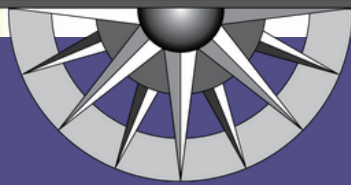




Merrick, Inc.
EMPOWERING ADULTS WITH DISABILITIES



Report to the Community 2020 - 2021

About Merrick, Inc.

Merrick, Inc., has been providing day services to adults with intellectual or developmental disabilities (I/DD) in Ramsey County since 1964. We offer a mix of life enrichment, prevocational, and day services to nearly 400 clients. Merrick is the largest day program in Ramsey County with a 58-year history of leadership in person-centered planning, self-advocacy, meaningful work options, operational excellence, and continuous innovation.

We strive to support clients in finding the best fit for them, whether it is through life enrichment opportunities or meaningful work. With person-centered planning and self-advocacy activities, clients at Merrick are finding their place in the world by:

- working in desired and meaningful jobs,
- being actively engaged in their communities,
- building relationships,
- enhancing personal skills, and
- leading more self-determined lives.

MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to empower adults with disabilities through vocational and social opportunities, and to guide them toward realizing their goals and dreams.

CORE BELIEFS

Self-Determination – responsible for one's choices and actions

Economic Fairness – balanced action between parties

Civic Responsibility – action that contributes to the common good

SELF-ADVOCACY

As a company, we support and encourage self-advocates to be involved in decisions that affect their lives.

VISION STATEMENT

Our vision is to be the agency of choice for every client and business partner we serve, leading the way in supporting each client in their quest to live the life they choose.



A Message from the Executive Director

Dear Friends:

Since my last letter to the community our local, national, and global political, health, and environmental concerns have been amplified beyond what most of us would have thought possible. Still, small and sometimes quiet moments of progress sustain our hope for a better future, and perhaps this letter and *Report to the Community* can serve that purpose in some manner.

The pandemic was especially hard for the clients we serve because most did not understand why they had to be isolated in their homes 24/7, away from family and friends. The negative impact on their cognitive, emotional, and physical health was quick, and we realized how important it was to get clients back into our programs. With the peacetime emergency restrictions in place, we began slowly in July 2020 and continued to increase the number of clients served through the end of the year. As the vaccine became available, restrictions eased, and more clients returned. In February, I challenged our management team to prepare for typical operations by July, and we used the mantra of being BOLD, which meant:

- *Believe it* and have the professional confidence that with a clear intention, sufficient resources, and a little good luck, it was possible that each of us could contribute to a shared objective – in this case, resuming typical services by July.
- *Own it* was understanding how the restrictions imposed on day programs could be met while maximizing the number of clients served.



John and his first granddaughter, Lenni

- *Lead it* was the most challenging aspect because it meant handling the frequent changes and obstacles with an attitude of "we can overcome" rather than "we are at the mercy of others."
- *Do it* was simply getting busy doing what we could to serve more clients.

I am pleased to report that on 7/12/21, we resumed typical operations and, at the end of December, we were serving 91% of the clients previously served, with the other 9% waiting for our business partners to bring back their client crews. Meanwhile, the work available to clients onsite has been more consistent than usual because a number of the jobs are essential products that have been in more demand during the pandemic. Moreover, with the generous support of donors, our onsite life enrichment programs have filled the void of limited community inclusion activities that are now beginning to resume. Finally, the federal and state COVID-19 grants have stabilized our financial situation, and we are prepared to move forward in our service to our clients and community.

To be sure, the pandemic has had individual, community, national, and global tragedies and consequences. It also has brought moments of courage and joy. For us, we found endurance in the clients' happiness when returning to our programs, seeing their friends, and returning to work. For that, I am genuinely thankful.

John Wayne Barker,
Executive Director

Our Programs

We provide an atmosphere for clients to articulate their needs and desires, build relationships, participate in social opportunities, develop leadership skills, and reach personal goals. Additionally, clients participate in activities and therapies to improve self-esteem and maintain health for a better quality of life. Clients find the support they need across the various stages of their lives. Some people gain work skills onsite at Merrick and then seek employment on a work crew. Others work independently and only need regular check-ins by our Employment Specialist. For those who do not have employment as a primary goal, our life enrichment programs provide a variety of engaging activities.

Life Enrichment

Clients who choose Merrick for life enrichment services have access to various community inclusion activities, including the YMCA, bowling, shopping, and movies. We offer therapeutic experiences such as yoga, horticulture, and music. Under enriched staff-to-client ratios, clients have a chance to participate in arts and crafts, sensory integration, social and recreational activities, positive behavior supports, augmented communication/assistive technology, and American Sign Language. Clients enjoy having a choice of activity settings and individualized strategies and schedules to promote emotional, mental, and physical health.

