

CARE LETTER

FALL 2023

A newsletter for those who care about Marklund



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From the Desk of Gil Fonger, President & CEO

I am thrilled to share with you an exciting development in our continuing commitment to enhancing the quality of life for those served at Marklund.

On June 22, the Marklund Board of Directors UNANIMOUSLY approved the \$15.5 million, 24-bed expansion and renovation of the Marklund Wasmond Center in Elgin. We anticipate to be under construction by November once we receive approval from the Elgin City Council, and completed by Spring 2025.

At Marklund, we have always been driven by **our mission...our promise...to make everyday life possible for individuals with profound disabilities**. This expansion represents a significant step forward in our commitment to the residents served today, and those whom we will serve in the future. Our newly expanded and renovated residential facility will not only be a beautiful, physical space but a haven of care, innovation and empowerment, tailored to meet the unique needs of each resident.

This 18,000-square-foot expansion and renovation project, which developed as part of our M2030 Strategic Plan, will include the following key features:

- Room for 24 additional beds, bringing the total to 85, all of which will feature capabilities for the latest vent care technology
- 2 additional Community Day Services Classrooms, expanding to 7
- A new Recreation Room
- 2 additional Nursing Stations
- 2 additional Living Rooms for parents/guardians to visit with their loved ones (expanding to 3)
- More than double the Parking Spots from 65 to 131
- Dedicated Therapy Area
- A new Training Room for staff
- 1 additional Marklund Day School Classroom (expanding to 3)
- Dedicated storage and receiving areas
- Spa room
- More restrooms for staff & visitors
- Bay/greenhouse windows in all of the CDS classrooms

We began our exploration of expanding and renovating the facility in January 2022 and have worked diligently since that time with staff, architects, the board, as well as state and local leadership. This expansion aligns seamlessly with our core values and **vision of creating a happy, safe, purpose-filled life for every individual with intellectual and developmental disabilities**. It serves as a testament to our dedication to make a meaningful difference in the lives of those who need us today and tomorrow.

We will keep you updated on the progress of this project as we move forward. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.



Thank you for your unwavering support and dedication to our shared mission.

Warm regards,

Gilbert W. Fonger, President & CEO



Scan for more details



On Our Cover: Back to School!

In August, Marklund Day School opened its doors for the 2023-24 school year to smiles, laughter, high-fives and high jumps! Cheers to our teachers, paraprofessionals and staff for a great start! Watch our progress throughout the year on social media!





Making *everyday life* possible for individuals with profound disabilities

October 15, 2023

8:30 a.m. 5K/1-Mile Start

Run, Walk & Roll for Marklund #11

Mark your calendars and lace up your sneakers for the 11th Annual Run, Walk & Roll 5K/1-Mile fundraiser, an event dedicated to making a positive impact in the lives of individuals with profound developmental disabilities.

Hosted by Marklund for the 11th year, this popular community event is scheduled to take place at 8:30 a.m. Sunday, Oct. 15, at the Marklund Hyde Center campus, 1S450 Wyatt Dr., Geneva. Participants of all ages are welcome to run it, walk it, or roll it in this inclusive 5K/1M, an event that welcomes everyone, regardless of their physical abilities.

"Our 11th Annual Run, Walk, and Roll is more than just a race; it's a celebration of unity, resilience and community support," said Celine Pierce, Race Director. "Whether you're a seasoned runner or someone looking to enjoy a leisurely stroll, this event promises a heartwarming and energetic experience for all while raising awareness and funds to support programs and services that enrich the lives of those served by Marklund."

Various participation options are available for:

- those looking to challenge themselves and compete for top honors and prizes
- for individuals and families who want to enjoy a power or relaxing walk and a morning of togetherness
- and for participants using wheelchairs or mobility aids to feel welcomed and meet challenges

After the race, everyone is invited to enjoy food, beverages and music at the *Party in the Park*.

Online registration is open and can be completed at www.marklund.org/5k. Commemorative event hoodies or belt bags are available on a limited basis.



