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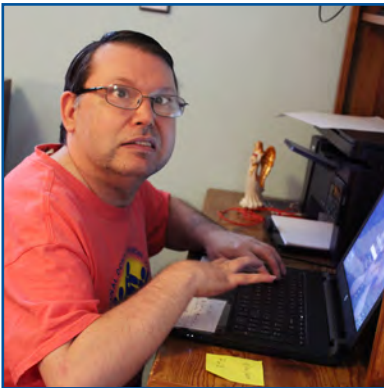
EVERY FAMILY HAS A STORY...

Eight individuals with unique backgrounds blended together to create a beautiful family at our Trenton CILA. Each of them expresses their personalities distinctively and they have grown independently and as a family unit.

RON ALBERS enjoys his yellow and John Deere green walls in his bedroom. He wants a Ford tractor to add to his collection. He said that the staff takes care of him and he is very happy living at the Trenton CILA.



PATTY LANCEY's favorite hobby is knitting. She also enjoys coloring and working on puzzles.



RON BEQUETTE likes his large bedroom. He enjoys spending time with his housemates. Ron helps cook breakfast which makes him happy.



PEARL HALE loves her home and really enjoys going on outings with her housemates. She loves everybody at the home, especially the staff.



WELCOME TO OURS!

MARK KUJAWA loves to spend time in his bedroom coloring. New coloring books and a brand new box of crayons or anything St. Louis Cardinals makes him super happy!



ZACH OWENS is happy that everything is organized and in its place at his home. He likes doing yardwork and helping out the staff. Purple is his favorite color—the same color as his bedroom walls.



MARILYN TOENNIES likes living at the Trenton CILA. Her favorite color is pink. Her bedroom walls are pink and she typically wears a pink sweater or jacket. She enjoys writing and likes books.



ERIC TRAMPE enjoys his room and his blue bed. He likes to go on outings and enjoys helping in the garden. He likes Halloween and he thinks his housemates are nice.

FIRST STEP



James enjoyed dressing up as a veterinarian at a play group in May at the Breese Senior Center.



112 children served in our Dental Clinics!

19 children needed restorative care and 12 children needed urgent dental care.



Brayden, Jonathan, and Alan played with toys during a parent training.



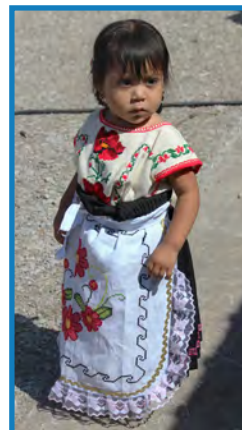
♥ 37 Families Adopted by Private Donors and Local Giving Trees ♥



Parents enrolled in the Early Head Start program conducted live guacamole and salsa demonstrations using a traditional molcajete (stone tool).



A group from Michoacan, Mexico performed a traditional dance called the Danza de los Viejitos at the Buddy Walk.



Shaila, dressed in traditional Mexican attire, celebrates Cinco de Mayo while watching her family perform a Mexican dance at the Buddy Walk.

ESSENDANT™
POWERING POSSIBILITIES

Essendant Foundation donated 50 backpacks filled with supplies such as paper, folders, notebooks, pencils, crayons and rulers to children in our First Step program.

THANKFUL FOR OUR PRICELESS VOLUNTEERS

150
VOLUNTEERS
AT THE
BUDDY WALK

Republic of Tea employees volunteered 150+ hours this year!



Republic of Tea employees, Danni, Tracy, and Lisa sorted 1,800 shirts for our Buddy Walk.



This year a **Volunteer Advisory Board** was created to assist in the overall direction of our volunteer duties. We are grateful for their insight and dedication!



MEET MARY

Mary Usselmann volunteers every Thursday from 9am-11am. She assists with various duties from bus unloading, lunch setup and quality one-on-one time with a few participants.

When asked what it has meant to her to volunteer at Community Link Mary stated, "This opportunity has provided me with valuable experiences that I cherish. It means so much to me how welcoming the staff has been and I am inspired by their love and dedication for their participants."

When Mary was asked what she liked best about volunteering she said, "Spending time and interacting with the participants. It has been enjoyable getting to know them and I love how our relationships have evolved."