Employment Support

We offer support in the next BIG step for individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities to explore, develop, and maintain employment in the general workforce. This person-centered approach focuses on each individual's skill set and preferences. Equally as important as securing the right job is keeping the right job. To support this success, we provide skill development, on-the-job training, and ongoing follow-up support for the duration of the individual's employment at a business partner's location.

For clients whose goals are to work in the general workforce, we provide Employment Exploration, Development, and Support Services. The needs of each person are evaluated individually to provide the right supports.



Self-Advocacy Highlights

Clients enrolled onsite participate in weekly self-advocacy groups. Each group elects officers yearly and determines the group's priorities and objectives.

Self-advocacy highlights this year:

- Self-advocates at Merrick conducted a food and toy drive and presented the donations to the Vadnais Heights Lions Club.
- On average, 85 self-advocates participated in one of six weekly onsite self-advocacy groups.
- With our assistance, 11 self-advocates created short videos explaining the importance of employment choice and sent them to their state legislators.
- The Ambassadors for Respect, funded by the MN Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities and created at Merrick, remotely conducted anti-bullying presentations for 4th-grade students in our area.
- Two self-advocates participated in the 38th cohort of Partners in Policymaking MN with support from our full-time Self-Advocacy Facilitator. This program educates people with developmental disabilities, their family members, and supporters to become active partners with those who make the policies that impact their daily lives.



Business Highlights

- Our recycling program processed more than 908,799 pounds of plastic bags, film, and surgical wrap providing jobs for 22 clients. Since the program's inception, we have diverted more than 13 million pounds of plastic waste from Minnesota's landfills, and the plastic is used to manufacture composite decking material.
- The document destruction team of six clients processed and recycled 187,000 pounds of documents and pull tabs.



- We received a "clean" (unmodified) audit for fiscal year '21 with no material weaknesses or significant deficiencies.
- Our Charitable Gambling Division came back strong in 2021 after extended closures due to the COVID-19 pandemic. More than \$860,000 was raised to support our programs and operations.

Volunteer Spotlight

In 1983, Mike Mann was looking for work opportunities and enrolled at Merrick. The twenty-two-year-old's life would be changed forever, and he would find more options than ever before.

In the intervening 38 years, Mike's mom, Stephanie has been involved in many of Merrick's activities, always a champion for her son and for Merrick. She is even credited with helping find our long-term Executive Director, John Wayne Barker while she served on the Board of Trustees.

Stephanie was a founding and still current member of Merrick's Holiday Party Elves. This group, made up mostly of clients' moms, raised money for the annual party by holding a "Bakeless Bake Sale." The whole idea behind the sale was to donate to the party what they and their friends would have spent

supporting a bake sale, and directing those funds to the holiday party instead. The Elves continue to raise funds to host the party which has grown over the years and is a program highlight for every client at Merrick.

Stephanie has been a supporter of all of our fundraisers throughout the years. She never missed a gala or Bowl-A-Thon. Most recently, she has shown her support as a table host at the yearly EMPOWER! Lunch. We are grateful for Stephanie's generosity and "can-do" attitude.



Business Partner Spotlight

Kowalski's Markets has partnered with Merrick, Inc., for more than 20 years. Today, 78 clients are employed at six of Kowalski's 11 Twin Cities markets, where they form relationships with Kowalski's staff and guests while bagging groceries, maintaining coffee shops, stocking shelves, and working behind the scenes in their deli and kitchen operations.

The family-owned grocer was one of the

first grocers in the State of Minnesota to recognize the value added to their business when employing people with disabilities. Kowalski's management has always had full confidence in the clients' abilities and never viewed their disabilities as limitations.

Kowalski's Markets consistently supports our fundraising events, and we appreciate their partnership.

Client Spotlight

From a very young age, it was apparent to Tim's mother, Cindie, that he was different from his peers as he experienced frequent outbursts in the classroom. Tim would repeat kindergarten twice, and Cindie would endure two and a half years of overwhelmingly negative school reports before a diagnosis of autism would be made. Shortly after his diagnosis, he was enrolled in a specialized school program. Within a month, Cindie was relieved because Tim was doing better in school and excelling.

Upon enrolling at Merrick after high school in 2006 at the age of 21, Tim chose to work onsite where he performed light assembly tasks. His involvement in Merrick's Self-Advocacy program would have the most significant impact. To his amazement, he was elected president of his self-advocacy group not long after joining. He had never been president of anything before! In the years that followed, Tim spoke at places, and in front of people he never thought possible: legislators at the Minnesota State Capitol, the Minnesota Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities, and fourth-grade students at local elementary schools.

After six years of working onsite, Tim was ready for a change. With the guidance and support of our employment services team, he was soon hired by Gordmans, where he worked part-time in the stockroom. He was hired by Beltmann Relocation Group in Roseville, MN as a digital imaging assistant in no time.

