

“

When we were in crisis, you were there. And when we needed help, you were there. Thank you, Esperanza! ”

Excerpt from a letter from Sara, the mother of a former student.

ESPERANZA COMMUNITY SERVICES
520 N. Marshfield Ave. Chicago, IL 60622

*For more information, please contact us at
info@EsperanzaCommunity.org or call 312.243.6097.
Visit us online at ESPERANZACOMMUNITY.ORG*



ESPERANZA COMMUNITY SERVICES

2009 - 2010
annual report

ESPERANZA COMMUNITY SERVICES

OUR MISSION is to provide instruction and services to people with disabilities to reach their fullest potential toward a productive and independent life in the community.

Our vision is to be a premier agency that provides a full range of quality services for people with disabilities and to advocate on their behalf to enhance their quality of life and to increase community, awareness and acceptance.

Located in the West Town neighborhood of Chicago, Esperanza Community Services provides individualized therapeutic and educational programs to help individuals with mild, moderate, and severe developmental disabilities achieve their full potential. For some, this means learning basic life skills that will help them attain a higher degree of self-reliance. For others, it means developing skills that lead to an increased level of community integration and independence.

Our mission is accomplished primarily through four programs, which are delivered at our main campus in West Town and throughout the community. These include:

- **ESPERANZA SCHOOL**, a therapeutic day school for students age 5-21
- **COLERIDGE ADULT DAY PROGRAM**, offering prevocational and life skills training in a workshop setting
- **COMMUNITY INTEGRATED LIVING ARRANGEMENT (CILA)**, a supervised, 24-hour residential program that emphasizes skills needed to remain integrated within the community
- **CLIENT AND FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAM (CFSP)**, providing families who care for an individual with a developmental disability in their home with help accessing resources and information

Creativity and the arts are celebrated at Esperanza. Activities like drawing, painting and theater are therapeutic as well as opportunities for individuals to learn and exercise independence. All of our programs are offered in both English and Spanish to meet the diverse needs of the populations we serve.

Esperanza Community Services helps more than 250 individuals annually across Cook County and beyond. Since opening in 1969, Esperanza Community Services has helped more than 7,000 children and adults move towards their individual goals and achieve their potential.



A LETTER FROM OUR BOARD CHAIR AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

DEAR FRIEND,

Esperanza Community Services is a place where transformation happens. This is true for our students and participants, who learn and grow along a continuum of increasing skill, enabling each person to reach his or her full potential. This is also true for the people who make our work possible. Nearly everyone at Esperanza Community Services has a story about a neighbor who transformed into a volunteer, or an acquaintance who transformed into an active and proud supporter of our work.

There's the local resident who came with a friend to our Holiday Art and Gift Fest and had his portrait sketched by Jaime, a participant in our Coleridge Adult Day Program, and found himself drawn into a conversation with the self-confident and outgoing artist. And there's the professor who attended our annual benefit dinner and left in awe of the services Esperanza provides—so much so that she became a member of our board of directors.

Every story is unique. It may have been seeing the pride on the face of an Esperanza School student when she learned to pronounce a challenging word. Or it may have been hearing the accomplishment in the voice of a resident of our Community Integrated Living Arrangement as he described his first solo trip to the grocery store. But in every story, the moment of transformation occurred when someone had the opportunity to experience Esperanza firsthand, and to interact with the children and adults who are at the heart of everything we do. In these moments, there is an almost immediate connection as people become drawn in. In these moments, they understand the vital role of Esperanza plays in the lives of our students and participants.

Our supporters are helping to make amazing things happen at Esperanza Community Services, and with every transformation, their numbers are growing. They see the direct impact of their involvement in the accomplishments that happen at Esperanza every day. This annual report highlights just a few of those accomplishments.

We would like to thank those who helped us continue to achieve our mission during fiscal years 2009 and 2010. During this period when economic challenges were a daily reality for everyone, their dedication to Esperanza did not waver. Thank you to our board of directors, whose leadership and guidance is indispensable. And thank you to the organizations and individuals who invested money and time in our work.

Your belief in us is enabling transformation in the lives of the adults and children we serve.

Thank you,


John Stocchetti,
2011 Board Chair




Diane Farina White,
Executive Director



ESPERANZA SCHOOL

ESPERANZA SCHOOL helps address the educational and developmental needs of students ages 5-21 through individualized academic goals, life skills and vocational training, and art therapy.

