

# Marbridge LIFE

## Christmas Memories

*Residents and staff share their  
favorite holiday memories  
(pg . 8)*

## A Whole New Lifestyle

*How one resident changed her lifestyle  
during the pandemic  
(pg . 14)*

Fall 2021



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## A Letter from the President

From the time that Marbridge was founded in 1953, people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) have experienced health disparities related to things such as a lack of access to high quality medical care, access to qualified medical personnel who have been properly trained to treat our individuals, and a disparaging failure to include those with IDD in public health efforts and other prevention activities. As seen with the amazing individuals who call Marbridge home, these failures are turning around, and those with IDD are not only living longer, but are living incredibly fulfilling lives.

People with IDD have varying ranges of health disparities which can include decreased life expectancy, increased rates of sensory impairment, limited mobility, and other health disorders at a greater rate than those without IDD. Ed and Marge Bridges set out to not only enhance the lives of those who have IDD, like their son Jim, but help every one of the individuals living on campus to thrive in every way. In this edition of LIFE Magazine, we're focusing on Well-Being, which encompasses physical, cognitive, social, spiritual, and emotional aspects.

Every employee on campus contributes to the well-being of each resident on campus. We meet residents where they are in each of the areas of well-being and challenge them to grow and thrive daily. Join us on their journey, support those who are on it, and celebrate each milestone for every resident. We wish you and your family health, prosperity, happiness, and well-being this holiday and all year through.

James Stacey, President

## Resident Success Meet Ben

Ben, a resident at The Village, was one of a small handful of residents that moved to campus in 2020. While moving to somewhere new can take some adjustments, moving to a new place during a pandemic can be overwhelming. Not for Ben though.

"In Ben's specific case, he was not only having to transition to a new community but also had to adjust to a new state," said Will Hoermann, Director of The Village. "Because of his positive attitude and can-do mentality, he handled the change with ease even through all of the changes in COVID protocol along the way."

In the short time Ben has lived at Marbridge, he has stayed active, participates in classes, made friends, and enjoys on- and off-campus activities.

"I love my classes and making friends," Ben shared. "I also love doing activities on-campus and when we go off-campus is fun too. I like when we go to restaurants and the wildflower center. I can't wait until we go bowling."



Above: Ben's 2021 picture day photo.

Below Left: Ben collecting vegetation for his sun catch project.

Below Center: Ben designing his sun catcher in Outdoor Recs class.

Below Right: Ben shares his completed suncatcher with his classmates.



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# Christmas is Back

“Bah Humbug” may not be the best thing to hear during the holiday season but residents are excited to say it as the 2021 Marbridge Christmas Program is none other than A Christmas Carol. Residents have been hard at work rehearsing this year’s program with Paige Brown, Marbridge’s Musical and Spiritual Instructor.

“Rehearsals have been going great,” said Jack, a Ranch resident and one of the stars of the play. “I’m very excited about it and I can’t wait to play Scrooge.”

The rehearsals and preparation for this year’s program will conclude with three limited capacity performances. One performance will also be recorded and viewable online through Marbridge’s YouTube page starting the week of Christmas.

“Marbridge Residents love to perform - whether a recorded presentation or live - they so enjoy and take seriously the opportunity to present their talents,” said Paige. “We know the residents will really ‘bring it home’ the night of the performance.”

You can watch the 2020 Marbridge Christmas Program, featuring two original programs, on the Marbridge YouTube Channel right now. Check back the week of Christmas to see the 2021 performance, just in time for Santa’s big night.



Top: Thomas (left) and Jack (right) rehearse one of the opening scenes from the program.

Bottom: Katie (left) and Jack (right) practice their scenes from the program.

Watch the Marbridge Christmas Programs at:  
**Marbridge.org/YouTube**

# Halloween 2021 was Spooktacular

## Residents and Staff Enjoy a Ghoulish Day of Fun

Halloween 2021 was a spooktacular success for residents across campus. Various Halloween activities were held throughout the week for all three communities.

Residents at The Villa kick-started their Halloween week with special ghoulish games like ghost bowling, smashing piñatas, and showing off their creative costumes.

“I love Halloween,” said Gerald, a Villa resident. “I love activities, trick-or-treating, and getting dressed up.”

