

**Park Lawn
Outcome Measurement Report
PLSAC**

In addition to oversight of day to day operations, the administrative team works in collaboration with the board of directors to identify and implement strategic goals for the future. The administrative team is comprised of the functional leaders of the organization (program director, finance director, human resources director, and development director) and the executive director. Since executive leadership of Park Lawn transitioned in 2015, the administrative team has developed into a team whose members participate in regular, ongoing communication as situations arise. The administrative team also meets bi-weekly to address critical operational issues and attends bi-monthly board meetings to discuss strategic issues. As a result of these various channels of communication, the administrative team has accomplished a number of important initiatives in the past few years and also has many critical initiatives slated for the future.

Park Lawn participated in a grant funded collaboration to develop an innovative new day program called Choice. After securing a grant, developing the program, and identifying a program location, the Choice program formally opened at the beginning of 2016. The Choice program provides an opportunity for 30+ program participants to choose their type of employment and increase time spent in the community through social activities and volunteer work. The program has been very well received by program participants and their guardians. The addition of the Choice program provided an opportunity for Park Lawn to provide day program services to another 20+ individuals, who replaced those that moved from the workshop to Choice.

Building on the successful outcomes of the Choice program, Park Lawn designated additional resources to the workshop program to expand the Enrichment program. Similarly to Choice, the Enrichment program increases opportunities for workshop participants to engage in volunteer and recreational activities in the community. As a result of the investment in the Choice and Enrichment programs, there has been an increasing demand for Park Lawn day program services within the community.

The new administrative leadership at Park Lawn recognized that the quality of programs directly correlated to the quality of the individuals who staff those programs. Unfortunately, rate freezes from the state of Illinois since 2008 prevented the previous administration from recognizing staff in the most impactful way – through pay increases. So it became increasingly difficult to attract & retain quality staff as wages became less competitive. A decision was made to utilize excess investment returns over the past decade to provide a one-time bonus to staff in December 2015 in recognition of their efforts. The bonuses were based on a percentage of annual income, and were indexed based on the number of years of service.

The board and administration recognized that a staffing crisis could threaten the quality of programs, and chose to go beyond a one-time bonus payout. At a time when investment growth was significant, staff wages were becoming less competitive. The leadership team determined that a larger annual investment draw was necessary in order to provide competitive wages. The leadership team worked through 2016 to identify a pay raise strategy that would focus on significant adjustments to targeted areas (i.e. DSPs) while also providing across the board increases for all staff. The new wages went into effect January 1, 2017. Ironically, the local county subsequently approved a minimum wage increase that mirrored the Park Lawn increase for the lower wage positions. Had administration & the board not addressed the employee compensation issue, it would have been forced as a result of the county ordinance. The result of these efforts is a stabilization of the workforce, which in turn, ensures the continuity of quality programs.

One of the primary goals in 2017 was to foster a greater sense of communication and collaboration between day program services and residential services. The quality of care for the nearly 100 individuals who receive both day and residential services hinges on communication and collaboration between both programs. In order to achieve this goal, program management was restructured. A single program director position replaced the old positions of day program director and residential director. As a result, all direct care, dietary, nursing, case management, and program management positions reported up through one director. Immediately, silos were eliminated as members of both programs began meeting and communicating amongst each other on a regular basis. Critical information about program participants was more readily shared between programs and standardized processes were implemented to maximize program effectiveness and individual outcomes.

In 2017, attention was also focused on identifying public funding sources for CILA rehab and capital improvements. Park Lawn facilities have experienced the normal wear & tear that comes with housing a number of residents. Additionally, accessibility needs are changing as residents are aging. The finance director and the finance committee reviewed HUD programs which would support capital improvement & renovations of CILA homes. One grant program was identified that could provide significant resources to Park Lawn, however there was also a significant up-front outlay of funds without guarantees of securing the grant. The team determined that it was best to look into other public funding options. Since that time, the finance director position transitioned and other issues have taken priority. This issue will be re-addressed in late 2018 and into 2019. But in the interim, Park Lawn has sought out other smaller grants which have provided the funds necessary to address improvements most critical to the needs of CILA residents.

Park Lawn programs are state funded, but funding from the state does not adequately cover the cost of providing quality programs. To address the short fall, Park Lawn has historically been a strong fundraising organization, primarily from fundraising events. As total fundraising has remained fairly steady in recent years, the organization began looking at alternative ways to develop a stronger fundraising base. In 2017 the development director and executive director began researching a variety of alternative fundraising options, with a focus on donor cultivation and major giving. As a result of

research and meetings with fundraising professionals, a donor cultivation and major giving program was presented to the board of directors in the fall of 2017. After thoughtful discussion, the board of directors approved the concept and funding for a position which will focus on relationship building, donor cultivation, corporate relationships, and major giving. The position is expected to be filled in late 2018.

The development of key alliances & collaborations is another critical aspect of successfully operating in this environment. In recent years, Park Lawn has taken an active role in Intersect for Ability, which is a network of a dozen Chicagoland providers which seek to identify programs & best practices in a changing world, with partner funding from the Coleman Foundation. Park Lawn has also been actively involved in a back office collaboration called Community Service Partners. But Park Lawn was lacking a proper affiliation with a provider network organization that focuses on legislative & policy issues. Park Lawn had historically been affiliated with the Arc of Illinois, but the focus of that organization had transitioned over the years to a family advocacy network. In 2017, Park Lawn joined the Institute of Public Policy for People with Disabilities and also secured a trial membership with the Illinois Association of Rehab Facilities. Both of these organizations provided an opportunity for the new executive director to not only network with peers, but to be a part of conversations on critical issues impacting similar organizations around the State of Illinois. Park Lawn has benefitted from receiving information about current issues, being at the table on issues impacting the future, and adopting best practices from other organizations.

The board and administrative team have developed goals for 2018 that are focused on laying the foundation for the future of Park Lawn. As federal & state policy and the expectations of consumers change, Park Lawn intends on being prepared to meet those changes. To be prepared, the administrative team is conducting a comprehensive evaluation of residential services, day program services, and transportation.

The evaluation of both residential & day program services will include the effectiveness & sustainability of each individual program, the condition & function of existing facilities, and the long term-term facility plan based on the anticipated array of services. The evaluation of transportation services will include the effectiveness & sustainability of services at both the programmatic & the individual passenger levels. The goal for 2018 is to recommend to the board of directors a long-term vision for residential, day services, and transportation, with phased implementation commencing in late 2018 or early 2019.

Equally critical to the effectiveness of programs is the recruitment, training, and retention of quality staff. Park Lawn is not exempt from the direct care worker crisis that is plaguing the field across the country. Through a combination of collaborative and internal initiatives, the human resources department will be identifying talent acquisition strategies, new pathways to employment, strategies to develop and retain existing personnel, and middle management training programs aimed at fostering the development & retention of staff.

In late 2017 the board of directors supported and approved the development of a donor cultivation plan and relationship/major gifts officer. Recruitment of the position will commence in the summer of 2018. The relationship/major gifts officer will be supported by the board and administration in developing a program to cultivate friends of influence, expand corporate relationships, cultivate major donors, and establish a planned giving program. As the sphere of friends expands, Park Lawn will have greater access to financial resources needed to implement the long-term residential and day program vision. Finally, a more systematic and grants management program will be established in late 2018 to provide additional financial resources to fund the future vision.