



Creating Opportunities for Everyone!

Annual Impact Report
July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024

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OUR MISSION

Enriching the lives of individuals with developmental disabilities by maximizing their opportunities for personal success, fun & friendship, employment, and community involvement.

CEL VISION

People with developmental disabilities are empowered to realize their greatest potential, thrive within the community, and achieve their hopes and dreams.

Follow us @CELfriends

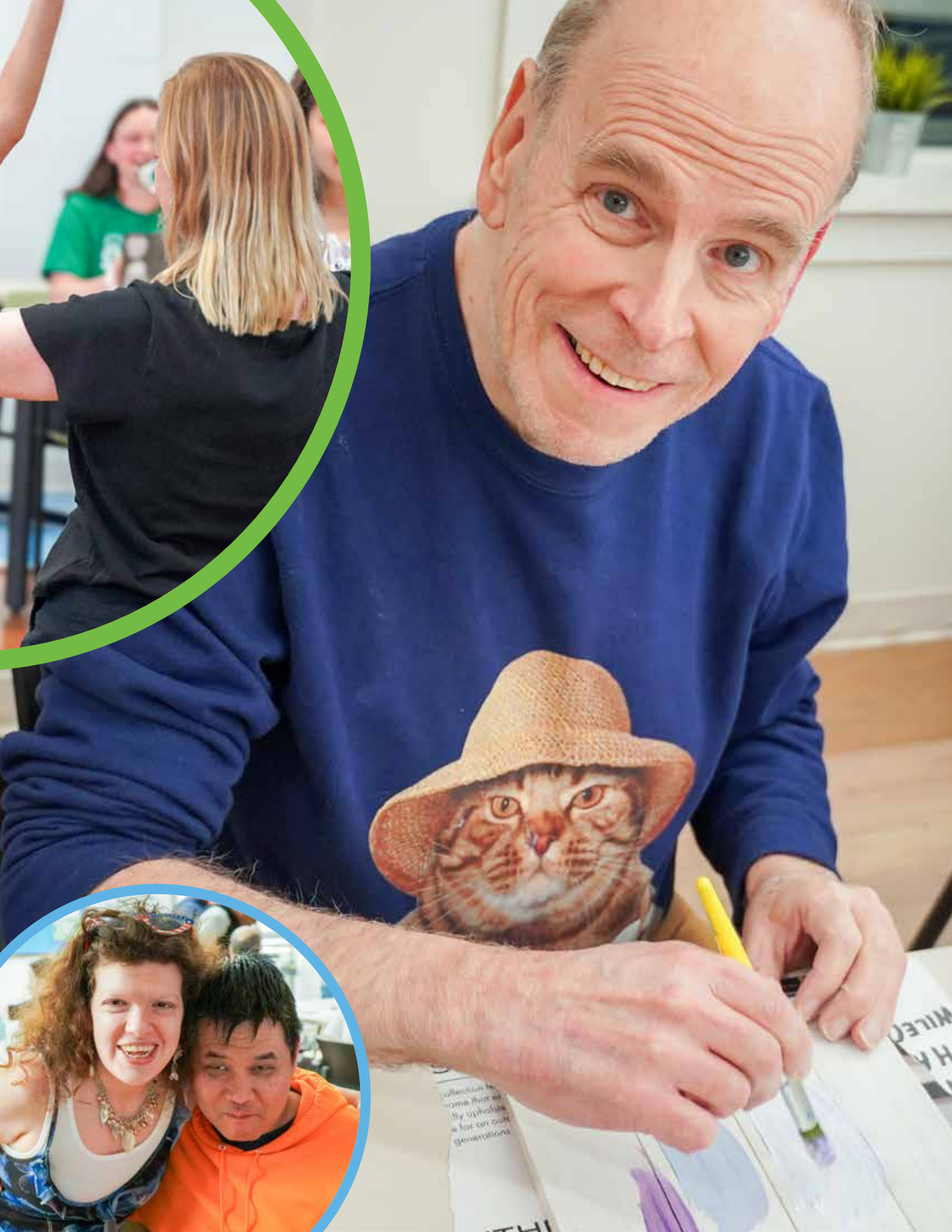


Follow us @Center for Enriched Living



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Dear CEL Family,

As I write this, I can't help but feel a deep sense of excitement and gratitude. This year marks my first as CEO of CEL, and I've had the honor of witnessing firsthand the incredible impact that our programs, partnerships, and supporters have on the lives of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. It's been a whirlwind of learning, connection, and inspiration, and I'm so proud to lead this organization into its next chapter.

