

# REPORTING INSTRUMENT

OMB Control Number: 1820-0606  
Expiration Date: June 30, 2014

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES  
REHABILITATION SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

## SECTION 704 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT For CENTERS FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING PROGRAM (Title VII, Chapter 1, Part C of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended)

# Part II INSTRUMENT

(To be completed by Centers for Independent Living)

Fiscal Year: 2022

Grant #: 13- 31- 22

Name of Center: Paraquad, Inc

Acronym for Center (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

State: MO

Counties Served: St. Louis City, St. Louis County

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 35 hours per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. The obligation to respond to this collection is required to obtain or retain benefit (P.L. 105-220 Section 410 Workforce Investment Act). Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Rehabilitation Services Administration, LBJ Basement, Attention: Timothy Beatty, PCP Room 5057, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave, SW, Washington, DC 20202-2800 or email [timothy.beatty@ed.gov](mailto:timothy.beatty@ed.gov) and reference the OMB Control Number 1820-0606.Chapter 1, Title VII of the Rehabilitation Act.

## SUBPART I – ADMINISTRATIVE DATA

### Section A– Sources and Amounts of Funds and Resources

Section 725(c)(8)(D) of the Act; 34 CFR 366.50(i)(4)

Indicate the amount received by the CIL as per each funding source. Enter “0” for none.

#### Item 1 - All Federal Funds Received

(A) Title VII, Ch. 1, Part B	\$0
(B) Title VII, Ch. 1, Part C	\$473,984.00
(C) Title VII, Ch. 2	\$0
(D) Other Federal Funds	\$773,054.96

#### Item 2 - Other Government Funds

(E) State Government Funds	\$206,549.45
(F) Local Government Funds	\$0

#### Item 3 - Private Resources

(G) Foundations, Corporations, or Trust Grants	\$1,010,464.72
(H) Donations from Individuals	\$2,640,372.62
(I) Membership Fees	\$0
(J) Investment Income/Endowment	\$(619,574.38)
(K) Fees for Service (program income, etc.)	\$10,196,229.91
(L) Other resources (in-kind, fundraising, etc.)	\$1,003,979.86

#### Item 4 - Total Income

Total income = (A)+(B)+(C)+(D)+(E)+(F)+(G)+(H)+(I)+(J)+(K)+(L)	\$15,685,061.14
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**Item 5 - Pass Through Funds**

Amount of other government funds received as pass through funds to consumers (include funds, received on behalf of consumers, that are subsequently passed on to consumers, e.g., personal assistance services, representative payee funds, or Medicaid funds)	\$5,459,646.00
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**Item 6 - Net Operating Resources**

[Total Income (Section 4)<minus> amount paid out to Consumers (Section 5) = Net Operating Resources	\$10,225,415.14
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## SUBPART II – NUMBER AND TYPES OF INDIVIDUALS WITH SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES RECEIVING SERVICES

Section 725(c)(8)(B) of the Act; 34 CFR 366.50(i)(2)

### Section A – Number of Consumers Served During the Reporting Year

Include Consumer Service Records (CSRs) for all consumers served during the year.

	# of CSRs
(1) Enter the number of <u>active</u> CSRs carried over from September 30 of the preceding reporting year	681
(2) Enter the number of CSRs started since October 1 of the reporting year	472
(3) Add lines (1) and (2) to get the <i>total number of consumers served</i>	1153

### Section B –Number of CSRs Closed by September 30 of the Reporting Year

Include the number of consumer records closed out of the active CSR files during the reporting year because the individual has:

	# of CSRs
(1) Moved	6
(2) Withdrawn	94
(3) Died	20
(4) Completed all goals set	259
(5) Other	94
(6) Add lines (1)+(2)+(3)+(4)+(5) to get <i>total CSRs closed</i>	473

### Section C –Number of CSRs Active on September 30 of the Reporting Year

Indicate the number of CSRs active on September 30<sup>th</sup> of the reporting year.

	# of CSRs
Section A(3) <minus> Section (B)(6) = Section C	680

## Section D – IL Plans and Waivers

Indicate the number of consumers in each category below.

	# of Consumers
(1) Number of consumers who signed a waiver	10
(2) Number of consumers with whom an ILP was developed	1143
(3) <b>Total number of consumers</b> served during the reporting year	1153

## Section E – Age

Indicate the number of consumers in each category below.

	# of Consumers
(1) Under 5 years old	5
(2) Ages 5 – 19	63
(3) Ages 20 – 24	66
(4) Ages 25 – 59	542
(5) Age 60 and Older	468
(6) Age unavailable	9

## Section F – Sex

Indicate the number of consumers in each category below.

	# of Consumers
(1) Number of Females served	634
(2) Number of Males served	519

## Section G – Race And Ethnicity

Indicate the number of consumers served in each category below. *Each consumer may be counted under ONLY ONE of the following categories in the 704 Report, even if the consumer reported more than one race and/or Hispanic/Latino ethnicity).*

**Please refer to the Instructions before completing.**

	# of Consumers
(1) American Indian or Alaska Native	11
(2) Asian	13
(3) Black or African American	699
(4) Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	1
(5) White	381
(6) Hispanic/Latino of any race or Hispanic/ Latino only	14
(7) Two or more races	7
(8) Race and ethnicity unknown	27

## Section H – Disability

Indicate the number of consumers in each category below.

	# of Consumers
(1) Cognitive	186
(2) Mental/Emotional	26
(3) Physical	801
(4) Hearing	21
(5) Vision	33
(6) Multiple Disabilities	0
(7) Other	86

## Section I – Individuals Served by County During the Reporting Year

Section 704(m)(4)(D) of the Act

List each county within the CIL’s service area, as indicated in the CIL’s application for Part C funds and the approved SPIL. Add additional rows as necessary. For each county, indicate how many individuals residing in that county were served by the CIL during the reporting year.

County Name	Number of County Residents Served
St. Louis City	439
St. Louis County	641
Franklin	3
Jefferson	21
Clinton	2
Madison	2
Monroe	1
St. Charles	19
St. Clair	7
Other (IL) Have to add to St. Louis city for fed report. No IL option.	14
Warren	1
Phelps	1
Boone	1
Sainte Genevieve	1

## **SUBPART III – INDIVIDUAL SERVICES AND ACHIEVEMENTS**

Sections 13 and 725(c)(8)(C) of the Act; 34 CFR 366.50(i)(3); Government Performance Results Act (GPRA) Performance Measures

**Please refer to the Instructions before completing.**

### **Section A – Individual Services**

For the reporting year, indicate in the table below how many consumers requested and received each of the following IL services.

<b>Services</b>	<b>Consumers Requesting Services</b>	<b>Consumers Receiving Services</b>
(A) Advocacy/Legal Services	47	42
(B) Assistive Technology	25	25
(C) Children’s Services	0	0
(D) Communication Services	0	0
(E) Counseling and Related Services	0	0
(F) Family Services	0	0
(G) Housing, Home Modifications, and Shelter Services	1	1
(H) IL Skills Training and Life Skills Training	291	283
(I) Information and Referral Services	172	169
(J) Mental Restoration Services	2	2
(K) Mobility Training	2	1
(L) Peer Counseling Services	41	38
(M) Personal Assistance Services	448	401
(N) Physical Restoration Services	1	1
(O) Preventive Services	194	133
(P) Prostheses, Orthotics, and Other Appliances	0	0
(Q) Recreational Services	1	0
(R) Rehabilitation Technology Services	26	26



<b>Services</b>	<b>Consumers Requesting Services</b>	<b>Consumers Receiving Services</b>
(S) Therapeutic Treatment	4	4
(T) Transportation Services	89	88
(U) Youth/Transition Services	68	44
(V) Vocational Services	149	146
(W) Other Services	178	163

## **Section B – Increased Independence and Community Integration**

### **Item 1 – Goals Related to Increased Independence in a Significant Life Area**

Indicate the number of consumers who set goals related to the following significant life areas, the number whose goals are still in progress, and the number who achieved their goals as a result of the provision of IL services.

<b>Significant Life Area</b>	<b>Goals Set</b>	<b>Goals Achieved</b>	<b>In Progress</b>
(A) Self-Advocacy/Self-Empowerment	99	13	61
(B) Communication	9	0	8
(C) Mobility/Transportation	375	231	110
(D) Community-Based Living	389	232	90
(E) Educational	53	34	1
(F) Vocational	34	22	2
(G) Self-care	247	42	121
(H) Information Access/Technology	13	11	0
(I) Personal Resource Management	23	6	8
(J) Relocation from a Nursing Home or Institution to Community-Based Living	1	0	0
(K) Community/Social Participation	54	5	7
(L) Other	7	2	0

**Item 2 – Improved Access To Transportation, Health Care Services, and Assistive Technology**

**(A) Table**

In column one, indicate the number of consumers who required access to previously unavailable transportation, health care services, or assistive technology during the reporting year. Of the consumers listed in column one, indicate in column two, the number of consumers who, as a result of the provision of IL services (including the four core services), achieved access to previously unavailable transportation, health care services, or assistive technology during the reporting year. In column three, list the number of consumers whose access to transportation, health care services or assistive technology is still in progress at the end of the reporting year.

<b>Areas</b>	<b># of Consumers Requiring Access</b>	<b># of Consumers Achieving Access</b>	<b># of Consumers Whose Access is in Progress</b>
(A) Transportation	229	3	226
(B) Health Care Services	429	50	379
(C) Assistive Technology	1434	240	1194

Note: For most IL services, a consumer’s access to previously unavailable transportation, health care and assistive technology is documented through his or her CSR. In some instances, consumers may achieve an outcome solely through information and referral (I&R) services. To document these instances as successful outcomes, providers are not required to create CSRs for these consumers but must be able to report that follow-up contacts with these consumers showed access to previously unavailable transportation, health care and assistive technology.

**(B) I&R Information**

To inform RSA how many service providers engage in I&R follow-up contacts regarding access to transportation, health care services or assistive technology, please indicate the following:

The service provider did  X  / did not  \_\_\_  engage in follow-up contacts with I & R recipients to document access gained to previously unavailable transportation, health care or assistive technology.

**Section C – Additional Information Concerning Individual Services or Achievements**

Please provide any additional description or explanation concerning individual services or achievements reported in subpart III, including outstanding success stories and/or major obstacles encountered.

## **Success Stories:**

John has been attending the Orthwein Center since the beginning of October. He utilizes both our 1:1 exercise trainings as well as our FES bike. In a recent email to our staff, his wife states, "We love the gym and the help he is getting... In any event he is so happy working out he says and it is such a positive experience for him and how he led his life before his stroke."

Evelyn had her artwork shown in the recent Public Policy Art exhibit. She was very proud to have her art shown at age 90. She drew a picture of her life that she has at home and a life she wouldn't want in a nursing home. It is titled: My Home, Not A Nursing Home.

Fred began his time here at the Stephen A. Orthwein Center about 2 years ago. He had a hard time independently pushing his chair, his seated balance needed to always have a support, and he needed additional adaptations and assistance to complete a slide board transfer. Fred has demonstrated determination and consistency during these 2 years. Currently he can sit unsupported for more than five minutes, he easily and independently maneuvers his chair, can transfer independently, and he can even perform 40 full pushups! Fred has grown at an amazing rate and continues to work hard with a very modest and humble demeanor.

Sarah contacted her CDS specialist about an electric disconnection that was expected to take place within three days. The specialist submitted a Dollar More application, which takes care of \$100. She then referred her to Community Action Agency of St. Louis County (CAASTLC), where she receive LIHEAP. At the time of follow up, she reported CAASTLC was able to take care of the remaining balance and prevent the disconnection.

Susie has greatly improved her walking and endurance. She is actively engaged in our group exercise classes including Cardio Drumming and Balance Plus, and states "I have noticed a big difference in my confidence with my balance since working on my proprioception in class." She also is motivated outside of group exercise classes and does independent exercise on our cardio and strength equipment. Prior to coming to our gym she couldn't visit her friend's house without help getting up the large hill to the entrance. Last time she went she walked it by herself.

The youth group was able to come together for an in-person holiday party right before the Omicron wave shut everything down again. The kids played Uno, had a dance party, built gingerbread houses, listened to music, ate pizza, and overall had a really great time.

Mary had a disagreement with her attendant and had not spoken to her for two weeks. As a result, she was without consumer directed service. The CDS Specialist was able to get them to agree to a meeting where they both agreed to reconcile their differences and work to a solution that would allow for the resumption of the service.

Marty was able to move home instead of to a nursing home because of items received from Reuse.

Earl received Employee of The Month at Goodwill. He had been struggling with task focus but with the help from staff was able to reduce his coaching hours from 4 hours a week to 2 hours a week.

Tonya was able to utilize the information she learned in the Continuing Education class Safety First while on the job. In March she had a tornado warning at work while she was bagging groceries. She moved away from the windows and went into the bathroom and took cover. She said that she remembered to stay away from the windows after discussing the procedures during the natural disasters lesson plan.

A participant whose house caught on fire was able to obtain a hospital bed, wheelchair, shower chair and bedside commode.

Mr. White has been with Paraquad for more than 10 years. He has been a good manager of his CDS services including scheduling his attendant's working hours, and managing attendant's EVV clockinout. His health condition was declining recently. He has 4<sup>th</sup> stage kidney cancer in addition to his 3 times dialysis treatment per week. Mr. White called his specialist each month, he kept his services updated. In 2022, he asked his specialist to contact DHSS for service increase. During DHSS' interview, he advocated for himself, he received an increased care plan. He adjusted his attendant's working hour to provide needed transportation services for him. When his budget is tight, he contacted Urban League as well as Paraquad's Dollar More program for utility assistance. In his coming IL goal, Mr. White said he wants a computer, he wants to learn how to connect it to internet. Specialist will refer him to City library to get a free tablet.

Ms. Edwards expressed that she was worried about her primary attendant being burned out due to working and being a CDS attendant. She wanted me to send another attendant to her. I reminded her we don't send attendants, but suggested she hire a second attendant to give her primary attendant a break. She said she would talk it over and see if her attendant knew anyone. A month later, Ms. White hired another attendant for the weekend so her primary attendant could have time off. I expressed to the participant that I thought she demonstrated forward thinking and compassion in this situation and made a good decision to ensure her care continues. She agreed.

Sheila is consistent in attending the Orthwein Center three times a week, varying her exercise routine to include mat exercises and mobility, strength equipment, and group exercise classes. She has even been an active participant in our peer service program, connecting with more individuals at the Orthwein Center. Some of her most recent accomplishments include more independence in sitting up at the edge of the mat, moving from lying down to sitting up, and showing off her wheelchair dip in her power wheelchair.

The People 1<sup>st</sup> group held their annual car wash (their first since COVID!) and they raised just over \$200 and had a great time.

