



# BIG TREE FARM DESIGN & OWNER HISTORY

## 1917—Groundbreaking on the Brookville estate

### Walker & Gillette Architectural Firm

Walker & Gillette was based in New York City; the partnership of A. Stewart Walker and Leon N. Gillette was active from 1906 through 1945.

**Design Work:** Until about 1920, most of Walker & Gillette's work amounted to two kinds of society residences: New York City townhouses and suburban mansions. Their 16 houses on Long Island were designed for clients like Irving Brokaw, Ralph Pulitzer, Charles Lane Poor and William R. Coe.

### Olmsted Brothers Landscaping Architectural Firm

The Olmsted Brothers company was an influential landscape architectural firm in the United States, established in 1898 by brothers John Charles Olmsted and Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., sons of the eminent landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted.

**Design Work:** The Olmsted Brothers completed numerous high-profile projects, many of which remain popular to this day, including park systems, universities, exposition grounds, libraries, hospitals, residential neighborhoods and state capitols.

### Lord & Burnham

Lord & Burnham was a noted American boiler and greenhouse manufacturer, and builders of major public conservatories in the United States.

**Design Work:** Major Lord & Burnham conservatories include New York Botanical Garden, United States Botanic Garden and Phipps Conservatory & Botanical Garden.



**James Norman Hill** [1870-1932] is the eldest son of James J. Hill, and, like his father, was a railroad man. He was born in Saint Paul, Minnesota and graduated from Yale in 1893. He began his business career as a clerk in a railroad office. He held various subordinate positions, but in 1905 was made Vice President of the Northern Pacific Railroad Company. He was Vice President of the Minnesota & International Railroad, a Director of the Burlington and Erie Railroads, of the Northern Securities Company, Pacific Coast Company, a Vice President of the Northern Express Company, and a Trustee of the New York Trust Company.



**Marguerite Sawyer Hill Davis** [1879-1948] was one of four children of Arthur Wilkinson Sawyer, part owner of E.R. Mudge, Sawyer & Company, one of the United States most important dry goods commission houses of the time. Marguerite attended Miss Claggett's School as a younger girl and then traveled throughout Europe with a governess. Prior to her marriage to James J. Hill, Marguerite was married to Dr. Clarence Fahnestock in 1906. This marriage ended in divorce and is said to be the reason she was never received at the James N. Hill house in Saint Paul, Minnesota. Marguerite was one of the wealthiest women in the United States in the mid-1900's. She was an art patron, socialite and heiress to a railroad fortune.

## AUGUST 23, 1912

### James J. Hill marries Mrs. Fahnestock in London.

#### JAMES N. HILL TAKES BRIDE.

Son of James J. Hill Marries Mrs. Fahnestock in London.  
Special Cable to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

LONDON, Aug. 23.—The marriage took place to-day of James Norman Hill, eldest son of James J. Hill, the railroad magnate, of St. Paul, and Mrs. Marguerite Sawyer Fahnestock, daughter of Arthur W. Sawyer of Boston. A civil ceremony took place at the Registry Office, and later the pair were married in the Chapel Royal, Savoy. The bride wore a traveling costume and a large picture hat, and was attended by Mrs. Swinburne, wife of Admiral Swinburne.

The proposed wedding had been kept a secret and only about a half dozen persons were present. The participants arrived in London only a few days ago from St. Moritz.

After a luncheon served at Claridge's, at which Mr. and Mrs. De Lan- ce-y Nicoll were present, besides those at the ceremony, the bridal couple went to Margate, and will later take an auto- mobile tour along the south coast.

James Norman Hill is the eldest son of James J. Hill, and, like his father, is a railroad man. He was born in St. Paul and is 42 years old. Mr. Hill was gradu- ated from Yale in 1893, and began his business career as a clerk in a railroad office. He held various subordinate posi- tions, but in 1905 was made Vice Presi- dent of the Northern Pacific Railroad Company. He is Vice President of the Minnesota & International Railroad, a Director of the Burlington and Erie Rail- roads, of the Northern Securities Com- pany, Pacific Coast Company, a Vice President of the Northern Express Com- pany, and a Trustee of the New York Trust Company and the Washington and Columbia Trust Company. Mr. Hill lives at 8 East Sixty-fifth Street, this city.

The New York Times

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## BIG TREE FARMS ARRIVES ON THE GOLD COAST OF LONG ISLAND

### 1918-Construction is completed, and Big Tree Farms arrives on the Gold Coast of Long Island.

James N. Hill and his wife, Marguerite, were prominent horticulturists. On their 230-acre estate called Big Tree Farm, they bred Holstein and Ayrshire cattle, grew 769 species of trees and had three large duck ponds. The Hill's interests included arboriculture, gardening, horses, tennis, shooting and golf. The Hill's home was considered one of the East Coast's showplaces and was the site of lavish events.



