

SUCCESS **LEARNING** **INCLUSION**



Annual Report 2021

Our Mission

We are SLI. A not-for-profit supporting the efforts of individuals living with intellectual/developmental disabilities by promoting:

Success · Learning · Inclusion

Vision Statement

To accomplish the mission, SLI:

- Offers guidance to clients in determining and following their chosen path in life
- Enhances clients' individual capabilities and skills by offering life-long learning opportunities
- Engages clients, families, guardians, and staff in developing plans and measuring accomplishments
- Promotes clients' rights through education and advocacy



ADAPTABLE

If I had to use one word to describe 2021 as it relates to SLI, it would be adaptability. Every single aspect of our organization has had to adapt to a variety of factors that directly influenced the way in which we carry out our work. We were challenged at every turn to stop, adjust, pivot, plan, and then start that process all over again.

The pandemic was the primary contributing factor that started this roller coaster ride. In short, we had to determine how to keep our clients and employees as safe as possible amidst a virus we knew nothing about. Throughout the last two years, we have had to act, make plans, set a course, and wait nervously to see how this would impact our clients and staff. Then, as we know all too well, things would begin to take a turn for the better and, with a big sigh of relief, we started getting back to “normal,” only to be right back where we were within weeks.

The clients had to learn very quickly how to adapt to the constant changes in their routine, isolation from family and friends, and lack of community involvement. This has all taken a toll on our clients, but they persevered and managed remarkably well.

The challenging employment market also left SLI in a critically low staffing situation. We implemented hazard pay, bonuses, additional benefits, hiring and referral bonuses, and other methods to retain and recruit. Ultimately, we had to implement an organizational restructuring and close two of our homes to consolidate the number of homes we staffed.

Even our CARF accreditation survey was different, as it was completed virtually. However, nothing interfered with our commitment to continuous quality improvement.

While all of this still feels very fresh and heavy on our shoulders, I am so proud of how the SLI community pulled together to overcome every challenge that has presented. Our clients, families, guardians, staff, and volunteers collaborated to do whatever we needed to do. The ability to be adaptable with this level of intensity and frequency is not something we care to engage in every day, but knowing we can, is enlightening, powerful, and will have a lasting impact on the way in which we conduct business moving forward.



Lisa Jackson
SLI President/CEO

Annette

*SLI client since 2018 · Community Living and
Community Integration Programs*

Annette is an outgoing and cheerful individual who has been a part of SLI's Community Living Program and Community Integration Program for almost four years.

Some of Annette's favorite SLI activities are when they go swimming and all of the different parties. "Especially the dance parties though!" she said. Annette was on the dance and cheer teams in high school so she enjoys being able to show off her skills at those parties. Annette also really enjoys singing and loves doing karaoke. Carrie Underwood and Whitney Houston are her go-to artists to sing.

In her free time, Annette enjoys giving back to her community by volunteering at different organizations and being a part of the SLI cleaning crew.

Annette enjoys being around the SLI staff who support her. "Of course I have my favorites, but all are awesome and friendly," said Annette. She is also appreciative of SLI because it has helped her grow more respectful of others.



How To Support The Mission



SLI's Giving Club

Your monthly donation helps carry out our mission of "Success, Learning & Inclusion."



One-Time Gift

One-time giving is a great way to make an immediate impact.



Amazon Smile

If you shop on Amazon, be sure to choose us for your Amazon Smile organization.



Festival of Trees

Become a sponsor, a designer, or donate something for the various auctions that take place at the event.



Matching Gift

Many companies offer a donation matching program. Check and see if you can double your impact with SLI.



Social Media

Stay up to date and share the mission and vision of SLI with your friends and family online.

***Supporting individuals with
intellectual disabilities since 1971***

Our Programs



Independent Living Program

SLI's Independent Living Program (ILP) is for those clients who have demonstrated the ability to live without 24-hour support. They are completely responsible for the cost of living independently, including paying rent and utilities at their own apartments, cooking and cleaning their home, and all of the things that come with living by yourself. Independent Living Advisors work with these clients to make sure that they are doing well with their budget, preparing healthy meals, managing their medicines, and solving other problems. They accompany the ILP client on trips to the doctor or other businesses in the community such as banking or grocery shopping. Many of these clients hold part-time or full-time employment.

