

Transforming lives since 1981



TOWARD MAXIMUM
INDEPENDENCE
TRANSFORMING LIVES

2022/2023

**ANNUAL
REPORT**

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Executive Director Message

“We can’t become what we need to be by remaining what we are.”

- Oprah Winfrey



One thing we can count on in life is the presence of change. Change can be subtle and discrete, or it can be dramatic and tumultuous. No matter how it enters our lives it doesn't discriminate who it will affect. The only thing we can control is how we allow it to change us. Will it be a positive or negative change is the question? In the course of only three years, sparked and ignited by the horrific pandemic crisis, change undoubtedly transformed our perspectives and viewpoints. We interact, eat, shop, work, and play differently, whether we realize it or not. If we are honest, the metamorphosis of a new normal has made many of us hesitant and a little fearful to turn the corner toward our futures. However, we cannot grow if we do not move forward, and we must move forward with courage and with greater resolve to make a positive impact in this world. We can no longer take for granted the connections we have with others and ignore what we have been called to do. We must truly learn from change and view and value our friends, families, co-workers, and classmates in an even more caring way. As we at TMI have all returned to providing services in full and are interacting with each other, we have wholeheartedly seen a change for the better. We understand, even more now, that life is short and so very precious. There is an energy of love, hope and gratefulness in the air. We are focused on the quality of life of our clients more than ever before. Our vision is magnified and our mission to help those in need has been made clearer and strengthened during these challenging times. Just as a caterpillar must endure the cocoon during change, we too had to face many struggles as an agency before breaking through and stretching our wings to display our beautiful and radiant colors for all to see. With this kind of change taking place at TMI, I am very excited to see what our amazing future holds and encourage you all to get involved and become a part of this remarkable transformation. Looking back has made us extremely grateful as we move forward. Join us in making the world a better place, "Your TMI Wings Await You!"

DR. RACHEL L. HARRIS
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rachel L. Harris".

About Us

INNOVATIVE & TRUSTED SERVICES

Headquartered in San Diego, Toward Maximum Independence (TMI) was formed in 1981 to provide Independent Living Services as a vendor with San Diego Regional Center. In 1986, the agency became a California nonprofit 501(c)3 corporation. Over the next several years our services were expanded to include Employment Solutions, Community Living Services, Family Support Services and, in 2000, for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. In 2020, we launched employment services for veterans with disabilities. TMI grew from a small sole-proprietorship based out of a home office, to offices in San Diego, Escondido, Temecula, El Centro, and Corona.

We strive for excellence and are committed to providing our clients with the highest quality of services while strengthening our relationships and deeply engaging with all of our stakeholders and community partners.

CORNERSTONES

All people we support experience full inclusion in their daily lives in all aspects of community life. We believe that the three cornerstones of a strong life foundation are: living as independently as possible, having the opportunity for real work for real pay and a safe and caring home.



MISSION

To provide personalized services to those who require support, enabling them to make informed choices regarding how they live, work and function productively and independently in the community.

VISION

Achieving valued roles, making critical life-defining decisions, gaining the respect of others, and contributing to the life of the community are opportunities enjoyed by all citizens.

CORE VALUES

Respect: having a valued place and role among a network of family, friends, colleagues and neighbors. Choice: having autonomy in decision making both in small every day matters and large, life defining issues. Competence: having the opportunity to perform functional and meaningful activities or work with whatever level of assistance necessary. Full inclusion: sharing ordinary places with a growing network of personal relationships and making a contribution to the life of the community.

Departments



SCAN FOR SERVICES

EMPLOYMENT SOLUTIONS

Employment Solutions provide programs for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD), veterans with disabilities and the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. Our clients can absolutely enjoy the rewards of being a contributing member in society and have the satisfaction and pride that comes with having a job or volunteering. We work with our clients to secure and maintain gainful employment in the community, if desired, and also work in collaboration with local businesses to develop volunteer opportunities for our clients. We offer a variety of employment programs.



