

# Our Vision, Our Mission

Our Vision: A world where individuals on the autism spectrum and with learning differences thrive and are valued.

**The mission of MLC** is to **transform** the lives of individuals and families affected by autism spectrum and learning differences.

We educate individuals in **Real Skills for Real Life<sup>TM</sup>** so that they may achieve sustained independent living, rewarding employment, financial security, personal growth, and responsible citizenship.

We adapt, evaluate, and continuously improve our methods, recognizing and valuing each individual's skills, contributions, and dreams.

We **champion** our students and graduates, carry their successes into the world, and collaborate with others in service of our vision.





Autism is more common than childhood cancer, diabetes, and AIDS combined.

## Our Values

#### **Experiential Learning**

Our students and graduates learn by doing. Our motto, Real Skills for Real Life™, embodies our commitment to enhancing student achievement and success through hands-on learning.

#### Community

Our students grow in self-awareness, confidence, and self-esteem. We foster physical, social, and emotional wellness in a diverse, compassionate, nurturing, and respectful environment.

#### Fun

We foster creative, positive interactions among students, graduates, and staff to establish mutual respect and caring and help our students develop important emotional, social, and cognitive skills.

#### Accountability

We focus on what individuals do well rather than on what they cannot do. We carefully assess each person's progress to design learning strategies that capitalize on the individual's strengths, abilities and interests. We use current research and professional practices in all our work.

#### **Team Work**

We encourage an innovative and supportive workplace where our professional staff participates in making decisions that advance its work, our mission, and our students' achievements.

#### **Partnerships**

We collaborate with educational, vocational, business, and non-profit partners to further our students' success and independence. We value highly our internal community of students, parents, graduates, staff, volunteers, extended families, donors, and alumni. We recognize every partner with a grateful heart.

#### Integrity

We strive to practice the highest ethical, financial, and moral standards in our work. We honor our commitments, take personal responsibility for our actions, and treat everyone with trust and respect.







A learning disability is one of the leading causes of illiteracy.

# Letter from Amy



#### Thank you.

After successfully completing my first year as the Executive Director of Minnesota Life College (MLC), the only thing that comes to mind is, "thank you!"

I could not be more proud to lead this dynamic organization, which embraces clear mission-focused thinking, an adaptable approach, and a willingness to listen and understand. This organization boasts a talented team of employees with an extremely high energy level, an engaged Board of Directors who are constantly striving for the best interest of our students, graduates, and our families, and a solid foundation of community partners.

It is because of this incredible network that we are able to achieve so much and reach so far. I am so appreciative of the financial support committed to our organization on an annual basis, and every dollar we receive is invested back into our mission. Our supporters truly understand the impact we are able to make on a daily basis. They value education and the importance of teaching Real Skills for Real Life™ in an immersive, safe environment.

Our annual report will speak for itself and the accomplishments we've achieved throughout the 2012-2013 program year, including record-breaking enrollment and gala numbers, facilities renovation support, and steps towards making a bigger impact on the greater community.

As a new Executive Director, my message is simple: thank you. The commitment all of you made to MLC over the years allowed for a successful transition in leadership and one of our best years yet.

Sincerely,

Amy Gudmestad Executive Director





As early as infancy, a baby can begin to show the three hallmark features of autism: communication challenges, impaired social interactions, and repetitive behavior.

## A Year of Growth

- July // Amy Gudmestad is appointed as the new Executive Director of Minnesota Life College.
  - // The Graduate Living Community (GLC) enrollment grows to 45 members.
- August // The Undergraduate (UG) Program welcomes 17 freshmen in the largest class to date.
  - // MLC conducts 40 hours of staff training to prepare for the new program year.
- **September** // UG kicks off evening and weekend extra-curricular classes, providing more structure.
  - // MLC founds the Junior Board of Directors.
  - October // We partner with the Southdale YMCA to offer free monthly presentations to the public on the topics of healthy living, social wellness, and independence.
    - // GLC partners with The Arc Greater Twin Cites to provide Lifetime Assistance Planning (LAP) to families.
- **November** // Mary Christianson, MLC instructor, and student Chris Isensee speak at the Conflict Resolution Center annual event on the topic of restorative justice.
- **December** // Chrissy Cleveland, MLC's Autism Specialist, pilots the 9th Planet curriculum and contributes social skills curriculum development.
  - **January** // UG students attend women's and men's leadership retreats, in partnership with True Friends Camps.
  - **February** // MLC recognizes all 45 members for their participation in the community and within the GLC program.
    - March // MLC hosts our biggest gala ever, with record-breaking attendance and dollars raised to support programs and scholarships.
      - // The Board of Directors approves the Campus Improvement Project.
    - April // MLC staff present at the national Independent Educational Consultants
      Association (IECA) conference and for the Autism Society of Minnesota.
    - May // Eight individuals graduate from MLC and bring our employment rate to 92%.
    - June // The Campus Improvement Project breaks ground.
      - // The Summer Internship Program (SIP) serves 10 teens and young adults, resulting in 50% enrolling in the Undergraduate Program.



