



Letter from the CEO

Dear Friends,

After a brief pandemic-induced hiatus, CLASS is proud to present to you the 2021-2022 Annual Report. Like most organizations, CLASS pivoted quickly during the course of the pandemic, ensuring that the individuals CLASS supports continued to safely receive the services they needed.

At CLASS, we also took this time to look internally toward our organization. As Ken Poirot once said, "Today is the opportunity to build the tomorrow you want." CLASS examined how we provide and support our service divisions, and has taken the past year to modernize our processes. This has resulted in building efficiencies throughout the organization. CLASS conducted capacity assessments across the agency. We have deployed the technology necessary to shift from paper records – daily notes, outcome tracking, timesheets, and training – to automated systems. We have done the work today, so that we have a solid foundation for the CLASS that will continue to serve our communities tomorrow.

Now, our eyes are set on growth. Our commitment to our community has grown stronger, as we continue to identify and prioritize how we build our network of services to best aid the people we support. This year alone, we have served over 1,200 people through seven different programs and services. We have our sights set on developing a couple of new opportunities in the next year.

In closing, I would like to thank you for your commitment to CLASS. We look forward to our next chapter. As you read the stories and data displayed throughout this document, know that we could not achieve these without the support of our donors, the dedication of our front-line staff, or the guidance of our leadership. We hope you will continue to join us in your commitment to building *A Community Where Each Belongs*.

Welva J. Fair



Mission

The mission of CLASS is to support people with disabilities as they explore options, participate in the community and strive toward equality.

We are... Working Toward A Community Where Each Belongs.

Guiding Principles

- 1. We support uniqueness, wholeness and dignity of each person. We shall strive to respond to the individual needs and preferences of each person we support and serve.
- 2. We enthusiastically advocate for the rights of people with disabilities, so they may fully participate in and contribute to community life. This includes enjoying a secure home, family, friends, education, services, and work they find meaningful.
- 3. We view all human life as having equal and unconditional value. Each life should be nurtured, respected, celebrated and fulfilled.
- 4. We support the life-long process of personal growth and development of all people.
- 5. We will take every opportunity to educate others and to advocate for the basic civil rights of people with disabilities:

"The right to prevention, early diagnosis, and proper care.

The right to a barrier-free environment and accessible transportation.

The right to an appropriate public education.

The right to necessary assistance given in a way that promotes independence.

The right to a choice of lifestyles and residential alternatives.

The right to an income for a lifestyle comparable to the able-bodied.

The right to training and employment as qualified.

The right to petition social institutions for just and humane treatment.

The right to self-esteem."

-CLASS Bill of Rights for Persons with Disabilities-

- **6**. We emphasize cooperation in getting things done through and with the people we serve.
- 7. We vigilantly adhere to these values.

CLASS Programs

Centre Services



Centre Services provides a space for adults with disabilities to attend classes, build life-skills and provides supported community engagement. Participants can register for classes which allow them to explore a variety of subjects.

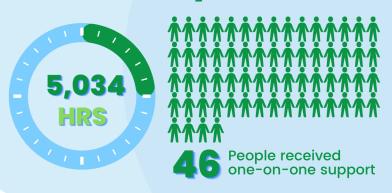
The **Extended School Year** or Transition Services assists adults as they are aging out of high school programs and into adult classes

*this program was limited in 2022 due to the local school's covid policies

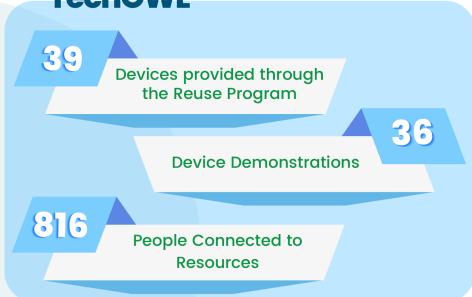
Community Partners provide one-on-one support based on the individual's goals.

Beyond traditional case management, partners work to develop strategies and valuable connections to natural support and resources in the community.

Community Partners



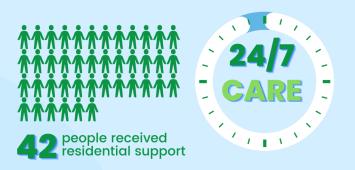




TechOWL connects individuals with Assistive Technology through a variety of programs.

The Reuse program saved individuals with disabilities a total of \$13,615.

Residential Services



Residential Services are provided around the clock. Services may include personal care, skill building, meal planning and prep, and more.

CLASS provided services in 22 homes in Allegheny and Westmoreland Counties.

In-Home Services provide Personal Assistant Services to support activities of daily living and community support.

Participants live in their own homes in the community.t.

In-Home Services



MSSS





The **Multiple Sclerosis Service Society** provides in-home exercise and wellness programming.

The exercises improve levels of function, activities of daily living, energy and mood. MSSS also works to increase knowledge regarding the diagnosis.

Information and Referral services help people navigate resources in their community, as well as understanding long-term supports and other services available.

