



 Becoming  
Independent

ANNUAL REPORT 2012 - 2013

## Dear Friends and Supporters,



Fiscal Year 2012 – 2013 was a year of reorganization and re-direction for Becoming Independent as we set in motion a number of initiatives to improve and enhance our services.

Foremost among these were changes to our Day Program in Santa Rosa, which serves close to 250 participants. In the fall of 2012 our Board of Directors agreed to a plan designed to better meet the interests of each individual participant. After completing exploratory interviews with participants and staff, three core program components were identified: **Employment, Personal Enrichment** and **Specialized Services**.

**Employment** provides meaningful paid employment in two settings. Participants who desire to earn a paycheck can choose between on-site work in **Production Services** or community-based employment through our **Vocational Enrichment Center**. Some people are happy to utilize their existing skill set on site, while others seek skill-building instruction that will enable them to eventually secure community-based employment.

**Personal Enrichment** is dedicated to developing skills to improve daily quality of life for participants. **Life Skills** focuses on maintaining and developing fundamental social and communications skills while also offering opportunities for meaningful community access. **Leisure Activities** puts a focus on recreational activities both on-site and in the community that appeal to our participants 55 and older, or those who prefer a more relaxed day.

**Specialized Services** is home to three dynamic programs. Artists whose work is widely shown and collected continue to create art for our agency's **ArtWorks Program**. Please see page 4 to learn about the enormous strides being made by **Community Integrated Services**. Meanwhile, we are developing an **Autism Specialty Program** to serve our county's growing need.

As we embraced change in our Day Services program, we welcomed eight new dynamic members to our Board of Directors at our annual meeting. Each member brings an impressive level of skill, experience and commitment to our mission and we are truly enriched by their presence. Two new chiefs were also welcomed: Kory Stradinger, Chief Operating Officer, and Lauren Meiklejohn, Chief of Services.

What did not change this year was the generous, heartfelt support we receive from the community. We enjoyed our best Human Race results ever in May, and at the start of the 2013-2014 fiscal year, our second-highest-grossing Dinner Under the Stars in the event's 23-year history.

Last summer, BI was named one of the "Best Places to Work" by the North Bay Business Journal, which coincided with an infusion of 30 motivated new staff members. I'm also pleased to say that during this fiscal year, the Board officially honored me with the position of Chief Executive Officer.

We are grateful for the good news while we remain cognizant of challenges. We have received a very generous grant from the Celebrate Community Partnership to create a multi-sensory environment room for our Autism Specialty Program. We were delighted to receive another year of funding from Community Foundation Sonoma County, Healdsburg Area, and look forward to expanding our Community Integrated Services thanks to their support. Frozen rates from the State of California remain our most challenging obstacle to realizing the life-changing initiatives that we envision and embrace.

Thankfully, we are able to cultivate and grow our programs and services because of the many families, community partners and supporters who truly value and understand the importance of the services offered at BI. To all of you, I express our sincere appreciation and look forward to continuing to work with you to sustain and grow this important community resource.

Sincerely,



Luana Vaetoe, Chief Executive Officer  
Becoming Independent



## 2012–2013 Outcomes of BI Services

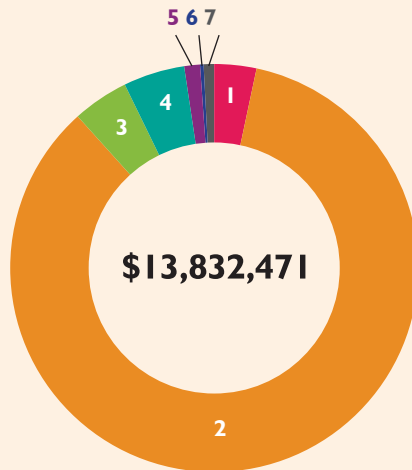
Success and progress experienced by individuals served by Becoming Independent are measured in real terms. BI tracks the number of people served, how many hours of service they received from staff, the number of hours of work they performed and wages they earned, and their level of inclusion in mainstream community activities. BI also gauges overall satisfaction with the Becoming Independent experience.

