



A HOME OF MY OWN
THE KC SUPPORTIVE LIVING INITIATIVE
FUNDERS GUIDE



INCLUSION Connections

PawsAbilities

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ABOUT

INCLUSION CONNECTIONS



INCLUSION CONNECTIONS was established in 2013 with the mission to strengthen the lives of individuals with **intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD)** by creating inclusive opportunities for community involvement, access to meaningful employment, and better options for supportive living in Kansas City.

Inclusion Connections was born out of a need for services for individuals with IDD in the Kansas City region. While there is certainly a need for educational and social opportunities for school-aged children with disabilities, the greatest need presents itself when kids graduate high school, and typically fall off the “cliff” with limited job and housing opportunities. On graduation day, students lose access to learning, exercise, friends and community. Most graduate without a job and a critical lack of supportive housing forces students to remain at home with parents indefinitely.

Inclusion Connections’ programs are innovative and designed specifically for individuals with disabilities. From health and wellness to art and theater, PawsAbilities Employment to our Supportive Living initiative, we are making things happen in the Kansas City community! ■ ■ ■

A HOME OF MY OWN:

KC'S NEW SUPPORTIVE LIVING INITIATIVE



Inclusion Connections is creating a safe, affordable and sustainable community in the KC region where adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities can choose to live with customized supports that promote career growth and independence.

The purpose of this guide is to provide a decision-making tool for potential supporters, community leaders, self-advocates and their families/caregivers and other key stakeholders. ■ ■ ■

AN IMMEDIATE NEED FOR THE ■■■ KANSAS CITY DISABILITY COMMUNITY

There is not just a gap in available supportive housing, but a genuine housing crisis for individuals with IDD. Most adults with IDD will outlive their family caregivers, resulting in forced, emergency placements. Individuals want and need independence as they transition into young adulthood. Our goal is to create a supportive campus where individuals with IDD have choices and receive necessary supports.

“The lack of safe and affordable supportive housing is a national crisis. Only with the support of public and private partners will local efforts be successful.” – Debbie Horn, Executive Director, Inclusion Connections

Kansas Department of Labor estimates 20,000 people with IDD live in Kansas ¹

85% of individuals with IDD are not only unemployed but also living in poverty across the country and in the Kansas City area ²

Average income of a single person receiving SSI is \$9,156 which is 22% below the Federal Poverty Level ³

In 2017, 1.3 Million people with IDD lived with a caregiver over age 60 ²

¹ KS Department of Labor. 2016 Kansas Disability Report. <https://klic.dol.ks.gov/admin/gsipub/htmlarea/uploads/2016%20Disability%20Report.pdf>

² Creative Spirit | What's More Creative Than Being Different?. Creative Spirit, 2021, <https://www.creativespirit-us.org/>.

³ United States Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor & Pensions (2014), Fulfilling the Promise: Overcoming Persistent Barriers to Economic Self-Sufficiency for People with Disabilities. Majority Committee Staff Report.

[http://www.nasuad.org/sites/nasuad/files/HELP%20Committee%20Disability%20and%20Poverty%20 Report.pdf](http://www.nasuad.org/sites/nasuad/files/HELP%20Committee%20Disability%20and%20Poverty%20Report.pdf)

KANSAS CITY'S NEW INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY



Our goal is to create a safe, affordable supportive living option for adults with IDD where residents don't just live but grow and thrive. People with IDD seek to lead full, participatory lives with relationships, meaningful employment, and choices for independent living.

Inclusion Connections is providing the KC community the opportunity to come together for our most vulnerable citizens.

We envision a community that accomplishes the following:

- Establish a regional community with customized and supportive residential options that serves as home for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities in the KC region.
- Launch a Transition Academy serving both youth and young adults to prepare individuals with new skills and quality-of-life indicators for the transition to independent or supportive living.
- Position the KC Supportive Living Community to serve as a model site for education, training and thought leadership focused on expanding choices for affordable, quality housing options across the KC region.
- Magnify Inclusion Connections' voice to engage in federal, state and local public policy that support new community-based models that support choices for independent and supportive living for individuals with IDD in the KC region.

CONNECTIONS TRANSITION ACADEMY NEXT STEP IS TAKEN HERE



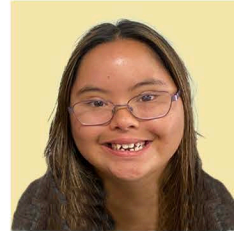
- Housing for 75 Residents
- Indoor Community Space: dining hall, fitness center, bar
- Outdoor Community Space: pickle ball, dog park
- Inclusion Connections Headquarters
- Transition Academy: classroom space, conference rooms
- PawsAbilities Bakery and Retail Store
- Space for Organizations with a Disability Mission (coffee shop, ice cream store)

Now is the time to offer individuals with IDD
a better choice for where they can live.



