



# Champions

Your support advances opportunities for all

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## Guidance Builds Self-Esteem and Success



"JaBron is motivated. He needed to find out what his strengths were. More than that, he needed encouragement. People around him were telling him he was a deadbeat. He needed someone to encourage him to try again every time he struck out."

Barb Maryniak met JaBron Dumas in 2015. At the time, JaBron was 20 years old, had not finished high school, and was struggling to get a job.

"I fell off the map," JaBron recalls. "I dropped out of high school after me and my mom were shot in a random act of violence." Both survived, but the

following years were difficult. JaBron acknowledges getting in trouble with the law and struggling with addiction.

JaBron was motivated to improve his situation, but "before I came to Starbridge, there were a lot of things I didn't know how to do. I'm a fast learner and I work hard. I needed guidance."

Starbridge's **Project ESTEEM** is a grant-funded program that supports young adults ages 16 to 24 in reaching education and employment goals. Barb Maryniak works as a Service Navigator, connecting people to resources and information.

JaBron still wanted to get his degree, but supporting his family took priority.

Barb connected JaBron with workforce training. JaBron recalls, "She helped me set up my resume on Indeed and learn that whole process."

Barb helped JaBron get bus passes so he could access tutoring, job fairs, and career exploration supports.

JaBron remembers going to many job fairs: "A lot of times, it felt like a dead end. Barb helped with praise, and telling me to push forward, and keep in mind what I've accomplished."

Barb says, "Every time something didn't work, JaBron would ask, 'Barb, what do we do next?'"

When asked what success looks like to him, JaBron says, "Pay the bills. I don't have to be rich. Take care of my kids and be a role model for them."

JaBron now has a job in food service at the Rochester Psychiatric Center. He enjoys connecting with patients and learning more about patient care.

Barb shares JaBron's pride in where he is now:

**"Now JaBron is able to tell people in his life that he is working and he is succeeding."**

# James S. Grossman

## Championing a vibrant advocacy agency in Starbridge

*Jim Grossman is a partner at Barclay Damon, LLP. Jim and his wife, Suki, have been longtime supporters of Starbridge's founding agencies and continue to support Starbridge today.*

In 1984, as a result of my work with the developmental disability community, Sheila Appleby, then Executive Director of Advocacy for the Developmentally Disabled, asked if I would join the Board of Directors. Although I was a member of a number of Boards at that time, the idea of advocacy for this community of individuals was of great interest to me, so I enthusiastically agreed.

Working with that Board exposed me to the tremendous vision of Jeanne Krautwurst and the incredibly competent and committed staff. The agency changed its name to The Advocacy Center, and I served as board chair for both it and for Western New York Protection and Advocacy, a related entity operating under the umbrella of the same staff and administrative leaders.

In the early 1980s I became aware of LDA through its Executive Director Shirley Cass and regularly followed LDA thereafter, as I believed individuals with learning disabilities were an underserved population.

My family was fortunate to have The Advocacy Center both advocate and provide counsel for a family member in need of special education services and, later, other services provided through the OPWDD system. In fact, The Advocacy Center won an appeal at the Commissioner of Education level, overturning a decision by our school district that had denied my family member a needed summer program.



Both advocacy and actual service to people with disabilities so that they can achieve fulfilling lives are essential in a just society. Starbridge and its formative agencies have been in the forefront of providing both advocacy and service in the greater Rochester community. The leaders of these organizations, and their staff, have always exhibited a passion to carry out the exemplary missions which are now ingrained in the current Starbridge mission.

My wife and I have always believed strongly that, as members of the Rochester community, it is our responsibility to support Starbridge and the individuals it serves in order to keep a vibrant advocacy agency in Rochester, as well as one with a focus on learning and developmental disabilities.

I have worked with many agencies serving individuals who integrate and succeed in society and with their families.

**The need for agencies championing and serving those individuals is going to remain essential. It is comforting to know that Starbridge will assure that the people it serves will have advocates and compassionate service in the coming years.**

## Special Education Support on Demand

**Q.** "I've got a meeting at my child's school next week and I wish I had someone or something to help me get ready..."

**A.** You're not alone! When your child is in school—regardless of whether you are new to the CSE process—preparing for team meetings or parent/teacher conferences can cause anxiety. You want to be an effective advocate for your child's needs. So what can you do?

Starbridge's Parent Center team have created a downloadable **Guide to Prepare for School Meetings**. The Guide will help you organize your thoughts and get your child's perspective before the meeting even begins. You can write down goals you and your child have for the coming year. The Guide also provides room to take notes during the meeting.

Additional guides are available on our website for free, and topics range from 504 Plans to Dyslexia. More guides are in the works!

