

Live





Learn

Work





Play.

2011 Annual Report

The mission of Anixter Center is to provide an array of services and supports for people with disabilities to live, learn, work and play in the community.

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Dear Friends of Anixter Center-

This past year was a time of transition for all of us, and it was an exciting personal transition for me, as I had the privilege to join you in the extraordinary work of Anixter Center.

Anixter Center has experienced many transitions in our 92 years of service – often seeking updated ways to express who we are and what we do. The essence of our guiding mission, however, has always remained consistent and clear: Provide an array of services and supports for individuals with disabilities and related challenges to live, learn, work and play in the community.

The 2011 annual report illustrates a new way of communicating the Anixter Center brand and shows how the mission is realized today in reaching close to 7,000 people through our 37 programs. The key to our long history of sustained success is found in the community, which is the most important element of our mission statement. The power of community is experienced when people are interconnected in a network of relationships giving them strength to accomplish something of value together.

Anixter Center is a community of inclusion where people with disabilities and related challenges build mutually supportive relationships with family, fellow program participants, volunteers, employees and donors. We know that this value of social connectedness must be balanced with an equally important need to gain dignity by making one's own choices in life. Our diverse services and supports consider the whole person and encourage each individual to expand his or her potential.

We are grateful to the community members who have made our work possible over the years — board members, program volunteers, staff and caring donors of funds and in-kind services. As you look through the pages that follow, you will find the names of over a thousand individuals, businesses, foundations and government bodies without whom Anixter Center could not realize its mission.

Thank you for your continued support. I look forward to a bright future for Anixter Center.

Kevin Limbeck

President and Chief Executive Officer

Anixter Center

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Residential Support

Anixter Center manages, maintains, and staffs 14 group residences for 12 people or less, and manages and maintains 124 units of accessible Housing and Urban Development (HUD) housing. Residential support represents more than a quarter of the Anixter Center budget and serves the northern suburbs and North Side of Chicago. Support ranges from home visits, to family services, to 24-hour support.

The 24-hour Supervised Residential Settings are homes with around-the-clock staffing specifically supporting adults who are deaf or hard of hearing, or living with intellectual/developmental disabilities or mental illness. Staff creates opportunities for residents to engage with their communities, whether that means visiting a restaurant or park or library, as well as to develop new skills for day-to-day living.

Anixter Center caseworkers reach out to people who are living in their own homes, and with selected support, can maintain their preferred residences rather than moving to more restricted settings. These Intermittent Residential Support Services connect people to existing community services or directly assist with skills like food preparation and money management, while Respite services are provided in private homes to relieve caregivers who support someone with a disability.





"I live in a building named Dobson."

Carlotta, 45, lives on her own with minimal support from a homemaker who assists with cooking and cleaning. The cleaning, Carlotta says, she could actually do without.

"To me, it looked like a mess [when it was clean]," she says. "I like having everything everywhere!"

Carlotta, who has cerebral palsy and uses a wheelchair, is a resident of Anixter Center's Dobson apartments, which provides 20 fully accessible living units for people with disabilities through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Carlotta transfers the support she receives at home to her work at Anixter Center's day services, where she provides assistance for others.

"I take people who cannot see or hear," she says,

"and I take them around to places they have to go."

Learn

Behavioral Health Services

Day Mental Health Services promotes selfawareness of living with mental illness and provides those with intellectual/developmental disabilities or who are deaf of hard of hearing opportunities to live productive lives through continued education and skill building.

Substance Abuse Treatment offers outpatient substance abuse services at sites throughout the Chicago area to people with disabilities, makes information and treatment more accessible, and supports the development of individualized treatment plans. Addiction Recovery of the Deaf provides substance abuse services to individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Educational Services

Students aged 7 to 21 attend the **Stuart G. Ferst School at Anixter Center** for functional academic and vocational instruction appropriate to children living with autism, behavioral disorders, brain injuries and intellectual/developmental disabilities. Though learning outcomes and strategies are defined by the needs and abilities of each student, as a group, Ferst students are a community of learners all striving to be productive members of society.

The Anixter Center **Literacy** program offers individualized instruction for people with disabilities. Volunteer tutors use one-on-one interaction to assist participants seeking General Education Development (GED) certification, computer training, job seeking skills or increased day-to-day living skills.





The **Training Institute** provides continued professional education and training to the staff of Anixter Center and other community agencies, while the Prevention Department promotes healthy lifestyles by educating individuals with disabilities on managing their medication, the impact of substance abuse and other health-related issues.

