Milestone
Building Lives & Futures

MATTERS

Newsletter For The Friends & Supporters of MILESTONE, Inc.

WINTER 2026
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PLEASE HELP US MAKE THESE WISHES REALITY

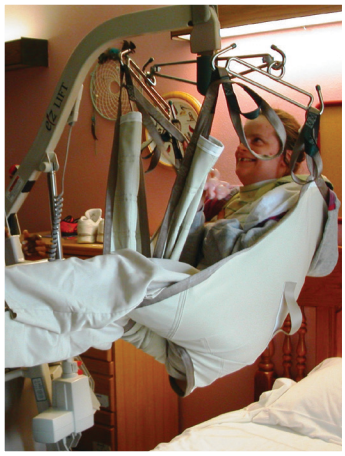
Just like many people this time of year, the staff at Milestone makes a **"Wish List,"** which includes items that are needed to ensure the Individuals in our care continue to receive the highest level of care possible while working towards reaching their highest potential. Many items on the list each year become reality thanks to the continued support of the entire community. A vast majority of Milestone's revenue comes from contracts with the State of Illinois to provide both care and services to our Individuals. Those funds are restricted and cannot be used for the items on this list. Support from the community is what has made the difference and allowed us to maintain our levels of care.

This is only a look at some of the items we hope will be in Santa's bag for Milestone.



iPads allow our Individuals to learn new skills and communicate with family. We have an ongoing need for iPads at all facilities.

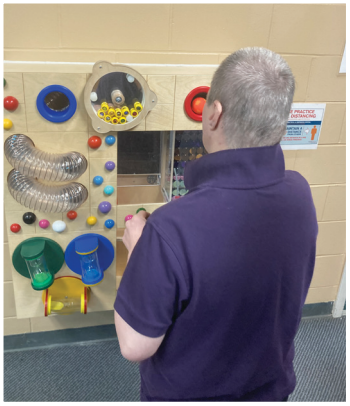
EZ Lifts and slings allow our staff to safely move an Individual from bed to a chair.



Outdoor recreational equipment allows our Individuals to enjoy the outdoors and the sunshine.



Sensory Equipment can change an Individuals life by reducing both behaviors and the need for medication.



A complete list is on page 7.



Milestone
Building Lives & Futures

FROM THE DESK OF BILL GRAHN, MILESTONE CEO AND PRESIDENT

Winter 2026

Dear Friends of Milestone:

As the holiday season approaches, at Milestone we are reminded of the many blessing that come from caring for one another, building meaningful relationships, and celebrating the unique gifts each person brings to our lives. On behalf of our entire Milestone family, I want to extend our warmest holiday wishes and sincere appreciation to you.

Throughout the year, we have had the privilege of witnessing moments of growth, independence, achievement, and joy. These moments remind us why our work is so important and reinforce our commitment to helping every individual live a meaningful, fulfilling life with dignity, respect, and opportunity.

2026 was another banner year for those who call Milestone Home. Our athletes again participated in Regional and State Competitions in Track and Field, Bocce, Volleyball, Golf, Bowling, as well as Basketball and Softball Skills. Our coaches dedicated themselves to ensuring our athletes were well prepared and were able to enjoy the camaraderie and the competitions. Many awards, memories and even a few State Titles were brought home. Due to your generosity and community partnership, our Campers once again were able to experience summer camp both home and away. And although it was a rainy day our Milestone Singers and Dancers brought the sunshine with their annual performance at the Boone County Fair.

Giving back to the community that supports us without hesitation is another activity that brings us immense joy. The individuals participate with pride in regularly scheduled volunteer activities throughout Rockford. October brought a beautiful fall day for the annual Trunk or Treat. Individuals and staff worked together to decorate vehicles, make costumes, and hand out candy to all who were able to participate.

We remain committed to the 260 individuals we serve daily. We are blessed with amazing employees, individuals, parents, guardians, friends, and community. Thank you all for being a special part of the Milestone Family. We are forever grateful for your unwavering spiritual and financial support.

We are Truly Blessed. May you and your family have a blessed Holiday Season, and I pray that you have safe and blessed 2027.

