



Access Living celebrates at the Disability Pride Parade

Established in 1980, Access Living is a change agent committed to fostering an inclusive society that enables Chicagoans with disabilities to live fully-engaged and self-directed lives.

Nationally recognized as a leading force in the disability advocacy community, Access Living challenges stereotypes, protects civil rights and champions **social reform**.

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Andres J. Gallegos, Access Living Board Chair

At the Access Living Annual Meeting in December of 2016. I was voted into the role of Chairperson for the Access Living Board of Directors. I assumed a leadership position that was filled so skillfully and passionately by Ben Lumicao, who transitioned off of the board after completing his term as chair. I am honored to follow Ben, and the many other leaders who have held this position.

I am proud to lead Access Living's Board of Directors - all very accomplished and dedicated members from our community – with whom I join as stewards of Access Living, which, since 1980, has not only served the disability community, but has aggressively pursued innovation and strategy in order to open new doors and create new opportunity for people with disabilities. This past year has been no different. In the first full year of the Beatrice C. Mayer READY Program, Access Living has partnered with multiple Chicago Public High Schools and enrolled scores of students in a program designed to help students with disabilities bridge the gap from high school to higher education and employment. Access Living also launched a Pre-Transition Services Program. intended to help young people with disabilities aged 16-22 secure part time employment.

The impact of Access Living is not limited to Chicago. Access Living played a lead role in the national effort to defend Medicaid and healthcare services against Federal legislative policy. Repeatedly, in the face of U.S. Senate efforts to pass legislation that would have dismantled community-based services, Access Living mobilized thousands of people who fought passionately and successfully to preserve programs that enable people with disabilities to live in their own homes instead of institutions.

Our work would not be possible without the generosity of donors who have supported Access Living. Over the past few years, the social services network across Illinois has struggled in the face of the state budget impasse. In the midst of the budget crisis, Access Living turned to the community to fuel our major gifts efforts. The community rose up and met the challenge, allowing us to continue to build our service and advocacy efforts.

When moving forward, Access Living tries to identify areas to strengthen our capacity and effectiveness. In order to continue our success. we know we will need to build our base and engage more people. With this goal in mind, we are developing strategies to re-energize our membership, recruit new members, and expand our social media network. Doing so will give Access Living the tools to mobilize quickly in the face of future legislative and policy threats, and to reach more people with Access Living's services and supports.

I am excited to continue my term as Board Chair. With the dedication of the very talented Access Living Staff, with the leadership and commitment of the full Access Living Board of Directors, the enthusiasm and support of our Young Professionals Council, and with the generosity of our donors, we will continue to navigate challenges, offer the resources people with disabilities need to be independent, and advocate for our right to selfdetermination, equity, and inclusion. While the road to equality of opportunity and full inclusion is long and seemingly never-ending, we move on it together. Thank you for your past support, we don't take it for granted.

The independent living movement began in Berekley, California, but its heart and soul is here in Chicago, thanks to all of you!

Sincerely,

Andrés J. Gallegos, Esq., Board Chair Access Living

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Access Living Board Members attend the Annual Meeting.

# In Memory of Courtney Graham Donnell and Peter Gidwitz



Courtney Donnell at a meeting of the Capital Campaign.



Peter Gidwitz attending the Access Living Gala with friends.

Sadly, among the other challenges from the past year, the disability community, and Access Living, lost two beloved members. Former Board Member, former Gala Chair, and an original member of Access Living's Capital Campaign, Courtney Graham Donnell, died this Fall. Courtney was a compassionate and engaged member of the Access Living community who contributed in countless ways to our mission. Also, Lifetime Board Member, and longtime Access Living supporter and donor, Peter Gidwitz, passed away. His presence will be dearly missed. His generosity will always be remembered, and his impact will always be felt. It is the support of people such as Courtney and Peter that give Access Living the power to move forward, to lead in the face of challenges, and to open new doors when so many appear to close.

In early July 2017, at the close of Access Living's Fiscal Year, the Illinois House and Senate voted to override Governor Rauner's veto of the Fiscal 2018 State Budget. The vote gave Illinois a state budget for the first time since 2015, helping to end a two-year budget impasse. No one emerged unscathed from the budget impasse. Many groups were forced to lay-off staff, cut services, or close their doors. However, in the face of this crisis, those same organizations rallied to put the human face on the stalemate. Advocates and agencies deserve to be recognized for their work to preserve the network of social services and to build the power of grassroots networks.

