



# Disability Advocates A Year of Impact



2025 Annual Report

# A message from Dave Bulkowski

## Disability Advocates' Executive Director

As we look back on 2025, I'm proud of the impact we made together. In a year marked by uncertainty and funding challenges, your support ensured that people with disabilities, veterans, youth, and families continued to access the services, independence, and advocacy they deserve. Every success story in this report is possible because you stood with us—believing in our mission and in a community where access and independence are a reality for all.

Thank you for being an essential part of our impact.



## Waves of Impact

Impact is not created all at once—it builds, like waves shaped by consistent movement and care. Your continued support allows our work to reach further while strengthening the outcomes we deliver. Each action contributes to meaningful, lasting change.

We thank our donors for investing in our mission and making this impact possible. We are equally grateful to our Board of Directors and volunteers whose leadership and dedication help expand our reach and deepen our impact.

333 places where  
accessibility reviews  
were conducted



448  
independent  
living plans  
were created  
for consumers



458 Home  
Assessments  
completed



486 young adults  
participated in  
employment  
readiness,  
independent living  
skills training, and  
mock interviews



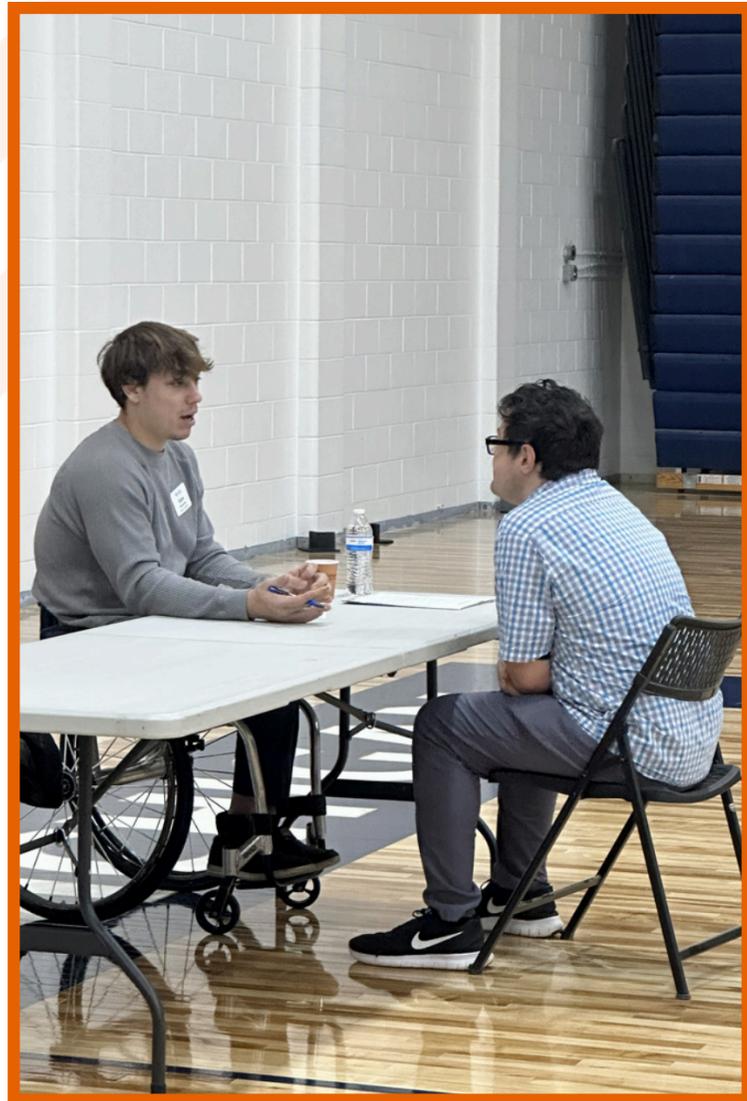
1,922  
information  
and referral  
contacts



# Building Confidence Beyond the Classroom

Throughout the year, young adults in our Youth Transition Services Program have been building the skills, confidence, and independence needed for life beyond the classroom.

Through in-person training, skill-building activities, and real-world experiences, participants gained practical tools for adulthood. At local job sites like Meijer and Dollar General, students built workplace confidence by stocking shelves, using ladders, and operating the cash register.