Esperanza School recognizes that each student has strengths, talents, and interests that can be developed to achieve individually relevant goals for a meaningful adult life. The school strives to create a nurturing environment in which each student can reach his or her potential along a continuum that leads to community integration and independence. After enrollment, each student is assessed to determine his or her learning and therapeutic needs. Teachers then develop an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) to meet academic, behavioral, and social-emotional needs.

In order to help students reach their potential and be prepared for life after graduation, the school provides opportunities for developing vocational skills. Based on interest and ability, students can explore career areas including horticulture and landscaping, retail sales, art and drama production, hospitality, facilities maintenance, and assembly/production. The Esperanza School Vocational Program enables students to apply skills, increase their self-esteem, and become more deeply integrated in the community.

The arts also play a key role at Esperanza School. Each project allows students further opportunities for self-expression, creativity, autonomy, and to develop critical social and vocational skills that will benefit them across a variety of settings.



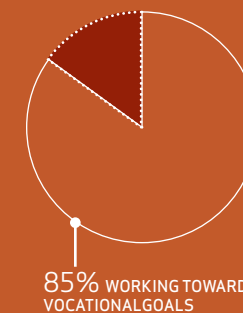
Students like GABBY, a 16-year-old high school student, are making strides towards their educational goals. After reading an article about how astronomers had discovered a new planet, Gabby was excited to discuss the news with his teacher. *“There’s another Earth, with oxygen and water!”* he exclaimed.

our successes

Esperanza School students took the lead in creating and producing a play, *A Day in the Life*, which allowed them to express their thoughts and feelings, as well as a chance to creatively reflect on their daily school experiences.

Esperanza’s internship program, created in 2009, provides hands-on job training and prevocational skills for 18 students. Participants are gaining positive self-identity and transferable skills that will aid them in finding employment or placement in a skills development program—and in most cases, a paycheck for their work.

100% of students receiving speech therapy services have increased their communication ability, with 68% of students achieving significant progress towards goal mastery.



85% of students now have vocational goals incorporated into their education plans. 80% successfully met one or more of their goals, and 57% met all of their vocational goals.

Esperanza School Demographics

Each student is regularly assessed to ensure progress towards goals and that increasing levels of independence are attained.

*Demographics from FY 2010

NUMBER OF STUDENTS
2009: 42 2010: 39

GENDER
85% MALE 15% FEMALE

ETHNICITY
59% LATINO 28% AFRICAN AMERICAN 7% CAUCASIAN 5% ASIAN

COLERIDGE ADULT DAY PROGRAM

THE COLERIDGE ADULT DAY PROGRAM helps individuals age 21 and over with developmental disabilities increase their level of independence within the community. Through custom-tailored skill development plans, Coleridge participants have the opportunity to grow life skills and practical vocational skills in a workshop setting. As with all Esperanza programs, the goal is to help the participant reach his or her individual potential for independence and integration within the community.

CORE AREAS OF GOAL ACHIEVEMENT INCLUDE:

- Independent living skills like cooking, cleaning, shopping, and using public transportation
- Academics and learning
- Communication skills like expressing needs and socializing appropriately with others
- Self-direction (being able to proceed through the steps necessary to complete tasks)
- Self-care skills like dressing, eating, and grooming
- Mobility, motor skills, and coordination

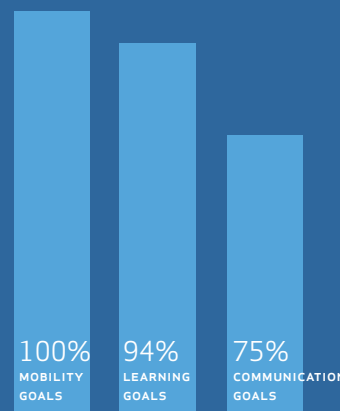
The unique needs and goals of each participant are placed at the forefront of the Coleridge Adult Day Program. Participants are empowered to the extent possible to make decisions regarding both their skill development plan and daily activities.

To help participants at all ability levels progress towards greater community integration, a variety of activities are available to promote progress towards the above goals, including tactile training, arts and crafts, theater, baking, woodshop, weaving, and more.

Coleridge participants are making measureable strides towards goal achievement, and continue to move towards personal milestones.

OUR SUCCESSES

100% of participants made progress or achieved their mobility goals, **94%** made progress or achieved their learning goals, and **75%** made progress or achieved their communication goals.