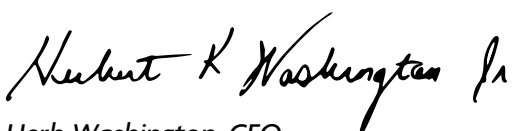
2024 has been nothing short of remarkable. Together, we've continued CEL's focus of making sure that every program or support we offer provides members with opportunities to live full and rich lives. **It's all about creating opportunities where everyone can experience life's possibilities, and you've helped us do just that.**

This year's successes are the result of a lot of hard work - and none of it would be possible without our amazing staff, volunteers, donors, and partners. You all are the heart and soul of CEL, and your support makes a world of difference for our members.

Looking ahead, we've got some exciting things on the horizon. As an example, we've launched our brand-new website that makes it easier than ever to get involved, stay connected, and explore the many ways we're impacting lives. And as we continue to grow, we're committed to finding new ways to expand our programs and reach even more people who need us.

Thank you for being part of the CEL family. Whether you've been with us for years or are just getting to know CEL, you mean the world to us. Together, we're building a brighter, more inclusive future for everyone.

Here's to a fantastic year and many more to come!
Warmly,


Herb Washington, CEO





“Building a brighter, more inclusive future for everyone.”





FY24 Volunteer Leadership July 2023- June 2024

Board of Directors

- Susan Bersh** *(President)*
- Lane Epstein** *(Vice President)*
- Mary Greanias** *(Secretary)*
- Akash Pathak** *(Treasurer)*
- Joan Cannon** *(Immediate Past President)*
- Howard Diamond** *(Senior Advisor)*

- Mark Bernstein
- Fred Blitt
- Miriam Campbell
- Rob Dorsey
- Jeffrey Greenspan
- Kristin Malek
- Vaughn Moore
- Ray Nair
- Mike Suchsland
- Paul Sundberg

Emeritus

- John Borta
- Kristin Coleman
- Kim Cysewski
- Noel Elfant*
- Alex Freund*
- Shea Hart*
- Kenneth A. Hoffman
- Sherwin Korey
- Kimberly Novak
- Greg Moyer, Moyer
- Kathryn A. Nellis*
- Daniel Ripes*
- Mark S. Robbins*
- Michael I. Rothstein
- Richard Sheiner
- Ira Singer
- Stephanie Slatkin



Trustees

Byron Holden*
David Kalfen*
Douglas Eckrote*
Gary G. Kash*
Michael Krasny
Richard Worsak*
Robert S. Vihon**

Young Leadership Committee (YLC):

Danny Bersh (*co-chair*)
Corey Sloan
Eddie Dooley
Jonathan Bersh
Kendyl Frank
Marielle Epstein
Tim Lahey
Julie Nadig (*co-chair*)
Jamie Miller (*co-chair*)
Alex Jakaitis
Alex DeTrempe



Scan to see
our current
leaders!

*Former Board President
**in memoriam

Our Employment Partners

Our Employment Opportunities program breaks down barriers for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities through partnerships with local businesses. Each of these local businesses has gained a dedicated and motivated team member by hiring a CEL member with a disability, fostering a positive work environment.

By creating tailored pathways to employment, we empower our members to achieve greater independence, inclusion, and a sense of belonging in the community, helping them find fulfillment in their work.

Abt Electronics
Amazon Fresh
Amgen (formerly Horizon)
Bark University Inc.
Blitt & Gaines, P.C
Border Tails Rescue
Brookdale Senior Living
Cooper's Hawk Winery & Restaurants
Culver's
Follow Your Nose
Gigi's Playhouse
Great Wolf Lodge
Heartland Animal Shelter
Hotel Indigo
Jewel Osco
Jiffy Lube
Leider Greenhouses & Garden Center
Mariano's
Noggin Builders
Pet Factory
Prospect Heights Public Library
Rainbows For All Children
TJ-Maxx
Thrown Elements Pottery
The Wild Roaster
Walgreens



“I like that I feel valued at my job.”

