



Possibilities.



Made possible.



# Opportunity.

Made possible.



Dear Friends,

Once again I am excited to share stories of achievement and perseverance by the children and adults we are privileged to support. We find inspiration in each individual's personal journey as well as the journey of their supportive families.

It's been said many times before, but these stories reveal deep lessons for all of us. The story about Jesus and Sophie enlightens us about a parent's vision and persistence. The story about Dawn's pursuit of personal goals toward independence and real relationships reveals inner resilience. The story about volunteer work through God's Kitchen demonstrates the importance and multiple benefits of giving back to our communities. Yolanda's story about acquiring a job at Old Navy and no longer requiring MOKA services is equally inspiring.

We remain grateful to so many of you who are essential to ensuring our continued success—most importantly the children and adults who have chosen MOKA to provide service, family members and supportive friends and advocates, our funding partners and our many generous donors to the MOKA Foundation whose role it is to support and highlight the work of its parent organization, MOKA. Our work would likewise not be possible without our talented employees and our committed board of directors. Again, thank you for your heartfelt support.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tom".

Thomas Zmolek  
Executive Director

# Access.

Made possible.

## % of Individuals Served by Program/Service



4%

Autism  
Services



17%

Residential  
Supports



30%

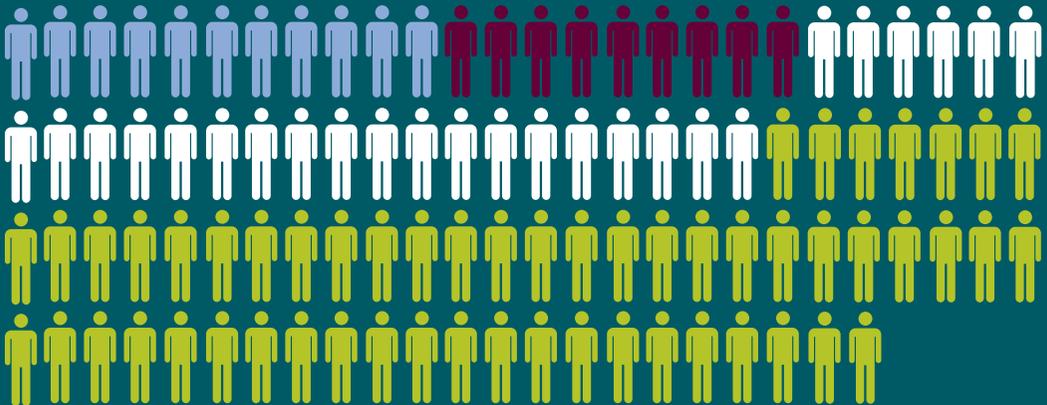
Supports  
Coordination



49%

Community  
Supports

## % of Individuals Served by Disability



● Autism      ● Mental Illness      ● Undisclosed

● Intellectual / Developmental Disability (I/DD)

# Progress.

Made possible.



## Love and Support Lead to First Words

The first words Stephany and her husband Jose heard from their son Jesus and their daughter Sophie must have been sweet. The courage shown by this couple in raising not one, but two children with autism inspires us.

Four years after their oldest son Jose was born, Jesus was the latest gift to their growing family. Initially, Jesus seemed to be developing normally but then somewhere between eighteen months and his second birthday, Jesus stopped using any words. At first, they thought his lack of word use was related to a loss of hearing, but testing revealed Jesus' "perfect" ability to hear. They then began to suspect other causes including autism and were immediately referred to the Helen DeVos clinic in Grand Rapids.

When the physician shared Jesus' diagnosis of autism with his parents, he asked "Why aren't you crying?" Evidently, this is the response of most parents upon hearing this difficult news. Stephany shared that she had anticipated the diagnosis and told the doctor, "I came here to get help."

Just prior to this time, the family welcomed a new member to their family who they named Sophia, and whom they affectionately refer to as Sophie. In September 2015, while the family was searching for providers of ABA Treatment for Jesus, Sophie experienced a traumatic physical illness which left her on life support and with loss of all movement on the right side of her body. After months of therapy at Mary Free Bed and with other supports, Sophie made miraculous progress, first with feeling in her foot, then sitting up and eventually



walking. On top of these many struggles, Stephany started to see signs of autism and had her daughter tested as well.

Jesus started in MOKA's ABA program only three months after his sister's traumatic experience. After six months, Jesus made significant progress including imitating gross motor movements, starting to imitate sounds and eventually using words again. According to his mother, he now uses about 10-15 words without help and this "...blossomed once he learned to imitate motor movement."