# Our Programs



Focused on building fundamental living and employment skills, the Undergraduate (UG) Program is at the heart of MLC's mission. Our holistic, strengths-based model allows students to learn in the way that is best for them and then practice the skills in a safe and supportive environment. The apartment-living setting allows students to learn personal finance, apartment management and healthy living skills in a real-world setting without having to take these leaps on their own. In addition, job training provides the opportunity for students to practice and learn critical employment skills in the working world, with paid job placement being the goal for everyone prior to graduation.



Our Graduate Living Community (GLC) fosters independence and active community living for qualifying graduates of the Undergraduate Program. This unique program offers a wide variety of educational, healthy living and social activities to help members stay connected to one another and their community. Employment, independent living and interpersonal skills support is also available as needed to support members in maintaining healthy, happy and successful lives.



High school students from across the country converge in Minnesota each summer to get a taste of the independent life with our Summer Internship Program (SIP). Students practice work skills at local employer internships, learn about living on their own as they navigate managing their apartment, and make lifelong friends while exploring the sights and activities the Twin Cities have to offer. Students leave the three-week program with a solid understanding of their strengths, skills and abilities and a new outlook on their potential and the opportunities that lay ahead for them.

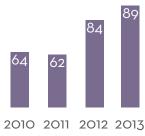




# Our Impact

#### **TOTAL SERVED**

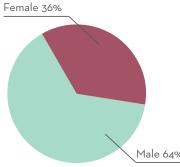
Total UG, GLC, SIP\*

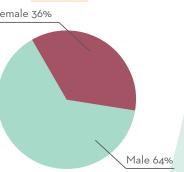


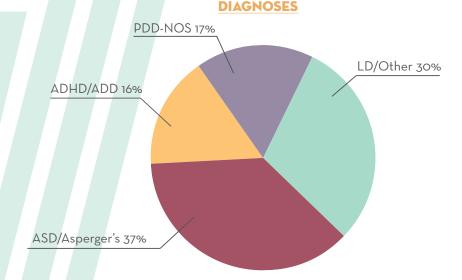
\*Year-end totals. No SIP program in 2010.

Since 1996, Minnesota Life College has taught Real Skills for Real Life™ to young adults ages 17 into adulthood, ensuring that learning differences and autism spectrum disorders are not barriers to living independent, self-sufficient, whole lives. The statistics tell just part of the story of those we serve; anyone who knows a student or graduate knows there's so much more to learn about these unique and talented individuals.

#### **GENDER**







#### **GEOGRAPHIC AREA**

Our students come from all over the country. In 2012-13, the following states we represented:

North Carolina Arizona California North Dakota Colorado Ohio Florida Pennsylvania South Carolina Illinois Indiana South Dakota Texas lowa Michigan Virginia Minnesota Washington Nebraska Wisconsin New York

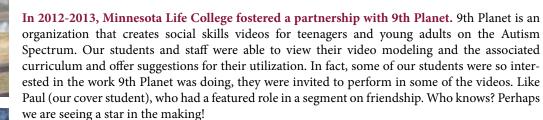




Autism was added as a special education in 1991 and now is the sixth-most-common classified disability in the U.S.

## Our Partners

We can't do this alone. In order to excel at what we do best: teaching real skills for real life to those who learn differently, we must look to community organizations and businesses for support in their areas of expertise. Partnering with others so all parties can benefit from our mutual experience only makes each of us stronger, and able to serve more individuals and families as a collective whole. Everyone wins!