Mary stated, "I would encourage other people to give back to this amazing organization that has done so much for people in our area."



Catholic Holy Family of Albers donated time painting the deck at our Carlyle CILA and donated money for the supplies.

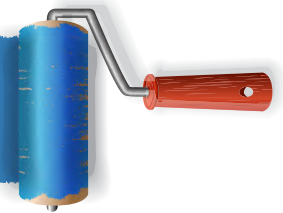


Volunteers saved us \$52,000 by donating their time



This year, Kohl's Cares volunteered at three Community Link events and donated \$2,500.

25+ community organizations volunteered for projects



ENRICHING LIVES ONE DAY AT A TIME

KATIE – When Katie Moose first came to Community Link four years ago she was extremely introverted and would not participate in activities, games or outings. In fact, she would not allow anyone to assist her or be in her personal space. Her ability to express herself seemed very limited and staff wondered if “no” was the only word she knew how to say. Transitioning was difficult for Katie and she would hesitate to exit the bus, leave the classroom for lunch or for home at the end of the day. The situation seemed pretty bleak, but the staff saw the hidden potential in Katie and refused to give up on her. They continued to work with her gaining her trust and affection. Today, she loves to sing and dance and sometimes puts on a special concert for everyone in the lunchroom. Katie has come so far since arriving at Community Link. The woman who once refused touch, now requests hugs. Where there was once anxiety and apprehension, now there exists happiness and ambition. Katie’s parents are very thankful and can tell that Katie genuinely feels safe, happy and comfortable at Community Link.



LUSCIOUS – Six years ago when DeLawrence “Luscious” Meeks first came to Community Link he was a man of few words and mumbled often making him hard to understand. Luscious possessed a few behavioral concerns and was incontinent. Due to the constant care and love from staff, he is now independent when using the restroom, can write his own name, and has begun speaking much more clearly. Most recently, Luscious was placed in the “Go Group” at Community Link’s Metro facility and began volunteering at the Belleville Food Pantry. Initially, staff was apprehensive about him volunteering but after a few visits they proudly reported that Luscious was amazing and needed less assistance than they ever thought he would. His state-appointed guardian came to Community Link’s office and stopped in

his tracks when Luscious smiled and said “Hello Mr. Parker.” Needless to say, Luscious’ guardian is very pleased with his progress. The staff at Community Link Metro has made a huge impact on this man’s life and will continue to open more doors for him. Thank you for helping them make a difference in Luscious’ life!

SUSAN - A few years ago, Susan had a three-year-old daughter and found out she was expecting a baby with her boyfriend. Several months into the pregnancy doctors encouraged Susan to end the pregnancy because the baby was not developing correctly. She asked her friend for help and was referred to Community Link's First Step Early Head Start program. Susan gave birth to a baby girl who was born with microcephaly, a condition where a baby's head is significantly smaller than expected. Susan chose to end the relationship with her boyfriend, but she didn't have everything she needed to make a comfortable home for her and the kids. Thanks to generous donors, she was able to get furniture and other necessary items for her home. She was also able to purchase items from First Step's parent store with Parent Bucks she had been earning by participating in the program. Because of Susan's positive experience with Community Link's Early Head Start program she is on her way to becoming an Early Childhood Teacher and her children are thriving. Thank you for giving Susan encouragement and hope for the future.



RICKY - Ricky Kurtzeborn's opportunities to enjoy community activities and events were limited until he became part of the "Go Group" at Community Link. As a member of this group, Ricky enjoys activities at the Caseyville Community Center such as playing bingo, participating in dances and making crafts. While getting ready to line dance a woman approached Ricky. He was extremely excited to see her. It was his grandmother! They typically only see each other on the weekends so she was surprised to see him at the community center. The two enjoyed the time they spent with each other at the dance. His grandmother asked about Ricky and how he was doing. She was happy to hear that he was going out into the community. Ricky and the other members of the "Go Group" have established special relationships with seniors at the community center—saving each other places at the table, baking desserts to share and simply spending time with each other. Thank you to our community for giving our participants an opportunity to develop meaningful relationships.

