



Will-Grundy **CENTER** for INDEPENDENT LIVING

Barrier Free Press

2415-A W. Jefferson Street • Joliet, Illinois 60435

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Will-Grundy Center for Independent Living

2012-2013 Annual Report

Dear Friends of Independent Living:

We are pleased to provide you with the Center's annual report for program year 2013. Once again, our Center experienced growth and continued to serve people with disabilities in their desire to live independently.

The Center was pleased to serve over 800 children and adults with all types of disabilities. Examples of these services included peer counseling, independent living skills, advocacy, legislative internship, disability law series, amplified telephone program, children's assistive technology program, and more. 12 people with disabilities were assisted in moving out of nursing homes into their own residences.

All of our successes would not be possible without your support. We most sincerely thank you for your ongoing support. Your time, talents, and treasures have truly made our Center the local resource for independence.

Please enjoy this report and feel free to contact us if you have any questions.

Pam Heavens
Executive Director

Bob Smith
Board President

Please mark your 2014 calendar for these upcoming events in which we invite you to participate.

- The Accessible Will County Campaign is an initiative to make Will County "the most accessible county in Illinois". Please check our website for the date of the roll-out of this campaign.
- Our 24th Annual Meeting will be held at the Center on April 16 from 3-7pm with a program at 5:30pm.
- Empowerment Event, our annual fundraising gala, will be held in August.
- The Center has begun a membership drive and we encourage you to become a member of our outstanding organization.

Please check out our website, our facebook page, and your mail for further information about these events.



Will-Grundy

CENTER for

INDEPENDENT LIVING

Board of Directors

- Bob Smith, *President*
- Val Rand, *Vice-President*
- Donald Cordano, *Treasurer*
- James Albritton, *Secretary*
- Elaine Sommer, *Delegate-at-Large*
- John Stanton, *Past President*
- Nancy Pohlman
- Paul Lagomarcino
- Rhonda Price
- Jen Nocco
- Linda Thompson
- Diane Seiler-Zigrossi
- Russell Anderson
- Anthony Cornoyer
- Jaq Buchanan
- Aleem Junaidi
- Stephanie White
- Denise Winfrey
- David Cumbo

Staff

- Pam Heavens, *Executive Director*
- Missy Martin, *Program Director*
- Steve Miller, *Development Director*
- Sam Knight, *Community Organizer*
- Kelly McKenzie, *Personal Assistant Advocate*
- Mary Tisdale, *Independent Living Advocate*
- Debbie Tarrant, *Independent Living Advocate*
- Heidi Litchfield, *Community Reintegration Advocate*
- Kayla Feeney, *Community Reintegration Advocate*
- Olivia Cruickshank, *Community Reintegration Advocate*
- Marie Malfatti, *Clerical Aide*
- Tabitha Monroe, *Staff Aide*
- Christine Doran, *Staff Aide*

The Consumers We Serve

Our staff prides itself on being a reliable, widely-respected resource to people with disabilities of all types and all ages.

Age

Under 5 years old	9
Ages 5-19	65
Ages 20-24	39
Ages 25-59	126
Ages 60 and over	19

Gender

Females	133
Males	140

Ethnicity

Black or African American	61
White	182
Hispanic/Latino only	20
Multiracial	7
American Indian or Alaskan Native	3

Disability

Cognitive	97
Mental/Emotional	52
Physical	70
Hearing	13
Vision	3
Multiple Disabilities	7

Individual Services

Assistive Technology	183
Independent Living Skills Training	133
Peer Counseling Services	33
Personal Assistant Services	109
Information and Referral	564

Community Organizing Came to Will-Grundy CIL

This past year, our Center formally began utilizing community organizing as our way of doing business. Staff and board members have met with dozens of people in our community in order to build relationships. These relationships will ultimately result in our collectively being able to accomplish significant, positive change in our community. In addition to building relationships, we are also training people to become leaders. We have already witnessed the emergence of several leaders in our community.

There have been three Public Life Leadership Teams formed: Housing, Transportation, and General Accessibility. These teams are working to improve housing options, increase transportation within the county, and ensure that all public accommodations are accessible. We invite you to join one or all of these teams.

"By putting regular people squarely in the middle of the action about how to effect positive social change, it says you're an actor who can make a difference, not a victim, not someone just acted upon."

- A contributor to the guide on what distinguishes community organizing from other tactics



The Housing Team discusses future plans.



The Access Team meeting was held in Bolingbrook.



One of many leaders on our Transportation Team.

