

COMMUNITY ACCESS
U N L I M I T E D
ANNUAL REPORT 2012

OUR YEAR IN REVIEW

A Year of Growth and Change

MISSION

To provide community access through effective and comprehensive support services for people with disabilities, youth aging-out of foster care and people with affordable housing needs, giving them the opportunity to live independently and to lead normal and productive lives as citizens integrated into the community.

VISION

We strive for our members to:

Achieve economic self-sufficiency while being as productive as commensurate with their abilities

Achieve independent living within the community according to their abilities, resources and needs.

Achieve a functional level of money management.

Achieve a satisfying social life

Achieve a healthy lifestyle

Achieve personal growth

Achieve equal rights and self determination.

VALUES AND BELIEFS

Community integration

Holistic interactions as valued human beings

Equal treatment as citizens

Equal value as members of a social activities movement

Choice & Self determination

Real lives in real homes

After 33 years of taking root in our community, Community Access Unlimited continues to support teens and adults with disabilities in the community.

People with disabilities have choice and control as to where they live, how they spend their time and enjoy the many benefits and responsibility of community living. Almost forty individuals moved into their new homes this past year as we added nine new homes- many offering those with mobility challenges the sprawling layout they have wanted for many years.

Youth transitioning out of foster care have stabilized as a result of our supports. Youth have traveled around the country to prepare their peers and youth workers on the benefits of hard work and perseverance. Attaining independence, graduating high school, enrolling in college are all noteworthy successes of our youth today.

Individuals receiving personal care assistant services across the state of New Jersey benefit from the control they experience in managing their supports. The PPP and other programs using this model have experienced a 28% rate of growth in the past twelve months. Many more state services are considering this self-directed option and will reap the rewards of choice and control.

Advocacy and equality are at the forefront of CAU's efforts to enable all people to exercise their civil rights.

Today we operate with a 39.5M budget and employ over 825 staff supporting over 4,500 individuals.

Watch us grow and help us to remain vibrant in our mission.



ADVOCACY AT WORK



Audrey M. Vasey



Sidney Blanchard

THESE ARE INTERESTING TIMES. While there are positive developments in our arena new challenges are approaching. There remain about 2,500 people with developmental disabilities in New Jersey still denied community living because they languish in institutions. In addition, more than 8,000 people are on the waiting list for state services. The good news is that the state has determined to close two developmental centers, North Jersey and Woodbridge, a step in the right direction. However, this means New Jersey must find community-based housing to meet the needs of the nearly 700 residents of these two facilities.

CAU remains on the forefront of this effort, continuing to expand our residential supports while operating more than 200 units of housing in Union County. Last year we opened nine new properties consisting of four-bedroom homes and a seven-unit apartment building that combines CAU housing units, market-rate rentals and commercial space. Our combination of creativity and aggressiveness enables us to remain committed to meeting the housing needs of people with disabilities in the community.

Our youth keep achieving, both collectively and independently. In 2011 MAC Attack, our youth-owned LLC, made 24 presentations about improving the child welfare system. They spoke at the national conferences of the National Independent Living Association and the Child Welfare League of America to help youth development professionals better shape how they deliver services to at-risk teens and young adults. Individually, 16 of our youth graduated from high school or college in 2011 and 19 of the 22 youth aged 18-21 years living in our independent living program are employed.

In another sign of progress, the number of people in New Jersey self-directing their own services is skyrocketing. CAU is the fiscal intermediary for the statewide Personal Preference Program, run out of the NJ Division of Disability Services, and in 2011 participation grew by 38 percent – from 1,166 to almost 1,613. We also added the Support Service Provider Program, run by the NJ Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired. The Veteran's Directed program, run through the Veteran's Administration, is currently supporting 49 veterans in Somerset, Morris and Bergen counties. These programs are vital to improving the quality of life for people with all types of disabilities, as they are given a say in the type of supports they receive and who provides them, enabling them to live better and healthier lives.

The theme of this year's annual report is Growing Our Community and that philosophy took actual root this summer when we launched a Youth Garden at the home of two young men receiving supports from CAU. The garden allows members to build self esteem and social skills while interacting with people from the neighborhood and the greater community. The Youth Garden was a collective effort of CAU and several community-based organizations.

We continue to fulfill our mission and support our growing membership through the support of such organizations and people like you. Your assistance enables us to in turn support thousands of people in New Jersey. Our core value and belief is that ALL people can be independent, productive, tax-paying individuals integrated into society. With your support, we will continue our work with adults and youth in need of transitional and community supports and advocate for the rights of youth and adults with special needs.

Thank you for being a part of building our community. Thank you for helping people become self-sufficient and independent. Thank you for being there when we need you.

Together we will continue to make a difference.

Audrey M Vasey
President, Board of Trustees

Sidney Blanchard
Executive Director

ADVOCACY has always been at the heart of Community Access Unlimited as we and our members strive to create an atmosphere of equality, acceptance and opportunity for all people, regardless of their abilities. Members embrace advocacy as a means to promote their rights and speak for those who cannot speak for themselves and encourage others to join them.

This year members of CAU have taken that cause to a new level with the launch of the New American Movement for People with Disabilities, or NAMPWD.

According to its mission statement:

The New American Movement for People with Disabilities is a movement committed to changing the social, political and economic structure of our society so that all of us can live in it with pride as equals regardless of our class, race, sex, gender orientation, religion, income or disability status.

Its members and supporters have three simple points:

No decisions about us without us

All institutions for people with disabilities must close

People with disabilities must be funded to engage in independent advocacy

Purposes of NAMPWD include advancing progressive public policies; bringing leadership to the effort; education; developing short- and long-term objectives; encouraging participation in democracy; linking with other groups; and encouraging activism.

The movement is being driven by CAU members and staff. The group launched a web site – www.nampwd.org – that lays out the movement's mission and purpose. The site also has pages dedicated to voter registration and turnout; issues, including Medicaid, developmental centers, waiting lists, the United Nations Disability Rights Treaty and social security; a call for action; a library and blog; and resources.

"The movement was formed in February 2012 when we were in Washington at a conference on disabilities," said Sid Katz, a self-advocacy field coordinator at CAU and a longtime advocate. "This movement was

driven by issues that concern people with disabilities, issues we're fighting for every day."

Primary among those issues are the closing of New Jersey's developmental centers.

"Our goal is to close all the developmental centers," said Gary Ruben, another CAU self-advocacy field coordinator and longtime advocate. "No human should be living in conditions like that."

