

United Ability  
Annual Report

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**2020**  
**IMPACT FOR**  
**CHANGE**

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**UNITED**  
**ABILITY**

## :: FROM THE CHAIR AND INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Dear Stakeholder,

**Resilience** is defined as “the capacity to recover quickly from difficulties; toughness.”

This is the perfect way to describe United Ability’s staff and Board of Directors throughout 2020. And your support played a role. **Thank you for helping to sustain the agency and its programming during a year of enormous hurdles.**

**...we never left.  
We never wavered.  
We never stopped  
finding creative ways  
to continue to address  
and fulfill needs.**

In 2020, United Ability celebrated 72 years of service to individuals living with disabilities. Despite a campus closure and the uncertainties related to the pandemic, more than **5,400 individuals and families leaned on United Ability and received service.** Your generosity helped make this possible.

To reflect fully on the past year, we must acknowledge the sudden loss of Dr. Gary Edwards, United Ability’s Chief Executive Officer of 38 years. His passion and impact will forever be missed. His vision and legacy will live on through our mission: **To provide innovative services connecting people with disabilities to their communities and empowering individuals to live full and meaningful lives.**

As the Report cover shares, *We are still here for you.* The truth is that we never left. We never wavered. We never stopped finding creative ways to continue to address and fulfill needs. Perhaps that is the best barometer for this agency we hold so dear.

Please pause when you read the parents’ quotes or enjoy the photos as you review this Report. These speak to the heart of United Ability and help bring our 10 programs to life.

Today, there is light at the end of the tunnel. With your continued, compassionate support, United Ability will not only make it through the tunnel but also will emerge stronger than ever. Resilience!

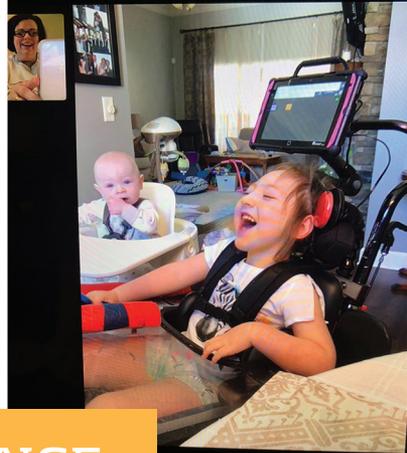
**We could not offer healthcare, therapy, education, support, transition services, employment, and other opportunities for children and adults without you.** For that, we remain ever grateful.



G. Allen Bolton, Jr.  
Chair, United Ability Board of Directors



D. Lee Yount  
Interim Chief Executive Officer



2020 was a year of RESILIENCE



In a recent interview, Stephanie, Gabby's mother, used the words "lifesaver," "peace," and "understanding" to describe how early intervention has impacted her life.

And with tears in her eyes, she said Gabby is her "dream come true."



Technology enabled our Early Intervention team to stay connected to the families we serve. Here, Claire (and her pup!) uses Facetime with her therapist.

not only here:  
we go out into  
home &  
community spaces  
to serve  
where we're needed

### HAND IN HAND EARLY INTERVENTION

United Ability is the largest Early Intervention (EI) service provider of its kind in Alabama, serving a five-county footprint. In 2020, **786** infants, toddlers, and their families directly benefited from visits and teletherapy by our therapists, special instructors, and service providers. In 2020, we conducted **532** evaluations to determine eligibility for services and **31,464** units of service coordination to help families access needed resources.

***Our EI program serves children from birth to three years old who:***

1. have at least a 25% delay in one or more of the five major areas of development;
2. have a diagnosis that results in a high probability of developmental delays; or
3. are at risk for developmental delays.

Team members work closely with the family to provide holistic training and therapy to help them meet the goals set for their child. Typically these services are provided in the child's natural environment — homes, daycares, parks, and playgrounds; however, 2020 was vastly different. The majority of services were provided remotely via Zoom and Facetime.

In a recent client survey,  
100% of client families indicated  
their family could better participate in  
and enjoy daily activities and community  
events because of United Ability —  
even during a global pandemic.

## HAND IN HAND EARLY LEARNING

100% of children with disabilities achieved their benchmarks toward developmental goals based on their Individualized Education Plan.

Hand In Hand reflects more than just a state-of-the-art early learning program for children and families like Leah's, who is pictured below with her classmates. It is a place where children of all abilities learn, play, and grow together to develop understanding, acceptance, and caring for one another. Strengthening the foundation for future success, children from six weeks of age to five years who have delays in one or more areas of development learn side-by-side with their typically developing peers in ten spacious classrooms.

Fully accredited and licensed by the National Association for Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the Department of Human Resources, this unique program features the latest technology tools, nature gardens, and fully accessible outdoor experiences. Because of YOU, 193 infants, toddlers, and preschoolers — with and without disabilities — were served in our award-winning inclusive child development environment in 2020.

“I didn't think twice about where she should go to receive the best care. United Ability was the place for her. I wouldn't trade [United Ability] for anything in the world.”

*NaTasha Garret,  
Leah's mother*





“They see past her disabilities. They celebrate her victories and support her through her failures. United Ability has saved us. They became the family and support we so desperately needed as we navigated through so many unknowns and obstacles. There will never be enough appreciation for what they mean to Boston, me, and the rest of our family.”