Bill Grahn

THE SPECIAL BOND OF SIBLINGS

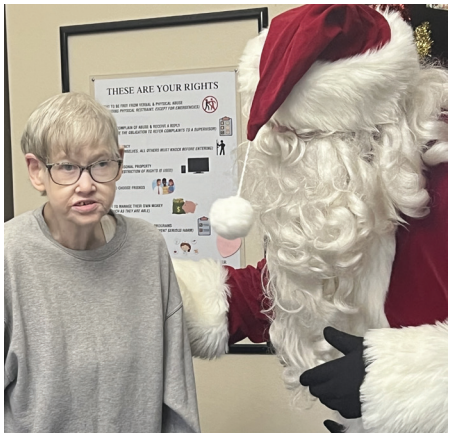


Brothers and sisters have a special bond that lasts a lifetime. In the case of Tom and Linda, Tom always knew one day he would be the one looking out for his sister. Linda was the older of the 2 siblings, but Tom became her legal guardian after both of their parents and older brother passed away. Something he knew would happen from an early age and a responsibility he gladly accepted. Growing up Tom did not get to know Linda because she was living at the Dixon Developmental Center, but that changed in 1979 when Milestone opened Elmwood Heights and his sister was transferred to her new home. Everyone in the family was thrilled, they could visit Linda more often, take her to the area parks and out to eat. Linda also flourished she enjoys going to work everyday first at the Center of Hope and for the last 40 years at Milestone Industries and during Day Training at her Group Home. Tom is thrilled that Linda has a full life adding her room reflects her personality and her likes. Her stereo is her prized possession because she loves to listen to music while she colors. While Tom is her Guardian he says Milestone's staff does well over 95% of the work required to meet her needs, adding they do an amazing job. He says part of the reason is because they do an amazing job at communicating any behavior or health changes or special needs that may develop. He says he gets regular updates about his sister and that makes his job



easier. Being a guardian for a loved one is a large responsibility and he advises anyone who is looking to possibly place someone to do their homework, to look at the overall record of the agency with the State regulatory departments and how long they have been providing services.

But Tom says the most important this is to visit and look at the face of the people who are being served. Look for the smiles. Because he says smiles are what you will find at Milestone.







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.

TRUNK OR TREAT

Over 200 Trick or Treaters attended Milestone's annual Trunk or Treat at Milestone Industries.
Over 20 vans were decorated and the Individuals were all smiles as the handed-out candy.
A special thank you to our sponsors who helped make the event possible.







MILESTONE TRUNK OR TREAT SPONSORS

HOWLING HALLOWS EVE SPONSOR
Eldridge Roofing

GRAND GHOST SPONSOR
R.Nelson Landscaping

HOCUS POCUS SPONSORS
Marshall Porter
Rockford Park District

SCARY SKELETON SPONSOR
Agnew Law Office,P.C

TOMBSTONE TRUNK SPONSORS
The Scott Clark Family
Fur Company
Dan and Stacy Ross
Tim and Lisa Normoyle
Meridian
The Sturm Family

WITCHS BREW CANDY SPONSOR
CB Distrbutors

JACK O'LANTERN SIGN SPONSOR
Meridian Printing















EXPANDING SMART TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM THANKS TO GRANT

The Smart Technology program in the Adult Group Homes is expanding thanks to a grant from Comcast. This program allowed the Individuals to adjust blinds and turn on fans and lights without staff assistance. It also helps with the tracking of weight and blood pressure. The program was started with an initial grant from Comcast in 2025.

MICHAEL BURJA MEMORIAL EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIP

Tammeca Howard is the recipient of this year's Michael Burja Memorial Education Scholarship. She has been an employee of Milestone for almost 14 years, and has worked as a DSP and most recently a Team Leader at MTC. Tammeca is currently enrolled at Grand Canyon University and will be working towards a Bachelor of Science in Education and Special Education. Tammeca plans to use her degree to further her professional career with Milestone. The scholarship was established by the Burja family in memory of their son, Michael, who was part of the Elmwood Heights family for over 8 years.

ENJOYING LOCKWOOD PARK

The last Day Camp of the year was at Lockwood Park, thanks to a partnership with the Rockford Park District. The Fall weather was a perfect time to learn about horses and the other animals at the park.



HELPING THE UNITED WAY

The staff and Individuals at Milestone's Elmwood Height's facility raised $500 for the Rock River Valley United Way in honor and memory of Shawn Way. The money was raised during a Balloon and Bake Sale. United Way Executive Director Julie Bosma was extremely grateful for the donation and the fact it was given in memory of Mr. Way who she considered a friend of the United Way.



