SAVE THE DATE!
Eden II & Genesis Foundation Nine & Dine is
Wednesday, May 8th at Bethpage State Park
Golf Course & Heritage Club at Bethpage.

Eden II students visiting our newest vocational venture,
Superior Chocolates. See page 5 for more info!
Dear Friends:

As always, there is much going on here at Eden II. Our programs and services continue to expand to meet the growing needs of the autism community. We are very excited about several of our new projects. Here on Staten Island, we are working on two new programs that will greatly enhance the range of services we will be able to provide. The first of these is the development of a senior center for our participants entering that stage of their lives. Research shows older adults who participate in senior center programs can learn to manage and delay the onset of chronic disease and experience measurable improvements in their physical, social, spiritual, emotional, and mental well-being. Unfortunately, many of our participants are not able to participate in traditional senior centers due to a variety of reasons, ranging from staffing needs to sensory issues and staff training needs. In addition, there simply are not enough services in general for seniors who may need supports to access programs.

We have formed an advisory board made up of experts in aging and services for seniors to help guide us on this journey. While we have been providing supports and services to people with autism for nearly 50 years, supporting seniors is relatively new to us. Having the input from these experienced professionals will help ensure we provide the type of setting and programs that will allow our participants to thrive as they enter this new phase in their lives.

The second project is the work we are doing with Superior Chocolates. As many of you know, Superior Chocolates, located at 1150 South Avenue, has been producing chocolate here on Staten Island for over 100 years. We began working with them last year by sending many of our participants to the chocolate factory in volunteer training positions, learning the ins and outs of chocolate making and packaging. Our long-term vision is to ultimately create actual employment opportunities for individuals with severe autism to get paid competitive wages. Historically, this is a population that is grossly unemployed and we’d like to see that change. In addition to getting job training in the chocolate factory, Superior Chocolates has also welcomed our Success Looms business into the retail site at 1150 South Avenue. Recently we have begun selling many of our products alongside the chocolates in the shop. We have greatly benefitted from this collaboration with Superior Chocolates and look forward to even bigger and better things in the coming years.

Joanne Gerenser, Ph.D.
Executive Director
EDEN II SCHOOL FOR AUTISTIC CHILDREN, INC.  
(DBA EDEN II PROGRAMS)  
FINANCIAL INFORMATION FOR FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2023

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

Revenue & Support
- Programs & Public Support Services: $38,865,859 (93%)
- Grants and Contract Services: 2,232,612 (5%)
- Contributions and Other Revenue: 909,334 (2%)
- Total Revenue & Support: 42,007,805 (100%)

Expenses
- Programs Services
  - Educational Services: 11,692,496 (28%)
  - Residential Services: 12,628,695 (31%)
  - Adult Day Habilitation Services: 6,953,252 (17%)
  - Family Support Services: 1,254,060 (3%)
  - Community Outreach: 3,398,346 (8%)
- Management & General: 5,042,997 (12%)
- Fundraising: 509,481 (1%)
- Total Expenses: 41,479,327 (100%)

Net Assets
- Change in Net Assets*: 5,726,375
- Net Assets as of July 1, 2022: 9,807,162
- Net Assets as of June 30, 2023: $15,533,537
*includes forgiveness of PPP loan of $5,197,897

BALANCE SHEET

Assets
- Cash: $4,191,290
- Program Services Receivables: 5,658,805
- Grants and Contract Receivables: 1,238,805
- Property and Equipment: 18,215,722
- Other Assets: 5,780,072
- Total Assets: $35,084,694

Liabilities & Net Assets
- Total Liabilities: $19,551,157
- Unrestricted Net Assets: 14,818,133
- Donor Restricted Net Assets: 715,404
- Total Liabilities & Net Assets: $35,084,694

Thank you to all our donors for your tremendous generosity. Your donations are essential to our programs, and we greatly appreciate your contributions.

Independent Auditors: GRASSI & CO., CPAs, P.C.

To receive the complete Eden II School for Autistic Children, Inc. audited financial statements, please send your request via email to: info@eden2.org.
Success Looms
Handwoven items made by individuals with autism.