These stories are just a few examples of the lives you help us enrich at Community Link. We could not accomplish this without you and for that we are forever grateful. THANK YOU!

MAKING A COMMUNITY IMPACT

Our participants are out in the community giving back and making a difference in the lives of others.

Meals on Wheels

Community Link Enlighteners volunteer their time to deliver meals to community residents through the Meals on Wheels program.



Food Pantry

Metro's "Go Room" assists stocking food items on the shelves and making grocery bags at the Belleville Food Pantry.

Villas at St. James

Participants enjoy visiting with residents and helping with activities.



Adopt a Highway

Community Link adopted part of a highway in Breese so our participants always make sure that this area looks nice and clean.



Remembering Our Friends Who Passed Away

Jeffery Barnett, 42, May 21, 2018

Jean Brenner, 71, May 27, 2018

Patrick Calvert, 33, Feb. 10, 2018

Brenda Cedarquist, 56, Aug. 23, 2017

Stephanie Mahan, 58, April 13, 2018

Brenda McFarland, 75, Nov. 5, 2017

Harold McLin, 65, Dec. 2, 2017

Mark Odum, 60, Oct. 19, 2017

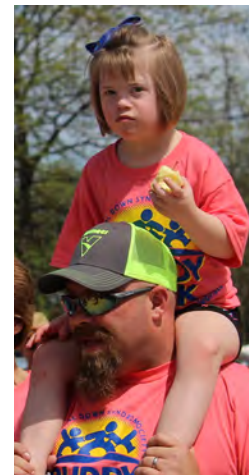
Mark Stewart, 39, Jan. 8, 2018

Natasha Towns, 31, Nov. 30, 2017

Loretta Young, 60, Nov. 30, 2017

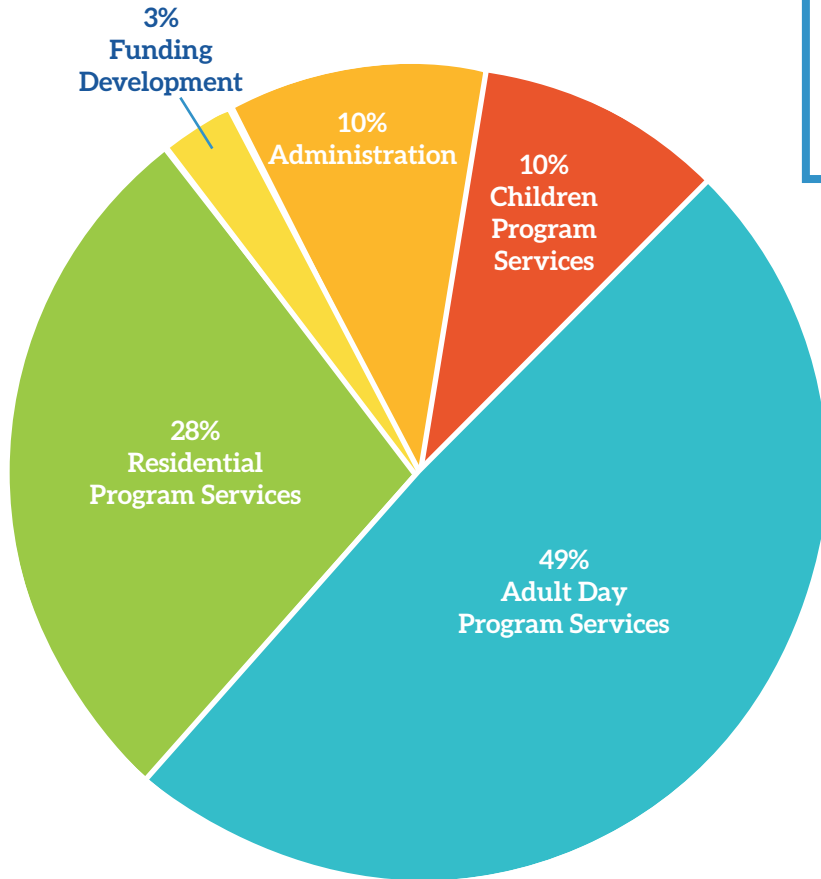
A Sea of Coral!

