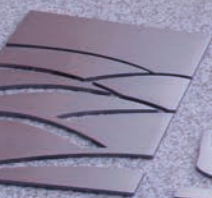




70 YEARS

Building Communities of Care



Seven Hills

Foundation



# COREVALUES

Respect & Kindness | Integrity | Teamwork  
Innovation | Service to Others

CELEBRATING

70 YEARS

## Excellence in Building Communities of Care

Since 1995, Seven Hills Foundation has been navigating the complex evolution of the delivery of integrated and sustainable Health and Human Services with the confident direction of its mission and vision amidst an ever-changing landscape.

Founded in 1953 as the Worcester Area Association of Retarded Children (WAARC), the one-office agency focused on programming for children with intellectual or developmental disabilities (IDD). Within a year, WAARC launched a new concept of services that included home care, residential living, and respite care for families who had been the sole providers for their children with IDD. Gaining traction with proven program success, WAARC expanded to adult services and changed its name to the Worcester Area Association of Retarded Citizens.

With a name change in 1995 from WAARC to Seven Hills Foundation, the vision has realized tremendous growth. From its grassroots origin to a multifaceted organization that encompasses 15 separate non-profit agencies with established roots in three states, Seven Hills stands as a premier provider of a diverse portfolio of health and human services. As it celebrates its 70th anniversary, Seven Hills acknowledges the dedication of its leadership, staff, allied health professionals, stakeholders, community members, families, and caregivers. Thanks to investments in physical resources, staff development and education, technology, and ongoing improvements to clinical care, Seven Hills has maintained the highest standards of excellence and has become the standard-bearer of a successful integrated health and human services network.

The following pages chronicle the dynamic evolution that Seven Hills has undergone in the last seven decades.

### ■ Mission Statement

The mission of Seven Hills Foundation is to promote and encourage the empowerment of people with significant challenges so that each may pursue their highest possible degree of personal well-being and independence.

### ■ Vision Statement

The vision of Seven Hills Foundation is to be a preeminent leader and resource in the identification of unmet community needs; in the promotion of professional and compassionate models of service; and as an advocate of emerging public policy which exemplifies the dignity of all persons regardless of physical, social, or emotional condition

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Seven Hills  
Foundation & Affiliates

70 YEARS





Stanley Kubrick, photographer, LOOK Magazine Photograph Collection, Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, [Reproduction number e.g., LC-L9-60-8812, frame 8].

## CHAPTER 1

# Laying the Cornerstone

*For decades, society harbored an attitude of indifference at best and hostility at worst when it comes to individuals with disabilities. Parents whose children were born with a disability were advised that their offspring would never improve or lead productive lives. These children were thought to be “uneducable,” and institutionalization was routinely recommended. Research studies found that those who were institutionalized often suffered “structural neglect.”*

Furthermore, professional literature from the early 1950s revealed that parents felt inadequate, overwhelmed and thoroughly unprepared to provide effectively for their children with disabilities. Community supports and services were nearly non-existent at the time.

### GRASSROOTS EFFORTS

In the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, efforts to raise awareness and create services for children with disabilities slowly began to spread across the country. In 1951, a group of Central Massachusetts parents whose children had developmental disabilities sat around a kitchen table, discussing how to deliver the best possible care to their offspring.

Two years later, the group incorporated as the Worcester Area Association for Retarded Children (WAARC), Inc. The fledgling organization met in the basement of an old building at City Hospital but offered little in the way of services at that time.

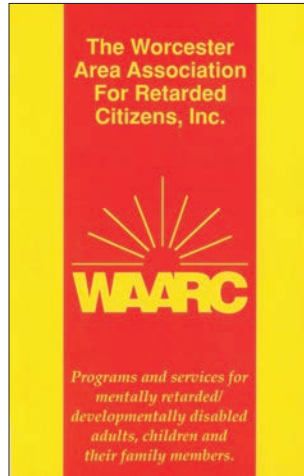


City Hospital,  
Worcester, MA



The organization's original mission was driven by families and parents who always placed the needs and preferences of the individual first. They strived to respect the dignity and self-determination of every person they served.

Grounded in advocacy and social justice, these passionate individuals were determined to integrate their children into mainstream education; the families lobbied for and were granted four classrooms in the Bloomingdale School on Plantation Street in Worcester. WAARC's unrelenting advocacy efforts served as a catalyst for Massachusetts to pass a law in 1955, requiring Special Education classrooms that would serve as a model program for other states.



Bloomingdale School



Camp Joy at Boynton Park in Paxton

In addition to securing educational opportunities for their children, the families sought to provide social experiences similar to those their siblings enjoyed. In 1957, they created Camp Joy at Boynton Park in Paxton where children could engage in a variety of activities from horseback riding, music, and art, to drama, gardening, and cooking classes.

As WAARC grew and created relationships with other local agencies, it became apparent that the group required a designated leader to help steer the organization. In 1960, WAARC hired Harold Crockett as its first executive director; he held the position until 1975.

## GAINING MOMENTUM

When WAARC's focus expanded to include adults with disabilities, the organization opened the Occupational Training Center (OTC) in one of the old City Hospital's outpatient buildings on Chandler Street in 1962. During its first year of operation, the OTC trained 80 individuals and placed 20 of them in jobs.