The Ranch and The Village residents celebrated Halloween with a huge parade on October 29. Residents modeled their costumes and held a parade around campus to show off their attire to residents at The Villa and to staff.

“I love wearing costumes and seeing everyone in their costumes,” said Nancy, a Ranch resident. “Some are scary and some are fun. I really like Halloween.”

Halloween is a favorite holiday for the residents and kick starts our Holiday Season. It’s also one of the many holidays that staff participate along with the residents to make it extra special.

“It’s great getting to see the residents in their costumes with big smiles on their faces,” said Bob Worden, Communications and Marketing Coordinator. “Being able to share fun days like these with the residents is really special.”



Top: Connally, a Ranch resident, enjoying a party at the Tuite Enrichment Center.

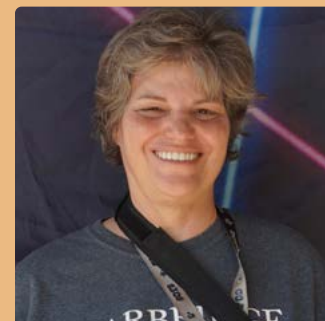
Bottom: Brad, a Village resident, gets ready for the Halloween Parade at Victory Hall.

See the ‘boo’tiful pictures at:  
**Marbridge.org/photos**

# 2021 Picture Day a Blast from the Past

Marbridge residents got a blast from the past for the 2021 picture day. The 80’s inspired laser backdrop was a resident favorite and brought out big smiles from across campus.

See the fun from the  
2021 picture day at:  
**Marbridge.org/photos**





# Hitting Goals

## Marbridge Staff Share How They Help Residents Achieve

Well-being, the theme of this issue of LIFE Magazine, is one of Marbridge’s core values often tied to goals for our residents. Each resident’s goals are created on an individualized basis with physical, emotional, and social goals, among others, being set for each person.

Those goals can range from wellness and increased strength for physical, acclimation, and lifestyle changes for emotional, and social activities and friendships for social. Other goals, like job skills and dietary, also play a big role in a resident’s success in meeting goals.

This article features current resident goals across campus and examples of how members of the Marbridge team help address those goals to help residents learn, experience, and achieve a whole new life.

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**Weight Loss:** A resident voices they have a desire to lose weight and maintain a healthier lifestyle

*How staff help a resident reach that goal:*

“If a resident has weight loss as a goal, we will do our best to get them at least five workouts a week. I take into account a resident’s likes and dislikes in regards to the fitness classes we offer, and build their schedule based on these.

Throughout the semester, a resident’s attendance and motivation levels are monitored in these sessions to determine their level of success. For example, if they were always in attendance and on time for cardio but skipped or were always late for walking, the next semester we would eliminate walking from their schedule and add more cardio to better set them up for positive work towards their goal.”

– *Jennifer Diaz, Victory Hall Manager*



Above: Thomas, a Village resident, and Jennifer Diaz, flex in celebration of Thomas’ 100 pound weight loss.

**Independence:** A resident has expressed interest in gaining more independence in their life.

*How staff help a resident reach that goal:*

“Our overall goal in therapy is to improve resident’s independence and to maintain or improve their quality of life. To support one’s activity participation and quality life gains, we look at it at a more skilled therapeutic level.

Therapy assesses the resident’s strengths and weaknesses, and uses their strengths, combined with our trained and skilled strategies and exercises, to compensate or remediate weaknesses. Residents can then be safe and fulfilled in their life at Marbridge including, but not limited to, the activities Marbridge provides as socialization opportunities. During therapy sessions, we encourage residents to participate in activities and facility programs.”

– *Marbridge Therapy Team*



Above: Pat, a Villa resident, poses for a photo with Tori, an Occupational Therapist on the Marbridge Therapy Team.

**Acclimation:** A resident has moved to campus and needs help adjusting to daily life on campus.

*How staff help a resident reach that goal:*

“At The Villa, we handle each resident’s move in a personal and comforting way. We take the time to get to know each resident and find out what makes them happy or what could make them sad. We like to introduce them to their peers, staff members, and volunteers and get them acquainted with as many people as they feel comfortable with. A new resident is also encouraged to participate in as many activities as possible and help them find ones they enjoy doing.

Staff will also try to make Marbridge feel like home. We make their room feel cozy, comfy, and like it would feel living with their loved ones. They decorate their rooms to show off their personality, which helps other residents and staff get to know each other better. Lastly, the staff will establish daily routines to help residents get into the flow of life at Marbridge.”

