



VANDERHEYDEN

Giving new life to youth, adults and families

MORE THAN
190
YEARS

NEWSLETTER



HAPPY
Holidays!

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HOPE for the Holidays



Help bring HOPE this Holiday Season

Vanderheyden is now in its 191st year of changing lives to save lives. Each day, we serve more than 700 youth, individuals and families. We are dedicated to making this Holiday Season a success. With your help, we can make that happen.

Scan here to donate!



or visit our website
www.vanderheyden.org

Contact: Dominique Madore
dmadore@vanderheyden.org
(518) 283 - 6500 ext. 719

Holiday Fun



Christmas Tree Lighting

We are so very thankful for our community sponsors, donors and volunteers for their support this Holiday Season. A very special thank you to Amanda Goyer and her family for their continued support in honor of her mother, Paula Stopera. Paula's legacy continues on in Vanderheyden's "Paula's Place", where we celebrate our Annual Christmas Tree Lighting.

Day Habilitation Christmas Party

Vanderheyden's Day Habilitation team celebrated the holidays by welcoming families, team members and care managers to have "Dinner with Day Hab"! The Day Hab team and individuals hosted a wonderful holiday party and open house to learn more about the program.



Fall Festivities

Halloween

Vanderheyden team members and individuals went all out for Halloween this year!



Happy Thanksgiving

Turkey Trot

A little rain could not stop Vanderheyden's 43rd Annual Turkey Trot! Thank you to special guest South Paw of the Tri-City ValleyCats for helping us kick off the race, and Town of North Greenbush Police Department and Rensselaer County Sheriff's Office for keeping us safe year after year.



Thanksgiving Dinner

Vanderheyden's Annual Thanksgiving Dinner serves as a reminder of the importance of connection and community. Our incredibly dedicated team prepares a feast for all Vanderheyden staff, individuals and their families to enjoy. A special Thanks to RJ Valente Gravel for providing the 50 Turkeys that were essential to this year's Thanksgiving Dinner.



Staying Sanctuary

Sanctuary Potato Bake

Team members and individuals enjoyed Vanderheyden's Annual Sanctuary Potato Bake! This event promotes Emotional Intelligence, one of The Sanctuary Institute's 7 commitments in effort to maintain Vanderheyden's Sanctuary environment.

It is a fun (and tasty) way to communicate ways to describe our emotions through adding different toppings to your baked potato. Sassy Salsa, Chipper Cheese, Brave Butter, Self-Conscious Sour cream, and many other toppings giving some names to our emotions!



SANCTUARY COMMITMENTS



Sanctuary Talent Show

Our individuals had an amazing time showcasing themselves at Vanderheyden's Annual Sanctuary Talent Show! The talent show provides a platform for creativity and self-expression for the individuals we serve. Supporting one another with cheering and lighthearted laughter fostered a positive environment and a strengthened sense of community.



Special Education School

Breast Cancer Awareness

Our Special Education School was decked out in pink in October in support of Breast Cancer Awareness. Educators wore shirts reading "In this school, no one fights alone".



Rummage Sale

To start our school year off on a high note, students in our Career Center job training program hosted a rummage sale. They worked diligently to price items, sell homemade baked goods and work with the community. 100% of proceeds went right back into the program!



First Day of School

Vanderheyden President & CEO Karen M. Carpenter greeted school team members and educators, welcoming them back from Summer Vacation.



Community Events

Employee Dinner

Thank you, Nate and his team at Outback Steakhouse in Colonie for partnering with Vanderheyden again this year to provide over 400 dinners to our incredible team members. Staff and their families enjoyed taking dinner to go and will be staying hydrated with their new Vanderheyden stainless steel tumblers to say thank you for all their hard work.



Thank you Regeneron!



Thank you, Regeneron, for spending a #DayForDoingGood with us! At Vanderheyden, we know that environment is key to our quality of care. Because of our generous community, we are able to keep things fresh and new for the individuals we serve!



Congratulations, Karen!
WOMEN WHO MEAN BUSINESS
Congratulations to our very own President and CEO Karen M. Carpenter for being a recipient of the Albany Business Review Women Who Mean Business Award!

