

touchstone

A quarterly publication providing the latest news & information for individuals with disabilities, families, friends and our community.

CLIENT SUCCESS

YMCA partnership promotes physical fitness

Stone Belt is now a proud partner with the YMCA Upstart program, a project with Bloomington's YMCA to support Stone Belt clients to have better overall physical fitness.

The program is also the subject of a prestigious Indiana University research project funding and focusing on improving fitness outcomes for people with disabilities. Through grants for this program, Stone Belt clients are supported to use YMCA facilities and attend classes with community members.

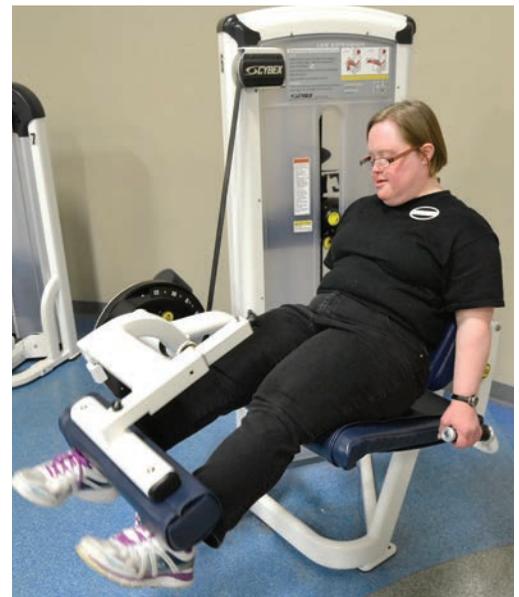
Adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities are often less active and experience significantly more health issues, yet successful physical activity programs are rare for this underserved group.

To combat this challenge, proceeds from the Bloomington Rotary Toast fundraiser were contributed to the YMCA solely to support the health of people with disabilities, allowing the hiring of fitness specialist Ann Brzuzny to work exclusively with Stone Belt clients.

"She is an experienced fitness professional that has provided just the right approach and amazing



Sammi Owen, left, warms up on the indoor track at the Monroe County YMCA. At right, Kim Mitchell lifts weights with her legs.



energy to this project," Lifelong Learning Director Susan Russ says. "I'm really excited to see all of this play out and to hear about results of improved fitness and the fun people are having attending Y classes and using the amazing YMCA facilities."

Brzuzny has also implemented fitness classes here in the Stone Belt building and trained classroom staff to support those classes and routines. An IU graduate student and several undergraduate students will be hired to help the Upstart program expand and continue beyond this first year.

Another grant opportunity to support Stone Belt's fitness efforts was applied for by IU professor Georgia Frey. Stone Belt is a co-recipient, along

with IU, of this \$25,000 award to support a research project around improving fitness outcomes for people with disabilities.

Proving the impact of programs like this, client Jason Truelock won this year's Empowered Learning Award for his energetic approach and compassion. He helps other participants in his YMCA strength training class, demonstrating the program's potential for increasing quality of life and expanding client opportunities.

"The hope is to increase fitness for all involved and to make healthy choices and lifestyles more prevalent for the people supported by Stone Belt," Susan says.

Become an advocate today! Sign up for advocacy news at info@stonebelt.org.

A look ahead to 2018

The New Year holds many things in store for Stone Belt. Some are predictable and within our control and others will require us to be alert and ready to respond if needed.

Strategic Planning

We are in the midst of completing our next three-year strategic plan. This time, we are taking a more comprehensive approach by gathering input from a wider array of constituents, including our community partners, similar agencies throughout the state, and external client advocates. This, in addition to the extensive information we have from clients, families and staff will inform us of the perceived strengths and weaknesses of our operation. We are also reaching out to advocacy associations and public policy experts, both within Indiana and nationally, to determine the opportunities and threats in the external environment. In a time that issues at the federal level are more at play than ever, this is extremely important. Among the threats we may face are funding cuts and movement to managed care for long-term support services. That said, however, opportunities may include new models of service, higher focus on quality outcomes in a managed-care environment, and new engagement with community members and organization in supporting individuals with disabilities.

