

I am Elizabeth Campbell, the mother of a young adult son with Down Syndrome Regression Disorder who will require 24/7 oversight for the rest of his life. After my husband was diagnosed with a terminal brain tumor, our hardest conversations were about what would happen to our son, Jesse. In the wake of my husband's death, I reached out to other Vermont parents of adults with significant developmental disabilities and founded the Developmental Disabilities Housing Initiative ("DDHI"). DDHI advocates for the development of stable, service-supported housing options for adults with intellectual disabilities and was the driving force behind the initiation and passage of ACT 186, which has opened the door to the development of housing models where adults like my son have the option to live and age in vibrant housing communities, alongside their peers.

I am, along with Jim and Amy Caffry – who are also parents of a young adult son with a developmental disability -- a recipient of an ACT 186 pilot planning grant, and with the guidance of Hannah Schwartz, a leading consultant on intentional communities for adults with intellectual/developmental disabilities, building Riverflow Community, an intentional community for adults with intellectual disabilities located on 30 beautiful acres in Monkton, Vermont. Nothing is more important to parents like us than securing a safe and meaningful future for our lifelong vulnerable adult children, and so we are deeply grateful for the Vermont legislators who supported ACT 186, and who we now hope will support us in our efforts to secure essential funding through the Vermont Housing Improvement Program.

Riverflow Community will provide the care needed to meet the needs of those individuals who require the kind of support that is difficult for adult foster care or supervised affordable housing units to provide. Given these realities, Riverflow will address a critical and unmet need in Vermont's developmental disability community.