



Going to college – one of the good things in life

Pete's first semester at Bristol Community College could only be described as a great success. His interest in animals went way beyond taking care of the family pets. For his final project in his senior year at High School, Pete brought in a "bearded dragon" to show his classmates. He always enjoyed animals so when it came time for him to choose his first class it was an easy decision – Introduction to Animal Care and Management. The hybrid course involved a combination of classroom lecture, field trips and work on line - an instructional format that worked well for Pete.

For most students going off to college, the period of adjustment of leaving the safety of the High School can be overwhelming and lonely. Pete was nervous and a little reluctant at first. However, he quickly settled into his new routine and the role of being a college student. On his first day of class, Pete had no trouble sitting through a 3 hour lecture and taking a break with the other students when it was time. Pete embraced all aspects of the course including going on the field trips (horse farm, animal shelter, aquarium and pet center) and completing the online assignments. Whenever he was attending a lecture, Pete always looked the part and professional by wearing his "scrubs". In fact, every student and staff member of the Veterinary Health Care Department was required to wear them, so he could always ask for information, initiate a conversation or just say hi to his fellow classmates in the cafeteria.

As part of the course, Pete was required to do job shadowing and keep a log book documenting his care of an animal. He went on a tour of the MSPCA Angell Animal Medical Center in Boston and found a part time job walking dogs. He was always ready in the mornings when his "mentor" came to pick him up, a stark contrast to his later years in High School when he was not as motivated.

It is not just the fact that Pete received his ACT (Animal Care Training) certification that made his first year at college so rewarding. Being an active member on campus is just as important as taking academic classes. Pete clearly liked the camaraderie of being with other students; not just in his class but also the general student community. He accessed the BCC library to review course videos and to do homework and assignments; exercised at the campus gym and enjoyed going to the Student Center where he would often eat lunch with a friend from ORR and other students he had met.

When we talk about the good things in life for people with disabilities such as a purpose, a sense of belonging, opportunities for growth and learning, we know that this must occur by people being in valued roles (college student) and having access to the places where everyday life is conducted (college). These good things in life are what most of us would agree make life worth living and are the elements that make up the typical valued life. For Pete, trying to help him develop that sense of belonging was not an accident but rather a strategic decision to support him in a valued role in places with people his own age and who share the same interests. Intentionality.

Pete is "thriving" on campus and is planning on returning to college in the Fall to continue his studies. The big step forward he has made in the past year has laid the foundation for great things to come. Pete can identify with peers in such a way that he now has the confidence to allow himself to dream of a future, as his friends are doing.

~Ross Hooley



Pete and his BCC Instructor,
Kym Libucha



Pete at Animal Instincts



Pete dog walking

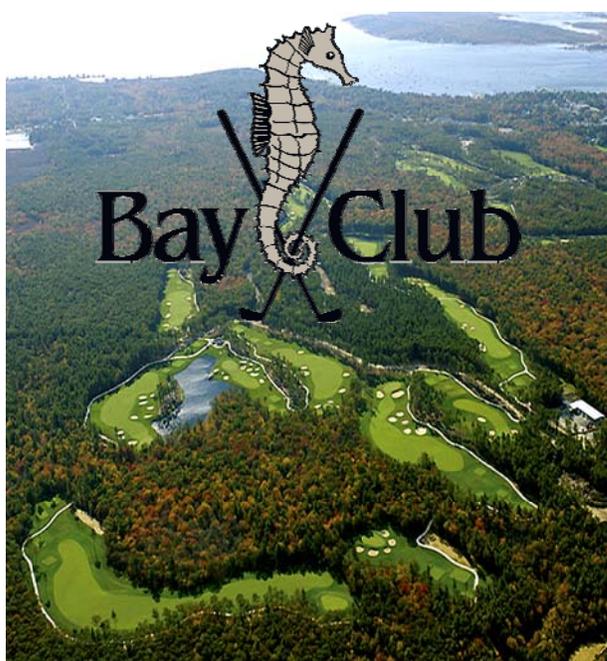
Our "VISION for the future"

The Nemasket Group envisions individuals leading successful lives that are rich with meaningful roles

109 Fairhaven Road
Mattapoisett, MA 02739
Tel: 508-999-4436
Fax: 508-997-9239
www.nemasketgroup.org



People who fill roles that are valued by others (example: photographer, employee, co-worker, voter, musician, volunteer, college student) will be granted the good things of life.



Louis Nisenbaum Memorial Golf Tournament

Attention all Golfers:

We hope you will join us at the **Bay Club** in Mattapoisett, MA on Monday, August 28th. Enjoy a great day of lunch, golf, and dinner. Enter our Putting Contest and try to win \$5,000 cash. There are raffle prizes and auction items that are sure to catch your attention. Not a golfer, come join us for dinner. There is definitely something for everyone. For more information please go to www.NemasketGroup.org or call 508-999-4436.

Summer Sizzler

Date: August 17, 2017
(rain or shine)
Time: 5:00 – 8:00 p.m.
Location: Mattapoisett YMCA
38 Reservation Road
Mattapoisett, MA

Come celebrate summer with the staff and families of The Nemasket Group and the Family Connections Center.

Families are asked to bring dessert and lawn chairs.

Activities will include:

- ~ DJ
- ~ Pool (please bring appropriate attire & a towel)
- ~ Magician
- ~ Lawn Games
- ~ Basketball, volleyball, frisbee