

WHY WE GIVE TO VITA LIVING THROUGH OUR DONOR-ADVISED FUND

BY: GALE MONDRY AND BRUCE COHEN

Our connection to Vita Living began long before the organization itself. Bruce grew up across the street from Stan and Renée Wallace, and his father attended school with Stan. Their daughter, Melanie, became one of Bruce's closest friends—a friendship that continues today.

Bruce also remembers Ricky Wallace as a young boy who was always ready with a hug. Watching Stan and Renée navigate the challenges of raising Ricky, who had intellectual and developmental disabilities, left a lasting impression. When they realized Ricky needed a level of care beyond what they could provide at home, they turned that deeply personal experience into a mission. They founded Vita Living to create loving homes and compassionate support for Ricky and others like him—a legacy that continues to change lives every day.

We've had many meaningful experiences with Vita Living over the years. Attending the luncheon honoring Renée's 90th birthday was especially moving, and we also fondly remember visiting Vita Living's gift shop, where clients proudly sold handcrafted pottery. Those moments reminded us of the joy, creativity, and dignity that Vita Living helps foster.

Supporting Vita Living through our donor-advised fund has made giving incredibly easy. Our fund, administered through the Jewish Community Federation of San Francisco, allows us to recommend a charitable grant in just a few clicks. It's simple, convenient, and an effective way to support organizations that reflect our values.

If you already have a donor-advised fund, we encourage you to consider recommending a grant to Vita Living. It's one of the easiest ways to make a meaningful impact.

When we support Vita Living, we know we're investing in an organization built on compassion, dedicated to helping people with intellectual and developmental disabilities live safe, meaningful, and fulfilling lives. We hope you'll join us in making a difference through your donor-advised fund.

HERE ARE JUST A FEW WAYS YOUR DAF GIFT CAN HELP VITA LIVING:

♥ \$10,000 — A YEAR AT THE TABLE

Nourish an entire Vita Living group home for a full year, providing not just meals, but comfort, routine, and the simple joy of gathering together each day.

♥ \$5,000 — HOLIDAY MAGIC FOR 40 HEARTS

Become the reason the holidays shine for 40 clients with no family support—gifts, surprises, and the feeling of being seen, celebrated, and cherished.

♥ \$1,000 — A MONTH OF MEALS & MEMORIES

Keep a group home's kitchen full for a month, fueling daily life, connection, and the moments that happen around the table.

♥ \$500 — MILES OF OPPORTUNITY

Power a month of transportation—getting clients to day programs, activities, and community experiences that bring independence and joy.

♥ \$350 — STRENGTH, CONFIDENCE & JOY

Fund a month of inclusive fitness classes with Bloom Fitness—helping clients build strength, confidence, and a sense of accomplishment in a supportive community.

♥ \$100 — MOMENTS THAT MATTER

Support meaningful experiences—whether it's art supplies that spark creativity, a shared outing, or a special holiday meal that brings everyone together.

2ND ANNUAL SEAFOOD BOIL SERVES UP FUN AND PHILANTHROPY



Through the generous partnership of The Post Beer & Wine Garden, Vita Living welcomed guests to the second annual Seafood Boil on Saturday, March 28, 2026.

The Post once again welcomed Vita Living and more than 150 guests for this special community fundraiser, bringing the community together for an afternoon of delicious food, lively entertainment, and philanthropy.

Guests enjoyed more than 400 pounds of freshly prepared seafood while immersed in a festive coastal

atmosphere complete with fishing nets, oversized lobsters, crawfish centerpieces, and the energetic sounds of Zydeco music.

Throughout the afternoon, attendees had the opportunity to win exciting raffle prizes, including a dinner for two at The Post, a Turtlebox speaker, and a deluxe Seafood Boil Kit. As the event drew to a close, Event Chair Bryan P. Smith thanked guests, sponsors, volunteers, and supporters for making the day such a success before inviting Alessandra Menn and John Menn, children of Board Member Myrla Menn, to help announce the winners of the live auction. Their enthusiasm and excitement created one of the afternoon's most memorable moments.

Blessed with beautiful spring weather, incredible food, and an overwhelming show of generosity, the 2nd Annual Seafood Boil raised more than \$10,000 to support Vita Living's mission of empowering children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities to lead meaningful, self-directed lives.



GUESTS ENJOYING SEAFOOD BOIL

THE TRANSFORMATIVE POWER OF THE ARTS

This spring, Vita Living clients experienced the extraordinary power of dance and music through two inspiring artistic collaborations that celebrated creativity, connection, and self-expression.

Professional dancers from the Houston Contemporary Dance Company (HCDC) partnered with Vita Living clients for a series of movement workshops that culminated in a moving performance for family, friends, caregivers, and supporters. More than a dance recital, the performance showcased confidence, joy, and the meaningful relationships formed through weeks of collaboration. It was a powerful reminder that dance transcends barriers and creates opportunities for every individual to shine.

At the same time, musicians from Nameless Sound brought the gift of music directly to Vita Living's Total Care clients. Through rhythm, sound, and interactive musical experiences, clients who often have limited opportunities for traditional artistic expression found new ways to engage, connect, and express themselves.

