

# Access Living 2018 Annual Report



Since 1980, Access to Living has challenged disability stereotypes, protected civil rights, and championed social reforms. We have earned national recognition as a leading force in the disability community.

Access Living gives services, support, and advocacy for people with a disability from Chicago. We do what it takes to make sure people can live the lives they choose independently in neighborhoods in Chicago.



Obama Foundation Inclusion Council



Access Living advocate in Springfield, Illinois



Access Living Resource Table



Board Chairman Andrés Gallegos presents at 2017 Annual Meeting



Access Living CEO Marca Bristo honors Ivan G. Strauss

## **Table of Contents**

Letter from Access Living President/CEO and Board Chairman – 3

Our Board of Directors – 5

Letter from U.S. Senator Tammy Duckworth – 6

The People We Work With – 8

Our Work: Independent Living Highlights – 10

Our Work: Advocacy Highlights – 11

Our Work: Civil Rights Highlights – 14

Our Work: Arts and Culture Highlights – 15

Access Living Remembers Buddy Mayer – 16

Our Funding: Public Funding – 17

Our Funding: Private Funding – 18

Our Funding: Ways you can Support Access Living – 19

Who is Access Living? Diversity & Inclusion – 20

Our Financials: How We Spend our Money – 21

## **Letter from Access Living President/CEO and Board Chairman**

Access Living works on issues like independence, social justice, race, gender, and immigration. We bring together our work on service and support with work on laws and policy to protect and promote the civil rights of all people with disabilities.

2018 was a difficult year for the disabled in our city and our country.

- The number of requests for affordable and accessible housing in the city continue to grow.
- We saw more people with a disability have contact with the police that ended in violence.
- We saw the Illinois State Board of Education take steps to sanction Chicago Public Schools (CPS) for years of bad practices in special education.
- There has been a rise in issues that affect people with a disability who are immigrants.
- We saw attacks on Medicaid, Medicare, and other social services which many people need as a safety net.
- Our community was also threatened by changes to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- Attempts to stir up fear and segregation were widespread.

Access Living got to work to make sure the voices of people with a disability were heard and the needs of people with a disability were met. In this annual report, you can read more about the work we have done to challenge these issues. But we know there is still more work to do.

The challenges people with a disability face are not new. We must work on what we have achieved in the past and continue to find new ways to work on advocacy and services for people with a disability.

Access Living staff, board of directors and the people with a disability we work with know that living with a disability changes opportunity, possibilities and the way people treat you. But with challenges come new opportunities, new possibilities, and a new way of thinking about disability that can help build a better world for everyone.

What we need now is people who think in a new way. We need people who believe in equality to work with us and take action. We need people who know that disability rights are human rights and that accessibility and equality are good for everyone. Will you join us? We need and appreciate your support.



**Marca Bristo**

Access Living President and  
Chief Executive Officer



**Andrés J. Gallegos, Esq.**

Board Chairman

## 2018 Board of Directors

Access Living is governed by a Board of Directors. This means they are responsible for the big decisions about Access Livings work and how we spend our money.

### Officers

Andrés J. Gallegos, Esq.	Board Chair & Treasurer
John Schmidt	Vice-Chair
Alice Palmer	Secretary
Tuyet Le	Program Committee Chair
Kristin Weaver	Resource Development Committee Chair
Emily Harris	Nominating Board & Development Committee Chair

### Members

Marca Bristo	Co-Founder, President & CEO
Ken Bennett	
Norma Borcharding	
Doug Dobmeyer	
Maurice Fantus	
Kevin Fritz	
Tara John	
Kent Klaus	
Wilson Mantilla	
Beatrice Cummings Mayer*	<i>Lifetime Member</i>
Brad Markham	
Mark Owen	
Gary Prescott	
Felicia Rauls	
Dr. Elliot Roth	
Shari Runner	
Kurt Schulenburg	
Cliff Weber	
Joan Wolfensberger	

*\*Deceased*



Senator Tammy Duckworth



Access Living staff meet with Senator Tammy Duckworth in Washington, D.C.

