

2018

ANNUAL REPORT



GIVE SHELTER. GIVE SERVICES. GIVE AN EXPERIENCE.

OUR MISSION & FOCUS

OUR MISSION IS TO ENHANCE THE LIVES OF ADULTS WITH DISABILITIES BY PROVIDING HOUSING OPTIONS, BY ADAPTING TO THEIR INDIVIDUAL NEEDS, AND BY MAXIMIZING THEIR POTENTIAL IN WAYS THAT INTEGRATE THEIR LIVES WITH THE COMMUNITY AROUND THEM.

LIFE SKILL COACHING

LIVING BASICS

SOCIAL INTEGRATION

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS



LIVING OUR MISSION EACH & EVERY DAY

We've been thoroughly thinking through the mission this year. Funding for services is always under attack. And we're striving to focus on the parts of service delivery that are either essential or have the biggest impact on an individual's growth.

From that, we've arrived at a few truths.

BrickWays works best as a small to medium organization where upper management knows the families and individuals we serve. Restricting size also means that we are more in tune with staff and identify and address most potential conflicts early.

We've also learned that Social Programs work the best. Our clients learn from social activities and unfortunately this is one area which is difficult to get consistent government funding.

Our clients have a variety of disabilities or challenges. Doing things — rather than being told to do things — creates a different neurological pathway in the brain. This isn't new science, but it is something we seem to have set aside in recent decades for streamlined one-size teaching. We have gone back to this and we use social situations (some of which happen to be fun!) as a foundation for social learning. This includes verbal and non-verbal communication, manners, safety in the community, resolving misunderstandings, and expressing your needs or feelings without yelling or blaming.

In addition to focusing on the social side of thriving in a community, we've fully realized that housing is a social program. Living successfully as a tenant, roommate or member of the community is not living in a bubble. Maintaining home care, housekeeping, hygiene are part of being a good tenant and maintaining a social life.

Housing is a motivator and a stabilizer. You have to perform certain "not fun" tasks in order to keep your housing. And having a place to go where you can either spend time with friends you choose or be alone is great for mental health.

We do housing better than anyone for the people we serve! You may find other care providers and you can find other housing but you will be very challenged to find another BrickWays where the services are part of community life.



PLANNING & FUNDRAISING

OUR NEWEST VENTURE: MARK'S HOUSE

Great news! We are starting work on our newest residence and it's already filled with love. Mark's House is the former home of our beloved Mark Loeffelbein, who died last Fall. We miss him and his fierce independence so much.

Mark's sister and brother-in-law are helping us honor Mark and his many accomplishments and friendships. They're working with the BrickWays Foundation to bring Mark's House under the BrickWays umbrella. It's conveniently located on Grant Street, just a few steps from the Community Living Center, and is in great shape. We want to honor Mark's memory by creating a home where people with issues similar to his can get help with self-reliance. The semi-supported home will house three to four graduates from BrickWays' higher needs program — and we will keep Mark's legacy of independence alive.



PLACING VALUE ON SOCIAL PROGRAMS

We are actively fundraising for our social programs because we see significant personal growth in the clients who participate on a regular basis. Funding for this program is always in jeopardy and donations to this fund have allowed us to continue providing and expanding services without interruption.

ONE PROJECT ON HOLD...

Our plan for broad community support for Sandys Fairway is on hold while we investigate other development and funding options.



SPECIAL GIFTS RECEIVED IN 2018

The Roger Loeffelbein estate donated \$150,000 to the Community Living Apartments on Grant Street for the maintenance and betterment of the building and facilities. A 5-year plan to renovate the kitchens and bathrooms, replace flooring, enhance the recreation room and create the Loeffelbein Technology Center on the first floor are being developed. All refrigerators in the building have been replaced as part of the betterment. Used refrigerators were donated through the local non-profit and former Swingshift competitor Spark in the Dark to 8 individuals in need.