Nowhere were the mutual benefits of the collaborations with our community partners in 2012-2013 more apparent than with the Southdale YMCA. Noting that most of our students never accessed fitness classes offered by the YMCA because they felt intimidated, our Assistant Director of Programs Aaron Carper worked closely with the Southdale YMCA to develop a variety of fitness classes designed to give students a basic understanding of the activities associated with them. From Water Aerobics to Zumba, our students were given the opportunity to test new things out in smaller groups. Because their comfort level rose, our students were able to try out other classes on the YMCA schedule and explore other



Please join us in recognizing the valued partners who helped MLC increase our reach and effectiveness in 2012-13: 9th Planet
Arc Greater Twin Cities
Arc's Value Village
Autism Society of Minnesota
Como Zoo
Conflict Resolution Center
CSM Corporation
Department of Public Health
Fairview Southdale Community
Friendship Ventures
Health Services
Hennepin County

fitness activities on their own and with friends.

LifeWorks
Minneapolis Community and Technical College
Minneapolis VA Medical Center
Minnesota Masonic Home
Park Nicollet Health Services
Richfield Fire Department
Richfield Police Department
Southdale YMCA
TeamQuest
University of Minnesota School of Nursing
University of St. Thomas Department of Education
Woodlake Lutheran Church



The Obama administration earmarked \$211 million for autism research. The president also advocates universal screening for all infants for autism disorders, as well as rescreening for all two-year-olds.

# Our Employers

#### **INTERNSHIP SITES**

Arc's Value Village

Como Zoo

PCs for People

The Depot

Minnesota Masonic Homes

Park Nicollet

Presbyterian Homes

Real Biscuits for Real Dogs

Residence Inn - Bloomington

Richfield Bloomington Honda

Veterans Administration Medical Center

Walgreens

#### For years, the staff at Minnesota Masonic Home in Bloomington have mentored UG students

as part of the Training Internship Program, a critical component of our Work Readiness Program. Their constant examples of hard work, dedication, and compassion have inspired all of our students in some way, but no one more so than Joey. As an intern, Joey learned the nuances of excellent customer service from his supervisors and when a paid position opened up in the spring, he jumped at the chance to join the Masonic team. Today, Joey keeps up the skills he was taught through his Training Internships as a Dietary Aide. What is the best part of the job according to Joey? "Working around people you enjoy; being with them and helping them!"

#### 2012-2013 saw the development of a Retail Training Skills Externship with Walgreens.

Designed specifically for our students to learn retail skills in a real world setting, the externship experience allowed our students valuable opportunities to explore a variety of jobs, including warehouse, stocking, and customer service. Just ask Rebecca. After completing her six week training, Rebecca was able to translate the skills she learned at Walgreen's into a paid position at a local restaurant. As she put it "Learning customer service at Walgreens has helped me land a paying job."

### **EMPLOYMENT HIGHLIGHTS**

- All seniors entering GLC had paid employment at graduation
- Job retention in paid employment was at 92%
- # 25 different employers hired an MLC student or graduate.
- MLC hosted an intern from the University of Wisconsin-Stout in their Masters of Science in Vocational Rehabilitation
- # 100% of the freshmen completed Vocational Skill Assessments and Interest Inventories







ADHD is the most common neurobehavioral disorder of childhood.

# Financial Statements

### **BALANCE SHEET**





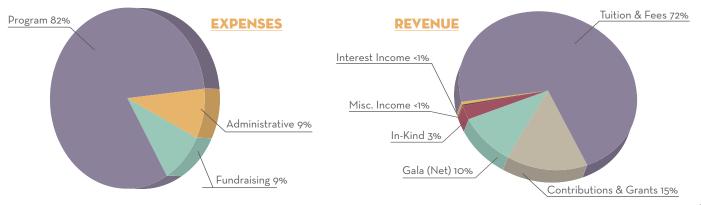
	_	_	
<u>ASSETS</u>	June 30, 2013	Ju	me 30, 2012
Current Assets			
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 683,482	\$	553,368
Certificates of Deposit	511,162		524,462
Accounts and Grants Receivable	291,895		53,649
Prepaid Expenses	58,525		59,950
Security Deposits	5,800		5,800
Total Current Assets	1,550,864		1,197,229
Grants Receivable, Long Term	-		-
Property and Equipment, Net	130,356		102,820
Total Assets	\$ 1,681,220	\$	1,300,049
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS Current Liabilities			
Accounts Payable	\$ 50,814	\$	35,916
Prepaid Tution and Fees	85,025		115,275
Accrued Payroll	52,151		49,770
Student Security Deposits	13,120		8,517
Total Current Liabilities	201,110		209,478
Net Assets			
Unrestricted Net Assets			
Undesignated	608,208		759,694
Designated	586,802		305,877
Total Unrestricted Net Assets	1,195,010		1,065,571
Temporarily Restricted Net Assets	285,100		25,000
Total Net Assets	1,480,110		1,090,571
<b>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</b>	\$ 1,681,220	\$	1,300,049