<b>Number of people served</b>	<b>1,520*</b>
<b>Hours of Service</b>	<b>577,873</b>
<b>Hours of Work</b>	<b>122,499</b>
<b>Wages</b>	<b>\$774,843</b>
<b>Hours on Inclusion</b>	<b>206,845</b>
<b>Rate of Satisfaction</b>	<b>90%</b>

\* Includes 70 people per each month during this fiscal year served at community dances through a partnership with Santa Rosa Parks and Recreation Department.

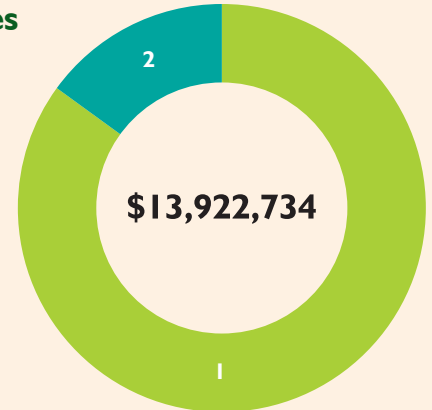
## FINANCIAL REPORT 2012–2013

### Support and Revenue



■ 1. Contributions	\$ 465,319	3.4%
■ 2. Service Fees	\$ 11,775,750	85.1%
■ 3. Educational Subsidies	\$ 602,769	4.4%
■ 4. Employment Income	\$ 678,040	4.9%
■ 5. Investment Income	\$ 173,414	1.3%
■ 6. Other Income	\$ 30,186	0.2%
<b>TOTAL – Unrestricted Support and Revenue</b>	<b>\$ 13,725,478</b>	<b>99.2%</b>
■ 7. Net Assets Released From Restrictions	\$ 106,993	0.8%
<b>TOTAL – Unrestricted Support, Revenue, and Assets Released from Restrictions</b>	<b>\$ 13,832,471</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

### Expenses



■ 1. Programs		
Community Living Supports	\$ 3,479,951	25.0%
Day Training and Activities	\$ 7,321,019	52.6%
Transportation Services	\$ 1,019,097	7.3%
<b>Total Program Services</b>	<b>\$ 11,820,067</b>	<b>84.9%</b>
■ 2. Supporting Services		
Administration	\$ 1,415,574	10.2%
Fundraising	\$ 308,489	2.2%
Other / Extraordinary Item	\$ 378,604	2.7%
<b>Total Supporting Services</b>	<b>\$ 2,102,667</b>	<b>15.1%</b>
<b>Total Unrestricted Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 13,922,734</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
Decrease in unrestricted net assets	\$ (90,263)	

## Who are the people at Becoming Independent?

They are the largest and most diverse minority in the world. They are all ages, genders, religions and ethnicities. They come from all socioeconomic levels and sexual orientations. And they are people with different disabilities.\*

Autism

Down syndrome

Learning and physical disabilities

Mental health conditions

Cognitive disability and developmental delay

And they are like everyone. They want to be free, happy, independent and respected full members of the community.

## They are people.

\* Adapted from "People First Language," by Kathie Snow, [www.disabilityisnatural.com](http://www.disabilityisnatural.com); and used with permission.



## Employment and Contract Services

When Travers Ebling heard that participants at Becoming Independent might be able to help his growing business with production work, he had the same thoughts many employers experience.

"I needed the work done," said Ebling, director of operations at No. 8 Lighting in Cotati. "But working with and relating to people with disabilities is outside of our culture's dominant paradigm. I wondered what is the sacrifice, what are the hassles, the entanglements?"

Our staff in Production Services quickly allayed his fears. Ebling was impressed by BI's professional handling of the work assessment, time studies and quality control practices. Since August, about 25 BI participants have been working on six distinct tasks related to packaging No. 8's recessed lighting systems. Ebling said the company ships 1,200 to 1,500 units a month.

"We sell a high-end product to high-end clientele," he said. "We pay attention to detail, and BI does that, too. I feel like BI has become part of our company's success." By turning over some of his more tedious, repetitive work to BI, Ebling said he freed up his four production employees in Cotati for more intricate tasks.

"It improves our efficiency and it improves our morale," he said. "And I'm getting the same quality of work from BI as I would from my top guy doing it here."

And he no longer worries about making sacrifices by teaming with BI. In fact, in February No. 8 hired a BI participant to work part-time on the assembly line at their Cotati facility.