Working with a facilitator, the board and staff have a lot of work ahead of them in the planning, but the anticipation of a great strategic plan keeps us focused on this outcome. If you have input or ideas on things you would like us to consider in our planning, please feel free to contact me or submit your thoughts to info@stonebelt.org.

I Am You Returns

We are in the final preparations for the 2018 I Am You. The production will be staged at the Bloomington Playwrights Project on February 23 and 24. This is our seventh season, presented biennially. The show poignantly brings to stage the stories of family, loss, love and personal perseverance. Twelve performers have already been busy writing their stories and determining ways of sharing those stories with the audience. I can't wait to see it. Ticket information will be forthcoming, so watch our Facebook page and check your email for more details.



LESLIE GREEN

Accreditation

We will be having our CARF accreditation survey in March. During this three-day survey, all programs and services are subject to a review that assesses our operations against a set of industry-developed

standards. While this is a required process for many programs, we feel it is important for all programs, regardless of requirements, to be reviewed for their effectiveness, efficiency and quality of service. We have been continually accredited since 1994.

Eyes on Washington

While advocates for people with disabilities, including Stone Belt, were vocal with concerns about the detrimental impact on Medicaid that was contained in the health care legislation that failed in Congress, our vigilance must continue. Since Medicaid is the largest funder of health care and long-term supports, such as those provided by Stone Belt, to people with disabilities, we need to be ready to voice concerns should Congress turn their efforts back on funding cuts for the program. This is potentially an issue if lawmakers look to reduce spending to offset the revenue losses from the recently approved tax overhaul. We hope we can count on you to help raise your concerns should this become necessary. It is grassroots efforts that have successfully brought about the many positive impacts of past legislation or turning back efforts to weaken funding. We at Stone Belt feel fortunate to have the support of so many. We look forward to 2018 with excitement, as well as some apprehension, but we are bolstered by the strength of our constituency. Thank you for your support that comes in myriad ways. It makes a great and positive difference in the lives of people with developmental disabilities that you support.

With best wishes for a happy and successful New Year,

How to Contact Your Legislators

In Washington:

To express your concerns about the changes in the Medicaid program or other federal issues, contact these federal legislators.

- Senator Todd Young
202-224-5623 in Washington or 317-226-6700 in Indianapolis
www.young.senate.gov/content/contact-senator
- Senator Joe Donnelly
202-224-4814 in Washington or 317-226-5555 in Indianapolis
www.donnely.senate.gov/contact/email-joe
- Representative Trey Hollingsworth
202-225-5315 in Washington or 812-288-3999 in Jeffersonville
<http://hollingsworth.house.gov/contact/email>
- Representative Luke Messer
202-225-3021 or <http://messenger.house.gov/contact>

In Indiana:

Every Indiana citizen has a state representative and a state senator. To find your legislators go to: <http://iga.in.gov/legislative/find-legislators/>. Contact these individuals for concerns at the state level, such as funding for the direct support professional workforce.

More information on how to effectively advocate in Washington and in Indianapolis is available in this Touchstone issue and on our website at stonebelt.org/advocacy.



Wiltz: Having a seat at the table

Milestones Director Jim Wiltz has been an advocate at the state and national level for people with intellectual disability and co-occurring mental health condition, referred to as “Dual Diagnosis,” for a number of years. Much of his recent work in this area has been as a member of the Public Policy Committee for the National Association on Dual Diagnosis (NADD).

This past November, Wiltz presented at the NADD annual conference in Charlotte, North Carolina, on the topic of how federal funding changes might affect people with dual diagnosis. The presentation focused on recently proposed Medicaid changes called block grants that would significantly reduce funding over time.

Wiltz also presented data from an NADD project he coordinated with a managed-care organization (MCO) in North Carolina. The data

demonstrated how federal funding changes could adversely affect services for this already underserved population.

In December, Wiltz also took part in a dual-diagnosis summit in Washington, DC, to discuss these issues and help plan for the future. The summit was co-sponsored by NADD and ANCOR, a national provider agency of which Stone Belt is a member.

