

2020 Annual Report



THE VILLAGE COMMUNITY

OUR MISSION

...is to provide a place where people with disabilities are nurtured and valued; a place where they will be engaged in all aspects of their lives, learning and working alongside their friends, family, and members of the community.

www.TheVillageCommunity.org

How do we ensure that our children and others like them maintain a high-quality and engaging life?

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To Our Membership/Stakeholders

*The Executive Board of The Village Community (TVC) is proud to report on our sixth full year of operation. 2020 was a year of **adaptation and resilience** for TVC. Along with the rest of the world, we face unprecedented challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Iowa’s day programs were mandated to close from mid-March through June 2020, which could have had a devastating impact on our organization and our members. But we found creative ways to carefully provide select services and quickly reopen the day program as soon as risks were mitigated and the mandate was lifted.*

***Pandemic-related assistance and grants** (federal, state, and local) were key in allowing us to purchase PPE, offer innovative programming solutions, and continue to pay full-time wages, even when services were reduced. Our executive team was creative in designing what low-pandemic-risk service provision looks like. As a result, we had no staff or members fall ill from a TVC-related contact.*

*Having adapted to service provision during a global pandemic, keeping our staff and members safe, and remaining financially stable, the Board continues to feel very **confident** in our **long-term success and sustainability**.*

The Village Community Board appreciates the flexibility and concern shown by our TVC staff, families, and stakeholders in this challenging year. Your selfless support and willingness to take steps to protect the greater “village,” was key to the health of individuals as well as the long-term stability of our organization.

The following report shares some of the highlights from 2020 and looks ahead to the future of The Village Community.

2020 in Review:



HITS

- ✓ Navigated a global pandemic
- ✓ Secured \$200k+ in grants and relief
- ✓ Networked with local and state providers
- ✓ Maintained continuity of services and employment



MISSES

- ✗ None, considering the serious issues we addressed, the risks we mitigated, the safety measures we implemented, and all that we accomplished together. 😊

2020 Operational Highlights

In last year's annual report, we described our proficiency in overcoming obstacles and persisting in order to provide the highest quality of services we are able to deliver. Well, 2020 gave us one unique "obstacle." In fact, it was the largest challenge we've encountered to date. But we were able to navigate through it and end the year with a sigh of relief and renewed resolve. TVC is well positioned to face any ongoing challenges in 2021.

Significant accomplishments in 2020:

- ✓ Navigated a global pandemic.

While the day program was temporarily halted in the spring and early summer, TVC pivoted to allowable services as we safely served a reduced number of members. We actively networked with other providers and Johnson County Public Health to develop some best practices prior to resuming day programs.

Most of our local providers did not reopen day programs until 2021. But TVC reopened as soon as the mandate was lifted, safely offering services to our membership and keeping our staff employed at near pre-pandemic levels. Some of our innovative practices included:

- *1:1 staff/member "silos" in the early months (1:2 staff/member teams following the initial surge) to limit the number of contacts each staff and member would potentially have,*
- *Reduced half-day member schedules to offer some level of daily service and continuity to more members,*
- *Full use of all of our program spaces to keep our silos/teams safely separated throughout the day and limit potential exposures,*
- *For those who could not attend in person... Themed Zoom calls with all members every week to maintain important connections and offer some stability during a time of uncertainty.*

- ✓ Secured ~\$203,000 in pandemic-related relief funds and grants:

- *Paycheck Protection Program funding covering April – October 2020, fully forgiven in late December 2020!*
- *Personal Protective Equipment and sanitation supplies,*
- *HHS/DHS supplemental COVID mitigation/relief funds,*
- *Improvements to ventilation and air purification systems.*

- ✓ Maintained continuity of services and employment.

- *Thanks to the above-mentioned grants, we were able to serve all of our members who were in need of programming, and provide full-time employment and benefits throughout 2020.*

2021 Targets:



OPPORTUNITIES

- ⦿ Implement some innovative new program ideas as inspired by newly-available grants.
- ⦿ Prepare for another year of challenges and continue to be creative and resilient, doing our best to meet the needs of our members, while keeping them safe.