-Jenny,
Wild Roaster Employee



You Made our First-ever Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month (DDAM) Crowdfunding Campaign a Huge Success!

CEL's first-ever crowdfunding campaign in March 2024 was a resounding success. It brought together the organization's community of members, members' families, volunteers, and CEL staff like never before. CEL leveraged a \$50K match from Vaughn Moore (Board of Directors) to raise over \$140,000! In total, CEL raised over \$190,000 in honor of Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month. The impact is even more significant when you consider that of the 935 donors who contributed to this campaign, 681 were new donors to CEL.

Perhaps most importantly, the bulk of the funds raised came through the fundraising pages of individuals, also known as "Ambassadors." These Ambassadors—mostly families of our members, CEL staff, and volunteers—created fundraising pages and joined teams to support the campaign. We would not have been so successful without the passion and commitment of our event Ambassadors and their willingness to share their love for CEL. The campaign concluded with a celebration at CEL for everyone who helped make it a success. We can't wait to do this again next year, even bigger and better!





**418
LIVES
ENRICHED**

2024 Member Impact



**Communities
Served**

53



112,261

**Program Participation
Hours**

**(40% increase over
last year)**



287

**Members Receiving
Scholarships**

\$132,012

**Financial Aid Awarded
(a 42% increase over last year)**

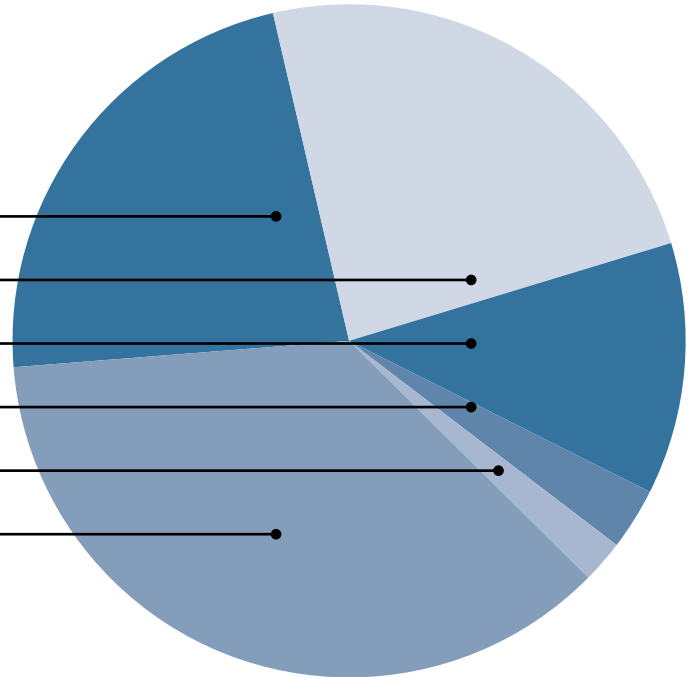


2024 Financial Report

Support/Revenue

Contributions:	\$962,332
Special Events:	\$1,018,733
Grants:	\$514,701
In-Kind:	\$126,549
Misc/Interest:	\$87,002
Program:	\$1,545,972

