

# The Faces of Abilities

Annual Report • 2014 - 2015



## *Vision*

An inclusive community where individuals with disabilities are given the opportunity to reach their fullest potential in life.

## *Mission*

We are dedicated to improving the employability and quality of life for people with disabilities by providing training and individualized services.



## *Values*

We take pride in setting the standard for providing innovative services that promote acceptance, self-worth, independence and success. Our team of caring professionals hold the following core values while carrying out our mission:

- **Communication** - Keeping the lines open for a brighter future.
- **Compassion** - Understanding the sensitive needs of each individual.
- **Fun** - Stopping to smell the roses along the way.
- **Integrity** - Saying and doing what we mean.
- **Respect** - Treating each individual with a high regard.
- **Safety** - Promoting a healthy environment.
- **Teamwork** - Working together toward our common vision.





## *A message from the Chief Executive Officer*

I am pleased to present the 2014 - 2015 Annual Report of Abilities of Northwest Jersey, Inc. A grassroots organization founded in 1974, Abilities has grown to be one of the most respected providers of disability supports in the region. I am proud to share the accomplishments of both the agency and our service recipients over the last year, made possible by stakeholder commitment to our mission.

During this report year, Abilities launched ACES (Autism Customized Employment and Services) for those affected by autism spectrum disorder. With the rate of autism continuing to rise, we found it critical to develop specialized services, led by both behavior and employment experts, so that each individual has the opportunity to reach their goals. Our team of dedicated professionals provides assessment services to determine the functional skills of each individual who enters the program.

Once evaluated, services are customized to promote success in achieving their goals, ranging from daily living skills to community integrated employment.

Historically, Abilities has provided employment and habilitation supports to adults with disabilities. Over the years, we expanded our services to include students ages 16 and older, assisting them with the transition to adult life and work.

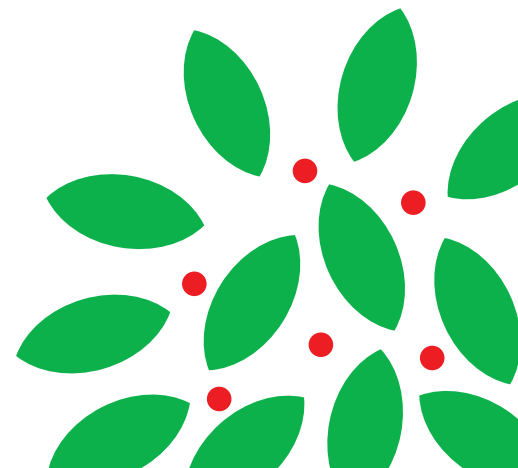
Our services have always been provided either within our program walls, or in the community as a whole. We are excited to report that in 2015—and in response to the growing need for home-based services—Abilities was approved by the Department of Children and Families to provide home-based support services for individuals ages 5 and older. We look forward to launching this service in early 2016, assisting families and their loved ones who seek services from within their own home. With the launch

of home-based services, Abilities will fulfill its mission of providing exemplary supports in the setting of each person's choice.

While we are excited for these new program developments that are needed by many, it would be impossible to provide such services without community support. Our Abilities community of team members, board members, volunteers, families, caregivers, donors, funders and advocates are the key to the success of our mission.

Thank you for your continued dedication, generosity and support which allows for each individual to reach their fullest potential in life!

Cynthia B. Wildermuth  
*Chief Executive Officer*





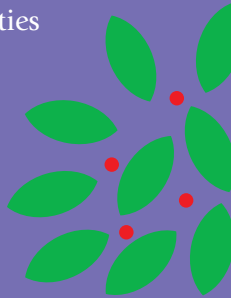
## Abilities Launches ACES

Abilities recognizes that there are currently limited services in the field designed specifically to meet the needs of adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), as well as those individuals with developmental delays who exhibit autistic symptoms.

