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## NEWS RELEASE

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### **People with Disabilities Make a Difference**

July 12, 2023, Carmel, NY – The parks in Putnam County have less litter these days thanks to the volunteer clean-up efforts of the men in CAREERS Support Solutions Ambition In Motion (AIM) program -- an innovative program for adults with developmental disabilities. CAREERS is a private non-profit located in Carmel and their AIM program teaches the interpersonal and social skills needed for independent living. The AIM group truly enjoys volunteering in the community and taking part in recreational and social outings.

“The guys in AIM love to go to the skate park in the Jimmy McDonough Memorial Park in Carmel to pick up litter and we go at least once a week,” says Dan Ramirez, CAREERS Community Instructor. “We also pick up litter in other Putnam County parks. The guys enjoy giving back to the community and it gives them a sense of purpose.”

Besides tidying Carmel’s parks, the men in AIM package recyclables at the Kent Recycling Center and tend crops and harvest produce at Hilltop Hanover Farm in Yorktown Heights.

The women in the AIM program are also active volunteers for the Humane Society and local food pantries. They sort donations and package food for distribution for the Hillside Food Outreach in Mount Kisco and Second Chance Foods in Brewster.

Tina Cornish-Lauria, Executive Director of CAREERS, said that “volunteering brings tremendous benefits to people in the community and also to those who donate their time to help others. People with disabilities need to feel they are a part of their community, and volunteering is the ideal way to give them a sense of purpose and learn skills.”

CAREERS Support Solutions provides support services to hundreds of individuals annually throughout Westchester, Putnam and lower Dutchess Counties. CAREERS mission is to empower people with disabilities by teaching workforce readiness skills and providing job placement, on-the-job training, and ongoing support to assure long-term success – at no cost to the individual or employer. For more information visit [www.careerssupportolutions.org](http://www.careerssupportolutions.org)

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Caption: AIM clients (from left to right) Michael, Ahmed and Anthony work hard and have fun while cleaning up the skatepark in Carmel's Jimmy McDonough Memorial Park.



Caption: AIM women Jennifer (left) and Victoria (right) package flour for clients of Second Chance Foods in Brewster.

