People with disabilities working together for dignity, independence and civil rights
This annual report is dedicated to the independent living leaders who we sadly lost this past year.

Linda Corey

Linda Corey was a true activist in every sense of the word. As a member of the psychiatric survivor community myself, I remember meeting Linda. She was the kind of advocate I aspire to be. Cool and calm. A woman who was quiet until just the right moment and then you would hear her message of inclusion. The line we heard her say the most was “nothing about us, without us” and she meant it.

She led from the heart. She was able to talk from personal experience that made others with lived experience feel like they could tell their stories too. She believed in choice and seemed to never miss an opportunity to express those fundamental principles of the psychiatric survivor movement to others.

Her spirit and work live on.

--Sarah Launderville

Artwork by Susan Sanderson
Dear Friends,

Back in 2009 when I took on the position of executive director of VCIL. I knew it was a dream come true. This year we have worked so hard to build stronger relationships and push forward on the intersectionality of many movements coming together with one voice.

The disability rights movement is at a crossroads in many areas and as I look back on our work in 2015 I can see the difference in our community.

We have embraced using the tools offered through Results Based Accountability to become very clear about where we want to go to make an impact in the community and really identify partners who will strengthen that work.

I want to thank the partnerships of the Human Rights Council, the Wellness Workforce Coalition, VT Aging & Disability Resource Connection, the VT Affordable Housing Coalition, VT Coalition for Disability Rights, VT Statewide Independent Living Council, and the VT Vision conference for their amazing work.

In the coming year we will be sharing the work of the youth transition project. We are pleased that so many partners have come together on the importance of youth and employment.

As we move forward, we will look to these partnerships to strengthen the rights and supports of people with disabilities. Support services that keep people living in the community are being threatened and we will continue to fight for the basic rights of people with disabilities.

Many thanks to all of you who contribute to the success of our movement here in Vermont.

In Solidarity,

Sarah Launderville
Executive Director
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Our Mission

Vermont Center for Independent Living

The mission of the Vermont Center for Independent Living is to empower Vermonters with disabilities, Deaf Vermonters, and others to tear down the physical, communication, and attitudinal barriers that keep us from realizing our full human potential.

Together, we will build communities to:

- Achieve our human and civil rights and equal access to services and opportunities.
- Have available ongoing resources and options for independent living.
- Realize our power to control and direct our own lives.

We join together to celebrate our diversity and the common goal for the full inclusion of all persons in the life of our communities.
WHO WE ARE
The Vermont Center for Independent Living (VCIL), a statewide nonprofit organization directed and staffed by people with disabilities, promotes the dignity, independence and civil rights of Vermonters with disabilities. Founded in 1979, VCIL was the first organization in the state to have a majority of board and staff with disabilities. In FY’15, 85 percent of our staff and board were people with significant disabilities. We understand what it takes to help others.

VCIL’s central office is in Montpelier with five branch offices in Bennington, Brattleboro, Burlington, Morrisville and Rutland.

INFORMATION, REFERRAL AND ASSISTANCE (I,R&A)
VCIL’s Information, Referral and Assistance (IR&A) Coordinator provides quality referrals and information to people seeking assistance on a variety of issues. Our I,R&A Coordinator is also responsible for the intake process of applications for the Peer Advocacy Counseling Program (PAC). In FY’15 VCIL provided 2,383 individuals with IR&A services.

PEER ADVOCACY COUNSELING PROGRAM
Peer Advocate Counselors (PACs) offer individual and group support, skills training, guidance for self-advocacy and resource development. PACs help peers define their individual interests and needs, develop and work toward personal goals, learn specific skills that enhance their ability to live independently and access available resources in their communities. In FY’15, VCIL served 346 individuals through the peer advocacy counseling program.

Deaf Independence Program
The Deaf Independence Program (DIP) provides individual and group skills training to people who are culturally Deaf throughout Vermont.

VT Interpreter Referral Service
The Vermont Interpreter Referral Service (VIRS) provides statewide
American Sign Language (ASL)/spoken English interpreter referral services for medical, legal, employment, educational, civil and recreational situations. Since VIRS became a program of VCIL’s (see story on page 13), 5,175 hours of interpretation were provided to the Deaf or Hard of Hearing in Vermont.

**Benefits to Work Program***
The Benefits to Work Program (B2W) helps peers plan for employment and greater independence. Our B2W specialist teaches peers how to utilize work incentives and provide information and assistance about the Ticket to Work program and the various employment resources available through State and Federal agencies. Our Benefit Counselors help peers understand how they can successfully return to work.
*Due to funding cuts, VCIL ended this work in FY’15.

**Vermont AgrAbility**
Vermont AgrAbility is a collaborative partnership between VCIL and the University of Vermont Extension. The Vermont AgrAbility program provides education and assistance as well as peer support at no cost to farmers, their families and farm workers with disabilities who are engaged in production agriculture and want to continue farming. Farmers and their families eligible for Vermont AgrAbility services may have any type of acquired or traumatic disability—physical, cognitive or sensory.

**HOME ACCESS PROGRAM**
VCIL’s Home Access Program (HAP) provides home entry and bathroom accessibility modifications for low-income Vermonters with physical disabilities. The Home Access Program receives funding each year to help people with disabilities make accessibility modifications so they can continue to live independently and remain in their communities. In FY’15 the Home Access Program provided 42 households with ramps or entrance modifications and made 51 bathrooms accessible!

**SUE WILLIAMS FREEDOM FUND**
The Sue Williams Freedom Fund (SWFF) provides funding for services and equipment to help people with disabilities achieve or maintain independence in their own homes. In FY’15 SWFF spent $44,271.78 to help 42 people obtain services or equipment and leveraged an additional $27,790.51.
MEALS ON WHEELS

VCIL’s Meals on Wheels Program (MOW) serves people with significant disabilities who are younger than 60 years of age. The program is statewide and serves people from all counties. It is coordinated from our main office in Montpelier. In FY’15 VCIL contracted with 35 meal sites across the state to prepare and deliver one hot meal a day to program participants. A total of 60,845 meals were funded through this program during FY’15 to a total of 492 peers. FY’15 did see a waiting list, starting with the third quarter of the fiscal year. By the end of the fiscal year the waiting list could be mostly eliminated and ended completely with the start of FY’16.

COMMUNITY ACCESS

VCIL’s Community Access Program works to improve access to buildings, services and programs. Program specialists provide technical assistance and training on the ADA regulations and standards to Vermont cities, towns, employers and businesses.

During FY’15 the program trained 407 people in nine training events around the state.

The Community Access Program responded to 345 ADA technical assistance requests from individuals, businesses and government agencies.

Additionally the program supported municipal ADA committees in Barre, Montpelier, Burlington, Brattleboro and Rutland.

WELLNESS WORKFORCE COALITION

The Wellness Workforce Coalition (WWC) is a statewide coalition of peer-run organizations supporting training and advocacy for Vermont’s peer workforce. The WWC’s mission is to create a statewide coalition of peer-run organizations that supports training and advocacy for Vermont’s peer workforce while preserving the autonomy, character, and contributions of each member organization.

While the coalition has been around and doing good work for a while, it will now be easier to share information about that work with the new website.

www.wwcvt.org
GET INVOLVED

Become a Member!

VCIL is a member-supported organization. We welcome all people who support our mission and have an interest in our programs and services. Membership is FREE and becoming a member affords you a copy of The Independent (VCIL’s news journal), quarterly electronic newsletter (via e-mail) and free loan of books from VCIL’s extensive library.

