

# Morrison Center

Building a Brighter Future for People with Disabilities

Winter 2020

## HERE WE GROW AGAIN!

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[www.morrisonmaine.org](http://www.morrisonmaine.org)

Morrison Center is thrilled to make the following announcement along with UCP of Maine:

Morrison Center & UCP of Maine Plan to Merge: Expand Services for Maine People with Disabilities

SCARBOROUGH & BANGOR, ME: The Morrison Center in Scarborough and UCP of Maine in Bangor have signed an agreement to merge their two community non-profits. The strategic decision was made earlier this month by these two leading organizations which provide essential services to people with disabilities in Maine. Mark Ryder, Executive Director of Morrison Center commented, "Both of our organizations and Boards of Directors are very excited about this merger. We have a similar history and provide services in two very different geographic regions, and it will be of tremendous benefit to be able to tap into state-wide expertise and collaboration. This is extremely good news for the people we serve, all of our staff and for the state of Maine."

The two organizations have similar missions and share common goals, in fact Morrison Center was once known as UCP of Southern Maine. Both regions of the state have seen an increase in the demand for services and the leadership of the two organizations believes that coming together as one will allow for strategic growth and long term viability of the exceptional services they provide.

Scott Tash, Chief Executive Officer of UCP of Maine also commented, "Neither organization is coming at this from a position of weakness. Instead, we are both strong, and are committed to best practices when it comes to providing essential services to children and adults who live with developmental, intellectual, medical, behavioral/mental health and physical disabilities.

Both Ryder and Tash applaud their staff and credit the care they provide in the excellent reputation both Morrison Center and UCP of Maine enjoy. Ryder said, "Our Boards are extremely enthusiastic about this merger, see it as a real opportunity to further provide value to our clients and their families, and recognize that by coming together, we can not only combine resources, but also achieve more expansive goals."

The merger is not expected to result in any staff cuts. Instead, there will be increased professional development opportunity and the chance to attract and retain highly skilled providers. The merger is expected to be finalized in the Spring of 2020 pending all regulatory approvals.

For more information, please contact Mark Ryder, Executive Director of Morrison Center at [mryder@morrison-maine.org](mailto:mryder@morrison-maine.org) or 207-883-6680 or Scott Tash, CEO of UCP of Maine at 207-941-2952 or [scott.tash@ucpofmaine.org](mailto:scott.tash@ucpofmaine.org)

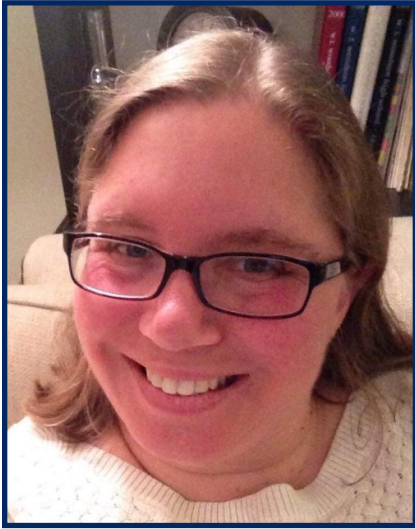
# Morrison Center

Building a Brighter Future for People with Disabilities



*Morrison Center provides services in Cumberland, York, Androscoggin, Waldo, Kennebec, Sagadahoc, Oxford, Lincoln, Penobscot, Somerset and Knox counties in Maine.*

## MEET OUR NEW STAFF!



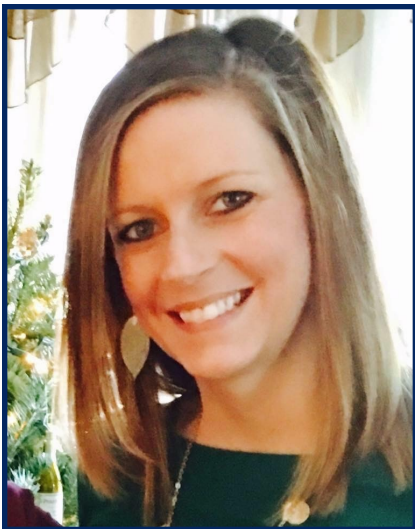
### **Beth Zivic, IEP Coordinator/Teacher Coach**

