



ST. LOUIS SPIRIT



SPRING
2025

St. Louis Center serves people with intellectual and developmental disabilities in an intentional, faith-based community. It was opened in 1960 by the Servants of Charity, an order of Catholic priests and brothers founded by Fr. Louis Guanella of Italy in 1908. Fr. Guanella was a pioneer of work with children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities, and St. Louis Center was named for him.

STATE REPS EXPLORE SLC'S FUTURE

St. Louis Center was honored to welcome State of Michigan House Representatives Kathy Schmaltz (46th District) and Carrie Rheingans (47th District) to its campus on April 28, 2025.



Pictured are **Development Director Peggy Cole, Fr. Satheesh, Ted Ludlow CAC, SLC Day Program Coordinator Haylie Moran, Rep. Rheingans, Ken Klovski CAC, resident Jacqui Pampuch, Glenn Johnson CAC, Rep. Schmaltz, SLC Community Engagement Coordinator Tyrin Johnson, Juanita Pampuch, and SLC Development Specialist Karinna Hershberger.**

They were joined by members of St. Louis Center's staff, Community Advisory Council (CAC) members, and CEO Fr.

Satheesh Alphonse to discuss the state allocation request that was recently submitted. Juanita Pampuch, mother of an SLC resident, expressed her gratitude for the sense of family that St. Louis Center provides.

She elaborated on the visit, "As a

parent, I appreciate that they took the time to listen to our story. We searched for a place that felt like a family for our daughter - and we found that family at St. Louis Center."

The Representatives toured the area of the original main building slated for renovations that will enable expanded

care and services, particularly for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities who are aging. The Representatives' visit provided an opportunity for them to see firsthand the impact of the Center's mission and the potential State funding could unlock for our community. St. Louis Center is grateful

for the Representatives' time and attention to the needs of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and looks forward to enhanced collaboration with the State of Michigan.

MAY FLOWERS BLOOM

Flowers are blooming across St. Louis Center and Chelsea, celebrating the rich diversity of human experience through the "1,000 Flowers Could Bloom" project. Inspired by the idea that people, like plants, thrive when given nourishment, a sense of belonging, and inclusion, the project encouraged cultural awareness and appreciation.

Led by clay artist and educator Eli Zemper, over 80 individuals with and without disabilities participated in hands-on workshops from January to May, creating unique ceramic flowers. Each flower featured stamped words or images representing the artist's cultural identity, symbolizing the beauty of diversity



Eli Zemper; Sue Lackey, Board of Directors, Chelsea Community Foundation; Albert; and Joe browsed the many 'flowers' in the Reading Garden at Chelsea District Library.

and self-expression. Each flower is unique, representing the diversity of its maker.

On May 17th, the community gathered for a joyful artist reception in the Chelsea District Library's Reading Garden. Despite cloudy skies, the mood was bright as St. Louis Center residents, artists from Soaring Arts Studio in Ohio, and local supporters admired the flower display on a vibrantly decorated fence.

Supported by a grant from the Chelsea Community Foundation,

this collaborative project powerfully showcased inclusion, creativity, and the shared human spirit—reminding us that with care, 1,000 flowers truly can bloom.

2024 ANNUAL REPORT INCLUDED

St. Louis Center is committed to the efficient use of resources. To help reduce printing and mailing costs, a shortened annual report is included with this mailing. Thank you for your understanding and critical support.



FROM FR. SATHEESH

Hope Blossoms

Dear Friends of St. Louis Center,
Greetings in the name of the Lord!



Watching the natural world around us blossom and bloom, I am reminded of the potential for personal transformation within each of us. As the bees pollinate the flowers, so too shall we care for and lift up those in need. As the birds flock, so too shall we gather and build one another up. As the rain waters a thirsty earth, so too shall we shower one another with love. When we cultivate a

spirit of love, friendship, and charity, we do transformative work within our communities. This type of commitment to our community is both immediate and ongoing. The work is not always easy, but the fruits of our labor are always worthwhile, whether we are there to see them or not.

