



Empowering Individuals for Life

From the CEO

As 2025 comes to a close, we're halfway through fiscal year 2026, our final year of the Vision 2026 Strategic Plan. It's remarkable to reflect on our progress. We've had tremendous growth in both Group Supported Employment and LIFE day support programs. The ECHO Barkery has added new products and has outgrown its Ashburn facility. Our fleet has added several new buses and operationally has never been more sound. All of our departments are led by committed, smart and effective leaders. We celebrated our 50th Anniversary and initiated a new annual event, "Big Day Out", that celebrates our participants and invites community supporters to join in the fun.

None of our accomplishments would be possible without the dedicated ECHO staff that bring our mission to life every day. Additionally, our work would be very limited without the strong support we receive from the community: our worksite partners that hire ECHO participants, our community partners that welcome LIFE visitors, our donors, our volunteers, our partners at Loudoun and Fairfax counties, and our Barkery, Blue Elegance and Inclusive Solutions customers. It is heartening to be surrounded by so many staff members, citizens and organizations that care about ECHO!

I hope your Christmas and Holiday season is a joyful one.

Sincerely,

Paul Donohue, Jr.
CEO, ECHO

Support ECHO Grounds This Season Of Giving



This season, your gift to ECHO's Annual Appeal will directly support the expansion of our ECHO Grounds Crew, creating meaningful new job opportunities for adults with disabilities. Our crews provide professional landscaping and grounds maintenance services throughout Northern Virginia. With your support, we can expand our crew, purchase much-needed equipment, and open more doors for individuals eager to contribute to their community. Together, we can make 2026 our most impactful year yet!

Click [HERE](#) to Donate!

ECHO Barkery: Launching New Treats!



We have some exciting news to share! Our signature dog bone treats have a new design. The bone on the left shows our sturdier, more consistent shape, making them even better for your furry friend. from ECHO Barkery

Why the change?

We wanted to make our treats a little more durable while maintaining that familiar, tasty quality your pups love.

Thank you for continuing to support ECHO Barkery and for making a difference, one bite at a time!

Blue Elegance: Holiday Products Available!



The holiday season is in full swing at Blue Elegance!

Our shelves are shining bright with Christmas-themed candles, including beloved scents like Gingerbread, Nanna's Kitchen, and Christmas Magic. Our team of artisans is also busy stocking up on new and classic items, including dog candles, winter hats and beanies, and Christmas ornaments. Whether you're shopping for a cozy gift or a meaningful keepsake, Blue Elegance has something special for everyone this season.

Shop Blue Elegance Today!

ECHO Ambassador of the Month



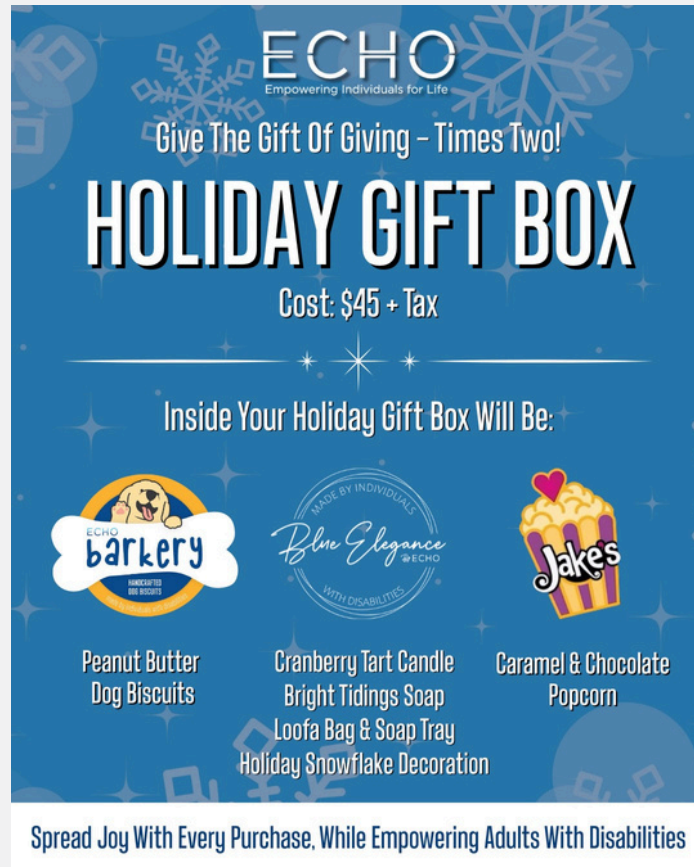
**ZWIESEL
FORTESSA**

We are proud to recognize Zwiesel-Fortessa as our Ambassador of the Month!

