



2022 Annual Report



**ACCESS
SERVICES**
unlocking potential

A Year In Review

A Message from President and CEO, Sue Steege

An organization's core values shape who they are and how they execute toward their mission. At Access Services, they give us purpose, guide us in achieving goals, give us something to aspire to, and help attract staff with shared values. Our core values have served as a foundation to the work we do for over 45 years. Over the past year, we have made the decision to consolidate our twelve core values into five core values. In reducing the number, we make it easier to remember and name our values and call out ways we see them lived out every day.

This process started with listening to our teams. Staff across every program had a chance to talk about what their values were and what drove them each and every day to serve their communities. It was amazing to see the alignment across such different regions and programs in the values that connect us. I'm so excited to share with you Access Services' Core Values.

Person Centered

We believe every person has value and worth and deserves to be treated with respect and compassion.

Innovation

We believe in seeing gaps and seeking to create pathways forward.

Passion for Service

We believe in striving for excellence in meeting the needs of those we serve.

Collaboration

We believe that we are better together.

Authenticity

We believe that we are humans helping humans united in commonalities and celebrating differences.

As you read through this report, you'll get to see many ways our values have been lived out this year. While this only represents a small amount of the overall impact, we hope you're inspired by the number of lives being changed by this important work. On behalf of our whole organization, thank you for your support.

Sincerely,



Sue Steege

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Our Mission

To empower and serve people in need of specialized supports by providing innovative services that improve their ability to live fulfilling lives in the community.

Person Centered

We believe every person has value and worth and deserves to be treated with respect and compassion.

In 2022, our Employment Services programs made a huge leap into opening opportunities for competitive employment for the individuals we serve in our Intellectual Disability and Autism Service Line. As highlighted in our summer newsletter, a new program "Employment Transition Services" was created to help introduce the concept of community-based employment to those in our Day programs and Pre-Vocational program. Believing that we can be part of creating a world accessible to everyone, our teams in the Intellectual Disability and Autism service line partnered to make this a reality one step at a time. Our focus on the value "Person-Centered" drove this process. We believe every person has value and worth and deserves the opportunity to build the life they want to live and to have access to the resources necessary to make that happen.

Employment Success Stories



Meet Amber

Amber is a fashion and make-up enthusiast. She came to our pre-vocational day program five years ago. Over this time, Amber was able to establish relationships with peers while earning a paycheck and learning valuable soft skills. Amber saw more for

herself. She frequently expressed a desire to work in a cosmetic or retail clothing store that she felt would be a good fit for her passions. Amber requested an Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) referral to begin this process. The pre-vocational staff helped Amber create a resume highlighting her experience and skills that she had developed. One day while out shopping at one of her favorite stores, Amber took the initiative to ask for an application. Her staff assisted her in completing the application and shortly after, she received a call to interview. Amber transferred to work with our employment service specialists. They were able to assist her in expediting the OVR process. Within a week of

the interview, Amber was offered the job! Amber began working one shift a week with the goal to increase shifts over time. She continued to attend the pre-vocational day program part-time which gave her support, encouragement and a place to discuss and problem solve any issues that arose in her community-based retail job. With the help of her job coach, Amber has learned to use public transportation and can get to and from work independently. The increased confidence Amber feels is very apparent. She loves working in an environment where she can use her passions and dress creatively. We're excited to see Amber reaching her goals and living the life she envisioned for herself!



Meet Chris

Chris attended our pre-vocational day program four days a week, earning a paycheck for doing small assembly work as well as various maintenance jobs. He consistently displayed an incredible work ethic! Chris also had the opportunity to volunteer at various places in the

community such as thrift stores and Cradles to Crayons. These opportunities expanded his skills and helped him become comfortable working with new people who were less familiar with his style of communicating and working. Chris and his family requested an OVR referral as he felt he was ready to work in community-based employment. Chris was assigned an employment specialist who helped him create a resume as well as assess his interests and skills to direct his job search. After submitting three applications to local businesses, Chris was offered an interview at a local factory bakery. Chris was excited when he saw the factory as there were

tasks that were familiar to him such as assembly and packing. There were also new skills to learn, and he was ready for this challenge. Chris began working two days a week. Within a week, he was asked to add a third day. With each new success, Chris felt a sense of pride and accomplishment. Chris no longer attends the pre-vocational day program, however, he recently stopped in for a visit and brought a case of the cookies he packs to share with his friends and staff. He was beaming with pride as he explained details of his new job to everyone. We're so excited for Chris and his drive to pursue new opportunities. We wish both Amber and Chris continued success!