Superior Chocolates
EST. 1911
STATEN ISLAND

BREAKING NEWS!
WE ARE PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE
SUCCESS LOOMS & SUPERIOR CHOCOLATES
ARE WEAVING OUR MISSIONS BY
MAKING A DIFFERENCE TOGETHER!!

VISIT OUR SUCCESSLOOMSGIFTS ETSY SHOP TODAY!
SuccessLoomsGifts is up and running on Etsy!
Every item you see has been made with fabric handwoven by our students. All products are priced lower than the standard handmade Etsy items. When you make a purchase, you are making a difference in the lives of children and adults with autism.

Thank you for your continued support!

https://www.etsy.com/shop/successloomsgifts
Learn more at eden2.org/successlooms
INTERVIEW: Loretta Kennedy, M.S. Ed.

Loretta Kennedy is the Coordinator of Extra Curricular Activities at Eden II Programs. She founded and oversees Eden’s II latest social enterprise - Success Looms - which was launched to increase recreation and leisure skills, as well as provide meaningful job opportunities for Eden II students. Loretta began her career working with children with autism over 25 years ago. She has served Eden II as a behavior specialist, classroom teacher, and piano teacher. She has also coordinated our theater group, dance program, and running club. Loretta holds a Master of Science in Special Education from The College of New Rochelle and is a graduate of Rider University.

1.) Why did you decide to work with people with autism?
As part of a child development class requirement in college, I interned at Princeton Child Development Institute (PCDI), which was serving children with autism.

While there, I remember being required to observe behavior, record data, and graph progress. I was able to interact with the students during their breaks from work and at the playground. Prior to this experience, I had never met an individual with autism. I enjoyed the moments spent playing with the kids and was impressed by the knowledge and dedication of the staff. I volunteered to stay for a second semester. The children I met at PCDI left a lasting impression on me.

After college, I pursued a career in human resources at a large investment firm. However, the impact of my time at PCDI lingered, and I realized that my true passion lay in working with children with autism. I was inspired by the potential to make a difference in their lives.

2.) What is a favorite memory while working at Eden II?
From proud moments at recitals and plays, to heartfelt expressions of gratitude from parents, to the everyday triumphs of our students in tasks like weaving or helping at the chocolate factory, every memory is treasured for its profound impact. It’s the culmination of hard work, dedication, and the joy of seeing children shine in their moments that make these memories unforgettable. Witnessing the kids’ sense of accomplishment and seeing the tangible results of their hard work is truly rewarding.

One memory that never fails to bring a smile to my face is recalling a great trip to the Guggenheim Museum with our students. Witnessing their awe and wonder as they interacted with the art, especially those experiencing a museum for the very first time, filled me with immense joy. It was fun to share my love for New York City with them, strolling through Central Park and enjoying lunch at the Hard Rock Cafe. Even long after the trip, the students fondly reminisced about our shared adventure.

The kind words of appreciation spoken to me by many of our parents throughout the years remain in my heart and serve as a reminder of the profound impact we have on our students and their families.

3.) What excites you most about Success Looms’ future?
Everything! The journey of Success Looms continues to inspire and delight, and I am thrilled to witness the continued growth and success of our enterprise.

Our partnership with Superior Chocolates has proven to be immensely beneficial, offering our students vocational opportunities while enhancing their skill sets. They are mastering essential tools like price guns and heat presses while also contributing by painting, gluing, labeling, preparing items for sale and stocking shelves. Our talented weavers are crafting beautiful fabrics that are then transformed into an array of products, ranging from scarves, towels, and pillows to tissue holders and our popular holiday wine bags.

Success Looms has provided our students with invaluable opportunities to actively engage with the community and showcase their talents both at in-house activities and local events. Here, they interact with customers, help manage transactions, and proudly display their weaving products and techniques. I am particularly excited about their inclusion at events surrounding World Autism Awareness Month.

As our business continues to expand, I am proud that we have remained steadfast in recognizing the joy our students seem to find in the skill of weaving. It is truly rewarding to see the enthusiasm with which the students approach their weaving sessions, and I am eager to continue supporting them on their journey.