I am from Arlington, VA and graduated with a degree in general and special education with a concentration in severe disabilities. I have a national board certificate in special education. I have been a teacher in an Elementary Autism Program for 15 years. I just moved to Maine this past summer to be closer to my family. I am enjoying the scenery and am excited with the lifestyle Maine has to offer! Supporting students with emerging and alternate communication as well as early emergent literacy skills is a strong interest of mine. I have masters level course work in Assistive Technology. These skills and interest as well as my past teaching experience is what drew me to work at the Morrison Center. I am enjoying supporting the students and staff in this wonderful community. In my spare time I enjoy quilting and spending time with family.



### **Matt McGinness, Associate Director of Residential Services**

I was born in Charleston, South Carolina but my father was in the Navy so we moved a lot. I lived overseas until I was 13 in Italy and Germany. I attended USM for 2 years and got into this field there. I spent a lot of time working and learning about individuals with IDD, specifically Autism focused, and that ended up being my path of choice. I have worked several jobs over the years, starting at 13 where I worked on a sheep farm for 4 years. I've done masonry, landscaping and manual labor jobs, until landing at Port Resources where I spent the last 11 years. In my free time I enjoy watching and playing sports, spending time at the lake/beach as well as cooking. I enjoy traveling, and have a trip planned to Europe in the fall.



### **Sarah White, Director of Children's Mental Health Services**

I am from originally from Windham, Maine and have lived in the Greater Portland area my whole life. I have a bachelor's in psychology and minor in sociology from St. Joseph's College and earned my MSW from Boston College and I continue to work on credits towards an MEd. I have worked with multiple populations and in different settings throughout my career to include children, adults, the geriatric population, substance abuse and homelessness. I currently run a private practice in Falmouth, Maine outside of my position at Morrison Center. I enjoy running in my free time and completed the Maine Half Marathon in 2017. I also enjoy cooking and dining out around the many delicious restaurants Portland has to offer! I have a cat named Triscuit who keeps me on my toes but also makes my house a home. I have a niece and nephew who I spend as much time with as possible! I am so excited and grateful to be a part of the Morrison Center team and look forward to my ongoing work within the agency!



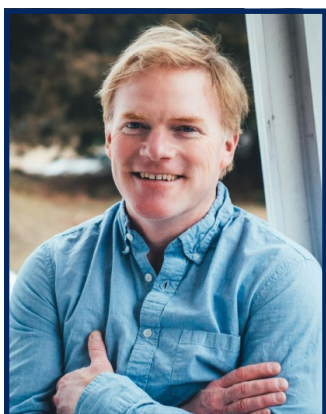
### **Ben Crockett, Farm and Greenhouse Manager**

I grew up in Waterford, ME and attended the University of Vermont, completing a bachelors in sustainable landscape horticulture. This is where I began working in the horticulture or agriculture fields. Although I grew up surrounded by farms with livestock, I came to work with animals in my early 20s. My first experiences were raising chickens for eggs and meat, and I quickly grew interested in raising pigs, cows, and everything else! I've learned to raise cows, sheep, goats, pigs, and even had a chance to work with draft animals periodically. Raising animals is a humbling experience, and one of the strongest connections you can have to your food. I enjoy the crisp air while out on walks with my dog and exploring the amazing food scene in Portland with my girlfriend. I am also learning to sew on a machine. I'm excited to be working at the Morrison Center, and hope everyone comes out to say "Hi" at either the Greenhouses or Farm.



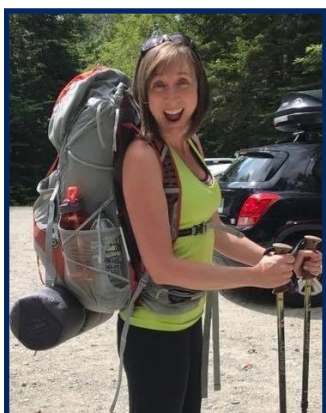
### **Lauren Bean, Recruiter**

I am from Yarmouth, graduated from Yarmouth High School, then studied English and Elementary Education at Vassar College. Since then, I have worked as a preschool teacher in Freeport, started my own business, and most recently managed the South Portland branch of Mathnasium. I live in Auburn with my husband Amos, cat Dash and new puppy Bonnie. I am an avid yogi and recently earned my yoga teacher certification. In my free time I enjoy playing music with my husband and family, reading, hiking, and maybe playing a video game or two. I am thrilled to be with Morrison Center and help the organization grow.