## Letter from Tammy Duckworth

**Tammy Duckworth is the United States Senator for Illinois and the first woman with a disability to be elected to Congress. In this letter, she thanks and recognizes Access Living for our work on disability rights.**

Dear Friends,

It is my honor to recognize Access Living for their outstanding leadership on disability policy. I am personally grateful and would not be where I am today if it were not for the sacrifices made by these advocates, who have fought for decades to create a more inclusive society.

For nearly forty years, Access Living has worked tirelessly to empower Chicagoans with disabilities to influence meaningful policy changes that benefit the disability community nationwide. The successes Access Living has achieved are a testament to the people who work there and to the continued dedication to their mission.

As your United States Senator, Access Living is one of my most crucial allies in the effort to uphold disability rights as civil rights. Access Living was at the forefront of the passage of the landmark Americans with Disabilities Act. The organization's perspective on issues that affect people living with disabilities



helps inform my decision making as a U.S. Senator. Whether it be advocating for policies on equitable access to durable medical equipment, the right to live in the community, improved Medicaid coverage or better transportation options, Access Living has been an indispensable resource for the disabled community.

Access Living and I share the belief that everyone has the right to the services and support they need to live as independently as possible within their chosen community. Independence is at the very foundation of the American dream. Thanks to Access Living, independence is becoming increasingly attainable within the disabled community. People with a disability make up the largest growing minority group in the United States. As our service members return home and our population ages, disability issues will become even more prevalent. For this very reason, the work and mission of Access Living is more important now than ever.

Thank you to Access Living for their leadership and advocacy on behalf of people with disabilities. I am honored to work alongside them and wish them continued success for years to come.

## The People We Work With

Access Living works with people from communities all around Chicago who have physical, intellectual, psychiatric and sensory disabilities. Most of the people we work with are low-income and people of color.

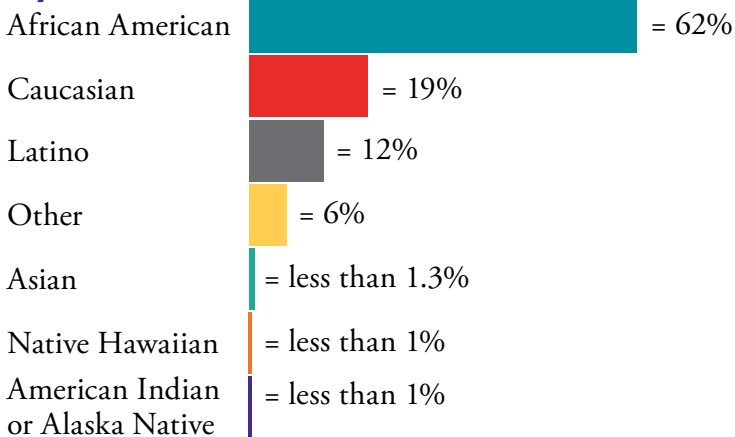
In 2018, we provided services to **1,829** people. We worked with people on accessible affordable housing, civil rights, moving into a community from an institution, education, employment, understanding finances, health care, and accessible transportation.

These graphs are about the 1,829 people we have worked with.

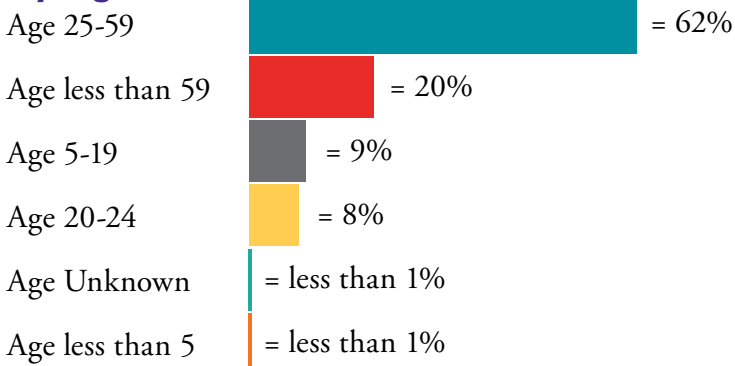
The graphs measure:

- What services we provided
- What disabilities the people we worked with had
- The age of the people we worked with
- The race of the people we worked with

