

# 2018 Annual Report



**A YEAR OF SYSTEM TRANSFORMATION AND PLANNING**





## IMPACT METRICS



Individuals served throughout the Greater WNY area



351

Individuals served through 9 certified clinic locations



32

Individuals enrolled in Site-based Prevocational Programs



232

Residents served in supervised and supported settings



351

Individuals served through Day Habilitation Programs



95

Participants enrolled in Community-based Prevocational Programs



157

Students served through the Moving Miracles Dance Program



27

Individuals served through the Personal Training Program



105

Riders served through the High Hurdles Therapeutic Riding Program





## Mission

*Transforming lives through creative opportunities and excellent supports for people with disabilities and special needs.*

## Vision

*sasi believes in a future where all persons, regardless of their ability, can reach their full potential as responsible, valued and contributing members of their community. We strive for excellence in providing healthcare, housing options and community supports that are chosen by individuals and their families. Together we transform lives and bring dignity, purpose, confidence and Hope to every individual, every day.*

## **A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT**

2018 was a year of system transformation and planning. The mandated elimination of Medicaid Service Coordinators (MSCs) and transition to Care Coordination Organizations (CCOs), although anticipated, presented challenges for all stakeholders. On July 1, 2018 OPWDD also transitioned from MSCs to CCOs. As a result, 21 of our MSC staff left sasi. Most went to work in a similar capacity for Person Centered Services of WNY. This transition was difficult but not the only challenge that we faced.



Recruitment and Retention remained at the forefront as staff vacancy rates across the state rose to 14% with a turnover rate of 26%. The #Bfair2Directcare campaign brought in new state funding to provide raises to Direct Support Staff. However, the increases were not enough to keep pace with the rise in minimum wage.

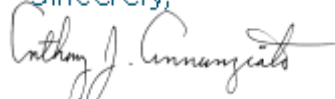
The OPWDD mandate to eliminate sheltered workshops led to the end of production at the West Seneca and East Aurora facilities. Additional components of the transformation agenda continue to change the nature of supports and services for persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities in New York State.

The Rate Rationalization experienced in 2017 put us in a position of reassessing, restructuring and creative planning. With an emphasis on quality outcomes, supports and services were redesigned and expanded. Although a difficult task, our management team and support staff took on the challenge with a systematic, well planned outcome based approach.

Consequently, much was accomplished. New and integrated opportunities for employment and community exploration for individuals became a reality. We also experienced efficiencies and cost savings as we consolidated day services. The Abbott Road Day Habilitation Program moved and merged with the West Seneca Program and the Eden Day Habilitation Program moved and merged with the Derby Day Hab. As a result, we were able to renovate the Eden facility and convert it into an eight bed IRA, which we have named "Symphony" due to its proximity to our Kazoo factory.

As managed care fast approaches the transition will continue. New challenges will come about as we prepare for the future.

I thank all of our stakeholders for their continued support of our mission and look forward to a successful and productive future.

Sincerely,  
  
sasi President & CEO

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## **RESIDENTIAL**

Ye Naing Aung was born in Burma in 1996. His parents died shortly after his birth and his adoptive parents relocated to Thailand where they worked on local farms for food. Shortly after arriving in Thailand, they were sent to a refugee camp. It was in this camp that an American doctor, from *Doctors Without Borders*, met Ye. He made arrangements to have him and his family flown to America so he could get the medical care he needed.

Ye and his adoptive parents arrived in America in March of 2009. They originally went to Rochester and spent some time

there prior to moving to Buffalo. Ye started attending school for the first time, as the schools in Thailand could not accommodate his special needs. .

At age 18, Ye moved into the Galway house and made an immediate connection with one of the other young men living at the house. He graduated from The Center for Handicapped Children in the spring of 2017. After graduating from High School, Ye began to attend sisi's Day Habilitation program in Angola.

## **"His smile lights up a room"**

Many wonderful people started the extensively long process to ensure Ye acquired his green card first, and then his American citizenship. After years of going through the process to complete this, Ye became an American Citizen on June 28, 2018. There was a small celebration for him at his home with all of the people who worked so hard to get this accomplished for him. Ye enjoyed red, white, and blue cookies and cupcakes. The yard was decorated with American flags and everything red, white and blue!