Staffed with expert professionals in this field, Abilities launched ACES, Autism Customized Employment and Services. ACES promotes learning environments that match individuals' needs and goals to a variety of support services.

Support services include the use of assessments such as Essentials for Living to determine functional skills related to language, social skills, vocational skills and activities of daily living.

Through a team approach of Abilities Board Certified Behavior Analysts, Direct Support Professionals and Employment Specialists, service recipients continue to grow and thrive within our community.



Working on floral arranging skills, the Washington Garden Club shares their time and talents in teaching new skills to Abilities service recipients.



# Connecting with the Community



Celebrating Memorial Day with those who served, **Abilities Hackettstown** program connected with our community and offered our "thank you for serving our country" to the visitors from the various armed forces.

**Abilities Medical Special Needs** program collected cat food, litter and toys for National Cat Day. All of the items collected were donated to a local animal shelter in need.



The hot days of summer are known for abundant harvests in local gardens, and nowhere is this bounty more evident than within the community gardens at **Project Self-Sufficiency**. Abilities Hackettstown program volunteers spend their time in caring and cultivating the gardens, knowing they are helping to put food on others' tables.



**Abilities Phillipsburg Food Pantry and Thrift Boutique** offers a unique opportunity for our service recipients to give back to the community. Individuals get to experience a retail setting with sorting, tagging, pricing, and labeling the items for sale. They also help with packing the products at Norwescap food bank, loading and unloading vans, inventory, cleaning the storage area and packaging. It's a win-win for everyone involved.



*" You inspired people to think about a brighter future, filled with job opportunities, personal growth and independence. You have helped countless individuals realize that their time and talents are valuable. I applaud you on a job well done. "*

# Achievement through Social Enterprises

Services offered to the business community that create training opportunities for the people we serve!



Graduating with a certificate in food safety handling, production and basic hydroponic skills, Abilities graduates celebrate with their employment specialist and staff from Edible Garden.



Abilities hydroponics skill training continues to grow at our Mary Apgar program. Service recipients are involved in the hydroponic growing and selling of produce. Abilities SustainAbilities™ Hydroponic skill training offers service recipients the opportunity to learn teamwork, innovative farming and a discovery of employment opportunities in agribusiness occupations.



*"We truly don't know of another place that would meet our son's needs. You have added new programs to give consumers choices. Words are hard to find to express our gratitude."*

SustainAbilities™ recycles electronics and other materials while providing new employment skills. Partnering with the local community and township e-waste collection events, Abilities trainees are learning fine motor skills, decision making, tool recognitions and math skills.

*Total Weight recycled to date: 50,635 lbs.*



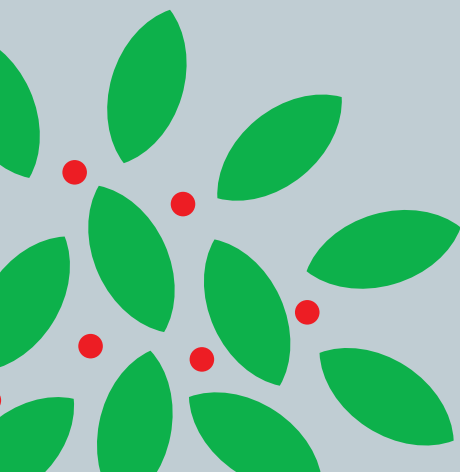
# Screen Printing *and Embroidery* PROMOTIONAL PRODUCTS



Custom screen printing, embroidery, vinyl banners, sign printing and promotional products ... Abilities storefront print shop brings the community and our service recipients together.

Our print shop provides the opportunity to learn customer service skills along with valuable employment skills.

*"I would like to say thank you so much, the order was accurate and the work on the shirt was amazing, all of my coworkers were impressed."*



# Celebrating Achievement!



## **Andy Tigar**

*Supported Employee of the Year*

Honesty, dedication, flexibility, and loyalty ... these are just some of the traits that make a good person, BUT they are also the same traits that make a great employee.