To join, please go to our website – www.vcil.org – or, if you received a hard copy of this report complete the enclosed membership form and return it in the donor envelope provided.

Groups & Events

VCIL’s regional offices offer a range of groups and/or activities based on the needs of that community. A schedule of meeting dates and locations can be found on our website or by contacting our I,R&A Department at: 1-800-639-1522.

VCIL Website:

Check out the VCIL website at www.vcil.org. From that site you can gain access to our Facebook, Twitter and YouTube pages.

Facebook:

We invite you to join our ongoing discussions and post upcoming events. Check out our page at: www.facebook.com/VTCIL.

Twitter:

VCIL invites you to follow us on Twitter, which is updated at least weekly by Sarah Launderville, Executive Director.

Donations:

The Vermont Center for Independent Living depends on private contributions to support our civil rights work. Please consider contributing to our organization by donating online today through our secure Network for Good link, through the United Way or by sending the enclosed envelope directly to VCIL.

AmazonSmile

When shopping on Amazon, go to AmazonSmile and Amazon will donate 0.5% of the purchase price to VCIL. Bookmark the link: http://smile.amazon.com/ch/02-0271000 and support us every time you shop!
PEER SUCCESS STORIES

Andrew Allen, Elmore – SWFF

Andrew experienced a traumatic brain injury while four-wheeling in the sand pits of Elmore when he was 13 years old. Despite wearing a helmet, the impact of the machine falling on top of his body did severe damage to his left side and motor cortex. For the last 19 years of his life Andrew says he’s struggled to regain what he lost that day and “continue to strive for the best possible life I can live. With the support of not only my family, but the entire community of Elmore, I’ve remained inspired to eventually return to my mother's farm, build a house, and assist her in the development of Jupiter Farm, the nonprofit she began.”

One of the first steps in making his dream a reality was to obtain an Action Trackchair. This chair would allow Andrew and other wheelchair users to access all of the farm's land and assist with projects otherwise unreachable. “Despite my continued physical rehabilitation, the reality is that I need this chair to live the active life I desire, as well as to help in establishing a community of involvement and awareness where others who have had their lives drastically altered can once again participate and feel a part of something greater than themselves.”

Thanks to private donations and a grant from the Sue Williams Freedom Fund Andrew was able to obtain his chair. His mother wrote to us and said, “Our farm is now fully accessible to all in wheelchairs. They no longer have to sit on the sidelines and watch farm activities. This is a big deal to people in wheelchairs.”

Helen Kincaid, Groton - HAP

"I feel safer when I shower and I love my bathroom. I appreciate all that everyone has done for me. The contractor and his crew were simply wonderful and very efficient. Thank you!!"

George Burke, Bennington - HAP

When George contacted VCIL he had use of only one hip and was going into surgery for the other hip. A ramp was a necessity in order to return home after the surgery. After being accepted into the Home Access Program
(HAP) and obtaining the necessary leveraged funding the project could begin. George said, “It looks beautiful!” George’s neighbors told him he had the best looking trailer in the park. He couldn’t agree more. “The ramp improved the look of the whole trailer park.” When the project was complete George said, “I’d be happy to have a picture taken of me swinging off my new ramp!”

**Anonymous, Brattleboro - PAC**

A peer had a stroke and was living in a nursing home. A disabled veteran who was anxious to move out of the nursing home and into their own accessible apartment with requisite services, resources and transportation. Our peer advocate counselors (PACs) worked closely with a team of providers, family and friends who were committed to working to assist the peer in developing a clear independent living goal. After eight months of hard work, the peer moved into an accessible unit with Choices for Care services and local transportation. The apartment is near to the peers family and the peer continues to receive services from Senior Solutions case management and the Veterans Administration.

VCIL PAC Candace Stoumen said, “the peer has demonstrated successfully, that with the right supports and assistance, independent living is a quality of life issue, which is tangible and attainable.”

**Melanie Casey, Arlington - HAP**

Melanie has Multiple Sclerosis (MS) and her mobility is affected. The stairs outside her home were becoming difficult to manage when she contacted VCIL and was approved for the Home Access Program (HAP). “I needed a ramp and you guys helped me get it and it’s great because now I can get out of the house. Now I can go shopping, to the post office, bank, etc. I can get out to the barn to get to my tractor and mow the lawn.”

She added, “It is not easy having MS but I make it work. I keep a very positive attitude. I try to laugh a lot and keep a sense of humor. There is no sense in crying about things.”
EMPLOYEE STORY

Charlie Murphy

Each year in the Annual Report we highlight one employee to learn more about their experience with disability and how they came to VCIL. I recently had the pleasure of talking to Charlie Murphy, PAC in our Bennington office, for this story. Charlie is blind – but wasn’t always. He believes he probably started losing his sight the day he was born although he was not diagnosed until the age of 20 at which time doctors determined it was Retinitis Pigmentosa (RP). RP is an inherited disease which causes retinal degeneration and a gradual decline in vision.

Charlie grew up in the hills of White Creek, New York, “we were called Crickers,” he explained. “We had no running water, we lived liked it was 1915 but it was 1965.” “My father was a good man but we now realize he suffered from undiagnosed PTSD from his time as a combat veteran in WWII.” After his death when Charlie was 14, his mother, alone and raising two children (he has a sister – two years younger) used life insurance money to equip the home with indoor plumbing and supported her family cleaning motels and hospitals until she landed in the retail world where she worked for many years. His mother struggled with an undiagnosed anxiety disorder but was always able to provide for her children.

Charlie described himself as being a shy, quiet kid - until he found out that he could get a laugh and then he “was off.” He is still one of the funniest people at VCIL, the one you want to sit next to at staff meetings!

In retrospect he realizes that there were changes in his vision that he couldn’t account for such as not seeing balls that were thrown to him in gym class in elementary school, or the fact that it seemed to him that one day he could see fireflies and the stars in the sky and one day he couldn’t.

After graduating high school in 1971 he attended Cobleskill; a technical school for two years “to get away from rural life.” He wasn’t sure what to do with his life and although he had not yet been diagnosed he was pretty limited visually.

In 1973 at the age of 20 Charlie graduated from Cobleskill and was diagnosed with RP which he described as being “scary as hell,” and that he just went “numb for a
while.” Charlie moved to Florida with a friend for a couple of years and “kind of freaked out.” Told he would be completely blind in 10 years Charlie was determined to get his driver’s license which he did just after his diagnosis. He drove for the two years he was in Florida and one more year after returning to NY where he lived in Hoosick Falls. Charlie said “I stopped in ‘76 after I sideswiped a car and finally realized being a terror on the highway was not good for me and society in general…”

In 1977 he was beginning to accept his reality and moved back to Hoosick Falls. He was 23 and realizing that his friends were having lives and he wasn’t. They had incomes and he didn’t. Someone told him about Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) which could help him pay for college. He applied for SSDI and went back to school. He moved back in with his mother in 1978 and completed his bachelor’s degree in Social Welfare from the State University of New York at Albany (SUNYA). He was legally blind by this time and was still very slow to accept his disability. He received services from the NYS Commission for the Blind & Visually Impaired which helped him to attend college.

Charlie also learned cane mobility from the Northeastern Association for the Blind in Albany. Charlie mainly used this skill away from his hometown because he didn’t want people that knew him to know he was losing his sight and needed a cane. Eventually, after a few mishaps like sitting on someone’s lap on the bus while looking for a seat (among other things) he realized that maybe he should start using the cane all the time.

