25 YEARS OF THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT







LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

July 26th marked the 25th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

All year, communities around the country rallied together to recognize the anniversary. I was happy to join in the festivities in our nation's capital, where the anniversary was celebrated with many events, including a magnificent reception hosted at the White House by President Obama and Vice President Biden. Here in Chicago, the city of "make no small plans" used the milestone as an opportunity to build upon previous achievements of the Americans with Disabilities Act and initiate action in areas where the law lacks progress.

To celebrate, raise awareness and initiate action, the Chicago Community Trust committed \$1 million to establish ADA 25 Chicago, a network of more than 200 civic leaders and partners across Chicago. It's mission was to leverage the anniversary to raise awareness, celebrate and initiate action through partner commitments and legacy initiatives. I was honored to serve as its co-chair, along with Steve Pemberton, the Chief Diversity Officer of Walgreens. The outpouring of support, interest, and creativity for ADA 25 Chicago went beyond our expectations. We never anticipated the volume of activity, events, project commitments and legacy initiatives. For a complete listing, be sure to check out the ADA25Chicago.org website.

Here at Access Living we celebrated the anniversary in multiple ways. We marched in the annual Disability Pride Parade. Our historic Tom Olin photo collection went on loan to the Chicago History Museum. We produced "The Road to the ADA," a short documentary that chronicles the impact of Chicago advocates on the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act. We collaborated with StoryCorps for a day of Disability Visibility Project audio recordings. We worked with "After School Matters" students on a video project that asked people with disabilities "What does the ADA mean to you?" We sponsored the annual "CounterBalance" integrated dance performance, this year staged at the National Mexican Museum of Mexican Art. Along with the

McCormick Foundation and the Poynter Institute, we hosted "Fresh Angles," a day and a half long work shop on disability and the media.

In addition, Access Living's legacy commitments include the Beatrice C. Mayer READY Program, a new initiative that will give young people with disabilities the tools to be successful as they transition from school into employment or higher education. We also expanded our civil rights impact litigation by adding another staff attorney who will focus on implementation and enforcement of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Though 2015 was filled with success around the Americans with Disabilities Act anniversary, there was no shortage of challenges. The most significant obstacle was the Illinois State Budget. From the day Governor Rauner introduced his proposed budget in February of 2015, the disability community faced an uphill battle, mobilizing to protect services that keep people with disabilities in their own homes and out of institutions, services that were threatened by the proposed budget. Access Living took the lead on much of this work, organizing trips to Springfield, initiating office visits with legislators, drafting and building sponsorship for resolutions and legislation written to protect the independence of people with disabilities





Senator Tom Harkin and Marca Bristo, Access Living's President and CEO at the Chicago Disability Pride Parade.

and seniors, and building coalitions of groups within and outside of the disability community. Through this work, Access Living built broad support for programs that are critical for the independence and self-determination of people with disabilities. The budget impasse has had a devastating impact on the non-profit community in Illinois, forcing some organizations to furlough or close their doors, cutting off vital services to people who need them most.

The contrast between the success of ADA 25 Chicago and the struggles of the budget impasse highlights the need for Access Living. No matter the year, the disability community will face highs and lows. With experienced staff, dedicated board members, and comprehensive programs, Access Living will steer us through the most challenging times and will advance us forward in the midst of opportunity.

Our job is never done. We would like to thank the many donors who have supported our work to serve people with disabilities. As we close this anniversary year, we look forward to picking up the challenge, posed by Terry Mazany of the Chicago Community Trust. "ADA every day!"

