

# MARGARET KELLY WINS PEER LEADERSHIP AWARD FOR HER DEDICATED WORK AT NEWBURYPORT RESIDENCE

Written by [\[Name\]](#) on [January 20, 2017 \(Friday, January 20th, 2017, 3:21 pm\)](#) |

Vinfen Residential Counselor Margaret Kelly is the recipient of the 6th Annual Peer Leadership Award. The award recognizes the outstanding achievements of a Vinfen staff person who has made significant contributions to the peer movement and to Vinfen. Margaret received the award on December 20 at the Newburyport residence, where she has worked for over ten years.

Vinfen Senior Vice President of Psychiatric Rehabilitation Susan Abbott, Director of Recovery Services Lisa Berger, and Recovery Coordinator and 2014 Peer Leadership Award recipient Jodi Johnson presented the honor during the house's holiday party. Margaret had no idea she was receiving the award and was completely surprised. "I was shocked and pleased," she said.

Health and Wellness Coordinator Haley Kuver nominated Margaret. "She's an unbelievable, valuable person for the people she serves and staff at the Newburyport. I enjoyed every minute I worked with her, and I learned a lot from her. As a peer, she has helped bridge the gap between the persons served and the staff members. Through her own lived experience, Margaret provides them an outlet and understanding that they would possibly not have otherwise," said Haley.

Through the years, Margaret has supported her residents to be more comfortable with socializing, developing social connections, and being active within their home and community. Margaret worked at Newburyport before Vinfen acquired the home. When she first started, the residents barely spoke to anyone and stayed in a lot. Once Vinfen took

over managing the home, Margaret decided it was time for the residents to explore their own neighborhood. She realized this when a resident asked her about her favorite memory. It was seeing the stars at the beach. "They hadn't seen the stars in so long," thought Margaret.

"Living in a group home, these men and women were at risk of being isolated. Margaret has found free, fun activities in the community that help show them there is life outside of the group home," said Haley.

"We started taking them out in the community," said Margaret. "We took them to the beach, bowling, plays, restaurants, and shopping trips for residents to buy items." The residents were at first hesitant to leave, but decided to go once Margaret and other staff offered a stop for coffee. It took a long time, but Margaret still remembers the day the residents created a new favorite memory for her: When they got out of the van without the promise of coffee and walked to the beach to hear the music being played. And days before, the residents kept asking staff if they were going to the beach. "Just to watch them light up and see them turnaround from people who didn't even look at you. Now, they ask about each other, and they care about the staff. They ask when they are going to see you next," said Margaret.

The residents have remained active. One now takes the bus by himself and goes out to dinner. Another one is really excited to be volunteering at a local playhouse. Residents often go food shopping with staff and others will join in to cook the meals. They also do chores around the house.

The residents have also become more expressive in their wants and needs. "We have helped create people who speak up for themselves. They ask questions. We include them in staff meetings," says Margaret. This is no small part due to her role as a Human Rights Officer. Margaret will remind residents their rights and to be respectful of others' rights as well. She encourages residents to attend the monthly human rights meetings.

"Margaret fights for the people who live in the group home. She fights for their basic human rights, both as a peer and as the human rights officer," said Haley.

Working at Vinfen has helped not only the people she serves, but for herself. "Working at Vinfen was the best thing I could have done for myself," said Margaret. "I learned coping skills by teaching them to others. These skills have helped me as well as how I have helped my family. I just love my job!"

"I like to thank everyone who thought I was worthy of this honor. I hope I can live up to it," said Margaret. But as Lisa noted, "Margaret exemplifies every characteristic an exemplary Peer Leader should represent and this is why she is this year's recipient of the Peer Leadership Award."

Please join everyone at Vinfen in congratulating Margaret on her wonderful accomplishment!

Posted in , | Tagged ,

---

## 4 RESPONSES



**Kelly Lindsey, Clinical Program Director Newburyport** January 23, 2017

(Monday, January 23rd, 2017, 2:14 am) at 2:14 am (Monday, January 23rd, 2017, 2:14 am) |

I am so proud to have Margaret on the team at Newburyport. She exemplifies what it is to be hard working and compassionate.

---



**Samuel Adebayo** January 31, 2017 (Tuesday, January 31st, 2017, 2:59 am) at

2:59 am (Tuesday, January 31st, 2017, 2:59 am) |

Congratulations Margaret

---



**lily** January 31, 2017 (Tuesday, January 31st, 2017, 6:49 pm) at 6:49 pm

(Tuesday, January 31st, 2017, 6:49 pm) |

congratulations Margaret.

---



**edrisa** February 2, 2017 (Thursday, February 2nd, 2017, 8:56 pm) at 8:56 pm

(Thursday, February 2nd, 2017, 8:56 pm) |

congrats Margaret.

---

Comments are closed.

---

---

## ARCHIVES

Copyright © 2017 Vinfen | 950 Cambridge Street | Cambridge, MA | 02141

Toll-free phone: **(877) 284-6336** | Local phone (617) 441-1800 | Fax: (617) 441-1858 | TTY/TDD: (617) 225-2000