JOHN*, a non-verbal adult who communicates through sounds and gestures, has learned the skill of pointing to an image in a picture book to communicate his wants and needs to staff. MARITZA, a participant who not long ago avoided interacting with others, now greets her instructor and friends with a warm smile and a friendly greeting. And in 2009, a participant named BOBBY published *Imagination Knocks My Brain*, a book of drawings and observations on life, including "Potential means reality taking shape."



By showcasing their artwork at various galleries and events, Coleridge participants have had the opportunity to interact with the public in a positive context while earning a sense of accomplishment as well as income from artwork sales. Works have been featured at the Chicago Cultural Center, Intuit: the Center for Intuitive and Outsider Art, Judy A. Saslow Gallery, and Barney's New York.

Coleridge Demographics

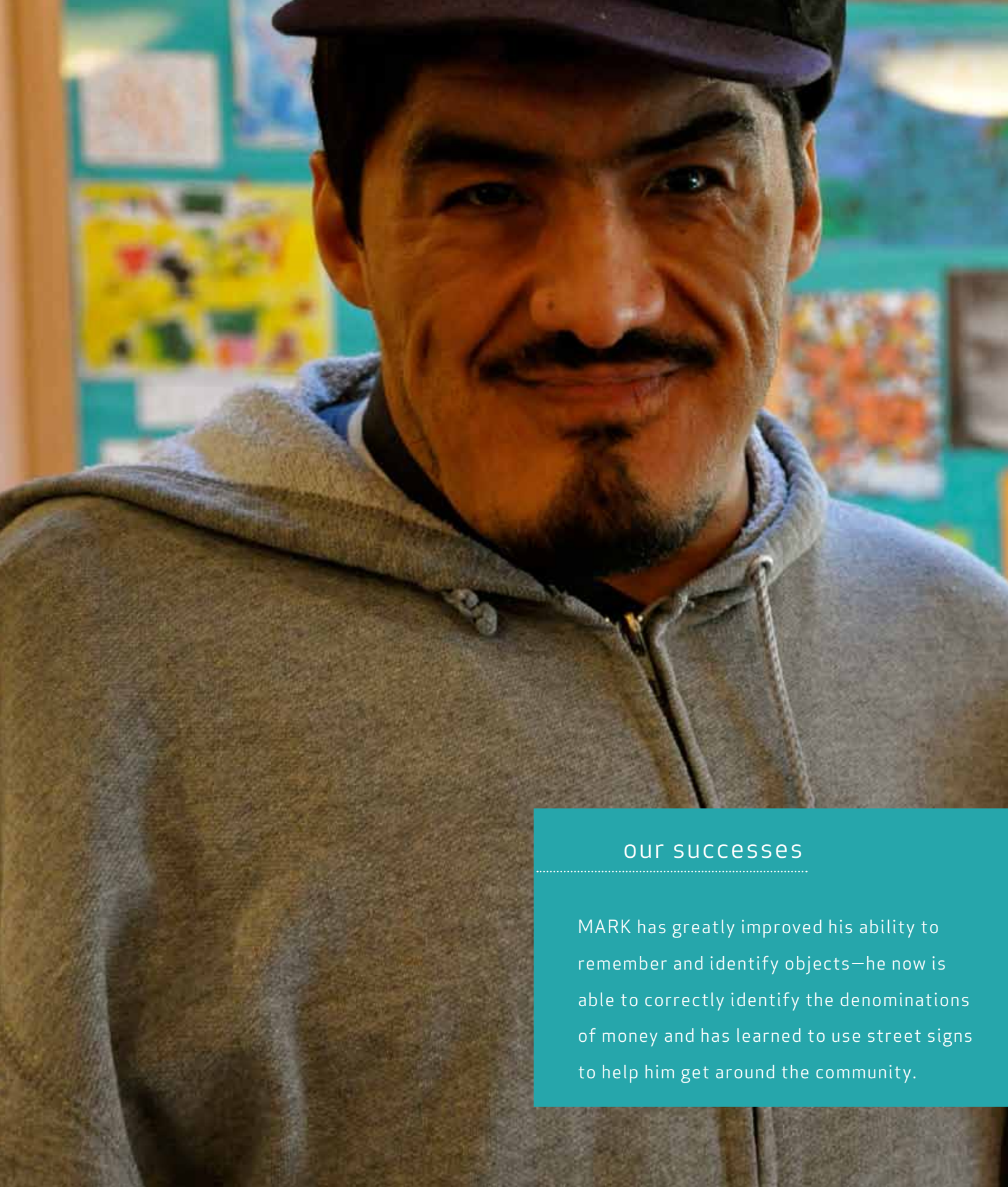
*Demographics from FY 2010

NUMBER OF STUDENTS
2009: 67 2010: 69

GENDER
68% MALE 32% FEMALE

ETHNICITY
43% LATINO 41% AFRICAN AMERICAN 12% CAUCASIAN 5% OTHER

*In some instances, names have been changed to protect the privacy of participants.



