Since 1987, Independent Living, Inc. has served as a common voice for persons with disabilities living in our community. A freestanding, locally controlled, nonprofit agency operated by people with disabilities, we offer a wide range of programs and services dedicated to ensuring universal access and opportunity in every aspect of community life.

Our efforts are directed to individuals of all ages having any disability, as well as to families, businesses, agencies, and municipalities. We are committed to the universal elimination of physical and attitudinal barriers, as well as assisting individuals with disabilities to successfully make the transition from system-dependency to independence. Over the past nineteen years, Independent Living, Inc. has touched the lives of literally thousands of people. Having a uniquely recipient-based perspective and approach to addressing disability issues, we have consistently exemplified cost-effective ways of improving the quality of lives of persons with disabilities.

During the past year, our Center provided a diversity of important resources to residents of our community. We assisted over 10,000 individuals including persons with disabilities, family members, educators, service providers, public officials and representatives from the business community.
Executive Director’s Message

In 2007, Independent Living, Inc. celebrated 20 years of service to the Mid-Hudson Region on behalf of individuals with disabilities. Our Gala dinner event in November was an outstanding opportunity to reflect on our accomplishments and to recognize several individuals for significant contributions to improving the quality of life for people with disabilities. Our 20th anniversary also made us very aware of how much remains to be done.

In the past twelve months, we have seen many changes at our Center: the facelift to the exterior of the building and re-paving of the parking lot gave us a new, more professional appearance. 5 Washington Terrace, as our green awnings proclaim, is our headquarters, and an address of note in the community. At our main office, our Community Partnership storefront on Broadway, and in our offices at the Cornerstone Residence, we have 25 different programs all aimed at effecting positive change for people with disabilities.

Three of the most powerful changes we focus on are:

1. Systemic change that opens doors to opportunities not previously available to individuals with disabilities.
2. Attitudinal change that results from a learning experience about the capabilities of people with disabilities.
3. Quality of life improvements for the people we serve, through adaptive technology, mental health services, and long-term care resources that allow them to remain independent at home and in the community.

We have enjoyed abundant media coverage in the past year, helping to educate our community about disability issues. We have implemented monthly “Friends of Independence” tours of our Center and introduced a quarterly agency newsletter, both of which extend our outreach to interested parties and help develop a mission-focused donor base.

We have established Independent Home Care, Inc., a new company that will enable us to provide licensed services under the new Nursing Home Transition and Diversion Waiver and Traumatic Brain Injury Waiver programs.

Our Board of Directors is committed to our mission, and engaged with our Administrative staff through regular participation in monthly meetings of our Finance, Development and Human Resources committees. Program staffs are all directly involved in the strategic plan for our agency through a Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) process that seeks to leverage our strengths and improve in areas where we can or need to enhance the services we provide.

Our supportive housing program has received increased funding for the existing allotment of beds, and has been approved for three additional beds in 2008. We established the Wellness Center at the Cornerstone Residence to promote and support physical, mental and spiritual wellness. It is open both to tenants at the Cornerstone as well as all Orange County residents.

Our Medicaid Service Coordination and Traumatic Brain Injury caseloads have increased significantly over the past year, and we have been contracted by the Washingtonville School District to provide transition and career development services for high school students preparing for adult life.

A long-standing goal of renovating the 5,000 sq. ft. of unused space in the lower level of our building into a regional disability training, technology and conference center is about to be realized: through the efforts of Senator William J. Larkin, we have just received a $250,000 grant from New York State to be used toward development of this facility, which will include a demonstration center for durable medical equipment and assistive technology. In addition, we are approved for up to $164,000 from Empire Zone tax credit funding.

So much has changed, but our commitment to improve the quality of life for people with disabilities is steadfast. It is this relentless focus on our mission that motivates us all to continue to seek, demand, and create unprecedented new opportunities for the people we serve; never wavering from our philosophy of “People 1st.”


Promoting Choice, Self-determination and Total Participation

**Mental Health Services**
Aimed at helping people with psychiatric disabilities, including those at continuing risk of homelessness, to overcome stigma, connect with needed supports, build constructive relationships with peers, advocate on their own behalf, define and pursue their personal “journeys to wellness,” and make the transition from system dependence to independence.

**Mental Health Case Management Services**
Provided at the Cornerstone Residence at 111 Broadway, in Newburgh, NY and offering a holistic, person-centered approach to facilitating connections with provider agencies and community amenities, and aimed at ensuring long-term residential stability, personal recovery, health and general well being.

**The Community Partnership**
Located at 72 Broadway, in Newburgh, NY and serving persons with psychiatric & co-occurring addictive disabilities (MICA) with the goal of aiding in the prevention of homelessness, this program provides wrap-around support, including core independent living services.