The name of the estate, 'Big Tree Farm,' derives from a massive sycamore tree that sits on the estate.



### 1954- Big Tree Farm is robbed!

Marguerite Sawyer Hill's large jewelry collection, which included diamonds, emeralds, rubies, sapphires and heirloom pieces, was robbed. Her jewelry was valued at over \$359,000 (equivalent to over \$5.2 million in 2018).

## AHRC NASSAU HISTORY

In the late 1940's there was no place outside of a state institution for people with developmental disabilities. Following the end of WWII, parents began coming together to create opportunities for their children with developmental disabilities beyond the walls of the institution.

The AHRC Nassau chapter was founded by such parents – parents who believed that their children "could be helped" if given the opportunity and support. They established an active board of directors to guide the fledgling organization, a network of local volunteer auxiliaries, and a staff of caring professionals to meet the individual needs of each child and adult served in AHRC's programs. The strength of the board, volunteers and staff has been the enduring hallmark of AHRC's growth and development.



### 1950- New Hyde Park School opens

1950- First summer program begins in New Castle

1918

The Hill's were on the Social Register, a semi-annual publication in the United States that indexes the members of high society. Inclusion in the Social Register was once so important for members of Society

Higgins M.W. Chas H. (Claire T. Van Lennep) Southampton L I  
 Higgins W. Thomas Elmhurst  
 Higgins M.W. Jas Crane (Elinor Sawyer) Bridgehampton  
 Higgins W. Thomas 2d L I  
 Higgins W. Wm Valentine Ardsley-on-Hudson N Y  
 Hildrup M.W. Wm T. Jr (Florence Houck) Harrisburg Pa  
 Hildt M.W. Howard (Lillias Johnston)  
 Hildt M.W. Thomas (Dorothy Ford)  
 Hill M.W. Eben C. (Lucy L. Atwater) Sandisfield Mass  
 Hill M.W. Ebenezer (Hacker-Mildred O. Caldwell)  
 Hill M.W. Edw Bruce (E. Currie Tuck) Pilot Island S Norwalk Ct  
 Hill M.W. Amelia L. Yulecote  
 Hill M.W. Gilbert G. Tuck-USA AEP Mountain Lakes  
 Hill M.W. Geo H. B. (Margaret E. Mitchell) Kilbowie Oban Scotland  
 Hill M.W. Jas Norman (Fahnestock-Marguerite Sawyer)  
 Hill M.W. James S. (Jamie Duncan) Married at Transfiguration  
 Marsh W. Rolph Jun 12

Summer Social Register 1919 New York

1920



1920-The 19th amendment to the US Constitution granted American women the right to vote, a right known as women's suffrage, and was ratified on August 18, 1920.

### 1932- James Norman Hill passes away

1935



1935- The Social Security Act of 1935 became US Law; it provided federally funded old-age benefits and funds to states for assistance to people who are blind and children with disabilities.

The Act also extended existing vocational rehabilitation programs.