Register and Fundraise at
www.marklund.org/5k

SAVE the DATE

04.21.2024



presented by:



Getting to know

Carol Donahue,

Marklund Board Member



Carol has been retired for many years. Her last paid position was V.P. Commercial Lending at Amcore Bank.

Background/Education: I have lived in Geneva for many years. I have two grown children and one granddaughter. I enjoy hiking, biking, gardening, plant-based cooking, and beekeeping. I have a BS in Psychology from Iowa State University.

Community Involvement: I volunteer at several local organizations most notably Marklund where I am Vice-Chair of the Board. I am also passionate about working with the Chicago Area Track & Field Organizing Committee to raise interest and financial support for the newly developed Settler's Hill Cross Country Track. Once a landfill, the area has become a premier high school and collegiate running venue.

Years on Marklund Board: 2015-2018 and 2021 to present

Positions held on Marklund Board: Member of Development Committee, Finance Committee, Vice-Chair

Reason for accepting appointment to Marklund board: I had volunteered at Marklund for many years in the Aqua-therapy program, Top Hat Ball committee, and Run, Walk, & Roll committee before accepting a position on the Board. I was privileged to see the level of care Marklund provides and to witness the daily miracles. Working with the staff and other volunteers and getting to know the clients served by Marklund has enriched my life. Accepting a position on the board has given me the opportunity to help plan for the future at Marklund.

Priorities/goals: Use my time and talents to continue our mission of making everyday life possible for individuals with profound disabilities.

See Carol's story at
www.marklund.org/ourstories



10 February 2024

**Celebrate
#28TopHat,
where everyone
is treated
like royalty!**

SAVE the DATE

10 February 2024

6:00 p.m. - 12:30 a.m.

Chicago Marriott Downtown Magnificent Mile

Honoring Friend of the Year: Jackie & Frank Murnane

Join Event Chairs Sandy & Mike Herlihy in supporting children and adults with profound developmental disabilities at this white-tie gala affair, the most formal of all celebrations. Over the past 28 years, Marklund's Annual Top Hat Ball has become one of the premier fundraising events in the Chicago area. Spend the evening in royal splendor—tuxedos, white bow ties, white gloves, evening gowns and even black top hats are all welcome.



Fundraiser of the Year Nominee

We are proud to share that **Jeannine Zupo, Signature Events Director**, has been nominated for 'Fundraiser of the Year' for The Raise Awards, an annual celebration hosted by OneCause, that honors the vision, passion and dedication of top fundraising professionals and their nonprofit organizations.

This recognition is well-deserved, as Jeannine has played a pivotal role in the success of our Top Hat Ball and Golf Classic fundraisers. Her dedication to raising millions of dollars for Marklund, while creating exceptional experiences for our donors and guests, is truly commendable.

"Jeannine's passion for making everyday life possible for our residents, students and community clients shines through in every event she organizes. We are grateful to have her on the team and can't wait for another amazing Top Hat Ball in February!" - Heather Graves, Chief Development Officer



Celebrating one of the best golf outings in Marklund history!


41
Years

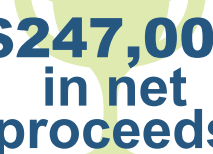

66
Sponsor
Companies


240
Golfers


40+
Volunteers


MANY
Generous
Donors

=


\$247,000
in net
proceeds

Meet our Board of Directors



Not pictured: Dan Foley

The Board of Directors plays a vital role in guiding and governing Marklund. With responsibility for overseeing strategic direction, budgeting, guidelines and policies, the Board sets the organization's course and helps ensure its financial well-being. The Marklund Board is made up of professionals from throughout the Chicago area with a wide variety of business and other relevant experience and expertise who are united by their passion for our mission. The Board meets five times per year, and directors are active in other ways by attending special events, volunteering onsite, and assisting with fundraising efforts. Each member is committed to innovation and growth in pursuit of Marklund's vision of providing a safe, happy, purpose-filled life for every individual with intellectual and developmental disabilities.