Community Support

Research suggests that social circles are smaller for people with disabilities, who may spend most of their time with caregivers or family members rather than a wider circle of friends and acquaintances. Barriers to social engagement might be education, mobility or cost, and the unfortunate result is disconnection from the community.

Anixter Center's specialized day services such as Community Resources & Support/Opportunities

for Choice focus on learning, socializing and actively connecting with the community through field trips and recreation. Training areas include vocational enhancement, wellness and sensory development. Home-Based support provides case management for the Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) adult waiver.

New Focus supports people with traumatic or acquired brain injuries as they attempt to functionally reintegrate back into the community, offering self-help and employment services, and coordinating rehabilitation services with referring organizations.

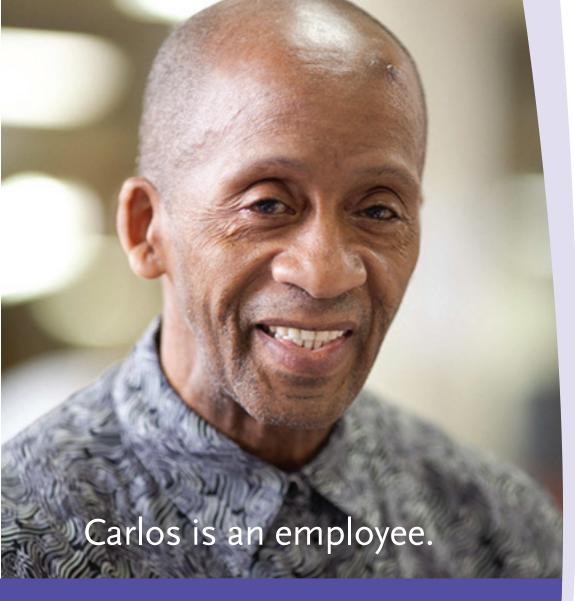
In Highland Park, the Adult Community Transition (ACT) provides therapeutic and supportive recreation and skill building for young adults with intellectual/developmental disabilities, and assists young people in making the transition from special education to independent life and work in the community.

"They listen to what I have to say and what I want to learn."

Thirty-year-old Jose uses skills he's gained through the Anixter Center literacy program to pursue his passion for poetry and further his ambition to become a motivational speaker and writer. Working with Anixter Center tutors, he's learned about different styles of writing, metaphors, and better expressing himself through words.

As his literacy skills have improved, so has Jose's self-assurance. He is active in his community and has been to the state house in Springfield, Illinois as an advocate for special education funding and other disability issues.

"I can tell people my story and carry myself with confidence," he says. "I try to motivate people through my actions as well as my words."



Carlos consistently achieves his goals as a valued employee of Anixter Center Imaging Services.

Carlos learned about the work program at Anixter Center four years ago. His goal was to make a better life for his family, and he says his Anixter Center job keeps him busy and provides the resources he needs to get things done around the house, invite others to visit and do a little traveling.

"If I weren't working, I'd be home watching television," he says.
"I'd rather work to make my own money, and I like the people, too."

Commuting from his home on Chicago's South Side, Carlos takes a bus and train to get to work. "I work all day, five days a week," he says. "I'm on time and I do a good job. That's what's expected of me, and I am always trying to improve."

"I like the job and the people; everyone treats me with respect."

Employment and Business Services

One-fifth of the Anixter Center budget is dedicated to employment services for job-seeking individuals with disabilities. In 2011, Competitive Employment Placement helped 102 people with disabilities gain employment in retail, transportation, hospitality and other industries. In addition, 120 individuals with disabilities were employed in Anixter Center's Imaging, Janitorial and Packaging businesses, which generate revenue while advancing the organization's mission, and offer paid work experience while providing high-quality contract services to local businesses.

Employment services are tailored to meet specific needs. For individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing, JOBWORKS services are offered in American Sign Language to such companies as Target Corp., Wal-Mart Stores Inc., Midwest Gaming and Entertainment LLC and The Eli's Cheesecake Company. Anixter Center North represents job seekers and provides employment readiness training throughout the north and northwest suburbs. Anixter Center North also operates a site for on-the-job training in the hospitality industry.