Sophie started work with MOKA's Youth Autism Specialists in December, 2017 and has made great strides including many new communication milestones, improved response skills, and engagement in social activities with her peers.

Stephany's advocacy for her children clearly made a difference and as a vocal advocate for early identification and intervention says, "I can't stress early intervention enough. I see so many parents who are afraid to get a diagnosis because they are afraid of what the future holds afterwards. But for me, it was like, "okay, this diagnosis gets me a ticket to get resources and help."

Impressively, the autism diagnosis did not change the way that Stephany and Jose see their children. As Stephany put it, "Jesus is still Jesus whether he has autism or not. That does not change who Jesus is. It's just part of how he functions; his personality is the same..." This clearly demonstrates Stephany and Jose's inclusiveness and supportive attitude.

Read the full story at: [www.moka.org/success-stories](http://www.moka.org/success-stories)

# Achievement.

Made possible.



## Meet Yolanda.

Cheerful, bright, and positive are all words that can be used to describe Yolanda, and now independent can be added to that list.

Yolanda has always shown tenacity and enthusiasm in her approach to life, qualities which led to her success in MOKA's Skill Building program. If an experience can help her learn and grow, she is not likely to turn it down. In fact, one of her favorite parts of the Skill Building program was volunteering in the community because she was able to learn new skills, meet new people, and help others.

When Yolanda entered MOKA's program, her long-term goal was to obtain a job. She knew reaching her goal would take a lot of personal motivation and determination. Having access to multiple volunteer sites enabled her to identify likes and dislikes in order to narrow down her job search. "Being out in the community and volunteering at places like Goodwill helped me gain the hands-on experience I needed to prepare me for a job," shared Yolanda.

Aaron Cope, Supervisor of Community Supports, played a key role in Yolanda's person-centered approach to reaching her goal. Aaron worked with Yolanda for just over five years, supporting her through every step of the process—from exploring career possibilities, to searching media for job openings, coaching her for the interview, and even accompanying her to the interview for support. Yolanda achieved



success in the Skill Building program when she was recently offered a job at Old Navy. She readily accepted. Yolanda revealed she “loves being around people and working in a business that I really enjoy.”

One noticeable difference in Yolanda is her level of confidence.

“It has risen tremendously since I began working with her,” says Aaron. The ability to explore multiple facets of her skill sets, interact with others, and make a positive and meaningful contribution to the community that she loves are all factors that have strengthened her poise and self-assurance.

Acquiring this job also helped her build and retain her own independence. She is now able to pay bills, maintain a place to live, and even go out for a night of her favorite activity, karaoke. After celebrating a major milestone, her one year anniversary with Old Navy, Yolanda looks forward to the future and achieving new goals.

**“Acquiring this job also helped her build and retain her own independence. She is now able to pay bills, maintain a place to live, and even go out for a night of her favorite activity, karaoke.”**

Read the full story at: [www.moka.org/success-stories](http://www.moka.org/success-stories)

# Impact.

Made possible.

## Volunteerism



of MOKA Individuals are engaged in volunteer work.

(National core indicators show that 36% of individuals in Michigan are engaged in volunteer work).

## Employment



**1 out of 9**  
MOKA individuals have a job.

(National Core Indicators show that 16% of individuals in Michigan have a job. MOKA has recently received a grant to start a JOBS Program in Kent County).

## New Funding



in new grant funding was received over the past four years



for the construction of new community-based homes

## Hours Worked per Week

# 13,177

hours of direct service per week  
provided to individuals and their families

OR

# 685,206.9

## total hours

by MOKA Direct Service Professionals

## Satisfaction



97%  
of MOKA stakeholders  
recommend MOKA  
services to others.

## Autism Rates in the United States



**1 in 37**  
boys



**1 in 151**  
girls

On April 26, 2018, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released new data on the prevalence of autism in the United States. This surveillance study identified **1 in 59 children** (**1 in 37 boys** and **1 in 151 girls**) as having autism spectrum disorder (ASD).

# Independence.

Made possible.



## Meet Dawn.

Dawn is a woman who fiercely values her independence, therefore, when she moved in 2010 to one of MOKA's Specialized Residential homes, her immediate personal goal was to move to a setting which provided her the greater independence she desired. Dawn also places high value on her family, her relationships with others, community involvement, and employment. Because she needed to build her resume, she started to volunteer at her local YMCA. She first worked at the front desk greeting people as they walked in, scanning membership cards, and completing other customer service duties. In 2015, after only a few months with the YMCA, Dawn was approached by YMCA leadership with a paid job opportunity in the Facilities Department where she was asked to maintain the pool area—gathering used towels, laundering and folding them, and restocking them in the pool area. She noted, “They kind of talked me into working there. I didn't think it would go that quick.”