COMMUNITY LIVING SERVICES

We are honored to offer Independent Living and Supported Living Services to individuals with IDD. In order to live in a home or apartment in the community, one person may need live-in support, while others may need only intermittent support once or twice a week to help with such things as meal planning, grocery shopping or banking.



TMI's mission and core values are the driving force behind our emphasis on helping people develop and build skills so they can do things for themselves; be independent.

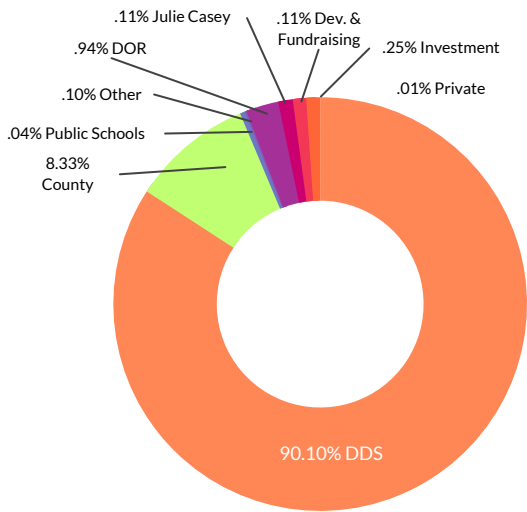
FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES

TMI provides Resource Family placements for children with IDD, as well as additional innovative programs to meet the needs of the children and families we serve.



Family preservation is important and, even when temporary placement is necessary, the ultimate goal is reunification. In cases when it is not in the best interest of the child and the courts have advised against a reunification plan, TMI has been successful in finding a long-term stable Resource Family for the child where they are loved and nurtured.

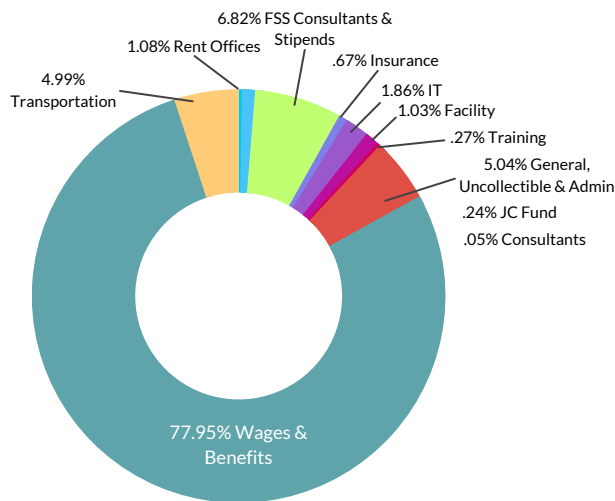
FINANCIAL RESULTS



INCOME

- Dept. of Developmental Services (DDS)
- San Diego & Imperial Counties
- Department of Rehabilitation
- San Diego Public Schools
- Private Pay
- Investment Revenue
- Development & Fundraising
- Julie Casey Honorary Fund
- Other

Program Revenue - DDS	\$19,333,967.87	90.10%
Program Revenue - San Diego & Imperial Counties	\$1,787,359.00	8.33%
Program Revenue - Department of Rehabilitation	\$201,628.39	0.94%
Program Revenue - San Diego Public Schools	\$8,260.00	0.04%
Program Revenue - Private Pay	\$2,934.59	0.01%
Investment Revenue	\$54,071.76	0.25%
Development & Fundraising	\$24,039.87	0.11%
Other	\$22,153.92	0.10%
<u>Julie Casey Honorary Fund Contributions</u>	<u>\$23,036.74</u>	<u>0.11%</u>
Consolidated Income	\$21,457,452.14	100.00%



EXPENSE

- Consultants
- Julie Casey Honorary Fund
- Facility
- Family Support Consultants & Stipends
- Insurance
- IT Expenses
- Rent - Offices
- Training
- Transportation
- Wages and Benefits
- General, Uncollectible & Administrative

