

*Celebrating the
Power of our Community
&
Voices of Change*

A Reimagined Virtual Event

Thursday, November 4, 2021

6:00 p.m.

<https://NILPGALA21.givesmart.com>



*Peer2Peer Resources for
People with Disabilities*

NORTHEAST INDEPENDENT LIVING PROGRAM INC.



Our Mission

The Northeast Independent Living Program is a consumer-controlled Independent Living Center providing advocacy and services to people with all disabilities who wish to live independently in the community.



A Note

From the Executive Director

Welcome, to our virtual event **The Power of Our Community & Voices of Change**. I want to thank our staff and board, along with all the voices in our community, who have stepped up to make access for all real.

One of those voices is our VP of Community Advocacy, Jim Lyons. Tonight, we honor Jim for his advocacy and activism from NILP's founding years to today. His stories and perspectives illustrate just how far the Independent Living Movement has come and where we still need to go.

I would also like to thank our sponsors, donors and community partners who share our vision and have supported this work from the beginning. The past few years have made it abundantly clear that we are in this together. Each of us has a role to play in building inclusive and equitable communities.

I'm proud to stand beside all of you as we celebrate 41 years of serving the disability community. We look forward to continuing to work with you and the voices of change in our community!

Our Impact



Across the Commonwealth, the disability community struggles with issues like unemployment, homelessness, and food insecurity daily. NILP is dedicated to connecting people with disabilities to resources

and tools to aid them in living healthy and confident lives independently in their communities.

“If it wasn't for NILP, **I couldn't do the things I need to do** like shopping, getting to doctor appointments, cleaning my house, getting into the shower, and a whole lot of other things.”



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Congratulations Jim Lyons

Thank You for
Your Commitment
to Accessibility!



Over the last 41 years, Jim has:

- Advocated for disability rights and strengthened legislation
- Helped cities & towns become ADA compliant
- Ensured all people have access to vote
- Contributed to cancer prevention efforts by developing accessibility standards for mammograms
- Impacted countless lives...

"I've hardly ever entered a public building with my father where he did not first test the automatic doors to ensure they worked."

—Jimmy Lyons, Son



Notes for Jim

Congratulations Jim on your 40 years of service to the disability community! That is quite the accomplishment. Let's keep going!

—Candice Pechilis

It's been, and will continue to be, a pleasure working aside of you. You have inspired me to become an advocate to the NILP cause.

Best wishes and continued success.

—Phil Lemire

It has been great working with you Jim. I'm always amazed at how much you know about the ADA and how involved you have been in disability rights movement.

—Sheila Hegarty

Congratulations on your 40 years with NILP and your great contributions to this organization!

—Mark Wheeler

Congratulations on your hard work and efforts year over year. Thank you for your 40 years of service!

—Lynette McRae

I will always remember you were one of the first persons to come up and welcome me to the office on my first day at NILP in 2006.

You made a great impression then and you have made a great and lasting impression on NILP.

Congrats on 40 years!

—Matt Pellegrino

Forty years!! Where would I begin? Your work aside, you are a wonderful guy, Jim, and everyone knows it. Including me.

Congratulations!

—Keith Hill

Congratulations on 40 years of service Jim! Your advocacy and passion for the disability community is inspiring and life-changing for so many. It's an honor to call you my colleague.

—Helina Fontes

Thank you, Jim for all your hard work and commitment to the disability community over the past 40 years!

—Lisa DiGiuseppe

Congratulations Jim! Thank you for all your hard work!

—Shelley Bergeron

God bless you Jim. Your such a good man and your constant efforts on behalf of the disabled are extraordinary. Always was a pleasure to work with you. Best wishes for you on the future. Congratulations.

—Paul and Fran Kuchar

I am so glad you work for NILP, as you accomplish so much good for the community of people with disabilities.

I also have had the pleasure of working with you, back in March 2002, for the 6 month contract. I learned so much from you and I enjoyed working with you.

—Maureen McGaw

You've been here for 40years!

Good job!

You are a really good boss.

—PJ Murray

Thank you so much for all that you have done in your 40 years with NILP.

—Heidi McCormick

Congratulations Jim on your 40th year anniversary working at NILP! I would like to thank you for your continuous hard work and determination throughout these years. There are many of us that will always be grateful to you for your service in improving our community.

