



FALL/WINTER 2015

# SPOTLIGHT ON UCP Seguin of Greater Chicago

## JERRY'S JOY-FILLED JOURNEY TO COMMUNITY-INTEGRATED LIVING, PAID WORK...AND MORE

DESPITE EXPERIENCING MANY DEVELOPMENTAL AND LIFE CHALLENGES,  
JERRY RAMEY IS A HAPPY, ENTHUSIASTIC, AND CARING MAN.



UCP Seguin participant Jerry Ramey (center) with McGrath Lexus co-workers David Garcia (L) and Luis Salas (R).

In 1994, due to complications with his family situation, at age 17 Jerry was placed in an alternative residential setting. He was first served at Maryville Academy in Des Plaines and later at The Hope School Learning Center in Springfield. When Jerry reached adulthood, the Department of Children and Family Services sought placement with an adult services agency in the Chicagoland area, close to where he was raised.

In spring of 1997 UCP Seguin received Jerry's referral for services. Agency staff members were confident that Jerry would greatly benefit from what UCP Seguin had to offer. Jerry made a site visit of the Carr Center for employment and training in Cicero, as well as an overnight stay at a Community Integrated Living Arrangement (CILA) group home.

Jerry was thrilled by what he saw – community-based employment programs, one-on-one training and assistance, and the close-knit, family atmosphere of the CILA group home. In 1997 Jerry made the decision to transfer to UCP Seguin. He moved into a CILA group home, and he continues as a contented resident of the community of

LaGrange. Provided with a stable and welcoming home, Jerry was able to successfully finish his last two years of special education at Lyons Township High School.

Jerry was accepted into UCP Seguin's Community Employment Program, which helps participants move into the world of work through job placement and on-the-job supports. Over the next several years Jerry showed his skills in a series of jobs, from street curb painter to restaurant lobby attendant, from hotel custodian to dishwasher.

In the past decade Jerry kept his skills sharp working as a marketer for the Seguin Auto Center – one of our two primary Seguin Enterprises – and as a dishwasher/custodian in the Carr Center. Employment staff recognized that Jerry could be successfully employed at a regular community business, yet needed to find the right fit to match his skills and minimize his challenges.

Over a year ago McGrath Lexus looked to hire a Service Greeter, and Employment staff immediately thought of Jerry. At his interview he thoroughly impressed McGrath's Customer Service Manager, and started his job in September 2014. Jerry received job coaching and travel training from UCP Seguin's

Employment staff, and within 90 days he was working at McGrath Lexus independently. A UCP Seguin Employment Manager maintained ongoing communication with McGrath to ensure any concerns were quickly addressed.

Nine months after starting, Jerry was honored by McGrath Lexus with their first ever "Employee of the Month" award. Jerry is incredibly proud of his accomplishments . . . and so is everyone at UCP Seguin.

Jerry is one of more than 300 individuals with developmental disabilities who benefit from UCP Seguin's Community Employment Program. Having closed its sheltered workshop in 1989, UCP Seguin has turned its focus to community-integrated life skills training as well as job placement and on-site support, both at community employment locations as well as at the Seguin Auto Center and Seguin Gardens & Gifts. With UCP Seguin's innovative services, participants with developmental disabilities such as Jerry can become productive, contributing members of their communities.

Are you seeking a qualified employee like Jerry for your business, or know of an employer who is? Contact Laura Gonzalez at 708.222.4836... you'll be glad you did.

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# 'TIS THE SEASON OF GIVING...

## HERE ARE SOME STORIES OF PHILANTHROPY TO INSPIRE YOU



UCP Seguin is in the midst of year-long project designed to highlight stories of generosity in all its facets: "On the Table: UCP Seguin's 100 Stories of Philanthropy". In partnership with The Chicago Community Trust, the region's community foundation, and MB Financial Bank, a longstanding supporter of our organization, UCP Seguin is convening donors to share their own compelling stories of giving to a cause. Their stories are chronicled at our website, www.ucpseguin.org. Among those featured are community donors, family members, Board members, staff, program participants, and others – a whole range of "philanthropists" who have given their treasure, talents, and time.