Consumer Highlights

- 12 consumers moved from nursing homes into their own residences.
- 20 young adults learned about government and systems advocacy. 17 students went to Springfield to advocate with legislators.
- 10 consumers became more knowledgeable about using Fixed Route Transportation.
- The Center began working on a supportive housing campaign.
- 3 Public Life Leadership Teams were created: Housing, Transportation, and General Accessibility.
- 267 free amplified telephones were distributed.

We gratefully acknowledge and thank the many individuals and businesses who have supported the Center with generous monetary donations this year!

\$5,000 AND ABOVE

James E. Hearns Charitable Foundation
Harrah's – Joliet
Joliet Township Government

\$2,500 AND ABOVE

ExxonMobil
Northern Illinois Steel Supply Company

\$1,000 AND ABOVE

Caterpillar Inc.
Terry D'Arcy – D'Arcy Motors
John Heavens
The Community Foundation of Grundy County
Morris Lions Club
The Holly Club
Richard DeGrush

\$500 AND ABOVE

Mr. & Mrs. Andy June
Aetna Better Health
George and Regina Block – Remco Medical
'D' Construction, Inc.
Edward and Gloria Dollinger – Edward Jones
Investments
First Community Bank of Joliet
EZ Auto Sales
Bill and Evelyn Michas
Pohlman-Zordan Family
Presence Saint Joseph Hospital
Jan Quillman
Senesac & Lennon, Ltd. CPAs
University of St. Francis
Channahon Township

\$250 AND ABOVE

Debra Condotti
For the Good of It
LeAnn Hibler – LMH Certified Reporting
Friends of State Senator Toi Hutchinson
J.D. Brown and Company
Larry Johnson
Friends of Richard Kopszick
Paul Lagomarcino
NICOR Gas Company
Jen Nocco
Val Rand
Mr. and Mrs. Donald Cordano
Sue Rezin
Elaine Seamon
Silver Cross Hospital
Bob Smith
John Stanton – Stanton Architects, Inc.
Denise Winfrey
Committee to Elect McFarland
L. DeGeus
Citizens for Pam McGuire

ADDITIONAL DONORS

South Suburban Housing Center
Mr. & Mrs. Tom Thanas
Dr. & Mrs. Paul Morimoto
Rev. & Mrs. James Allen
John Sheridan
Mark Bruno
Jeanne Owen
Eleanor Fulton
Paul Blatti
Joseph Formhals
PrairieLand Audiology
Pat McGuire
Bernard Kliska
Mr. and Mrs. Gary Bebar

Jack Rogers
Forest Preserve of Will County
Deborah Tarrant
Kathleen Bond
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Betty Davito
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Ray Semplinski
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Miriam Merrill
Valeria Wilmette
Susan Rink
Coal Bin Self Storage
John Greuling
Wieslaw Paradowski
Chris Book
June McLuckie
Mary Holden
Mr. and Mrs. Rodney Lechwar
Dr. & Mrs. Richard Tarizzo
Mr. & Mrs. Eugene Smyk

We also acknowledge the generous support from United Way of Will County, United Way of Grundy County, the U.S. Department of Education, the Illinois Department of Human Services, and the National Catholic Campaign for Human Development.

**A copy of our FY2013 Financial Audit is available at the Center.
Please contact Pam if you wish to review it.**



Will-Grundy

CENTER *for*
INDEPENDENT LIVING

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

As people with disabilities and their advocates, the Will-Grundy Center for Independent Living strives for equality and empowerment of persons with disabilities in the Will and Grundy County areas.

We inform persons with disabilities of their rights, educate them about their responsibilities, provide support services, promote advocacy, and raise community awareness about disability issues.



*Our Mission Statement guides us in our daily work.
If you are in need of our services, or know someone
who does, please contact the Center.*



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www.will-grundycil.org



www.facebook.com/WGCIL

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2013 Disability Mentoring Day another success

50 students took part in Disability Mentoring Day on November 13, 2013. Under the leadership of Kelly McKenzie, Personal Assistant Advocate, these students with disabilities had the opportunity to shadow adults in the workplace. We thank the businesses that participated in this year's Disability Mentoring Day: Acorn Portraits, Clean Image Car Wash, Crest Hill Police Department, Culver's of Joliet, Easter Seals, Enterprise Newspaper, Fantastic Sam's, For the Good of It, Golden Corral, Grace United Methodist Church, Greg's Auto Body, Jiffy Lube, Joliet Animal Control Center, Joliet Park District, Joliet Slammers, Kmart, Lewis University, Lockport Police Department, Plainfield Veterinary Clinic, Red Lobster, Sine Labs Studio, Spanish Community Center, Super Cuts; Tracy, Johnson, & Wilson Law Firm; Velocita Technology, and Lockport's Wal-Mart.



*John Claude Novak is pictured with
Lockport Police Officer Debbie Schenk*