After graduating from SUNYA in 1981 he started hearing about the Independent Living movement. In 1982 he was hired by VCIL to see if he could organize a group of people with disabilities to create an advocacy group in Bennington. The group was formed and became known as the Coalition of Disabled Individuals, a cross disability grassroots advocacy group that lasted over 14 years. The focus of the group when formed (pre-ADA) was to make Bennington more accessible. Through their efforts the town eventually added curb cuts, ramps and other modifications to the town office. Select board meetings were moved to an accessible location and an audio stoplight was installed in the center of town. Charlie felt that when he got involved with VCIL he “found people that were all
working toward a common goal, that I’d found my people.”

In 1983 and through this group Charlie met Jan Cellura and they married in 1988. Jan had Multiple Sclerosis (MS) which affected her mobility and Charlie described their relationship as “Jan was my eyes and I was her arms and legs.” In 1999 Charlie left VCIL to become Jan’s primary caregiver which he did until her death in May 2008.

After Jan’s death Charlie was depressed and restless and needed a purpose and “a life.” For many years life took place in his home being with Jan and dealing with medical care professionals; suddenly that was no longer occupying his time. Old friends from VCIL, Sam Liss (current board Vice President) and Tracy Dorman (former PAC), helped get Charlie out of the house. Tracy recruited him in the summer of 2008 to help with the Bennington Battle Day float and by the spring of ’09, he was ready to return to work. He contacted VCIL who snapped him up shortly thereafter where he joined Tracy as a Peer Advocate Counselor (PAC) in the Bennington office. Charlie still works part-time and is the PAC Supervisor for the Bennington and Brattleboro staff about whom he has nothing but great things to say.

Today Charlie lives in Bennington with Kim, his girlfriend of five years and says, “Life is wonderful. I’m happy as a clam. When I started losing my sight completely I wanted to go blind gracefully, I didn’t want any of that ‘oh, the poor bastard’ pity. I did live in fear of what it would be like to lose my sight so I just decided to live day by day – in the moment.” “I just deal with things as they come, I just deal.”
ABOUT OUR PEERS

GENDER

Female............ 1187
Male ................. 852

OUR DISABILITIES

Cognitive...................... 45
Hearing......................... 68
Mental Emotional .......... 103
Multiple......................... 412
Physical......................... 786
Vision ......................... 16
*Unknown .................... 609

AGES OF OUR PEERS

Under 6 years .......... 1
Ages 6-17 .............. 4
Ages 18-34 ........... 110
Ages 35-64 .......... 1079
65 and over .......... 249
*Unknown ............. 596

INDIVIDUALS SERVED
BY COUNTY

Addison.............. 47
Bennington .......... 201
Caledonia .......... 122
Chittenden .......... 315
Essex .............. 38
Franklin .......... 103
Grand Isle ........ 9
Lamoille .......... 80
Orange ............ 79
Orleans .......... 113
Rutland ........... 194
Washington ....... 210
Windham .......... 169
Windsor .......... 115
Out of State
or unknown.... 244

*Much of the data represented is from IR&A calls where people do not always disclose their age or type of disability
SERVICES AT A GLANCE

Information, Referral & Assistance
3,265 peers and organizations (duplicated)

Home Access Program
51 bathroom modifications, 41 ramps, and one entrance

Peer Advocacy Counseling
346 peers served

Meals on Wheels
492 peers served – 60,845 meals

Sue Williams Freedom Fund
42 peers received assistive technology totaling of $44,271.78
FY’15 HIGHLIGHTS

VIRS joins VCIL

In October, the Vermont Interpreter Referral Service (VIRS) was back in business after being without a home when the VT Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing organization shut down. It is now operating as a VCIL program in our Brattleboro office.

VIRS Program Coordinator Nancy Groff and Program Specialist Bridget McBride are thrilled to be back at work, providing sign language interpreter referral services throughout the state for service providers and their Deaf consumers or clients. Groff said, “For Deaf folks not to be able to access interpreter services for even a month is a month too long. VIRS also provides advocacy, explaining to requesters their obligation to provide equal access to communication under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) — this advocacy was sorely missed.” Missy Boothroyd, VCIL’s Deaf Independence Coordinator, was profoundly impacted by the closing of VIRS. She had to scramble to try to schedule interpreters during the time that VIRS was closed. Boothroyd said, “They do such an amazing job.

VIRS really means a lot to the community, not just the Deaf community but to any agency such as police departments and doctor’s offices.” VCIL Executive Director Sarah Launderville said, “We saw a real impact when the service was shut down, including people not having proper accommodations because business owners were not able to locate an interpreter. We wanted to help immediately and feel proud to have been chosen as the organization that is taking on this very important program.”

Ed Paquin Honored at NCIL

In July at the National Independent Living Council (NCIL) conference in Washington, Ed Paquin, Executive Director of Disability Rights Vermont and long-time VCIL board member, received the National Council on Independent Living Region 1 Advocacy Award for his dedication to promoting the rights of people with disabilities. Kim Brittenham, VCIL’s Civil Rights manager, nominated Ed for the award because he is the type of man she would like her sons to become. “Ed is a tireless, yet graceful, warrior for civil rights who has put his shoulder to improving lives of people with disabilities no matter what role he has filled.”
Sarah Launderville, represents New England on the NCIL Board and was excited to present the award to Ed. “He is so humble and it was fun to see the surprise in his face that he was being honored. It was particularly special because we were celebrating the 25th anniversary of the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act and there were so many young people at the conference who are motivated by what he has helped create here in Vermont.” She added, “Ed always makes time to listen, think about how to improve a situation and advocate against injustice. He is a wonderful man and champion of disability rights.”

Ed said, “It was a real surprise and honor to receive the award. It has given me the opportunity to step back and think about how lucky I am to be able to work with some of the best people and organizations around to make the world a better place.” He added, “It was a joy to be at the NCIL Conference celebrating the ADA surrounded by hundreds of people whose very presence was proof that disability is a foolish reason for any sort of discrimination – they were sharp, good-willed, motivated, funny and ABLE! We don’t get this work done alone and when I feel frustrated that I am not making impact I should, I will think about this award and realize that I am a part of something truly greater than the sum of its parts!”

**Include! Rollout**

In October Deborah Lisi-Baker, principal author of the new K-12 Include! curriculum shared her thoughts about the program at its unveiling at the statehouse.

This online K-12 curriculum was developed by the Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) with the help of teachers, family members and individuals with disabilities. The purpose of the program is to bring disability pride to students with and without disabilities. The materials are available free to interested schools. IncludeVT.org.
We were honored that also on hand for the event were, from left, John Tracy of U.S. Sen. Patrick Leahy's office, Susan Elliot of Congressman Peter Welch's office, and Alex Craven of U.S. Sen. Bernie Sanders' office.

**Farmer Veteran Coalition**

An ongoing movement to connect veterans returning from deployment with farming made great progress in FY’15 in the Green Mountain State. VCIL has helped organize veterans and other nonprofit organizations to apply for a state chapter of the farmer veteran coalition. After many months of work by a steering committee made up of these individuals and organizations, the application was submitted to the national Farmer Veteran Coalition, and was one of four states that was issued the **first state chapter, Farmer Veteran Coalition Vermont (FVC of VT)**!

VCIL will continue on with this new coalition and will continue to work one-on-one with veterans with disabilities to help them reach their goals.

