

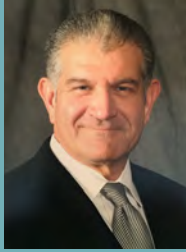
Avenues
To Independence

Celebrating
65 years



2018
Impact Report

**Celebrating
65 years**



Jerry Feldman
Chair, Board of Directors



Fred R Sasser
Chair, Foundation Board



Robert Okazaki
President and CEO

Dear friends

In 1953, Dwight Eisenhower was President, the Academy Awards were first broadcast on television and the Korean War finally ended.

Interspersed among this news was an article published in the *Park Ridge Advocate* simply titled “PRARC”. The article highlighted the assignment of a room at the Park Ridge Methodist Church, to be used as a classroom for the “Park Ridge Aid for Retarded Children”. The article also announced that “PRARC stands ready to commence classwork on Monday morning, October 5”.

That was the humble beginning of Avenues to Independence. In an era when there were no public schools for children with disabilities, the people of Avenues created opportunities where none had previously existed.

Over the next 65 years, Avenues would continue to be creative. As special education became law, our organization changed and grew to create a broad range of residential, employment and day programs supporting adults with autism, cerebral palsy, Down syndrome and other intellectual, physical and developmental disabilities. Today, over 200 people throughout Chicago and the suburbs are supported in programs operated by Avenues to Independence.

Avenues’ creativity is also evident through our many fund raising events. Today, despite Illinois’ poor history of state support, it is our collective efforts in fund raising that improve the well-being of our folks and allow everyone to live as independently as possible.

The future will require us to be even more creative. Government funding is on the decline, while demand for services continues to grow. To meet this demand, we must modernize our day services, enhance our residential programs and expand the network of people interested in supporting our cause.

In 1953, there were no educational services for children with disabilities. We worked to solve that problem. Today, the well-being of adult individuals with disabilities is at risk. The people of Avenues will step up to solve this dilemma as well.

Congratulations to all of us for 65 years of service. Thanks in advance for helping kick-off the next 65 years!

Sincerely,

Three handwritten signatures in black ink, corresponding to the individuals in the portraits above: Jerry Feldman, Fred R Sasser, and Robert Okazaki.

DELIVERING ON A PROMISE MADE 65 YEARS AGO



It all started

in 1953 when a postman in Park Ridge named William Knaack delivered on a promise. On his route William noticed many children with developmental disabilities in the community were home during the day because there was no place for them in the public schools. William himself had a child with Down syndrome and worked with other parents, friends and neighbors in the community to start what was then known as Park Ridge Aid for Retarded Children.



In the basement of the First United Methodist Church his daughter and nine other children were able to attend classes and receive the support they needed from the community. The communities we serve are still coming together 65 years later to serve individuals with developmental disabilities. Thousands of individuals have been touched by our organization, many who have been with us for decades. William Knaack began the idea of putting aside old ideas about what is possible and we will to continue to deliver on that promise every day at Avenues.

Above: The Park Ridge Aid for Retarded Children's first class posing in the basement of the First United Methodist Church. Left: William Knaack, founding member of Avenues with his wife Jean at the first Love Affair in 1988.

Celebrating
65 years

Working for independence

When William Knaack began what is now known as Avenues to Independence he may not have been able to foresee what the future would hold for the children being served by the organization.

Currently Avenues has employees that work a variety of positions within the community. Many of the Avenues program participants have held positions for several years. **Mary Anne Sullivan** is one of them, “Avenues has kept me competitively employed for most of the 18 years I’ve been here.” Mary Anne is an attendant in the women’s locker room at the Niles Family Fitness Center. She started when the facility opened in January 1999, and with 18 years of service is one of the longest serving employees there.



Some of the Avenues program participants that work in the community become local celebrities. **Cindy Wroblewski**, has been a program participant at Avenues for 25 years and has worked at local grocery stores during that time.

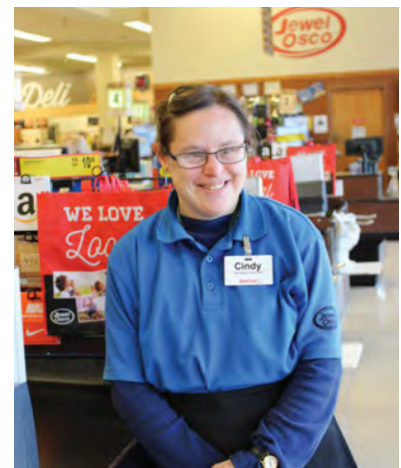


“I love it at Jewel. It’s the workers there that are very nice. I’m very proud of Avenues’ staff that’s helped to get me the job.”

