

# OPPORTUNITY HOUSE

empowering people with developmental disabilities



*OUT & ABOUT  
JANUARY 2021*

## *A Look Back at 2020*

The year of 2020 may have been challenging, but it was also full of memories and accomplishments. The staff and individuals served by Opportunity House would like to thank friends, family, board members and community employers who helped make this year incredible. Best wishes for the New Year!

### **Community Day Services**

CDS staff were able to update and organize all of the programming resources and materials. CDS are very pleased with the new classes and activities that will be available to individuals when they return.

CDS experimented with virtual platforms to stay connected, continued the Music Therapy program, and offered virtual classes through Zoom. They look forward to the ways they will be able to continue using technology in the future. CDS had so much fun coming up with ways to keep clients engaged and stay in touch by providing activity kits, treats, and special messages to those who could not attend day program.



*Carol reading in CDS.*



*Learning for Life program learning about artist Horace Pippin.*



*Craig mock voting in CDS.*





*St. Patrick's Day activities in CDS.*



*CDS hosted a drive thru lunch with water toys.*

### **Vocational Department**

As of today, 83% of the clients in the Vocational department are employed. None of the clients were laid off because of COVID-19. The Vocational department has still managed to help clients gain employment throughout the pandemic.

### **Community Supports Program**

Most clients achieved their program goals to get as close to independence as possible. CSP added two new clients, Kiley and Kevin, to the program. One client Mary, moved to a new apartment where she met new friends, and a new staff was added to the team, Jill. She has been amazing!



*CSP enjoyed a day at Jonamac Orchard.*



*Mark sanitizing carts at Meijer.*



## Residential

Residential Staff shared their favorite memories and highlights with residential clients.

### Linden Home

Haley, a DSP at Linden, successfully reached out to the actress, Nikki Blonsky who starred as Tracy in the movie Hairspray. Haley got a personal shout out for Claire on twitter. Claire absolutely loves the movie Hairspray and she really appreciated the personalized message from one of her favorite characters. DSPs Joni and Sierra coordinated a fun karaoke party for all the Linden residents and held an award ceremony afterwards.

### Hudson Home

Staff at Hudson helped David put together a customized scrapbook of his social distance activities. Staff took David to a drive-thru zoo and on a car ride tour of all the fall colors. Hudson also had a Disney week where they did Disney activities and made Disney food recipes.

### Alden Home

Alden staff and residents visited several community parks. They also attended a drive up lunch hosted at Center Cross and DT's water splash drive up lunch.

### Manor & Brian Homes

Staff at Manor and Brian took the time to take the clients on numerous car rides, whether it was to a drive-thru restaurant or the Rochelle train park. The clients enjoyed getting out of the house. The staff created their monthly calendars, making sure to incorporate activities the clients can do at home. Some of the special activities were root beer float night, make your own personal pizza night, movie night, planned crafts, puzzle time, and baking days.

### Maplewood

The staff and clients at Maplewood spent time baking cookies and cakes. The clients had fun creating their own day of the week for the menus so that we were able to incorporate all of the client's own personal tastes. They recently enjoyed a movie night, where they ordered out, popped some popcorn, and watched A Charlie Brown Christmas.



*Mark working on his train table at Linden.*



*Sam decorating Easter eggs at Manor*



*Thanksgiving craft activities at CLF*



*JP practicing the piano at Alden.*



*Rich Road residents enjoying the day outdoors.*



*Fourth of July at Maplewood.*



*Kim helping to clean so we all stay safe & healthy.*

## Workshop

There are two things that really shined in the Workshop. First, is the commitment of the workshop staff to keep the program viable and successful. The second is the patience, understanding, and loyalty of the Workshop customers.

In March, after it was decided to keep the clients out of Day Programming, the workshop staff went right to work filling out customer orders. Even though our workforce went from a daily average of 50 people to 5 people, the workshop team kept the work flowing and our customers satisfied. DT staff, Medical Assistants and Vocational Staff helped out with completing orders when they weren't helping out in residential.

