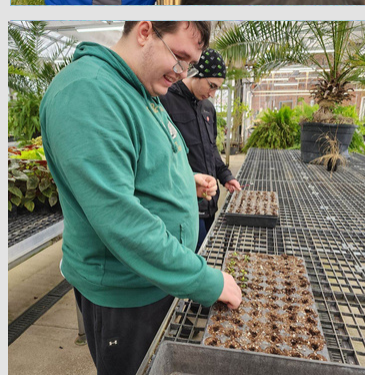




# 2024 Annual Report





# Letter from the CEO

Dear Friends and Supporters,

As we reflect on this past year, I want to express my sincere gratitude to the organizations and individuals who make our mission possible. Your support allows us to provide high-quality services to individuals with disabilities, helping us grow, improve, and strengthen our programs.

This year, we were fortunate to receive a grant from The Disability Foundation for an EasyStander, benefiting individuals who rely on wheelchairs by improving mobility, circulation, and independence. Additionally, grants from the Erie County Community Foundation, First Energy, and Apex Clean Energy helped enhance our outdoor sensory area, ensuring an inclusive and engaging space for all.

We expanded Community Integration efforts with the addition of a dedicated coordinator and increased our investment in staff development through training, conferences, and our "Most Appreciated" staff in-service.

A highlight of the year was hosting the Journey of Hope riders, a powerful event promoting disability awareness and inclusion.

We also secured a permanent home in Lorain County at 4270 E. Lake Rd. in Sheffield Lake, ensuring a stable future for the individuals we serve.

Our Community Respite outings brought new experiences and opportunities for connection, with trips to Pittsburgh, Cleveland, Columbus, and more.

Finally, we celebrated 50 years of service, a testament to the dedication of our staff, partners, and the community. Looking ahead, we remain committed to fostering inclusion, expanding opportunities, and making a lasting impact.

Thank you for being part of our journey.

With gratitude,  
*Doreen Ehlert*  
Chief Executive Officer  
Ability Works



# HIGHLIGHTS

## Disability Foundation Grant

A grant from The Disability Foundation allowed us to acquire an EasyStander. Individuals who rely on a wheelchair for mobility benefit from this device in medical and psychological ways. It improves range of motion, circulation, contractures, and increases independence and self-image.

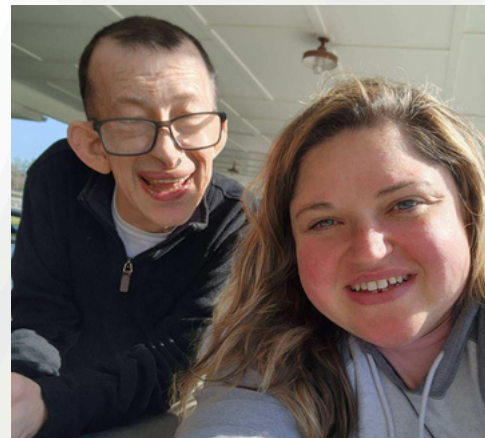


## Sensory Spaces

We have expanded into outdoor sensory areas! Grants from the Erie County Community Foundation, FirstEnergy, and Apex Clean Energy allowed us to make our outdoor space as inviting as our inside Sensory Space.

## Community Integration Coordinator

We expanded our community integration opportunities by hiring Michelle Hutchinson as our Community Integration Coordinator, ensuring maximum integration and planning meaningful activities.



## 50th Anniversary

In 2024, we celebrated 50 years of providing services for individuals with disabilities.