**HAP Award**

In September, VCIL was one of four organizations selected to receive an award of $100,000 for the Home Access Program from USDA Rural Development to improve housing conditions for low-income rural residents in the Northeast Kingdom. Senator Patrick Leahy said: “These are community-strengthening investments that will make a real difference to families in Vermont.”

**Nonprofit Housing Grants**

The Barre Housing Authority requested one of six nonprofit housing grants VCIL had available. The grants, part of VCIL’s VT Housing & Conservation Board (VHCB) grant, were for nonprofit housing organizations to help with accessibility. Their request was to establish a cement walk-way that goes to the outside picnic area so folks using chairs and other mobility devices could have an easier time getting outside.

North Barre Manor residents enjoy the sunshine in the newly accessible picnic area.
In September, Patricia Tedesco, HAP Coordinator and Susan Britto, HAP Specialist, attended a celebration at Kelley’s Field in Hinesburg where three apartments received tub to shower conversions because of VCIL’s grant money to this non-profit housing unit.

International Visitors
In October five international guests and disability activists from Tajikistan came to VCIL. The group was sponsored by the Open World Program of the U.S. Congress and the topic was “disability rights and inclusive education.” VCIL was contacted about these international visitors by Gail Stevenson, executive director of the Vermont Council on World Affairs, who also accompanied them to VCIL.

Advocacy for Deaf Rights Day
In January over 100 advocates for Deaf rights braved the frigid -10 degree weather to fight for their rights after the closing of the VT Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing in September. Advocates for the hearing impaired want lawmakers to pass protections for their community.

The focus was access to educational and other support services for Deaf and hard of hearing children and their families. Sen. Anthony Pollina introduced a bill that would create a Deaf Bill of Rights and form a Commission for the Deaf in Vermont. Forty-one other states already have such a commission.

Green Mountain Film Festival
In March, VCIL had the honor of sponsoring the film, “The Road Within” by award-winning writer-director Gren Wells who was present for a Q&A after the screening. Learn more about the film by watching the official trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-MYzi2TPRcM.

VCIL was also proud to be a GMFF community partner of the film “Bullet Proof.” Learn more about this film at: http://www.becomingbulletproofmovie.com/
Resolution

On July 15th, the City of Barre passed a resolution honoring the 25th anniversary of the ADA. Ericka Reil, PAC Coordinator (and Barre City resident) was instrumental in helping the city develop the Barre City ADA Committee in 2010 and has continued to work with the City to keep ADA issues at the forefront.

Proclamation

A similar proclamation was passed in the city of Burlington on July 26th by Mayor Weinberger that reaffirmed Burlington’s commitment to the “betterment of our City through our dedication to working toward full accessibility and inclusion of people with disabilities.”
South Hero July Fourth Parade
Every year the extended family of Sue Williams’ three daughters plan a vacation/family reunion on the island of South Hero, VT. This year, not only did they participate in the annual parade but they celebrated the 25th anniversary of the ADA and the Sue Williams Freedom Fund. VCIL board member Henry Demar joined the family for the march.

Ally of Accessibility Award
In July, VCIL’s Civil Rights Specialist Mike Charron presented the Woodstock VINS with our Ally of Accessibility Award. The staff of VINS created an accessible hiking trail and also improved program access by creating outdoor pathways and accessible seating for the "Bird Ambassadors" programs, and other outdoor activities at the Woodstock VINS site.

Courage in Bloom
In July, VCIL Civil Rights Manager Kim Brittenham and Executive Director Sarah Launderville were honored to attend the Courage in Bloom ceremony sponsored by the VT Center for Crime Victim Services and to honor advocate and survivor Sue Russell.

VCIL's Executive Director wrote and read the following poem at the ceremony:

Care In Bloom
May your story be assumed;
May you understand you are not at fault;
And your emotions and reactions are common.
May you have and take the time and energy you require;
May you have access to supports you need- housing, transportation, personal attendant services, food, assistive technology and people who are supportive.
May the world not pressure you, lock you up because of your emotions and reactions or define what is right for you.
May you find liberation from despair or seclusion and be the glorious, magnificent human you are.
May you bloom.
FY’15 EVENTS/ACTIVITIES

25th ADA Celebration

This year the focus of the ADA was on outdoor recreation for everyone. VCIL took advantage of Vermont’s gentle mountains and calm waters with outdoor celebrations throughout the state.

The VCIL Montpelier staff took advantage of the accessible trails and fishing platforms at Waterbury Center State Park.

VCIL has, over the past five years, worked with State Parks Director Craig Whipple, Director of Programs Frank Spaulding and regional directors on many issues to make the parks accessible to all. After visiting some of these parks, VCIL knows that all of this work shows.

Waterbury Park staff and the Youth Conservation Board were present for our picnic so VCIL could formally thank them.

Burlington’s North Beach Park

In July, VCIL joined Mayor Weinberger, city staff, activists and guests at the North Beach Pavilion to celebrate. Mayor Weinberger kicked off the speeches and said “It is important to celebrate our community’s accomplishments, such as the mat and mobile chair at North Beach, which allow people with disabilities to have the opportunity to experience the waters of Lake Champlain. We must not forget, however to ensure access and equity for everyone who lives, works, and plays in our great city.”

Shaftsbury State Park

Bennington and Brattleboro VCIL staff teamed up with the Bart K. Ruqqiere Adaptive Sports Center to host a day of inclusive kayaking and picnic lunch.

Rep. Kesha Ram, Ash Brittenham (reading the Burlington Proclamation) and Mayor Weinberger at the 25th ADA Celebration.
First Annual Comedy Night

In January at the Fresh Tracks Farm and Vineyard VCIL hosted a comedy night fundraiser. Comedian Christine Parker served as MC and recruited Bitsy Biron, Kathleen Kanz and Regi B. to perform. In addition, longtime VCIL friend and former employee Matt Saltus brought his troupe Kamikaze Comedians; Mourning Fox, Heather Caldera and Chris Jarvis to join in the fun. All participants generously donated their time helping us to offset costs and the sold out show was a great success.

Mark your calendars for the **second annual show** coming up March 18th, also at the vineyard. Tickets on sale now at [www.brownpapertickets.com](http://www.brownpapertickets.com) or call VCIL for more information!

![First Annual Comedy Night](image1)

VIRS Annual Fundraiser

The 10th Annual Yolande Henry Community Fund Fundraiser was held on May 2nd in Burlington. The Yolande Henry Community Fund pays for sign language interpreters for weddings, funerals and family gatherings in Vermont which are not covered under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), thus sparing the families considerable interpreter expenses for these important life events and assuring that Deaf loved ones are able to attend. The Community Fund is funded entirely by this annual fundraiser and by individual contributions.

This year’s performer was Deaf comedian and storyteller Arkady Belozovsky, whose stories and adventures were both funny and inspiring. It was a joy to see so many members of the Deaf community come together in support of the Community Fund. Mark your calendars for this year’s fundraiser coming up on April 23rd.

![VIRS Annual Fundraiser](image2)

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*Chris Jarvis, Heather Calderra, Matt Saltus, Regi B., Chris Parker front row: Mourning Fox, Bitsy Biron and Kathleen Kanz pose for a photo after their performance.*

*Arkady Belozovsky, Missy Boothroyd, Nancy Groff and Bridget McBride at the event.*
Disability Awareness Day

On March 18, 2015, the Vermont Coalition for Disability Rights (VCDR) and co-sponsor VCIL celebrated Disability Awareness Day along with over 300 folks from around the state. The theme of the day was celebration and recognition of Disability Milestones: Progress Made; Miles to Go.

