A leader in supporting people with developmental disabilities.
A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT AND BOARD CHAIR

"Coming together is a beginning, staying together is progress, and working together is a success."
— Henry Ford

Dear Friends,

Reflecting on the past year, we are grateful for the many opportunities we have had to work together with you to accomplish the goals for year two of strategic plan 2016-2019. Thanks to your generous support, we are pleased to report the following:

• To meet the growing needs of families with children on the autism spectrum, we opened our fourth residence for individuals with autism.

• As part of our commitment to provide individualized continuum of care to our community, staff took part in specialized training to address the needs of our aging population. The training was made possible by the John and Maria Lauricella Fund.

• Our Health and Wellness initiatives continue to assist our community with resources to live longer, happier and healthier lives.

• The Family Support program partnered with Framingham Public Schools to assist vulnerable families of children with special needs to better navigate the system and access resources.

• Our Wings for Autism program continues to grow and gain national media attention. This innovative program has helped so many families to take a test run through the airport boarding process and help ease the stress of travel.

• Day Habilitation’s flourishing internship program supported 11 interns during the year.

• Community partnerships continue to expand to include more colleges and school districts.

• Plans are underway to develop a new Clinical Department within the Charles River Center.

We are in the process of developing a new strategic plan for the agency. This process includes a rigorous analysis of both internal and external factors influencing both our industry and the Charles River Center. Staff at all levels, along with board members, are engaged in the process. This new strategic plan will chart our course through the next few years to strengthen Charles River’s position as an industry leader in providing quality services.

In all we do, we are reminded of your commitment to the mission of the Charles River Center. Our programs require enormous support from the community-participants, staff, families, the board of directors, volunteers, community partners and donors. We are extremely grateful for the many ways that you support Charles River Center. Your gift of time, money and energy inspires us to do more.

With deepest gratitude,

Anne-Marie Bajwa Alice Taylor
President and CEO     Chair, Board of Directors
Expressive Therapy
Day Habilitation has continued to grow the therapeutic aspect of the program. Client Day Habilitation Service Plans are written with goals in as many as seven areas: affective, behavior, communication, independent living, self-help, sensory motor, and social development. Expressive Therapy is one of the therapies that promote a functional application of the goals and can influence modifications. If a client needs to work on social development, for example, singing in music class can allow them to meet goals set for social skills such as turn-taking, waiting, communicating, initiating and making choices.

Internship Program
The Day Habilitation Intern Program has continued to draw interns from a number of schools, primarily Lasell College, Lesley University graduate program, Bridgewater State University graduate program and the Massachusetts Institute of Health Professions graduate school. The number of interns has risen to an average of eleven a year, and they come from a variety of disciplines including Human Services, Speech Language Pathology and Expressive Therapy. In these reciprocal relationships, Charles River Center benefits from the student’s perspective of current teachings at top educational programs and the interns get invaluable experience guided by professionals in a highly therapeutic Day Habilitation program.

Technology
Each year, we have increased the number of people who have high tech Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) devices. While low tech versions—such as wallets or books—to help a client to express their needs have been around a long time, it is the use of high-tech versions that harness the power of computing that are enabling people across a wider range of disabilities to communicate. These include iPad-like devices with “direct select” touch screens and screens using eye gaze systems for those with limited mobility. These devices have been available only in recent years, but their use is spreading quickly.

Many young adults entering the Day Habilitation program have received their devices while still in school and are adept at using them, but many have had their device only a short time and need a great deal of training to achieve proficiency.

Staff, under the direction of Carol Alden, a speech language pathologist and vice president of the Day Habilitation program, and Gayle Greenstein, M.Ed., CCC-SLP, a speech language pathologist, help clients master the use of the devices.

Additionally, for those individuals who cannot communicate and do not have AAC devices, Gayle prepares, analyses and submits the needed data and documentation to have new devices approved by MassHealth for our clients who need them.
Two Employment Success Stories

A large crowd attended the Babson College retirement party for Leslie, in celebration of her 29+ years of service as a laundry attendant. Since 1988, Leslie had managed commercial washers and dryers, laundering, ironing and folding a variety of linens. Many friends also gathered at a party hosted by the Charles River YMCA in celebration of Bill’s 15 years of service. Since 2002, Bill worked part-time as a Day Porter maintaining the cleanliness of various areas of the facility.