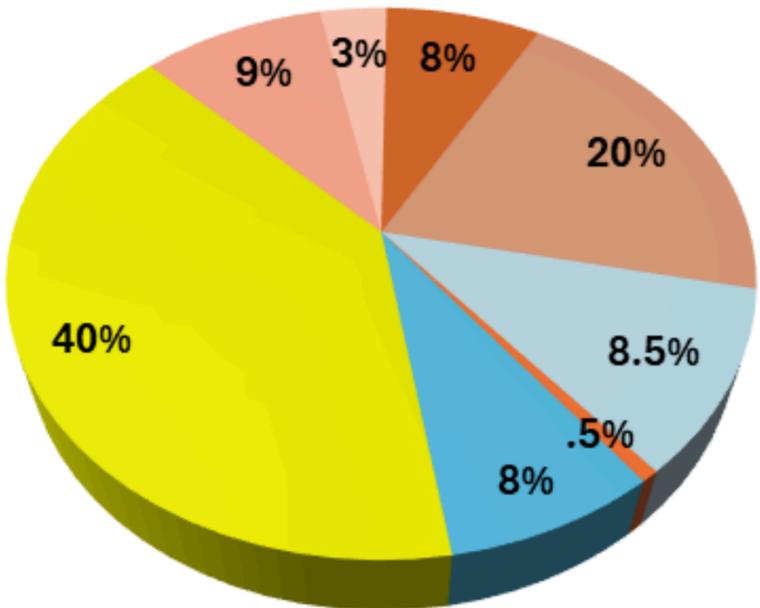
Back at Disability Advocates, they focused on what it takes to maintain employment, work toward promotions, and take initiative in their own growth. Along the way, students shared how the program helped them problem-solve independently, take pride in their progress, and feel genuinely supported by instructors who care. As one student put it, “It’s all about learning how to be independent—and feeling good about yourself along the way.”

That growth carried into our mock interview sessions, where participants practiced professional interview skills and received supportive, one-on-one feedback. For Robert, the experience was nerve-racking at first—but with each interview, his confidence grew. He applied what he’d learned through Youth Transition Services, including how to respond to illegal interview questions, maintain eye contact and posture, offer a strong handshake, and use deep breathing techniques to manage nerves.

Robert went above and beyond by completing four mock interviews, feeling more prepared each time. His hardworking, outgoing, and independent nature shined, and he’s now stepping into future opportunities with greater confidence and readiness.

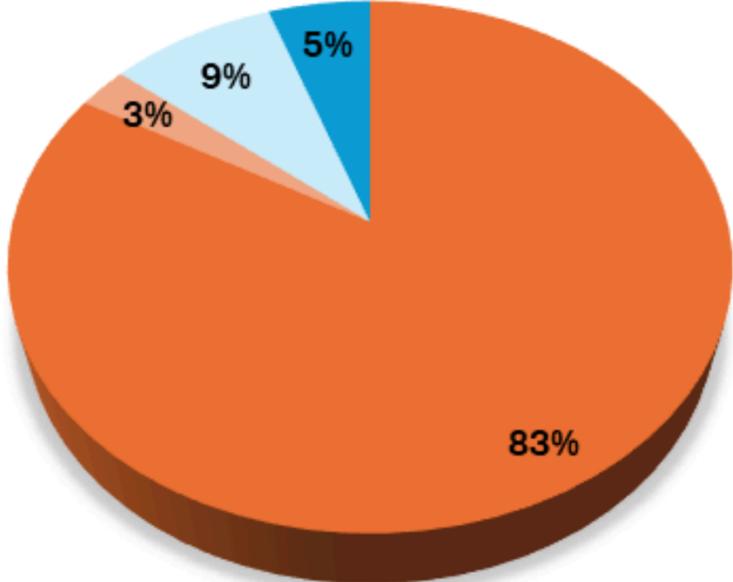
The determination, resilience, and enthusiasm shown by participants in our Youth Transition Services Program reflect the impact of intentional, supportive transition planning. We’re proud to walk alongside these young adults as they build momentum toward meaningful employment and independent, self-directed lives.

Revenue



■ Foundation Support	\$255,294.00
■ Fees for Services & Miscellaneous	\$642,609.00
■ Individual Contribution & Support	\$342,193.00
■ Donated Goods & Services	\$21,390.00
■ Assets Released From Restriction	\$251,434.00
■ Government Grant Support	\$1,279,889.00
■ Employee Retention Credit	\$300,719.00
■ Interest	\$110,893.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$3,204,421.00</b>

Expenses



■ Programs and Operations	\$2,429,842.00
■ Fundraising	\$76,161.00
■ Management & General	\$254,690.00
■ Consumer Equipment & Goods	\$155,930.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,916,623.00</b>

# From Uncertainty to Independence

William's journey is a powerful reminder of what support, advocacy, and determination can make possible.

Blind and navigating immense challenges, William once found himself without stable housing and overwhelmed by a system that felt impossible to manage alone. Homeless and feeling helpless, he was unsure how to take the next step forward.