Andrew Tigar has been working at Stop & Shop for 6 years as a porter. Because of Andy's work ethic, he recently has been assigned to the Dairy Department and will also work in the Grocery Department, setting up new ad items.

Andrew demonstrates great employee qualities that his employer from Stop & Shop has recognized. When there are new hires, Andy has been assigned with new employee training and has been a role model for other employees.

Reliability ... Andrew will go above and beyond for his team. He has walked to work during snow storms, and will stay that extra shift if his coworkers can't make it in.

Because of Andrew's understanding of giving 100% to his job, for being dependable and for always going above and beyond, he was presented with the Supported Employee of the Year Award.



## **Shawn McNerney**

*Distinguished Service Award*

## **Ashley Lommatzsch**

*Individual Achievement Recognition*



*Emeritus Board Member*  
**Phyllis Burd**

*Legislative Advocate*  
**Senator Steven V. Oroho**

*Distinguished Service Award*  
**Shawn McNerney**

*Volunteers of the Year*  
**Phillipsburg "Branching Out" Food Pantry**  
**Volunteers**

*Community Partnership*  
**Community Garden**  
**Project Self Sufficiency**

*Business Partnership*  
**Evonik Cyro LLC**

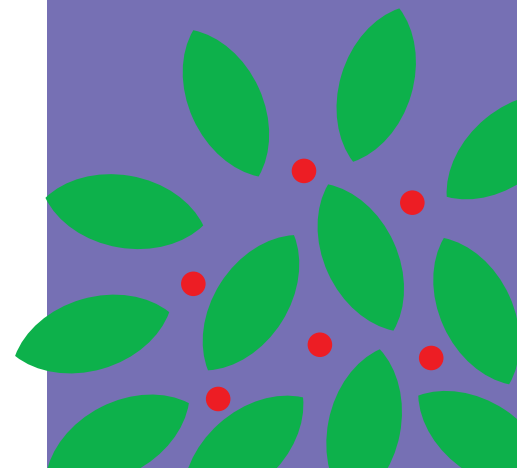
*Individual Achievement Recognition*  
**Jack French**  
**Tina Wright**  
**Ashley Lommatzsch**

*Natural Supports and Accommodations*  
**Genesis HealthCare**  
**Brakeley Park Center**

*Student of the Year*  
**Joe Souza**

*Employer of the Year*  
**Weis Markets**

*Supported Employee of the Year*  
**Andy Tigar**





## Meet Jarrett ...

Jarrett has been employed at Weis in Hackettstown since March 2014. When his employment first began at Weis, Jarrett relied on public transportation and often, his mother. One of his personal goals was to earn his driver's license.

Last year, Jarrett achieved his goal and obtained his driver's license. He is currently saving money to be able to afford his own vehicle, and he plans to start car shopping next month.

As Jarrett is nearing his 2-year anniversary, he continues to smile during every shift and never complains about his Parcel Pick-Up tasks. The Parcel Pick-Up position is responsible for clearing the lot of carts and any garbage, collecting grocery baskets inside the store, and Weis' number one priority which is customer service. Jarrett EXCELS with the customer service that he provides to each of his customers.

A lot of the usual customers know him by name and they get the same friendly gesture in return. The Store Manager has mentioned that Jarrett has a great attitude in all aspects of the job and is always eager to help out and try new tasks. Congratulations Jarrett, and keep up the great work!

*"I want to take this opportunity to thank the staff for providing my son with the skills necessary to work at a job he loves with people who care about him. Your employment staff certainly made a difference and I applaud their work ethic."*



# Community Partnership - Together, we make a difference!



Raising over \$23,000, the Rossi Festival of Trees continues to be an event of celebration, and a successful partnership!

Abilities received a \$5,000 grant from Investors Foundation, using the funds to enhance our SustainAbilities™ electronic recycling and hydroponic skill training.