She deserves a star on the Avenues Walk of Fame since starring in a peer-to-peer video with her roommate Nora about stress management created by the Down Syndrome Center at Advocate Lutheran General Hospital in Park Ridge.

Many of the people who attend the Wheeling day program have the ability to work and earn a paycheck. **David Roma**, program participant for more than 20 years, enjoys doing his job at the Wheeling Center, “I like working because I do the piece work; and I like making money”.

Clockwise from left: Mary Anne at her job at the Niles Family Fitness Center making sure towels are stocked, and the floors are kept dry; David shown rolling product for one of the many contract jobs at the Wheeling Center; Cindy at her job at Jewel in Park Ridge. She loves the interactions she has with both customers and co-workers.



Community living

Individuals that are supported by Avenues staff live in apartments, townhomes, and single family homes. Avenues staff provides support for residents which includes helping with cooking, housekeeping, budgeting, and other daily living skills. The people of Avenues want to live as independently as possible and experience everyday life in their community.

David Goldblatt, a 23 year resident at Herbst Family House in Park Ridge, appreciates the level of independence that he has been able to attain. “I used to live with my Dad in Long Grove. But I came to Avenues because I wanted to do more things on my own and have a job.”



Longtime resident **Jenny Dziejczak**, a resident of the Des Plaines Cambridge House said, “I like living at Avenues because a part of Avenues is like everything to me. It changed my whole life around.” Jenny shares her home with four other housemates. She loves her job at the Wheeling Center and enjoys listening to 1960’s music and collecting several types of memorabilia.

Jeff Jones was originally a program participant at another organization. After seeing what Avenues had to offer for Jeff his family wanted to give him the independence that he wanted so badly. “I’m working at Avenues and I like living in my house. I clean my room– nice and neat. I love Avenues.” He loves earning his own money and the freedom to commute to work by bus on his own.



Clockwise from upper left: David is a maintenance employee at the Wheeling day program. He loves to play the guitar and even enjoys cooking; Jenny with her housemate and friend George; Jeff works two jobs, one at the Wheeling Center and the other at Culvers.

Life-long learning

Avenues program participants have the ability to become life-long learners by the opportunities offered at the Wheeling Center.

Cassie Lee Jenkins has always enjoyed learning. She attends courses at Harper College and Alexian Brothers and loves taking advantage of the computer lab at the Wheeling center. “What I learned about the computers here at the Wheeling Center is that they are adaptive pieces of equipment. It’s a lot easier to use”.

Cassie’s dream is to one day work in an office and use the on the job skills that she learned in her five years at the Avenues day program.



Clockwise from above: Cassie takes full advantage of the computer center since the adaptable machines make it easier for her to use; Brian seen with the winning bidder for his artwork at the 2017 Spotlight on Wine event; Paul really enjoys doing Zumba. He also likes to play basketball with the other program participants.



Brian Ray is a budding artist who loves learning new techniques to create artwork. “I like painting. I make cards; and flowers.” When asked about the winning bidder of his artwork at the Spotlight on Wine event Brian said, “she said she loved the flowers. She took it, gone. Sold!” He often sells his works of art at the Avenues events throughout the year.

At the Wheeling Center there are a variety of programs to participate in. Zumba, a very popular activity choice, is a great way to break up the day

as well as encourage healthy life choices. **Paul Joseph** “We do Zumba; we do dancing and twisting. It’s fun, I love going to Zumba.”

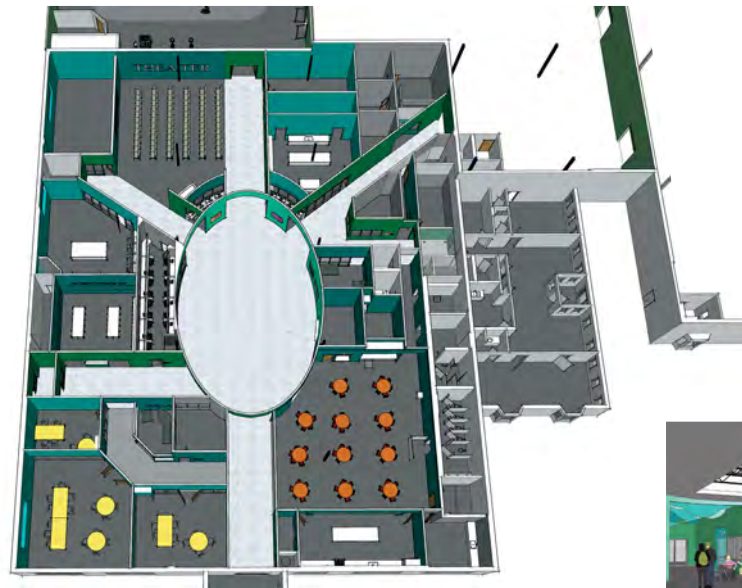


Looking to the future

When parents and families are looking for the next steps for their family members they can trust that Avenues to Independence will continue to put aside old ideas about what is possible.