Other employment services throughout Anixter Center are tailored to people with disabilities in the Latino community (CALOR: Employment to Independence), those of high school age (The Factory), and degreed professionals (Professional Placement). The Employment Opportunities program introduces job candidates to private sector employers through placement, and operates sites for On-The-Job evaluation assessment in corporate environments that lead to jobs in competitive markets. Anixter Center's on-the-job sites include The Westin O'Hare Hotel, Marshalls Inc., Hyatt Corp. and the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT).

The **Center Court Grille** program functions as a cafeteria for IDOT employees in Schaumburg, Illinois.





Lekotek

Lekotek uses interactive play experiences, and the learning that results, to promote the inclusion of children with special needs into family and community life. Lekotek has built a reputation among toy manufacturers for its expertise in evaluating toys, and in particular, adaptive toys.

Lekotek's Recreational Support Services include Individual Family Play and Support Sessions for Play Groups in three age tiers — 0-2 years old, 3-5 years old and 6-8 years old. During each session, Lekotek Play Specialists help parents and caregivers find new ways to meaningfully engage their children and assist them in discovering new abilities. Lessons learned in the playroom can be applied to daily life.



Compuplay uses encouraging computer software and adapted equipment such as enlarged keypads and track balls, toys and other props to create opportunities for expression, skill development and increased independence. Professional and Family Toy Lending provide more than 50,000 toys that have been analyzed by Lekotek specialists and are safe and adapted for children with disabilities.

Training Services for Parents and Professionals are offered by Lekotek to help parents, educators, specialists or anyone supporting a child with disabilities to better understand their needs and how they play. The Lekotek model is also replicated among 18 sites nationwide that provide Affiliate Support for traditional programs, and the National Lekotek Center serves as the central source for information on starting and growing a Lekotek program that meets the diverse needs of families in their own communities.







"She's non-verbal, but she sure shows her feelings."

Thirteen-year-old Jessica takes measured steps toward a television in a classroom at Anixter Center's Stuart G. Ferst School before gently touching the screen to indicate one of her favorite WII Sports Resort games.

It's a small act that some may take for granted, but, says Ferst principal, Diane Kush, "Choosing things is huge for Jessica."

Minutes later, Jessica is feverishly pumping her arms to propel her virtual cyclist along a winding, seaside trail. Much of her time on the WII is spent receiving hand-over-hand support from one of Ferst's physical therapy assistants, but for Jessica, who is autistic, the ability to play on her own shows the tremendous progress she has made in her time at Ferst.

"When Jessica first came here, she had no affect at all," says Denise Garvy, Ferst certified special education teacher.

"And now she's in the classroom, working and playing," Kush says.

"This is not just play for play's sake."

National Lekotek Center

Business Development

The National Lekotek Center, a division of Anixter Center, has developed extensive expertise in how to make play accessible and successful for children of varying degrees of abilities. After three decades of providing direct services to children with disabilities and their families, this very specialized niche has made Lekotek nationally recognized and a seasoned resource for the toy industry and professionals working with children with disabilities.

Realizing the positive changes Lekotek can make for children with disabilities, Lekotek has established a business development department which packages Lekotek's expertise in the areas of toys, play and children with special needs.



Over the last 20 years, National Lekotek Center has been asked by product manufacturers and retailers to assist them in the following areas:

- Toy and Product Evaluations & Ratings
- Collateral Development Partnerships
- Training

Toys 'R' Us

For 16 years, the National Lekotek Center has partnered with Toys 'R' Us, a national retailer of toys and products for children, to publish the Toys 'R' Us Guide for Differently-Abled Kids. This publication reaches over 1 million families each year through direct mail and in-store distribution and is also available for online use. Lekotek evaluates approximately 200 toys annually, selecting only those with exceptional features for inclusion in the Guide and conducts a formal evaluation process. Upon assessment results, Lekotek drafts the copy that appears in the Guide. Each year, Lekotek's *Top Ten Tips for Choosing Toys* are also featured on page one of the Guide.

AblePlay

One of the National Lekotek Center's accomplishments was the creation of AblePlay, a website that rates and reviews current toys for children with disabilities along with products that enrich their lives.



NAPPA

Since 2003, Lekotek has served as the Toys and Tech Toys judge for the National Parenting Publications Awards (NAPPA). Lekotek evaluates approximately 250 toy products annually, and bestows gold and honor award status to the top products. The feature article announcing the winners is published in 60 parenting publications nationwide. Lekotek writes a short product description for the print publications and more extensive copy for the website. In addition, Lekotek writes an article that relates current toy trends and children who have disabilities.