Occupational Training Center (OTC) brochure

Deinstitutionalization created chaos when first implemented in the mid-1960s but offered WAARC an opportunity to serve an even greater number of individuals with disabilities. Those who had resided in institutions were in desperate need of community supports and services. The state wanted agencies to accept 80 percent of residents from the state schools and 20 percent from the community. WAARC responded in 1973, by opening Oberlin House, the





Oberlin House

first community-living facility for individuals who had been institutionalized.

In 1973, WAARC became the Worcester Area Association for Retarded Citizens to reflect its expanded population; the organization now served many adults as well as children.

## "BIG B"

In 1975, Harold Crocket retired, and the search began for his replacement. A staunch advocate for the rights of children, women, the LGBT community, adoptees, and those with developmental and physical challenges, Barbara A. Andersen proved to be the ideal candidate. While she was a tenacious negotiator with government agencies, she was also passionate about theatre, her family, and, most of all, the people WAARC served.



Barbara A. Andersen

Andersen was often applauded for her ability to recognize a need, to understand the political intricacies involved in securing services for the need, and to find creative and effective solutions for that need. She has been hailed for her "sensitivity and political astuteness," which greatly benefitted



1973 Rehabilitation Act

those WAARC served.

Andersen's success in her role at WAARC can be attributed to her open-door policy, which extended beyond the typical workday. She never ignored phone calls, regardless of the time of day. Clients and staff referred to her affectionately as "Big B."

## RESPITE CARE

Early in her leadership, Andersen introduced the Respite Care Program, relatively unknown at the time, to provide staff known as "Sitters" trained in behavior management, developmental activities, dressing, the latest technologies, tracheostomy care, gastrointestinal feeding, care for ventilator-dependent individuals, and more. Sitters were available to families on a regular or as-needed basis for a few hours, a weekend, or up to 30 days to allow time for commitments outside the home without worry. The basic premise behind the Respite Care Program was to keep children and adults with special needs in their homes in an effort toward normalization.



Barbara A. Andersen



Holden Landmark, Malboeuf Respite House Article, 1985

WAARC opened Malboeuf Respite House, the first Respite Care facility in Massachusetts. Here, children or adults with disabilities could stay while their families received much-needed personal time. In 1980, Karen Reynolds joined the WAARC workforce as a direct support professional for Malboeuf House. In 1985, Barbara Andersen tapped Reynolds to be the residence director of the second respite facility, The Fitchburg House, which served an estimated 120 families in the North Central area. Reynolds is now in her 43<sup>rd</sup> year of service at Seven Hills and currently serves as assistant vice president at Seven Hills Community Services. She reflects on Respite Care as that pivotal point for families caring for a loved one with disabilities. “Many of our families

didn’t have the luxury of being able to go on a vacation and leave their son or daughter with professional staff,” Reynolds said. “We did our best to provide a family-like environment and to make sure they felt safe and secure while away from their families.”

## SKILLS AND JOB TRAINING

Once the residential homes became operational, Andersen contemplated ways in which the residents of those homes could learn work skills in a safe environment. WAARC developed sheltered workshops, which taught basic skills and then expanded into more personalized and enhanced skill sets. With newly acquired job skills, people were able to find employment with local retailers. These stores found that individuals with Down syndrome and other developmental disabilities made fastidious, punctual, and thoughtful employees.

In addition to job training, WAARC began to offer programs focused on educational, employment, reproductive, medical, and personal rights.



WAARC's Occupational Training Center, 81 Hope Ave., Worcester, 1988

Mary Altomare became involved with WAARC after her son, Michael, was born in 1961, and diagnosed with Down syndrome.

“Her vision for her child was that Mike would learn to interact in the community, that he would have a job of some sort, and that he would learn to care for himself as much as possible,” said John Altomare, Mike’s brother, and long-time member of the Board of Directors at Seven Hills Foundation.

“At that time, there was a prevailing sentiment that these children should be sheltered. And there were several parents, my mother included, who were just going to turn that thought process upside down. They were going to immerse their children in the community and get as much life into them as they possibly could.”

Mary’s efforts paved the way for community acceptance. “She’s the reason things are much easier

for those of us who came after her,” he said. “She had an idea of the way she wanted these children to be introduced and immersed into the community. And she did it in a very persistent but graceful way. She was lucky enough to have a number of other parents with the same type of vision and that really catapulted the work.”

At Seven Hills, Mike lives in a residential setting where he receives excellent care. John Altomare cited the warmth, dedication, and passion with which his brother is treated and applauds Seven Hills for providing that care.





In spite of some small gains, access to education still proved challenging for children with disabilities. While many children and adults were still in state-run institutions, in Massachusetts the relentless advocacy of families paid off with the enactment of Chapter 766, passed in 1972. Chapter 766 helped bring thousands of young people into more inclusive educational settings. It also required that local school systems educate every student in their community and fund appropriate educational costs. Chapter 766 was the catalyst for President Gerald Ford to sign into law the All Handicapped Children Act (EHA) [now known as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)]. The passage of this act helped WAARC further serve children with disabilities and integrate them more fully into the community.



