

HOMELIGHTS

A Newsletter For Friends and Families of St. Coletta of Wisconsin

2019 July Edition

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Family Advocacy

Yule Ball Prom & Torch Run

OSF Convent Opening

Brewers & Admirals games

St. Coletta of Wisconsin

PARTNERS WORKING TOGETHER
A message from our President

Dear Friends and Family,

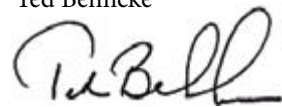
As we close out our fiscal year and enter another, it would be timely to share some of the things we have been working hard on to improve the environment we operate in, and which drives our ability to deliver care to your loved ones.

Organizationally we have been continuing to improve our operations and services. We continue to expand in all of our areas including Brookfield. We have made many accessibility changes particularly in renovation of homes, but also in adding vehicles in the fleet that have exceptional handicap accessible features. Our work force remains very stable, with a quarterly retention rate of over 90%. Stable care translates to better care and we are very happy about our retention rates. Others have been as well. We were humbled to receive the 2019 “Moving Mountains Award” in May, a national award given to one provider in the country for workforce excellence.

This year we made deliberate and planned advocacy into legislative circles to address short falls in funding in both Illinois and Wisconsin, states we operate in both residentially and with day or other programs. You should have received a letter from me in April asking you to join in our advocacy efforts. Many of you have responded, and thank you for agreeing to assist. As you may know, 80% of our funding comes from public sources and is directly affected by appropriations in state budgets. What you may not be aware of is that funding in both states is insufficient to even pay for the cost of our direct care staff. Funding in Illinois pays for about \$11.08 an hour for each Direct Support Professional (DSP) and Wisconsin even worse at \$10.50 an hour. Wages for our St. Coletta care staff start at \$13.50 an hour, a necessary competitive wage, so you can see the existing gap. Illinois has made a modest effort to address the gap, providing increases in the last two years to bring them to the current figure. Wisconsin has not moved at all in ten years. That’s right, since the roll out of Family Care in 2007/2008 the rates for care have remained unchanged. Together we had to take action. As a result, we engaged the members of the Wisconsin Joint Finance Committee including their co-chairs and all of their members. Additionally, we hosted the new Wisconsin Department of Human Services Secretary Andrea Palm in May at St. Coletta to address the issue directly. In Illinois we have joined a group of providers known as the “They Deserve More Coalition,” an organization dedicated to increasing DSP wages and sponsoring legislation to do the same. All efforts have been disappointing.

Honestly, there seems to be indifference by lawmakers to the funding issue. Consequently, there is no immediate plan to change anything in either state. St. Coletta continues to fill the funding gap, now approximately \$3 million dollars per year and growing on its own as the economy heats up. In the past three years, St. Coletta has used a combination of gifted money, growth on our reserve, and part of the reserve itself to balance our expenses. Organizationally we must take action, and have formulated an augmented development plan to correct this. Now more than ever, we need to build on your belief in the St. Coletta mission with participation of everyone in our community. Working together with business, families, and fundraising activities we can make it happen. Look for this detailed plan in an article later in this publication. Thanks for all and your trust in serving your loved one.

Ted Behncke



President, St. Coletta of Wisconsin



Upcoming Events & Dates

- Family Weekend August 2nd & 3rd
- IL Day at the Races August 25th
- DSP Week Sept 8th - 14th
- Holiday Open House December 7th



Cover photo credit:
Nicole Sweeney DSP - Excel
On the cover: Victor, a client in our Excel Day Program, smiles for staff as they enjoy an outing to the park.

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SAVE THE DATE
AUGUST 2ND & 3RD



ST. COLETTA NAMED 2019 MOVING MOUNTAINS AWARD WINNER

Through a partnership of the National Alliance for Direct Support Professionals (NADSP), the Institute on Community Integration at the University of Minnesota (ICI) and the American Network of Community Options and Resources (ANCOR), the Moving Mountains Award recognizes organizations using leading practices in direct support workforce development that result in improved outcomes for people with disabilities. Organizations that apply are required to illustrate how their direct support workforce practices and philosophy align with the principles of the NADSP.

This year, St. Coletta of Wisconsin was named the 2019 Moving Mountains Award winner. Being recognized for using leading practices in direct support staff workforce development that result in improved outcomes for the people being supported. St. Coletta of Wisconsin offers residential and vocational programs that embrace the concepts of independence, community inclusion, and empowerment.

“We congratulate the staff, leaders, and Board of Directors at St. Coletta of Wisconsin who worked hard to make this initiative a success and provide high quality program & services for the 400 individuals that rely on St. Coletta to ensure they receive the supports they need. We share this distinguished achievement with the families and friends of St. Coletta of Wisconsin and we couldn’t be more proud of our group,” said President, Ted Behncke.



