MATTERS
Newsletter For The Friends & Supporters of MILESTONE, Inc.

SUMMER 2020
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FIGHTING COVID 19

We Continue To Fight COVID-19 As A Team!
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Corporate Office: 4060 McFarland Road • Loves Park, IL 61111 • 815/654-6100 • www.MILESTONE-INC.org
Friend of MILESTONE,

When last we spoke we were coming out of a mild winter and optimistically looking forward to spring in the Midwest. Right about the time we last published MILESTONE Matters we were learning about COVID – 19. “That’s in China, that’s their problem.”

No, that’s our problem. Social Distancing. Shelter in Place. I had never heard those terms before. Here at MILESTONE we’ve established a culture of handshakes, fist bumps, high fives and hugs. That’s how we roll. In a family 800 strong it’s all about connections. We’re in the Human Service business.

So how has life changed? Since mid-March we’ve Sheltered in Place. We’ve kept our individuals in their homes. Sure, they may venture out to their back porch, maybe a walk around the block, but we have kept them closely guarded, and for the most part we’ve kept them protected from COVID.

Unfortunately we’ve had COVID infiltrate 2 of our campuses, Elmwood Heights and RocVale. In a matter of a few days a dozen employees and a number of the individuals we serve have been infected on each campus. Fevers, body aches, coughs, sore throats and other symptoms have impacted the lives of 3 dozen in our family. Fortunately everyone has come through this nightmare. We have had a handful in the hospital, but they received top level care and have returned healthy.

MILESTONE is deemed a “congregate setting”, a living arrangement with large numbers under one roof. The individuals we serve are cared for by a number of staff, as we operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Try as we might to keep COVID out of our lives, this insidious disease is nearly impossible to stop. While many have effectively “Sheltered in Place” our staff cannot. These heroes have jumped into the flames of COVID. There’s no hiding. When your passion is to care for the men and women, boys and girls we serve, you don’t turn your back, despite the fear and concerns surrounding COVID. You face your fears. That’s what our heroes have done.

Direct Service Providers and Nurses are heroes here at MILESTONE. Are they fearless? No, absolutely not. But do they continue to care for the individuals they serve? Yes, of course they do. You don’t turn your back on family.

In closing I just want to say thank you to our team. Life on earth is a one-time deal, and these heroes have made the most of their time here on earth.

Thank you Heroes!

M. Shawn Way
President and CEO
SHELTER IN PLACE

Shelter in Place Orders changed the way we do things.

MILESTONE Industries and the MILESTONE Training Center closed in early March and everyone stayed home.

But we continued to work with Computers, including learning about FaceTime.

We continued to learn Living Skills.

And we continued to make items for future Art Shows.

MILESTONE MISSION STATEMENT

“Everyone has the right to be treated with respect, to participate in community life, to develop and exercise personal competence, to have family and friends, and to make decisions in their lives.” MILESTONE, Inc. exists to ensure that persons with developmental disabilities can exercise these same rights.
OUR NURSES WORKED AROUND THE CLOCK TO KEEP EVERYONE SAFE
Many slept in a mobile home at Elmwood Heights in case they were needed for an emergency, while others slept in the homes at RocVale. They took the temperatures of all staff at the start of each shift.

CELEBRATIONS
We found new ways to celebrate: Birthdays included cake, balloons and drive by salutes.

RocVale Graduates were honored during drive-bys and with signs on campus.

PLANNING FOR ANY POSSIBILITY
Many contingency plans were put into place as we battled COVID 19, including converting MTC to a COVID treatment site.
THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS AND SUPPORTERS

After months of battling COVID-19 we needed your help so we could provide everyone with the necessary Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), including masks, gowns, gloves, and face shields.

We reached out to our supporters, and thanks to your donations and support we were able to acquire the PPE supplies we needed to help ensure the safety of everyone at MILESTONE.

We appreciate every donation and helping hand.

We also had a small army of volunteers making over 2,000 cloth face masks for our employees and Individuals. These allowed us to preserve our supply of N95 masks while keeping people safe.

HOMES BECAME TEAMS

A friendly competition was held between homes through games and other activities. It started with each home creating a team name and logo.

HEARTS FOR HOPE

Windows at MILESTONE homes were covered in hearts as a sign of hope while Sheltering in Place.

It was a way of saying we are in this together.
WE DID FIND WAYS TO STILL ENJOY THE OUTDOORS ONCE THE WEATHER ALLOWED
MILESTONE RECEIVES A GRANT FROM THE ILLINOIS COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES AND ARC OF ILLINOIS

The Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities and the Arc provided funding for demonstration projects to assist in filling gaps experiencing due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The grant MILESTONE received was used for activity boxes for each group home that included learning activating and life skills activities.

HELEN BRACH FOUNDATION HELPS THE MILESTONE DENTAL CLINIC

A grant from the Helen Brach Foundation will provide the funding so uninsured and under insured patients can get the dental care they need. The MILESTONE Dental clinic provides care to children and adults with developmental disabilities from 40 counties in Illinois, including the Chicago area.

UNITED WAY COVID 19 EMERGING NEEDS FUND HELPS MILESTONE

MILESTONE received 2 grants for PPE equipment from United Way COVID-19 Emerging Needs Fund. Applications were reviewed by the 815 Community Response Team Grant Making Committee, which is a partnership of the Community Foundation of Northern Illinois, The Kjellstrom Foundation, the Northern Illinois Center for Nonprofit Excellence (NICNE), and United Way of Rock River Valley, which are part of the 815 Community Response Team that also includes Transform Rockford and the Workforce Connection.

BLAZER FOUNDATION HELPS MILESTONE FIGHT COVID

A grant from the Blazer Foundation in memory of Cedric Blazer, provided funding needed for PPE supplies. These items were critical in the fight to keep everyone safe from COVID 19.

GRANTS HELP US GET IPADS

Thank you to both Alpine Kiwanis and Comcast for grants that allowed us to get more iPads. The iPads were quickly put to use and allowed our Individuals to FaceTime with family.

EMPLOYEE ANNIVERSARIES

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Diana Stralow</td>
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WE NEED YOUR HELP TO CONTINUE TO FIGHT COVID 19
Help us continue to fight COVID 19 and making sure we have the proper PPE equipment for our staff and Individuals by donating to our COVID 19 fund.

Please call the Development office at 815 639-2965 for more information.

HONORING FIRST RESPONDERS
Area First Responders will be honored during MILESTONE’s Annual Monster Cup Golf Playday

Monday, August 17th at The Club at Mauh Nah Tee See

Police Officers, Firemen, Paramedics and Emergency room personnel are being invited to attend as guests of MILESTONE and will be paired with a team of 3. You can be a Monster Sponsor for $1,500 which includes a hole sponsor sign, and team registration. The fee to register a team of 3 is $750 and includes a box lunch and dinner, $250 for a single golfer hole; sponsorships are $250.

Call the Development office at 815-639-2965 for more information.