



Annual Report

2021-22





“Our children have grown and blossomed because of your dedication, patience, and love. The Guild staff are the best of the best!”

– Sue T., parent of Guild adult resident and former Guild School student



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Welcome

Dear Guild Community,

This year was an important time of reconnection – with our communities and each other. Whether it was seeing the joy and pride at our in-person awards events; going on field trips; returning to work, volunteering, or recreational opportunities; or even being able to share meals again in The Guild School's cafeteria and house barbeques; this year brought us back together.

It was also an important year toward renewing and strengthening how we operate from our systems, programs, services, and facilities to providing our workforce with opportunities for growth and expanding The Guild's role in the disability rights movement. This year's Annual Report highlights a few of the most memorable moments of reconnection and renewal.

At the heart of the triumphs of our residents and students is the unwavering dedication of The Guild's staff, families, community, and philanthropic partners. Our staff is committed to the care and empowerment of those we serve. Our families are engaged in supporting and enhancing The Guild's programming. Our community partners are creating opportunities and pathways for our residents and students to build the skills that increase independence and community engagement. Our donors and philanthropic supporters are partnering with us to innovate and expand The Guild's service models.

We are deeply grateful to all of you who believe in the power and collective strength of inclusive communities. Thank you for your time, talents, and contributions to The Guild's community.

With gratitude,



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michelle Peters".

Michelle Peters
*Chair, Board of
Trustees*



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Amy C. Sousa".

Amy C. Sousa
Chief Executive Officer



About The Guild

Headquartered in Concord, Massachusetts, The Guild serves more than 140 people with intellectual and developmental disabilities annually through educational, residential, and clinical programming.

Offering flexibility within structure, The Guild promotes the development of academic, social, vocational, and independent living skills through a private, 365-day, special education school serving up to 90 students; 9 group homes for 72 youth; as well as 12 residential homes for 60 adults diagnosed with intellectual disability, autism, and other developmental challenges.



Honoring Tom Corcoran's Legacy



“Were it not for Tom, I don’t think our Adult Residential program would ever have begun.”

— Maureen Costello-Shea,
Chief Program Officer

“Tom, thank you for teaching me about the history of The Guild, and for encouraging me to think bigger and broader about The Guild’s future.”

— Amy Sousa,
Chief Executive Officer

In 2007-2008, the world experienced the most severe economic crisis since the Great Depression. Banks failed and businesses crumbled. In response, most investors tightened their belts and focused inward to repair the damage. Never shrinking from a challenge, financial expert Tom Corcoran did the opposite; he reached out to help, joining The Guild’s board at a time of great need.

Quickly earning the position of Treasurer, Tom’s impact on The Guild’s board was felt immediately. His savvy investment strategy and thoughtful approach to financial problem-solving enabled The Guild to emerge from the financial crisis with strong investment processes and even greater returns.

Not satisfied with only earning money, Tom got to work on ensuring that The Guild’s financial resources were put to the best use. His passion for the mission and financial acumen enabled The Guild to upgrade and expand facilities, including the purchase and renovation of a new school building in 2016 and several new group homes with expansive living and outdoor spaces.

In 2013, Tom championed the launch of The Guild’s Adult Services Program, which started with purchasing four houses and, soon after, an additional four, which then grew to twelve. These homes and the staff who support them ensure that 60 adults with intellectual disabilities live safe, healthy, and fulfilling lives.

In 2017, Tom played a key role in the recruitment and hiring of Amy Sousa as CEO. Shortly thereafter, Tom became Chair of the Board of Trustees in 2018. As chair, he focused his time and energy on expanding the board, including personally recruiting Trustee Michelle Peters from CLA Advisory Services. Tom retired as Chair of the Board in 2022 turning over the reins to Michelle Peters. He now volunteers as financial advisor to the CEO and CFO and sits on the board as Trustee Emeritus.

“Thanks in no small part to Tom Corcoran’s efforts and visions, my son is leading a quality of life that I could not have imagined. Grateful barely begins to describe it. My true and heartfelt thanks and best wishes.”