Consultants	\$11,320.00	0.05%
Julie Casey Honorary Fund	\$50,498.18	0.24%
Facility	\$215,681.92	1.03%
Family Support Consultants & Stipends	\$1,423,679.16	6.82%
Insurance	\$139,053.38	0.67%
IT Expenses	\$388,205.64	1.86%
Rent - Offices	\$225,042.06	1.08%
Training	\$56,441.06	0.27%
Transportation	\$1,041,109.19	4.99%
Wages and Benefits	\$16,270,606.28	77.95%
<u>General, Uncollectible & Administrative</u>	<u>\$1,052,573.35</u>	<u>5.04%</u>
Consolidated Expenses	20,874,210.22	100%

Board of Directors

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Alice Campbell, Chair
Retired
MMA Insurance

Bryan Shull, Vice Chair
Vice President | Branch Service Manager
Bank of Southern California

Jocelyn Gonzalez, Treasurer
VP Finance & Accounting
Americas at WD-40 Company

Cathy Bishop, Secretary
Retired Software
Program Manager

BOARD MEMBERS

Minnie Courtingon
Special Education Teacher

Norman Faleono
Resource Parent

Michele Mamerto
Real Estate Assistant

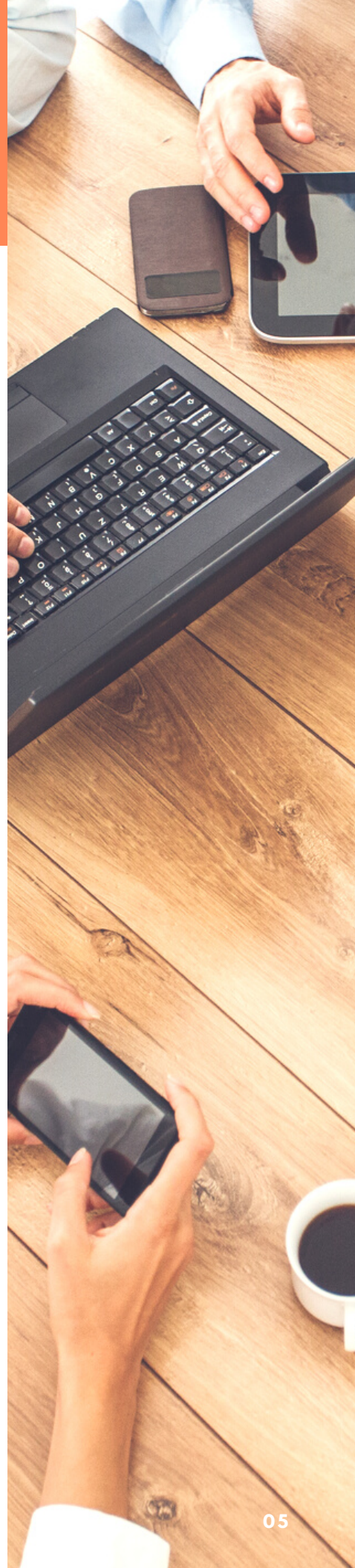
Heather Martin
Mental Health Professional

Tyler
Client Representative

Jenna Plante
TMI Case Manager
Staff Representative

Donaven Yousif
Financial Advisor
Edward Jones

Christopher Walters
Lawyer
Walters Law Group



Thank You

COMMUNITY PARTNERS



San Diego Business Supply

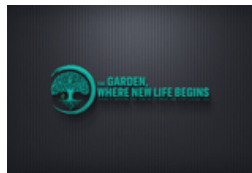
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DONORS

The support of our community for more than 42 years has helped to directly impact the lives of our clients. We can't thank you enough!



