



DEPARTMENT OF NOURISHMENT ARTS® at The Center for Discovery

The Center for Discovery in Sullivan County, New York is a residential, educational, and medical facility for children and adults with developmental disabilities including autism spectrum disorders. On the grounds is Thanksgiving Farm, a biodynamic and certified organic 300 acre farm dedicated to providing quality food and meaningful opportunities for the individuals that we serve.

DNA®, **The Department of Nourishment Arts®**, is a ground breaking and unique approach to providing all individuals at The Center for Discovery with the ultimate whole foods experience. DNA® brings together farmers, chefs, and nutritionists collaborating to ensure our food and resulting nutrition are optimized at every point along the food chain. This is what we call our **Seed to Belly®** philosophy. Through this shared goal, the food program at The Center continues to make a major impact in promoting health, healing, and quality of life for our residents.

Using the word “nourish” in the title of the department was a careful decision and commitment made by The Center to demonstrate our dedication to food as a foundational therapy. “Nourish” encompasses much more than just food itself, it is everything around the food as well. From the farming, to the nutrition, to the way our guests eat, our intent behind “nourishment” is as the way a mother cares for her child - wholesome, nurturing, steadfast.

At The Center for Discovery, we believe that **Food is Medicine®** and quality food is a basic building block necessary for health and happiness. We believe that whole, real food sustains body, mind, and spirit. Our food is geared to support good health, to combat oxidative stress and inflammation, and to provide the very human need for pleasure and community through mealtime. Our menu is plant based with a focus on homemade, healthy comfort foods devoid of harmful additives and other chemicals. We believe food should be whole, real, and straight from the farm. Our residents have an elevated need for high nutrient density, and we meet this need through a colorful variety of fresh foods that we artfully prepare.

Our Seed to Belly® philosophy emphasizes and teaches the importance of optimum quality along our entire food chain. At The Center, quality food really begins in the ground with healthy soil through biodynamic and organic practices, then through the planting process where residents help to plant seeds, and finally with harvesting. The process continues with food preparation in the houses, utilizing recipes and chefs who know that healthy nutrition must come in the form of well-prepared, great tasting food. The most important part of our chain, however, really comes at the end - the belly. We can have healthy soil, grow and prepare the most nutritious food, but what matters most is for our residents to actually eat it. We help picky eaters transition to eating our healthy food and we focus on keeping all of our guests eager and interested in mealtime every day. Thus, the ultimate goal of DNA® is one thing - the bite - as only once our amazing farm fresh, nutrient dense food is consumed can its healing properties be truly recognized.