For now the movement's organizers are focusing on building awareness and momentum through word of mouth, events, emails and alerts, interviews and soon social media.

"We're trying to work with other human services organization, exhibits, events, conferences," said Gillian Speiser, a community organizer for NAMPWD. "We ask other advocacy groups that support the same rights we believe in to join us."

NAMPWD also is sending out voter packets prior to the upcoming presidential election, not encouraging members which candidate to vote for but rather issues that are important to people with disabilities and where the candidates stand on each. They also want to better educate the media about issues of concern for people with disabilities.

"The media talks about us but they need to be educated," Gary said. "They never interview us on television shows to ask us about issues that are important to us. The media needs to be educated."

"Our goal as of late has been to engage in dialogue versus bombarding people with reasons why they should support us, to create awareness of our cause," said

Kirsten Schenk, another NAMPWD community organizer. "It's a building block for a greater movement."

Added Sid, "When you start out you start out small but you keep talking to people and you get them connected. You talk about where we have come, and we have achieved a lot."



New American Movement for People with Disabilities





Marion Simmons

When Marion Simmons joined CAU she found not just a home but a community. She has been helping to grow it ever since.

Marion entered CAU's Transitional Opportunities Program (TOP) five years ago through the agency's Group Home. She moved first into the Supervised Transitional Living Home, then the Semi-Independent Program and finally Supported Housing, a transition that allowed her to develop her independent living skills.

"As I moved up I was able to do more things," she said.

She now applies those skills when living at college. She is a junior at Lincoln University of Pennsylvania, majoring in sociology and human services.

"You have to learn to be independent," said Marion, who especially enjoyed learning to cook. "You don't have staff watching over you all day long."

Marion helped grow her CAU community by participating in the Member Action Committee and Youth Advisory Board, eventually becoming a leader in both. She is doing the same at her new home and community at Lincoln, where she belongs to three organizations, one of which she helped found – Queens Living Through Legacy, an all-female pan-African organization that focuses on self-love and cultural awareness.

Marion's sense of cultural awareness was expanded when she arrived at her new home and community in Pennsylvania. Lincoln sits in Amish Country.

"It's an eye opener," she said.

A new home to live in, a new community to help grow.



Donna Humber & George Cluen

Donna Humber and George Cluen found home and community when they found each other 18 years ago. George was ill and homeless when a friend introduced them.

"My friend started bringing me to the house and she and I became friends," George said. "She started feeding me and I would live on the couch. She told me, 'You can't live by yourself.'"

After George found a home for himself, Donna lost her apartment and it was George's turn to help, opening his doors to her.

"The landlord said, 'George, is that your girlfriend?'" George remembers. "I said, 'I wish.'"

"And I said, 'Yes, I am,'" Donna added.

George served Donna breakfast in bed and they have been together since. Today they live in a 1-year-old condo owned by CAU, decorated with Michael Jackson pictures and George's miniature Cadillac car collection. They enjoy entertaining friends.

"All new floors and new furniture, thanks to Aleyah," Donna said of Aleyah Lacey, information and referral coordinator at CAU.

George and Donna also belong to another community. They are members of the Senior Spirit Medical Day Program in Roselle Park, where they enjoy camaraderie and recreation.

Whether as a community of two, in a small group of friends or at a larger gathering at Senior Spirit, George and Donna feel at home.

Where there are homes there is community. Where there is community there is access to all the benefits and responsibilities that come with community. At Community Access Unlimited our mission includes providing community access through affordable housing to give our members the opportunity to live independently and lead normal and productive lives as citizens integrated within into the community.

Our housing programs for people with disabilities include:

- Emergency Capacity Systems (ECS) – Temporary emergency housing for individuals with disabilities who have no other stable housing options.
- Supervised Apartment Program (SAP) – Community living in a home, condominium and apartment with 24-hour supervision.
- Supportive Living Apartment Program (SLAP) – Semi-independent living for members not requiring 24-hour supervision.
- Children's Placement Enhancement Project (C-PEP) – Residential support and training for youth with disabilities.

At-risk youth often come to CAU having lived in many places but often few real homes. As a result their sense of community has never been allowed to grow. We offer these young people:

- Transitional Opportunities Program – A continuum of housing and support services. Homeless youths ages 12 to 18 have access to our emergency youth shelter, as well as safety and emergency support. Youths under the care of the state's child welfare system between 13 and 15 enter our Group Home, receiving skills training and therapeutic services.
- Supervised Transitional Living Home (STLH) – Apartment setting with skills training for youths 16-18.
- Semi-Independent Program – A less structured living environment for youth older than 18.
- Supported Housing – Independent living with continued support when needed.
- CAU also runs the Union County HomeShare program, matching people who have a home but who are experiencing financial hardship and difficult housing costs with people who are or soon-to-be homeless.





Joshua Sharlan

Joshua Sharlan hails from the rolling hills and deep clear lakes of Sussex County, a healthy environment where he lived with his family.

"All of the sudden a stroke happened," he said.

Joshua first went to another program before coming to CAU in the spring of 2012. By the time he arrived he was emotionally unhealthy to go along with his physical impairment.

"I was scared, very scared and very nervous," he said. "I have no people skills."

That changed with the help of CAU support staff.

"Now I'm acclimated," Joshua said. "I'm here and I'm not going back soon."

Yet Joshua has a healthy attitude about going back to Sussex County eventually, which should help his physical recuperation, as well. Because he found his way to CAU from the hills of Northwest

New Jersey, he is on the road back to a healthy future –

physically, emotionally and spiritually.

"I want to go back to Sussex County at some point in the future, to the farms and fishing," he said. "I want to get an apartment and work with animals – dogs, cats, others."

A healthy goal, indeed.

With health comes opportunity – the opportunity to live independently in the community, to work and shop and recreate, to volunteer and participate, to find friendship and love. After housing, personal health is an essential element of the support CAU provides to our members. By helping them to be physically, emotionally and spiritually healthy, we help them be active and independent members of the community.

CAU offers:

- Independent Living Skills – Customized support to strengthen interpersonal relations, vocation, personal hygiene and health, housekeeping and the ability to travel, among others areas.
- Recreation and Social Education – Access to cultural and social events, including sporting events, overnight trips and dance classes, an annual Walk-a-Thon and participation in the Special Olympics.
- Health and Wellness Curricula.
- Health Care Education – Collaboration with community organizations such as Elizabethtown Healthcare Foundation, AMERIGROUP Community Cares, the Hyacinth Foundation and Planned Parenthood.
- Direct Care – Nurses, behaviorists and educational specialists.
- Counseling – Group and individual.
- Respite – Support for caregivers through respite and recreational programs.

