



2025 Annual Report

The Power of Possibility

MISSION

To provide opportunities for choice, growth, and independence for adults with developmental disabilities.

VISION

A community where every person is valued for their presence and contributions.

Jumping Right In.



Dan



Ben



John

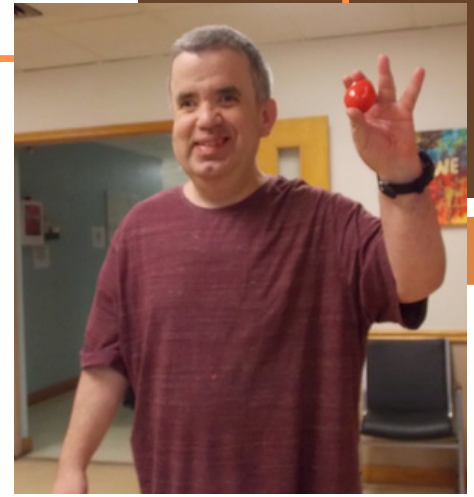
In April 2025, 3 new participants joined us at our Fairview Heights (Metro) Day Program. These 3 guys, John, Dan, and Ben, have Jumped Right In and quickly became part of the Community Link family.

John, Dan, and Ben live together in a CILA home and all started on the same day. While they have all embraced so many opportunities for work, volunteering, learning, and recreation, each bring their unique talents and personalities, and are finding their own joys and successes.

John was unsure of a lot of things during his first days at Metro. He didn't know anyone, and wasn't sure what to expect. It took some time to open up to people, but he was determined to make friends, get involved in a lot of activities, and really wanted to work. He quickly got to know his fellow participants and created connections with staff by participating in all of the great activities they created.

When he is not working, John may play flag football, tend to our plants, or chat with new friends. He is always ready to get out in our community, from volunteering to playing bingo. He has enjoyed movies at the Omnimax Theater, picnics in the park, samples at the Chocolate Chocolate Chocolate Factory, and so much more.





Dan is a chill guy who likes to do it all. When it comes to working, he is happy to tackle any job. He enjoys getting a paycheck and likes to always have money in his pocket to occasionally treat himself to a soda or a meal at his favorite restaurant. A great day for him is going shopping, whether it's the grocery store, dollar store, or department store, he loves staying stocked up on food and supplies.

Dan found it pretty easy to settle in at Day Program. He enjoys everyone's company, hanging out, laughing, and making jokes with his friends and staff. He was a judge of our Metro fashion show, and gave everyone 10's. He has also taken many opportunities to enjoy activities like fishing, bowling, sight-seeing, and visiting the local ice cream stand.

Ben is a kindhearted gentleman with a smile that will brighten your day. When he arrived, he was pleased to reconnect with his friend Ed. Ben and Ed are a perfect pair, who both appreciate a good cup of coffee, and breaks sitting outside on the front bench. Ben likes working and having a paycheck, but he also chooses to join trips out to see or pet animals, including Willoughby Farms, Grant's Farm, and the St. Louis Zoo.

While he is often soft spoken, Ben loves music and is a beautiful singer and talented dancer. He has a wide range of taste, from R&B, to classic stars like Elvis and Michael Jackson. As he was taking his first tour around the building, Ben was singing to himself the Elvis tune "I Think I'm Gonna Like It Here" and the song has become his truth.

At Community Link, we are providing more opportunities for a wide variety of interests, to create meaningful days for every unique individual. These guys are truly embracing the future of Community Link, where every day can be a new adventure.

More Opportunities. More Impact.



Our Adult Day Program has continued to grow by creating more opportunities for participants to be active, visible, and valued members of the community. We have continued to expand beyond our walls, building new connections and exploring more places that allow individuals to share their talents, discover new interests, and engage with our community in meaningful ways.



Volunteerism has been at the heart of this growth. Our participants have stepped into roles that make a direct impact, including delivering Meals on Wheels to homebound neighbors, helping with the community snack program, and supporting local recycling efforts. These activities provide a sense of purpose and pride while fostering friendships and stronger community ties.



Trying New Things. Changing Lives.



Our CILA program has made incredible progress this year in creating more individualized choices and opportunities for participants. By focusing on personal interests and goals, we've been able to open doors to experiences that many had never tried before. For some, this has meant stepping out of their comfort zones and discovering new things they truly enjoy. Whether it's exploring different activities, meeting new people, or choosing how they spend their free time, participants are finding more ways to shape their own lives.

This year has been full of firsts for CILA. Participants took exciting trips to new places, including a memorable adventure to Nashville, Tennessee. We celebrated our very first CILA prom, a joyful event filled with dancing, friendship, and fun. More of our participants also enjoyed several special evenings at The Muny, experiencing live theater under the stars. These new opportunities have been more than just activities—they've been moments of growth, confidence, and joy that highlight the power of choice and new experiences.