Together, these partnerships demonstrated that the arts are far more than entertainment—they are a powerful vehicle for inclusion, communication, and human connection. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the talented artists of Houston Contemporary Dance Company and Nameless Sound, the dedicated Vita Living staff, caregivers, volunteers, and supporters who made these unforgettable experiences possible, and a special



SHOWCASE PERFORMANCE



PEARLS OF WISDOM 2026

On May 14, 2026, Vita Living welcomed more than 300 supporters to the annual Pearls of Wisdom Gala at River Oaks Country Club for an unforgettable evening of celebration, generosity and community. Dressed in elegant Italian-inspired attire, guests gathered to support Vita Living's mission of providing lifelong care and services to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD), helping raise more than \$240,000 for the organization.

The evening began with a lively cocktail reception where attendees mingled over signature drinks and passed hors d'oeuvres while exploring an exciting silent auction. Guests bid on an impressive collection of experiences and luxury items, including a private dinner experience at Carrabba's Kirby, luxury getaways to Jackson Hole and Colorado's Vail Valley, a VIP Houston Astros experience, two Trophy Club tickets to the 126th U.S. Open Championship, a rare bourbon collection and a tequila tasting paired with a custom suit experience.

As guests moved into the ballroom, they enjoyed a delicious Italian-inspired dinner and an engaging program. Event chairs Myrla Menn and Bryan P. Smith welcomed attendees and introduced a moving video presentation that highlighted the profound impact Vita Living has on individuals and families across Texas.

One of the evening's most meaningful moments came as Vita Living Board Chair Kristen Perrin honored Joseph Cooper, former Chief Executive Officer of Vita Living and now Executive Director of the Vita Living Foundation.



JOSEPH COOPER,
VLF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



EVENT CHAIRS: BRYAN P. SMITH & MYRLA MENN

Cooper received a standing ovation in recognition of his dedicated leadership and lasting contributions to the organization.

The energy in the room continued to build during the live auction, led by Johnny Bravo Holloway, as guests enthusiastically raised their paddles in support of Vita Living's mission. Exclusive experiences and one-of-a-kind packages inspired spirited bidding, turning generosity into an exciting and memorable part of the evening.

The celebration concluded with an exclusive Post-Event Toast hosted by event chairs Myrla Menn and Bryan P. Smith. Guests gathered one final time, raising glasses of champagne to celebrate the evening's success, the incredible generosity of the community and the bright future ahead for Vita Living.



AMEGY BANK GUESTS

CREATIVE CARING: THREE NEW BEGINNINGS

Just weeks before Christmas 2024, Vita Living welcomed three new individuals into our family: Maria, Daniel, and Cindy. Each arrived with unique circumstances, complex needs, and an uncertain future. For many organizations, the challenges may have seemed overwhelming. For Vita Living, it was an opportunity to do what we do best—practice Creative Caring by meeting each person where they are and helping them build the skills, confidence, and support needed to live as independently as possible.

For Maria, Creative Caring meant fostering confidence. With a love for fashion, colorful accessories, and self-expression, her goal has always been greater independence. Through patient coaching from our Direct Support Professionals, Maria has learned practical everyday skills like recognizing currency and managing money during weekly community outings. What once caused anxiety has become an opportunity for success, giving her the confidence to shop independently and make choices that reflect her personality—from her favorite press-on nails to vibrant hair colors.

For Daniel, Creative Caring means helping him age with dignity while remaining active and engaged. Whether dancing with friends, solving puzzles, participating in fitness classes, or welcoming new clients on their first day, Daniel continues to strengthen both his mind and body. His joyful spirit reminds us



MARIA, LEAH, DENISE, CINDY

As time went on, each began to assimilate into their new environment, eventually participating in routines that would become their lifeline.

that independence isn't only about daily living skills—it's also about staying connected, purposeful, and young at heart.

For Cindy, Creative Caring began with simply believing in her potential. After being told her medical needs were too complex elsewhere, Vita Living welcomed her with a personalized plan focused on health, safety, and encouragement. Through carefully tailored physical exercises and the unwavering support of staff, Cindy has steadily improved her mobility and confidence. Every step forward—no matter how small—is celebrated because every step represents progress toward greater independence.

Maria, Daniel, and Cindy each have different goals, different abilities, and different journeys. But they all share one thing in common: they found a place where they are valued for who they are, not defined by the challenges they face.

That is Creative Caring. It means seeing possibilities instead of limitations, creating individualized pathways to independence, and ensuring every person has the opportunity to live a safe, satisfying, and meaningful life. Every day, Vita Living meets people where they are—and helps them discover just how far they can go.

To see Maria, Daniel, and Cindy's inspiring progress firsthand, watch their story on YouTube: [@vitaliving1982 - Creative Caring](#).



MARIA



DANIEL

BOARD MEMBER FEATURE: JEB GALTNEY AND COURTNEY MARSHBURN

For Jeb Galtney and Courtney Marshburn, serving on Vita Living's Board of Directors is much more than volunteer leadership—it's deeply personal. Although they have different fathers, Jeb and Courtney grew up together in the same household, where their older sister, Brittany, profoundly shaped their lives and inspired their commitment to Vita Living's mission.