Ye continues to live at the Galway IRA, where he enjoys sitting outside on his patio swing in the summer time. At sisi's Day Habilitation program in Angola, he has made many friends and enjoys spending his days participating in various activities. sisi is proud of Ye's achievements and to be supporting him in his wonderful new life.



## **TELEMEDICINE COMES TO sasi**

In April 2018 sasi was invited to participate in a Telemedicine pilot with People Inc. and two other local agencies. The project is supported through a grant, and any resident living in a sasi operated home in Erie County is eligible for services.

Through an extensive network of health care providers, telemedicine allows for the provision of health services to a person within their own home through the use of video, audio, photographic and/or electronic communication. It is used for those situations when a doctor is unavailable (i.e. nights, weekends, holidays) and the use of a hospital or urgent care is not required. It is not to replace the use of 911 when it is needed.

Although there is a cost benefit associated with this service, it is primarily intended to enhance one's quality of care and life. The health care professionals that visit the home are able to provide medical treatment and order x-rays, diagnostic tests, and medications. It leads to avoiding unnecessary trips to the ER and the risk of exposure to other illnesses. Evaluation and treatment often occurs more quickly than in a hospital, and it reduces the stress that comes from being asked to sit for long periods of time in a strange environment.

The pilot includes a monthly review and assessment of all telemedicine referrals, as well as measuring satisfaction with the service. It runs through 2020 but with the support of the state for telemedicine services, we anticipate that there will be funding beyond that date. As we move closer to managed care, collaborative efforts such as this will be considered as we provide the best health outcomes possible.

## **IN MEMORIAM**

Richard (Dick) Hanlon passed away on September 23, 2018. Dick became an active volunteer and founding member of the Claddagh Community Advisory board shortly after the organization was formed in the late 1970's.

He loved teaching special education for 37 years with Erie 1 BOCES at Cheektowaga Junior-Senior High School and remained an advocate for several of his students long after retirement. His wife, Donna is a member of the sasi Corporate Board of Directors. Dick's love and passion for helping others was greatly inspired by his sister, Rita who is a member of sasi's Killarney family.





## **GRANTS AWARDED**

### **Penfold Flores Donor Fund**

\$1,000 for High Hurdles

### **Robert J. & Martha B. Flerle Foundation**

\$6,000 for Moving Miracles/Adaptive Fitness

### **The Zeron Foundation**

\$5,000 for Moving Miracles

### **Kelly for Kids Foundation**

\$2,500 for Moving Miracles

### **Little-Kittinger Foundation**

\$5,000 for Original Kazoo

### **First Niagara Foundation**

\$10,000 for Community Pre-Vocation

### **Buffalo Sabres Foundation**

\$5,000 for Moving Miracles

### **FiveStar Bank**

\$5,000 for Community Pre-Vocation Program

### **J.M. McDonald Foundation**

\$10,000 for purchase of vehicle

### **Gelco**

\$500 for signage

### **Gernatt Family Foundation**

\$1,500 for High Hurdles

### **Marla Love Convalescent Fund**

\$4,580 for High Hurdles Equicizer

### **M&T Charitable Foundation**

\$2,000 for Moving Miracles Performance

### **Arts Services Initiative of WNY**

\$4,980 for BPO Quartet performance at 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Moving Miracles Show

### **Niagara Frontier Automobile Dealerships Assoc.**

\$4,140 for Stories Galorious storytelling contract

## **QUALITY MANAGEMENT**

The Quality Management Department continued its support of sesi's programs by conducting audits, investigations, observations and soliciting stakeholder feedback. Among these responsibilities, were several highlights that included: agency-wide training on Incidents and Compliance, publishing the Compliance Handbook and partnering with the Western New York DDRO and People Inc. to facilitate a Board and Committee training. The Board and Committee training is a six-week course that provides interested individuals with disabilities, with information on how to serve on an agency's Committee or Board of Directors.