From the beginning, Beltmann and Tim were a perfect match. His love for technology, along with the consistency of the job and the fantastic coworkers and leadership team at Beltmann,



helped create an environment that both validated Tim's strengths and encouraged future growth. Beltmann continued to be interested in Tim and asked him to consider staying with the company in a different position. When asked about his professional goals, he expressed to us a desire to work with phones. Soon, he was doing less digital imaging and devoting more time to answering the phone at Beltmann.

Outside of work, Tim loves to travel with his mom and long-time friend, Paul, who is also his PCA. Some of his favorite trips are kayaking down the Chicago River, vacationing in Las Vegas, and taking a trip to Duluth, MN.

As he looks back on his journey thus far, Tim is quick to acknowledge the many people whose guidance and support helped him become the success he is: his mother, teachers, supervisors, and everyone at Merrick. He also acknowledges the part he plays in his success. According to Tim, "The best person to help you is you." More and more, he has come to realize the power of his own words and is amazed at how far he has come. Tim knows the journey is far from over, but instead of feeling anxiety, he feels calm because he knows he is not traveling alone. One way he stays connected to Merrick is through a weekly email game with Executive Director, John Wayne Barker. Each player tries to stump the other by challenging him to use the other's "word of the week" in a sentence. It's a routine they both enjoy!

Community Inclusion

Clients enrolled in our life enrichment and work support programs enjoyed a variety of activities in the local community when their schedules permitted. Favorite outings were volunteering, boating, visits to apple orchards, farms, specialty shops, museums, and visits with the North St. Paul High School Band.



Merrick Leadership

Board of Trustees

Crystal Saric-Fashant, President
Jamey Austad, Vice President
Erik Levy, Past President
Philip Sanfilippo, Treasurer
Heather Monnens, Secretary
Deb DeGreeff
Karen DeYoung
Kristin Mahre
John Marzitelli
Maureen McGarry
Paul McHale
Joe Murphy
Diogo Reis
Dan Schneeman

Leadership Team

John Wayne Barker, Executive Director
Donna Bauer, Director of Administrative Operations
Jim Chicone, Staff Psychologist
Pat Hanson, Operations Director
Dede Hauck, Quality Coordinator
Karen Herrera, Development and Communications Director
Tammy Miller, Facility and Transportation Manager
Kristine Orubo, Program Director

Support Merrick

There is a Way for Everyone to Get Involved

- **Refer** client work opportunities to us.
- **Hire** us for your paper shredding/document destruction.
- **Join** us on Facebook, Instagram. and LinkedIn. Tell your friends about us.
- **Tell** your state legislators that the work Merrick does is crucial to our vibrant communities.
- **Volunteer** your time on a committee or the Board of Trustees.
- **Donate** – cash, stock, and in-kind gifts are all gladly accepted. Will your employer match your contribution?
- **Become** a Champions Club member with a monthly gift to Merrick at www.merrickinc.org/champions



Merrick's Champions Club

Monthly giving is one of the easiest and most convenient ways to help us carry out our mission to empower adults with disabilities. The average cost per client to provide services is \$80/day and the governmental reimbursement is \$75/day creating a \$5 daily gap per client. Champions Club members play a crucial role in closing this gap. Over a year's time, a monthly gift of just \$10 will cover this gap for a whole year for a client.



"I've been a long-time supporter of Merrick Inc., and I have had the privilege of serving on the Board of Trustees for the past few years. With life as busy as it is, I often found myself forgetting to make a monthly contribution until the option to become a "monthly giver" became available. It was easy to set up the automatic payments, and I'll never again forget to contribute to the organization I am so proud to support."

Crystal Saric-Fashant

Merrick By the Numbers



77% Work Support
23% Life Enrichment

Client Program
Enrollment



13.3 Years

Average
Client Tenure



99.4%

Client Overall
Satisfaction



91,392

Hours of Direct
Support Provided



50

Business Partners
Providing Work



750,000

COVID-19 Test Kits
Assembled by Clients
(since the start of the pandemic)

Financials

Balance Sheet as of June 30, 2021

Assets	2021	2020
Fixed Assets	\$4,330,844	\$4,255,252
Current Assets	\$6,256,039	\$3,315,886
Total Assets	\$10,586,883	\$7,571,138
Liabilities		
Total Liabilities	\$2,999,240	\$3,085,979
Net Assets		
Unrestricted	\$7,542,526	\$4,448,670
Temporarily Restricted	\$45,117	\$36,489
Total Net Assets	\$7,587,643	\$4,485,159
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$10,586,883	\$7,571,138

Income and Expense Statement

Revenue	\$12,648,167	\$9,288,795
Expenses		
Program	\$7,839,648	\$7,692,081
Administrative	\$1,509,139	\$1,411,594
Development	\$196,896	\$197,092
Total Expenses	\$9,545,683	\$9,300,767



**Thank you
for your
support!**



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Sign up for our quarterly newsletter at
<https://merrickinc.org/navigator/>
for all the latest updates

