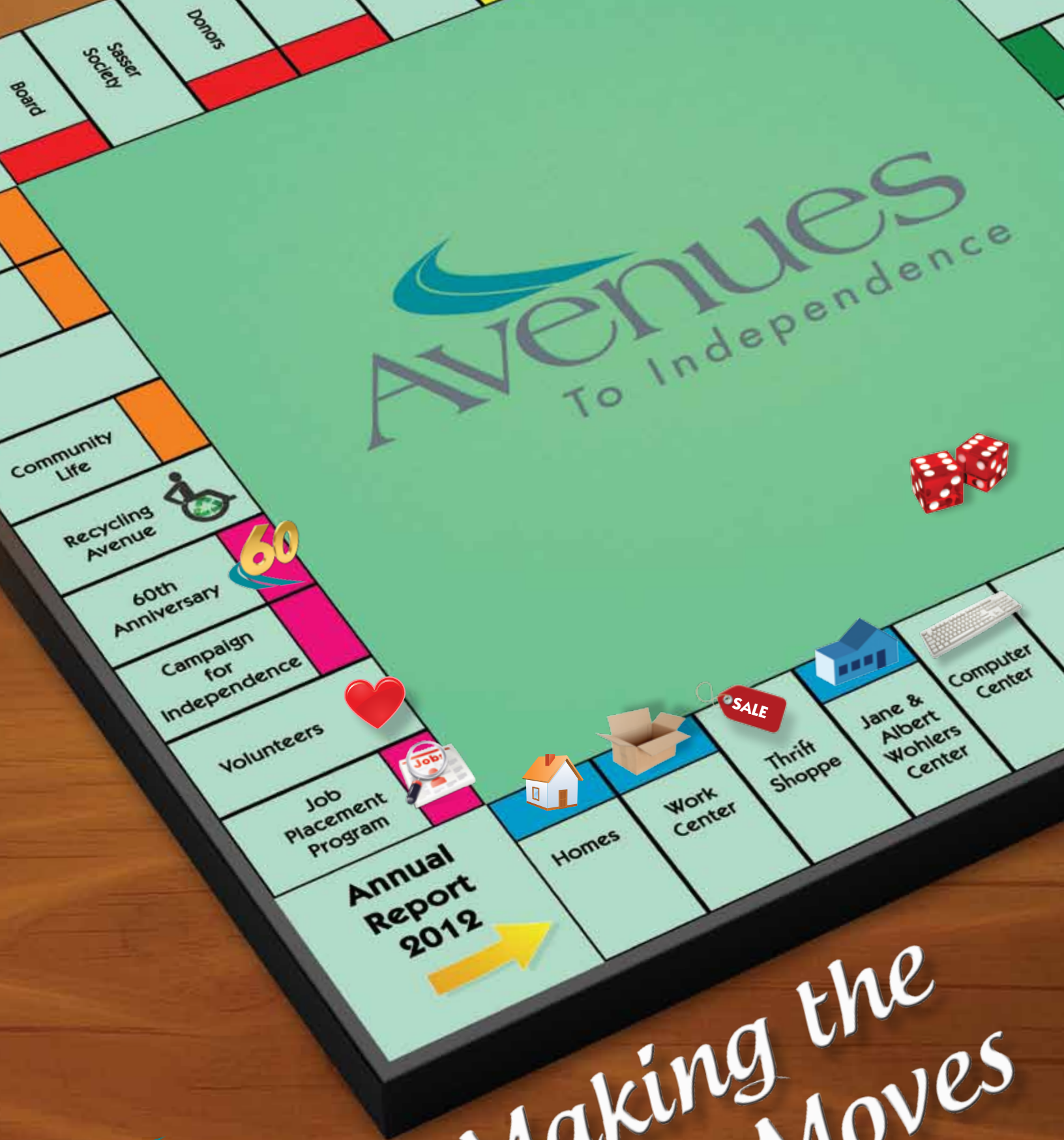


Avenues To Independence



Making the
Right Moves



a Message from the Directors

Dear Friends of Avenues,

Since 1953, Avenues to Independence has existed to provide individuals with autism, cerebral palsy, Down Syndrome and other intellectual, physical and developmental disabilities to live, learn and work in the most independent settings possible.

