

## Kuhn Gets Two New Hoyer Lifts

Kuhn continues to work towards enhancing the experiences of its individuals every day. As part of this continued improvement, Kuhn has installed two new Hoyer Lifts at its North Colony location which will aid staff in the safe transfer of participants in Kuhn’s Community Experience Program (CEP) and Opportunities for Older Adults (OOA) program who have limited mobility or who are unable to walk. This lift is mounted in the ceiling and is helpful in the smaller spaces at Kuhn as there is no floor space needed. It will aid staff and prevent injuries and muscle strains as they support individuals. Kuhn has conducted multiple training sessions for Kuhn staff to ensure proper usage of the two lifts and as of the end of April, they are both up and running in two of Kuhn’s facility bathrooms. The new Hoyer Lifts will continue to allow Kuhn to aid individuals in both CEP and OOA programs “to assist participants in wheel chairs and others as we anticipate mobility challenges as they age in our program for older adults” says Kuhn CPO Erin Gasparini who was integral in their installation. “We are excited to have this mobility tool which makes Kuhn more accessible.”

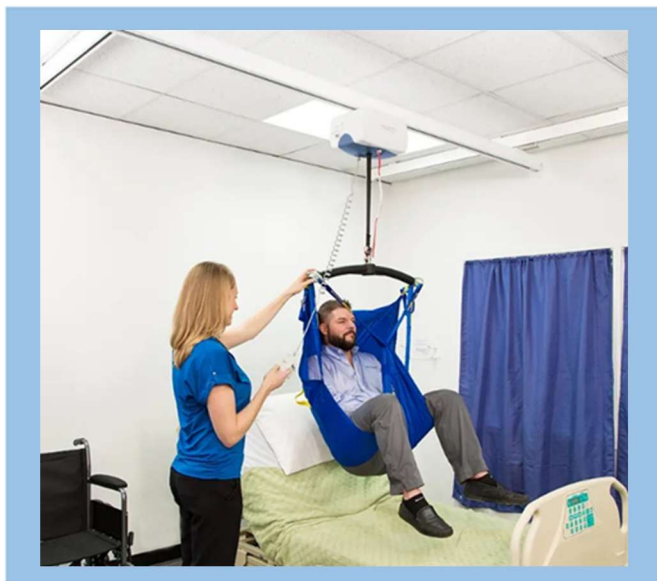


## OOA Takes a Train Ride to Hartford

In an effort to gain new experiences, participants in the Opportunities for Older Adults program took a train ride from Meriden to Hartford, with support from their staff Angelo Aglieco. Many of our individuals don’t have experience with public transportation, and this outing was meant to expose them to that. The trip was about 20 minutes in duration.

The train riders, Jeff H., Katherine T., and Ralph D. were very excited to take the train, talking about it even before it took place. Individuals waited patiently, as they missed the first train, but in real world fashion, missing your train means you wait for the next one! The train riders boarded the train, and found comfortable seating for their journey. The train even passed by Kuhn, and support staff encouraged the group to “wave to Kuhn!”

The group were met by a Kuhn van in Hartford and were driven back to program, where they happily told their peers about their journey. Program participants are looking forward to another excursion, and a larger group plan to go in the near future.



A similar Hoyer Lift like the photo above was installed at Kuhn



## Quarterly Newsletter

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### Announcement

Kuhn Employment Opportunities would like to welcome you to our first Quarterly Newsletter. We invite you inside to see what has been taking place throughout the year and highlight some of the amazing work that our Program Participants, Staff and Supporters have done for the last few months. Each issue will give you a glimpse of some of the activities that our participants have engaged in, some of the amazing stories of our job seekers and highlight some of the ways Kuhn is improving its services to better serve the Communities of Meriden, Middletown and many other surrounding towns. Thank you for Supporting Kuhn!

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## Non-Profit Rally Day 2024

On the steps of the State Capitol in Hartford on April 24, 2024, the Nonprofit community rallied for more nonprofit funding! "It's crucial for all nonprofits to come together and advocate for meaningful funding increases in the state budget" The Alliance: The Voice of Community Nonprofits publicized before the rally began. The 2024 rally included approximately 1800 senior leadership, staff, board members, family advocates, service recipients, volunteers, and supporters who made their voices heard. Decked out in green "Fund Nonprofits" t-shirts, and signs, the 2 ½ hour long rally heard from advocates, those receiving services from various providers and 55 Legislators who raised their voices for increases in Nonprofit funding. Alliance President and CEO Gian-Carl Casa began the rally with the cry of the day "HEAR US!" chanted many times throughout the rally. Kuhn was a proud participant of the rally which included individuals from our Community Experience and Opportunities for Older Adults programs coming for the morning to raise their own voices for more funding. Kuhn leadership spoke with legislative representatives from Meriden and surrounding service areas about the concerns raised by nonprofits and the importance of more funding to continue to serve the most vulnerable populations in Connecticut. After a morning of hearing about why Nonprofits are essential to Connecticut outside, many nonprofit providers including a few from Kuhn went inside the Capitol to speak individually with Representative and Senators to continue to advocate. Kuhn CEO Beth Fisher had this to say about the importance of the day. "It was great to see such a large turnout of support for nonprofit health & human services providers, who have been underfunded for more than a decade. Nonprofits have typically been the first to receive funding cuts during difficult State budget years with a promise of funding when the State had more money. The State does have money now, and we need to be a priority. Without increased funding, individuals in need of services will sit on waiting lists and/or have their services reduced. We appreciate those legislators that stand with us."