Among the participants were advocates and families, the CEOs of NADD, ANCOR, AAIDD (the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disability), and NAMI (the National Association on Mental Illness), as well as national leaders from The Arc, several MCOs, and associations that represent state directors of disability and mental



JIM WILTZ

health services. This all-day summit was organized as a short-term think tank with three roundtable discussions to identify strengths and weaknesses across state systems and begin to develop plans to advocate for what works.

“Regardless of possible changes to Medicaid, most people agree that managed care and its promises to save states money, will play a growing role in future long-term services,” Wiltz says, explaining that this is already happening in other states because of funding pressures everywhere. “The point of the summit was for stakeholders to form a coherent strategy, so that when contracts are made between states and MCOs, strong advocacy can help guide the process to include funding to address the unique needs of people with dual diagnosis.”

He adds, “That’s why it is important for stakeholders to have a seat at the table.”

CHANGES

Promotions, new BCs expand Behavior Support

Related to Julie Miller’s new role as director of the Supported Group Living program, Milestones’ Mari Shawcroft is assuming a greater leadership role as coordinator of Behavior Support Services.

Milestones Director Jim Wiltz says this was a natural fit since Shawcroft is a leader and the most tenured behavior clinician (BC), having worked here for over 10 years.

Shawcroft will no longer carry a standing caseload, although she will continue to work with new clients and their families during intakes.

This is because the number of BCs has doubled in the past two years, which requires more supervision.

In addition, Carol Persley was promoted to senior behavior clinician. She will provide clinical supervision to meet licensure requirements for BCs still pursuing a license. Providing this specialized supervision is one of the strengths of the program, which helps recruit and develop the expanding program.

Sierra Hofmann and Tera Caster recently joined Milestones’ talented group of BCs. Hofmann comes

from Centerstone where she was a therapist. She has a master’s in marriage and family therapy. Caster’s background is in working with the geriatric population in nursing homes. She has a master’s in social work and is starting to work with some of Shawcroft’s clients.

Wiltz described that “one of the best signs of success in the Behavior Support Program has been our ability to recruit and retain talented clinicians to provide these needed services. Tera and Sierra are great examples of this.”

STAFF

Miller steps up as new SGL director

Julie Miller has been a very valuable member of the Milestones team for over three years where she has served, along with Mari Shawcroft, as a manager of Behavior Support Services.

In late 2017, Miller was promoted to director of Stone Belt’s Supported Group Living (SGL) program.



Milestones Director Jim Wiltz, who will continue

JULIE MILLER

to supervise Miller, says, “Although we had a talented group of applicants, Julie’s hard work and accomplishments in the Behavior Support Program gave her a leg up in the interviewing process. Because of her recognized efforts at Milestones, everyone in Stone Belt’s leadership team has confidence that Julie will be a success as director of the group home program.”

Miller’s recent contributions at Milestones include assuming leadership roles in both the Skills program and outpatient clinic when it was needed due to sudden, temporary staffing changes. In each case, Miller essentially changed her entire work life around to help stabilize these important parts of Milestones.

“Julie does not actively seek out recognition for what she does, but it seems to find her anyway,” Wiltz says. “That’s why she earned the Visionary Leadership Award at Stone Belt’s recent Annual Celebration.”

TRAILBLAZING

Program targets spiritual support for clients

A trailblazing spiritual support program for individuals with disabilities was recently formed for Stone Belt clients and the community.

Skills Development Clinician Sarah McKenney, who holds a master's degree in divinity from Columbia Theological Seminary, has been collaborating with Milestones Director Jim Wiltz to create a concrete program for clients who want to explore their faith needs.

The program's main goal is to offer Stone Belt clients a personalized spiritual support plan—whether just discussing needs, offering support and maintaining current faith choices, or providing an extensive exploration of faith and spirituality.