[www.starbridgeinc.org/special-ed-guide](http://www.starbridgeinc.org/special-ed-guide)



## Thank YOU

The successes of Starbridge and the people we serve are made possible, in part, by the gifts we receive from **supporters like you**. We thank you for your support and hope you enjoy reading about the impact you have in the lives of many!

## A Paws-itively Meaningful Goal

A person I support had a cat that meant the world to him. A few years ago, because of life circumstances, he was forced to give up his cat. For over a year, anytime he saw a cat or heard about a cat, he would cry.

Volunteer work is one way people often engage in their communities. Since that was a goal of his – and because I knew he missed his cat – I suggested volunteering at a shelter but, at the time, this was unthinkable to him. Over the next year, we talked about volunteering occasionally. Eventually, he agreed to try.



Once he got his volunteer badge, he was proud to show it to everyone.

During his shifts at the shelter, this man pours out so much love to abandoned and hurting animals. He talks to the cats and tells them how special they are. He shares stories about special times with his own cat, like watching fireworks out the window together on the 4th of July.

The bond and connection he feels with the shelter's cats is great to see. And he's meeting one of his goals to be engaged in his community in a way that is so meaningful to him.

~ Kristen Monro, Starbridge Community Habilitation Counselor

*Starbridge's Com Hab service assists adults with disabilities to achieve goals, to live as independently as possible, and to make their lives meaningful and worthwhile.*

## Juanita Lyde, Board Member

*Juanita is the Senior Manager of Cultural Competency, Health Literacy and Community Initiatives for the Finger Lakes Performing Provider System. She lives in the 19th Ward in the City of Rochester, and enjoys the beautiful homes and neighbors. Juanita has been a board member since 2017.*

I joined the Board of Directors after meeting Colin Garwood and Ida Jones and experiencing the passion they demonstrated for the staff, consumers, community and the mission of Starbridge.

I also have an adult child who has a developmental disability, and have managed programs providing services to individuals with disabilities in the past. Serving on the Board at Starbridge seemed to be the perfect fit.

I am a Certified Diversity Professional and currently work at the Finger Lakes Performing Provider System. In this role I help provide strategies and education to organizations, staff and community stakeholders that support health equity and the reduction of health disparities among vulnerable populations. I have met some wonderful people through this work and have been able to see first-hand the resources available across the Finger Lakes region and the passion that so many individuals have for our communities and the amazing people they help each day through our health care and community programs.

I encourage others to become involved in our communities by serving as Board members and in other volunteer capacities. Having diverse Boards, volunteers and staff helps organizations develop culturally responsive and inclusive strategies and activities.

**Diversity offers a lens that brings a level of understanding and consideration representative of the various demographics, challenges and barriers of the individuals and communities served.**



Serving as a Board member of Starbridge has helped me remain passionate and eager to serve because of the level of commitment demonstrated by the leadership team, staff and other board members to ensure the mission of the organization is fulfilled and the well-being of the individuals served is at the forefront of every conversation and decision.

*Thank You*

*to our Board members!*



## 2019 EDUCATION CONFERENCE

# PRACTICAL STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE EXECUTIVE FUNCTION SKILLS



Monday, November 18, 2019  
8:00am-3:30pm

Burgundy Basin Inn  
1361 Marsh Road, Pittsford, NY

### FEATURING



**Sarah Ward, MS, CCC-SLP**

Co-Author, 360 Thinking Executive Function Program  
Co-Director of Cognitive Connections

### Topics to be covered:

- Future Thinkers: A New View of Executive Function Skills
- Self-Regulation and Situational Awareness
- Teach Students to be a Mind Mime
- Being a Beat Ahead
- Time and Task Management
- The Get Ready \*Do\* Done Model

**\$99/person**, includes conference materials, light breakfast & buffet lunch *(please notify us of dietary restrictions at registration)*

Register today at [www.starbridgeinc.org/education-conference](http://www.starbridgeinc.org/education-conference) or call 585-224-7248

## Would you consider making a gift to Starbridge in your will?

"My involvement with the Board educated me about the negative effects learning disabilities can have on our young people. By designating Starbridge as a beneficiary on one of my life insurance policies, **I know I'll be giving children a good start in life.**"

~ Lynn M. Carleton



A **Legacy Gift** is a thoughtful commitment you can make now that will support people who have disabilities and their families in finding their way to the **hope** and the **how** for generations to come.

Join our **Champions Circle** giving society by making a bequest today. To learn more, go to [www.starbridgeinc.org/LegacyGiving](http://www.starbridgeinc.org/LegacyGiving)