1942

1948



### 1948- Marguerite Sawyer Hill Davis passes away

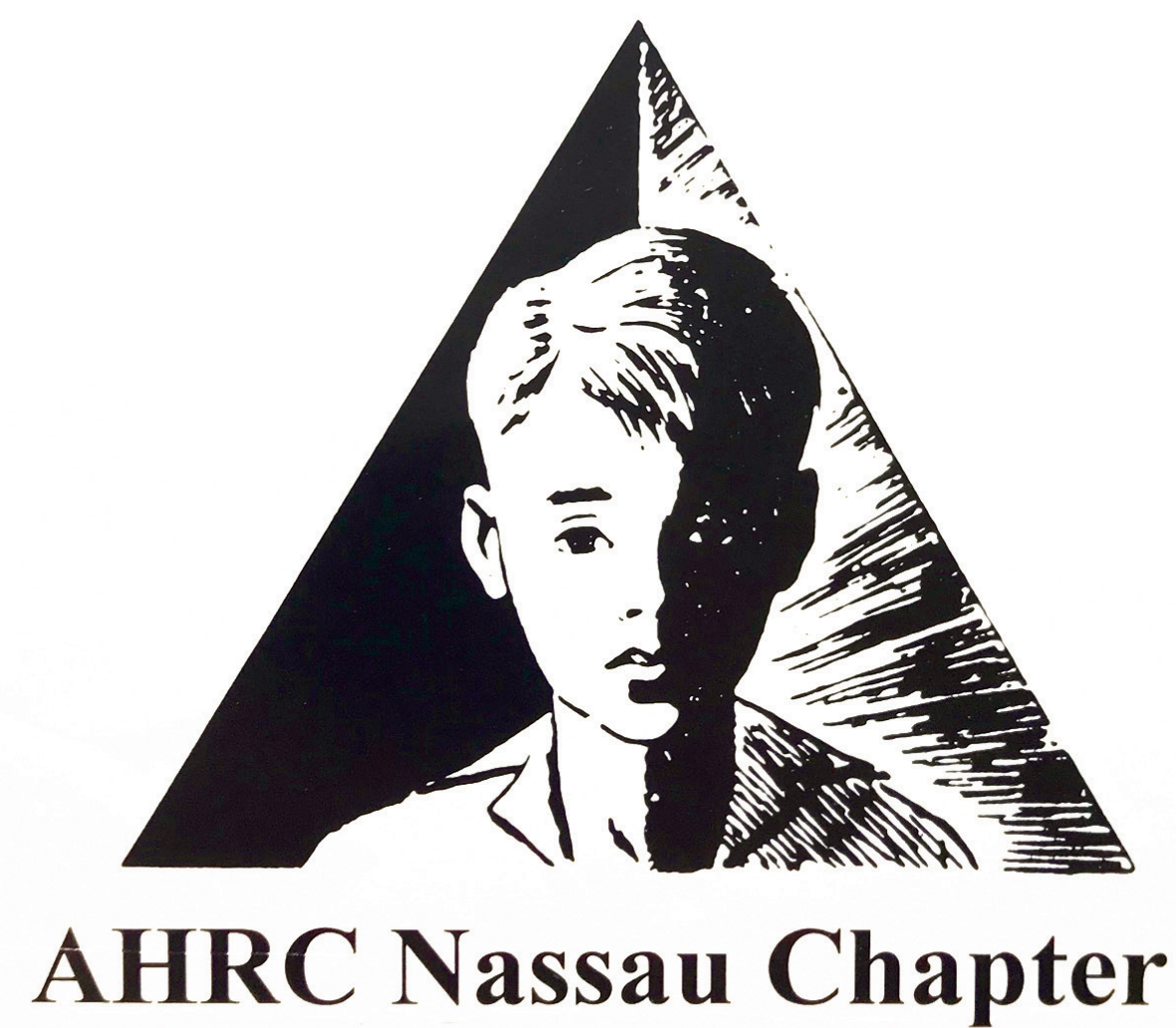
1949

### 1949- First organizational meeting for Long Island takes place at the Carle Place Fire House

on October 25th 1949. The Long Island Chapter of was voted into existence. Subsequently, the Long Island Chapter split into the Nassau County Chapter and the Suffolk Chapter.



1950



1954- First class for children diagnosed with profound I/DD is established in New Hyde Park



**1958-AHRC Nassau Purchase**  
 "Big Tree Farm" was purchased in 1958 for \$175,000 and initially renovated through the hard work and efforts of the then AHRC Nassau auxiliaries, community volunteers and board of directors.



1961- Vocational program expands and moves to larger quarters in Hempstead



1961- Helen Kaplan, AHRC Nassau Executive Director

1966- NY State Hostel Program initiated

Hostels were homes in the community with "house parents" who lived with the residents. This type of living arrangement had been promoted for many years but it was not until 1966 when legislation provided funds for construction that the program began to take shape. The first hostel, a Manhattan townhouse, opened in 1968.



1967- Silver School Completed

In September of 1967. The school – a first of its kind on Long Island – provided children, who were prohibited from attending public schools because of their disability, a place where they could learn and grow.

The 34-room modern school continues to educate children with developmental disabilities from across Long Island. The building was named in recognition of the generosity and leadership of Mr. and Mrs. Louis Silver.



1954

1956

1958

1960

1961

1966

1967

1968



1956- First sheltered workshop and vocational program starts over a laundry in Hempstead

AHRC Nassau Leads effort to pass legislation for permissive education

1958- AHRC Nassau establishes a medical clinic



1958- PL85-926, which provided federal support for training teachers for children with mental retardation, became law in the U.S.



Listening and Learning. Children attending one of Brookville's pre-school classes pay close attention to teacher, Mrs. Murray Rosenberg, left, and volunteer Mrs. Harold Clarkson, Gina Rivoli, and Mrs. Sidney Stern, Boyles Section, National Council of Jewish Women. Mrs. Clarkson and Mrs. Stern are among many volunteers who give weekly service working with the children.

1960- Occupational day care program established in Brookville

AHRC Nassau is a prime mover in passing legislation to mandate education for children with developmental disabilities



1960- Dr. Edmund C. Neuhaus, AHRC Nassau Executive Director



1966- Silver School Groundbreaking

AHRC Nassau breaks ground on the Children's Educational Center located on its Brookville campus. Funding to build the school, the first of its kind on Long Island for children with special needs, was made possible through federal, state and private funding.





