

Staff members of A New Leaf are continuing to leave their mark on the Owasso community. Employees like Gavin Bushyhead, who has Asperger's Syndrome, are given a chance to hone their workforce skills through horticulture programs like the nonprofit's pop-up outside Battle Creek Church on 86th Street. "It's a different change of pace than a lot of places I've worked at; I actually like," said Bushyhead, who works at the busy site a few days a week. "It's dropped my stress a lot, and I'm dealing with plants all the time." A New Leaf, based out of Broken Arrow, helps improve the lives of adults with developmental disabilities and autism. Established in 1979, the organization provides its clients with critical life skills and job training through horticultural therapy, as well as community-based vocational placement and residential services. Bushyhead, 22, has been putting his green thumb to good use at the Owasso site over the last couple of months watering flowers, loading trucks and helping customers find the right shrubbery for their landscapes. "I've always like plants, and I've always liked taking care of them," he said. "I have a couple of plants myself, and it just felt like it was probably the best thing for me to do. I've always liked seeing how they turn out." Bushyhead is among a rotating crew of around four adults with disabilities who venture north of their Broken Arrow hub every week to serve at the Owasso tent. They also regularly serve at A New Leaf's other local pop-up, located in Jenks. Now in its fourth season in Owasso, the nonprofit's remote site is open through mid-November, and offers a variety of fall selections including mums, pansies, violas, kale and cabbage, among other foliage, for both casual planters and professional gardeners alike. The Owasso pop-up is the first stage of A New Leaf's plan to build a large-scale agricultural community, or "agrihood," in Owasso that provides a platform for individuals with disabilities to learn and grow. The site, located on a 50-acre lot southeast of 86th Street and Memorial Drive, will play host to a new planned development fostering the advancement of farming and horticulture through different initiatives. "We

trying to build a good partnership early on and develop that customer base for when we open up a permanent location," said Maranda Figueroa, chief development officer for the organization. A New Leaf's new "agrihood" will be the first of its kind in Oklahoma, providing more opportunities for clients like Bushyhead to hone their skills and plug into the community. Figueroa and her team chose Owasso because of its available land and convenient location, but mainly because of its family-centric values and strong focus on character that encapsulates the city and its residents. "It's just awesome to see how the Owasso community has embraced our organization," Figueroa said. "I love that they're shopping local, for one, and two, really wrapping their arms around the folks that we serve." Owasso's pop-up, located at 12200 E. 86th St. N., is open Sunday, 12-5 p.m.; Monday, 12-6 p.m.; and Tuesday-Saturday, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. More information about A New Leaf can be found at [anewleaf.org](http://anewleaf.org). Be the first to know Get local news delivered to your inbox! Sign up! \* I understand and agree that registration on or use of this site constitutes agreement to its user agreement and privacy policy.