

Planting Trees, Creating Opportunities: Growing Together This Summer

Summer's Here!

It seems like we spend six months preparing for summer, three months enjoying its hectic schedule, then three months recovering from the busy-ness of it. We're in the "hectic schedule" mode now, tending our gardens and preparing for our golf outing - our largest event of the year! As our organization grows, so too does our activity level as you will see as you read this newsletter. But, as we keep telling our clients, It's good to be busy!

If you are a gardener, send us a picture of your flower or vegetable garden when it hits its summer peak. We'll share those pictures in our Fall/Winter newsletter.

Wishing you an enjoyable summer,

Mary Anne Neiner

President, Planting Possibilities

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS: BUILDING SKILLS, CHANGING LIVES

Thanks to the generosity, encouragement, and support of our community, Planting Possibilities continues to help more individuals build skills, find meaningful employment, and achieve greater independence across Northwest Indiana. Over the past year, our Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Program served 31 individuals—a 55% increase from the previous year. This growth was made possible by adding our new Employment Specialist, Tramese Washington.

We are very proud of the progress our participants achieved in 2025. More than half of those enrolled in our program found employment in their chosen industry. Even more encouraging, 83% of individuals remained employed one year after placement, a significant increase from 60% the year before. Additionally, 43% of our participants found employment on their first job placement attempt, exceeding both the Indiana and

national averages. Participant satisfaction remained exceptionally high, with an average rating of 4.8 out of 5.

This year also marked the successful first year of our Seeding Success Pre-Vocational Program. Through hands-on horticulture activities, participants developed many valuable job skills including workplace readiness, communication, and safety awareness. Every participant completed individualized goals and demonstrated meaningful growth in key employment skill areas.

As we look ahead, we remain committed to creating more opportunities through stronger employer partnerships, expanded community connections, and enhanced employment services.

-Kristy Fletcher
Executive Director

SEEDING SUCCESS: PLANTING OUR NEW APPLE ORCHARD



Planting Possibilities received a generous project-specific grant from Wild Ones Gibson Woods which covered the cost for us to plant a small orchard. Spring was the time to get moving so we called everyone out for Earth Day on April 22nd to get planting our new orchard! Allyssa McAley from the NWI Food Council came out to the farm and

provided local apples for people to enjoy. Oakley showcased the apple varieties

chosen for their flavor profile and improved disease resistance:

Goldrush is like a Gold Delicious, Liberty is like a

Honeycrisp and Enterprise is like a McIntosh. He

demonstrated the planting process before instructing everyone to just take a tree and plant! All participants in Pre-Vocational training attended and planted an Apple tree with their peers and families.



Afterwards, some toured our Hoophouse within a hoophouse that we heated and

used to produce food through the Winter. Others came to the raised garden beds to see what was growing at that time. Most of what was growing in April was garlic and potatoes.

Now there is much more in the garden. Follow us on social media to watch our crops grow!

-Oakley Molinaro
Prevocational Garden Manager

Planting Possibilities in the Community

THANKS FOR SUPPORTING OUR GERANIUM SALE



We started our day in the rain while we unloaded the truckload of geraniums as they were delivered the morning of Saturday, May 16. After that, though, it was a beautiful day! We sold out of the larger flowers and several varieties of our

heirloom tomato plants, too!

We'll be back again in the same location on a Saturday in mid/late September with our annual fall mum sale. We'll also have produce that we grew in our garden in Crown Point. Watch your mail/email/Facebook for that date.

OUR ANNUAL GOLF OUTING IS SOLD OUT



Thanks to an overwhelming response, our 11th Annual Golf for Possibilities event to be held on August 1 is sold out!

While we may not be able to accommodate any more golfers

we still welcome event sponsors and donations for our Silent Auction, Raffle, and golfer gifts. Items like sports memorabilia, event tickets, restaurant gift cards, and unique experiences are always a hit at our post-tournament celebration. For details, visit plantingpossibilities.org/golf or email us at golf@plantingpossibilities.org.

SEE YOU AT THE CROWN POINT FARMERS MARKET



Our Garden Manager, Oakley Molinaro, will be at the Crown Point Farmers Market every Saturday from 8AM -12PM through September selling Planting Possibilities products. The market will be closed on July 4 and July 18. Come by to purchase our fresh produce and other products.



Thank You to Our Donors

Karen Anderson	Griffith Evangelical Lutheran Church	Dede Morrow
Mr. & Mrs. Raymond Bakker	Steve & Amy Hadley	Martita Mullen
Michael & Rebecca Bennett	Patricia Helminski	Teri Overhage
Edwin Bodley	Melanie Igel	Rod & Pam Pasyk
Louise Chickie-Wolfe	Joe & Carole Janusonis	Sandra Porter
Crown Point Community Foundation	Steve & Luanne Jurczak	Providence Bank
Curt & Elaine Dainton	Al Kalembe	Dan & Pam Pullen
Bill & Monica Ference	Lake County Master Gardeners	Harriet Rincon
Gene & Brenda Fiegle	Pamela Masson	Rockopelli Music Fest
Keith & Fay Gaiser	Drs. Greg & Janet McComis	Marc & Tracy Ruiz
Nancy Gergets	Don & Bobbi McElroy	Joe & Linda Stefanich
Kaliappon & Salvi Gopalan	Linda Moran	Tornados, Inc.
		Charles Turman
		Mr. & Mrs. Timothy Wiess

Thank You Andean Class of 2027



The Junior class at Andean High School in Merrillville, Indiana had a Lenten project this year to raise money for a local non-profit organization. Planting Possibilities was

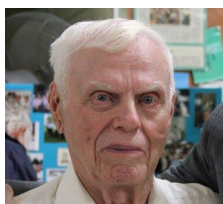
chosen as the recipient of their efforts. During finals week, Mr. Jason Novak's third hour theology class, who raised the most money, presented us with a check for over \$1450! Thank you so much for your efforts and your desire to connect with the helpers in our community. Enjoy your summer!



