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Roz paints a ceramic dish with purple and green paint.

NEW DAY PROGRAM LAUNCHED

Pandemic restrictions limit full roll out

Slowly but surely, Envision’s new day program is growing as the easing of COVID-19 restrictions allow more people to participate. Program Director, Melissa Paton views the incremental roll-out as a blessing in disguise.

“It’s given us a chance to get each person fully settled in before adding more people to the mix. This has actually been very helpful. We started out in October with just one individual and then added another and another until we now have 12 people coming on a regular basis,” said Melissa.

The numbers may be small, but the vision for the program remains large. Envision’s 32-acre campus provides ample space, both indoor and outdoor, for a variety of activities. Eventually the program will be able to accommodate up to 50 people and will include weekly community outings.

“We’re getting a ton of referrals and inquiries and look forward to adding more participants when COVID restrictions are fully lifted,” said Melissa.

Roz comes every Tuesday and Thursday and particularly enjoys working on craft projects and baking. Just before Easter, she painted a ceramic dish with pale hues of purple and green and helped make a bunny cake to share with her friends.

“I love coming here and seeing everybody and doing fun things,” she said.

Andre often prefers to hang out in the cozy sensory room. But now that the weather is warmer, he gravitates toward outdoor activities, including playing corn hole or strolling the campus with a men’s walking club.

An outdoor pavilion, built with funds provided by the Good Shepherd Foundation, is a prime gathering space.

“We have so many plans in the works. I’m really proud of how this is unfolding,” said Melissa.



Andre enjoys hanging out in his favorite chair.

“We’re getting a ton of referrals and inquiries and look forward to adding more participants when COVID restrictions are fully lifted.”

– Melissa Paton, Program Director

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LEGACY SOCIETY GAINS ITS FIRST MEMBERS

The Keiser's pledge gift to Envision



Peter & Sandy Keiser

Envision's new "Legacy Society" has gained its very first members. Peter and Sandy Keiser recently confirmed that they have designated Envision as a beneficiary in their estate planning.

"We are thrilled that the Keiser's took this important step. They are demonstrating their affinity for the mission of Envision by structuring a legacy gift to benefit the children and adults with developmental disabilities," said President & CEO, Jim Steffey.

Peter and Sandy hope their example will inspire others to consider taking a similar step.

"A planned gift sends a message that you value what an organization is doing and that you want to acknowledge that with a final gift – no matter how large or small," said Peter.

The couple have a long relationship with the Envision. Peter is the current chair of the Board of Trustees and has served in a variety of board positions over the past two decades. As retired social workers (Peter spent the last 15 years of his career at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center and Sandy worked for a local social service agency), they understand – perhaps better than most people – just how important planned giving is to the long-term stability of a non-profit organization.

"We believe that all people need to be given the opportunity to reach their full potential and be the best they can be. Envision espouses that value and builds on the strengths of the people they serve," said Sandy.

Interested in learning more about making a planned gift? Contact Susan at (513) 619-2903 or shosler@envisionohio.org.

"A planned gift sends a message that you value what an organization is doing and that you want to acknowledge that with a final gift – no matter how large or small."

– Peter Keiser

Purpose, Social Connections and Greater Independence

Bryneka and Rick keep busy with volunteering and paid employment

Bryneka

A lot of positive changes have unfolded for Bryneka during the past year. After spending much of her teens and early 20's being served by Envision's Family Living program (she lived with one family for nearly six years), the 26-year-old now has her own apartment and paid employment in the community.

Before she started her current job as a dishwasher at LaRosa's, Bryneka volunteered at Our Daily Bread – a local nonprofit that provides hot meals to Cincinnati's homeless and disenfranchised. She helped serve food, cafeteria style, as people came through the line. It wasn't her first volunteering gig. While still in her teens, she helped out at Tender Mercies, another local nonprofit that provides shelter and other services to the homeless.

"I really enjoy volunteering. It makes me feel good to help other people," said Bryneka.

But as much as she enjoys working with people, it's her former volunteer work with horses that gave her the most pleasure. She would clean stalls at a boarding facility and help get the horses saddled up and ready for trail rides.