Innovation

We believe in seeing gaps and seeking to create pathways forward.

The beautiful part of this core value is that it has taken many shapes and forms over the years, leading us to transform as an organization. With the growth of our staff and our partnerships, new voices come forward. New ideas form from our unique perspectives and connections in the communities we serve. This year was no different in our endeavors to continue to innovate. New resources, new programs, and new systems and infrastructure were created and adopted to better support our growth in 2022.

Innovative Community Resources



Montgomery County Overdose Response Team (MCORT)

With the desire to reduce incidence of overdose in Montgomery County, a collaborative effort has put a Department of Public Safety paramedic and a Certified Recovery Specialist (CRS) from our Mobile Crisis team on a rapid-response team to provide outreach on referrals of overdose or relapse involvement. Addiction breaks down the pathways to connection in the community, a vital part of long-term recovery. MCORT seeks to rebuild these connections and help people find hope.

The Multi-Faith Coalition

This merger with our Intersect program has increased our ability to bring together people from faith communities, service partners and county government to promote collaboration, dialogue, and resource sharing for the common good in Montgomery County and beyond.

Street Medicine

Our Street Outreach team launched the Street Medicine program in collaboration with Pottstown Hospital/ Tower Health and a number of other service providers serving individuals experiencing homelessness in Pottstown in 2021. The success of this program was used as a case study around innovation by Open Minds and the program was expanded into serving the Norristown homeless community in 2022.

Innovative New Programs



Access Learning Academy

Access Services acquired the Malvern Academy in 2022. This incredible team of educators has been providing unique educational, emotional and social needs through a supportive and person-centered learning environment for over 15 years.

Behavioral Support Services

In response to needs for behavioral support in our Intellectual Disabilities & Autism service line, Behavioral Support Services was developed. This service brings behavioral support specialists to work directly with individuals we serve and develop behavior plans to help them reach goals. The service started with a slow roll out internally and will fully launch in Spring 2023.

Employment Transition Program

This program was born out of a desire to make employment accessible to many of the people we serve who did not have the opportunity or skills development to pursue competitive employment. The program is already helping our individuals see the potential of what they can work on and achieve in their lives.

Innovative New Systems

New technology and IT infrastructure

We welcomed Enkompas to partner with us in revamping our IT infrastructure and many of the technologies that we use internally. A group of stakeholders within Access Services is currently revising our use of Evolv, our patient management system and are laying out a unified plan for the way we manage data as an organization.

New website

Our website was long overdue for a overhaul. The desire was to build something that was intuitive to the needs of our community and a tool for our staff and leaders. After six months of meeting with programs, strategizing layouts and designs, our new website was launched in May 2022.



Passion for Service

We believe in striving for excellence in meeting the needs of those we serve.

Our value – Passion for Service – leads us to believe in striving for excellence in meeting the needs of those we serve. Part of that process is making sure that our staff is equipped in every possible way. It means investing in our employees so they can serve and grow in their careers. Over the last year, our Intellectual Disabilities & Autism (ID/A) service line has been looking for new ways to support and develop our direct support professionals (DSPs). A pay raise was implemented across the board for current and incoming staff to better reflect their efforts and support the work they are doing in our community. Our ID/A leaders were also able to secure a grant to fund an initiative to train and develop our ID/A staff – a DSP Accreditation Program – through the National Alliance for Direct Support Professionals (NADSP). The NADSP has developed a national certification program for Direct Support Professionals. This is a nationally recognized certification that can bolster our staffs' resumes and

help prepare them to move forward in their careers with Access Services or other companies.

The program will start with a cohort of people from our group of team leads or assistant supervisor DSP positions over the next year. The benefits of having this group go first will be their ability to support other DSPs through this process as we continue. The cohort model will allow our staff to build relationships and support each other through this program as well. Applications for the program opened January 16th, 2023. Twenty-five people will be selected for the first cohort. The program officially launches on March 3rd, 2023 with the goal to complete the DSP Accreditation in a year. There are three certification levels to complete, with bonuses at each level for a total of \$3,000! We are excited to offer this opportunity to our incredible, dedicated staff in the ID/A service line. We are confident that this will support them in their passion to serve our individuals even better.