Amended January 11, 2014: In the original printing of this report, an error was located on page 9, in the Statement of Activities. We neglected to list the temporarily restricted net assets. The corrected Statement of Activities follows.

REVENUE AND SUPPORT	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Total
Contributions and Grants	\$ 97,086	\$ 285,100	\$ 382,186
Gala (Net)	257,524	-	257,524
Tuition and Fees	1,871,366	-	1,871,366
Interest Income	9,406	-	9,406
In-Kind Donations	75,492	-	75,492
Miscellaneous Income	8,209	-	8,209
Net Assets Released from Restrictions	25,000	(25,000)	-
Total Revenue and Support	\$ 2,344,083	\$ 260,100	\$ 2,604,183
<u>EXPENSES</u>			
Programs	\$ 1,818,501	\$ -	\$ 1,818,501
Administrative	192,254		192,254
Fundraising	203,889	-	203,889
Total Expenses	\$ 2,214,644	-	\$ 2,214,644
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	\$ 129,439	\$ 260,100	\$ 389,539
NET ASSETS			
Beginning of Year	\$ 1,065,571	\$ 25,000	\$ 1,090,571
End of Year	\$ 1,195,010	\$ 285,100	\$ 1,480,110

SUMMARY OF EXPENSES: JULY 01, 2012 - JUNE 30, 2013								
UG	GLC	Vocational	SIP	Administrative	Fundraising			
\$ 1,251,138	257,551	216,256	93,558	192,254	203,889			



## Our Donors

## MOST DISTINGUISHED DONORS (Cumulative Giving)

#### Real Skills for Real Life \$1,000,000 and above

Beverly and Roe Hatlen, and the Hatlen Foundation

#### Achieving Personal Success \$500,000 - \$999,999

Buffets, Inc.

#### Strength and Determination \$250,000 - \$499,999

Coca-Cola Company Jerry and Jean Marie Foss and Family Phillip and Jill Lighty, II

#### Partnership for Independence \$100,000 - \$249,999

Caliber Foundation
Suzanne and Walter Scott Foundation
John Lavander and Nan Owen
United Way
US Food Service, Inc.

### *Transforming Lives* \$50,000 - \$99,999

Geoff Barnard and Diane Vosick Blake and Nancy Barnes Paul and Julie Gulstrand Clifford Hoffman The Rich Family Foundation Sara Lee Coffee and Tea Foodservice Howard and Marlies Terpning

#### Learning by Doing \$25,000 - \$49,999

Jerry & Judy Alyea
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Mark Milberger
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#### **ANNUAL GIVING**

### Transforming Lives Advocate \$50,000 - \$99,999

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#### Learning By Doing Advocate \$25,000 - \$49,999

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#### Integrity Advocate \$15,000 - \$24,999

Dale E. & Jolita Benson Glenn & Susan Isensee Mark W. Milberger

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Blake & Nancy C. Barnes Doug & Julie Craven Sue & Mark Gherity Clifford Hoffman John Lavander & Nan Owen Gregory & Frances Sauer

#### Teamwork Advocate \$5.000 - \$9.999

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Kirk Sorensen & Peggy Herum
TJX Foundation Inc
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Michael & Ginny Walters

#### Fun Advocate \$1,000 - \$4,999

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Allina Health System
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#### Community Advocate \$250 - \$999

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## 2012-13 Annual Report

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#served | 89

#partners | 22

#internship sites | 12

#donors | 605

#thankyou
```



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