THREATS

- Limited community activities due to ongoing pandemic.
- Medicaid privatization (persistent attempts to reduce services and ongoing billing issues)

In an ideal world...

Though we accomplished much and delivered a safe and creative program when our members needed us most, there were obviously projects that were placed on the back-burner for 2020 (and possibly for 2021 as well). We will continue to prioritize the health and well-being of our members and staff, as well as the sustainability of our program. And as time allows, we will get back to some of those initiatives we had originally planned for 2020.

Looking Ahead

The Executive Board's priorities for 2021-22 are to continue to look for and capitalize on opportunities while anticipating and mitigating threats:

Opportunities:

- ⦿ Implementing innovative program enhancements through pandemic-related grants. *There may be some new opportunities on the horizon, and we want to be actively pursuing those, writing grant proposals, and securing funding for creative ways to serve our members.*
- ⦿ Preparing for another year of challenges due to COVID-19. *How can we best engage our members, providing them with opportunities to grow and feel successful during an otherwise stressful and discouraging time? All the while, keeping in mind that we need to maintain staff health and wellbeing at the same time. We have some creative ideas in the works for 2021... stay tuned!*

Threats/Anticipated Challenges:

- Finding alternatives to our traditional community outings. *We do not plan on returning to the movie theater or gym, or to restaurants, or stores, or crowded outdoor locations in 2021. How can we help our members stay active and engaged – physically and mentally – while keeping them safe and healthy during a pandemic? We will need to pull out all the stops in identifying safe places we can go or new things we can do on site.*
- Addressing ongoing funding/reimbursement issues. *This is a threat we will likely face long-term. It seems we will just have to learn to adapt and continue to mitigate as best we can.*

Note: It is extremely unfortunate that a significant portion of our payroll is now dedicated to addressing issues with the MCOs that were not present prior to privatization. Given the current administration in Iowa, things are unlikely to improve for many years.

2020 Financials

Summary: 2020 was off to a financially-stable start, though there would be less cushion, due to the 2019 final day program rate cuts. The Board had set targets for future cash reserves and was building a plan to attain those targets in the coming years. And then a global pandemic temporarily derailed our plans. Thanks to the grant-writing abilities of our Executive Director and our Director of Community Relations, we were able to get back on track in 2020, and finish the year in a very healthy financial position.

Financial Highlights

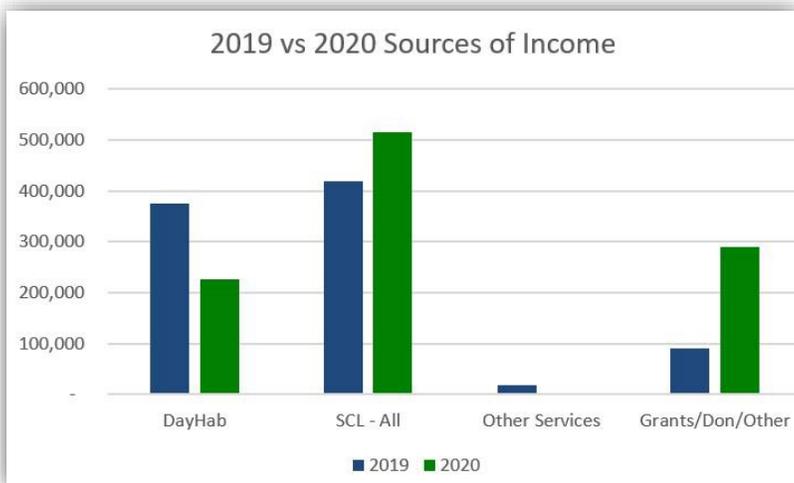
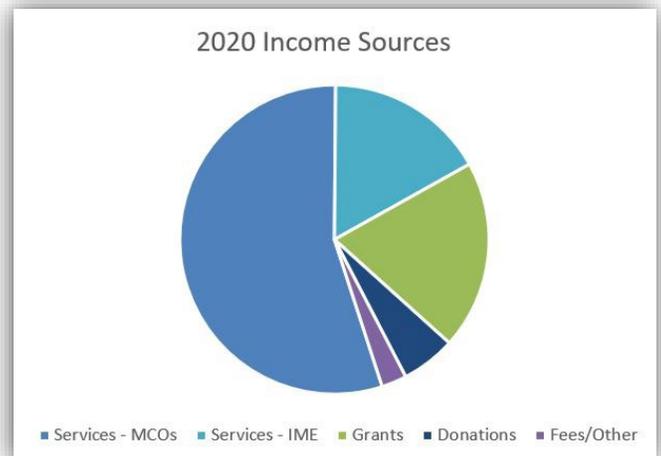
Our 2020 income was largely supplemented by grants and donations, which represented 25% of our gross income for the year. The largest contributor was the CARES Act’s Paycheck Protection Program. (In a typical year, grants and donations would only contribute 5-10% to gross income.) Also significant were our generous families and supporters. ♥