## **Major Obstacles:**

COVID continued to be a major obstacle for Paraquad in FY22. Although the initial emergency response has subsided, COVID continues to impact service delivery due to the hybrid work environment. While most of our programs returned to in-person services, many people with disabilities continued to stay home due to safety concerns, and we have had to remain flexible and proactive in offering our services and supports in virtual, in-person, and hybrid formats.

Transportation also posed a considerable barrier, particularly over the summer when several drivers resigned, and another went on medical leave. Like public transit authorities, waste management companies, schools, and long-haul shippers across the country, Paraquad grappled with trying to find enough drivers to support our in-person programming, even calling on in-office department managers with Class E licenses to step in and cover routes.

Externally, the inability of people with disabilities to get out into the community was an obstacle, due to the risk of COVID, as well as the challenges faced by Metro Call-a-Ride in finding and retaining enough drivers to cover the rides required by State and Federal law. Many participants struggle not only to make it into Paraquad, especially at a specific start time, but also to go out into the community, run errands, pick up supplies, and ensure their basic needs are met.

The challenges presented by COVID and limited transportation resulted in some programs struggling with low attendance throughout the year. In October 2022, we resumed in-person programming for Continuing Education and attendance jumped to 35 participants for the semester. When the People First group resumed meeting in-person in April, attendance went back up to pre-COVID levels. Youth group resumed meeting in-person in December 2021 and attendance has been steadily rising since, but average attendance is still below the pre-pandemic average.

Finally, over the last six years, the funding landscape of Paraquad has changed significantly, primarily due to changes and cuts to the Medicaid-funded, Consumer Directed Services (CDS) program. The cuts have been exacerbated by increases to Missouri's minimum wage. During the 2021 legislative session, the Missouri legislature responded favorably with a 5.29% rate increase. However, the rate increase was vetoed by Governor Parson, impacting approximately 35,000 Missourians with disabilities. It also impacted our budget significantly during the second half of FY21 and throughout FY22. In January 2022, minimum wage increased another \$0.85 and will do so again on January 1, 2023, bringing the state's minimum wage to \$12.00/hour, further impacting our ability to sustain the program.

The Governor's FY2023 proposed budget called for an increase to the Consumer Directed Services Medicaid reimbursement rate from \$15.96 to \$19.56 per hour. While this was a much-needed increase, it did not put the program on par with other home and community-based service programs nor was it enough to cover the costs of administering the program. During Missouri's 2022 legislative session, we advocated for a further increase to the reimbursement rate comparable to that of other Medicaid home and community-based service programs, but leadership in both the Senate Appropriations Committee and the House Budget Committee did not feel that it would be worthwhile to raise our rate above the Governor's recommendation

without some indication from the administration that it would not be vetoed again. We tried both independently and through our lobbyist to educate the administration on the value of the program and what support it needs from the state to continue, but we were unable to do so before the end of session in May. The targeting of CDS threatens the continuity of the program and the safety and independence of people with disabilities and seniors. The CDS program offers the most freedom of choice and control for individuals with disabilities.

Making the decision to close Deaf Way due to financial viability was challenging, but intentional. We are refocusing on core services and programs that are successful, impactful, and sustainable.

## SUBPART IV – Extent of CIL Compliance with the Six Evaluation Standards

Section 725(b) and section 725(c)(8)(A) of the Act; 34 CFR 366.63

### Section A – Compliance Indicator 1: Philosophy

#### Item 1 - Consumer Control

34 CFR 366.63(a)(1); 34 CFR 366.50(i)(5) and (6)

#### (A) Board Member Composition

Enter requested governing board information in the table below:

<b>Total Number of Board Members</b>	<b>Number of Board Members with Significant Disabilities</b>
18	10

#### (B) Staff Composition

Enter requested staff information in the table below:

	<b>Total Number of FTEs</b>	<b>FTEs Filled by Individuals with Disabilities</b>	<b>FTEs Filled by Individuals From Minority Populations</b>
<b>Decision-Making Staff</b>	14	8	2
<b>Other Staff</b>	53	32	11

## **Item 2 - Self-Help and Self-Advocacy**

34 CFR 366.63(a)(2)

Briefly describe how the CIL has promoted self-help and self-advocacy among individuals with significant disabilities during the reporting year.

Paraquad supports People First of St. Louis, a self-advocacy group, run by, and for, adults with developmental disabilities. Participants learn advocacy skills and are then provided opportunities to put those skills to action in their community by taking leading roles in hosting and implementing events, organizing and attending rallies, visiting members of the legislature, and speaking with other community members about disability advocacy issues. People First of St. Louis members empower each other to learn about their rights and to advocate for community and systems change to ensure that necessary services, supports, and opportunities are in place for people with disabilities. They are active in the statewide People First organization and representatives from the Chapter attended two in-person statewide steering committee meetings in 2022, as well as the Real Voices Real Choices conference. In addition, 5 People First members attended the annual Disability Rights Legislative Day where they met with their legislators at the Capitol and advocated for issues impacting their lives.

In 2021, the People First group moved to meeting via Zoom. COVID-19 created several barriers for this group and communication via zoom and phone was difficult and resulted in diminished meeting attendance and participation. As a result of the decline in COVID-19 cases, the People First group returned to meeting in-person in April 2022 and attendance has returned to pre-COVID levels.

Paraquad's Youth and Family program works with youth with disabilities to help develop their self-advocacy skills. A Youth Group meeting is held once a month and youth work on a specific advocacy skill. For instance, during our January meeting the group discussed housing options for their future and in February they participated in a presentation about service animals. Beginning in December 2021, the group resumed in-person meetings.

During the summer, the youth and family team delivered two intensive programs: a 3-week transition camp, where participants explored their options for life after high school, and a 4-week comprehensive sexual health and healthy relationships course. Youth participants in the transition camp enjoyed thinking about and planning for their lives after high school, as well as gaining hands-on experience and practical skills in budgeting, grocery shopping, meal planning and preparation, using public transportation, and advocacy across a variety of settings including employment, education, healthcare, etc. In the sexual health class, youth learned about their bodies, human reproduction, consent, avoiding and reporting exploitation, as well as developed positive skills for relating to peers, identifying and approaching an appropriate potential partner, stating needs, setting boundaries, and safer sex practices.

In October 2021, the youth and family team began utilizing the University of Missouri – Kansas City's Institute of Human Development's 'Charting the Life Course' tool to help



youth develop and meet transition goals. This tool guides participants through the process of transition planning by developing an independent living or transition goal, taking thorough inventory of the resources and relationships the participant already has along with what tools and resources the person will still need to achieve their goal.

Finally, Paraquad has collected several dozen stories from self-advocates to assist in our legislative advocacy efforts. We have shared several of these stories with key legislators and facilitated advocacy days where advocates and staff met with legislators at the Capitol and shared their stories. In addition, we have also identified more than 20 Medicaid community ambassadors that worked with Paraquad staff to promote and educate the community about the importance of the Medicaid program. By doing this, these ambassadors are receiving training from Paraquad to further develop their self-advocacy skills. 18 Ambassadors showcased their artwork at a Medicaid Art Exhibit in November, 2021.

### **Item 3 - Peer Relationships and Peer Role Models**

34 CFR 366.63(a)(3)

Briefly describe how, during the reporting year, the CIL has promoted the development of peer relationships and peer role models among individuals with significant disabilities.

Paraquad promotes the development of peer relationships in multiple ways. Paraquad's Peer Mentorship program provides services to individuals across the disability spectrum who have questions or concerns and/or are facing barriers related to their disability. Individuals with disabilities, identified as peer mentors, agree to meet with and talk to participants. During this process, the mentor provides feedback and shares problem-resolution skills with the participant. The peer mentors are pre-screened and trained as Paraquad volunteers.

Since October 2021, we have had difficulty onboarding new peer mentors/mentees. We were not able to do as much in-person outreach, which is critical for this program. We continue to do outreach to individuals participating in our Stephen A. Orthwein Health and Wellness Center and have resumed our relationship with Ranken Jordan Pediatric Bridge Hospital and The Rehabilitation Institute of St. Louis to conduct outreach to those being discharged.

Our peer staff also support several peer support groups, as well as a support group located within our Stephen A. Orthwein Center. Our Living Well program has received a grant through the University of Missouri – Kansas City's Institute of Human Development that will allow us to mentor another Missouri Center for Independent Living in establishing their own Living Well program.

The Youth Group focuses on social and recreational activities that promote the development of social skills. Young people with and without disabilities can join the group. Paraquad's Youth Group targets youth between the ages of 14-21. The Youth Group meets on the third Saturday of each month from October to May for group

discussions. Summer camps/workshops also focus on building the peer component while teaching the youth transition skills. During these camps/workshops, the youth have a safe place to share their experiences with each other. The peer component occurs naturally. Summer camps/workshops took place in June, July, and August. In addition, we hosted Friday Fun Nights virtually from November 2020 through May 2022, which provided a space for youth to socialize and enjoy their peers. As youth participants returned to in-person activities both within and outside of Paraquad, they chose to phase out the Friday Fun Nights in favor of other social activities.

Paraquad's People First program also provides a great platform for peers with developmental disabilities to interact and learn from each other. People First members meet on the fourth Saturday of the month. They learn about each other's disabilities, how to navigate different barriers in the community, and develop advocacy and independent living skills.

In addition, numerous Independent Living Specialists (ILSs) who work in Paraquad's various programs have a wide array of disabilities and speak with participants about their experiences living with a significant disability. Peer role modeling is also evident in the structure of the organization itself, as a majority of Paraquad's staff and Board of Directors have a disability.

#### **Item 4 - Equal Access**

34 CFR 366.63(a)(4)

(A) Briefly describe how, during the reporting year, the CIL has ensured equal access of individuals with significant disabilities, including communication and physical access, to the center's services, programs, activities, resources, and facilities, whether publicly or privately funded. Equal access, for the purposes of this indicator, means that the same access is provided to any individual with a significant disability regardless of the individual's type of significant disability.

Paraquad ensures equal access to all the Center's services, programs, activities, and resources. For individual services, the needs of each potential program participant are assessed prior to the provision of services to determine what accommodations may be needed to meet their individual goals. These accommodations may include interpreting services, reading of written materials, transportation to the center, etc. Paraquad's office meets ADA guidelines for accessibility and is located near public transportation.

Any programs or services that are provided to the public (i.e., rallies, legislative activities, workshops, and speakers) are announced ahead of time and information on how to request accommodations is included in all announcements. When Paraquad finds it necessary to provide a program at a location away from its main office, the accessibility of the remote location is reviewed to ensure that individuals with significant disabilities will have the same access to the program as anyone else.

(B) Briefly describe how, during the reporting year, the CIL has advocated for and conducted activities that promote the equal access to all services, programs, activities, resources, and facilities in society, whether public or private, and regardless of funding source, for individuals with significant disabilities. Equal access, for the purposes of this indicator, means that the same access provided to individuals without disabilities is provided in the center's service area to individuals with significant disabilities.

Paraquad works to identify all areas where there are barriers to services for people with significant disabilities and works to eliminate those barriers, so all individuals have access to services regardless of their abilities.

Paraquad continues to work for improved access to quality, affordable healthcare for individuals with disabilities. Staff members collaborate closely with other statewide health advocacy groups to address barriers presented by MO HealthNet (Medicaid), particularly addressing the 2017 cuts to home and community-based services and lack of increased provider rates for HCBS providers. Paraquad, in collaboration with other CILs, carried out a multi-pronged advocacy strategy during the 2022 Missouri legislative session to fight for funding for HCBS and Independent Living Centers. Paraquad staff work with participants to help them navigate the complicated Medicaid system by troubleshooting, story banking, and advocating with department officials to create solutions to these problems. Paraquad staff also participated on the Missouri Health Partnership working to protect and strengthen the safety net, including Medicaid. Paraquad also participates in Cover Missouri's Medicaid Advisory Group and Medicaid Expansion Planning workgroup where information and concerns are shared by health care advocates with state agency staff. Paraquad has submitted testimony to several Missouri Senate and House committees regarding improvements to our Medicaid Buy-In program and funding for home and community-based services, all with the goal of protecting and increasing access to healthcare for people with disabilities. During the 2022 Missouri legislative session, Paraquad staff met with approximately 50 legislators to advocate for access to affordable accessible healthcare for people with disabilities

During the 2022 Missouri legislative session, Paraquad advocated for the rights of students with disabilities. We worked with partners to advance legislation that would require parental consent for IEPs to be implemented, and legislation that would shift the burden of proof to the school district in disputes involving education access.

In addition, we are advocating for the passage of a statewide Employment First policy to give preference to competitive integrated employment for people with disabilities.

Paraquad continues to work to promote and improve equal access to public transportation. Staff members continue to serve on Metro Disability Transportation Resource Network to help ensure that people with disabilities have equal access to public transportation, as well as facilitated discussions between Metropolitan Saint Louis Transit Agency and People First advocates.

Paraquad continues to work with local public accommodations and state and local entities to provide full and equal access for individuals with disabilities. Paraquad has grown its AccessibleSTL program which provides surveys, trainings, and technical assistance to businesses/organizations to support greater accessibility. Since October 2021, Paraquad has worked with several businesses, including the Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri, Great Rivers Greenway, and The St. Louis Federal Reserve Bank.

Paraquad staff also advocate for voter access for people with disabilities. Paraquad staff participate in the Missouri Voter Protection Coalition and serve on the Accessibility subcommittee.

Paraquad staff continued to represent the agency on several advisory committees working on access including the St. Louis County Commission on Disability, Governor's Council on Disability, the Missouri Statewide Independent Living Council, and St. Louis Metropolitan Equal Housing Opportunities Council. Paraquad also contributed to the Universal Design Group for a large City streets project called the Brickline Greenway.

#### **Item 5 – Alternative Formats**

34 CFR 366.63(a)(4)

Briefly describe how, during the reporting year, the CIL has ensured the availability in alternative formats of all its written policies and materials and IL services, as appropriate.

Paraquad provides all its written policies and materials in alternative formats such as Braille or Large Print whenever requested. In addition, Paraquad has access to in-house interpreting services for the deaf and hard of hearing. If a participant is unable to read materials due to their disability, Paraquad staff will read the material to them if requested. A picture board has also been developed to assist with communication.

#### **Section B – Compliance Indicator 2: Provision of Services on a Cross-Disability Basis**

Section 725(b)(2) of the Act; 34 CFR 366.63(b)

Briefly describe how, during the reporting year, the CIL has ensured that IL services are provided to eligible individuals with a diversity of significant disabilities and individuals who are members of populations that are unserved or underserved, without restrictions based on the particular type or types of significant disability and in a manner that is neither targeted nor limited to a particular type of significant disability.