Brittany was diagnosed with severe cerebral palsy shortly after birth. Nonverbal and requiring lifelong care, she—and their cousin, Linley, who also has a developmental disability—helped shape a childhood centered on love, inclusion, and acceptance.

Growing up, Brittany taught them that communication extends far beyond words. Her expressive personality, contagious laughter, and joyful spirit reminded them that every person has something meaningful to contribute. Those experiences instilled a lifelong belief that individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities should be included, celebrated, and given every opportunity to thrive.



As their parents grew older, Brittany needed more than care at home. She needed a safe place to live, compassionate professional support, meaningful relationships, and opportunities to experience greater independence. Although Brittany's time at Vita Living was brief, it gave their family something invaluable: peace of mind.

"What I appreciate most about Vita Living is the peace of mind it provides families," Jeb says. "Finding someone you trust to care for the person you love most is one of the hardest decisions a family can make."

Courtney agrees. "Vita Living supports the whole family. It gives families confidence that their loved one is not only receiving exceptional care but is truly thriving."

Today, Jeb and Courtney are proud to serve together as Co-Chairs of the Clays for Care Sporting Classic, helping ensure more families have access to the same compassion, support, and sense of belonging that meant so much to their own.

Together, they believe Vita Living offers more than outstanding care—it provides hope for individuals with IDD and peace of mind for the families who love them.

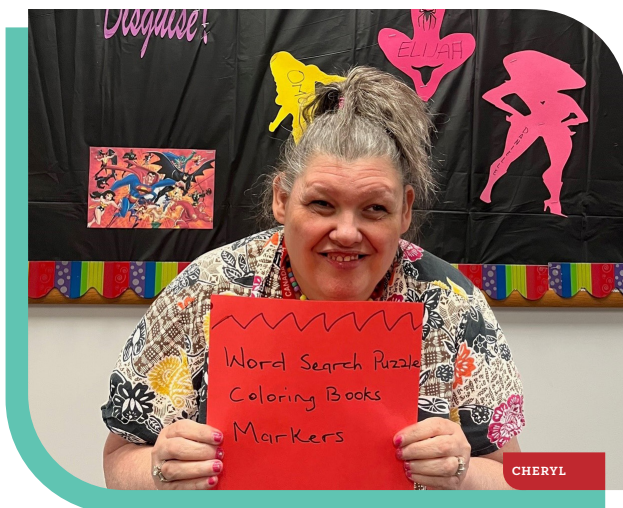
"We never really knew life without someone with disabilities in our family," Courtney says. "It was simply our normal."

Courtney carried those lessons into adulthood by volunteering in her high school's special education classroom during lunch and later at SIRE Therapeutic Horsemanship, where she worked alongside individuals with disabilities. For Jeb, those lessons deepened as their family experienced one of the greatest challenges many families in the IDD community eventually face—planning for a loved one's future.



ADOPT A FRIEND

CLIENT FEATURE: CHERYL



Cheryl loves Christmastime. She enjoys creating various holiday crafts and loves participating in the Annual Christmas Program at Vita Living, but what she loves the most is seeing gifts under the tree. The magical spirit that fills the air is underlined by a kind-hearted individual that provided her with the experience of opening presents on Christmas morning.

Years earlier, before finding a home at Vita Living, there were holidays when Cheryl had very little. Some years there were no presents to open. Other years, there was simply no one to celebrate with.

A simple act of kindness can become a lifelong memory. Help make this holiday season one they will never forget

Now, each December, generous donors from the community answer her holiday wish list. Volunteers spend days shopping, wrapping gifts in colorful paper, and tying each package with bright ribbon. Every present was chosen with care, not just because Cheryl needed a gift, but because she deserved to feel included and loved.

Each holiday season, Vita Living gives our generous community of donors the opportunity to create the same joy and wonder that so many of us cherish from our own holiday memories. For 65% of the children and adults we serve, family is absent or unknown, making our dedicated staff the closest thing they have to loved ones.

This year, you can make the holidays truly magical. By adopting a friend or making a gift of just \$120, you can ensure a Vita Living client receives thoughtful gifts that remind them they are seen, valued, and deeply cared for. Your generosity will do more than provide presents; it will create lasting memories, bring joy to someone's holiday, and show them they are never alone.



READY TO GIVE?

VISIT OUR DONATION PAGE TO EXPLORE ALL YOUR GIVING OPTIONS:
WWW.VITALIVING.ORG/PLANNED-GIVING/

"Within each of us is the power to ensure that every human being has an equal right to a decent life...the greatest power on Earth is the human heart."

Irving Pozmantier
Board Member

SAVE THE **DATE**



TUESDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2026

Greater Houston Sports Club
6700 McHard Rd, Houston, TX 77053



VITALIVING

PEARLS of WISDOM

**Una Notte
Italiana**

THURSDAY, MAY 13, 2027

VITAVISTAS



CREATIVE CARING FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

SUMMER 2026

no. 67

Vita Living provides lifelong services and supports for children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities to promote personal growth toward a safe, satisfying, and meaningful life in the community.

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