2023-24 Board of Directors



Mike Herlihy, Chair

Carol Donahue, Vice Chair

Jerry Finis, Treasurer, Finance Committee Chair

Jim Armbruster, Secretary

Laura Karlins, Development Committee Chair

Tim Adkins

Dr. Maleeha Basha

Howard Brandeisky

Carie Carney

Gerald Estes

Karyn Fitch

Dan Foley

Yaneth Medina

Frank Murnane Jr.

Aristides Smith

Daniel Whiston



A Conversation with *Kim Kahl*

Director of Community
Day Services (CDS)



Kim has been with Marklund for 3.5 years, starting in 2020 as the Marklund Wasmond Center Community Day Services Program Manager, and moving into her current role in 2022.

Q. What attracted you to Marklund?

A. I've spent my entire career (approximately 15 years), working at local non-profits, serving individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities. Marklund is known for exceptional care and having innovative ideas, which is what initially attracted me. I knew coming to Marklund would be a new challenge I was ready to take on.

Q. What attracted you to this position as Director of Community Day Services?

A. The Director role allows me the opportunity to oversee four different CDS sites (179 clients), each one is so very different. Playing a role in all four of these sites, creates the variety and challenge that I thrive on. The addition of the Bridge Builder program at NEC, really brings this full circle, and allows me to use my variety of skills, each and every day.

Q. What challenges do you face in this role?

A. Funding from the Illinois Department of Human Services is severely lacking, which impacts every aspect of programming, especially staffing levels. Due to this, expanding services continues to be significantly challenging for providers, even though there is a significant need for more services within our community.

See more of Kim's story at
www.marklund.org/ourstories

Nathan Educ

Opening doors to a new sch



"This is a thank you to the staff and people of Marklund for taking care of your Uncle Nathan for 20 years," stated Jim Armbruster on June 27, at the ribbon cutting ceremony of the new Nathan Education Center (NEC), addressing his remarks directly to his two young grandchildren who were in attendance. A Marklund board member, Jim is the father of the new building's namesake.

With several pairs of gold scissors cutting a long purple ribbon, Marklund staff, board members, public officials and donors officially opened Marklund's newest facility located at 1210 Hunter Drive in Elgin. The facility provides space for Marklund's new **Bridge Builder** Community Day Services program for adults with developmental disabilities as well as much-needed additional classrooms for students on the autism spectrum as part of the Marklund Day School.



Marklund Day School at Nathan Education Center

The Day School area within the new Nathan Education Center features five Life Skills classrooms that will allow Marklund to extend specialized school services to an additional 36 students. The classrooms are structured very similar to those at Marklund's other successful day schools in Geneva and Bloomingdale.

The Life Skills program is specifically designed for students on the autism spectrum. This program welcomes students who have cognitive impairments, deficits in expressive communication, and even those with medical needs. Curriculum is individualized based on the needs of the students, really focusing on their skill deficits and getting them to where they need to be.

SCAN TO



LEARN MORE

ation Center:

ool and vocational program



"All of this will help further the Vision that we are committed to at Marklund: **A happy, safe, purpose-filled life for every individual with intellectual and development disabilities,**" said Gil Fonger, Marklund President and CEO. "This state-of-the-art facility and the many dedicated staff members who serve here will open up a whole new world of purpose-filled possibilities to the students and adults who will participate in these programs."

IL State Sen. Cristina Castro took part in the event, thanking Marklund, noting how opening this facility is an important accomplishment and will provide much-needed services to the people in this community. "I want to thank all the community and the donors for the support for this facility because you are going to change lives—you are going to help families."

Bridge Builder & the Community

Marklund's Bridge Builder is a specially-designed therapeutic learning and training program that assists adults with developing new skills and enhancing personal interests and strengths as they pursue independent, fulfilling futures. One of our primary goals is to provide Marklund's Bridge Builder CDS participants the opportunity to engage with the community in the following ways:

- Practice Vocational Skills through volunteering and/or working at local businesses
- Develop Life Skills through weekly shopping outings
- Participate in a structured onsite cooking group
- Increase physical health by utilizing fitness equipment at our local Community Center

We believe that having a connection to local businesses and organizations is important for our participants as well as for the members of the community.