Paraquad works with all people with disabilities regardless of the type or severity of disability or an individual's ability to pay. To ensure the ability to serve the diversity of individuals with disabilities in the St. Louis metropolitan area, Paraquad works with a variety of funding sources to increase the amount of funds available for services. Outreach is also conducted within the service area to reach unserved and underserved populations.

Paraquad was established on the foundation of the Independent Living (IL) philosophy. The five core services, Information & Referral, Peer Consultation, Independent Living Skills Training, Transition and Advocacy, are the building blocks for all services and programs offered at Paraquad. If an individual does not meet the specific eligibility requirements of the requested program, other services such as referral to alternative programs, peer counseling, independent living skills training, or even advocacy to increase eligibility for the requested services will be provided if requested. Paraquad trains all employees on the Independent Living philosophy and the skills needed to provide services to individuals with disabilities regardless of the type of disability. All training is presented using the “People First” model, which teaches staff that every person is a person first and their disability does not define who they are as a person.

Paraquad serves the greater St. Louis metropolitan area and several surrounding counties. Most individuals that request services are from minority populations. The need to provide outreach to historically unserved and underserved populations is addressed through marketing and community outreach activities with local civic groups, churches, senior centers, and other service providers throughout the area. Outreach efforts include community presentations, health fairs, community education activities, conferences, school presentations, etc. Paraquad also works with several organizations that provide services to the various immigrant populations that live in many of the city neighborhoods and has grown its partnership with the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce.

Paraquad was also contacted by Oasis International to begin services with our Afghan refugee who became disabled during conflict in his home country. We anticipate more referrals from this agency as the refugee population continues to grow in the area.

## **Section C – Compliance Indicator 3: Independent Living Goals**

Section 725(b)(3) of the Act; 34 CFR 366.63 (c)

### **Item 1 – Consumer Information**

Briefly describe how, during the reporting year, the CIL has ensured that consumers have the opportunity to develop and achieve their goals (either with or without an ILP) and that the consumer has the opportunity to express satisfaction with the center and such consumer satisfaction results are evaluated by the center.

All participants who request services from Paraquad are offered the opportunity to develop an Independent Living Plan (ILP). An individual Needs Assessment is conducted with all new participants to help identify potential areas of need and participants are then given the opportunity to develop goals. Goals are reviewed by the participant and IL Specialist on an annual basis. Goals are modified, and/or new goals are developed at any time if requested by the participant. If a participant does not want to develop an ILP, they sign an Independent Living Waiver and can still receive services. Participants not wanting to develop an ILP are encouraged to develop goals with their ILS to assist in directing their

services and to verify that they are receiving the necessary services to help increase their independence.

Paraquad staff is trained to work in coordination with their participants to develop and monitor goals that increase the independence of the participants they serve. During FY22, Paraquad served 1153 participants through its various programs and services. Some of the programs are one-time services and do not warrant the necessity of developing an Independent Living Plan. Of those served, 1143 (99%) participants developed an Independent Living Plan with goals they were actively working on with IL staff.

Paraquad gathers satisfaction information from participants in all programs throughout the year. The information gathered from these surveys is shared with Paraquad's management team and Board of Directors through program scorecards and is utilized in determining the effectiveness of programs and in assisting with the improvement of services. Any areas identified as needing improvement are reviewed and action plans are developed.

## **Item 2 – Consumer Service Record Requirements**

Briefly describe how, during the reporting year, the CIL ensured that each consumer's CSR contains all of the required information.

Paraquad utilizes a single point of entry system. All incoming participants are filtered through a centralized intake process during which additional information is gathered and referrals are initiated for any requested services. This process has assisted in decreasing the length of wait times between initial requests and the actual start date of services. IL program guidelines have been written according to best practices and are required to be followed across all programs. The guidelines are revised when necessary. Documents requiring participant signature and placement in the participant file are made available to IL Specialists on Paraquad's computer network. A real time listing of the required file documentation and the most current forms are available electronically through the computer network.

Every new participant file is reviewed for the required documentation by the Compliance department. Required documents are scanned, uploaded, and stored in the agency's database and original copies are placed in the participant file. Immediate corrective action is expected when a file fails to contain required information and deficiencies are corrected by the respective ILS. All files are kept in a secure file room requiring keypad entry to protect participant information and confidentiality. Random file location audits are completed to ensure proper file storage. File audits are conducted annually on existing files to ensure the file is being appropriately maintained and any required updates have been completed.

## Section D – Compliance Indicator 4: Community Options and Community Capacity

Section 725(b)(4) and (6) of the Act; 34 CFR 366.63(d)

**Please refer to the Instructions before completing.**

### Item 1 – Community Activities Table

In the table below, summarize the community activities involving the CIL’s staff and board members during the reporting year. For each activity, identify the primary disability issue(s) addressed as well as the type of activity conducted. Describe the primary objective(s) and outcome(s) for each activity. Add more rows as necessary.

Issue Area	Activity Type	Hours Spent	Objective(s)	Outcomes(s)
Other	Community/Systems Advocacy	60	Youth with disabilities have access to adequate education services.	Advocated at 2 school districts (St. Louis Public City schools & St. Louis County SSD) to ensure youth have access to services & facilities school. Advocated for the passage of two bills to improve education access for students with disabilities.
Other	Community/Systems Advocacy	50	Youth with disabilities have access to adequate education services.	Worked with parents and youth with disabilities at 6 IEP meetings and 25 consults to fully understand their rights under IDEA and the IEP process.
Other	Community/Systems Advocacy	100	Raise awareness of inaccessible infrastructure and make physical change to sidewalks, curb cuts, etc., to increase accessibility.	We worked with Metro transit and Great Rivers Greenway to help make infrastructure more accessible. In addition, we also worked with Cole Engineering on a training video to illustrate inaccessible infrastructure.

Health Care (1) (2) (3)	Community/Systems Advocacy	400	Influencing the outcome of various bills that would negatively impact health care for people with disabilities.	Collected healthcare stories from advocates detailing the impact of healthcare cuts and shared with legislators. Submitted testimony on several bills impacting the health of people with disabilities.
Other	Community/Systems Advocacy	40	Educate, agitate, and grow the disability rights movement and independent living philosophy through teaching and speaking about organizing principles.	Facilitated 4 advocacy trainings to the community and hosted a workshop on systems advocacy at the 2022 Independent Living Summit.
Other (6)	Community/Systems Advocacy	150	To increase the number of people with disabilities registered to vote, educate people with disabilities and their community supports about voter rights at the polls, and increase voter turnout at the polls.	Continued our work with the GOTV grant. Participated in the Missouri Voter Protection Coalition (MOVPC), the MOVPC accessibility subcommittee, and the ID Access Coalition. Sent voter registration/election alerts through our e- newsletter. Hosted 4 trainings for other organizations/associations on voting rights and processes in Missouri.
Other	Community/Systems Advocacy	800	Support, guide, and train a group	Each member has an individualized goal that they work towards that



			of people with intellectual disabilities to exercise the highest level of self-determination and skill building to live successfully and as independently as possible within the community.	builds autonomy, self-determination and/or advocacy skills. These individual goals also provide an opportunity for People First members to work together for a common goal.
Health Care (1)	Community / Systems Advocacy	400	Policymakers are aware of issues important to people with disabilities.	Educated numerous legislators on Paraquad's legislative priorities and how legislation positively or negatively impacts people with disabilities.
Other	Community/Systems Advocacy	120	People with disabilities can access their community.	Have provided accessibility consultation and disability awareness trainings for area employers.
Health Care	Community/Systems Advocacy	80	Policymakers are aware of issues important to people with disabilities.	Paraquad took staff, disability advocates, and People 1 <sup>st</sup> members to Jefferson City to participate in the annual Disability Rights Legislative Day. We also planned and executed a CDS day of action in the Capitol.
Health Care (4) (5)	Community Education/Integration	350	People with disabilities have current information regarding disability policy.	Sent out 15 action alerts to more than 5,000 advocates regarding various healthcare issues. Worked on Community Voices for Medicaid and Medicaid Expansion grants to educate people

				with disabilities and allies about importance of Medicaid.
Health Care (2)	Collaboration/Networking Community/Systems Advocacy	100	People with disabilities have access to necessary and affordable health care services.	Worked in collaboration with healthcare advocates across Missouri to develop media, legislative, and organizing strategies on various healthcare issues.
Transportation	Community/systems Advocacy	50	To improve the availability of safe, affordable, accessible transportation for people with disabilities.	Advocated with the local transit authority regarding improving the accessibility of the public transportation system. Participated in Metro's Disability Transportation Resource Network.
Other	Community Education/Integration	150	To engage the community in discussions and conversations related to disability, to increase Paraquad's profile and promote integration and opportunity for people with disabilities.	Provided digital communications via over 300,000 Paraquad website page views and another 5,000 or more Stephen A. Orthwein page views; by reaching 123,588 contacts via Facebook, resulting in over 5,000 "actions" taken by Facebook followers.
Other	Community Education/Integration	700	To educate the community about issues around living with a disability.	Published 10 blogs, providing information about disability rights and services, hosted a Medicaid Art Exhibit highlighting the challenges the system presents for people with

				disabilities. and provided training to 25 Ameren employees.
Other	Outreach Efforts	200	To provide education and information about Paraquad's services to potential participants or to referral sources.	Diversity Awareness Partnership Panels, Diversity Awareness Event, Paraquad Speaker Series, Maryville University and Fontbonne University seminars reached 240 people. Participated in Hispanic Chamber of Commerce's Linking Leaders event to educate other area nonprofits on PQ's services, Stephen A. Orthwein Open House, Adaptive Sports Community Day

**Item 2 – Description of Community Activities**

For the community activities mentioned above, provide additional details such as the role of the CIL staff board members and/or consumers, names of any partner organizations and further descriptions of the specific activities, services and benefits.

Healthcare\*:

- (1) Legislators were urged to pass provider rate increases for the Consumer Directed Services program. Testimonies were given before the MO House Budget Committee regarding funding for Consumer Directed Services. Staff advocated with legislators on the importance of Home and Community Based Services (HCBS). We partnered with other CILs and other Home Care Associations to create talking points and advocate for HCBS. Worked with advocates to help share their stories with legislators.
- (2) Continued our participation in the Missouri Health Partnership Coalition. Collaborated with other CILs and disability organizations to oppose cuts to home and community-based services
- (3) Continue our participation in Missouri Foundation for Health's Exemplary Advocate Cohort and on MFH's Medicaid Expansion Planning workgroup.
- (4) Advocated for the proper implementation of Medicaid expansion
- (5) Paraquad has been actively educating the community about the importance and benefits of Medicaid for people with disabilities. We have identified community Medicaid leaders and champions to help with this education. We have held several community Medicaid education events, including our Medicaid Art Exhibit.

Other\*:

- (6) We continued our work with our civic engagement grant and conducted 4 advocacy trainings to the community to promote civic engagement. We are also actively involved in the Missouri Voter Protection Coalition, serving on the Accessibility Subcommittee, as well as on the ID Access Coalition.

## **Section E – Compliance Indicator 5: IL Core Services and Other IL Services**

Section 725(b)(5) of the Act; 34 CFR 366.63(e)

In addition to the data provided in Subpart III, describe how information and referral services and the other IL core and other IL services are provided to those who request such services in formats accessible to the individual requesting the services. Describe any innovative practices (not mentioned elsewhere in this report) to enhance the availability and effectiveness of IL services.

IL service needs are provided through the program categories of Information and Referral (I&R), Independent Living Skills Training, Peer Counseling, and self and group advocacy. Additional services are provided in the following areas:

### **Information and Referral (I&R) Services**

Paraquad provided I&R services to a total of 3320 individuals this fiscal year. I&R services included one-time individual or group services of such a nature that the establishment of a Consumer Service Record (CSR) is not justified.

I&R services:

- Contacts made to Paraquad requesting information over the telephone, in person for walk-ins, by email, and/or through the mail.
- Paraquad continued to maintain a website that provided additional information for participants as well as who to contact for additional questions ([www.paraquad.org](http://www.paraquad.org)).
- The energy assistance program assisted 38 households through Ameren UE and 8 households through Spire during FY22.
- I&R Specialists updated community resources to verify contact and program information for correctness.

### **Independent Living Skills Training**

In FY22, services to develop the skills needed to live more independently were delivered to 1153 people with disabilities. Independent Living Specialists (ILSs), with full participation from the individuals who requested services, conducted an Intake and Needs Assessment. This included people with whom there was enough contact to develop a Consumer Service Record (CSR). Progress toward goals was recorded throughout the year. Programs and services listed below represent the process by which participants acquire independent living skills training.

- Independent Living Adult Program (ILAP) – worked with participants 18 and older on a variety of areas to increase the skills needed to remain independent. Although all Paraquad programs provided independent living skills training, the Independent Living Adult Program provided training on a more individualized basis.
  - During FY22, 63 participants requested and received skills training through the ILAP program.
    - Robotic Pet Program: Twelve individuals participated in this program which explores the use of robotic companion pets as a low-cost, low-tech means to alleviate the negative impacts of social isolation. The 5-week study was open to both older adults and individuals with disabilities who are at least 18 years old and residing independently. The participant has a choice to either return the pet back to Missouri Assistive Technology or keep it after 5-weeks. All the participants chose to keep their pets.
    - Assistive Technology Reuse Program: provided pre-owned durable medical equipment to 249 people with disabilities. Paraquad accepts donations of used equipment, assesses it for reuse, clean items and makes any minor repairs necessary. The equipment is then provided to participants at no cost.
  
- Consumer Directed Attendant Services (CDS) – provided services to 402 CDS participants this fiscal year. Some of these services were:
  - Maintained files of eligible attendants who assist employers in completing daily living tasks. These individuals have completed all the background screenings as required by the vendor contract with the Missouri Medicaid Audit & Compliance Unit (MMAC).
  - Trained CDS participants in skills helpful to employ and maintain attendant services. Training covered handling of payroll functions; employee information forms; electronic visit verification (EVV) timekeeping system; identification of abuse, neglect, or exploitation and fraud; rights and responsibilities of the participant; and rights and responsibilities of the attendant.
  - Each new CDS participant received and was trained on a comprehensive CDS Participant Manual.
  - Assisted in general orientation of CDS participants to the Independent Living philosophy.
  - Processed inquiries and solved problems related to CDS, payroll and CDS EVV timekeeping system.
  - Assisted with collection of data concerning CDS employers for evaluation activities.
  - Gathered information and participated in discussions and advocacy with entities regarding Medicaid, spenddown issues, program structure, best practices, regulations, and vendor oversight.
  - Reviewed emergency plans with CDS participants monthly and updated plans as needed.
  
