

OPPORTUNITY HOUSE



empowering people with developmental disabilities

Out & About January 2022

A Look Back at 2021

The year of 2021 was full of wonderful memories and accomplishments. Opportunity House would like to thank all our donors, family, staff, board members and community employers who helped make the year incredible. We are forever grateful for your constant love and support. Here's to another amazing year. Best wishes for the New Year!

Community Day Services

Community Day Services has been staying busy during the last year, while also trying to stay safe and healthy. We were able to attend CDS in-person the majority of the year, and we have enjoyed doing many fun and interesting activities both inside and outside the classrooms. We really enjoyed regaining a sense of normalcy with the return of in-person classroom activities such as music therapy, book clubs, fitness groups, arts & crafts, and the Learning for Life program.

In the community, clients had the opportunity to volunteer at Walnut Grove Vocational Farm and the DeKalb County Community Garden's plot behind Dolce Vita in DeKalb. We are looking forward to expanding both our classroom offerings and community inclusion in the coming year!



Craig volunteering at Walnut Grove Farm



The Learning for Life Program learning about ethnic foods with the new Education & Development Coordinator, Brooke Montavon



Tera taking a trip to the library





Jill and Kathy at the CSP holiday party



Mary Jo enjoying the day at the park



Friends from CSP at a White Sox baseball game

Community Supports Program

Most clients achieved their program goals to get as close to independence as possible. We were excited to welcome Ron into the program and Frank moved to a new apartment where he met new friends. A new staff member was added to the team, Matt McCoy. He has been amazing! Some of our favorite activities include going to a White Sox baseball game, hosting a holiday party, visiting the apple orchard and the train park, and seeing tons of movies.

Vocational Department

Last year 28 people from the Supported Employment Program found or maintained a community job. We are happy to share that no one was laid off because of COVID-19. Job coaches continued to meet with job seekers to submit resumes and applications. On-the-job coaching continued throughout the year to help employed clients keep up their work skills and following Covid precautions.



Jason Started a new job at Keg & Kernel in December!



“Chrysten has been such a wonderful addition to our team. She is always smiling, laughing and helping others when she can. It has been so great to see her confidence grow as she continues to learn new things,” says Amanda Corona, Owner of Culver’s in Sycamore

Residential

There have been some up and downs in the Residential Department these past 12 months. Some of them bad (COVID), but mostly good. Most of our clients have mastered their independent living skills goals for the year. These goals include banking, cooking, making medical appts, etc. Some clients have gained independent skills where they are able to maintain keys to their homes and rooms. We are so proud of them!

We also started a new nutritional program called MY25. This program is designed for individuals in congregate living arrangements, and it modifies the menus according to the clients’ dietary needs as prescribed by their doctor. They are proud of the weight loss, low glucose levels, and the praise they get from their doctors because of the improvement in their health.

We are looking forward to the new year with a positive attitude! We’re hoping for BBQ’s in the park, Fairs and Festivals, and getting back into the community and enjoying life.

Workshop

After a lot of planning and creative thinking, the workshop was able to safely re-open for business on January 19th of 2021. Customers such as Ideal, Seymour, MPP, Snyder Industries and Ledil, who stuck with us over the pandemic shut down, greatly increased their orders. This increase over the past year has provided workshop clients many hours of paid work. OH Inc. welcomed Innovative Component Sales and Clark Foam to our list of valued customers in 2021.

Long-time customer, Verve Inc. showed their unwavering support for our clients and workshop staff in July by sponsoring a pizza party, that was enjoyed by all.

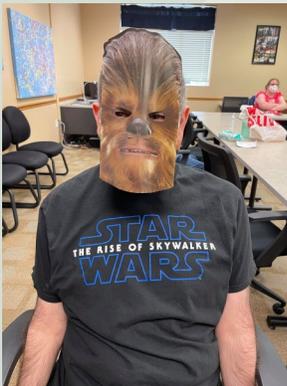
After more than 18 years of service to Opportunity House, our Director of Operations, Ken Safford, announced his retirement. The clients and staff here all wish Ken the best of luck and a very happy retirement!



The workshop crew enjoying a pizza party after a day of work

Recreation

The Recreation Department had some big changes in the year of 2021. We welcomed a new Recreational Coordinator, Emily, to the organization in September and saw the return of in-person activities after many long months of not being able to gather. We exercised our bodies with Center & Flow Yoga and Movin' & Groovin', we expanded our minds and creativity during themed Trivia and Crafts. We also got out & about and explored The Morton Arboretum, saw shows at the Egyptian Theatre and the Sycamore State Theater, and celebrated the holidays by viewing a winter light show.



Sam dressed up on May 4th to watch Star Wars. May the "fourth" be with you!



Laura playing bingo and winning goodies



We love taking trips to the Egyptian Theatre!

Celebrating the New Year

On New Year's Eve, Tina made Green Grinch Punch with red sugar around the rim for the Manor home friends. We tossed balloons, enjoyed popcorn, and danced under the disco light. It was a fun filled night. Thank you Tina for spending New Years Eve with us! We had a great time.



Winter Activities

Baby it's cold outside! Friends from the CLF home stayed warm and had fun making creative snowmen and snowflakes indoors.



Welcome Madeleine!

This is the first year that Opportunity House is participating in the DeKalb County Non-Profit Partnership Internship Program. The Internship program connects undergraduate interns from NIU with DCNP-member organizations.

We are excited to welcome Madeleine Vinz to the Opportunity House team as the Marketing intern! She will work closely with Shaylee, the Marketing & Development Coordinator and contribute to the success of our fundraising and digital marketing goals.



Madeleine is a student at Northern Illinois University studying Marketing and Spanish. She hopes to study abroad in Spain in the near future. Additionally, she works for the Sycamore School District and has grown up in the Sycamore community. She graduated from Sycamore High School in 2019.

