Stepping Stones is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization (EIN #31-0671799).

Thanks to Curiosity Advertising for donating design work throughout the year.

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BE PART OF A STRONGER FUTURE FOR CHILDREN, TEENS AND ADULTS BY BECOMING A STEPPING STONES SUPPORTER.

WE APPRECIATE GIFTS OF TIME AS WELL AS MONEY AND DONATIONS-IN-KIND.

5650 Given Road
Cincinnati, OH 45243

1414 Lake Allyn Road
Batavia, OH 45103

2300 Drex Avenue
Cincinnati, OH 45212

5195 North Bend Road
Cincinnati, OH 45211

www.facebook.com/SteppingStonesOhio
@SSOhioInc
513.831.4660
SteppingStonesOhio.org

We’ve come a long way, baby!

55 YEARS OF SERVICES

2017 ANNUAL REPORT

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ALLYN CAMPUS
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Batavia, OH 45103

UCP CAMPUS
2300 Drex Avenue
Cincinnati, OH 45212

BEAVITA WEST CAMPUS
5195 North Bend Road
Cincinnati, OH 45211

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CHRIS ADAMS
Stepping Stones Executive Director, 2010–present
“My primary focus has been to increase services and effectiveness through carefully targeted growth. We have expanded programs, added new facilities and locations, and built a powerful team of staff, volunteers and supporters to carry us through the 21st century and beyond. Our growth springs from a solid foundation that has never wavered from its core focus—meeting the needs of the people we serve. Their successes, shown in strong individual outcomes, are our ongoing achievement. As the father of a daughter with Down syndrome, it brings a great sense of pride to know that these efforts will have helped individuals with developmental disabilities achieve fulfillment in their lives.”

LARRY ZINN
Stepping Stones Executive Director, 1968–1993
“Larry Zinn faithfully served as Director of Stepping Stones Center for 25 years (1968–1993). Under Larry’s leadership, what began as a small summer day camp for children with disabilities evolved into a large year-round center for people of all ages. His passion for Stepping Stones was evident in his tireless devotion to meeting the needs of people with disabilities through quality programs. It is very gratifying to see his legacy live on in the form of service to our most vulnerable citizens, as it was his life’s work.” —Duerk Zinn, Larry’s son

SUE RADAUBACH
Stepping Stones Executive Director, 1994–2010
“The greatest challenge in serving individuals with disabilities is that first, you must see them as persons with a LOT of ability. As leaders and ambassadors for persons with disabilities, our job is first believing in their abilities. It becomes our role to provide those opportunities and challenges that allow them to believe they CAN do anything. We should spark their dreams and, through those dreams, we see their talents, gifts and potential for success. The Tiny Tots program, started in 1971, was a great example of this belief. Movement comes from all the human senses and, with adaptive physical activity, leads to an increase in cognitive skills. With the right approach and the right tools, we made great strides with our youngest clients during those years.”

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“Deceased”

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Deb Caley
Vice President
Whitney Eckert
Treasurer

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Jeff Chapman
Kenny Conroy
David Creull
Steve DeSimone
Julie Dunford
David Ellingsham
Fred Fisher
Brian Fulke
Michael Gay
Jamie Griffith
John Hassan
Joe Heller

Thanks TO OUR LEADERSHIP

EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM
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Executive Director
Chris Brockman
Director of Facilities
Sam Allen
Director of Programs and Operation
Jeremy Vaughan
Immediate Past President
Kay Pettenelli
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Director of HR
Kelly Crow
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Fun + Friends + Independence

A WINNING RECIPE FOR LIFE

Founded in 1963 as Greater Cincinnati’s first summer day camp for children with disabilities, Stepping Stones has grown from a summer recreational program to serving more than 1,000 individuals annually across four campuses and five locations. By combining a mission to increase independence and improve lives with a passion for creating innovative programming, the agency has served as a regional leader in offering educational, social and recreational outlets for countless individuals with disabilities.

“Stepping Stones’ array of services has grown over the last five decades to serve individuals 5–85+ through summer camps, weekend social clubs, adult outings and respite programs, as well as to provide an alternative education program for students with severe autism. Our Adult Day Service program provides unique participant-driven activities, allowing our clients to connect to the larger world through employment exploration, technology, community inclusion and recreational outings.”

Stepping Stones’ “Tiny Tots” program has been the one steady for him through his life—when the hard knocks hit, he can still depend on being greeted by the friendly, smiling faces of the volunteers and staff. He has attended preschool at Given, Saturday Kids Club, summer camp and weekend respites. Last summer, he even caught his first fish there!

More than two decades ago, Tommy Derrick found his first adventures in the “Tiny Tots” program at Stepping Stones. Says his mom, Sally, “Thank God we found Stepping Stones—it’s been everything, and a whole family experience for us!” As Tommy grew closer with staff and volunteers in those early years, he was able to develop better motor skills, improved perceptive behaviors and, equally important, benefit from socialization outside of his immediate family. States Sally, “the program really taught us how to be with him and how to support him.”

