

# ANNUAL REPORT 2022

CELEBRATING THE PAST,  
MOVING TO THE FUTURE

Community  
**50**Link  
Anniversary  
1972 - 2022





# BUILDING TRUST

Those who are close to Kaela know she is a sweet, helpful, kind and fun individual who loves to exercise, watch the Cardinals, and lend a helping hand to those who may need it. Kaela's staff and fellow participants now see this side of her every day. However, that was not always the case.

When Kaela and her mom, Melissa, first visited the Community Link Fairview Heights (Metro) location, she was very shy and did not like to talk to people she didn't know. In new situations she is quiet and observant. But Melissa knew that with time, surrounded by people she could trust, she would blossom and show her true self.

At Day Program, Kaela has opportunities to learn new skills, work in production, and explore our community with the Go Group. But most importantly, Kaela found a place where she can be confident, supported by people who love to see her happy and successful. She is more relaxed and outgoing and spends the days talking and laughing with staff and friends.



Kaela truly loves to be helpful and giving to those around her. It is in giving that we receive, and Kaela receives much joy from caring for others. At Community Link, she is comfortable being herself, doing things that make her happy. She has many friends at Metro and loves to stop and chat with participants and staff when she sees them out and about.

Recent times have reminded us of the importance of our friends and connections. For individuals who need time and trust to build personal bonds, it can be even more challenging. Fortunately, at Community Link, Kaela has developed those bonds that give her purpose and happiness.







**At the Buddy Walk this year, Kaela had a great time not just walking with her friends and family, but participating in our first Best Buddy dog show with her dad's puppy, Molly. Kaela did a fabulous job handling Molly to show off her beautiful coat and fluffy tail. Molly even won the "Best Groomed" category!**



**Some of Kaela's favorite things include going to Cardinal baseball games, helping around the house and the yard, spending time with coworkers and staff, exercising, and enjoying the holidays!**





# BEING BUSY BEES



Community Day Services have been booming this year! Participants have been productive working and learning, and staff is keeping everyone motivated and on task.

Participants have loved being able to resume many fun activities during day program too! There have been trips to art studios, hiking in Carlyle, and daily events in our activity rooms, like Spa Days, cooking and baking classes, art classes, and more!

Our 50th Anniversary parties at each location were a blast! From an outdoor cookout to a luau catered by Dairy King, a great time was had by all.







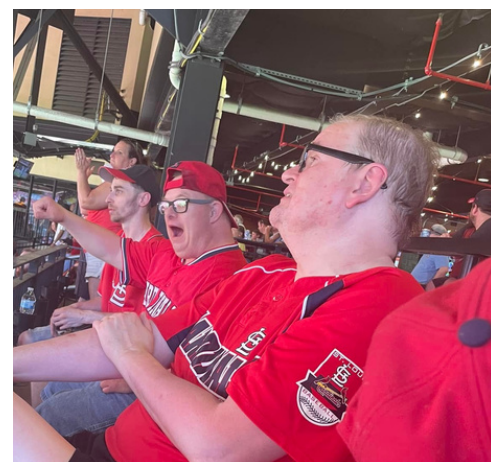
## NEW HOME

We have opened a second CILA home in Trenton. It is a beautiful, modern home with 8 bedrooms, accessible bathrooms, wide open hallways, and comfortable living spaces. Our residents are loving their new home!



## BEING TOGETHER

The residents of our CILA (community integrated living arrangement) homes enjoy the holidays and every day in our community. At parades, parks, restaurants, sporting events, shows, dances, and at home, we know how to enjoy life together.







Our 1st Step Family Educators continued to navigate changes of program operations due to pandemic restrictions. While playgroups and parent trainings continued to be virtual again this year, home visits were able to resume in-person for part of the year. Always finding creative ways to connect and educate, our Family Educators began recording themselves reading children's stories for families to enjoy!

## SERVING FAMILIES:

**7 pregnant women**

**52 children up to 3 years old**

**45 dental visits  
by Dental Safari**

**37 vision screenings  
by Lions Club**



We received so many generous donations from local businesses, schools, and friends to stock our Family Store. Our families rely on these household items such as cleaning supplies, hygiene products and baby supplies. We are also grateful to everyone who provided toys, clothes, and gifts to brighten the holidays for our families.



