



# Employee of the Year



As part of our Think-N-Grow, organization-wide staff meeting, on July 16<sup>th</sup> *The Nemasket Group, Inc.* presented the **2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Employee of the Year Award** honoring a staff member of the organization who has shown exemplary service! We asked family members, people who receive services, employees and others to nominate a Direct Support Professional or employee who they feel has contributed significantly to the organization, and/or has shown a deep level of commitment in their support of individuals and/or families.

This year we received 10 nominations in total, making the decision making process challenging for the nomination committee. We are pleased to recognize all of the employees nominated: Ana Colon, Sandy Heller, Neil Klein, Justin Laurianno, Erica Roemhild, Patrick Russell, Wendy Sheehan, and Shanell Stewart.

Nominated by Dianne Huggon, the mother of Jonathan Huggon and co-manager of his individually directed supports, Neil Klein has been selected as our Employee of the Year. When asked why Dianne chose to nominate Neil for the award, she responded *"2020 has been the teaching year. Staff turnover and Covid19 put us in a situation where we had to make many adjustments in the family to make sure Jonathan's needs were met. Neil's reaction to all of it was 'how can WE make this work?'* Rather than be furloughed, he wanted to continue supporting Jonathan (and his family) in the safest way possible. We discussed the plan, and commitment was made that we would all take every safety precaution to keep us all healthy and find creative ways for Jonathan to continue to work on his photography. Neil was phenomenal with finding locations that allowed Jonathan to get fresh air and not be exposed to people. Building relationships is one of Jonathan's top goals and despite not being able to interact with others, Neil used Jonathan's photography to prompt conversations on Facebook. 2020 has been difficult, however the difficult times opened our eyes to recognize we are blessed with a committed and invested Direct Support Professional."

When asked how Neil's work has been guided by the Mission of *The Nemasket Group*, Dianne responded, *"Jonathan's personal vision is to live, work and enjoy life in his community. What's very important to him and his family is that he have friends and healthy relationships with people in his community. Jonathan relies on his direct support professionals to act on opportunities for him to meet people. Jonathan spends a lot of time working on his photography. He has met and interacted with many people. Conversations have been about many topics whether it's his photography, the city/town, historical sites, the weather or explaining how he uses his camera. Neil has contributed greatly to helping Jonathan use his own 'voice' and express his thoughts more clearly. Jonathan is very capable of making his own decisions. We all need people in our life to help us make wise decisions. Jonathan and Neil's working relationship allows for this to happen."*

Jonathan is viewed as a Photographer in his community. He is also recognized as an independent man who enjoys life. Dianne went on to comment that *"Having Neil on his team has proven that all things are possible."*

We are extremely proud of our workforce, and honored that so many took the time to nominate and recognize the work done over the past year by employees of the organization, especially our **Direct Support Professionals**. They continue to be the backbone of *The Nemasket Group*, even during a world-wide health crisis. Employees of the organization are committed not only to the safety and well-being of those we support, but also dedicated to supporting folks to live typical lives, and experience the joys and sorrows that make us all human.

*Written by: Dustin Green, Executive Director*



***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.***

# Years of Service Recognition

Historically, employees of *The Nemasket Group* work for the organization for many years, decades even. Each year we recognize employees who have reached significant milestones over the past year, and this year we are proud to announce the following years of service achievements:

## 20 Years of Service

Therese Leigh Eyre – Community Living Program

## 15 Years of Service

Syrena Costa-Neves – Job Paths Program

## 10 Years of Service

Amy Cornell – Administrative Assistant

Helena Furtado – Job Paths Program

Debra Ramos – Community Living Program

## 5 Years of Service

Jill Ann Arpin – Agency with Choice

Neil Klein – Agency with Choice

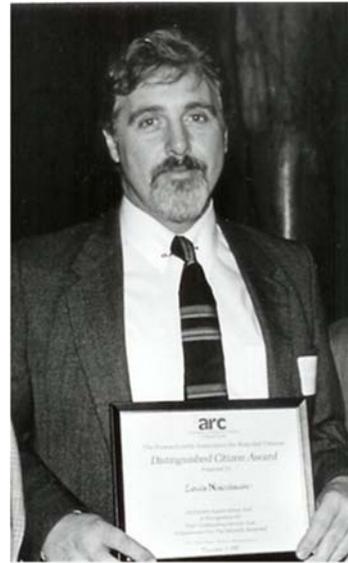
Carlton Pina – Job Paths Program

Jon Scieszka – Job Paths Program & Agency with Choice

Kathryn Vicino – Community Living Program

National Direct Support Professionals Recognition (DSP) Week is a national effort to recognize direct support professionals and highlight the dedicated workforce that comprises the heart and soul of supporting persons with disabilities.

DSPs have a number of responsibilities that impact the lives of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. This year, during the week of September 12-19<sup>th</sup>, here at The Nemasket Group, we are celebrating their hearts and the work they do to support people with disabilities. Thank you DSPs!



Louis Nisenbaum was the Executive Director of The Nemasket Group from 1984 until his passing in 2011. He may be gone, but he is not forgotten. Thanks to the help of Chris Charyk and the talented professionals at ORCTV we have updated and enhanced our video presentation, honoring Lou's Legacy.

You can view it here:

<http://nemasketgroup.org/about-us/>

Due to the restrictions on golf and community events resulting from COVID-19, The Nemasket Group has decided for the safety and well-being of all to cancel the August 2020 golf tournament. This golf tournament has historically been the organization's largest fundraising event of the year, and last year's event was the most successful ever, due to our generous supporters.

As with other organizations, the services The Nemasket Group provides and the delivery of those services, has changed dramatically because of the pandemic. We need your support now, more than ever! Please consider making a donation by visiting our website: [www.nemasketgroup.org](http://www.nemasketgroup.org)