HAVING FUN AT THE ICE HOGS GAMES

Everyone had a great time cheering on the Rockford Ice Hogs and meeting Hammy. The game was exciting and everyone is ready to go back.





SPECIAL OLYMPICS UPDATE

STATE GOLF COMPETITION



Golf Skills
1 - Gold Medal
1 - Silver Medal
2 - Bronze Medal
3 - 5th Place Ribbon
1 - 6th Place RIbbon

One athlete traveled to Forsyth, Il for the State Golf Competition where he earned a 4th place ribbon in golf skills

STATE SOFTBALL COMPETITION

Eight athletes traveled to Springfield for the State Softball Skills competition. Everyone had fun and did a great job.



Softball medals
2 - Gold Medals
2 - Silver Medals
1 - Bronze Medals
2 - 4th Place Ribbon
1 - 5th Place Ribbon

WINNING BIG AT THE STATE FALL GAMES

The Milestone Goats earned both Gold Medals and a Trophy at the Modified Volleyball-Division III Competition. The games were held at the UW Sports Factory in downtown Rockford, so no one had far to travel. This was a great end to a long season.

BOCCE REGIONAL GAMES

Milestone was well represented at the Regional Bocce Tournament in DeKalb with 25 Athletes and 4 unified partners. Five athletes advanced to the State games in Springfield.



Bocce Medals
5 - Gold Medals
5 - Silver Medals
12 - Bronze Medals
6 - 4th Place Ribbon





HEAD REGIONAL VOLLEYBALL COMPETITION

Milestone's two modified volleyball teams traveled to Oaklawn, IL. to compete in the Regional Volleyball Competition at Oaklawn High School. The Milestone Marvels fought a tough division and came home with the Bronze Medal. The Milestone Goats came home with the gold medal and will advance to the State Games.





WISH LIST

Milestone



MILESTONE TRAINING CENTER

Replace Carpeting	$100,000
Nintendo Switch gaming system	$400
Replace gym tiles	$50,000
Outside recreation area upgrades	$5,000
Sensory equipment (12 classrooms @ $3,000)	$36,000
Concrete work/leveling	$15,000
Commercial grade entry doors (2 @ $2,000)	$4,000



MILESTONE INDUSTRIES

Various educational materials	$3,000
Concrete work/leveling	$15,000
Art supplies	$3,000
Replacement carpeting	$20,000
Outdoor covered swings (3 @ $1,000)	$3,000
Outdoor recreation area	$20,000



ELMWOOD HEIGHTS SPECIALIZED CARE FACILITY

Adaptive swing set with wheelchair 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	$40,000
Bedroom/bathroom remodels (6 @ $15,000)	$90,000
Replacement flooring (2 homes)	$20,000
Replacement windows (6 homes @ $15,000)	$90,000
Hi/Low hospital beds and mattresses (5 @ $4,000)	$20,000
Closet remodels (6 homes @ $3,000)	$18,000
Resurface walking path	$70,000
Hospital beds (15 @ $2079.99)	$31,199.85

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
Operatory upgrades	$50,000
Dehumidifier/Humidifier system	$20,000
Operatory lighting	$5,000
New office windows	$15,000



ADULT GROUP HOMES

Slings for EZ-stand (3 @ $350)	$1,050
XXL EZ lift slings (2 @ $400)	$800
Seated Scale	$1500
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 (2 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 (12 @ $3,500)	$42,000
Acoustic/noise reducing tiles (2 rooms @ $8,000)	$16,000
Screened-in porch	$8,000
Extended/widened driveway	$10,000
Car/Sedan	$40,000
Whole home generators (would like 3)	$15,000
Bike rack	$500
New windows (2 homes @ $6,000)	$12,000

JOURNEY BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT CLINIC

Therapeutic Board games	$500
Art Therapy Kits	$500
Paper Shredder	$310
Nex Playground	$350
PlayPop8 gaming system	$300
Smart TV	$350

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

35 years

Emma Jenkins	October

30 years

Bonita Dismuke	December

25 years

Laura Van	October
Robelys Batista	October
Patrice Neely	October
Keri Johnson	October

10 years

Taucisha Williams	October
Aime Contreras	November
Tajhe Patterson	November

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Milestone
We're Hiring!

Open Positions:

Direct Service Provider: $20.00 to $21.00/hr
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LPN: $31.37 to $37.36/hr • RN: $37.37 to $44.38/hr
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$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

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Contact Human Resources with any questions
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