One Step Ahead

In 2008, online retailer Chelsea & Scott partnered with Lekotek to create an AblePlay-rated section on its retail website. This section showcases toy and play products that are AblePlay-rated, places the AblePlay rating seal on each product, and includes copy written by Lekotek explaining which types of disabilities each product is appropriate for, along with adaption ideas for buyers.

Collateral Development Partnerships

PlayCore

2010 marked the beginning of a partnership with PlayCore, a premier manufacture of playground equipment, to promote inclusion play. The result was the launch of *2PlayTogether*, a comprehensive guide that fosters understanding and fun between children with and without disabilities on playgrounds.

Lekotek worked with PlayCore to carefully evaluate a variety of products through their AblePlay RatingTM and contributed to the publication, launch and promotions of 2PlayTogether.

Lekotek has evaluated and written extensive reports on several different PlayCore product lines including Everlast, GameTime and SNUG.

Training

PlayAbility

PlayAbility, an award-winning manufacturer of toys designed for children with special needs, partnered with Lekotek in 2010 in co-developing trainings. This educational effort was geared to parents, caregivers, family members, social workers, pediatric therapists, special educators, early child-hood educators and others interesting in gaining skills and ideas when playing with children with disabilities. Lekotek provided techniques on how to better facilitate play and creative ways to utilize "PlayAbility toys" for children with special needs.

Current AblePlay Toy Evaluation Clients

Aeromax
American Girl
Swing N Slide –
PLAYCORE
Creativity 4 kidz
B. Toys
EZY Roller
Snug – PLAYCOR
Crayola

Springfree Trampoline Crayonball Buckley Boo Giddy Up
Pal Toys
Manhattan Toy
Goosie
MEGA
Toys N Tayls
Little Tikes
One Step Ahead
Birdcage Press

First Toddle

Crorey Creations

B. Dazzle
National Sporting
Goods
Ambucs
Zats
Playability
Soma Cycle, Inc
Playability Toys
VTech

Playability Toys VTech Melissa & Doug Schoenhut

Current AblePlay Great Find Product Evaluation Clients

Reatrik Saucer
BGR Juvenile Products
Sniffle Buddies, LLC
Banz
Kid Kusion
Creativity 4 Kidz



Chicago Hearing Society

Since its inception in 1916, Chicago Hearing Society has offered an array of services for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing. In 2011, 33,000 hours of sign language interpretation and captioning services were provided by CHS Interpreter Services. The Audiology Clinic, which includes the Hearing Aid Bank, provided comprehensive hearing evaluations, hearing aids and related services to close to 1,000 people.

The CHS Youth Program introduces successful deaf adult role models to deaf and hard of hearing children and teens, and provides structured and creative activities that give youngsters chances to exercise responsibility, leadership and independent living skills. The Social Services and Advocacy program works to ensure accessibility to public and private services, and educate the community regarding the needs of people who are deaf or hard of hearing.

The Domestic Violence and Victim Assistance programs are designed specifically for deaf or hard or hearing individuals, and offer a variety of services for victims and their families, including short-term counseling, court advocacy and crisis intervention. CHS is also a founding member of CHOICES for Parents, a coalition of Illinois parents and professionals working to ensure that children with identified hearing loss and their families receive the necessary resources, advocacy, information, services and support.







CALOR

CALOR, located in Chicago's Belmont-Cragin neighborhood, is a community-based service working primarily to provide Prevention and Education Services to individuals affected by HIV/AIDS. CALOR also offers health, residential and employment services to people living with disabilities. Like all Anixter Center services, CALOR begins with the individual. The staff is bilingual, knowledgeable about community resources and potential employers, and has a deep cultural competency within the community.

Employment Services at CALOR fill an important niche for those encountering barriers to employment by helping develop personal employment plans and resumes, training clients on interview preparation, answering benefit questions and supporting job placement. In addition, CALOR provides Substance Abuse Treatment engagement and referrals for people at risk for HIV/AIDS and substance abuse. CALOR also provides affordable HUD housing at Casa Contreras for residents and families living with HIV/AIDS.