William connected with Disability Advocates' staff members Chloe and Jacob, whose guidance and dedication made a lasting difference. With their support, William received assistance navigating housing options and financial resources, helping him secure a safe place to call home. Along the way, he also gained the tools and confidence needed to reenter the workforce.

Today, William is housed, employed, and empowered. What once felt like an insurmountable situation has become a story of stability, independence, and renewed confidence. William's success reflects not only his resilience, but also the impact of personalized advocacy and the importance of having someone in your corner when it matters most.

# Honoring Service Through Support

When Janice returned home after a hospital stay and time in rehab following a stroke, her husband Reggie didn't know where to turn. Suddenly, their home no longer worked the way it once had, and the equipment and modifications Janice needed felt overwhelming and out of reach.

Reggie reached out to Disability Advocates for help. After a home assessment, our team identified simple modifications and adaptive equipment that would allow Janice to move safely and independently throughout her home. With insurance covering only one item, the couple worried they would have to shoulder the remaining costs themselves.

Because of funding support for Veterans, the needed equipment and modifications were provided at no cost. Today, Janice is safely navigating her home and continuing her recovery with renewed independence—proof that the right support at the right time can make all the difference.



**A special thank you to our Board of Directors and dedicated volunteers,  
whose unwavering support and commitment have helped us expand our impact in 2025.**

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\*Board as of January 2026

## **Upcoming Events – *Mark Your Calendar!***

### **Disability Awareness Day**

**March 13, 2026**

Become advocates, engage with an advocacy panel, participate in breakout discussions and, connect with community resources.

### **Absolutely Accessible**

**May 14, 2026**

This technical workshop features breakouts in inclusive design, community planning, real estate (new), and residential construction (new).

### **A.D.A. Celebration**

**July 22, 2026**

Celebrating the 36th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act with fun for the whole family.

### **Invest In Ability**

**October 22, 2026**

Eliminating barriers for the thousands of individuals with disabilities in our community is cause for celebration!

# Aging in Place With Confidence

For Lucinda, independence is not just a goal — it's everything.

Living with heart failure, Lucinda needed specialized equipment to manage her health and safely navigate daily life. Elevating her feet is critical to supporting her heart, but without the right tools, even resting or standing up had become a challenge.

Through Disability Advocates, Lucinda received a medical-grade lift chair that has made a tremendous difference in her daily comfort and safety. The chair allows her to elevate her feet as needed and includes a backup battery, providing peace of mind in the event of a power outage. This single piece of equipment dramatically improved her quality of life.

Additional supports helped restore even more independence. A bed rail now allows Lucinda to get in and out of bed on her own. A shower chair, couch lifts, and other essential equipment ensure she can safely move through her home and complete daily routines without relying on constant assistance.

These supports have allowed Lucinda to remain independent in her own home — something that matters deeply to her.

As she puts it, "Independence is everything. I want to stay independent for as long as I can."



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FOUNDATION

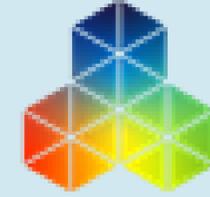
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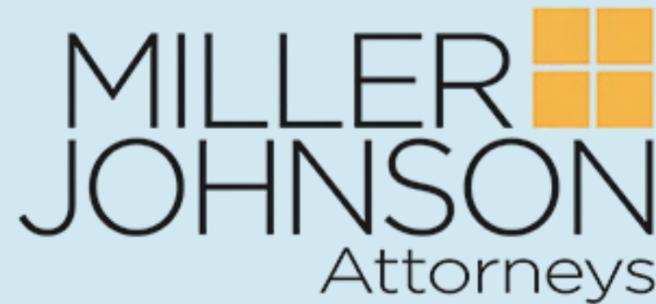
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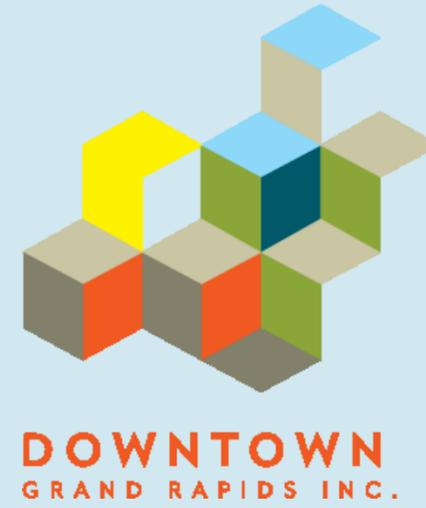
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