### By Race

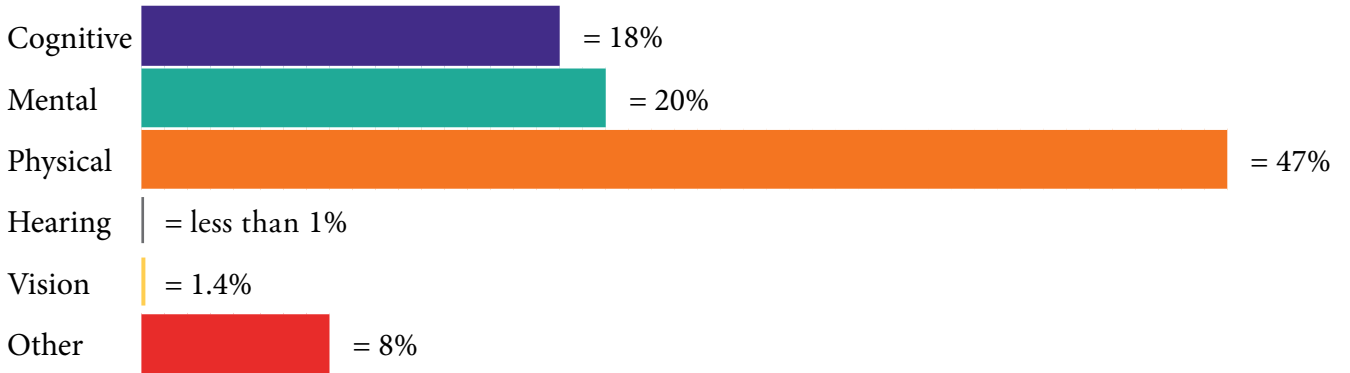


### By Age

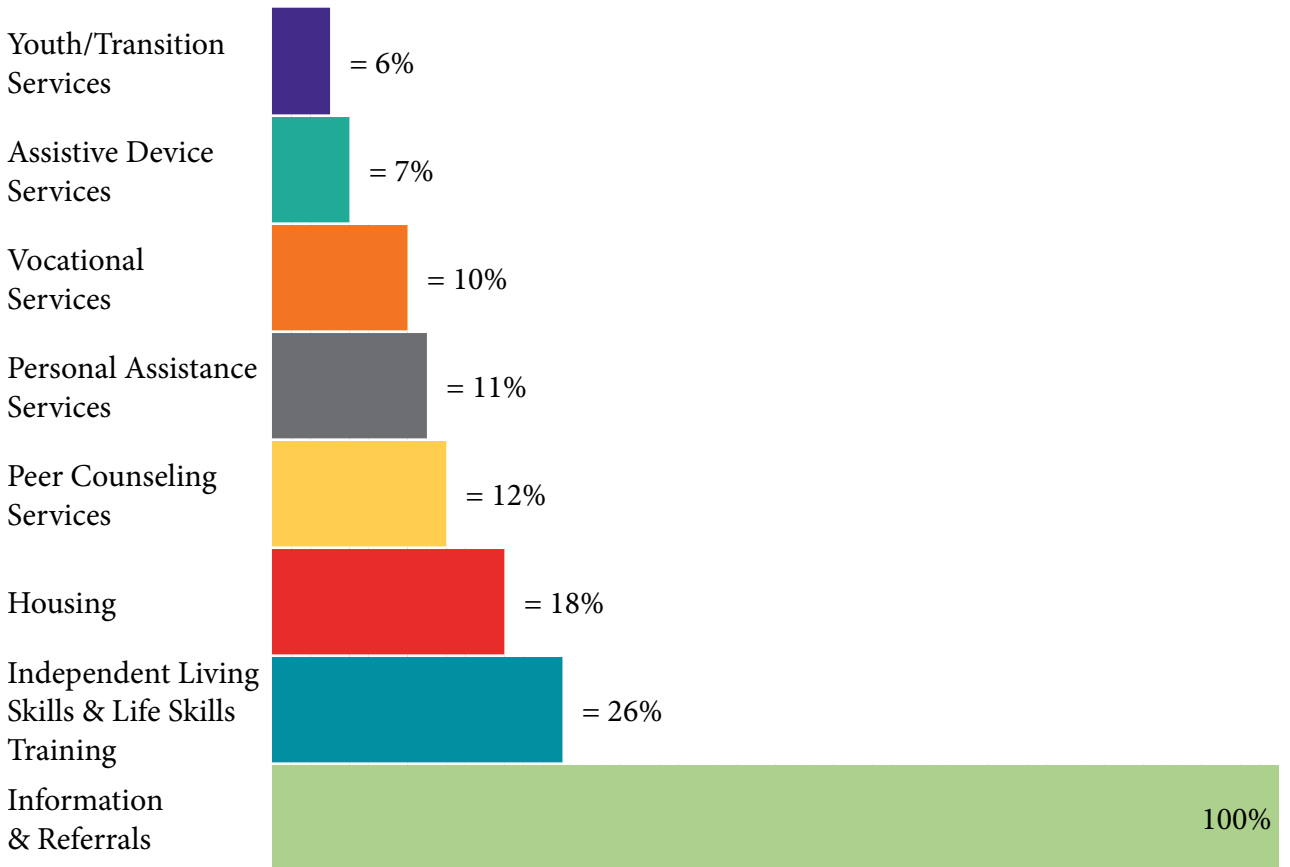




### By Primary Disability



### By Service Received



## Our Work: Independent Living Highlights

Access Living supports people with a disability so that we can live independent lives that we choose.

This year we have helped people to live independent lives through:

### Support

- We have matched more than 260 people with a disability to services, support, or technology that can help them to live more independent lives in the community.
- We have worked with more than 130 young people to find jobs or mentors. Mentors are people who can support you to think about how to grow your career or personal life.



Photos Left to Right:  
Access Living mentee with his mentor;  
Stepping Stones program coordinator  
sets up an email address with a consumer



Students visit  
Access Living

### Classes

- We have worked with more than 460 people in housing classes and 69 people in financial literacy classes. These classes help people to learn skills that they need to spend and save money.

### Programs

- We have supported more than 120 young people with a disability who are moving from high school to higher education or employment through our program Realizing Education and Advancement for Disabled Youth (READY).
- We have worked with 116 people with a disability who took part in an Access Living program called Stepping Stones. The program prepared people to live independently.

## Our work: Advocacy Highlights

Advocacy means speaking up to make sure the rights of people with a disability are respected and our voices are heard on the issues that are important to us.

This year Access to Living has advocated on some big issues including:



Accessible Housing Coordinator Shelette Parham meets with a consumer

### Healthcare

We worked with others to fight against attacks on Medicaid. We defended the rights of people with pre-existing conditions, and their right to access healthcare and services in their home or community.



Amber Smock with Nancy Pelosi advocating to save Medicaid



Marca Bristo at Chicago's Disability Pride Parade