DONORS



DONATE

“One of the marvelous things about community is that it enables us to welcome and help people in a way we couldn't as individuals. When we pool our strength and share the work and responsibility, we can welcome many people, even those in deep distress, and perhaps help them find self-confidence and inner healing.” - Jean Vanier

Highlights

SERVING MORE THAN 1,200 CHILDREN & ADULTS

- Through the relationships and connections we have built with various organizations and apartment buildings, we have been able to secure affordable housing to allow several clients to achieve their dream of moving into their own home.
- We have successfully increased our Supported Living program in our El Centro office by 33% and have a constant stream of referrals coming in due to our outstanding reputation.
- Successfully advocated for several clients to have their services and financial assistance reinstated through very lengthy appeal processes. During this time, we worked creatively to find other resources, grants, etc. to allow these individuals to remain in their homes.
- Three new Supported Employment (SE) groups were established; two at Naval Hospital and one at Camp Pendleton. Camp Pendleton also hired nine new clients that joined the existing groups. At the end of the fiscal year, we had a total of **23 groups** and **69 clients employed in full-time permanent positions with benefits**.
- Our SE Department, through employer engagement efforts, was able to help create employment opportunities for TMI clients with more than **32 new employers** that had never employed TMI clients in the past. One notable new employer was **Snap Dragon Stadium**, which hired six clients at the same time due to the diligent work of SE Division Manager Julie Dickerson. Other companies include **San Ysidro Health Center, Pendry Hotel, Town & Country Hotel, United Pacific Gas Station, Magnolia Adult Day Care Center, Boys & Girls Club of Poway, Chipotle Grill, Cava Restaurant, State Department of Rehabilitation, The Sheraton & Westin Carlsbad Resort and Spa, The Maid Brigade, Stater Bro., Hanes Warehouse, Big Five, Park Ridge Elementary School, and the California Citrus State Historic Park and Chino Hills Park-Riverside**. We are excited about these new employer relationships as it gives us the opportunity to educate others on the benefits of hiring individuals with disabilities. Through our efforts of collaboration and support, our goal is to build a solid working relationship with these employers that will translate into future employment opportunities for new TMI clients.
- Our SE Department will be expanding our services for Department of Rehab (DOR) clients in the 23/24 fiscal year. We have already begun supporting clients in participating in the State Internship Program (SIP). This program gives TMI clients the opportunity to intern with the State of California at various state departments such as DOR itself, State Parks, the State Unemployment Department, and others. We are in the process of becoming vendored for the Student Services Program and Customized Employment, both of which will present new opportunities for our clients.
- We increased the number of clients served in El Centro by 37.5%; from 80 to 110.
- 100% of all donations went to our TMI Julie Casey Honorary Fund to directly assist our clients. **This fiscal year alone, we issued nearly \$20,000 from the fund to our clients for essential needs including rent, food, medication, clothes, and much more.**





SCAN TO SHARE

NORTH COUNTY STAND DOWN

TMI Veteran Employment Manager Cesar Peraza was honored to attend North County Veterans Stand Down (NCVSD) which assists with enabling all veterans and their families to receive much-needed services in a safe, friendly, and secure environment. At the event, Cesar shared information regarding our innovative employment program for veterans with disabilities, as well as met some outstanding individuals.

Cesar had the honor of meeting Joe Heard, one of two sanctioned combat photographers during the Vietnam War; a conflict in Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia from November 1, 1955 until the fall of Saigon on April 30, 1975. Joe shared his first-hand experiences while in battle where he disregarded his own safety to capture the heroic acts of our fighting military forces. Joe's photos are a painful reminder of the heroic acts by our military men and women. He shares them with those who will listen.

"Meeting Joe was something I will never forget," said Cesar. "He is a remarkable person who survived a devastating war. I am grateful for his service to our country and the heroic stories he continues to share to educate the younger generations."

Cesar was joined at the event by our client and fellow veteran Victoria. Victoria received assistance with her veteran benefits, as well as medical and dental needs, and was also able to obtain critical information and legal support for her mother who is ill.