LEARN MORE

Meet
Kevin Gatto
Bridge Builder Program
Manager



Kevin has been with Marklund for 6 years, starting as a Developmental Instructor/Qualified Intellectual Disabilities Professional and in Jan. 2023 became the Bridge Builder Program Manager, helping to develop the program from the ground up.

Q. What attracted you to Marklund?

A. A good friend told me about Marklund. On my tour, most of the staff were interacting with the clients and smiling and laughing, especially George. Seeing that sealed the deal for me. I wanted to be able to serve those with special needs but do so in a supportive, family-like atmosphere.

Q. What vision would you like to see for the Bridge Builder program?

A. Illinois is in the bottom 15% of states for services for adults with disabilities over the age of 22. I want to ensure that those who need services, have programming available to serve them. I would love for Marklund to be able to expand using this model program, so that many more clients can receive services that they need. Programming wise for Bridge Builder, I would love for our clients to have their own micro business onsite and then to be able to go out in the community during the day for competitive paid employment and volunteer opportunities.

Q. A favorite memory from your tenure at Marklund is:

A. When Heather and Shelly played a switch activated basketball game and had a big stare down when Shelly made some shots when it was her turn.

See more of Kevin's story at
www.marklund.org/ourstories

Government Relations Official Visits:

Building relationships, strengthening ties in support of Marklund

In an encouraging display of commitment to Marklund and those it serves, various public officials have visited Marklund locations and/or met with Marklund administration over the past year, learning about the organization, even advocating for our causes and raising awareness about the critical work our staff does.

Among those who have personally connected with Marklund are Congressman Bill Foster, Congresswoman Delia Ramirez, State Senator Cristina Castro, State Representatives Jeff Keicher and Jennifer Sanalidro, Cook County Commissioner Kevin B. Morrison. Illinois Department of Human Services, Division of Developmental Disabilities Interim Director Sarah Myerscough-Mueller and new DHS-DD Director Tonya Piephoff.

"The visits by these officials not only emphasize the significance of our work as a nonprofit in the healthcare sector but also demonstrate their dedication to making positive changes in their communities," said Mary Kobbeman, Government Relations Manager. "The relationships we build with these legislators and public officials often translate into tangible support, whether in the form of increased funding, legislative initiatives, or policy changes. We are very appreciative of their time and efforts."



Senator Cristina Castro Receives this Year's Marklund Advocacy Award

In recognition of her support of Marklund's expansion efforts in the Elgin area and her ongoing advocacy for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, IL State Senator Cristina Castro of Elgin received Marklund's 2023 Excellence in Advocacy Award on August 10.

"We are very appreciative of Sen. Castro's efforts made on our behalf to the state's Joint Committee on Administrative Rules (JCAR) in support of our proposed group home concept in Elgin," said Gil Fonger, Marklund President & CEO. "Her support has helped push this important project forward and we couldn't be more grateful."

In accepting the award, Sen. Castro said *"I believe we need to do all we can to make kids (that Marklund serves) be successful and to give parents a place where they can bring their kids. I so appreciate this award, but remember, this is what I do—I love fighting the good fights!"*

Among past winners were State Representatives Anna Moeller and Keith Wheeler, and Kane County Commissioner Drew Frasz.



Sen. Cristina Castro receives the award from Marklund President & CEO Gil Fonger, left, and Board Chair Mike Herlihy.



Summertime Smiles at Marklund



#SummerGames2023

After 3 years, Marklund Summer Games action was back in full swing with residents proudly showing off their skills to volunteers, staff, families and friends in a celebration of strength, determination and teamwork!



Getting to know
Gerry Estes,
Marklund Board Member



Occupation: Retired, LORD Corporation, Vice President, Global Business Development

Family: 3 daughters and a stepson; daughter Karen has been a resident of the Marklund Wasmond Center/Little Angels since 1985. He and his wife, Charlotte, reside in Chapel Hill, NC.