## Discrimination

We defended the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). We worked with others to stop a federal bill called HR 620 which would have increased discrimination against people with a disability and made the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) weaker.

## Employment

We supported the Illinois Dignity in Pay Act. We started some important talks about stopping segregated employment for people with disabilities.

## Education

We encouraged the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) to check how Chicago Public Schools' (CPS) is following laws that protect the education of students with disabilities.



Advocate Michelle Garcia at a press conference about CityKey



2018 Governor Candidates Forum

- We organized two forums so that people with a disability in Illinois could find out about political candidates' opinions. One was for the Governor's primary race and one was for the Attorney General's primary race. The forums were livestreamed online to hundreds of viewers.
- We protected important parts of the state budget.
- We had two legislative meet and greets and an advocacy day with the Illinois Network of Centers for Independent Living.
- Access Living community members took part in a learning day on the legislature.
- We generated over 8,000 emails from disability advocates to elected officials at the local, state, and national levels.



Inaugural convening of the World Independent Living Network

### **Supporting Disabled People Who Are People of Color and/or Immigrants**

- We have done more work on racial justice this year. We are working to change how the police respond in emergencies involving black and brown people with disabilities.
- We have advocated on the rights of immigrants with disabilities. We worked on bills to make sure immigrants with disabilities in Illinois can access services they need.
- Access Living's Latinx community group, Cambiando Vidas, worked with the Chicago City Clerk and partners to develop the Chicago CityKey. The CityKey is a type of ID that gives homeless people, undocumented people, and other people without a traditional ID access to some city programs.