"Stand Down was a life-changing experience times three!" said Victoria.

The Stand Down coordinators, Matt and Carrie Foster, are a married couple. Matt served 24 years in the Marine Corps and is responsible for organizing and coordinating this amazing annual event.

Victoria, who is currently working at the Camp Pendleton Commissary as a Custodian, was thrilled to have the privilege to meet Matt and Carrie who she credits with being responsible for her life-changing experiences.

"Being at this event with Victoria and seeing the impact it has had on her life, along with many other veterans, has truly affected me," added Cesar. "As a veteran myself, I am grateful that this event is available for veterans who are in need of assistance."

Cesar also had the opportunity to meet Sandra Durbin, the first female African American US Navy Air Traffic Controller. Sandra is currently the California State Commander for AMVETS, a veteran service and support organization.

"Sandra is a living legend among those who helped to carve out diversity in our US military," said Cesar.

Please visit North County Veterans Stand Down to learn more about their annual event and all that they are doing for veterans. Should you or someone you know need additional veteran resources, please contact North County Veterans Stand Down at info@ncvsd.org or for employment services for veterans with disabilities contact us at info@tmi-inc.org.



Senior Center



SCAN TO SHARE

Danny, David and Ezequiel have been volunteering at the Moreno Valley Senior Center since January of 2013 with the assistance of their TMI Integrated Work Job Coach Isidro Mendoza. While Eric, Gibraan and Robert “Bobby” have been volunteering there since July 2017 with their TMI Job Coach Marina Pineda. Both groups are essential to the Senior Center and take pride in the service they provide to the seniors.

The groups volunteer at the Senior Center Monday through Thursday. Their main role is to assist in the serving of hot plates to 80 - 90 seniors! Bobby and Ezequiel have gained an ample amount of knowledge, confidence and experience by going behind the counter and serving the hot meals. With the help of their Job Coaches, they have both become independent in putting on their hair nets, gloves and aprons after thoroughly washing their hands in preparation for serving the food on each plate. Eric, Danny, David, and Gibraan run the front of the house by passing out each plate to the seniors and taking their drink order all while wearing a smile on their face!

“It is such a treat to see them work so hard and love what they do,” said TMI Division Manager Bianca Romero. “They have come a long way and although some days are still filled with differences between their personalities, when they are serving the food they come together to make sure that they are providing the best service. They are respectful to all the seniors and to the kitchen staff who are so gracious and give them the opportunity to make a difference. These are such hard working groups along with their Job Coaches who deserve to be praised and recognized for their hard work!”

“Each group is missed when they are not here. We couldn’t do the work without them and their Coaches. They help us so much! We are so happy to have them every day!” – Elizabeth, Senior Center Kitchen Manager

We are very proud of these awesome TMI teams! Keep up the great work everyone!

Thank you to the Moreno Valley Senior Center for partnering with us to give our clients an opportunity to learn new skills while giving back to the community. We are extremely happy to see our clients succeeding while doing something that they love!



Deaf & Hard of Hearing



SCAN TO SHARE

The first TMI group who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing (DHH) is up and running in Hemet at the STAT (Save the Animals Today) Animal Sanctuary, a nonprofit organization where horses that are too old to ride serve as companions and therapy animals. Andrew, Douglas and Travis are with the TMI Community Integration Training Program which is designed to provide vocational and social skills training for our clients to participate in their community. With the assistance of TMI Job Coach Julius Howey, who can communicate with the group effectively through American Sign Language (ASL), the group is off to a great start!

The clients love helping Tony who is one of the STAT Site Coordinators on the farm. They enjoy making his job easier and seeing all the different animals there. With the farm laying on 20 acres of land and plenty to do, it is easy to get distracted and wander off. It was extra challenging for Julius and other staff at the property to get the groups attention, but Julius was able to effectively communicate with the group to ensure that they were clear about their duties.