WHY WE DONATE: DIANE & MATT MILLER

"My parents shared Mary Jean Brick's vision for adults with a disability to achieve independence and the importance to belong to one's community. Brickways devotedly supported my brother Mark's independence, which gave him pride in his home and confidence in himself, leading to respect and belonging in his community. We appreciate Brickways dedication to provide housing, services and experiences so that young adults with a disability can live their best life." - Diane Miller



THANK YOU TO DONORS & VOLUNTEERS!

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First National Bank of America
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Dorothy & Leonard Teitlbaum
Gregg Armstrong
Peter & Alicia Oleszczuk
Bob & Nancy Brick
BJ & Kecia Brick
Terry & BB Brick
David & Karen Spencer
Jeff & Jill McAllister

RESIDENT INTERVIEWS

IN 2018, WE BEGAN INTERVIEWING RESIDENTS WITH THE GOAL TO COMPLETE THIS PROCESS WITH 90% OF CLIENTS BY THE END OF 2019.

CURRENTLY, 13 CLIENTS (9 FEMALE & 4 MALE) HAVE BEEN INTERVIEWED. THE FOLLOWING IS A SUMMARY OF WHAT WAS GATHERED. WE'VE FOUND THIS WORK TO BE REWARDING AND UPLIFTING FOR BOTH THE ORGANIZATION & OUR RESIDENTS.



A SPECIAL THANK YOU...

Diana Longton, one of our Board of Directors, reached out to BrickWays residents to gather qualitative responses for this report. On doing the research, Diana remarked, "I have been filled with joy in interviewing clients and residents at three BrickWays locations."

SUMMARY TO DATE OF QUALITY ASSURANCE INTERVIEWS:

ON COMMUNITY:

"I have lots of friends outside of here"

"People are really polite to me"

ON ACTIVITIES:

"I love going to the gym"

"We have so much to do all summer long"

"Everyone here is happy, they make me smile"

"I love the activity board"

"We have so much to do all summer long"

ON INDEPENDENCE:

"I love living close to downtown"

"I love to ride my bike everywhere"

"I never had my own space my whole life and now I have my own space I love it here"

"The hardest part about being here is cleaning"

ON STAFF:

"I love going for walks with the staff"

"We always goof off with the staff, I love it"

"When others get scary the staff help"

"My coach has fun working with me"

"I love that they help you try new things"

"I can make Michele laugh"

"They all take the time to help others"

"They work hard for us"

"I appreciate staff that appreciate me"



OUR STORIES

MEET ABE HAACK (CLIENT)



Abe Haack, 24, came to BrickWays after aging out of foster care. His first six months of care were covered by an agency and he had applied for services through the local community mental health, but was denied. After the six months were up, BrickWays asked what we should do and were told to drop him off at a homeless shelter.

Not an option.

We supported Abe and volunteered our time to work with him for nearly a year until CMH authorized services.

That year was vital. The consistency Abe found and the support he received helped him in numerous ways. He modified his diet to reduce his anxiety and he connected with family members and found a church. Abe has been with BrickWays for four years and is eager for more responsibility.

Abe is all about independence. Since moving into BrickWays housing, he's learned to cook, clean, do laundry and other necessary tasks. But he's also found a job. Two of them, in fact.

Abe works three days a week at Bay Area Recycling for Charity. When possibly, he rides his bike to work at the Grand Traverse Commons; in inclement weather, he takes BATA. He's hoping to get his driver's license soon. He also works for BrickWays, removing snow, lugging heavy things and other maintenance tasks.

More confidence, better money management and more independence are some of the changes Abe has seen in himself since coming to BrickWays. Others have noticed changes, too.

"He's more direct, he makes eye contact, he can talk to you," said Kathy Nowak, BrickWays accountant. "He's really been good about putting money in his Disney account," said Janet Brezinski, another BrickWays accountant. "He really wants to go and he really worked for it."

**"HE'S MORE DIRECT,
HE MAKES EYE CONTACT,
HE CAN TALK TO YOU."**

- KATHY NOWAK, BRICKWAYS ACCOUNTANT.



