

INclusion Day at LinkedIn

In mid-October, 10 participants from Community Gatepath were invited to LinkedIn in San Francisco to work with employee volunteers on developing their LinkedIn profiles and learning to use the tool to search for work. Our day was a tremendous success, but don't just take our word for it, see what LinkedIn's, Matt Tague had to say in his post about the event:

Take a moment and imagine.

Imagine the possibilities of a world that could be a little kinder, a little gentler and a little more understanding of our brothers and sisters with special needs and disabilities.

*Earlier this month, we at **LinkedIn** had the opportunity to help manifest that reality by working with **Community Gatepath** to host an inspiring group of young adults on the autism spectrum at our San Francisco office.*

The World Bank estimates that approximately 15% of the global population, or roughly the population of China, experience some form of disability today. The statistics around autism specifically are sobering:

- *Over 100 million people globally are thought to have autism*
- *Adults with autism have an estimated unemployment rate of 90%*

Among the myriad of challenges faced by this group of people, one of the most pressing is lack of access to meaningful economic opportunities.

Here at LinkedIn, our mission is to create economic opportunity for every member of the global workforce. Our CEO, Jeff Weiner, often speaks of the power of the Economic Graph and the powerful role it will play in enabling these connections on a global scale.

In helping this group to build out their profiles and begin to create a professional presence on LinkedIn we had the opportunity to learn as much as we taught.



Community Gatepath at INclusion Day hosted by LinkedIn.

Through the work of the fantastic participants from Community Gatepath and our dedicated LinkedIn volunteers, we made meaningful headway towards creating a world where people with autism are hired because of their autism rather than in spite of it.

*Written by Matt Tague
Organizer of INclusion Day
Chair/Founder of EnablIN at LinkedIn*

A special thanks to all of our friends at LinkedIn – we appreciate your support and all your efforts around INclusion Day!



CEO, Sheryl Young

CEO Corner: Happy Holidays

The holiday season is a time to reflect and give thanks, and I want to take this opportunity to say thank you for your continued support and commitment to our mission. Your investment has a significant and ongoing impact on our participants. This year:

- Our preschool programs expanded into Santa Clara County by opening Learning Links Mountain View with 96 children enrolled. In addition, we currently serve 225 children at our Burlingame site.
- Due to a recent surge of children and youth on the autism spectrum we are offering new services:
 - Autism Social Connection is an inclusive program where groups of youth produce short films and/or take part in other technology-based social groups including

photography, art, and multimedia.

- Friday FuturePath Hang Outs offer age-appropriate activities designed for teens and young adults of all abilities that emphasize social skills and offer a safe place for these teens to be themselves.
- New employment partnerships continue to take shape and 67 people were placed in community-based jobs and we provided job coaching for another 200 individuals.
- The Watch Me Grow Demonstration Site provides free developmental screenings for children ages 0-5 to identify children with special needs and link them to services. We served 500 children and families this past year. With funding from Lucile Packard Foundation for Children's Health, we convened

the San Mateo County Community Care Coordination Collaborative to improve care coordination for children with special health care needs in San Mateo County.

- We recently released our third national report: *The Journey to Life After High School*, published by AbilityPath.org, our online resource center. This report helps families navigate the transition from high school to adulthood – a challenging time for all teens but especially those with special needs.

I am proud to share our successes this year. Thank you again for all that you do to create a better community with opportunities for all.

Happy Holidays!

Caring Santa is Coming to Town

This holiday season, Community Gatepath continues our Caring Santa national program. In partnership with Simon Malls and The Noerr Programs, AbilityPath.org, our international website, brings a unique holiday experience to children with special needs all across the country. On Sunday, December 7, over 150 malls will welcome children with special needs to meet Santa – complete with photos – in an environment that supports their sensory, physical and developmental needs.

Gatepath works with the mall managers to create sensory-friendly environments that will lessen potential triggers for children on the autism spectrum or with other special needs. Select Simon Malls



Santa and a child with special needs taking a photo at a Caring Santa event.

will open for private hours and create a calmer atmosphere by turning down the lights and music, and turning off water features. This allows families to sit in a waiting area instead of standing in line –

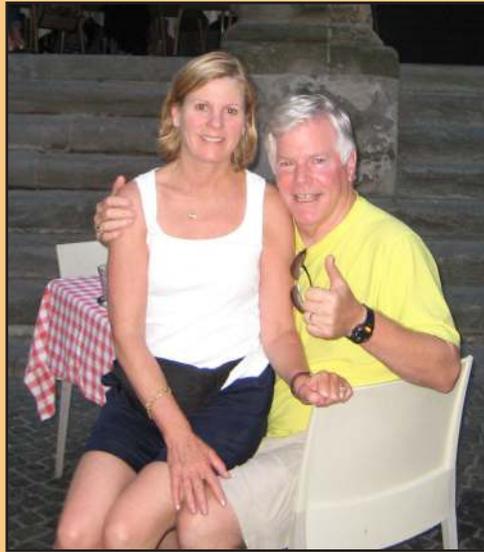
a gift for ANY child and parent!