Andrew Imparato, executive director of the Association of University Centers on Disabilities, was the keynote speaker for the day. Visitors had a choice of workshops to attend or could sit in on testimony by the House Commerce and Economic Development Committee which focused on economic savings incentives and Medicaid for people with disabilities in the workforce.

A House resolution recognizing important legal milestones in the protection of the rights of persons with disabilities and designating March 18, 2015 as Disability Awareness Day at the Statehouse was read and disability folks were introduced on the floor of the House and applauded by the 150-member House of Representatives. The Senate took up S.66, an act relating to persons who are Deaf, Deaf-blind, or Hard of Hearing and voted to read it for a third time to its eventual passage in the Senate.

NSTI

VCIL’s Community Access Program again worked with National Summer Transportation Institute high school campers to bring awareness to designing accessible pedestrian areas and transportation engineering of air planes, buses, and trains. VTrans hosts this annual two week program free to Vermont high school students. Students with disabilities are encouraged to apply.

TBI Support Group

The Vermont Center for Independent Living continues to facilitate the St. Johnsbury, traumatic brain injury support group. This monthly event reaches out to the community to increase the awareness about TBI. The group has participated in several craft shows where individuals from

Andy Imperato (center) with VCIL PAC co-coordinators Ericka Reil and Tyler Sweeten.
the group were able to exhibit and sell articles that they produced as part of their recovery program. The group is currently working with a senior editor of the Caledonian Record to publish a book that was started by one of group’s members. Interviews are being conducted with those in the group willing to share their story.

**Funky Bike Day**

In May, VCIL and BART Adaptive Sports Center co-sponsored a “Funky Bike Day.” Joe Hurley of BART brought hand cycles, an upright tricycle, and recumbent bikes for the all to try. The focus was on opening up the cycling possibilities for people with disabilities, but anyone was welcome to join.

**Walk and Rolls**

VCIL’s Bennington staff hosted a “Walk and Roll Around” with the Bennington Public Works Department. RJ Joly, Public Works Director, and his eight person crew met on Main and traveled in wheelchairs along the north and south side. Participants also tried out low vision goggles and one member was blindfolded and used a white cane to walk a section of the block. The purpose was to sensitize the Public Works crew to what it is like to use a wheelchair and have low or no vision as they install side-walks in order to increase accessibility.

**Accessibility Walk**

The Rutland VCIL office, the City of Rutland’s Commission for Accessibility Improvements in Rutland (CAIR) and the local advocacy group, DAARA (Disabled Access & Advocacy of the Rutland Area) organized an Accessibility Walk in downtown Rutland on July 22 in recognition of the 25th anniversary of the signing of the ADA.
Farmer’s Field Day

In late July, the Vermont AgrAbility Program, of which VCIL is a partner, held a Farmer’s Field Day at the Kayhart Brothers dairy farm in Addison County. The dairy farm is operated by a person with a disability. Special guests spoke about how to continue farming amid health issues, and many peers and staff members attended. There were information booths as well as interactive exhibits.

Disability History Display

In honor of the 25th anniversary of the ADA our Rutland office borrowed a disability history display from the Museum of disABILITY in Buffalo, New York. The exhibit illustrates the struggle for civil rights and accessible communities by people with disabilities. The display was up for two weeks at the Asa Bloomer building and another two weeks at the Rutland Free Library.

NonProfit Information Fair

In July, VCIL Rutland and the local advocacy group, Disabled Access & Advocacy of the Rutland Area organized a nonprofit information fair in July at the Asa Bloomer Building. Local providers of services and programs for people with disabilities were set up to aid those needing services.

Washington Electric Cooperative Community Fund Grant

Washington Electric Cooperative’s (WEC) Community Fund Committee guides itself on the principle that causes approved for grants should be ones that, in the judgment of the committee, most people would endorse. After hearing about some of VCIL’s peer stories the committee decided VCIL was “a cause they could get behind.”

Sarah Launderville, Executive Director, Mike Charron, Civil Rights Specialist, Linda Meleady, Development Coordinator, Patrick Fitzgerald, Outcome & Evaluation Specialist and Database Coordinator Peter Johnke.

Article and Photo by WEC’s Co-op Currents Editor Will Lindner
National Summer Transportation Institute students assessing pedestrian right of ways at Vermont VTrans region 5 office with Vermont Center for Independent Living’s Alaina Clements, Jake Lavigne and Nate Besio.

VCIL I.R&A Specialist, Jacob Lavigne came in 5th in the Burlington city Marathon Hand cycling division!

VCIL loved the idea the Drawing Board had with the puzzle on the window of their business so we took the liberty of copying them (highest form of flattery...). Seemed like folks really enjoyed the puzzles which all had a disability related theme. Thanks guys! More to come in the spring.

As part of our celebration at the park VCIL presented Kim Brittenham, our Civil Rights Manager, with the VCIL Advocacy Award. As Sarah stated, “Kim has been advocating, pushing, fighting, teaching and working for VCIL for the past nine years. She has made our state a better place in which to live.”

Brattleboro Women’s Support Group had a great Halloween social. Members brought dishes from home to share and discussed their mutual concerns and health issues.

Kim Brittenham, Jake Lavigne and Alaina Clements represent the spirit of VCIL at the Corporate Cup along with the 4,000 other walkers and runners.

Congratulations and thanks to VCIL Vice President Sam Liss for all of his hard work to ensure that Medicaid for Working Persons with Disabilities and ABLE Act language were included in Vermont's economic development bill. Sam attended the bill signing ceremony and spoke on behalf of people with disabilities.

Along with VCIL employees many friends or previous co-workers joined us for Joyce’s Werntgen’s farewell lunch. Which, like Joyce was a no nonsense affair with pizza – just the way she wanted it! Guests included: John Riley, James Haslam, Rosie Miller, Barry Bernstein, Ed Paquin, and Susan Werntgen.
**May Day Rally**

Led by VCIL, participants make their way to the State House.

Participants gather on the State House steps.

VCIL’s Alaina Clements speaks to the crowd.

**White Cane Awareness Day**

As part of the 51st White Cane Awareness Day event at the Manchester Community Library, the Vermont Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired held a short walk around Manchester to bring awareness to those depending on a white cane for mobility and independence. (Photo by Melissa Hoellerich)

**Disability Awareness Day**

Ed Paquin, Executive Director of Disability Rights VT (and VCIL board member), addresses people at Disability Awareness Day. Back row: Sarah Launderville, Nicole LeBlanc, Andrew Imparato and interpreter Bridget McBride. (Photo by Jennifer Tedesco)

**Accessible Gardens**

Be sure to come check out our accessible gardens this spring, faithfully maintained by Karin Nissen.

**Business Expo**

Greg Morgan (top right), one of the founders of VCIL, stopped by our booth at the Business Expo and met Kim Brittenham and Nate Besio.

**Walk and Roll**

Deborah Lisi-Baker and VCIL employee Franklin Shiner check out the accessible trail at the Waterbury Reservoir.
BOARD of DIRECTORS
Martha “Marty” Roberts, President
Samuel E. Liss, Vice President
Ed Paquin, Treasurer
John Pierce, Secretary
Henry Demar, At-Large Member
Paul Audy
Bryan Pritchard
Gary Snyder
Stuart Soboleski
Benjamin Wimett

STAFF
Sarah Launderville, Exec. Director

Financial Services
Michelle Grubb, Finance & Operations Officer

Admin. & Support Services
Chanda Beun, Receptionist/MOW Program Ass’t.
Sue Booth, Bus. Office Coord.
Patrick Fitzgerald, Outcome & Evaluations Specialist/Receptionist
Stefanie Monte, Executive Ass’t.

