



Newsletter For The Friends & Supporters of MILESTONE, Inc.

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### A DECADE OF EXPANSION

The 1980's saw a time of expansion at MILESTONE, in an effort to provide for people at every level of disability and ensure each person the opportunity to achieve his or her highest level of growth and independence, MILESTONE expanded their Group Home Programs to encompass five additional locations. Searles, Javelin, Applewood, Dierks, and Belvidere offering adults the advantages of living closer to family and friends, and the opportunity to share in the resources of our community.



The 1980's also saw the opening of the MILESTONE Training Center, a sheltered workshop where both life skills and vocational skills were taught. MILESTONE was awarded a Community Integrated Living Arrangement (CILA) pilot project grant towards the end of the decade. The men and women in this program could live alone or with a friend in apartments MILESTONE helps them select and maintain. They work in the community, do their own shopping, pay their own bills, and plan their own activities with support from MILESTONE staff.

The 1990's saw the opening of MILESTONE Industries, a new sheltered workshop and vocational training center. The 16,500 square foot production area provides much-needed opportunities for full-time employment to the Individuals in MILESTONE's residential program, while offering regional businesses quality production services.



1996 was the most exciting year in MILESTONE's history since Elmwood Heights opened. Through negotiations with the Department of Mental Health, MILESTONE received the funding to begin the conversion of Elmwood Heights to a facility serving adults with developmental and physical disabilities and complex medical needs.

More group homes were built and opened in the 90's and the decade ended with the opening of the MILESTONE Dental Clinic.



A grant from the Department of Human Services provided the funding and the clinic provided much-needed access to dental care for the individuals served by MILESTONE, as well as those served by other agencies located throughout the state. It is the only free-standing dental clinic serving persons with disabilities in the United States.

But MILESTONE was not done growing, a look at the 2000's in the next issue of MILESTONE Matters.



## FROM THE DESK OF BILL GRAHN, MILESTONE CEO AND PRESIDENT

Friends of MILESTONE,

Recently as we were enjoying an early summer day during Spring, sun shining, warmer than normal temperatures a beautiful day, I embarked on a walk around our campus. As I rounded the corner, I heard the most beautiful music and witnessed a scene that totally filled my heart. The music and scene were a combination of laughter, friendship, and engagement. Staff and individuals in an exciting game of beachball volleyball, others taking time to help fly kites, while still others engaged in music and conversation. The genuine joy and happiness transported me back to my start over 30 years ago and I began a time of self-reflection.

Self-reflection takes me back to so many wonderful memories and the excitement of celebrating 50 years of MILESTONE and its mission. We cannot thank anyone and everyone that has had an impact on this organization enough. I sit and wonder what thoughts a small group with a (1) folding table, a couple of chairs and a one-line phone had in mind. That group set the cornerstone for this great organization. The vision of that small group, coupled with past and current Board of Directors, past and current staff, donors, and amazing leaders both former and present is what has helped us to grow and provide exceptional services for all these years. These same people, both former and new, are committed to driving the mission of MILESTONE forward for at least another 50 years. I am beyond proud to serve alongside them all.

Without all of you MILESTONE would not be who we are today. An agency I am proud to serve but most importantly a place that over 225 individuals call Home. Please take time to reflect, allow yourself to get lost in your memories. Thank you all, thank you for all you do! Here is to the next 50 years!

Thank you,

Bill Grahn  
CEO and President



## DEALING WITH LIFE'S TRANSITIONS



Janet's MILESTONE journey began when she was living in Missouri. Her mother passed away and her father was not able to care for her. Until her family found a permanent home for Janet her sisters agreed to take care of her. The family looked at many facilities, and once they visited MILESTONE, they knew their search was over. The placement process happened quickly, and Janet went to live at MILESTONE on Kishwaukee Street as her first home in 1986.

The transition was hard on everyone. Janet would call her sister about midnight or 2:00 a.m. crying. The emotional roller coaster was brutal at first, but about 3 weeks in, Janet did not call her sister one night. Her sister immediately called Janet's home and asked to talk to her. Janet told her sister she was having fun with her new friends, and she was happy to be with them. Janet never called her sister during the middle of the night again. It was hard for her sister to hear Janet crying...begging her to pick her up, but she knew that Janet was with people and staff that would make her happy, take care of her, and she would make new friendships. Her sisters breathed a sigh of relief when Janet felt comfortable enough to not call during the night again.

Janet's family says the experience has been absolutely wonderful! The staff takes care of Janet and know how to comfort her and handle her when she is confused about an issue. Every person they have met over the last 35 plus years has always put Janet and her feelings first. It is not easy to talk to Janet about something that is unpleasant that she does not want to do, but all of the staff have always known the right way to proceed with Janet, never hurting her feelings.