McKenney's role as spiritual support and volunteer coordinator will be to act as a liaison between individuals who desire to explore their spirituality and local faith communities. She will work with identified clients who want a greater involvement in their faith community to have

desired experiences. As a part of this, she will reach out to the faith communities to enlist them as participants in this program. The outcomes will be to improve the quality of life for all involved and to help clients create more relationships beyond their current spheres.



SARAH MCKENNEY

A sponsorship effort will pair clients with volunteers from any chosen faith, in which volunteers may provide transportation to spiritual activities and offer companionship for services.

"That way, clients truly have a choice, just as they have the human right to choose where they worship," McKenney says. "This is to help make that accessible."

After growing up with dyslexia and learning disabilities herself, McKenney became attuned at

an early age to anyone being excluded or made to feel unwelcome.

"I grew this lens to where I see the world and pretty quickly see those who are marginalized," she says.

McKenney constructed this innovative program from the ground up after repeatedly hearing stories from people with disabilities about the lack of spiritual support in their lives.

"It's a great way to provide natural relationships with people in the community and community members being able to learn and grow and experience a new relationship," McKenney says.

The spiritual support program will also advocate with clergy and congregations to provide education for how to make worship a more inclusive experience, including assistance with worship accommodations and nonverbal grief counseling.

MANUFACTURING

New contract and first belt shipment

Stone Belt Manufacturing is happy to announce our new partnership with DQE Inc., an Indiana-based manufacturer that recently moved operations to Bloomington.

This collaboration will provide even more opportunities for Stone Belt clients to have rewarding careers doing meaningful work, and emphasize our community's commitment to empowering our clients.

"We had a long and rewarding partnership with another central Indiana Arc," DQE Director of Operations Corey Jacobs says. "After a tour and some trial projects, we were impressed with Stone Belt's sophistication, facilities, responsiveness and scope of ability."

DQE manufactures and distributes decontamination shower systems and personal protective equipment to improve safety in first responder and healthcare markets. They provide a variety of protective clothing kits that offer a great fit for the Stone Belt workshop.

Corey praises Director of Manufacturing Karen Freeman and her team, and he says he looks



The Bedford Manufacturing team completed its first shipment of 4,050 belts for Ira Green in Rhode Island.

forward to growing DQE's relationship with Stone Belt. He says the company is grateful for the stable and skilled resource as they design future products.

"We benefit greatly from the support and are thrilled that our business provides meaningful work opportunities for persons with special needs," Corey says. "The Bloomington community is blessed to have a resource like Stone Belt, and we are proud to be a partner."

COLUMBUS

Clients give back through STEP

Stone Belt's Columbus STEP (Success Through Exploration and Participation) program is giving clients the chance to learn essential life skills while also contributing to their community.

Clients have been volunteering at the Bartholomew County 4-H Fair/Special Olympics BBJ's Iced Tea Booth, Love Chapel and Orphan Grain Train to explore their community and develop independence and social skills.

While classroom activities include instruction on topics such as public transportation, employment, money and shopping skills, it also emphasizes giving back to the community through volunteering.

Columbus Lifelong Learning Supervisor Susie Warnell says, "(I want) for each client to experience life and life skills. For them to explore and learn all aspects of adult daily living for a better quality of life. To build their self-esteem and self-independence."

THANK YOU DONORS

Pillar Society (\$5,000 - \$9,999)

Old National Bank, Don & Carolyn Snyder

Limestone Society (\$2,500 - \$4,999)

Malcolm Brown, Richard Sanders, Randall & Rae Kirk

Builder Society (\$1,000 - \$2,499)

Diana Baker & Tom Carter, Alex & Ginny Buchwald, Kay Dahlgren, Mike & Betty Davis, David & Jane Dunatchik, Preston & Lori Garraghty, Jim & Joyce Grandorf, Cindy Higgins, Kappa Kappa Sigma, Iota Chapter, Stuart & Cookie Mufson, Jerry & Jean Olson, Diane Pelrine & Patrick McNaughton, Winston & Sue Shindell, Trish Sterling, The Ability Experience, Kurt & Lisa Zorn

Advocate Society (\$500 - \$999)