Danielle Dalley

Danielle Dalley is a social butterfly. While she lives alone in an apartment she is anything but a loner.

"I like to go out with my friends," she said. "I try to get my non-member friends to go to CAU recreation events. I like to hang out at the mall and watch soap operas with friends."

No moss grows under Danielle's feet, either. In addition to attending a day program where she interacts with friends and meets new people she loves to go places.

"I love TGI Fridays. We go the one in Linden," she said. "I like Medieval Times. We go to Point Pleasant. I like going to the boardwalk."

Community: an interacting population of various kinds of individuals in a common location

While that may be one of the definitions of community, social interaction is the true meaning. Through an active social life people learn about others in the community and taste the many flavors of society. Living independently does not mean living alone. CAU helps our members maximize the pleasures of community living and avoid the sense of isolation that too often accompanies being a person with disabilities or a youth in the child welfare system – blossoming like one of many flowers on a rose bush.

Some of the many avenues to social life our members enjoy include:

- Day and Overnight Recreation – Dinners out, trips to state parks, parties, events and art classes.
- Boy Scouts of America Venturing Program – A program open to open to young men and women intended to provide positive experiences to help participants mature.
- Member Action Committee and Youth Advisory Board – Advocacy, personal interaction and rapport-building for youth members.
- Annual Youth Conference – A social and education forum for more than 100 young people from throughout the state.
- Quality-of-Life Initiative – Opportunities for community members participate in activities with our members, such as reading with them or going to parks, dinners, or movies with them. We also encourage community members to serve as mentors and trainers for our youth members.

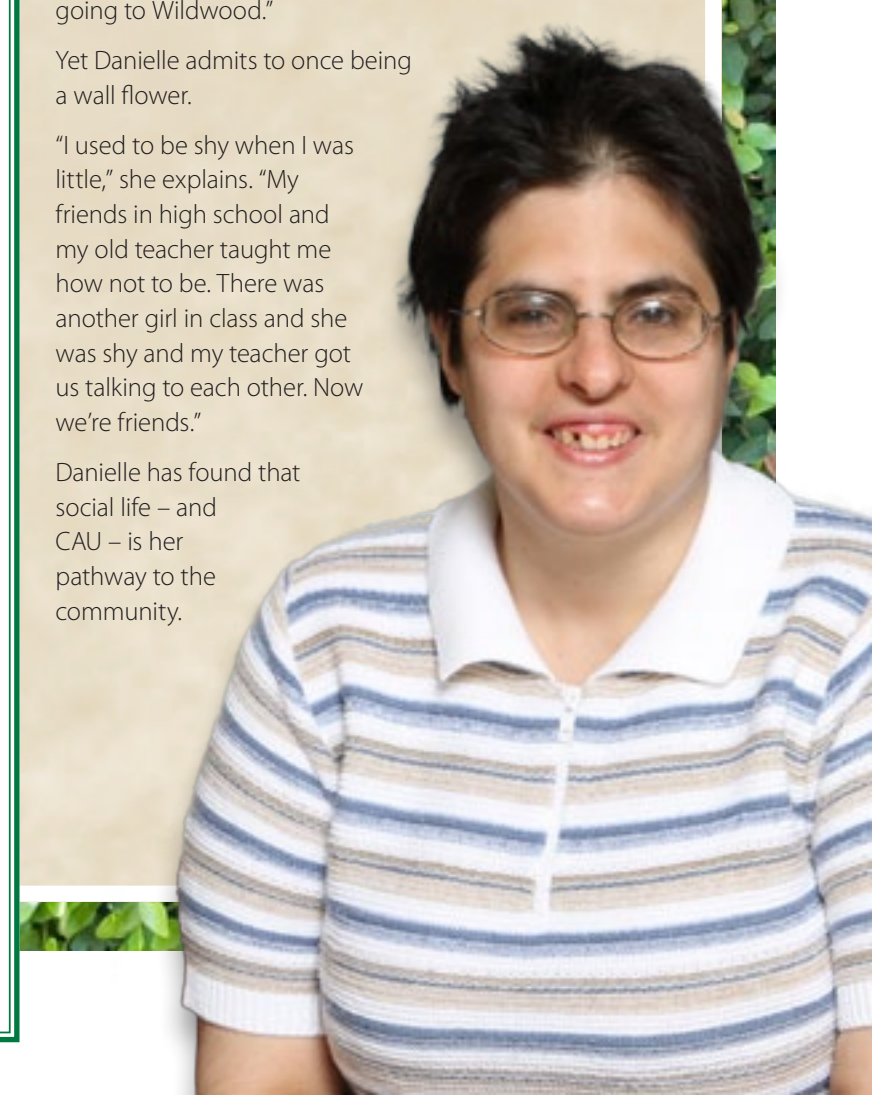
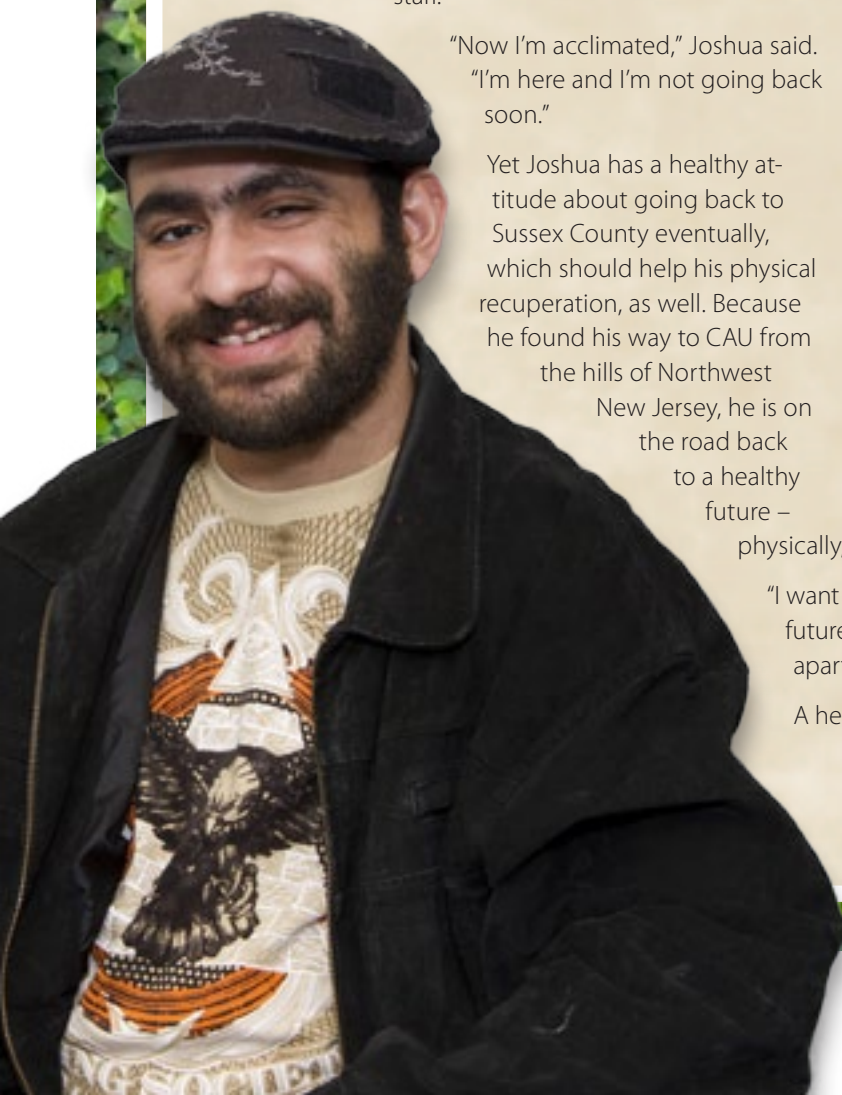
Her favorite games are the water gun and darts and guessing games.