Information, Referral & Assistance (IR&A)
Jacob Lavigne, I,R&A

Development / Fundraising
Linda Meleady, Development Coord.

VT Interpreter Referral Service
Nancy Groff, Program Coordinator
Bridget McBride, Program Specialist

Community Access
Kim Brittenham, Civil Rights Manager
Mike Charron, Civil Rights Specialist

Peer Advocacy Counseling (PAC) and Deaf Services
Colleen Arcodia, PAC – Bennington
Nate Besio, PAC – Burlington
Missy Boothroyd, Deaf Independence Program Coord. - Brattleboro
Jessie Butterfield, PAC – Rutland
Helen Johnke, Benefits to Work Specialist
Peter Johnke, Database Coord.
Charlie Murphy, PAC - Bennington
Kevin Plant, Database Assistant
Glenn Reed, PAC – Rutland
Ericka Reil, PAC Coord.-Montpelier
Franklin Shiner, Advocacy Specialist
Candace Stoumen, PAC - Brattleboro
Tyler Sweeten, PAC Coord.-Montpelier
Kimberly Colville, PAC - Burlington
Tom Younkman, PAC, AgrAbility Specialist

Direct Service Programs
Alaina Clements, Sue Williams Freedom Fund Specialist
Rever Kennedy, PAC & Home Access Program Specialist
Karin Nissen, Meals on Wheels Coord.
Patricia Tedesco, Home Access Prog. & Sue Williams Freedom Fund Coord.

Wellness Workforce Coalition
Julie Brisson, Coordinator
ABOUT OUR FUNDING

Most of VCIL’s funding comes from a variety of federal, state and local sources. VCIL’s primary funding comes from the U.S. Department of Education.

The Department of Education funding helps us provide Peer Advocacy Counseling, skills training services, community advocacy activities, and information, referral and assistance services.

In FY’15 VCIL received funding from several Vermont state agencies, one United Way, and 140 cities and towns, all of whom are valuable partners. We thank all of the individuals, businesses, contractors, community organizations and partners that help keep our programs active and successful. These include the Vermont Legislature, the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board, the Statewide Independent Living Council, the National Institute on Disability & Rehabilitation Research and the Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living, the Vermont Department of Mental Health and the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Most importantly we thank the volunteers and individual donors who help bring VCIL’s mission of dignity, independence and civil rights to every community in Vermont. Your active participation in this movement and your continued support is what makes our work possible.
### VERMONT CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING
### STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION
### FOR THE YEARS ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2015 AND 2014

**CURRENT ASSETS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2014</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cash</td>
<td>$317,882</td>
<td>$305,073</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accounts and grants receivable</td>
<td>309,127</td>
<td>312,739</td>
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<td>Prepaid expenses</td>
<td>36,601</td>
<td>31,798</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS</strong></td>
<td><strong>663,610</strong></td>
<td><strong>649,610</strong></td>
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**PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT, net**

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2014</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Restricted cash – building reserve</td>
<td>14,923</td>
<td>11,622</td>
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<td>Investments</td>
<td>257,254</td>
<td>222,896</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL OTHER ASSETS</strong></td>
<td><strong>272,177</strong></td>
<td><strong>222,896</strong></td>
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**TOTAL ASSETS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2014</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$1,278,956</td>
<td>$1,260,734</td>
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**CURRENT LIABILITIES**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2014</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current portion of long-term debt</td>
<td>22,000</td>
<td>21,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Current portion of capital leases</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4,620</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accounts payable</td>
<td>92,938</td>
<td>87,695</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accrued payroll and related liabilities</td>
<td>83,650</td>
<td>66,867</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accrued vacation</td>
<td>34,149</td>
<td>33,139</td>
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<td>Contract advances</td>
<td>76,011</td>
<td>54,803</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES</strong></td>
<td><strong>308,748</strong></td>
<td><strong>268,124</strong></td>
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**LONG-TERM LIABILITIES**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mortgage note payable, net of current portion</td>
<td>210,850</td>
<td>232,709</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL LONG-TERM LIABILITIES</strong></td>
<td><strong>210,850</strong></td>
<td><strong>232,709</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**TOTAL LIABILITIES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2014</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>519,598</td>
<td>500,833</td>
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**NET ASSETS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2014</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unrestricted – undesignated</td>
<td>729,193</td>
<td>742,635</td>
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<tr>
<td>Board designated – building reserve fund</td>
<td>14,923</td>
<td>11,622</td>
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<tr>
<td>Subtotal – unrestricted</td>
<td>744,116</td>
<td>754,257</td>
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<tr>
<td>Temporarily restricted</td>
<td>15,242</td>
<td>5,644</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL NET ASSETS</strong></td>
<td><strong>759,358</strong></td>
<td><strong>759,901</strong></td>
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**TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS**

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2014</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$1,278,956</td>
<td>$1,260,734</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
## VERMONT CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING

### STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES

FOR THE YEARS ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2015 AND 2014

### CHANGE IN UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS

#### REVENUES, GAINS AND OTHER SUPPORT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2014</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Federal and State Grants</td>
<td>$2,588,630</td>
<td>$2,319,362</td>
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<td>Contributions</td>
<td>23,968</td>
<td>25,790</td>
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<tr>
<td>Municipalities</td>
<td>43,930</td>
<td>40,000</td>
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<td>Fees and other income</td>
<td>88,111</td>
<td>104,398</td>
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<tr>
<td>Investment Income (loss)</td>
<td>(5,730)</td>
<td>22,857</td>
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<tr>
<td>United Way</td>
<td>2,540</td>
<td>5,380</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Net assets released from restrictions</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>35,745</td>
<td>20,265</td>
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</table>

#### TOTAL REVENUES, GAINS AND OTHER SUPPORT

$2,777,194  $2,538,052

### EXPENSES

#### Program Services:

- Independent Living Resources: $1,247,856, 1,086,676
- Peer Advocacy Counseling: 559,282, 612,713
- Advocacy: 236,265, 137,403
- Other Programs: 416,260, 280,736

**Total Program Services**: $2,117,528, 2,130,295

#### Support Services:

- General and Administrative: 271,741, 295,429
- Marketing and Development: 55,931, 51,012

**Total Support Services**: $327,672, 346,441

#### TOTAL EXPENSES

$2,787,335  $2,463,969

### CHANGE IN UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS

(10,141)  74,083

### BEGINNING UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS

754,257  660,174

### ENDING UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS

$744,116  $754,257

### CHANGE IN TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED NET ASSETS

#### SUPPORT AND REVENUE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2014</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gifts and Grants</td>
<td>45,343</td>
<td>19,110</td>
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**Net assets released from restrictions**

45,343  19,110

(35,745)  (20,265)

### CHANGE IN TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED NET ASSETS

9,598  (1,155)

### BEGINNING TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED NET ASSETS

5,644  6,799

### ENDING TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED NET ASSETS

15,242  5,644

### TOTAL CHANGE IN NET ASSETS

$543  $72,928
THANK YOU TO OUR GRANTORS

Aging & Disability Resource Connection (ADRC)
National Institute on Disability, Independent Living & Rehabilitation Research
Statewide Independent Living Council
United Way, Rutland
University of VT State Agricultural College
U.S. Department of Agriculture
U.S. Department of Education
U.S. Department of Health & Human Services
U.S. Department of Social Security Administration
VT Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living
VT Department of Mental Health
VT Housing & Conservation Board

VCIL wishes to extend our sincere appreciation to all of our project partners that we have worked with throughout the years. Without these valued relationships our mission would not be possible.