Outside of school and work, she plays on the club softball team at NIU and volunteers at her church's middle school youth group. In her free time, she enjoys playing sports like tennis and basketball, baking, and spending lots of time with her friends and family.

Madeleine is very excited to be interning at Opportunity House and to get to know the community more!



Thank You Sycamore Theater

Opportunity House is so grateful for the Sycamore State Theater! They collected donations over the holidays, and raised \$200 for the Recreation Program.

The Recreation Program loves watching movies at the Sycamore Theater and we can't wait to return! OH extends our thanks to all the community members who made a contribution. Thank you everyone for your generosity!



Thank you Annual Appeal Donors

WOW! We did it!! Thank you to all 105 donors who helped us exceed our \$42,000 campaign goal. Thanks to people like you we were able to raise \$44,658 for the Supported Employment Program!

The Supported Employment Program helps adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities find community employment and provides on-the-job coaching to help maintain their employment. All Annual Appeal contributions will enhance this program, making it more effective for the population we serve. Thank you again for everyone's support!



Thank You Douglas C. & Lynn M. Roberts Family Foundation

Opportunity House is grateful for the relationship we have established with the Doug & Lynn Roberts Family Foundation. For many years, the Roberts Family Foundation has contributed significantly to the progress of our organization. The Roberts Family Foundation has provided our organization and the people we serve with continuous support, funding our capital campaign, fundraising events, and other major projects needed to enhance our programs and services.

Opportunity House is beyond grateful to receive a \$50,000 grant from the Roberts Family Foundation on Monday, January 3, 2022. This funding will be used to purchase additional computers and laptops needed to upgrade performance and allow us to budget for an annual rotational computer and laptop program moving forward.

In 2021, Opportunity House received \$20,000 from the DeKalb County Community Foundation Covid Relief Fund, which has been fully utilized. As with other agencies in our field, we continue to struggle to fill open positions. Therefore this funding will also be used for incremental sign on and referral bonus.

This grant also helped offset the costs of the following expenses.

Thanksgiving & Christmas Dinners

Thanksgiving and Christmas dinners were gifted to residents and working staff who were unable to celebrate the holidays with family. Meals were catered from Tom & Jerry's for Thanksgiving, and catered from Italian Dreams for Christmas. Thanks to the Roberts Family Foundation, residents and staff to enjoy a holiday dinner together.



OH Apparel

Opportunity House apparel was gifted to all staff as a holiday gift to show appreciation for their hard work and dedication.



Signage

Signage has been installed around the exterior of the administration building. This includes large plastic letters mounted to the front of the building, two signs on the north and front sides of the building, and a parking lot sign. We are excited to finally have signage since moving to this location in 2017! We hope that this signage will raise awareness of our organization and provide a proud and welcoming atmosphere for staff, clients, and visitors.



Road Crossing

Extra Road Crossing signage was installed for the safety of staff and clients crossing California Street.



Thank You Donors!

December 29, 2021 - January 24, 2022

Sycamore State Theater
Sam Crutcher
Rotary Club of Sycamore
Helen Traglia
Timothy Leacock
Betty Johnson
Steve & Melinda Chaney
Taki's To Go
DeKalb Corn Fest
The Cosentino Law Firm, LLC
Dennis Lewis
Jerry & Sue Bemis
J6 Charitable Foundation LTD
Douglas C. & Lynn M.
Roberts Family Foundation
Robert Clarner
Mark & Janet Susmark
Robert Hutchins
Heartland Bank & Trust
Michelle & Richard Malone
Mike & Eva Marchese
Larry Wilson
Michael Steinbis

Kevin & Marcy Buick
Robert & Mary Pritchard
Jack & Ellen Cress
Steven & Michele Glasgow
Jerrold & Carol Zar
Jason Newhouse
Frank DiNatale
The Traveling Yogi
Deanna Blanco
Sue Jensen
Star & Paul Diedrich
Elliott & Wood, Inc.

Honorariums

In honor of Michael Eberly
Gary & Jacquelyn Eberly

In honor of George Huzenis
JRG Capital Partners LLC
Huzenis Family

In honor of Sarah Bullmer
Steven Bullmer

Memorials

In memory of Robert Wood
Sandra Wood

In memory of Ann Wallin
Joy Wallin
Mike & Karen Wallin

In memory of Helen Stryker
David & Mary Stryker

In memory of
Roger & Ron Hoffman
Brian & Deanna Bazan

In memory of Bob Brayfield
Michael & Linda Walt



Thank you for supporting the mission of Opportunity House to help adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities work, live in homes of their choice, and enjoy community life.



OPPORTUNITY HOUSE

empowering people with developmental disabilities



About Opportunity House

OH is a not-for-profit 501 c 3 organization providing services to disabled adults since 1963.

Our mission is to help people with developmental disabilities work, live in homes of their choice, and enjoy community life.

We offer a wide variety of services including residential, Day program, supported employment, recreation and Special Olympics.

For more information about our programs, visit our website at www.ohinc.org or contact us at 815-895-5108.

Annual Sponsors



The Suter Company, Inc.®



SMITH-**DAHLQUIST**, Inc.
Your Full Service HVAC Provider



Board of Directors

Officers

Ben Swedberg.....Chair
Landon Faivre.....Vice Chair
Helen Traglia.....Secretary
Jim Dombek.....Past Chair
Jeanne Isabel.....Treasurer

Directors

Lorna Bemis
Tim Conklin
Lisa Crutcher
Jennifer Darlinger
Landon Faivre
Jeanne Isabel
Monteil Johnson
Pulchratia Lacey
Kathy Sloniker

