



A Word From Luana Vaetoe

Chief Executive Officer

Dear Friends and Supporters,
As John Hume once said,
“Difference is the essence of
humanity.... and it should therefore
never be the source of hatred
or conflict. Therein lies a most
fundamental principle of peace:
respect for diversity.”

The history of community-based
services for people with disabilities
is preceded by decades upon
decades of institutional living.
Although institutions later received
great scrutiny, in the beginning they
served an important purpose by
offering a community for those who
had none.

Over time, as understanding and
acceptance of all disabilities grew,
the community-based model
emerged. In the 1940s and early
1950s, the efforts of a few groups
of determined parents living
throughout the United States led
to a strong, national movement
of parents who began assuming
leadership roles, and telling
professionals, “We speak for our
sons and daughters.” Their message
was an unapologetic challenge to the
validity in the words, “Nothing can
be done for your child.”

And, so, we broke from segregation,
and found we had choices. We
moved into an era of integration and
engagement. Becoming Independent
was one of the first organizations
in our area, and one of the largest
statewide, to offer programs that
reflected the values held in this new
era of services.

“Do the best you can until you know
better. Then when you know better,
do better.” –Maya Angelou

We are now in the midst of
navigating a mandate from the
federal government to exit all
congregate settings, and move more
fully into the community. But for
Becoming Independent, it is first and
foremost a mandate from the people
we serve. This necessarily has
resulted in the need for a paradigm
shift in the way we operate, but
let me assure you that not only are
we ready for this challenge, we are
excited about the opportunities
for positive change that come with
it. We know from history that this
shift we are now experiencing is
simply the natural progression that
all human services providers must
experience if they are to grow. And
in the same way that organizations
before us once moved from
segregation to integration, we now
move from community integration
and into community inclusion.

We believe that it’s our responsibility
to adapt our services to the needs
of the people we serve. At the helm
of our Passport to Independence
program serving young adults on the
autism spectrum is a highly qualified
and competent staff. We created a
unique and powerful curriculum for
the program, but it’s the students
who mold the program when they
tell us if a gap exists. And they are
the ones who are telling us that they
want to engage in activities that
secure them a meaningful place
within their community.

Sincerely,

Luana Vaetoe
Chief Executive Officer
Becoming Independent

Our organization has a robust team
of individuals who are ready to take
their place in the workforce. They
are telling us that they want to be
given the same level of responsibility
that a neurotypical person would
be given in that same position. We
provide opportunities for them to
naturally engage in environments
that, with our without our support,
they can thrive. We help to uncover
and cultivate their innate skill sets,
giving them confidence to pursue
their chosen careers.

**THE PEOPLE WE SERVE ARE SAYING,
“WE AREN’T JUST AROUND YOU;
WE ARE YOU.”**

Now, as we begin our 50th year, we
have decades of history to remind us
that, as always, we will emerge from
this time of transition and we will
be stronger for having endured. Our
commitment to dignity, respect, and
personal empowerment becomes
more deeply embedded in our
foundation with each collective step.

Past



2015–2016 Outcomes of Becoming Independent 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.