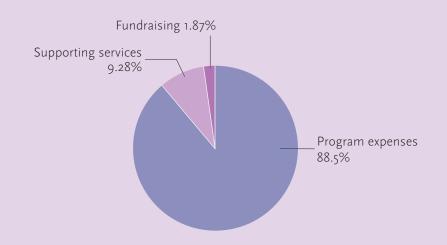


Community,

Financial Overview

Operating Expenses

Program expenses \$ 21,039,370 Supporting services 2,197,926 Fundraising 441,761 Total expenses \$ 23,679,057



Operating Revenue

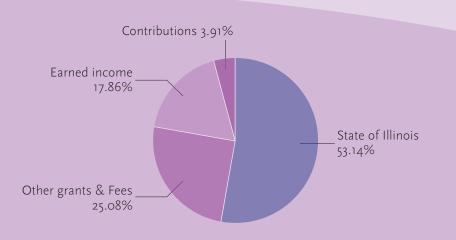
 State of Illinois
 \$ 12,669,512

 Other grants & Fees
 5,978,888

 Earned income
 4,258,646

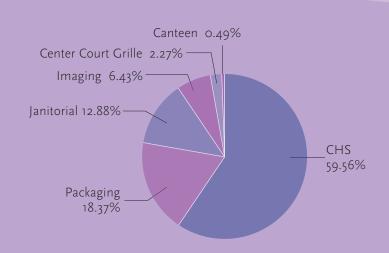
 Contributions
 932,632

 Total revenue
 \$ 23,839,678



Earned Income

Total earned	\$ 4,258,646
Canteen	20,930
Center Court Grille	96,589
Imaging	273,854
Janitorial	548,431
Packaging	782,191
CHS	\$ 2,536,651



Employers of People with Disabilities in Partnership with Anixter Center 2010 – 2011

ACS Xerox

American Security

Analysts in Motion, Chicago

Anixter Janitorial

A-Plus Electric, Niles

Big Ed's BBQ

BNY Mellon

Boston Market, Park Ridge

Café 200

CALOR (a division of Anixter

Camargo Pharmaceuticals,

Cincinnati, Ohio

Challenge Unlimited Landscaping

C&I Metals

CJE Senior Life

Condell Memorial Hospital

Culver's, Mt. Prospect

Dominicks, Buffalo Grove

The Eli's Cheesecake Company

Federal Express

French Café, Evanston

Goodwill Great Lakes Naval Base

Health First Medical Support

Help at Home

Hilton Garden Inn

The Human Development

Foundation

Hyatt Regency Hotel

- Chicago O'Hare International

Airport Schaumburg InfoTrack, Deerfield

Jane Adams Hull House

Jarosch Bakery, Elk Grove Village

JC Penney, Woodfield Mall

Jimmy John's

Kelly Services

Labor Ready Temp Agency

Lakeview Bus Line

LaQuinta Inn, Elk Grove Village

Manor Care Health Services

Mariano's, Libertyville

Marshalls

- Kenosha, Wisconsin

– Waukegan

Meijers, Niles

Morton Salt, Chicago

Office Team

Old Navy

Pepsi Beverages Company,

Schaumburg^{*}

- Lincoln Park

Bloomingdale

Phalanx Family Services

Pop O Licious, Des Plaines

The Salvation Army, Des Plaines

Six Flags Great America

Staff Source

Staffing Now, Schaumburg

State of Illinois

Strack and Van Til

Target

- Chicago, 2112 W. Peterson

- Chicago, 4466 N. Broadway

- Crystal Lake

- Highland Park

- Niles

- Norridge

- Oak Lawn

- Vernon Hills

- Wheeling

Toys 'R' Us, Niles

UPS

Walgreens

Wal-Mart

- Calumet City

Chicago

– Crystal Lake

– Niles

- Round Lake

- Streamwood

– Vernon Hills

- Wheeling

We Clean

Westin Hotel

- Chicago, North Shore

- Wheeling

XSport Fitness

Chicago

Libertyville

Earned Income Imaging, Packaging, Janitorial 2010 – 2011

Easter Seals of Illinois

Enjoy Life Foods

Epworth Church

Federal Express

Field Trip Factory

Freeborn & Peters

Huron Paper Sock

ID Clare/Proforma

General Looseleaf Bindery

FDIC

FGS Inc.

HuFriedy

Community Health Organization

Community Network Systems Inc.

David Grossman and Associates

Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago

Aadvert International Inc.

Accolade Adult Dayservice

Advance Equipment

Advocate Health Care

American Scrap Metal

Attorney General's Office

- The Honorable Lisa Madigan Bazaar, Inc.