– *Miranda Wright, Villa Social Worker*

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**Special Olympics:** A resident wants to join a Special Olympics team.

*How staff help a resident reach that goal:*

“When we do an admissions meeting, I like to ask potential residents what their interests are. That gives me initial ideas of class schedules and activities they may enjoy through Training & Education. After 14 days at Marbridge, a resident’s IPP is created and Training & Education will meet with the resident’s director annually to assess.

If a resident mentions they want to join a Special Olympics team, we make sure we get them added to the corresponding class for their sport. If they want to play basketball then they’ll take our basketball class with Coach Hughie. They’ll also have to establish which sports they want to participate in as the Special Olympics allows an athlete to play in one sport per season and three seasons per year with winter, summer, and fall games.”

– *Jana Kay Green, Director of Training & Education*

**Employment:** A resident has expressed they wish to have a job.

*How staff help a resident reach that goal:*

“If employment is a goal for a resident, and the family supports that goal, we place them in the Job Skills Assessment Class. This class is designed to observe general skills needed in the employment environment. The class does not focus on specific job tasks, but rather the skill set necessary to have successful coworker relations, an understanding of proper etiquette on the job, functional communication, and a ‘tool set’ of conflict resolution, time management, and problem solving.

The class also provides an environment for the employment coordinators to assess and get to know the skills of the residents in the class for job placement purposes. This is the only class at Marbridge that is taken only once. This class is for residents with employment as a goal.”

– *Rhonda Bonavita and Derek McClain, Employment Coordinators.*

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These are examples of a few common goals that resident’s may wish to achieve. Marbridge is a resident centered community with each individual getting the attention they need to learn, experience, and achieve a whole new life.



Left: Steven, a Village resident, practices the javelin for Special Olympics Track & Field.  
Right: Sophie, a Ranch resident, works her shift in The Ranch dining hall.

Learn how Marbridge can help your loved one reach their goals at:  
**Marbridge.org/admissions**



# Christmas Memories

## Marbridge Residents and Staff Share Favorite Holiday Stories

The Christmas spirit came to campus early this year and we’re excited for the upcoming holiday season. To celebrate the holidays, we gathered favorite Christmas memories from residents and staff.



**Kyle, Village Resident**  
*I just love spending time with my family at the holidays. It means a lot to be with them at Christmas and I really like Christmas because of that.*



**Drew, Ranch Resident**  
*My favorite Christmas memories are singing Christmas songs. I love singing.*



**Sarah, Village Resident**  
*When my sister and I were kids, we lived in the house we are in now. It was time for us to go to bed and take a bath. While we were in the bath tub, Santa came to leave us presents. I can’t remember if it was me or my sister that screamed when we heard a ho-ho-ho but the happy part was when we opened the front door and there were bikes on the front porch and my mom let us ride them in the house. Another good memory was when we got our lab puppy. She was so cute and she slept a lot and one time she fell asleep on the trash bag of Christmas wrapping paper. We miss her a lot.*



**Pam, Ranch Resident**  
*My favorite Christmas memories are me hanging out with my sister and making our mom’s chili.*



**Sarah, Villa Driver**  
*Every year, for as long as I can remember, the women of the family get together every 2nd Saturday of December and make dozens upon dozens of tamales. This tradition started I’m not sure how many years decades even back. December 2011 stands out the most. We all gathered at my grandmother’s house that year. I remember walking in and smelling the coffee and Mexican hot chocolate and seeing the spread of sweet bread on the table. We all laughed and made tamales all day. A week later, to the day, we lost my grandmother. We still carry on the tradition but it’s not the same without my grandmother there. That day is one of my favorite Christmas memories. Defiantly the one memory that first comes to mind.*



**Bill, Villa Resident**  
*I love Christmas music. My favorite is Jingle Bells. I like getting gifts and eating lunch during Christmas.*



**Katherine, Ranch Resident**  
*My favorite Christmas memories are opening gifts and watching Christmas movies with my family. I also like the Christmas food such as turkey, green beans, and apple pie.*



**Nick, Village Resident**  
*My favorite Christmas memory is hanging out with my family and friends. I love to sing Christmas carols and open gifts.*



