orchard Aquarium had maintained our center’s aquarium and graciously taught our participants about the care of their aquarium.

This year, The Old Orchard Aquarium closed its doors and their former employees opened their new place “The Local Fish Store” on July 1, 2022. The Douglas Center would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to their employees who have worked with our participants for several years providing them with a greater understanding of aquatic life. They have conducted field trips for our participants to their fish store and have graciously worked with them at our center.



Peter of The Local Fish Store with The Douglas Center on-site Aquarium



Peter of The Local Fish Store , shares his insights with our participants on the care of fish

The Douglas Center’s on-site aquarium has been a welcome addition for our participants. Studies have shown that there are many wellness benefits to having an aquarium such as lowering stress and anxiety levels, relaxation, lowering blood pressure, improving focus and creativity, sensory processing, etc. Our program participants have enjoyed watching and caring for their fish companions.



The Douglas Center on-site Aquarium

988: America’s First 3-Digit Mental Health Crisis Line

Too many people are experiencing suicidal crisis or mental health-related distress without the support and care they need. As part of the federal government’s commitment to addressing the mental health crisis in America, Congress has designated 988 as the emergency dial code for mental health-related crisis. 988 offers 24/7 access to trained crisis counselors who can help people experiencing mental health distress. People can call or text: 988 or chat 988lifeline.org for themselves or if they are worried about a loved one who may need crisis support. 988 can be accessed anywhere in the United States in order to reach a trained crisis counselor who can help.

The transition to 988 offers the opportunity to strengthen and transform crisis care in our country. The vision for 988 is to build a robust crisis care response system across the country that links callers to community-based providers who can deliver a full range of crisis care services.

988
24/7 Crisis
& Support



Simply calling or texting 988 or chatting 988Lifeline.org will connect you to compassionate care and support for mental health-related distress. #988Lifeline



**The Douglas
Center**

A ray of light for individuals with special needs

3445 Howard Street, Skokie, IL 60076
P: (847) 674-1921; F: (847) 679-1823
www.thedouglascenter.org



The Douglas Center serves to assist adults living with intellectual, developmental and physical disabilities in improving their independent living skills and enrichment of their quality of life.

OUR MISSION

DO YOU HAVE OLD ELECTRONICS?

**Bring your electronic waste to
The Douglas Center
and we will dispose of it safely and
responsibly.**

**Drop off your electronic items at our location:
3445 Howard Street, Skokie Illinois 60076
Monday—Friday: Call for Drop-Off
Appointment**

Please note: We do not accept CRT monitors or televisions.