— Jennifer Young, Guild parent

It is safe to say The Guild would not be where it is today without Tom’s financial skills, leadership, and devotion to strengthening the quality of our programs and services. Thank you, Tom, for always being such a strong advocate for every student and resident. Your legacy will be felt for generations.

Evan T.'s employment journey

Every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, Evan T. packs up his bag and heads to Market Basket in Waltham to work the mid-day shift. From 10:30–2:30, he directs customers and collects and organizes shopping carts within their corrals in the store's parking lot.

"I work hard at pushing carts," he says. "I enjoy it and get paid every week."

Evan's path to employment wasn't without its challenges. His mother, Alice, explains that finding an adult day



program that would prioritize his employment goals was extremely difficult. Staff with the first program he attended did not believe he was ready for a job in the community, which was incredibly frustrating for both Evan and Alice.

Evan eventually transferred to a new day program, and the Executive Director there let Alice know that Evan was a strong candidate for employment. With training and the support of a job coach, Evan began working at Market Basket in 2016 and immediately found success. He's been employed at their Waltham location for five years and continues to shift three days each week.

At his Guild residence in Dedham, staff help Evan get ready for his shifts by ensuring he's prepared for four hours of work. "Guild staff know how to get Evan into the right mindset for his job," says Alice. "As for Evan, he's really mastered his

"He's been employed at Market Basket for five years and continues to shift three days each week."

activities of daily living and knows what he needs to pack and do before each shift."

Moving forward, Alice says she'd like to see communities and employers become more accepting of including people with disabilities across various employment positions. "[With his first day program], I asked what we needed to do to get him ready for a job, and basically, the response was that he has to not be Autistic. I thought, we can't do anything to make a person with a good amount of skills successful?" she says.

Market Basket provided accommodations for Evan to support him in retaining the job long-term. When COVID-19

took hold in March of 2020, the crowds became overwhelming, and the store provided a temporary leave for Evan. "When it's crowded, and there are too many people, it gets stressful," he says. Within a few months, he was back at it and felt lucky to be able to work in a safe, outdoor environment throughout the pandemic.

In the future, Evan says he'd love to work at the Audubon Society in their maintenance department. For now, he's excited to continue greeting customers with a smile during his weekly Market Basket shifts.

Guild students reach new heights with college coursework

On a chilly Tuesday afternoon last spring, Guild School student Leah* is busy whipping up some homemade mac n' cheese in Middlesex Community College's instructional kitchen. "It's even better than Kraft," she promises. Next door, her Guild classmate, Daniel*, is talking to a classmate about last night's Red Sox game – in Japanese.

Both Leah and Daniel participate in the Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment Initiative (ICEI) program at Middlesex. ICEI is a dual enrollment opportunity for high school students with intellectual disabilities to take part in college-level courses and receive career support, educational coaches, peer mentors, and full access to the college's clubs, student activities, and academic resources.

Leah, who took Culinary Theory this past spring and has dreams of becoming a chef, says that preparation at The Guild School has helped her succeed at Middlesex. "My professor had high expectations, and you had to make sure you completed all of the assignments on time," she says. Leah worked with Lauren Byron, Teacher Assistant with The Guild, each week to review coursework and preview upcoming lectures.

For Daniel, courses at Middlesex allow him to explore different career paths before graduating from The Guild School. He's taken both culinary and foreign language classes. "The Japanese course I took was very challenging with a lot of homework, but overall it was good, and I liked our professor," he says.

Shawn Massak, Employee Services Manager with The Guild, worked with Daniel throughout the year on organizational and study skills as well as general employment skills, like completing applications and preparing for interviews. He says he'd like to see more opportunities like the ICEI program that allow students to learn about new subjects, become more independent, and meet other people in their age group.

Leah and Jonathan closed out the academic semester by giving final presentations about what they had learned to community members, course facilitators, and Middlesex students and parents.

"It was great to see the presentations come together and for Leah and Daniel to share stories from their time at MCC," says Shawn. "Both students were really proud of what they accomplished."