—William Sanabria

Thank you for being a tireless professional, a helpful coworker, and a good friend to everyone in the disability community; for promoting, defending, and protecting the human rights of people with disability.

You are so very appreciated and our community owes a lot to your great service.

—Alyson Ferro

I continue to be amazed by your knowledge, your advocacy and your leadership.

Congratulations on your 40 years of service.

I wish you many more years to share your wisdom and expertise with all of us.

—June Sauvageau

Congratulations Jim! It has been a pleasure to work with you these last few years.

Cheers to 40 more!

—Amanda Cordero

Congratualtions!

You are a source of inspiration.

Wishing you a very happy 40th work anniversary.

—Cyndi Wood

Your passion, enthusiasm, and commitment for your work throughout these 40 years has set an example for many of us.

Thank you. Stay blessed and Happy 40th Anniversary!

—Zuleika Gonzalez

Congratulations, Jim.

Thank you for your 40 years of ongoing advocacy for our community and individuals and your unwavering dedication to NILP. I wish you all the best in whatever the future holds for you!

—Kevin Hatch

Congratulations, Jiim. It was a pleasure to work with you and get to know you.

Best of luck in all you do.

—Chris McNeil

Congratulations Jim on "40" Years of Service!!

—Joanne Wolf

Congratulations on 40 yrs of service.

Well done!!!

—Benita

You are a true gentleman and a scholar. You are both one of the nicest guys and one of the most effective advocates I know. You've always been able to get things done, even the tough stuff, while maintaining good working relationships with people toward whom you are advocating.

Jim, this is truly a unique ability that has helped make you so accomplished at what you do. I am so glad you found your way to NILP and that you decided to make it your life's work. I consider myself fortunate to have known you these many years.

I hope you will be sticking around for awhile yet.

Congratulations for forty years of a job well done!

—Gary Hale

Why Support NILP



Americans live with a **disability**.



93% of children with **significant disabilities** **missed milestones** due to the **pandemic** compared to 54% of their non-disabled peers.



40% of people with **disabilities** experience **low-quality housing, difficulty paying bills, unmet need for health care, or inadequate food**.



Our **Youth Program** continued to **provide** comprehensive **services** **throughout** the **pandemic**.

- Peer Support & Mentoring
- Self-Advocacy Skills
- Job Counseling
- Drivers Ed

We **served over 5,000 persons** with disabilities **last year**.



Massachusetts has one of the **highest percentages** of **people with disabilities**, ages 18-64, **residing in nursing homes**.

This is why our **Nursing Home Transitions Program** is so important.





Celebrating the Power of Our Community & Voices of Change

**Thank you Jim Lyons for your advocacy
for the disability community!**

CORD

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CORD - advocacy in action

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We commend your work providing services and advocacy for those with disabilities who wish to live independently.



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Core Services:

- Information & Referral
- Skills Training
- Peer Counseling
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wishes NILP
a wonderful
40th
Anniversary
Gala

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Committee

Of the NILP 40th Anniversary Gala

David Bradburn	Sheila Hegarty	June Sauvageau
Lisa DiGiuseppe	Mark Kelly	Lisa Visone
Nicole Fortier	Meghan McCann	Mark Wheeler
Kevin Hatch	Candice Pechilis	

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Lisa & Bill DiGiuseppe

Lowell Housing Authority

Phil Lemire

Rebecca Puentes

Riverside Press

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Acknowledgement

For 41 years, our mission has been, and continues to be, to ensure full community participation through education, training, and advocacy by and for people with disabilities. Our tagline, Peer2Peer Resources for People with Disabilities, illustrates our continued commitment to consumer-control. This is what makes Independent Living Centers so special. Our voice represents our community.

As we honor and celebrate NILP's unique history, we must acknowledge that this event simply would not have been possible without the contributions of our staff, board, sponsors, donors, and volunteers. Whether you donated an item to our Online Auction or bid on items, we thank you for raising funds in support of our mission. If you dressed up from home to participate in our Best Dressed Contest, left an advertisement or message in this program book, or joined us as a sponsor, we can't thank you enough for being a part of this event and NILP's future success.



NORTHEAST INDEPENDENT LIVING PROGRAM INC.

www.NILP.org

Lawrence Office
20 Ballard Road
Lawrence, MA 01834

Lowell Office
35 John Street, 2nd Floor
Lowell, MA 01852

(978) 687-4288



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