I have learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, **BUT PEOPLE WILL NEVER FORGET HOW YOU MADE THEM FEEL.**

- Maya Angelou
One key to lifelong learning is having a sense of wonder. It engages our senses and sparks emotion, curiosity and interest. Wonder is felt when we accomplish something beyond our expectations or experience the extraordinary.

At Little City’s ChildBridge Center for Education – a therapeutic day school – teachers work with students to develop those qualities by helping them identify and manage their emotions to create the optimal learning environment.

Through the Zones of Regulation program, students learn to identify their emotions, understand it’s OK to have those feelings and then use different tools to get in the right state of mind to learn. When teachers know how students are feeling and why, they can create scenarios in which students can identify the emotions in someone else. This helps them utilize appropriate coping skills to get back on track.

One student who has made significant progress is Jalen. When Jalen struggles to communicate with words to express his feelings, he simply points to the appropriate colored zone on his check-in sheet or writes or types his feelings. Teachers can then reference the activities that help with that emotion, such as typing a letter when he feels sad, to help him remain calm and focused.

“I am very proud of Jalen’s use of emotional regulation strategies,” said Karoline Dean, Administrator for the ChildBridge Center for Education. “While Jalen still has room to grow, he is making tremendous progress and is a role model for his peers.”

The program has been in place for a year and is in nearly every classroom, so students are always in an environment that promotes wonder, excitement and achievement.

ChildBridge Center for Education – a therapeutic day school – provides a distinctive pathway to achieving success and greater independence by uniquely preparing students for lifelong inclusion, at home and in the community. Find out more. Contact Karoline Dean, School Administrator, at 847-221-7728 or kdean@littlecity.org.
When people see Katie, they can’t help but smile. That’s because when Katie walks into Little City’s Countryside Center, she can’t help but smile.

Katie is one of the nearly 200 people with developmental disabilities who participate in the vocational skills program where participants earn a paycheck while working in the safe environment of the Countryside Center.

Katie’s joy is contagious as she takes it upon herself to go above and beyond her daily job and help others any time she can.

She has become a jack-of-all-trades at the Countryside Center, engaging in her primary production work such as the project with Sloan Valve as well as helping in the maintenance department when needed. Her tremendous progress has also enabled her to participate in the work enclave at Cole Parmer with her co-workers.

Katie has also become a leader at the Center as she often helps those in New Horizons – a program for those with more severe developmental disabilities – as well as the seniors in Golden Opportunities.

Jessica Ritsch, a Qualified Intellectual Disabilities Professional at the Countryside Center, glows when talking about the joy Katie brings to her work and others each and every day.

“Katie used to have difficulty accepting jobs that she did not like as much as others but that has completely diminished,” said Jessica. “She is always laughing and socializing with her peers in her work areas and completes every job with almost no errors.”

There are opportunities for people of all skill levels, whether it is forming parts and components or assembling packages. Corporations look to Countryside Center participants to do the finishing work they need.

Each and every day, Katie’s mother is thrilled and thankful to see such joy radiating from her daughter’s smiling face.

“I am so happy she gets to socialize with others outside of Mount Saint Joseph (where Katie lives),” her mother said. “She will even get calls on the weekend from her friends at Countryside Center.”

Adult Life Enhancement serves more than 835 adults with developmental disabilities. You can help. Find out more. Contact Wendy Mayfield, Director of Day Services, at 847-438-8799 or wmayfield@littlecity.org.
One look at the inside of Little City’s Center for the Arts and it is hard to feel anything but overwhelming awe. A seemingly endless world of colors, creations and unique communication fills nearly every inch of a building that does little to hold back the awesome power of the art inside.

The final creations reach as far as Denmark, where an art enthusiast paid for a piece to be shipped to his home. Some reach England, where a group of exhibitors have asked for a collection to display. There is no language or culture Little City’s artists cannot speak to with their work.

One such artist is Joe, who has been a longtime artist in the program. Like all artists at the Center, Joe is given the freedom to explore and experiment with different styles until he finds the one that feels right. He paints amid short episodes of twirling dance steps that complement the looping marks which he is committing to canvas or paper.

"Joe’s work displays an astonishing degree of variety, with each new piece achieving new effects of texture, and relationships of form and color," said Frank Tumino, Center for the Arts Administrator. "Like all our artists, we let them be driven by their desires and needs and we just try to guide them to see what they are capable of."

The Center continues to break barriers, and there is high demand for the ever changing collection that is available for sale at www.littlecity.org/arts. The proceeds benefit both the artist and the program. There is wonder and awe to be found in each piece of art from Little City residents that shows they truly do live in A Great Big World.