The support of customers like Ideal Industries, Auto Meter, SVI International, Seymour, and Snyder Industries have been very impressive. They have all been flexible with turnaround times and expressed a commitment to maintain partnerships. Their concern for the clients' health and wellbeing have also been inspiring.



Thank you to all the staff who are here for the clients during good and not so good times and to all those in the community who support our mission.



*Sarah bagging instructions.*



*Jason putting together lenses for LEDiL.*

## *Christmas at OH*

### **The Giving Tree**

Every year, First Midwest Bank hosts the Opportunity House Christmas Giving Tree. We have been fortunate to have this partnership for 15 years. Bank employees and members of the community selected ornaments from the tree to help make Christmas brighter for the clients at OH. Without those who participate in the Giving Tree, we would not be able to provide such a great Christmas experience.

Thanks to the kind-hearted community, 18 clients will have the clothing, boots, gift cards, art supplies, blankets and more that they wished for this holiday season. We are extremely grateful for the abundance of gifts we received this year. We appreciate your kindness throughout the year as well as during the holiday season.

### **Santa Clause is Coming to OH**

It's the most wonderful time of the year. Santa made a surprise visit to the group homes. He raised everyone's spirits by greeting the clients and bringing them each a small gift bag. Looks like everyone was on the nice list this year!



*Thank you First Midwest Bank!*



*Hope opening Christmas gifts.*



*Santa visiting the Brian home.*



*Terry opening Christmas gifts.*

## *Holiday Door & Window Decorating Contest*

Deck the halls! The Recognitions and Rewards Committee presented the Holiday Door and Window Decorating Contest. The contest was a fun and safe way to enjoy the holidays at OH. Residential staff decorated a window in each group home and invited clients to join, and Main Building staff decorated their office doors. It was a tough choice, but ultimately the winners were the Community Support Program for their Elf on the Shelf inspired door, and Center Cross for their creative Santa and reindeer displays. Thank you to everyone who participated and brought their creativity to OH.



*CSP staff, Jill & Brianna holding their door decorating award.*

*Center Cross, window decorating winners.*

## A Family with Generous Hearts

The Steinbis & Vanatta families are longtime friends and supporters of OH. We are very thankful for the joy they brought to OH not only this holiday season, but the whole year round. On Friday, December 18, the Steinbis & Vanatta families helped spread Christmas spirit to all 9 of our group homes. They kindly delivered holiday pouches, dinner from Tom & Jerry's, and a holiday movie. The clients were thrilled to see the Steinbis & Vanatta families and all the goodies they delivered. It was a much needed moment of happiness during this unprecedented time. This was the 5th annual Sponsor a Pouch that Shannon has coordinated for the clients at OH. Shannon reached out to the community for donations to help purchase goodies, personal care items,

and gift cards to stuff the pouches with. Thanks to Shannon and the support from the community, they were able to put a smile on the faces of 81 clients from residential and CSP. Steve & Mary Ann Steinbis regularly deliver the Tom & Jerry's dinner every Spring. This year, they delivered the dinner during the holiday season to raise the Christmas spirits of our clients. Thank you for the smiles and joy that you have surprised our clients with. We are truly grateful for your family's generosity.



*The Steinbis & Vanatta families.*



*BJ & Sarah holding their holiday pouches behind a wreath that was donated to each group home by the Boy Scouts.*



*Raising the spirits at Sacramento.*



*Frank from CSP holding his holiday pouch stuffed with goodies and a \$10 certificate to Tom & Jerry's.*



*Delivering goodies to Center Cross.*

# THANK YOU TO ALL OUR DONORS



Throughout the year, the Stateline Toy Collectors Club hosts toy shows and uses the profits to donate to local nonprofits of their choice. For several years, the club has chosen Opportunity House. The purchasing of games, arts and crafts, sporting goods helps to keep our individuals active, engaged and having fun throughout the year. Thank you Stateline Toy Collectors!