Hoffman Car Wash

Hoffman Car Wash invited Vanderheyden to their Latham location to learn the ins and outs of car detailing! A very special thank you to the team at Hoffman for taking the time to teach and support the individuals we serve with patience and kindness! This new connection has given the opportunity to multiple Vanderheyden residents to receive employment at Hoffman.



Meet Stephanie

21 YEARS OF AT VANDERHEYDEN

Tell us a little about yourself and what brought you to Vanderheyden.

I just celebrated my 21st work anniversary. Prior to coming to Vanderheyden I taught preschool for 14 years, and I was a waitress at a restaurant down the street. Many of the school staff at the time including school secretary Pat Mahar used to come in on Fridays after work. They suggested I come and work with them and I did. I haven't looked back since. I've enjoyed every moment, being part of the Vanderheyden family. At one point, I even had the privilege of working beside both my daughter Erika and my son Stephen.

What is your job at Vanderheyden?

I am a certified teachers assistant, but I've been teaching Earth Science for the past eight years as a long-term substitute. This has inspired me to go back to school. I just earned my Bachelor of Science in May. This month I started school, working towards a Master of Arts in Teaching at Empire State University.

What has your time at Vanderheyden taught you?

Vanderheyden has taught me the importance of being a lifelong learner. We are all teachable. I learn something from my students each and every day.

Can you share a memory or story of a youth in your care?

There are so many amazing events and experiences here at Vanderheyden. I have enjoyed every first day of school, Student Council carnival, prom & graduation. This year all 14 of my students taking the Earth Science regents exam passed! To say that I am so very proud of each of them is an understatement.

Why should someone work at Vanderheyden?

Every day is a new opportunity to foster and motivate our students. At Vanderheyden there are endless opportunities to make an impact and a difference in the life of a child. This is the most rewarding job that you will ever love.



Tell us about the activities or practices that you have at Vanderheyden that have made a positive impact on the individuals we serve.

I am the student council advisor at our school. We organize events at our school and our community as well. Teaching my students to do their part and providing them with opportunities to help others in need is essential in shaping our future citizens. We have volunteered at: the Ronald McDonald House, Van Rensselaer Manor Nursing Home, Equinox- Thanksgiving Community Dinner and Capital Region Food Bank of Albany. For the past 8 years I have facilitated our Student Peer Mentoring program. Through modeling, support and encouragement students build sustainable relationships and empower one another. We focus on team building through positive cooperative experiences aimed at fostering talents, interests, and personal growth.

Meet Jeremy

GIVEN A SECOND CHANCE AT VANDERHEYDEN

Where are you from?

I was born in Missouri, but I like to say I am from everywhere. We moved around a lot and ended up in Colorado. When I was 6, my siblings and I were taken from our mother and placed in the foster care system. We all ended up being adopted by a family in Colorado who soon moved to New York. That's how I ended up here!

What is something you are passionate about?

I like working out, weightlifting and being strong. I want to see myself become a life coach and have my own office. I want to be a dad one day. Growing up with two siblings, I always knew I wanted to have my own children. I want to work towards getting my own apartment and be more independent.

How long have you been a part of the Vanderheyden Family?

I never really adjusted to my new family, and I started looking for other things to make me happy. I started hanging out with people I later learned were a bad influence. At 17, I moved out, and not long after that I was homeless. Struggling with drug addiction, I ended up in the hospital more times than I can remember. After years on the streets, my peer advocate and therapist at the homeless shelter connected me with Vanderheyden's services. I always knew I wanted to do more with my life, I just did not have the tools to make myself better. In February of 2023, I started living at a Vanderheyden Independent Residential Alternative.

Who is a staff member that helps you?

Destiny has been there with me since the beginning. What I like about her is that she is always fair and consistent. She listens to me, gives great advice and always looking for ways to help me. Blake is someone I look up to. He is a dad, and models to me what a good dad is supposed to look like. He pushes me to be better and is my gym buddy.

What advice would you give someone who is coming to Vanderheyden?

Be ready for change. Vanderheyden has kept me sane! I struggled with depression for many years, but Vanderheyden gave me housing, opportunities and someone to talk to. I actually feel like staff want to help and be there for me. They have given me a lot of stability.

