

FALL 2025 NEWSLETTER

BRIGHTSTONE



OH WHAT A FALL IT'S BEEN!

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BRIGHTSTONE IS A COMMUNITY FUNDED 501(C)3 NONPROFIT SERVING ADULTS WITH INTELLECTUAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES IN MIDDLE TENNESSEE.

BRIGHTSTONE.ORG

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LETTER FROM THE CEO

As we approach the close of another remarkable year, I want to take a moment – on behalf of all of us at BrightStone – to say thank you. 2025 has been a year of incredible growth, powerful milestones, and heartfelt moments that remind us why we do what we do. Because of your continued belief in our mission, BrightStone is stronger, more vibrant, and more hopeful than ever.

This year, we've experienced a significant increase in the number of students we serve in The Stinnett Center for Learning, Art and Enterprise. Each new student brings a unique story and an opportunity to help them thrive – and it's an honor to walk alongside every one of them and their families. Our new *I Believe in BrightStone* campaign that launched this year to showcase the stories of our students and families is a reminder of the profound impact our program has when we help our students discover their purpose, potential and passion. It is the transformation that takes place when you focus on abilities and not disabilities. Shout out to our teachers for their dedication and commitment!

I am proud to report that we have had residents living on campus for more than a year now and they are all living the life they have envisioned for themselves, experiencing a new level of independence, community and confidence. Our residential staff demonstrate the heart of BrightStone providing quality, compassionate and loving care for our residents. I am also excited to share that the infrastructure work is being completed for the development of future homes, allowing us to extend care and support to even more individuals. Let me emphasize, this is not just about building houses – it's about building homes that will be filled with real people who are seeking independence, transformational care, and a community.

All of this is only possible thanks to our community – individuals, family foundations, and corporate organizations who have supported our programs through their generous contributions made to our annual fund and attending our events throughout the year. We know that every time someone makes a gift to BrightStone – whether that is time or money – every gift is a gift of the heart. So, to all who attended, volunteered, or donated, you are providing hope and making a real impact in the lives of many.

As we look ahead to 2026, we do so with deep gratitude and great anticipation. There is still so much to do. We will continue to learn, train, and grow, applying best practices and always ensuring BrightStone maintains our reputation as "best in class." We will also be innovative and thoughtful about new opportunities and partnerships.

To sustain and expand our services and secure our future growth, I humbly request your continued commitment in the year ahead. You power our mission – whether through your generous time, your essential resources, or the crucial advocacy of sharing our story. Your every contribution is the critical investment that ensures our momentum never stops. Once again, on behalf of the entire BrightStone family, I extend my heartfelt appreciation for you. With your continued support, we can continue to serve more families and give our adults the lives they've dreamed of.

May the new year bring you peace, joy, and renewed hope for the future.

With deepest gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lee Rose".

Lee Rose
President and CEO

A BIG BrightStone Welcome!

WELCOME TO OUR NEW STUDENTS
WHO JOINED US IN 2025!



Alex



Amelia



Andrew



Carrie



Grant



Jack



Noah



Parker



Rachel



Sean



William

BRIGHTSTONE'S STAFF IS GROWING!

These amazing staff members came on board this year. Stay up-to-date on all our staff members and learn more about them at brightstone.org/about-us

Margaret Bonga
Teaching Assistant

Lillian Cottrell
Kitchen Assistant

Ashley Garth
Residential Program Coordinator

Rebecca Harding
Teaching Assistant

Elizabeth Hayes
Donor Services Coordinator

Mary Catherine Mousourakis
Senior Mgr, Philanthropy and Corporate Engagement

Missy Naff
Senior Development Manager

Carly Normandin
Residential Home Weekend Support

Kendall Rogers
Teaching Assistant

Milton Wells
Bus Driver

Crystal Werman
Residential Home Weekend Support

Oh What a Fall!



FOUNDER'S DAY

September 7th marked 26 years since the founding of BrightStone. Each year on this date, we honor founder Brenda Hauk whose faith and vision brought BrightStone from its humble beginnings to its current Land of Dreams. For 26 years, BrightStone's vision has never faltered – to build a community that empower adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities to live to their potential.



I BELIEVE IN BRIGHTSTONE

On August 4th, Mr. Commodore, Vandy cheerleaders, and Preds mascot Gnash all came to campus for a day of cheer and celebration with our students to end a fun spirit week that included USA day, Western Day, 80's and superhero fun. The celebration also marked reaching the first \$50,000 of the *I Believe in BrightStone* project, which has now raised more than \$300,000 towards the \$600,000 year-end goal.