Venus Abbitt, Bill & Michelle Bartley, Vicki Borrelli, Charlotte Daniel, David Hamilton & Inge Van der Cruysse, Victor Harnack, Anne Higley & Eric Benson, Dan & Beth Lodge-Rigal, Edwin Marshall, Mary Phillips, Sandra Taylor, T.I.S. Inc., Charlotte Zietlow

Steward Society (\$100 - \$499)

James & Shirley Abbitt, Ann Armstrong, Sarah Baumgart & Bill Lozowski, Basil & Jane Bennett, Carol Bentley, John & Kathleen Bethell, Leslie Bishop & Jeffrey Hyman, James Bohrer & Dr. Denise Howard, Steve Bonowski, Summer & Josh Boyd, Brad & Karen Braun, Dallas Burch, Doris Burton, James & Carol Campbell, John Clower, James & Constance Cook Glen, Susan Cote, Jean & Doris Creek, Betty & Larry Davidson, Richard Davis, Betty Deckard, David & Kim Deckard, Dick & Rosemary Dever, Doreen Devitt, David Eskenazi, Elaine Finnegan, Maureen Gahan, Joe & Mary Gajewski, Rich & Lois Gehrman, Margaret Gilbride & Claire King, Tom & Shirley Goodman, Catherine Gray & John Turner, Henry Gray, Leslie Green & Ed Maxedon, David & Judy Haas, Jo and Steve Ham, Justin & Emily Harrison, David & Mary Higgins, Tim Hines & Rebecca Philippsen, Leon & Loretta Hoevener, Mike & Barb Horvath, Don & Carol-Anne Hossler, Trish & Louie Ierino, David & Janet James, Miles & Marjorie Kanne, Jim & Mary Kenny, Robert Agranoff & Susan Klein, Gregory Lloyd, Russell Lyons, Jim Major, Bob & Suzanne Mann, Dave & Laura Martin, D.J. Masson & Betsy Gersin, Pam & David McCoy, Valerie Merriam, Donna Miller, Daunna Minnich, Stephen & Sandra Moberly, Kathie Moh, Charlie Nelms, William & Phyllis Perkins, Carolyn & Rollin Phillips Rhodes, Doug & Ellen Porter, Jamie & Debra Prenkert, Barbara & Gwyn Richards, Dick Rose, Harold & Sandy Sabbagh, Kathy Sideli, Philip & Gloria Smith, Kailyn Sorrell, Nila Sunday, Reginald Travis, Susan & Albert Velasquez, Al & Marie Vendel, Wayne & Vivian Winston, Dane & Nancy Woll

Friend Society (\$1 - \$99)

Amal & Salih Altoma, Katie Anderson, Ron & Sheryl Barnes, Catherine Beeker, Jim & Marge Belisle, Mark & Charlene Braun, Dan & Patricia Butler, Deanna Carrington, John & Susan Cronkhite, Paul & Lana Eisenberg, James & Jacqueline Faris, Steven Floyd, David Hossler, David & Anne Johnson, Josh & Stephanie Johnson, Iris Kiesling, Scott & Mary Mapes, Woody McGee, Ron & Diana McGovern, Myla Jean Meadows, Nancy Metcalf, P.E.A.C.E. Meyer, Larry & Brenda Mitchell, Bob & Bridget Morgan, Robert & Suellen Moynihan, Francis & Phyllis Newton, Bobbie & Channing Partenheimer, Terry & Dixie Patterson, Joseph & Virginia Pech, Katy & Ken Ratcliff, Catherine Simmons, Chester & Celeste Skoczylas, Keegan Smith, David & Sarah Smith, Keith Solberg & Sonja Johnson, Bobbi Jean Stewart, Sue Stillions, The Irish Lion Restaurant & Pub, Hugh & Lita Truelock, Steve Tucker, Lee Van Buskirk & Bonnie Gordon-Lucas, Rita Wacker, Randy & Diane West, Todd & Becky Willis, Christiana Yablonowski, Betty & Neil Yoder, Martha Young

