

Grace and Stephen in the "Valued Role" of Artist

Grace is a passionate, imaginative 18 year old who loves the seasons, holidays, and painting with bright colors. The Building Futures Project first met Grace when she was 11. Her diagnosis of autism strongly impacted on her ability to initiate social interactions, initiate communication, respond to others, share her interests, and to develop age appropriate peer relationships. Today, Grace takes sewing classes with a seamstress, has joined a quilter's guild, is a member of a local art gallery and has sold her hand sewn holiday table runners at craft fairs and seasonal celebrations. Through a dance and movement class, Grace has made friends with other young people from the New Bedford Youth Ballet and helped in the costume shop.



We talk often about the importance of relationships in the lives of the people we support and that sharing similar interests is the first step to developing supportive, fulfilling friendships. Grace's passion in sewing has led her to meeting other quilters in the area. Not only is her work valued and appreciated but she has found a community of friends where she is welcomed and acknowledged for her talents and gifts.

Stephen's love of music has in many ways led him to where he is today. He is a well-known artist in the Greater New Bedford area who has had the opportunity not only to produce originally designed home textiles and clothing but also to study with nationally known artist, teacher and author Elin Noble. In 2004 Stephen attended the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth where he was a member of the percussion section of the World Music Class. This class stimulated his interest in art. With gentle nurturing and support, Stephen developed an interest in screen printing dance wraps and producing quality batik scarves which led him to designing and making wraps for the UMass African Dance Troupe. He is known for the beautiful and sought after work he had done in the past such as silk screened pillows, eco-friendly tote bags, silk scarves and matted art work, made primarily using recycled materials. More recently, Stephen's artistic focus is in dyeing and making large quilts as well as wool scarves. Over the years Stephen has participated in numerous local craft fairs and exhibited at Gallery X, the Green Bean Restaurant, and Rogers Gallery in Mattapoisett where he has an open invitation to display his work. Occupying the valued role of artist is important to Stephen, and it is clear to see that this man speaks through his art.



Our "VISION for the future"

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



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



After 28 years of dedicated service to The Nemasket Group, Emily Murgo-Nisenbaum retired from her position as the Senior Associate Executive Director in early January 2016. Over the years Emily has directly impacted the lives of many individuals, and she has assisted countless families to navigate the ever changing and often difficult to maneuver service system. The mark that Emily has left on the organization will not soon be forgotten. Thankfully, Emily will continue working for The Nemasket Group on a part-time basis as the Coordinator of the Family Leadership Series in addition to other special projects.

We would like to thank everyone who bought tickets for our Holiday Basket Raffle this year.

To see the names of the Polar Bear Basket winners go to:
<http://nemasketgroup.org/holiday-basket-raffle-thank-you>
Congratulations to Emily Murgo-Nisenbaum and Karin Bonesteel for selling the most tickets. Special Thanks to Kathy Souza, Rick Souza, and Amy Cornell for ensuring the Holiday Basket Raffle was a success.



**Save the date for our 2016 5K Walk/Run
April 30, 2016**

Join us for a great morning of fun as we make our way through Fairhaven with family, friends and neighbors while raising awareness and support for The Nemasket Group. For more information please go to our website at www.NemasketGroup.org and follow us on Facebook.