Collaboration

We believe that we are better together.

For many years, our Intensive Behavioral Health Services (IBHS) and Foster Care programs have found gaps in the system that serves our children in care. Keeping things stable when a child comes into care is difficult at best, close to impossible at times. There are constant delays in getting the support these children need.

With 191 children served by our Foster Care program in 2022, and this number increasing every year, both programs saw the need for help. Identified system gaps include better training and support for foster parents and families; quality, trauma-informed treatment for children in care; and increased communication/ teamwork amongst the child's care providers. Working together over the last year, IBHS and Foster Care developed a program and sought out funding streams to make it a reality. The larger vision has grown from one mobile therapist to a team of people, a branch of IBHS, specifically trained to support our foster families. High turnover rates at the system level including social workers, therapists and case managers, as well as foster

families all contribute to significantly poor outcomes for children in care. 50% of foster parents do not continue after their first placement; 90% of foster parents discontinue within two years. A big contributor to this is the lack of quality training for foster families. This new program intends to address areas of need and others.

Some of the goals of this collaboration include increased emotional support and stabilization, decreased adjustment issues, behavior problems and recidivism of children back into foster care after reunification. This all will lead to better outcomes such as increased permanent placement with one foster family and reunification with biological parents when possible and safe for the child. The plan is to start in Lehigh and Northampton counties with the intention to grow into all fourteen counties where we serve children as this program builds on successful outcomes. Without collaboration, new and better ways to serve people in our community would not be possible. We are excited to watch this program develop over the next year.

How we are addressing needs for Foster Care and IBHS Families:

1. Trauma-informed care through mobile therapy which can be provided in the home and school. This will be for the child as well as the parents, and will include supporting placement, adoption or reunification as needed. Staff will be trained in specific identified evidence-based practices (beginning with Trust Based Relational Intervention, or TBRI).
2. Equipping foster parents through quality, trauma-informed education, and training. This will be one way to help with placement stabilization, as well as letting foster parents feel supported and prepared.

3. Supporting foster and adoptive families through groups for foster parents, foster siblings/other children in the home and other family members. These can be psychoeducational, and support based – facilitated groups. There can also be groups for the foster children during this same time. The goals here are connection, support, and recognition of the experience of others in the home who are supporting the foster child/children.
4. Empowering foster and adoptive families through developing internal and external support systems. This will include a case management component in ways that are not already assumed by either Foster Care or IBHS – ways to connect children and families into the community, build resiliency and support.

Authenticity

We believe that we are humans helping humans united in commonalities and celebrating our differences.

Each and every day, our peer specialists bring their authentic selves to work. They provide support to those we serve through the lens of their own lived-experience. Each of our peer support staff stand as a testament to the fact that you can live a life worth living regardless of what you may need to overcome. They are a beacon of hope to those who may be struggling now. To be able to reach out with an empathy that comes from a place of knowing. This is the superpower of our Peer Support staff. Below we share three stories from some of our peers who use their lived experience to serve our people.

Peer Support Success Stories

Amy Kunkle

Family Support Specialist, Bucks LIFE
Child & Family Service Line

Amy Kunkle became a family support specialist with Access Services in 2010. She chose to work with family support after her family benefitted from the program. She shared her experience and drive for this work with us.

Family support has been part of my life for 26 years. My family benefited from family support with my son from the time he was in first grade. It was an immense value for our family. The value comes in the connections with families from a place of zero judgment. Family support provides hope and support, but more than that they empower you to see how they overcame adversity in their lives. I wanted to be that for other families. Sometimes it can feel like there's no hope or no way out. When parents or youth are tired, systems can be overwhelming and complex to navigate and connect.

As parents, sometimes we're spoken at by service providers instead of being invited into planning for the best interest of your child or family. My goal is "I never want a parent to get off the phone with me and feel hopeless." I believe parents, all parents, can use support. There's a difference between clinical care and peer support.

Peer support allows you to know you're not alone and your experience isn't unusual. Someone else has walked this path.

In moments of frustration or helplessness, we can be there to listen, understand and offer support or direct them. Sometimes it can feel like the movie "Groundhog Day" when



things happen over and over without any spark of change. I can be there to help them find a resource or help them advocate for needs to be met that can be the catalyst for change. Many times, people overlook including children and teens in their own plans and helping them to come up with solutions to the struggles they face. Empowering the children and youth to have a voice is profound. They can learn self-advocacy skills and help to come up with solutions.

