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From the Desk of Gil Fonger

President & CEO



Dear Marklund Family,

The week of September 13 is National Direct Support Professional Recognition Week. Seven days is not nearly enough to honor what our DSPs do, but it is a good reason to stop and say plainly what is true the other fifty-one weeks as well: this work does not happen without them.

That is the quiet truth about mission-driven organizations. They gather people around a shared purpose and turn that purpose into care — one shift, one meal, one bath, one bedtime at a time. They show what happens when people invest their time, their talent and their resources in someone else's wellbeing.

For me, this is personal. Apart from my years in the United States Coast Guard, my entire career has been spent in the nonprofit sector. It has been a privilege to spend it alongside dedicated, compassionate and talented people whose commitment to serving others still inspires me every day.

Marklund began in December 1954, when one mother entrusted her son, Mark William Lund, to a nurse named Claire Haverkamp who believed he deserved a fuller life. More than seven decades later, that same conviction shows up in every shift...every classroom...every therapy session. Through our community of care (staff, volunteers, partners and supporters) we provide the care, support and advocacy that help individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities live purpose-filled lives of dignity, happiness and connection.

In 1968, in a sermon called “The Drum Major Instinct,” Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. put it simply:
“Everybody can be great, because everybody can serve.”

Service is not about titles or credentials. It is about compassion, commitment, and the willingness to make a difference in someone's life. Those who are part of our community of care prove that every day.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Gil Fonger'.

Gil Fonger, President & CEO

gfonger@marklund.org | 630.593.5476

Meet our 2026-27

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Behind every major milestone achieved by Marklund is a dedicated group of volunteers committed to advancing its mission.

Serving as the organization's highest governing body, the Marklund Board of Directors plays a vital role in guiding strategy, ensuring accountability, and supporting long-term growth. This dedicated group is made up entirely of volunteers whose backgrounds reflect a broad range of professional and personal experiences. Board members are elected through a thorough nomination process and approved by the full Board. Directors serve three-year terms and may be elected to serve up to four consecutive terms.

"For more than seventy years, Marklund has depended on committed individuals willing to give their time, talent and treasure to something bigger than themselves," said Gil Fonger, President and CEO.

"Our Board members carry that same spirit forward — their expertise and dedication to our mission are an essential reason for Marklund's growth and our continued strength and readiness for what's next."

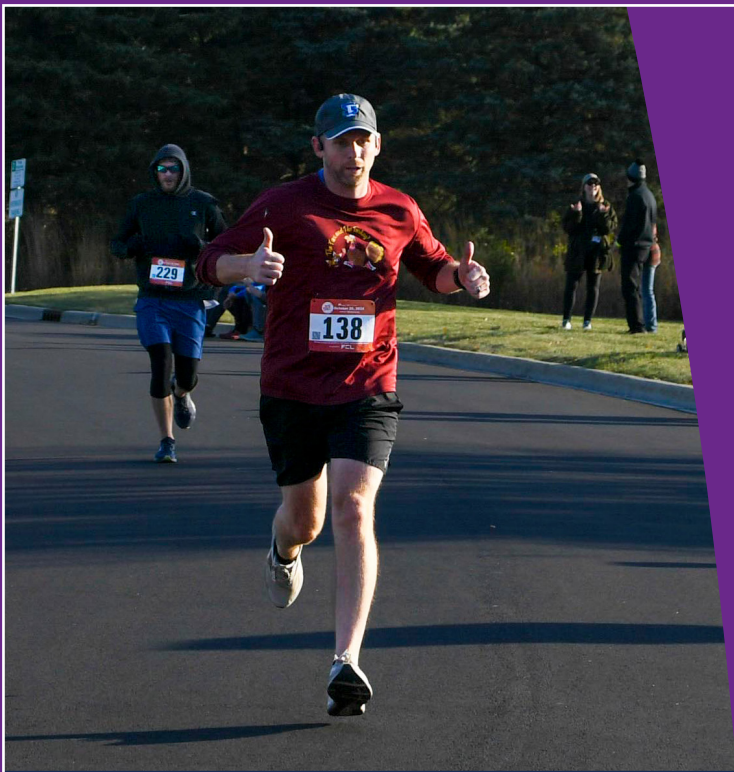
The Board meets four times annually and participates in a full-day strategic retreat each August. Members also contribute their talents through service on various committees, support the organization's fundraising events, and often take part in volunteer opportunities.