### ONE THEME COMES THROUGH IN EACH OF THE STORIES: IT FEELS GOOD TO GIVE.

As the year unfolds, we look forward to sharing how "Friends of UCP Seguin" have shown their kindness, and in re-defining philanthropy across the many wonderful ways it can be expressed. Read below about some of the individuals who have made a difference in the lives of people with disabilities, enabling them to have "life without limits".

#### *Dr. Shankar and Mrs. Devi Sanwalani* *It's all in the family...and more*

More than a decade ago UCP Seguin initiated residential and day services to Vikas, a young man with autism and the son of Dr. Shankar and Mrs. Devi Sanwalani of Orland Park. "Vikas has benefited greatly from UCP Seguin's consistent loving care," the Sanwalanis report. The Sanwalanis believe it is their duty to be philanthropic because they feel they have been "blessed" – both through the services their son has received and by the quality of life they have enjoyed since moving from their native India to the United States. They have donated to the general good of the agency, but also to cover costs of new furnishings and improvements for their son's home in Forest Park – donations that also benefit Vikas' housemates, enabling them to live in a beautiful, functional, and safe home.



#### *Amy Jacksic and the Riverside Exchange* *Making the season brighter for people with disabilities*

Last holiday season Amy Jacksic learned of UCP Seguin's "Secret Santa" program to provide gifts to persons with developmental disabilities with little or no family. These individuals would not otherwise experience a major part of holiday cheer – gifts received due to the generosity of others. Amy recruited friends and local community members through an online community message board. She urged them to come together as a group to donate holiday gifts to several individuals served by UCP Seguin. As a result, two dozen Riverside residents – as part of the "Riverside Exchange" – provided gifts, or cash to purchase gifts, for ten very fortunate persons with disabilities who live in Riverside Township and other nearby communities. Because one woman listened to a need and asked others to help, this kindhearted community of people ensured a happy holiday season for people with disabilities.



UCP SEGUIN HAS BEEN GIVEN SEVERAL CHALLENGES.

# Can you help us meet them?

## ONE CHALLENGE

HELP US FIND EMPLOYMENT & HOUSING  
FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES



Back in the late 1990s Brian and Dawn Caden were seeking opportunities for their amiable, generous and joy-inspiring son Peter to participate fully in adult life.

Peter had recently graduated from Oak Park-River Forest High School. He and his parents were anxious to secure services from a well-run, innovative community organization. Fortunately for them UCP Seguin of Greater Chicago was able to fill that role.

While Peter was able to participate in the agency's employment and life skills training programs, the Cadens also sought a residential placement – a home where Peter could build skills and grow into adulthood. Through tireless advocacy the Cadens were successful in making that happen. Now Peter lives in a UCP Seguin home in his Oak Park community, where he is employed at the New Rebozo restaurant and his parents can stay well-connected to him.

Generous friends of UCP Seguin have pledged to match donations this holiday season to benefit the organization's outstanding programs, such as those in which Peter participates. **Help people with disabilities achieve their potential and advance their independence, through community jobs, residential supports, life skills training, and other innovative services provided by UCP Seguin.**

## ANOTHER CHALLENGE

HELP US IMPROVE THE LIVES OF PEOPLE  
WITH DISABILITIES FROM "EYES TO TOES"



People with disabilities often experience complications with matters that many of us take for granted in our daily existence – our sight, our mobility, our most basic functions.

UCP Seguin's "Eyes to Toes Project" has jumped into the breach, providing individually tailored vision and foot care.

Brenda Hall, who has cerebral palsy and impaired vision, resides at a UCP Seguin group home in Bridgeview. She also participates in our Employment & Life Skills Programs. Through the "Eyes to Toes" project, she can access specialized optometry services and secure properly fitting, sturdy eyeglasses. Brenda can accomplish at-home activities more effectively, as well as her work at Seguin Gardens & Gifts and Portillo's Learning Kitchen.