This was reflected when changes in Janet's medical condition necessitated a move to a different home, which was upsetting to Janet. The staff was patient and worked with her until she was comfortable with

the move and did everything, they could to help her adapt. Janet is happy to call the new location her home. This is also due to the staff knowing that Janet was reluctant to leave her friends at her old home and they made Janet feel as though she was now part of the family at the new location.

Over the years there have been a few bumps, but Janet's sister points out the staff is always quick to correct them.

She says MILESTONE has been a blessing since day one. Every staff member has been courteous and helpful to Janet and her family. She is grateful every day that MILESTONE is where Janet resides. She knows her sister will be loved and taken care of every day.

Her advice if someone must place a loved one in a facility, is to accept that it is a very hard decision. No one wants to do this, because of guilt and we think no one will love the family member as much as we do. However, if you do your homework and research, you can find the right facility that will match your loved one's needs. And further, if you end up choosing MILESTONE, you do not have to worry about whether they will be loved and cared for. "My sister and I looked at several facilities before we made the decision to go with MILESTONE for Janet. MILESTONE on Kishwaukee Street was our first choice and I have never regretted that decision. Janet is cared for and loved just as much at MILESTONE as we would care for and love her. Trust your gut and know that you are actually helping your family member thrive. When Janet first entered MILESTONE, she could not make decisions without consulting us; now she makes them every day for herself. Janet could not order food in a restaurant, now she does it on her own every time we take her out to dinner. Janet could not dress herself; now she does this all by herself. " Janet blossomed upon entering MILESTONE because her sisters say they did too many things for her; They learned Janet could do things herself and was good at it, which was all taught to her by MILESTONE staff. Also, the friendships Janet has made over the years at MILESTONE are priceless; she has a complete social network which brightens her life every day.

## MILESTONE MISSION STATEMENT

"Everyone has the right to be treated with respect, to participate in community life, to develop and exercise personal competence, to have family and friends, and to make decisions in their lives." MILESTONE, Inc. exists to ensure that persons with developmental disabilities can exercise these same rights.





## HELEN BRACH FOUNDATION HELPS THE MILESTONE DENTAL CLINIC

A grant from the Helen Brach Foundation will provide the funding so uninsured and under-insured patients can get the dental care they need. The MILESTONE Dental clinic provides care to children and adults with developmental disabilities from 40 counties in Illinois, including the Chicago area.

## MILESTONE DENTAL CLINIC GETS GRANT FROM KJELLSTROM FAMILY FOUNDATION

A grant from the Kjellstrom family Foundation provided the funding for a new server for the MILESTONE Dental clinic. The Kjellstrom Family Foundation was established in 2004 and sustains the memory of Janet Kjellstrom and her history of philanthropy and supporting many organizations in the area.

## NEW OUTDOOR SENSORY AREA



Thanks to a grant from the Blazer Foundation an outdoor sensory area was added to the outdoor recreation area at the Milestone Training Center. The flowers are both colorful and musical.



## FRIDAY FUN

GIGI's Fridays Friends is always a fun time.

From games, country line dancing, Halloween parties and to so much more. They group is really a group of close friends, who celebrate happy times together, and support each other through difficult times.



## ENJOYING LOCKWOOD PARK

Individuals from MTC had a wonderful time enjoying the sunshine and animals at Lockwood Park. They even had a chance to brush and help groom some of the animals.







## MILESTONE ARTISTS DISPLAYED THEIR WORK

The creations of MILESTONE's Artists got rave reviews during the Rockford Art Council's Spring Artscene. The weekend event was well attended, and everyone had a good time.



## HELP US PUT SMILES ON THE FACES OF THE INDIVIDUALS MILESTONE SERVES.



Summer camp is a yearly highlight for the Individuals at MILESTONE,

But, due to ongoing COVID-19 restrictions and concerns our camp program is a bit different. It will be a hybrid with some people traveling to summer camp again this year, and others will be camping at home, or taking part in local group activities.



Our goal is to send as many Individuals as possible to summer camp for a week. However for those who can not travel, we will bring Summer Camp to them with a Summer Camp Staycation. All the fun of summer camp will be brought to them, through a combination of activities, virtual events, group events and a special "Camp MILESTONE" area at MILESTONE industries.



**Please help us make it a reality by Adopting a Camper or an Activity**

**For \$50 you can adopt an activity box.**

**Or**

**For \$100 you can Adopt a camper's Staycation, or trip to summer camp.**

For more information please call the Development Office at 815-639-2965





## SPECIAL OLYMPICS UPDATE

### SPRING GAMES

Over 60 MILESTONE Athletes competed this year, and MILESTONE had the honor of leading everyone in the Special Olympics pledge. The rain held off and everyone had a great time. 18 gold medalists earned a trip to State games in Bloomington/Normal later this year.



### BOCCE

15 MILESTONE Athletes took part in the Region A Special Olympics Bocce Tournament. The gold medalists will advance to state games later this year.