## Our Work: Civil Rights Highlights

Access Living works to make sure people with a disability are included in society. Our legal team works to challenge inequality using the law and gives support to people with a disability on their civil rights.

In 2018 our legal team:

- Filed a federal lawsuit against the City of Chicago about its failure to make its affordable housing program accessible to people with disabilities.
- Continued our lawsuit against Uber because it does not provide equal access to its transportation service for people who use wheelchairs.
- Took on a number of discrimination cases in which people with disabilities have faced a barrier to housing, government services and programs, and businesses.
- Ran housing discrimination tests. We sent people with and without a disability to rent apartments in Chicago and then compared their experiences to find out whether discrimination against people with a disability happened.
- Led work with the Chicago Housing Authority to ask the Department of Housing and Urban Development to agree to a higher rent subsidy for people with a disability. A subsidy is a part of a rent that is paid for a person by the Department of Housing.

Access to Living has worked on 68 law cases in 2018. Of those cases, 29 were successfully resolved. This means they ended well for Access to Living and the people with a disability we have supported. 26 of the cases we have worked on are still pending, this means we are still waiting for a decision.



Advocate Chris Yun talks about educational policy



Illinois State Capitol building

## Our Work: Arts And Culture Highlights



Swept dance performance by dancers Deb Goodman, Anita Kenney, and Ginger Lane at the 8th annual CounterBalance dance concert held at Center on Halsted

Photos on this page by Lisa Green

The Access Living Arts and Culture Project raises awareness about disability arts, community, and culture and supports artists with disabilities.

We hold a series of lectures and run music, art, poetry and spoken word programs each year.

In 2018, Access Living sponsored 11 events attended by more than 480 people.

We work with organizations and artists on this work. This year some of the groups we have worked with include Theatre groups, dance companies, poetry groups, museums as well as individual artists.



## **Access Living Remembers Buddy Mayer**

Access Living lost a good friend, supporter, and lifetime board member this year with the passing of Beatrice “Buddy” Mayer at age 97.

Buddy dedicated her life to working on social justice. When she experienced vision loss and started to use a wheelchair, she included disability rights in her work.

She gave generous donations to build Access Living’s headquarters. When the headquarters were built it was the first office building in the United States to use the principles of universal design. Universal design is a way of designing a space to make sure that it works for everyone.

“Buddy deeply believed everybody should have the right to participate in the world,” said Access Living CEO Marca Bristo.

Access Living launched the Beatrice Mayer READY program in 2016. The READY program works to support people with a disability who are high school students to move from school to higher education and employment. READY remains one of Access Living’s main service programs.

Buddy became an Access Living board member in 2003, In 2009 she was elected a lifetime board member. Buddy was then recognized in 2017 with Access Living’s highest honor, the “Lead On” Award, given to those who make a lasting impact on the disability community.

Buddy often told her family, “With privilege comes responsibility.” The legacy she leaves behind will not be forgotten. Access Living is forever grateful for knowing Buddy and working with her.

---

**“Access Living removes barriers for people with a disability so they can live the future they envision.” – Buddy Mayer**

---

## **Our Funding: Public Funding For 2018**

Public funding is money that we get from city, state, and federal government to do our work. Here you can see which groups gave us funding for our programs and services.

### **City of Chicago**

- Department of Family and Support Services – Youth Mentoring
- Department Planning and Development – Technical Assistance – Citywide
- Mayor’s Office for People with a disability – Independent Living Program

### **Illinois Department on Aging**

- Colbert Housing Relocation Program

### **Illinois Department of Human Services**

- Independent Living Program
- Home Services Program
  - Stepping Stones
  - Personal Assistance Training
- Vocational Rehabilitation
  - Community Based Employment Services
  - PTS- Pre-employment Transition Services
  - Youth Initiative Project

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

- Administration for Community Living
  - Centers for Independent Living Program
  - Empowerment Zone

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

- Fair Housing Initiatives Program
- Housing Counseling- Housing Action Illinois Subgrant

## Our Funding: Private Funding

We also receive funding from private donors. In 2016 Access Living began a Major Gifts Campaign with the goal of raising \$10 million which could be used to help us do our work. For the financial year which ended June 2018, we raised \$2.5 million for the Major Gifts Campaign. We raised \$8 million total since the start of the campaign.