"I go on trips and vacations," she added. "I've been to Niagara Falls. I went to Bush Gardens and this year we're going to Wildwood."

Yet Danielle admits to once being a wall flower.

"I used to be shy when I was little," she explains. "My friends in high school and my old teacher taught me how not to be. There was another girl in class and she was shy and my teacher got us talking to each other. Now we're friends."

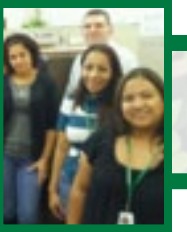
Danielle has found that social life – and CAU – is her pathway to the community.



MONEY MANAGEMENT



PERSONAL PREFERENCE



John Barker

John Barker works hard and plays hard – so he spends wisely.

John works Monday through Thursday every other week at the Occupation Center of Union County.

"I do piece work, putting things together like shower heads," he said.

John also works weekends at a local supermarket.

"I work at ShopRite, bagging groceries," he said. "I enjoy the people and the paycheck."

That paycheck, the pay he receives from the Occupation Center and his monthly Persons with Disabilities check allow John to live independently in an apartment, pay his bills and shop.

"I meet with my counselor and he helps me deposit it into my account," John said. "I pay rent and my phone bill. It lets me buy clothes – spring clothes, summer clothes, winter and fall. I like clothes."

The Burlington Coat Factory is a favorite.

John travels and visited Las Vegas this spring, where he played the slots and took in a comedy show. He also enjoys the luxuries of home. He recently purchased a new bedroom set and large-screen television with surround sound. He collects CDs and DVDs – he likes the older music and shows, such as the Carpenters, the Partridge Family, the Flying Nun and the Monkeys.

Through careful budgeting and wise spending John enjoys life and community living to the fullest. He works hard so he can play hard – and live independently.

According to the National Foundation for Credit Counseling (NFCC), only 43 percent of American adults have a budget; 33 percent don't pay their bills on time; and 80 percent admit that they could benefit from financial advice from a professional.

Members of CAU are not among those in the community who lack financial literacy and discipline. Through a variety of money management and financial independence training, CAU helps our members bring stability to their present and design a well-founded path to their future. By managing their income and consumerism, they become active and contributing members of the community.

Members with disabilities receive money management training that includes:

- Banking and Budgeting
- Math and Computer Skills
- Vocational and Employment Services – and subsequent budgeting on income
- Personal Preference Program (see next page)

At-risk youth often come to CAU with no resources and at a point in their lives when money management habits are formed. CAU provides our young members with counseling and education to better control and budget those resources they have and those they will earn as they become among the community's most resourceful residents.

Dan Florio

Dan Florio is a graduate of Rutgers University and the University of California, Berkeley, School of Law. For nine years he was an attorney at Legal Services of New Jersey and is now interested in opening his own law firm, focusing on disability rights.

Dan is a person with severe disabilities. While in California he worked at the Center for Independent Living, the nation's first independent living center, alongside the eventual co-founder of the World Institute on Disability. Dan also is a very smart guy.

That is why he is the best person to manage his resources and personal care.

In college Dan relied on personal attendants supplied by agencies, as was the system at the time. As a student with odd hours he was unable to get the care he required.

"I couldn't get people to work at the time I needed them," he said. "They were being paid to perform a job and weren't performing."

The state recognized that Dan needed to hire and manage his own attendants and he became one of the state's first residents with disabilities to be given personal control over his financial assistance.

"By having a cash model you eliminate the middle-man," he said. "The more control of the money you put in the hands of the consumer the better service you get. I had better experience training people myself."

The Personal Preference Program offered through Medicaid strengthens the independence of people with disabilities and further hones their money-management skills as they become employers, converting care hours into dollar equivalents and determining on which services and service providers those dollars will be spent.

The idea of is to put consumers in the best position to manage their personal assistance, as they know best who should be working for them and what services they need and when they need them. The consumer is assessed their needs and given a budget, which they manage with the help of a fiscal intermediary.

CAU provides assistance with payroll, budgeting and account maintenance as a fiscal intermediary for the New Jersey Personal Preference Program and others of its kind. We also provide orientation, training and on-going counseling to provide guidance and support. As more people with disabilities take control of their personal care and budgets CAU has seen our Personal Preference Program expand at a rate of 75 new participants per month.

Dan has employed and trained 45 attendants. His at-home attendant has been with him more than a decade and he employed multiple attendants while at Legal Services, young professional interns interested in law, medicine or education who were highly qualified but moved on quickly.

"That's another reason consumer control is important," he said. "It's not like every situation is the same. There's no way I could have found good people at an agency."





Marissa Scott

Marissa Scott has places to go and is working hard to get there. The senior at Kean University and member of CAU's Supported Housing program has high career aspirations.

"I would like to own my own business, or businesses," she said. "I'd like to own my own hair salon and maybe a little boutique. I also thought about working in the human resources department of a company. I feel like it will allow me to work in different places."

