



2022

Annual Report

UNIFIED COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS




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2022

Annual Report



MISSION

Our mission is to support individuals with disabilities in achieving independence, productivity and the quality of life they seek.

VISION

Our vision is to be recognized for excellence and leadership in providing innovative, person-centered supports, making us the agency of choice for individuals with disabilities and their families and the employer of choice for human service professionals.

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Message

from our
PRESIDENT AND CEO
& BOARD CHAIR

As we emerge from COVID-19 restrictions, we are so proud of all our staff who, over the past three years, have continued to serve our individuals in creative and unique ways. We are pleased to share that we have partially reopened our day habilitation programs in Frederick and Cumberland, and in Hagerstown, we have transitioned our programming to be community-based versus facility-based with great success. We currently support more than 210 individuals through our Meaningful Day Services.

The Developmental Disabilities Administration has encouraged providers of Meaningful Day Services to prioritize community participation for individuals with disabilities. Unified is truly ahead of the curve with our Community Development Services (CDS) initiative becoming an integral part of our programming. CDS supports individuals in having meaningful days by giving them the freedom to structure their days doing things they enjoy, either as an individual or with others who have similar interests. It could be a trip to the theater, getting a manicure, visiting a park or museum, taking a course or volunteering or having a paid position through our Employment Services program. The possibilities are endless.

There has also been exciting news in our Residential Services with the creation of single-resident apartments. True to our mission to support people with disabilities in achieving independence, we have renovated the lower

levels of some of our community living group homes and converted them into accessible apartments, allowing individuals to live independently with the security of convenient access to Unified's residential staff and a wide range of support services. Unified currently operates 43 community living group homes, housing 143 individuals, and 10 renovated apartments, housing 9 individuals, with one waiting to move in.

It was a very successful year for fundraising. Our 17th Annual Golf Classic raised \$66,000, and Hoodstock XIX raised \$106,000. Hoodstock, since it began 19 years ago in Russ and Jen Causey's backyard, has now raised a total of \$1-million dollars—a true milestone. Both events were fully in person this year with 99 golfers participating in the Golf Classic at the Elkridge Club and more than 400 people attending Hoodstock at The Winslow. A highlight of Hoodstock was the presentation of the Samuel A. Tucker Memorial Can Do Award to Jerel Layne, who was recognized for his work with Unified's Assistive Technology Services program. Using a Nova Chat communication device, Jerel can now communicate with family, friends and people in the community.

We also appreciate the generous organizations who have given Unified grants during the past year to include the Maryland Transit Administration, whose grant allowed Unified to purchase four new vans to transport individuals to our day habilitation programs, doctors' appointments,

“ WE THANK YOU FOR PUTTING YOUR TRUST AND
CONFIDENCE IN US AS WE CONTINUOUSLY STRIVE
TO HELP OUR INDIVIDUALS LIVE MORE MEANINGFUL
AND INDEPENDENT LIVES. ”

recreational outings and community activities; the Washington County Gaming Commission for purchasing community theater tickets for our individuals in Washington County; and the Greenspring Advisors Grant Program, which is allowing Unified to enhance and rebuild its Employment Services program in Hagerstown. We thank Snowden and Nancy Stanley for their donation to support our staff in obtaining MANDT certification training so they can train new direct support staff in comprehensive approaches to prevention, de-escalation and intervention when providing behavior supports.

We thank all our donors and supporters. Please know you make a difference in the lives of each of the individuals we serve, and we could not do our job without your support.

Check out our newly designed website www.unified.org to keep abreast of the latest Unified activities. Also, you will note in this report that some of the names of our programs and services have changed. Although the names may be new, our services and programs continue to promote self-determination, independence, productivity, integration and inclusion in all facets of life and are designed to assist individuals with disabilities in achieving the quality of life they seek.

Our board of directors' guidance and leadership allow us to continue to be one of the premier organizations in the region supporting people with disabilities, and this year,

we are pleased to welcome Kim Reno and Jody Gatuso to the board.

