

Center for Independence through Conductive Education ~ 100 W. Plainfield, Ste. 100, Countryside, IL 60525  
(708) 588-0833 ~ [www.center-for-independence.org](http://www.center-for-independence.org)



## Note from the Director

Dear Friends of the Center,

I Can! Two simple words and just 4 letters – but how powerful those few words are – and what an incredible difference it can make across a lifetime.

Why is it that some children flourish, despite significant disabilities, and successfully transition to independence, adulthood and employment while others do not? Self Determination!

The focus on Self-Determination is where Conductive Education stands out. The program breaks down physical skills like walking, sitting and eating into achievable tasks and requires every participant to initiate the task...take a risk, cope, persevere, adapt – and learn! It is through this continuous cycle of trial and error that children develop a strong “I Can!” attitude; where they believe in their own ability and recognize that there is *no limit to learning*.

Self-Determination is priceless – it is the outcome of failure, hard work and a “try and try again” spirit. “I Can!” cannot be bought – **it is earned**. Thank you for encouraging over 200 children and adults with physical disabilities to discover the “I Can!” in themselves. Your kindness allows so many children to realize that their disability does not limit them – they should expect more, learn more and do more! Certainly a life lesson we all can benefit from!

Thank you ~

**Patti Herbst, Executive Director**

The mission of the Center for Independence is to help children and adults with physical disabilities maximize their independence. We do this by offering Conductive Education programs that develop their motor functions in a manner that promotes positive self-direction, self-esteem and an “I Can!” attitude. The Center is an IL 501 (c) 3 non-profit organization.



## Site Locations:

The Center is pleased to offer motor training programs at the following locations:

- Countryside Program  
Main Site  
100 W. Plainfield Road, Ste.  
100 Countryside, IL 60525
- North West Program  
St. Francis de Sales Church  
135 S. Bueshing Rd.  
Lake Zurich, IL 60047
- Carlos Cantu Center  
2434 S. Kildare  
Chicago, IL 60623
- **South-South West (NEW)**  
900 Maple Ave.  
Homewood, IL 60430

## Introducing Our NEW Site: "South-SouthWest" Homewood-Flossmoor



For several years the Center has been exploring options to expand our program to the South-South West region of the Chicagoland area. With tremendous support from the Roger & Ruth MacFarlane Foundation, the Jon Goers Fund, and our generous donors - we are so pleased to finally announce the opening of our **fourth site** to be located in the Homewood-Flossmoor community!

Please join the Center in welcoming Dr. Ann Jackson, DPT and Dr. Amber Brim, DPT to our program! These incredibly talented physical

therapists have over 40 years of combined experience serving children and adults with physical disabilities. The Center will be offering a range of Conductive Education programs serving babies with physical disabilities through adults recovering from stroke - our focus will be on families and children who face access barriers to quality health services.

Please welcome Ann and Amber at [AJackson@cfice.org](mailto:AJackson@cfice.org) and [ABrim@cfice.org](mailto:ABrim@cfice.org) - and thank you for helping us bring this life-changing program to the S-SW community!

### News from the Northwest

This past year has been very busy and exciting at the Northwest Center in Lake Zurich. We will be hosting our 11th summer camp this July! Our goal to expand the number of children served at NW continues to motivate us. We are committed to ensuring children learn the skills they will need to fully access education and the community.

We are grateful for St. Francis de Sales Catholic Church for generously donating our classroom space. Your continued support of our program is a real blessing for the children, families and staff! A very special thank you to Shane Nolan who completed his Eagle Scout project with us. Shane and his team built two beautiful cabinets that hold all of our classroom and office supplies, and contain

individual storage space for every child that attends the Center! He raised all of the funds for this project himself. We are so grateful!

Thank you to Dale and Judy Lenart and the Sherkey family for hosting our 7th annual golf outing in September. We appreciate everyone who attended the 11th annual fundraiser in March - thank you for supporting children with physical disabilities on their journey towards independence!