BUILDING A STRONGER ST. COLETTA TOGETHER

St. Coletta, as many of you may know, operates Residential Programs, Day and Educational Programs, along with Employment and Transportation operations in the states of Wisconsin and Illinois. Funding for those programs comes from both private sources (18%) and public sources (82%) with the majority coming via Medicaid funding administered by contract in both states. Together, it would be optimal if they adequately covered the costs of providing services but unfortunately they do not. In the fiscal year that just closed on June 30, 2019 all funding fell 16% (3 million dollars) short of paying for services provided. That averages about \$15,000 unfunded dollars per person. It is challenging St. Coletta and getting worse.

Here is why: In simple terms, care is costing more and funding has largely stayed static for the past twelve years. That's right, in the State of Wisconsin funding rates have not changed since the roll-out of Family Care in 2007. That funding which would support a flat rate of \$10.50 an hour for care workers, provides the most basic of services. Similarly, the State of Illinois funding supports an approximate flat rate of \$11.30 an hour, again capable of only providing the most basic of care. That is basic care if you can find and keep care workers. Unfortunately, these levels of funding have not stayed with the rate of inflation and the rising costs of everything else. In real terms we have seen a 30% increase in providing care since 2007, but no increases to cover those costs. Labor cost is the clearest example

of the challenge. In 2007, we provided new hires with no experience \$9.50 an hour starting wage. Today to be competitive and to provide the level of care we all want, the retention of staff, and all of the other services you have come to expect of St. Coletta, we are providing \$13.50 an hour and have to be prepared to adjust that figure to draw caregivers. It's getting more competitive everyday as you have probably noticed—there are hiring signs in every window.

What to do about it? In the past fiscal year we dedicated a lot of time and effort attempting to influence State government in both states to better fund service rates for us and others. In Wisconsin we met or spoke with every member of the Wisconsin Joint Finance Committee while the budget was under development. This included office calls with state senators and assembly persons sharing details on the funding gap. We hosted them at St. Coletta, including the new Wisconsin Department of Human Services (DHS) Secretary Andrea Palm. We also met with Wisconsin DHS rate setters several times. In Illinois we participated in the "They Deserve More" coalition, an organization whose purpose is to increase Direct Support Professional wages. We were hopeful that the effort would yield some fruit. In the end, Wisconsin rates are literally unchanged. Illinois approved a 3.5% increase, but in both cases the changes are far short of the needed funding. Unfortunately, other providers are closing or significantly limiting services. We have heard from many families coming from other providers,

they are in need of new services. Regrettably, we are unable to serve everyone and wait lists are starting to form for some locations. At St. Coletta, we are prepared to do everything we can to meet the needs of the 400 individuals we serve but we are unable to do this alone.

As mentioned, St. Coletta has been battling these challenges for some time. In the first few years our fund raising was sufficient to fill the gap. We have been very fortunate to have our supporters as they have truly made a difference. As time moved, on with no rate change a combination of fund raising and growth on our reserve (if the market performed well) was used to fill the gap. The last three years we have had to tap our reserve directly to continue to provide services. Choices are few, either cut the level of services and accept a less qualified and turbulent workforce or support the mission in other ways. We feel no choice but to select the latter.

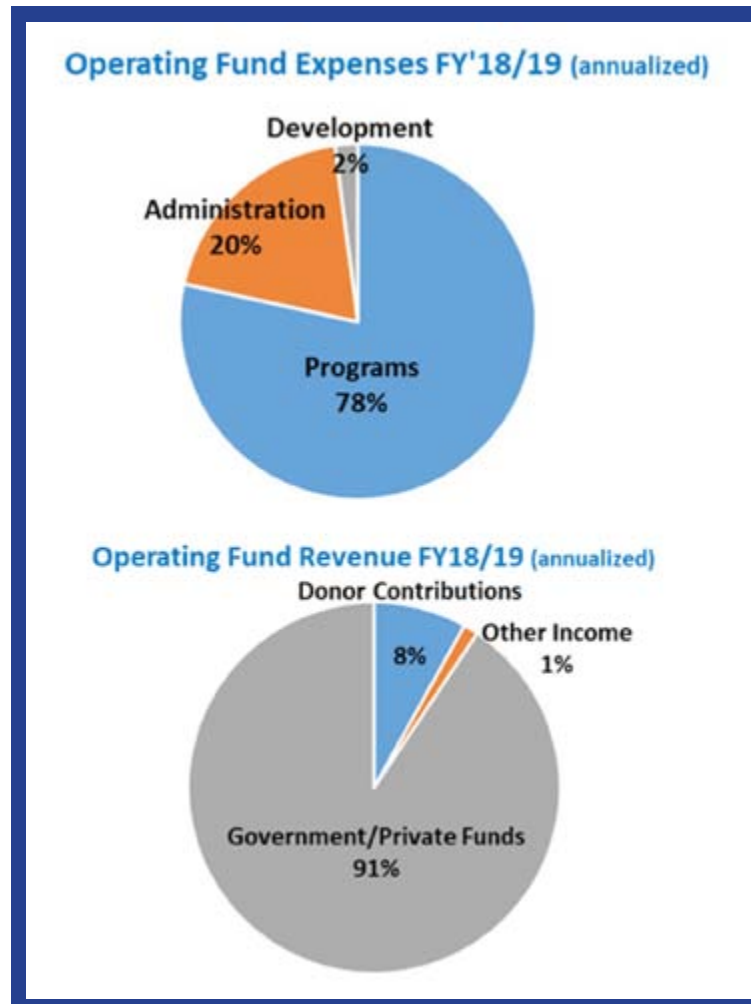
At St. Coletta we have been fortunate that families and guardians ultimately feel the responsibility to share in the care for their child or family member. With current circumstances we feel, now more than ever, we need families and guardians to be actively involved and engaged with St. Coletta's fundraising efforts. For each Individual Service Plan (ISP) meeting starting after September 15, 2019, there will now be a development component attached to the end of it. The goal of these meetings will be to educate all families and guardians of the ongoing fundraising efforts necessary to ensure our mission continues well into the future and to discuss options that could help us close the funding gap.