President Gerald Ford signing the federal EHA law

Throughout her two+ decades with WAARC, Andersen developed relationships with countless professional organizations. Her appointment as community representative for the Greater Worcester Council of The Office of Children created a direct pipeline to the Massachusetts Executive Office of Human Services, which advocates for children across the state.

After 27 years at the helm of WAARC, Andersen, considered a “force of nature,” retired, leaving a legacy on which the Seven Hills Foundation was built.

For Andersen the work at WAARC was always “about the families.” She believed that the families were “the base sealing the floor of the whole building of the program.” ■



Barbara and Roy Anderson at her retirement in 1995



In 1969, Robin and Marian Mahar welcomed a son they named Rob, who was diagnosed with seizure disorder when he was four months old. By the time he was four years old, he required full-time care in a place that would nurture, protect, and educate him. Initially, they placed Rob at the Perkins School in Lancaster where he remained before transitioning to Perkins School for the Blind in Watertown when he turned 18. As he was about to “age out,” the couple needed to find another option that could provide medical services as well as mental stimulation, socialization opportunities, and compassionate care.

WAARC had just opened Overland House, which proved to be a perfect fit for Rob for the next 12 years. When David Jordan became president, he opened Seven Hills first custom-built residential home in Sterling on November 5, 2005.

Robin and Marion lived nearby and visited their son every week. They were delighted with the care Rob received. The Mahars are grateful that they had the unwavering support of Seven Hills Foundation. Marion said, “Seven Hills seems to find people who are very caring, very professional and have an empathy for the people they serve. It’s a first-class operation.”

“When you’re on a different journey from the one that normal parents have, it’s important that the people on that journey are helping you,” said Robin. “We’ve been so fortunate to have the people at Seven Hills Foundation to take care of our guy Rob.”



## CHAPTER 2

# Shifting Operational Gears

*When Barbara Andersen announced her retirement, WAARC faced the daunting task of finding a replacement. For 21 years, Andersen had grown a locally based, person-centered operation that served a growing population of people with developmental disabilities in Worcester. The board of directors sought an individual who would adhere to the organization's original parent-driven mission and maintain its viability.*

After interviewing several internal and external candidates, Dr. David A. Jordan, former president and CEO of Crotched Mountain Foundation and champion for people who are under-respected, underserved, and undervalued, emerged as the most outstanding candidate. Although as an “outsider,” he faced some pushback from board members and families, he was ultimately handed the reins.



Dr. David A. Jordan and Claire Swan, Board Chair, 1998

The night before his interview with the WAARC board, Jordan prepared a 100-day plan that included what some thought of as revolutionary ideas. “My first proposal was to change the name,” he said. “I told them that what had been done was great, but we needed to open the curtains and look at what the future is.”





Jordan's first order of business met with some resistance from the board as well as from parents. However, he persuaded them that this new identity would allow for more avenues of growth and move the agency toward a new way of thinking. His mantra of "no margin, no mission" clearly indicated that the main goal of the organization is to serve the individual the best it can, and encourage and empower the person to be independent, while remaining mindful of the bottom line. In 1995, the organization adopted the Seven Hills Foundation label as a tribute to the Worcester topography and the Seven Hills of Rome.



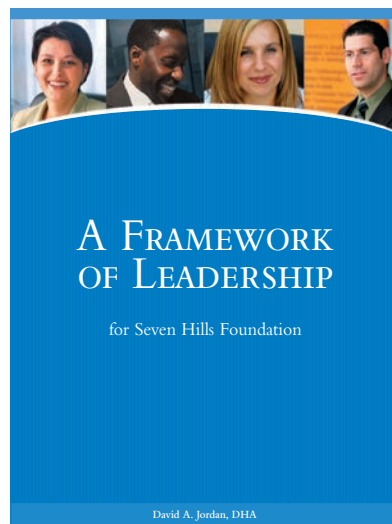
## SERVANT LEADERSHIP

In addition to updating the organization's name, Jordan initiated several other important changes, including a new management concept. He developed a "Framework of Leadership" that sets forth guidelines for who leaders are, how they act, and what they do; this structure also encompasses characteristics, behaviors and actions, and skills and competencies guided by the principles of "servant leadership."

Servant leaders adhere to a set of values that governs their actions and helps define and judge the self. While predicting the future is a near-impossible task, leaders need to absorb as much information as possible, analyze it, and anticipate actions before they happen. This foresight, together with enthusiasm, forms the essence of "the art of leadership." Jordan emphasized that leaders who value the respect and friendship of others and pursue a life of altruism will leave a

lasting positive legacy.

At the core of servant leadership is the question: How can I support you to do what you need to do? The servant leader is here for "the other," and that means employees, the individuals supported, the families that are involved, and their connected teams.



Celebrating Thanksgiving as a Seven Hills community

## PROMOTING A VISION

Even as he embraced the philosophy of servant leadership, Jordan faced some challenges during the first five years of his tenure. Fear of the unknown permeated the board, the families, and the staff. Jordan spent those years in ongoing conversations with these groups to reassure and promote his vision for a larger organization well positioned to serve a broader base of individuals in need of services.