- Community Transition Services – assisted people with disabilities who are institutionalized to move to a community-based setting of their choice.

- This fiscal year staff assisted 0 participants. Missouri subcontracts the service to selected vendors.
- Job Development and Placement Services – 71 participants worked with Employment Specialists to improve their job readiness skills and obtain employment this fiscal year. Services included: vocational assessments, resume, and cover letter preparation, interviewing and salary negotiation skills, job development skills, online application instruction, networking, and job retention strategies. Employment Specialists provided job development and placement services to the participants.
  - Bloom Culinary Training Program: 18 students have participated in a 15-week culinary training program, building job readiness skills and obtaining ServSafe certifications. After completing the culinary training program, students are referred to the job placement department to obtain jobs in the culinary field.
  - LaunchCode Partnership: 5 students participated in a 20-week computer programming class through LaunchCode, a partner organization. The program was discontinued during the year.
  - Youth Employment Transition (IEP's): provide support and guidance for students and parents during transition IEP meetings. They discuss the vocational services students are eligible for through Paraquad.
  - Youth Employment Transition (schools): hygiene classes are provided to students within the Special School District (SSD) at the request of teachers. Hygiene kits are provided to each student and contain various hygiene products specific to race/gender.
  - Youth Employment Transition (other): Job Readiness Training is provided for SSD students at the request of teachers. This class discusses the importance of dressing for success, application process and interview process.
- Continuing Education – provided adult education courses to serve 43 adults with developmental disabilities who live in St. Louis City and County. Over the course of FY22, we offered 8 different virtual classes in the following areas: managing stress at home, book club, healthy relationships, and safety first. Students set individual goals for each class; classroom teachers assist students to reach those goals.
- Job Coaching and Retention – provided one-on-one job site support to 12 individuals with developmental disabilities in St. Louis City and County. Job Coaches initially provide full-time support on the job until natural supports are developed and the job tasks are adequately performed independently. As time continues, the Job Coach reduces support from the job site. Support is then provided a minimum of twice a month. The Job Coach also facilitates communication between the employer and co-workers, helping the employee understand and follow workplace policies and procedures, and helps ensure proper training on tasks.
- Work Incentives Planning and Assistance – provides work incentive knowledge and advocacy for Social Security beneficiaries who are working on employment goals and ready to return to work. Participants learn how income from employment will affect their benefits. During this fiscal year, the WIPA project responded to 420 referrals for service

and initiated intensive individualized benefits counseling for 235 beneficiaries. This does not include the individuals who started receiving service in prior fiscal years who are still receiving long-term support. These individuals are not counted in our overall numbers due to the restrictions of the WIPA grant.

- Ticket to Work - The Ticket to Work and Work Incentive Act of 1999 established an employment program for people who want to go to work that receive Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits. The program was designed to remove barriers that keep people with disabilities from choosing to work for fear of losing health care coverage. The Ticket to Work program is voluntary, and it increases opportunities and choices for Social Security (SS) disability beneficiaries to obtain employment, vocational rehabilitation, and other support services from public and private providers, employers, or other organizations. Social Security provides a ticket to disability beneficiaries to use in obtaining employment assistance and support services from approved providers and organizations. Paraquod has provided Ticket to Work (TTW) service as an Employment Network (EN) to 59 individuals during FY22. These individuals are not counted in our overall numbers due to the restrictions of the TTW grant.
  
- Stephen A. Orthwein Center - a specialized, fully adapted fitness center with a variety of services to support the comprehensive exercise needs people with disabilities.
  - During FY22, the Health & Wellness center has served 287 participants.
  - In addition to participants with disabilities, the Stephen A. Orthwein Center is also available for use by family members, attendants, SilverSneakers®, Renew Active™, and Silver&Fit® members, and Paraquod staff.
  - The Stephen A. Orthwein Center is staffed by physical therapists, occupational therapists, occupational therapist assistants, and physical therapist assistants.
  - There is a strong, supportive social environment that encourages participants to connect with other participants.
  - For an additional fee, participants can schedule 1:1 exercise training with a Stephen A. Orthwein Center staff member to develop condition-specific exercises, use specialty equipment, and/or achieve specific fitness/athletic goals. Sessions are available in-person or via telehealth.
  - The Stephen A. Orthwein Center partners with other community organizations and healthcare professionals to offer free education sessions on topics that are relevant to the health and fitness needs of individuals with disabilities and older adults.
  - All participants complete an annual assessment with a staff physical or occupational therapist to set goals, evaluate fitness levels and review appropriate exercises. The assessment is also an opportunity for staff to make appropriate referrals for additional resources, both internal and external.
  - The Stephen A. Orthwein Center offers adapted group exercise classes each week in multiple formats including yoga, circuit, Parkinson-specific classes, balance class, Krankcycle® classes, and cardio drumming class. When possible, classes are offered both in-person and virtually.

- Paraquad has contracts with multiple local schools to provide both observation and fieldwork opportunities for students. These include programs in occupational therapy, exercise science, and nutrition.
  - The Program in Occupational Therapy at Washington University provides clinical services and conducts research at the Research Lab and Community Practice Clinic at the Stephen A. Orthwein Center.
  - The Logan University Health Center provides evidence-informed, patient-centered, natural health care, chiropractic services at the Stephen A. Orthwein Center.
  - Participants frequently report increased strength and endurance to complete functional tasks, such as transferring or walking longer distances, and many also report decreases in secondary conditions such as high blood pressure.
  - Through grants and donations, the Stephen A. Orthwein Center provides members with scholarship assistance as needed, so they can participate in the program regardless of financial ability.
- Telecommunications Access Program (TAP) – is a free program through Missouri Assistive Technology that provides adaptive telecommunications equipment and to people with disabilities. For FY22, the program has provided TAP services to 11 participants in St. Louis City and County.
  - Youth & Family Services – served youth with disabilities from birth to age 24 and their families. In FY22, 48 youth and their families were served.
    - *Youth Group* – Since October, the youth group has continued to meet over zoom. The group has participated in various virtual activities to build independent living skills and they took part in a three-part training on mental health and self-confidence. Also, since November youth have been meeting every Friday night for Friday Fun Nights. This provides a great opportunity for the youth to socialize and have fun during a time when many feel isolated.
    - *School-Based Activities* – provided services specifically geared toward educational services for youth and their families. Paraquad staff provided classes on personal finance, personal hygiene, and independent living to the St. Louis County Special School District.
      - Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and IDEA – staff provided support to youth and their parents at annual IEP meetings and on-going support throughout the school year according to need. The Youth and Family staff also provided parents and youth an online training on virtual IEP meetings and what to expect.
        - Special Education Advocacy – staff worked with students, parents, and educators to support the needs of students with disabilities in various school districts.
  - Peer Consultation (including cross-disability peer counseling)
    - During the funding cycle, Paraquad peers provided direct and indirect services. Some of the types of services were legislative advocacy, mobility training, cooking, learning to shop, relationships (i.e. marital, dating, parenting), employment, re-entering the work force, equipment and technology, skin, bowel, and bladder care, assertiveness training, and budget management.



Currently, 6 mentors are actively working with 15 individuals. The Peer Specialist provided ongoing trainings for the mentors on the Independent Living Movement to assisting creating SMART goals with the peers. There are also 21 individuals participating in peer support groups. One group is general and the other is for individuals with spinal cord injuries. The Peer Mentor Specialist also provided the yearly review of the Mandated Report and HIPAA for the mentors who have been mentoring for over a year.

## **Section F – Compliance Indicator 6: IL Resource Development Activities**

Section 725(b)(7); 34 CFR 366.63(f)

Briefly describe the CIL’s resource development activities conducted during the reporting year to expand funding from sources other than chapter 1 of title VII of the Act.

Through the first half of Fiscal Year 2022, Paraquad’s Development Department has raised 36% of its annual fundraising goal (\$1.8 million) by securing roughly \$659,000 gifts and commitments. Highlights of FY22 activities thus far include:

- Our #MakingIndependenceAccessible crowdfunding campaign, scheduled for May 17<sup>th</sup> thru May 18<sup>th</sup>, has brought in over \$53,000 in matching gifts and matching pledges. We anticipate reaching our match goal of \$75,000 prior to the date of the event. Our day-of event promises to be an active one, with 7 videos created by volunteers celebrating independence, and 8 to 10 volunteer “teams” working together through social media to garner online support and enthusiasm for Paraquad.
- Direct mail appeal: Our fall appeal raised \$36,421, above the budget of \$30,000, while our “White Mail” revenue (unsolicited donations) significantly exceeded projections (\$32,393.45 raised compared to \$25,000 budgeted).
- Ambassadors for Independence: With the Board Development and Marketing Committee, and development staff, we have completed the initial structure for this long-term sustainability initiative, which includes a program component (home modifications and peer mentoring), a volunteer component, and a funding component. We envision this program as an opportunity to bring individuals and corporations interested in deeply connecting and transforming non-profits through volunteering and giving. Paraquad has been awarded a 6-month, full-time fellow through the American Family Dreams Foundation, who will hold a key role in the initiative’s launch in the coming year.
- Special Gifts Campaign: Our Special Gifts campaign launched late in FY21, with a goal of benefitting three areas: home modifications, peer support, and the Orthwein Center. In FY21, we received \$40,000. In FY22, we have received an additional \$1.9 Million, with a goal of \$3Million in operating, capital, and reserve funding. This Special Gifts Campaign aligns with Paraquad’s goal of capacity-building to address the needs of individuals who acquire disabilities through accidents, injuries, or illnesses.
- Shine the Light Jubilee: Our annual gala is scheduled for September 23, 2022 with a goal of \$275,000 in gross revenue.

Our Marketing Department has also supported our revenue-producing programs, including the growth of the Stephen A. Orthwein Center, Consumer Directed Services, and Deaf Way

Interpreting Services. The Marketing Department is nearing completion of new flyers and brochures for all of our program offerings. By the fall of 2022, we will have introduced our new branding guide, logo, and tagline to all stakeholders. Our goal is to revamp and refresh our website, with full completion by the end of the 2022 calendar year. We continue to allocate resources into building a rich digital presence, which will allow Paraquad's services to rise to the top of online searches for disability services in the St. Louis area.

By the end of the 2022 fiscal year, Paraquad's Development Department raised \$587,922 for the Annual Fund and \$1,960,836 for the Special Gifts Campaign. Development Department notable events and achievements for the last half of FY22 include:

- #MakingIndependenceAccessible crowdfunding campaign took place May 2022 and exceeded the \$110,000 fundraising goal.
- Direct mail appeal: Our fall appeal raised \$36,421, above the budget of \$30,000, while our "White Mail" revenue (unsolicited donations) significantly exceeded projections (\$32,393.45 raised compared to \$25,000 budgeted).
- May 2022, we held an open house at the Stephen A. Orthwein Center. Participants, partners, donors, and providers joined us for a packed house event, with approximately 200 attendees. As a result of the event, we raised \$11,200 for the Special Gifts Campaign, all from new donors (9 individuals).
- With support from American Family Dreams Foundation full-time fellow from July 2022 to December 2022, we are restructuring our Ambassadors Club, renaming the program *Ambassadors for Independence*. The purpose of the program is to engage with the community through three core components: volunteers, funding, and programming. We plan to a pilot home modifications program FY23.
- August 2022, in partnership with the Disabled Athletes Sports Association, we hosted an Adaptive Sports and Wellness Extravaganza. This free event brought people of all abilities together to try out equipment and activities adapted for people with disabilities. In addition to sports activities, the day included food, giveaways, and a bubble bus.
- Special Gifts Campaign: Our Special Gifts campaign launched late in FY21, with a goal of benefitting three areas: home modifications, peer support, and the Orthwein Center. In FY21, we received \$40,000. In FY22, we have received an additional \$1.9 Million, with a goal of \$3 Million in operating, capital, and reserve funding. This Special Gifts Campaign aligns with Paraquad's goal of capacity-building to address the needs of individuals who acquire disabilities through accidents, injuries, or illnesses.
- Shine the Light, our annual gala, was held on September 23<sup>rd</sup> at the Ritz-Carlton. Our theme of "Boots and Bling" brought the largest crowd that we have ever welcomed – 415 tables. The event proceeds of \$283,980 exceeded our revenue goal of \$275,000 by about \$9,000. The event was featured as part of Town & Style's "Snapped! Party Coverage".

Our Marketing Department has also supported our revenue-producing programs, including the growth of the Stephen A. Orthwein Center. The Marketing Department has drafted new flyers and completed a one-page Paraquad overview document. We have introduced our new branding guide, logo, and tagline to most stakeholders. We are in the process of revamping our website, with the goal of full completion by the end of the 2022 calendar year. We are committed to raising our media profile through social media and a strengthened website.



# **SUBPART V – ANNUAL PROGRAM AND FINANCIAL PLANNING OBJECTIVES**

Section 725(c)(4) of the Act

## **Section A –Work Plan for the Reporting Year**

### **Item 1 – Achievements**

Discuss the work plan’s proposed goals and objectives and the progress made in achieving them during the reporting year.

#### **Goal 1: Continue to improve organization’s financial status in accordance with FY21-24 strategic plan goal to “Achieve and Maintain Financial Health.”**

Objective 1.1 Achieve or exceed annual budget targets.

- A. Analyze monthly financials and identify trends.  
In progress and ongoing. Financials are sent monthly to finance committee as well as to individual department heads and managers. Monthly meetings are held with department heads and managers to review and analyze monthly financials and identify trends.
- B. Develop and implement correction plans, as necessary.  
In progress and ongoing. Launch Code employment program eliminated in late March 2022 due to low enrollment. Recruiting plan developed for potential culinary students living in St. Louis County to align with funding opportunities. New Advancement Senior Director hired with significant development experience. Part-time Ticket-to-Work Specialist hired to complement full-time specialist. In preparing the FY23 budget, operations and programming were reviewed for their cost effectiveness. Deaf Way Interpreting Services will be eliminated in FY23 due to lack of financial viability.

Objective 1.2: Continue building a robust Development and Marketing program.

- A. Develop and implement annual Development Plan.

Partially complete. The FY22 Development Plan was developed and implemented. FY22 fundraising goals exceeded FY21 goals by 13%. FY22 ended with a successful Shine the Light Gala, with revenue nearing \$300K compared to the budgeted \$275K. Annual giving of \$1.6 Million was below the budgeted total revenue of \$1.8 Million, a difference of \$200K. Special gifts giving of \$1.96 Million, combined with annual giving totaled \$3.581 Million, the largest amount Paraquad has raised in its 50+ years.

- B. Identify and cultivate relationships with new high-capacity supporters.
  - a. Schedule two meetings per month with new prospects.