Dawn continued to work hard on her goals and in 2017, chose to relocate to a more independent setting within a community adult foster care home. Since moving, she has maintained her employment, acclimated to a new environment, established friendships with peers, developed rapport with support staff, and has expanded her transportation options by participating in Travel Training with The RAPID. [Note: Travel Training is a service that any community member can partake in if they would like to learn more about navigating public transportation along the fixed bus route. The fixed route is cost-effective and provides riders



flexibility with schedules.] This was important to Dawn as she is a woman on the go. Learning the RAPID was critical, not only in getting to her job, but also her health care appointments and social engagements.

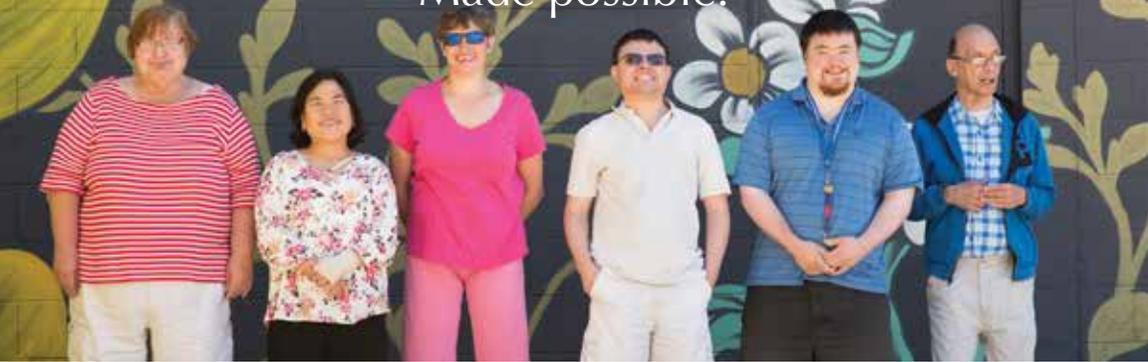
Another unique element about Dawn's move toward greater independence is how it has increased her natural support system. She established healthy, meaningful relationships prior to her most recent move and remains connected with several of her former housemates and support team. Her friends—Cathy, Bobbie, Katrina and Elise—genuinely care about each other. Dawn frequently shares with her Supports Coordinator her adventures in the community with these friends—movies at local theatres, dining at Culver's, shopping at Target or Wal-Mart and various retail outlets. They all attended a Kid Rock Concert at the Van Andel Arena. And of course, sometimes they simply get together to celebrate birthdays and holidays, share a meal, and have cake and ice cream.

Dawn has participated in various services and programs at MOKA, even pilot programs/services, providing valuable feedback which MOKA, after review, decided to implement. Dawn is a strong advocate for herself and others. She is compassionate, independent, knowledgeable, and determined to work towards her hopes and dreams and, along the way, doing what she can to better the lives of others.

Read the full story at: [www.moka.org/success-stories](http://www.moka.org/success-stories)

# Friendships.

Made possible.



## Delivering Food and Friendships

Gracie looks forward to Sam arriving at her doorstep every Wednesday at 11:30 am. Her anticipation is due not only to the hot meal Sam is delivering as part of his volunteer work for God's Kitchen, but the fact that they have built a relationship over the past 48 months.

Interactions like these help to build relationships all over Kent County through MOKA's partnership with Meals on Wheels and God's Kitchen. Karrie Brown, Program Supervisor, shared that the goal of the program "...is to help people receiving meals remain independent, continue to live in their own home and know that there's support coming." Karrie continued, "another big impact of the program is reducing loneliness by having someone knock on your door every day and say hi to you—now you have daily interaction. It's brief, but it's important."

***“Over the past four years, groups of MOKA volunteers have been donating their time every week and last year delivered more than 3,500 meals to families.”***

Over the past four years, groups of MOKA volunteers have been donating their time every week and last year delivered more than 3,500 meals to families.



One of the major advantages for the individual MOKA volunteers is seeing the direct impact of their efforts. According to Karrie, “At some of our other volunteer sites, we do things behind the scenes, like prepare lunches or materials that benefit people, but we don’t get to see who gets them. At God’s Kitchen, volunteers are personally handing a meal to someone, so you get that connection with them. Each volunteer has an assigned home. Like, “this is the house I get out at,” and they have that regular face-to-face interaction, delivering the meal to the same person each time. They get to see they are making a contribution in a person’s life. It’s meaningful.”