We have already launched a robust plan that will increase the support of businesses, create larger and more diverse types of events, and engage families. The ultimate goal is to significantly expand our support base into new areas and to new people that will also believe in the mission and special place we know as St. Coletta. We will also be launching our new St. Coletta Family Alliance (the STCFA), which will become the new medium in which all fundraising efforts will flow. There will be an expectation for each family to agree to aid the effort to raise critical funds through attending events, volunteering, soliciting friends and family to engage, and to making annual gifts that will reduce the \$15,000/person/year gap.

We love what we are able to do for so many of your loved ones and we feel obligated to serve people to the best of our ability and give them a full life. In order to do this, we will need your help. In many ways the present day brings us back to the earliest days of the Sisters when there was no public funding and all care depended on the labor of the Sisters, the sale of produce from the farm and the fundraising they did to meet the need of their day. Thank you for all you do and your trust in the care of your loved one. Together, I know we can meet the needs of today.

If you have questions or concerns regarding our new family support initiative, please contact:

President Ted Behncke at #920-674-8237 or Vice President of Development and Support, Robin Baker at #920-674-8331.



Lead the CHARGE

BELIEVERS & ACHIEVERS GALA

Two hundred people were on hand at Blue Mound Golf and Country Club in Wauwatosa, WI to watch the founders of Kwik Trip, the Don Zietlow family, receive this year's Lifetime Achievement Award. Carl Rick, Director of Public Relations, accepted the award on behalf of the family.

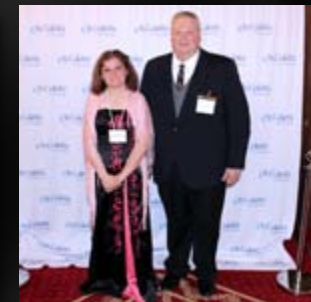
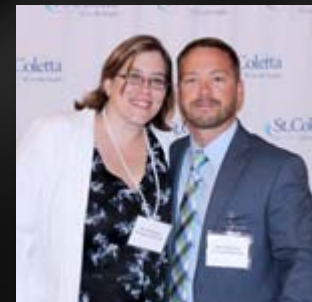
In 1965 the first Kwik Trip was opened with the mission to provide exceptional services to the customers and community. Over 50 years later, Kwik Trip is owned by the Zietlow Family, operating trusted, local convenience stores across the Midwest. Focusing on a strong foundation of core values, Kwik Trip's commitment to its customers, its employees and the community is second to none.

With the development of a "Retail Helper" position, Kwik Trip has given individuals with developmental disabilities a valuable opportunity to find gainful employment that not only provides an income, but a sense of pride. It is our great honor to present the Zietlow family with the Lifetime Achievement Award for their commitment to our communities.

Also in attendance was Don Zietlow's daughter, Vicki Kunz (Dan), Goddaughters, Chynna Zietlow and Emily Rick (Carl) and Retail Helper Program Leader, Joalyn Torgeson (Rod).