**1970- AHRC Nassau Hempstead Hostel opens; the first hostel in Nassau County.**



**1973- The Rehabilitation Act of 1973** prohibits discrimination based on disability in programs conducted by federal agencies, in programs receiving federal financial assistance, in federal employment, and in employment practices of federal contractors. It also requires the federal government to make sure that electronic and technology information is accessible to people with disabilities. A new section of the Rehabilitation Act requires medical diagnostic equipment to be accessible to people with disabilities.

Under the Rehabilitation Act, the term "disabled individual" means "any person who (1) has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more of such person's major life activities, (2) has a record of such impairment, or (3) is regarded as having such an impairment."



**1975- The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)**

(formerly the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975) governs how states and public agencies provide early intervention, special education and related services to more than 6.5 million eligible infants, toddlers, children and youth with disabilities. The law requires public schools to make available to all eligible children with disabilities a "free appropriate public education" (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment appropriate to their individual needs.

IDEA requires public school systems to develop appropriate Individualized Education Programs (IEP's) for each child. The specific special education and related services outlined in each IEP reflect the individualized needs of each student. IDEA also mandates that particular procedures be followed in the development of the IEP. Each student's IEP must be developed by a team of knowledgeable persons and must be at least reviewed annually. The law has been reauthorized many times and has expanded the scope of services to include services for infants and toddlers.



**1979- AHRC Nassau Valley Stream Hostel opens**

**1980- Hostel program** renamed community residences continues expansion and by 1989 has opened a total of 20 residences and three supportive living apartments.



**1980- Sheltered workshop and vocational training center** opens in Plainview. Including the Freeport Center, vocational centers encompass over 120,000 square feet.