Marca Bristo

Marca Bristo, President & CEO

Access Living

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LETTER FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

the opportunity to be a part of memorable, historic and groundbreaking events. Access Living's 2015 "Lead On!" Gala was all three of those. On June 1, more than 850 people gathered at Navy Pier's Grand Ballroom for the Gala, which celebrated the 35th Anniversary of Access Living and the 25th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act. We were privileged to present President Bill Clinton with the "Lead On!" Award. As the first president with the responsibility of implementing the Americans with Disabilities Act, Clinton vigorously enforced the law and established the foundation and legal precedent which has had a transformative impact on the United States over the past 25 years. Presenting the award to President Clinton, Marca Bristo spoke of Justin Dart, whose trademark phrase gives the award its name. "As a trusted friend and advisor to President Clinton, Justin would be so honored to know you are receiving the award that carries his name," she said. We were thrilled also to present an award to Shirley Ryan for her work as chair of

In my role as Access Living's Board Chair, each year I have

At the 2015 Gala, more guests attended than ever before and we surpassed previous giving records, raising more than \$1 Million for Access Living programs. Some of that money was raised when Board Member Kareem Dale took the stage and asked audience members to support Access Living's new Beatrice C. Mayer READY Program, an initiative that will give young people with disabilities the tools to be successful as they transition from school into employment or higher education. With low employment numbers for people with disabilities, and a drastically high academic achievement gap between disabled and non-disabled students, the program will target a desperately underserved area. I was overwhelmed with the response. Though the evening was growing late, audience members wouldn't stop raising their paddles, pledging to give what they could to support a program highly in need.

Pathways and a former Board Member for the National

disabilities in all aspects of society.

Council on Disability. Ms. Ryan has impacted Chicago and the

nation through her commitment to inclusion of persons with

The business community in Chicago is also making an effort to address the low unemployment of people with disabilities. Through ADA 25 Chicago, the newly established **Chicagoland Business Leadership Network** has

This year, Access Living mourned the loss of former board member David Decoursey.

committed to disability inclusion in the corporate sector, collecting best practices and strategies for recruiting, employing and retaining employees with disabilities.

As chair of the Access Living Board, it was an honor to be a part of exciting and innovative developments and breakthroughs in 2015. But sadly, 2015 was also a year of heartache. Early in the year, Access Living lost three current and former board members. As the liaison between the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago and Access Living, Dr. Henry Betts was a permanent member of Access Living's Board. In her remarks at Dr. Bett's funeral services in January, Marca Bristo said, "He enabled the fledgling disability rights movement to find its own voice and he opened doors to civic leaders to support our efforts." Joanne Crown also passed away in January 2015. As a Lifetime Board Member, Crown and her family worked diligently to build resources and support the rights of the disability community. Joanne was with Access Living at our inception and continued to serve for 27 years. Finally, former board member David DeCoursey died in January as well. As the Executive Director of Leadership Greater Chicago for 25 years, DeCoursey has given hundreds of Chicago leaders, including Access Living staff and board members, the tools to build their networks and pursue new

Though 2015 was filled with its share of hardship, the legacy of the board members we lost, the accomplishments of Access Living, and the successes of the Americans with Disabilities Act have laid a foundation for us to build on as we move forward in the future. As I continue to serve as Board Chair for Access Living, I look forward to working with the Access Living community and broader community to address the challenges we face and build from our foundation of success.

Ben Junico

Ben Lumicao Board Chair



Ben Lumicao



In 2015, Access Living mourned the passing of Lifetime Board Member Joanne Crown and Board Member Dr. Henry Betts.

WHAT WE DO

Access Living programs are divided into Independent Living, Advocacy, and Legal Departments. The departments position staff to deliver programs and services that equip people with disabilities to advocate for themselves, live independently, and create an inclusive community.



"Lead On!" honoree President Bill Clinton speaking at the 2015 Access Living Gala.



Rahnee Patrick, Access Living's Director of Independent Living, and Amber Smock, Access Living's Director of Advocacy, presenting the Advocacy Award to Judith Gethner of the Illinois Partners for Human Service.

The Independent Living Department includes all of Access Living's direct services that are geared to support people living in their own homes. Services include housing search assistance, community and economic support services, community reintegration services,

personal assistant services, peer support and youth and education services.



Affairs Department includes Access Living's community organizing, under the banner "Power to the People," and leadership development and legislative affairs policy work. The department addresses issues from youth empowerment, housing and education, to employment, health care and Latinos with disabilities. Access Living's Ombudsman Program also is within the Advocacy Department. The program gives people with disabilities who live in the community support on issues related to health care providers and plans, home services programs, benefits and rights. Finally, the department houses Access Living's external affairs, designed to coordinate our public outreach and communications work.