**Pseudonyms are being used in this article to protect student privacy.*



For Babra Nankya, completing her degree doesn't mean putting her career on hold



For Babra Nankya, Residential Assistant with Walnut House, working in human services is more than just a job — it's a chance to change lives. She's currently completing her bachelor's degree in human services at Fitchburg State University so she can continue to grow professionally within the sector. As part of her coursework, she had to complete a 90-hour practicum to provide her with first-hand case management experience at a placement site.

Since she was already working a full-time job with The Guild, Babra thought completing her practicum here at The Guild School made sense. She knew that managing a 40-hour work week on top of this additional fieldwork would be challenging, and she was relieved that her supervisor highly supported her request. "He was happy about my idea and helped me push it forward," she says.

Babra's supervisor connected her with Suzanne Henderson,

The Guild's Director of Professional Development and Research. She was thrilled to support Babra in practicum work that would allow her to see other departments. "Often, we don't understand what our colleagues are working on in other parts of the organization, and it's so helpful to see the bigger picture," says Suzanne. Suzanne served as the liaison between Babra and other Guild staff, scheduling practicum hours and providing additional research and content for Babra to contextualize her experiences.

Babra's practicum required her to spend one day each week circulating in different departments at the school site. During her rotations, she gained a thorough understanding of the case management process through observing and interacting with students, drafting assessments, attending parent and IEP meetings,

learning documentation protocol, and more.

"Being part of The Guild has been a great opportunity for me because they give undergraduate students flexible schedules which you can change," says Babra. She notes that this flexibility was critical to her success throughout completing her undergraduate degree. In the future, she'd like to continue her education by earning her Master's of Social Work.

The Guild offers several opportunities for employees who want to further their education or engage in professional development. In addition to providing both tuition assistance and student loan repayment assistance, The Guild supports employees by creating customized professional development plans, connecting them with a professional mentor, and assisting undergraduate and graduate students with completing degree requirements.

"We love to see our staff developing their skills and knowledge, whether for their current role or a position they're working toward in the future," says Suzanne.



Guild community honored at annual awards ceremonies

On a breezy day last June, adults and students donned their best and made their way to the Westin in Waltham for The Guild's annual awards day ceremonies. After two years of virtual and smaller school-based celebrations, The Guild community was excited to be back in the Westin's grand ballroom for this special event.

Each year, adults and students receive awards from residential and education staff honoring their progress toward their individualized goals, which

they create with support from staff and guardians.

Throughout the year, students and adults identify and work on the skill sets needed to achieve these goals, focusing on increasing independence.

"The annual awards ceremonies are a time of unity," says Mustapha Abdulai, Director of Adult Residential Services at The Guild. "It's a special day where we recognize the hard work of those we serve and look ahead towards their potential in the coming year."

Awards recognize skill development ranging from increased independence in daily routines and community outings to improved money management and academic curriculum-based skills.

"Awards day is more than a celebration of successes," says Annie Willis, The Guild's Chief Education Officer. "It is an opportunity to pause and reflect as a community on the hard work of students, adults, providers, families, and supporters toward the goal of

improving the quality of life for those we serve."

As for students and residents, the awards ceremonies are certainly a summer highlight. "Everyone in our house is always really excited to attend the awards ceremonies," says Mory Konate, Maynard House Manager.

"I always feel very proud at the awards day," says Aaron Watt, Maynard House resident. "Seeing my friends and family happy makes me happy," he adds.

The Guild and Artists For Humanity unveil new mural

This past December, designers with Artists for Humanity together with Guild community members created a bright new mural adjacent to The Guild's Concord campus lobby. The display features a bustling downtown scene complete with artwork by Guild students and adult residents framed in the windows.

"Guild students and adult residents proudly contributed their artwork to make this mural come to life. The final product embodies our vision of creating inclusive communities," says Amy Sousa, Chief Executive Officer of The Guild.

The mural project was born out of The Guild's partnership with Boston-based nonprofit Artists For Humanity (AFH), which

provides under-resourced teens a path to self-sufficiency through paid employment in art and design. In the spring of 2021, AFH installed interactive wayfinding murals throughout The Guild School to support students with low vision, orientation, and mobility challenges.