In the meantime Marissa is learning how to manage people as an assistant store manager at a Gap store, where she started as a sales associate three years ago.

"It's challenging being sure everyone is always doing what they're supposed to be doing. Sometimes people want to do things their own way. You have to be persistent."

"I like being there. It takes me away from school and everything else going on. It takes me to a different atmosphere."

That helps Marissa strengthen her interpersonal skills.

"We get people from all over the world," she said. "A lot of people don't speak English but I still make it work."

Being a member of CAU has been vital for Marissa's development, as well.

"I've been able to save money," she said. "I have a savings account so when I get paid I save money for budgeting. They teach you skills – how to be an adult. I have money so when I want to go places, I go."



Joy Smith

When the new clothes come in at the children's and infants department at the Marshall's store in Clark, Joy Smith gets to enjoy the best part of her job.

"I like bringing out the new clothes and hanging them," said Joy. "I like putting out the new children's clothing."

Joy has seen plenty of new lines come in at Marshall's – she has been working there for 20 years. Currently she works three days a week.

"I like my job," said the 30-year member of CAU, who is deaf. "I like the people I work with and my boss. I like working with the children."

Unfortunately, the store recently cut some of Joy's hours.

"I don't like my paycheck as much anymore since they cut it," she said.

Joy enjoys making the most of what she earns, however, "I like shopping and going out to eat," she said. "I like to go get coffee. And I like to be with my boyfriend. We eat together and watch TV and take walks together."

"I like to go out for breakfast and at night I cook. I like to buy ice cream, apples, oranges, juice – in other words, I like to eat."

Not to worry – Joy stays fit by walking. She did plenty of that this summer when she visited Six Flags Great Adventure on Deaf Awareness Day, reuniting with former classmates and current friends. Just a little time away from work.

Albert Einstein believed there were three rules to work – out of clutter find simplicity; from discord find harmony; in the middle of discord lies opportunity.

For CAU members with disabilities and at-risk youth, working brings simplicity, harmony and opportunity. Through vocation comes purpose and career paths.

Employment brings financial stability and independence. In the process our members become independent members of the community – paying mortgages, rent and taxes, acting as consumers and contributing to society through participation.

CAU operates a variety of vocational and employment supports and training techniques designed to enable.. members to earn money, achieve greater independence and train for success.

People with disabilities have access to vocational assessments, job training and employment services, as well as classes in basic math, reading and computer skills. They

work either at CAU or outside businesses, with several enjoying long-term employment with a single company. The Community Support Program provides adults with disabilities and caregivers, as well as youth, in-home support that includes employment assistance.

CAU's members receive vocational counseling and training and employment assistance, including interviewing, interaction with others in the workplace and dressing for success. Our On Your Way to the Top program provides youth members with employment opportunities tied to occupational training during the summer months.

Whether seeking part-time work or a long-term career path, our members receive the training and support they need to find the simplicity of employment and financial security, the harmony of vocation and camaraderie and the opportunity to reap the rewards of working.



MEMBERSHIP



VOLUNTEERISM



Alphonsina Bardino

Alphonsina Bardino celebrated her 100th birthday earlier this year, surrounded by friends and fellow members and staff of CAU. With CAU for more than 30 years, Alphonsina has been a member of the greater community for even longer – including family, school, work and church.

Born in Italy, Alphonsina was brought to the United States by her parents while in diapers. She had three brothers but two died and from age 9 to 15 she cared for the third, remaining close to him today. She attended a training school for 50 years and worked at both the Salvation Army and the Occupation Center of Essex County.

During her 100 years Alphonsina has sang in the choir and played the organ, lost a husband to World War II and been reunited with her brother after a long separation.

Alphonsina treasures being a member of CAU. She loves to eat and enjoys when staff make her meals and sit talking with her. She also enjoys dancing and loves to tell fellow members stories of her childhood so long ago. Just recently she discovered she enjoys traveling and visited Las Vegas and Connecticut.

Now in her second century, Alphonsina intends to visit Italy and plans to bring her counselor.

That's what membership means.

People with disabilities and at-risk youth too often feel a sense of isolation – disconnection from the community around them. We are committed to allowing those we serve to become not just members of CAU but of the greater community, as well.

Membership in CAU brings a supportive environment, resources, friendship and opportunity. The rewards of membership include:

- Housing
- Independent Living Skills Training
- Vocation & Employment
- Recreation
- Advocacy

With these skills and support our members become active and contributory members of the greater community, as well. They work and contribute through consumerism and participation – from attending town council meetings and voting to volunteering and advocating.

The membership fee for being in the community – be it CAU or the greater whole – is self-respect and respect for others, a willingness to work hard and recreate and a commitment to building a better future, for oneself and one's neighbors.

Penka Baecke

Each Tuesday afternoon after school, Penka Baecke goes to the Linden Animal Shelter, where she volunteers her time for two or three hours. She walks dogs, cleans cages and performs other needed duties. Volunteering at the shelter was the idea of Penka's counselor in CAU's Supervised Apartment Program as a way for her to become more involved and learn the rewards of giving.

It's working.

"I care about animals and I like working with them, playing with them, taking them for walks," Penka said.

The time at the shelter also has strengthened Penka's sense of empathy. She has a dog at home who is skittish and understands how the shelter animals feel.

"It makes me feel good because of all the stuff they have been through," she said. "They're traumatized and they need care."

There may be no greater way to participate in and build a community than through volunteering. Volunteers are citizens in the truest sense because they take action to improve their community. Volunteers receive, as well – not simply by living in a strengthened community but through the rewards of giving of oneself. As Gandhi said, the best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others.

At CAU volunteerism flows two ways – from our members to the community and from the community back again. Our members volunteer collectively in a variety of ways – including advocacy, voter registration drives, group donations to those in need, soup kitchen support and toy drives – as well as individually in their immediate community.

CAU also relies on the support of the community to fulfill our mission. That support includes:

- Walk-a-Thon
- Golf Outing
- Car and Hope Chest Donations
- Training, Education and Mentoring
- Recreation

In addition, the CAU Community Network is a collaborative effort between CAU and local businesses enabling companies to extend their community outreach while offering volunteering opportunities to their employees.

Penka also would like to volunteer at a Petco to bathe and groom dogs and hopes to attend college to become a veterinarian.

There is some disappointment in her volunteer work, however – "The hardest part is when they die or get really sick and can't survive," she said. Yet Penka has learned the joy of giving – the wagging tails of the dogs when they see her.