JIM HINTON MEMORIAL GOLF BENEFIT

Presented by **ATMOS**
energy

The Annual Jim Hinton Memorial Golf Benefit was held on November 3rd. The event was held for the first time at the beautiful golf course The Grove! Now in its 24th year, BrightStone's Golf Benefit has raised over \$3,500,000 to help fund BrightStone's programs and services for our students and their families. Thank you to all who participated and sponsored.



A NIGHT FULL OF COMEDY

If you missed A Night Full of Comedy, you missed a night full of laughter from several outstanding Nateland Entertainment comedians – Dustin Nickerson, Nick Thune, Aaron Weber, and surprise comedian Derrick Stroup. The WBST student news team also made a special appearance and entertained the crowd through “Cool Weather” Colin’s comical banter with Emcee Tom Riles and students Jack and Josh’s incredible performance of “Hakuna Matada”.



EMS DAY

An EMS day was hosted on campus in late October. Our students enjoyed an incredible day with a hands-on collaborative effort from several representatives of Williamson County Emergency Services. The activities were a great culmination to classroom learning where students were educated on how to respond in the event of an emergency and what occurs when EMS services assist. Students were excited to explore a rescue helicopter, fire engine, ambulance and the EMS mobile service center. The day was an amazing opportunity for them to also speak directly to those who work each day to keep them and our community safe.





BELMONT UNIVERSITY OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY PARTNERSHIP

The new partnership between BrightStone students and Belmont University's Occupational Therapy program is helping our students thrive! Under the supervision of Dr. Caroline Hillyard, three Level 2 OT students have been onsite 5 days a week providing one-on-one therapy with our students to meet personal health goals, improve dexterity, build strength and movement, and more. The Belmont OT students are side by side with BrightStone students – building independence, confidence, and life skills.

STRONGER TOGETHER COMMUNITY HEALTH FAIR

In early October, the Stronger Together Community Health Fair was held, providing free health screenings for those ages 5 and older with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Hosted by BrightStone in partnership with Special Olympics and supported by Walmart, community members came together on BrightStone's campus for a day of community, health, recreation, and inclusion. This event is now planned to be an annual event on the BrightStone campus!



WE'VE GOT A SECRET! Several BrightStone students were able to feel like stars in a fun-filled, special filming on campus! We're excited to reveal our surprise filming to you soon! Visit BrightStone on Facebook and Instagram at BrightStonetn for the final reveal!

SECRET SANTAS

This month students hit the stores for their annual Secret Santa shopping. Each year, students look forward to the group outings where they are able to pick out gifts for their Secret Santa friends. The gifts are shared during a fun-filled Christmas party on campus where students exchange gifts alongside jolly St. Nick.

Groundwork for New Residential Homes is Underway!



For adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD), the dream of an independent, fulfilling life in a supportive community is often out of reach. At the Land of Dreams campus, we are building a first-of-its-kind community in Tennessee where those dreams become reality. In 2022, we opened our first two residential homes. Now, we are ready to make more dreams come true for families in need of a home for their adult child.

With \$2,377,547 already raised toward our \$4 million Homecoming Capital Campaign goal, we have been working diligently to have the infrastructure for our next phase of residential homes prepared. This infrastructure is nearing completion and, with your support, we will begin construction on our next homes. These homes will provide eight more residents a life of further independence in a beautiful, loving, and supportive environment.

BrightStone is now the only organization in Middle Tennessee legally authorized to offer adults with IDD residential options in a campus setting. Last year, BrightStone was selected by the Tennessee Governor as a Pilot Residential Program. We are approved to build more homes and are establishing the first campus of its kind in Tennessee – serving as a model program nationwide for supportive, campus-based living.

Families are counting on us. Your generous gift or pledge today is critical to the success of this vital campaign. Every gift, no matter the size, brings us closer to making this essential dream a reality.

Join the final push to help begin building our next two homes in 2026!

Make a gift or pledge by December 31, 2025 and give more adults a safe, permanent home - www.BrightStone.org/donate

Become a Member of the BrightStone Legacy Society

By including BrightStone in your will, establishing a trust, or naming BrightStone as a beneficiary of a life insurance policy, retirement, or investment account, you are building a brighter future for generations to come, empowering the adults we serve to live fulfilling lives.

Define the impact you wish to leave behind. Contact Jenny Myhr, Director of Development at 615.790.4888 or Jenny.Myhr@BrightStone.org to discuss how you can support BrightStone through Planned Giving.