Everything we do depends upon our loyal and dedicated staff, and we thank them for all they do every day. They are at the heart of who we are and what we do. And finally, to all our individuals and families, we thank you for putting your trust and confidence in us as we continuously strive to help our individuals live more meaningful and independent lives.

Sincerely,



A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Amy Kreitz".

Amy Kreitz
President and CEO



A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ellen Milles".

Ellen Milles
Board Chair



It Takes a Village

Finding a place to call home can be challenging for people with disabilities. For more than 20 years, Unified has worked with families to help people with disabilities move into a home of their own and make the transition from living with family to living independently in a community living group home. On the following pages, we highlight a few of the people who make it possible for Unified to provide the care and support people with disabilities need to live meaningful and productive lives in their own homes.

Dung Pham and Hien Tran Move Their Son into a Home of His Own



Dung Pham and Hien Tran's son, Richard, as a young child.

Moving their oldest son Richard into a group home was one of the most difficult decisions Dung Pham and his wife Hien Tran have ever had to make. "Even though I knew it would be best for him, it was heartbreaking for us," says Dung. "Richard is the son every parent wants. He is kind, friendly, patient and wise. He is very loving, and we love him so much. We miss him every day."

Richard's stepmother Hien stayed home to care for Richard when he was a child, but as he grew into a teenager, it became physically challenging for her to care for him. It was also a struggle to give him the attention and social opportunities he needed as a young adult.

"Richard is a very intelligent and naturally outgoing person," Hien says. "He became very curious about the world." On a few occasions, he even slipped out of their house unnoticed. "We were so scared something might happen to him."

Dung adds, "We realized it would be increasingly difficult to care for him and keep him safe, as we got older."

When Richard turned 19, Dung and Hien began looking for a home where Richard could live as an adult. "We could have continued to care for Richard for longer, but we felt it was better to move him into a place of his own while we were still able to help him make the transition," says Dung. "We didn't want to wait until we were too old to care for him or something happened to one of us."

After touring several of Unified's community living group homes, they found one with a big open floor plan where Richard could have his own bedroom and bathroom. "Along with Richard's happiness, there were many things to consider, such as the supports offered, health care services available, staffing and how often we could visit," explains Dung. Twelve years later, Dung is confident they



Richard Pham (right) with his older sister, baby brother and parents, Hien Tran and Dung Pham.

made the right choice. “We are thankful that Richard is happy, has friends and receives the personal supports and medical care he needs.”

Dung and Hien visit regularly. They have a wonderful relationship with the staff and a special fondness for House Manager Bryan Carpenter. “We appreciate the care he gives Richard and the positive impact he has on the quality of life in Richard’s home,” says Dung.

Every couple of years, Dung and Hien buy Richard a new iPad. They have also purchased televisions for the home, a barber kit, a rice cooker and a pressure cooker. They are always open to supporting Richard’s independence and making his home more comfortable and enjoyable for all the residents.

“We will continue to support Unified to ensure the best care for Richard and other people with disabilities,” says Dung. “There is so much each of us can do to make life better for someone with a disability. Even the smallest donations make a difference. We hope more people will open their hearts and support Unified.”

Richard Pham Enjoys a Life of His Own

There is a real sense of community in Richard Pham's home, and it is a place where he feels comfortable and safe. Richard has great camaraderie with House Manager Bryan Carpenter, and he likes the other staff and his housemates, especially his housemate Dean, who is one of his best friends. Richard and Dean enjoy hanging out in each other's rooms, playing video games and going to church together.

The Unified community living group home where Richard lives provides 24/7 supervision. Richard receives supports for aspects of everyday life and help with medication management. His home allows him to have independence, privacy, daily social interactions and a support network.

Richard is a cheerful, social person. He enjoys good food and going out to eat. He regularly helps cook at home and often looks up and tries new recipes. He is proud of his Vietnamese heritage and loves when his parents have Vietnamese food delivered to him.

