



A Message From Our President

At UCP Seguin of Greater Chicago, every milestone we reach and every life we touch is made possible because of you—our dedicated families, donors, partners, and advocates. Your generosity fuels our mission to create life without limits for people with disabilities, and it allows us to provide compassionate, high-quality support to individuals and families across our communities.



This Spotlight offers a meaningful glimpse into the impact of your support. Inside, you will see the many ways you help bring our mission to life—from celebrating extraordinary foster parents and dedicated staff, to highlighting new and exciting things growing at UCP Seguin.

You will also find opportunities to get involved, including upcoming community events like our Life Without Limits Golf Classic, volunteer opportunities at Soldier Field, and activities across our service locations. These gatherings are more than events—they are opportunities to connect, celebrate, and be part of a community committed to inclusion and empowerment.

Just as importantly, this issue shows you what your generosity makes possible. Through stories and photos, you'll see the people we support actively engaging in their communities—volunteering, exploring new places, building friendships, and experiencing joyful moments every day. These are powerful examples of what “life without limits” truly looks like, and they are only possible because of your continued investment in our mission.

As we look ahead, one of our top priorities is strengthening the sustainability and impact of our services. We continue to advocate for increased funding and improved wages for Direct Support Professionals—essential members of our workforce who provide daily care and support. Your partnership strengthens this effort and helps ensure that individuals with disabilities receive the consistency, dignity, and opportunity they deserve.

We remain committed to transparency, collaboration, and responsible stewardship of the resources you entrust to us. Together, we are building a stronger future—one where every person has the opportunity to thrive.

Thank you for believing in our mission and for standing alongside us. Your generosity is changing lives every day.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joseph Mengoni".

Joseph Mengoni
President & CEO
UCP Seguin of Greater Chicago



**Watch our latest video,
Fostering Something Beautiful,
by scanning here!**

UCP SEGUIN CHILDREN'S SERVICES:

Strengthening Families, Changing Lives

UCP Seguin's Children's Services department is making a powerful difference across our community—supporting children, empowering families, and creating pathways to stability and belonging.

Community Connection Services: Preventing Crisis, Preserving Families

In 2021, UCP Seguin partnered with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) on a new program - **Community Connection Services (CCS)**, which works proactively with families before challenges escalate into crisis.

Over the past year alone, **1,612 families** have received support through CCS—helping them remain safe, stable, and together while avoiding deeper involvement with the child welfare system.

Through compassionate, early intervention, families are connected to critical resources such as:

- Parenting support
- Housing and food assistance
- Mental health services
- Budgeting and life-skills coaching
- Ongoing in-home support

By stepping in at the right moment, CCS strengthens families and protects children—demonstrating how prevention and partnership can transform lives.

Foster Parents: *The Heart of Our Mission*

For children who do need a place to call home, UCP Seguin's **foster parents provide extraordinary support**. These dedicated individuals care for youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities, behavioral challenges, and complex medical needs—offering not just a place to live, but a true sense of home.

Supported by a full team of nurses, case managers, therapists, and specialists, foster parents ensure every child receives compassionate, individualized care in a stable and nurturing environment.

Their commitment helps children heal, grow, and thrive—while also keeping siblings connected and families supported whenever possible.



The Need Is Growing

To learn more about becoming a foster parent or accessing Children's Services, contact:

Foster Care Services

708.222.3564 · wmcdaniel@ucpseguin.org

Community Connection Services

708.222.3210 · ltaylor@ucpseguin.org



TURN GAME DAY INTO IMPACT: Volunteer at Soldier Field

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES: Make a Difference

Volunteering is a powerful way to build connections, strengthen communities, and support our vision of a life without limits for people with disabilities. Whether you're looking for a one-time project or an ongoing opportunity, there are many ways to get involved.

Special Events

Help bring our signature events to life by supporting setup, registration, and guest engagement at events like the Golf Classic, Gala, and Stroll & Roll.

Residential Homes

Assist with seasonal clean-up and organizing shared spaces to create welcoming, comfortable homes for those we serve.

Garden Centers

Get hands-on with planting and maintenance while supporting wellness and skill-building programs in our community spaces.

Social Recreation

Connect directly with participants by helping with activities and events that foster joy and meaningful relationships.

No matter your interests or schedule, your time and talents make a lasting impact. Join us in creating opportunities without limits.

Imagine being part of the excitement at Soldier Field—cheering fans, high-energy crowds, and unforgettable events—while also making a meaningful difference in your community. Through a new partnership with **Levy Restaurants**, volunteers can now support **UCP Seguin's mission of a life without limits for people with disabilities** by helping staff a concession stand at some of Chicago's biggest events.

A Front-Row Seat to the Action

Volunteers will have the chance to work at a variety of high-profile events, including:

- **Chicago Bears home games**
- **International soccer matches**
- **Major concerts and special events**

How It Makes a Difference

Here's the best part: **for every event worked, Levy Restaurants donates to UCP Seguin.** That means your time and effort directly support programs and services that empower individuals with disabilities to live more independent, fulfilling lives.

By volunteering, you're not just helping serve food—you're helping create opportunities, expand access, and build a more inclusive community.