**Alice, Villa Resident**  
*I remember traveling for Christmas. We went to Washington, D.C. and I saw the Washington Monument and the Lincoln Memorial. It was pretty. I also like the times I spend with family and friends.*



**David, IT Coordinator**  
*It was 1994 and I was ten years old. I decided I’d like to go find and cut down a tree by myself. When I told my parents my plan (it was a brilliant plan, to go cut a tree down by myself with a handsaw), I remember no apprehension in their voices, but I am sure there was plenty. I then started for the next three hours cutting down a tree with a handsaw, stopping midway through for lunch, before finishing the job with a backsaw because I was convinced the cartoon looking handsaw had been slowing me down. Well, I must have been searching for the perfect Christmas tree using only two criteria, “it has to be big”, and, “I can cut that down”, because when we pulled this thing inside, it was obvious; it was ugly. It was too big for the living room, almost beach ball round, and lopsided, but I had done it. After we all decorated and rotated it just so, it turned out pretty good!*

You can send joy to campus this holiday season by fulfilling a wish from the Marbridge Wishlist at:  
**Marbridge.org/wishlist**



# Benevolent Care Secures a Future for All

Marbridge serves a unique population. Unique in the sense that we care for adults with a variety of cognitive and developmental disabilities, but also unique in the tenure of the residents. Over a dozen residents on campus have lived and thrived at Marbridge for over 50 years. Those residents have seen a vast change to campus since it was founded in 1953 and have stories they love sharing. Some of those residents also have seen family members and loved ones pass.

If a resident has outlived their financial and family support, Marbridge’s Benevolent Care can step in to ensure that resident will remain safe and thriving. Benevolent Care provides those who have called Marbridge home for many years, to continue aging-in-place without any disruption in care, activities, or daily life.

“Residents receiving Benevolent Care are offered opportunities to continue a fun and engaging life here on campus without being excluded from opportunities due to their financial circumstances,” said Marcus Mercer, Director of The Ranch. “They don’t go without. Birthdays and holidays are still celebrated and they continue to participate in extracurricular activities such as Special Olympics sponsorship, festivals, sporting events, and camping trips to name a few. Aside from the fun activities, their medical needs are also met.”

Currently, about 15 residents receive support for tuition through Benevolent Care. Many of those residents also receive financial support through Marbridge’s Scholarship Endowment, but the scholarship only covers a percentage of the tuition. The Endowment Scholarship and Benevolent Care are similar in that they help fund tuition but differ in one big area.

“Benevolent Care is a real time donation for residents who may no longer have the financial support to pay their tuition,” said Scott McAvoy, Executive Vice President. “If someone donated \$50,000 to Benevolent Care, we can use that money right now to help assist the residents in need. If someone makes that same donation to the Scholarship Endowment, we can’t use it right now. We can only use the interest off the principle. Marbridge is different because we get more scholarships through Benevolent Care donations than most residential communities like us. We’re

hopeful to grow both our Benevolent Care funding and Endowment Scholarships.”

A resident who receives Benevolent Care will never have to leave Marbridge due to financial hardship. They’re ensured to continue to learn, experience, and achieve without concern over their costs being covered. That’s thanks to the generosity of our amazing supporters. With that support, both in our mission and through financial backing, the residents will thrive for years to come.



Top: Ed (left), Marge (center), and Jim (right) Bridges pose for a photo: late 1990s.  
Bottom: Leo, a beloved former resident, enjoys a hug from a friend.

You can help support Benevolent Care today at:  
**Marbridge.org/donate**

# The Villa’s On The Move

## Two New Shuttles Allow Residents Off-Campus Fun

Through much needed donations, The Villa residents and staff were in for a big surprise as they now have two new ADA accessible shuttles. Residents who saw the unveiling erupted in cheers and applause as they have not been able to go on off-campus activities in groups during the pandemic.

The two new shuttles are a huge boost in morale for both the residents and staff. While outings are limited due to COVID-19 protocols, residents have lined up to go on the outings that are currently running.

Outings currently consist of back road drives and sightseeing. John, a Villa resident, is extremely fond of the drives where they see buses and 18-wheelers.

“I love taking rides where we can see the big trucks,” John shared. “One day we saw probably 500 trucks and it made me really happy.”

The outings will expand to town trips, activities, lunches, and more, once COVID protocols become more relaxed and safer for Villa residents.