# Supported Employment

## 301 Supported Individuals

### Employers

5 Below

African Wildlife Safari

Aldi - Fremont

Alpine Nursing Home

Apples Lorain

Aramark

Auto Zone - Clyde

Avon City Pools-Avon

Back to the Wild

Bassett's-Bellevue

Bellevue Hospital

Bethesda Nursing Home

Bob Evans - Fremont

Boots to Grasses

Burger King-Fremont

Cedar Point-Sports Center

Cleveland Clinic-Avon

Chili's Avon

Chipotle - Fremont

Concord Reserve

Countryside Manor Healthcare

Denny's - Fremont

Dollar General-Wellington, Fremont

Dollar Tree- Fremont

Dunkin Donuts-Avon, Clyde, Elyria,

North Ridgeville, Sandusky, Vermilion

El Habanero Mexican

Elmwood Assisted Living

Elyria City Schools

Erie County Dog Warden

Erie County Metro Parks

Family Farm and Home

Fazoli's-Sandusky

Freight House

Friendship APL

FRMC

Gabe's-Elyria

Giant Eagle-Amherst, Avon Lake,

Elyria, Sheffield

Goodwill- Bellevue, Fremont, Huron

Hampton Inn-Milan

Health & Strength Gym

Heritage Village Assisted Living Facility

Home Depot-Sandusky

HomeGoods-Avon

HomeSense- Westlake

Honey Hole

House of Donuts

Humane Society - Fremont

IMC/Parts Authority

Kalahari

Kroger - Fremont

Precision Automotive

Renaissance Retirement Community

Riddell

Ruby Tuesdays

Rural King - Fremont

Salvation Army-Norwalk

Sams Club- Sheffield

Sandusky Bay Pancake House

Sandusky County Dog Warden

Sawmill Creek Resort and Hotel

Save-A-Lot

Second Harvest Food Bank

Share and Care

Speedway-Clyde

St. Mary's of the Woods

Super Fitness- Toledo

Taco Bell- Amherst, North Ridgeville,

Vermilion

Target-Sandusky

The Sandusky Mall

TJ Maxx-Sandusky

Trustwell Living

University Hospitals-Elyria

Valley View Health

Value Hardware-Vermillion

Walmart-Avon, Lorain, Sandusky,

Norwalk

Wendy's- Huron, Lorain

Westlake assisted Living Facility

YMCA French Creek-Avon

Zale's- Sandusky

## 131 Students Involved in Pre-employment Transition Services



## 170 Individuals Received Job Coaching and Supported Employment

## 77 Individuals Placed in Competitive Employment





# Services

**259 Supported  
Individuals**

**Day Habilitation - 57  
Community Integration - 62**



**Home and Personal  
Care - 20**

**Transportation  
- 72**



**Supported Employment - 30  
Community Respite - 18**

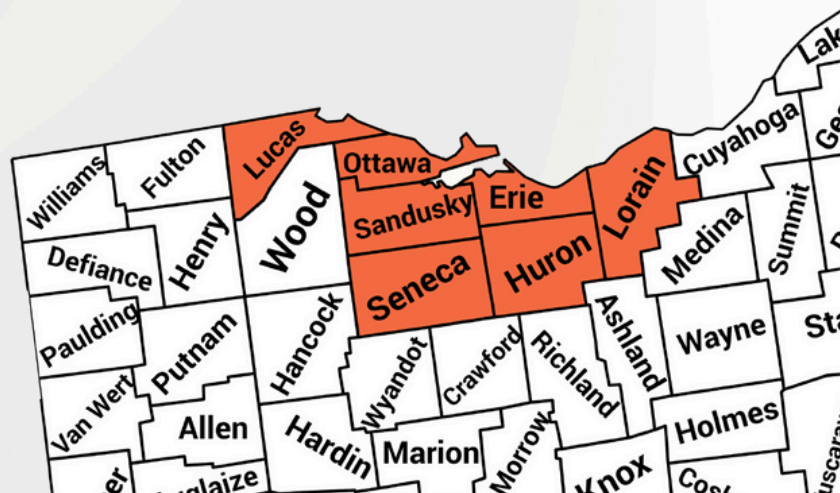




# Counties Served

We primarily serve Erie County, with our employment services reaching beyond to a total of seven counties.

Erie - 93  
 Lorain - 90  
 Sandusky - 46  
 Huron - 58  
 Ottawa - 10  
 Lucas - 2





# Personal Spotlight

## William Bailey

William is a great guy, who likes to stay busy. He has been working at Mickey Mart in Vermilion since August 2021. He works the morning shift on Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday. He comes to work with a smile on his face, works hard and has a great attitude. He is very proud of his job and enjoys having extra spending money.

William also participates in our Community Integration services. Where he has opportunities to volunteer at The Second Harvest Food Bank. He is always happy to help others in any way that he can. He is easy going and enjoys whatever he is doing.

Additionally, William has been taking advantage of our Community Respite Trips. He has joined us for trips to Hocking Hills, Pittsburgh, and several professional and semi-pro sporting events. One of the highlights for him was a tour of the Pittsburgh Steelers stadium and locker room. He is a huge Steelers fan and enjoyed every moment of being in the place where the magic happens.