All four individuals who graduated from the Board and Committee training, served on our agency-wide Safety and Incident Review Committees. Based on the success of the program and outreach efforts, we reached out to our partners and will be holding another training session in the Spring of 2019.

## **MOVING MIRACLES THERAPEUTIC DANCE PROGRAM**

In commemoration of Moving Miracles' 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary, a unique collaboration with the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra took place during the annual May performance. A beautifully choreographed routine featuring past and present program dancers using wheelchairs, was accompanied by a BPO string quartet performing U2's 'It's a Beautiful Day.' On cello, former dancer Mitchel Law, autistic and hearing impaired, played, while his sister Maddie, who has cerebral palsy, danced. Funded through Arts Services Initiative of WNY, this special arrangement was a moving and memorable experience for dancers and audience members.



The program took part in several outreach activities throughout 2018 which included: a holiday clothing/supplies collection to benefit Buffalo City Mission; performance at Villa Maria College's Annual Dancers Give Back Cancer Benefit, participation in Fredonia State College's



Dancing with the Athletes, performance at the sisi Celebration at Kleinhans Music Hall, performance at sisi's first annual Summer Sendoff fundraiser, participation in Cantalician Center for Learning's Fall Open House, as well as D'youville College's annual Pi Theta Epsilon Art Gallery Event. Also during 2018, Moving Miracles welcomed to the studio Erie County Executive Mark Poloncarz and Frank Cammarata, Director of Erie County Office for People with Disabilities. A studio tour and small dance showcase was provided along with a performance by sisi's own Beat Down Drummers.

Throughout the past year, Moving Miracles has been very visible on Facebook and Twitter. We canvased the earth searching for pictures and people from the past 20 years to feature in our 'Throwback Thursdays' posts. Our weekly 'Spotlight Saturdays' highlights our shining dance stars who have volunteered to share their dance story, and 'Technique Tuesdays' followed on the heels starting in the summer. Teachers provided dance technique, movement and stretch tutorials for students to practice in preparation for the Fall season.





## **PERSONAL TRAINING**

Achieving sustainable, healthy weight loss demands a dedicated and multi-faceted approach. In order to be successful, one must, over time, consistently make better choices regarding food, physical activity, sleep and stress. Maintaining a healthy weight requires a commitment to adopting healthier habits and creating a lifestyle change. These participants have beat the odds in doing just that:

**Kathy:** Trains twice a week. Results: Lost five lbs.; Lost four inches from waist; Change in body composition.

Kathy participates in the sasi Personal Training Program twice a week at the West Seneca Day Hab. Last January, she expressed the desire to lose 10 pounds in the New Year. Every week, she greets her trainer with an enthusiastic grin and encourages her fellow participants to keep going. As she learned more about nutrition, she began to experiment with healthier choices. With the support and amazing culinary skills of her sasi residential staff, Kathy began trying cauliflower rice, egg bakes, salads, etc. to incorporate more veggies and fiber into her diet. She also increased her water intake. sasi staff at the West Seneca Day Habilitation who attend the weekly sessions with Kathy, would post the monthly challenge information at the worksite and encourage her to participate in physical activity on her days off from training. This inspired other staff to join her and participate in the challenges themselves.

Mid-year, Kathy took time off of from training to recover from an injury. She had not yet met her weight loss goal...but that wouldn't stop her. When she was medically cleared to return, she worked even harder and longer in her training sessions. By December, she had finally hit the five-pound weight loss mark and lost four inches from her waist. These results are significant and indicate a change in body composition. While she may have only lost five pounds, she has lost body fat and gained muscle. With a small victory under her belt, Kathy finished 2018 recovered and ready for the next challenge.



**Matt:** Trains twice a week. Results: Lost 20 lbs.; Lost two inches from waist, three inches from hips and three percent body fat.



Matt has worked with the sisi Personal Training Program for the past three years. He trains twice a week, coming to the studio in the evening and participating at East Aurora Day Hab. Matt also stays active on days outside of his training sessions, participating in baseball and ice skating. While he has a natural predisposition for muscular strength, his food choices made it difficult to maintain a healthy weight.