**Jackie Bathery**  
Northwest Manager

**Dr. Jamie Gancayco, M.D., F.A.A.P.**  
Board Director





## Celebrating 1 year of CE for adults post-stroke!

The Center's stroke group has been meeting for over a year now and we are thrilled with the immense growth in the participants and their journey back to independence. According to the National Institute of Health, more than 700,000 people in the United States suffer a stroke each year. Early and intensive rehabilitation for adults post-stroke is necessary to gain back lost skills and improve their quality of life.

The Center's program excels due to its emphasis on individualized, focused, and repetitive practices within a social context. Working together with peers who have shared experiences is not only unique, but also empowering, motivating, and educational. By working together on a similar task or goal, individuals post-stroke focus on improving strength, balance, coordination, and mobility skills *together*.

**Participant Testimonial:** 'Enjoyable' was never a word I associated with physical therapy - until I began participating in the Center's stroke program. Since I began the program, I have gained strength and mobility while also having fun interacting with the other participants. After each session, I am physically exhausted but mentally energized. I consider this program to be the perfect combination of physical therapy and encouraging support group.

*If someone you know would benefit from attending the Center's Stroke Program, please call (708) 588-0833 or contact Maureen at [mmichalski@cfice.org](mailto:mmichalski@cfice.org)!*

## Conductive Education: No limit to learning - Reach your potential!

### Did you know?

Cerebral palsy affects over 800,000 Americans and is on the rise in the U.S., impacting 1 in 278 children. Sadly, many children are not receiving quality services because insurance limits coverage or therapy is too expensive and out of reach. For example, 90% of the Center's family have therapy capitations that limit services.

Can you imagine spending only 1 hour per week learning to walk, sit or toilet independently if you have a significant physical disability? It doesn't work. Not only does it not work - lack of therapy can result in lifelong problems. Children with cerebral palsy who do not access therapy can develop bone joint deformities, muscle contractures, scoliosis, respiratory dysfunction, pneumonia, severe weakness and ultimately, pain.



*We are proud to report that the Center meets all 20 Better Business Bureau of Chicago Charity standards, is rated highly by Guidestar Charity Navigator and received a 2016 Top Non-Profit Award from Philanthropedia.*



# Gracias! Köszönöm! Merci! Danke! Thank you!

## *We'd Like to Thank:*

Everyone that supported our **18<sup>th</sup> Annual Golf Outing & Fundraiser!** Thank you to our Fundraising Committee including Katrena Card, Kellie Chamberlain, Angela Cecchi, Kathy Foley, Naheda Jablonski, Megan Kalweit, Steve Knysch, Charlotte Maloney, Ann McCormick, Anne McSweeney, Jessica Miller, Laura Olson, Tracey Olson, Joey Penachio, Ginny Prihoda, Lisa Rowen, Dana Santucci, and Denise Scott. You are so appreciated!

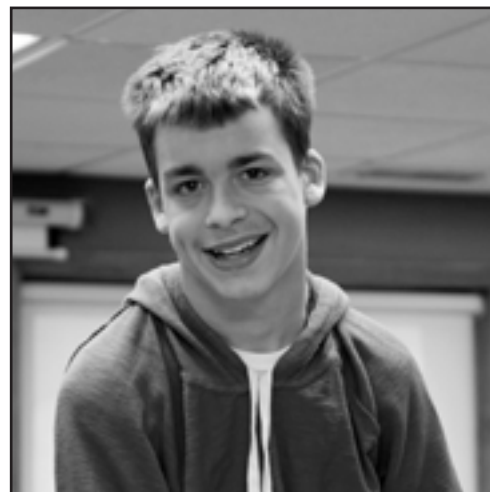


***Pleasantview Fire Department***  
for hosting a fundraiser for our children. Your consistent effort to make our community a safe place is incredibly appreciated!