William loves to sing and has participated in our annual talent showcase for the past few years. The song from Toy Story, “You’ve Got a Friend in Me” has special meaning for him and he loves to share with the crowd.

Originally from Connecticut, William currently lives in Vermilion with his sister and brother-in-law. He is an avid sports fan and loves cheering on his favorite teams, including the Pittsburgh Steelers and the Ohio State Buckeyes.





# Staff Highlights

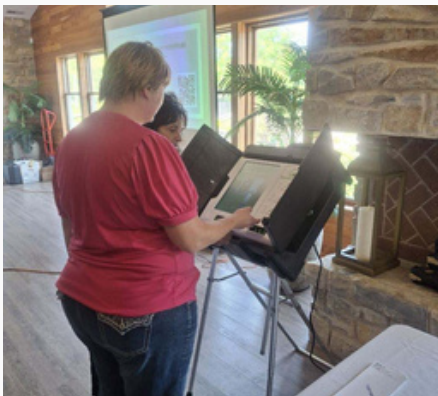
Our work at Ability Works is only possible because of the outstanding dedication and passion of our incredible team. Every day, they show up with unwavering commitment, working tirelessly to support and uplift the people we serve. Their efforts go far beyond just fulfilling their roles—they bring energy, compassion, and a deep sense of purpose to everything they do. By giving 110% to our mission, they create a positive, inclusive, and empowering environment where everyone can thrive. We are deeply grateful for their hard work and the meaningful impact they make each and every day.





# New Building in Lorain

This year, we were thrilled to purchase a building for our services in Lorain County located in Sheffield Lake. Strategically located near a library, several parks, and the community center, this new space will allow us to deepen our community connections and expand our reach. We look forward to growing our programs and increasing the number of individuals we serve, furthering our mission to support and strengthen the community.





