



Lois Jeanette Curtis

July 14, 1967 – November 3, 2022

Lois was an American artist and the lead plaintiff in the United States Supreme Court case that became known as the Olmstead Decision, in which the court held that the unjustified segregation of people with disabilities was discriminatory and a breach of the Americans with Disabilities Act.



ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT

In Honor of Their Legacy

Judith Ellen Heumann

December 18, 1947 – March 4, 2023

Judith was known as the "Mother of the Disability Rights Movement" and was recognized internationally as a leader in the disability community. Judith was a founding member of the Berkeley Center for Independent Living which was the first grassroots center in the United States and helped to launch the Independent Living Movement both nationally and globally.





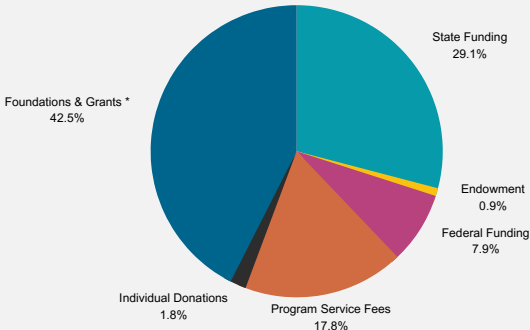
This past year has been a time of great change and growth for our organization. Despite the challenges presented, we remained steadfast in our commitment to our mission and continued to serve our community in new and innovative ways. Our staff and volunteers worked tirelessly to adapt our programs to the changing needs of our community while ensuring the safety and well-being of our customers and team members. Together, we assisted 2,777 people who reached out to us for support with various concerns related to disabilities. We also provided over 200 educational opportunities and conducted 63 accessibility studies in our communities to advance justice, access, and inclusion for all. These achievements would not have been possible without the hard work and dedication of our staff, volunteers, board members, donors, and community partners. This work represents a significant step forward in advancing our mission, and I am excited about the possibilities that lie ahead. I want to express my deepest gratitude to our community of supporters who have made this past year such a success. Your generosity, engagement, and commitment to our mission make our work possible. And to our previous CEO, Joel Cooper, we say a heartfelt thank you for your leadership and dedication. We wish you all the best in your retirement and are grateful for the foundation you have laid for us to build upon. Thank you all for your partnership and for joining us on this journey to create a better world for all. As we look to the future, we remain committed to building on the progress we have made and continue to serve our community in new and innovative ways. We recognize that there is still much work to be done, and we are eager to continue positively impacting the lives of those we serve.

With gratitude,

Yvonne Fleener, President and CEO

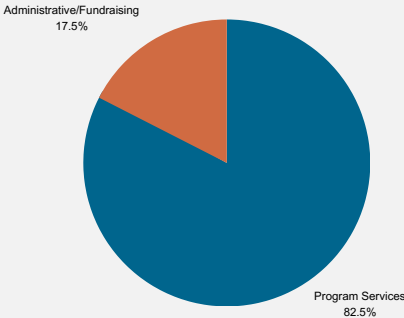
FINANCIALS

Revenue \$4,197,116



*Multi-year grants are reflected in this revenue category

Expenses \$2,713,527



MINDY KULASA
Board Chairperson
Disability Rights Advocate &
Statewide Independent Living
Council Member



BILL MCELHONE
Vice Chairperson
Executive Director of
Kalamazoo Valley Museum



BILL CHAPMAN
Past Chairperson
Retired 9th Judicial Circuit Court
Juvenile Division & Community
Volunteer



SASHA BOERSMA
Secretary
Associate Attorney,
Conybeare Law Office



BRYAN ZOCHER
Treasurer
Executive Director - Education
for the Arts at Kalamazoo RESA

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

WE BELIEVE...

Disability is best understood by people who experience it.

Disability is a natural part of the human condition.

A disability doesn't exist until someone encounters a barrier.

Partnering with others is the best way to create change.

The language we use to describe disability is powerful.



A BIT ABOUT US

Currently in our forty-second year of operation, our vision remains the same: a community that values disability as human diversity, free of attitudinal barriers, where all people benefit with full access and inclusion. Whether someone has physical, psychiatric, neurological, or sensory disabilities, we believe they should be able to thrive and grow at home, in the workplace, and in their community.

OUR MISSION

To educate and connect people with disabilities to resources while advocating social change.

WHAT WE DO

- ✓ INDEPENDENT LIVING SUPPORT
- ✓ SOCIAL SECURITY COUSELING
- ✓ ACCESSIBILITY ASSESSMENTS
- ✓ INFORMATION & REFERRAL
- ✓ ADVOCACY
- ✓ RAMPS & HOME MODIFICATIONS
- ✓ PEER SUPPORT
- ✓ YOUTH TRANSITION
- ✓ COMMUNITY EDUCATION



SERVING BARRY, BERRIEN, BRANCH,
CALHOUN, CASS, KALAMAZOO, ST. JOSEPH
& VAN BUREN COUNTIES

60%

Board members identify
as a person with a
disability.

75%

Staff identify as a person
with a disability.

HIGHLIGHTS



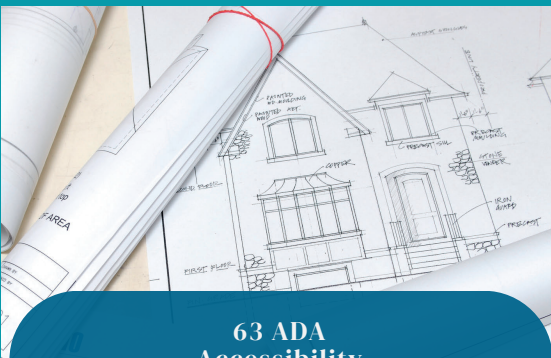
46 ramps
built



12,397 people learned about
disability-related topics in
200+ presentations



2,777 customers served and over
5,500 information & referrals
assisted with navigating resources



63 ADA
Accessibility
Studies completed



New
Battle
Creek
Office

MICHIGAN SENATE RECOGNIZES DISABILITY AWARENESS & EDUCATION DAY ON OCTOBER 21



Disability Network Southwest Michigan hosted its 10th year of Advocacy Academy in 2022. Advocacy Academy is an 8-week paid summer position for people with disabilities ages 16-29. Five young adults from diverse backgrounds were hired for the 2022 Advocacy Academy group. Advocacy Academy interns spent their first days on the job learning about disability history, pride, and advocacy before choosing an advocacy project to work on as a group.

For this year's project, the group proposed Disability Awareness & Education (DA&E) Day as a state holiday to be celebrated annually on the third Friday in October. "The group chose to establish DA&E Day because learning about disability history empowered them, and they wanted to give everyone in Michigan the chance to learn about disability culture," stated DNSWM Community Education Specialist, Max Hornick.

Group members created flyers, brochures, Facebook and Instagram accounts, and a Change.org petition to promote their idea. They sent letters to other disability organizations, contacted their state legislators, and met with Michigan Representative Julie Rogers and Michigan Senator Sean McCann to seek support.

"I was pleased to meet with Disability Network of Southwest Michigan's Disability Advocacy Academy students. Their advocacy project sought to have a legislator introduce a resolution of support for their proposed Disability Awareness & Education Day," said Sen. Sean McCann (D-Kalamazoo). Sen. McCann introduced a Senate Resolution marking Friday, October 21, 2022, as Disability Awareness & Education Day. "I am proud to sponsor this resolution and hope that our adoption of Senate Resolution 167 will honor, celebrate, educate and raise awareness of the rich culture and history of the disability community."