"It makes me feel good seeing them, too," she said.



COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND INTEGRATION



Shawanna Hicks

Shawanna Hicks has a lot on her mind and lets it out every chance she gets – thanks to the support she received at CAU.

“I love CAU,” she said. “The benefits. What they teach you – the tools they give you. The doors it opens.”

Shawanna has jumped through those doors into a community she is committed to being part of and improving. She has become an accomplished advocate for others in the child welfare system, recently speaking at conferences of the National Independent Living Association in Texas and Atlanta, Georgia, and the Child Welfare League of America in Washington, D.C. While in Washington Shawanna and her co-presenters met with New Jersey congressman Frank Pallone and discussed issues concerning youth in the child welfare system, including housing, education and health.

Shawanna also works parttime in CAU’s Human Resources Department – “I’m just so happy I can give back to this place,” she said – and teaches in CAU’s six-month leadership program – “We’re supposed to pass on our leadership to others.”

By becoming involved and integrated Shawanna is building a better community.

“Right now at age 22 I wake up knowing there’s a 5-year-old or 6-year-old getting put out of their home,” she said. “I have to speak for them so that they don’t experience the things I experienced. We advocate for those who can’t advocate for themselves.”



Unlimited access to the community requires more than housing, financial stability and support programs promoting life skills, health, education and recreation. For our members to become truly assimilated into the greater community beyond CAU they must become involved and integrated – and contribute.

When people with disabilities move from solitary or institutional living and become more involved with and integrated into the community, both benefit. At-risk youth who have spent a great portion of their young lives within the child welfare system connect with the community after coming to the agency and use the support and care CAU gives to expand their boundaries.

As CAU members become involved and integrate, they become active in:

- Civic Causes
- Government
- Advocacy
- Volunteerism
- Education

Through CAU-based groups our members and their families collectively reach into the community to make a difference, including:

- Helping Hands Self-Advocacy Group – Members with disabilities advocating concerns in the public arena
- Youth Advisory Board – Youth members advocating for at-risk youth in Union County and throughout the state
- Concerned Families – Families of members advocating for their loved ones.
- Member Action Committee or “MAC” - Group run by members of our Transitional Opportunities Program (TOP) that meets to discuss trends, ideas, and issues in the TOP program. They meet quarterly with CAU administration to advocate for members of the TOP program.

Through their own initiatives and interests, our members build on the interpersonal and advocacy skills they develop at CAU and become involved in their communities in many other ways, from singing in church choirs and volunteering at local charities to attending town council meetings and speaking at conferences.

Rosalie Naylor

Rosalie Naylor recently took paper and pen in hand and drew a beautiful flower for a visitor asking about her painting, handing it to him as a gift. Rosalie feels her drawing and painting talents are a gift from God and she in turn should share them with others in the community.

“I started drawing and painting when I was home after an operation,” she said. “I just picked it up. God gave me the gift so I had to use it.”

When some of Rosalie’s work was displayed in a school for children with disabilities in Newark the artist visited.

“I was happy to be there and I met some nice people and I got to show my paintings,” she said. “It made me feel good to give them my pictures because love is in my painting.”

When she was asked to share her talents with the children she didn’t hesitate.

“I show them how to paint,” she said. “They’re nice kids. I liked them. It makes me feel good inside when I’m painting. It makes me feel good to teach. But right now there isn’t anyone to teach. I miss them.”

Even though the program lost funding Rosalie keeps painting and sharing whenever she can, even after losing sight in one eye.

“I just make it up in my head,” she said.