In addition, through this beneficial project individuals served by UCP Seguin receive special podiatric treatment, enabling them to be more mobile, and to actively engage their world.

This year the Community Memorial Foundation has issued UCP Seguin a challenge – a grant to cover costs of vision and podiatric care for people with developmental disabilities. CMF will match up to \$10,000 from new donors or donors who increase their giving to UCP Seguin. **With your generous support, you can help persons like Brenda to be happier and healthier from "Eyes to Toes".**

## MANY CHALLENGES, MANY SUCCESS STORIES

... and you can assist UCP Seguin in creating more success stories. Help children and adults with disabilities achieve their potential, advance their independence, and act as full members of the community.

A handwritten signature in black ink, belonging to Steven V. Napolitano.

Steven V. Napolitano, Board of Directors Chairman

A handwritten signature in black ink, belonging to John Voit.

John Voit, President/CEO

**GIVING TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1 • WWW.UCPSEGUIN.ORG**  
DONATIONS WILL BE MATCHED UP TO FIVE TIMES BY CHALLENGE GRANTS.

*Thank you for your generosity!*



# STRATEGIC PLAN FY2016 – FY2020

## EXPANDING ON OUR LEGACY OF ACHIEVEMENT

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In July 2013, two outstanding nonprofit organizations, United Cerebral Palsy Association of Greater Chicago and Seguin Services, took a momentous step, merging to become one powerful force of support for people with disabilities: UCP Seguin of Greater Chicago.

Now more than two years into our existence as one organization, UCP Seguin is proud to announce the adoption of a new blueprint for the future. **“Strategic Plan FY2016 - FY2020: Expanding on Our Legacy of Achievement”.**

This plan represents the culmination of a year-long collective effort of the board, management, staff, program participants, and other stakeholders to build on the organization’s strength and shape the first chapters in the history of this newly formed entity. The plan emphasizes a few crucial concepts guiding UCP Seguin’s efforts over the next five years:

- **SMALLER IS BETTER**
    - Four-person or fewer CILA group homes
    - Smaller day program sites, with 20 to 40 participants enrolled
  - **WORK IS GOOD**
    - Paid employment
    - Volunteer work
  - **SERVICE NEED FOR “AT RISK” CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE CONTINUES**
  - **GROW INFINITEC ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY & TRAINING PROGRAM**
  - **RAISE MORE MONEY**
- 

Six strategic directions, as shown below, form the framework for the plan. They represent both the challenges – and the opportunities – UCP Seguin faces in expanding to meet community needs, while sustaining and ever improving the quality of services. We are confident that you, as a constituent of and stakeholder in UCP Seguin, will see progress toward achieving these noble goals, and bringing life without limits for people with disabilities.

### STRATEGIC DIRECTION A (Theme: Expanding Needs, Growing Expectations)

UCP Seguin will improve and expand services to enrich and enhance the quality of life for people with disabilities with a focus on Employment First, individual choice and community integration, housing, advocacy, specialized foster care and collaboration and coalition building.

### STRATEGIC DIRECTION B (Theme: Adapting Services to Address Demographic Changes)

UCP Seguin will be responsive to the ever-changing demographics of persons with disabilities and their families, agency employees, contractors, visitors and other constituents.

### STRATEGIC DIRECTION C (Theme: Developing & Strengthening Our Workforce)

UCP Seguin will ensure a highly capable, professional, ethical and culturally competent workforce, through hiring, training and retention that is constantly evolving to meet the changing needs of the individuals served.

### STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS D (Theme: Using the Best of Technology)

UCP Seguin will invest in and implement state of the art technologies to increase quality and efficiencies for program, participants, staff and administration.

### STRATEGIC DIRECTION E (Theme: Expanding Funding Options and Public Visibility)

UCP Seguin will sustain its fiscal strength and innovative services, through expanding its base of funding, instituting cost-efficiencies, collaborating with peer organizations, responding creatively to changing government regulation and funding, and presenting a compelling brand identity to the public.

