

























Philadelphia's Center for Independent Living

2010 ANNUAL REPORT















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Now the largest of over 400 CILs nation-wide with a dedicated staff of over 300 individuals in two locations, we continually reflect on Liberty Resources' humble, grassroots beginnings in a West Philadelphia storefront nearly three decades ago. It is because of the struggles—the many victories, defeats, and historic milestones that Liberty has been a part of over the years—that we remain a proud family, even as we grow larger and more quickly than we could have imagined back in West Philadelphia.

Our family, I am very pleased to say, has welcomed some new members that will enable us to better serve the community of people with disabilities through an even more comprehensive array of services. Some of the CIL's initiatives have, in the spirit of our mission, become independent; namely, Liberty Wheels and Liberty Housing Development Corporation. Liberty Wheels now thrives as a licensed Durable Medical Equipment dealer, located just next door to the CIL. Wheels is unique in that profits flow back to the CIL, so that when customers purchase mobility equipment—increasing access and independence for themselves—they in turn support our efforts to foster accessibility and independent living for all.

Liberty Housing Development Corporation works tirelessly with landlords and developers to create affordable, accessible, integrated housing opportunities—something that falls outside of the CIL's mandate, but which defines LHDC, now an independent, licensed Community Housing Development Organization.

We are also in the process of creating a fiscal intermediary non-profit that will make the attendant payment and benefits administration processes easier and more efficient for Consumers and attendants alike.

Since I began my involvement with Liberty Resources nearly eighteen years ago, the dedication and fortitude of our Consumers, staff, volunteers, and advocates continually amazes me. The devotion of our people is truly invigorating, and it stands as a constant affirmation of the mission behind our work.

So, as we embrace the future and honor the past that shaped who we are today, as a CIL and as soldiers in the Independent Living Movement, I take this opportunity to offer my sincere thanks to and admiration of the Consumers, staff, volunteers, and advocates without whom The Liberty Family of Companies would not exist.

Sincerely,

Thomas H. Earle, CEO

#### **Our Mission**

Liberty Resources, the Philadelphia Center for Independent Living, advocates with disabled people, individually and collectively, to ensure our civil rights and equal access to all aspects of life in the community.

Liberty Resources, Inc. is one of over 400 Centers for Independent Living (CILs) nationwide. All CILs are Consumer-controlled; the majority of the governing Board and staff are persons with disabilities. Centers provide assistance to all people, regardless of disability type. Like all Centers for Independent Living, Liberty Resources enables persons with disabilities to live in a manner of their own choosing by providing individuals with a menu of services. The following pages describe the services and programs Liberty offers.

#### Core Services

#### **Advocacy:**

The roots of all Independent Living Centers lie within the Disability Rights Movement of the 1970s—a movement initiated to enable individuals with disabilities to have the same life choices as non-disabled persons. Liberty Resources remains committed to advocating for the rights of individuals with disabilities.

#### **Skills Training:**

Training services offer individuals the opportunity to learn and practice those skills needed to live independently in the community. Training is provided both individually and in small groups and emphasizes Independent Living skills including home and financial management, personal assistant management, nutrition and meals, rights and responsibilities, community mobility, socialization, and communication.

#### **Peer Support Services:**

Peer support services offer a Consumer the opportunity to work with another disabled person, exploring options, making informed decisions, and gaining individually defined control over his or her life.

#### **Information & Referral:**

This service provides our Consumers, their families, and professionals with information about disability-related issues and programs, facilitating linkage through referrals to needed services.

#### Ancillary Services

#### **Attendant Care:**

Also known as Personal Assistance Services (PAS), attendant care is a critical, Consumer-directed Independent Living service which supports a person's ability to work, live, and attend school independently in the community. Its focus is to provide a Consumer with assistance and maintenance of daily activities.

# **Specialized and Transitioning Services (STS):**

STS aims to increase outreach and awareness regarding nursing home transitioning; to transition Consumers to the community, and to offer and provide Specialized Services to residents in nursing homes.

#### **Supports Coordination:**

Supports Coordination is a Consumer-directed service which provides information, assistance with problem-solving, and referrals to community-based services. Its focus is on advocacy at the Consumer's direction.

#### **Housing Advocacy:**

Liberty Resources' Housing program works with individuals with disabilities to help them obtain housing appropriate to the individual's needs, including homeownership. LRI staff also remains active in community efforts to direct city officials and resources to address the housing crisis in Philadelphia and to increase the number of affordable, accessible, integrated housing units.