Wheeling Center Renovation Project

How do we find a healthy work/life balance? That's a question many of us strive to answer in our daily lives. It's no different for the people that Avenues' serves, and at Avenues we have always worked towards helping our program participants answer that question.



Here is an overview of what the changes will look like at the Wheeling Center. The Culinary Avenues cafe lets Avenues program participants cook and enjoy their meals with friends. The Recreation & Fitness Area has space for Zumba and dance class.



In 2017, Avenues' staff, Board of Directors, family members and program participants collaborated to create an exciting renovation plan for our current Wheeling Center. This plan will ensure our day services exist in a relevant, modern and welcoming place to promote work, lifelong learning and social opportunities for 150 current and future participants.

The renovated center will provide:

- Instruction for employment readiness, computers, art, cooking, exercise, healthy lifestyles and more
- Outings to enjoy what the community has to offer
- A quality meeting place for our seniors
- Programs for the next generation of clients who will need our services
- Spaces and services to meet the physical needs of those who need more support
- Quiet relaxation rooms where someone can find a respite in the middle of the day



The plan for the Wheeling Center was approved by the Avenues Board of Directors, and renovations begin in 2018. We are excited that this plan will support the changing needs of the people we serve today and in the future, and will ensure an updated and welcoming place to explore friendships and what it means to find a healthy work/life balance.

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Spirit of Avenues



Patricia Grimes and Cindy Krupski, whom Patricia met after hiring Cindy to roll coins at her bank in Des Plaines more than 25 years ago.

2017 Recipient, **Patricia Grimes**

The Spirit of Avenues Award is given to individuals who are passionate about Avenues and the ideal of putting aside old ideas about what is possible. The volunteer, donor, family or staff member embraces all that Avenues stands for and provides continued service to the people it serves. At the 2017 Annual Dinner & Dance long time Board Member and Avenues volunteer Patricia Grimes was the recipient of the 4th Annual Spirit of Avenues Award.

Pat was instrumental in the early days of the community employment program and has continued to be involved for more than two decades. She truly encompasses longevity and lifetime dedication. In addition to being a member of the Board, Pat has previously been the Chair for the Fall Fashion Show, Love Affair and Irish Fest.

Previous recipients include AT&T Pioneers (2016), Kathy Seiwert (2015), Avenues staff (2014).

To honor the 65th Anniversary of Avenues to Independence the *Spirit of Avenues* will now be named the **William & Jean Knaack Spirit of Avenues** award.

We know the Knaack's legacy will continue to be celebrated in future generations.

The Jane & Albert Wohlers Visionary Award

2018 Recipient, **Robert Healy**

The Jane & Albert Wohlers Visionary Award was created to honor the idea that everyone deserves to be to be a productive member of the community. Due to his philanthropy and vision for future generations Bob Healy was awarded the Jane & Albert Wohlers Visionary Award at the 30th Annual Love Affair. Bob Healy got his start with Avenues through the Builders of Skills program, a small organization that supported adults with multiple disabilities including deafness. In 1997 Avenues to Independence acquired Builders of Skills and Bob along with his son Kevin became part of the Avenues Family.

Bob and his wife Peg O'Herron, both still active board members, created and Chair the Annual Irish Fest event, which in March celebrated its 21st year. As the parent of an Avenues resident, Bob was always in line with the idea that individuals need to develop the skills to live independently. With the \$565,000 raised over the past 21 years through Irish Fest, Avenues can continue to support program participants for years to come.

Previous recipients of the Jane & Albert Wohlers Visionary Award include Al Bartel (2017), Alice Murphy (2016), Dale Kendrick (2015), Fred Sasser (2014), Clarence Herbst (2013).



Robert Healy and Peg O'Herron.

A legacy of giving



The Sasser Society honors donors who have included Avenues in their estate plans. We are grateful for the Sasser Society members' far-sighted generosity that will help ensure our life-long commitment and best quality of life for the people of Avenues.