1970

1972

1973

1974

1975

1977

1978

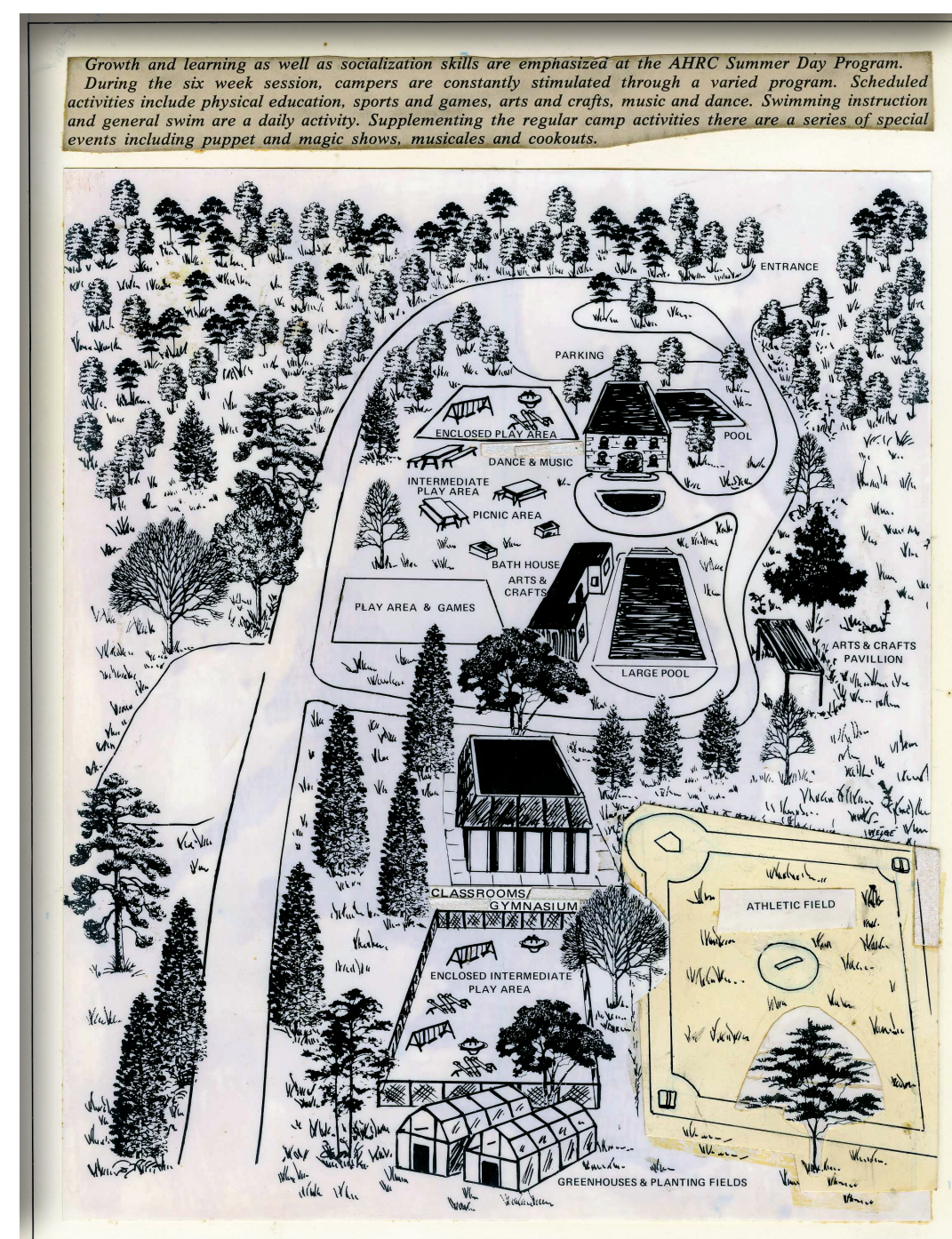
1979

1980

1981



**1977- Brookville Campus summer camp**



**1978- "The Padavan Law" Mental Hygiene Law**

MHY § 41.34 is enacted. In New York State, the Padavan Law takes precedence over local zoning authority in the siting of licensed community residential facilities for people with mental disabilities. The purpose of the law is to promote and encourage the placement of people with mental disabilities in community settings to provide the "least restrictive environment that is consistent with" the needs of such individuals. This law paved the way for group home development across NY State.



**1972-Geraldo Rivera releases the exposé, "Willowbrook: The Last Great Disgrace"**

Geraldo Rivera releases the exposé, "Willowbrook: The Last Great Disgrace" on the state-supported institution for children with disabilities in Staten Island. The documentary provoked public outrage and served as the impetus for accelerating the pace of community placements for people with developmental disabilities, expanding community services, increasing the quality and availability of day programs, and establishing the right of children with disabilities to a public education.

**1974 - Camp Loyaltown opens for children and adults with developmental disabilities in Hunter, NY**





1984- Day Treatment Center established in Brookville and named in honor of the Cissy Birnbaum Five Towns Auxiliary



1986- Sam A. LaMagna, Ed. D, AHRC Nassau Executive Director



1988- Michael Mascari, AHRC Nassau Executive Director

1988- An Intermediate Care Facility (ICF) is constructed in Plainview and named in honor of longtime founding member and executive director, Helen Kaplan



1990- The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

is a civil rights law that prohibits discrimination based on disability. It guarantees equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities in public accommodations, employment, transportation, state and local government services, and telecommunications.

This landmark law greatly expanded the scope of protections and remains the greatest legislative victory for people with disabilities. The definition of disability under the ADA was expanded by the ADA Amendments Act of 2008 to: (A) a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities of an individual; (B) a record of such an impairment; or (C) being regarded as having such an impairment.