With this new mural, both organizations set out to create an interactive experience that would give all members of The Guild a sense of ownership and community while ensuring space for each participant to express their imagination and feel represented. The project involved over 60 people in its design, from AFH designers and artists to The Guild's students and adult residents.

Muyani Kasune, Associate Director, says that adults enjoyed getting a chance to contribute their artwork. "This mural represents the lives we live in the community every day," he notes.

For students, walking past the mural to the lunchroom each day elicits memories of field trips and other outings. "The picture of the swings reminds me of my time at the playground with my friends this summer!" says one student.

Guild staff add that the mural represents the range of activities and experiences they provide for students and adults. "The mural makes me feel proud. We're working hard as a team to make our students feel included and part of the community," says Raji Ravichandran, Guild School teacher.

Integral to AFH's team was their group of teen designers who saw the project through from initial sketching to implementation. Designers



created coloring templates for The Guild's students and adult residents to fill in and contribute to the display.

AFH designers emphasize how collaboration across organizations fostered a sense of community reflected in the mural. "Feeling part of something bigger is important to me, and I'm glad I could help teach others about working as a collective," says Bloo Nicholson, AFH Teen Designer-turned-AFH alum.

Be sure to check out the new downstairs mural during your next visit to our Concord campus and see the incredible work of AFH and the individuals we serve!

"The picture of the swings reminds me of my time at the playground with my friends this summer!"

— Guild student

For Dennis Elyau, LEAD program was a launching point

When Dennis Elyau entered the human services field five years ago, he wasn't sure what to expect. Having just moved to the United States, he was transitioning out of a career in banking and began as a Direct Care Counselor. It wasn't long before he fell in love with the sector.

Dennis started as a youth Assistant Residential Manager (ARM) at The Guild in Cedar House. In the ARM role, he took on increased responsibilities including managing staff. To further his leadership skills, Dennis enrolled in The Guild's Leadership Employee Advancement and Development (LEAD) program in the fall of 2021. The program, designed with the International Institute of New England, builds leadership and management skills for Guild employees in every department who want to advance their careers as non-profit leaders. It also includes a mentoring component where each LEAD

participant is matched with someone from The Guild's leadership team.

Dennis says that the LEAD program, which covers topics like crisis management, communication strategies, and supervision techniques, was integral in his promotion from ARM to Residential Manager at Willow House later that fall. "Participating in LEAD gave me the upper hand in my application," he says.

LEAD allowed program participants to collaborate across departments and share their unique experiences managing staff and working with Guild students and residents. This was a welcome opportunity for Dennis to branch out from the youth residential division and hear about how others approached their roles. "Since we heard from people with different skill sets, it caused us to start thinking differently about how to manage," he says.

Dennis supervises all Willow House staff and oversees resident reports, evaluations, and check-ins in his new role. He says managing staff and residents requires flexibility and effective communication to ensure everything runs smoothly. "Being the manager in a community where so many people have different ideas and opinions, you have to work alongside people and keep everyone's interests in mind," he adds.

In the future, Dennis hopes to complete his master's in Applied Behavior Analysis and eventually move into a Residential Director position. "I love working at The Guild because we have the opportunity to progress in our careers," he says. "I learn so much from students and staff every day."



From ‘Me’ to ‘We’: Engaging in healthy relationships with Elevatus Training



Each Wednesday night last fall, a group of six Guild adult residents cleared out their schedules and logged onto Zoom at 5 p.m. sharp. They would spend the next hour in lively discussion talking about their relationships with employers, family members, romantic partners, and themselves. The group was part of The Guild’s Healthy Relationships course, designed by Elevatus Training.

The class, led by Estella Ngufor, former Walpole House Manager,

and Junior Paris, Dedham House Manager, followed a curriculum to empower individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities to build self-confidence and maintain healthy relationships. The course covered how to engage in appropriate interactions within different types of relationships; the importance of consent; the difference between private and public settings; parenting responsibilities; and more.

“We wanted course graduates to be confident in themselves

and how they interact with other people,” says Estella. “The engagement of the group was just awesome. It exceeded our expectations.”

“I think it’s important to know about things like this, and it can help in many different types of relationships. I liked hearing other people’s perspectives in the class,” says Dylan B., resident with Dedham House and participant in the course.