Information & Referral





Residential Services Expanded Into Westmoreland County

Affordable housing is a barrier that many individuals are currently facing. For people with disabilities, housing must also be accessible. Finding an affordable, accessible home in the area you want to live in can often become a multifaceted and challenging undertaking. CLASS strives to provide residential options for people within the communities in which they choose to live.

CLASS received referral to Residential Services an individual who wanted to find housing in Westmoreland County, allowing them to continue to work at their current position. CLASS began to explore options of how to best serve this person. When two additional people expressed interest in a neighboring town, CLASS connected the individuals and their families. As time forged forward, it was clear that the potential roommates got along well and CLASS started to hunt for properties.

In January of 2022, CLASS opened its first home in Westmoreland County.

It was first necessary to ensure modifications were made to make the home accessible. The three individuals who now live in the home, two of whom are brothers, are enjoying their new home and looking forward to getting more involved in their community. For these roommates, this was their first home away from their family or childhood home. It is extremely important that residents get the services they need, that they direct their services and that they choose how to lead their lives.

Services provided by staff members include assistance with independent living skills. Staff support individuals creating meal plans suited to their desires and dietary needs, as well as exploring different activities in their community.

CLASS continues to explore different options to expand and grow Residential Services. This program provides support with activities of daily living up to 24 hours a day. When people express interest in the program and want a specific area, CLASS continues to try and find options to best suit their needs among existing homes or may choose to obtain a new home.

If you or a loved one are interested in Residential Services, contact CLASS today! We may be moving to a home near you.



Let's Talk Tech

Technology for Our Whole Lives, or TechOWL, is a part of The Institute on Disabilities at Temple University. The goal of TechOWL is to assure a system of easy access to Assistive Technology (AT) to all Pennsylvanians with disabilities.



Through a variety of TechOWL programs available at CLASS, individuals with disabilities and families throughout Southwestern Pennsylvania can explore their Assistive Technology options and find diverse solutions. TechOWL offers device demonstrations to discuss different solutions as well as a lending library to allow individuals to try out Assistive Technology expensive before purchasing equipment.

The ReUse program accepts donations of gently used Assistive Technology to be re-homed to individuals in need of assistance. With the assistance of the ReUse Program people with disabilities have been able to save a combined \$13,615 over the course of a year.



Yvette Griggs & TechOWL

Yvette Griggs is a woman with Multiple Sclerosis. She was having trouble using a phone due to a resting tumor. Yvette came to CLASS to find out what type of Assistive Technology would help her be able to utilize a cell phone independently.

Through a **Device Demonstration** with an AT Coordinator, she learned that she could control an iPhone with voice commands and the digital assistant - Siri.

Representatives at CLASS helped her complete an application for the Free Special Phone Program through the PA AT Act Program and TechOWL. After receiving an iPhone through this program, the AT Coordinator helped her set up the phone and customize the voice commands to work best for her.

Yvette and her mother were very appreciative of the ability to get support through this process. Neither were familiar with this type of technology.

Yvette's story at CLASS does not end here. She was able to learn about the many other programs available and will soon be moving into one of the CLASS residential homes.



Launched as the product of the doctoral capstone project of Olivia Shope, TechOWL has added 3D printing to the catalog of options available for Assistive Technology. 3D Printed Assistive Devices have provided a more diverse and personalized solution to many individual needs, but with a lower overhead cost. Devices created so far include a zipper pull, fork/spoon aid, a key turner, bag holder and more.



Scan the QR code to access resources, accessible technologies, and additional information the TechOWL program.





Change & Growth

When Melva Fair accepted the role of Chief Executive Officer in 2019, she set out to create growth at CLASS. She evaluated where the organization was and set goals for where it could go. A strategic map was developed to lay the foundation for modernization and expansion.



The Strategic Map outlines the necessary steps for CLASS to grow effectively. In order to facilitate the impending growth, CLASS had to start by modernizing the administrative structure including automating payroll, implementing new agency-wide software, and updating the technology. These changes allow CLASS to run more efficiently and reduce overhead costs.

Change is necessary for growth. Under Ms. Fair's direction the changes were made and quickly began to produce results. Many of the changes implemented have allowed staff to take advantage of modern technologies and simplified many tasks.

For example, rather than reporting on care provided in residential homes with paperwork, each home has been provided the technology and software to be able to record care in real time. This has increased communication of needs and allowed staff to have more time to focus on the residents. This is just one example of how Ms. Fair is bringing CLASS into modern standards of care.

Human Resources

The Strategic Map has impacted CLASS within multiple areas of the organization. The HR team has been an important part of the implementation of so many of the changes.

For their part in the Strategic Map, HR has been able to reduce their time working on tasks such as payroll and allowed a better focus on providing new opportunities to staff. CLASS's human resources team has sought out opportunities to ensure that the new staff onboarding is a smooth process.

They have prioritized finding quality staff to take on the mission of Working Toward A Community Where Each Belongs. Through a diverse and equitable environment, we are able to have a more engaging community throughout our locations.