Throughout this annual report, you will see examples of independence and accomplishments. In addition, you can read about the innovations taking place within our programs and view profiles of donors, volunteers, board and staff whose work has contributed to Avenues' overall success.

You have all helped to establish, grow and sustain these very important services. Today, more than 200 individuals with disabilities have opportunities that one could never dream of in 1953.

We know that much more work needs to take place to bring Illinois and its system of disability services up to 21st Century standards. Fortunately, for those individuals supported by Avenues to Independence, ours is a progressive, modern organization that has weathered the recent economic storm and will be here to support individuals with disabilities for generations to come.

This is possible because of you and your commitment to our cause. Thanks for **"making all the right moves"** for Avenues to Independence.

Sincerely,

Jacqueline Kimel

Chairperson
Avenues Board of Directors

Robert Okazaki

President and CEO

Our Mission...

Avenues to Independence is dedicated to putting aside old ideas about what is possible. We work in partnership with the community to support and encourage people with disabilities to lead the lives they choose. Our success will eventually be measured by how little we are needed.

Making the Right Moves...

Working for Independence

Avenues to
Independence

**Annual
Report
2012**



In Avenues nearly 60 years, we've always worked hard to make the right moves. But today we are faced with a rapidly changing game plan from the state. Illinois ranks 49th out of the 50 states that support people with developmental disabilities in community-based programs. That means funding is at an all-time low for the people that we care so much about. At Avenues, we understand that the people we serve will continue to be successful only if we find new ways to provide the exceptional opportunities and programs we have been known for since 1953.

At Avenues to Independence, we have always put aside old ideas about what is possible, so please be assured that we are indeed making the right moves to do just that. Our committed leadership team advances the organization and ensures that we sustain – and ultimately improve – the quality services we provide to more than 200 people with developmental and other physical or intellectual disabilities, so they will continue to live and work in the community with independence and dignity.

Jane and Albert Wohlers Center



Executive Director Robert Okazaki, along with residents Jim Kearns (left) and George Minasian collectively represent nearly 100 years with Avenues.

Recycling Avenue



Greg Campone, co-founder of Recycling Avenue in 2007, works in the Recycling Avenue enclave at our Wheeling work center.

Volunteers



Cindy Krupski displays the canvas she painted in Avenues art class, one of several featured at the Love Affair fundraiser silent auction. Pat Grimes proudly made the winning bid!

Homes



John Davis was thrilled when staff member Calvin Keyes offered (on his own time) to take him to a concert at the United Center. Without Calvin's help, John would not have been able to attend. For Calvin, it was a time to "hang out" with a friend.

Making the Right Moves Throughout the Year...

Behind the red brick façade of Avenues administrative center lies a dynamic hub where ideas flourish, problems get solved, and strategies are planned – all designed to enrich the lives of our participants. It's the place where efforts and accomplishments enable us to make the right moves, due to the capable leadership and exceptional longevity among our staff and board members. Many staff members and participants have spent most of their entire adult lives with Avenues, resulting in relationships and special bonds that have flourished for 20, 25, and even more than 30 years together.

Recycling Avenue continues to help the environment by recycling small electronic items while providing employment and training opportunities. Currently, the program has nine workers who have listed and sold more than 2500 items on Recycling Avenues' eBay site, which recently earned a prestigious red star feedback rating from their satisfied customers.

Recycling bins are located in more than 30 locations in the metropolitan Chicago area. In addition to their thriving recycling and resale business, Recycling Avenue strives to adapt technology and software that help them work more efficiently and will benefit others with disabilities. They are currently partnering with a University of Iowa Ph.D candidate to develop computer mouse software that will assist individuals with motor impairments.