"I've liked horses since I was a kid. I've gone horseback riding and loved it," she said.

Bryneka has 11 siblings. All were adopted by other families except for her and one sibling. She admits that she struggled academically and had difficulty with some inappropriate behaviors that got her expelled from high school. Nevertheless, she has good memories of being actively involved in sports, including the swim team, basketball and floor hockey.

She's come a long way. Although Bryneka still needs support from Envision staff, she's becoming increasingly independent. She likes her job at LaRosa's and enjoys having friends visit her at her apartment. She was recently invited to serve on Envision's Board of Trustees, representing the interests of people with disabilities served by the agency.

"I've been with Envision for more than a decade. I know the agency pretty well and like the staff very much. They always treat me nice," said Bryneka.



Bryneka washing dishes at LaRosa's



Bryneka volunteering at Our Daily Bread

Rick

Rick tends to worry a bit about what's going on in the world right now. His regular routine was disrupted by the restrictions and closings brought about by COVID-19.

"The news really freaks me out," he said.

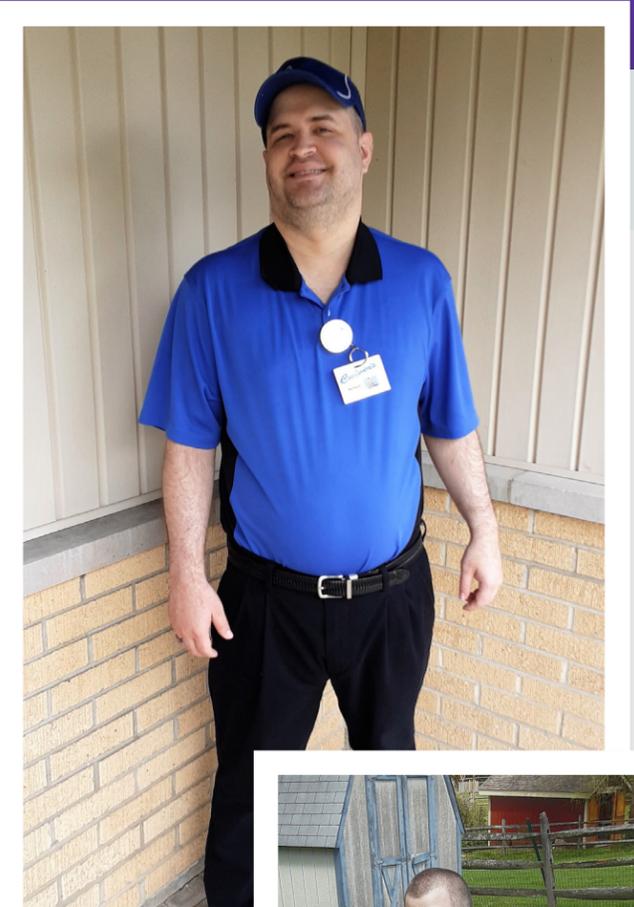
Rick believes that the best remedy is to simply focus on something else – namely work. Every Wednesday through Sunday, he goes to his job as a dishwasher at Culver's Restaurant, known for their "Butterburger" and fresh frozen custard.

"I love my job. I like working. And I really like making money," Rick said.

In addition to his job at Culver's, Rick collects soda cans for recycling. Envision is one of several "accounts" that Rick has cultivated. He even has his own business cards that include the slogan: "I'll take your cans off of your hands." The staff of Envision set aside all of their cans for Rick, who stops by their West Fork Road offices once a month to pick them up.

For the past three years, Rick has been a resident at one of the group homes operated by Envision. He lives with three other men and spends time with them watching baseball and other sports on TV. He also likes riding his bicycle and going out to eat with his family. He has two sisters and two step-brothers. Rick also enjoys music. He used to play drums (and took lessons for a while), but left his drum kit at home when he moved into the group home.

When asked how people might describe him, Rick quickly answered: "They would say I'm funny, a good guy, and I like to work!" he said.



Rick in his Culver's uniform, ready to go to work.