The Advocacy and External

The Legal Department includes the enforcement of laws enacted to ensure the right of people with disabilities to live the lives they envision in communities of their choice. Access Living works to resolve individual complaints, most often related to fair housing, and pursues class-action litigation designed to impact system-wide policy change. In FY 16 the legal department will become part of the advocacy department, to better synergize our policy, organizing and legal work. We will also add an ADA component to our legal work that focuses on discrimination under Title II and III of the Americans with Disabilities

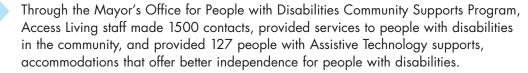
Though not in a department, Access Living's Arts & Culture Project is an important part of Access Living's work, raising awareness around disability arts, community and culture.

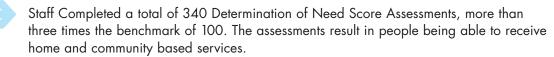
PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

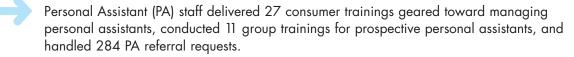
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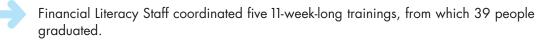


Independent Living Department









Seventy seven people with disabilities transitioned out of nursing homes and into their own homes through Access Living's Community Reintegration Program





Members of the Disability Rights Action Coalition for Housing in Springfield for a legislative action day.

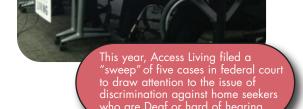
Legal Department

Access Living collaborated with a coalition of public interest organizations on state legislation to protect people with disabilities (and victims of domestic violence) from the harmful effects of the various crime free/nuisance property ordinances in counties across the state, which penalize residents or landlords when police are called to a property. We drafted disability-specific language for the bill. The bill passed the House and Senate and was signed by the Governor. Partners on this project included: Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law, Housing Action Illinois, Open Communities, ACLU of Illinois, Illinois Coalition Against Domestic Violence, Chicago Battered Women's Network, and the Illinois Association of Realtors

We filed a "sweep" of five cases in federal court to draw attention to the issue of discrimination against home seekers who are Deaf or hard of hearing. The cases are based on five phone-based fair housing tests. For each test, a non-disabled tester called a housing provider on a

test, a non-disabled tester called a housing provider on a regular phone and a Deaf tester called a housing provider using the Internet Protocol Relay System. The five tests that formed the basis for the five federal cases revealed discrimination against the Deaf testers. The Deaf testers were hung-up on, steered away, or otherwise mistreated. The federal complaints were all filed on the same day to send a message to housing providers in the Chicago area that they must provide equal access and equal opportunity to people with hearing disabilities or they risk being named in a federal lawsuit. The cases are pending in federal court.

Legal staff opened 47 new cases and continued to represent clients whose cases were opened during a prior fiscal year. Thirty seven cases were successfully resolved.



Advocacy Department

In September of Fiscal Year 2015, Access Living officially established the Ombudsman Team, advocates who assist individuals with disabilities, addressing matters related to health care providers and plans, home services programs, benefits and rights. Between September 2014 and June 2015, the team provided information and referral services to more than 400 callers, opened 96 cases, and closed out 65 cases. The team also presented to 79 different groups about the Ombudsman Program.

Access Living advocates coordinated statewide efforts to fight back against proposed changes to the Determination of Need (DON) Score, a measurement tool that determines if people with disabilities and seniors are eligible to receive supports in their own home. Without these supports, people with disabilities and seniors are at risk of homelessness, hospitalization, and institutionalization. Under Governor Rauner's proposed budget, 10,000 people with disabilities and 24,000 seniors would lose eligibility for the services. To fight back against the changes, Access Living: organized neighborhood legislative visits; testified at multiple house and senate appropriation hearings; led seven different consumer trips to Springfield, where advocates rallied, participated in news conferences, and met with their local legislators; and passed legislation that called for the preservation of the DON Score. Upon our printing deadline the Governor committed to abondoning his plan to change the eligibility requirement, a victory for our hard work.

