

Winter 2018

**1978**

In response to the movement to 'de-institutionalize the mentally retarded,' ROI is founded and begins providing services in Kalamazoo at five **Specialized Residential** licensed group homes (Douglas, Hoard, Wisner, Stanton, Heersma). William Uhlman is appointed Executive Director.



**1980**

ROI contracts with the Kalamazoo County Community Mental Health Board to fund program services at Douglas House and Hoard Manor.

**1986**

Due to rapid growth, ROI is re-structured into three divisions, each assigned to a Program Director.

**1991**

ROI Endowment established at the Kalamazoo Community Foundation. **Supported Living Alternatives** program begins.



**1996**

ROI develops its first **Affordable Rental Housing** unit for individuals with disabilities.



**1997**

Kalamazoo Homestead, Inc. hires ROI to manage its properties and then merges with ROI in 2000.

**1999**

ROI becomes nationally accredited through the Commission on Accredited Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF).

**2001**

ROI assumes responsibility for four group homes supporting individuals who are medically fragile.



ROI begins **Representative Payee Services**, providing money management to individuals.

**2004**

ROI provides 71 Affordable Rental Housing units.

**2012**



ROI opens the **Great Lakes Center for Autism Treatment and Research** in Portage, providing an intensive (residential) treatment program and an outpatient program to children and adolescents with a diagnosis of autism.

**2015**

ROI opens the **Joanne and John Lawrence Autism Center** in Galesburg, providing outpatient services to children with autism. The building was generously donated to ROI by the Lawrence family.



**2017**

ROI provides residential and support services to adults, children and families in these areas: **18** group homes in Kalamazoo County, serving **134** individuals with disabilities through our **Specialized Residential** licensed group homes, **97** individuals with disabilities live as independently as possible in the community through our **Supported Living Alternatives** program, **143** individuals with modest incomes are provided affordable rental housing through our **Affordable Rental Housing** program, **267** individuals receive help managing their budget and paying bills through our **Representative Payee Services** program, **16** children on the autism spectrum decreased challenging behavior and learned adaptive skills to prepare them to transition back to their home through the **Intensive Treatment Program**, **66** children on the autism spectrum developed new social and life skills through the **Outpatient Services Program**.

**2018**

ROI celebrates the **40th year** of carrying out the mission of partnering with children and adults with disabilities and their families so they may live more meaningful, healthy, and independent lives in their homes and communities.

**2018**

# CEO NOTES

## The Crisis Has Arrived



### **Board of Directors**

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Many of us have been warning policy makers and funders of the community mental health system for years, if not decades, that there would be a direct care worker staffing shortage crisis. National and State studies have identified the impending crisis. There has been little to no action taken and that has left us where we are today.

At the end of October 2017, ROI had to terminate services for 21 people. Today we are making plans to consolidate services for another ten people. We have so many staff openings that we simply cannot continue to serve as many people as we have done historically. I expect there will be more service consolidation and/or reductions in the future. Our dedicated staff are stretched too thin for ROI to be able to sustain services for everyone. Please don't assume that these people and their families will be okay without services. Most of them won't.

The cause of this is very simple. The direct care providers in the State are not paid enough and many live a life of poverty. They work stressful jobs for ROI and then go home to the stress of poverty. Loving and dedicated staff are leaving ROI because they are paid better in the fast food industry and in retail.

They leave jobs they love because, financially, they have to.

Today's economy is humming along and has been improving continuously for almost a decade. Almost all industries have raised wages in order to attract the needed quality of staff, far outpacing the minimum wage increases. Direct care staff in the mental health system have not received these increases because we've not been funded to do so. Only the State has the resources to respond to this crisis. Last year, the Legislature authorized wage increases of 50 cents per hour for these staff, but we were clear in telling them wages are rising so fast that we need a \$3 per hour raise to have a chance to stabilize the workforce. That did not happen, and the result is loss of services for people who rely on the mental health system. It is only going to get worse unless the State funds these positions in a way that allows providers to compete for good staff. And only then will people with disabilities receive the care and support they need and depend on.

Scott Schrum  
Chief Executive Officer





HERITAGE GLEN  
GOLF CLUB

# ROI 25th Annual HOLE STROLL 2018

## SAVE THE DATE!

Friday, June 15, 2018

[www.holestroll.com](http://www.holestroll.com)

### Partnership Opportunities

### 2018 ROI Hole Stroll Benefits

Presenting  
**\$5,000**



Includes 8 golfers. Company banner at clubhouse. Company signage on tee. Speaking opportunity at dinner event. Acknowledgment plaque. Recognition in all promotional literature. Logo on website.