### STRATEGIC DIRECTION F (Theme: Board Development)

UCP Seguin will strengthen its board and increase the level of engagement of board members in their role and responsibilities in service of its mission.

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**UCP SEGUIN’S “STRATEGIC PLAN FY2016 – FY2020: EXPANDING ON OUR LEGACY OF ACHIEVEMENT” CAN BE FOUND AT OUR WEBSITE: [www.ucpseguin.org](http://www.ucpseguin.org)**

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## UCP SEGUIN FOUNDATION

Generating funds to bring life without limits for people with disabilities



In 2013 Seguin Services and United Cerebral Palsy of Greater Chicago took a momentous step, merging to become UCP Seguin of Greater Chicago, a pioneering nonprofit agency serving individuals with disabilities in metropolitan Chicago and beyond. At the same time, the merger produced another entity, the UCP Seguin of Greater Chicago Foundation, a charitable foundation whose mission is to raise, grow, steward and distribute funds that help children and adults with disabilities served by UCP Seguin.



Over the past two years the Foundation has allocated special grants to enable UCP Seguin to fulfill their mutual mission. Last year the Foundation provided nearly \$110,000 in funds to address the agency's information technology needs, while also assisting UCP Seguin's Infintec program in upgrading its online training capacities. Most recently the UCP Seguin Foundation allocated nearly \$230,000 to assist in acquisition of a new Employment & Life Skills Center for UCP Seguin participants in DuPage County.

**Generating funds to support UCP Seguin programs and services is no easy task. Among the UCP Seguin Foundation's efforts to develop such support are two fun and successful special events.**



The Great Chefs Tasting Party, hosted each year at the Sheraton Hotel and Towers in downtown Chicago, took place on June 3rd. Over 500 guests enjoyed food and drink provided by Chicago's hottest restaurants while placing bids on Auction items ranging from fresh Nantucket seafood to a hockey stick signed by the 2015 Stanley Cup Champion Chicago Blackhawks. Overall, the evening raised nearly \$200,000 for the cause.

Close to 130 golfers took to the links at River Forest Country Club in Elmhurst on October 5th to "Chip In Fore Hope". Attendees enjoyed 18 holes of challenging golf, engaged individuals served by UCP Seguin, and generously supported the mission. Additional guests joined the festivities for dinner. This event was a "hole in one", raising \$115,000 to help children and adults with disabilities have life without limits.



## 2015 WAS AN EXCITING YEAR FOR UCP SEGUIN ATHLETES

Paralympians & Special Olympians Excel – Bocchia Team Rolls to Nationals



In the past year UCP Seguin athletes successfully competed in Basketball, Track & Field, Equestrian Events and Bocchia at events throughout Illinois, the Midwest and at the national level. The Bocchia team in particular had great success, including 1st, 2nd and 3rd place results at the Great Lakes Regional Games, with the pairs team of Candace Gregg and Anthony Randolph finishing 4th overall at the USA Bocchia Nationals in Gardner, Kansas. Congratulations to Candace Gregg, Anthony Randolph, Alex Plair, Cynthia Moretti, Laura Estrada, Andrew Wesson, Jessica Wood, Richard Lagunas, Shavonna King, Darius Thompson, Miriam Guerrero, Shannon Owens, Dan Garringer, David Thomas, and their inspirational coach Blanca Munoz! Bocchia ROCKS (and rolls too)!

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# UCP SEGUIN TEAM MEMBERS

## WIN NATIONAL INNOVATION LAB COMPETITION



The victorious Team Wheelhouse included individuals with a wealth of talents and wide-ranging backgrounds: UCP Seguin participants Mike Simpson and Miriam Guerrero (center), accompanied by UCP Seguin staff member Katherine Thurston; University of Illinois-Chicago engineering student and team facilitator Zain Adhami; ADA specialist Robin Morrissey; locally-based universal design innovator Melissa Zlatow; and hailing from France, inventor and designer Hugo de Gentile.

