



A WORD FROM
LUANA VAETOE
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

DEAR FRIENDS & SUPPORTERS,

Fiscal Year 2013–2014 has proven that when we set out to do great things in our community, we will not only be successful—we can exceed expectations. Looking back, we were fortunate to not only grow, but to also become more efficient in continuing our long tradition of creating innovative programs.

Thanks to all our dedicated supporters and the committed work of the entire Becoming Independent staff and volunteer team, we saw the largest increase in funding revenue in our history. These results are not only inspiring, but also a humbling reminder of how much faith people have placed in our organization.

Each day, the community is growing more aware of Becoming Independent and relying on the services we offer. Last year, hundreds of our participants gave their time and skills to build up the well-being of our community through a variety of partner organizations. They helped feed Sonoma County through the Redwood Empire Food Bank, organized the inventory of Sonoma County Libraries, and delivered friendly greetings and over 500 nutritious meals per month to homebound seniors through Council on Aging's Meals on Wheels. Becoming Independent participants are making a positive difference in the lives of others and playing a vital role in the community. These volunteer opportunities give each participant a great sense of pride—and we are so delighted to help them achieve it.

In 2014 we set out to serve another segment of our community—adults with autism. By pioneering a new program, we are answering the call to meet the needs of adults in our region on the autism spectrum through our Autism Integrated Services. We have dedicated hours and energy into laying the foundation for the new program. We're happy to say we are progressing towards reaching our goals for the future.

But as one new program takes shape, other programs face major challenges. We will see significant cuts from state funding sources for several programs,

such as the Community Living Supports—which allows the people we serve to live independent lives in the community. At the same time, the rest of our programs have not received a rate increase in almost two decades.

We have examined these challenges from every angle, and it has become very clear that self-sustainability is not an option—it is a necessity.

Becoming Independent participants are making a positive difference in the lives of others...

So in 2014 we embarked on the mission to diversify Becoming Independent revenue streams to reduce—and eventually eliminate—our dependency on the State of California. We dedicated resources to renew and develop our business relationships within the community.

We welcomed new board members who have inspired new ideas. And we are joining together with philanthropic partners that share our desire to elevate human abilities for the mutual benefit of our community.

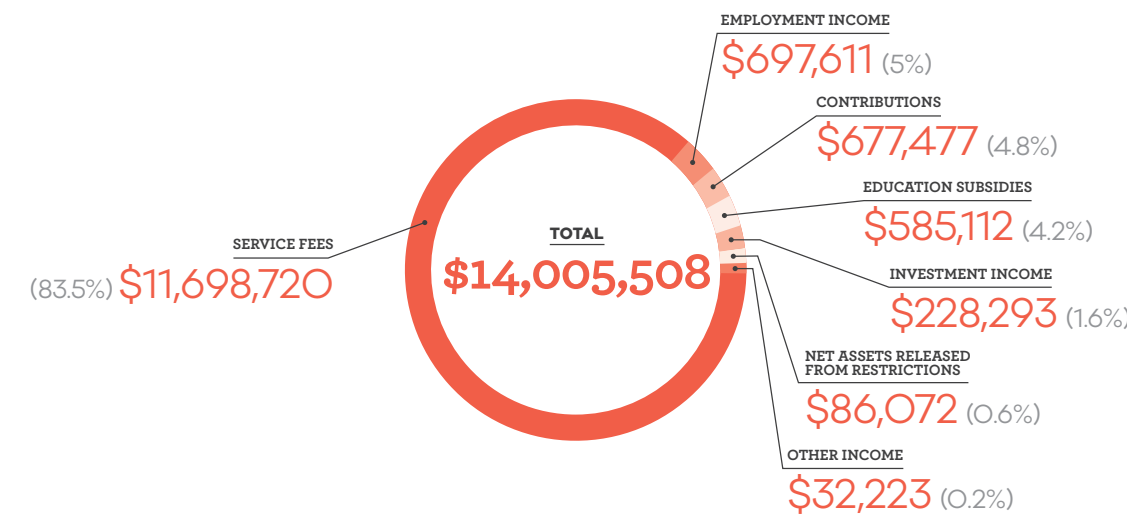
Looking forward, we are expecting another magical year at Becoming Independent. We are not only charting a course for self-sustainability, we are setting out to further engage and inspire our community. We believe our pioneering model will continue breaking barriers for people with disabilities. We believe we are all connected and our community is enriched when we invest in one another. And we believe that every social investment has the potential to be broadly transformative.

Thank you for your continued support and partnership.