**These lists reflect Individual, Business, Organization and Grantor contributions and/or partnerships for FY’15. Our deepest apology to any agency, organization or individual we may have inadvertently omitted.**
## CITIES AND TOWNS

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<th>City</th>
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<td>North Hero</td>
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<td>Fairlee</td>
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<td>Strafford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fayston</td>
<td>New Haven</td>
<td>Stratton</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS

Ted Allen
Jane Alper
Amazon Smile
American Legion Montpelier Post 3
American Legion Rutland Post 87
Anonymous check if any in memory
Paul Audy
Paul & Anne Bakeman
Dan Barbin
William & Eveleth, in memory of Barbara Farnsworth
Jeffrey Bernstein
Stephen Bessette
Sue Booth
William & Ruth Botzow
Richard Bower
Wendy Boyd
Polly Boynton
Julie Brisson
Kim Brittenham
Susan Britto
Canadian Club of Barre
Robert Cannon
Rosemarie Carriker
Catamount Construction Co.
Eugene Chamberland
James & Andrea Chandler
Rudy & Susan Charbonneau
John Chard, in memory of Nancy Chard
Michael & Joy Charron
Chiaroscuro Foundation
Alaina Clements
Bill & Nancy Clements, in honor of Alaina Clements
Kenneth Cloran & Linda Carlson
Verna Coderre
The Coffee Corner
Judith Corey
Eugene Cronin & Diane Kleindienst
K. Gordon Cross
Shawn P. Cummings
John & Janet Dattilio
Janice Dawley
Rick DeAngelis & Ariane Kissam
Shawn Delisle
Janet Dermody, in memory of Selma Bayer
Kolleen Dodge
Bill Doelger & Linda Normandeau
Anne B. Donahue
Michael T. Downey
David & Elizabeth Edson
M. Jean Erno & Danny Burnor
Corine Farewell
Thomas Faris
Barbara L. Farnsworth
Marilyn Farnsworth, in memory of Barbara L. Farnsworth
Sheila Farrell
Ellen Fein
Angelo & Betty Finelli, in memory of James Quebec
First Unitarian Universalist Society of Burlington
Patrick Fitzgerald
Patricia Fontaine
D. Sharon Francis
Gus Francis
Benjamin French
Dorothea Fullem
Mark Garfield
Ned & Marilyn Gaunce, in honor of Sue Booth
Julie B. George
Eileen & Paul Gillies
Richard Graham, in memory of Rolfe Eastman
Delema Gratton
Green Mountain Gamers
Green Mountain United Way
Jerry Greenfield
Jack Gross, in honor of Sam Liss
Fred & Michelle Grubb
Jack & Gail Hall
Mark Johnson Hedges
Teresa M. Hemingway
Susan and David Hindinger
James & Evelyn Holmblad, in memory of Ann Holmblad
Jayne Hubener
Judith Dossett Hughes
Pamela Hull
Catherine Jenness
Kris & Guiliana Jensen
Jet Service/Accura
Peter & Helen Johnke
Anna Jones
Diane Jones
Kathleen Keenan, in memory of Michael Cahill
Keene Medical Products
Joseph Kiefer & Amy Goodman Kiefer
Susan Kiefer
Bobby & Sally King
Anthony Klein
Lake Sunapee Bank – HAP
Gregory LaFlower
Phyllis Larrabee
Russell & Lucille Lauderville
Thad & Sarah Lauderville
Paul & Elizabeth Levy
Samuel Liss, in honor of the 25th Anniversary of the ADA
W.G. Livingston & Amy Wright
Gary Lyman, in memory of James Quebec
Main Street Family Dentistry, PC
Jackie Majoris & Bob Kiss
Dorothy Mankowsky, in memory of Jean Mankowsky-Upham
Robin Mayo
Jay and Joan McEvoy
Linda Meleady
John Merrick
Jeffrey Michaud
Sheridan Miller
Todd Miller
Susan Minter & David Goodman
Stefanie Monte
Greg & Toni Morgan
Morrisville Rotary Club
Melinda Moz-Knight
Karin Nissen
Betty & Victor Nuovo
Kerry O’Brien & Ed Biggins
Diana O’Hara & James Durkee
Onion River Sports
Ormsby’s Computer Store
Ed Paquin & Gini Milkey
Amaryah & Will Pendlebury
John Pierce
Stephen Pilcher
Kevin Pilcher, in memory of Beverly Gosslant
Thomas & Carol Pombar
Lucia Port
Marjorie Power
Jeffrey Prescott
Anne Proctor
Renee R. Putney
Roxanna Quero
Jennifer Raney
William Reil
Janet Ressler
Tim and Karen Reynolds, in memory of Allen Allard
Lila Richardson
James & Ann Ross
Matt & Deborah Saltus
Susan Saltus, in honor of Matt Saltus
Sarah Devens Trust
Beth Schwaner & Tim Watkins
Edward Schwaner, in honor of Linda Meleady
Stan & Susan Senger
John & Dianne Shullenberger
Rachel Siegel & Jules Fishelman
Evelyn Silver
Neal Silver
Florence E. Smith
Neal Smith, in honor of Olivia Smith Hammond
Kathy Sowerby
Loring Starr
Bruno & Linda Studer
Swenson Granite Co., LLC
Alan Taplow (M. Novack)
Patricia Tedesco
Charles Teske & Rhoda Lush, in honor of Joyce Werntgen
Charles Teske & Rhoda Lush, in honor of VCIL Staff
Charles Teske & Rhoda Lush, in honor of Bennington VCIL Staff
Caro Thompson
Bob & Susan Titterton
Greg & Laura Titus, in honor of William Reil’s birthday
Maida Townsend
True Colors Home Decorating, Inc.
Kathryn & Barry Tucker, in memory of Barbara Farnsworth
Dennis Underwood
Lydia Underwood
Unitarian Universalist Church of Rutland
Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Bennington
United Way of Chittenden County

Dennis Upham, in memory of Jean Mankowsky-Upham
Ellen Urman
Carol Vassar
Grace Volkmann
Terry Volz
VT Community Foundation
VT Eastern Star Home
VT Federal Credit Union
VT Network
VT Right to Life
Washington Electric Coop.
Chani Waterhouse & Carter Stowell
Gale Wendell
Richard Wendell
Joyce Werntgen
Katherine Wilder, in memory of Ben Wood Lewis
William & Ann Cannon Foundation, in the name of Robert Cannon
Richard Williams
Kristin Wood
Tom Younkman, in honor of Sarah Launderville
Sue Williams Freedom Fund
Family Fundraiser
David & Peggy Ainsworth
Anonymous
John & Jerice Bergstrom
Deborah Block
David & Nancy Brown
Marijoan Bull
Zoe Carter
Kathi Downing
Bob & Suzanne Elliott
Melinda Foley-Marsello
Jeannette Frary
Bill & Bobbi King
Robert & Lynn Kyler
Mark Larsen
Carew Magnus
Danielle Pakradooni
David & Nancy Reynolds
Kenneth & Kathleen Roberts
Ed & Barbara Steiner
Ellen Takas
Elizabeth J. Taylor
Paul Vahlstrom
Marianne Warner
Lorraine Weinmann
Craig & Barbara Whitcher
Lilla Willey
Suzy Williams
Heather Winkler