People Served

1,010*

Wages

\$786,667

Hours of Work

115,018

Hours of Service

592,046**

Hours on Inclusion

341,763

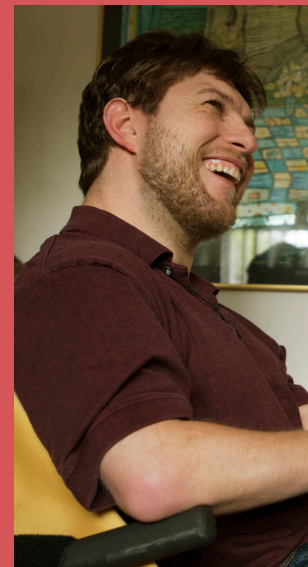
Rate of Satisfaction

93%

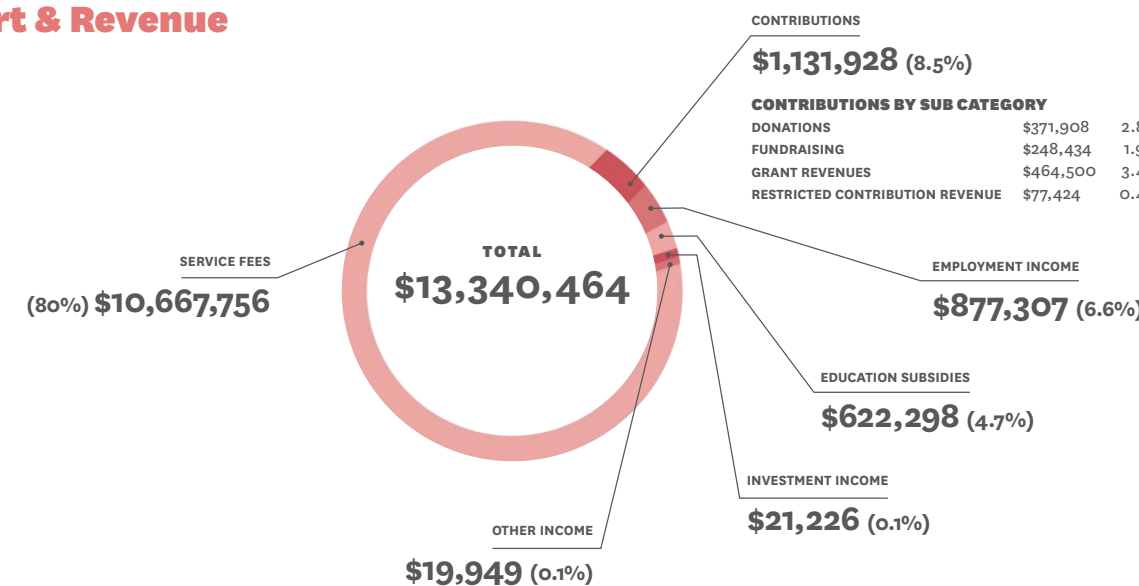
Becoming Independent's most recent audited financial statement
and tax return are available at BecomingIndependent.org

*Includes an average of 100 attendees per month during this fiscal year served at community dances hosted by
Becoming Independent at Steele Lane Community Center.
**Includes 3,324 hours of service during this fiscal year for service through community dances.

Present



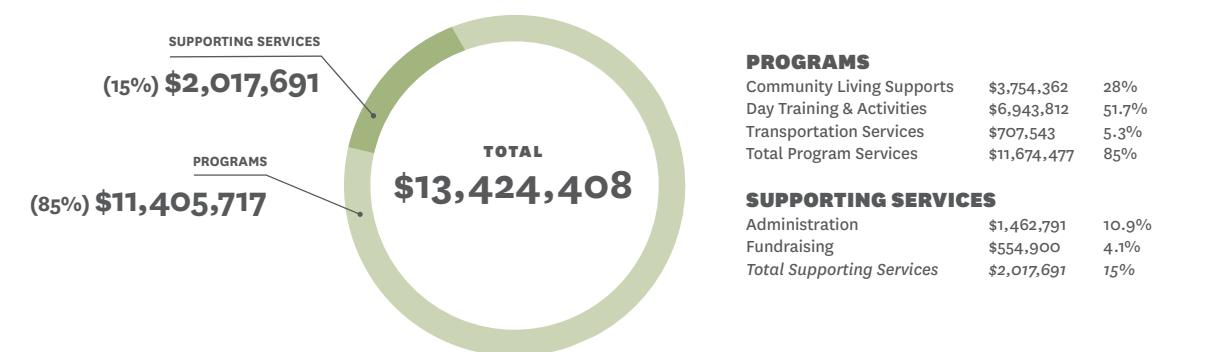
Support & Revenue



Future



Expenses



Many Thanks

Becoming Independent thanks the following for their support and generous donations throughout the 2015–2016 fiscal year.

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Our Purpose

Elevating human abilities
for the mutual benefit of
our Community.

Who We Are

Leading innovators in the
field of human services.

B Becoming
Independent™