

A YEAR OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS











LETTER FROM THE CEO

Dear Friends,

It has been a tremendous year at Abilities First, one in which we made great progress advancing our mission. We have touched the lives of many more people needing our services, and we have engaged in many ways with our community to raise awareness and acceptance for people with developmental challenges.

It is an ever-changing landscape for non-profit organizations. Mandates, requirements and payment arrangements with the state and federal governments are changing rapidly. In response, we are remaining flexible and agile to evolve into an organization that will be competitive long into the future. At the same time, we remain true to the values of our founding members back in 1962: at the heart of all decisions are people who we care about. We take our responsibility very seriously, and we are committed to enriching the lives of children and adults in our communities.

As part of our planning for the future, we have established the Foundation for Abilities First NY (FAFNY). This new corporation will oversee our financial investments and help enhance our fundraising efforts. In 2017, we saw our investment accounts reach \$1M for the first time ever. As we continue to grow these funds through FAFNY, they will help to ensure a fiscally sound future.

We are most grateful to you and the communities we share for your commitment, support and partnership. I could not be more proud of our history and our current place in the Hudson Valley region. I look forward to sharing more success with you in the coming years.

Sincerely,

Jeffery Fox, Ph.D. Chief Executive Officer



LETTER FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

Dear Friends,

On behalf of the Abilities First Board of Directors and Officers, it is my pleasure to present our 2017 Annual Report. In collaboration with our executive staff, we continue to successfully follow our strategic plan to diversify and grow our programs to better support our community, while remaining true to our Agency's mission.

Our advancement efforts in 2017 produced record-setting levels of giving to Abilities First, with many new friends and relationships created. Given the ever challenging fiscal environment we face, private financial support is critical. Please give generously and often.

2018 and beyond holds great promise for Abilities First to serve those in need. We possess the management expertise and financial discipline to maintain vibrant programs that will continue to expand our footprint and capacity. I am proud of what Abilities First has accomplished in 2017, and excited about the future.

David W. Melby Board Chair, Abilities First

Senior Vice President Rose & Kiernan, Inc.











www.AbilitiesFirstNY.org



MISSION

To provide people with disabilities and their families support to attain independence, self-determination, integration and acceptance by others through education, exploration and experience.

VISION

All people are recognized and valued for their abilities **first**.

VALUES

Integrity – consistently truthful, dependable, professional and ethical

Equality – fairness in all opportunities

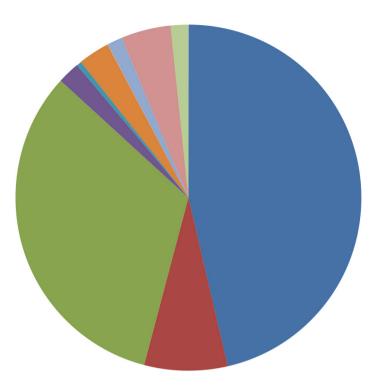
Dignity – deserving of respect and consideration

Distinction – pursuing excellence via world-class best practices

Diversity – encouraging inclusiveness

2017 SOURCES OF REVENUE

Source	
Medicaid	\$16,492,493
NYS OPWDD	\$2,769,322
Tuition	\$11,623,554
Private Contracts	\$744,312
Dutchess County	\$162,000
SS/SSI	\$1,047,275
Transportation	\$510,504
Donations	\$1,652,043
Other	\$588,296
	\$35.589.799



2017 EXPENSES

Expense

 Salaries & Fringe
 \$25,879,539

 Property & Equipment
 \$3,959,431

 Transportation
 \$2,013,834

 Food/Supplies
 \$981,504

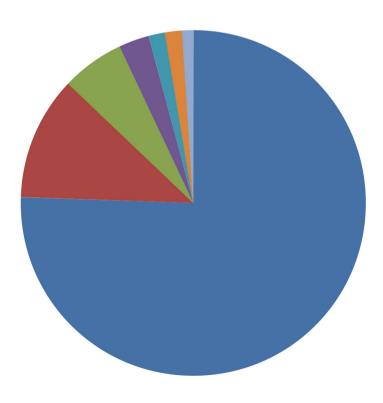
 Consultants
 \$519,358

 Other
 \$548,584

 Insurance
 \$356,789

\$34,259,039

Administration expenses continue to be well-controlled at 11%





- Our team successfully completed a \$250,000 fundraising campaign to build a new playground at our main school location in LaGrange. This playground provides meaningful outdoor play space for the 92 children who attend school at this site.
- The School Program expanded with a new site in the Town of Cornwall in Orange County. This program includes 40 children and will be relocated to a permanent and newly renovated facility in the fall of 2018.
- Approval was received from the New York State Education Department to expand our Special Education Preschool program to Orange County. This program will begin in the fall of 2018 and will serve children living in the Orange County area who need specialized preparation for Kindergarten.
- Development of new residences is underway to create two new group homes for adults in need of residential services, thanks to the approval from the New York State Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD).
- Twenty seven people with disabilities now live with minimal supports and with greater independence than ever before, following the completion of our first Integrated Supportive Housing project in East Fishkill.
- We received OPWDD approval to expand our adult day services programs to include a day program designed for seniors, and another one designed to help people become ready for employment.
- In 2017, Abilities First became reaccredited by the Council on Quality and Leadership (CQL), which is a determination that we provide highquality, person-centered services.



(continued)

- Working in collaboration with Dutchess County, Dutchess Community College and several other non-profit organizations in our community, we helped establish the first college program in the County designed for young people with special needs to prepare for work and success in life. The Think Ahead program, housed on the Dutchess Community College campus, is now available for young people in our community.
- The Abilities First Outpatient Recovery Services (AFORS) was relocated and expanded. Through AFORS we provide much needed substance use treatment that is designed specifically to meet the learning needs of people with intellectual, developmental and other kinds of disabilities.
- Abilities First went beyond CQL accreditation to develop our own unique Person-Driven Service model that allows us to ensure we respond to the personal needs and requests of the people we support. This model helps to establish a premier level of quality in our continuum of services.
- In collaboration with 22 other non-profit organizations across the Hudson Valley, Abilities First participated in the creation of Hudson Valley Service Providers (HVSP). HVSP is a coalition dedicated to advocacy for our population and preparation for Medicaid redesign. This kind of collaboration and leadership will be essential to our future success.
- The Abilities First investments reached its goal of \$1M. The Board and executive leadership resolved to create the Foundation for Abilities First NY, Inc., which will be a new 501(c)(3) corporation that will steward these funds, as well as continue to grow our endowment and ensure our future.
- Abilities First received a generous gift of real property valued at \$3.2M in New Windsor in Orange County. The interest of the donor will be realized in 2018 with the opening of the state-of-the-art Abilities First School at the Straus Family Pavilion.



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Abilities First is most grateful to the individuals, foundations and businesses for their generous support of the mission. The impact of your generosity assures strengthened resources for all programs and services.

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Through the generosity of numerous community businesses and individuals, combined with a \$100,000 grant from Senator Sue Serino, the Future Steps Playground Campaign exceeded its \$200,000 goal to build a fully accessible playground at the Abilities First School.

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GIFTS IN-KIND

In 2017, Straus Family Capital, represented by Dr. Marc Straus, Ari Straus and their families, made a most generous in-kind donation of real property valued at \$3.2M. The property, located at 59 Windsor Highway in New Windsor, NY is the first Orange County property for Abilities First and will be home to the Abilities First School at the Straus Family Pavilion, opening in the fall of 2018. The gift was the largest in AF history.

With an interest in advancing Abilities First opportunity to begin upgrades to the gifted property in New Windsor, **Rifton Equipment** provided the **generous support of over \$30K in materials and labor** for the exterior renovation and painting of the 43,000-square-foot property.

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