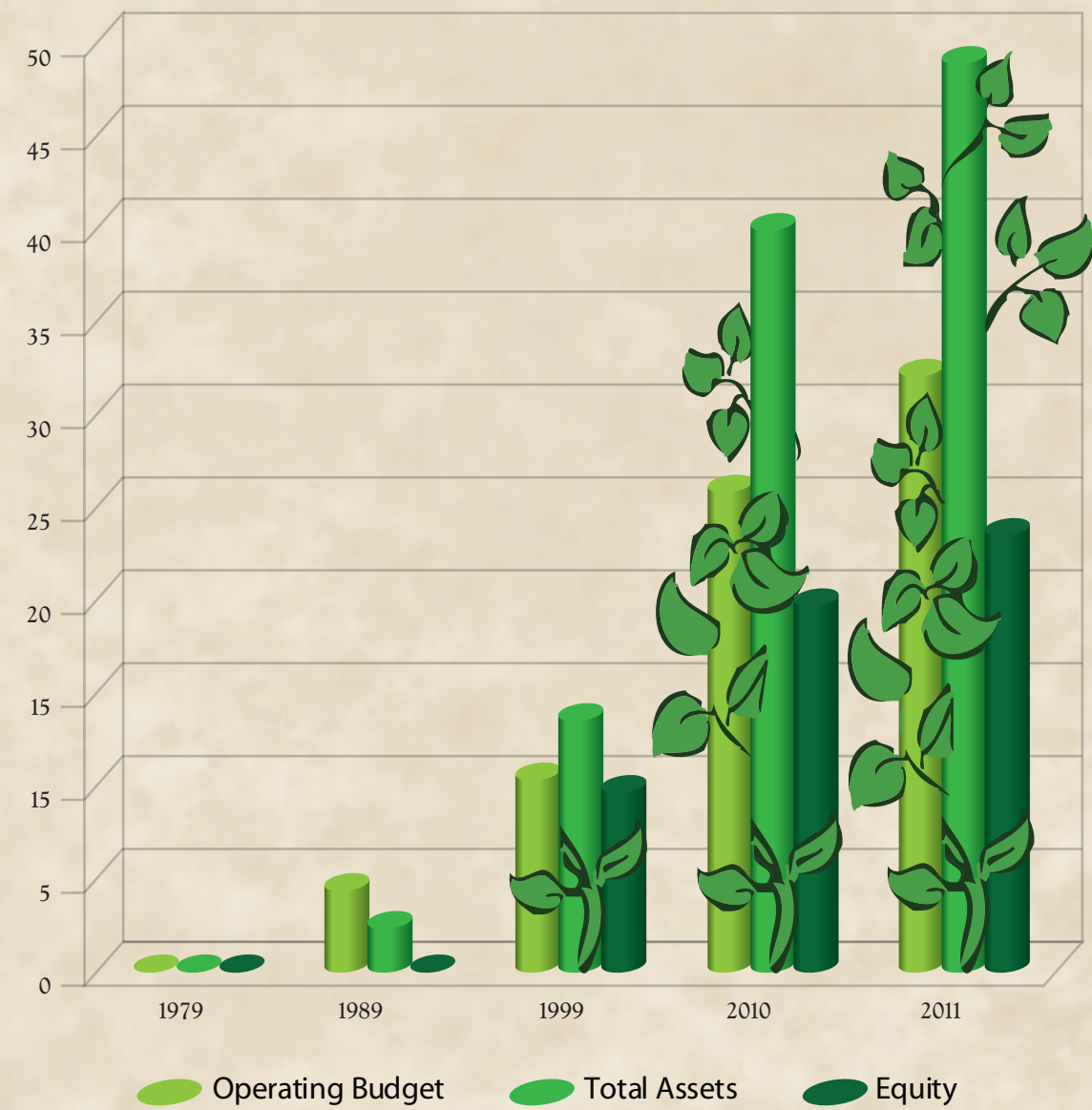
FINANCIALS



Flourishing Revenues

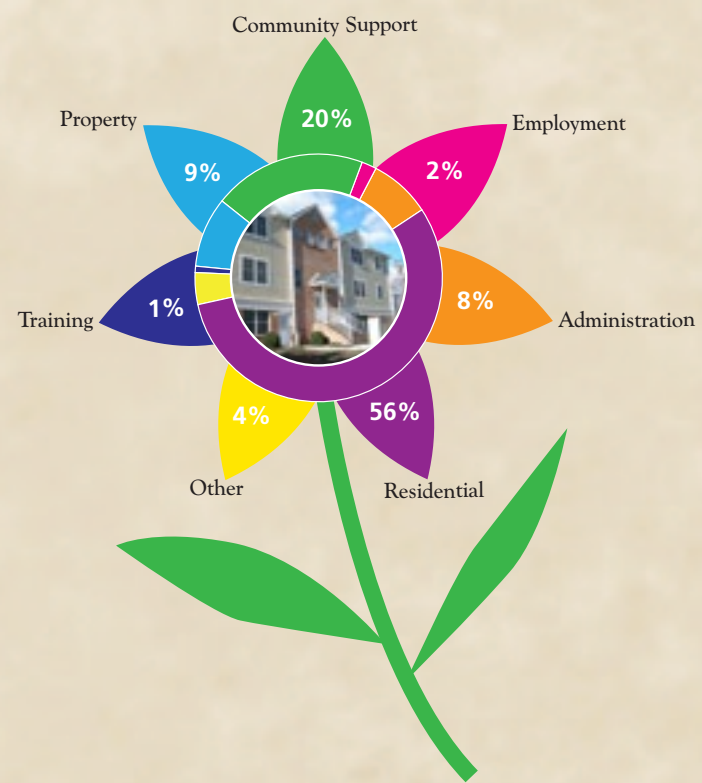


Financial Performance* 1979-2011

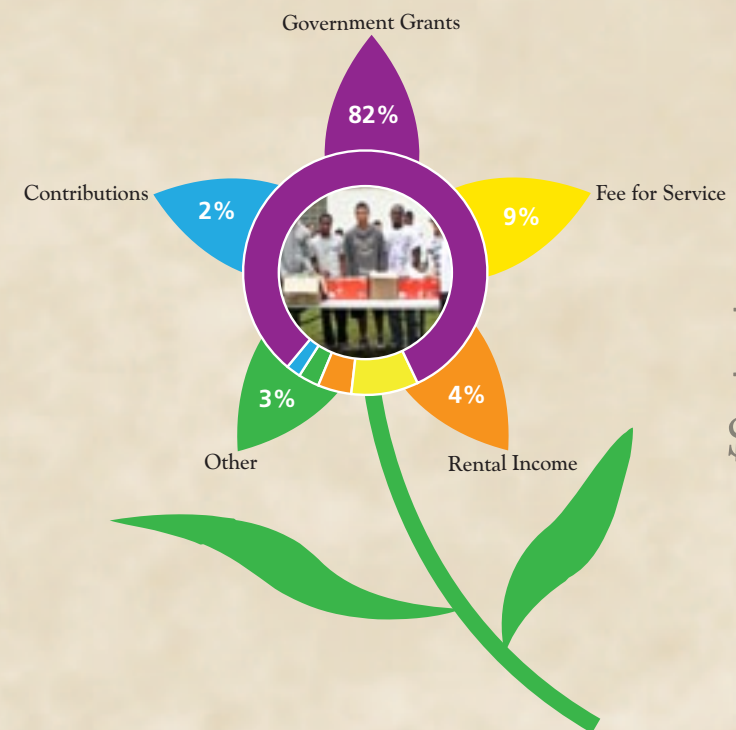


* As of 12/31/2011 in millions

Revenue* \$31,942,198 M



Expenses* \$29,426,879 M



* As of 12/31/2011

FINANCIALS

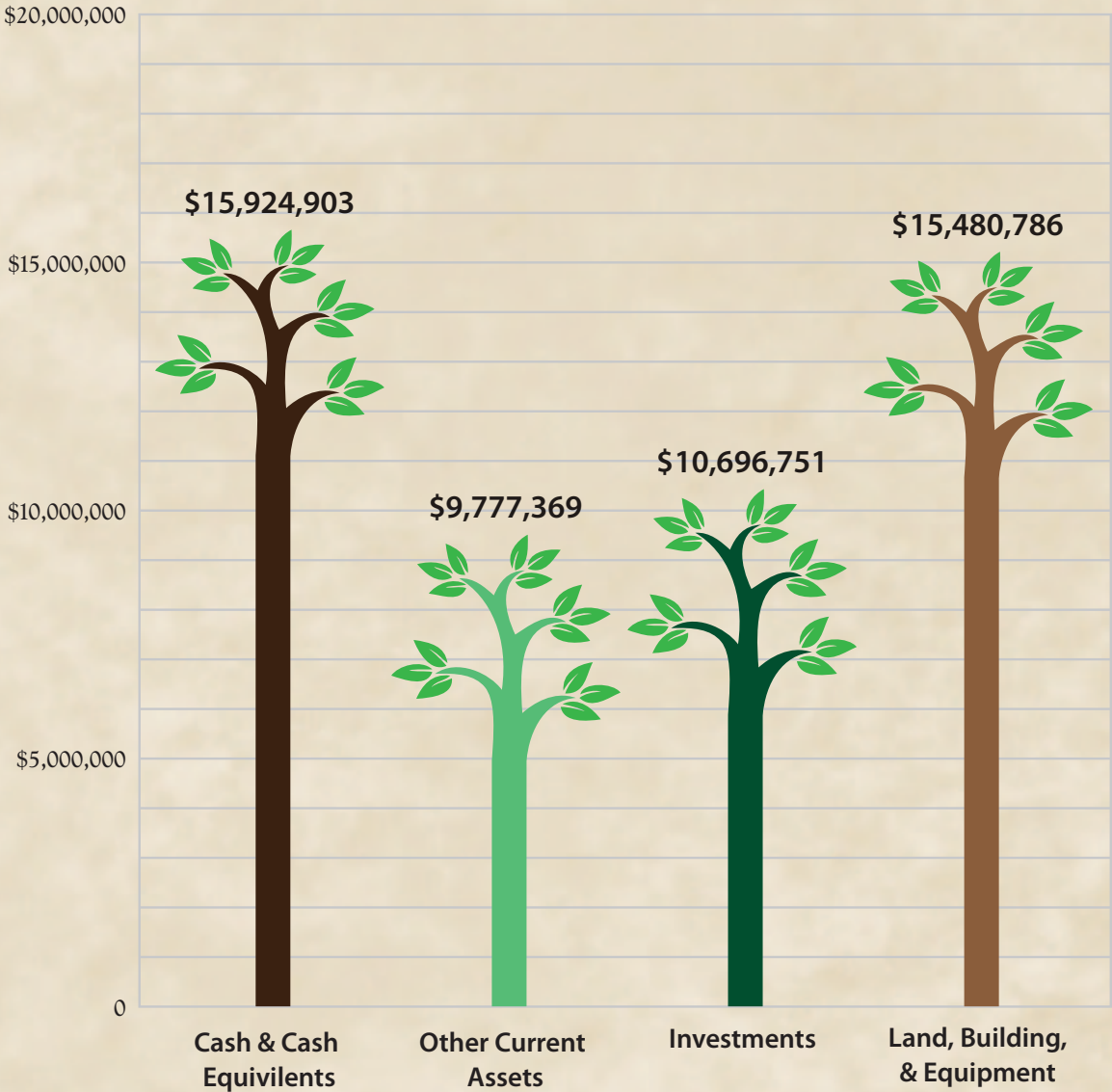