On May 19-20 people with disabilities joined designers, engineers, technologists and other professionals as part of the first annual “Innovation Lab” sponsored by United Cerebral Palsy’s Life Labs Initiative. The inaugural event was held at Microsoft’s Midwest Technology headquarters in Chicago. This two-day national competition is part of an effort to improve the lives of people with disabilities through development of innovative technology.

Team Wheelhouse, comprised of individuals served by UCP Seguin of Greater Chicago alongside UCP Seguin staff, students and technology professionals, won bragging rights, taking first place in this prestigious contest.

“Innovation Lab” challenged entrants to design assistive technology or equipment concepts to solve everyday problems for people with disabilities. Team Wheelhouse’s winning entry was entitled “Mike.io”, otherwise known as “Mobile Interactive Kinetic Environment”, inspired by team member and UCP Seguin participant Mike Simpson. “Mike.io” is a tool to assist individuals with disabilities, who frequently have difficulty conceptualizing how to construct questions for internet searches.

The team created an idea for a “wiki-type” site to include a menu of symbols based on several daily activities and ways to access information to assist in completing these activities. Users can choose an activity, then select from a drop down menu to find popular questions or add questions. Individuals would also be directed to helpful videos, products, and other resources. The team facilitator has now purchased the domain name, the next step in the process of creating a useful and marketable product to enrich the lives of people with disabilities through information technology.

## CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES BLOSSOM THROUGH UCP SEGUIN’S INFINITEC PROGRAM

Students with disabilities often lag behind their peers without disabilities, and those differences increase with age. Through the power of UCP Seguin’s Infinitec and the application of assistive technology, the playing field can be leveled for students with disabilities. Such resources are critical to helping children with specialized needs achieve success and engage in activities of daily living and academics, as well as communicate with their family and friends.

For the past two decades UCP Seguin’s Infinitec program – whose name was inspired by the concept of Infinite Potential through Technology – has worked to fulfill its mission, helping to advance independence and promote inclusive opportunities for diverse learners through the use of technology. Infinitec accomplishes its mission through assistive technology support to special education students and training of school personnel to understand the use of these technologies. More recently Infinitec has initiated similar efforts in support of adults with disabilities and community service providers.

UCP Seguin’s Infinitec regional coalitions, engaging multiple school districts and organizations in Illinois and beyond, have benefitted countless individuals, offering them an array of assistive technology options. With Infinitec interventions and support, children can overcome the limitations that have hindered their educational and personal development. Each spring, the Infinitec Southwest Coalition Network recognizes children who have conquered challenges to attain outstanding personal achievements using assistive technology.

Courtney is one such young person. A high school student diagnosed with autism, Courtney had difficulty communicating on a daily basis. Now she

uses her Saltillo Nova-Chat 5 and is able to communicate at school and at work. Her teachers have seen an immediate change in her mood and behavior since she began using her device and understood she could communicate successfully. Now she can converse with her family and peers while participating in activities throughout her day. It has allowed her to make the changes in her life that will help her gain future success and independence. Today, Courtney has the ability to bring joy to any room and is an inspiration to all she meets.



Through the expanding reach of UCP Seguin’s Infinitec, more children and adults with disabilities like Courtney will experience the benefits of assistive technology, offering them the opportunity to have “life without limits”.

## THERE ARE MANY WAYS TO GIVE TO UCP SEGUIN CONSIDER A CHARITABLE REMAINDER TRUST

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UCP Seguin participant Keith Ritter (standing), and the late Wayne and former Board Member Doris Ritter. The Ritters have been long-standing and generous donors to UCP Seguin.

Are you looking for a way to make a charitable gift to UCP Seguin while deferring or eliminating capital gains taxes, and receive a fixed payment for yourself or someone you designate? We have good news for you.

### **A CHARITABLE REMAINDER TRUST MAY BE JUST WHAT YOU WANT.**

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- It provides a steady cash flow and can be more beneficial to you than keeping an appreciated asset or than selling the asset outright.
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**FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CALL DAWNEEN SURIANO,**  
708-222-4251 or [dsuriano@seguin.org](mailto:dsuriano@seguin.org).