We are grateful to all of our donors who have donated money to our Major Gifts Campaign between 2016 and 2018.

Our Access Living Legacy Society donors make sure that Access Living can continue to empower people with a disability to live independently for years to come. Many thanks to the generous members of Access Living's Planned Giving Legacy Society

You can read more about our donors on Access Living's website:

<https://www.accessliving.org/2018-Access-Living-Annual-Report>

## Major Gifts Campaign Progress



## **Our Funding: Ways You Can Support Access Living**

Some ways you can support Access Living are by:

- Becoming a donor – donors are people who give money to organization to support them to continue their work
- Attending or hosting an Access Living fundraising event
- Becoming a member of Access Living
- Join the Young Professionals Council
- Joining the Access Living Legacy society

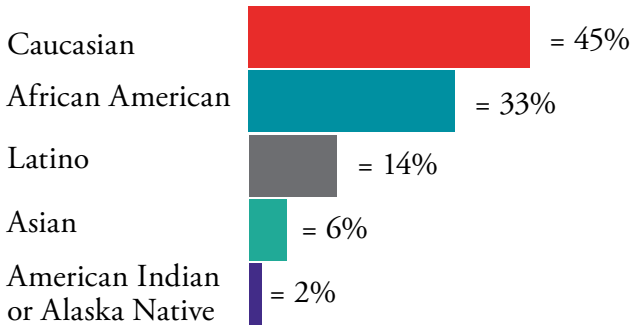
If you'd like more information on ways to support Access Living, please visit our website [www.accessliving.plannedgiving.org](http://www.accessliving.plannedgiving.org). or contact the Development Department Office at (312) 640.2197 (voice) or (312).640.2102 (TTY).

## Who is Access Living? Diversity & Inclusion

Access Living is governed by a board of directors who make the big decisions about our work. Our work is carried out by our staff.

Our board and our staff team are a diverse group made up of people of from different racial backgrounds and with different disabilities.

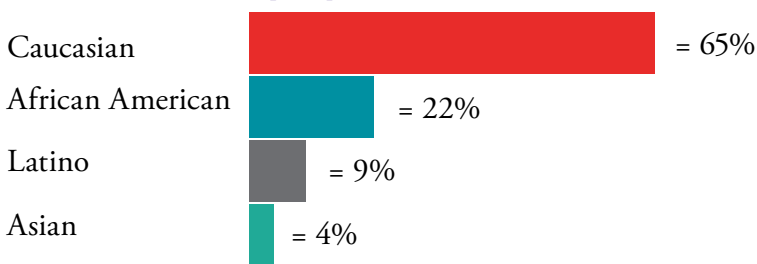
### Staff Diversity By Race



**64% of staff are disabled.**



### Board Diversity By Race



**61% of board members are disabled.**



## Our Financials

Statements of Financial Position: June 30, 2018, and 2017

<i>ASSETS</i>	<i>2018</i>	<i>2017</i>
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$3,675,647	\$2,806,586
Investments Designated for:		
Endowment, Building, and Other Reserve Funds	\$6,602,407	\$6,141,755
Cost Incurred Recoverable under Grants, Net	\$541,451	\$648,661
Other Receivables	\$129,150	\$120,821
Unconditional Promises to Give, Net	\$3,626,098	\$3,227,182
Prepaid Expenses and Other Assets	\$4,135	\$4,442
Property and Equipment, Net	\$7,479,512	\$7,780,405
Art Collection	\$59,461	\$59,461
	<b>\$22,117,861</b>	<b>\$20,789,313</b>
 <i>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</i>		
<i>LIABILITIES</i>		
Accounts Payable and Other Accrued Expenses	\$118,062	\$81,133
Deferred Revenue from Advance Fees	\$4,736	\$5,175
Accrued Compensation	\$240,628	\$208,037
Total Liabilities	<b>\$363,426</b>	<b>\$294,345</b>
 <i>NET ASSETS</i>		
Unrestricted	\$14,934,434	\$14,659,324
Temporarily Restricted	\$6,097,771	\$5,835,644
Permanently Restricted	\$722,230	\$ –
Total Net Assets	<b>\$21,754,435</b>	<b>\$20,494,968</b>
	<b>\$22,117,861</b>	<b>\$20,789,313</b>