Disability groups like Access Living built new partnerships, developing coalitions to fight to preserve critical supports for marginalized populations. Advocates organized for quality healthcare, inclusive education, independence, and economic opportunity. The resilience and vision of thousands of advocates, working every day in the trenches, helped underserved people navigate the threats.

Unfortunately, this was not the only obstacle Access Living faced in 2017. Statewide, the implementation of rigid overtime rules in the Illinois Home Services Program threatens to cut off vital personal assistant supports to hundreds of people with disabilities. Without the support needed for activities of daily living, people with disabilities may be forced into institutions, losing their independence. The looming end of DACA, along with discriminatory executive orders and xenophobic messaging, are eroding protections, resources, and opportunity for immigrants, including immigrants with disabilities. The U.S. House of Representatives introduced HR 620, legislation that will dismantle the civil rights of people with disabilities under the Americans with Disabilities Act. The U.S. Senate Leadership has repeatedly introduced legislation that would gut Medicaid, putting limits on services that support people with disabilities in the community, eliminating what are considered "essential health benefits," and all but denying protection from discrimination based on pre-existing conditions.

Policy threats are not new. Each year, Access Living faces many that pose obstacles on the path to independence. Unlike other years, the growing number of policy threats challenge the philosophical foundation on which Access

Living was founded. In 1980, Access Living opened its doors for the first time on the principle that people with disabilities, like non-disabled people, have the innate right to full integration and participation in community life. The challenges Access Living faces on the local and Federal level challenge these founding principles.

These threats are not specific to disability. African Americans, Muslims, immigrants, the LGBTQ community, and women are all targeted by legislation, cuts, and executive orders. In response, communities are organizing together to resist and protect human rights. Amidst these organizing efforts, Access Living ensures that the interests of people with disabilities are recognized. Whether it be Access Living's Director of Independent Living speaking at the Women's March in January, Access Living's Organizing Group Cambiando Vidas ensuring that disability is part of the immigrant rights platform, or Access Living's healthcare policy staff leading national advocacy efforts to protect Medicaid, Access Living is giving voice to the disability community. That voice is making a difference. For example, without the overwhelming pressure brought to bear on Washington by people with disabilities, and the leadership of groups like National ADAPT, there would not have been the votes to stop the healthcare repeal bills.

While all this is happening in the world around us, Access Living's team of dedicated staff have continued day in and day out to offer services to over 1,800 people with disabilities. The generosity of our donors has not only prevented Access Living from massive lay offs, but also enabled us to solidify our financial base for the future.

We deeply appreciate all of you for your generosity at this time.

Marca Bristo, President & CEO

Access Living

Marca Brish

Marca Bristo with Judy Heumann



# Highlights

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 while also Maximizing Human Potential, Building Capacity, and Increasing Civic Engagement.

### **Maximizing Human Potential**

Through our Community Reintegration program, Access Living transitioned 84 individuals with disabilities out of nursing homes and into their own apartments in the community.

Our Beatrice Mayer Realizing Education and Advancement for Disabled Youth (READY) high school transition program saw 34 of its members gain employment and 13 gain acceptance to college.

71 people with disabilities graduated from the Access Living Financial Literacy Program, learning vital money management skills.

We provided 115 people with disabilities with Independent Living Training through our Stepping Stones Peer Support Program.

Our Personal Assistant Referral Program matched 291 individuals with disabilities with a Personal Assistant from our database.

### **Civic Engagement**

Access Living facilitated Disability Power for Community Integration (DPCI), a working group that brought state and national disability advocates together for strategic coordination to save Medicaid and defeat efforts to damage healthcare for people with pre-existing conditions. Advocates in the DPCI network managed to stop two harmful major Congressional healthcare bills, and continue to monitor this issue.

Access Living's housing advocates in DRACH, along with housing rights allies, fought to pass a zoning ordinance through Chicago's City Council that would allow for the construction of needed new affordable housing in Jefferson Park. The housing development is to include accessible units, as well as units for veterans.

Access Living's Latinos with disabilities group, Cambiando Vidas, worked alongside ICIRR, Communities United, Mujeres Latinas en Accion and other coalition members and city officials in the development and design of the new municipal ID, ensuring that people with disabilities who need a municipal ID can secure one.

Access Living added 500 followers on Twitter, 900 followers on Facebook, and our Facebook posts were liked 17,024 times. Access Living also sent 233 advocacy alert email messages, and our 2,400 subscribers sent 18,289 advocacy messages to members of Congress and the state legislature.