### **Ted Dalton, Principal, Wells Preschool and K-12 Special Purpose School**

I am from Wiscasset, Maine and graduated with a bachelor's degree from the College of the Atlantic. I currently attend USM pursuing a master's in educational leadership. I have worked at the New England Medical Center, Portland Schools at Spring Harbor Hospital, Southern Maine Community College, and the Aucocisco School. In my free time I enjoy playing music, sports, and ocean time. I am fortunate to work at Morrison Center with some very talented people and very fun students.



### **Penny Coward, Principal, Scarborough Preschool and K-12 Special Purpose School**

I was born in Portland, Maine, lived in England for five years during my early childhood and returned to the United States where I graduated from South Portland High School. I attended Franklin College in Indiana and received a bachelors in elementary education. I completed my special education teacher certification at the University of Maine at Farmington and am currently finishing up my master's in educational leadership at USM. I taught at Dyer Elementary School and Spring Harbor Academy before coming to Morrison Center last year where I am excited to work with exceptional staff that are dedicated and care deeply about our students every day. In my free time I enjoy hiking, spending time with friends and family, being at the beach (in all types of weather), crafting and taking care of my 10-year old dachshund, Jubilee.



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## TAKE A LOOK AT THIS GREAT ARTICLE FROM MAINEBIZ

*Excerpts from MaineBiz article, December 30, 2019 by Laurie Schreiber:*

Morrison Center is a nonprofit whose mission is to help people of all ages with disabilities. The organization specializes in complex and involved developmental disabilities, the center's programming includes a preschool and childcare program, a K-12 special-purpose grade school, adult day community support programs, case management services for children and adults, and an integrated therapy clinic for all ages. That need has prompted the purchase of several properties over the past few years to accommodate increased demand for case management and residential services. Most recently, the center bought a 3,300-square-foot office building with a 22-space parking lot at 31 Central St., in downtown Westbrook. "Morrison Center's growth and expansion of services has necessitated the purchase of our new site at 31 Central Street in Westbrook for additional space to provide case management services," the center's executive director, Mark Ryder, told MaineBiz. "We are thrilled to be a part of the city of Westbrook downtown area that offers high visibility and easy access for networking and service delivery." In [August 2018](#), the center bought a 125-acre property, called Opportunity Farm, at 215 Gloucester Hill Road in New Gloucester, so that the center can expand its residential facilities there. In December 2017, the center bought an adjacent 26 acres to become part of the campus. In [January 2017](#), it bought an office building at 2250 Post Road, Wells, to expand programming in that town. The center operates a second facility in Wells, at 526 Post Road. Incorporated in the 1950s, the organization is headquartered in Scarborough and operates a smaller facility in Portland.

**Opportunity Farm:** Morrison Center continues to look toward the redevelopment of Opportunity Farm in New Gloucester for expanded residential facilities. "Morrison Center, in response to the urgent need for children's residential services in the State of Maine, has initiated an aggressive capital campaign to develop the Opportunity Farm Campus in New Gloucester into a state-of-the-art educational, therapeutic and residential campus," Ryder said. "The interest and response from the community and potential corporate, individual and foundation partners have been encouraging and we hope to share our lead donor names soon." To learn more about Morrison Center, the Opportunity Farm Campus and the Capital Campaign, please contact Amy Whitmore, Director of Development at [awhitmore@morrison-maine.org](mailto:awhitmore@morrison-maine.org) or visit our website at [www.morrison-maine.org](http://www.morrison-maine.org).

We now have 5 pages on Facebook! Morrison Center, Morrison Center Children's Programs  
Morrison Center Adult Program, Opportunity Farm Alumni and Friends and  
Morrison Center Children's Therapy Services.