## Our Financials – How We Raise Our Money

Statements of Activities: June 30, 2018, and 2017

<i><b>OPERATING REVENUES</b></i>	<i>Unrestricted</i>	<i>Temporarily Restricted</i>	<i>Permanently Restricted</i>	<i>Total</i>
Fees and Grants from Governmental Agencies	\$2,408,086	\$ –	\$ –	\$2,408,086
General Public, Corporate and Foundation Support*	\$1,540,680	\$2,391,651	\$ –	\$3,932,331
United Way of Chicago	\$113,007	\$ –	\$ –	\$113,007
Special Events	\$639,904	\$ –	\$ –	\$639,904
Interest and Dividend Income	\$10,374	\$ –	\$ –	\$10,374
Net Realized and Unrealized Gains	\$217,812	\$ –	\$ –	\$217,812
Other	\$31,404	\$ –	\$ –	\$31,404
Net Assets Released from Restriction	\$2,049,524	(\$2,049,524)	\$ –	\$ –
Net Asset Transfers	(\$642,230)	(\$80,000)	\$722,230	\$ –
<b>Total Operating Revenues</b>	<b>\$6,368,561</b>	<b>\$262,127</b>	<b>\$722,230</b>	<b>\$7,352,918</b>



## Our Financials – How We Spend Our Money

<i><b>OPERATING EXPENSES</b></i>	<i>Unrestricted</i>	<i>Temporarily Restricted</i>	<i>Permanently Restricted</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Program Services</i>				
Community Organizing	\$700,756	\$ –	\$ –	\$700,756
Youth Institute	\$732,619	\$ –	\$ –	\$732,619
Policy Analysis	\$491,865	\$ –	\$ –	\$491,865
Community Support	\$1,070,480	\$ –	\$ –	\$1,070,480
Civil Rights	\$708,652	\$ –	\$ –	\$708,652
Long Term Care	\$1,249,518	\$ –	\$ –	\$1,249,518
Art	\$106,950	\$ –	\$ –	\$106,950
Net Assets Released from Restriction	\$2,049,524	(\$2,049,524)		
Net Asset Transfers	(\$642,230)	(\$80,000)	\$722,230	\$ –
<b>Total Program Services</b>	<b>\$5,060,840</b>	<b>\$ –</b>	<b>\$ –</b>	<b>\$5,060,840</b>
<i>Supporting Services</i>				
Management and General	\$384,599	\$ –	\$ –	\$384,599
Development	\$648,012	\$ –	\$ –	\$648,012
Total Supporting Services	\$1,032,611	\$ –	\$ –	\$1,032,611
Total Operating Expenses, Includes Depreciation and Amortization Expense of \$402,759	\$6,093,451	\$ –	\$ –	\$6,093,451
Change In Net Assets	\$275,110	\$ 262,127	\$722,230	\$1,259,467
Net Assets, Beginning of Year	\$14,659,324	\$5,835,644	\$ –	\$20,494,968
Net Assets, End of Year	\$14,934,434	\$6,097,771	\$722,230	\$21,754,435
	\$14,934,434	\$6,097,771	\$722,230	\$21,754,435

\*Access Living began a Major Gifts Campaign in 2016 with a goal of raising \$10 million, a portion of which will be designated as an endowment, as well as used toward new and existing programs over the next five to seven years. \$2.5 million in revenue was recorded for the Major Gifts Campaign for the year ended June 30, 2018.

This report is available in alternative format upon request.

**Access Living**

115 West Chicago Avenue

Chicago, Illinois 60654

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

tel. 312.640.2100

fax. 312.640.2142

tty. 312.640.2102