“Residents really like going to get frozen yogurt and are looking forward to going bowling,” said Michelle Caddel, Life Enrichment Specialist. “One thing we’re hoping to do is go to the zoo and go back to the aquarium.”



Above: Residents and staff get their first glimpse of the new shuttles.



Above: Residents enjoy their first off-campus country drive on one of the new shuttles.

Residents are also proud of these two new buses as they spearheaded the acquisition of their transportation.

“The incredible thing about our new shuttles, aside from the fact that we will again be able to go on outings now that it is a bit COVID safer, is that the residents really are the ones to thank for us having them,” said Duncan Murray, Villa Administrator. “They, and their families, raised the money that enabled us to purchase them. Our residents and families are amazing. Our reimbursement from State of Texas Funding (Medicaid) is incredibly low. It is only through support like this, both monetarily and philosophically, that we are able to do and be the incredible place that we are.”

The residents are excited about the future of off-campus outings and are already discussing their next activities when more become available to them. The next few months will be packed with fun new photos from all the adventures The Villa residents and staff go on.

Learn more about The Villa when you visit:  
**Marbridge.org/Villa**



# A Walk With A Mentor

## Village Resident Makes Strides With Her Mentor

Missy, a resident at The Village, lives a healthy and active lifestyle. She excels in Special Olympics sports, walks numerous miles each day, and competes in 5k and 10k charity races. Her success comes from her determination, her peers, her instructors, and the Village staff. One person though, if you ask Missy, who is a huge help for her is Tracy, her mentor.

Tracy became Missy’s mentor eight years ago and has been a driving factor for her continued success in maintaining her healthy and active lifestyle. Before the pandemic, the two would walk around campus together and share thoughts and stories. They also competed in charity races together and would often go out for pancakes to celebrate Missy’s hard work. Since the pandemic though, their normal activities have a new look.

“Before COVID, Missy and I would walk,” said Tracy. “Since COVID began, I try to motivate and encourage her to walk around Marbridge. We talked about Missy getting to a point where she walks two miles a day.”

On October 24, Missy competed in the 2021 Komen Central Texas MORE THAN PINK Virtual Walk. Leading up to the event, Tracy motivated and encouraged Missy’s training and passion to walk in this event.

“She helps me put together the races and my next race is a fun run on December 3,” said Missy. “Tracy is a great help to me and I can’t wait until we can compete together again.”


Mentors like Tracy are a huge help to the residents and campus as a whole. Haley Koop, Marbridge’s Volunteer Coordinator, matches up residents with potential mentors. As of this writing, 21 mentors and compassion team members (mentors for Villa residents) regularly visit with their mentees.

“We look to connect individuals with like commonalities to help the relationships grow,” said Haley. “A main mentor’s role is to support their mentee in the goals they set for themselves through their care meetings and class schedule, and have some fun along the way.”

Missy and Tracy continue to work on maintaining active activities and a healthy lifestyle through their relationship. Though Tracy won’t be able to compete in person with Missy during her next fun run, they’re with one another each step of the way. Step-by-step, the two continue to grow their friendship and succeed with each finish line crossed.



Top: Missy and Tracy at the Keep Austin Weird Fest & 5K.  
Left: Missy shares a smile during one of her walks.  
Right: Missy and Tracy say “cheese” before the St. Jude Walk/Run to End Childhood Cancer event.



### Did You Know?

Did you know that over 100 residents have expressed interest in having a mentor and only 20% of those residents currently have one? Mentors, like Tracy, go a long way in helping residents learn, experience, and achieve *a whole new life*.

Learn how you can become a mentor when you visit:  
**Marbridge.org/volunteer**

# Back In The Saddle Again ... Kinda

## A New Class Shows The Impact Of Equine Therapy

When speaking about Marbridge’s equine therapy, we often talk about the success a resident has in learning to bond with the horse and to ride. The success of equine therapy has helped over 50 residents ride on a regular basis with confidence, responsibility, and improving their overall quality of life. The success of Marbridge’s equine therapy isn’t limited to residents who ride though, as a new class has proven this semester.

The non-riding equine class, a new class lead by Shonda Corn, Equine Coordinator, is helping residents who don’t wish to or no longer can ride. The class was created after Shonda saw the want to participate in some of Marbridge’s older residents or those who love horses but have no desire to ride them.