We have made strides in our ADA enforcement initiative. In October 2016, we filed suit against Uber alleging violations of the ADA as Uber does not offer equivalent access to its travel service to Chicago motorized wheelchair users and other mobility-device users who cannot transfer into traditional vehicles.

We also persuaded Village Discount Outlet stores throughout Chicago to modify their turnstile entrances, which prevented access by people who use wheelchairs, in violation of the ADA. The outlet chain improved the entrances to 14 different stores.

The ADA initiative has also expanded beyond Title III enforcement. Recently we have also begun to take on Title II cases which applies to state and local government programs and services.

of our representation, the management company agreed to service the chairlift, ensure it works properly, and pay damages and fees to our clients for the violation.

Our Arts and Culture programming continued to showcase disability culture and disability identification and pride through art displays and events held in our building including readings, workshops, film screenings, dance performances, and cabaret events.

# Policy Priorities

In order to support the self-determination and independence of people with disabilities, systems change and accountability is part of the core work at Access Living. Access Living interacts with a number of civic processes at the same time. While much of the work looks to the state and General Assembly for system change, Access Living also engages with the Chicago City Council, the Cook County Commissioners, and members of Congress. At each level, the goal is to make sure that people with disabilities are actively engaged in the decisions that affect our lives.

This year, Access living systems change priorities included:

### Saving Medicaid; Defending Healthcare

Access Living was part of the national effort to block harmful efforts to change Medicaid into block grants and to damage state exchange health plans, as well as to strip Medicaid expansion and weaken employer health plans.

### Pushing for the Right to Live at Home

Access Living supported new housing in Jefferson Park, worked with the Chicago Housing Authority to ensure adequate vouchers for Colbert class members, and worked with homeless people with disabilities to advocate for their rights in shelters and to live in their own homes.

# Ensuring Fair Access to the Illinois Home Services Program

Access Living worked with community partners to monitor and weigh in on the State's implementation of a new overtime rule. We were able to get the State to delay and then reconsider the original proposed rule, with new components that reflected the concerns of consumers.

# Defending the Rights of Students with Disabilities

Access Living monitored and weighed in on the State's efforts to seek a new school funding formula, which could have negative impact on special education funding. We also released our annual report analyzing the Chicago Public school budget from a disability standpoint.

### **Protecting Disability Rights in Police Interactions**

Our young adults group AYLP led the way in Access Living's efforts to develop a legislative effort to ensure that people with disabilities in emergency behavioral crisis receive emergency response that does not put them at risk of harm from the police.

### **Ensuring Opportunity in Transportation**

Access Living worked with community partners to improve on-time performance in Pace paratransit, improve oversight of the Chicago Transit Authority's ADA Advisory Committee, and monitor developments in rideshare and driverless car options.

# Who We Serve

Access Living serves and advocates on behalf of people with physical, developmental, intellectual, psychiatric and sensory disabilities. In Fiscal Year 2017, Access Living provided individual services to 1894 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, and transportation.



Students in Access Living's high school transition program participated in the city's One Summer Chicago Program.



Access Living advocates demand a meeting with the Governor.



Members of Advance Youth Leadership Power (AYLP) celebrate their successes.

The following charts are a demographic breakdown of Access Living consumers for the fiscal year 2017.

# Total Consumers

### Race and Ethnicity

Black/African American 1,009 // 53%

Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander 4 // less than 1%

White/Caucasian 374 // 20%

Hispanic/Latino 197 // 10%

American Indian/Alaska Native 5 // less than 1%

Asian 35 // 1%

Two or more races 31 // 1%

Unknown 239 // 13%

# Disability Type

Cognitive 258 // 13%

Hearing 16 // less than 1%

Mental/Emotional 245 // 14%

Other 315 // 17%

**Physical** 1,034 // 54%

**Vision** 26 // 1%

# Age

**24** and under 240 //13%

**25-59** 1,218 //64%

**60** and over 400 //21%

**Unknown** 36 //2%



Students visit Access Living and volunteer while learning about disability rights.



Mentor and mentee pair from Disability Justice Mentoring Collective (DJMC) meet at Access Living.

# 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 self-determination 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.

**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.

# \$10 Million Major Gifts Campaign

Access Living's \$10 Million Major Gifts Campaign is a five-year campaign that will expand our programming and outreach to help more people with disabilities live on their own in the community. The funds contributed to the campaign are

designated for programmatic support and growth for our youth institute, maximizing human potential, civic engagement, civil rights, capacity building as well as our permanent endowment fund to ensure our sustainability into the future.