**SHE'S AN ENTREPRENEUR.
BETSY DESIGNS & SELLS NOTE CARDS TO HELP FUND
HER TRIP TO DISNEY WORLD IN MAY 2019!**

MEET BETSY ZEERYP (CLIENT)



When Betsy Zeeryp first moved out of her parents' house, she still relied heavily on them. "It wasn't pretty," says Betsy. "My parents were very frustrated." And Betsy's apartment at Riverview Terrace was a mess. "Dishes were backed up everywhere" and Betsy was on the verge of being evicted, she says. "Nobody told me about adulting."

Thankfully, a social worker at Community Mental Health recommended the TRAIL program at BrickWays.

Betsy was nervous at first about letting someone into her home, but the nonjudgmental atmosphere quickly relaxed her. And now, she gets on swimmingly with her BrickWays life coach, Lynn Morton.

"She motivates me to clean my apartment, to get groceries, to pick up my prescriptions. She helps me stay independent." Betsy has found a diet and medications that keep her healthy, and is "starting to realize that there are people who care, who do things out of the kindness of their hearts." She's even become an entrepreneur, designing note cards and using the proceeds to help fund her trip to Disney World in May 2019.



OUR STORIES: THE FACES WE SERVE

MEET NIKKI KASCHEL (FORMER CLIENT)



When Nikki Kaschel moved out of BrickWays housing last fall, she left with more skills, more confidence and more security.

“There used to be lots of chaos in my life,” said Nikki, 23. “Now things seem more comfortable and I feel able to share more things. I’m more comfortable to be who I am.”

Her mother, Jackie, agrees and welcomes the changes. “Now she can follow a course on her own. She needs help developing the course, but she can follow it.”

Besides self-confidence and communication skills, Nikki learned life skills, including cooking, which she loves. “Back when I first started cooking, (BrickWays’ life skills coaches) would help. Then they let go, but they’d still be there.” Nikki appreciated Keshia Stevenson’s math skills when doubling recipes and now Nikki can figure quantities on her own. Plus, she loves making spaghetti and meatballs.

“She’s grown in confidence, matured,” says Jackie. “She’s more able to express how she’s feeling, when she’s upset, what is appropriate.” And Jackie and the rest of Nikki’s family appreciate learning “new patterns for relating” that they picked up from BrickWays staff. “One thing BrickWays does is look at their residents as adults with challenges, not as children. There’s always been expectations and that’s helped us too.”

**“SHE’S GROWN IN CONFIDENCE,
MATURED.”**

– JACKIE, NIKKI’S MOM

OUR LONGEST BRICKWAYS EMPLOYEE.

**SHERRY HAS BEEN A PART OF THE BRICKWAYS
FAMILY FOR 20 YEARS!**



Sherry Opper’s inspiration has always been her son, Geoff, now 25, who has autism. When Sherry started working at BrickWays 20 years ago — our longest serving employee — her main focus at the beginning was to better her son’s life.