Partially complete and ongoing. The advancement department underwent significant transition with the departure of the Senior Director and the Marketing Manager. The New Senior Director of Advancement worked with the President to develop portfolios, which include new prospects, a calendar, and tracking system for donor meetings. The President and Director of Advancement meet weekly to discuss potential asks and stewardship efforts.

Through the *Partners for Independence* campaign silent phase, donations were secured from multiple high-capacity donors. A list of additional potential high-capacity donors was completed in collaboration with a current major donor.

- C. Raise \$3 million through *Partners for Independence* special gifts campaign, with a minimum of \$100,000 for unrestricted use.

Partially complete. To date, we have raised \$2,036,336. We are shifting to a second phase in FY23 to further expand facilities.

- D. Enhance Ambassadors Club to engage new donors and volunteers.

In progress and ongoing. With support from American Family Dreams Foundation full-time fellow from July 2022 to December 2022, we are restructuring our Ambassadors Club, renaming the program *Ambassadors for Independence*. The purpose of the program is to engage with the community through three core components: volunteers, funding, and programming. We plan to a pilot home modifications program Q2 FY 23. The American Family fellow is working with us to develop achievable outcomes, including revenue and program participation goals.

We utilized multiple volunteers Ramp Day; Adaptive Sports, Wellness, and Exercise Extravaganza; Shine the Light, board committees; and in an advisory capacity to develop the Home Modifications program.

- E. Develop and implement donor stewardship plan.

Complete and ongoing, The Annual Plan includes a calendar of stewardship events and activities. The calendar has been followed throughout FY 22. We continue to improve on donor “touches”.

- F. Utilize metrics to set goals and measure outcomes.

- a. Cost per dollar raised  
Goal: .29  
Actual: .17 including special gifts.

- b. Growth rate (dollars raised and number of donors)  
Revenue Goal: \$1,806,670  
Actual: \$3,581,384 including special gifts.
- c. Number of Donors  
Goal: 674  
Actual: 740 including special gifts.
- d. Retention rate:  
Goal: 40%  
Actual: 36.3%
- e. Average gift amount  
Goal: \$2500  
Actual: \$4384 including special gifts.

G. Develop and implement annual Marketing Plan

Partially complete. Marketing Plan was developed. It has not been fully implemented due to significant staffing transitions, including the departure of the Senior Director and the Marketing Manager.

H. Implement orgstory recommendations for collateral development and update to align with new branding strategy and impact visibility. Collateral materials include:

- a. Website  
In progress.
- b. Paraquad brochure  
Complete.
- c. Program flyers  
In progress.
- d. Internal branded templates  
In progress.

I. Train Paraquad staff on new Paraquad branding and messaging.

Incomplete. Due to staff transitions and marketing, training on branding and messaging will be provided in Q2 FY 23.

Objective 1.3: Implement short- and long-term strategies to address declining Consumer Directed Services (CDS) revenue.

A. Continue analysis of staff and staff responsibilities to improve efficiency and revenue-producing capability.

- a. Identify and train a backup for weekly payroll processing.

In progress and ongoing. We have identified a back-up on weekly payroll processing, but training is still needed. Additional payroll employees have some knowledge of the process.

- b. Identify and implement a third-party vendor to process CDS taxes.

Revised. Upon financial analysis, a third-party vendor was deemed as too costly. Future review will take place.

- B. Establish regular meetings with Program, CDS, and Finance leadership to identify and correct issues and/or inefficiencies.

In progress and ongoing. Monthly meetings held with CEO, Finance, and CDS leadership to review the CDS financials. CDS managers also meet monthly and as needed to address issues or concerns. Prior to the selection of and transition to a new EVV vendor, the CDS managers met weekly.

- C. Research and implement a new Electronic Visit Verification (EVV) system.

Complete. After research and demonstrations from three vendors and feedback from staff, Amber Chron Manager was selected as the new EVV vendor. On March 1, 2022, we began transitioning CDS participants. The process was completed June 2022.

- D. Advocate for rate increases for Home and Community Based Service (HCBS) providers.

Complete and ongoing. Throughout FY22, we met with Missouri Homecare Associations and other CDS representatives from Missouri Centers for Independent Living. Throughout the budget process and prior to the legislative session, we targeted the Governor to request additional funding in his FY23 budget recommendation via lobbying, phone calls, written correspondences, zoom and in-person meetings). While still not enough, a 22% increase was granted from \$15.96/hour to \$19.56/hr.

- E. Meet with the following Missouri managed care companies: Centene, WellCare, and United Healthcare.

Incomplete. The bidding process ended in February 2022, and we are waiting to hear which managed care companies were selected.

- F. Develop a written case for managed care organizations to contract with Paraquad for HCBS.

In progress.

Objective 1.4: Continue plans to expand the revenue-producing potential of the Stephen A. Orthwein Center.

- A. Pursue/strengthen relationships with current and potential donors.

Complete and ongoing. In collaboration with the Advancement team, a Special Gifts Campaign continued throughout this fiscal year and raised approximately 1.8 million dollars. With the addition of new equipment purchased from the Special Gifts, the Stephen A. Orthwein Center has seen a significant increase in 1:1 exercise training revenue since March 2022. In addition, 1:1 exercise training grew from 122 hours of at the start of the fiscal year to 293 hours at the end of the year.

New and ongoing relationships with donors were established through an Open House on May 2022 with a dedicated happy hour for donors and potential supporters. Discussions regarding future growth of the Center are taking place in collaboration with major donors.

- B. Continue to strengthen and build community partnerships and referral network. Complete and ongoing. Continued in-services with new and existing healthcare partners, including Mercy Outpatient Neuro, St. Louis University Movement Disorders Clinic, Washington University Movement Disorders Clinic, SSM Rehabilitation Network, SSM Health Day Institutes, Washington University PT, Washington University OT, The Rehabilitation Institute of St. Louis, St. Louis Children's Hospital, St. Luke's Rehabilitation Hospital, SLU Healthcare, Barnes Jewish Hospital, and Ranken Jordan Bridge Rehabilitation Hospital.

Collaborated with various community partners for exercise classes, including St. Louis Children's Hospital, LifeBridge Partnership, LoveU2Pieces, and American Parkinson Disease Foundation.

Two continuing education courses were held in October 2021 and June 2022, bringing in nearly 60 new professionals to tour the Center.

In collaboration with the Disabled Athlete Sports Association, the Center hosted a community-wide Adaptive Sports & Wellness Extravaganza in August 2022. The event garnered support and participation of non-profits, for-profits, adults and children with disabilities and their families across the St. Louis region.

- C. Recruit new members and personal training clients to reach profitability and achieve budget targets.

In progress and ongoing: Membership increased from 216-239 participants in Q1 and Q2 to 255-276 participants Q3 and Q4. There was an increase in 1:1 exercise training in the second half of the fiscal year, increasing from an average of 133 hours in the first 6 months to an average of 237 hours in the second 6 months. The average number of members participating in 1:1 exercise training increased from 35 members in the first 6 months to 48 members in the second 6 months. We surpassed our budget of \$142k in 1:1 exercise training by \$42.7k. We ended FY22 with a net revenue of \$29.8k.



Objective 1.5: Continue plans to increase profitability for Deaf Way.

A. Improve efficiency to increase profitability and achieve budget targets.

Not achieved. We worked to schedule interpreters in the same area as much as possible. In addition, we used Deaf Way staff managers as much as possible to decrease the dependence on independent contractors. A new scheduler, who also is an interpreter, was able to handle in-house assignments, thus freeing up our staff to cover more lucrative assignments in the field. A major contract was lost unexpectedly midyear. Despite our efforts to improve efficiency and increase profitability, Deaf Way did not achieve the budgeted target of \$70,000 year-end surplus but finished with a deficit of approximately \$65,000. As a result, the difficult decision was made to close Deaf Way at the beginning of FY23 with efforts being made to match Deaf Way clients with the other agencies serving the deaf and hard of hearing.

B. Increase collection rates.

Ongoing. Collections continue, but not at the rate expected. Staffing shortages forced the Business Manager, whose responsibilities included collections, to spend less time in the collection role. In addition, a part-time staff member, responsible only for collections, left in August 2022. See Objective 1.5 A.

C. Improve customer contracts terms and pursue only desirable new contracts.

No longer applicable. We consistently tweak Terms of Service Agreements to impact profitability. While we focused on maintaining current contracts, Deaf Way did bring in 50 new customers FY22. Our contract with Barnes Jewish Hospital was updated to a higher rate and included staff parking fees, a considerable amount given the frequency of work with the hospital. See Objective 1.5 A.

Objective 1.6: Continue to analyze facility usage and ownership as it pertains to Paraquad's financial health.

A. Continue utilizing the Facilities Committee and/or outside expertise to develop future recommendations for refinancing and/or building ownership.

Complete and ongoing. The Ad Hoc Facilities Committee met several times and contracted realtors were consulted to develop recommendations for refinancing and/or building ownership. The recommendation is for Paraquad to sell the main building to an investor and Paraquad to become a tenant in the building. The committee and realtors have begun identifying potential investors. One 6400 square-foot Paraquad-owned building was leased in early FY22 with the option to purchase. Given the large investment the tenant made to improve the building, a future sale is expected.

B. Rent available space.

Ongoing. Per above, a 6400 square-foot building was leased in early FY22 with the option to purchase. A 6200 square-foot restaurant space also was leased in early FY22. The lessee also is considering leasing 8800 square-foot warehouse space adjacent to the restaurant. Paraquad also has approximately 14,000 square-foot of office space available in our main building. A letter of interest was submitted by the St. Louis Science Center. However, the Science Center withdrew its interest, and realtors are searching for other potential lessees.

**Goal 2: Continue to strengthen internal infrastructure.**

Objective 2.1: Develop a FY 22 infrastructure plan

A. Develop a maintenance plan and timeline.

Complete. A monthly timeline with approximate costs was completed early in FY22.

B. Develop a maintenance ticket system and ensure all requests are addressed in a timely manner.

Incomplete. The ticket system started early/mid FY22 was put on hold due to competing priorities.

C. Develop an IT plan and timeline.

Ongoing. An annual plan was developed in partnership with MGB Systems. The plan is discussed every other week at IT steering committee meetings. Approximately 90% of the original plan was completed in FY22. The remaining 10% will be completed in FY23.

Objective 2.2: Enhance Supervisory/Managerial Skills of Leadership

A. Develop and implement training opportunities for supervisors to enhance management/leadership skills.

Incomplete. We planned to deliver five modules of training between mid-April and the end of September 2022. As a result of the Senior Director of HR having COVID and then resigning, only two modules were delivered: 1) An introduction of what it means to be a supervisor; and 2) A review of equal opportunity employment, anti-harassment, and workplace safety. A supervisor's handbook and subsequent trainings will be completed by March 2023. The trainings will cover interviewing and hiring, onboarding new employees, performance management, and disciplinary action.

- B. Develop a leadership lending library of professional books and/or publications for professional development

Started an ongoing. A location has been identified for the lending library, including a physical location as well as an electronic location for electronic formats. In addition, we are assembling a committee to give input on the types of publications, including accessible formats. To date, 12 publications have been purchased/secured. The lending library was put on hold for the last quarter of FY22 due to the resignation of the Senior Director of HR, who was responsible for the project. With the hiring of a new Senior Director of HR, it is the expectation that this project will be completed in FY23.

Objective 2.3: Attract and retain the best quality staff

- A. Continue to develop partnerships with area vocational schools, colleges, universities, and professional organizations, including historically black colleges, and partnerships with university access and veteran offices.

Complete and ongoing. We continue to build and strengthen partnerships as opportunities arise. School/organization partnerships include University of Missouri-St. Louis, Harris-Stowe State University, Washington University Brown School of Social Work, AAIM Employers' Association, and the Department of Veterans Affairs.

- B. Develop and implement a years of service recognition program.

Incomplete. A program to honor employees with recognition and a monetary award for incremental years of service, i.e., 1, 5, 10, 15, 20, etc. is has been delayed primarily due to the resignation of the Senior Director of HR, who was responsible for the project. With the hiring of a new Senior Director of HR, it is the expectation that this project will be completed in FY23.

- C. Evaluate current holidays, determine if Juneteenth should be observed and make recommendations to the Board of Directors.

Complete. It was determined approval was not needed from the Board of Directors. The senior leadership team unanimously agreed that Juneteenth should be added as a paid holiday, and it was observed in FY22.

**Goal 3: Continue to improve staff morale and engagement.**

Objective 3.1: Continue to measure/assess employee engagement and satisfaction and make improvements when possible and appropriate.

Complete and ongoing. An employee engagement survey was administered in January 2022 and results were shared with leadership, staff, and Board in March 2022. Areas for short-term and long-term improvement were identified. Initial action has been taken to

provide more leadership opportunities as well as make organizational changes in the interest of increasing core programming.

Objective 3.2: Evaluate Paraquad's current position relative to the marketplace and similar organizations regarding compensation and benefits.

- A. Review pay-structure benchmarking to determine potential changes. Complete and ongoing. Data gathered in FY21 will continue to be considered when making offers. Several staff received pay increases commensurate with increased responsibilities and the marketplace, however, a significant change in pay structure cannot take place due to budget constraints. We continue to work with the insurance broker to ensure Paraquad is getting the best possible rates for employee insurance premiums.

Objective 3.3 Continue to implement a comprehensive communication plan that encompasses the Board of Directors and Paraquad staff.

- A. Evaluate effectiveness of activities.

Complete and ongoing. Staff receive updates from leadership on issues related to Paraquad's programming and overall financial health, including during monthly team meetings. We evaluated Coffee Talks with the CEO and President as well as Brown Bag lunches with the Board; it was determined staff are still benefiting, and interested, so both will continue. We continue to solicit information about the type of communication and format desired.

Objective 3.4: Complete performance reviews for staff and reward strong performance with incentives such as merit raises, bonuses, and days off based on financial results.

Complete and ongoing. Performance evaluations were completed at the close of FY21 and merit raises were given based on performance January 2022. FY22 performance evaluations will take place first quarter of FY23 with merit increases taking place January 2023.

Objective 3.5: Implement succession plans for key staff positions.

Complete and ongoing. Key staff positions were identified, including senior leadership and programming and operations personnel. Increased leadership opportunities were given to multiple staff. Other staff were cross trained to serve as back up. We continue to evaluate current needs and structure.

**Goal 4: Continue to strengthen the effectiveness of the Board of Directors.**

- A. Add three new members.

Complete and ongoing.

Objective 4.2: Develop a pipeline of potential board members with disabilities to achieve and maintain the required board membership of 51% or more people with disabilities.

In progress and ongoing. Discussed creating a Board of Directors Nominating Committee to assist in identifying and onboarding new members, we will re-examine in FY23 due to capacity concerns. Utilized board, leadership, staff, and community for new board prospects. Focused on greater racial diversity and cross-disability representation to better reflect participants we serve.