There were 16 charter members when the society was formed in 2000; today there are nearly 90 members. Because of their generosity, Avenues has realized \$3 million in planned gifts since the inception of the Sasser Society.



Fred and Pam Sasser continue the legacy that their family began more than 30 years ago.

- Laura Allworth
- Laura & Glen Amundsen
- Evelyn Anderson
- Lester Anderson*
- Lorie & Allan Bartel
- Doris & Charles Blachut*
- Harold & Wanda Braner*
- Lori & Richard Brayer
- Michael Bruni
- Barbara & Leonard Bunge
- Barbara & Jack Cavalenes
- Karen Clarke
- William Dearhammer
- Jeannette Debicki & Wanda Debicki*
- Donna & Edward Dernulc
- Charles Derrickson*
- Sally Derrickson
- Patricia & Dennis DuBoux
- Susan & Howard Ebner
- Ann Marie & Allan Ehrlich
- Sue & Jerry Feldman
- Marianne & Clark Gapen
- Marilyn Goll*
- William Gorman*
- Vivien Gorman
- Brenda & Jerry Grafman
- Peg O'Herron & Robert Healy
- Clarence Herbst
- Graham Hills

- Linda Hills
- Anita & Jim Hornbrook
- Roberta & Gerald Horwitz
- Mary & Eric Johnson
- Terri Kaisling
- Dale Kendrick
- Cathy & Robert Kerr
- Jacqueline & Shelly Kimel
- Greg Kintzle
- Edith Koomuyjian*
- Floyd Kortenhof
- Georgene Ross & Alan Lifschultz
- Mary Lou Loughlin
- Lillian Martiny
- Susan Matejka
- Jim Meyer & Francine Ross
- Jordan Minerva*
- Alice Murphy
- Brian Murphy
- Kevin Murphy, Jr
- Kevin Murphy, Sr.*
- Marianne Bark Nettelhorst
- H. Terrence O'Brien
- Robert & Judy Okazaki
- Christel & Jack Owens
- Judith Parker
- Konrad & Melita Parker*
- Blair Plimpton*
- William & Mildred Powell*



Eric and Mary Johnson are welcomed in the Sasser Society.

- Mary & Michael Prindiville
- Craig Randall*
- Patricia Rascia
- Maria Rawski*
- Collin Sasser & Alison Whittington
- Pam & Fred Sasser
- Robert & Doris Sasser*
- Sheila Schultz
- Michele & Joel Shoolin
- Lorraine Shouldis*
- Jean & John Simms
- Wanda Smail*
- Marianne Tamura*
- Dianne Teipe
- Daniel Watts
- Rita Whalen*
- Jane & Albert Wohlers*
- Joan & Jerome Wroblewski
- Mary Zungrone

We honor the memory of our deceased Sasser Society members, whose names are italicized and featured in color.

**Celebrating
65 years**

Statement of financial position

Avenues to Independence

June 30, 2017

ASSETS

Current Assets	505,342
Land, Buildings and Equipment (book value)	1,421,326
Interment Sites	10,000
Other Assets	40
	<u>1,936,708</u>

LIABILITIES and NET ASSETS

Current Liabilities	333,760
Long-Term Liabilities	0
Total Liabilities	333,760
Beginning Net Assets	1,691,191
Prior Period Adjustment	0
Change in Net Assets	(88,243)
Ending Net Assets	1,602,948

TOTAL LIABILITIES and NET ASSETS **1,936,708**

STATEMENT of ACTIVITY

(Condensed) for the 12 months ended June 30, 2017

REVENUES

Government	2,412,934
Thrift Shop Sales, Job and Service Contracts	225,527
Contributions (includes \$1,016,918 from Avenues' Foundation)	1,472,303
Program Fees	827,977
Park Ridge Community Chest	19,000
Miscellaneous Revenue	7,366
Interest Income	2,480
Unrealized Gain (Loss) on Investments	<u>8,485</u>
TOTAL REVENUES	4,976,072

EXPENDITURES

Staff Costs:	
Direct Care (Program)	3,209,583
Management & General	295,072
Fund Raising	<u>291,667</u>
Total Personnel Costs	3,796,322

Professional Fees & Contract Service	133,309
Occupancy	442,639
Client Pay	79,447
Transportation	184,315
Supplies	139,385
Small Equipment Purchases, Equipment Maintenance, Equipment Rental, and interest on Equipment Purchase	30,535
Other	114,739

TOTAL EXPENSES 4,920,691

DEPRECIATION 143,624

TOTAL EXPENSES with DEPRECIATION 5,064,315

TOTAL CHANGE in NET ASSETS (88,243)



We exceeded our Giving Tuesday goal of \$65,000 and with a combined matching gift from the Coleman Foundation and an anonymous donor we raised more than \$78,000. Thanks to our generous donors we can continue to provide programs to benefit the people we serve.