COMMUNITY INTEGRATED LIVING ARRANGEMENT PROGRAM

Through the Community Integrated Living Arrangement (CILA) program, Esperanza provides individuals who are ready to take the next step in community integration and independent living with a safe, supervised environment in which they are supported to be as autonomous as possible.

The CILA program provides residents with training to increase independence in daily living, economic self-sufficiency, and community integration. Residents receive assistance in maintaining contact with families and friends, and in meeting personal goals as they move toward an increasingly independent life.

Esperanza operates three Community Integrated Living Arrangement homes in Chicago—Tobias House, a two-flat, six-bedroom apartment unit, Sophia house, a four-bedroom home with a backyard, and Natoli House, a four-bedroom home with a deck and basketball hoop. Natoli House is our newest addition to the CILA program, and opened in 2009.

our successes

MARK has greatly improved his ability to remember and identify objects—he now is able to correctly identify the denominations of money and has learned to use street signs to help him get around the community.

BENJAMIN is a resident of Natoli House where he lives with his two brothers, and all three of them have autism. The siblings have come a long way since being on the brink of homelessness just over a year ago when their mother became seriously ill. Benjamin’s story, however, is nothing short of amazing. Benjamin works a full-time job, manages a savings account, a debit card and a cell phone plan. He’s also a musician who sings and plays guitar. Recently Benjamin expressed interest in starting a band—“Just like John Lennon,” he says.

CHUCK has also made huge strides towards community reintegration. He is employed part-time, and is now also able to use public transportation to get to the grocery store and do his food shopping independently.

HAROLD has become more comfortable talking to others and now enjoys participating in discussions and conversations with his housemates.

** Names have been changed to protect the privacy of participants.*

CILA Demographics



Moving Toward our Vision...

ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2009 - 2010



PHOTOS FROM LEFT TO RIGHT:

Halloween at Esperanza; participants express themselves through the arts; Volunteers from Northern Trust and Sollitt Construction at Esperanza; Clarence Simmons, Coleridge participant, explains his inspiration for a recent work; paintings made by Esperanza participants on sale at the Art and Gift Shop; Nelly Carreño, Weather Anchor for Telemundo and recipient of the 2010 Bobby Reyes Tribute Award.

ADVOCACY

As an organization created to serve individuals who had few existing resources, Esperanza Community Services has always maintained advocacy as a central component of its work.

Since 2009, Esperanza program participants, volunteers, and staff have participated in several rallies to voice opposition to proposed state budget cuts that threatened social services. From Springfield to Chicago, Esperanza is taking the fight for funding directly to our elected officials.

And in 2010, Esperanza School joined the Cluster School Constituency Group to leverage our collective influence and advocate for funding for specialized schools.

IN THE COMMUNITY

Esperanza continues to strive for an increased presence in the community in order to better serve our participants and help them maximize their potential.

February 2010 saw the grand opening of the Esperanza Art and Gift Shop. Located at 1624 W. Grand Avenue, this unique storefront is staffed by Esperanza participants and stocked with their colorful (and reasonably priced) paintings, mosaics, and other handcrafted creations. The Art and Gift Shop is an opportunity for our artists to gain confidence while learning valuable job skills.

Thanks to a grant from the Illinois Arts Council, a mural was created on campus by Esperanza School students. The project provided internship-to-employment opportunities, practical vocational preparation, and the self-confidence that comes with the creation of a high-visibility community art project.

"VOLUNTEERS MAKE OUR UNIVERSE GROW BIGGER!"

-Bobby Tirelli, author, artist and Coleridge Adult Day Program participant

The people who volunteer their time with Esperanza Community Services are a remarkable group. Their commitment, dedication, and connection to Esperanza's mission are truly amazing.

During 2009-2010, more than 200 individuals gave over 4,700 volunteer hours with Esperanza. That averages to an impressive 23.5 hours per individual! We built and grew volunteer partnerships with BuildOn, Chicago Cares, DePals, the French Pastry School, Glotel Incorporated, Noble Street College Prep, Northern Trust, One Brick, Sollitt Construction, Willis Tower, YouthWorks!, and more! We continue to be inspired by our volunteers. Thank you!