Objective 4.3: Continue to improve Board engagement through committee and volunteer opportunities.

In progress and ongoing. Started including an interactive engagement activity at each board meeting and are receiving positive results from board surveys. Board members are continuing to participate in volunteer activities in new ways.

Objective 4.4: Regularly meet with Board members regarding philanthropy and provide annual training on methods of successful fundraising.

Complete, the President and Senior Director of Advancement met with each board member to discuss board experience and opportunities for philanthropy and volunteering. Board fundraising training was completed July 2022.

## **Goal 5: Continue to pursue programmatic excellence.**

Objective 5.1: Continue to review, standardize, and implement processes and procedures for programs.

- A. Create a consistent template across departments (style, content, formatting, branding, etc.) and implement it for all processes and procedures.  
Complete. A template was sent out to program managers in February and completed in March 2022. All documents are stored on the shared drive and are accessible to the Development and Marketing Department. Additional data will be added in the future.
- B. Develop a central repository of all program documents on the server to be managed by Compliance.  
Complete. Compliance is the repository for all programs documents including but not limited to intake forms, annual forms, checklists, and form letters. Staff have access to the folder.
- C. Implement and train staff on how to utilize CARF folders and materials.  
  
Complete and ongoing. CARF folders are created. Staff email requested documents to the Strategic Project Coordinator. The coordinator records the receipt of documents, compares to CARF standards, and identifies what else needed. One-on-one meetings have taken place informally. We are still collecting final CARF documentation for our recertification visit in January 2023.

Objective 5.2: Audit all program files to ensure program compliance.

Complete and ongoing. Files are reviewed on the month they were activated to ensure all required paperwork is in the file. Files are also reviewed at intake and closure to ensure compliance.

Objective 5.3: Establish and utilize outcome data for every program to evaluate program effectiveness against established program goals.

Complete and ongoing. We are using monthly scorecards to monitor and evaluate program effectiveness.

Objective 5.4: Increase effectiveness of information and referral.

- A. Track and evaluate call/email volume and implement necessary changes to staffing and/or outreach.

Complete and ongoing. We are tracking and monitoring monthly call volume and in November 2022, we reduced one of our I&R staff to 50% in response to decreasing numbers. We continuously explore outreach opportunities and I&R staff makes monthly outreach calls to other agencies that serve individuals with disabilities to market. Paraquad services.

Objective 5.5: Increase effectiveness of Youth and Family programming

- A. Develop and implement an in-school transition program.

Complete and ongoing. We worked with three St. Louis Public School students to help identify and meet their non-academic independent living transition goals utilizing UMKC's Charting the LifeCourse tool.

- B. Continue strengthening partnerships with St. Louis Public Schools and the Special School District.

Complete and ongoing. We continue to meet with each district and have established a strong working relationship with our in-school transition program.

- C. Develop new programming based on Youth interests and needs.

Complete and ongoing. In June 2022, we offered a comprehensive sexual health and relationships course for youth with disabilities ages 15-21. The class covered types of relationships, public versus private behavior, sexual communication and decision-making, sexual diversity, contraception, and safer sex practices in a positive and affirming environment. We received positive feedback from participants, their families, and the community. We secured funding to continue the end expand the program to include an adult class, in virtual and in-person settings for the next three years.

Objective 5.6: Increase effectiveness of the Peer Program

- A. Strengthen partnerships with area rehabilitation centers by doing at least six regions per month to individuals being discharged.  
Partially and ongoing. We hired a part-time peer outreach specialist to focus on strengthening partnerships and scheduling consistent outreaches with community partners; staff is meeting with additional rehabilitation facilities and programs. A list of other agencies that serve individuals with disabilities is being developed and prioritized for staff engagement in further outreach. Initially, we had difficulty reaching a Memorandum of Understanding with some rehab facilities which delayed outreaches. We increase outreaches to 5 per month Q4.

Objective 5.7: Increase effectiveness of Adult IL Program

- A. Identify and implement at least one new IL service that will meet the needs of the community.

Complete and ongoing. Independent Living Adult Program (ILAP) staff have started to reach out to other agencies that serve people with disabilities to explain the services provide.

We explored a home modifications program within the IL program, but upon analysis, the advancement team will pilot the project with IL support in FY 23. Access to email and the ability to use virtual platforms is a significant barrier to for participants to participate in other Paraquad services as well as activities and educational opportunities in the community. In response, ILAP staff has developed a curriculum and course plan for a Zoom class. We expect to offer the first set of class December 2022.

Objective 5.8: Increase opportunities for economic independence.

- A. Increase efficiency and revenue capability of Employment
  - a. Establish regular meetings with Program, Employment, and Finance leadership to identify and correct issues and/or inefficiencies.

Complete and ongoing. The senior director of programs meets monthly with finance, employment director, and CEO to review employment revenue and identify shortfalls.

- b. Add a part-time Ticket to Work Specialist position.  
Complete. A part-time ticket to work specialist was added in November 2022, increasing annual revenue.

- c. Add a full-time Employment Coordinator.

Complete. A full-time employment coordinator was added in November 2022. The Employment Coordinator assists with Job Coaching, Vocational Rehabilitation Caseload, and Culinary Training program.

- d. Increase the number of Productive Living Board (PLB) participants from 10 to 20 to utilize funding.

Incomplete. We fell short of our goal with only 12 PLB participants for FY22. COVID has been a barrier, especially for culinary classes.

- B. Improve networking and relationship building with VR, Nexus Employment Group, and St. Louis schools.

Complete and ongoing. The employment director has attended Nexus employment group meetings and has conducted multiple meetings with VR offices across St. Louis throughout the year to strengthen relationships.

Objective 5.9: Continue to provide information to people with disabilities to enhance independence and physical and emotional health.

- A. Increase awareness of transportation systems.

Complete and ongoing. Transportation updates are provided to the disability community through our Advocacy Matters e-newsletter and through social media posts. We also participate in a quarterly Disability Transportation Resource Network where information and resources are shared among area transportation providers.

- B. Increase awareness of emergency preparedness procedures and resources.

Complete and ongoing. A review of emergency preparedness procedures and resources is included in the intake process for the Independent Living Adult Program. Employment program participants review procedures and resources on a quarterly basis specific to their workplace/site. The facilities manager provides information and resources to employees who are instructed to share information with participants on a regular basis.

**Goal 6: Strengthen external relations with consumers, organizations, advocates, contributors, and media.**

Objective 6.1: Develop and implement a formal plan to increase and enhance engagement opportunities for donors, volunteers, people with disabilities and their families, and the community to build a pipeline of participants and support.

- A. Collaborate with Development and Marketing, Programs, and HR to design a volunteer component to the Ambassadors for Independence program to build capacity while increasing community engagement (possible volunteer opportunities include Home Modifications, Ramp Day, Continuing Education, People First, Fitness and Sports Extravaganza, Shine the Light, and board committees).



In progress and ongoing. With support from American Family Dreams Foundation full-time fellow from July 2022 to December 2022, we are restructuring our Ambassadors Club, renaming the program *Ambassadors for Independence*. The purpose of the program is to engage with the community through three core components: volunteers, funding, and programming. We plan to a pilot home modifications program Q2 FY23. The American Family fellow is working with us to develop achievable outcomes, including revenue and program participation goals.

We utilized multiple volunteers Ramp Day; Adaptive Sports, Wellness, and Exercise Extravaganza; Shine the Light, board committees; and in an advisory capacity to develop the Home Modifications program.

- B. Develop quarterly thought leadership seminars/webinars/panels led by internal and external experts

Partially complete. Love Is... A Discussion on Love and disability took place in February. A panel discussion on traveling with a disability took place June 2022.

Objective 6.2: Continue to enhance Public Policy and Advocacy and prioritize disability rights.

- A. Advocate for increased funding for Home and Community Based Services.

Increased funding for Home and Community Based Services was a major focus for the public policy team. We sent out advocacy alerts through our Advocacy Matters e-newsletter and social media; mobilized board members, staff, and advocates to make phone calls and send emails to legislators; testified before the House Budget Committee; and held meetings with house budget committee members and CDS consumers. The governor increased the rate from \$15.96 to \$19.56 per hour in his budget recommendation. The rate increase was not on par with in-home, nor enough to cover the costs of the program, so we advocated for a further increase. The Senate Appropriations and House Budget leadership said they would not waste the time or capital including a further increase in the budget without support for the governor. That initial recommended rate increase was passed, and we are going into FY 23 with an ask of a 25% increase.

- B. Advocate for increased opportunities for competitive integrated employment for people with disabilities.

Complete and ongoing. During the 2022 legislative session, we pursued Employment First legislation which prioritizes competitive integrated employment for people with disabilities as the first and preferred option. This bill was filed in the House but only made it through second reading. We also worked for the passage of a bill modifying Missouri's Medicaid Buy-in/Ticket to Work program to allow people with disabilities to save for retirement and get married without losing access to personal care services. Additionally, it would bridge the

gap between traditional Medicaid eligibility and the income required to afford to pay personal care attendants privately. In the 2022 session, the House bill died after second reading, and we are currently seeking Republican sponsorship in hopes of securing a committee assignment and hearing during the 2023 session. The Senate version was passed out of the Seniors, Families, Veterans, and Military Affairs Committee unanimously.

We plan to have both bills pre-filed again in December 2022 and work with legislators on both sides of the aisle for passage.

C. Increase access to affordable and accessible housing.

a. Advocate for and remove barriers to affordable and accessible housing.

In progress and ongoing. We are in the early stages of developing a pilot home modifications program to help create more accessible housing in the St. Louis area and allow newly disabled and aging individuals to remain in their own homes.

Our public policy team works closely with partners to monitor property tax legislation that would impact the ability of seniors to remain in their homes on a fixed income even as the value of their house, and therefore their tax assessment, increases. We are active on a circuit breaker coalition tasked with ensuring that the circuit breaker tax credit remains in effect and hopefully, is improved upon. Due to the work of this group, the Missouri Department of Revenue agreed to remove some language from the Circuit Breaker Form 5674 that discouraged prospective beneficiaries from seeking help with the process.

b. Work with the MOSILC Housing Committee to play an active role in developing affordable and accessible housing.

Incomplete. The MOSILC Housing Committee did not have a chair and has not been active. In August 2022, a Paraquad employee became Chair of MOSILC and appointed a chair of the Housing Committee. The committee will reconvene within the next few months. Paraquad will connect with the appointed chair in FY 23.

D. Advocate for successful implementation of Medicaid Expansion.

Complete and ongoing. Paraquad continues to be involved in efforts to ensure Medicaid Expansion is implemented in an equitable way in Missouri. Staff has actively participated in the Medicaid Expansion Implementation Team and the Consumer Experience subcommittee through Missouri Foundation for Health and will continue to work in the newly-merged Medicaid Expansion Planning group as well as attend Cover Missouri Coalition events to build relationships with other

providers. In addition, we have distributed information on Medicaid expansion at our Medicaid art show, Disability Rights Legislative Day, FestAbility, and other community events. We continue to support individuals who reach out to us for information or assistance in applying for Medicaid Expansion.

E. Advocate for CDS reform to strengthen the program.

Complete and ongoing. Paraquad continues to meet with the administration, including DSS, DHSS, and MMAC to stay informed and advocate for increased enforcement and monitoring of CDS. In addition, along with other CILs, we have begun having conversations with DHSS about value-based payments to enhance the quality of the CDS program.

F. Engage and mobilize advocates in the community.

Complete and ongoing. Public Policy and Advocacy staff engaged and mobilized advocates through our Advocacy Matters e-newsletter; posting regular calls to action and informational posts on social media; organizing and hosting several Medicaid educational events, including our Medicaid art show with over 100 attendees. We also took 8 participants to the Capitol to advocate at Disability Rights Legislative Day. We continue to collect stories from community members to be used for legislative advocacy.

We advise the St. Louis Chapter of People First, a self and systems advocacy organization comprised of and lead by people with developmental disabilities. In 2022, the group returned to in-person activities. In addition to monthly membership meetings, they participated in FestAbility, statewide People First steering committee activities, and the 2022 Real Voices, Real Choices conf centered around mental health destigmatization and support.

G. Increase civic engagement among people with disabilities.

Complete and ongoing. The public policy team has been actively engaged in Get Out the Vote work as part of the Missouri Voter Protection Coalition and their voter accessibility subcommittee that focuses on ensuring that everyone has access to voting regardless of disability or English-language proficiency.

The public policy team initially planned a Paraquad-wide contest in June 2022 to see who can help the most participants register to vote and create a plan for voting. However, changes to Missouri's voting and registration laws were passed during the 2022 legislative session that impeded the ability of nonprofit organizations to register voters in the course of their work. We still presented a voter rights training at an internal all staff meeting, as well as to several external groups throughout the election season, including People First of St. Louis and a virtual community event in July 2022.

Objective 6.3: Support the Missouri Statewide Independent Living Council in building capacity.

We have an employee serving on the MOSILC executive committee. He is very involved in creating the IL survey each year to determine satisfaction with services.

## **Item 2 – Challenges**

Describe any substantial challenges or problems encountered by the CIL, and the resolutions/attempted resolutions.

### Stephen A. Orthwein Center

Challenge: With the rise in cases related to Covid at the start of the calendar year, we saw a dip in January revenue.

Resolution: Based on our previous numbers, we suspected this would be a temporary drop. To make up revenue, we sought out collaborations with other programs, including LifeBridge Partnership and St. Louis Children’s Hospital for group exercise. We also established a relationship with Simucase, an online learning platform for healthcare students, for additional revenue.

Challenge: Inclement weather in February posed issues with closing the gym. With the already short month, we were open only 15 business days.

Resolution: We proactively rescheduled 1:1 exercise training instead of cancelling them. We also sought ways to make additional revenue in March by offering a promotion on our FES equipment.

Challenge: We noticed individuals were slipping through the cracks for annual assessments.

Resolution: We identified a process with the compliance department to pull monthly reports from our database. Our administrative coordinator now flags individuals due for assessments in our ClubReady system to be more efficient with scheduling.

Challenge: With the growth experienced during the summer months, we recognized the need for more support for general gym members on the floor.

Resolution: We brought in our PRN Exercise Assistant on a more regular schedule 4 days per week, providing improved support and assistance to the team.

### Consumer Directed Services (CDS)

Challenge: Stagnant and much lower needed CDS provider reimbursement rates.

Resolution: After numerous efforts in advocating, the reimbursement rate was raised 22% from \$15.96/hr. to \$19.56/hr.

Challenge: Increased requirements for EVV systems.