#### **Liberty Resources Academy:**

The Academy is a pre-vocational program that offers individuals the training and skills they need to enter or re-enter the workplace. Training includes operation of assistive technologies, basic office equipment, reading and written communication skills, math, beginning and advanced computer skills, resumé and interview development, and dressing for success.

#### **Liberty Retreads:**

Liberty Retreads is designed to help wheel-chair-using Consumers get quick, inexpensive repairs to their chairs on-site at LRI. Liberty Retreads recycles used wheelchairs and provides loaner chairs to Consumers during equipment repairs as well.



#### The People







#### **Board of Directors**

#### Janice McGrane, Chair

Leonid Belkin Hernan Brizuela Marshall Brown

Thomas H. Earle, CEO

John Gladstone

James Goodwin Charles Homiller

Linda Lukiewski

Janice McGrane, Chair

Eric McNeil

Melissa Monser

Marsha Peurifoy

Caroline Reeves

Jean Searle, Secretary

Sharon Sutow, Vice Chair

Erik von Schmetterling, Treasurer

Filomena Ward

#### **Volunteers**

#### **Theresa Yates, Volunteer Coordinator**

**James Davis Estelle Downing** 

Felicia Ennis

Gary Isaac

Joseph Kirchoffer

Donna Moody

**Julia Norris** 

Keith Ross

Baker Schaffer

Carmen Tyson

Daphne Waters

#### **Community Advocates** Nancy Salandra, Director of Community Advocacy

Maria Bottiglieri

Karen Burrison

Michael Citro

Kathleen Curcio

Robin Dickens

Gino Eaddy

Joyce Farria

Herman Gray

Candace Harris

Gary Isaac

Lordia Jackson

Ida Lawton

Michelle McCandless Isaac Osei-Tawiah

Alletta Parris Olday

Stephen Polk

Gloria Rice

Virginia Simmons Glenda Speller-Erby

Tina Thompson

Tim Taylor

Susan Trager

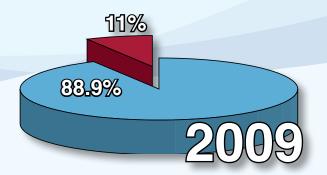
Margaret Vance

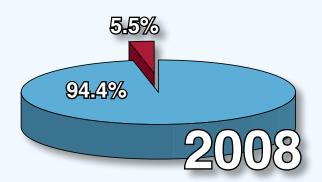
Stanley Vaughn

Troy West



#### Financial Statement





#### **Program Services Administration**

Fundraising accounts for 0.1% of the budget for both years sampled

Income	2009	2008
Fees & Grants	74,450,544	62,768,702
Rental Income	1,767,991	349,546
Investment Net Income (Loss)	(1,581,242)	151,111
Other Support & Fees	61,570	91,818
Total Income	74,698,863	63,361,177
Evicana	2000	0000
Expenses	2009	2008
Expenses Program Services	<b>2009</b> 66,491,954	<b>2008</b> 56,725,176
Program Services	66,491,954	56,725,176
Program Services Management & General	66,491,954 8,252,263	56,725,176 3,261,767
Program Services Management & General Fundraising	66,491,954 8,252,263 93,788	56,725,176 3,261,767 84,677

#### Benefactors

#### **Grants & Contracts**

Citizens Bank
Fair Housing Rights Center in Southeastern PA
PA Council on the Arts
PA Office of Housing and Community Development
PA Office of Supportive Housing
Woods Services