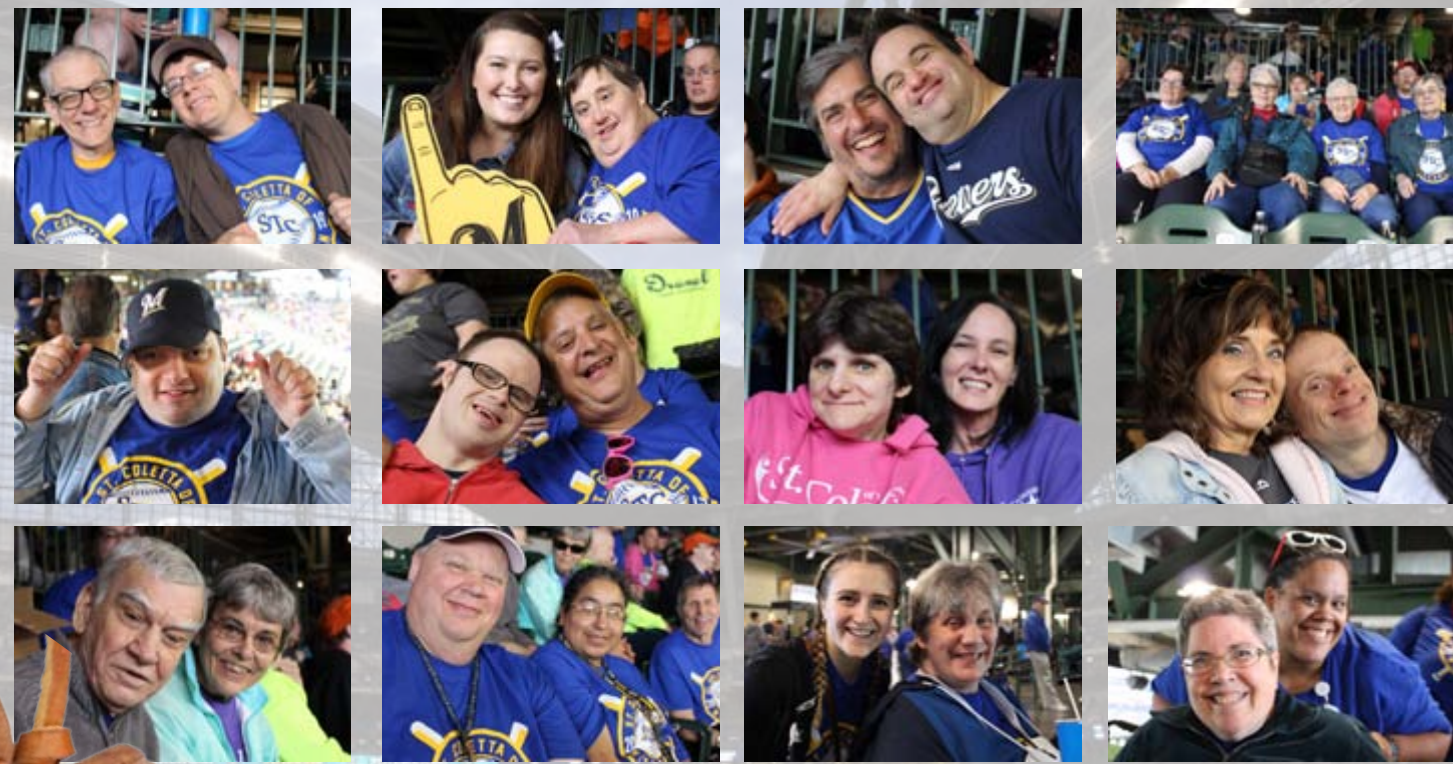
"Tonight created important awareness to our mission. St. Coletta proudly served Rosemary Kennedy for 48 years and like everyone we serve, was provided a life of compassion, dignity and respect. We were honored to have Kwik Trip and the family of Don Zietlow with us tonight and we couldn't be more thankful for the valuable opportunities they are providing to individuals with disabilities", said Ted Behncke, President of St. Coletta.

A tremendous thank you goes out to our major sponsors: Baird, United Heartland, Graystone Consulting and Hays companies. Special thanks to the partners of Kwik Trip, who cash and product donations totaled over \$8,000. Together, with your help, we raised \$75,000 for creating more accessible housing opportunities for our 49 unique properties.



BREWERS GAME

Wednesday May 22nd, marked the 10th Annual Milwaukee Brewers Event for St. Coletta of Wisconsin. With the generosity of the Milwaukee Brewers Community Foundation, we were able to provide over 250 persons served and staff with lower level seats off the first base line. The Brewers pulled off a hard fought win against the Cincinnati Reds 11-9. "The game beat our expectations with the Brewers pulling off a win over the St. Louis Cardinals. Thank you to all who assisted at the Brewer Game, a tremendous amount of teamwork went into the coordination of the day's activities" said Robin Baker, Vice President of Development and Support.



ADMIRALS GAME

The 3rd Annual Milwaukee Admirals event was hosted in March with over 125 persons served and staff participating this year. Admirals player, Justin Kirkland scored in regulation and also connected in the shoot-out as the Admirals won for their fourth straight game with a 3-2 shoot-out victory over the Manitoba Moose in front of nearly 8,000 people on Baird's School Day Game. "What a wonderful opportunity for the people we serve to get out in the community and really enjoy an action-packed event. We are so appreciative to the Admirals, who go above and beyond to support our group. They even provide us with a special wheelchair section that sits directly behind one of that goal boxes," said Stephanie McDonald, Manager of Day Programs.

HOMELIGHTS

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PILGRIMAGE TO ASSISI

In February, we were proud to send Liz Bouchard, Director of Day Programs, Charlie Hrobsky, Maintenance, Maria Perez, Residential Manager, and Becky Weber, Associate Director of Stewardship and Communications on our annual pilgrimage opportunity that St. Coletta offers. This program is offered to staff to hold true to our Franciscan values that established St. Coletta's focus so long ago. Traveling to the birthplace of St. Francis in Assisi, Italy in accordance with the Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi's annual planned pilgrimage.