Shown at this year's Board Retreat held at Marklund's Foglia Education Center at Marklund Day School-Geneva are:

(Front Row L-R) Dan Foley, Dr. Maleeha Basha, Laura Karlins (Development Committee Chair), Jerry Finis (Chair), Yaneth Medina (Vice-Chair, Treasurer), Jim Armbruster, (Secretary), Ari Smith

(Back Row L-R) Gerry Estes, Carie Carney, Julie Schrager, David Van Daff, Carol Donahue, Mike Herlihy, Karyn Fitch, Frank Murnane, Jr.





MARKLUND

OCT 18 RUN WALK & ROLL

5K/1 MILE - GENEVA

PRESENTED BY:
Fitch Foundation

Sunday, October 18

Marklund Hyde Center
1S450 Wyatt Drive, Geneva, IL 60134

8:15 a.m. 5K Wheelchair Race Start

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

- USATF certified course
- 5K chipped timing
- 1-mile option for all abilities
- Commemorative sweatshirt
- Participant medal & finisher prize
- Post-race Party in the Park



Register, Donate,
or Volunteer at
www.marklund.org/5k

*100% of the net proceeds directly support
Marklund's mission of making everyday life
possible for individuals with profound disabilities.*



RUN, Walk & ROLL IN GENEVA

ON YOUR MARK(LUND), GET SET, GO!

This race will begin with adults and children with different abilities, ambitions and speeds gathered at the starting line and united by a common goal: supporting the care of individuals with developmental disabilities. It will end with a community enjoying a morning of fitness, fun and connection.

Marklund's 14th Annual Run, Walk & Roll-Geneva will be held **Sunday, Oct. 18**, in the South Mill Creek neighborhood of Geneva. Bringing together runners, walkers and wheelchair rollers, this popular inclusive event starts and finishes adjacent to the *Marklund Hyde Center campus* at 1S450 Wyatt Dr., Geneva. The Wheelchair race will start at 8:15 a.m. followed by the 5K and 1- Mile start at 8:30 a.m.



Register Now

www.marklund.org/5k

Whether chasing a personal record, enjoying a leisurely stroll with friends and family, or competing in a racing wheelchair, participants will find a place at this event.

"This year, we're celebrating 14 years of bringing together friends, families, neighbors, and supporters to make a real difference for Marklund."

NATALIE SARBY, MARKLUND'S
DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY EVENTS.

This year marks the return of the **Wheelchair Race Division**, which is for 5K participants who use racing wheelchairs to complete the course safely and competitively.

Event features:

- USATF-certified 5K course
- Chipped timing for all 5K participants, plus division awards
- A welcoming 1-Mile option for families, beginners, and participants of all abilities
- Event merchandise and race packet goodies
- Our popular Party in the Park, featuring food from Buona and Jersey Mike's Subs, beverages from BUBBL'R and Starbucks, other great local vendors, and more!

Awards and recognition will be presented in select categories, and all participants will be celebrated for their involvement and support.

For registration information, sponsorship opportunities or additional event details, contact **Natalie Sarby** at nsarby@marklund.org.

"What I love most about this event is that everyone belongs. Seeing our wheelchair 'rollers' alongside runners and walkers is a powerful reminder of what inclusion looks like, and what makes this day so special. Whether you join us as a participant, volunteer, sponsor or donor, every person who shows up and every contribution, big or small, helps make an impact in the lives of those Marklund serves every day."

Save THE DATE

APRIL 24, 2027
**2nd Annual Run,
Walk & Roll-Elgin**

BACK TO SCHOOL:

The school year began before students even reached the classroom. In the parking lot, Marklund Day School (MDS) teachers and staff gathered to welcome each student by name, offering familiar smiles, personalized greetings and helping hands into the school.

As a non-public therapeutic day school approved by the Illinois State Board of Education, MDS partners with area public school districts to serve students whose needs are unable to be met in a traditional setting at their home school.

With four locations in Geneva, Bloomingdale and Elgin, MDS serves students ages 3 to 21 with autism and developmental, intellectual and medical disabilities whose needs require specialized educational and therapeutic support. Here, highly trained teachers and specialists tailor the environment, instruction and care for each student.