- **Income from services** ↓ 9% (Partly due to lower reimbursement rates; mostly due to day program closure)
- **Income from grants/donations/other** ↑ 495% (CARES Act funds and generous private donations)
- **Net income** (- depreciation) ↑ 119% (CARES Act funds, donations, and decreased expenses)
- **Equity** ↑ 57%

2020 Income Sources

The graph on the right displays 2020 income sources as a percentage of total funding.

TVC remains highly reliant on MCOs for timely and complete reimbursement. This continues to be an issue with MCOs unable to consistently pay in full and on time. In 2020, the MCO’s share of our total service reimbursements grew to 77% (from 63% in 2019 and just 41% in 2018), which greatly increases our risk of non-timely payment or denial of services.



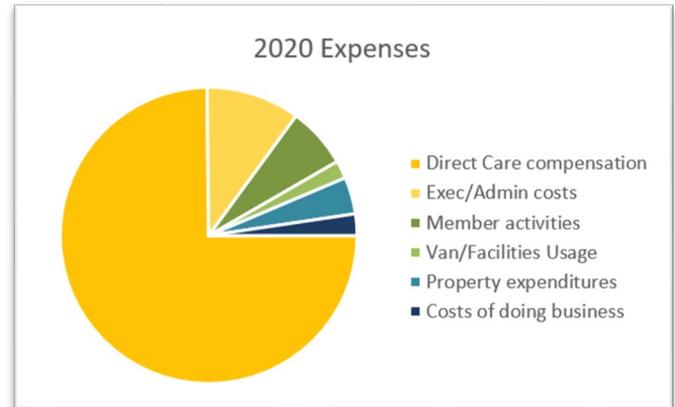
2019-2020 Services Income

This graph illustrates the ongoing shift in services income. As day hab income continued to decline in 2020 (due to rate reductions and months of group program closure), SCL continued to represent a greater portion of annual services provided. This includes Daily SCL (residential service), which remained open throughout the pandemic, as well as 1:1 individualized services, which were able to be safely provided when larger group programs were not deemed to be safe.

2020 Expenses

Even in the midst of a global pandemic, TVC’s spending remained in line with our mission to provide our members with high quality and engaging activities, settings, and staff. While our on-site activities and community outings looked much different in 2020, the focused remained on providing safe and enriching member experiences. The recent breakout in payroll spending has come from our 2019 decision to prioritize sustainability as well.

85% = Total Labor Costs: We continue to recruit, retain, and reward excellent direct care staff, and we enjoy very low turnover as a result. While total salaries represent 85% of our budget, as they did in 2019, we now split Direct Care vs. Exec/Admin salaries (10%), in order to better track the increased cost of MCO-driven administrative efforts – as well as the cost of procuring grants, donations, and other funding, as necessitated by Medicaid budget cuts. This is part of our focus on long-term organizational sustainability.