GIVING TUESDAY

Giving Tuesday is December 2nd

MATCHING DONATION

\$100,000

December 2nd is Giving Tuesday and, thanks to the generosity of one of our BrightStone supporters, every dollar you give to BrightStone between now and the end of Giving Tuesday will be matched – up to \$100,000!

Giving Tuesday is a special day to spread generosity and to support nonprofit organizations working to

make a huge impact on the lives of others. If you believe in BrightStone's mission, we are grateful for your support and for sharing the word of BrightStone with others too.

At BrightStone, every day is a chance to celebrate ability, purpose, and joy. Your gift helps to support our programs, scholarships and operations. With no government

funding, your support also helps BrightStone keep tuition affordable for the families we serve.

\$100,000 Match ends at midnight on Giving Tuesday.

Let's make this the best Giving Tuesday yet!

Thank You For Believing in BrightStone!

The *I Believe in BrightStone* project runs through December 31, 2025 and was created to help showcase the abilities of our amazing BrightStone students and their stories of how they continue to thrive and transform their lives through their experiences at BrightStone.

A big thanks to all those who have taken the time to learn about our students through the tapestry of stories that make up the project and for sharing our student pages. We are also extremely grateful to those who have helped support our project through a one-time gift or by becoming a monthly donor through the BrightStone Believer's Club.

Support received through *I Believe in BrightStone* helps close the gap between what families pay and the true cost of BrightStone's life-changing programs. Every donation supports our students and ensures that all adults at BrightStone have the opportunity to live with purpose, dignity, and joy.

If you haven't gotten to know our students yet, hurry and take the time

to do so now. We are blessed to see our students grow and thrive each day, whether it is through finding their voice, choosing the path they wish to take in their favorite classrooms or vocational inspiration, finding friendships, or showcasing their talents in music, one of our electives, or at a BrightStone event. Our individualized curriculum helps inspire each adult to live to their fullest.

Scan the QR code to visit the *I Believe in BrightStone* project.

We also invite you to see your impact in action. Visit **BrightStone.org** to schedule a tour today.



When you give \$25 or more a month, you will receive:

- ◆ A handmade welcome gift created by a BrightStone student
- ◆ An exclusive *I Believe in BrightStone* t-shirt
- ◆ A VIP annual tour with lunch for you and up to eight guests
- ◆ A 10% discount on all BrightStone products year-round
- ◆ An invitation to the Believers Club Christmas reception with early holiday shopping and a complimentary student-made ornament

Join the Believers Club!

BECOME A MONTHLY DONOR

fundraise.givesmart.com/vf/Believer



Join Us in Celebrating the Magic of the Holidays!

BRIGHTSTONE'S CHRISTMAS POP UP SHOPPE

December 1-6 at BrightStone's Land of Dreams
9 am - 3 pm

Come shop for beautiful and unique handmade holiday decor, ornaments, ceramics, and crafts made by our BrightStone students. And, BrightStone cookie, dip and tea mixes make great gifts or provide delicious treats for your holiday parties too!

Our Christmas Shoppe is always in high demand - shop early!

While you are at our Christmas shoppe and student program, be sure to visit our BrightStone Wish List Tree! Pick an ornament and help fulfill wishes for a variety of needed items for our facilities and programs that serve our adults, including: exercise equipment, rocking chairs, classrooms materials, kitchen supplies and appliances, and more.

BRIGHTSTONE'S ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

Our highly anticipated annual student Christmas Program will be held **December 9th** at the Factory at Franklin.

BrightStone's Annual Christmas Program is our way of giving back to the community! This free, family-friendly holiday event draws nearly 1,000 community members each year, treating them to an evening of music and holiday fun proudly performed by BrightStone students. The event also includes an hors d'oeuvres buffet and pop-up shoppe. The event is a wonderful opportunity to partner with BrightStone and share in the magic of what makes BrightStone so special.

We look forward to seeing you there and celebrating the holidays! If you wish to sponsor this magical event, please reach out to Jenny.Myhr@BrightStone.org or 615.790.4888

Campus & Community



Thank you to Atmos and Friends for a great night at A Night Full of Comedy



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This season, we invite you to **Believe in BrightStone** – to believe in the dreams, growth, and dignity of the individuals we serve. Your heartfelt gift today fuels opportunities, empowers potential, and builds a brighter tomorrow for our community.

Together, we can begin the new year with hope and purpose. Please make your year-end gift to BrightStone and help us continue this meaningful work.

BrightStone.org/donate



TOUR

TOURS FILL UP QUICKLY.
RESERVE YOUR SPOT TODAY!
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615-790-4888

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