“The residents learn how to care for horses, what they eat, medical care, and grooming,” Shonda said. “They learn about the anatomy of the horses, different colors of horses, and different breeds. They also learn about tack used on horses, parts of the saddle, and how to saddle. The class also involves some creativity when we use washable paints to paint our horses and create ‘Painted Ponies’ while learning about Native American culture.”

The class has already proven to be extremely useful, especially for Jerry, a Ranch resident, who gets to reconnect with the horses. Jerry rode horses for over 30 years and has competed in shows as part of the Marbridge Equestrian team. Getting to be able to care for the horses and join the non-riding class has meant a lot to him.

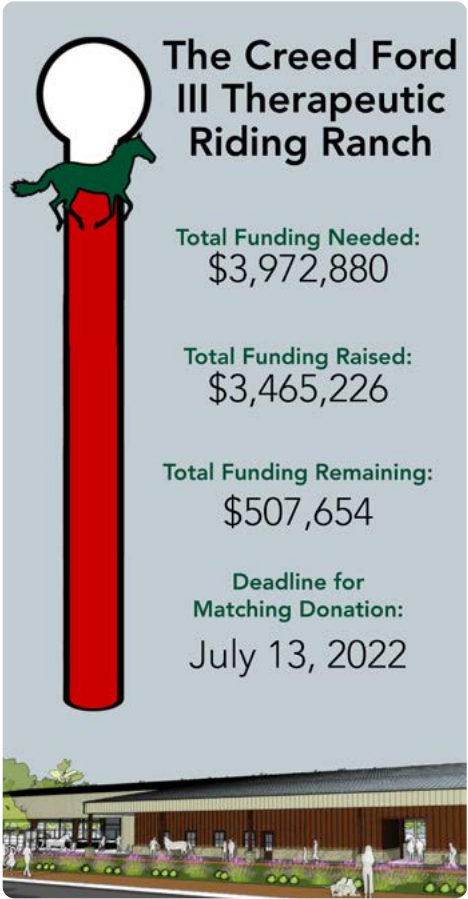


Above: Jerry, a Ranch resident, helps brush one of the horses while Shonda, Equine Coordinator, assists.

“I used to ride a lot,” Jerry shared. “I like being back with the horses and my favorite thing is grooming them. The horses like when we brush them and clean them up.”

Jerry, like other members in the class, has already asked to be in future classes. The success of this initial class could lead to more residents participating in non-riding equine therapy and with the Creed Ford III Therapeutic Riding Ranch, it means more residents at all three communities can join.

The Creed Ford III Therapeutic Riding Ranch is nearing the end of its capital campaign with just over \$500,000 left to fully fund. This new facility at Marbridge will allow residents from all three communities to participate in classes like non-riding equine.



Help bring the dream of the Creed Ford III Therapeutic Riding Ranch to reality at:  
**Marbridge.org/equine**



# A Whole New Lifestyle

## One Resident Used The Pandemic To Motivate Health

Throughout this issue of Marbridge's LIFE Magazine, we have focused on the core value of Well-Being. That core value is one that Brooke, a Village resident, has shown extreme success in over the past 18 months. While many of us internally told ourselves that we are going to do something constructive and healthy during our time dealing with COVID-19, she has been the person who thrived through it.

After visiting with her sister, Brooke decided she needed to change her level of physical activity and be more aware of what she was eating. Noting that her sister cut out dairy, Brooke followed suit and met with Will Hoermann, Village Director, to come up with healthier options for her dietary wants.

"I know my sister no longer eats dairy and I looked at milk and saw that it has sugar in it," said Brooke. "I didn't want sugar in my diet and got rid of it, started walking more with my friend Abby, and started counting my steps."

Brooke's change in lifestyle to a healthier one has been met with overwhelming support. She motivates and walks with her peers at The Village and changed her daily habits with help from The Village staff and her Training & Education instructors.

Today, Brooke is enrolled into more active classes. She's in more cardio and walking classes and keeps track of her workouts with her smart watch. Brooke has also seen increased physical activity from her job working in the equine program with Shonda Corn, Equine Coordinator.