A long-time supporter of ECHO, Zwiesel-Fortessa continues to go above and beyond in their commitment to our mission. From sponsoring ECHO events to most recently donating their stunning showroom space for our ECHO Gratitude Event, their generosity and partnership have made a lasting impact. We are especially grateful to Peggy Musgrave, whose kindness and collaboration make every interaction a joy.

Thank you, Zwiesel-Fortessa, for your continued dedication to empowering individuals for life!

Holiday Gift Boxes Available!



If you're looking for a meaningful way to spread joy while supporting ECHO's mission, our Holiday Gift Boxes are still available for purchase!

Each box is filled with handcrafted items made by adults with disabilities.

Each box includes:

- ECHO Barkery Dog Biscuits
- Cranberry Tart Candle
- Bright Tidings soap
- Loofa Bag & Soap Tray
- Holiday Snowflake Decoration
- Caramel & Chocolate Popcorn

Order Yours Today!

My Interview With Gabby Zalevsky

Rick's Rundown



December Edition

Gabriela “Gabby” Zalevsky brings warmth, creativity, and dedication to her role as an Employment Support Specialist (ESS) in ECHO’s Blue Elegance worksite. Since joining ECHO on July 12, 2024, she has embraced every opportunity to help participants grow, learn, and feel confident in their work. Her journey began in the LIFE program, where she supported individuals in building daily living skills through activities like crafts, cooking groups, and community outings. I had the opportunity to see her work firsthand when I started in April—long before she transitioned to GSE in June or July—and it was immediately clear how naturally she connected with participants and how passionately she supported their growth. From LIFE, she moved into Group Supported Employment (GSE), gaining hands-on experience in a variety of work environments—from INOVA Hospital and Good Shepherd Thrift Store to The Farm, Stryker, the ECHO Academy, the Barkery, and now Blue Elegance.

Throughout her time at ECHO, Gabby discovered how meaningful it is to support adults with disabilities as they develop new skills and express themselves in their work. She often talks about how much she enjoys seeing participants shine—whether they’re crafting ornaments, sorting donations, harvesting produce, or preparing products for sale. No matter the setting, she says the best part of her job is working as a team, learning from each participant, and celebrating what they accomplish together.

Of course, the work comes with challenges, especially in a busy department like Blue Elegance. During high-demand seasons, the team may need to create a large volume of products within a short time frame. But Gabby approaches those moments with positivity and organization, relying on teamwork to ensure everything gets done. She finds that supporting each other not only keeps the workflow smooth but also strengthens the sense of community within the group.

Gabby describes Blue Elegance as a creative, fast-paced, and hands-on environment where participants learn valuable skills like candle-making, ornament crafting, labeling, and product preparation. She emphasizes that teamwork, patience, and clear communication are essential as everyone works together toward shared goals. Most importantly, she loves that the department focuses on building independence, supporting safety, and encouraging every participant to grow—not just as workers, but as confident individuals finding their place in the community.

Behind the Mission



At ECHO, every success story starts with support from people like you. Whether it's building job skills, exploring the community, or gaining independence, our participants thrive because our mission is backed by the generosity, compassion, and care of our local community.

Your gift, no matter the size, helps fuel meaningful opportunities for adults with disabilities across Loudoun and Fairfax Counties.

Want to be part of the impact?

Help Fuel Our Mission [HERE](#)

Testimonial

"Our daughter has been with ECHO since fall of 2020 and absolutely loves working at the Barkery and sometimes on other projects. She always talks about her job with such pride and dedication...She is happy and fulfilled at her job: what else can we ask for? Thank you, ECHO staff and management, for creating such successful programs and a great environment for our children!"

- Sarah Adkins-Blanch, ECHO Parent