Elevatus is an organization that aims to empower, motivate, and educate self-advocates, professionals, and parents. The Elevatus course curriculum aligns with The Guild’s mission to provide individuals with the tools to engage in self-advocacy and make informed, thoughtful decisions within relationships. The Guild plans to expand its sexuality education program this year by facilitating Healthy Relationships courses for adults and students.

“We want participants to

respect their own body and be proud of those they care about,” says Junior.

Estella adds that the course sought to instill that everyone, regardless of ability, can lead a fulfilling sexual life – especially given that many general sex education courses overlook how those with intellectual and developmental disabilities can embrace their sexuality. “Whether you have a disability or not, you can be a sexual being. That’s one of the things we wanted the participants to know,” she says.

“We want participants to respect their own body and be proud of those they care about.”

***The World Got Smaller* recognizes strength of The Guild community throughout pandemic**

The COVID-19 pandemic struck the human services sector especially hard, with day programs shut down and individuals with disabilities separated from their families for months. At The Guild, staff rose to the challenge and volunteered to quarantine with residents for weeks at a time. Through it all, The Guild community adapted and grew stronger.

This spring, The Guild released a short documentary film, *The World Got Smaller: The Spirit of The Guild during COVID-19*, to memorialize this time in history and provide a first-hand look at how the pandemic impacted people with disabilities. The film, which features interviews with Guild staff, students, residents, and community partners, shows how The Guild pivoted to move classrooms to residences, create supplemental adult day programming, and adapt to the state's ever-changing protocols.

“What I enjoy most about *The World Got Smaller* is that it shows the resilience of both the individuals we support and staff.”

“Seeing how the pandemic stole the day-to-day choices of residents and students should galvanize us all to keep fighting for inclusion and community life in the post-pandemic era,” says Leo Sarkissian, Executive Director of The Arc of Massachusetts, an organization that offers advocacy and services for people with disabilities.

The World Got Smaller was produced by Viemark Video and released initially via Zoom to an audience of over 200, spanning 20 states, and later during an in-person screening at the Goodnow Library in Sudbury.

Natwona Smith, Former Residential Manager, says that being interviewed for the film and reflecting on the pandemic made her proud to be part of The Guild community. “What I enjoy most about *The World Got Smaller* is that it shows the resilience of both the individuals we support and staff,” she adds.

The World Got Smaller was recognized with an Award of Excellence in the 28th Annual Communicator Awards and a Telly Award.

“We’re thrilled that members of The Guild community are getting the recognition they deserve through these awards,” says Amy Sousa, CEO of The Guild. “We hope this film continues to inspire viewers to work toward full community inclusion of people with disabilities.”

The full version of *The World Got Smaller* is now available on The Guild's YouTube channel.



Sudbury Foundation grant connects nonspeaking children with family online

For Guild students with communication disorders, the onset of the pandemic brought unique challenges, given that traditional video communication platforms do not allow for effective, complete non-verbal communication. With this in mind, The Guild developed the concept of online expressive therapy as another means for families to connect with their nonspeaking children while living at The Guild and beyond. Last winter, The Guild was awarded a \$19,130 grant from the Sudbury Foundation to support this crucial program.

Many Guild students experience congenital or acquired communication disorders associated with cerebral palsy, autism, intellectual disability, or traumatic brain injury. These challenges are not unique to The Guild. The American Speech-Language-Hearing

Association reports that an estimated 40 million Americans experience speech, language, and/or hearing disorders. These disorders limit people's ability to communicate thoughts, feelings, and needs.

"Communication is a fundamental human right that allows people to learn, connect, express feelings, make decisions, and be involved in a community," said Amy C. Sousa, The Guild's Chief Executive Officer. "Through the generous support of the Sudbury Foundation, The Guild's online expressive therapy program will empower students with communication disorders to connect with their family members using the video technologies on which so many of us rely."

The Sudbury Foundation, whose mission is to transform lives and strengthen

communities, provided the grant as part of its Children, Youth & Families Emotional Wellbeing Program.