**VISION STATEMENT** The vision of Seven Hills Foundation is to be a preeminent leader and resource in the identification of unmet community needs; in the promotion of professional and compassionate models of service; and as an advocate of emerging public policy which exemplifies the dignity of all persons regardless of physical, social, or emotional condition.

The original Worcester-focused organization had fulfilled its intent and mission defined in 1953 when it was founded. With an operating budget of approximately \$5 million and 150 employees, the organization did what it could at that time to improve the lives of children with disabilities. When Jordan arrived, the organization had a solid foundation on which to build. "In essence, we stood on the shoulders of a lot of great people who had done wonderful things in founding the entity," Jordan said. But he was ready and prepared to implement a new, more aggressive plan.

Jordan's vision started with the creation of a foundation, which would allow the organization to expand well beyond Worcester. He and his leadership team created a management company, which would serve as an umbrella for affiliated companies. Although this concept had been implemented in other states, it was new to the Worcester community. These ideas

became the mustard seed from which everything else emerged.

During those early days, Jordan faced opposition at times, but routinely communicated his vision to staff, always receptive to their input. Because he had worked on the front lines in direct care and held a client-based perspective, he could relate to all employees as direct support professionals.

## BUILDING A SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

Soon after Jordan became president/CEO, the organization began to position itself as a social enterprise, meaning that it was a business with a social focus rather than a charity. "The perception that a non-profit organization is poor and serves 'poor people with disabilities' would not be self-serving. Rather it would keep the organization in a negative mindset," Jordan said. "Let's start changing the narrative."

Jordan kept Seven Hills on an upward trajectory by taking a cue from successful business models. The organization began using debt financing, created an endowment to ensure its financial stability, and began branching out to other parts of the state as well as around the globe.

Along the way, Seven Hills viewed and dignified people with significant life challenges, whether economic, psychological, physical, neurological, or some level of poverty, abuse, or addiction.



Seven Hills Foundation Annual Report 2000





Jordan said, “The term significant life challenges is a big enough umbrella that encompasses all the people we support, whether children in Pittsfield who need child care or children in Sierra Leone who need basic education.”

For the last 28 years, Seven Hills continued to reinvent itself, evolving to meet the day’s challenges. As new needs arose, the organization was prepared to shift operations accordingly. Jordan said, “During my tenure, we’ve gone through four or five different iterations of Seven Hills. We keep going through growth cycles.”

Jordan looked to his long-time partner Joseph Tosches, Executive Vice President and Chief of Operations, to move through those cycles.

Tosches had decades of experience working with David Jordan and observing his leadership style. “Taking on big, hairy, audacious goals, as David liked to call his growth ideas, were leaps of faith,” Tosches said. “But they weren’t unrealistic goals. They really were meant for us to do two things: serve the clients in better settings and diversify and financially stabilize ourselves.”





Seven Hills ASPIRE! grand opening

Tosches remembered one defining moment when Children's Hospital Boston asked Seven Hills to assume ownership and operations of a pediatric long-term care facility in Groton, Massachusetts. After a review of the site, Jordan asked Tosches, "Can you find me \$1 million for expansion and renovations to dignify the home for these 82 medically fragile children?" Tosches answered, "No problem."

## defining DIGNITY

The renovation turned into a \$10 million project, putting Seven Hills Pediatric Center in the country's top 1% of nursing facilities and defining the demand for excellence that became the hallmark of Jordan's work.

In 2000, the then-named Department of Mental Retardation (DMR) contacted Seven Hills to ask for leadership in relocating 500 individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities (IDD) from Wrentham State School and other state hospitals into community residences.



Friendships formed at Fortes Group Home



Children's Hospital Boston supporting Seven Hills Pediatric Center

As part of the landmark Rolland v. Cellucci decision, people with IDD, aged 3-93, would receive community living support. "DMR came to Seven Hills and said, 'We need your help. We built and bought 100 group homes.' Think about that—that's incredible. And we pulled it off," Tosches said. "They knew who the go-to guys were in the state, and we were able to accomplish a lot. They trusted us, and we built a great relationship."



Loretta Roland and family

Throughout these different stages, technology has played a critical role in Seven Hills' pursuit of social entrepreneurship as it helps the organization deliver care more efficiently, effectively, and financially responsibly. Jordan believes in using data analytics to measure the quality of the work Seven Hills does and anticipates moving the organization into predictive analytics. "We've got to be able to understand what the costs of care are going to be for an individual at a very early age," Jordan said. "I try to anticipate the future to position ourselves to align with trending."

"David has this unique ability to see the future. I would always say to people that he's got a crystal ball. He had that balance of intellectual business and this compassion for people with disabilities," Tosches said.