The Disability Rights Action Coalition for Housing, in cooperation with the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities (MOPD) and the City's Department of Planning and Development, successfully advocated for new funding in MOPD's budget for home modifications. The new money will nearly double the amount of accessibility modifications MOPD can make to improve housing units for Chicagoans with disabilities.

On July 26, 2015, the disability community celebrated the 25th **Anniversary of the Americans** with Disabilities Act. From accessible main line transportation, to closed captioning in movie theaters and on television, to accessible ATMs and curb cuts, and the deinstitutionalization of persons with disabilities, the landmark civil rights law has opened doors of access, creating an environment that is more inclusive for people with and without disabilities.



launch event.

The law has also changed the lens through which people see disability, raising awareness around the idea that disability is a natural part of our culture. Throughout 2015, there were celebrations, events, and programs across the country. Nationally, the ADA Legacy Tour traveled to all corners of the United States, partnering with diverse communities to trumpet the history of the ADA and the impact it has had across generations. The tour stopped in Chicago on July 18, 2015, the date of the Disability Pride Parade.

Locally, ADA 25 Chicago brought together partners to build new initiatives designed to leave a lasting legacy of access, opportunity, and awareness. Through partner commitments, ADA 25 Chicago leveraged the anniversary to raise disability awareness and to improve the quality of life for people with disabilities in the areas of education, employment, community inclusion and technology.

Response to the ADA 25 Anniversary was overwhelming, from both the disability community and the at-large community. The celebrations, educational events, programs and projects in Chicago and around the country will leave a lasting impact for years to come.



ACCESS LIVING'S ADA 25 HIGHLIGHTS:





GALA

At the 2015 Gala, Access Living honored President Bill Clinton and Shirley Ryan with "Lead On!" awards. At the Gala, more than 850 people celebrated the Access Living 35th Anniversary and the 25th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

AFTER SCHOOL MATTERS AND STORYCORPS

Through After School Matters and the Disability Visibility Project (a partnership with StoryCorps) community members created videos and audio recordings, sharing their stories about the impact of disability and the Americans with Disabilities Act on their lives.

ACCESS FOR ALL AT THE CHICAGO HISTORY MUSEUM

Access Living's collection of Tom Olin photographs is on loan at the Chicago History Museum, which has created Access for All, an exhibition that honors the twenty-fifth anniversary of the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act, and includes the Museum's first-ever descriptive audio tour for visitors who have low vision or are blind.



THE BEATRICE C. MAYER READY **PROGRAM**

As a legacy commitment to ADA25 Chicago, Access Living launched the Beatrice C. Mayer Realizing Education and Advancement for Disabled Youth (READY) Program. Partnering with key organizations throughout the city this initiative will support youth with disabilities transitioning from high school to higher education and employment.

WHO WE SERVE

Access Living serves and advocates on behalf of people with physical, developmental, intellectual, psychiatric and sensory disabilities. In Fiscal Year 2015, Access Living provided individual services to 1895 people. Access Living serves people with disabilities from communities all around Chicago. The majority of our consumers are low-income and people of color.

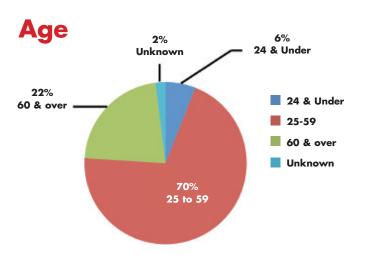
Through advocacy, independent living services, peer support and information and referral, Access Living impacts issues related to:

- housing
- civil rights enforcement
- community reintegration
- education
- employment
- fair housing
- financial literacy
- health care
- transportation

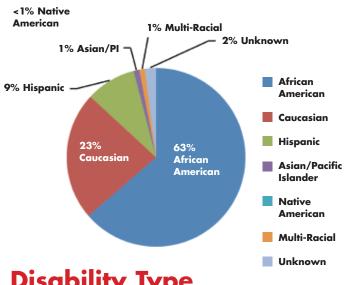


Consumer Demographics

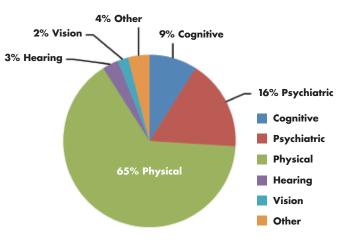
The following charts are a demographic breakdown of Access Living consumers for the fiscal year 2015.