Nearly 200 volunteers help improve our participants' quality of life. From supporting our fundraising efforts by serving on committees, assisting with facilities maintenance and engineering projects, conducting special activities and classes, or even taking residents to a ballgame or for a manicure, the volunteers make a positive impact. And often, it's because of our participants that volunteers get involved with Avenues. More than 20 years ago, program participant Cindy Krupski got a job at the First National Bank of Des Plaines, where she met fellow employee Pat Grimes. Cindy is the reason why Pat initially connected with Avenues. Both currently work for different employers, but the friendship has strengthened through the years.

Avenues sustains as many as 74 adults in our residences, and provides additional services for nearly 25 individuals that have home based support. A major accomplishment this year is that we continue to provide residential services to the individuals who lost state funding, some after more than 30 years of support. Our residents are encouraged to experience everyday life in their community. They receive training in daily living skills that are essential for independent living. These and other decision making skills are carried out by each individual to the best of their capabilities, and as independently as possible. Additionally, our dedicated staff is working with families on our residential waiting list to help them take advantage of current openings in Avenues' residential program.

Thrift Shoppe



Volunteer Anita Hornbrook assists Avenues' participant and employee John Kelly with rearranging artwork at the Thrift Shoppe

Job Placement Program



Bill Rogers, one of the participants working in the community, leaves his home to walk to Jewel, where he has worked for nearly 20 years.

Work Center



Efrén Miranda, one of the top producers at the work center, keeps busy stuffing holiday stockings for Maurice Sporting Goods.

Computer Center



In the reception area of the work center, Kevin Brazeau opens incoming on-line orders, and also runs the computer's virus scan.

The Thrift Shoppe provides Avenues with a strong, visible presence in the community while serving as a learning opportunity for more than 10 participants and volunteers. It has increased its program components by creating niche jobs. Our participants learn to deal with the public, problem solve, and gain confidence in their abilities while preparing for future employment. The Thrift Shoppe has also been the base for a few participants who have developed specialized services, such as flower arranging and sewing repair.

The Chicago retail shop keeps busy with local patronage, as well as a growing email base with over 800 subscribers.

Obtaining community based employment for our participants remains very challenging in this economic climate. While we have several qualified workers waiting for employment opportunities, there were few new jobs in the private sector. As a result, several initiatives were introduced, including the development of a computer training center and a "Train to Hire" program, where our workers initially take a job as an unpaid intern as they gain experience and training.

We have also welcomed some formerly employed back to the work center where they can learn new skills and earn a paycheck, and others are preparing for future employment by volunteering at Avenues Thrift Shoppe.

Five days a week nearly 150 program participants come to the work center to do light assembly or packaging jobs. The work gives them a sense of purpose and provides a paycheck. This is especially important as many of the workers have no other means to earn an income. Besides the sense of dignity and pride achieved from working, the participants also enjoy spending time with their peers.

The work center's goal is to obtain more high volume projects that will allow our program participants as much hands-on activity as possible. Vendors like PepsiCo, NTN Bearing Corporation, and Farmer Brothers Coffee continue to provide jobs for our workers.

At the same time, the work center staff is developing the therapeutic and rehabilitative aspects of work and the benefits it provides the program participants.

A computer center is being built within the work center in Wheeling where program participants can update their computer skills, or learn how to use a computer for the first time. More and more, our program participants are seeking to enrich their computer skills and obtain community employment, while others want to communicate on-line with family and friends and learn to express themselves. For many, computer knowledge is an important step towards achieving independence.

Initially, the computer center will feature twelve work stations, including two that are wheelchair accessible. A dedicated computer specialist will instruct and supervise persons in appropriate skills and activities, including the use of software specifically designed for adults with special needs. Ultimately, our goal is to place computer stations within other Avenues' locations.

Campaign for INDEPENDENCE

Working for Independence... Assuring Dignity

As the state of Illinois has demonstrated an increasing inability to support the current and future needs of persons with disabilities, the people and families Avenues serves are faced with a severe economic challenge.