# Thank you, Donors

American Legion Post 83

Autogate

Barnes Nursery

Biogas

Browns Bakers

Civista Bank

Cleveland Clinic

Dunkin Donuts

FOP #17

FOP #35

Feick Contractors

First Congregational Church

Foster Chevrolet

Franklin Station

Ghostly Manor

Herzog Family

Herwat Family

Hohler Furnace

Honey Hole

Huron Eagles

Franklin Station

Lake Erie Arms

Lindsley Insurance

Marshall and Brenda Brown

Mickey Mart

n2y

Norwalk Eagles

Norwalk Furniture

One Digital

Orioles

P Beverly

Sams Club

Saucy Brewworks

Schmid Architects

Secure Sight

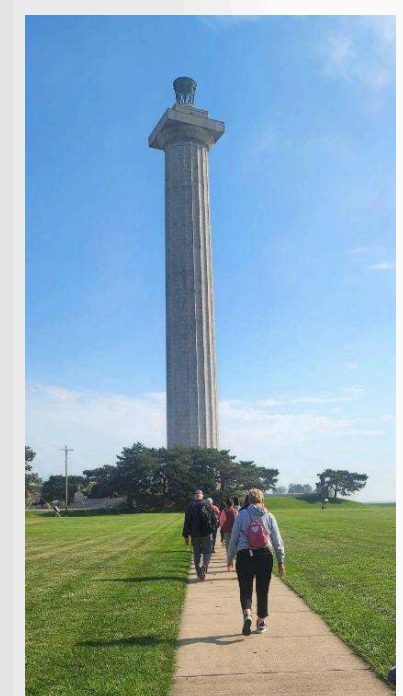
Siesel Distributing

The Clark Family Foundation

Vacationland Federal Credit Union

Waterstreet Financial

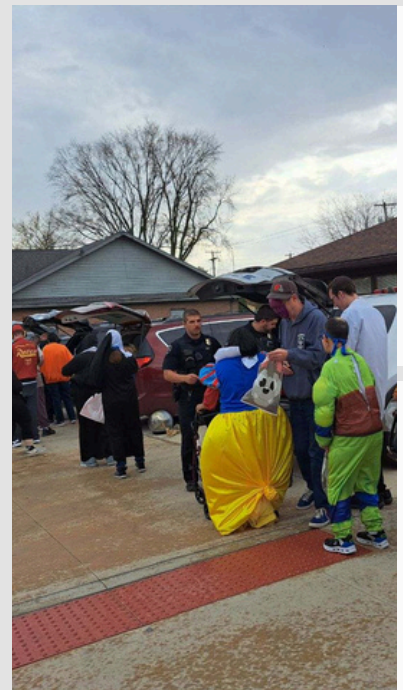
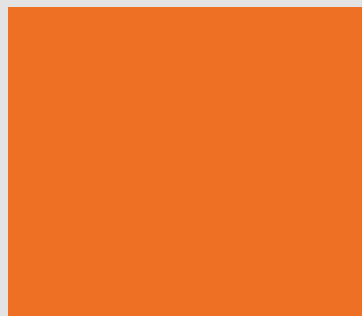
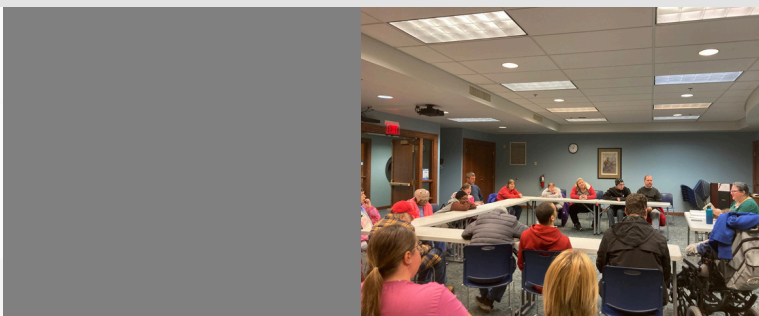
Windsor Mold



# Grants Awarded

Apex Clean Energy  
Buckeye Cablevision  
Cafaro Foundation  
Dorn Foundation  
Erie County Community  
Foundation  
FirstEnergy  
Frohman Foundation

Community Foundation Lorain  
County  
Ohio Department of  
Developmental Disabilities  
Mylander Foundation  
The Disability Foundation  
United Way  
Walmart





# 2025 Board of Directors

**Laura LaGodney | Board President**

Employed at Bio-Gas Technologies

[lagodneylaura@gmail.com](mailto:lagodneylaura@gmail.com)

Term: 4/25/22-4/25/25

**Judina Marsh | Board Vice President**

Employed at Sandusky City Schools

[judinamarsh@gmail.com](mailto:judinamarsh@gmail.com)

Term: 3/15/23-3/14/26

**Deb Sutter | Board Secretary**

[Moosydeb@gmail.com](mailto:Moosydeb@gmail.com)

Term: 3/15/24-3/15/27

**Gavin Sutter | Board Member**

Term: 4/25/24-4/25/27

**Chrissy Stohl | Board Member**

Employed at n2y

[Chrissy.stohl@gmail.com](mailto:Chrissy.stohl@gmail.com)

Term: 12/20/23-12/20/26

**Jim Smith | Board Member**

[squawk418@aol.com](mailto:squawk418@aol.com)

Term: 10/21/24-10/24/27

**Betsy Wilbur | Board Member**

Employed at E.F. Wilber Law Office LLC.

[efwilber@buckeye-express.com](mailto:efwilber@buckeye-express.com)

Term: 2/2/23-2/2/26



Board President Laura LaGodney and Board Vice President Judina Marsh

# Star Performers & Partnerships





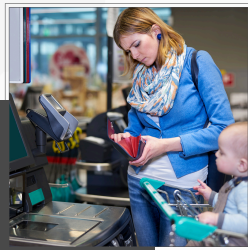
# WAYS TO SUPPORT

Contribute to our goals to support independence, inclusion, & employment



## Donate

Donate, sponsor, and give experiences



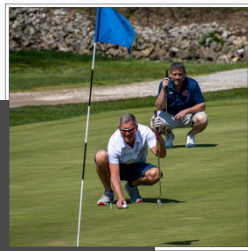
## Kroger Rewards

Donate for FREE when you shop



## Recycle Clothes

Donate old clothes to be recycled



## Get Involved

Attend an event or volunteer



## Hire Individuals

Hire our clients or group employment





# Thank You

For fifty years, our focus has been to figure out ways people with disabilities can participate in everyday activities and all aspects of the community. We appreciate all of the support and hope you join us on this journey.

📞 419-626-1048

📍 3920 Columbus Ave, Sandusky, OH 44870

📍 4270 E. Lake Rd. Sheffield Lake, OH 44054

✉️ [info@ability-works.com](mailto:info@ability-works.com)

🌐 [www.ability-works.com](http://www.ability-works.com)