After much planning, construction, and inspections, Mary Apgar Center is proud to announce the firing of their newest crafting equipment: a KILN! Thank you to Lou Wonslidler of BLT Ceramic Occasion for donating molds, glazes, ceramics and brushes to help get the crafting started.

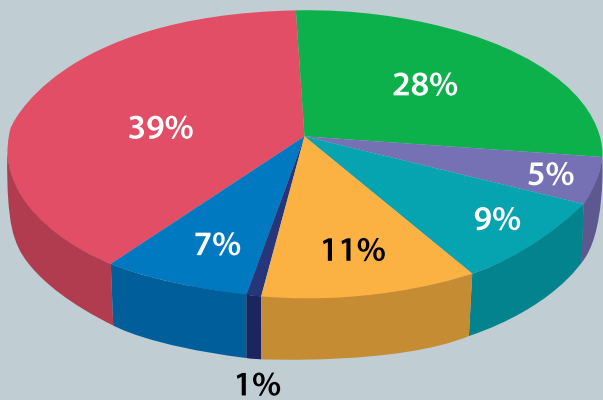
*"What you do every day makes such a difference in the lives of so many families, individuals, companies and organizations! You do what you do so well!"*

# Who We Serve

In FY 2015, Abilities provided vocational rehabilitation and community employment services to over 300 individuals throughout Warren, Morris and Hunterdon Counties. Abilities operates nine programs which include four employment centers, medical special needs, behavioral support, adult habilitation, extended employment, work adjustment training, vocational evaluation, supported employment and transitioning services.

## Primary Disabilities

CD DD ID MI MH PDD SI SD

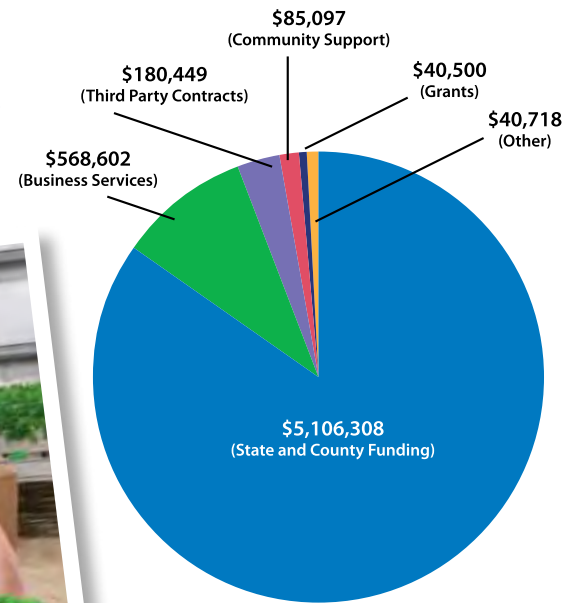


Cognitive Disabilities .....CD .....7%  
 Developmental Disabilities.....DD..... 39%  
 Intellectual Disabilities .....ID..... 28%  
 Medical Impairment.....MI .....5%  
 Mental Health Disorder .....MH .....9%  
 Pervasive Developmental Disorder .....PDD .... 11%  
 Sensory Impairment.....SI.....1%  
 Substance Disorder .....SD.....0%

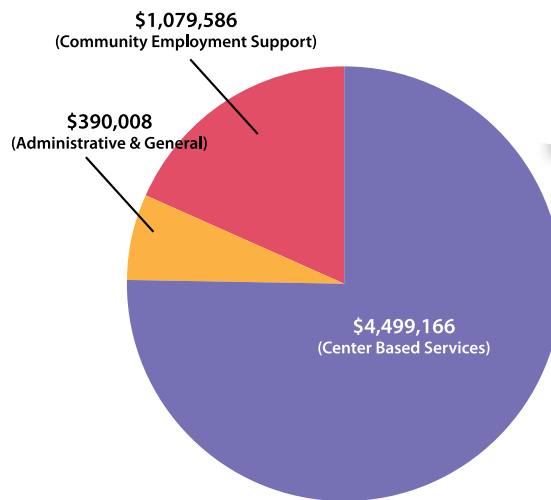
Abilities tracks the primary and secondary disabilities of service recipients in order to provide appropriate program services. Out of the 276 service recipients served in our day programs through FY 2015, nearly 40% had a Developmental Disability as a primary diagnosis, more than 25% had an Intellectual Disability and 11% have a Pervasive Developmental Disorder (Autism Spectrum) diagnosis.