Now more than ever, Avenues must move forward and meet the needs of more than 200 individuals who look to us for support every day. Since our founding nearly 60 years ago, we promised the people we serve opportunities to live and work in the community with independence and dignity. We've kept that promise for nearly 60 years, and we don't ever intend to go back on it.

For this reason, we have initiated our *Campaign for Independence*, a five year plan to help finance the future of Avenues to Independence. Our goal is to create a legacy for the future that will support the Avenues residential, day training and employment services, and create a fund from which we can maintain our homes and support centers. This will allow people with disabilities to live, learn and work in the most dignified, highest quality settings possible.

Campaign Goal: \$3.8 Million

The Campaign will Provide...

- **Independence and dignity for the people we serve. They want to be contributing members of our community, and they have much to offer.**
- **Greater financial independence for Avenues.**
- **Peace of mind and confirmation to families that Avenues will be here for their loved ones for many years to come.**
- **Continued presence in the community; inspiring and empowering the lives of ALL that come into contact with Avenues participants, today and well into the future.**

The Campaign for Independence has been a great opportunity for us to meet with families and community supporters and discuss their commitment to Avenues.



Making the Right Moves...



Avenues to Independence is a place where independence is celebrated every day of the year. And it has been so for nearly 60 years.

In 1953, Avenues began when a group of parents believed things should be different for their children with developmental disabilities. The change began in the basement of the First United Methodist Church of Park Ridge, where classes were held to help educate and prepare those children to live and ultimately work in the community. The parents knew then that old ideas must be put aside for persons with developmental disabilities.

Those simple roots have become extremely deep-seated, and we are still dedicated to putting aside old ideas about what is possible.

Approaching our seventh decade, we continue to embrace the programs that have been at the core of everything we do since our inception.

This fiscal year Avenues earned a three year accreditation from CARF (Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities).

“Who could have imagined 60 years ago that Avenues would flourish to support and encourage thousands of people to lead the lives they choose?”

The CARF seal is considered the hallmark of quality in human services. Since Avenues first applied for CARF accreditation more than 20 years ago,

we have consistently received the highest rating.

Despite our past accomplishments, we know there is much we can do to provide services for the future and support each new generation of persons with intellectual, physical and developmental disabilities. We are confident that under the stellar leadership of our administration and board of directors, and the continued support of our families and friends, we will continue to put aside old ideas about what is possible.

As we plan our 60th celebration, we know that today’s achievements truly are a foundation for the future, as Avenues makes the right moves.

Celebrating 60 Years



Statement of Financial Position

Fiscal Year 2011

ASSETS

Current Assets	1,656,271
Land, Buildings and Equipment (book value)	1,862,291
Interment Sites	10,000
Other Assets	4,143

TOTAL ASSETS **\$3,532,705**

LIABILITIES and NET ASSETS

Current Liabilities	755,860
Long-Term Liabilities	489,552
Total Liabilities	1,245,412
Beginning Net Assets	2,718,461
Change in Net Assets	(431,168)
Ending Net Assets	2,287,293

TOTAL LIABILITIES and NET ASSETS **\$3,532,705**

STATEMENT of ACTIVITY (Condensed) for the 12 Months Ended June 30, 2011

REVENUES

Government	2,667,040
Thrift Shop Sales, Job and Service Contracts	341,957
Contributions and Special Events (includes \$382,877 from Avenues' Foundation)	832,617
Program Fees	758,494
United Way and Park Ridge Community Chest	11,250
Miscellaneous Revenue	3,375
Interest Income	2,027
Unrealized Gain (Loss) on Investments	4,752

TOTAL REVENUES **\$4,621,512**

EXPENDITURES

Staff Costs: Direct Care (Program)	2,934,372
Management & General	301,354
Fund Raising	240,327
Total Personnel Costs	3,476,053
Professional Fees & Contract Service	194,004
Occupancy	510,440
Client Pay	101,873
Transportation	193,942
Supplies	98,367
Small Equipment Purchases, Equip. Maintenance, Equip. Rental, and interest on Equip. Purchase	21,077
Contribution to Affiliate (Prospect HUD Project)	31,069
Other	99,467
Bad Debt Expense	144,610