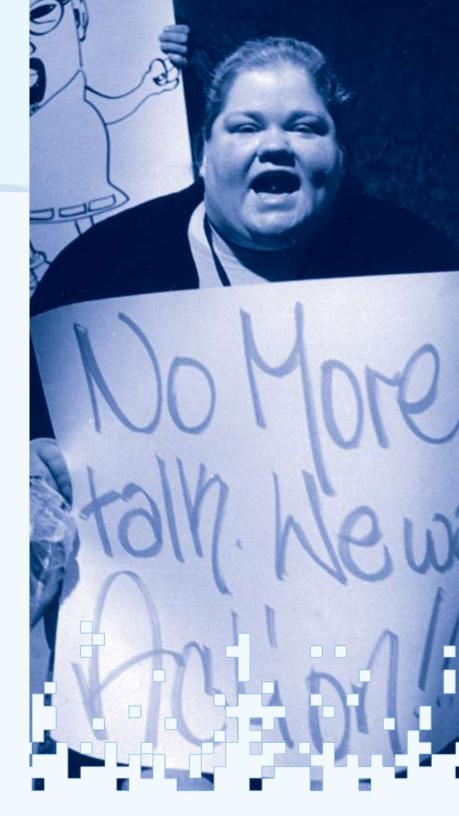
#### **Donors**

Debi Bacon
Jennifer Barnhart
Margaret A. Boudin
Mary C. Cheeks
Mr. & Mrs. Bruce Connus
Vicki Cuscino
Jean M. D'Eramo
Norma Robertson-Dabrowski
Linda Dezenski
Wanda W. Dunphy
Thomas Earle
Daniel Hart

James & Christine Hennessy

Cassie James Holdsworth

Chava Kintisch
Suzanne J. Ladek
Rosemary T. Lorenz
Jon & Anne Maratea
Stephen J. Masi
Marie Palladino
Barbara Polzer
Chester & Annemarie Pondo
Emily Roberson
Nancy Salandra
Lennox Smith
Elvis Solivan
Anneliese Tunnhoff
Louise C. Weston, PhD



# Personal Stories

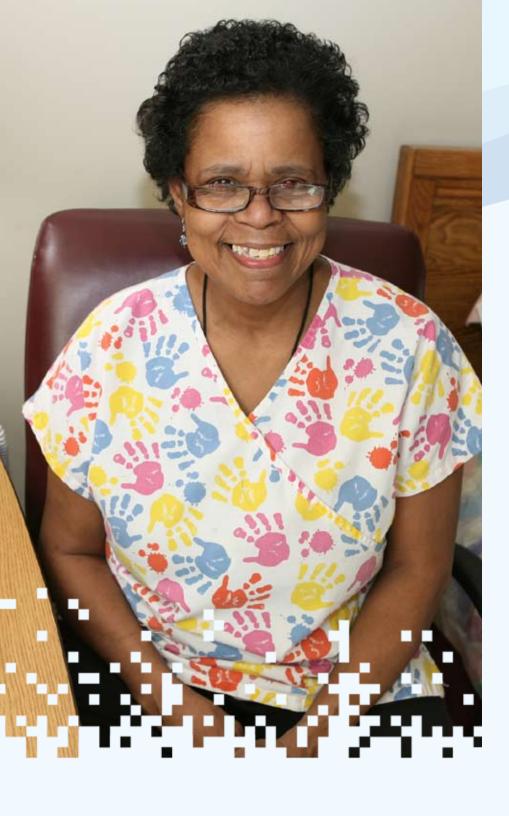


These small words together form the simplest of sentences and the clearest, most powerful of assertions. Yet life presents us all, at one point or another, with circumstances in which these simple words of affirmation seem impossible to say with any



conviction. At such times, it's easy to let our limits control and define us. The funny thing about limits is that they are merely perceptions—products of someone else's often mistaken or stereotypical assessment of our capabilities. The following stories illustrate that important truth. In answer to the many voices—including their

own—that insisted "you can't," these individuals raised their voices even louder and asserted "I can," because finally and fully, they believed those words and could act on them to reclaim their independence.



#### Michelle 5.

Until a stroke changed his life in 2004 at the age of 42, Michael ran property management and urban renewal and development companies.

While he was in recovery, his marriage ended. His former wife had heard of Liberty Resources, so they called for information. Michael remains involved in a number of Liberty's programs, including Liberty Resources Academy. His outgoing, positive presence there leaves an impression on everyone he meets.

No longer feeling lost in the wake of his stroke, Michael is thankful for the services and support he has received from Liberty, and hopes to share his experiences with others.

I have attendant care through the [Medicaid] Independence Waiver. I've participated in Independent Living Skills Training and courses at the Academy. Most recently, I became part of [the disability rights advocacy group] ADAPT. I also work in the Disabled In Action office part-time.

### How have the services you received affected your life?

They informed me about my rights and helped me accept my disability. I was afraid to leave my house initially, and everyone encouraged me to get back into the community.

# What things did you learn about yourself in the process?

I learned that I can still do something. I have shortterm memory issues so I don't know if I can go back to what I used to do. [Prior to his stroke, Michael had three companies that focused on property management, and urban renewal and development.] I am still looking at possible employment—something that will benefit the community.