Resolution: We researched and identified a new EVV vendor that is fully compliant with all state requirements. Began the transition process March 1 through June 2022. Due to various issues with the EVV system, the process still remains a challenge for both CDS participants and their attendants.

#### Public Policy and Advocacy

Challenge: Challenging political landscape.

Resolution: We continue to build relationships with the majority party and are exploring alternative ways of framing our legislative priorities – for instance, emphasizing the workforce development angle of Ticket-to-Work legislation over the disability support angle.

We had a consistent presence in the Capitol and will continue. We are strengthening relationships with partners across Missouri, particularly in rural areas, to elevate the voices of disability advocates outside of the major urban centers and highlight that disability issues impact all Missourians.

Challenge: Very unusual and difficult state budget process this year.

Resolution: We are working with advocates, partner organizations, and our MOCIL lobbyist to prepare our talking points in preparation of staying informed throughout the budget process and mobilizing advocates at key points. We see an opportunity for new discussions as the Senate Appropriations Committee leadership changes, and in addition to advocating for an increased CDS Medicaid reimbursement rate, we are also asking for a new actuarial rate study on the program to be commissioned by the state and exploring opportunities to address the 60% cost cap on CDS.

#### Youth and Family

Challenge: Making the greatest impact with limited capacity.

Resolution: We have refocused efforts on services we provide well and those that meet a known need for youth in our community. We launched our in-school transition services with some success, and we offered our pilot comprehensive sexual health and healthy relationships course June 2022. We received positive feedback from participants, their families, and the community. We secured funding to continue the end expand the program to include an adult class, in virtual and in-person settings for the next three years.

#### Employment

Challenge: Due to Covid, recruitment for specific employment training programs, including Launch Code and Culinary, has been slow.

Resolution: We have concluded the Launch Code program is not viable due to lack of participation. We have ramped up our recruitment efforts for Culinary with participation increasing to an average of 5 students each semester. We attribute the increase due to developing relationships across VR offices, PLB, and through employment outreach.

#### Independent Living Adult Program

Challenge: Obtaining new referrals.

Resolution: Marketing is in the process of finalizing new program flyers to spread the word about our independent living programs and services. Peer staff have been meeting with rehabilitation hospitals and have started meeting with people in day rehabilitation programs. This past year we have reached out to hospital chaplains and have been meeting with people as early as in the ICU. We continue to look for additional outreach opportunities.

#### Peer Services program

Challenge: Outreach and maintaining consistent relationships with hospitals, rehab centers etc.

Resolution: A Peer outreach specialist has been hired and is facilitating a peer support group and a spinal cord injury support group at the Stephan A Orthwein Center. We have strengthened our collaboration with the Orthwein Center on outreach, as it provides a natural setting for peer support.

#### Deaf Way

Challenge: Lack of interpreters in the St. Louis area. Due to Covid, many interpreters have not renewed their license and are therefore not able to work. This has resulted in a nationwide shortage of interpreters.

Resolution: We have doubled up our efforts to recruit and sign independent contractors. We have hired one additional staff interpreter and added an additional Independent Contractor to our preferred list to work exclusively through us. Deaf Way Interpreting Services will be eliminated in FY23 due to lack of financial viability.

Challenge: Collections. Staffing shortages forced the business manager, whose responsibilities included collections, to spend less time in the collection role. In addition, a part-time staff member, responsible only for collections, left in August 2022.

Resolution: Deaf Way Interpreting Services will be eliminated in FY23 due to lack of financial viability.

Challenge: Lack of a qualified interpreter coordinator/scheduler, key to the success of Deaf Way. The long-time interpreter coordinator/scheduler left in the early part of FY22.

Resolution: After two failed attempts at hiring an interpreter coordinator, Deaf Way rehired an individual who only had served as an interpreter. As he has scheduling duties, he also serves as an interpreter for all in-house assignments. Deaf Way Interpreting Services will be eliminated in FY23 due to lack of financial viability.

### **Item 3 – Comparison with Prior Reporting Year**

34 CFR 366.50(i)(7)

As appropriate, compare the CIL’s activities in the reporting year with its activities in prior years, e.g., recent trends.

Paraquad continues to serve the disability community throughout the St. Louis metropolitan area and in collaboration with other CILs throughout the state of Missouri to increase the availability of services for people with disabilities, particularly home and community-based services. Over the years, the focus for people with disabilities in Missouri has continued to be increasing affordable healthcare and higher reimbursement rates for caregivers. While Medicaid Expansion passed in Missouri, we continue to fight for implementation and against efforts to overturn the decision. Paraquad also continues to work toward increasing the availability of services that will promote people with disabilities living with independence and dignity in their communities and competitive integrated employment. While Covid numbers are decreasing, it will take time to recover from the impact of Covid, including decreased program participation. We continue to provide Covid education and resources, including vaccine information. Diversity, equity and inclusion are major topics of discussion, resources, and debate. We are focused on raising the voices of people with disabilities and including them in DEI efforts. Making the decision to close Deaf Way due to financial viability was challenging, but intentional. We are refocusing on core services and programs that are successful, impactful and sustainable. Finally, efforts to raise money to increase capacity and impact continues to be a focus. It is a challenge to know the need, but to lack the full capacity to meet the need.

## **Section B – Work Plan for the Year Following the Reporting Year**

### **Item 1 – Annual Work Plan**

List the CIL’s annual work plan goals, objectives and action steps planned for the year following the reporting year.

#### **Goal 1: Continue to improve organization’s financial status in accordance with FY21-24 strategic plan goal to “Achieve and Maintain Financial Health.”**

Objective 1.1 Achieve or exceed annual budget targets.

A. Analyze monthly financials and develop and implement correction plans as necessary.

Objective 1.2: Continue building a robust Advancement program.

- A. Develop and implement annual Advancement Plan for marketing and development.
- B. Utilize metrics to set goals and measure outcomes.
  - a. Retention rate
  - b. Percent increase/decrease in total giving
  - c. Lapsed donors
  - d. Number of donors
  - e. Total number of contributions
  - f. Average contributions
  - g. Cost per dollar raised
- C. Expand donor stewardship plan.
- D. Hire Major Gifts Officer second quarter.
- E. Identify and cultivate relationships with new high-capacity supporters.
- F. Begin strategy for continuing the Partners for Independence Special Gifts campaign.
- G. Develop and implement planned giving program
- H. Pilot Ambassadors for Independence program to engage new donors and volunteers.

Objective 1.3: Implement short- and long-term strategies to address declining Consumer Directed Services (CDS) revenue.

- A. Continue analysis of staff and staff responsibilities to improve efficiency and revenue-producing capability.
  - a. Continue cross-training CDS staff.
- B. Determine whether a third-party vendor should process CDS taxes.
- C. Advocate for rate increases for Home and Community Based Service (HCBS) providers.
- D. Develop and implement internal and external outreach plan for CDS.
- E. Develop relationships with managed care companies.

Objective 1.4: Continue plans to expand the revenue-producing potential of the Stephen A. Orthwein Center.

- A. Pursue/strengthen relationships with current and potential donors.



- B. Continue to strengthen and build community partnerships and referral network.
- C. Recruit new members and personal training clients to reach profitability and achieve/exceed budget goals.
- D. Increase media coverage and other forms of publicity.
- E. Maintain member mix at >35% paying members and <30% on full scholarship.

Objective 1.5: Analyze transportation costs to determine cost effectiveness.

- A. Research transportation alternatives.

Objective 1.6: Continue to analyze facility usage and ownership as it pertains to Paraquad's financial health.

- A. Develop plans for unwinding New Market Tax Credits.
  - a. Finalize decisions on property ownership. If selling, pursue and obtain a buyer for Paraquad's main building.
- B. Rent available space.

**Goal 2: Continue to strengthen internal infrastructure.**

Objective 2.1: Continue to review staffing needs and personnel for improved efficiency and cost-effectiveness.

Objective 2.2: Continue developing formal succession plan.

Objective 2.3: Strengthen Finance Department.

- A. Continue to provide oversight and staff education regarding Paraquad's 401(k) plan.
  - a. Continue to review investment results, investment options, provide training on pension document review and compliance.

Objective 2.4: Enhance Supervisory/Managerial Skills of Leadership.

- A. Develop and implement emerging leadership opportunities.
- B. Develop opportunities to share leadership, i.e., staff to facilitate all team meetings.
- C. Implement accessible leadership lending library for all employees.

D. Finalize and distribute Supervisor Handbook.

Objective 2.5: Continue to attract and retain the best quality staff.

- A. Continue to develop partnerships with area vocational schools, colleges, universities, and professional organizations, including historically black colleges, and partnerships with university access and veteran offices.
- B. Review and, if necessary, refine annual performance evaluation forms for greater accuracy of an employee's performance.
- C. Continue regular one-on-one meetings between supervisor and supervisee to strengthen relationships, and to identify and problem-solve stressors that could impact employee engagement and retention.

**Goal 3: Continue to improve staff morale and engagement.**

Objective 3.1: Work with supervisors to identify opportunities to increase employee engagement and recognition.

Objective 3.2: Discuss the possibility of a mentoring program to enhance employee professional development and, if deemed wanted, implement that program.

Objective 3.3: Continue to increase salaries where possible.

**Goal 4: Continue to strengthen the effectiveness of the Board of Directors.**

Objective 4.1: Evaluate forming a Nominating Committee to create a pipeline of qualified prospective members who align with board recruitment goals.

Objective 4.2: Continue to improve board engagement through interactive board activities, committee work, and volunteer opportunities.

Objective 4.3: Regularly meet with Board members regarding philanthropy and provide annual training on methods of successful fundraising.

**Goal 5: Continue to pursue programmatic excellence.**

Objective 5.1: Continue to review, standardize, and implement processes and procedures for programs.

- A. Update program templates template across departments (style, content, formatting, branding, etc.) and implement it for all processes and procedures.
- B. Update all program documents on the server to be managed by Compliance.
- C. Modify CARF folders and materials as needed, and train relevant staff.
- D. Develop process for documenting best practices and developing strategies for implementation across all programs.

Objective 5.2: Continue auditing all program files to ensure program compliance.

Objective 5.3: Continue utilizing outcome data for every program to evaluate program effectiveness against established program goals.

- A. Meet monthly with Compliance to analyze program/participant numbers.
- B. Share program/participant numbers with senior leadership on a regular basis and evaluate the need for action.

Objective 5.4: Increase effectiveness of information and referral.

- A. Track call volume and determine appropriate capacity of employees to fulfill other duties.
- B. Continue to track caller satisfaction and reach a minimum of 7.5 out of 10 satisfaction score.

Objective 5.5: Increase effectiveness of Youth and Family programming.

- A. Continue building and strengthening in-school transition program.
- B. Continue strengthening partnerships with St. Louis Public Schools and the Special School District.
- C. Offer virtual and in-person comprehensive sex education courses in accordance with the workplan outlined in the Paraquad-MODDC partnership.
- D. Continue to strengthen transition services through youth group and summer blast activities including self-advocacy training, hands-on independent living skills practice, and opportunities to develop social skills and positive peer relationships.
- E. All youth and family staff will take a youth mental health first aid course.

Objective 5.6: Increase effectiveness of Peer Program.

- A. Strengthen and maintain partnerships with area rehabilitation centers and other related facilities.
- B. Establish a relationship with hospitals, rehabilitation centers, and related facilities that will allow us to contact newly disabled participants earlier in their rehabilitation process.

Objective 5.7: Increase effectiveness of Adult IL Program.

- A. Identify community needs for IL skills training.
- B. Increase outreach and promotion of IL services to other agencies serving people with disabilities.

Objective 5.8: Increase opportunities for economic independence.

- A. Increase efficiency and revenue capability of Employment.
  - a. Establish regular meetings with Program, Employment, and Finance leadership to identify and correct issues and/or inefficiencies.
  - b. Recruit a minimum of 2 PLB culinary students per semester.
  - c. Recruit at least 35 Continuing Education students per semester.
  - d. Explore DMH contract to provide employment services to people of development with disabilities.
- B. Improve networking and relationship building with VR, Nexus Employment Group, and St. Louis schools.

Objective 5.9: Continue to provide information to people with disabilities to enhance independence and physical and emotional health.

- A. Increase awareness of transportation systems.
- B. Increase awareness of emergency preparedness procedures and resources.
- C. Continue providing information on COVID-19.
- D. Continue to provide information and support in navigating Medicaid enrollment and the changes brought about by the implementation of Medicaid expansion.

**Goal 6: Strengthen external relations with consumers, organizations, advocates, contributors, and media.**

Objective 6.1: Pilot Ambassadors for Independence program to increase and enhance engagement opportunities for donors, volunteers, people with disabilities and their families, and the community to build a pipeline of participants and support.

Objective 6.2: Continue to enhance Public Policy and Advocacy and prioritize disability rights.

- A. Advocate for increased funding for Home and Community Based Services.
- B. Advocate for increased opportunities for competitive integrated employment for people with disabilities.
- C. Advocate for increased affordable and accessible housing.

- D. Engage and mobilize advocates in the community.
- E. Increase civic engagement among people with disabilities.
- F. Advocate for increased accessible and affordable transportation.
- G. Advocate for successful implementation of Medicaid Expansion.

Objective 6.3: Support the Missouri Statewide Independent Living Council in building capacity.

## Item 2 – SPIL Consistency

Explain how these work plan goals, objectives and action steps are consistent with the approved SPIL.

Goal 1: Increase community integration of persons with disabilities across Missouri in areas of: (1) housing, (2) employment, and (3) transportation.

### **Housing:**

**Objective 1.1.A: Educational opportunities and resources will be developed and provided to increase centers for independent living influence on their local housing market and to educate statewide stakeholders.**

The following goals and objectives address Objective 1.1.A:

Goal 1: Continue to improve organization’s financial status in accordance with FY21-24 strategic plan goal to “Achieve and Maintain Financial Health.”

Objective 1.2: Continue building a robust Advancement program for marketing and development.

Objective 1.2.A: Develop and implement annual Advancement Plan for marketing and development.

Objective 1.2.F: Begin strategy for continuing the Partners for Independence Special Gifts campaign. *Partners for Independence includes money for a new home modifications program.*

Objective 1.2.H: Pilot Ambassadors for Independence program to engage new donors and volunteers. *Ambassadors for Independence includes a pilot home modifications program.*

Objective 6.2.C: Advocate for increased affordable and accessible housing.

Goal 6: Strengthen external relations with consumers, organizations, advocates, contributors, and media.

Objective 6.1: Pilot Ambassadors for Independence program to increase and enhance engagement opportunities for donors, volunteers, people with disabilities and their families, and the community to build a pipeline of participants and support.

Objective 6.2: Continue to enhance Public Policy and Advocacy and prioritize disability rights.