In 2021, SLI designated a home that is considered a transition home from group living to independent living. The home provides support that assists clients to practice their independent living skills and learn new skills while preparing to live independently.

Community Living Program

SLI's Community Living Program began in 1972 with the opening of Topeka's first group home. Our homes are staffed 24/7 by dedicated staff who support our clients in their day-to-day needs including but not limited to social interaction, managing health issues, companionship, daily living skills, healthy lifestyles, and participating in community life with their housemates. Since SLI clients have disabilities that range from mild to profound physical and mental impairment, individualized staffing patterns based on the unique need in each home are offered. Like your home, our homes are places where our clients not only live, but where they thrive in the community.

In 2021, we were inspired by the flexibility of the Direct Support Professionals (DSP) and other program staff who went out of their way to cover vacancies and provide coverage during the day in the homes. DSPs are truly the backbone of the organization and are committed to the clients. Staff members were heroes and comforters when visits were limited and community activities were on hold. The courage of the staff, when they had families themselves, and the patience and courage of the clients are the biggest accomplishments of 2021.



Community Integration Program

Our Community Integration Program (CIP) offers life-enhancing activities, dynamic learning, and community participation to support our integration and inclusion goals. This empowers our clients to remain engaged in contributing to the place in which they live. Program services are designed to promote learning, growth, and independence while also celebrating individual interests and differences.

Volunteerism is a big part of CIP. Even though our clients were somewhat limited in volunteering in the community, several clients found ways to keep their volunteer tradition alive.

Thanks to a grant from the Capitol Federal Foundation, in 2021, we were able to add a location to the Community Integration Program and create programming specifically designed to meet the needs of retirement-age individuals. The Retirement Program honors the retirement life stage and provides activities, engagement, a level of reduced environmental stimulus, and a setting designed to support the needs of aging clients.

This program is so important to our clients because it provides an opportunity to socialize and support each other. Like many of us who returned to more “normal” activities in 2021, the reopening of CIP was a special moment when clients and staff reunited.



Corey

SLI client since 2011 • Community Living Program

Corey is a considerate and friendly individual who has been a part of SLI for 11 years in the Community Living Program.

Corey has many interests including playing video games on his PS4, watching Netflix, singing karaoke, and hanging out with his three-year-old niece. While all of those are fun, his true passion is airsoft. “It is similar to paintball but uses different pellets,” explained Corey. He is planning on attending an airsoft gathering this summer in Oklahoma.

Special Olympics also has a special place in Corey’s heart. He enjoys playing softball where his favorite position is first base.

Corey is most proud of his growth over the past couple of years in his mentality and attitude. He recognizes that he has a more positive attitude when it comes to his job and just his life in general. As Corey stated, “I have learned to look at things differently and to be present and be yourself.”

He wants others to change their attitude as well. An important thing to Corey is that people see him as a person and not as his disability. As he eloquently says, “I am more than my disability. I like to do things just like everyone else. I want people to understand that I am loved and loving and I understand things just like everybody.”



Festival of Trees is in the books and we couldn't be more grateful. This tradition has brought the holiday spirit to our community for 44 years. It is a gift of love from SLI to everyone who adores the Christmas holidays.

Our good friends at Fairlawn Plaza hosted the event. We enjoyed being a part of the merchant community at this Topeka treasure. During the historic 12-day event, Festival welcomed and delighted more than 3,800 visitors. It was an absolute joy to share the beauty of Festival with the community after hosting the event virtually in 2020. As always, everyone was awed by the talent and creativity of the designers who bring the event to life.

Festival of Trees is SLI's annual fundraiser. Its purpose is to raise money to support the unfunded needs of SLI clients such as transportation, medical supplies and advocacy, special equipment, and much more. We are proud to announce that the 2021 Festival of Trees event raised \$110,000! We couldn't have done this without our sponsors, donors, designers, committee, and volunteers. The lights of Festival may have dimmed but our clients will benefit from the event all year long.