#### BOCCE MEDALS

- (2) gold medals
- (2) silver medals
- (8) bronze medals
- (3) 4th place ribbons



### SPRING GAME MEDALS:

- (18) gold medals
- (21) silver medals
- (9) bronze medals
- (14) 4th place ribbons
- (9) 5th place ribbons
- (5) 6th place ribbons
- (2) 7th place ribbons
- (1) 8th place ribbon



### WISH LIST



**ROCVALE CHILDREN'S HOME**

Nintendo Switch gaming system 3 @ \$400.....	\$1,200
Sensory equipment .....	\$2,000
Big Screen TV.....	\$2,000



**MILESTONE TRAINING CENTER**

iPads 4@ \$400 .....	\$1,600
Sensory equipment 6 classrooms @ \$3000 .....	\$18,000



**MILESTONE INDUSTRIES**

iPads - 4 @ \$400.....	\$1,600
Various Educational Materials.....	\$3,000



**AGENCY WIDE**

AED Training Units.....	\$2,000
Robo-Coupe Commercial Food processor 2@ \$1,900 .....	\$3,800



**MILESTONE DENTAL CLINIC**

Parking Lot Repair and Repaving.....	\$40,000
Replace carpeting/ flooring .....	\$9,000
Schick 33 digital x-ray sensor, cable, box kit 3 @ \$7000 .....	\$21,000



**ADULT GROUP HOMES**

Slings for EZ-stand 3 @ \$350.....	\$1,050
Patio .....	\$4,000
iPads 4@ \$400.....	\$1,600
Exercise equipment .....	\$2,550
Support railings.....	\$3,000
Washer and Dryer 6 @ \$1,000 .....	\$6,000
Carports at 2 group homes @ \$8,000.....	\$16,000
New Furniture 10 homes @ \$7,500 .....	\$75,000
Bathroom renovations 2 @ \$30,000 .....	\$60,000
New Flooring multiple homes.....	\$50,000
Automatic door openers for bedrooms and bathrooms 6@ \$3500 .....	\$21,000
Bike rack.....	\$500
New windows .....	\$6,000
New Furniture - 10 Homes @ \$4,000 .....	\$40,000
Bathroom Renovations - 2 @ \$30,000.....	\$60,000



**ELMWOOD HEIGHTS SPECIALIZED CARE FACILITY**

Adaptive Swing Set with Wheel Chair Swing.....	\$8,000
Medical Equipment.....	\$10,000
Positioning Slings 40@ \$275.....	\$11,000
Replacement Entrance Doors 6@ \$5,000 .....	\$30,000
Sensory Equipment 6 homes@ \$5,000 .....	\$30,000
Patio Door replacements for homes .....	\$40,000
Bedroom/ bathroom remodels and upgrades in each home 6 @ \$15,000.....	\$90,000
Replacement flooring for two homes.....	\$20,000
EZ lifts 5 @ \$8,000 .....	\$40,000
EZ Lift Replacement batteries 10 @ \$100 .....	\$1,000
Medical Exam Bed.....	\$10,000
Replacement Windows for 6 home@ \$15,000.....	\$90,000
Wheel Chair Van 7 passenger .....	\$80,000

MILESTONE, Inc. is a 501 (c)(3) Illinois not-for-profit organization. MILESTONE Matters is developed to inform the public of the program services we offer to developmentally disabled citizens from Northern Illinois. To learn more about MILESTONE and the individuals we serve, please call (815) 654-6100.

Bill Grahn, CEO and President  
MILESTONE Matters Editor: Arles Hendershott  
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### EMPLOYEE ANNIVERSARIES

<b>35 years</b>	Billie Denson	April	<b>15 years</b>	Stephanie Bauer	April
				Tina Lang	April
<b>30 years</b>	April Adams	June		Kayla Breit	June
				Diane Seymour	June
<b>25 years</b>	Alesia Thompson	April	<b>10 years</b>	Donna Nelson	April
	Paula Burnett	June		Bradley Zarembski	April
<b>20 years</b>	Tisha Lewis	May			
	Courtney Udelhofen	May			



Building Lives & Futures

4060 McFarland Road  
Rockford, IL 61111

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**MILESTONE MATTERS** SUMMER 2023



# We're Hiring!

**Open Positions:**

Direct Service Provider: \$16.25/hr • QIDP: \$23.25/hr  
C.N.A.: \$17/hr • C.N.A. Team Leader: \$19/hr  
3rd Shift Home Coordinator: \$18.95/hr

***\$600 Sign On Bonus***

**Benefits:** Health Insurance, Dental/Vision insurance,  
Paid Time Off, Life Insurance, 401k Profit Sharing,  
Tuition Reimbursement, and so much more!

EOE



**Apply online today at**  
[www.jobsatmilestone.com](http://www.jobsatmilestone.com)

Contact Human Resources with any questions  
at 815-639-2849 or [hr@milestone-inc.org](mailto:hr@milestone-inc.org)