



SAIL  
Connect



November 2021

SOLUTIONS FOR ADULT INTERDEPENDENT LIVING

# News from SAIL

With two major events under our belts, our first Friendship Connect Event and our first SAILing Lessons, SAIL's mission to inspire families to create and develop their own housing solution for their loved one has received a great response. SAIL is happy to announce that in just one month, over 15 families have joined SAIL.

In the months to come, we hope that number will double. And as we grow, so will the opportunities to get involved. In our next newsletter, SAIL will post several volunteer opportunities specific to our committees.

### SAIL Launches Website

SAIL's website is live. Those interested can become members on our site: <https://sailhousingsolutions.org/register/>. For \$30 per year (your registration in 2021 will carry you through all of 2022) you will have full website access including [SAILing to your IDD Housing Solution](#), a guide created by parents for parents to address some key steps to consider as you develop a plan to move your loved one into a housing solution, over 50 resource documents

to help you develop your model, access to SAIL's Friendship Connect online portal and free admission to SAILing Lessons (SAIL's mentorship and education initiative) and Friendship Connect events.

### Friendship Connect

*"I thought it was a wonderful event. Organized and well planned."* – Parent Participant

About 40 guests attended SAIL's first Friendship Connect event on Friday, October 8, including individuals with IDD, their families and caregivers. We also had more than 20 volunteers present, so the room was abuzz with conversation. Guests participated in decorating name tags, a scavenger hunt, hat decoration, yarn bracelet braiding, arts and crafts, a photo booth, "Basket Heads" ball toss, corn hole and giant Jenga challenges. The "Rock'em Sock'em" robots attracted plenty of competitors, too!

SAIL representatives demonstrated the new SAIL website and encouraged participants to become members.



### Friendship Connect

SAIL hosted its first Friendship Connect Event on Oct. 8, an evening of crafts, games and laughs!



### Friendship Connect

Join SAIL and learn about the benefits of Friendship Connect, a SAIL initiative to connect people to people.

**Friendship Connect CONT.** They explained that membership includes access to the new Friendship Connect online service, ability to download documents created to help transition your loved one to interdependent living, and free attendance at future Friendship Connect and SAILing Lessons meetings.

Some guests renewed friendships from the past and others made new connections. We received lots of feedback from parents expressing appreciation for the fun activities available and the effort to help individuals meet each other. We also received suggestions for future events. We will continue to improve upon these events, adding new activities and eliminating those that aren't popular.

The organizing committee has begun planning our next Friendship Connect evening December 3. Mark your calendars. The invitation has been mailed to everyone on our mailing list. We hope you can attend. Feel free to share the invitation with others who might be interested.

Many thanks to all the families and volunteers who attended, and to the First Presbyterian Church of Birmingham for providing the space for this event.

SAIL understands that every family situation is unique and some families have a loved one with high needs. At our next FC event, we encourage families, even if your loved one cannot attend because the environment is not appropriate, to attend and possibly meet other families who may have similar needs.



SAILing Lessons

### SAILing Lessons- Planning, Dreaming and Working Together

On Nov. 3, 2021, twenty families gathered together for SAIL's inaugural SAILing Lesson. "The SAILing Lessons" initiative provides a forum for families to come together as partners to encourage and empower one another to develop a plan to launch their loved one into a happy, fulfilled, interdependent life and living situation.



SAILing Lessons

In our first lesson, participants learned about the SAIL organization and the resources that are available at [www.sailhousingsolutions.org](http://www.sailhousingsolutions.org). The Mueller family inspired us with their journey of launching their daughter into an apartment with two other young women. Susan Rogers, LMSW, ACSW shared some resources and stories from her 25 years of experience helping people with IDD live independently.

Families split into individual work groups to talk about their dreams and challenges for their loved ones. Safety, location, and finding support staff bubbled to the top of the list of challenges discussed in the individual work groups. Many of the participants expressed gratitude regarding SAIL's mission and appreciated the opportunity to meet other parents.

The evening concluded with questions and answers from the participants and SAILing Lessons Chairperson, Sara Fentress-Gannon.

Our next SAILing Lesson is **January 5, 2022** and we will further our discussions on how to best protect our most vulnerable people, while allowing them to live full and independent lives. Keep an eye on our website and your email for more information!

### FAST FACTS

17.9%

In 2020, **17.9 percent** of persons with a disability were employed

29%

In 2020, 29 percent of workers with a disability were employed part time, compared with 16 percent for those with no disability.

