Hello NEHD community,
Below is a letter from one of our donors that reflects the spirit of philanthropy that is in the NEHD family. Please know every dollar and contribution makes a difference in the lives of our residents. Some examples of how your contributions matter are: The Deaf/Blind walkway, an Olive Garden dinner/movie event, and a resident outing to Deaf/Hard of Hearing day to cheer on the Boston Red Sox. Please consider donating to NEHD to continue to support programs that create a community of home.

Chuck Crush
CEO/ED NEHD

My name is Matthew Rodriguez, and my brother Mark lives at the New England Homes for the Deaf. I am on the Board of Directors for the Homes and have been a long-time donor to the facility. I wanted to talk a little bit about how much NEHD has meant to Mark and our family over these many years, and to share how you can help keep this much-needed resource available to other families like mine.

While Mark was Deaf from birth, my mother didn’t realize Mark couldn’t hear for some time, until she noticed he didn’t react when she dropped a pan, or when a car horn honked. My folks were in their mid 20’s, and my father was working 100-hour weeks as a physician. They had another child on the way and two more to follow. Throughout his childhood, Mark had numerous physical challenges, spending time in and out of hospitals and doctors’ offices. As young parents with no experience dealing with a Deaf child, where could they turn? My mother became Mark’s biggest advocate. She went to all his appointments, became the first in our family to learn Sign Language to relieve Mark’s social isolation, and took endless trips to Randolph’s Boston School for the Deaf to check on Mark’s progress. She was determined that he would get every bit of support and care that her other children received.

And Mark thrived. He graduated from Boston School for the Deaf and Randolph High School. He lived in Quincy in a Deaf home and later in Framingham. He worked, and he learned to live independently. He made friends, took trips in and around Boston, and enjoyed a community of people with whom he could communicate and share experiences.

Eventually, Mark needed more than his home in Framingham could provide. For my parents, Mark’s return home meant he was safe and loved. Yet they constantly worried about what would happen when they were no longer around for Mark.

Enter NEHD. To say that the home was a godsend truly understates what it has meant to my parents and our family. Any place can be a facility that takes care of people. However, it takes more than four walls for a place to be a home, and that represents the essence of NEHD: the camaraderie of the residents; the compassion and dedication of the staff; the ability to communicate through sign with other Deaf individuals.

The support and vibrancy of NEHD are the antidote to the isolation so many Deaf and Deaf-Blind people experience. Yes, the home provides top-notch medical care for residents. However, the joy and community NEHD fosters are what makes it special. My parents have passed away, and my siblings and I care for Mark now. But it is NEHD where Mark is at home.

With your donations, you can help give others a home, too. Please make our annual appeal successful, and go to the link below to donate