“Having a Job Coach like Julius is amazing,” said TMI Division Manager Eva Prendes. **“He has a personal connection with the DHH community as he was raised by parents that are DHH. Growing up in that community has made Julius sensitive and patient with the clients while also being able to properly communicate and understand their needs.”**

With many aging and disabled animals at the sanctuary they have a particular appeal to the special needs community and veterans. Seniors find it a treat to feed the animals or just enjoy being outside in the picnic area. The handicap accessible garden is an added treat for all. The farm is also a place to bond with your kids while volunteering there.

“The STAT staff absolutely enjoy this group,” added Eva. “They are learning so much from them and are even picking up on some sign language. The clients love going to the farm every week and look forward to the beautiful scenery that they get to enjoy.”

Andrew, Douglas and Travis, who also volunteer at Ocotillo Restaurant and Simpson Center, as well as community and local park trash pick-ups, have received praise from the City of Hemet and residents for their outstanding volunteer work. Way to go!

Thank you to the sanctuary for partnering with us to transform lives!

In Memory

We said a very sad final farewell to our beloved client Brian Garcia. Our Integrated Work program assisted Brian with integrating into the community and making new friends. Our support focused on working with Brian to help him be more comfortable with socializing and to independently have conversations with others. We also focused on his safety including reminding him that he needed to keep his helmet on, which he disliked wearing, in order to protect his head due to him having seizures.

When Brian was just three years old, he had cancer but went on to survive and live to 28 years old. Sadly, he ultimately passed away due to a seizure.



“Brian will always have a place in our hearts,” said TMI Associate Division Manager Jasmine Oldham. “I will remember him for his kind heart and mischievous smile. You knew when you saw him that he was going to joke around or pull a prank on you or someone else. More importantly, you knew that he was having a good day.”

Brian will be remembered for his great sense of humor, always being ready to go with a smile on his face and for being a very caring person.

He learned to integrate, express himself better, follow instructions, as well as to open up more to others and share. He loved basketball, and enjoyed listening to music, doing puzzles, and shopping.

“Brian was always joking with me,” said his TMI Job Coach Sonia Tellez. “He would pretend he was upset, then all of sudden burst out laughing out loud. It always made me laugh. I will really miss him.”

Brian lived with his family who loved him dearly and always advocated for him. They were attentive to everything he needed and wonderful with communicating with him. In addition to his mom and dad, he had two brothers and one sister. His number one advocate was his mom Alma, who was dedicated to making sure Brian had anything and everything he needed to be happy.

“I admired Brian for giving his all to live his best life despite any health struggles he would go through,” added Jasmine. “He was truly a special person.”

Our condolences to Brian’s family, his TMI staff and all who knew and loved him. He will be missed very much.

May Brian rest in peace.

Q&A with Sarah

Our client Sarah, who has autism, shared her journey with the TMI Paid Internship Program which led to paid employment at a job that she absolutely loves! With that has come newfound confidence and independence. Although Sarah has only been with TMI less than a year, she has proven that disability doesn't mean inability.

Q. How has TMI assisted you?

A. My first TMI Facilitator Karen Ritchie helped me get a Paid Internship at Christy's Toy Outlet at the Viejas Outlet Center in Alpine. My new TMI Facilitator Mary Hanson then taught me how to do so many things in my internship. When Mary teaches me new skills, she shows me what to do, does it with me, and then lets me do it by myself. She always praises me when I do it right and never gets mad at me when I don't, even if she has had to help me 18 times. Mary helps me clock in using the GT Independence app and when it didn't work right, she texted my TMI Associate Division Manager Colleen Gatchalian who then brought paper timesheets which Mary helped me fill out so I could get paid. Mary has taught me how to straighten all the toys and books in the shop. She has also helped me do inventory, pricing and restocking. Mary is always there and makes me try things for myself once she has taught me how to do my job.