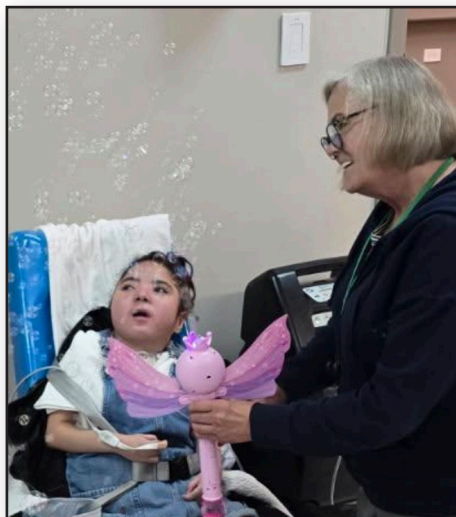


Learning Designed Around Each Student

“There is no one-size-fits-all approach,” said Paula Bodzioch, Chief Academic Officer. “Instruction and supports are designed to help students grow in the areas outlined in their individualized education plan (IEP).”

MDS offers an important range of services to enhance the special education, including speech, occupational and physical therapy; nursing care; music, recreational therapy; and behavioral support from Board Certified Behavior Analysts. Adaptive technology, including iPads, communication switches and accessible computers—provides additional ways for students to participate and succeed.

Students also take their learning into the community, practicing social, communication and independence skills during scheduled outings.



For one student, progress may mean mastering an academic skill. For another, it may mean communicating a need, improving coping skills, completing a task independently or trying something new.

“A new school year means new possibilities. At Marklund Day School, every step forward is worth celebrating!”

Paula Bodzioch, Chief Academic Officer

Returning to Familiarity and Friendly Faces, Ready to THRIVE!

Marklund Day School's mission is to "Make progress possible"—helping students discover their abilities and reach their potential.

"I want to ensure that our parents always feel that Marklund is a safe, positive environment where the students are deeply cherished, respected, and given every opportunity to shine."



Emily Hefner, Foglia Education Center, Marklund Day School Geneva

Master's in Educational Leadership from University of St. Francis; Bachelor of Science in Elementary from Bradley University; Currently enrolled in Liberty University for a Doctorate of Special Education. At Marklund Day School since 2020

When I reflect on why I decided to step into the Principal role at Marklund Day, it always comes back to a deeply personal passion for helping others and a call to advocate for our incredible students; children who are so often misunderstood by the world outside our walls. I wanted to lead a school where success isn't defined by state test scores, but by those unforgettable "a-ha!" moments: a student mastering a communication switch to express a thought, taking steps in a gait trainer, or realizing they are truly understood. Every single day, I am in awe of how our dedicated teachers, therapists, nurses and staff support our students, creating a space where they can flourish, grow, build independence, and experience success. As I begin my journey with Marklund Day School, I am most excited about the people and the relationships we will build together. My commitment is to listen, learn, build trust, support our staff and students, celebrate our success, and continue building upon the incredible work already happening at Marklund.

Sheri Fato, Nathan Education Center and Marklund Day School-Wasmond Center, Elgin

Master's degree in Educational Leadership and Administration from Concordia University Chicago; Bachelor's degree in Special Education and Teaching from Northeastern Illinois University, Chicago. Joined Marklund Day School this summer.

I am honored and excited to join Marklund Day School. I was drawn here because of the commitment to students, and the opportunity to be part of a community that recognizes the potential of every individual with profound disabilities. Throughout my career, I have shared that same commitment—creating opportunities for students with diverse and complex needs to learn, grow, build independence, and experience success. At Marklund Day School, my commitment is to listen, learn, build trust, support our staff and students, celebrate our success, and continue building upon the incredible work already happening at Marklund.



Dr. Ketura Vimariba, Ann Haskins Center of Marklund Day School, Bloomingdale

Doctor of Education degree from University of St. Francis, Joliet; Master's degree in Educational Leadership from Concordia University, Chicago; Bachelor's degree in Elementary Education and Special Education from the University of St. Francis, Joliet. Joined Marklund Day School this summer.

I have always loved the therapeutic day school environment, but in addition to that, the Marklund mission and vision stood out to me because they align with my personal values as a leader and educator. It is obvious that if you decide to have a career in this field, you must care for what you do and have a why that motivates you to do it. I believe that my purpose as a person-centered leader is to inspire students and staff alike to grow every day and I believe that Marklund supports that. So, this is why I chose Marklund...and I am happy that Marklund also decided to choose me.