This foresight has benefited everyone Seven Hills has served and everything Seven Hills has achieved. The organization has flourished; the work Seven Hills does has served as a guiding light for other statewide organizations that want to expand. Held in high regard by other human services agencies, Seven Hills has first-hand knowledge and experience with the challenges of an ever-changing social climate and can assist other organizations that need support. ■





## CHAPTER 3

# Expanding Programs, Staff, and Footprint

*When David Jordan became President & CEO, he planned to enlarge Seven Hills' footprint even more so the organization could, over time, assist smaller agencies in continuing their designated work in the local communities. "We had to create a structure that was more of a management company, strategically diversifying our programming through assimilation of companies that had a niche but needed a path to sustainability," he said.*

In 2001, Seven Hills shook up the industry when it acquired New England Residential Services in a \$30 million transaction. Mergers were unheard of at the time, but this initial acquisition launched Seven Hills' growth and represented a cultural shift. This marked the beginning of Jordan's "affiliation movement" that helped reshape human services in Massachusetts. Thanks to the organization's lead and success, other agencies acquired companies and diversified.

"We just took off with mergers and acquisitions, and the people that we served became much more diverse. All of our programs began to take on personalities of their own," said



Children's Aid & Family Service Child Enrichment Center grand opening

Tosches. “The business plan that we created was outstanding, in my opinion. Things really began to take off after we shifted to the affiliate corporate structure. When we had merger meetings with other companies, they loved the idea of coming to Seven Hills and not losing their identities.”

The financial benefits of the business model included reducing overhead costs for the affiliates, which enabled them to continue delivering on their core competencies while pursuing new service opportunities and enhancing programming for people supported. With each new affiliation, Seven Hills recognized the importance of maintaining its established structure in the community. This preservation “turned the tide for Seven Hills,” allowing the organization to continue adding businesses to its portfolio while respecting each affiliate’s unique relationship-building experience with families.

Chris Bailey, director of Human Resources Information Systems, has been with the organization for 41 years, long

enough to experience the different leadership philosophies. “David talked about getting larger and getting smaller: Getting larger in the sense of being able to sustain and build upon the various resources needed and being stable on a fiscal level was extremely important,” Bailey said. “But at the same time, we needed to keep that small, unique neighborhood environment for our families, for the individuals we supported.”

The expansion of affiliates enabled Seven Hills to expand its service delivery and offer choices in community living arrangements, social activities, vocational opportunities, and health care. Today, the organization employs nearly 5,000 staff with an operating budget of \$400 million and an industry-low administration rate of 7.5 percent.

The 15 affiliated companies are thriving under Seven Hills Foundation’s core management, and staff has embraced the culture and financial security that Seven Hills provides.

## THE PREEMINENT LEADER, 2023



Dr. Jordan with Jim Regan of Family Services of Central MA



Roy Angel of YOU, Inc.



Karen Ludington and Suzanne Weekes of Children's Friend





- **Seven Hills ASPiRE!’s** Model of Innovative Lifelong Learning is how we have branded our day program options supporting people with disabilities through contracted services from the Department of Developmental Services and the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission. At ASPiRE!, individuals have a voice and choice to pursue the activities that interest them — whether preparing for employment, developing friendships, or accessing a wide array of arts, music, and dance; fitness and wellness; healthy cooking and so much more! Our success with this model has led Seven Hills ASPiRE! to five programs located in Worcester, Hopedale, and Devens, Massachusetts.



- **Seven Hills Behavioral Health (SHBH)** was developed to respond to the increasing complexity of the individuals with disabilities who are presenting with mental illness. Across our affiliates, we have significantly increased our clinical acumen by adding behaviorists, licensed social workers, therapists, psychologists, nurse practitioners, and psychiatrists. Across Massachusetts, we have a growing Behavioral Health system of care that includes clinics and home and community-based counseling specializing in children and families. In the Southeast areas of Massachusetts, SHBH has highly skilled community public health outreach focusing on the prevalence of HIV/AIDS and substance abuse. We have received Federal SAMHSA Grants to support this work and, most recently, have expanded our reach to youth, tackling the issues earlier with an emphasis on prevention.



- **Seven Hills Community Services (SHCS)** provides residential group homes to individuals with disabilities who qualify for this community-based option. Seven Hills’ homes are beautiful — comfortable and accessible accommodations that dignify the residents and provide a welcoming environment for the staff who care for them. The SHCS model reassures families that there will be someone to care for their loved ones when they can no longer provide the care themselves. The key ingredient to our success is the passion of our staff. It takes a special calling to dedicate one’s profession to caring for another person — and enabling that person to become an active member of their community.



- **Seven Hills Family Services (SHFS)** operates four Family Support Centers in North Central, South Valley, Greater Lowell, and North Quabbin regions, which provide information and referral for thousands of individuals with disabilities and their families. SHFS offers an extensive slate of parent groups, social groups for children and adults, trainings — and, most important — scholarships when needed. SHFS also manages over 600 Shared Living and Adult Foster Care arrangements where people live in the home of their family or caregiver as part of their family unit. These are nationwide trends in community-based living options, and Seven Hills Family Services boasts a 30-year track record of success in these models of care. SHFS’s Community Connections program provides Individuals

of all ages with social, recreational, and wellness activities. With over 15 competitive Special Olympic team sports, and non-competitive offerings such as ballroom dancing, yoga, theater, arts, flower arranging, woodworking, and more, there is undoubtedly something for everyone and every interest. Community Connections is vital to the health and emotional well-being of our individuals who, through this program, form meaningful friendships and lasting relationships.