VIRS Fundraiser
D. Charlea G. Baker
Lisa Bixler
Elizabeth Bjerke
Brattleboro Hearing Center
Brattleboro Retreat
Brattleboro Rotary Club
Michael Carter
Chroma Technology Corp.
Virginia Clark
Janet Dattilio
David & Ann DiBenedetto
Edward Jones Co., Ana Saavedra
Robert & Amy Fox
Emily Graves
Patrick Harris
Holyoke Community College ASL Club
Michael Jerald
Landmark College
Deborah Lashman
Deborah Leverett
Joe Loga
Elizabeth Lucey
Mary McGowan
Lianne Moccia
Rene Pellerin
Edward Peltier
Jennifer Raney
Brenda Seitz
Sprint
Ray Stevens
Frances Strayer
The Richards Group
Karen Todd
UVM Academic Success Program
Vermont RID
Voc Rehab Vermont
Barbara Walker
Janice Wightman
William E. Wilburn
Thank You!

To the many individuals and organizations who helped make the 25th anniversary of the ADA celebrations possible. This year, events were held statewide and focused on accessibility for all!

Disability Rights Vermont
Rutland Regional Medical Center
VocRehab Vermont
VT Developmental Disabilities Council
VT Network Against Domestic & Sexual Violence
VT Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC)
VT Workers’ Center

In Kind/Volunteers
7th Day Adventist Church, Rutland
Artisanal Wines (VIRS Event)
Bridget McBride (Interp.VIRS Event)
Champlain College (VIRS Event)
Emily Wood
Joan Pellerin (Interp.VIRS Event)
Joyce Werntgen
Lindsey Bixler (Interp.VIRS Event)
Mechelle Palmer (Interp.VIRS Event)
Ormsby’s Computer Systems
Patrick Galasso (Interp.VIRS Event)
Price Chopper, Barre
RID Bookstore (VIRS Event)
Ron Hemenway
Rose Reed-Denardo
Rutland Area Cooperative
Shaw’s, Montpelier
Sovernet
Speakeasy Cafe

Stephanie Cramer (Interp.VIRS Event)
Tiffany Heath
UVM ASL Club (VIRS Event)
Walmart, Berlin
William Lucas
Yankee Medical, Inc.

25th ADA T-shirt fundraiser
Nate Besio
Sue Booth
Jessie Butterfield
Michael Charron
Alaina Clements
Nancy Clements
Chip Dolan
Patrick Fitzgerald
Michelle Grubb
Dale Hackett
Sarah Launderville
Neal Meier
Linda Meledy
Rosemary Miller
Stefanie Monte
Charlie Murphy
Avram Patt
Joe & Ericka Reil
Shannon Reynolds
Martha Roberts
Franklin Shiner
Karen Tronsgard-Scott
VCIL
Joyce Werntgen
Tom Younkman

**Our deepest apology to any individuals or organizations we may have omitted.**
Farewells

Tracy Dorman-by Charlie Murphy

In November Tracy made the difficult decision to leave VCIL to embrace a new journey in her professional life. About leaving Tracy said, “VCIL has taught me that I am an individual with many skills to offer and just because I have a disability, I do not have to limit myself in any way.”

We asked Charlie Murphy who worked with Tracy the longest to tell us a little about her. Tracy Dorman and he met in 1988. She had just moved back to the Bennington area from Alaska with her husband and two children after her husband’s discharge from military service. Tracy had been on the board of directors at an independent living center while there. Soon she joined across-disability grassroots advocacy group in Bennington, named the Coalition of Disabled Individuals.

Tracy was a leader and active member of CODI from 1988 to 1996. Tracy’s involvement resulted in the group’s participation in the Bennington Battle Day parade. With Tracy’s guidance and energy CODI built seven award winning floats focusing on disability as the theme. The floats brought disability awareness to the community of Bennington, sensitizing people to the issues related to being disabled.

In 2001 Tracy became a Peer Advocate Counselor (PAC) at VCIL working out of the Bennington office. In her role as a PAC, she helped many people with disabilities maintain or increase their independence. While working at VCIL, Tracy again brought her creativity to her role. VCIL participated in five Bennington Battle Day parades with each float garnering a trophy.

We wish Tracy the best of luck in her new endeavor but truly appreciate her sentiments about leaving. She said “I am committed to continuing to educate and push forward the independent living movement to the best of my ability.” We are sure she is!

We wish Tracy the best of luck in her future endeavors!

Good Luck!
Joyce Werntgen

Joyce has been a fixture at VCIL since 1993, when she was hired as the executive director’s assistant. She served in that role for about 10 years, till she began working in the Home Access Program in 2003. Joyce was the manager of the program, until her retirement in December 2014.

Working at VCIL has fulfilled Joyce’s career goals of doing something that matters in people’s lives, and she has particularly enjoyed her work in the Home Access Program. She said, “You see something tangible at the end [of a project]. You see a ramp or a bathroom or somebody able to get back to work—those kinds of things. My time here has never been dull. I’ve worked with some fantastic people and it’s an organization that addressed my goals of doing something that mattered in people’s lives. [A nonprofit] is the place to go if you want to make a difference; that has been my goal, and I’ve been lucky to do that for 20 years.”

We wish Joyce the best of retirement and are so thrilled she has started volunteering here so we still get to see her and enjoy her company and sense of humor.

Oh, What a Gem!
by Linda J. Meleady

So Long to Joyce, but not her Voice
She may be retiring But always inspiring
Her dedication to the movement And making an improvement Whether a ramp or other modification The job got done without acclamation
Such a sense of right and wrong Had a way of making others feel strong Her wife Peg was a mover and shaker! But together they were barrier breakers!
Talk about a powerful team But more than that they’d make you beam Peg, Joyce and I once cooked hot dogs and buns I never knew grilling could be so fun! The banter between the two of them Made me laugh till I cried Oh, what a gem!
Retiring without Peg will be bittersweet Life throws us some curves but Joyce won’t retreat She’ll fill her time with family and friends Hobbies and reading and movies to attend But always, she’ll be part of the mission It’s who she is, despite this transition Joyce, you know we wish you the best We accept your retirement, under protest But honestly you deserve to no longer work Having you at VCIL was a definite perk So go off and travel and enjoy some down time But come back and visit – or... work here part-time?!
VCIL and SILC members meet with Senator Leahy in Washington, DC
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Montpelier, Vermont 05602
802-229-0501 (voice and TTY)
800-639-1522 (voice and TTY)
Email: info@vcil.org

VCIL – Bennington
601 Main Street
P.O. Box 82
Bennington, Vermont 05201
802-447-0574 (voice and TTY)
802-681-9096 (video phone)

VCIL – Brattleboro
28 Vernon Street, Suite 317
Brattleboro, Vermont 05301
802-254-6851 (voice)
802-275-0099 (video phone)
802-246-0328 (TTY)

VCIL – Burlington
7 Kilburn Street, Suite 312
Burlington, Vermont 05401
802-861-2896 (voice and TTY)
802-881-0138 (video phone)

VCIL – Morrisville
85 Portland Street, Suite 3
P.O. Box 1622
Morrisville, Vermont 05661
802-888-2180

VCIL – Rutland
60 Center Street, Suite 1
Rutland, Vermont 05701
802-779-9021
802-779-0265 (video phone)