In a paradoxical way, this outreach by volunteers at MOKA to help those in need in the community is at the same time helping achieve the personal aspirations and goals of the volunteers themselves—to build relationships, to contribute back to the community and grow in leadership skills.

Read the full story at: [www.moka.org/success-stories](http://www.moka.org/success-stories)

# MOKA.

Made possible by you.

You make such a difference. Your donation to the MOKA Foundation transforms lives. Just read the stories in this report—you made that possible. You change lives, you build brighter futures, you provide hope. There is still more work to be done, and more individuals that need your help. Donate online at [moka.org/donate](http://moka.org/donate) or by calling 800-644-2434 ext. 670.

## Thank you for your support!

*Jenna VandeKamp*  
Development Director

### Donors

Airway Oxygen  
Alan P. Cranmer  
Alicia Cusack  
Alternative Lawn Care  
Alyssa Serrell  
Amanda M. Minzey  
Arend Gilligan  
Barbara Park  
Baskin's Termite and Pest Control  
Beacon Recycling  
Bell's of Whitehall  
Bergman Lock & Security LLC  
Beth A. Hoffer  
Brenda L. Peterson  
Bruce Essex, Jr.  
Chadwick Busk  
Charles Zamiara  
Chucks Landscape Management Inc  
Civil Development  
Clinton Galloway  
Community Shores Bank  
Dale T. Ertzinger  
Daphne M. Lewis  
Deanna Runions  
Debra Allen-Burns  
Debra J. Golliver  
Denise Balk  
Denise R. Anderson  
Diana L. Mapes

Donald J. Butler  
Doreen Oom  
Dorothy M. Bowne  
Downtown Firestone  
Edward C. Crans  
Eileen Shedleski  
Emily Sweet  
Enterprise Holdings Foundation  
Ernest C. Webber  
Frosty Cove  
Garland Reed  
Gary Siegersma  
Giving Assistant  
Godwin Plumbing Inc  
GoodSearch  
Gresham Driving Aids Inc  
Gull Pointe Pharmacy  
Holly L. VanVolkinburg  
Hoogerhyde Safe and Lock  
Huizingh's Furniture  
Integrity Business Solutions  
James Combs  
James E. Koster  
Janet L. Fowler  
Janice A. Rerecich  
Jason Powers  
Jenna VandeKamp  
Jessica Pressley  
Joann Crumm  
JoAnn Michael  
John G. Anderson

Joshua T. Canale  
Joy Werkema  
Julia Brennan  
Kalamazoo Long Term Care, LLC  
Karen L. Johnson-Cole  
Karrie Brown  
Katherine Collier  
Kelsey A. Newsome  
Kendra L. Verhaar  
Kimberly S. Jakus  
Knights of Columbus  
Langlois Furniture  
Lee Ann Shedleski-Holmden  
Lighthouse Insurance Group  
Lisa Hammond  
Lora V. Cooper  
Marilyn Von Der Heide  
Mary Brooks  
Mary Gillhespy  
Mary Gilligan  
Metropolitan Appliance Service  
Michele L. Wells  
Michelle Kelly  
Muskegon Fire Equipment  
Petronia L. Reese  
Pinnacle Construction Group  
Pioneer Resources  
Premier Caulking, Inc.  
Rebecca L. Parsley  
Robert L. Ferencsik

Roger and Michelle Morgenstern  
Roger Fraser  
Rush Pediatric Neuropsychology  
Ruth A. Burkert  
Salvatore Maniscalco  
Sandra M. Morales  
Sarah V. Bulthuis  
Shar Boerema  
Sharlene Karsten  
Shawna A. Martin  
Sherry L. DeVriendt  
Shoreline Recycling  
Staal LLC  
Stephanie Hill  
Stephanie M. Grippo  
Sue Buckner  
tbd Solutions, LLC  
Terry D. Hendricks  
Thomas Zmolek  
Tom A. Stranz  
Tracey A. Hamlet  
Veneranda V. Mukantaganda  
Vinh-Yen Duong  
Wasserman's Flowers and Gifts  
WBBW- Big Boy Grand Rapids  
Wedgwood Christian Services  
Wilson & Wynn Interventions  
Zandra J. Wrobleski  
Zervas Facility Maintenance