- **Seven Hills Global Outreach (SHGO)** was launched in recognition of the staff who have immigrated from 58 countries to the United States and chosen a career of compassion and care at Seven Hills. SHGO leverages humanitarian efforts by partnering with health, education, and human services organizations in the home communities of Seven Hills' staff. SHGO's partnerships in Bangladesh, Ghana, Guatemala, Puerto Rico, Haiti, Jamaica, Kenya, Liberia, and Sierra Leone is helping to improve their access to essential resources such as potable water, sanitation, food, clothing, education, and healthcare by developing local solutions to these challenges.

SHGO also focuses on microfinance programs that teach financial business strategies and provide funding to women who use these strategies to build community commerce and generate significant sources of capital. These efforts are helping over 20,000 people by improving overall health in the villages and empowering the community members to lead productive, more dignified lives.



- **Seven Hills New Hampshire (SHNH)** is home to Crotched Mountain School, which has garnered a 70-year

national reputation as one of New England's most iconic schools for students with disabilities. The school offers academic, residential, vocational, rehabilitative, recreational, and long-term care to students with a range of special needs. The beautiful campus in Greenfield boasts a lake, scenic nature trails, on-site swimming and therapy pools, a gymnasium, a media center, a farm program, and more. Crotched Mountain Village supports adults with a variety of needs both on campus and in the community.



- **Seven Hills NeuroCare (SHNC)** responds to Massachusetts' need for people with acquired brain injury (ABI) to access services critical to their neurorehabilitation. Seven Hills has built 20 homes and a Brain Injury Clubhouse to help people with ABI rebuild their lives. Over 60 members of our staff have worked to receive their Certification as Brain Injury Specialists, and our team of clinicians are experts in the treatments that best support individuals whose lives have changed in the blink of an eye due to a brain injury.



- **Seven Hills Pediatric Center (SHPC)** in Groton is a five-star pediatric skilled nursing facility for children and young adults with profound cognitive disabilities and complex medical needs. Long-term palliative care is provided in a residential treatment environment by a dedicated team of nurses, therapists, educators, and activity specialists who ensure the residents are comfortable, engaged, and always loved. The Seven Hills Academy at Groton is an on-site



special education school for the residents and students with special needs in the community. Seven Hills Pediatric Center at Hopedale provides residential treatment for children under the supervision of the Department of Children and Families who need 24-hour, specialized medical care. SHPC at Hopedale staff work closely with the children's public schools to ensure their educational needs are met and regularly engage with the community to promote socialization.



- **Seven Hills Rhode Island (SHRI)** supports children and adults with disabilities and their families through various residential options and day supports. More than 1,000 adults are supported in leading lives with the greatest independence and building relationships that encourage growth and well-being. Early Intervention supports families with a child from birth to age three with a suspected or confirmed delay or disability. Child & Family Services supports 400 children with critical services that ensure they have the best preparation for entering school. SHRI clinicians and teachers support families with the skills they need to help their children thrive at home, in school, and in their community.



- **Children's Aid & Family Service (CAFS)** supports income-eligible families throughout Central Massachusetts in their pursuit of a successful life/work balance. CAFS' Child Enrichment Center in Fitchburg, MA, provides year-round, facility-based child care. The Center accommodates 82 children and offers comprehensive family services, including parent skills training, counseling, information and referral,

and advocacy. The affiliate is one of the Commonwealth's year-round, home-based Family Child Care coordinators, managing a network of licensed providers who offer care in small group settings. CAFS is the state's most extensive Child Care Resources and Referral provider, a single access point for child care voucher management services and provider information and referrals. The affiliate's staff support families from Western MA through Metro West, providing guidance and access to high-quality child care.



- **Children's Friend (CF)** has been serving children and families in the greater Worcester community since 1849. The affiliate's mission is to improve the lives of children and those who love them by creating, supporting, and strengthening families. What started as an orphan's home has grown into an agency that supports over 1,000 children and families in Central Massachusetts with adoption services and early education and care. CF works closely with the Department of Children and Families to provide assessments, home studies, case management, and placement of children in new families. Children's Friend also operates The Early Learning Center located in the heart of Worcester for families to access early childhood education and care conveniently, with access to local resources and recreation.



- **Family Services of Central Massachusetts (FSCM)** brings over 130 years of service to the greater Worcester communities, with a history of caring for and supporting seniors. The Home Care program supports the growing

trend of aging in place for seniors who wish to live as independently as possible in their home and community. A wide range of caregiving services are provided in the senior's home regularly or as needed. Through the AmeriCorps Seniors network, FSCM operates a vibrant senior volunteer program with community-based engagement and a Senior Fraud Helpline that assists seniors in recognizing, resisting, and reporting senior fraud activity. The Senior Companion program provides one-on-one socialization and basic skills care for seniors with limited mobility and independence. For the greater Worcester senior community, FSCM's impact has been uplifting and rewarding for all involved.