Let's make a difference together!



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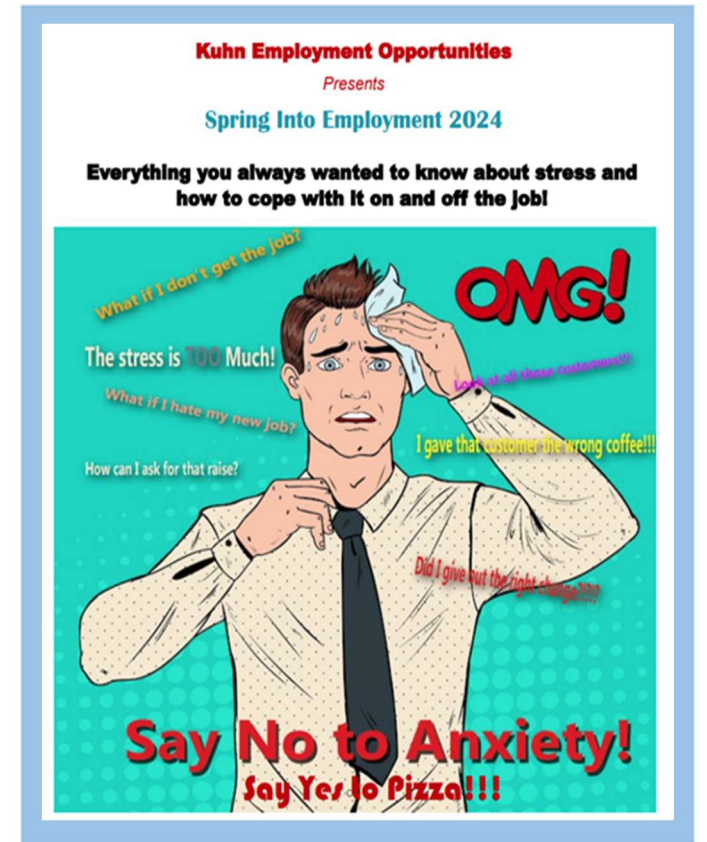


### E.B. Kuhn Award Winner: Mariah Melendez

The Ernest B. Kuhn award, named after the founder of Kuhn, recognizes a staff member who showed "outstanding work & dedication in enhancing the lives of persons with disabilities". This year's award recognizes Mariah Melendez, who received multiple nominations that recognized her patience with and encouragement of her job seekers. She was also commended for going the extra mile with her individuals. Vanessa Avila, Kuhn's Program Manager at our Middletown location had only glowing praise of Mariah, "Mariah is extremely patient and tactful with clients who need help with firming up their employment goals. One particular individual, with Mariah's assistance, has explored multiple career paths, and Mariah has gone above and beyond in guiding and supporting her efforts. Mariah has been an advocate for her with employers, and a sounding board when the individual needs someone to share her challenges with." Mariah began her Kuhn journey in 2022 as a Mentor for Kuhn's Vocational Mentor Program where colleagues say she developed instant rapport with the individuals she served. When she expressed interest in a recently vacated Employment Specialist position, she was welcomed with open arms. She took on her new role with gusto while still continuing to help with the VMP. Mariah splits her time between Kuhn's Middletown and Rushford-based locations where she has adapted well to the unique challenges of each location.

## 2024 Meriden Daffodil Festival Parade

On a beautiful Saturday in May, Kuhn, decked out in their daffodil yellow shirts, marched along West Main Street and through Hubbard Park in Meriden for the 44<sup>th</sup> Annual Meriden Daffodil Festival Parade. With nearly 50 Individuals, Staff, Family and Supporters, Kuhn carried their banner proudly. This was the 3<sup>rd</sup> consecutive year that Kuhn had participated in the parade and Kuhn's individuals were more excited than ever. It was the talk of the North Colony site for several weeks before the Saturday event. Surrounded by many other local community groups, Kuhn was appreciative of all the waves and cheering they received as they passed the robust crowds of spectators that turned up for the parade. Kuhn continues to appreciate all the support it receives from the local communities it serves!



## Say NO to Stress and Anxiety

As part of Kuhn's continued efforts to engage with the communities it serves and provide assistance to job seekers, Kuhn's Middletown and Rushford-based locations collaborated this past April for their Spring Into Employment Seminar. This year's seminar, which took place at the Russell Library in Middletown and was led by Walt Kita, Kuhn's Middletown-based Senior Employment Specialist, focused on strategies to cope with stress and anxiety both on and off the job. Walt was joined by guest speaker Krista Ingham from Middlesex Health's Behavioral Health Program. After discussing various strategies around coping with stress and anxiety, all participants were treated to some pizza from Mondo's also located in Middletown. Both of these Kuhn programs will collaborate once again in the fall for their Halloween Workshop. Dates and locations have not yet been released.