"The Sudbury Foundation is pleased to support The Guild's Expressive Arts Family Therapy project," said Sonia Shah, Executive Director of the Sudbury Foundation. "This was the type of program we had in mind when we designed the Youth Emotional Well-Being project grant. We are excited to be part of an effort to help ease the social disconnect affecting so many children and families."

Expressive arts therapy is a beneficial conduit for therapy with families because creating art is an activity that enables all family members to participate at a similar level of communication, even if family members are nonspeaking. The Guild School is using this therapeutic approach to help



**THE SUDBURY
FOUNDATION**

families express feelings with one another while together and when they communicate via video conferencing. By providing this guided tool, families have options for connecting with nonspeaking children when separated by distance, allowing greater frequency and quality of communication.



Samantha Lynch



Alexander Gonzalez



Angel Hernandez



Rebecca Jason



Jesse Peterson



Ava Policano



Kensington Roy



Ethan Rex

Guild School Graduates
July 2021–June 2022

Leadership



This year, The Guild welcomed Robert Sousa to the Board of Trustees. Robert currently serves as the Director of Asset & Liability Management at Middlesex Savings Bank.



The Guild was pleased to elect Michelle Peters as Chair of the Board of Trustees in 2022. Peters is a signing director with CliftonLarsonAllen LLP and an active volunteer with Special Olympics Massachusetts.

Senior Leadership

Amy C. Sousa, PhD
Chief Executive Officer

Michael J. Clontz, MSW,
LICSW
Chief Operating Officer

Maureen Costello-Shea, MEd
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Financials

Statement of Financial Position

Assets	2022	2021
Cash	\$2,806,568	\$4,876,153
Accounts Receivables	\$4,344,218	\$3,864,443
Investments	\$13,499,322	\$15,485,329
Prepaid Expenses	\$88,880	\$46,296
Property & Equipment	\$25,036,020	\$25,062,942
Other Assets	\$38,584	\$41,973
Total Assets	\$46,357,166	\$50,533,268
Change in Net Assets	(\$4,176,102)	

State reimbursement covers almost all direct costs associated with The Guild School and residences but does not cover expenditures for capital renovations, program innovation, vacations and travel, and quality-of-life enhancements. The Guild relies on annual contributions from individuals, businesses, and grant-making institutions to support important program and capital expenses each year.

Financial Activities

Revenue	2022	2021
Tuition	\$26,414,025	\$26,478,496
Service Fees	\$11,407,163	\$9,730,952
Contributions	\$165,533	\$175,061
Interest & Dividends	\$143,995	\$118,389
Investment Income	(\$2,062,073)	\$3,286,736
Other	\$1,835,475	\$214,615
Total Revenue	\$37,760,123	\$40,118,545

Expenses	2022	2021
Guild School	\$24,187,371	\$23,760,827
Adult Residential	\$12,696,688	\$10,861,983
G&A	\$2,734,046	\$1,973,707
Fundraising	\$103,531	\$48,320
Total Expenses	\$39,721,636	\$36,644,837
Income	(\$1,961,513)	\$3,473,708

Thank You to Our Donors

(July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022)

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 Special Olympics Massachusetts
 Sudbury Red Sox
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 Walden Woods Project
 Waverley Oaks Athletic Club
 Waypoint Adventure
 YMCA of Metro North
 YMCA of Metrowest



The Guild at a Glance



81 students

are enrolled in The Guild School



13 inaugural

Leadership Employee
Advancement and
Development (LEAD) program
graduates during FY22



248 attended

The World Got Smaller
documentary film premiere



17 adults

participated in Waypoint
Adventures' adaptive recreation
program during FY22



10 adults

attended the Mass Advocates
Standing Strong annual
conference in FY22



**5 Special Olympics
Massachusetts teams**

at The Guild provide students with
athletic opportunities



597 COVID-19 vaccinations

administered by The Guild during FY22



“We are so fortunate that Gabe is in a home where he is happy, enriched, nurtured, and loved,”

— Lisa P., parent of Guild adult resident

The Guild for Human Services
521 Virginia Road, Concord, MA 01742
GuildHumanServices.org



The Guild

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Artwork
created by a
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