**Americans with Disabilities Act /Environmental Modification (ADA/E-Mod) Consultation & Access to Home Services**
Directed to individuals, local municipalities, commercial property owners, employers, businesses, schools, medical facilities, and provider agencies, these services help persons with disabilities to remain at home (or return to home) while playing a vitally important role in ensuring compliance with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

**Benefits Advisement**
Offering consultative services aimed at informing persons with disabilities about benefits, entitlements and available work incentives.
Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services
Providing a bridge between the Deaf and hearing cultures in Orange, Ulster, Dutchess and Sullivan counties, this program is actively engaged in community outreach and education, advocacy, service coordination counseling, and in offering technical support.

Mid-Hudson Regional Early Childhood Direction Center (ECDC)
Providing disability and disability service information to families of children from birth to 5 years of age, and offering technical support to schools, day care centers, and child care professionals in Orange, Sullivan, Dutchess and Ulster Counties.

Student and Family Services
Supporting students with disabilities during the transition from school to adult life; providing a day habilitation program for adults with developmental disabilities; offering Saturday activity/respite services; and maintaining an after-school learning enrichment program for students with developmental disabilities.

Medicaid Service Coordination
Aimed at helping people with developmental disabilities (DD) and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) to make connections with needed services and community supports.

Consumer Directed Personal Assistance Services (CDPAS/Options)
Serving persons with disabilities, including seniors, and made available in cooperation with the local Departments of Social Services in Orange, Ulster, Sullivan, and Dutchess Counties. Offers a unique alternative to traditional attendant care, giving individuals who receive services the opportunity to decide how, when and by whom their personal attendant needs are being addressed.

Long-Term Care Services
Focused on the transition and diversion of individuals with disabilities, including the frail elderly, from nursing facilities to least restrictive settings (consistent with the 1999 Olmstead Ruling of the United States Supreme Court). This person-centered program works closely with individuals, family members and significant others, hospital and nursing facility discharge planners, Points of Entry, the Regional Resource Development Center, the local Department of Social Services, the Office for the Aging, CASA and Home and Community Based Services waiver programs, to provide all the people that we serve with the opportunity to remain at home if they choose to do so.
Our Constituency and Funding Sources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VESID</td>
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<td>NY State Department of Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>OMRDD</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>Office of Mental Retardation &amp; Developmental Disabilities</td>
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<td>OMH</td>
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<tr>
<td>DOH</td>
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<td>Department of Health/Medicaid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTHER</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While headquartered in Orange County, Independent Living, Inc. serves people region-wide. Many of our programs, including our Early Childhood Direction Center, Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services, Work Incentives Planning Assistance and Consumer Directed Personal Assistance have a strong presence in our neighboring counties and work cooperatively with area agencies to address the needs and represent the interests of persons with disabilities.

The fact that we are an organization of peers enables us to offer an approach that is immediately distinguishable from other traditional service organizations. Moreover, 51% of our Board of Directors consists of persons with disabilities. Whether we’re providing peer counseling to a newly disabled adult or offering technical assistance through partnership with a local industry or municipality, Independent Living, Inc. serves as an important voice for systems change, and a vital resource for persons with disabilities within our local and regional communities.
# People Served

## Services Provided

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Provided</th>
<th># Served</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy/Legal Services</td>
<td>1131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Architectural Barriers &amp; Deaf/Blind Services</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counseling (General)</td>
<td>4799</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family &amp; Youth Services</td>
<td>342</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing Services</td>
<td>594</td>
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<tr>
<td>Information &amp; Referral</td>
<td>1517</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Living Skills</td>
<td>553</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peer Counseling</td>
<td>382</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Assistance</td>
<td>179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation &amp; Recreation Services</td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocational Services</td>
<td>241</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benefits Advisement</td>
<td>567</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>10609</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Pie chart showing the distribution of services served.](image)
Ten Reasons why Independent Living, Inc. is a Good Investment:

- We provide comprehensive long-term care services, including “resource and referral” and “service coordination” that help individuals return or remain at home vs. living in a nursing home at a higher cost to the Medicaid system.
- We provide supportive services to people with psychiatric disabilities and substance abuse addictions who would otherwise be homeless; and help them to stay on track toward recovery and wellness.
- Our Early Childhood Direction Center assists children from birth to age 5 who have developmental delays and disabilities, and their families.
- We work with at-risk students in middle school and high school as they prepare to make the transition to adult life, helping them achieve their goals to attend college, obtain employment or enter the military, as alternatives to the adult services system.
- We are one of the largest providers of competitive employment for people with disabilities in the Hudson Valley.
- We provide benefits advisement to encourage people with disabilities to return to work.
- We advocate for “systems change” through the legislative process to create new laws, policy and regulation.
- Our on-site Community Independence Program (CIP) provides opportunities for adults with developmental disabilities to engage in service to the community while learning new skills in real-life settings.
- As a consumer-run organization, we provide a unique peer-based perspective in our mental health advocacy and bridger services. In addition, a minimum of 51% of our Board of Directors is comprised of individuals with disabilities.
- We educate the community about the capabilities of persons with disabilities; we help individuals see their possibilities; advocate for their right to choose and we encourage people with disabilities to dream, and to take the steps necessary to achieve their self-
The Mid-Hudson Regional Disability Training, Technology & Conference Center will comfortably accommodate a wide variety of events and activities. It will include a large conference suite with break-out areas and classrooms, offices, a demonstration center for durable medical equipment and assistive technology, a lounge area and fully accessible restrooms.