As I look around, I am heartened by the many encouraging things happening at St. Louis Center. We have numerous events filling up our summer schedule, many of which bring generous supporters together and are designed to inspire and engage our residents. I am also continually renewed by the creative and hard-working staff here at the Center. Their commitment to the residents' well-being is not only unwavering, but also inspiring. Our Lord has filled the Center with a host of wonderful individuals doing the work of Christ. Each person, whether employee, volunteer, or donor, plays a distinct and important role in the happiness of our residents, and for that, I thank you.

I would also like to take the time to specifically thank those of you who donated to our Get Moving Match this spring. I am overjoyed to announce that we have surpassed our goal of \$50,000! What a blessing you have been. Mobility and transportation are vital to providing our residents access to the wider community and spreading awareness. As we press forward into summertime activities as well as a new fiscal year, we continue to build community through our ongoing commitment to our residents.

Fr. Satheesh

A NIGHT OF SUPPORT AND COMMUNITY



Calvin and Abigail Preston won a raffle item and were excited to take it home to share with their family.

This year's Pasta with the Priests, held on **February 27th**, welcomed over 100 guests for an evening of delicious food and community spirit. Attendees enjoyed pasta favorites, a salad bar, and desserts while hearing updates from staff and supporters. Ken Unterbrink promoted the Alaskan Cruise Raffle, and Peggy Cole shared renovation plans for the main building. Norm Neuman and his son introduced the \$50,000 Get Moving Match—with nearly half raised that night alone. Thanks to our generous supporters, the full match has been met, helping St. Louis Center residents gain greater mobility and independence throughout Chelsea and beyond.



Fr. Dave Stawasz, SdC, escorted Bob and Tony down the red carpet at Night to Shine **February 7th**.

Use the camera app on your mobile device to scan QR codes throughout the newsletter to read more about the Center.



SLC COMMUNITY ADVISORY COUNCIL

Joseph Munie, Chair
Glenn Johnson, Vice-Chair
Donna Hrozencik, MD, Secretary
Mark Umlauf, Treasurer

James Kennedy, JD
Kenneth Kloviski
William Lamb, JD
Ted Ludlow
George Mallison
Kathi Neuman

Norm Neuman
Amy Ninness
Juanita Pampuch
Jerry Ruggirello
Rosalie Tocco-Bradley, MD
Don Walker

George Walrath
Vickie Walrath
Barry Borsenik,
(MI State Deputy, KofC)

PROFILES OF GUANELLIAN STAFF

GUANELLIAN STAFF ARE PATIENT, KEEPING EMOTIONAL BALANCE AND HOPE, ALWAYS ENCOURAGING OTHERS.

- WITH FAITH, LOVE, AND COMPETENCE 86



St. Louis Center is home to 55 full-time residents. It takes a large family of staff members to provide them with personalized, compassionate care. To make sure that a family atmosphere thrives, fun and creative activities abound. On **Wednesday, February 26th**, residents and staff were challenged to pick the best chili during a chili cook-off. Several staff members and residents prepared their favorite recipes, hoping to win the "St. Louis Center Choice Award." Each person could sample 10 different entries. The cups displayed the number corresponding to the pot it came from so that the residents could easily vote for their favorite. The kitchen staff also provided tortilla chips and a side salad to balance the meal.



Family | Community

Patience, in the Guanellian staff, is understood as the virtue of "alert waiting" for the growth of the person, doing everything possible to foster it. (From the book inspired by the writings of St. Louis Guanella: *With Faith, Love, and Competence: Profile of the Guanellian Staff, 80.*)

Please visit the website to view current staff openings.

Volunteers are Family, Too

Committed volunteers help provide "Fullness of Life" for the residents. Explore volunteer opportunities at: stlouiscenter.org/have-fun-here/volunteer/

Volunteer Spotlight

Rose Lawrence and her husband have supported the Center for over a decade, but her generosity goes beyond being a Monthly Sustainer. Rose is a hairdresser by trade and has been volunteering her time to help make the ladies look lovely each year for the Night to Shine. On **February 7th**, Rose treated eight women to salon-styled hair, and her daughter painted their nails.