With gratitude, we want to thank the community and you for making the 2021 Festival of Trees a success.

**Festival of Trees
Committee Members**

Traci Brown
Mikki Burcher

Lisa Deghand
Jesyca Hope

Gwen Ketter
Sara Lively

Valerie Nelson
Meredith Priesner

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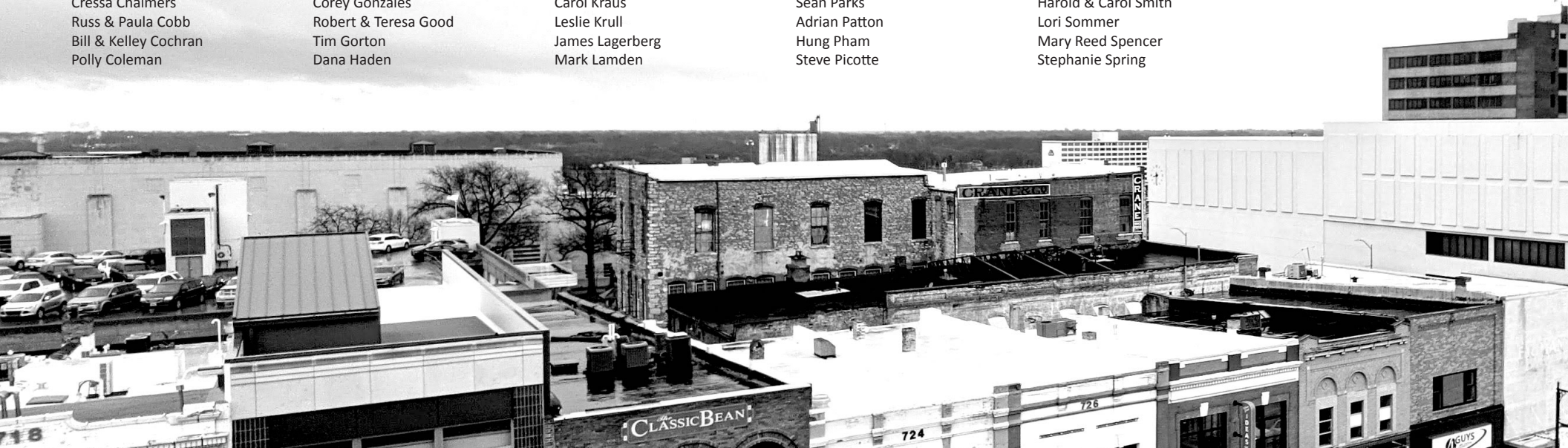
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Tina

SLI client since 1999

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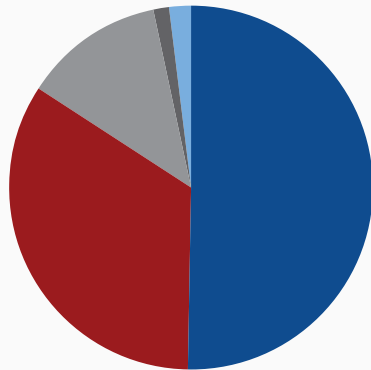
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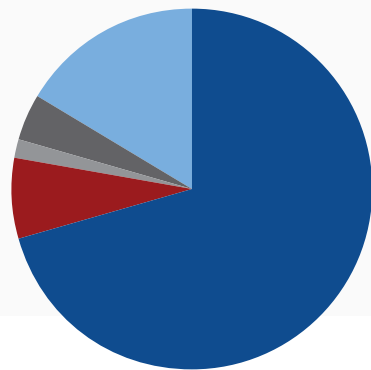
Financials

SLI is committed to transparency and excellence. The following numbers are taken from the audit of our 2021 financial statements by an independent audit and accounting firm.



Income

● Federal	50.50%
● State	33.86%
● Local	12.47%
● Fundraising and Special Events	1.40%
● Donations, Grants, and Other Revenue	1.77%



Expenses

● Community & Independent Living	70.68%
● Community Integration	7.18%
● Targeted Case Management	1.81%
● Transportation	4.19%
● Administrative	16.13%

Brandon

SLI client since 2020





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Success · Learning · Inclusion*

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