Platinum  
**\$3,000**



Includes 4 golfers. Company signage on tee. Recognition at dinner event and in promotional literature. Logo on website.

Gold  
**\$1,000**



Includes 4 golfers. Company signage on tee. Logo on website.

Silver  
**\$750**



Includes 2 golfers. Company signage on tee. Logo on website.

Bronze  
**\$500**

Logo on website.

Foursome **\$400** Individual **\$100**



Join the fun and support a great cause! Form a team, join a team that needs another player, or create your own team with three other friends.

8:30 a.m. Shotgun Start

Lunch | Live & Silent Auction | Prizes & Raffle

**Heritage Glen Golf Club**

29795 Heritage Lane | Paw Paw, MI | 49079

### Mission

ROI partners with children and adults with disabilities and their families so they may live more meaningful, healthy and independent lives in their homes and communities.

Your financial support of the 2018 ROI Hole Stroll impacts over 500 individuals whom ROI serves through the Independence Fund. The Independence Fund offers financial assistance for quality of life items, such as: medical co-pays, prescription assistance, dental care, eye glasses, YMCA memberships, athletic and concert tickets, community activities, furniture, clothing and much more!

### Accepting Sponsorships and Individual Golfers through June 8, 2018:

### Contact

Dana DeLuca  
Director of Development and Public Relations  
Residential Opportunities, Inc.  
1100 South Rose Street  
Kalamazoo, MI 49001  
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ddeluca@resopp.org

### DID YOU KNOW?

Last year, ROI served over 700 individuals and provided over 80,000 days of care in the following areas: Group Homes, Supported Living, Affordable Rental Housing, Representative Payee Services, and Intensive and Outpatient Autism Services.



**All golfers receive: 18 holes of golf, light breakfast and buffet dinner, gift bag**



## Three Rivers Autism Center (TRAC)

A new autism program is now open! The Three Rivers Autism Center (TRAC) is located inside the Barrows Education Center at 416 Washington St. in Three Rivers, MI. TRAC will serve children from earliest diagnosis to young adulthood. Comprehensive Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) services will be individualized, and may include 1-on-1 sessions, group activities, and mastering of daily routines. TRAC also offers a gym and an outdoor play area. Find out more at [www.autismtreatmentresearch.org](http://www.autismtreatmentresearch.org).

## ROI Angel Tree

The ROI Board of Directors hosted the 2nd annual Angel Tree project to recruit gifts for many of the individuals we serve. During the holidays, over 125 gifts were collected and distributed to 33 individuals served in our Specialized Residential and Supported Living programs. Gifts included tickets to matinee shows at Miller Auditorium, sheet sets and bedding, winter coats and hats, sweaters, nightgowns, electric toothbrushes, hair products, and more! Our sincere thanks go out to the ROI Board of Directors for their amazing generosity on this initiative!



## Eaton partners with the Lawrence Autism Center

The new swing set at the Lawrence Autism Center (LAC) in Galesburg was sponsored by a generous gift from the Eaton Corporation. Installed by four dedicated staff from Eaton, the new swing set is a favorite destination for the children we serve. We are grateful to Eaton Corporation for their continued financial support.



Jerry Havenaar, Gary Pfister, Doug Dietsch and John Cordes of Eaton join Mike Buchanan of ROI (second from right) at the swing set installation at LAC on November 3, 2017.

## 2018 Youth Hockey Fights for Kids with Autism

The Great Lakes Center for Autism Treatment and Research (GLC) will once again be partner with the Kalamazoo Optimist Hockey Association (KOHA) and the Southwest Michigan High School Hockey League (SWMHSHL) for the 6th annual Youth Hockey Fights for Kids with Autism event on Saturday, January 27, 2018 at Wings West from 1:30-9pm. Funds raised will assist families of children who receive autism services in the

Outpatient program at GLC. The event is also supported by Senator Margaret O'Brien. Senator O'Brien is an advocate for children with autism. She has been instrumental in the fight for key legislation supporting this cause in Lansing.

Approximately 250 hockey players from kindergarten through high school will be playing throughout the day to raise funds and increase autism awareness in our

community. Event sponsors include DTE Energy, Consumers Energy, Wings West, Kalamazoo Optimist Hockey Association (KOHA), Southwest Michigan High School Hockey League (SWMHSHL), Kingscott, and Miller Johnson.