On **May 13th**, the staff was treated to a thoughtful surprise from the Family Association. Arriving early with a spread of homemade treats, snacks, and even lottery tickets, three Family Association members stayed throughout the day to rotate through shifts, ensuring every staff member had the chance to be recognized and appreciated. While the day was filled with fun and treats, it also highlighted something deeper: the strong sense of community at St. Louis Center. Events like this—along with volunteer days, community workshops, and more—reflect the shared commitment to creating a welcoming, supportive environment for residents and staff alike.



The St. Louis Center Cardio Drumming class is in need of some supplies. If you would like to help, please scan the QR code at right or visit: <https://a.co/2dqG6e7> to have items shipped directly to the Center.



REST IN PEACE



Barbara Fairchild

Barb joined the St. Louis Center family as a direct care worker in **July 2023** and was dedicated to the care of the residents. Barb was born on **July 12, 1983** in Sault Ste. Marie. She passed away on **Sunday, March 30, 2025**, and is greatly missed by all who knew her.



WINTER WONDERS: SEASON HIGHLIGHTS

The residents had a busy winter despite the cold weather. Here are a few highlights.

HOOPS WITH FRIENDS

Many St. Louis Center residents play basketball on the Special Olympics team, and many more enjoy just playing in the gym. Caitlin Blomquist, Fitness Trainer, is always looking to get all residents active in fun ways that interest everyone. She worked with the Chelsea High School Girls Varsity Basketball team to make a fun fitness session on **January 10th**.

Under the leadership of Todd Blomquist, Head Coach, the Chelsea team has racked up a pretty impressive record this year: 16-3. He decided this winning team could bring some fun and games to the Center's residents during their Friday practice.

When the team arrived, they went straight to the gym to greet the eager residents. The gym was soon filled with laughter and high-fives as players of all abilities came together for an unforgettable afternoon of teamwork, fitness, and fun.



Mike had a great time sharpening his skills.

LEARNING THE LEGACY OF MLK

The national "Martin Luther King, Jr. National Day of Service" officially started when the King Holiday and Service Act was signed in 1994. This federal legislation challenges Americans to transform the King Holiday into a day of citizen action and volunteer service in honor of MLK.

Megan Ivey, Direct Care Supervisor, asked the residents

to write about Martin Luther King, Jr. and what his life and work meant to them. She engaged them in preparing short speeches that were then given at a campus-wide event **January 20th**. Sixty-five residents and staff members participated in the event which was held in the Center's gym.

A NIGHT TO REMEMBER

This year, nineteen residents enthusiastically prepared for an unforgettable evening on **February 7th**, at 242 Community Church in Ann Arbor. It was their "Night to Shine."

Rose Lawrence brought her daughter to the Center to help style the ladies' hair. And Christine Okler, mother of a resident, prepared suits for the men so they could look just as nice as the ladies.

Meanwhile, a host of volunteers in Ann Arbor was preparing for the arrival of hundreds of "Kings and Queens" to the 10th Annual Night to Shine.

Upon arrival, each guest received a corsage or boutonniere as well as a crown fit for a king or queen. It wasn't long before dinner was served and the real fun began. A DJ played high-energy tunes to keep the "Royalty" dancing all evening long.

The Tim Tebow Foundation, the global force behind this event, is committed to making sure that each MVP (most vulnerable person) experiences their inherent dignity.



Jackie and **Lee** were adorned like royalty and arrived in style on the red carpet.



A GLOWING SUCCESS



Mike and **Keavan** got into the glow spirit.

music to spirited dancing, the night was filled with laughter, movement, and connection. It was a vibrant celebration of community—and a reminder of the joy that comes from simply being together.

