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First Bank of Greenwich Community Corner: Helping Abilis Grow

BY RICHARD KAUFMAN

Since 1951, Abilis has provided services and support, from birth on, for individuals with special needs in Greenwich and the lower Fairfield County area.

Abilis offers early intervention and customized therapies to help individuals achieve important developmental milestones. As people enter adulthood, Abilis also provides a wide range of life service programs, such as recreational activities, transition and life skills support, job training, competitive and supported employment and a choice of residential options.

Abilis has experienced substantial growth in recent years with the help of Amy Montimurro, who has worked with the organization for over 22 years as Director of Residential Services, Director of Life Services and now President and CEO.

THE FIRST BANK OF GREENWICHSM

"It's amazing [to see the growth]," said Montimurro. "It's a very special, unique organization. Watching the opportunities and the partnerships and individuals take on these amazing journeys is very rewarding."

Abilis-run businesses, such as the greenhouse, gift shop, cafe, and even office administration, facility maintenance and landscaping, provide clients with an opportunity to learn valuable skills and explore career options through meaningful employment.

"It's really rewarding to see people get jobs for the first time, or getting their own place to live," Montimurro said, noting that when she first started working at Abilis, there were nine residential facilities available to clients. Now there are 37.

Theo Brown has been a client of Abilis' for several years, and works in the greenhouse located at the Greenwich headquarters. He was able to get a second job at Finocchio Brothers in Stamford, where he also lives at a residential facility.

"When I came here I didn't have anybody. I go from that to having a whole second family

and life," Brown said. Serving as a family to people is something Montimurro cherishes.

"We want to make sure that families know that we're here to take care of their children, and



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First Bank of Greenwich (FBOG) President & CEO Frank Gaudio; Abilis President & CEO Amy Montimurro; Abilis client Theo Brown; FBOG Vice President and Retail Banking Manager Emily Newcamp and Chief Lending Officer Evan Corsello, at Abilis' greenhouse.

we're going to support them. But, many people don't have families. We're their family. We advocate for them and care for them until the very end," she said.

Montimurro added that she loves seeing the success of those involved with Abilis.

"I like to see them enjoying a meaningful life when they're a part of their community, and they can actively participate in the community where they live," she added. "My measurement of success is when they don't want to go home anymore. They call Abilis their home."

Because of their standing in the community and their impact on so many people, a relationship with the First Bank of Greenwich made perfect sense.

"I'm very passionate about what they do here, and I believe

in what they're doing," said FBOG President and CEO, Frank Gaudio.

Montimurro, who became the President and CEO of Abilis last September, said she's excited to work with FBOG in the future.

"I'm just getting to know Frank, and he has interesting and wonderful ideas to help the organization," she said. "I look forward to that relationship and partnership."

Gaudio said the bank will host an art show, featuring artwork from Abilis clients, in the summer.

"It's a blessing to have them do the work they do. This is the kind of organization the bank should be involved with," Gaudio added.