

MetroWest Center For Independent Living



2023 Annual Report

Serving 26 Communities

Ashland, Bellingham, Dover, Foxboro, Framingham, Franklin, Holliston, Hopkinton, Hudson, Marlborough, Maynard, Medfield, Medway, Millis, Natick, Needham, Norfolk, Plainville, Sherborn, Southborough, Stow, Sudbury, Wayland, Wellesley, Weston and Wrentham



Message from the Executive Director

Mission Statement

MWCIL enhances the full participation of persons with disabilities in the community.

Vision

All people with disabilities are empowered to choose how they experience Independent Living.

Leadership Team

- Sadie Simone—Executive Director
- Rose Quinn—Assistant Director
- David Correia— Director of Advocacy
- Danya DelMonaco—Director of Services
- Winifred McGraw—Executive Assistant

Board of Directors

- Joe Bellil—President
- Michael Kennedy—Treasurer
- Tyler Terrasi—Clerk
- Sebastian Leu
- Mark Dempsey

2023 was a year of transition for MetroWest Center for Independent Living. I stepped into my role of Executive Director in April. While the role and the building were new, the staff and the mission of the program were not new. Since I had worked out of the MWCIL offices as the Statewide Independent Living Council Coordinator for the previous nine years, I was very familiar with many aspects of the Center and Independent Living.

During my time at MASILC, I had the good fortune to work in mentorship with Paul Spooner. He taught me the big and little issues in Independent Living, why it’s so important, what obstacles have been overcome, what barriers remain, and ways to make a difference in personal relationships and advocacy. The staff has enabled a successful transition, as I learn the business intricacies of running an IL Center. And thanks to Rose Quinn’s leadership during the months after Paul’s death, and the dedicated staff, our consumers have always received the services that they needed.

Following three years of COVID restrictions, 2023 brought back the in-person opportunities for connection. In March the Independent Living Centers returned to the State House for Independent Living Education Day. Advocates and staff filled the Hall of Flags and then the corridors, talking with their legislators to share the barriers that continue to keep people with disabilities from being able to live, work and participate in the communities of their choosing.

This year also brought back health fairs and in person groups in schools and at the center. MWCIL TAP staff connected with more high schools, and the IL Coordinators were able to better support our consumers. The additional outreach also means we are able to reach more people who need our services.

In 2024 we will continue to strengthen our services, advocacy, education and outreach in 2024. The aging population brings more people into our camp, making Independent Living more important than ever.





Financial

Statements of Financial Position for the Period Ended June 30, 2023

Statements of Activities for the Period Ended June 30, 2023

Support and Revenue

Government Funded Contracts	\$1,233,737
Service Fees	9,100
Gifts, Grants and Contributions	17,988
Total Support and Revenues	1,260,825

Functional Expenses:

<i>Program Services:</i>	
Independent Living Services	887,078
Statewide Independent Living Council	123,677
Total Program Services	1,010,755
<i>Supporting Services:</i>	
Administrative	204,191
Total Supporting Services	204,191
Total Functional Expenses	1,214,946

Changes in Net Assets Without Donor Restrictions	45,879
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Net Assets Without Donor Restrictions — Beginning of Year	465,201
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Net Assets Without Donor Restrictions — End of Year	\$511,080
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Assets

Current Assets:

Cash	\$241,344
Accounts Receivable, Program Services	286,368
Deferred Compensation Account	15,899
Prepaid Expenses	17,842
Total Current Assets	561,453

Property and Equipment:

Office Furniture and Equipment	21,583
Leasehold Improvements	18,378
Subtotal	39,961
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	(23,552)
Net Property and equipment	16,409

Non-Current Assets

Deferred Compensation Account	
Security Deposits	20,000
Right-of-Use Asset, Operating Lease	594,135
Total Non-Current Assets	614,135
Total Assets	\$1,191,997

Liabilities and Net Assets

Current Liabilities:

Accounts Payable and Accrued Expenses	\$16,911
Accrued Payroll and Related Costs	48,100
Deferred Revenue	
Deferred Compensation Plan Obligation	15,899
Operating Lease Liability, Current	80,084
Total Current Liabilities	160,994

Non-Current Liabilities:

Operating Lease Liability, Non-Current	519,923
Total Non-Current Liabilities	519,923
Total Liabilities	\$680,917

Net Assets:

Net Assets Without Donor Restrictions	511,080
Total Net Assets	511,080

Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$1,191,997
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Core Services

MWCIL is committed to serving the diverse members of the community. Danya, the Director of Services, has kept the staff working effectively through COVID-19 and our other transitions!

Total number of staff	11
Staff with disabilities	5
Consumers Served	532
Individual Services	1427
Service Hours	3982

Options Counseling

For individuals needing long term care services, we provide information and assistance for connecting with appropriate resources. This service is typically needed during a time of crisis or when an individual's situation is changing dramatically. Learning their options allows consumers to make informed decisions about their care and where to receive it.