On **March 16th**, St. Louis Center residents and guests lit up the night at the Glow Dance Party. Dressed in neon pink, yellow, green, and white, everyone danced under black lights with glow sticks in hand, filling the room with color and energy. A fun photo booth with a glowing frame and a sign reading "We are joyful" captured plenty of smiles. From great

DAY OF SERVICE



Fr. Gabriel Richard High School sent 30 sophomores to St. Louis Center on **April 11th** as part of their annual Sophomore Day of Service. Here is one student's reflection:

"It left a lasting impact on my heart, challenging me to think about things I hadn't considered before. It was a powerful reminder that individuals with I/DD are just as filled with love as anyone else. They are incredible people with unique stories, and deserving of respect, love, and dignity."

UPCOMING EVENTS: SUMMER GOLF & FALL FUN

ITALIAN AMERICAN DELEGATES GOLF OUTING

When: Monday, July 14th

Time: 9:00am

Where: Pine Knob Golf Club, 5580 Waldron Rd., Clarkston, MI 48348

Dust off your clubs and grab your golfing buddies. You won't want to miss this event. It is at a new venue this year. The golf is spectacular.



2025 DAD & LAD GOLF OUTING

When: Wednesday, August 6th

Time: 9:30am

Where: Twin Lakes Golf & Swim Club, 455 Twin Lakes Dr., Oakland, MI 48348

The Dad & Lad Golf Outing was created in 1997 to encourage father and son camaraderie.

MEMORIAL GOLF OUTING

Paul Frisinger was a successful realtor. After retiring, he was active with many local organizations, including the St. Louis Center Community Advisory Council.

Paul and his wife Kathy enjoyed attending and volunteering at many St. Louis Center fundraising events.

When: Saturday, August 16th

Time: 9:00am shotgun start

Where: Pierce Lake Golf Course, Chelsea MI



JULY
21st

3rd Annual Sean Brian Ashline Golf Outing

4 PERSON SCRAMBLE

LET'S COME TOGETHER AND SPREAD THE LOVE!

Event Highlights

Fundraising Initiative ◀
In Sean's memory, to enrich the lives individuals who need support in advocating for themselves in adulthood.

Location ◀
Lakelands Golf and Country Club

Contests/Auction/Raffle ◀
-Vegas hole
-Closest to the pin
-Hole in one wins a car!
-Longest drive
-Place your bids on auction items 50/50 & more fun surprises

Event Details

JULY 21, 2025
10:00 AM - SHOTGUN

About Our Event!

We warmly invite you to join us for our event. Whether you're an individual wanting to make a difference, a business aiming to support the community, or a volunteer ready to offer assistance, we welcome you!

SIGN UP TODAY!

Contact us
248-207-6617

Website
Seanbrianashlinefoundation.org

29TH ANNUAL Fall Harvest Fest

TO BENEFIT ST. LOUIS CENTER

Sunday, September 14, 2025

Be a Guardian Angel

Attend the 29th Annual Event.

Tickets are \$80 per person

Includes: Gourmet Meal, Beer & Wine, Beverage Service

Please RSVP by September 4th

Italian American Club of Livonia

39200 Five Mile Road
Livonia MI 48154

The Randazzo Family present the annual

CELEBRATING 10 YEARS! OF FUNDRAISING

MEN'S SOCIAL FUNDRAISER

Save the Date

Thursday, September 18th, 2025 at 5:30pm

All proceeds benefit St. Louis Center About St. Louis

\$200/Ticket

The best fundraiser you'll ever attend

Save the Date

Fall Dinner Auction

to benefit St. Louis Center

November 8, 2025

For more information about these or any events, visit: stlouiscenter.org/have-fun-here/events/



There are multiple ways to support St. Louis Center:

- Become a Monthly Sustainer
- Make a Tribute Gift in memory or honor of someone special
- Make an Annual Gift or gifts in response to our Spring and Year-End appeals, or at any time during the year
- Attend a Fundraising Event
- Make a Donation of Securities, including appreciated stocks, mutual funds, or bonds
- Inquire about your company's Matching Gift Program.
- Host a 'Third Party' Event
- Make a gift through your Donor Advised Fund or IRA
- Make an In-Kind Gift of Goods or Services
- Include St. Louis Center in your Estate Planning



St. Louis Center is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization. Your gifts are tax-deductible to the fullest extent of the law.