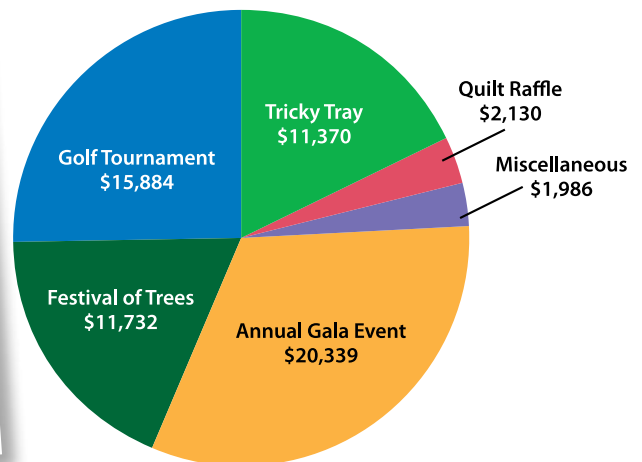
## Total Revenues \$6,021,674



## Total Expenses \$5,968,760



## Fundraising Totals \$63,441



## OUR LOCATIONS

### Headquarters

264 Route 31 North  
P.O. Box 251  
Washington, NJ 07882  
(908) 689-1118

### Community Rehabilitation Program, Business and Administration

Hours of Operation:  
Monday - Friday 8:00am to 4:00pm  
Phone: (908) 689-1118  
Fax: (908) 689-6363  
info@abilitiesnw.com

### Medical Special Needs

Hours: Monday - Friday 8:00am to 3:00pm  
Phone: (908) 689-6677  
Fax: (908) 689-6363  
msn@abilitiesnw.com

### Abilities Washington

Hours: Monday - Friday 8:00am to 3:00pm  
Phone: (908) 689-1118  
Fax: (908) 689-6363  
wec@abilitiesnw.com

### Employment Pathways

#### Career Development and Community Supported Employment Services

14A Brass Castle Road  
Washington, NJ 07882  
Hours: Monday - Friday 8:00am - 4:00pm  
Phone: (908) 689-7460  
Fax: (908) 689-7435  
employmentpathways@abilitiesnw.com

### Abilities Phillipsburg

340 Anderson Street  
Phillipsburg, NJ 08865  
Hours: Monday - Friday 8:00am to 3:30pm  
Phone: (908) 454-2579  
Fax: (908) 454-5392  
pec@abilitiesnw.com

### Abilities Hackettstown

999 Willow Grove Street  
Unit 2-5A  
Hackettstown, NJ 07840  
Hours: Monday - Friday 8:00am to 3:30pm  
Phone: (908) 850-8214  
Fax: (908) 850-8217  
hec@abilitiesnw.com

### Abilities Mary Apgar

22 Kayhart Lane  
Washington, NJ 07882  
Hours: Monday - Friday 8:00am to 3:30pm  
Phone: (908) 689-2063  
Fax: (908) 689-0116  
mec@abilitiesnw.com

### Individual Specialized Program

Phone: (908) 689-4674  
isp@abilitiesnw.com

### Abilities Screen Printing & Embroidery

56 East Washington Avenue  
Washington, NJ 07882  
Hours: Monday - Friday 8:00am to 4:00pm,  
Saturday by appointment  
Phone: (908) 689-0612  
Fax: (908) 689-0614  
printing@abilitiesnw.com



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