That family support emerged in many ways, as Tommy’s siblings John, Betsy and Sarah also discovered the magic of Stepping Stones through volunteering, followed by years of working as summer staff. As the seasons passed, Tommy’s world continued to grow through his success in Stepping Stones Saturday Clubs and summer camps, along with the all-important friendships and socialization that he carried over to his school days in his home district. Those skills led Tommy to serve as manager of his high school varsity soccer team for three years and graduate with his senior class. Today, Tommy is building a strong future through his Project Search job training at Xavier University and weekend volunteering at the local library.

“My son Will has been attending Stepping Stones programs for the past 11 years. I love how Stepping Stones has a program for every stage of his life! Camp has been the one steady for him through blow—when the hard knocks hit, he can still depend on being greeted by the friendly, smiling faces of the volunteers and staff. He has attended preschool at Given, Saturday Kids Club, summer camp and weekend respites. Last summer, he even caught his first fish there!

Stepping Stones has given Will a great sense of independence, and the programs provide a great opportunity to practice his life skills. It is the one place I can leave him knowing he will be well looked after while having a great time!” —DENA, parent
Growing Our Resources
DISCOVERING A GREATER PURPOSE

For generations, expanding horizons has been a hallmark of Stepping Stones programs, not only for the participants served, but also for program volunteers and staff as well.

"I came to Stepping Stones hoping to impact others, but I cannot ever explain the impact these individuals that I have the privilege to work with have had on me. It is an ordinary place, but the people make it extraordinary and special. Stepping Stones is truly magical, inviting and rewarding." —KATIE PERRY, Stepping Stones volunteer and special education major

Many of the agency’s current staff made their first acquaintance with peers and participants as summer program volunteers. Connecting with peers, sharing common goals, and discovering a greater purpose has shaped these future leaders in the fields of special education, disability services or related professions—a summer at Stepping Stones has influenced their choice of work.

BUILDING HARMONY

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Japanese culture defines community as “harmony”; a peaceful unity within a social group, through which members celebrate their shared personal interests.

For Ron and Sis, the Adult Day Program has provided that harmony for most of their adult lives. As two of the program’s most senior participants, they have grown into their individual roles as leaders and ambassadors for their peers. Ron actively participates in all of the adult programs and enjoys attending Overnight Camps at Allyn during the summer months. Sis is involved as a community volunteer outside of Stepping Stones and enjoys helping others with activities when visiting the Norwood campus.

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As the very first student enrolled in the Step-Up Alternative Education Program for individuals with severe autism, Chloe’s arrival at the Given campus in the spring of 2004 was a milestone in many ways. The agency’s mission of filling gaps in services to individuals was a clear call to action. Chloe’s transportation that day consisted of an ambulance and a four-point restraint that did little to reassure her caregivers. After surviving years in a failed school setting, Chloe’s prior experiences were so traumatic that her basic reaction to any academic environment required cautious and close supervision.

Over time, Chloe discovered that the Step-Up classroom was filled with kindness and acceptance; she gradually became acclimated to a positive, supportive environment that allowed her to flourish and grow comfortable with others. A primary goal for Chloe was to share space in close quarters and develop the necessary skills and behaviors to function in a social setting. Chloe received her certificate of graduation from Stepping Stones in April 2011 and continues her personal progress with her longtime aide and mentor, Chris. While a “typical” family excursion for others might be a trip to Disney World, for Chloe and her family to be able to share that experience was a paramount goal, one she was able to achieve following graduation.

In the spring of 2009, Zaphnocy (“Zach”) arrived for his first day at Step-Up Autism Alternative Education program for individuals with severe autism. As a non-verbal 14-year-old, Zach’s future success would require a unique learning environment to provide him the means to discover the best way to learn and grow, while finding meaning and purpose in his daily routine. Step-Up’s innovative programming has paved the way for Zach to build a strong sense of confidence, invaluable life skills, and an ease of comfort with the outside world.

In December 2017, Zach received his certificate of completion from the Step-Up program with great pride. In January, he began a job at Goodwill and is now independently managing his schedule and transportation. Outside of work, Zach is enjoying an adventurous new hobby skiing down the slopes at Perfect North! As a result of his years at Stepping Stones, Zach is poised to live life with purpose, dignity and confidence.
At a sprightly 95 years, Stepping Stones former officer and Trustee Emeritus Kay Pettengill continues to carry a legacy of stewardship, passing on that spirit of giving to her grandchildren Grace, John and Sam. All three have learned the personal reward in giving to others by volunteering in Stepping Stones programs. Most recently, Sam Pettengill, currently a sophomore at Cincinnati Country Day School, reflected on how giving back to others has expanded his world view.