One Care

One Care is an option for adults age 21-64 at the time of enrollment who are eligible for both MassHealth and Medicare benefits. The goal of One Care is to offer a better, simpler way for people with disabilities to get all the care they need in one streamlined, integrated, person-centered plan. MWCIL staff serve as Long Term Supports Coordinators and assess consumer goals, needs and supports. As part of the Integrated Care Team, MWCIL staff work with our contracted One Care partner, Commonwealth Care Alliance, to get appropriate supports approved and put in place. Examples of services include arranging homemaking services, transportation, and home health services.

Information and Referral

MetroWest Center for Independent Living provides disability and community related information to all individuals with disabilities, family members, service providers, and community members who request it.

Peer Support

One-on-one peer mentoring helps people with disabilities develop mutual support, assistance, confidence and understanding. MWCIL provides peer support in a consumer-directed manner over the telephone, in person at the center, or at a consumer's living site.

Advocacy

MWCIL participates in Advocacy based on consumer and/or community issues. MWCIL advocates for needed legislation as well as funding and enforcement of existing laws to improve the quality of life for all people living with disabilities. MWCIL also supports consumer self-advocacy which empowers consumers to be assertive and articulate when faced with obstacles to independent living goals.

Independent Living Skills Training

Independent living skills training is personally tailored to achieve consumers' goals. Some skills relate to personal growth, others relate to learning how to handle and navigate services and responsibilities.

Transition

Some transitions are planned, some are expected and others just happen.

- Moving consumers from institutions to the community,
- Working with youths transitioning to adulthood (TAP)
- Helping consumers living with changing disabilities to maintain their independence.





Focus on TAP

The Transition to Adulthood Program serves 14-22 year old students with disabilities. Most youth services are no longer available after age 22, so it's critical for students to plan and prepare for their transition into adult services. With

TAP, our traditional IL Core services are tailored to young people and their age-related needs. Students learn skills and self-confidence so they can successfully transition from special education to an independent adulthood.

The Youth Services staff work with local students as they prepare for higher education, work, and life after high school. Goals may include college preparation, obtaining a driver's license, improving time management, financial and social skills, job search and interview skills. MWCIL staff advocates at IEP meetings and supports senior projects that match student interests and strengths. Services are tailored to the individual needs of students and works with families and schools to support their community involvement.

COVID-19 drastically impacted the way Youth Services were provided. Things are beginning to change. Online Drivers Education Prep classes continued throughout the shut-downs and this year MWCIL has expanded to hybrid and in-person options, one of which will be held at Marlborough High School. In addition to Driving Permit Preparation, the Youth Services department has begun offering other workshops including Healthy Relationships, Odyssey Planning and Job Readiness.

Increases in outreach and relationship building with area high schools have led to increases in referrals and collaborations. This year Youth Services has worked closely with schools in Natick, Franklin, Hudson and Keefe Tech in Framingham. MWCIL is looking forward to an even better 2024 for youth services.





2020 In-Person Forum

Legislators' Forum

Sponsored by the MetroWest Center for Independent Living and Easter Seals of Ma, the annual Legislative Forum was held in person on February 3, 2023. Karen Langley from REquipment attended as well as MWCIL and Easter Seals staff.

State legislators attending the event included: Senate President Karen E. Spilka; Senator Jamie Eldridge; Senator Becca Rausch, Rep. David P. Linsky; Rep. Jack Patrick Lewis, Rep. Jeff Roy, Rep. Carmine Gentile, Rep. Kate Donaghue (new), Rep. Priscila Sousa (new), and a staffer from Rep. Kate Hogan's office.

Rose Quinn, our Acting Director, welcomed everyone.

Paul Madeiros, President and CEO of Easter Seals, Massachusetts, and Alexandra Ullrich described the College Navigator program which provides individualized services to college students with disabilities based on their goals, strengths, and needs.

Karen Langley asked for permanent funding for REquipment, which has supplied used, free Durable Medical Equipment to many consumers.

David Correia, MWCIL, asked for a \$2 million increase in IL funding, and spoke about the Architectural Access Bill.

The MetroWest legislators are consistently strong supporters of Independent Living.



Advocacy



The MWCIL Advocacy Director provides technical assistance on accessibility to cities and towns, businesses, and individuals. This year, David provided technical assistance to the town of Ashland for their downtown infrastructure project which included sidewalks, curb cuts and new traffic lights. David helped to ensure the push buttons for traffic lights were moved to accessible locations and helped them identify which areas may need variance applications.

David also provided technical assistance to the town of Wrentham's Parks and Recreation Department. With one park in particular, he identified areas that could be easily made more accessible and helped identify grants and funding sources for more complicated and expensive accessibility projects. David connected Wrentham's staff with the engineer from Ashland so they could share knowledge and resources.

The Town of Framingham worked with David to assess a voting location for accessibility.

In addition to filing access complaints where identified, David also worked closely with the AAB to review open complaints and bring them to a resolution, whether that be closing due to compliance, a move to a hearing, or variances.

MWCIL staff provided testimony for several bills this year including the Estate Recovery Bill, The Mass Access Bill and the AHVP Bill .

The Advocacy Director also chairs the Statewide Independent Living Council's Public Information and Education Committee. This committee plans IL Education Day at the State House and is a place for Independent Living Centers to share information about current disability related issues such as changes in the PCA Program, disability related legislation and regulations.