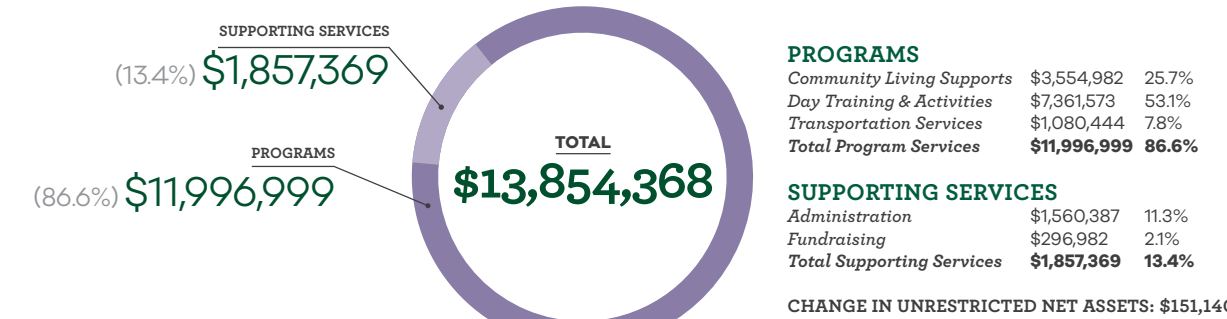
Sincerely,

Luana Vaetoe
Chief Executive Officer
Becoming Independent

SUPPORT & REVENUE



EXPENSES



PROGRAMS

Community Living Supports	\$3,554,982	25.7%
Day Training & Activities	\$7,361,573	53.1%
Transportation Services	\$1,080,444	7.8%
Total Program Services	\$11,996,999	86.6%

SUPPORTING SERVICES

Administration	\$1,560,387	11.3%
Fundraising	\$296,982	2.1%
Total Supporting Services	\$1,857,369	13.4%

CHANGE IN UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS: \$151,140



2013–2014 OUTCOMES OF BECOMING INDEPENDENT SERVICES

Success and progress experienced by individuals served by Becoming Independent are measured in real terms. Becoming Independent 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. Becoming Independent also gauges overall satisfaction with the Becoming Independent experience.

PEOPLE SERVED

1,446*

WAGES

\$779,099

HOURS OF WORK

123,141

HOURS OF SERVICE

568,287**

HOURS OF INCLUSION

198,273

RATE OF SATISFACTION

92%

Becoming Independent's most recent audited financial statement and tax return are available at www.becomingindependent.org

*Includes an average of 70 people per 11 months during this fiscal year served at community dances through a partnership with Santa Rosa Parks and Recreation Department.
**Includes 4,620 hours of service during this fiscal year for service through community dances through a partnership with Santa Rosa Parks and Recreation Department.

PIONEERING AUTISM SERVICES

One of our community's fastest growing needs is to develop services that effectively support the rapidly expanding population of adults with autism. Today, Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) diagnoses are ten times more common than 40 years ago, and according to the Sonoma County Office of Education, over 180 teenagers with ASD will soon age out of the public school system. In order to become engaged and productive adults, strong supportive services will be required. As the largest, strongest resource for people with developmental disabilities, Becoming Independent is uniquely positioned to respond.

During 2014, a task force was convened that includes lead staff, parent and Board member, Donna Cates, and our consulting behavioral psychologist, Dr. Xavier Polk. Extensive research, visits to cutting edge programs, and input from experts at The UC Davis Mind Institute, among others, has provided the team with valuable insights. Curriculum development and staff training are on the immediate horizon. Meanwhile, we've dedicated a wing of our Santa Rosa campus to Autism Integrated Services and are actively seeking the partnership of local businesses, service organizations, foundations and individuals to help secure the funding necessary to launch programming in Santa Rosa, Sonoma and Healdsburg during 2015. Kaela Talafili, pictured to the right with Sean, is poised to assist Sean and dozens of his peers as they advance their social skills utilizing a SmartBoard acquired thanks to the support of a generous grant from the Celebrate Community Partnership.



New Autism Wing Classroom Overview



EXPANDING EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

We always have a lot of work to do at Becoming Independent and we're happy to say our participants do, too. Last year our Employment Services contracts expanded exponentially, providing partner businesses with the valuable talent of Becoming Independent participants.

Participants and businesses find Employment Services contracts to be mutually beneficial. "It's a win-win. It's great to have them on site with us" says Ron Nersesian, CEO of Keysight Technologies, pictured here with participants who hold jobs in document destruction and gardening. Patti, pictured above with Ron Lindenschus, CMO of Lagunitas Brewing Company, takes great pride in helping Lagunitas produce quality promotional materials at a competitive rate.

Our unique approach to employment services is rooted in highlighting and developing the talents of our participants. We help match each person's skills to employer needs—ranging from retail and maintenance to production and assembly. And with continued investment in job coaching, we help guide participants toward fully individualized employment.

As our employment program has grown, we've discovered work can be a great equalizer. Finding success in a job is a universal longing, helping each of us to find a greater sense of self-fulfillment and economic empowerment. We're making progress and laying the groundwork toward realizing our ultimate vision—being sought after for innovative partnerships.