4.) What do you do when you aren’t working at Eden II?
When I’m not at work, you’ll often find me enjoying the beauty of the Hudson Valley. After nine years of city living in Manhattan, I made the leap to Westchester in 2021, seeking a deeper connection to nature. I have lots of hobbies. I play the piano, am an avid knitter, take fitness classes, enjoy cooking and, of course, dream up fresh weaving projects.

Above all else, nothing brings me greater joy than creating memories with my family. Spending time with my four grown children, their significant others, and babysitting my two young granddaughters fills my heart with immense happiness and gratitude.
Run, Randy, Run!

ASSOCIATE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR HOSTS FUNDRAISER, RACES 26.2 MILES TO RAISE AWARENESS

Our Associate Executive Director of Education and Adult Services, Randy Horowitz, put together a fun-filled evening at The Shore House in Long Beach, complete with great music provided by The Katie Mitchell Band and exciting raffle prizes, to raise money for Eden II! Thank you to Randy and everyone who attended! Randy, an avid and seasoned runner, held the fundraiser leading up to running our Blazing Trails Run and 26.2 miles in the NYC Marathon! She has raised well over $80,000 in the past 20 years to benefit the autism community.
The members of the Long Island Elite have proudly announced Eden II Programs as their 2024 Charity Partner of the Year. Eden II Programs supports people with autism throughout their lives to achieve their full potential and offers programming in both Nassau and Suffolk counties. Long Island Elite, a 501c3 nonprofit organization, is dedicated to fostering the growth and development of local Long Island business professionals and emerging regional leaders. Individually and collectively, the members of the organization are committed to meeting the needs of the communities where they live and work leading to the partnership with Eden II Programs.

The funds raised by Long Island Elite in 2024 will give Eden II Programs the opportunity to enhance the programs offered at the organization’s day habilitation site in Commack. Just last year, Eden II Programs embarked on expanding their physical space, by acquiring additional square footage within the former school building of Christ the King in the Commack neighborhood of Suffolk County. The expansion required renovations including HVAC, electrical, and flooring along with outfitting and furnishing the new site. While Eden II Programs was able to host fundraisers to cover the cost of most of the renovations, the outfitting and furnishings remained incomplete.

Enter the members of Long Island Elite. With their support, Eden II Programs will now be able to furnish and develop the ten themed vocational training rooms including the Café, Culinary, Business, Philanthropy, Arts & Education, Recreation & Technology, Clinical, Environment & Society, Seasons for a Reason, and Community Explorer Rooms. Each room will offer adults with autism the opportunity to learn new skills in their expressed areas of interest. Many of these activities require equipment, supplies, and resources that can now be acquired because of the support received from Long Island Elite.

“The Long Island Elite or “LIE” for short, is thrilled to be partnering with Eden II this year. We have a long track record of providing meaningful support to those we select as our Charity Partners of the Year, but we also form long lasting relationships that continue to pay dividends to both organizations. It also makes our task of fundraising on their behalf that much easier when they are as professional and well organized as Eden II is. 2024 is going to be very special for us all!” said, Benjamin Cooper, President of the LIE.

During the 2024 charity partnership year, members of Long Island Elite will visit the Eden II Commack site to learn more about the services offered, understand the challenges the organization faces, and interact with the participants as they learn and train at the site.

Mary McDonald, Associate Executive Director for Long Island Programs, said, “We are extremely grateful to all the members of Long Island Elite for their generous support. Not only do we appreciate their fundraising support, but we’re excited to partner with them at our Commack site and have them be engaged with our day hab community.”

Teresa Cirelli, Director of Development for Eden II Programs, added, “We’re so thankful for this opportunity to work closely with Long Island Elite. We’re very eager to have all the Board and members of the organization volunteer, participate in creating the vocational rooms and be an active part of the positive impact they’re making at our site. For over 20 years, Long Island Elite members have supported many not for profits. The organization has donated over $1.2 million dollars for charities and charity partners, including Paws of War, United Cerebral Palsy, ACLD, SIBSPlace, The Safe Center LI, New Ground and Long Island Alzheimer’s & Dementia Center. LIE members’ efforts have positively impacted thousands of lives on Long Island and their work with Eden II Programs will continue to expand their impact.