The spiritual journey takes them on visits to the major sanctuaries associated with St. Francis and St. Clare of Assisi.

Applications are open for the 2020 pilgrimage!



OSF CONVENT

Last year, we sent out an appeal asking to support the Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi to support their journey of raising enough funding to build a new convent that could provide better services for their aging Sisters. The original Motherhouse was not intended to be used for the elderly and individuals with physical limitations. Because of its age and massive challenges, it was not appropriate for significant renovation.

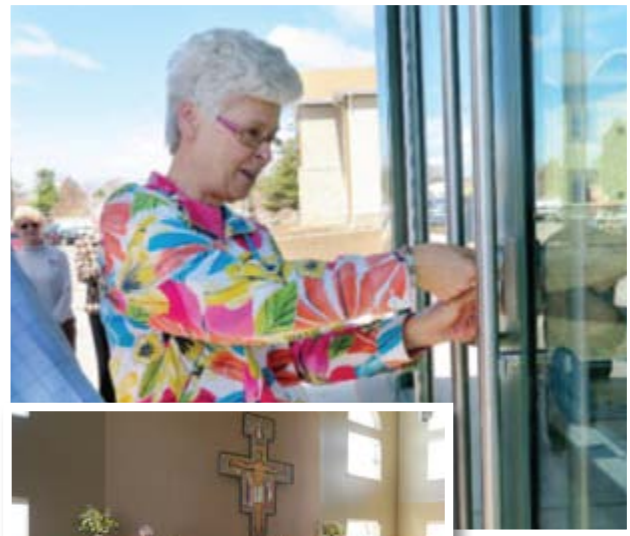
On April 23, the Sisters proudly accepted the keys to the new building during a special celebration with those who had been involved with the project for the past two years, including personnel from Groth Design Group (the architects) and VJS Construction Services. Sister Diana De Bruin, director of the congregation, is seen here unlocking the front doors for the first time.

On May 3, the Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi celebrated the structural completion of their new convent with a Mass of Dedication and the cornerstone laying ceremony. Bishop James Schuerman, Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, officiated at the private event.

There is still time to become part of history and continue to further the mission of the Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi! Now available, engraved memorial pavers for purchase that will be placed at the entrance of the new Convent and in the St. Mary's Memorial area. Pavers are available for \$150 - \$1,000.

Order here:
<http://sistersofstfrancisofassisi.donationbricks.com/>

**Excerpts of this article are from
 spiritofstfrancis.org*



ADVOCACY DAY AT THE CAPITOL

There is still an opportunity to join the newly formed Family Advocacy Group and to update you on current advocacy efforts under way. St. Coletta continues to participate in the annual Disability Day at the Wisconsin State Capitol. This year our participants connected with two State Senators and five Representatives in the Assembly. For the first time ever, we had a family speak at a public hearing of the Joint Finance Committee.

Our message was clear. Organizations like St. Coletta who provide residential services to persons with disabilities cannot continue to survive with the funding provided to the majority of our residents by the Legislature through the Managed Care Organizations. The core of St. Coletta services is provided by Direct Support Professionals, the caregivers in our homes. The State of Wisconsin reimburses St. Coletta an average of about \$10.50 per hour, far below the necessary level to sustain a competent, experienced workforce.

St. Coletta recognized this several years ago and instituted the Moonshot program. It is an initiative consisting of training, benefits, compensation, and opportunity for career advancement. This program has stopped the loss of DSP staff and improved workforce stability. As a result, St. Coletta has been recognized nationally with the Milwaukee BizTimes Nonprofit of the Year award, the ANCOR "Moving Mountains" award, and calls from other national organizations for information on our program.

The funding gap created by this commitment to our dedicated workforce must be made up by our fund development efforts and interest/dividends from our investments. Unfortunately, in the past few years this has not been sufficient to cover our losses, resulting in depletion of the principal in our reserves.

The success of our program, especially our national recognition, has resonated with the Wisconsin legislators we have spoken with. To ensure we retain and continue to compensate our DSP workforce adequately, a grassroots effort has formed to intensify advocacy at the family level.

The need is urgent. We need your involvement with our advocacy efforts now. Our window of opportunity is limited as the two-year Wisconsin budget is currently being prepared. Please join in our efforts to close the funding gap and help sustain the mission of St. Coletta for years to come.

If you would like to learn more or are interested in participating with the Family Advocacy Group, please contact family member, Mary Jo Shackelford at #202-257-1989 mjshacks.ex@verizon.net.





**LAW ENFORCEMENT
TORCH RUN[®]
FOR SPECIAL OLYMPICS**

June 3rd marked the 2nd Law Enforcement Torch Run in Jefferson. This is a statewide event that brings everyone together from the community to raise funds and awareness for Special Olympics. Our individuals and athletes led the way carrying the Flame of Hope alongside the Jefferson Police Department, community volunteers, Jefferson High School staff and students, and our own staff and volunteers. Thank you to everyone who showed their support and helped celebrate and encourage our athletes heading to the Summer State Games the following weekend. It surely was a beautiful day!