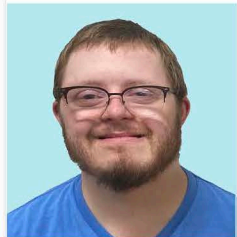
CUSTOMIZED
SUPPORTS

HEALTH &
WELLNESS



SOCIAL
COMMUNITY

TRANSITION
ACADEMY



HOME
OWNERSHIP
AVAILABLE

2021 CAPITAL CAMPAIGN LAUNCH



OUR CAMPAIGN WILL FOCUS ON THE FOLLOWING THREE PHASES:

PHASE I

- Land Acquisition
- Architecture

\$1-2 Million

PHASE II

- Tiny Homes
- Community Space
- IC Headquarters

\$8-10 Million

PHASE III

- Apartment Building
- Retail Space

\$10-12 Million



The rights, interests and choices of individuals with developmental disabilities are the focus for planning.

Employment is a critical pathway to independence and community integration.



Individuals with disabilities must receive the necessary supports to live more independently.



Services and support encourage the development of social relationships, community employment and community living skills.



Everyone has the right to live full, healthy, participatory lives in the community of their choice.



A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A RESIDENT

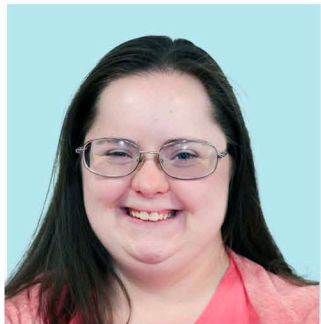


- Meals accommodating special diets
- Medication reminders
- Ongoing employment support
- Transportation
- Transition services
- Fitness opportunities
- Access to the arts
- Safe living program
- Active social life

SELF-ADVOCATE TESTIMONIALS



Kyle (24), Matthew (25) and Sam (26) are three friends, all employed, who talk daily about living in their own apartments and everything they are going to do - watch WWE, go to the bar, and go on dates. Each needs assistance with meal preparation and managing medications. Unfortunately, there are not good housing options for Sam, Matthew and Kyle that provide the support needed at a cost that is affordable.



Caroline (26) has three part-time jobs and desires to be more independent. She dreams of having friends over to her own apartment to watch Grey's Anatomy and eat snacks. She loves the idea of living on a campus with her friends and having independence just like her sisters. Caroline suffers from Rheumatoid Arthritis and needs to stay active and healthy to maintain her mobility.



Alexis (27) is looking for a place to live near friends where she can stay involved with PawsAbilities and get transportation to her job at MNU. She would like to live next to her friends Katie, Kyla and Bailey. Alexis loves her daily exercise time at the gym and hopes to have access to a good gym when she moves. She needs assistance with cleaning, paying bills and sometimes with her job expectations. ■ ■ ■

BARRIERS

- Extremely low incomes due to earning-capacity limits and under-employment
- High cost of living independently with supports
- Perception that aging families can serve as caregivers

People with disabilities are being completely left out of the national conversation regarding social justice efforts and almost all initiatives centered around diversity, equity and inclusion. Inclusion Connections is addressing this challenge head on by creating a local solution to address our immediate housing needs for the individuals with IDD that we serve in the Kansas City region. ■ ■ ■

WHY GROUP HOMES ARE NOT THE SOLUTION

The Harsh Reality about Group Homes: Living in Fear

A 2016 Chicago Tribune expose found that “although some group homes are safe places with caring, competent staff, recent news indicates that these may be the exception rather than the rule. People with disabilities are regularly abused and neglected in group homes.” The report found caregivers to be “woefully unprepared”, few regulations in place specifying needed qualifications, with employee training programs being virtually non-existent. The report stated that residents were deprived of food, forced to wear soiled clothing for extended periods of time, restrained with duct tape, and taunted about their intellectual impairments. One resident’s offense was being accused of stealing cookies. He was beaten to death by his caregiver.

Families continue to be wary of group homes. Fears are justified, as an article by ABC Law Centers spells out, “those with intellectual disabilities experience sexual assault more than seven times as frequently as people without disabilities; this data doesn’t include group homes, where the rate of assault is likely even higher. People with intellectual disabilities can have difficulty recognizing unacceptable or illegal behaviors, reporting abuse, and describing incidents; moreover, their claims are often discounted by people who think they have overactive imaginations.” ■ ■ ■

Patience has run out for reform of group homes.

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