

The Oak Park Developmental Disabilities Consortium, under the auspices of the Community Mental Health Board of Oak Park Township, is dedicated to supporting individuals with disabilities in reaching their dreams and aspirations.

CHECK THE WEDNESDAY JOURNAL FOR INSPIRING STORIES FROM THE MEMBERS OF THE CONSORTIUM.



During a 2014 session of its social-recreation After Opps program, Opportunity Knocks staff introduced the process of pickling to its Friday cooking group. Cooking has long been a staple activity of this program, but the pickling session would change the organization's mission forever.

Guided by these "Warriors", Opportunity Knocks embraced the pickle production process. The agency recruited the Life Shop team, its day program for adults older than 22, to take on the task of developing a marketing and business plan for this fledgling business. Before long, Knockout Pickles not only developed into Opportunity Knocks' first vocational program, but also became its first Warrior-driven social enterprise.

Patrick O'Rourke was on the ground floor of Knockout Pickles, involved in every aspect of the enterprise. He has shown great leadership in developing the production process and the marketing. He has taken a hands-on approach in advertising by eagerly donning the pickle suit at events, working the booth and selling jars at these same events. Additionally, he has met with potential clients, helping to close deals. Patrick has blossomed with this venture. Patrick's growth through Knockout Pickles is the essence of the opportunity and impact of all the innovative programs at Opportunity Knocks.

Opportunity Knocks participants are Warriors. We believe in their voice. We believe in an interdependent connection between Warrior and community. We believe in a fearless exploration of life's experiences unhinged by abilities. We believe in wellness. Our programs are built on those beliefs. We offer a series of programs for teens and young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Program activities are embedded with a focus on peer leadership, health and wellness, social interaction and community connections.

Contact us.

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[facebook.com/pages/Opportunity Knocks/172233927251?ref=br_tf](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Opportunity-Knocks/172233927251?ref=br_tf)



While Oak Park Township Senior Services has many programs for older adults, it also assists senior citizens with cognitive issues including dementia and developmental delays. The Senior Services Care Coordinators provide case management to promote independent living.

In May 2012, Robert [name protected for privacy], a gentleman with "borderline intellectual functioning", was living independently in Oak Park and was referred to Senior Services by another agency. After a home visit, Care Coordinator Heidi Jasien identified the need for improved housing. Since Robert had severe knee pain, he had trouble managing the stairs to his apartment, and the building didn't have an elevator. In addition, Robert's air conditioner needed to be replaced.

Ms. Jasien contacted the Celebrating Seniors Program and arranged for Robert to receive a new air conditioner. She also facilitated Robert's applications to subsidized buildings better equipped for residents experiencing mobility issues.

Robert's new 1st floor Oak Park apartment doesn't have stairs. He also has a senior ride-free transit card so he can go bowling, attend concerts, and visit friends. With subsidized coupons provided by Oak Park Township, Robert also enjoys visiting the Farmer's Market.

Oak Park Township's Care Coordination Program played a critical role in helping Robert relocate to a more comfortable and air-conditioned apartment. Because of the support he receives from community agencies including Oak Park Township Senior Services, Robert is now independent and thriving in his new living environment.

Oak Park Township designs and administers services, grants, and partnerships that benefit senior citizens, at-risk youth, and financially challenged community members; assists in planning and funding local mental health services; and provides voter services, property tax information, and appeal assistance.

Contact us.

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Community Mental Health Board of Oak Park Township

The Community Mental Health Board of Oak Park Township (CMHB) is a branch of Oak Park Township. The CMHB is comprised of nine residents appointed by the Township Supervisor with the approval of the Township Trustees. One CMHB member is a Township Trustee.

The purpose of the Community Mental Health Board is to assist in planning, developing, coordinating, evaluating, and funding mental health services in Oak Park. This includes services for persons with mental illness, alcohol or other drug dependence or developmental disabilities. The Township's Community Mental Health Fund provides over \$1 million in financial support for programs and services to 12-20 agencies per year in Oak Park.

DD CONSORTIUM AGENCY LIST

Aspire

aspirechicago.com

Community Support Services

cssservices.org

Oak-Leyden Developmental Services

oak-leyden.org

Oak Park Senior Services

oakparktownship.org/departments/seniors

Opportunity Knocks

opportunityknocksnow.org

PACTT Learning Center

pactt.org

Riveredge Hospital

riveredgehospital.com

Seguin RCA

seguinrca.org

Suburban Access, Inc.

subacc.org

The Answer, Inc.

theanswerinc.org

UCP Seguin of Greater Chicago

ucpseguin.org

West Suburban Special Recreation

wssra.net

You can show your support for our Consortium members and the great work they do by visiting their websites - learn more, donate, volunteer, and follow them on social media. We appreciate your support!