# Through the Years

By Jim Shields, Program Coordinator  
(Lands End)

Through the years, there have been many changes, both at ROI and in the Mental Health system. But, one thing that's never changed is ROI's commitment to its core values. I know this first-hand, because I'm one of the fortunate few who's been part of ROI and the people we serve, for nearly 40 years.

When I first heard about ROI, I was a young Vietnam veteran, studying elementary education at WMU. My wife was a Special Education teacher, and alerted me to a unique job opportunity at a place called "Douglas House." So, I applied and got the job! At the time, Douglas House was managed by McKercher Rehabilitation Center (MRC). The unique part about the job was that it required you to live as a "house parent" in a small apartment within the home. The only other person on staff was a cook, so together we served 16 people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

The first day of new hire orientation consisted of being given a single sheet of paper with 'everything you need to know about running a group home,' on it, including the names and brief explanations about 16 people I'd never met before. Each day began with getting 16 people up and engaged in various activities. We made breakfast, passed medications, and completed the activities of daily living. While the work we did 40 years ago is still similar today, the 1 to 16 staffing ratio has greatly improved! Hiring the first program

staff to assist us was one of the highlights of the early days. These staff are now called Direct Support Professionals (DSP's), but back then were called "programmers." They were assigned to help establish the program, and over time, we created additional staff positions.

Back in 1978 when ROI began, MRC moved away from providing residential services. As house parents, we partnered with newly established Board of Directors, and hired William Uhlman as the first Executive Director at ROI - even that title has now changed to Chief Executive Officer. At the time, the agency included five homes: Douglas House, Hoard Manor, Wisner House, Heersma House, and Stanton House.

My wife and I lived at Douglas House for nearly two years. I also took on a full-time position at MRC, and occasionally worked relief shifts at ROI. A short time later, Bill Ullman asked me to start a new group home called Nature Way, a joint venture between ROI and the State of Michigan. The total venture was to include four group homes; Nature Way, Engel Court, Fraternity Village, and Osterhout. These homes were designed to get people out of the Coldwater Regional Center and placed back into their communities. My favorite memory from that time is driving an empty ROI van to Coldwater to bring individuals to their new home, located in a quiet, residential neighborhood. There were

continued on back

# ROI Newsletter Feedback

We Value Your Feedback. We want to hear what we're doing well and where we can improve. Please take a few minutes to fill out and mail back our survey or complete it online at: [bit.ly/2018ROInewslettersurvey](http://bit.ly/2018ROInewslettersurvey)

**1. To what extent do you read the ROI Newsletter?**

- All of it
- Most of it
- 50% of it
- None of it

If your answer is 'None of it,' please share reasons below.

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**2. How could we make the ROI newsletter more informative and useful?**

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**3. Do you share the ROI newsletter with colleagues and partners?**

- Yes
- No

If no, please tell us what would encourage you to do so.

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**4. Have you used the information contained within the newsletter in any way?**

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continued on back

# ROI Newsletter

## Feedback continued

**5. How would you rate the overall design of the newsletter?**

- Poor
- Neutral
- Good
- Excellent

If applicable, please tell us how you think we could improve it.

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**6. How would you rate the overall quality of the newsletter content?**

- Poor
- Neutral
- Good
- Excellent

**7. What topics would you like to see us cover in the future?**

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**8. We publish the ROI newsletter four times a year (quarterly). How often would you prefer to receive a copy of our newsletter?**

- Once a year
- Twice a year
- Three times a year
- Quarterly works for me!

**9. Has our newsletter encouraged you to...**

- Visit our website
- Follow us on Facebook

**10. Any other comments?**

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cheers of joy all around as we drove away from the institution! While the individuals settled right in to their new surroundings, collaborating with the institution proved to be far more challenging. On one occasion, we intended to build a garden and were told to wait for permission from the State before roto-tilling because "that grass belongs to the State of Michigan."

Despite challenges like this, it was highly rewarding to empower the folks we served to be integrated into the community. Along the way, there were numerous activities and events that promoted growth and learning in the individuals and staff alike. After two years, an opportunity to return to Douglas House became available, this time without the requirement of living on-site. I made the move, and spent ten years there before moving to a house called West Main. West Main later transitioned to Brookhaven, and then to Lands End. During all those transitions, I'm proud to say that all six individuals we served were able to remain living together!

There have been many changes during my ROI journey. We now have highly improved staff ratios, training, and adaptive aids and equipment. Programs are now called licensed group homes, and staff consistently empower the individuals we serve to live lives that are most meaningful to them.