Weeding Out Expenses



Total Assets*

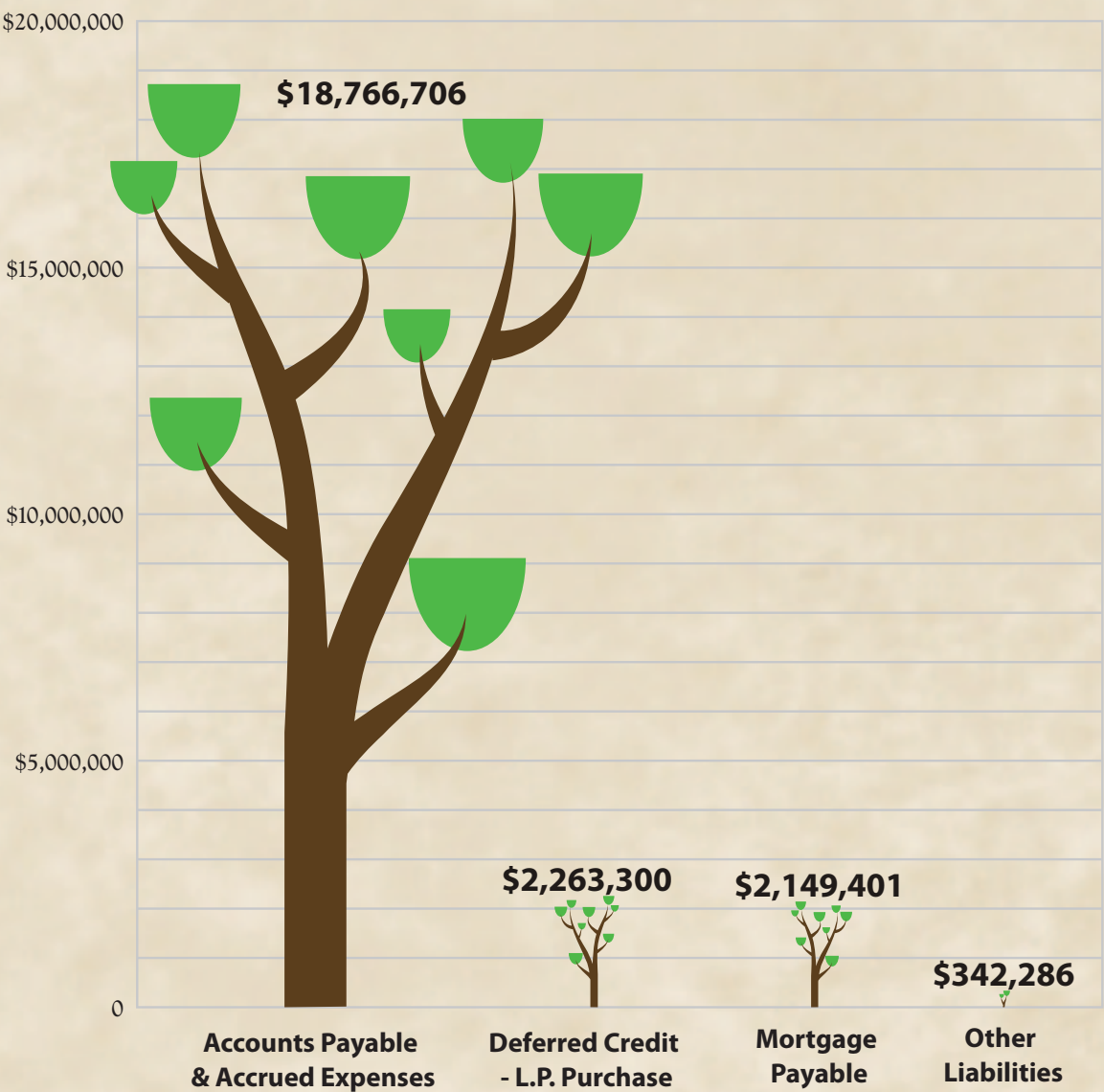
\$48,879,809



* As of 12/31/2011

Total Liabilities*

\$23,521,693



* As of 12/31/2011

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Elizabethtown Healthcare
Foundation
Linden Foundation
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