1984

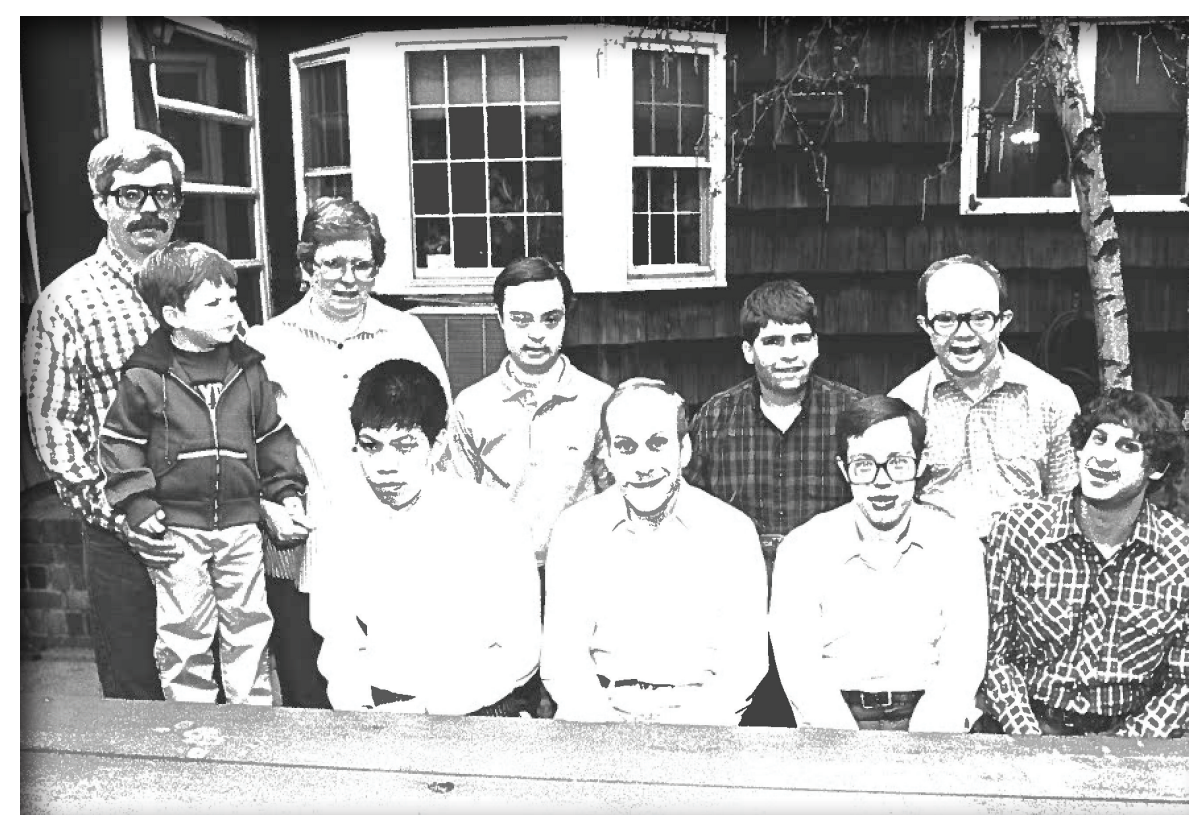
1985

1986

1988

1989

1990



1985 - Residents of the Uniondale Residence

1985- Mrs. Roberta L. Marks, AHRC Nassau Executive Director



AHRC Nassau Presidents Council

1989- Respite program for families is expanded along with a Saturday recreation program



1990- Six additional Community Residences are opened as the program continues to expand





**1991- New York State Governor Pataki announces five-year expansion plan**  
to double community-based residences for people with developmental disabilities.



**1995- AHRC Day Habilitation participants begin**  
to volunteer in the community. Horticultural program expands to larger quarters at Greenhouse.

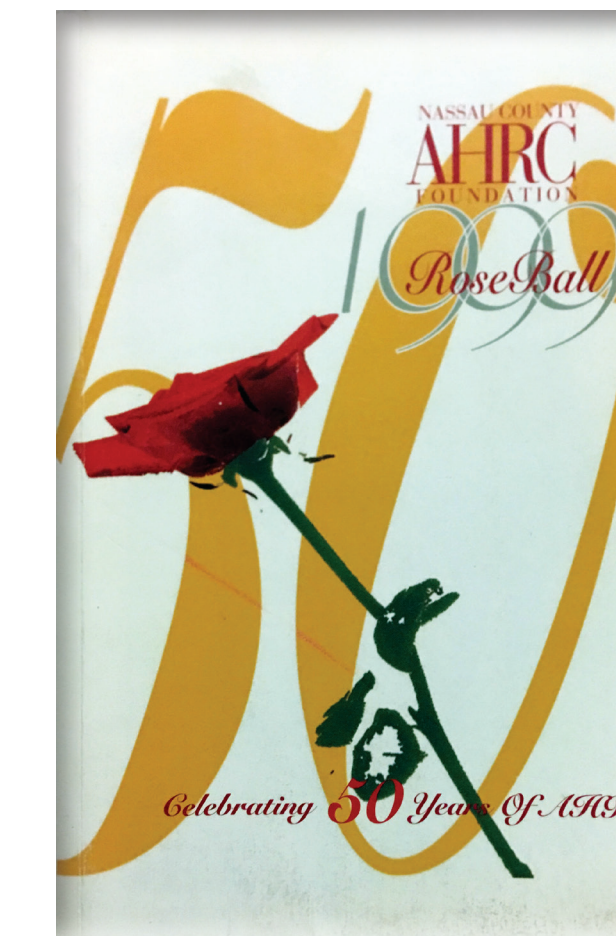
Expansion continues for residential services as the program serves 450 people.

**1997- Day habilitation expands** in Carle Place and Sea Cliff supported employment programs continue to grow, providing new community-based opportunities.



**1998- Lifestyles program relocated** to small sites in Nassau communities. Residential services continue to expand.

The Next Thrift Shop opens in Carle Place.



**1999- AHRC Nassau celebrates 50 years of "Fulfilling the Promise"** to children and adults with intellectual and other developmental disabilities.

Expansion of Community Living Services and Community Volunteer Programs continue.



**2000- AHRC makes great progress** in expansion of Community Living Program.

All Day Habilitation Programs now located in community inclusive hubsites.

1991

1992

1993

1994

1995

1996

1997

1998

1999

2000

**1992- Three new community residences are opened under Medicaid Waiver program.**  
A new day habilitation program is opened in East Hills.