Breese looked like the Coral Sea with 1,760 walkers / runners flooding the streets on May 5th. Our wonderful community once again rallied behind us and **CRUSHED** our \$150,000 by raising **\$180,000!** Because of your support, our Buddy Walk is ranked number one in Illinois and 20th in the nation!



Financial Report

Community Link is pleased to present the following audited summary of revenues, expenses, and changes in net assets for the Agency's Fiscal Year 2017-2018, ending this past June 30. For a copy of the completed audit, please e-mail info@commmlink.org or call (618) 526-8800.



Revenue

Fees for Service/Gov't Grants	\$6,478,809	77%
Contributions/Fundraisers	\$1,328,504	16%
Sales from Worksites	\$531,730	6%
Investment and Other Income	\$13,262	1%
Total Operating Revenue	\$8,352,305	100%

Operating Expenses

Salaries & Benefits	\$5,728,559
Other Operating Expenses	\$1,599,826
Total Operating Expenses	\$7,328,385

Net Operating Gain

Depreciation Expense	\$215,902
Net Gain after Depreciation Expense	\$808,018

Functional Expenses FY 2017-2018

Residential Program Services - 28%

Adult Day Program Services - 49%

Children Program Services - 10%

Administration - 10%

Funding Development - 3%



Located in Nashville, IL, this house was donated to Community Link from the children of Jerry and Marilyn King after their passing.

*While there is time,
let us do good...*

Leaving a Legacy

Making or amending your Last Will and Testament is a deeply private matter. At Community Link we respect that. In choosing to remember the work of Community Link with a simple bequest in your will, know that your generosity ensures the most vulnerable will always be cared for. Let your final story be the one you choose. To ask questions or confirm details, you can speak privately to Cindy our Development Director at 526-3938 or CindyT@commlink.org.

FY 2018 Board of Directors

Joseph L. Heimann, President
Dax Garrison, Vice President
Sandra Harris, Treasurer
Amanda Oelze, Secretary
Donna Brauer
Paulette Evans
Jennifer Foushee
Jason Gourley
William Hibner
Theresa Morrison
Ariel Washington
Tracy Welker

Executive Director

John Huelskamp

Message from the Board President

Thank you to everyone for making the past year another great year for Community Link.

Even with our many successes, Community Link is at a crossroads. Over the past five years we have made great progress in improving our financial stability by increasing our CILAs with the addition of our Trenton and the soon to be opened Nashville houses. We also had another record Buddy Walk and we have solidified our commitment to our Foundation. These are significant accomplishments which can easily carry Community Link for years to come.

We can take pride in our financial success, the product of good stewardship and hard work. However, nearly 80% of our revenue comes from the government and only 5% of our support comes from the community. If we continue to rely so heavily on the government, particularly the State of Illinois, we undoubtedly will continue to have underpaid employees, underfunded mission and unfulfilled goals.

We still almost exclusively depend on the workshop model to give meaning, purpose and dignity of work to nearly all of our participants. Currently, only a few of our participants work in the community in salaried positions. The rest are employed in our workshop earning a sub-minimum wage. It is time to move beyond near complete reliance on the workshop.

My vision for the future is simple. We must accomplish two things in the next five years.

First, we need to increase the number of Buddy Walk participants from 1,800 to 10,000. When we become **THE** event in the community, one that the St. Louis media covers, then we will be able to make a profound impact on the lives of the participants and employees of Community Link. **We have the model, we just to need to increase the numbers of walkers. Help us do that!**

Second, we need to find a substitute for the workshop that is dependent on piece work from others at subminimum wages. Our participants, like all Americans, are proud to work. They want to earn their pay, be part of a team and know they are respected. We need a future in which most of the participants work in the community, not just a few. The ones with more challenges would work in a self-sustaining business that produces a product that we can sell to everyone. You can help us achieve this future. **Help us identify community jobs for our participants and help us develop a business designed for our participants.**

We have an enthused leadership team directing Community Link. They are serious about challenging, teaching and inspiring our entire community by making Community Link an inspiration for us all. Join me in helping them lead us to new heights and I will see you at the Buddy Walk on May 4, 2019.

Best Regards,

Joseph L. Heimann



Community Link

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