For more information about supporting St. Louis Center or to set-up a tour, please contact Peggy Cole, Development & Communications Director, at mcole@stlouiscenter.org or 734.475.8430, ext. 431.

DEVELOPMENT SNAPSHOTS

HERRICK FOUNDATION TRAININGS

St. Louis Center not only values learning opportunities for our residents, but also prioritizes professional development for our staff. Thanks to the Herrick Foundation, several staff members attended a series of full-day seminars over several weeks. These sessions were tailored to the roles of each participant and brought together professionals from various local and regional non-profits.

DAWN FOODS VISIT

On **March 20th**, St. Louis Center welcomed Cherie Good, Head of Corporate Giving at Dawn Foods. Cherie had the opportunity to tour our facilities and meet resident Jacqui P., who is employed in the kitchen. We're grateful for the visit and look forward to growing our relationship with this valued community partner.

NBS FURNITURE

We were thrilled to receive generous donations from NBS Furniture, thanks to Annette Popiel-Hammerle and Connie Ahee. On two visits, they brought modern office furniture that has enhanced our administrative offices and workspaces, making a meaningful difference for staff.

CHELSEA HOSPITAL VISIT

In April, five healthcare professionals from Chelsea Hospital toured St. Louis Center. The hospital has been a generous supporter, most recently funding our "Fitness for Life" program that promotes independence. During their visit, they met residents, toured the facility, and shared a meal with staff to discuss future collaborations.

SECRETARY OF STATE VISIT

On **May 14th**, Joshua Elliot, Deputy Chief of External Affairs for the Secretary of State, visited for lunch. Residents quickly connected with him, eagerly sharing their stories. Staff then guided him on a tour of our main building, highlighting areas slated for renovation. During lunch, Joshua explained his role in ensuring communities know how the Secretary of State's office can assist them.



Connie Ahee, Fr. Satheesh, and Annette Popiel-Hammerle pledge to support the renovations of the skill-building wing.

Recognizing the challenges some residents face in accessing state services, Joshua offered to coordinate a visit from the SOS Mobile Office. This future event will help

residents update their IDs on-site and will also be open to the broader I/DD community.



Make a Gift Today

One-Time Gift: \$50 \$100 \$250 Other \$ _____

\$357 - Help cover one resident's benevolent care costs for one day.

Recurring Donation - Make a monthly gift and automatically become a **SUSTAINER!**

Monthly Gift: \$5 \$15 \$25 Other \$ _____

Payment Information

Payment Type: Credit Card Cash Check

Name on Card: _____

Card Number : _____

Exp. Date: ____/____ 3-Digit Security Code: _____

Contact Information

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone Number: _____

E-Mail: _____

Mail this form to: Development Dept., St. Louis Center, 16195 W. Old U.S. Hwy 12, Chelsea, MI 48118 or

Donate Online by scanning the code below or at: stlouiscenter.org/about/news/newsletter/st-louis-spirit/#donate

Note: We value your privacy as much as you do. We will never share your information with any third party.



CARING FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

OVERCOMING LONELINESS AND ISOLATION

We are currently living in a global epidemic. It is not an epidemic caused by germs or viruses. It is a crisis of loneliness and social isolation.

The crisis is so severe that in 2023, the former U.S. Surgeon General Vivek Murthy wrote an Advisory on the Healing Effects of Social Connection and Community. The impact of social connection is well-documented. In his report, he warns that loneliness is not just an emotional struggle—it poses serious health risks, increasing the likelihood of heart disease, dementia, stroke, depression, and even premature death. Research indicates that a lack of social engagement is also linked to a higher risk of dementia.