As we've grown as an agency we've added several programs, such as a Supported Living, and two autism centers. We now provide nursing, and serve far more individuals with medical challenges. We have moved from three-bedroom, multi-level homes to six-bedroom ranch homes.

But, what I am most proud of is our staff. They are the glue that has kept me here all these years. Time and time again, I'm amazed at the caring and dedicated staff that ROI hires and retains. Some of the best people I've ever known work at ROI. We are human, and we do make mistakes. But at ROI, we always aim to do the right thing. I'm deeply proud of what ROI has accomplished over the past 40 years and I've been incredibly honored to be a part of it.



*Sharon and Jim enjoy the 2017 ROI holiday party.*

Direct care workers provide daily living assistance to millions of older Americans, people with disabilities and others with chronic care needs. While there is no one consistent, standard definition used for the direct care workforce, estimates show that positions related to direct care constitute one-third of the health care workforce - outnumbering physicians nurses and medical assistants. These workers are the backbone of the long-term care workforce and assist individuals with daily tasks by preparing meals, managing medications, providing transportation and much more.

There is growing demand for direct care workers and not enough workers to meet the demand. The direct care workforce includes some of the fastest growing occupations. By 2024, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that more than a million direct care workers will be needed. To meet this demand and create jobs across the country, Congress must invest in this field and these workers who care for millions of community members every day.

### What does the Direct Care Opportunity Act do?

The Direct Creation, Advancement, and Retention of Employment (CARE) Opportunity Act addresses the need for a prepared, well-trained and empowered direct care workforce now and for the future.

- Provides funding to fifteen entities to invest in strategies that will create jobs and enhance the direct care workforce pipeline.
- Implements models and strategies to make the field of direct care more attractive, such as training, career pathways, or mentoring, allowing for local and regional innovation to address workforce shortages and needs in a high-demand field.
- Encourages retention and career advancement in the growing field of direct care.
- Responds to the needs of a growing aging population and allows older American, people with disabilities, and others who require direct care services to remain in their communities, when possible.

Sources: Committee on Education & the Workforce (<https://edworkforce.house.gov>) and Bureau of Labor Statistics ([https://www.bls.gov/emp/ep\\_table\\_102.htm](https://www.bls.gov/emp/ep_table_102.htm))

## STAFF PROFILE

### Rachel VanBeek

By Susan Clayborn, ROI Program Director

Rachel is everyone's favorite team member at Schuring Road group home. She jumps right in when needed, and she's the ultimate team player. She utilizes open and positive communication with co-workers. When there's an issue to address, she pulls the supervisory team together to problem-solve. When there's room for improvement, she brings ideas and suggestions to the table. Rachel demonstrates leadership qualities and she values each member of the team. When it comes to the individuals we serve, she is patient and understanding. She helps individuals discover and accomplish personal goals. She communicates openly and gives everyone a voice.

Rachel has a special relationship with Arthur, one of the individuals we serve at Schuring Road. Arthur immediately warmed up to Rachel right from the start. Without a doubt, she is his preferred staff. Rachel goes above and beyond for Arthur and other individuals living at Schuring Road. One day, Arthur was adamant about going to the store. He just wouldn't let up! He insisted several times that he needed to go to the store, and that it had to happen that very day. So, staff at Schuring Road took Arthur to the store. While there, he picked out and purchased a small bouquet of flowers. When he returned home to Schuring Road, he gave the flowers to Rachel and said, "You're a good staff." It was a tender moment, and further reinforced to everyone what a valuable asset Rachel is to Schuring Road.



Rachel VanBeek



### **Mission**

ROI partners with children and adults with disabilities and their families so they may live more meaningful, healthy and independent lives in their homes and communities.

### **Vision**

ROI will be recognized as the regional provider of choice for people with disabilities and a model of excellence for improving quality-of-life outcomes.

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[www.residentialopportunities.org](http://www.residentialopportunities.org)  
[www.autismtreatmentresearch.org](http://www.autismtreatmentresearch.org)

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Leaving a **LEGACY**

## **LEGACY. WHAT WILL YOURS BE?**

We invite you to consider including Residential Opportunities, Inc. (ROI) in your estate plans. A gift through your estate can allow you to leave a legacy of investing in the future of our community. The easiest planned gift is a simple bequest that names ROI as the beneficiary of your Will or Living Trust. Please contact Dana DeLuca, Director of Development and Public Relations at 269.250.8234 or [ddeluca@resopp.org](mailto:ddeluca@resopp.org) for more information.

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