Thanks to the generous support from the community we are well positioned to make a lasting impact.

Statement of financial position

Avenues to Independence Foundation

June 30, 2017

ASSETS

Current Assets	4,542,155
Land, Buildings and Equipment (book value)	3,935,369
Other Assets	2,024
	<u>8,479,548</u>

LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS

Current Liabilities	114,576
Long-Term Liabilities	<u>1,625,727</u>
Total Liabilities	1,740,303
Beginning Net Assets	6,849,544
Prior Period Adjustment	0
Change in Net Assets	(110,299)
Ending Net Assets	6,739,245

TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS

8,479,548

STATEMENT of ACTIVITY

(Condensed) for the 12 Months Ended June 30, 2017

Contributions	491,086
Special Events Revenue	551,388
Building Usage	230,876
Investment Income	162,338
Realized gain on investments	9,278
Unrealized Gain (Loss) on Investments	308,936
TOTAL REVENUES	1,753,902

EXPENDITURES

Grants	1,023,818
Staff Costs	86,001
Occupancy	182,267
Professional Fees & Consultation	103,626
Supplies	6,606
Mailings, Appeals and Printing	38,116
Service Fees	10,632
Fund Raising	218,227
Other	<u>18,463</u>
Total Operating Expenses	1,687,756

TOTAL EXPENSES

1,687,756

DEPRECIATION

176,445

TOTAL EXPENSES WITH DEPRECIATION

1,864,201

TOTAL CHANGE IN NET ASSETS

(110,299)



WTTW *Chicago Tonight*'s Jay Shefsky (Top left) along with Allan Rehwinkel, Bill Rogers, Louis Kaufman, Jim Kearns and George Minasian. The Avenues' residents were featured in a segment on *Chicago Tonight* where Jay visited with the guys of Amundsen House. The video was featured on the *Chicago Tonight* website and Facebook page and has received more than 1.5 million views and more than 18,000 shares— making it the most viewed video in the show's history.

**Celebrating
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Leadership

Our exceptional leaders are the most outstanding, inspiring, and creative people that we know. Their expert guidance ensures that Avenues will continue to provide independence and dignity for the people we serve now and in the future.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Jerry Feldman

Vice Chair
Andrea Goodkin

Secretary
Jacqueline Kimel

Treasurer
Eric Johnson

President, CEO
Robert Okazaki

BOARD MEMBERS

Allan Bartel
Linda Buggy
Matthew Coyne
Jeanne Doheny
Clark Gapen
Tom Garcea
Patricia Grimes
Robert Healy

Jill Liska
Mike MaRous
Sara McKitrick
James Meyer
Peg O'Herron
Fred Sasser
Richard Spatafora
Steven Wilson
Jolene Wise Silverman



Chicago Partnership Board members at the 2017 Spotlight on Wine.



Board Vice Chair Andrea Goodkin and Board Chair Jerry Feldman at the Annual Dinner in June 2017.

FOUNDATION BOARD

Fred Sasser, *Chair*

Glen Amundsen
Amy Bergren
Paul Carlisle
Jerry Feldman
Clarence Herbst
Joe Keenan
Curt Rodin
Robert Washlow

PARTNERSHIP BOARD CHICAGO DIVISION

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Collin Sasser, *Past Chair*

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Chad Andrulonis
Amy Bergren
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Karen Clarke
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Sue Tanko

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Bob Border
Cheryl Border
Marc J. Blumenthal
Ed Coyne
Beth DiMeo
Jerry Hogleund
Kathy Korsch
Sara McKitrick
John Sasser
Joel Shoolin
Anne Skoronski
Tom Villano
Cindy Walsh
Jamie Zimmerman



The Suburban Board Members at the Surfin' USA BBQ at the Wheeling Center.

avenuestoindependence.org

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Administrative Offices

Jane and Albert Wohlers Center

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Park Ridge, Illinois 60068
Phone: 847 292 0870

Wheeling Center

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Wheeling, Illinois 60090
847 541 5250

Avenues Thrift Shoppe

7710 W. Touhy Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60631
773 631 6230



Avenues to Independence is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit 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 condition of disabilities. Avenues is accredited by CARF (Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities.)

Thank you to Darwill, Inc. for the courtesy printing of the Impact Report.