***Nives & Joe Rizza***  
for hosting another wonderful Holiday Party for the Center Families! We are so grateful!

***Improving Self-Determination and Self-Direction in children with disabilities is the greatest influence in success at school, college, and ultimately, employment!***



## Financial Report

The Center considers it an honor to be stewards of the wonderful donations we receive. The audit of our December 31, 2016 Financial Statements has been completed and we are very pleased to report that approximately 90% of every dollar we spent was on Programs and Equipment that serve children with physical disabilities and approximately 10% spent on Management/General and Fundraising Expenses.

|                                |             |
|--------------------------------|-------------|
| Total Revenue                  | \$1,487,006 |
| Expenses                       |             |
| Program Services               | \$1,266,874 |
| Management/General             | 117,658     |
| Fundraising                    | 35,658      |
| Total Expenses                 | \$1,420,190 |
| Increase in Net Assets         | 66,816      |
| Net Assets - December 31, 2016 | \$1,474,995 |

As a result of your kindness, and so very important to the children and families of the Center, during 2016 we were able to provide over \$750,000 in financial assistance, guaranteeing every child's participation regardless of financial or insurance limitations!



**The Center has *never* turned a child away from necessary therapeutic services due to inability to pay!**

### *CE Testimonials from families of the Center*

"Conductive Ed teaches my child about her abilities rather than her disability!"

"It reminds me that he is not alone in this. He looks around and sees everyone working hard and that motivates him to try his best."

"CE is more than therapy - it is showing my child he can be independent, no matter the challenges he faces."

### **What is Conductive Education?**

Conductive Education is an intensive method of teaching people with motor disabilities to be more functionally independent. It is founded on the premise of neural plasticity; with intensive focused practice, the brain is capable of creating new pathways despite significant damage.

Children with motor disabilities develop and learn in the same way as typically developing children do. However, what most children learn through assimilation, the child with a motor disorder must be taught as a skill, whether it be walking, toileting, or dressing.

Our talented staff of Conductive Education Teachers, Physical and Occupational Therapists work together to provide a comprehensive program to promote confidence and motivation in every child, so that life skills are achieved to the best of their ability. The group setting is a strong motivator, encouraging children to take responsibility for their learning with an **"I Can!"** attitude.



## Expanding Employment Options for People with Physical Disabilities

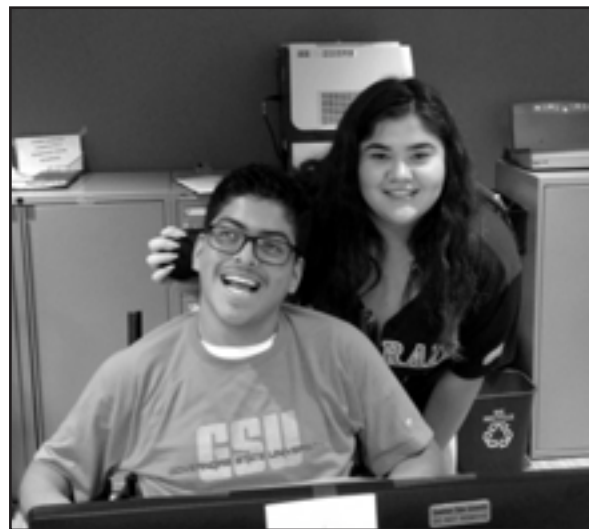
The Center is committed to breaking down barriers people with disabilities face in accessing employment. With generous grants from AT&T and the Coleman Foundation, we are pleased to report the following:

**AT&T Aspire Program** - by June 2017 the Center will place over 40 teens and young adults with physical disabilities in paid internships at businesses and nonprofits throughout the Chicagoland area. Jobs include receptionists, day care assistants, data entry and video designers to name just a few!

**Teaching Together Chicago** - the Center is working with local social service agencies, the Chicago Archdiocese and the Coleman Foundation in expanding employment opportunities for people with disabilities within Chicagoland Catholic Schools. The project started in July 2016 and the Center anticipates placing 12 adults with disabilities in paid internship positions by June 2017.

Our sincere thanks to everyone involved for giving so many people with disabilities the opportunity to develop the skills they need to be successful in the workforce. Together we are helping end the cycle of poverty by offering real life learning opportunities that lead to employment!

Please be a leader in expanding job opportunities for people with disabilities - call us about a internship or job opportunity available for our teens & young adults!



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*We'd like to take this opportunity to thank the members of our Board for donating their time and talents to the Center!*

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# **Donor List** Our program could not exist without the generous donations from Individuals, Corporations, and Foundations. Thank you for helping us teach children with physical disabilities to be more independent!

## **Grants and Donations \$100,000+**

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