# What advice would you offer someone new to Liberty?

Just don't give up.

### Is there anything that Liberty could have done differently?

Living in the suburbs, there was not enough information and resources. I heard about Liberty really through word of mouth.

### Do you have any ongoing challenges that you worry about?

I really want to share my feelings and experiences with others. I felt so lost, and LRI helped me set goals and turn my life around.



#### isreal P.

Annette lives with a neurological disability that doctors have so far been unable to pinpoint. Her communication skills and physical abilities can vary widely within the same day, as can her emotional state.

Now 52 years old, Annette has been connected to Liberty Resources for more than four years. She acknowledges that prior to her involvement with the CIL, she limited herself to visiting only her church and a small group of friends.

Until she met people at Liberty, Annette felt embarrassed by her disability, and her lack of self-confidence played a large part in her curtailed social activity.

Annette sees the unique challenges she has faced due to her disability as "learning tools" and she would not change them. Since her relationship with Liberty Resources and the Academy began, she has gained courage and learned that she is "proficient with technology."

I participated in Building Bridges, [a program that facilitates improved Consumer-employer/attendant relationships], and I do advocacy. I receive services from the Community Services Program for Persons with Physical Disabilities (CSPPPD). I have received assistive technology that I am being trained on through the Academy. I also receive transportation services.

### How have the services you received affected your life?

For the last two years, I have been more independent. I was restricted and now I am more out in public. I have gotten more courage, and I am less inhibited.

## What things did you learn about yourself in the process?

The voice of advocacy is astounding. I am learning to use what I have learned through Liberty as a spring-board for a more effective life. I also discovered that I am very proficient with technology.

### What advice would you offer someone new to Liberty?

Find out about the services. Participate in something that you find interesting. Get out into the community. Reassess yourself and don't put limits on yourself.

### Is there anything that Liberty could have done differently?

No.

# Do you have any ongoing challenges that you worry about?

I work on a ministry for children and I want to be active in the streets speaking about the value of education and technology. I care about intergenerational learning.

I see my disability experience as a great learning tool, and I would not change it. I am enriched by discovering my own strength and the power of others' prayers.



#### Charles J.

As a diabetic, 58-year-old Virginia has learned to live with Diabetic Neuropathy, a complication that makes it impossible for her to walk.

In 2007, Virginia was a nursing home resident and began receiving Specialized Services from Liberty Resources. Specialized Services allowed her to remain as comfortable and independent as possible while in the confines of the nursing home, until she decided she was ready to reclaim her independence and transition to life on her own, in her own residence.

When that decision came, Liberty's Nursing Home Transition department was there to assist Virginia in completing her move out of the nursing home. She now works as a Community Advocate.

I was visited regularly by my Supports Coordinator while in the nursing home. My SC encouraged me to get involved in activities once my health improved. I started attending skills classes. Eventually I was ready to look for an apartment.

# How have the services you received affected your life?

I love my life. I visit other Consumers in nursing homes. It means everything to me.

### What things did you learn about yourself in the process?

I realized that if I needed the assistance of people or equipment, it did not matter. Whatever condition I'm in, I can still do something.

## What advice would you offer someone new to Liberty?

Come down and see for yourself. When you visit, you will see that people with disabilities can be active and productive. You can do it, just like I did.

# Is there anything that Liberty could have done differently?

No. Liberty helped me build up my faith and my self-confidence.

### Do you have any ongoing challenges that you worry about?

I'm going through re-certification for Customized Community Transportation (CCT) eligibility so I can ride SEPTA's Paratransit.



## Terry H.

Twenty-six-year-old Bunnie lives with Cerebral Palsy. After her mother became ill and could no longer take care of her, Bunnie stayed with an uncle but was soon forced to move out because she was not listed on his lease.

When she came to Liberty Resources in November, Bunnie had briefly stayed in a hotel, and even spent some nights in her cousin's car. Then, she temporarily occupied one of the accessible Broad Street condos developed by Liberty Housing Development Corporation while waiting for her permanent place to become available. During that period, as Bunnie prepared to move into the condo, she went grocery shopping at the supermarket for the first time in her life.

Bunnie loves Independent Living, and is once again excited about life. She greets every day—and everyone—with a smile.

Bunnie has received housing assistance. Bunnie was finally able to move to her permanent place in March 2010, a subsidized apartment she shares with her brother Kendall.

Bunnie is still going through the enrollment process for Home and Community Based waiver services.