Center for the Arts has nurtured artists whose work has appeared at museums in six different countries. You can help. Find out more. Contact Frank Tumino, Center for the Arts Administrator, at 847-221-7161 or ftumino@littlecity.org.
Hope is what Verne Carson and his late wife, Merle, needed decades ago when they first noticed their daughter Jamie was not developing at the same pace as other infants and seemed to have significant disabilities. Hope flourished in their hearts, along with optimism and gratitude, after seeing the positive impact Little City had and continues to have on their daughter and others with developmental disabilities.

Jamie entered Little City in 1963 when she was nine years old. Verne has been a great supporter of the organization ever since. Not only has he been part of the Little City family for more than 50 years, he continues to serve on the Little City Board of Directors.

"Little City has been an important part of our lives, helping Jamie reach her full potential," said Verne. "She learned to read and write, how to make friends, how to pick up new skills and how to work in the community, enjoying more than 15 years working at Mario Tricoci Hair Salon & Day Spa. She was even awarded "Employee of the Year."

Verne is an outspoken proponent of Planned Giving. "Little City must remain vital and vibrant," he said. "It is my hope that everyone realizes the importance of Legacies & Bequests, as it will help ensure the brightest future possible for individuals with developmental disabilities, and their families."

Planned Giving – Legacies & Bequests is committed to providing a personalized and confidential approach to help meet your philanthropic goals. Find out more. Contact Ed Hockfield, Chief Development Officer, at 847-221-7880 or ehockfield@littlecity.org.
Gardens can be a constant source of inspiration, and it is no different at Little City. Our Community Garden serves as a constant reminder to love, care and grow what we have in this special place.

You can feel the passion and patience it takes to nurture each flower and vegetable in the garden in the walls of every Little City building. The hard work and care it takes to build the beautiful fencing is appreciated beyond measure, and can be seen in every staff member who looks after Little City residents each and every day. Little City’s garden truly is an embodiment of the entire organization.

The fence is a symbol of a huge heart and giving spirit, something that would never have been possible without the love and dedication of Colin Ziomek, a local Eagle Scout who was inspired to beautify Little City. Colin spent three days over the summer managing and directing a team of 26 volunteers as they revived the garden and surrounded it with fencing. Colin raised more than $750 to complete the project that will continue to give both spiritual and physical gifts to Little City residents for years to come.

It is volunteers like Colin that further inspire Little City to maintain focus on its mission and continue to passionately pursue a future filled with hope, happiness and optimism.

In FY16, Little City hosted over 2,000 volunteers working over 10,000 hours on 65 projects. You can help. Find out more. Contact Catrina Johnson, Manager of Volunteer Services, at 847-321-7904 or cjohnson@littlecity.org.

TO PLANT A GARDEN IS TO BELIEVE IN TOMORROW.
– AUDREY HEPBURN
They say if you do what you love, you never work a day in your life.

Luckily for Danny B., he has found a job that lets him do what he loves most – helping people – and he is most grateful for the opportunity to do so.

Through targeted job development, which matched his unique talents to a local employer’s needs, Danny secured a position at Jersey Mike’s on Dundee Road in Palatine in early October. He works from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., five days a week, performing a number of essential functions including stocking cookies and chips, as well as greeting customers and ensuring the dining area is clean and tidy.

No matter the task, Danny is grateful for being able to help his co-workers. The gratitude flows both ways.

Danny’s boss and store manager, Susan Isaacson, said she has been a fan from the day he was hired.

“He has a contagious positive attitude every single day. He is always happy, smiling and joking around. I think that positive energy is the most important thing to have; attitude is absolutely everything. If you don’t have that one employee that is always happy and smiling no matter what, then I think you have an incomplete team.”

Danny’s appreciation for the job was on full display right away as he worked hard to learn the new routine and skills that were needed to be successful in his work. Susan said training Danny helped her become a better manager as well.

“I would say training him was difficult, not more difficult. I feel that anyone in an instructor position, whether it be in a school or work setting, must realize that in order to teach or coach effectively, you must adapt to different learning styles. Everyone learns differently. Everyone absorbs, processes, comprehends and retains information differently; some learn by listening to information, some learn more hands-on. As a manager, if I were to try and train every employee that I hire in the exact same fashion, no one would remember a word I said.”

Employment First Program has a 94% retention rate with over 40 different employers in the past year. You can help. Find out more. Contact Casey B. Burke, Director of Employment and Day Services, LifePath Adult Services, at 847-221-7854 or cburke@littlecity.org.
It's a late December day and the kind of cold that cuts through the warmest layers hange in the air. It's the kind of cold that would cause most people to think twice about going outside and consider staying at home with a comfortable blanket.

But not Kevin, Danny and even 63-year-old Jerry. These three Little City residents possess an elevated sense of pride that tells them there is work to be done, regardless of the conditions. So they walk across the Little City campus in the sub-zero temperatures and head to the indoor pool. If they're cold from the walk you wouldn't know it. Within minutes, they are in their swimming trunks and hit the water.