“Growing up, I had heard so many stories about my grandmother’s involvement, that, for me, it was a given that I would also volunteer. My time last summer was spent with the Crickets, who were around 10–12. They were so open and accepting and were willing to hold my hand immediately. I felt like they knew right away that I was there to help them. My perception has changed so much now that I see that, while these kids might think and act differently at times, we ARE the same, and it’s just a question of having OTHER or different abilities. Volunteering has taught me the importance of being there for a friend, to accept [them] as they are and to be supportive. My time at Stepping Stones empowered me to understand myself better and to be a better person for others.” — SAM PETTENGILL

The Edwards “family affair” began six summers ago, when a sleepover at a friend’s home paved the way to a whole new world for Brooke Edwards, who is working in her third year as a Rec & Leisure staff. “When a friend invited me to join her to volunteer at summer camp, it was love at first sight,” states Brooke. Her passion for the camp magic took her from summer camp volunteer to senior staff member for the 2018 season.

Camp impacted Brooke’s decision as a special education major at Ohio State University and her plans to continue in graduate studies for occupational therapy. Along the way, Edwards’ family shared camp stories that ignited a similar fire in older brother Alex, who joined the staff team in 2015 and is now a first-year medical student at University of Toledo. Despite his demanding class schedule, Alex still works an occasional Saturday Club. “It’s been my work at Stepping Stones that led me to pursue pediatric medicine, specializing in disabilities,” explains Alex.

The Edwards family affair continues with mom Rudy Edwards, a high school teacher who found a way to combine leadership and service to others in a summer camp sponsored by Goshen Schools. In 2017, Rudy brought approximately 50 students from her district to Stepping Stones to learn firsthand the value of giving back to others. Youngest sibling Sam Edwards has now also joined the volunteer corps of summer camp and can’t wait to return this coming summer!
Stepping Stones has been changing and building futures since 1963, when a handful of dedicated staff launched a summer day camp on a hillside in Indian Hill. Today, more than 100 full-time staff, 225 part-time staff and 1,500 volunteers provide life-changing programs that meet educational, recreational and independence needs of Greater Cincinnati’s children, teens and adults with disabilities.

- Our Adult Day program grew from 62 adults in 2013 to 236 in 2017.
- Summer Day Camp attendance is 425 and growing.
- Saturday Clubs are at capacity with record-breaking attendance.

As Stepping Stones has grown, so have our needs:

- Renovations and repairs to aging buildings and grounds
- Expansion needs
- Technology upgrades
- New equipment to meet sensory and adaptive communication needs
- Improvements to build vocation and life skills

Upon entering the next chapter of our evolution, Stepping Stones draws inspiration from the courageous and determined individuals we serve and our generous, equally determined supporters.

Our future holds continued opportunities for expanding support in the community and developing new, creative ways to make ability available to all.

We thank you for being part of our winning team in building a sustainable future!

SteppingStonesSociety.org

Financial Highlights

2017 RESULTS

REVENUES
$6,304
- $4,443 Program Fees
- $4,897 Overhead
- $166 UW
- $984 Grants
- $178 Contributions
- $166 UW

EXPENDITURES
$6,139
- $297 Operating
- $297 Operating
- $449 Program
- $449 Program
- $496 Overhead
- $443 Events

A Case for Support
BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

Highlights are marked by solid performance across most categories, coupled with growth in program attendance while managing and maintaining expenditures in parity with the prior period.

Dollars in thousands unaudited

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Stepping Stones' supporters celebrated the Valentine’s season in style at the 9th annual Open Your Heart dinner, presented by SPA, Inc., and held at Eddie Merlot’s. The evening’s festivities warmed hearts and netted $104,000 to benefit agency programs.

Open Your Heart

Stepping Stones’ signature fundraising event of the year, Bloom, raised $278,000 after expenses. Guests at the September tented garden party enjoyed a live band, dinner by-the-bite from 20+ local restaurants, and bidding on high-end auction packages. Presented by Huntington, Bloom was hosted at the breathtaking Greenacres Arts Center in Indian Hill.

Bloom

In spring 2017, the agency hosted its first Sporting Clays Tournament, the brainchild of two energetic and devoted volunteers. The successful inaugural event, presented by PLK, raised $33,000 after expenses.

Sporting Clays Tournament

As summer programming kicked off at Stepping Stones’ campuses, generous backers tuned in to support the agency’s day and overnight programs. The 16th annual The Golf Classic, presented by Niagara, featured morning and afternoon flights and an evening banquet, and netted $80,000. O’Bannon Creek Golf Club provided the perfect setting for this perennial favorite.

The Golf Classic

With a little help from our friends, Stepping Stones’ third-party promotions netted $27,000. CFL Pizza, franchisee for 30 area Pizza Hut locations, has named Stepping Stones its official charity partner. In 2017, CFL Pizza sponsored fundraising drives through its restaurants, led pizza-making sessions at our program sites, spent a day landscaping at camp, adopted in need participant families for the holidays, and more. Other successful third-party events were sponsored by the Cincinnati Area Board of Realtors, Dillard’s, Movement Mortgage, and other area businesses.

Third-Party Events
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Donation Amount</th>
<th>Sponsorship Category</th>
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<tr>
<td>Thomas Ackermann</td>
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<td>Denise &amp; Chris Adams</td>
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<td>Drs. Jilda &amp; Brian Adams</td>
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<td>Sam &amp; Aliy Adams</td>
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