Over the summer, with the help of his sisi residential staff, Matt took his portion control seriously and we reviewed healthy food options in our weekly discussions. When he began to see results, such as needing to tighten his belt another notch, it motivated him to challenge himself further. He began incorporating cardio workouts on the elliptical in studio, rather than using the bike. By the holidays, Matt had lost 20 pounds and we kicked off our studio "Maintain, Don't Gain" challenge. Although he has a long-term goal of losing a bit more weight, we educated Matt on enjoying special occasions with moderation, so that he can maintain his weight loss without having to start over in the new year. As 2019 rolled in, Matt had maintained his weight and his healthy habits. He has made a serious commitment to living a healthier lifestyle, and we are anxious to see what other goals he will set for himself.



## HIGH HURDLES

A new full-time riding instructor, Rebecca Vincent was hired in place of Elisabeth Pratt in August 2018. A part-time instructor was newly hired for 6-8 hours in July to help with Saturday classes.



High Hurdles provided riding and horsemanship lessons to 105 unduplicated riders during 2018. Between February and December, a total of 1,004 lesson units were taught. No matter how many times people came to the "farm" they always enjoyed the experience of being in the country and connecting with the High Hurdles horses and staff.

The new High Hurdles schedule for 2018 was created for both eight-week sessions and four-week sessions. A four-week session was offered in March and another in August. Eight-week sessions were offered in April/May, June/July and in September/October. Riders could also choose to participate in the full season session, from March to November.







In addition to individual and group horsemanship lessons, High Hurdles provided specialized lessons based on the criteria specified in three separate grants funded by the OPWDD Family Support Services division. Two of the grants are for children living in the Western New York region and one grant is for those in the Finger Lakes DDRO catchment area. The Pioneer BOCES program again brought students with special needs and behavioral concerns to ride under the Finger Lakes grant. In past years it has been hard to find students in the Wyoming County area to meet the criteria of the grant but the Pioneer program helped us meet our goal! Pioneer students rode in the Spring, Summer and Fall of 2018.

The "Come Ride with Me" sibling riding program which is designed to provide sibling pairs the opportunity to ride together was discontinued in 2018.

There were several changes to the horse herd. Beatrix was donated in March of 2018. Fionna left in July and Matrix left in September. Two new horses, Bella and Toby, came in the Fall and have remained with the program. Bella was donated by Houghton College and Toby is on long-term lease. Cody retired in November.

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 Mr. & Mrs. Rick Winter  
 Ms. Angela Witt  
 Mr. William Wood  
 Ms. Mary Grace Wood  
 Mr. & Mrs. John Wurtz  
 Ms. Melissa Wyzkowski  
 Ms. Maya Wyzkowski

Ms. Claudia Yates  
 Mr. & Mrs. Robert Yekich  
 Mr. & Mrs. Steve Yekich  
 Mr. & Mrs. David Young  
 Miss Jennifer Yuen  
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Mr. & Mrs. Kevin Kelly

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Mr. & Mrs. Gary Braunscheidel

**In Honor of Doug McCormick**  
Mr. & Mrs. Doug McCormick

**Happy Birthday Dr. Skoog**  
Mr. & Mrs. Tom Becker

**In Memory of Gale Syty**  
Mr. & Mrs. Paul Synor



**In Memory of Jenny Parent**  
Mr. & Mrs. Anthony Annunziato  
Mr. & Mrs. Don Bach  
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**In Memory of James Pilc**

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Mr. Lawrence Robinson

**In Honor of Matthew Lavey**

Mr. Thomas Lavey

**In Memory of Raymond Boehm**

Mr. & Mrs. Paul Synor



### **In Memory of Richard Hanlon**

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Mr. & Mrs. Michael Bien  
Mr. & Mrs. Dale Eckl  
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Mr. & Mrs. Anthony Annunziato

