

It has been 2 ½ years since the onset of one of the most challenging health crises that our community has faced and our staff continue to be our warriors. They are working tirelessly every day for the people we serve. When they are called upon to assume new or different duties, they answer the call with pride.

This summer Charles River senior management team is attending residential and day program staff meetings to hear from our staff directly. Typically, we would conduct an on-line staff satisfaction survey but this year we felt it was important to meet face-to-face with our dedicated staff, to initiate an open the dialogue to hear how about their work experiences We have been asking questions like are you enjoying your jobs; what are the challenges that you face; do you have the resources to do your jobs do you feel appreciated; do you have suggestions for the leadership team and do you feel the leadership effectively communicates with staff? In addition, it has been a great opportunity for the leadership team to express their own heartfelt gratitude to our staff.

Once we have completed the rounds of staff meetings, the leadership team will summarize the results, develop action plans for improvement where warranted, and will share it with our staff in a virtual “town hall” style meeting. The common themes that have emerged from the discussions include collaboration, flexibility, and the joy of working with persons served. It has also become evident from these discussions, that our incredible employees work tirelessly to fulfill Charles River’s mission of empowering and supporting people with disabilities, but more importantly demonstrate a commitment to the happiness of persons-served, their families and co-workers.

In recognition of our staff, we created the Employee Emergency Assistance Fund to provide financial assistance for those who are experiencing economic hardship. With the money raised at the 2022 Build a Dream Gala, we launched this initiative in July. Staff are excited about the fund and consider it a great benefit to those in need.

Moving forward, the Lamp will contain a new feature, called ***Together We Illuminate***. This is an opportunity for a member of our Board of Directors to contribute an article explaining what the Charles River Center means to them in this issue, you will hear from Clare Dunsford. Enjoy!

In closing, it’s genuinely an honor and a privilege to be a part of such a dedicated team and community that makes a difference in the lives of so many – and supports each other in the most challenging times.