- **Open Door Arts (ODA)** is Seven Hills' Boston-based affiliate that works energetically to increase access, participation, and representation of people with disabilities in the arts. ODA believes its shared cultural community is strengthened when it represents, includes, and engages all people. Open Door Arts works with more than 3,000 students, teaching artists, educators, and leaders of cultural organizations annually through innovative and inclusive programming, training, events, and exhibits. ODA members are in-person in the Boston Public Schools and host two studios and galleries in Boston and the Worcester Art Museum.



- **Stetson School** became part of the Seven Hills network in 2012. At that time, the census of students was 39 and declining with an aging facility. After the redesign of

flexible care models and extensive investment in facility and infrastructure, Stetson School has the capacity to serve over 100 students on campus. Currently, it has a waiting list of over 40 students from multiple states. This 200-acre campus in Barre has re-emerged as the leader in the national therapeutic school community. Stetson specializes in male students with problematic behaviors, complex developmental difficulties, chronic mental illness, and autism spectrum disorders, who have suffered from severe trauma. Stetson School offers a continuum of support and services to the high-risk population with a family-focused, individualized "culture of recovery."



- **YOU, Inc.** has been serving at-risk children, adolescents, and families across Worcester County since 1972. For nearly 50 years, the affiliate has provided youth and families with opportunities to fulfill their potential and build a brighter future through a wide array of education programs that help young adults prepare for success in college and beyond. At the same time, at-risk families and the wider community are supported through information, referral, and supports to keep families together and thriving.

## ESTABLISHING A CULTURE OF INNOVATION AND CREATIVITY AT HOME AND ABROAD

Seven Hills is committed to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging, regularly involving staff in its decision-making processes. Employees developed the Corporate Core Values of Respect & Kindness, Integrity, Teamwork, Innovation, and Service to Others, which are tightly woven into every aspect of the organization, including its culture, mindset, and care delivery.



Human Services Career Support Program graduates





Destination Seven Hills staff from Puerto Rico

John Altomare notes that Seven Hills and its dedicated staff define culture. “We have a culture that is incredibly unique, that fosters innovation, that allows for a lot of creative ways of bringing service to people with disabilities,” Altomare said. “There is professionalism here, unlike any other organization, where further education of our employees is encouraged. That

directly impacts our service delivery.”

The vast and varied journeys staff has made from the 58 countries they represent define diversity at Seven Hills. For those who have immigrated from around the world, the “Destination Seven Hills” recruitment initiative has provided transitional housing, cultural connections to the community, and specialized training.

“SHGO is defining a culture of putting others first,” Jordan said. “Global communities face several challenges stemming from lack of access to basic resources. With a limited investment, we have dug wells for fresh water. We have developed sewerage systems for villages. And the impact from this has been that the health, especially of mothers and children, has increased dramatically. When people are healthy, they can go to school. When people are healthy, they can go to work. When they can do both, they can begin to build a robust society.” ■



First fresh water well dug in remote Bo, Sierra Leone in Africa





## CHAPTER 4

# Taking the Next Steps

*Throughout the last 70 years, Seven Hills has led the way in reframing the health and human services sector in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and New Hampshire and is a respected model for efficiency, quality, and innovation. Embracing risk, the organization is revolutionizing standards of care for those it serves and its employees.*

Seven Hills Foundation exists because people need our services. People need our creative, compassionate, and fiercely dedicated professionals. People need our commitment to Building Communities of Care, wherever that may be. People need care provided by an organization that delivers the highest quality supports through our Core Values of: Respect & Kindness, Integrity, Teamwork, Innovation and Service to Others.