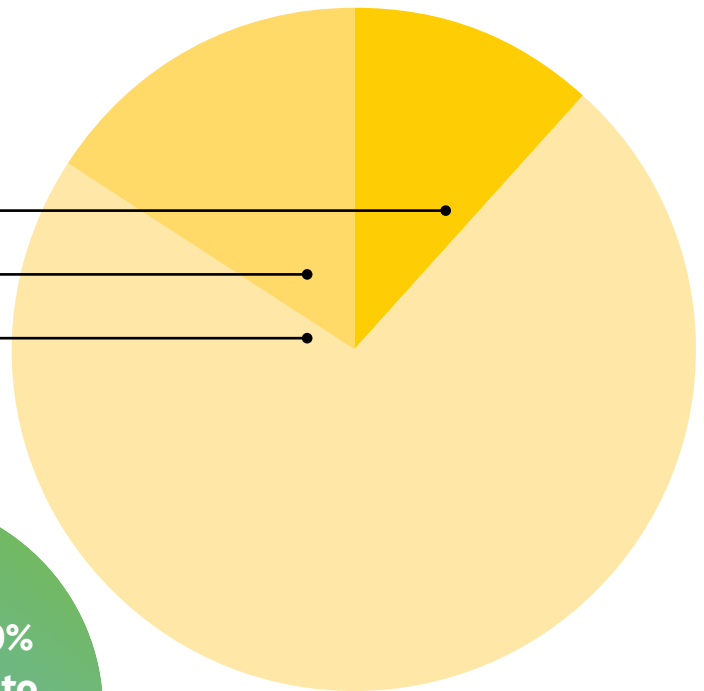
TOTAL REVENUE **\$4,255,289**



Expenses

Management/General:	\$623,587
Fundraising:	\$829,640
Programs:	\$3,847,559

TOTAL EXPENSES **\$5,300,787**



Program Fees cover around 30% of what it costs to provide great programs for our members!

FY24 Ending Net Assets:
\$5,683,403

Ending Assets June 30, 2024

Program Highlights

Catalyst Life Skills Program

The brand new Catalyst Life Skills Program is designed to help support personal growth and independence of our members with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Focused on learning life skills, each session members focus on a new topic like meal planning and preparation to learning about community resources, personal safety, and in-home tasks.

Members have grown so much in their skills going to grocery shop for groceries and coming back to prepare their lunch meals with their friends. We are proud of the growth our members have seen in confidence, self-sufficiency, and life skills.



REACH

Our REACH members spend 70% of their time out and about in the community. Whether visiting museums, volunteering at Bernie's Book Bank, or exploring different cultures, they embrace every opportunity to connect and learn. Through the REACH program, CEL provides year-round community-based opportunities and activities for continued learning and growth for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities who have graduated from high school and are 18 years or older.

Employment

Every person deserves the chance to shine and contribute their skills and talents to the community. Sheerba A. is a great example of this. With support from CEL's employment program, he received job coaching that helped him secure his first paid position as a server assistant at Cooper's Hawk Winery and Restaurant.

There he is gaining hands-on experience in the culinary field and developing the skills he needs to achieve his dream of owning his own culinary business one day. He is a valued member of his team and currently receives job retention support through the Employment Opportunities Program.



Scan to read more stories of Employment dreams realized!

Social & Recreation

CEL members choose how they spend their free time, whether it's an overnight trip out of town, a Chicago Wolves game, or a visit to the brewery. CEL's social and recreational programs give teens and adults the chance to have fun with their friends, explore their interests, cultivate or discover hobbies, and enjoy life in ways that are meaningful to them.



Scan to read more about members' trip to Revolution Brewery!

Program Highlights

Robert Vihon Family Resource Center



The Robert Vihon Family Resource Center was launched, providing mental health support and resources to our members as well as their families and caregivers.

As part of this initiative, we hosted a speaker series featuring local experts who shared insights on housing options and independent living services for individuals with IDD. Attendees received valuable resources to help navigate housing challenges for their loved ones. By fostering these discussions, we empower families and help build a community where everyone can access the support needed for a fulfilling life.



Sip and Stroll Art Show

CEL transformed into an art gallery showcasing the artwork of talented CEL members. It was an incredible evening, with 115 pieces sold and 70% of the proceeds going directly to the artists. You could see the pride on so many of our members, who got to show off their work and share the inspiration behind some of their pieces. We are so proud of each and every one of our members.



Summer Camp Talent Show

We proudly welcomed 35 teens and young adults for an amazing ten weeks filled with fun, friendship, and engaging activities that helped everyone connect and grow.

Capping off summer camp was a fantastic talent show, where campers showcased their talents in front of family, friends, peers, and CEL staff. Campers rocked the stage by singing and dancing to their favorite songs from movies and shows, sharing their artwork, presenting exciting science experiments, and delivering hilarious comedy skits.





**Experience
Life's Possibilities**
Programs & Services for People
with Developmental Disabilities



CEL - Center for Enriched Living
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ExperienceCEL.org