Some of Richard's favorite activities include spending time with friends, going to the park and watching television. His favorite TV channel is CNN, and he closely follows politics. He also enjoys watching movies and reading on his iPad. His favorite places to visit are Hershey Park and the National Aquarium. Richard participates in Unified's Frederick Day Program. He also regularly attends church and takes courses at Frederick Community College.



Richard Pham feels comfortable and safe in his Unified community living group home.



Richard Pham (l) has great camaraderie with House Manager Bryan Carpenter (r).



Bryan Carpenter Makes Group Home Life Fun

House Manager Bryan Carpenter oversees the day-to-day activities in Richard Pham's home. His favorite part of the job is interacting with the residents and their families.

"When you are supporting a person with a disability, you have to be attentive and fully engaged," he says.

"What's important to recognize is, apart from needing help with some tasks, people with disabilities are very much like everyone else, with the same interests and tastes. The guys in this house are some of the coolest people I've ever met."

While Bryan takes his responsibilities seriously, he wants life in the group home to be fun too, and he looks for ways to make everyday activities more enjoyable. "People who struggle with fine motor skills sometimes find personal care like getting dressed or doing their hair challenging," he explains. "Making sure the guys in our house feel confident about how they look is a priority for me." One of the ways Bryan supports the guys in looking and feeling their best is by setting up a home "barbershop" to shave, cut and style their hair. To get into the spirit, they

play music and set up outside when the weather permits.

"When Richard's father Dung noticed, he gifted the house a new barber kit. He and his wife are very kind and generous," says Bryan.



Sandy Snyder Finds the Perfect Houses for Unified

Searching for the perfect home can be exciting and stressful at the same time. “Unified is always looking for the best possible house for the people it supports,” says Sandy Snyder, a licensed real estate agent for more than 23 years.

Early in her career, Sandy helped a Unified employee buy a home. The employee was so impressed, she referred Unified to Sandy for help in finding a house to turn into a community living group home. Sandy has been working with Unified ever since. She has helped Unified buy more than 19 homes, including the home where Richard Pham lives.

Through the years, Sandy has developed a comprehensive understanding of what Unified looks for in a home. “Every once in a while, we find a home that is perfect as is, but most of the time Unified will need to renovate it to make it work,” she says. She looks at square footage and the number of bathrooms and bedrooms. Ideally, everything is on one floor, and the home must have enough space to be able to widen the hallways and doorways and enlarge the bathrooms. The driveway must be flat so residents can get safely on and off accessible vans.

“Unified wants the residents to be able to function in and around the home,” Sandy explains. “As a mother, I imagine having to move a family member into a community living group home is a difficult choice. I hope that knowing how much thought and work Unified puts into each home makes families more comfortable and confident and helps ease some of their concerns.”

Sandy has long had a passion for supporting people with disabilities. When she was in college, she worked as an assistant house manager for a group home for

people with disabilities. She says, “I see what Unified is doing and truly appreciate the impact it has on peoples’ lives.” For the past 10 years, for every house Sandy has helped Unified buy, sell or list, she has donated a portion of her commission to Unified. “When you connect with a cause, it feels really good to give to an organization you know is making a difference.”

Real estate agent Sandy Snyder has helped Unified buy more than 19 homes.



2022

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- Elected in 2022
- Retired in 2023



Statistics

for
FISCAL YEAR
2022

More than **800**
Individuals Supported



210

Individuals Enrolled in
Meaningful Day Services



73

Individuals in Community
Development Services
(CDS) Program



43

Community Living
Group Homes





225

Individuals Receiving Assistive
Technology Services



319

Direct Support Professionals
(420 Employees Total)