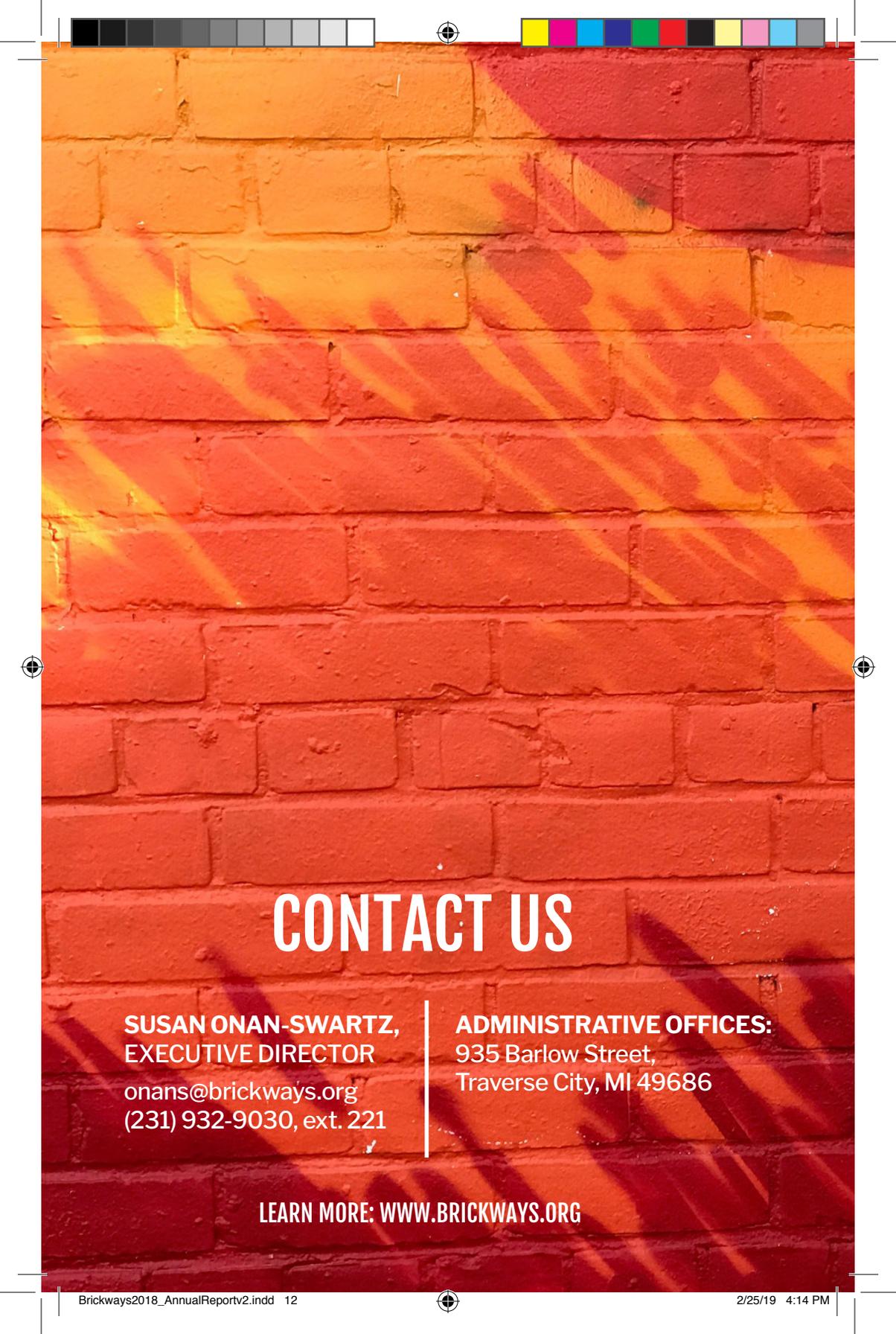
In the course of doing that, she learned so much more. “The longer I work with BrickWays clients, I myself become a better person,” she said. “I can’t see myself not being a part of their lives. They are my everything.”

Sherry, BrickWays housing manager and a life skills coach, remembers one client having his Social Security money cut drastically and suddenly. “He could still pay rent, but couldn’t afford food.” She took him to the Salvation Army, where he got a week’s worth of food and toiletries, then helped him navigate other community resources to keep him going.

“That’s absolutely the BrickWays way,” she says.

She has taught clients to cook, once beginning with cucumber sandwiches (“It took four hours to get through one cucumber”) and moving onto lasagna roll-ups, meatballs and chef salads. And she continues to learn from them, she insists. “From the older generation, I’ve learned the more everyday stuff, like clothes and hygiene. The younger generation has taught me about electronics, appointments, meds.”

And she’s still inspired by her son. “He taught me to be more patient and to learn more. He prepared me for caring for the individuals I care for at BrickWays.”



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