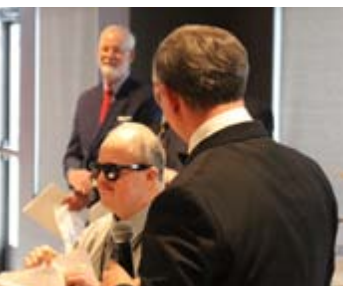
YULE BALL PROM

June 1st, we held our annual Prom dance in Jefferson. The theme (submitted by Excel Room 5) that was voted on for this year was *Harry Potters "Yule Ball"*. Staff and volunteers put some incredible creativity and teamwork into the decorations to bring this year's theme to life. With the halls covered in brick, wands, banners, balloons, and so much more, it was like walking into a castle to find their way to the ballroom.

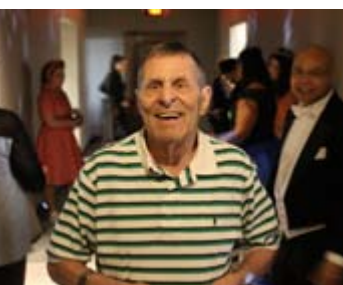
Thank you to the staff and volunteers who help with hair, makeup, fashion, decorations, cleanup and transportation. The smiles and experience is what makes the hard work so very worth it. Everyone had a fantastic time and are already asking about next year!



CLIENT RECOGNITION



The room was packed and it was a star-studded luncheon on Saturday, April 13th, for the annual recognition gala which honors the anniversaries of service for the people we serve. The theme for the event was "Instruments of Peace". The afternoon was complete with a walk down the red carpet, paparazzi photos & autographs, numerous speakers, a video presentation, catered lunch and finally - the awards ceremony.



Awards are given to individuals on their 5 and 10 year marks. This year 59 people were honored, while Jouvent R. took home the longest served award at 70 years, followed closely by Mike M. at 65 years and Vance J. at 50 years. A big thank you to Sr. Mary Jeanne Michels, who gave a wonderful speech on this year's theme and to all the staff who volunteered to deliver the awards to the presenters dressed in fad outfits for a specific decade while dancing to that era's music!





SPECIAL OLYMPICS STATE ATHLETES

St. Coletta has an astounding 80+ Special Olympic Athletes that compete in over 8 different sports! We are so proud of the many athletes that not only competed but placed in State competitions so far this year. From our basketball team winning their Regionals to qualify for State, to our many athletes that placed at Stevens Point State Competition for Swimming and Track & Field. Congratulations to all! Good luck to our bocce & golf athletes with those competitions just beginning!

Let me win, but if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt.



Jennifer G. poses with Vicki (Mom) and Bruce (Dad) at the summer Special Olympic games in Stevens Point.



ILLINOIS FRIENDS GOLF OUTING

While the weather did not agree with our outdoor plans, the rain did not stop the 100+ golfers from joining together to raise enough money to supply generators to our 9 Illinois homes. Often times when the power goes out, clients become displaced from their homes forcing everyone into hotels until the outage is over. Generators allow our residents to stay hunkered down in times of bad weather and storms and saves us from additional costly expenses.

This year's golf outing was full of family, fun and fellowship. There were a number of travel-centric live auction items and the traditional "heads and tails" game was the highlight of the day. With over 130 attendees for dinner, there was plenty of comradery amongst the group.

This was the 26th anniversary of the Illinois golf outing and a special thanks to Lee Davis, John Stoeckert, Russ Schaefer and Gene Tegeler for coordinating the event. Also, an extended thank you to volunteers of the IL Friends of St. Coletta of Wisconsin family group and the Illinois program staff for helping to make the day a great success!