### How have the services you received affected your life?

The Department of Human Services (DHS) was involved in my life before because my mother could not take care of me. Now I am free; I have a future. I have the greatest brother. He is going to get paid to work for me.

### What things did you learn about yourself in the process?

That I can live on my own.

## What advice would you offer someone new to Liberty?

Don't give up hope. Keep believing in God.

### Is there anything that Liberty could have done differently?

No.

# Do you have any ongoing challenges that you worry about?

Money has been tight because Bunnie's brother hasn't been paid yet. She waited for the month of March for her assessment to get done. Bunnie is also waiting to get approved for Paratransit.

Bunnie recently received her new power wheelchair. When she is ready, Bunnie will attend activities at Liberty Resources and she also hopes to go to college for Sports Journalism in the future.



#### Yvonne H.

Thirty-three-year-old Tanikia battles depression and a speech impairment. Until recently, she lived with family members and was "not doing much with her life." When tensions rose between Tanikia and her family, they threatened her with the possibility of going to a shelter—a prospect that led Tanikia to attempt suicide. Luckily, Tanikia began treatment for her depression, and thanks to the programs she attended and the medication she began taking, her life started to improve.

Currently, Tanikia lives in a community rehabilitation residence. A roommate shared a flyer about the Academy and Ticket to Work, a government program designed to help Social Security beneficiaries gain employment. Determined to try something new, she enrolled in the Academy in 2008 and recently finished her classes.

Tanikia goes to the Client Assistance Program where she assists in the office a few mornings a week. She hopes to work in a clerical position at a non-profit organization, and enjoys working in a setting where she can encourage others.

Tanikia has attended courses at the Academy and has done volunteer work for Giving from the Heart, an annual home goods drive held at LRI.

### How have the services you received affected your life?

I wasn't doing too much with my life. Now I have goals; I have to go out and be around people. I take my meds and I have learned about my depression. I learned to monitor my speech and my tone.

## What things did you learn about yourself in the process?

I want to encourage people. I know I can do anything that I put my mind to.

# What advice would you offer someone new to Liberty?

People encouraged and supported me; but they also taught me that it is a tough world out there where I have to compete.

### Is there anything that Liberty could have done differently?

No. I just wish it had happened sooner. I wasted so much time.

### Do you have any ongoing challenges that you worry about?

Tanikia is going to finish her internship in June and look for a job. At some point, she wants to find an apartment. Liberty has encouraged her to work with the Housing department and also put in an employment application at LRI.

#### 2009-2010 Highlights

#### **Statistics**

7,748 Consumers received at least one core service: Information and Referral, Independent Living Skills Training, Individual or Systems Advocacy, or Peer Support.

3,272 Consumers now participate in Home and Community Based waiver services.

Forty-five Community Advocates visit 77 nursing home residents on a regular basis, offering services to ensure the best quality of life and the highest degree of independence while in the nursing home, and providing the guidance and resources necessary to help the individual transition to independent living, if they so desire.

Liberty Resources transitioned 56 Consumers to independent living, and assisted our collaborative partners on another six transitions. Advocates successfully encouraged the state to hire a Regional

Housing Coordinator to assist with the *Money Follows the Person* transitioning initiative, which aims to rebalance long-term care so that people with disabilities can choose home care instead of nursing home care.

Independent Living Services staff assisted 33 Consumers with advocacy and information about Medical and Social Security benefits.

#### **Strategic Planning**

LRI expended substantial time and resources on the development of a software package to more efficiently process attendant payroll for our Consumeremployers. Consumers and staff work together on a monthly basis to improve the policies and procedures of our Financial Management Services department.

Board Members, staff, advocates, and Consumers took active roles in the implementation of a longterm business plan. When fully implemented, the plan will enable the CIL to reorganize its management structure to adequately address its rapid growth.

Liberty Resources continues its role as a proud and conscientious building owner and landlord. This year, LRI formed an Accessibility Committee dedicated to architectural improvement and program accessibility throughout not only the organization, but the entire Sovereign Building.

#### **State Advocacy**

Pennsylvania's budget crisis necessitated many cutbacks in the Commonwealth, and some of the few programs and policies that work in favor of independent living suffered as a result. In response, advocates quickly mobilized on the following issues:

• The preservation of Act 150, which provides for the availability of in-home attendant care throughout Pennsylvania.









Philadelphia's Center for Independent Living











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