FOR INFORMATION ON HOW TO SUPPORT THE LONG ISLAND ELITE & EDEN II PROGRAMS, VISIT WWW.LONGISLANDELITE.COM, WWW.EDEN2.ORG, OR EMAIL INFO@LONGISLANDELITE.COM OR TCIRELLI@EDEN2.ORG.
Around Town
Eden II Programs is proud to announce that the organization has been awarded two grants specifically aimed at workforce development from New York Community Trust and The Ira DeCamp Foundation. These funds will be used to improve the recruitment of Direct Support Professional (DSP) staff members and improve internal advancement opportunities for other job titles.

William Myhre, Director of Human Resources for Eden II Programs, said, “Workforce Development is a challenge common to all employers. Here in Staten Island, the Eden II leadership has encouraged our team to jointly work with multiple employers to develop Workforce Development programs to benefit a wide range of employers and organizations dedicated to linking people with jobs. These two grants now permit Eden II and our multiple employer partners and linking organizations to create a pipeline of job creation and training which had not existed before.”

With the funding support from both New York Community Trust and the Ira DeCamp Foundation, Eden II will be able to implement the new “Bridge to Employment” program. The program’s overall goal is to provide direct support jobs to individuals interested in career journeys and provide high-quality care for people with disabilities.

Teresa Cirelli, Director of Development for Eden II Programs, also expressed her appreciation for New York Community Trust and the Ira DeCamp Foundation saying, “We’re so proud to work with both Foundations to begin our collaborative Bridge to Employment program in Staten Island. Not only will our agency benefit, but we’ll be working with several nonprofit organizations to really tackle the staffing crisis throughout the borough. We’re thankful that both Foundations prioritized their support for Staten Island to help bolster workforce development.”

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THIS PARTNERSHIP, VISIT WWW.EDEN2.ORG/WORKFORCE.
give thanks

to our generous supporters

• Bob's Discount Furniture
• Borough President Vito Fossella
• Constellation Foundation
• Drive for Autism
• Enterprise Fleets
• The Hyde and Watson Foundation
• Mid Island Rotary
• North Shore Autism Circle
• North Shore Rotary Club of SI
• NSASA
• Soroptimist International of SI

Thank you to the following individuals and groups who hosted events with proceeds benefiting Eden II.

we are thankful for your support!

• Applebee’s Breakfast with Santa
• Brunch with Mr. & Mrs. Claus
• Ernie’s Comedy Club
• Friends of Eden II Irish Dance
• Long Island Fight For Charity
• Ozana Realty annual softball game
• Songbird Foundation annual baseball game

our monthly giving program is easy and convenient. you can become a gem in four easy steps:

step 1: go to eden2.org/gem
step 2: type in any amount to give monthly and add to cart.
step 3: click ‘recurring’ checkbox instead of one-time.
step 4: hit ‘submit,’ and done!

your monthly gift amount will be processed automatically each month for you—until you tell us to make a change.

what is an eden ii gem?

Eden II GEMs are committed champions like YOU, who are part of a monthly giving program that provides funding continually so we can continue to:

• build and grow essential programs to help individuals living with autism achieve their best possible quality of life,
• increase access to technology and equipment, and
• maintain clean spaces for children and adults with autism, and continue to build and grow essential programs.

why you should become a gem...

When you become an Eden II GEM, you will be part of a community of supporters dedicated to furthering our mission to support individuals with autism throughout their lifespan.

By working together, we can help Eden II Programs continue providing the best, high-quality services to children and adults with autism and expand these programs to other families needing support.

To get started, visit eden2.org/gem or contact the development department at 718-818-1422.

donor levels*

diamond $100
ruby $50
sapphire $20
emerald $10

*All donor levels receive an annual recognition gift in appreciation of their ongoing support.
**Nine & Dine**

Golf Outing & Dinner Dance

**Wednesday, May 8, 2024**

Bethpage State Park Golf Course
& the Heritage Club at Bethpage

[edn2.org/ninedine](http://edn2.org/ninedine)

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**GOLF OUTING**

To Benefit the Eden II & Genesis Foundation

**SAVE THE DATE:**

**FRIDAY, JULY 19, 2024**

**Silver Lake Golf Course**

[eden2.org/golf](http://eden2.org/golf)
Lauren Colon, MS Ed., BCBA
Director of Eden II’s Genesis School

Lauren Colon is the Director of the Genesis School on Long Island. She has been employed by Eden II Programs since 2009, and has worked in Adult Services, Outreach Autism Center and The Genesis School in many different roles. Lauren earned her Master’s degree in Students with Disabilities at CW Post’s CASE program (Competencies in Autism for Special Education) and is a New York State licensed special education teacher. In 2020, she finished her coursework at St. Joseph’s College for the advanced certificate in Applied Behavior Analysis.