Establishment of this Center will be catalytic to empowering individuals with disabilities and their families, and will be instrumental in changing attitudes about persons with disabilities of all ages, that have long prevented their full inclusion in society, and sharply limited their opportunities to achieve economic self-sufficiency through competitive employment.

**Capital Campaign**

**Investment Opportunities**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>New Parking Lot</td>
<td>$125,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference Room</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offices</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art</td>
<td>$2,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fabric</td>
<td>$500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendship</td>
<td>Any Amount</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Gratefully Accepted
Putting People First

In July 2006, Linda* called the Early Childhood Direction Center to request resources and assistance regarding her child's education. Linda is a parent with a disability who is deaf /hearing impaired. Linda's daughter Amy* was a preshooler with a disability, enrolled in a local approved preschool special education program and receiving speech therapy. Amy is a child with moderate to severe hearing loss who requires hearing aids. Amy's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) indicated her classification was “other health impaired”. The child required a Frequency Modulation (FM) trainer system at the special education preschool she attended, but the preschool’s system was not compatible with her hearing aids, despite repeated contacts with the child's audiologist who informed the school that the system did not work with the child's hearing aids. In addition, the parent was not provided an interpreter at the IEP or school meeting, nor was effective communication in place. The school district would often leave phone messages on the home answering machine that Linda was unable to hear. Amy was to attend kindergarten in the fall and the school district wanted her to be placed in the School for the Deaf, the most restricted environment, for her kindergarten program. As a result of ECDC involvement, Linda accomplished having her daughter's IEP changed to more appropriately reflect Amy's disability and establish her educational needs related to her hearing disability and the need for appropriate assistive technology. Amy was able to move into a general education kindergarten program in the 2006-07 school year in her neighborhood school; the least restrictive environment. Her classification was changed on the IEP to “hearing impaired” and she received an appropriate FM system that was compatible with her hearing aids. In addition, she was assigned a Sign Language Interpreter who worked with Amy on a daily basis to support her in her class. Team meetings and a consultation with a Teacher of the Deaf were scheduled twice a week on her IEP. Her IEP also indicated preferential seating and refocusing and redirection as program modifications and accommodations. In addition, the parent, Linda, received an interpreter at all CSE meetings and communication from school is currently done via email and the parent's Blackberry. In January 2007, the IEP was reviewed by parents and the Committee on Special Education from the school district. The following changes were made to Amy's educational program: A Teacher of the Deaf was recommended to support the child in the general education classroom three times a week along with weekly consultation between the Teacher of the Deaf and the classroom teacher, in addition to receiving speech therapy five times a week. She also receives extended time for testing and continues to use the appropriate FM trainer system. Amy is making wonderful progress in her educational program.

* Names have been changed to respect the privacy of the individuals.
The People who are Independent Living

When I look back on all that Independent Living has accomplished this past year, I see that the momentum which has made it all possible is the people who are Independent Living, Inc. - management, staff, board members, and our supporters in the community. We have worked together to achieve what many would consider impossible. Our successes are the result of hard work, cooperation with our partners in the community, and an unyielding commitment to one another and to the individuals we serve.

Our dedicated board members, the majority of whom are individuals with disabilities, meet monthly and serve on at least one of six committees, ensuring regular oversight as well as contact with management and staff, and partnership in the decisions that drive the organization. Our Board conducts an evaluation each year: of ourselves and the organization, to help us understand how we can ensure that Independent Living, Inc. continues to thrive and grow along with the community we serve. We are an organization driven by both passion and mission, interwoven to create and sustain a solid and enduring resource that makes a real difference in our society.

I'm honored to serve as President of the Board of Directors of Independent Living, Inc., and I look forward, with your help, to making every day someone's Independence Day.
Our Mission
Independent Living, Inc. is a consumer-directed, cross-disability advocacy and service organization, dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for persons with disabilities.

Our Vision
Our vision is a barrier-free society with opportunities for all people to achieve their maximum potential.

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