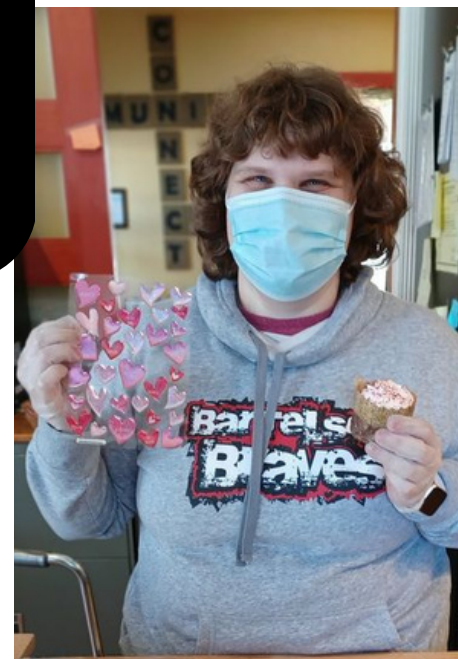




As we approach the 3rd Birthday of our beloved Red Porch Café, it is exciting to look back at all of the amazing things accomplished in the short time. Business has picked up post-pandemic and our employees have stepped up the pace. This year, we have offered a seasonal menu for every season, which has been a big hit! We participated in the Southern Illinois Coffee Trail in October and November, and were voted #1 coffee shop in Southern Illinois by the ILLINOISouth organization.

At the Red Porch, we strive to live up to our mission every day to *Brew Good. Do Good.* We catered Teacher Appreciation weeks for several schools with delicious sandwiches, salads, and other goodies! We love to lend a helping hand to local animal shelters whenever possible, and in March we held a donation drive for local animal shelter items at the café. Our generous friends donated items from toys to food for large dogs, small dogs and cats!

Community Link participants share in the benefits of our Red Porch successes. This year, several participants have worked at the café. From making food, pastries, and coffee to running the cash register, they are working hard! We also had a successful “Red Porch Day” at the Breese East building, where staff members pre-ordered their lunch from the Red Porch, and participants practiced customer service and change making skills.





# Special Needs Foundation for Community Link

In a year where we have celebrated our past and future, the Special Needs Foundation for Community Link has prepared for our needs of today, tomorrow, and years ahead. Formed in 2004 to fund special projects, the foundation's main current focus is to grow our endowment fund. This fund provides secure and lasting support for the participants of Community Link. By giving to the endowment, contributors are building a legacy that will endure for generations.

In 2022, the foundation board hosted the *Building for the Future* Gala, the primary fundraiser for the endowment. The long-awaited evening brought together 230 friends of Community Link for dinner, drinks, auctions, and much generosity. Over \$115,000 was raised through the kind giving by local businesses and individuals. So many gave items, donations, and time for the success of the night.

For 2023, a night with even more fun is being planned for April 1 at the American Legion in Breese, IL. The *Run for Possibilities* Gala will be packed with fast-paced horse racing, auction, dinner, and derby-style refreshments. Please join us for an evening of great fun for a great cause.



**Helen Heimann**  
President

**Amy Kruse**  
Vice President

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*Run for Possibilities Gala*  
*April 1, 2023*  
*American Legion*  
*Breese, IL*





# OUR FRIENDS ARE GOLDEN



It was a sunny Golden Day celebrating Community Link's 50th Anniversary during the 2022 Buddy Walk. At 11am on October 8th, participants, family members, friends, and supporters lined up to walk a mile together in the streets of Breese. We would like to take a moment and thank all who helped us achieve this golden milestone.

Besides our 50th Anniversary celebration, there were several other new activities at the 2022 Buddy Walk that contributed to its success. Community Link had its first ever Best Buddy Dog Show, with a "pawsome" turnout of 20 pups and 1 turtle.

The Buddy Walk raised over \$130,000 and we could not have done it without the help of our team captains, sponsors, volunteers, and donors. We were thankful to have over 1200 registered walkers with us. We are forever grateful for our community!



# FINANCIAL REPORT

Community Link presents the following audited summary of revenues, expenses and changes in net assets for the Agency's Fiscal Year 2022, ending this past June 30. For a copy of the completed audit, please email [info@commlink.org](mailto:info@commlink.org) or call 618-526-8800.