### Access Living has pledges of:

# Million

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# 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:

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For those interested in learning more about planned giving, please visit Access Living's website for helpful information and useful tools. 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.

# Public Funding FY2017

### City of Chicago

Department of Family and Support Services- Youth Mentoring

Department Planning and Development-Technical Assistance-Citywide

Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities-Independent Living Program

### Illinois Arts Council Agency

### Illinois Department on Aging

Colbert Housing Relocation Program

Home and Community Ombudsman Program

### Illinois Department of Human Services

Independent Living Program

Home Services Program

- Community Reintegration
- Personal Assistance Training

Vocational Rehabilitation

- Community Based Employment Services
- Pre-employment Transition Services

"Lead On!" Award winner, Beatrice Cummings Mayer and her guests attend the Access Living Gala.

### **U.S.** Department of Health and Human Services

Administration for Community Living

### U.S. Department of Housing and Urban **Development**

Fair Housing Initiatives Program

Housing Counseling- Housing Action Illinois Subgrant

### **U.S.** Department of Education

Rehabilitation Services Administration

- Centers for Independent Living
- Empowerment Zone

Karen Tamley and Rob Thomas attend the Access Living Gala.





Janet Gilboy and John Schmidt attend the Access Living Gala.

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Brad Markham speaking at the Access Living Gala.

# Financials

### STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION

June 30, 2017 and 2016

ASSETS	2017	2016
Cash and cash equivalents	\$2,806,586	\$1,993,231
Investments designated for:	<b>. </b>	
Endowment, building, and other reserve funds	\$6,141,755	5,422,339
Cost incurred recoverable under grants, net	\$648,661	\$828,709
Other reveivables	\$120,821	\$107,293
Unconditional promises to give, net	\$3,227,182	\$878,879
Prepaid expenses and other assets	\$4,442	\$4,977
Property and equipment, net	\$7,780,405	\$8,142,755
Art collection	\$59,461	\$59,461
	\$20,789,313	\$17,437,644
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
LIABILITIES		
Accounts payable and other accrued expenses	\$81,133	\$93,396
Deferred revenue from advance feed	\$5,175	\$5,199
Accrued compensation	\$208,037	\$370,549
Total liabilities	\$294,345	\$469,144
NET ASSETS		
Unrestricted	\$14,659,324	\$13,571,253
Temporarily restricted	\$5,835,644	\$3,397,247
Total net assets	\$20,494,968	\$16,968,500
	\$20,789,313	<b>\$17,437,644</b>

### STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

Year ended June 30, 2017

OPERATING REVENUES	Unrestricted	Temporatily Restricted	Total
Fees and grants from governmental agencies	\$2,574,994	\$	\$2,574,994
General public, corporate and foundation support	\$1,065,804	\$4,124,324	\$5,190,128
United Way of Chicago	\$118,216	\$	\$118,216
Special events	\$909,435	\$	\$909,435
Interest and dividend income	\$2,586	\$	\$2,586
Net realized and unrealized gains	\$326,427	\$	\$326,427
Other	\$128,679	\$	\$128,679
Net assets released from restriction	\$1,685,927	(\$1,685,927)	\$
Total operating revenues	\$6,812,068	\$2,438,397	\$9,250,465
OPERATING EXPENSES			
PROGRAM SERVICES			
Community organizing	\$481,484	\$	\$481,484
Youth Institute	\$726,846	\$	\$726,846
Policy Analysis	\$289,112	\$	\$289,112
Ombudsman program	\$390,685	\$	\$390,685
Community Support	\$902,072	\$	\$902,072
Civil Rights	\$651,059	\$	\$651,059
Long term care	\$1,221,509	\$	\$1,221,509
Art	\$89,058	\$	\$89,058
Total program services	\$4,751,825	\$	\$4,751,825
SUPPORTING SERVICES			
Management and general	\$361,158	\$	\$361,158
Development	\$611,014	\$	\$611,014
Total supporting services	\$972,172	\$	\$972,172
Total operating expenses, includes depreciation and amortization expense of \$402,653	\$5,723,997	\$	\$5,723,997
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	\$1,088,071	\$2,438,397	\$3,526,468
Net assets, beginning of year	\$13,571,253	\$3,397,247	\$16,968,500
Net assets, end of year	\$14,659,324	\$5,835,644	\$20,494,968



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