BUILDING OUR CAPACITY

2009 and 2010 was a time of growth and refocused energy at Esperanza. Our board of directors adopted a strategic plan that will enable us to continue to serve our participants effectively and identify new opportunities. We opened Natoli House, a Community Integrated Living Arrangement (CILA) facility, increasing our integrated housing capacity by 33%.

Esperanza School capacity has been enhanced through the creation of our Vocational Program and internship agreements with local businesses including Green Grocer, El Taco Veloz and Zagone Studios.

We are proud to announce that our newly-formed Junior Board is off to a terrific start, and its members are eager to build Esperanza's relationship with neighbors, businesses, and young professionals. We are also in the process of growing our Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) capacity through which Esperanza assesses and addresses problematic behaviors.

EVENTS

The past two years have seen many terrific events at Esperanza. Our benefit dinner, held annually on the first Sunday in May, is a celebration of the individuals who have been drawn in to the Esperanza community. The Holiday Art and Gift Fest in November continues to be a great opportunity for shoppers and supporters alike to see Esperanza firsthand, meet our artists, and purchase unique, participant-made paintings and crafts.

CLIENT AND FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAM

The Client and Family Support Program (CFSP) provides case management, advocacy, and connections to vital resources for developmentally disabled individuals who live at home with family members.

By helping families navigate complex benefit and healthcare processes, including accessing resources for assistive technology and home/vehicle modification, obtaining translation and legal services and more, Esperanza Community Services is helping individuals retain their independence and remain a part of our community.

Participants in the CFSP program are learning to self-advocate and become more independent. After working with Esperanza to fix a problem with her health insurance, Josefina gained the knowledge and self-confidence she needed to go directly to the appropriate government office to address the issue herself the next time a problem occurred.



BRANDON is a young man who faces a number of cognitive and physical challenges. He was becoming further and further withdrawn from family and friends, and as a result, was experiencing episodes in which a task like putting on a jacket could take up to 30 minutes. Esperanza staff intervened and worked with family members to assess the situation. Now, Brandon is more outgoing and talkative, and he no longer experiences disruptive episodes.

our successes

RUBY and ALONZO are recent high school graduates whose participation in CFSP enabled them to make college a reality. Esperanza staff worked closely with school administrators to ensure that adequate accommodations and resources were in place. Now, Ruby and Alanzo have successfully completed their entrance exams and will begin their first semester in the spring. Alanzo plans on enrolling in technology courses, while Ruby wants to become a lawyer. "I want to help people," she said.



100% of eligible Client and Family Service Program participants have received linkages to relevant information regarding their rights around guardianship and other legal matters.

And CFSP is helping families break down economic barriers to care by providing expertise and referrals to resources that can help facilitate state reimbursement to families and increase home-base support services program income by up to one-third.

CFSP Demographics

*Demographics from FY 2010

NUMBER OF STUDENTS
2009: 110 2010: 146

GENDER
63% MALE 37% FEMALE

ETHNICITY
76% LATINO 16% AFRICAN AMERICAN 5% CAUCASIAN 2% OTHER

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

	2009	2010
REVENUE		
Fee For Service	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
IDHS	1,259,848.00	1,428,423.00
Local School Boards	1,705,842.00	1,725,589.00
Government Grants	126,450.00	118,625.00
Contributions	312,742.00	295,270.00
United Way	103,996.00	62,616.00
Food Program	15,656.00	16,201.00
Investment Income	2,177.00	6,814.00
Other Revenue	73,290.00	36,192.00
TOTAL REVENUE	\$ 3,600,001.00	\$ 3,689,730.00
EXPENSES		
Program Services	3,002,757.00	2,884,411.00
Administrational and General	583,151.00	689,331.00
Fundraising	41,647.00	59,106.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 3,645,014.00	\$ 3,615,389.00
NET ASSETS		
Increase/Decrease in Net Assets	(45,013.00)	74,341.00
Beginning of the year	1,577,194.00	1,532,181.00
End of the Year	\$ 1,532,181.00	\$ 1,606,522.00

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

	2009	2010
ASSETS		
Cash in Banks	\$ 208,546.00	\$ 175,426.00
Programs & Other Receivables	486,319.00	912,995.00
Investments	310,574.00	317,336.00
Prepaid Expenses	19,540.00	20,113.00
Fixed Assets	1,692,260.00	1,598,383.00
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 2,717,239.00	\$ 3,024,253.00
LIABILITIES		
Accounts Payable	115,911.00	298,554.00
Mortgage & Loans Payable	637,147.00	589,177.00
Line of Credit	432,000.00	530,000.00
TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$ 1,185,058.00	\$ 1,417,731.00
NET WORTH		
Net Assets - Beginning of the year	1,577,194.00	1,532,181.00
Total Net Assets	1,532,181.00	1,606,522.00
Total Liabilities & Net Assets	\$ 2,717,239.00	\$ 3,024,253.00

“

Esperanza is an outstanding organization that is dedicated to providing excellent services to help individuals who live with developmental disabilities reach their potential in our community. As the stories in this report will attest, Esperanza is both highly effective and an outstanding investment. That's why I am proud to invest my time as a volunteer and my dollars as a donor.