**1994- Nassau County AHRC Foundation, Inc. is established.**

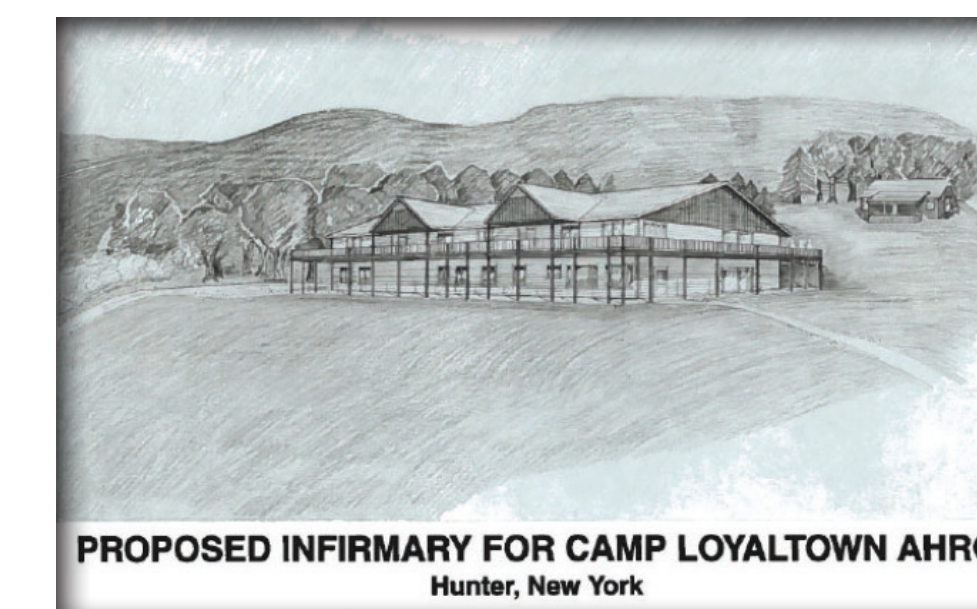
**1994- Early Intervention program begins** at the Silver School.

The Article 16 Clinic opens and residential services continue to expand.

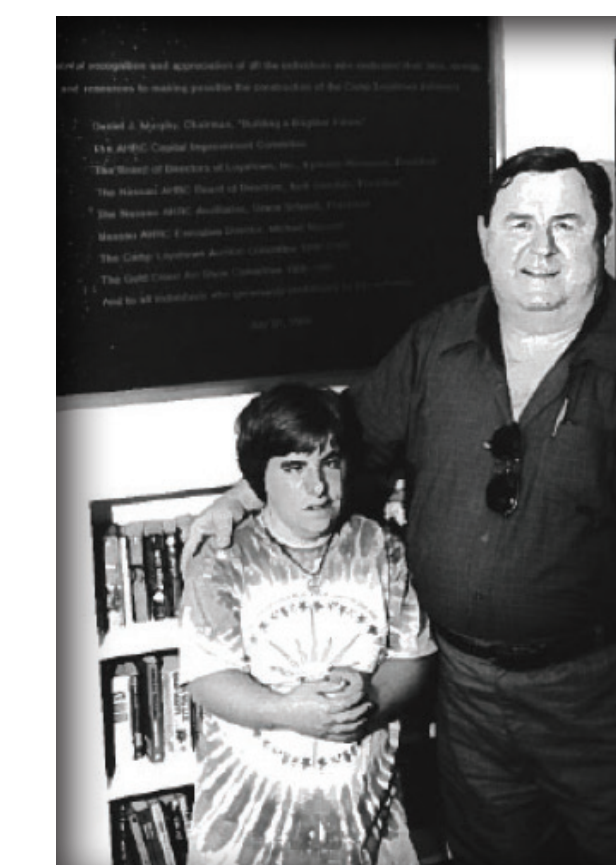
**1996- AHRC's Early Intervention Services.**  
Article 16 clinic and day habilitation program continue to expand.

Residential services opens homes in Seaford, North Bellmore, and apartments in Levittown and Jericho.

AHRC opens KISS sensory garden in Brookville.



**1999 - New Infirmary opens at Camp Loyaltown** through parent-led fundraising efforts



2001 2002 2003 2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 2009 2010

2001 - Integrated Pre-School classes expand in the Children's Educational Center

2003- AHRC's Autism Program at the Children's Education Center in Brookville opens a new site in Sea Cliff. A partnership is formed with SUNY-Old Westbury to expand inclusive early childhood program.

A community hubsite program for seniors opens in Glen Cove.

Work begins on an Article 28 Clinic to be located on the Brookville campus.



2005- The Article 28 Clinic is named The Pearl & Jack Ain Advantage Care Diagnostic and Treatment in honor of the generosity and leadership of Jack Ain, and his wife, Pearl.

Two more residences open in Glen Cove and East Meadow. In addition, two more hubsites open in East Meadow and Roslyn.

The Board voted to officially change the agency name to AHRC Nassau - removing the "r" word from its legal name.



AHRC Nassau 2009

2006- Four new residences open in Westbury, Jericho, East Meadow and Plainview.

In addition, three new community hubsites open.

2008- Day Treatment at Brookville is relocated to smaller, community-based sites. The program is expanded by three new hub-sites that open in Lynbrook, Oceanside and Freeport.

The residential program continues to expand with a focus on the needs of aging residents.