Paula Bodzioch, Chief Academic Officer

Master's degree in technical leadership from St. Xavier; Bachelor of Education degree from Benedictine University. At Marklund Day School since July 2014.

As Chief Academic Officer, my WHY is to create the conditions in which both students and staff can thrive. For students, that means ensuring that we provide high-quality, individualized instruction grounded in evidence-based practices, meaningful data, and a deep understanding of each student's unique needs. It means asking ourselves not only, "What are we teaching?" but also, "Why does this skill matter to this student, and how will it make a difference in their life?"

For our staff, my WHY is equally strong. My responsibility is to make sure they have the resources, professional learning, collaboration, support, and leadership they need to do that work well.





**Their
Summer.
Their
Smiles.
Our
Why!**





6.15.26 | White Eagle Golf Club, Naperville

Presented by



PORTER
PIPE & SUPPLY

PARTNERSHIP WITH PURPOSE

What. A. Day.

Our 44th Annual Marklund Golf Eventure became the most successful in our history, raising an incredible

Over \$300,000 in NET proceeds

to support the remarkable students, residents, and community clients of Marklund.



220 GOLFERS. 120 DINNER GUESTS. ONE EXTRAORDINARY MARKLUND COMMUNITY.

White Eagle Golf Club in Naperville—an exclusive, private course set the stage for a day overflowing with generosity, heart, and unforgettable moments. *“A special thank you goes to the event’s Title Sponsor, Porter Pipe, which always shows up big to set the tone for the day,”* noted Jeannine Zupo, Signature Events Director. *“Porter Pipe’s continuous support of this event made it a day of impact, because every swing, every bid, and every moment helped strengthen our mission of making everyday life possible for individuals with profound disabilities.”*



MARKLUND 2026 Hero Award

Longtime supporters Michelle and Joe Mattia received Marklund’s 2026 Hero Award at this year’s Golf Eventure. Established in 2003, the Hero Award is given annually to someone who, for many years, has tirelessly supported and furthered the Marklund mission with change and enhancement, and has gone beyond the status quo to improve the lives of the infants, children and adults we serve. This year’s award recipients, Michelle and Joe Mattia of Naperville, have been involved in Marklund’s Top Hat Ball and golf outing for more than 8 years— Michelle volunteers on the Top Hat auction committee, Joe on the golf committee, and both contribute generously and share our mission every chance they get. Just last year, as members of the private White Eagle Golf Club, the Mattias opened up this prestigious venue to Marklund as the new host site for our annual Golf Eventure—bringing the event to the next level. Michelle and Joe’s sons, Richie and Joey, volunteer annually at Top Hat and the golf outing, making it a family affair.



Honorees: Michelle & Joe Mattia

PLAN AHEAD FOR *Holiday Giving*

With the holiday season just a flip of the calendar away, now is the perfect time to begin planning for end-of-year giving.

GIVING TREES GIFT DRIVE

Anyone looking to make the holidays more special for a child or adult with developmental disabilities—as well as for themselves—may consider donating a holiday gift to a Marklund resident.

Starting in early November, churches and businesses are welcome to host giving trees that are decorated with specially designed gift wish tags for each of Marklund's 181 residents. Each tag features details of a resident, a few favorite likes, along with gift ideas for him or her. Help "undecorate" the giving trees by taking the tags off, and shopping for a resident. Participants may return wrapped gifts to any of the Marklund locations through mid-December. The real fun then happens on "Gift Opening Day," Saturday, Dec. 19, when all the gifts will be unwrapped by residents, with the assistance of staff and volunteers.

For information about the Giving Tree program, Gift Opening Day, or to request tags for your business, contact Nikki Osterloh, Volunteer Program Manager at nosterloh@marklund.org.

LEAVE YOUR LEGACY

For more than 70 years, Marklund has been making everyday life possible for children and adults with profound disabilities. Through the Marklund Always program, you can help ensure that this life-changing care continues for generations to come.

A planned gift allows you to support Marklund's mission in the future while maintaining control of your assets today.



