

# Mainstay COMPASS

Navigating a Brighter Future  
in Housing and Home Care

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Thank you from the Mainstay Board!

From left to right: Ian Macnab, Judy Gould, Bob Manasse, Nancy Gair, Dr. Amy Gottlieb, Avanelle Cole, Larry Oaks, and Alice Rose;

Not shown: Deb Crossley and Ellen Miller

## Letter from Our CEO — Mainstay's Impact in Human Terms

Two years ago, the Mainstay Leadership team and I decided it was finally time to create a scholarship fund to help more people access supportive housing. For far too many of the families we were meeting, economic hardships were insurmountable barriers preventing them from securing housing and support for their loved ones in need. It became an urgent issue we could no longer ignore.

backing of caring people just like you, we've raised close to \$100,000, which has allowed us to directly assist seven families so far (seven and counting!).



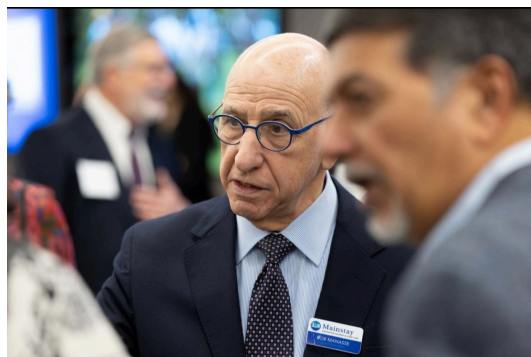
What does the impact of this new fund actually look like, in human terms? In this edition of *Compass*, we feature the remarks shared by Kayla Hurst at our “You Make a Difference” fundraiser. Her son, Brennan, is thriving in one of our supportive homes because of the scholarship fund. I am sure her words will resonate with all of you, and reinforce that the donations YOU provide are truly helping families access the housing and support they so desperately need.

Kayla’s tale is powerful, and it represents the growing impact we are able to have on families thanks to the generosity of donors like you. So, on behalf of the board and staff at Mainstay, and the families whose lives are being impacted by this fund, thank you for all your support. We couldn’t do this incredible work without you!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in purple ink that reads "Larry Oaks".

Larry Oaks  
President & CEO  
Mainstay Supportive Housing and Home Care



# A Night to Remember!

There's a reason behind the name of our annual fundraiser — YOU truly do make all the difference for Mainstay! Last week's 5th Annual "You Make a Difference" night brought in nearly \$70,000 for our Supporting Success Scholarship! Thanks to our corporate and private donors, board members, staff and guests, we surpassed our initial goal by \$20,000.

Your generosity ensures that we can help more individuals with developmental and intellectual disabilities live independently. Everyone deserves that opportunity, and we at Mainstay are privileged to be able to provide.

We want to thank all those who took part in the event, particularly Boston Housing Chief Sheila Dillon, Representative Jake Auchincloss, panelists Raj Sisodia and Niren Chaudhary, Mainstay Resident mom Kayla Hurst, and emcee Lauren Beckham Falcone.

Plans are already in the works for our 2026 event. We hope you will consider joining us for the 6th annual fundraiser next fall!



Kayla and Brennan Hurst at You Make a Difference 2025

## One Family's Scholarship Story — Falling Through the Cracks No More

According to his mother Kayla, 20-year-old Brennan Hurst has spent most of his life falling through the cracks. When their family was awarded a "Supporting Success" scholarship from Mainstay, Brennan was able to remain a resident in one of our supportive homes — meaning his housing needs were secure. Kayla was a featured speaker at Mainstay's 5th Annual "You Make a Difference" fundraiser and talked about the extraordinary way this changed their lives. The following is excerpted from her speech:

I'm honored to share a glimpse of what Mainstay has meant to my family and especially my son. Brennan lives with developmental disabilities that

young adults need.

From the time he was little, Brennan was one of those kids who was always in danger of falling through the cracks. He fell through the cracks at school. Teachers never knew what to do with him. He would test above grade level in one area and then be unable to complete a simple classroom task in another. He wasn't failing, but he wasn't thriving either. He was just falling through the cracks.

[Read more...](#)

## Board Chair Dedicated to Mainstay's Mission

*"We are a small organization trying  
do big things in the lives of people."*

— Bob Manasse

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## Welcoming Our New Director of Development!

Earlier this month Emily L. Mason, PhD joined the Mainstay team as our Director of Development. Emily comes to us from the Metrowest Women's Fund where she served as Development Manager.

In her role with Mainstay, Emily's duties include cultivating and stewarding new and existing philanthropic partnerships. Her work will help us drive growth as we look to our next 50 years.

Please join us in welcoming Emily! You can connect with her directly by email at [emily.mason@mainstayliving.org](mailto:emily.mason@mainstayliving.org) or follow her [Facebook page!](#)



## What's Better than Saturdays with Sandy?

Is it really Fall if you don't go pumpkin picking? Recently, a group of residents from our Norwood homes traveled to Ward's Berry Farm in Sharon with Mainstay's Recreation Specialist Sandy Slavet, who is also a mom to one of our residents. They enjoyed an afternoon in the sun and came home with pumpkins and gourds of their choice.

Once a month, Sandy organizes a fun field trip or activity for residents known as "Saturdays with Sandy."

Sandy also facilitates weekly house meetings for our residents to go over highs and lows of their week. As you can imagine, these outings and meetings are a highlight for our residents.

Thank you, Sandy, for making a difference in the lives of so many!



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# ‘Wilson Wonderland’

Mainstay Residents, Family, Friends, and Supporters are invited to join us on Thursday, December 11 for our 2nd Annual 'Wilson Wonderland' holiday celebration. The event will take place from 5:30 to 7 p.m. in the cul-de-sac at 45 Wilson Street in Norwood.

Get in the holiday spirit as we are joined for a festive sing-a-long led by Miss Massachusetts 2025 Khailah Griffin and other special guests! Light refreshments and hot chocolate will be served.

Festive attire (think Santa hats) is encouraged.

**Donate to Mainstay**

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