This opportunity is perfect for:

- Corporate teams
- Community organizations
- Friend groups and families

To learn more email us at volunteer@ucpseguin.org or scan the QR code.





GROWING FORWARD TOGETHER: A New Chapter for Seguin Gardens & Gifts and Empowering Gardens



Seguin Gardens & Gifts, a social enterprise of UCP Seguin, has stepped forward to take over the ownership and operations of Empowering Gardens in Forest Park—ensuring that our mission not only endures but continues to grow in meaningful and inclusive ways.

Seguin Gardens & Gifts and Empowering Gardens have always shared a core mission: creating meaningful, skill-building employment opportunities for adults with intellectual disabilities.

A Strategic Merger for Lasting Impact

This collaboration ensures the mission—and the people at its heart—continue to thrive. By integrating operations while maintaining the Empowering Gifts brand, the partnership honors the legacy while strengthening reach, efficiency, and long-term sustainability. More than a business decision, this merger reflects a shared commitment to expanding opportunities for individuals of all abilities to learn, work, and succeed. This next chapter brings exciting potential for growth, innovation, and impact, including a broader customer base, increased revenue, and stronger community engagement.

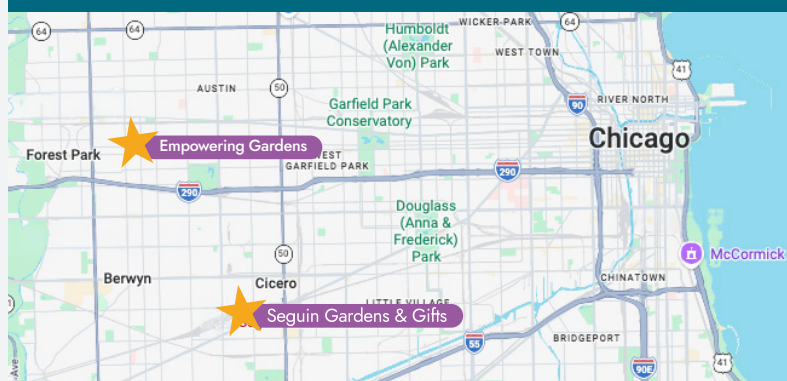
Bringing Empowering Gardens under the Seguin Gardens & Gifts umbrella not only safeguards existing jobs but also amplifies the impact of both organizations. The result is greater efficiency, a broader footprint, and a more stable future—along with new opportunities for growth, increased revenue, and deeper community engagement.

Recognizing Vision and Commitment

This successful transition is a direct result of the vision and dedication of the entire Seguin Gardens & Gifts team and the support of UCP Seguin's Leadership and Board of Directors, whose commitment ensured that Empowering Gardens would not be lost. The future is bright. This partnership not only preserves a vital community resource—it enhances it.

We invite you to visit and shop at
BOTH OF OUR LOCATIONS,
and support our shared mission.

Together, Seguin Gardens & Gifts AND
Empowering Gardens are cultivating employment
opportunities for people with disabilities and
creating a life without limits for all.



Seguin Gardens & Gifts
5621 West 31st Street
Cicero
seguingardens.com

Empowering Gardens
7730 Madison Street
Forest Park
empoweringgardens.org

Smiles, Strides & So Much Fun



Volunteering



Painting



Capturing
Memories



Celebrating



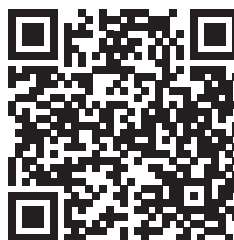
Rolling



Strolling

DONATE NOW

Create life without limits today - make a gift to UCP Seguin of Greater Chicago and help empower individuals of all abilities to reach their fullest potential.



Family Fun

ADVOCATING FOR CHANGE: Building a More Equitable Illinois

UCP Seguin continues to be a strong voice for people with disabilities, advancing equity and opportunity through leadership in the They Deserve More coalition and direct advocacy efforts.

This spring, more than 230 advocates—including self-advocates, families, and providers—gathered in Springfield for Action Day, raising awareness and urging lawmakers to prioritize critical funding and support. Momentum continued statewide as supporters contacted legislators and amplified the message.

Our advocacy is driving real progress. Through engagement with policymakers—including meetings with leaders such as Speaker Emanuel “Chris” Welch and other legislators—UCP Seguin has helped advance priorities like increased wages for direct support professionals, contributing to new funding and system improvements.

We also remain active at the federal level, monitoring policies that affect daily life, including Medicaid and SNAP benefits, and taking action to help protect access to essential supports.

Advocacy is ongoing. By connecting elected officials directly with our programs and participants, we ensure that real experiences inform policy decisions and drive meaningful change.



Get Involved

**Join the UCP Seguin Advocacy Network
to stay informed and take action.**



Scan the QR code to read the latest Advocacy Updates or visit ucpseguin.org/ucp-seguin-advocacy-network/join-the-network.html to sign up and lend your voice to creating a life without limits.





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LIFE WITHOUT LIMITS GOLF CLASSIC



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SEPTEMBER 22**

**SEVEN BRIDGES GOLF CLUB
WOODRIDGE**

BACK AGAIN - THE GOLF BALL DROP!

**1 BALL FOR \$20
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