The Futures Program College Connection

Within Employment and Day Services division, the Futures programs at Needham and Natick focus on skills-building and activities that foster independence. As part of that program, in collaboration with Curry College in Milton, and Emmanuel College in Boston, individuals become students. Paired one-on-one with a college undergraduate, they spend one day a week on campus, working on skills in a classroom, having lunch in the cafeteria and developing relationships with advisors and students. The educational and social aspects are equally important parts of the program.

In the fall of 2017, ten individuals visited Curry College for ten weeks of classes. Paired with a psychology upperclassman or woman, they worked on interests such as money skills, increasing vocabulary or, like Mike, conversations and social skills. There was a graduation that family members attended, and a certificate awarded.

In the spring of 2018, Emmanuel College hosted five individuals for six days over six weeks. Again, paired one-on-one with a student, the focus was working on an individual’s specific goals. Julia and Melissa worked on communications and self-advocacy.

Horticulture Program Continues to Grow

The innovative Horticulture Program at the Charles River Center is now three years old and continues to thrive. Adults with autism, Down syndrome, cerebral palsy and other developmental disabilities have participated. Under the direction of Program Coordinator Mike Bolio, vegetables, flowers, native plants and fruit trees are grown and cared for throughout the year. The program is modeled around what a typical season looks like for a New England farm.

The collaboration with Needham Community Farm continues, including the one-year-old Mobile Market, which runs one night per week from June until October. The market switches weekly between several Needham Housing neighborhoods distributing vegetables, flowers and fruits from the Charles River Center’s garden.

The program also works in coordination with Drumlin Farm Wildlife Sanctuary in Lincoln, the Habitat Education Center and Wildlife Sanctuary in Belmont and the Hutchins Farm in Concord.

New this year, six individuals participated in picking apples at Hutchins Farm for a month and a half during the fall harvest. It was the program’s first paid, group employment site!
Wings for Autism  
Seven Years Young

This successful nationwide program, created in 2011 by Charles River Center, helps those with autism or intellectual/developmental disabilities with the process of air travel, without making an actual flight. Families practice going through the procedures at the airport in a fun, relaxed environment, gaining needed familiarity and skills to take a trip successfully. Charles River Center continues to host Wings for Autism twice a year at Boston’s Logan International Airport thanks to a collaboration with Massachusetts Port Authority, the Transportation Security Authority and many dedicated volunteers.

Social and Recreation Programs for Adults

Every month at Charles River Center, a dance and a party are held for adults 22 years and older. Every event has a theme and colorful flyers with the details are circulated via emails, the website and posted on social media. There may be a costume party for Halloween, a Valentine dance in February and a St. Patrick’s dance in March.

Enrique attends as many events as he can. His mother, Tanya, says, “Enrique looks forward to the monthly dances. It is a wonderful way to unwind and socialize among peers and staff. Thanks to everyone who makes this happen!”

There are also Saturday Community Groups for adults living at home. These typically five-hour sessions offer respite to caregivers and a fun, social opportunity for individuals. Groups this year visited Larz Anderson Auto Museum in Brookline, Swan Boats in Boston, Capron Park Zoo in Attleboro and Marina Bay in Quincy.

Family Trainings

Family Trainings for caregivers continued to be offered throughout the year. The topics of these workshops and educational seminars continue to respond to the interests of parents. This year’s presentations included Massachusetts Benefits and Entitlements, Transition Café and MassHealth Forum.

Sexuality and Socialization, iPad Apps, Safety Care and Using Technology to Increase Independence were scheduled to answer a trending interest in sexuality, self-determination, continuing to live at home and the use of technology to aid in safety and independence.

Adult Family Care

Adult Family Care (AFC) is a MassHealth-funded service that allows a family to receive ongoing support from a case worker and nurse when they care for an adult family member in their home. Since the Charles River Center program’s launch in 2015, the AFC program has grown steadily and now supports 25 families. The AFC program is also assisting families with the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) funded Agency With Choice, a self-direction program encouraging home care. It provides families the opportunity to hire and train staff to work in their home and customize the care received. This co-employment model engages AFC program staff to guide the family through the planning, scheduling, hiring, and ongoing management of their support workers.