2020



2019



2018

## Donors

Nancy Arndt  
 Mary K. Brennan  
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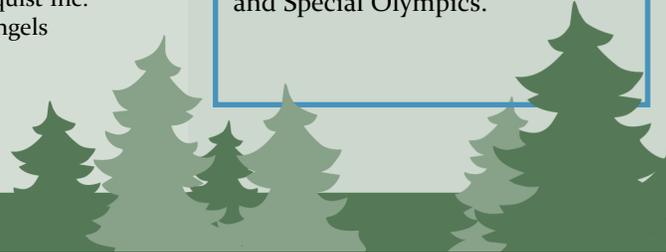
Lorna Bemis, Tim Conklin,  
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## About Us

OH is a not-for-profit 501 © 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.



## Honorariums

**In honor of Claire Petit**  
Ed & Terry Petit

**In honor of Allison Stahl**  
Tony Stahl

**In honor of BJ Berkheimer**  
Margaret Berkheimer  
Gene Anderson

**In honor of Stacy Rummel**  
Paula Howlett

**In honor of George Huzenis**  
Harry & Charles Huzenis

**In honor of Aletta Johnson**  
Katharina Barbe

## Memorials

**In memory of John Olson**  
Bob & Allison Klotz

**In memory of Katherine Reding**  
Jack Reding

**In memory of Linda Schumacher**  
Mike & Crystal Gahlbeck

**In memory of Ralph Schafer**  
Gerald & Sue Bemis  
Carl Dumoulin  
Bobby & Shirley Kyler  
Dale & Cheryl Sanderson  
Sandra Schafer  
Paul & Mary Schweitzer

**In memory of Roger Hoffman**  
Pat Barger

**In memory of Helen Stryker**  
Linda Loudermilk  
John & Sue Rood  
Mary Dave Stryker

**In memory of Raymond Steinbis**  
Greg & Jan Benning  
Tony & Crystal Benning  
Wayne & Doreen Binger  
Scott & Jackie Cantlon  
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Deborah Dillon & Family  
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Rod & Jacque Schairer  
Dick & Laurel Stokke  
Joe & Debbie Strausberger  
Ron & Carla Vanatta  
Plote Construction

In lieu of a Christmas present, this donation is made on behalf of Renee Hoffman Krabbe and **in memory of her beloved brothers**. May they rest in peace and may Renee's joyous memories of them live on and inspire all who visit the Opportunity House. -Rachel Ammann

May our hearts be filled with peace and faith. May our days of doubt be replaced with days of hope and cheer. May we all let love prevail. God Bless us everyone!

Thank you for the "opportunity" to be a part of our Board and grow within the community! May we all have a safe and happy holiday season. -Christine Kyler

Your campaign including Kevin was heart warming.  
The service you provide is wonderful.  
-Pamela Cook-Webb

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!  
-Aldo and Iris DeSandre

You are a gift

Happy,  
happy  
Birthday!



Alice 1/12



Shari 1/10

Lolita, January 1

Robert, January 1

Brian, January 3

Laura, January 5

BJ, January 8

Gregg, January 20



## Employee Walk of Fame



Mia is studying Psychology, Special Education and Family and Child Studies at Northern Illinois University. She anticipates graduating with a bachelors degree in the Spring. Mia is involved with Alpha Phi Omega, a service fraternity at NIU. Last year she held the position of Service Vice President. Mia has been ice skating since she was 8 years old. She used to be on a competitive team and went to nationals 4 times. Now, she skates during her free time and will go to the ice rink every now and then. She also enjoys reading and hanging out with her cat.

### Upcoming Events

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day  
Opportunity House Closed  
Friday, January 18, 2021

For more information  
about our programs check  
out our website at:

[www.ohinc.org](http://www.ohinc.org)

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Opportunity House, Inc.



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### Sponsors