Another important thing is there are so many different circumstances and dynamics in the families I serve. It has challenged me to learn and grow and look for the best way to help individual families. It's about connecting and learning from them. They can overcome, but don't always have the tools and resources they need. Talking to the families about their fears and not brushing them off. Listening to them. Validating their feelings. Allowing them to lead in the best way to support them. It's not textbook; it's unique and individualized. As a parent, I didn't feel alone or judged anymore with family support in place. There was someone encouraging me through the bad days and the good days. My favorite part of this job is the graduations and the successes along the way. The simple text message from a family that says, "my son is doing so well in school this year." That's what makes this job so special!



Stephanie Sikora

Assistant Program Specialist
Altec Services
Intellectual Disability & Autism Service
Line

Stephanie was originally involved with Access Services as an individual served by our In-Home Supports program. Her main goal was to live independently in the community. Her team was able to help her realize this goal, even helping her move when the time came. She was certified as a peer specialist and wanted to use her experience to help others. She worked with ALTEC's Employment Services program and ended up working for Altec as a part-time receptionist. After the office re-opened from Covid restrictions, Stephanie was promoted to an assistant program specialist with the Life Enrichment program. She shared with us her passion for this work.

I'm a very big advocate for myself and the people I work with. I spend time gaining understanding of each of the people in the program. I want to give a more positive view of what they can work on and achieve. I want to see their ability first. I want to help them, and their families learn to shift focus to support each individual's vision for their future. It was important for me to see how my parents adapted to a place of support for my independence. This was a hard shift for some of my family members to understand. Independence was an important step for me. Many people looked at my limitations. I proved that I am willing and capable of learning new things.

My work with horses at Sebastian's Riding Associates, as a child, helped me begin to understand how to read people better. It helped me connect with people better. Connections are extremely important, but I struggled with connecting at first. I've made a lot of lifelong friends through my work with horses. Sometimes I have a rough day and then I realize how many people I have in my corner. When I originally got the job with Altec, only the supervisors knew that I had lived experience. Now most of our individuals know and it's been a valuable asset to connect with them. I get to know our individuals and I want to see them do well and help them see how they can do this themselves.



Stephanie horseback riding at Sebastian's Riding Associates. Working with horses has been a crucial step in her independence.

You don't know what you're capable of until you try.

Being supported, encouraged, and empowered to take steps is all someone needs. I want to help families know how to listen to their adult children and work towards the goals that they see for themselves. Knowing the benefits that you have through social security can be empowering to help people reach even further than they originally imagined. Sometimes programs don't even fully know what's available.

Collaboration between our leaders and our people with lived experience leads to a deeper capacity to serve our individuals. I want to share with people what I've learned from my lived experience. They may feel intimidated by the overwhelming process of finding benefits and support. They may have a lot of people seeing only their limitations. I've been living on my own for 10 years now. I can help our clients understand and empower them to reach for more. I see a bunch of our people in the pre-vocational program who could potentially do more. Two of our individuals wanted to do more than the workshop. Supporting them in the way that they want to work has empowered them to go beyond what everyone else thought they could. Advocating for others is extremely rewarding work.



Rhonda Murray

Peer Specialist
Peer Support & Teen Talk Lines
Behavioral Health Service Line

Rhonda Murray became a Peer Specialist back in 2014. She first joined Access in 2016, then re-joined the Peer Support & Teen Talk Line this fall. She shared her journey with us.

Living with a mental health challenge can be difficult. Many people get into the mental health field as a career desiring to help people. They care about you, but you don't feel fully understood. You don't feel heard in the same way that you will with someone who has lived experience with mental health challenges. The medical model of mental health care has caused a lot of harm and it can be healing for people to know that they are heard. As peers, we understand their challenges. Hearing that someone understands helps a person know that they don't have to view themselves as strange or alone and isolated. I love the role of certified peer specialist, even after studying psychology and considering the idea of going into counseling, I decided to stay in peer work. I believe that everyone is "the expert of their own journey". Peers validate that.

My job is to help people see their strengths.

When people talk to me, I listen and ask, "What has been helpful to you in the past?" We don't always realize how strong we are or our resilience. I can help people see what they have overcome and start to identify what has helped them. It helps them reframe reaching out as a strength and not a weakness. Many times, it can feel like nothing will

Rhonda sits with Kerri Hoogenhuis, Associate Director of Warmlines.



change, but I tell them the fact that they called me means there's something in them that wants to try!