### **In Memory of Ronald Swartz**

Mrs. Linda Swartz

### **Happy 18<sup>th</sup> Birthday Samantha Golab**

Mr. & Mrs. Alexander Golab

### **In Honor of Tammy Yekich**

Mr. John Edson

### **In Honor of Tanyla Landis**

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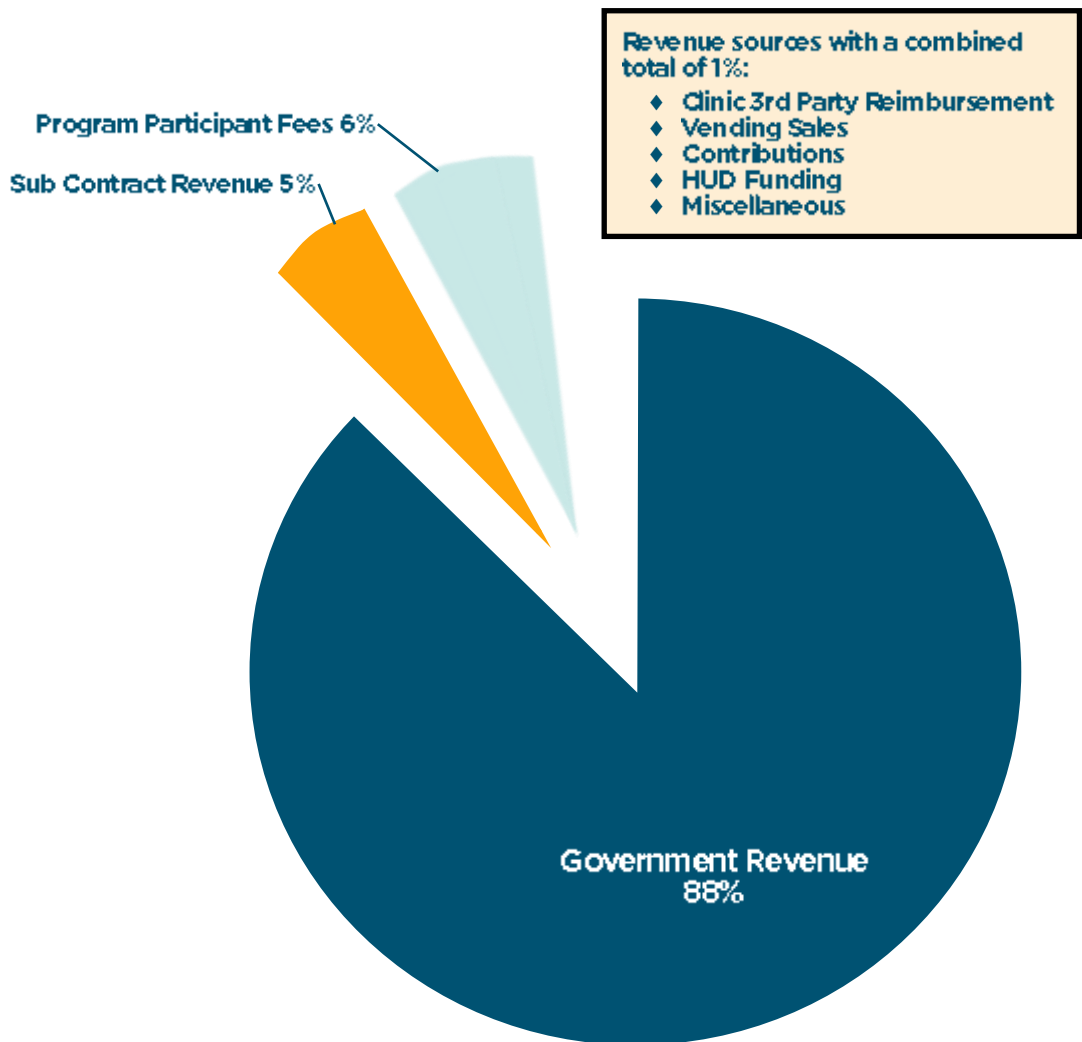
Through sasl's Community Prevocational Program, several individuals who receive support from sasl are employed at the **Astronics Corporation** in East Aurora, New York.

