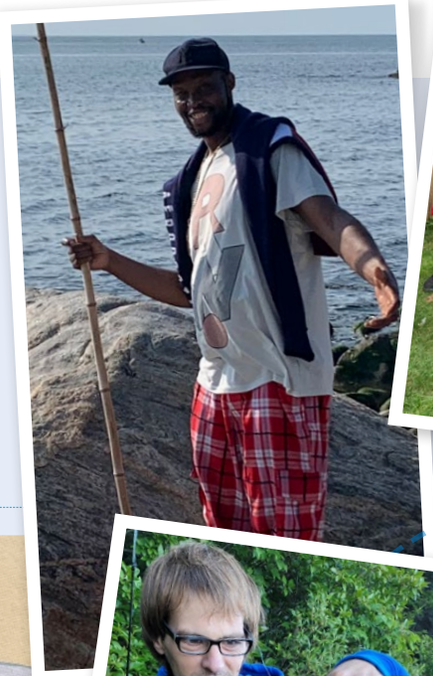

First time feeding chickens

Visiting the submarines!

Phil's fresh catch.

Tubing on Lake Champlain.

Lake Champlain

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First bowling game

First hike

First time camping

Playing disc and miniature golf!

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A Summer of Firsts

What if someone told you they had never seen fireworks? Or had never been camping, or seen a real parade? Now imagine that person is 40 years old. That was the reality for Tony, a resident of one of our group homes.

But in 2022 that would all change.

Sue Downs began her Oak Hill career in 1990 and has been changing lives ever since.

Phil, Tony, Sue, Will, and Vinny, Summer of Firsts.

Will, Phil, and Tony, soaking up the sun!

For Tony, Sue is a friend, confidant, support system, and the Direct Support Professional (DSP) who cares for him daily. Vinny Beckford is Sue's colleague and has worked for Oak Hill for over 20 years, supporting the residents of our group homes.

Vinny and Sue understand how important it is for Tony, and all residents who they work with, to live a meaningful, productive life. For Tony, and his friends Will and Phil, who have lived together for twelve years, this has meant regular employment at the Thomas Hooker Brewery and on the Oak Hill campuses. But living a full life doesn't just mean having a job, it also means deeper enrichment.

Enter Summer 2022, the **Summer of Firsts.** Having spent many childhood vacations in Vermont, Sue knew what to do…

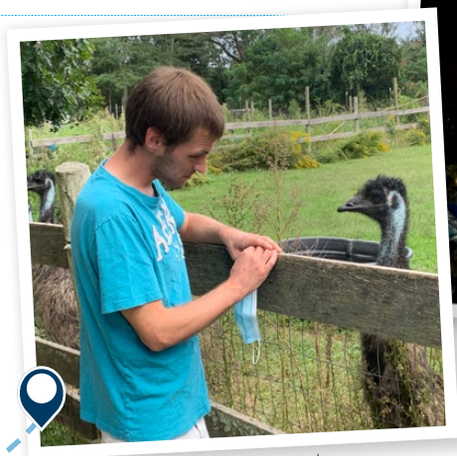
Tony, Phil, and Will experienced the summer of a lifetime. A full summer of firsts. Spending nearly two weeks in Vermont with Sue, the trio embarked on activities and adventures most of them had never experienced before – fishing, fireworks, campfires, tubing, hiking, star-gazing, disc golfing, and even some Ben and Jerry's!

They enjoyed it all, but Tony, Phil, and Will agree that the best part of the trip was the fishing and tubing on Lake Champlain, followed by an evening of fireworks.

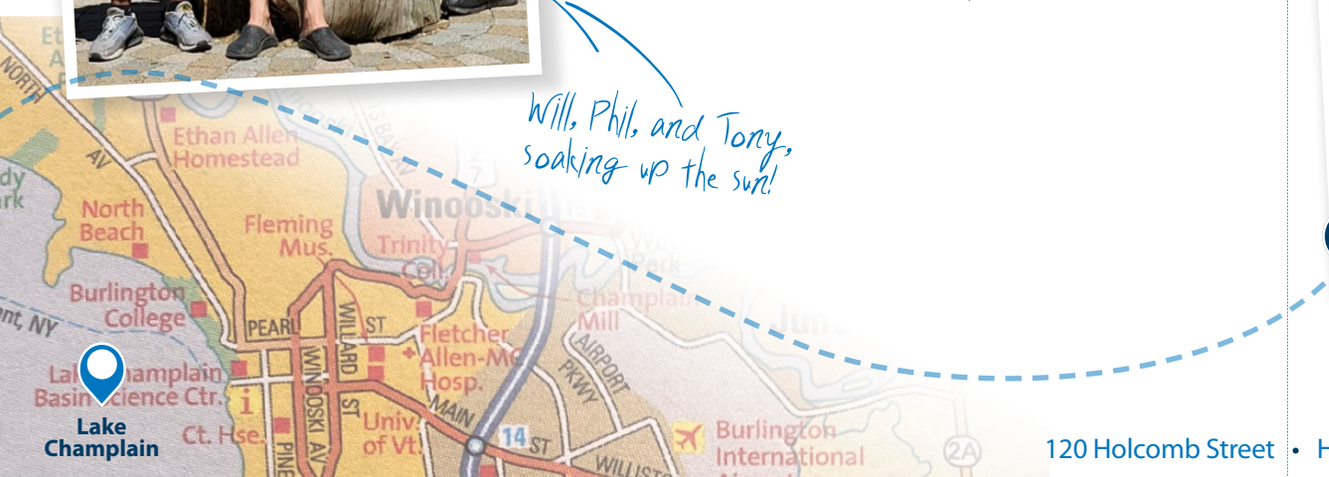
Sue's favorite? Watching the men she's worked with for the past six years experience the very best of what life has to offer.

This holiday season, we humbly invite you to help us make more firsts happen! It is only through your generosity that we can continue to make new adventures and enriching experiences happen for the people we serve. All gifts bring us closer to our promise of full community integration and participation for individuals with disabilities.

Thank YOU for being their champions and making dreams come true.



Visiting an Ostrich farm!

Watching their first fireworks.

First time deep sea fishing on the Sound!