Linda, Albert, and Bob look forward to Cardio Drumming each Friday.

The studies yield similar results around the globe.

How can people hold the world in the palm of their hand, yet be so isolated and alone?

St. Louis Center offers a solution. It is a community of connection. People live in a neighborhood setting, surrounded by others. In addition, there is a never-ending calendar of events to participate in and designed to offer choices for every interest.

Social interaction stimulates cognitive function and helps maintain mental agility. Without regular engagement, the brain may experience accelerated cognitive decline. St. Louis Center strives to provide 'fullness of life' for each person regardless of ability, combating the effects of loneliness and isolation to the greatest extent possible.

According to peer reviewed studies found on the National Institutes of Health website and others published by Oxford University Press on behalf of The Gerontological Society of America, loneliness affects nearly half of all U.S. adults, but for people with disabilities, the risk is even higher—they are 1.5 to 2 times more likely to experience chronic isolation.

For more information about these studies visit: <https://tinyurl.com/lonelystudy> or <https://tinyurl.com/StudyLoneliness>



COFFEE FOR A CAUSE



St. Louis Center is partnering with Kolbe Coffee, a Chelsea, MI company sourcing top specialty-grade beans from Guadalupe Farms, a cooperative of 56 coffee farms in Nicaragua. Your coffee purchase supports our mission and the farmers. Place your order at kolbecoffee.com and choose St. Louis Center as your donation recipient.



LINDA RYBARSYK



1964-2025

Linda was born November 24, 1964 to Louis and Helen Rybarsyk. She had a sister who died in infancy, but she is survived by one brother and two sisters. Linda lived with her parents until they passed away, then moved to St. Louis Center in December 2021. She was a cherished member of the SLC community and will be greatly missed.

UPCOMING EVENTS

IAD Golf Outing

July 14, 2025

Pine Knob Golf Course - Clarkston

Sean Brian Ashline Golf Outing

July 21, 2025

Lakelands Golf & Country Club - Brighton

Dad & Lad Golf Outing

August 6, 2025

Twin Lakes Golf & Swim Club - Rochester Hills

Memorial Golf Outing

August 16, 2025

Pierce Lake Golf Club - Chelsea

Fall Harvest Fest

September 14, 2025

Italian American Banquet Center - Livonia

Randazzo Men's Social

September 18, 2025

Randazzo Fresh Market - Macomb

Fall Dinner Auction

November 8, 2025

St. Mary Church - Chelsea

Learn more on our website:

stlouiscenter.org/have-fun-here/events/

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REMEMBERING OUR FRIENDS

Mario Galasso, 93, born May 8, 1931, in Colle Sannita, Italy, to Michele and Pilla Galasso, Mario passed away peacefully **March 15th**, leaving

behind a legacy of love, hard work, and kindness.

In 1949, Mario emigrated to Michigan, where he built a beautiful life for his family.

He was a devoted father to Michael, Mark, and Raymond. He cherished his grandchildren and took great pride in his role as a great-grandfather.

Mario was preceded in death by his beloved wife, Mary, a grandson, and his brothers, George,

Umberto, Antonio, and Geurino Galasso.

A man of many talents and an unwavering work ethic, Mario was always willing to lend a helping

hand. He was a founding member and supporter of the Italian American Club of Livonia and honored as 2005 Outstanding Italian of the Year.

His artisan skills were capable of making or fixing just about anything. He found joy in gardening, playing cards, bowling, golf, and bocce ball. He especially loved spending time outdoors at picnics, where laughter and good company were always in abundance.



Mario's warmth, generosity, and hardworking spirit will be deeply missed by all who had the privilege of knowing him. His memory will live on in the hearts of his family and friends forever.

ALSO REMEMBERING:

Barbara Fairchild

Pope Francis

Mario Galasso

Mary Heitker

Richard Hertz

Robert Murphy

Tim Ortbring

Patricia Parr

Joanne Randall

Thomas Rea

Mike Roskowski

Linda Rybarsyk

Dolores Sinacola