Remembering Mark Neiner

Steve & Robin Kalubo
Nathan Pullen

In honor of Alvin Decker's 100th Birthday



Nieces Cathy McAndrews and Mary Anne Neiner honor their Uncle Alvin Decker on his 100th Birthday! Alvin is the third generation of five generations of the Decker Family to operate their family's Centennial Farm in Champaign County, IL. So proud of our wonderful uncle and his legacy of seven children, 18 grandchildren, and 16 great-grandchildren with three currently on the way.

In memory of Joseph Richard "Dick" Hemingway



Steve Furman, Joe & Cookie Janostak, Munster Chamber of Commerce and Robert Rankin wish to honor the memory of Joseph Richard "Dick" Hemingway.

Dick was a devoted husband, loving father, teacher, dedicated coach, and proud grandparent of 14. Along with his wife Nancy, he spent a life in service to his community. His lengthy and notable career as a teacher and coach in Hammond, Indiana, was honored by being inducted into Hammond's Sport Hall of Fame. Dick and Nancy enjoyed many retirement years enjoying the company of their family and volunteering in the community. His was definitely a life well lived.

In memory of Kevin Perz



Jeff and Alice Perz cherished their son Kevin Daniel Perz. Kevin was a long-time resident at Cardinal Services group home in Warsaw, IN where he found comfort and purpose including his involvement in their art studio. Kevin was deeply loved by his family and friends. Kevin's kind and gentle spirit will be missed by all who knew him.

In memory of Keith Gaiser



Planting Possibilities honors another life well lived. Keith Leroy Gaiser and his wife Faye have been longtime supporters of Planting Possibilities. Keith lived a life of quiet service, raising six biological children and numerous foster children over the years. His strong faith inspired him to generously share his time and talents with several community organizations and with the many children Keith and Faye lovingly brought into the fold of their family. Well done, good and faithful servant.

WANT TO REDUCE YOUR INDIANA STATE TAX BILL?

THIS IS A WIN-WIN FOR YOU AS AN INDIANA TAX PAYER AND FOR PLANTING POSSIBILITIES.

Planting Possibilities participates in the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority's Neighborhood Assistance Program (NAP). Every donation of \$100 or more (maximum limit of \$2,500) made between July 1 and December 31, 2026, is eligible for a 50% Indiana State tax credit. This year, **non-itemizing taxpayers are allowed a federal tax deduction** (\$1000 for single filer or \$2000 for married

filers) for charitable contributions, making your donation an even bigger bargain! Check with your tax consultant for official information. Your donation not only reduces your federal tax liability, but your tax credits are directly subtracted from your 2026 Indiana state taxes on your tax form.

Planting Possibilities has a limit to the amount of tax credits to "sell". We run out of

credits every year; therefore, we must offer these credits on a **first-come, first-serve basis**. Any business or individual that pays Indiana State income tax is eligible.

Email or call Mary Anne at maryanne@plantingpossibilities.org or 219-614-7168 with any questions.



PLANTING POSSIBILITIES IS A VOCATIONAL REHAB PROVIDER CARF CERTIFIED - SERVING LAKE AND PORTER COUNTY, INDIANA

- Over 175 clients served since 2012
- Life skills training on task completion, soft skills, and project planning
- 83% success rate for job-seeking or academic track clients (initial placement/subsequent employment or college/trade school enrollment)
- Certified one-on-one direct service professional job coaches
- Special needs client staffed lawn service micro-business
- On-site vocational garden and greenhouse
- Certified staff horticulturalist/twice weekly client education sessions
- Opportunities for social interaction through Special Olympics and other sponsored events

96% satisfaction from Quality Assurance survey



Planting Possibilities
PO Box 1805
Highland, IN 46322

Visit PlantingPossibilities.org



Learn More About:

- >> Seeding Success
- >> Farmers Markets and Plant Sales
- >> Golf for Possibilities

Planting Possibilities is a registered 501(c)3 with the mission to provide job-skills training, employment, and volunteer opportunities for adults with autism and other developmental disabilities in Lake County, Indiana.

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WWW.PLANTINGPOSSIBILITIES.ORG |   

Planting Possibilities is a 501(c)3 nonprofit eligible for company matching programs. Your contribution is tax-deductable in accordance with applicable law.

PO Box 1805 Highland, IN

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Circle one of the following: _____ MasterCard _____ Visa _____ Discover

I would like to volunteer, please contact me: _____ Yes _____ No

Planting Possibilities

Gardeners Circle Levels

\$25 \$50 \$75 \$100 \$250 \$500 \$750 \$1000

other - \$ _____

Please make checks payable to: _____

Planting Possibilities





If you would like to support Planting Possibilities with a financial gift, please donate online at www.plantingpossibilities.org or complete the form below. We thank you sincerely for your support.