"Last Christmas, Brooke's dad gifted her with an Apple Watch, she's been asking for one for a while. With the addition of this new fitness tool she upped her game," said Jennifer Diaz, Victory Hall Manager. "Having her Apple Watch for her workouts, gave her a renewed sense of motivation, and this has helped her to keep the weight off. Brooke gives 100% to her workouts on the elliptical and walking outside. I know she will always make the most of each session."

Brooke's healthier lifestyle has increased her happiness and confidence. Her happiness is shared with her community, instructors, and her family, including her father who has encouraged Brooke each step of the way.



Above: Brooke celebrates her achievements in her Special Olympics competition on campus in October 2021.

"Clearly, the last year and a half has been a difficult time for everyone. To watch how the Marbridge staff has handled this event has been unbelievable," said Stan, Brooke's father. "They have kept the residents calm and busy. I can tell you that those extra activities have made a world of difference. With the encouragement and involvement of the training staff, Brooke has been able to lose a huge amount of weight, and drop 8 sizes. She is in the best shape of her life. There isn't enough words to express our thanks."

Brooke's success over the last year and a half has been a true team effort, but there was always one driving force keeping Brooke going.

"While our dietary staff, resident trainers, instructors/coaches, and her family members all provided encouragement along the way, the simple truth is that Brooke became her own motivational guide once she set her mind to it," said Will Hoermann, Village Director. "From exercising in her free time to overhauling her diet, Brooke was determined to make a change."

See how your loved one can achieve when you visit:

**Marbridge.org/admissions**

# Levels of Learning

## Instructors Provide Classes for All Levels of Learning

The Training & Education (T&E) team has worked hard to ensure residents of all learning levels have the opportunity to participate in classes. Those classes range from life skills to physical activities to numerous elective classes, such as Outer Space and Outdoor Rec which allow residents, at any learning level, to participate in learning with their fellow peers.

In 2020, Molly Banner and Rachel Collins joined the T&E team as full time instructors. Both previously served as interns and knew the Marbridge population well. They hit the ground running and worked with Jana Kay Green, Director of T&E, and Jennifer Diaz, Victory Hall Manager, to create and teach classes that would help residents at any level of learning with a focus on lower levels.

A new class taught by Molly, Outer Space, quickly became a favorite among residents as an elective class. In this class, residents spend time with a lesson on a specific area of the universe and conclude each class with an activity related to that day's teachings.

"Hands-on activities have a major role in Outer Space class. With there being a variety of ways to learn, some residents learn best being hands-on with a project," said Molly. "One week our topic was about stars and constellations. So, residents were able to first create their own constellation, name it, and then actually assemble it with marshmallows and toothpicks to match their drawing."

Rachel Collins, like Molly, teaches an equally popular elective class, Outdoor Rec, for lower level learning residents. The class covers numerous areas including environmental impact, the values of outdoor recreation, and familiarization of natural settings.

"Residents receive guidance, support, and encouragement from peers to work together and to find ways to reach a common goal. This can be seen through recreational activities, nature projects, and leisure experiences," said Rachel. "When residents face challenges, we team up with peers and find ways to work together. When we work together, we create friendships, improve communication skills, and build on self-confidence. This class promotes empowerment and growth when we are respectfully using nature to do activities we enjoy."

Lizzie, a resident at The Village, has classes with

both Rachel and Molly. She's a big fan of all of her instructors but really enjoys the classes she has with both of them.

"They're fun classes, they're educational, and I learn a lot," said Lizzie. "One of my favorites is Outer Space and I loved learning about going to the moon. Their classes are great."



Top: Molly assists Lizzie, a Village Resident, with her Outer Space activity.  
Bottom: Rachel speaks to the class about their outdoors project and the best things to collect for it.

Learn more about T&E classes provided at:  
**Marbridge.org/training**





### Marbridge Foundation

P.O. Box 2250 • Manchaca, TX 78652  
512.282.1144 • [info@marbridge.org](mailto:info@marbridge.org)  
[Marbridge.org](http://Marbridge.org)

Marbridge is a non-profit residential community that offers transitional and lifetime care to adults with a wide range of cognitive abilities and — through compassion and faith — provides them opportunities to learn, experience, and achieve a whole new life.



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## Upcoming Dates

Last Day of Fall Classes	December 16
Resident Break	December 20 - January 9
First Day of Spring Classes	January 10, 2022
Amplify Austin Day	March 2-3, 2022
CoAct Symposium	April, 2022