HOMELIGHTS

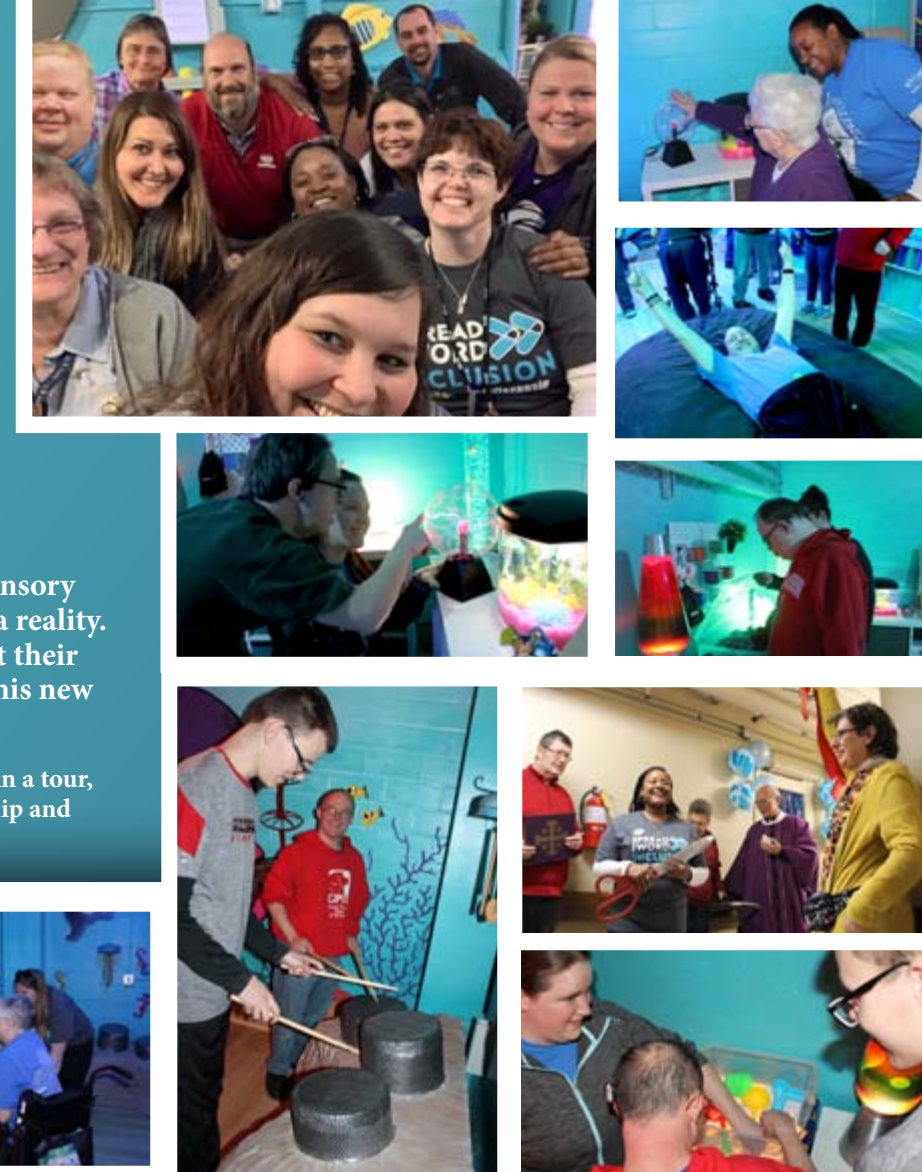
SENSORY ROOM

BENEFITS OF A SENSORY ROOM:

- Improved focus
- Develop or activate senses
- Encourage socialization
- Promote cognitive development
- Promote mental and physical relaxation

Thank you to all of you who supported our sensory room initiative and helped to make this dream a reality. We are incredibly proud of the staff that spent their time, energy and personal resources to bring this new service to St. Coletta of Wisconsin.

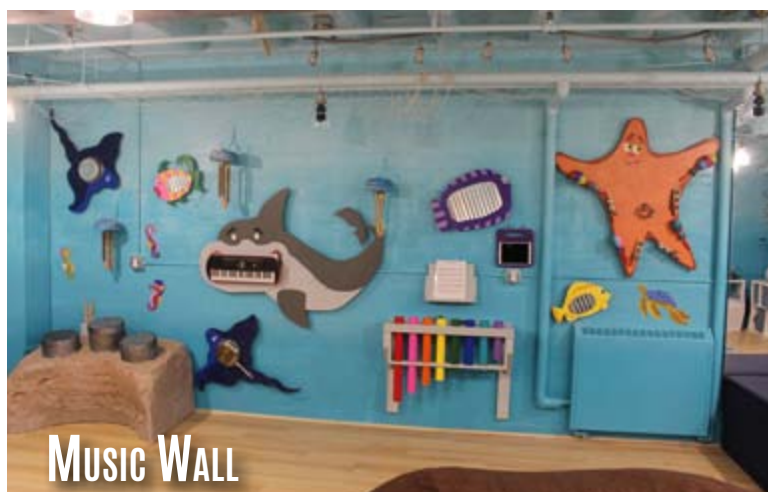
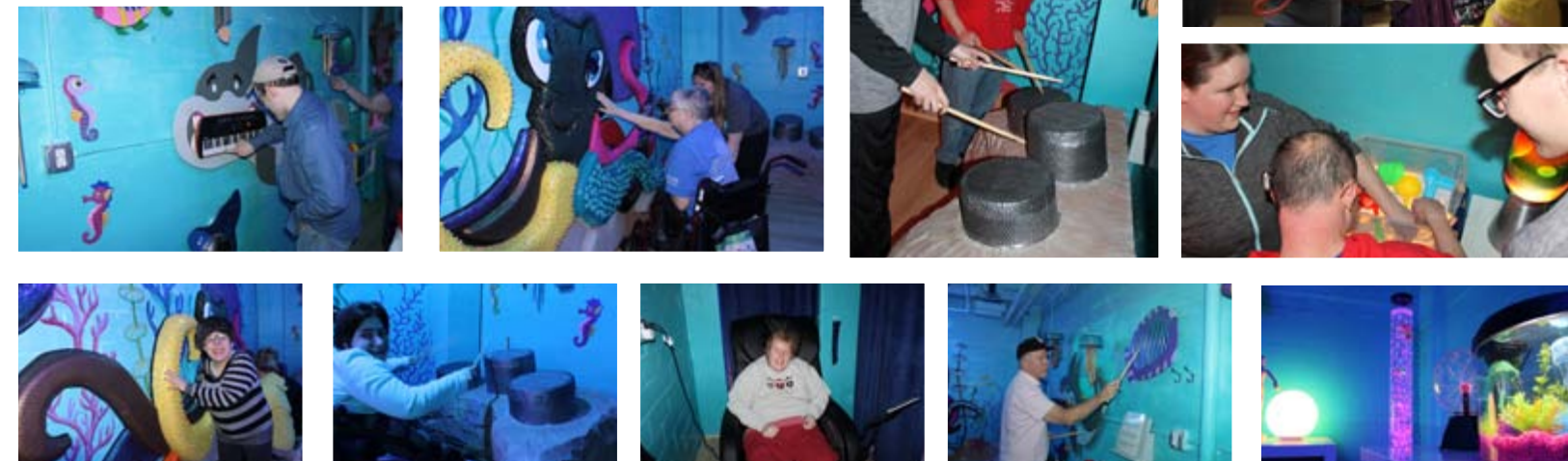
If you have not seen the sensory room or are interested in a tour, contact Becky Weber, Associate Director of Stewardship and Communications at #920-674-8240.