I feel like everyone can be a peer in some way. We all have our own lived experience that is valuable and can connect with someone who is walking through a similar experience.

I value each person who is willing to call in and open up to me on the Peer Support line. My lived experience allows me to resonate with their experiences and to empathize at a deeper level. My story has made me who I am today. People know. They can hear when you're authentic. It's coming from a place of truth. While I may not live your exact experience, I know where you're coming from. We're way more alike than we are different. I'm not talking at them. I can relate to what they're feeling and share how I got through my own struggles, but their journey and steps may look different. We are honoring what the person is feeling.

I think people have been forced to reevaluate what is important and be more authentic in the last two years. Everyone can overcome. I was in a wheelchair before. I fought my way back to health. I utilized support and that's why I strongly believe in the work I do. I never discount any option to help others. I think my diverse recovery journey has helped me to be more well-rounded in helping others. My faith has kept me strong. I've been in the "hole" of feeling hopeless and I understand how it feels to not see the way out, to be misunderstood. It took one person to make me feel understood. It's priceless. Now I can stand in the gap and be that person for someone. They hear my story and there's that identification of "if you did it, then there's hope for me!"

Statement of Activities

REVENUE & SUPPORT	FY 2021-2022
State Funding - ODP	\$19,411,311
County Funding - MH/Base	5,011,696
County Funding - CYS	3,356,259
Behavioral Health Funding	11,624,662
Program Fees & Other Income	349,161
Room & Board/Rent Rebate Income	1,094,919
Grants & Contributions	485,088
Other Income	33,627
TOTAL REVENUE & SUPPORT	\$41,366,723

PROGRAM EXPENSES	
Wages	\$18,727,910
Taxes/Benefits/Insurance	4,894,092
Recruitment/Staff Development	524,521
Accounting/Legal/Consultants	660,947
Rent/Mortgages/Utilities	1,294,933
Communications	813,355
Office Supplies	85,350
Food/Household/Habilitation	282,570
Transportation	883,703
Professional Services	7,325,152
Interest Expense	94,444
Equipment	128,440
Repairs	115,915
Depreciation	438,384
Motor Vehicles/Expenses	406,212
Other Expenses	47,427
TOTAL PROGRAM EXPENSES	\$36,723,355

ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES	
Admin Wages	\$2,286,982
Taxes/Benefits/Insurance	545,056
Recruitment/Marketing	38,478
Accounting/Consultants	445,491
Depreciation	48,407
Transportation	26,411
Rent/Utilities/Maintenance	392,453
Office Communications	201,978
Office Supplies	34,290
Interest Expense	17,841
Office Equipment	72,999
Staff Development	61,337

TOTAL ADMIN EXPENSES \$4,171,723

FUNDRAISING \$36,869

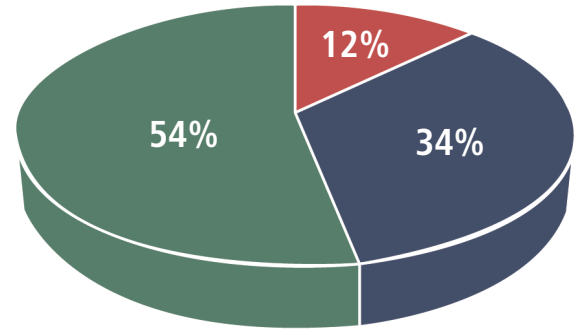
TOTAL EXPENSES \$40,931,947

NET EARNINGS/(LOSS) \$434,776

OTHER INCOME \$127,297

INCREASE IN UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS \$562,073

Revenue by Service Line



Intellectual Disabilities & Autism
\$21,835,463

Behavioral Health
\$14,053,182

Children and Family
\$4,959,363

Grant Update

We've almost doubled our funding from grants in 2021-2022! Grant funding has allowed us to innovate and meet internal and external needs as highlighted by some of our stories in this report.

1. Our ID/A services qualified for up to \$130,000 in ARPA funds for training, allowing us to offer the NADSP Certification Program to our direct support professionals.

2. The Intersect program received a \$200,000 donation from the Templeton Foundation to support trainings to faith communities.

3. A \$85,000 Healthspark grant allowed us to hire an outreach guide for our Street Medicine program, transforming the way doctors connect with the homeless population we serve.

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