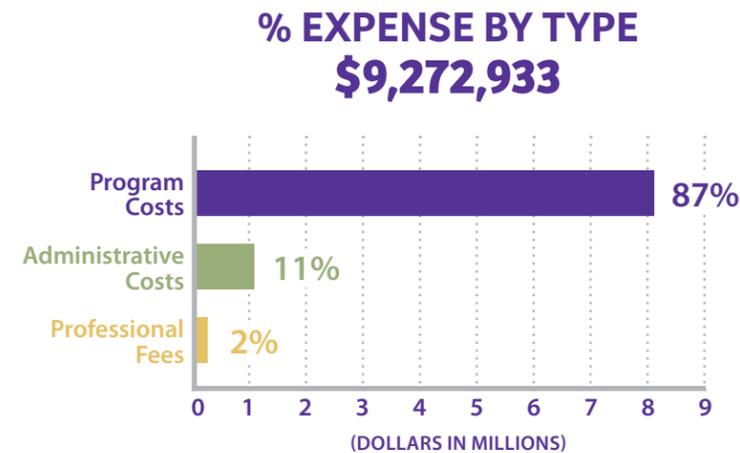


Rick enjoying the spring weather in the backyard of his home.

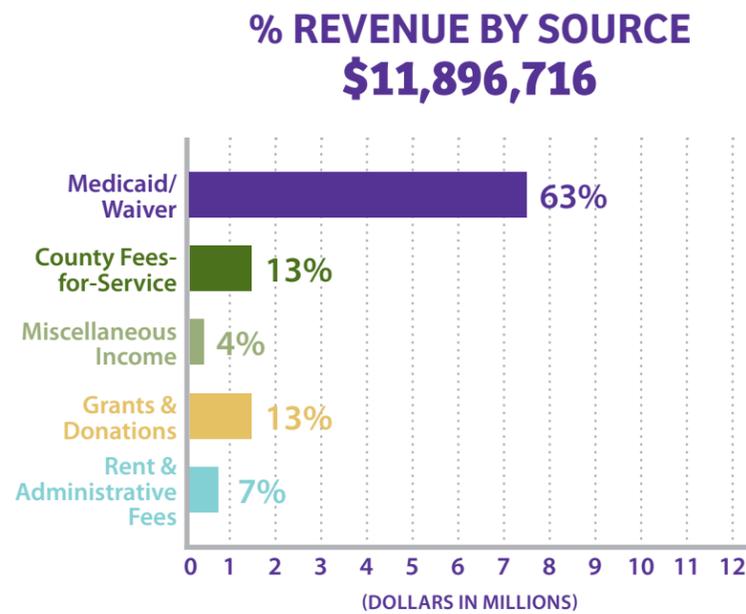
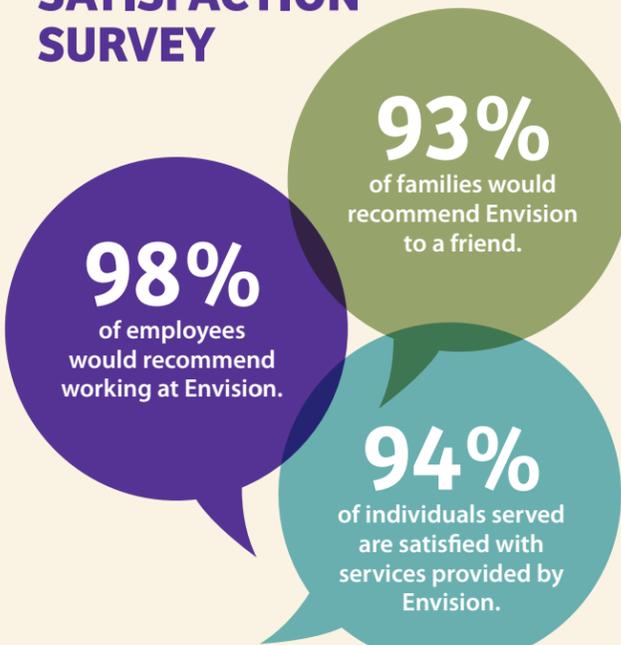
2020 Annual Report



CITE: 358
 Mental Health Services: 220
 Family Living: 47
 Supported Living: 73



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