

Students Make Holidays Brighter for Children with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

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Categories : [Community Organizations](#), [Holidays](#), [Parents & Kids](#), [Volunteers](#)

Tagged as : [STAR Inc. 2021](#), [Star Inc. Lighting the Way 2021](#), [STAR Inc. Rubino Center](#)

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Each child in the STAR Rubino Family Center, an early intervention pediatric therapy program in Norwalk, will receive a handmade card with a cheerful holiday note along with a book to enjoy during the holidays, thanks to a project spearheaded by Amanda King Heavey and her son, Will.

— *an announcement from* [STAR Inc., Lighting the Way](#)

Heavey, a STAR board member and New Canaan resident, and Will, a student at East School in New Canaan, were joined by students in Grades K-4, the Community Service committee of volunteer parents, the PTC board, and Principal Mrs. Woleck came together to give the holiday gifts.

Along with the gifts to individual children, the project is also providing a specially curated selection of books that address age appropriate understanding of unique abilities, inclusion, diversity, and kindness will be shared at the school and donated to STAR Rubino Family Center lending library.

Through STAR Rubino Family Center, STAR provides a multi-lingual program for children experiencing, or at risk of, developmental delays.

This program, generously supported in part by The New Canaan Community Foundation and The Community Fund of Darien and other generous grants, offers services from birth through age eight.

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The goal of the program is to assist families throughout the preschool years and beyond by strengthening the continuity of therapy and teaching that will benefit families with basic short-term needs as well as those with greater challenges.

Interested families may contact Barbara Fitzpatrick, Director of STAR Rubino Family Center, 120 East Ave., Norwalk. starrubino@starct.org or by calling (203) 855-0634.

For more information, see the [STAR Early Intervention Services video, here](#).

Molly Cioffi, a young adult from New Canaan, exemplifies the potential envisioned for these children.

“STAR has been a part of my life since before I can remember. Starting when I was one month old, STAR therapists helped me learn to do what comes easy to most babies but was hard for me, like sitting up, crawling and walking,” Cioffi said.

“I also learned to talk with the help of my STAR speech therapist. Some days my parents say that the speech therapist did her job TOO well! Well, here I am today, a graduate of New Canaan High School and a student at Lesley College in Cambridge.

“I have many people to thank who have helped me along the way, but I thank STAR for supporting me and my family from the time that I was just a baby up until today, when I am in college and have my first jobs at Ann Taylor and Groove in New Canaan!”

About Star Inc.

[STAR Inc., Lighting the Way](#) is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to serving people impacted by intellectual and developmental disabilities from infants to adults, as well as providing support services to their families.

Entering its 70th year, STAR Inc. was established in 1952. STAR creates opportunities for individuals to live full lives with independence, freedom of choice and personal growth by providing support, services and advocacy.

To be able to serve all income levels, STAR is an approved provider accepting Medicaid, most medical insurances and private pay. STAR offers developmental evaluations, occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech therapy and special education.

Additional services include behavioral supports, assistive technology, translation, and family supports. STAR offers results-driven early intervention services.

Headquartered at 182 Wolfpit Avenue in Norwalk, with an office at 111 Elm Street, New Canaan and 51

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Tokeneke Road in Darien, STAR annually supports over 600 families throughout mid Fairfield County. STAR believes in inclusion and helps to inform and encourage the community to recognize and appreciate the unique talents of all individuals.

We Are Hiring! *Do you know someone great to join our team?*

*Do you know a business needing employees? **We have STAR Participants Seeking Jobs!***