This year, the company shared the holiday spirit with the gift of frozen turkeys as a Thanksgiving 'Thank You' to all of their employees.

Pictured with their prize birds, from left to right are Arlan Anstett, Jennifer Kerr, Kelly McDonald, Matt Lange and Jonathon Baker

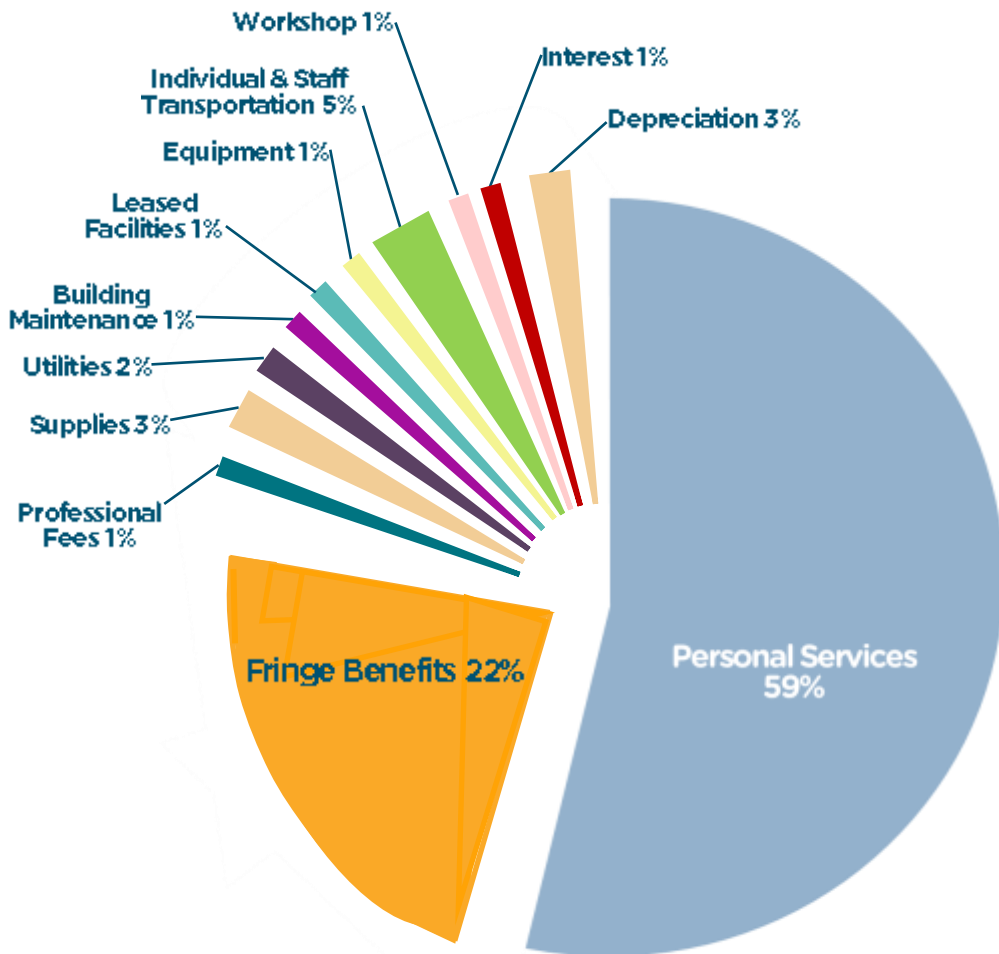


## 2018 Financials—Revenue



**Total 2018 Revenue: \$47,105,694**

## 2018 Financials—Expenses



**Total 2018 Expenses: \$45,467,767**

## In Memoriam

*In 2018, the following members of our  
sasi family left us too soon:*

Carla Bennett

John Fromen, Sr.

Richard Hanlon

Linda Kilburn

Corey Matheny

Deborah Macpherson

Carol McConnaughey

Travers O'Connor

Laurie Ortel

Genevieve "Jenny" Parent

Arnold Smith

Alvin Storm

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