Race/Ethnicity



Disability Type



THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS

Access Living Legacy Society

By joining the Access Living Legacy Society, donors ensure that Access Living can continue to empower people with disabilities to live independently for years to come.

Through planned giving, donors can provide support that benefits both Access Living and their loved ones.

Many thanks to the generous members of Access Living's Planned Giving Legacy Society that have already made this commitment:

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For those who are interested in learning more about planned giving, please visit Access Living's planned giving website for helpful information and useful tools at http://www.accessliving.plannedgiving.org.

You can also contact Bianca Barr, Planned Giving Manager, at bbarr@accessliving.org or at (312) 640-2113 to get more information or schedule an appointment.

Circle of Allies - Monthly Giving

Launched in 2014, the Circles of Allies is a society of donors who make monthly recurring gifts to sustain Access Living's programs and services. Thanks to an anonymous donor, new members are eligible to have their gift matched 1:1 as long as their annual contribution is greater than their annual contribution in previous years. We would like to recognize the following people for their commitment to the Circle of Allies:

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Independent Living Program

Home Services Program

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Vocational Rehabilitation Community Based Employment Services

Illinois Department on Aging

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Home & Community Ombudsman Program Colbert Housing Relocation Program

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U.S. Department of Education Rehab Services Administration Centers for Independent Living Empowerment Zone



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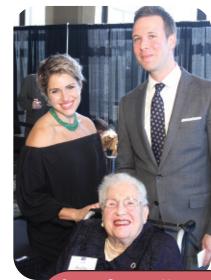
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seated) with her grand daughter amie Mayer Phinney and Jamie' usband Ĥap Phinnéy.



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Second City

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Via Veneto Restaurant

Windy City Fieldhouse Zanies' Comedy Club

WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

Access Living's Advocacy Department, **Independent Living Department and Legal** Department collaborate together to create real options and freedom for self-determination for people with all kinds of disabilities. Our work creates systemic and community opportunities to protect and exercise our human rights. You are invited and encouraged to get involved. Lend your voice and effort to initiatives that will support choice and independence for people with disabilities. There are a number of ways to participate.





Get Involved with Access Living's **Advocacy Work**

Our Advocacy Department works to create real options and freedom for selfdetermination of people with all kinds of disabilities.

Join one of Access Living's community organizing groups

Each group works around a specific issue and develops and implements campaigns in order to open up opportunities for people with disabilities. Contact Access Living's Manager of Community Organizing and Policy to learn more.

Sign up for Access Living **Action Alerts**

Stay informed about what is happening in the community and receive action alerts that allow you to send direct messages to policy makers.

Volunteer with Access Living

Access Living often has volunteer opportunities for individuals interested in promoting the mission of Access Living

Become a member of Access Living

As a member you'll receive our newsletter, attend our annual meeting and receive updates about issues concerning the disability community.

For more information, contact Access Living at 312-640-2199 or 312-640-2102 TTY.

Recognizing the Black Lives Matter Movement, Access Living created a staff committee charged with identifying ways in which Access Living programs could support Black Lives Matter. Through the work of this committee, Access Living hosted a Town Hall Meeting on Stephon Watts and the First Responder Bill, and two Access Living Staff presented at the annual National Council on Independent Living Conference about the intersection of disability and race issues.