With the current upward trend in the number of families interested in providing dependent adult loved ones with more individual choice, self-determination and self-directed care, we anticipate that the program will continue to grow in years to come.
RESIDENTIAL SERVICES

Condor Road, Sharon
Charles River Center’s new group residence on Condor Road in Sharon is the fourth home for individuals on the autism spectrum. It is set up in the same way as its two sister homes in Sharon on North and South Main Streets with all of the residents in their early to late 20s.

Condor Road also follows the same practices as the other homes for individuals with autism. They have set schedules that help organize their days. Residents are busy attending day programs as well as either the Charles River Center Employment and Day Services or Day Habilitation programs. Most participate in a community activity every day. On weekends they are out and about enjoying activities with a lot of exercise built in.

The model of structure through schedules, staying engaged through activities and exercise has been so successful that it has been incorporated at other group homes.

Staff Trainings Begin Thanks to the Lauricella Fund
The John and Maria Lauricella Fund was created in 2018 to support workforce development for Charles River staff to enhance skills and provide specialized training to care for the aging population—currently 15% of the Charles River Center clients or residents are 65 years of age or older—and people with complex needs.

Thanks to the fund, Residential staff completed the dementia care certification program through the Institute of Professional Care. The goal of the program is to enhance skills in recognizing the signs and symptoms and provide a better understanding of person-centered care for the individual with dementia. The fund also allowed our residential nursing staff to attend a skin and wound management course through the Wound Care Education Institute.

Because of these opportunities, staff will train other Charles River staff members in this specialized care, increasing Charles River Center’s skills in providing an individualized continuum of care to the community.

Pathways to Friendship
Charles River Center’s Residential Services launched the Health and Wellness Project with a primary goal of promoting and establishing supports for six guiding Pillars of Health and Wellness. One of those pillars is Healthy Relationships and one of the programs that was adopted under Healthy Relationships was Pathways to Friendship.

Pathways, a collaboration between The Arc of Massachusetts and the Massachusetts Department of Developmental Services, provides training on approaches to improve community inclusion and the establishment of friendships between people with or without disabilities. Charles River Center is affiliated, and an active member of Pathways and has five individuals participating in the first Pathways to Friendship group. The group’s goal is for the individuals to establish connections in the community, including outside of Charles River.

Richard Lawrence, a residential director, is on the Pathways committee and says of participant Priscilla, “She’s just blossoming in terms of the connections she’s making. It is just wonderful to see.”
### REVENUES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State Agencies</td>
<td>$20,325,698</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicaid</td>
<td>$3,218,914</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Pay</td>
<td>$1,736,990</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development</td>
<td>$590,262</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HUD</td>
<td>$329,644</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investments*</td>
<td>$371,728</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*excludes unrealized gains

### EXPENSES BY PROGRAM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Residential Services</td>
<td>$14,273,976</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Therapeutic Day Services</td>
<td>$2,848,383</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBDS and Employment Services</td>
<td>$2,895,972</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Support Services</td>
<td>$2,594,775</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General and Administrative</td>
<td>$2,349,071</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fundraising</td>
<td>$251,893</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### EXPENSES BY CATEGORY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Salaries and Taxes</td>
<td>$16,809,156</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupancy</td>
<td>$2,749,472</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programs Support</td>
<td>$2,609,088</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee Benefits</td>
<td>$1,956,577</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Fees</td>
<td>$1,089,777</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

WE ARE PROUD THAT OUR OVERHEAD IS ONLY 10%, SO 90¢ OF EVERY DOLLAR YOU GIVE GOES DIRECTLY TO THOSE WE SERVE.
MISSION STATEMENT

To empower and support people with developmental disabilities by offering high-quality, individualized opportunities that foster independence and community inclusion.

CHARLES RIVER CENTER BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Alice Taylor
Chair
Richard Zimbone
Vice Chair
Gilbert Cox, Jr.
Treasurer
William Day
Secretary
Anne-Marie Bajwa
Raymond Brassard
Joseph Breitfelder
Cynthia Chaston
Clare Dunsford
Jill Fadule
Nicole Gowe
Richard Lawless
Leslie Lockhart
Gerald McTernan
Philip V. Robey
John Timmerman
Walter Tobin

An affiliated chapter of The Arc
A certified CARF Gold Seal Organization