1.) How did you first get involved with Eden II?
My friend from college worked at Eden II and asked if I wanted to work with her. I had just graduated with my Bachelor’s, and was starting my graduate program, for what then was going to be school counseling. I was looking for a job where I would gain more experience with different populations. I started working in the Long Island Adult Day program in the summer of 2009. From there, I moved all around Eden II’s Genesis programs, working in family support, the Outreach behavior clinic, and now in the school program since 2019.

2.) Why did you decide to work with individuals with autism?
Before working at Eden II, I didn’t have much experience working with or interacting with individuals with autism. In high school, I participated in an inclusion gym period, where I would be something of a peer model to individuals with all disabilities. It was not on my radar for a career path, though, until I started working at Eden II. I had always known I wanted to work in a school setting and make a difference in other’s lives, but I hadn’t known until I worked with the individuals in the adult program. I felt such an overwhelming sense of purpose and passion for the adults I worked with in a very short period of time. I remember a week into my graduate program having a conversation with my grandma about how conflicted I was with my career path. After that first semester, I changed my degree to gain my teaching certification for students with disabilities, with a concentration in working with individuals with autism.

3.) What is your favorite memory while working at Eden II?
My favorite memory is actually one that is ongoing. Last year, I had the opportunity to open a full classroom of 5, 6 and 7-year olds. Before this year, our youngest student was 13 years old. Being able to get to know a student from the beginning of their educational career is such a unique experience. In only a year, I have seen such growth in them. I can’t wait to continue to see them grow and learn.

4.) What is the most rewarding thing about working with our participants?
The most rewarding thing in my mind is when you have been working on teaching a certain skill or program and you finally see it click and they become just a little more independent than they were. I remember once teaching one of my adults to play on the Wii. Teaching him to push the ‘trigger’ button on the remote took several weeks. It seems like a long time for a simple skill, but this opened up a whole new leisure skill that kept him happy and decreased many challenging behaviors. This was almost ten years ago and I still remember that feeling when I was able to teach a new skill.

5.) What do you do when you aren’t working at Eden II?
When I’m not working, I love being at home with my 7-year-old daughter Ellie, and husband Ulysses. I also crochet a lot! I make crocheted stuffed animals called amigurumi. I spend time playing with my two-year-old dog Kona. When I can, I enjoy traveling. Our whole family loves to go to Disney World. St. Augustine is one of my all time favorite places to be as well!
David was born on Staten Island and has been a lifelong resident. As a boy, he was involved in scouting and worked at Ten Mile River Scout Camps for three summers. He achieved the rank of Eagle Scout in 1985. In June of the same year, David graduated from Tottenville High School. During the summer, he enlisted in the United States Marine Corps and went to Boot Camp at Paris Island South Carolina that October. In 1989, David was honorably discharged and returned to Staten Island, securing employment at Clean Harbors Environmental Services, where he soon attained the rank of foreman. He was tasked with supervising crews of workers in remediating hazardous waste sites. In 1991, David was recalled to the Marine Corps for operation Desert Storm. At the completion of his military service, he again returned to Staten Island and resumed employment at Clean Harbors. In 1995, he was employed by the New York City Police Department where he served as a Police Officer in the 10th and 122nd Precincts. In 2002, David was promoted to Sergeant and served in the 68th Precinct and then the Patrol Borough Staten Island Investigation Unit. During his tenure with the New York City Police Department, he attended The College of Staten Island and graduated with a B. S. in Economics Summa Cum Laude and attained a Master’s Degree in Public Administration from Marist College. David retired in 2017 and spends his time caring for his family including his daughter, Sarah, who attends the Beach Street program.
CHRISTOPHER BARNETT, CEO OF ABA CENTERS &

DENISE JORDAN, AUTISM ADVOCATE & AUTHOR

Eden II Programs is proud to announce the addition of two new board members, Christopher Barnett, CEO of ABA Centers, and Denise Jordan, autism advocate and published author.