Access Living of Metropolitan Chicago STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES Year ended June 30, 2015

		Unrestricted		Temporarily Restricted		Total
Operating Revenues		Unrestricted	-	Restricted		Total
Fees and grants from governmental agencies	\$	3,255,865	\$	_	\$	3,255,865
General public, corporate and foundation support	Ψ	617,387	Ψ	1,112,500	Ψ	1,729,887
United Way of Chicago		123,181		1,112,500		123,181
Special events		1,188,597				1,188,597
Interest and dividend income		282				282
Net realized and unrealized losses		(45,122)		_		(45,122)
Other		61,013		_		61,013
Net assets released from restriction		733,315		(733,315)		01,015
Total operating revenues		5,934,518	-	379,185		6,313,703
Total operating revenues		3,934,316	-	379,103		0,313,703
Operating Expenses						
Program services						
Community organizing		853,230		_		853,230
Policy analysis		479,897				479,897
Ombudsman program		636,886				636,886
Community support		1,427,709				1,427,709
Civil rights		702,650		_		702,650
Long term care		1,196,572		_		1,196,572
Art		125,427		-		125,427
Total program services		5,422,371	-			5,422,371
Total program services		3,422,371		-		3,422,371
Supporting services						
Management and general		381,540		_		381,540
Development		592,240		_		592,240
Total supporting services		973,780	-			973,780
Total supporting services		915,100		_		915,100
Total operating expenses, includes depreciation						
and amortization expense of \$485,307		6,396,151				6,396,151
and amortization expense or \$465,507		0,550,151	-			0,590,151
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS		(461,633)		379,185		(82,448)
		(101,000)	-	377,100		(02,1.0)
Net assets, beginning of year		13,633,877		2,708,727		16,342,604
,		,,,	-	_,,-		-,-,-,-,-,
Net assets, end of year	\$	13,172,244	\$	3,087,912	\$	16,260,156

Access Living of Metropolitan Chicago STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION June 30, 2015 and 2014

<u>ASSETS</u>	_	2015	_	2014
Cash and cash equivalents	\$	863,784	\$	2,002,317
Cash and cash equivalents restricted for: Accessibility grant program		9,060		165
Investments designated for:		9,000		103
Endowment, building and other reserve funds		5,505,854		4,267,033
Cost incurred recoverable under grants		794,865		770,837
Other receivables		16,498		89,144
Unconditional promises to give, net		570,565		584,704
Prepaid expenses and other assets		56,635		2,701
Property and equipment, net		8,634,815		9,054,678
Art collection	_	59,461	_	59,461
	\$_	16,511,537	\$_	16,831,040
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS				
LIABILITIES				
Accounts payable and other accrued expenses	\$	80,022	\$	95,048
Deferred revenue from advance fees		6,585		8,585
Accrued compensation	_	164,774	_	384,803
Total liabilities		251,381		488,436
NET ASSETS				
Unrestricted		13,172,244		13,633,877
Temporarily restricted		3,087,912		2,708,727
remporarily restricted	-	3,007,512	-	2,700,727
Total net assets	_	16,260,156	_	16,342,604
	\$_	16,511,537	\$	16,831,040

WAYS TO SUPPORT ACCESS LIVING

Become a member of The Access Living Advocates, the giving society of donors of \$1000 or more each year.

Donate to Access Living online at www.accessliving.org

Join Circle of Allies—a society of donors who make monthly recurring gifts to sustain our programs and services.

New monthly givers are eligible for a 1:1 match if the annual total is the same or higher than previous gifts to Access Living's Annual Fund.

Provide for Access Living by making a legacy gift through your will or trust, or by naming Access Living as the beneficiary of your life insurance policy or retirement plan. Visit the Planned Giving site at accessliving.plannedgiving.org

Make a donation of appreciated stocks, providing a substantial gift to us and a tax break for you.

Come to our Annual Gala Gather friends or colleagues to purchase a table or individual tickets to our annual celebration of our vital work.

Host a fundraiser for Access Living at your home, office or at our building.

Ask friends to make a donation to Access Living in lieu of a gift for a special occasion.

Join the Young Professionals Council, a group of young professionals committed to supporting inclusion and independence for people with disabilities.

If you want more information, please contact the Development Office at Access Living. 312-640-2198 (voice), 312-640-2102 (TTY).









Access Living staff



115 West Chicago Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60654

tel. 312.640.2100 | fax. 312.640.2142 | tty. 312.640.2102

www.accessliving.org

This report is available in alternate format upon request.