Why he joined the Marklund board: When the “merger” of Little Angels with Marklund was nearing approval, I attended a question-and-answer meeting at Marklund in Bloomingdale for parents of Little Angels residents and other stakeholders. I was impressed with Gil Fonger’s presentation and his answers to questions regarding the merger, and particularly the vision that the consolidation would be positive for both organizations in the future. Strategic objectives including the diversification of revenue sources, achieving economies of scale and integration of the patient-facing workforce all resonated with me.

Following this meeting I was asked if I would be interested in joining the Board and eagerly accepted the opportunity to participate in the planning and execution of strategy to meet these objectives. I joined the Board in December of 2016. Since that time, I have been a member of the Finance Committee.

I am proud of both organizations for their creativity, flexibility and persistence during this period.

Today, the foresight by Marklund leadership to anticipate the value that the Little Angels organization and facility could have to Marklund is recognized in the plan to expand MWC to accept residents from MPC and then to expand the total resident population for the future.

I have always felt that the Little Angels culture was epitomized in the Cheers lyrics which I paraphrase as “you wanna go someplace where everybody knows your name.” My goal is to keep the expanded MWC as that place for Karen.

See more of Gerry’s story at
www.marklund.org/ourstories

From volunteering to working at Marklund

“I can confidently say that volunteering at Marklund changed my life.”

Adam Schulz was a teenager back in 2009-10 when he volunteered at the Tommy Home on the Marklund Hyde Center campus in Geneva. “We would go on outings with the residents—go shopping, bowling, visit animals at pet stores, and just hang out with them. It was super fun!”

Six years later when he decided to apply for a job at Marklund, he recalled these experiences, particularly noting how kind the volunteer manager and other staff were with him, training and supporting him.

“I remember it was a joy to volunteer so I thought if I could get paid to do anything remotely close to what I had done before, then it would be perfect!”

Adam joined Marklund as a paraprofessional for Marklund Day School in Bloomingdale. One class shy of graduating college, he was encouraged to finish by his manager, Paula Bodzioch, Director of Educational and Adult Services. Now, as a Behaviors Analyst, he is one exam shy of becoming a Board Certified Behavior Analyst. These days he spends his time with students and clients at Marklund’s Nathan Education Center in Elgin.

“Our students come to us with ‘problem’ behaviors,” he explained. “We understand it is just a communication deficit mixed with a learning history. So, within the interdisciplinary team, I help design the environment to reduce the need for problem behavior, while setting up opportunities to increase communication of their wants and needs so that over time, they learn they do not need to use problem behaviors to communicate.”

Also supervising Registered Behavior Technicians, he develops model strategies for working with students.

Mike Jones, Gift Processing Associate for Marklund’s Development Department, supervised Adam in those early years while working in the Tommy Home, and said is happy he returned to Marklund. “I could tell when I worked with him that he embraced it—he was very excited to help out, very in-tune with the residents.”