JOHN STOCCHETTI, Board Chair

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Linda Romano-Derr
Libby Roth
Ruzicka & Associates
Sarah's Pastries & Candies
Schawk Photography
Greg Scott
Shedd Aquarium
Jackie Shen
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Six Flags Great America
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Wishbone Restaurant
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* Who have provided goods or services with a value of \$100 or more.

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Access Health Clinic
Ada S. McKinley
Adult Down Syndrome Center
Advocate Health Care
Anixter Center
Anixter Packaging Service
The Art Institute of Chicago
Association House
Aurora School District 129
Barney's New York
Best Buddies of Illinois
Building with Books
Center for Disability & Elder Law
Chicago Barn Dance Co.
Chicago Children's Museum
Chicago Cultural Center
Chicago Hearing Society
Chicago Park District
Chicago Public Schools
Chicago Weaving School
Community Alternative
Unlimited
Community Service Options
Culinary Institute
DePals, DePaul Community
Service Association
Department of Human Services
Office of Rehabilitative Services
Easter Seals
El Valor Corporation
Envision Unlimited
Family Resource Center
First American Bank
The French Pastry School
Garden Center
Gateway to Learning
Greater Chicago Food Depository
Green Corp
Green Grocer Chicago
Harold Washington School
Hartgrove Hospital
Helping Hand Rehabilitation
Center

Illinois Association of Private
Schools for Exceptional Children
Illinois Coalition for
Immigrant & Refugee Rights
Illinois Eye Institute
Illinois Masonic Medical Center
Illinois Regional Office
of Education
Illinois State Board
of Education
Institute on Disability
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and Outsider Art
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YMCA of Metro Chicago
Zagone Studios

“ Working with the Coleridge artists keeps me connected to the world and the people in it ”
Coleridge volunteer

WE VALUE and appreciate the support of all of our donors and volunteers—their investment of resources and time make our work possible. If we have omitted your name, please let us know by contacting us at 312.243.6097 or info@esperanzacommunity.org.



GET INVOLVED WITH ESPERANZA.

There are a number of ways you can support our mission. You can make a financial contribution by returning the enclosed envelope, or give quickly and securely by visiting EsperanzaCommunity.org. Check with your employer to find out if they have a matching gift fund that will double your gift, and please consider making a planned gift to Esperanza.

You can also volunteer your time. We are always seeking people who are interested in helping in classrooms or getting involved in a leadership capacity through our board and committees. For groups, we have maintenance projects and event support opportunities available. And for business owners, please consider becoming a partner of our Vocational Program. We also have a number of sponsorship opportunities available.

We are always appreciative of donations of school, craft and office supplies, and more. For information on any of these opportunities, or to schedule a visit, please call 312.243.6097, x18 or email info@EsperanzaCommunity.org.



I CAN...

Read a book.
Learn about science.
Finish a puzzle.
Spell and write.
Color and draw.

Count to 10.

Sing *Take Me Out to the Ballgame* and *My Girl*.

Set the table at lunch time.

Play catch with my class.

Do math, and I discover something new every day.

These statements, created by Esperanza School students, line the walls of our cafeteria. They serve as a daily reminder of how hard the students worked to achieve these successes, and of how much they are capable of accomplishing.

“

Esperanza has inspired me to be a better person. Knowing that I have made a difference in someone's life is humbling and rewarding. My time here has brought me a family, a home, and wonderful friends.

”

Tiffany Wong, Esperanza School volunteer



ESPERANZA SCHOOL is accredited by the North Central Association (NCA/CASI) and approved by the Illinois State Board of Education.

United Way
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THE COLERIDGE ADULT TRAINING PROGRAM, COMMUNITY INTEGRATED LIVING ARRANGEMENT PROGRAM, and the CLIENT AND FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAM are funded by the Illinois Department of Human Services and accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF).