



FOUNDATION  
FOR ABILITIES FIRST NY

*Philanthropic leadership to enrich the mission of Abilities First*



ABILITIES FIRST  
ENRICHING THE LIVES OF CHILDREN  
& ADULTS IN OUR COMMUNITIES

*an affiliate of*  
ABILITIES PARTNERSHIP  
OF THE HUDSON VALLEY, INC.

# 2020 ANNUAL REPORT





# ABILITIES FIRST

ENRICHING THE LIVES OF CHILDREN  
& ADULTS IN OUR COMMUNITIES

an affiliate of  
ABILITIES PARTNERSHIP  
OF THE HUDSON VALLEY, INC.



## 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

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# ABOUT US

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Abilities First was incorporated under the name Rehabilitation Programs in 1962 with a mission to serve children and adults with developmental disabilities in Dutchess County, N.Y.

The organization began with a small education program known as the “Little Red Schoolhouse.” The name Rehabilitation Programs was changed to Rehab Programs in 1996, and then again in 2008 to Abilities First. The name Abilities First was meant to signify that we value what people can do, what they can learn, and what they accomplish rather than their limitations or disabilities.

Over the years, the organization grew into a multifaceted operation employing over 650, pre-pandemic. Those employees support approximately 1,400 people with various kinds of developmental and intellectual delays and impairments, including:

- People with intellectual and developmental disabilities
- People with developmental delays and learning disabilities
- Children and adults with autism
- Young children in need of early childhood education
- People with physical disabilities
- Seniors and other people experiencing some form of dementia
- People with mental health conditions

**OUR COMMITMENT TO INCLUSION:** The wide range of services we offer and people we support reflects our commitment to inclusion and acceptance of people with various kinds of developmental challenges. From typically developing children who need to prepare for the academic rigors of school - to people with intellectual disabilities who need to prepare for independent living - to seniors who want to keep their independence and communities as they age, Abilities First provides the bridges and the resources.



Dear Friends,

We are pleased to present the Abilities First Annual Report for 2020. It was a year like no other, filled with stress, fear, and heartbreaking loss, but also hope and resilience. The COVID-19 pandemic forced us to abandon our plans for growing our programs and advancing our mission further to adapt to a rapid flow of changing dynamics, requirements, and orders designed to limit the impact of the deadly disease on the people we support, our staff members, and other stakeholders.

Throughout the health crisis in 2020, members of our workforce, including Direct Support Professionals, proved why they are the single most important resource of our organization. I could not be more proud of the way our staff members consistently demonstrated commitment, excellence, and bravery as they continued to support the people in our programs.

We will forever look back on 2020 as a year that tested our resolve, and we will forever remember that our commitment to the mission of Abilities First emerged from the pandemic stronger than ever.

As we look forward to 2021 and the years beyond, I want to thank all of our stakeholders and invite you to continue on our journey with us. There are countless ways for us to work together to make this world even better for children and adults faced with developmental challenges. I look forward to seeing you all in person once again.

Sincerely,



Jeffery Fox, Ph.D.  
President & CEO, Abilities First, Inc.



**Jeffery Fox, Ph.D.**  
Chief Executive Officer



## 2020 ABILITIES FIRST EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP



**Ellen Griffin**  
Chief Financial & Administrative Officer



**Melissa McCoy, CFRE, CFRM**  
Chief Advancement Officer



**Kelly J. Martinez, PHR, SHRM-CP**  
Vice President of Human Resources &  
Corporate Compliance



**Leann Coyle, MEd., SDA**  
Vice President of Educational Services



**Mark Nace, MSOL**  
Vice President of OPWDD &  
Community Services



**Kim M. Ryder**  
Director of Finance

Dear Friends,

First and foremost, we sincerely thank you for your continued support of Abilities First, both financially and with your time and advocacy. While the organization has undergone a consistent period of growth over the past eight years, 2020 was trying, to say the least. Once it became evident that this would not be a “normal” year, our executive team and staff took swift action to ensure continued services and revenue. For the most part, our staff and participants fared well relative to other agencies that support individuals with developmental disabilities. As reflected in the enclosed annual report, our financials were less than ideal. However, enrollment in programs that were affected by the pandemic is on the uptick, and we continue to look for opportunities to ensure that the organization remains financially viable. We remain hopeful that a solid rebound will occur in the upcoming year. This will not be possible without your continued support, for which we are eternally grateful.



Daniel Stafford, Esq.  
Chair, Abilities First, Inc. Board of Directors



**Daniel Stafford, Esq.**  
Chair





# 2020 ABILITIES FIRST BOARD OF DIRECTORS



**Gary J. Cassiello,**  
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**Katherine Trela**



**Lorraine Heneka**  
Board Member Emeritus

When the Foundation for Abilities First New York (FAFNY) was established, little did we know how challenging the first few years would be. A pandemic, after all, is a “once in a generation” occurrence. Its impact has been significant and is still unfolding. Yet, despite the enormity of this challenge, FAFNY fundraising and volunteering has had an impressive year. We are proud of our results and the way FAFNY and all of Abilities First, Inc. came together as one cohesive body. Notwithstanding the lack of in-person interaction, and especially larger events which are the lifeblood of any fundraising venture, FAFNY did what it set out to do: raise awareness and funding for the organization.

The mission is even more critical in the coming year when we are concerned about pandemic fatigue and increasing pressures from New York State. State funding sources are becoming scarcer and reimbursement rates have been slashed.

We will be calling for more financial support and volunteering in 2021 as we push through this challenging time. Now more than ever we need your commitment. As hard as it seems this last year has been, the truth is that it is always hard for an organization such as ours to meet its financial obligations. The pandemic has compounded the challenge but it is no match for our loyal supporters. For this, we are forever grateful and indebted to you.

We look forward to warmly greeting you in person and continuing our service to a community of citizens we all care so deeply about.



Joshua Mackey  
Chair, Foundation for Abilities First NY (FAFNY)



**Joshua Mackey**  
Chair

# 2020 FOUNDATION FOR ABILITIES FIRST NY BOARD OF DIRECTORS



**Theodore Prenting**  
Vice Chair



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Treasurer



**Craig Irwin**  
Secretary



**Amy L. Bombardieri**



**Renee Giordano  
MacDonald**



**Anthony  
Morando, Esq.**



**William  
Van Ornum, Ph.D.**



**Michael Pine**

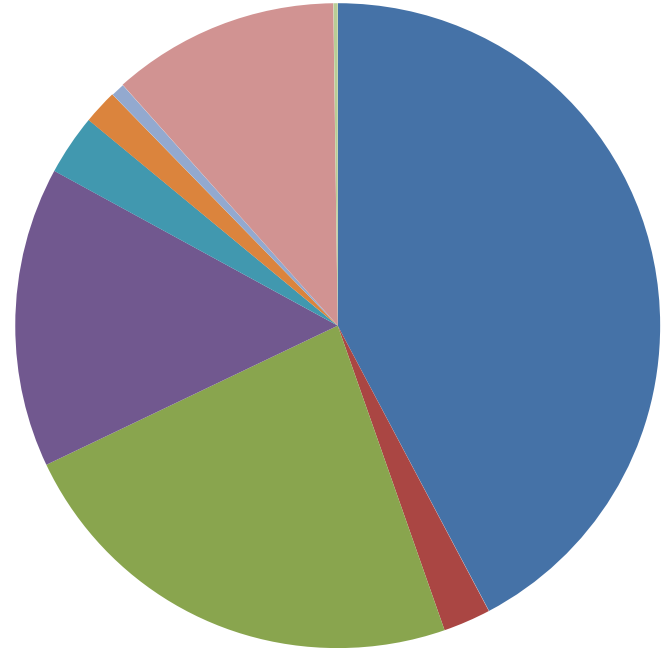


**Pete Setaro**



## 2020 SOURCES OF REVENUE

2020 Sources of Revenue	Amount
● Medicaid	\$15,658,576
● NYS OPWDD	\$889,143
● NYSED/Local Districts	\$8,630,089
● NYSED/Local Counties	\$5,574,155
● Fees From Individuals	\$1,123,807
● Private Contracts	\$638,506
● Donations/Contributions	\$253,520
● Federal Funding	\$4,226,100
● All Other	\$77,171
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$37,071,067</b>



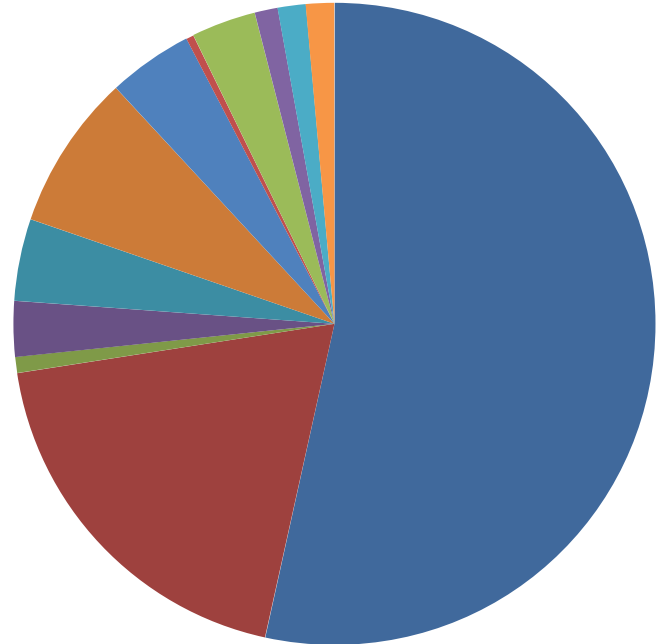


# ABILITIES FIRST

## 2020 EXPENSES

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2020 Expenses	Amount
● Staff Salaries	\$17,743,426
● Fringe	\$6,333,981
● Subcontract Wages	\$268,064
● Other Professional Services	\$925,178
● Travel/Transportation	\$1,370,596
● Occupancy	\$2,600,451
● Interest/Depreciation	\$1,414,956
● Equipment	\$125,279
● Supplies/Food/Printing	\$1,077,826
● Development/Marketing	\$387,534
● Agency Insurance	\$463,237
● All Other	\$476,250
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$33,186,778</b>



THE CAMPAIGN TO

# HONOR OUR HEROES



FOUNDATION  
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“We can’t say enough about Abilities First. It’s such a **RELIEF** and provides tremendous **PEACE OF MIND** knowing that (while we live in California) our son is in such **CAPABLE HANDS** in New York, and with the AF team’s guidance, has **ACHIEVED** all that he has.”

---

**Andrew & Nancy S.**  
Parents, Abilities First Adult Residential

“The Abilities First School **BRINGS LIFE TO CHILDREN** who need to be accepted and included. I place my **TRUST** in them, as they provide **HAPPINESS** and **COMFORT** to our whole family, in a nice, **SAFE ENVIRONMENT.**”

---

**Karen M.**  
Parent, Abilities First School

“I work for Abilities First because I wholeheartedly **BELIEVE** in our mission. I **LOVE** working for an agency that their **TOP PRIORITY** is their **INDIVIDUALS’ NEEDS** and to **ASSIST THE STAFF** to better achieve their goals.”

---

**Kristi P.**  
Employee, Abilities First



*Our sincere appreciation to our community for the vital support and generosity during this challenging year.*

## 2020 DONORS: COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Jeanine Agnolet-

Rado

Pamela Alley

Eleanor

Androulidakis

Anand Baichwal

Annette J. Barchat

Judith Barry

Linda Bertolozzi

Helen & Joseph A.

Biela

Michael Blustein

Gregory W. Bolner

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Earl Bruno

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Gabriella Gaspar

Judith A. Gattine

Victoria Gearity

Barbara Giangaspro

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Christopher Gilbert

Ellen Ginsberg

Nancy & Mark

Giordano

Elizabeth H. Graham

Ellen Griffin

Joseph Grotzer

Deborah Gruntler

William Halstead

Jennifer Hart

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Muriel M. Horowitz

Moujalli Hourani

Susan & Steven E.

Howell

DeForest Howland

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Amy Irwin

Craig Irwin

Terry Jackrel

Crystal R. Jackson

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William Jeffries

Linda Johnson

Patricia Jones

Raymond J. Jurkowski

Maryann Katz

Barry Kaufman

Tara Kelliher

James Kelly

James Kidder

Joan Kinkade

Robert Kinkade

Nancy Koch

Matthew Kojac

Paul Kowalski

Catherine L. Kramer

Sunja Kwock

Linda A. Lant



MaryJane Lekanides	Douglas McCourt	Diane Paladino	Robert Robles	Nurisa Sehovic	Scott Travis
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Renee Giordano	Lynn & David W. Melby	Kristi L. Plass	Kim M. Ryder	Christopher Smith	Laura & Gerald Wagner
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Ralph Manzoello	Mark A. Nace	Christine Riganati	Janice Schanck	Erin Taxter	Jason Zeboris
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Steve Masiello	Michael B. Oates	Diana S. Ritchie	Brad Schuka	Jean Theobald	
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Darcy J. McCourt		Paul Robitaille	Katherine Scott	Donato Traditi	
		Paula Robitaille		Jean Traver	

## 2020 DONORS: BUSINESSES, FOUNDATIONS, GRANTS & ORGANIZATIONS

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ACME Give Back Where It  
Counts Bag Program  
Albertsons Companies  
Foundation  
AmazonSmile Foundation  
Bank of America Charitable  
Foundation  
Beacon Elks Lodge 1493  
Box Tops For Education  
Carole E. Nugent Estate  
Central Hudson Gas & Electric  
Corporation  
Michael & Erin Martucci Family  
Foundation  
CPL Team  
Cuddy & Feder LLP  
Dutchess Responds Fund of the  
Community Foundations of the  
Hudson Valley  
Elpiniki Foundation

Emergency One Urgent Care  
Entergy  
Foundation for the Handicapped  
Hannaford Community Bag  
Program  
Hudson Valley Helping Heroes  
IBM Employee Services Center  
IBM Retiree Charitable Campaign  
Insite Engineering, Surveying &  
Landscape Architecture, P.C.  
Jim Holder & Associates, Inc.  
Lifetouch National School Studios  
M&T Charitable Foundation  
Mackey Butts & Wise LLP  
MassMutual Foundation  
Mid Hudson Construction  
Management  
Montefiore St. Luke's Cornwall  
Hospital  
Network for Good

PayPal Giving Fund  
Prenting Family Fund for  
Poughkeepsie  
Real Property Abstract & Title  
Services, LLC  
Robinson Sales, Inc.  
Robitaille Family Trust  
Rose & Kiernan Charitable  
Foundation, Inc.  
Rose & Kiernan Insurance, Inc.  
Royal Carting Service  
Spettel Trust  
Stewart's Foundation  
Stop & Shop Community Bag  
Program  
TEG Federal Credit Union  
Stewart's Shop & The Dake  
Family Fund of the Community  
Foundation for the Greater  
Capital Region

Triple R Refrigeration & Air  
Conditioning Co., Inc.  
Ulster Savings Bank  
United Way of the Dutchess-  
Orange Region  
Walden Savings Bank  
Wells Fargo Advisors  
Westchester Medical Center  
Wilmington Trust  
Wollner/Troccia Family Fund of  
the Community Foundations of the  
Hudson Valley  
YourCause, LLC Trustee for  
Chevron Matching Employee  
Funds  
YourCause, LLC Trustee for  
Mastercard Impact Fund  
YourCause, LLC Trustee for Wells  
Fargo Foundation  
Zylofone Studios, Inc.

## 2020 EVENT SPONSORS

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A&R Security	Dutchess County Department of	MOVIA Robotics, Inc.	SUNY Orange
Advocates	Community & Family Services	MVP Health Care	Taconic Resources for
Autism Directory Service, Inc.	Dutchess County Public Transit	NYS Justice Center for the	Independence, Inc.
Avello Brothers Contractors, Inc.	Emergency One Urgent Care	Protection of People with Special	TEG Federal Credit Union
B&K Excavation, Inc.	Enabling Devices	Needs	The Chazen Companies
C Tech Low Vision	Facilities Maintenance Corp. of	Odyssey Church	Timely Signs
Canine Companions for	Florida	Open Doors Educational	Town of Wappinger Little League
Independence	Horses for a Change	Advocates	Challenger League
Child Abuse Prevention Center,	JGS, CPA, PC	Package Pavement Co., Inc.	United Healthcare
Inc.	Kinotech Voice Technologies, Inc.	Page Management Group LLC	Van DeWater & Van DeWater
City Winery Hudson Valley	Liscum, McCormack, VanVoorhis	Personalize It	Veith Enterprises, LLC
ClearCaptions, LLC	Mackey Butts & Wise LLP	Sergio Pessoa	Walkkill Valley Federal Savings &
CPL Team	Marvin & Company, P.C., CPAs	Pine Innovative Planning	Loan
Cuddy & Feder LLP	Mauri Architects P.C.	Prockter Design, LLC	Weisman Success Resources, Inc.
Day & Stokosa Engineering, P.C.	McCabe & Mack LLP	Professional Computer Associates	Corey Whitted (SERVPRO of
Down Syndrome Association	Merrill Lynch - The Irwin/	Rhinebeck Bank	Western Dutchess County &
of the Hudson Valley	Burlingame Group	Sloan Architects, P.C.	Kingston/New Paltz)
Dutchess Community College	Mid Hudson Construction	Special Olympics New York	William A Smith & Son, Inc.
Academy of Music	Management	Stenger Roberts Davis &	Zylofone Studios, Inc.
	Mobile Life Support Services, Inc.	Diamond, LLP	

## 2020 GIFTS IN-KIND

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Able Newspaper

All Sport Health & Fitness

Beer World

Bergen Mask Task Force

Bigelow Tea

Boscobel House & Gardens

Children's Home of Poughkeepsie

Christiania Vodka

City Winery Hudson Valley

Community Enterprises, LLC

Cornell Cooperative Extension

Orange County

Face Mask Friends

Jeffery Fox

William Gordon

Harney & Sons

Highway Displays

Hudson Valley Helping Heroes

iHeartMedia

Kelly Johnston

Maple Ridge Bruderhof

Community

Ayden McDevitt

Charlene McManus

Media Solstice Marketing &

Public Relations

Dina M. Menzie

Microsoft Corporation

Anthony F. Morando

Karen Mott

Barbara Murray

Mark A. Nace

Oak & Reed

Orange Die Cutting Corp.

Elisa Pisanelli-Sherman

Powelton Club

Theodore O. Prenting

Prime Print Shop

Gabriella Rado

Right at Home Albany

S&S Vac

SallyeAnder

Sloop Brewing Co.

The Professional Image Marketing

& Public Relations

The Shoppes at the Historic Palen

Drug Store

Twaalfskill Club

William Van Ornum

## 2020 TRIBUTE GIFTS IN HONOR/MEMORY

---

Patricia Larkin

Erin McGuinness

Barbara Murray

Teresa C. Colucci Shand

Mark Shapiro





Please join our PLEDGE TO POWER campaign by adopting the principles of the Pledge. The Pledge is a commitment that you can make as an individual, an organization, or a business. When you sign the Pledge, you agree to keep in mind the interests and needs of people with disabilities.

You also agree to do your part to help people with disabilities attain independence, self-determination, integration, and acceptance by others. Please join us in celebrating our vision that all people are recognized and valued for their Abilities First.

If you would like to go beyond the Pledge, we will provide a presentation, training, or other kinds of guidance on how to implement inclusion and accessibility in the workplace, place of business, or other part of your community.

# WE PLEDGE

TO KEEP IN MIND THE INTERESTS  
AND NEEDS OF THOSE WITH  
**DISABILITIES** AND SUPPORT THEIR  
INTERESTS WHERE POSSIBLE

*to attain independence, self-determination,  
integration, and acceptance by others through  
education, exploration, and experience.*

## POWER POINTS:

- ✓ **A**sk before providing assistance.
- ✓ **B**e respectful in words and actions.
- ✓ **I**nclude people in activities, clubs, and events.
- ✓ **L**isten and communicate directly with the person.
- ✓ **I**dentify how a program, goods, or services can be adapted for inclusiveness.
- ✓ **T**ake the initiative to assure diversity with activities, participants, or employees.
- ✓ **I**nitiate changes to an environment for accessibility and inclusion.
- ✓ **E**ducate yourself and others.
- ✓ **S**peak people-first language by defining the person, not a disability, limiting stereotypes and assumptions.
- ✓ **FIRST** step starts with you!



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OF THE HUDSON VALLEY, INC.

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