



The Family Leadership Series...a first step toward changing the world!

"The Leadership Series not only educated me, it made me think differently. It was great to leave with our visions – I am convinced that there will be a better future!" FLS Graduate

The Nemasket Group, with funding from the Department of Developmental Disabilities, began providing a new learning opportunity in 1990 for families raising children with disabilities – that opportunity is called the Family Leadership Series (FLS). The Series is an intensive, 8 day course (2 four day weekends over a 6 month period) that is designed with a three-fold purpose: the first is to offer information about "best practices" for people with disabilities. The second is to assist families in creating a vision for their family member and a process to achieve the vision through leadership and advocacy. The third is to develop family leaders who will advocate at the local and state level to improve the lives of individuals with disabilities. The Southeast Family Leadership Series has been replicated and is now offered annually throughout Massachusetts so there are over 3000 FLS graduates statewide!

Families leave the FLS with lots of information, new ideas, a feeling of affirmation and connectedness but most especially with a new network of support available to them. Families who have completed the Family Leadership Series have had a monumental impact on services and supports for children and adults living with disabilities in Massachusetts. In 2002, FLS families were able to pass Family Support legislation in Massachusetts. Families have individually and collectively worked on inclusion in school systems, have advised and worked with the Department of Developmental Services and other state agencies on policy change and the development of new policy, have been involved in teaching human service professionals about working with families, have advocated for human service funding with the legislature, and have served in various capacities on committees and boards of directors.

One of the quotes we use during the FLS is from Ghandi, "Be the change that you wish to see in the world." I'd like to highlight a FLS graduate who has made this quote her mantra for life. Kathleen Amaral attended the FLS in 2008. She lives in Dartmouth with her husband Dan (also a FLS graduate) and is the proud mom of Emma, Liam and Mae. In 2005, her son received a rare diagnosis of Congenital Disorder of Glycosylation (CDG), and when he was just three, she applied to participate in the Family Leadership Series. Kathleen says, "The series gave me the tools to create a vision for Liam, which remains the driving force behind how we approach coordinating supports and services for him in and out of school."



Kathleen Amaral

Kathleen hasn't stopped with creating a better life for her son and her family. She shares her knowledge by working with families through The Nemasket Group and most recently, has become the Advocacy Alliance Coordinator- Becker Center for Advocacy, Arc Massachusetts. Most excitedly, in 2018, Kathleen became the Coordinator for the Southeastern MA Family Leadership Series returning to her roots!

Kathleen is a Citizen Member of the Massachusetts Developmental Disability Council and in 2017, she ran for and won a seat on the Dartmouth, MA school committee. She is the Chair of the Dartmouth MA Special Education Parent Advisory Council and has been the primary organizer of the Southeastern MA Community Resource and Craft Fair since 2013. Kathleen is a member of the Dartmouth Disability and Accessibility Commission and a member of the Massachusetts Sibling Support Network.

Kathleen says that the following quote by Margaret Mead sums up the FLS experience, "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."

Written by: Emily Nisenbaum

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.

Strangers in the House: The Dilemma of Living with In-Home Services

This one-day presentation explores the dilemma of living with in-home services. It offers insights, practical advice and strategies for managing the issues involved, and invites participants' reflections on the types of mind-sets that might improve or worsen this dilemma.



Monday, April 29, 2019

8:30am – 4:00 pm

Lunch will be provided

BayCoast Bank – Conference Center
330 Swansea Mall Drive, Swansea, MA

To register please call Amy Cornell at 508-999-4436 or email AmyCornell@nemasketgroup.org



SATURDAY, MAY 4, 2019

FORT PHOENIX, FAIRHAVEN, MA

Registration 8:00 AM

Runners 9:00 AM

Walkers 9:05 AM

The first 125 registered adults and registered children (under 12) receive an event T-shirt

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 and to register, go to our website at www.NemasketGroup.org



St. Gabriel's Church, Marion, has generously chosen The Nemasket Group as recipient of their Easter collection. St. Gabriel's is committed to inclusion and devoted to finding forms of service that will bring joy and bless others.



Consider supporting The Nemasket Group when you shop AmazonSmile.com by designating The Nemasket Group as the charitable organization of your choice.