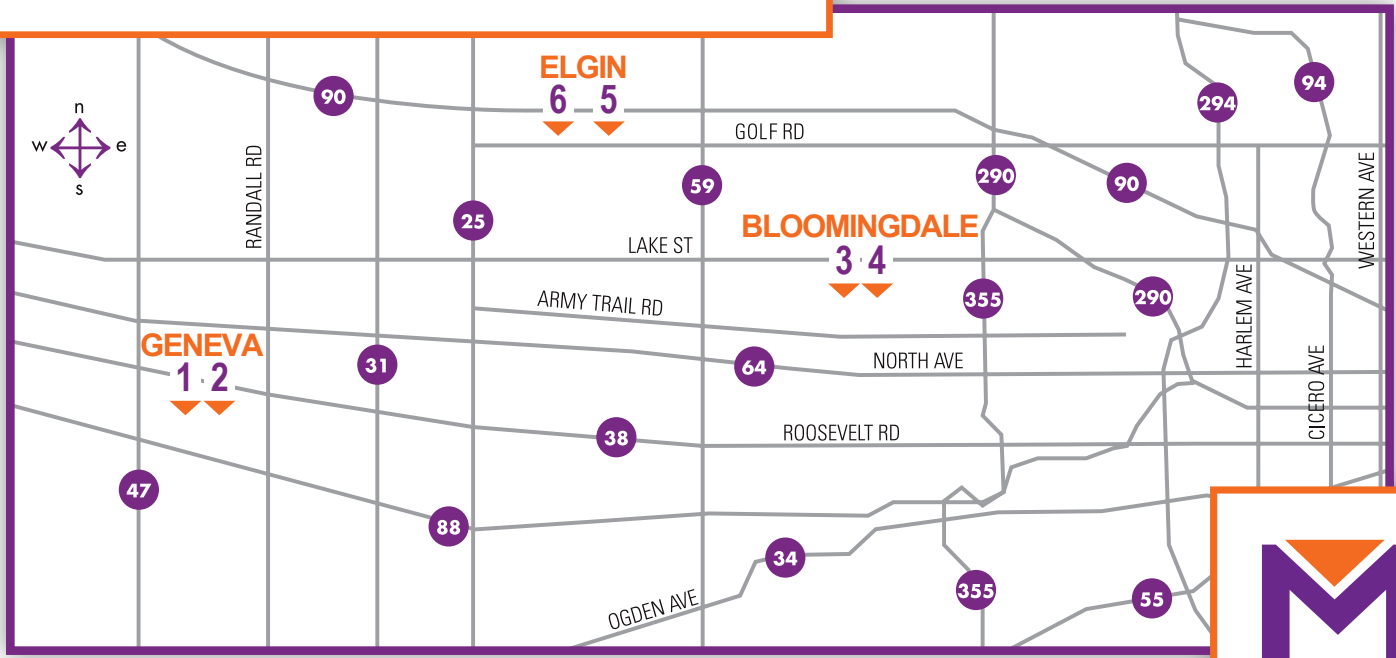


“I do very much enjoy my job at Marklund,” Adam said, remembering how it all began 14 years ago.

What would he say to someone contemplating volunteering at Marklund? “Do it. When you interact with our population, something very rewarding and unique will come out of it, and it will make you a better person.”



FIND US IN 3 COUNTIES



1 Marklund Hyde Center & School

1S450 Wyatt Drive | Geneva, Illinois 60134 | Phone: 630.593.5500

2 Foglia Education Center at Marklund Day School-Geneva

1S450 Wyatt Drive | Geneva, Illinois 60134 | Phone: 630.307.1882

3 Marklund Philip Center

164 S. Prairie Avenue | Bloomington, Illinois 60108 | Phone: 630.529.2871

4 Marklund Day School & Ann Haskins Center

164 S. Prairie Avenue | Bloomington, Illinois 60108 | Phone: 630.307.1882

5 Marklund Wasmond Center & School

1435 Summit Street | Elgin, Illinois 60120 | Phone: 224.523.7530

6 Nathan Education Center

1210 Hunter Drive | Elgin, Illinois 60120 | Phone: 630.953.5230

Follow us!



Scan Here



to get Social!

CALENDAR OF EVENTS



Oct. 15, 2023

**GIVING
TUESDAY**

Nov. 28, 2023



Feb. 10, 2024

OUR VISION

A happy, safe, purpose-filled life for every individual with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

OUR MISSION

Making *everyday life* possible for individuals with profound disabilities.



1S450 Wyatt Drive, Geneva, IL 60134

FALL 2-0-2-3

NON-PROFIT
ORG.
US POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT #128
ELGIN, IL



CARELETTER

A newsletter for those who care about **Marklund**.



SCAN TO
APPLY &
LEARN MORE:

"Being a difference maker at Marklund for years has allowed me to see the power of love, patience and dedication. Seeing our residents flourish and discover their talents is a reminder of why I chose this rewarding path."
- Lem Pablo, QIDP



**Become a
Difference Maker
today with**

WWW.MARKLUND.ORG/CAREER