TOTAL EXPENSES **\$4,870,902**

DEPRECIATION **\$181,778**

TOTAL EXPENSES WITH DEPRECIATION **\$5,052,680**

TOTAL CHANGE IN NET ASSETS **(\$431,168)**

Board of Directors

Chairman.....	Jacqueline Kimel	Allan Bartel	Michael MaRous
Vice Chairman	Gregory Simmons	Matthew Coyne	Peg O'Herron
Secretary.....	Robert Healy	Edward Dernulc	Michael Prindiville
Treasurer	Eric Johnson	Jerry Feldman	Bonnie Reinhart
President and CEO	Robert Okazaki	Fred Gillick	Annette Roma
		William Gorman	Fred Sasser
		Patricia Grimes	Richard Spatafora
		Graham Hills	Steve Wilson

Foundation Board

Chairman.....	Fred Sasser	Paul Carlisle	Curt Rodin
		Clarence Herbst	Howard Stone
		Jacqueline Kimel	Nan Weiss Ham
		Robert Okazaki	

Campaign for Independence Leadership Committee

Campaign Chair	Jerry Feldman	Allan Bartel	Jacqueline Kimel
Honorary Chair.....	Clarence Herbst	Silvia Campone	Peg O'Herron
President and CEO	Robert Okazaki	Edward Dernulc	Fred Sasser
		Robert Healy	Gregory Simmons
		Graham Hills	Robert Washlow

Avenues to Independence Partnership Boards – Suburban and Chicago Divisions

Suburban Chair..... **Greg Simmons**

Chicago Chair

Dirk Ahlbeck	Bonnie Bulfer	Jerry Feldman	Curt Manning	George Shewfelt
Jason Allcox	Michael Bulfer	Andrea Goodkin	Rosemary Mulligan	Joel Shoolin
Diana Almazan	Paul Carlisle	Eldon Ham	Elaine Nekritz	Brian Stewart
Glen Amundsen	Joyce Christensen	Susan Hopkins	Tara Nemeth	Abizer Zanzi
Laura Amundsen	Karen Clarke	Jim Hornbrook	Sandra Pernick	
Ron Bjelopetrovich	Ed Coyne	Bruce Jancovic	Elke Quade	
Marc J. Blumenthal	Donna Dernulc	Sheldon Kimel	Ed Reinhart	
Cindy Bozik	Raymond Emerick	Kathy Korsch	Cheryl Rodgers	
Lori Brayer	David Fasano	Don Lindstrom	Collin Sasser	
John Brown	Nicole Faulkner	Jill Liska	John Sasser	

Heritage Society becomes Sasser Society

**Creating
a Legacy...
Ensuring
the Future**



In honor of the Sasser family's decades long and multi-generational support of Avenues, the Heritage Society was renamed the Sasser Society at the May 2012 Heritage Society Reception. The society was established 12 years ago to recognize and honor donors whose future gifts will secure continued opportunities for people with developmental disabilities.



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Jane and Albert Wohlers Center
515 Busse Highway
Park Ridge, Illinois 60068

Non Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Park Ridge IL 60068
Permit 47

2012 ANNUAL REPORT

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(847) 541-5250
www.avenuespackaging.com

Avenues Thrift Shoppe

7710 W. Touhy Avenue
Chicago, IL 60631
(773) 631-6230

Avenues to Independence is a non-profit 501 (c) (3) organization providing services for adults with intellectual, physical and developmental disabilities. Avenues offers a variety of programs which enhance an individual's work, social and daily living skills. It is Avenues' goal to provide work and residential opportunities enabling those with disabilities to be as independent as possible. Avenues does not discriminate services or employment on the basis of race, age, color, sex, ancestry, religion, national origin or handicaps. Avenues is accredited by CARF (Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities.)

Scan Here with your
Smartphone for more Info



Avenues to Independence is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization



Find us on Facebook

www.avenuestoindependence.org