Coach Tim Lahart isn't surprised he didn't have to convince the swimmers to practice. Their pride provides all the motivation they need. When their shoulders are heavy and their lungs start to burn after 30 minutes of swimming as much as possible with minimal breaks, that pride kicks in again and Tim has to remind them to stop.

"It's amazing how hard they work," Tim said. "Sometimes I have to remind them to take a break."

Swimming is one of only two Special Olympic sports Little City participates in that requires a prerequisite physical test. In swimming, an athlete must be able to swim 25 meters without stopping and in the other sport, powerlifting, a person must complete a 45-pound deadlift.

Both programs have grown rapidly at Little City as Tim is always on the lookout for athletes looking to push their limits. He often finds potential participants in the day program, like when he saw the quiet Jerry seemingly ready to walk on a treadmill for hours on end.

"If you gave him his music and put him on a treadmill, he'd still be there tomorrow walking if you didn't stop him," Tim said. "I'm amazed at how much energy he has at his age."

The sports are tough, and Tim is proud of the strides the athletes make each year. In 2016, 27 Little City athletes won 42 medals across multiple sports.

"We expect to do well and that's how we prepare," Tim said. "With a wide spectrum of abilities, it's fascinating to work at different levels and see them reach new goals."

Fitness & Recreation has added many activities, including Snowshoeing, Golf, Sensory Fitness, Choir and Dance. You can help. Find out more. Contact Tim Lahart, Director of Fitness & Recreation, at 847-221-7311 or tlahart@littlecity.org.
BUT WHERE IS LOVE?
WE SAVED THE NUMBER ONE POSITIVE EMOTION FOR LAST.

Dear Friends, Family and Supporters,

Love is the essence of Little City and encompasses every emotion showcased in this annual report, and more. With that in mind, we pose these questions believing full well that the answers are clear.

What’s “Love” got to do with it? Actually, everything.

Can you really power an organization with Love? Of course, the love of purpose.

Love is a strange word to use in the context of business and management, but it shouldn’t be. Love is a normal concept in fields where compassion, care, and making positive emotional connections are at the core of an organization. Love is always there – we just need to pay attention. Like a WiFi signal, just because you don’t see it, and sometimes are not tuned to it, does not mean it isn’t there. We just need to tune into it. The moment we do, we see it, and we’re all connected to one another. The benefits speak for themselves. Just look at our merger with Countryside Association for People with Disabilities – which became official in July, 2016 – Better Together.

Love is neither alien nor misplaced in our organization. The fact remains: it’s one of the key drivers in staying mission-focused, maintaining our composure, staying strong and positive, persevering through challenging times, and seizing every opportunity to add immeasurably to the individuals who call Little City home.

WE DEEPLY APPRECIATE THE INCREDIBLE GENEROSITY FROM THOSE WHO SHARE OUR LOVE OF PURPOSE AND PASSION, TO ENSURE A FUTURE FILLED WITH HOPE, HAPPINESS AND OPTIMISM. ON BEHALF OF LITTLE CITY, WE THANK EACH AND EVERY ONE OF YOU FOR YOUR ONGOING SUPPORT.

Yours in service,

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Legacies and Bequests come to Little City as a result of the gracious philanthropy of individuals who made the important decision to include us in their estate plans.

We are immensely grateful for their generosity, vision, and life legacy to support our mission. To learn more about planned giving, please contact Edward Hockfield at 847-221-7880 or ehockfield@littlecity.org.

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FINANCIALS

Since 1959, Little City has provided innovative programs and services that foster development and personal fulfillment for the children and adults it serves. To do so, Little City relies on government funding and direct contributions from individuals, corporations and foundations.

In fact, 85 cents of every dollar directly support first-class programs and services for hundreds of children and adults in need. Little City must raise an average of $110,000/individual/year* to maintain the quality of life desired for each child and adult at Little City. Beyond the state-required minimal standard of care, Little City’s quality-of-life standards encompass programs and services that foster a life of health, recreation, education and culture that protect one’s rights, beliefs, choices and aspirations.*

*The shortfall is due primarily to less than full reimbursement from the State of Illinois for services rendered, but also due to Little City’s commitment to a quality of life.

The pie charts provide a breakdown of Little City’s operating expenses and revenues for Fiscal Year 2016 dating July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016.

TOTAL AGENCY (LCF)
For over 55 years, Little City has developed innovative and personalized programs to fully assist and empower children and adults with autism and other intellectual and developmental disabilities. With a commitment to attaining a greater quality of life for society's most vulnerable citizens, Little City is A Great Big World that actively promotes choice, person-centered planning and a holistic approach to health and wellness.

Our mission is to be a leader in providing the best options and opportunities to live safely, learn continuously, explore creatively and work productively. To inspire, innovate, advocate and pursue success with passion and purpose, and to create hope, happiness and optimism for individuals with disabilities and their families.