Christopher Barnett brings more than a decade of leadership concentrated within the healthcare space to assist in elevating this New York City-based nonprofit that supports people with autism through service, science, and passion so they may achieve their full potential throughout their lives.

Mr. Barnett is a serial entrepreneur with more than 20 years of experience creating, buying, growing, and selling companies. He has applied the vast experience he gained owning and growing over a dozen healthcare assets to ABA Centers, a family-inspired passion project that has become his professional pièce de resistance to date.

ABA Centers is a vertically integrated behavioral healthcare organization that provides applied behavior analysis (ABA) therapy services to children with autism spectrum disorder through a play-based approach rooted in positive reinforcement. The company currently serves families throughout 22 service areas in 9 states, with plans to rapidly and strategically expand nationwide.

In launching ABA Centers, Mr. Barnett sought to fill a substantial need due to the disparity of ABA providers and kiddos with autism, who deserve compassionate and comprehensive behavioral care. As a space disruptor, ABA Centers has sustained exponential growth by offering a unique value proposition that includes drastically reduced wait lists and exceptional, internally trained clinicians and staff.

Denise Jordan offers over twenty years of experience in the autism and developmental disabilities field. Ms. Jordan is a proud parent of an adult son with autism who receives services provided by Eden II Programs. Her self-described passion and purpose are to advocate for him and his peers who are not able to advocate for themselves.

Additionally, Ms. Jordan has worked in the nonprofit field for over fifteen years and has built strong relationships with parents, community leaders, and stakeholders. During her advocacy work in the disabilities field, Ms. Jordan decided to share her story with other parents and authored “Seeing Autism through a Different Lens.” In her book, she shares her journey with her son from autism diagnosis to residential placement and she hopes to inspire other parents and support them as they navigate similar decisions.

Dr. Joanne Gerenser, Executive Director of Eden II Programs, shared, “Our team welcomes Chris Barnett and Denise Jordan to the board of directors and we are eager to include their new ideas and innovative perspectives to our decision-making process. Together we share a commitment to creating positive impact for children and adults with autism fueled by service, science, and passion. With the addition of Mr. Barnett, Eden II Programs will have the additional business expertise to enhance our future endeavors. Ms. Jordan joining our team strengthens our commitment to including parent voice and ensures that strategic plans are made in consultation with all points of view considered.”
EDEN II PROGRAMS
LOCATIONS

STATEN ISLAND

AGENCY HEADQUARTERS, EDEN II SCHOOL, & FAMILY SERVICES
Honorable James P. Molinaro Center for Autism
15 Beach Street, Staten Island, NY 10304

LITTLE MIRACLES PRESCHOOL
309 Saint Paul's Avenue, Staten Island, NY 10304

STATEN ISLAND ADULT DAYHAB PROGRAM
94 Wright Avenue, Staten Island, NY 10303

COMMUNITY CENTER
400 Victory Boulevard, Staten Island, NY 10301

LONG ISLAND

GENESIS SCHOOL, FAMILY SERVICES, AND OUTREACH AUTISM CENTER
600 Newbridge Road, East Meadow, NY 11554

LONG ISLAND ADULT DAYHAB PROGRAM
2 Indian Head Road, Commack, NY 11725
2476 North Jerusalem Rd, North Bellmore, NY 11710

A Little Goes A Long Way
SPARE CHANGE MAKES GLOBAL CHANGE

We've recently partnered with RoundUp, an App that allows you to “round up” the change from your debit or credit card purchases and donate it to Eden II monthly.

We would be honored if you would commit to giving via Round Up as it provides another way for us to continue our mission to support people with autism throughout their lives to achieve their full potential. You can download the app for iPhone, Android or create an account on the web!

Donors can choose to set a monthly giving cap, so you can set a limit that you are comfortable with.

Visit www.eden2.org/roundup to register today!

For any questions, contact mhiggins@eden2.org or 718-816-1422 x 1029.