Join Our Team

CLASS hires staff on an ongoing basis. We are looking for individuals interested in providing person-centered care and support to people with disabilities and seniors throughout Allegheny County and Westmoreland County. If you are someone who wants to build stronger communities and ensure that all people, regardless of ability can live, work, and play in the communities of their choice-CLASS wants you on our team.



To learn more about Employment Opportunities available at CLASS, scan the QR code below.



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Leadership Team

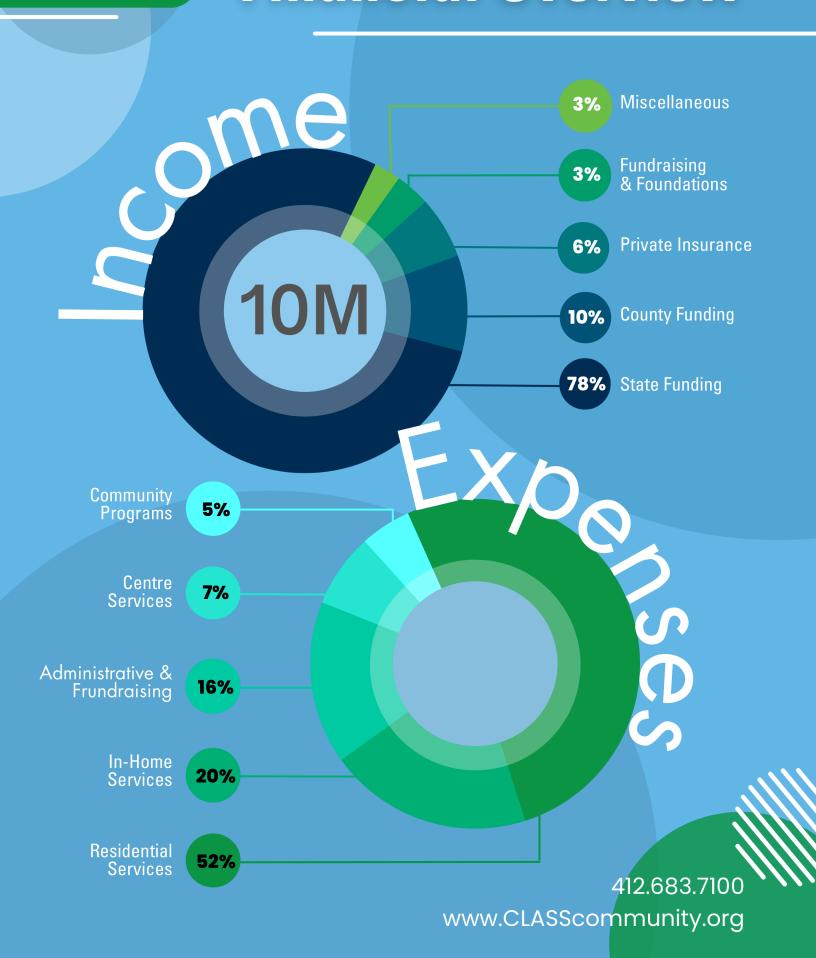
Melva Fair, *Chief Executive Officer*George Burgman, *Chief Finance Officer*Chris Phelps, *Chief Programs Officer*



As we move forward and find our stride beyond 2020 and 2021, CLASS can not thank our supporters enough. It is with the support of the community that this organization has been able to stay strong and continue to work toward our mission to serve individuals with disabilities as they strive to live independent lives as active members within their communities. As we move forward, 2022 is about growth and progress. CLASS could not have done it without you. Together we will continue on our path as we are...

Working Toward A
Community Where
Each Belongs.

Financial Overview



Methods of Support

Get Involved

ANNUAL EVENTS



Highmark Walk for a Healthy Community





Alby Oxenreiter Golf Classic





Community **Heroes Award Dinner**



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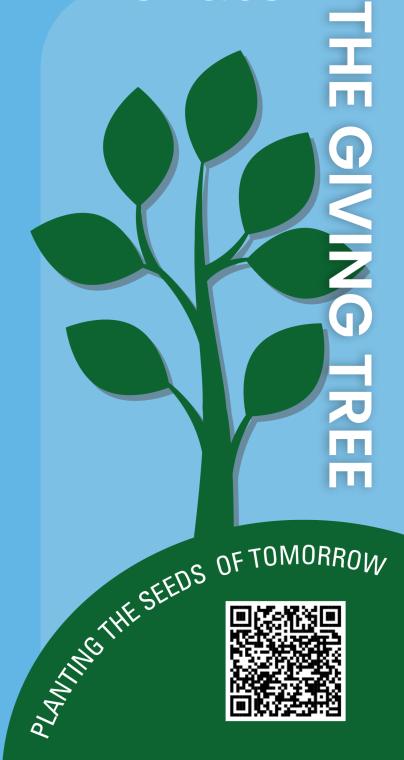


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Stay In Touch

1400 South Braddock Ave, Pittsburgh, PA 15218-1264 www.CLASScommunity.org Phone: 412.683.7100

Toll-Free: 1.888.954.2424

Fax: 412.683.4160