✿ PEACE LOVE WALK ✿



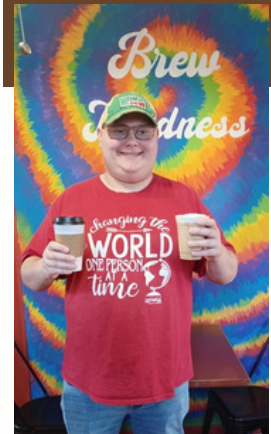
What a *GROOVY* day we enjoyed at the **19th Annual Community Link Buddy Walk** on September 13, at Northside Park. Over 1,500 of our family, friends, and community members gathered together to celebrate individuals with Down syndrome and other developmental disabilities. Thanks to everyone's generosity, we surpassed our goal, raising over \$175,000 to date!

In addition to being a crucial fundraiser for our participants and mission, this day celebrates the amazing talents and personalities of all individuals. The cheers and applause for every performer of karaoke and our first fashion show, brought joy, confidence, and pride for all on stage. Our activities of tie dying, cookie and bracelet decorating, and face painting were fun for all ages. Most importantly, we spent time together and walked together to send a powerful message: **Every person matters. Every person belongs. Together, we are stronger.**



Red Porch Café

The Red Porch Café has been buzzing with energy and community involvement, serving up delicious made-to-order sandwiches and spreading joy wherever they go. At the 2025 Buddy Walk, the café team served walkers fresh sandwiches. The team also served over 200 lunches at the Special Olympics.



We proudly supported staff member AJ in her fundraising efforts for the Polar Plunge with Special Olympics.

Each week the Red Porch and our Busy Bees at Breese East collaborate together to deliver lunches to different towns in Clinton County.

Through each of these experiences, the Red Porch Café continues to blend community engagement with skill-building, getting outside of the walls of the café and making a positive difference one order at a time!





Special Needs Foundation for Community Link

The Special Needs Foundation for Community Link was established in 2004 by families who wanted to create more opportunities for their loved ones and strengthen the future of Community Link. That vision continues today.

Thanks to the generosity of individuals and businesses in our community, and the efforts of the all-volunteer board of directors, the endowment has now grown to more than \$1.1 million. This investment ensures a strong and sustainable future for Community Link, providing a reliable source of funding that will support our mission for generations to come.

The primary source of funding for the endowment is our annual gala. On March 29, the Special Needs Foundation for Community Link hosted the *Unmasking the Possibilities* Gala at the Breese American Legion, bringing the fun and flair of Mardi Gras to the evening. Over 230 guests, filled the room with the excitement of casino games, auctions, and Red Porch Café treats.

Our incredible guests, sponsors, and donors raised more than \$110,000 for the Foundation's endowment, including \$33,000 during our Fund Our Family paddle raise. A heartfelt video featuring Community Link participant David Richards, reminded us why this mission matters. We are so grateful to everyone who made the night a success.



Board of Directors

Helen Heimann **President**
Amy Maschhoff **Secretary**
Joe Heimann **Treasurer**

Amber Brooke
Amy Buller
Barb Gerstner
Ashley Gramann
Bill Hibner
Paul Klostermann
Dana Korte
Brittany Puchbauer



This year's gala celebration will feature *Dueling Pianos*, *dinner*, *drinks*, and *auctions* for a great cause. Join us for an unforgettable evening of music, dancing, and laughter to make a lasting difference.

From Our Families and Friends

“Emma LOVES going to Community Link to spend time with her friends and the staff. She always has a big smile on her face when we see her there and it is obvious that she is with ‘family’ there.”

~Maureen Burch (mother of Emma)



Emma with her parents, Randy and Maureen



David enjoying a vacation to Peoria, IL with his sister Nancy

“Our family is very impressed with the quality care that David receives at his CILA home and at the Community Link Day Program, which has enriched his life beyond our expectations. David enjoys the weekly CILA social activities as there is always something he is looking forward to with his CILA family, in addition to the time he spends with me and with his girlfriend, Sharon, and her family. We are truly blessed, and we are grateful for the Community Link staff who take such good care of David. Thank you!”

~Nancy Day (sister of David Dalhaus)

“As a first time Buddy Walk participant, I didn’t know what to expect. But what I witnessed was something I’ll never forget. Over 1,000 people came together to cheer on and support a wonderful cause. In today’s world where times can be uncertain, the Buddy Walk gave me hope and made my heart happy. Coming together is what it’s all about and I’m so incredibly thankful that I got to experience this day with friends, family and my peers. I’m already looking forward to next year!”

~Megan Doyle (Team Captain of the Breese Journal team)



Megan and the Breese Journal team walking the Buddy Walk

By the Numbers

8

CILA Homes in Clinton County communities

229

Individuals participating in Day Program

51.2

Average Age of CILA residents

49

Residents of CILA Programs

86.7%

Percentage of Day Program participants engaged in Community Activities

23%

Percentage of CILA participants needing mobility assistance

4

Day Program locations (Breese East, Breese West, Fairview Heights, and onsite at Clinton Manor)

26

Bus Trips per day to transport individuals to Day Program

Financial Report

Community Link presents the following summary of revenues, expenses and changes in net assets for the Agency's Fiscal Year 2025, ending this past June 30. For a copy of the completed audit, please email info@commlink.org or call 618-526-8800.