143

Individuals Living in
Community Living Group
Homes



10

Community Living
Apartments



2022

Revenues & Expenses

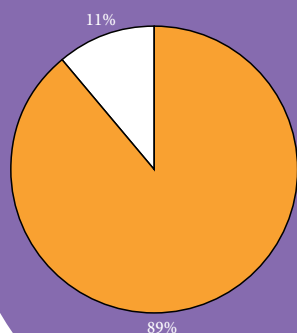
SOURCE OF REVENUE

- Md. Developmental Disabilities Administration – 98%
- Fundraising – 1%
- Other – 1%



FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES

- Program Services – 89%
- Administration and Fundraising – 11%



REVENUES

Contracts	\$ 26,880,914
Fundraising	\$ 243,305
Other	\$ (871,574)
TOTAL REVENUES	\$ 26,252,645

EXPENSES

Program Services

Direct Services	\$ 22,406,084
Public Education	\$ 105,462

TOTAL PROGRAM SERVICES	\$ 22,511,546
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ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

Management & General	\$ 2,696,076
Fundraising	\$ 123,288

TOTAL ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES	\$ 2,819,364
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TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 25,330,910
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EXCESS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	\$ 921,735
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ASSETS

Current Assets	\$	16,537,032
Property & Equipment, Net of Accumulated Depreciation	\$	10,533,014
Other Assets	\$	259,745
TOTAL ASSETS	\$	27,329,791

LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS

Current Liabilities	\$	4,834,280
Long-term Liabilities	\$	5,542,453
Other Liabilities	\$	319,530
TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$	10,696,263

COMMITMENTS & CONTINGENCIES

Net Assets		
Unrestricted	\$	16,468,253
With Donor Restrictions	\$	165,275
TOTAL NET ASSETS	\$	16,633,527

TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	\$	27,329,791
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2022

Statement of Financial Positions

FOR YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2022

Unified Community Connections is designated as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. A copy of our audited financial statement is available upon request by calling 410-484-4540 or writing to Unified Community Connections at 952 Ridgebrook Road, Suite 1000, Sparks, MD 21152. Additional information is on file with the Maryland Office of the Secretary of State.

2022

Donors

Unified Community Connections gratefully acknowledges the following generous donors for their gifts of \$100 or more received between July 1, 2021, and Dec. 31, 2022. These donations, along with many other much appreciated gifts below \$100, enable us to better serve people with disabilities in Maryland.

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(\$25,000+)

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“ I AM PASSIONATE ABOUT
 SUPPORTING PEOPLE WITH
 DISABILITIES TO LEAD LIVES
 THAT ARE MEANINGFUL. ”

— Unified Employee

New Terminology

SAME GREAT SERVICES

USE: Meaningful Day Services

INSTEAD OF: Day Habilitation

Meaningful Day Services encompass our day habilitation program and community development and employment services and offer adults with disabilities the opportunity to engage in meaningful individual and group activities that promote inclusion and foster independence.

USE: Community Living Group Home(s)

INSTEAD OF: Residential Home(s)

Community Living Group Homes provide adults with disabilities accessible, barrier-free housing, 24/7 personal care assistance and life-skills training in agency-owned or leased homes and apartments.

You may have noticed in 2022 Unified began using new terminology to describe some of our services. We also use terms that may be unfamiliar to some people, so to ensure everyone is in the know, here is a list of commonly used terms and what they mean.

USE: Direct Support Professional

INSTEAD OF: Personal Development Associate

A Direct Support Professional provides daily personal care assistance to adults with disabilities in addition to helping them develop independent living skills and participate in recreational and meaningful activities.

“ I LIKE THE STAFF AT UNIFIED.
THEY TREAT ME WITH RESPECT. ”

— *Jeremy Gibson, Individual from Frederick*

Connecting people with disabilities to life's possibilities.



The programs and services provided by Unified Community Connections are operated on a nondiscriminatory basis. They are subject to the provisions of Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 and the Hill Burton Act. These acts prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, age and disability. Unified Community Connections' nondiscriminatory position applies to employment, admissions, provision of services, assignment of services, granting of privileges, accommodations and opportunity to participate in programs and activities.



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2022

Annual Report