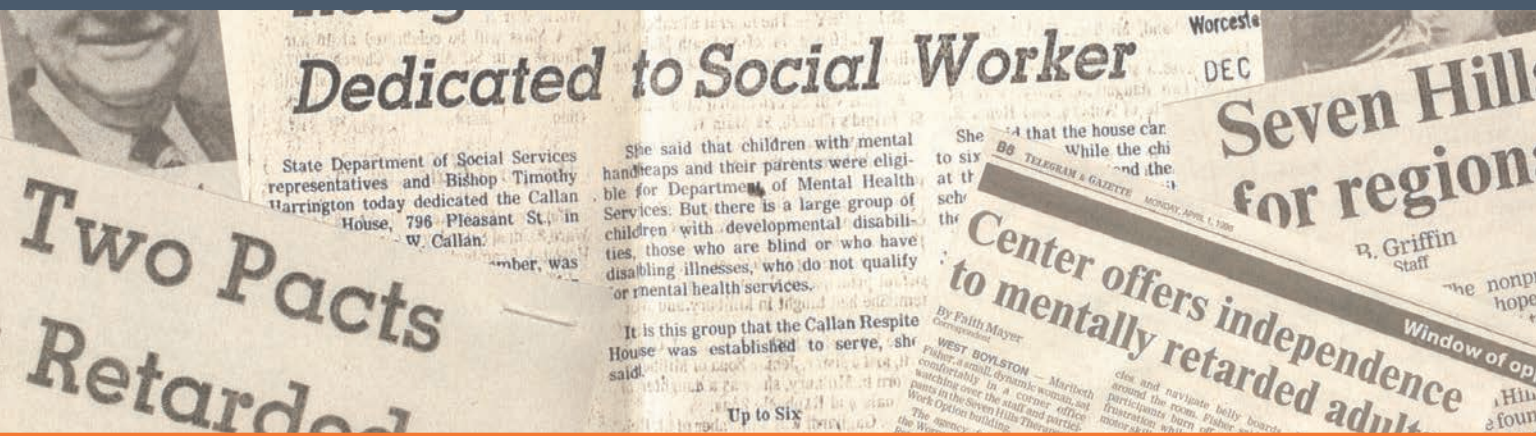


## CORE VALUES

Respect & Kindness | Integrity | Teamwork  
Innovation | Service to Others







Raising awareness for the rights and inclusion of people with disabilities has been one of Seven Hills' greatest accomplishments, according to Altomare. "It's important that the organization thrives and continues to care for and foster the independence of people with disabilities in the community," he said. "While they have challenges when given the opportunity to lead their best lives, they succeed with a bit of help and encouragement."

Board member Deborah Needleman agrees with Altomare and emphasized that Seven Hills serves as a role model in the industry. "Everything we have done has been for the benefit of the people we serve. They have flourished because of that, and the kind of work we do has been a guiding light for other organizations that want to move forward," she said.

During the next decade, Jordan anticipates that Seven Hills will continue to lead the sector, forging new paths to meet emerging demands and bridging the gap between health and human services and health care.

When Jordan became President/CEO, his trend analysis "crystal ball" foretold that Seven Hills would become part of a much larger healthcare system. "Now is the time to prepare for that future and ensure that those for whom we care are







given their rightful place within this much larger healthcare delivery system we are watching evolve,” he said.

In parallel with evolving technology, Jordan has moved the organization from an “analog” to digital approach to service delivery—one that involves telehealth, telecounseling, data analytics, and predictive analytics to improve and maintain its competitive sustainability.

Jordan asserted that it is important to recognize the past experiences and celebrate the accomplishments. Yet, it is a leader’s job to recognize those experiences from a different perspective, taking a hard look at both the good and the bad. “Make the necessary adjustments to move forward, sharpened by hindsight, to build upon all the good that has been accomplished,” Jordan said. “At the end of the day, what’s most important to me is what we are going to do tomorrow and, in the future, and why? People with significant life challenges are making strides in their communities and quality of life. What is their next big step? How can we bridge the pay gap for our staff? How do we encourage young people toward a career path of serving others? How are we going to apply business skills to social good and social needs? Whether you call that social entrepreneurship or compassionate business, you know it’s good social policy,” he said.

These are the questions that must be answered to secure a future. They are relevant throughout a leader’s tenure. Many of the positive changes at Seven Hills thus far can be attributed to the forward-thinking of its leadership. Raymond Quinlan credited Jordan for his ability to see what needed to be done and use the right people and resources to get it done effectively. “Great leaders not only recognize the need, but they also tap the talent—the best people for the job to ensure success and the need is met.”

Seven Hills Foundation is incredibly fortunate to have its







next seasoned leader in place to lead into the next chapter of success. Kathleen Jordan has spent the last 20 years of her professional career with Seven Hills preparing to lead as President & CEO. She brings a remarkable ability to design supports and service delivery systems that best serve the complexities of care for people with life challenges. She also brings a unique ability to build strong internal teams and external partnerships that support her commitment to populations in need.

“I am thrilled to continue the amazing work of Seven Hills and to position our organization to meet the increasingly complex needs of the sector. The challenges have never been greater, but our team has never been stronger,” said Jordan.

For 70 years, Barbara Andersen, David Jordan, and our staff have always stayed mission-driven — it’s WHY we have always done and will always do this work — Building Communities of Care where everyone can thrive. We’re an advocacy agency. We serve people with disabilities and life challenges. It is incredibly important work, and we consistently bring together teams who believe in our WHY.

Tosches enjoyed reminiscing about his time at Seven Hills. “I couldn’t be prouder of my journey. The legacy that I’ve been part of has set Seven Hills apart from any other organization. I’m most proud of the fact that we always had our clients’ best interests in mind. Whether buying a house for a group home or buying a new building to house a program, we always had our clients’ needs as our guide.”

According to David Jordan, Seven Hills should find joy and pride in its accomplishments, but never be satisfied. He noted that, as a new leader takes control, the organization is at a moment when it will have to reinvent itself again. “I’ve been a steward of this place for a period of time, and now it’s time to transition to new leadership,” he said. “I have great confidence in our future.”

“David is a passionate leader, a competent leader, and one that is tireless,” Altomare said. “David is 24/7, seven days a week. Seven Hills was his mission. We were blessed to have David. We also gave David a conduit from which he could fulfill his mission in life. Now we look to ensure the future is as bright for those people we have yet to serve.”

“We know that thousands of lives rely on us, every day. We take that seriously. Our work is built on providing support in ways that mirror the support we would want for our family members,” said Kathleen Jordan. “For 70 years we have done that and done it well. I can’t wait to see what the next 70 brings to this incredible agency.” ■



## Mission Statement

The mission of Seven Hills Foundation is to promote and encourage the empowerment of people with significant challenges so that each may pursue their highest possible degree of personal well-being and independence.



Respect & Kindness | Integrity | Teamwork  
Innovation | Service to Others