REVENUE

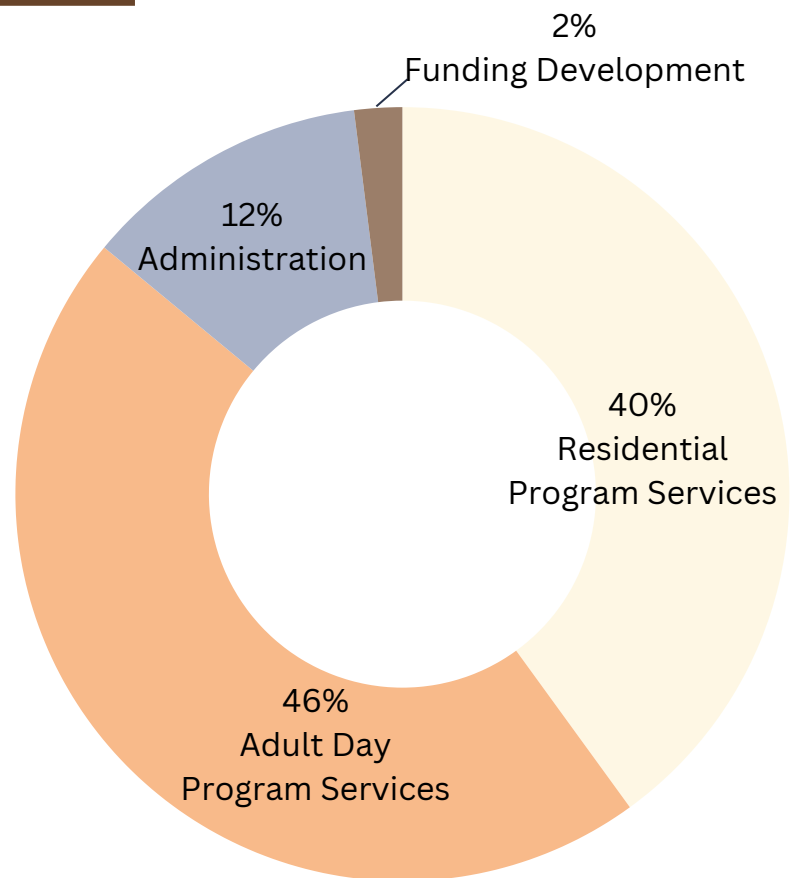
Fees for Service/Gov't Grants	\$9,711,387	86%
Sales from Worksites	\$916,812	8%
Contributions, Fundraisers and Other Income	\$721,400	6%
Total Operating Revenue	\$11,349,599	

OPERATING EXPENSES

Salaries & Benefits	\$9,054,891
Occupancy	\$669,183
Other Operating Expenses	\$1,333,039
Total Operating Expenses	\$11,057,113

Net Operating Gain	\$292,486
Depreciation Expense	(\$190,682)
Change in Net Assets	\$101,804

FUNCTIONAL EXPENSE FY 2025



Message from the Board President

Throughout this report, you will see a recurring theme of “new.” We have been happy to welcome new participants into our programs. John, Dan, and Ben, as well as several more individuals, have been fully welcomed by our staff and encouraged to sample all of the activities offered. They have quickly become part of the family, as if they have been attending for years.



As we continue to evolve our Day Program to provide meaningful experiences beyond work, one focus has been increased volunteerism. This has brought many new smiles and new connections with individuals in our community that we serve by volunteering. At our Day Programs and CILA homes, our calendars have been filled with a wide variety of activities to learn new skills, have some fun, and give back.

These new activities are just one phase of our 5-year Strategic Plan that we began to implement in 2025. We will continue to expand opportunities for skill building, leisure, employment, and volunteerism within our Day Program. We are also working to expand our residential program while ensuring that our operations maintain the characteristics of the “Ideal CILA.”

All of these new initiatives are possible because of the exemplary staff that strive to create memorable moments every day. We are grateful to all of our friends and family in our community who recognize the talents and contributions of all individuals with developmental disabilities. On behalf of the full board, we thank you for creating new possibilities.

Sincerely,
William Becker

A blue ink handwritten signature, appearing to be 'W. Becker', written in a cursive style.

Board of Directors

William Becker President	Teresa Sudholt Treasurer	Jerry Albers Pamela Buehne Andrew Cassibry Heidi Dodd	Charles Hilmes Amanda Loepker Sandra Porter	John Huelskamp Executive Director
Tara Hilmes Vice President	Bailey Rinella Secretary			

Remembering Friends Who Have Passed Away

Andrea Van Hulzen, 70, March 9, 2025	Mary Jo Kluck, 77, July 2, 2025
Daniel Hercules, 63, May 15, 2025	Julie Dawson, 76, July 25, 2025

Thank You!



**Special Needs Foundation
Rockin' the Possibilities Gala**
April 18, 2026
American Legion
Breese, IL

**20th Annual
Community Link Buddy Walk**
September 19, 2026
Northside Park
Breese, IL



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

THE RED PORCH CAFÉ
301 E Hanover Street | New Baden, IL 62265



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