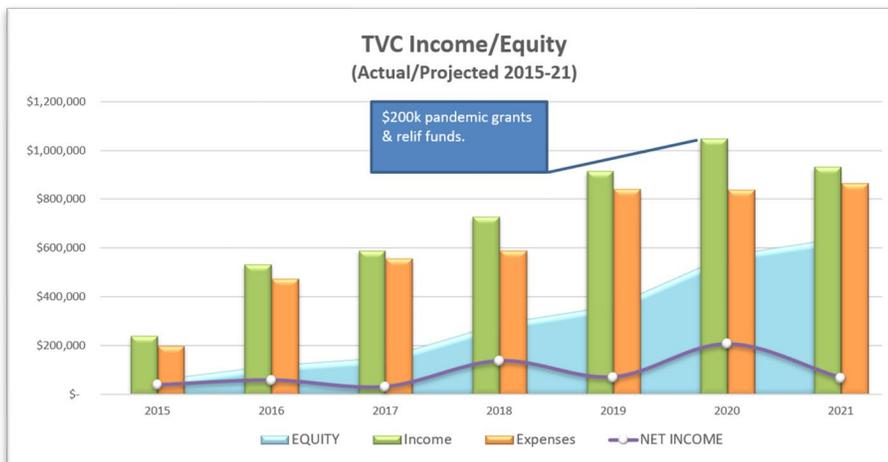
8% = Member Activities: While we may have expected this number to go down (due to closed movie theaters, pools, gyms, etc.), we actually saw a slight increase from the typical 5-6%. While our offsite activities consisted mainly of walks and hikes, we did purchase many new games, puzzles, and other onsite activities, as well as bi-weekly “Zoom Kits” for our at-home members to stay engaged and connected to their TVC peers. (Some costs were offset by pandemic/mental health grants.)

5% = Property expenditures: (maintenance, landscaping/gardening, mortgage interest, etc.) provide a safe, spacious, and welcoming environment for our members. Expenses were down slightly from 6% in 2019.

2% = Costs of doing business: As always, we try to keep overhead costs to a minimum. Necessary expenses include accounting services, insurance, required subscriptions, accreditation, and dues. These expenses don’t directly improve the member experience, but they are critical to sustaining our business.

2015-21 Actual & Projected Financials

TVC realized significant Net Income and Equity growth in 2020, despite a decline in services income. The increases were a result of higher-than-typical grants and donations, combined with cost savings due



to service reductions. We do not anticipate 2021 yielding a similar financial upside. In fact, we expect a relatively flat year next year. TVC’s 2021 budget assumes service levels similar to 2020, as we do not expect a return to “normal” for our vulnerable members until local community spread is extremely low. We will continue to try to contain costs and build sufficient equity and cash reserves in order to mitigate the risk of MCO payment delays.

2020 Satisfaction Surveys

Summary of Results:

Communication

98%

COVID-10 Safety And Engagement

98%

Overall Satisfaction

98%

Member/Family Satisfaction

TVC conducted member and family surveys in October 2020. Those results are reported here and summarized in the sidebar.

As always, feedback was overwhelmingly positive, although this year’s questionnaire looked quite different. Rather than ask our typical annual questions in regards to activities offered, member engagement, etc., we decided to focus on two important topics for our reduced membership in the fall of 2020: Communication and COVID-19 Safety/Engagement.

Communication was imperative in a year of evolving guidelines, protocols, mandates, and local viral spread. In 2019, we had adopted a text-blasting tool that made it easy to send out quick messages to families who opted in. We continued to use the tool in early 2020, and it was well-received. However, it was best used for less-important communications (“Special Olympics track event at 9 am Saturday...”). During the pandemic, we used email to send longer messages to families. We also utilized a survey tool to learn about families’ holiday plans, virus exposure mitigations, etc. And we used 1:1 texts/emails/calls to communicate directly with families regarding their member’s plans and logistics during pandemic-modified programming. For this, we earned extremely high scores of 98% satisfaction (as compared to 91-94% in previous years).