Working in partnership with BI "has been a really good fit," Ebling said.



# Community Integrated Services



If you've seen an increased number of BI participants in the community lately, it's no accident.

Last summer, we hired James Cox to ramp up our Community Integrated Services program with the goal of helping more participants become active in their communities, primarily through volunteer work. James reports "huge strides in increasing our participants' presence in the community."

That includes BI volunteer crews delivering meals to senior citizens in their homes, helping keep books organized at our local public library, processing and packaging donations at the regional food bank and helping with a variety of tasks and activities at area senior centers.

This work not only benefits the non-profits and public agencies that are the recipients of help from BI, but it helps our participants become more visible and feel more valued in their communities.

The partnership between BI and the Sonoma County Council on Aging was featured in *The Press Democrat* a week before Christmas. BI volunteer crews deliver more than 120 lunches a week to home-bound seniors in Santa Rosa and Cloverdale. Our participants are having a great time doing the work, and the seniors love it, too. Wanda Zanders, a Meals on Wheels recipient, told the PD; **"It's been absolutely lovely."**

At year's end, Cox was working on partnerships with a variety of other agencies and non-profits around the county. So, next time you see volunteers doing good in the community, take a closer look. That just might be a BI participant giving back and helping to strengthen our communities.

**Becoming Independent thanks the following for their support and generous donations  
throughout the 2012–2013 fiscal year. Thank you so much!**

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Co. ▪ Winkle, Don ▪ Winograd, Barry ▪ Wiseman DMD, Richard and Sherrie ▪ Wolfe, Mary ▪ The Wolford Family ▪ Wolfson, Richard and Artley ▪ Wollman, Eric and Debbie ▪ Wong, Lynette ▪ Wright, Jay and Kathryn ▪ Wright, Thierry ▪ Wright, Susan ▪ Wright, Janice ▪ www.partyjump.com ▪ Yabroff, Lawrence ▪ Yaeger, Mike and Lee Anne ▪ Young, Elaine ▪ Zamora, Shirley and Jeffrey Barrett ▪ Zane, Shirlee ▪ Zink, Laura ▪ Zuehlsdorff, Marck and Allison ▪

## OUR MISSION

To promote community inclusion and participation for people with developmental disabilities.

## OUR VISION

An improved quality of life - meaningful work, recreation and support of family, friends and the community.

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Close to 1,000 people, all living with a variety of disabilities, seek their own paths to personal fulfillment and independence with the help of programs and opportunities made available at Becoming Independent.

Developing since BI was established in 1967, our programs provide instruction in activities and skills essential to successful everyday living. The skills are wide ranging and include the most basic and incidental, to the very sophisticated and personal. BI provides individualized programs for each person served, promoting personal choice based on areas of interests and passions.

As the North Bay's largest nonprofit human services organization dedicated to people with developmental disabilities, BI services are available in Napa, Solano and Sonoma counties. We are dedicated to "promoting community inclusion and participation for people with developmental disabilities."

## SERVICE LOCATIONS

Becoming Independent provides services throughout Napa, Solano and Sonoma counties for hundreds of people with disabilities.

**Santa Rosa**  
Central Office  
1425 Corporate Center Parkway  
1455 Corporate Center Parkway  
Santa Rosa, CA 95407  
Phone: (707) 524-6600  
Fax: (707) 527-1206  
[www.becomingindependent.org](http://www.becomingindependent.org)

**Sonoma Valley**  
355 West Napa Street  
Sonoma, CA 95476  
Phone: (707) 996-5988  
Fax: (707) 935-7861

**Healdsburg**  
625 Center Street, Suite B  
Healdsburg, CA 95448  
Phone: (707) 431-1345  
Fax: (707) 431-8136

**Napa / Solano**  
1832 Soscol Avenue, Suite 101  
Napa, CA 94559  
Phone: (707) 252-9288  
Fax: (707) 252-0682



Paco volunteering to deliver a hot meal to a home-bound senior through the partnership between Becoming Independent and Sonoma County Council on Aging



Becoming Independent 1425 Corporate Center Parkway, Santa Rosa, CA 95407  
Phone (707) 524-6600  
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