\* Bureau of Labor and Statistics, 2.21

### Calendar of Upcoming Events

Dec. 3, 2021

Friendship Connect Event, First Presbyterian Church, Birmingham.  
TIME: 6:30-8:00 pm

Jan. 5, 2022

SAILing Lessons, First Presbyterian Church, Birmingham  
TIME: TBD

Feb. 4, 2022

Friendship Connect Event, First Presbyterian Church, Birmingham.  
TIME: TBD

Mar. 2, 2022

SAILing Lessons, First Presbyterian Church, Birmingham.  
TIME: TBD

April 1, 2022

Friendship Connect Event, First Presbyterian Church, Birmingham.  
TIME: TBD

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contact us at  
[info@SAILhousingsolutions.org](mailto:info@SAILhousingsolutions.org)  
[www.SAILhousingsolutions.org](http://www.SAILhousingsolutions.org)



### Troy Families Update

After more than five months, the young women who set sail in June of 2021 are flourishing. To see the growth in each of them is really quite astounding. A situation in June that may have led to a disagreement, some tears, a door slam (remember, these are three women) is now a non-issue. The young women face disagreements with a grace and maturity that only comes with living on your own. Maintenance reports are filled out without parent or staff support, menus and grocery pick-ups are planned, and a healthy respect for each other's private time has developed.

Since June 2021, each girl has celebrated a birthday and will now look to celebrate their first Christmas together!

### SAIL Outgoing President

Since its inception in 2020, Don Courtright, with the support of Susan Chaplin, has led SAIL to where we are today. In September, after 2 years at the helm of SAIL, Don has resigned. The challenges starting a non-profit with 10 families and over 20 opinions were plentiful. Add in a pandemic and most leaders would have thought to table the SAIL mission until a better time presented itself. But with Don's grace and temperament and commitment to our mission, SAIL has gone from an idea to reality. The SAIL members are indebted to Don for his work and he leaves a legacy that will go unmatched.

Kathy Remski is now president of SAIL. Welcome to our new president and thank you, Kathy, for taking on this leadership role.

### Rochester Housing Solution Update

Much activity occurred over the summer months for the families of

Rochester Housing Solutions (RHS) – a group of families working with Bill Godfrey and Three Oaks Communities to build integrated I/DD housing in Rochester Hills. By the end of October, a total of 10 families will have completed the customized training based on the Center for Independent Futures' program preparing families to work together on this housing initiative.



Membership in RHS is increasing and connections with the community are growing. A formal organizational structure has been established. Housing options are beginning to work their way through the City zoning and planning processes. Member families gathered twice this summer; first, to review the site plan for Walton Oaks (a potential site of future I/DD homes off of Walton Boulevard) and to get an update on the other two Rochester Hills sites; then, in September for an update from the interim board, general organization update and bowling for the young adults.

RHS has formed an operating committee to lead the organization and functional committees in areas such as marketing, public relations, development, and support services/technology. The website is under review and will be refreshed during the fall.

### Membership Corner

Welcome to SAIL! If this is your first newsletter, we are excited to introduce you to SAIL and its mission. We invite you to visit our website to read past issues of our newsletter to get caught up.

For those of you who have been following SAIL's progress, you can now become a member of SAIL and take advantage of all the work that the SAIL team has been doing for the past two years! The entire SAIL family is here to help you in your journey to develop

the right housing solution for your loved one(s).

Your first step is to Join SAIL and become a member through our website at

<https://sailhousingsolutions.org/register/>

The yearly membership for SAIL is \$30 and your registration now covers you for the remainder of this calendar year and 2022. Once you are a member, you will enjoy full access to our website including:

1. Housing Roadmap & Resources: This section of the site includes valuable resources to help you at every step, regardless if you are just getting started, looking to launch your loved one in the near future, or if your loved one(s) is already living on his or her own.
2. Friendship Connect: Here you can create a personal profile for your loved one(s) and search other profiles to find potential friends and roommates.
3. Free admittance to Friendship Connect Events and SAILing Lessons

Find SAIL upcoming events on the SAIL Calendar. Join today and start your journey. We are excited to have you come aboard!

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

SAIL would like to thank First Presbyterian Church for graciously allowing us to host events at their church.

SAIL would like to thank Cheryl Loveday, Cindy Merten and Joanne Blair for their unwavering support and guidance for the past 2 years.

### SAIL VISION

We dream of a day when all individuals, with their unique abilities and talents, can enjoy lives of interdependence, empowerment, and purpose in the community of their choice

### FOUNDING MEMBERS

Susan Chaplin and Dan Brake  
Don and Barbara Courtright  
Sara Fentress-Gannon  
Dave and Heather Mingle  
Isidor and Yolande Mueller  
Tom and Diane Mueller  
Susan and Jack Nanry  
Jim and Kathy Remski  
Leslie Tons  
Dennis and Ro Varley