Bowman Printing

Centrum Equities

Chenille Kraft

Chicago Cares Children's Memorial Foundation

Childserv

Citation Box & Paper Company

City of Chicago

- City Hall
- Department of Buildings
- Public Building Commission
- Department of Purchasing
- Department of Revenue - Fire Department
- Fire Prevention Department

Cohesion Products Collins Brothers

Comcast

International Promotional Ideas Kernel Seasons LLC

L.C. Industries

Lindo Systems

MD Retail Midland Paper

Midpack

Morgan Stanley

Neal, Gerber & Eisenberg LLP

Network of Strength

Nickelson Industrial Services

NISH - Ability One Nordstrom

Personal Care Products Inc.

Phonak Hearing Systems

Proper Protection Inc.

RBS & Associates

Relax the Back

Scooter's Friends Couture

Scooterworks USA

Sidley and Austin LLP South Suburban Neurology

State of Illinois

- Central Management Services
- Department of Children and Family Services, Office of Child Development
- Department of Employment Security Department of Employment
- Services Department of Rehabilitative Services
- Department of Transportation
- Illinois Pollution Control Board

State of Tennessee

- Department of Commerce and
- Insurance Department of Fire Prevention

Structure Tec

24 Seven Copies

Talbott Teas

United Cerebral Palsy (UCP)

- United States - Army Reserve Center, 88th Regional Support Command
- Department of Housing and Urban Development
- Department of Veterans Affairs

University of Illinois

- Department of Invoice Processing
- Department of Payroll Services

Urban Accents

U.S. Legal Support

William Blair & Company

Williams, Lea LLC W.R. Grace

Zacuto Film Partnership

Friends of Anixter Center

\$25,000+

Colonel Stanley Reid McNeil Foundation

Healthcare Foundation of Highland Park

Lester & Edward Anixter Family Foundation

Morris Braun Foundation Polk Bros. Foundation

Toys "R" Us Children's Fund, Inc.

\$10,000-\$24,000

Anonymous

Anonymous

Circle of Service Foundation, Inc.

Cochran Family Foundation Hillary A. and Matthew Ebach Harris Bank

Jones & Cleary Sheet Metal Co., Inc

David Nicholson

Northern Trust Charitable Trust Mr. and Mrs. Thomas A. Silberman

The Washington Square Health

United Way of Metropolitan Chicago

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Complete Cleaning Co, Inc. Jeannine Cleary and

Frank ten Brink

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Daniel F. and Ada L. Rice Foundation

Dr. Scholl Foundation

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The Fezzik Foundation, Inc.

\$1,000-\$4,999

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- Goldblatt Fund Rita Bakewell

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Hooters

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ITAC

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National Lekotek Center

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Green Gifts to CHS only

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MaryMargaret Sharp-Pucci Louise A. Silberman

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Thomas A. Silberman

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The Children's Surgical

The Royal Group

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Widex

Zatswho, LLC

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Abogados De Mexico Inc.

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AT&T United Way Employee Giving

Campaign

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Bank of America Charitable Foundation

Harold Blankstein

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Betty S. & Robert B. Frank

Charitable Foundation

Franklin A. Chanen

Daniel Brassil

Bravura Networks

Nancy M. Buchanan

Mr. Robert Castillo

Zahia Centracco

Franklin A. Chanen

Chicago Mercantile Exchange

Foundation

Clean Impressions Corp

June Cleary

William J. Cleary, III

Nicole Cleary

Combined Federal Campaign

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Our Values

Person Centered

We affirm the worth, capacity and contributions of all people and treat everyone with dignity and respect. We promote self-advocacy and advocate for full human rights and participation in the community. We offer education and support to make informed choices. We value working together, using our diverse talents and experiences to support individuals in leading a self-directed and full life.

Commitment to Employees

We value our employees and provide a supportive, culturally sensitive work environment with opportunities for professional development and growth.

Open and Honest Communication

We foster an accessible environment in which respectful communication and the exchange of ideas can occur.

Informed Action

We strive to exceed expectations by basing our practice on the best available research and operational experience. With a vision toward being the best, we actively seek ways to improve and innovate through ongoing customer and employee feedback and by promoting a continuous learning environment.

Collaboration

We achieve our mission and inspire communities through teamwork with people living with or at risk of disabilities, families, donors, volunteers, community members, our employees, and other professional partners.

Excellence

We maintain a disciplined, results-oriented organization and operate within the highest ethical standards in all of our working relationships and business practices.



The ability to soar™

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