## **Directed Gifts**

### **Academy**

Lynette M. VanDuine-  
VanVleet

### **Academy/Stan's Home Program Fund**

Kammie S. Huitt  
Lisa M. Druer

### **Allegan Supported Living Program Fund**

Jamie Moss  
Michelle L. Bates-Phipps  
Teresa Bronson

### **Amanda Program Fund**

Caitlin J. Koster

### **Autism Services**

Community Foundation for  
Muskegon County  
The Dolores Kuklewski Trust

### **Crystal Lake Program Fund**

Christine A. Grant

### **Empowerment Fund**

Kayla S. Tompkins-Davis  
Lisa Parriott  
Michael White

### **Jones Circle Program Fund**

Lynette M. VanDuine-  
VanVleet  
Christine A. LeClear

### **Kent Endeavor Program Fund**

Skultety Living Trust

### **Mullins Home Program Fund**

Beth A. Hoffer

### **Ottawa Supported Living Program Fund**

Meredith Wilson

Stephanie Rameau

### **Pierce Street Program Fund**

Melissa J. Rockey

### **Skyline Drive Program Fund**

Donna J. Holmberg

### **Slocum Program Fund**

Athena Carson

### **Sophia Program Fund**

William C. Stauter

## **Gift-In-Kind Donors**

Buffalo Wild Wings  
Devon Bell  
Frauenthal  
Karen Knowles  
Lighthouse Insurance Group  
Max - n - Marley's  
Mr. B's Pancake House  
REDI RENTAL  
Red Robin  
Shoreline Inn & Suites  
The Cheese Lady  
The Station Bar and Grill  
Two Men and a Truck  
Lakeshore  
Wasserman's Flowers  
and Gifts  
West Michigan Symphony

### **In Memory of Leon "Bud" Stedman**

Ella Emert  
Jerry Smith

### **In Honor of Tom Ferencsik**

Lisa Mead

## **In Honor of The Levitts**

Judith Geyer

### **In Memory of Eric Reddig**

Richard and Janet Krosschell

### **In Memory of Athena Carson**

Barbara Pulaksi  
David Streeting  
Merle Bernhardt  
Myra A. Mieras  
Roger Silk  
Susan Haas

### **In Memory of Joanne Gaunt**

Marci Bessinger  
Gayle Larson  
Debbie Parker  
James and Jeanne Hunt  
Janice McBride  
Stephanie Jend  
Nora Wilke  
Reymundo and Sherry  
Mascorro  
Linda G. Eckerman

### **In Memory of Gerald O'Brien**

Amanda Stipek  
Gary Miller

### **In Honor of Mark Hendricks**

Terry Hendricks

## **MOKA Corporation Board Members 2016 - 2017**

Leon Stedman, President  
Gerald O'Brien, Vice  
President  
Charles Zamiara, Secretary  
Christopher Benedict,  
Treasurer  
Judi Kuiper  
Dale Rietberg

## **MOKA Foundation Board Members 2016 - 2017**

Gerald O'Brien, President  
Leon Stedman, Vice  
President  
Charles Zamiara, Secretary  
Thomas Stranz, Treasurer  
Judi Kuiper  
Dale Rietberg

## **Private Insurers**

Aetna  
Anthem Blue Cross and Blue  
Shield of GA  
Blue Care Network  
Blue Cross and Blue Shield  
of Michigan  
Cigna  
Cofinity  
Tricare - Health Net Federal  
Services

## **Funding Partners**

Allegan CMH  
Health West  
Lakeshore Regional Entity  
Michigan Rehabilitation  
Services  
network180  
Ottawa CMH

## **Community Collaborators**

Michigan Rehabilitation  
Services  
Muskegon Lakeshore  
Chamber of Commerce  
WEAVE Project Partners  
Hope Network  
Spectrum Community  
Services  
Thresholds  
YWCA West Central  
Michigan\*

*\*Lead Agency in Project*

*Special thanks to the Wege Foundation for a grant to MOKA to start a JOBS Program in Kent County. The program started in June 2018.*

## **In Memoriam**

We want to take this opportunity to recognize the contributions of two board members who passed away this past year. In February, 2017 Gerald O'Brien died after a brief illness. Jerry, as he was known, was the son of founding board member Gerald O'Brien, Sr. and served as President of the MOKA Foundation and Vice President of MOKA. In August, 2017, Leon H. "Bud" Stedman also died due to ongoing health challenges. Bud was a founding member of MOKA and Board President for nearly 40 years. We thank them again for their commitment to MOKA's mission and their many years of service.



715 Terrace Street  
Muskegon, MI 49440

(800) 644-2434  
[contact@moka.org](mailto:contact@moka.org)  
[www.moka.org](http://www.moka.org)



NONPROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
**MUSKEGON, MI**  
PERMIT NO. 102