Locally, the nationally recognized Caring Santa event will take place at Stanford Shopping Center.

Seeding a Legacy: Betsy and Larry Grotte

Betsy and Larry Grotte are the proud, devoted parents to their son Peter, who 19 years ago started life as a typically developing child. When he was eight months old, Peter contracted life-threatening bacterial meningitis, which caused numerous disabilities including cerebral palsy. The Grotte's were introduced to Community Gatepath when Peter was a toddler and needed early intervention services to address his developmental delays.

They are now committed to giving back so other families can benefit as they did. The Grotte's have become full-time volunteers; Betsy with the Hillsborough Auxiliary to Community Gatepath and Larry on the Gatepath Board of Directors. "We are all in with Gatepath," says Larry.



Betsy and Larry Grotte

Last summer, the Grotte's were updating their family trust and decided to make a legacy gift by naming Gatepath as

a beneficiary of their estate. While learning to take care of their family's future, they discovered they could also support others by including Gatepath in their estate plan. Larry explained with this beautiful analogy: a legacy gift is like planting the seed of a shade tree; you will never sit under the tree but your children and future generations will benefit from its shade.

Betsy and Larry hope to inspire others to consider making a legacy gift to Gatepath so their shade tree becomes a grove that provides for even more children and adults with special needs and disabilities in the future. Will you join them? Contact Jenny Luciano at jluciano@gatepath.com or (650) 652-0686 for more information.

The Power to Change the Game

"All my life, I played the underdog. People would say that I couldn't do something and I worked that much harder, just to prove them wrong."
 -- Anthony Ianni

On Thursday, October 23, nearly 450 people gathered to hear the inspirational life story of Anthony Ianni at the The Power of Possibilities Recognition Event. Diagnosed as a child, Anthony is the first known athlete with autism to play Big 10 basketball at Michigan State University. Today, Anthony travels the country as an anti-bullying advocate, sharing his personal experiences, challenges, and ultimate success because he was determined to "live his dream."

Equally inspirational was General Manager John Hutar of the Sofitel San Francisco Bay, Gatepath's Employer of the Year for 2014. His heartfelt testimonial about the benefits of hiring adults with special needs and disabilities



*Anthony Ianni speaking at The Power of Possibilities Recognition Event.
 Photo Credit: Tom Jung/San Mateo Daily Journal*

was a true testament to The Power of Possibilities.

Congratulations to all of our 2014 Power of Possibilities award winners:

- Neal Poppin Award -- Jamie Hanson
- Volunteer of the Year -- Sandra Ann Tilch
- Community Impact Award -- Sara and James Jungroth

- Employer of the Year -- Sofitel San Francisco Bay

- Legacy Award -- Toby Mumford

The event raised over \$175,000 for Community Gatepath.

Anthony will return to the Bay Area in spring 2015 to share his message with students along the Peninsula. Stay tuned for more details!

AmazonSmile!

This holiday season as you shop online, please sign up for AmazonSmile and 0.5% of your eligible purchase will be donated to Community Gatepath whenever you shop on AmazonSmile! Just log-in to your Amazon account and look for the AmazonSmile link and choose Community Gatepath. Giving back was never so easy!



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Mark Your Calendar

Summer Inclusion Games - Friday, June 26, 2015



The Games

- Water balloon toss
- Suitcase race
- Sack race
- Spoon and ice cube race
- 4 x 4 tri-cycle race
- Football throw
- Obstacle course: cones, tires, limbo, hula hoop, crawl tube, and splash zone

Unleash your inner competitor and join us for the inaugural Summer Inclusion Games. The day will be full of fun, vintage games that will challenge teams of 10 (including at least one person with special needs) to a little "friendly" competition coupled with some easy fundraising. Corporate, school, nonprofit, faith community, and family teams are invited to participate. Everyone will win at the Summer Inclusion Games, but some will walk away with coveted team awards that are sure to engage the silliest to the fiercest competitors among us.

All proceeds will support Community Gatepath's Employment Programs. For information about forming a team, contact Christine Ackermann at cackermann@gatepath.com or 650-652-0685, or look for information about the Summer Inclusion Games coming soon at www.gatepath.org!