## REVENUE

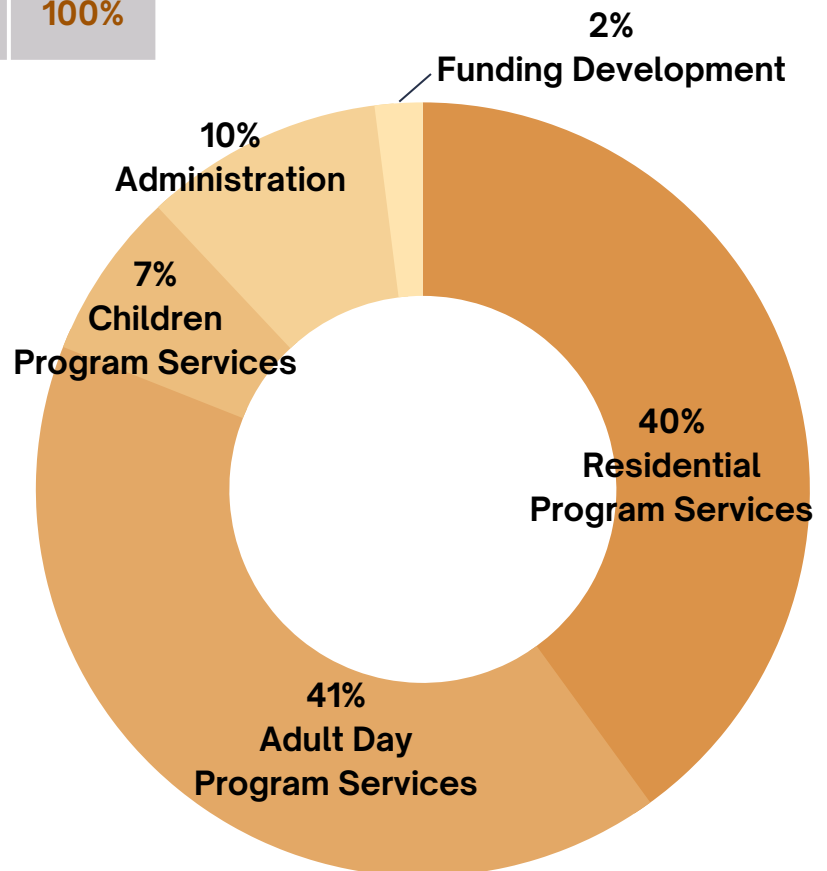
Fees for Service/Gov't Grants	\$7,833,866	83%
Sales from Worksites	\$1,139,559	12%
Contributions, Fundraisers and Other Income	\$455,390	5%
<b>Total Operating Revenue</b>	<b>\$9,428,815</b>	<b>100%</b>

## OPERATING EXPENSES

Salaries & Benefits	\$6,312,804
Other Operating Expenses	\$2,391,499
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>\$8,704,303</b>

<b>Net Operating Gain</b>	<b>\$724,512</b>
Depreciation Expense	(\$243,174)
Depreciation on Capital Assets, Expensed	(\$5849)
Gain on Sale of Assets	\$94,804
<b>Change in Net Assets</b>	<b>\$570,293</b>

## FUNCTIONAL EXPENSE FY 2022







# Message from the Board President

In 1972, Community Link was chartered as a not-for-profit corporation by the state of Illinois. A team of 27 participants and six staff members had set up a satellite of the Kaskaskia Workshop in Carlyle, Illinois. Originally known as the Clinton County Rehabilitation Center, they quickly became popular and grew out of that first location. In the decades since, the Adult Day Program moved to Breese and expanded to Fairview Heights. Infants and families have been served through Early Head Start and Children's Learning Programs. Residents moved into our Community Integrated Living Arrangement (CILA) homes. Then recently, we opened the Red Porch Café in New Baden.

That is a very simple summary of the past 50 years of Community Link, but those years have been anything but simple. So many individuals, our friends, family and neighbors, have been impacted by the programs of Community Link. I am proud to be a part of this organization that has endured and served for so long.

As much as we have enjoyed looking back and celebrating 50 years of possibilities, our focus now is looking to the future. The unprecedented challenges of recent years forced us to approach obstacles differently and focus on what is most important every day. In 2022, we have been happily reconnecting with our friends and community. We have resumed many activities of the past and are expanding program offerings.

In 2023, we will continue to modify programs as we implement the Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) settings rule. The federal rule highlights informed choices, decision making, and community inclusion. In many ways, the new protocols will strengthen the person-centered values that we already uphold. Individuals will have even more autonomy and independence in making life choices.

I am grateful to the talented staff who work tirelessly to ensure that our participants are living their best lives. On behalf of the entire board, I'd also like to thank our dedicated families and generous friends who continue to support our mission to offer opportunities for growth and independence for all individuals.

Sincerely,  
Amanda Loepker

## ***Remembering Friends who have Passed Away***

***Joseph Peters, 67***  
May 19, 2022

***Paul Hall, 70***  
August 18, 2022

***Christie Owens, 35***  
November 2, 2022

***Jakob Reuther, 28***  
November 27, 2022

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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Executive Director



# THANK YOU



*Special Needs  
Foundation  
Run for Possibilities  
Gala  
April 1, 2023  
American Legion  
Breese, IL*

*Save  
the  
Date*

*17th Annual  
Community Link  
Buddy Walk  
September 16, 2023  
Northside Park  
Breese, IL*

#### MISSION

To offer opportunities for growth and independence for people with developmental disabilities.



#### VISION

A community where everyone is valued for their presence and contributions.

#### EAST FACILITY/ADMINISTRATION

1665 N Fourth Street | Breese, IL 62230

#### METRO FACILITY

9815 Bunkum Road | Fairview Heights, IL 62208



#### WEST FACILITY

8510 Old US Hwy 50 | Breese, IL 62230

#### FIRST STEP (CHILDREN'S PROGRAM)

955 N Plum Street | Breese, IL 62230

Proud member of

United Way  
of Greater St. Louis



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