SENSORY ROOM

In March of 2018, the Autism Group started with a vision to create a new “sensory room” that would create positive outcomes for the individuals we serve. Fundraising started with a penny wars game to determine who would be sitting in the dunk tank for our 2018 picnic. In addition, the global online giving holiday “Giving Tuesday”, helped to bring in over \$12,000 for the new room. Add in a few smaller fundraisers and the group was able to push towards their initial goal of \$15,000.

The vision was to have an interactive room, a cut above other typical sensory spaces, that appeals to many senses: sight, touch, sound, smell, balance, and proprioception to name a few. The room is everything the team envisioned it be! Sensory Rooms can help those who have learning difficulties, developmental disabilities or sensory impairments learn to interact with the world around them, but in a safe environment that builds up their confidence and their ability.



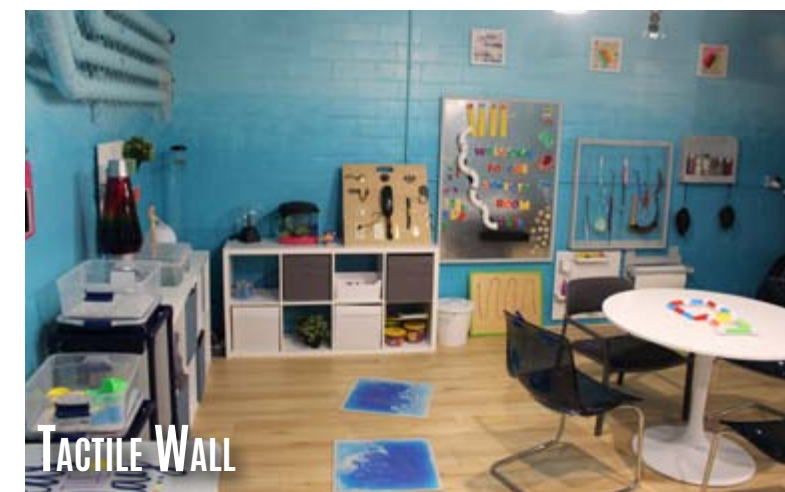
MUSIC WALL



TACTILE AREAS



TEXTURE WALL "OPHELIA"



TACTILE WALL

Polar Plunge

Another year, another group of craziness! This year we had nearly 30 people participate in the Polar Plunge on a single digit degree day in February. With each jumper gathering donations from their friends and families, they raised nearly \$4,000 for Special Olympics of Wisconsin and received a portion back to St. Coletta of Wisconsin. Great job plungers!



Donate Today!

Please consider the many ways to give to St. Coletta of Wisconsin

- **Giving Online** is easy at www.stcolettawi.org
- **Annual Appeals** - Look for one of our four annual appeal letters.
- **Special Events** - We have several opportunities for sponsorships.
- **Appreciated Assets** - Stock Gifts, Retirement Funds and Property are assets that can be bestowed to St. Coletta of Wisconsin.
- **Estate Planning** - Providing for St. Coletta of Wisconsin in your will is an opportunity to create a meaningful legacy that will provide quality services for our future generations.
- **Volunteer** - Giving one's time is very valuable and always appreciated. We are always in need of volunteers.



Photo taken by client, Allie Held, who successfully completed her internship for photography with the Marketing Department. Allie persistently took photos for 3 months and reviewed and edited them weekly. Learning new tips, tools and software to further her path into photography. Congratulations Allie!

Please contact Robin Baker for more information at: rbaker@stcolettawi.org or call #920-674-8331.

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of Wisconsin
St. Coletta
It's in the People.