COVID-19-related questions included surveying families’ perceptions of safe and adequate services provided. Typically, we would assess individualized, community-based opportunities. But for most of 2020, we were committed to safely meeting our members’ needs for services. Abundant communication of expectations/guidelines, schedules/staffing, and community information (from Johnson County Public Health and our other local providers) was key to mitigating risk of viral spread. As a result, we’ve had zero COVID-19 infections due to time spent at TVC. Safety efforts were recognized and appreciated by TVC families at a rate of 98% satisfaction.

“Pre-pandemic, communication was excellent. We loved the new text messaging tool for receiving timely info, as well as Annie’s thoughtful “TVC Updates” emails. During the pandemic, communication has been phenomenal.”

“Thank you for all your efforts to provide services during this pandemic and taking so many actions to keep safety a priority.”

“Annie and team have not missed a beat in their responsiveness and transparency during this challenging time.”

“Our questions are answered immediately and thoroughly. Overall, communication has been fantastic and proactive.”

“We are SO THANKFUL that (our son) has the opportunity to continue to attend day program during COVID. We understand this is no small feat, as almost all other local programs have not reopened since March.”

“During this uncertain time, having service available has lessened (daughter’s) anxiety and allowed us to continue to work.”

TVC Business Model

Fiscal Priorities

Despite recent funding challenges and uncertainties – including a global pandemic, our fiscal priorities remain the same: operate a sustainable, high-quality program by allocating a majority of our budget to items that *directly* contribute to member engagement. Such as:

- Paying higher direct care staff wages than other local providers,
- Maintaining safe, attractive, functional and inviting areas for members,
- Participating in varied and engaging outings,
- Providing high-quality recreational therapies and activities on site.
- Essentially... **Prioritizing and investing in member success** rather than in overhead and administration.
- This model requires founding family investment, staff commitment, engagement of key families and community partners, and significant volunteer hours. But – year after year – we continue to agree – it is well worth it!

The founding families' original mission endures. TVC's priority will always be to provide high-quality, engaging member experiences delivered by exceptional and consistent direct care staff. Our budget will continue to reflect our priorities in a sustainable way. And we will continue to push for state policy that will *once again* recognize the value of effective, family-driven, low-overhead programs like ours.

Conclusion

While the Board's optimism was briefly shaken in mid-March 2020, we quickly set about figuring out how to safely navigate the pandemic. We aimed to provide a continuity of service to our members who desired either on-site or in-home day programming, as well as to those receiving 24-hour residential services. While many local providers' day programs remained closed for the duration of 2020, The Village Community reopened as soon as the governor's mandate was lifted.

Thanks to the tenacity and creativity of the directors, direct care staff, and board, TVC was able to bring some amount of normalcy to an uncertain period in our members' (and staffs') lives. We did not compromise when it came to health and safety. And while – at times logistically challenging – we aimed to offer the programming that each member needed.

In a testament to the commitment, flexibility, and generosity of our families; the dedication and creativity of our staff; and the unwavering resolve of our leadership, TVC was able to offer valuable services when many other organizations did not.

While this year was – at times – exhausting and demanding, we have concluded 2020 with renewed confidence and optimism for the future. That is not to say that we do not expect to face the ongoing roadblocks of corporate Medicaid, or that we think the pandemic is a thing of the past (it is still going strong). We know we will continue to face challenges in the coming years. But looking back at what we just achieved gives us a new resolve and confidence to face whatever lies ahead.

Contact Information

The Village Community's Executive Board is available to answer your questions or hear suggestions for our organization. We are most easily reached at TVC@TheVillageCommunity.org



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For More Information

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