



Lifelong Advocates for Marylanders with Developmental Disabilities

ANNUAL REPORT TO SPONSORS

November 2, 2013

The Board of Directors presents the following report on the status of By Their Side, Inc. as of September 30, 2013.

By Their Side has 270 members. Of these, 205 have living sponsors and 65 receive active services following the death of their sponsors. Since September 30, 2012, two members have started active services following the death of their sponsor and five members have passed away. Four applications for Lifelong Advocacy Services (or membership) were approved and eight sponsors have newly contracted for Advocacy Plan Services (or Supplemental Services.) 45 members currently receive Advocacy Plan Services. One Non-member now receives Advocacy Plan Services. This new option was approved by the Board to allow families in need to receive immediate assistance at higher hourly fee while they become familiar with By Their Side.

In the past year, all members for whom Lifelong Advocacy Services have started received an assessment visit, usually in conjunction with their annual planning meeting. Personal Advocates provided follow up as well as information and guidance to siblings and Trustees, for example advocating for increased support for an individual living independently who was in distress and exploring alternatives for an individual who chose to no long participate in his day program. Personal Advocates assisted individuals and their families in Advocacy Plan Services, for example, by securing previously denied residential funding, researching and advising Trust purchases to help assure safety in unusual circumstances, explaining the resource agency selection process, and assuring one provider paid for regulatory nursing visits with DDA funding rather than individual funds. Parents still serving as the primary advocate were provided requested information regarding Special Needs Trust Attorneys, impact of burial policies on Social Security, in home support resources, and steps for transitioning to a new service provider, for example.

The annual audit of By Their Side's financial records up to June 30, 2013, is in process by Naden/Lean, LLC. The 2012 audit found "the financial position of By Their Side as of June 30, 2012, and the results of its operations and changes in fund balances for the year then ended, in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles." By Their Side's investments are managed by Harbor Investment Advisory, and in the past year have out-performed indices. Operating funds are drawn from investment income and undesignated donations. This year By Their Side received a \$40,600 bequest from the Safranek Trust, and approximately \$1000 in

memorial donations in honor of Luanne Frebertshauser, By Their Side's first Director of Services.

By Their Side's employees include Executive Director Kathy Vecchioni, who works 20 hours a week and also serves as a Personal Advocate; Beverly Rill, who retired as Executive Director in 2012 and continues to provide financial assistance 8 hours a month as well as serving as a Personal Advocate; and Sandie French, who serves as Administrative Assistant 4 hours a week. Seven experienced contractual Personal Advocates--Susan Buehl, Leonard Cohen, Marilyn Folus, Mary Funk, Chris Irving, Rebecca Rubin, and Portia Willis--also provide advocacy, for a total of nine Personal Advocates.

A planning retreat was held in July 2013. The Board envisioned a future where all Maryland families know of By Their Side's advocacy program so they can decide if it is a service they would like, and envisioned enhanced member and sponsor services supported by future program growth. Goals identified include increasing outreach to families especially those with older caregivers, pursuit of a grant to fund a service project, development of a technology presence to reach today's tech savvy families, and continued expansion of our statewide presence with additional personal advocates.

Board Committees re-formed to address these goals. *By Their Side sponsors are welcome and encouraged to participate in any committee of interest.*

Member Services Committee: This committee plans support to families. Newsletters highlighting resources and updates were emailed in the Spring and mailed in the Fall, to families, friends, sponsors, and supporting organizations. The committee is considering how to best offer support and information to siblings, and the Executive Director is talking with the Developmental Disabilities Council and Arc Maryland as those organizations plan new sibling support programs. The committee developed By Their Side's November Annual Meeting program, and educational material is being updated.

Grants Committee: This new committee will seek outside support for a member or sponsor services project, to be identified in conjunction with the Board. Efforts are underway to identify Grant sources that share our commitment to family support and individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities.

Finance Committee: The committee's objective is to plan for and implement policies to achieve financial stability and growth and to protect reserves necessary to maintain programs during adverse periods. The committee meets regularly with Harbor Investment Advisory regarding By Their Side's investments, which have outperformed indices this year. The fee structure for services has remained constant with two additions: 1) A reduced sponsor fee for siblings was approved by the Board. Their sibling is less likely to receive Lifelong Advocacy Services that begin after the sponsor passes away, yet membership provides a safety net and enables access to reduced cost Advocacy Plan Services. 2) The Board newly approved Advocacy Plan Services for non-members, at a higher hourly fee. This allows the organization to support families requesting immediate advocacy assistance while they become familiar with By Their Side services. The committee initiated two fund drives this year and explored corporate contributions. GoodSearch continues to provide proceeds.

Outreach Committee: The committee's objective is to inform Maryland families about By Their Side's mission and services. This year, Board members and the Executive Director discussed By Their Side with family support groups, a local Arc Annual Membership meeting, Transitioning Youth Fairs, the Disability Expo, the Arc Maryland Convention, and has been invited by two estate planning entities to address parent groups. Efforts are underway to enlist provider support in reaching families.

Technology Committee: The committee's objective is to expand By Their Side's ability to connect with families through the internet and expanded social networking sites. Bytheirsideside.org is in final stages of update for enhanced security.

GOVERNANCE

By Their Side continues to be governed by a volunteer Board of Directors. Directors serving during Fiscal Year 2013 include: Mark L. Wagner, DDS, President; Kenneth Moore, Vice President; Jeffrey Dahlka, Sr., Treasurer; Kimberly Breton, Secretary; Shannon Hammond, Esq.; Craig S. Hebert; Joan Kolobielski; Martin Lampe, Ph.D; Philip Levinson, DDS; Paula Mattson-Sarli, Esq.; Margaret Ulle; and Judy Volkman. *The Directors welcome individuals from different professions, geographic areas, and segments of the community to serve on the board or on a board committee.*

Respectfully submitted,

Mark L. Wagner
President, FY 2014