COMMON PLANNED GIVING OPTIONS:

- ☐ Bequests through a will or trust
- ☐ Retirement Assets (IRA, 401(k), etc.)
- ☐ Donor Advised Funds
- ☐ Life Insurance Policies
- ☐ Charitable Gift Annuities
- ☐ Charitable Remainder Trusts
- ☐ Gifts of Real Estate
- ☐ Charitable Lead Trusts

To learn more about opportunities or to start a conversation, contact Carrie Seida at cseida@marklund.org

Tax benefits vary based on individual circumstances. Please consult your attorney, financial advisor or tax professional to determine the best option for you.

READY TO TAKE THE NEXT STEPS?

- 1. Consider Your Legacy:** Think about the people and causes that have been most meaningful in your life.
- 2. Review Your Assets:** Take inventory of your estate, retirement accounts, life insurance policies, and other assets.
- 3. Meet with Your Advisor:** Speak with your attorney, financial advisor or estate planning professional to determine the best giving option for you and your family.
- 4. Include Marklund in Your Plans:** Designate a gift that reflects your wishes and helps ensure a brighter future for individuals with profound disabilities.
- 5. Let Us Know:** If you have already included Marklund in your plans, or are considering it, we would love the opportunity to thank you and welcome you into the *Marklund Always* community.



Sites&Services



Marklund Hyde Center

1S450 Wyatt Drive, Geneva, IL 60134; 630.593.5500

25-acre campus includes:

- Marklund Hyde Center building houses Community Day Services (CDS) classrooms, onsite aquatic therapy pool and spa, administrative and therapy offices, dental office and salon
- Six 16-bed homes are licensed as Intermediate Care Facilities (ICFs) that provide 24-hour care to support the medical, social, emotional and physical needs of 96 adult residents
- The Foglia Education Center at Marklund Day School-Geneva serves students ages 3-21 with multiple disabilities, including those on the Autism Spectrum, within both the Multi-Needs and Life Skills programs
- Our Marklund ball field, newly resurfaced with specialized materials suitable for wheelchair accessibility



Marklund Wasmond Center & School

1435 Summit Street, Elgin, IL 60120; 224.523.7530

- Five-acre campus includes a newly-renovated MC/DD residential facility for 85 children and adults with medically complex developmental disabilities. Facility offers new, state-of-the-art skilled nursing and intermediate care services, comprehensive respiratory services, onsite aquatic therapy pool, dental office, and therapeutic social, recreational and community activities
- CDS classrooms also located adjacent to main building
- Marklund Day School-Elgin operates Multi-Needs classrooms onsite



Marklund Day School

Four locations in Bloomingdale, Elgin and Geneva;

Phone: 630.307.1882

Therapeutic Day School serves students ages 3-21 with multiple disabilities, including those on the autism spectrum, within both Multi-Needs and Life Skills programs. Education services are supported by nursing and therapy teams.

- **Ann Haskins Center, 164 S. Prairie Avenue, Bloomingdale, IL 60108:**
 - Multi-Needs and Life Skills programs
- **Marklund Wasmond Center, 1435 Summit Street, Elgin, IL 60120:**
 - Multi-Needs classrooms
- **Foglia Education Center, 1S376 Wyatt Drive, Geneva, IL 60134:**
 - Multi-Needs and Life Skills program
- **Nathan Education Center, 1210 Hunter Drive, Elgin, IL 60120:**
 - Life Skills classrooms for students on the autism spectrum
 - Bridge Builder CDS program for adults on the spectrum who have aged out of traditional school programs



**Scan here to learn more about
Marklund at www.marklund.org**

CARELETTER

The Marklund CareLetter is a quarterly newsletter created and distributed by Marklund, a nonprofit organization that provides residential, educational and day services programs for children and adults with severe and profound developmental disabilities.

To receive extra copies, email
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Chief Communications Officer,
at dlassiter@marklund.org.

For digital copies, visit
www.marklund.org/newsletters.

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Call 630.593.5500



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

Mark your CALENDARS!

MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Find us – follow us – on Socials



@MarklundCharity
on Facebook



@MarklundCharity
on Instagram



@Marklund
on LinkedIn



OCTOBER 18, 2026
14th Annual
Run, Walk & Roll
Geneva



DECEMBER 1, 2026
Giving
Tuesday



FEBRUARY 6, 2027
31st Annual
Top Hat Ball



APRIL 24, 2027
2nd Annual
Run, Walk & Roll
Elgin