- A. Advocate for increased funding for Home and Community Based Services.
- B. Advocate for increased opportunities for competitive integrated employment for people with disabilities.
- C. Advocate for increased affordable and accessible housing.
  - a. Advocate for and remove barriers to affordable and accessible housing.
  - b. Work with the MOSILC Housing Committee to play an active role in developing affordable and accessible housing.
- D. Engage and mobilize advocates in the community.
- E. Increase civic engagement among people with disabilities.

Objective 1.1.B: Centers for independent living statewide and other stakeholders participate in policy making processes that impact consumer housing options.

The following goals and objectives address Objective 1.1.B:

Goal 6: Strengthen external relations with consumers, organizations, advocates, contributors, and media.

Objective 6.2: Continue to enhance Public Policy and Advocacy and prioritize disability rights.

Objective 6.2.C: Advocate for increased affordable and accessible housing.

**Objective 1.1.C: The MOSILC Housing Committee will support centers for independent living statewide to play an active role in the development of affordable and accessible housing.**

The following goals and objectives address Objective 1.1C:

Objective 6.2: Continue to enhance Public Policy and Advocacy and prioritize disability rights.

Objective 6.2 C: Increase access to affordable and accessible housing.

- a. Advocate for and remove barriers to affordable and accessible housing.
- b. Work with the MOSILC Housing Committee to play an active role in developing affordable and accessible housing.

**Employment:**

**Objective 1.2.A: Increase competitive and integrated employment of persons with disabilities.**

The following goals and objectives address Objective 1.2.A:

Goal 5: Continue to pursue programmatic excellence.

Objective 5.8: Increase opportunities for economic independence.

A. Increase efficiency and revenue capability of Employment.

- a. Establish regular meetings with Program, Employment, and Finance leadership to identify and correct issues and/or inefficiencies.
- b. Recruit a minimum of 2 PLB culinary students per semester.
- c. Recruit at least 35 Continuing Education students per semester.
- d. Explore DMH contract to provide employment services to people of development with disabilities.

B. Improve networking and relationship building with VR, Nexus Employment Group, and St. Louis schools.

Goal 6: Strengthen external relations with consumers, organizations, advocates, contributors, and media.

Objective 6.2: Continue to enhance Public Policy and Advocacy and prioritize disability rights.

Objective 6.2.B: Advocate for increased opportunities for competitive integrated employment for people with disabilities.

**Objective 1.2.B: Engage community partners to advocate for competitive employment.**

The following goals and objectives address Objective 1.2.B:

Goal 5: Continue to pursue programmatic excellence.

Objective 5.8.B: Improve networking and relationship building with VR, Nexus Employment Group, and St. Louis schools.

Goal 6: Strengthen external relations with consumers, organizations, advocates, contributors, and media.

Objective 6.2: Continue to enhance Public Policy and Advocacy and prioritize disability rights.

Objective 6.2.B: Advocate for increased opportunities for competitive integrated employment for people with disabilities.

**Objective 1.2.C: Promote education for CIL staff regarding Social Security incentives for employment.**

The following goals and objectives address Objective 1.2.C:

Goal 5: Continue to pursue programmatic excellence.

Objective 5.8: Increase opportunities for economic independence. *In addition, Paraquad administers the Work Incentives Planning and Assistance Program and the Ticket to Work Health Assurance Program for Missouri.*

**Objective 1.2.D: Increase CIL participation in VR programs such as summer employment and Pre-ETS.**

The following goals and objectives address Objective 1.2.D:

Goal 5: Continue to pursue programmatic excellence.

Objective 5.5: Increase effectiveness of Youth and Family programming

- A. Continue building and strengthening in-school transition program.
- B. Continue strengthening partnerships with St. Louis Public Schools and the Special School District.

Objective 5.5.D: Continue to strengthen transition services through youth group and summer blast activities including self-advocacy training, hands-on independent living skills practice, and opportunities to develop social skills and positive peer relationships.



Objective 5.8: Increase opportunities for economic independence.

Objective 5.8.B: Improve networking and relationship building with VR, Nexus Employment Group, and St. Louis schools.

Goal 6: Strengthen external relations with consumers, organizations, advocates, contributors, and media.

Objective 6.1: Pilot Ambassadors for Independence program to increase and enhance engagement opportunities for donors, volunteers, people with disabilities and their families, and the community to build a pipeline of participants and support.

**Public Transportation:**

**Objective 1.3.A: Increase awareness of existing transportation systems by making information available in an easily accessible format.**

The following goal and objectives address Objective 1.3.A:

Goal 5: Continue to pursue programmatic excellence.

Objective 5.9: Continue to provide information to people with disabilities to enhance independence and physical and emotional health.

Objective 5.9.A: Increase awareness of transportation systems.

**Objective 1.3.B: Work closely with local, regional, and state planning entities and providers to promote transportation.**

The following goal and objectives address Objective 1.3.B:

Goal 6: Strengthen external relations with consumers, organizations, advocates, contributors, and media.

Objective 6.1: Pilot Ambassadors for Independence program to increase and enhance engagement opportunities for donors, volunteers, people with disabilities and their families, and the community to build a pipeline of participants and support.

Objective 6.2: Continue to enhance Public Policy and Advocacy and prioritize disability rights.

Objective 6.2.D: Engage and mobilize advocates in the community.

Objective 6.2.E: Increase civic engagement among people with disabilities.

Objective 6.2.F: Advocate for increased accessible and affordable transportation.

**Objective 1.3.C: Increase the number of CILS consumers who use public transportation.**

The following goal and objectives address Objective 1.3.C:

Goal 5: Continue to pursue programmatic excellence.

Objective 5.9: Continue to provide information to people with disabilities to enhance independence and physical and emotional health.

Objective 5.9.A: Increase awareness of transportation systems. *We will encourage use of public transportation*

**Objective 1.3.D: Promote “Ride Share” programs.**

The following goal and objectives address Objective 1.3.D:

Goal 5: Continue to pursue programmatic excellence.

Objective 5.9: Continue to provide information to people with disabilities to enhance independence and physical and emotional health.

Objective 5.9.A: Increase awareness of transportation systems. *We will include information on “Ride Share” programs.*

**Goal 2: Stimulate civic engagement of Missourians with disabilities and Centers for Independent Living (CILs) to result in increased inclusion and independence.**

**Objective 2.1.A: Encourage and educate persons with disabilities on the importance of civic engagement, promoting self-advocacy.**

The following goal and objectives address Objective 2.1.A:

Goal 6: Strengthen external relations with consumers, organizations, advocates, contributors, and media.

Objective 6.2: Continue to enhance Public Policy and Advocacy and prioritize disability rights.

Objective 6.2.F: Engage and mobilize advocates in the community.

Objective 6.2.G: Increase civic engagement among people with disabilities.

**Objective 2.1.B: Educate self-advocates about serving on local and state boards, committees, and commissions.**

The following goals and objectives address Objective 2.1.B:

Goal 6: Strengthen external relations with consumers, organizations, advocates, contributors, and media.

Objective 6.1: Pilot Ambassadors for Independence program to increase and enhance engagement opportunities for donors, volunteers, people with disabilities and their families, and the community to build a pipeline of participants and support.

Objective 6.2: Continue to enhance Public Policy and Advocacy and prioritize disability rights.

Objective 6.2.F: Engage and mobilize advocates in the community.

Objective 6.2.G: Increase civic engagement among people with disabilities. *We will continue to educate advocates about serving on local and state boards, committees, and commissions.*

**Objective 2.1.C: CILs will educate policymakers on prioritizing disability rights in all areas of public policy.**

The following goal and objectives address Objective 2.1.C:

Goal 6: Strengthen external relations with consumers, organizations, advocates, contributors, and media.

Objective 6.1: Pilot Ambassadors for Independence program to increase and enhance engagement opportunities for donors, volunteers, people with disabilities and their families, and the community to build a pipeline of participants and support.

Objective 6.2: Continue to enhance Public Policy and Advocacy and prioritize disability rights.

- A. Advocate for increased funding for Home and Community Based Services.
- B. Advocate for increased opportunities for competitive integrated employment for people with disabilities.
- C. Advocate for increased affordable and accessible housing.
- D. Engage and mobilize advocates in the community.
- E. Increase civic engagement among people with disabilities.

F. Advocate for increased accessible and affordable transportation.

G. Advocate for successful implementation of Medicaid Expansion.

**Goal 3: Expand emergency preparedness, response and recover for people with disabilities in Missouri.**

**Objective 3.1.A: Persons with disabilities in Missouri are prepared for emergencies and are included in the response and recovering planning made by local and state officials.**

The following goals and objectives address Objective 3.1.A:

Goal 5: Continue to pursue programmatic excellence.

Objective 5.9: Continue to provide information to people with disabilities to enhance independence and physical and emotional health.

Objective 5.9.B: Increase awareness of emergency preparedness procedures and resources.

Goal 6: Strengthen external relations with consumers, organizations, advocates, contributors, and media.

Objective 6.1: Pilot Ambassadors for Independence program to increase and enhance engagement opportunities for donors, volunteers, people with disabilities and their families, and the community to build a pipeline of participants and support.

Objective 6.2: Continue to enhance Public Policy and Advocacy and prioritize disability rights. *We will continue to advocate for disability inclusion in all aspects of emergency management.*

**Objective 3.1.B: The Missouri SILC (MOSILC) and the CILs will foster a spirit of disability inclusion into all aspects of emergency management through partnerships and collaborations with local, state, and federal emergency management and others.**

The following goal and objectives address Objective 3.1.B:

Goal 6: Strengthen external relations with consumers, organizations, advocates, contributors, and media.

Objective 6.1: Pilot Ambassadors for Independence program to increase and enhance engagement opportunities for donors, volunteers, people with disabilities and their families, and the community to build a pipeline of participants and support.

Objective 6.2: Continue to enhance Public Policy and Advocacy and prioritize disability rights. *We will continue to advocate for disability inclusion in all aspects of emergency management.*

**Goal 4: Increase the capacity of the Missouri Statewide Independent Living Council**

**Objective 4.1A: Identify resources needed to fulfill the expanded role of the Missouri Statewide Independent Living Council.**

The following goal(s) and objectives address Objective 4.1.A:

Objective 6.3: Support the Missouri Statewide Independent Living Council in building capacity.

## SUBPART VI - TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDS

Section 721(b)(3) of the Act.

<b>Training And Technical Assistance Needs</b>	<b>Choose up to 10 Priority Needs --- Rate items 1-10 with 1 being most important</b>
<b>Advocacy/Leadership Development</b>	
General Overview	
Community/Grassroots Organizing	
Individual Empowerment	
Systems Advocacy	
Legislative Process	
<b>Applicable Laws</b>	
General overview and promulgation of various disability laws	
Americans with Disabilities Act	
Air-Carrier's Access Act	
Fair Housing Act	
Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act	
Medicaid/Medicare/PAS/waivers/long-term care	
Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended	
Social Security Act	
Workforce Investment Act of 1998	
Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999	
Government Performance Results Act of 1993	
<b>Assistive Technologies</b>	
General Overview	
<b>Data Collecting and Reporting</b>	
General Overview	
704 Reports	
Performance Measures contained in 704 Report	9
Dual Reporting Requirements	
Case Service Record Documentation	
<b>Disability Awareness and Information</b>	
Specific Issues	
<b>Evaluation</b>	
General Overview	
CIL Standards and Indicators	
Community Needs Assessment	
Consumer Satisfaction Surveys	
Focus Groups	
Outcome Measures	

<b>Financial: Grant Management</b>	
General Overview	
Federal Regulations	
Budgeting	
Fund Accounting	
<b>Financial: Resource Development</b>	
General Overview	
Diversification of Funding Base	1
Fee-for-Service Approaches	2
For Profit Subsidiaries	3
Fund-Raising Events of Statewide Campaigns	
Grant Writing	
<b>Independent Living Philosophy</b>	
General Overview	
<b>Innovative Programs</b>	
Best Practices	
Specific Examples	8
<b>Management Information Systems</b>	
Computer Skills	
Software	
<b>Marketing and Public Relations</b>	
General Overview	
Presentation/Workshop Skills	
Community Awareness	
<b>Networking Strategies</b>	
General Overview	
Electronic	
Among CILs & SILCs	
Community Partners	5
<b>Program Planning</b>	
General Overview of Program Management and Staff Development	
CIL Executive Directorship Skills Building	
Conflict Management and Alternative Dispute Resolution	
First-Line CIL Supervisor Skills Building	10
IL Skills Modules	
Peer Mentoring	7
Program Design	
Time Management	
Team Building	6
<b>Outreach to Unserved/Underserved Populations</b>	
General Overview	
Disability	
Minority	
Institutionalized Potential Consumers	
Rural	

Urban	
<b>SILC Roles/Relationship to CILs</b>	
General Overview	
Development of State Plan for Independent Living	
Implementation (monitor & review) of SPIL	
Public Meetings	
Role and Responsibilities of Executive Board	
Role and Responsibilities of General Members	
Collaborations with In-State Stakeholders	
<b>CIL Board of Directors</b>	
General Overview	
Roles and Responsibilities	
Policy Development	
Recruiting/Increasing Involvement	4
<b>Volunteer Programs</b>	
General Overview	
<b>Optional Areas and/or Comments (write-in)</b>	



## **SUBPART VII – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Section 704(m)(4)(D) of the Act

### **Section A – Other Accomplishments, Activities and Challenges**

Describe any additional significant accomplishments, activities and/or challenges not included elsewhere in the report, e.g. brief summaries of innovative practices, improved service delivery to consumers, etc.

Accomplishments:

- Finalized metrics/scorecards for all programs.
- Provided tablets and hotspots to participants who did not have internet access.
- Increased focus on stewardship and creating innovative opportunities for donors/volunteers to engage which has resulted in increased gifts.
- Adopted a hybrid work model that offers greater flexibility and employee satisfaction.

Challenges:

- We continued to face a variety of barriers from COVID especially regarding our consumer's use of technology.
- We were challenged with lack of capacity and not having enough IL funding to provide additional services.
- We were challenged within our Consumer Directed Services program resulting from the Governor's veto to an increase to the provider rate. Many consumers continue to struggle to find and retain attendants.
- We are also challenged with the lack of homecare workers.

### **Section B – Additional Information**

Provide additional information, comments, explanations or suggestions not included elsewhere in the report.

## SUBPART VIII - SIGNATURES

Please sign and print the names, titles and telephone numbers of the CIL director and board chair.

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SIGNATURE OF CENTER DIRECTOR

DATE

---

NAME AND TITLE OF CENTER DIRECTOR

PHONE NUMBER

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SIGNATURE OF CENTER BOARD CHAIRPERSON

DATE

---

NAME AND TITLE OF CENTER BOARD CHAIRPERSON

PHONE NUMBER