In-Kind Donors

Carol & Michael Bodnar, Cook Medical, Donny & Sharon Disque, Matthew Elliott, Robert & Sally Ellison, Tyler Hamacher, Robert Houle, Jeff Huffman, James and Lara Keith, Joe and Meridee Lamantia, Carmen Levasseur, Markey's Rental and Staging, Monroe County Convention Center, Sheila Paul, Larry & Debra Sherer, Thermo Fisher Scientific, Henry & Celicia Upper

Consider Stone Belt in Your Will or Estate Plan

By making a bequest to Stone Belt in your will, you help insure individuals with disabilities receive our supports for years to come. For information, contact your financial advisor or call Leslie Green at 812-332-2168 ext. 249.

GIVING MATTERS

Why I Give: Michael Melby

Michael Melby is the Regional Director of Pharmacy at Indiana University Health South Region. He is also the CEO of Health LINC and serves on Stone Belt's Board of Directors.

Economic inequality refers to the extent to which economic advantage is distributed in an uneven manner among a population. In the United States, economic inequality, or the gap between the haves and have-nots, has been growing markedly, by every major statistical measure, for some 30 years. I would love to believe that the people on the scarcity end of that inequality would have their playing field leveled by social safety net programs being maintained or even strengthened. We do not appear to be headed in that direction.



MICHAEL MELBY

Stone Belt supports and empowers more than 1,600 individuals to live fulfilling lives by providing them with the necessary opportunities for self-growth. Stone Belt believes in the uniqueness, worth and right to self-determination of every individual. They work every day to lessen the impact of the gap between the haves and the have nots.

I am fortunate enough to have been born a healthy person into an economically advantaged family. We were not wealthy by any means, but I had enough to eat, a safe environment, good family support, and was able to go to college and enjoy a wonderful career. I am a "have."

Watching the safety net disappear for the people Stone Belt provides for is not an option from my perspective. If local, state and federal payers will not maintain or improve the safety net then it is my moral imperative to share from my abundance to help offset the inequality.

I respect and admire the work Stone Belt does and I am humbled and proud to donate my time and my money to support the mission. May Stone Belt's commitment to that mission never be forced to waiver for lack of funding.

Complete the enclosed giving envelope and drop it in the mail with your donation, or visit stonebelt.org to donate online.

EVENT

Performers prepare stories for I AM YOU

The 2018 I AM YOU show will take place February 23 and 24 at the Bloomington Playwrights Project.

The performances will feature Stone Belt clients Jacob Johns, Jeff Stillions, Bryson Wrightsman, Marilyn Chitwood, Anna Harner, Julia Adams, Jessica Walker, Tommy Cunningham, Nick Parsley, Thomas Phillips, Amber Teulker and Carla Mann.

A preview for clients, family and staff will be held

February 22. Ticket information will be distributed to those groups.

Stone Belt will have information and items for sale—including books published by Stone Belt Press and client artwork—before and after the shows.

Tickets for the public performances can be purchased at the Buskirk-Chumley Theater Box Office or online at <https://web.ovationtix.com/trs/pr/985372>.

Corporate Giving

Becoming a corporate donor today is a premier way you can show your support for remarkable achievements in the lives of individuals with disabilities. Be part of something meaningful in 2018 and gain increased community awareness for your company at the same time. A corporate gift provides many unique and substantive marketing opportunities for donors. For more information on how to make a positive impact on individuals with disabilities and the many amazing benefits that come with being a corporate donor, contact Adam Hamel at ahamel@stonebelt.org.

UPCOMING EVENTS

JAN. 30, 5-7 p.m.

Project SEARCH
Graduation
Shreve Hall, Ivy Tech
Community College

FEB. 23-24, 7:30 p.m.

I AM YOU
Bloomington Playwright
Project

FEB. 2, MAR. 2, APR. 6

Advocacy Meeting
12 p.m.
Stone Belt Central



If you would like to receive our publications, please contact Linda Margison at lmargison@stonebelt.org.

www.stonebelt.org

Stone Belt Arc @StoneBeltArc 812.332.2168

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