The Leeds Child Development Center in Manhasset is acquired by AHRC. The Leeds Program becomes part of the Marcus Avenue Program, which is later renamed the Brookville Center for Children's Services.



2009- AHRC Nassau celebrates 60 years of fulfilling the promise.

The Fay J. Lindner Center for Autism, an affiliate of the North Shore-LIJ Health System, joins AHRC's Brookville campus to offer specialized diagnostic and treatment services for people diagnosed with autism. AHRC's children's programs expand to serve nearly 1,000 children with intellectual and developmental disabilities, becoming known as Brookville Center for Children's Services.

Four residential homes for children diagnosed with ASD open in Lido Beach and Glen Cove.

Cissy Birnbaum building is opened as a school for 72 children diagnosed with autism.

2002- Community Living Services continues expansion and opens a house for people with developmental disabilities and onset of Alzheimer's disease.

Day Habilitation Program has 13 hubsites.

2004- AHRC Nassau County Chapter is certified as a COMPASS Agency by the New York State Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) Division of Quality Assurance.

2004- AHRC forms partnership with North Shore-LIJ toward expanding services to children with I/DD and their families.

The program, known as the Marcus Avenue Early Childhood Developmental Program, which includes sites in New Hyde Park and SUNY Old Westbury.

Two Lifestyles and Next Step hubsites open in Glen Head and Farmingdale.

Three more residences open in Roslyn Estates, Seaford and Glen Cove.

2010- Two new homes open in Freeport and Baldwin. A hubsite in East Meadow opens and begins supporting 40 men and women.

AHRC Nassau begins offering innovative IT asset disposition solutions to businesses that are concerned with electric waste. This program combines assets recovery and recycling services while providing meaningful employment for people working at the Freeport Vocational Training Center.



2010 - All programs exclusively supporting children under the age of 21, including the Children's Educational Center in Brookville, are combined under the Marcus Avenue Early Childhood Developmental Program umbrella.

The organization is renamed, Brookville Center for Children's Services.





**2012- Partners Health Plan (PHP) and its parent (Partners Healthcare Solutions, Inc., (PHSI))** is established by the Nassau County AHRC Foundation. Partners Health Plan is the not-for-profit managed care organization dedicated to the needs of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.



**2015- Advantage Care Diagnostic & Treatment Center becomes** an independent, Federally Qualified Health Care Center (FQHC) and opens a second location in Freeport. The Freeport Health Center is dedicated in honor of Frank & Margaret Riva, parents of three children with I/DD.



**2015- AHRC Foundation acquires the property located at 211 Wheatley Road**, which was part of the original 1958 purchase, but sold off in intervening years. The property expects to offer innovative day programming for adults with I/DD.



**2016- Stanford J. Perry, AHRC Nassau Executive Director**



CQL | The Council on Quality and Leadership

**2018- AHRC Nassau and Citizens Options Unlimited** achieve Person-Centered Excellence Accreditation *With Distinction* from CQL | The Council on Quality & Leadership, the organizations highest designation for quality supports.

**2018- One Stop Gift Shop opens in Hicksville**



**2018- AHRC Nassau celebrates 100 years of the AHRC Mansion, formerly known as "Big Tree Farm"**

2011

**2011- AHRC Nassau completed** its four-year restructuring process to better serve the needs of people with developmental disabilities and their families. AHRC Nassau is poised to meet the challenges of future decades, as is the AHRC Foundation and its affiliates, Brookville Center for Children's Services, Citizens Options Unlimited, and the Pearl & Jack Ain Advantage Care Diagnostic & Treatment Center.

AHRC'S eWorks program contracts with Nassau County to recycle 100,000 pounds of ewaste from their administrative offices.

2012

2014



**2014- AHRC Nassau and Citizens Options Unlimited achieve Person-Centered Excellence Accreditation** by CQL | The Council on Quality & Leadership. At the time of its awarding, AHRC Nassau is the largest and most complex organization to receive this accreditation.

**2014- Partners Health Plan (PHP) expands** to include four metro chapters of NYSARC Inc. It represents New York State's first managed care plan to exclusively dedicated to people with I/DD.

**2014- E-Works Electronics Services, Inc.,** is separated from AHRC Nassau and incorporated as non-for-profit company providing responsible recycling and sustainable employment for people supported by AHRC Nassau and AHRC Suffolk.

2015

2016



**2016 - PHP was approved by the Federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS)** to operate in nine New York counties (i.e., the five boroughs of New York City, Nassau, Rockland, Suffolk, and Westchester Counties). Known as "PHP Care Complete FIDA-IDD Plan," the plan will provide all Medicare- and Medicaid-covered services, including OP-WDD services to eligible individuals who elect to participate.

2018

2019

**2019- AHRC Nassau celebrates 70 years of fulfilling the promise**