More Advocacy

In addition to the Advocacy Director’s work, and the Direct Service work with individual consumers, several staff members got out into the community and/or spoke up for Independent Living.

Options Counseling and TAP hosted outreach tables at multiple local events, such as Senate President Spilka’s annual 55+ Health and Wellness Fair.

Danya and Erin attended the National Council on Independent Living’s annual convention in Washington, D.C., meeting with their counterparts from across the country, advocating with our legislators and learning at workshops.

Other staff went to Boston to advocate for PCA wages and IL interests.

MWCIL continues to be an active partner with REV UP Massachusetts by maintaining the RevUpMA.org website, email and facebook. REV UP works to increase disabled voter participation, and improve voting access.

MWCIL participates in Dignity Alliance Massachusetts which is dedicated to securing fundamental changes in the provision of long-term services, support and care. We maintain and host the DignityAllianceMA.org website and manage their other online technical needs.





Consumer Stories

These Consumer Success Stories are written by MWCIL staff. All names have been changed. As these stories demonstrate, *every situation is different*. Sometimes a person needs something relatively simple to remain independent while other situations are very complex.

Note: Consumers in stories are not pictured.

Bob, age: 68

Disabilities: Diabetes, Depression

Started with MWCIL: April, 2019

Bob has been an active consumer with MWCIL since April of 2019. During this time Bob has focused primarily on securing accessible housing, as he has lived in a third floor apartment. This has been an increasing concern due to his dependence on insulin for diabetes management as well as his advancing age and decreasing ability to safely climb the stairs. Ben has proven to be an effective advocate for himself, addressing numerous physical plant issues in his building with his landlord.

This past March, Bob was contacted by a Property Manager, letting him know an accessible unit was available. Bob was offered the unit, signed a lease and successfully moved in at the end of April. MWCIL staff assisted Bob in completing his housing application through CHAMP, and provided education on voucher programs and lotteries. Bob took initiative and conducted his housing search independently.

Amanda, age: 19

Disabilities: Autism and Anxiety

Started with MWCIL: April, 2022

Amanda began working with MWCIL in April 2022. At that time, her main goals were to obtain her learners permit, and to find out about the college admissions process. She has worked very hard and quickly accomplished her goal of learning the college admissions process. She applied to and was accepted to The College of the Holy Cross in Worcester. She also has continued to work on obtaining her learners permit, and she will be taking the exam soon. She hopes to have her driver's license before she leaves for college in the fall. Staff is very proud of all the hard work that Amanda has done throughout this year and is confident that if she continues to work hard, she can achieve all of the goals that she has set for herself.

Consumer Stories

Note: Consumers in stories are not in photos.

Lesli, age 64

Disabilities: PTSD, Anxiety, Depression

Started with MWCIL: January, 2023

Lesli began working with MWCIL in December of 2022. Lesli moved back to her home state of Massachusetts from Virginia where she had been living in an abusive situation for over a year. Upon returning to MA, Lesli moved in with a friend and promptly began searching and applying for other housing opportunities. Staff and Leslie worked together on the Common Housing Application for Massachusetts Programs (CHAMP) to increase the opportunities for finding her own apartment. Lesli proved to be a strong advocate for herself, making phone calls, utilizing public transportation to visit different Public Housing Agencies (PHAs), and collecting all documentation necessary to ensure she got onto the emergency wait lists for each place she applied to. In March, Lesli received an offer from a subsidized complex in Framingham. Lesli was able to move into her apartment in early May. MWCIL was able to help her access Community First funds and purchase essential household items. Lesli continues to work with MWCIL on achieving her goals.



MA Association of Independent Living Centers

2023 was a watershed year for the SILC. Sadie Simone stepped down as Coordinator and Aliza Levine stepped into the role. Both annual events were in person! IL Education Day focused our energy on a few key issues, and got us out meeting with legislators. The IL Conference provided education with speakers and workshops on complex and new issues and was a great opportunity for statewide collaboration.

Independent Living Education Day at the State House



Independent Living Conference





Staff



Sadie



Rose



David



Danya



Elizabeth



Janna



Dan



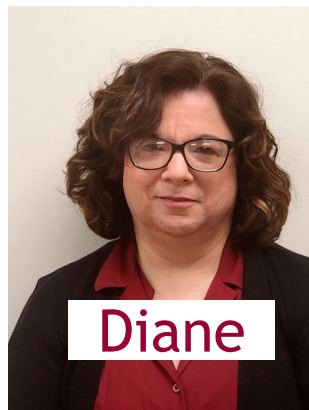
Lou



Brittney



Erin



Diane



Sue

and Wini!

MetroWest Center for Independent Living

was created by people with disabilities seeking full integration into society. MWCIL empowers people with disabilities with the practical skills and self-confidence to take control over their lives and become active members of the communities in which they live. MWCIL works to promote access and change within society and responds with programs and services to meet the needs of people of all ages with a wide range of disabilities.



**MetroWest Center for Independent Living
One Clarks Hill, Suite 200
Framingham, MA 01702
508-875-7853
www.mwcil.org
info@mwcil.org**