Q. How does being employed make you feel?

A. I love my job! Having a job makes me feel valued and worthwhile. I am glad that Christy hired me one month before I completed my internship and that she trusted me enough to take a vacation on my first day as her employee. My favorite thing to do is to make grab bags. I go through the toy bins, mark paper bags, fill them, staple them shut, and then place them on the rack.

Q. What life challenges have you faced?

A. I have asthma and nut allergies. I also deal with feeling worried and having occasional meltdowns.

Q. How have you faced these challenges?

A. I deal with asthma by taking medicine by inhaler when I start wheezing. I deal with my nut allergies by avoiding any food with nuts. If I eat something with nuts, my sister Amy has Benadryl. I deal with feeling worried and having meltdowns by taking deep breaths, going for walks outside, riding my exercise bike, talking to my doll Savannah, and by sleeping.

Q. How do you feel when you are able to manage these challenges?

A. It makes me feel great and accomplished.

(continued)



Q&A with Sarah (cont)



SCAN TO SHARE

Q. What do you enjoy doing in your free time?

A. I enjoy riding roller coasters and traveling. We have horses which I like to ride. I also like to watch my favorite TV shows, *Big Bang Theory* and *The Curse of Oak Island*. I love watching movies especially *Cinderella Story* with Hillary Duff and *The Wizard of Oz*. I also enjoy reading books, coloring, and making art with glitter and glue, as well as listening to CDs by my favorite musicians: Katy Perry, Taylor Swift, Avril Lavigne, BB Rexha, Halsey, and Lady Gaga. I like taking care of my cats, Frankie and Black Cat, who live in my room with me. I love to help keep the house clean by sweeping, vacuuming, dusting, organizing the refrigerator, and doing the dishes. I also enjoy working out to dance videos.

Q. Is there anything else that you would like to share with our readers?

A. I love my family! I have two sisters, Lisa and Amy, and my brother Brandon. Brandon and I used to dress up for Halloween, it was fun! I grew up in a condo in Pine Valley but now I live in Boulevard with Amy. My mom had a stroke a few years ago and she became an angel. Lisa used to ride motorcycles, but she got in an accident and now uses a wheelchair. I used to ride with Lisa on her motorcycle. I held on tight and wore a helmet. Lisa is my niece Cameron's mom. Cameron and I are the same age. Growing up, I remember going on vacations to the beach in Texas. When we went to Yuma, I went on the swings with Brandon and Cameron. I went to Mountain Empire High School where I got good grades and was a cheerleader.

Q. What are your hopes for the future?

A. I hope to work more hours at Christy's Toy Outlet.

“Sarah has a positive outlook on the world,” said Mary. “She is the embodiment of ‘When life gives you lemons, make lemonade.’ If there are thunderheads in the sky, she calls them curly clouds. Sarah waits on the rain and thunder to end and for the rainbow to appear. When she has a problem or gets in trouble, she thinks about what she has done and figures out how to make things better. She does not want to disappoint anyone, especially her sister Amy. I hope that she achieves all her dreams, continues to grow in independence and that she is safe and happy.”

Amy had this to say on the San Diego Autism Support Group Facebook Page: “I am so proud I could cry! Sis was hired by the small business where she was doing her paid internship! She has been so diligent about being there, being on time and doing her best job! Her Job Coach through TMI has been so awesome! Sis couldn't have done it alone. Shout out to Mary for all her hard work! Special props to Christy's Toy Outlet! They have been super supportive of Sis too! I am having a super proud sister/mom moment! I know our Angel Mom is super proud of her too!”

You are amazing, Sarah, and all of us at TMI are very proud of you as well! Mary, you are a wonderful TMI Facilitator. We are extremely fortunate to have you with us and appreciate you very much. You two make a great team! Thank you to Christy's Toy Outlet for partnering with us to transform Sarah's life!



ANNUAL REPORT



Connect With Us!

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ANNUAL REPORTS

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