*Payton,  
Boston's mother*

## Ability Clinic Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation

As a source of hope and support to families, the Ability Clinic was established in 2011 to provide a new level of care to children and adults living with disabilities. Our team delivers a family-focused approach designed to improve the overall health and quality of life for children AND adults living with special needs through innovative medical and therapeutic interventions. Under the direction of Dr. Charlie Law, the clinic provides Physical Medicine and Rehabilitative Services to reduce symptoms caused by neuro-motor disabilities. Dr. Law is the only practicing physiatrist in Alabama that is dually-certified to serve pediatric and adult patients throughout their lifetime.

Because of you, **1,605** children and adults received medical services in-person and via telemedicine through the Ability Clinic for a total of **2,663** patient encounters in 2020. **440** of those were telehealth visits delivered during the pandemic, ensuring that all patients had access to our life-changing care.

Also, of note, Dr. Law and his team had **415** patient encounters at satellite locations throughout the state, bringing care and compassion to those who could not travel to Birmingham.



The Ability Clinic, under the direction of Dr. Law, continued to meet the needs of those we serve.



In 2019, you enabled us to create the Early Intervention Specialty Clinic (EISC).

Despite the COVID-19 crisis, we pressed on in 2020, and the EISC impacted 70 children from birth to age three who were seen, evaluated, and given a first-time diagnosis by Dr. Law.



Vanya practices his walking skills with his Physical Therapist, Marliese.

Thank you for helping  
make 4,292 therapy  
sessions possible  
for children in our  
community.

## Ability Clinic Outpatient Therapy

United Ability's Outpatient Therapy Program offers holistic care that centers around the child and family. Our multi-disciplinary team is specially trained in pediatrics and serves children from birth through 14 years. Our outpatient clinic is home to specialized feeding clinics, wheelchair evaluations and training, and assistive technology and augmentative communication (AAC) training in addition to speech therapy, physical therapy, and occupational therapy. In 2020 our team helped secure **13** alternative augmentative communication devices, in one instance delivering and installing a device in a driveway because the client needed it during the COVID-19 quarantine.

Vanya, pictured above, is one of **461** patients who received outpatient therapy in 2020. He began his journey with us 12 years ago in our Early Intervention and Outpatient Therapy Programs where he received Physical and Occupational Therapy services. For the past six years, he has developed the strength, balance, and coordination to learn to walk. Despite numerous surgeries and setbacks, in March 2020, it happened. His persistence paid off — Vanya took more than a few steps. He is now walking!



When Hazael needed her speech-language device in the middle of the quarantine, Melissa delivered and installed it in her driveway!



Here, our “blue ribbon” team of Parent Educators.



## First Teacher Home Visiting Program

In 2020, our First Teacher Home Visiting Program (FTHVP) served **208** children and family members promoting successful child development and improving parenting skills. The program is for children aged birth to five years who have a diagnosed disability or have certain factors that put them at risk for developmental delay. FTHVP also provides services to women who are pregnant and who could benefit from parenting training. In 2020 our FTHVP was named a Blue Ribbon Affiliate by the Parents as Teachers National Center to recognize its commitment to excellence.

Our CCEP program provided free training to **639** teachers in **48** facilities throughout our service area in 2020, greatly enhancing childcare opportunities for children of all abilities.

## Childcare Enhancement with a Purpose

CCEP (Childcare Enhancement with a Purpose) utilizes experienced developmental specialists to share simple, practical ways to work with and include children with special needs in childcare settings. The impact of our training has raised awareness for the early identification of children at risk for developmental delays.

## Hearts Respite

Caring for a child with a disability is emotionally and physically demanding. The Hearts Respite program allows the parent to train a caregiver of their choice to care for their child. This program, funded through a grant from the Children’s Trust Fund, enabled United Ability to reimburse **55** families for their out-of-pocket child care expenses. Hearts Respite is provided in collaboration with the Alabama Department of Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention, and in 2020 enabled us to directly impact **163** adults and children in a effort to decrease the likelihood of child abuse and/or neglect and strengthen families.



Kimberly (OT) and Joe (PT) have themed therapy days to make it fun: welcome to Tropical Tuesday!

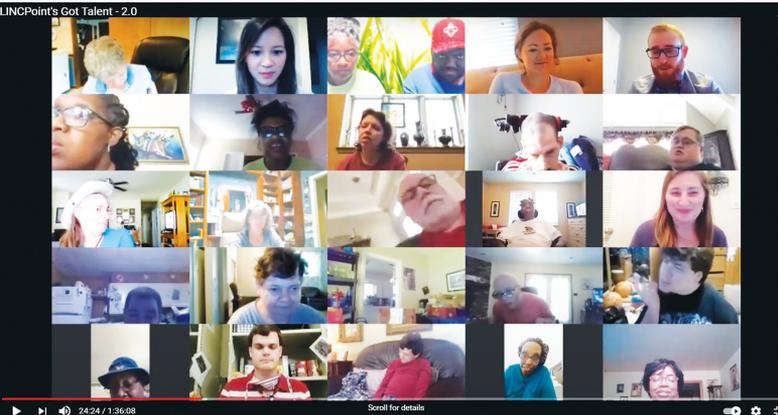
Our dedicated staff strives to give the 171 Adult Day program participants the best day of their life every day.

## LINCPoint Adult Day Program

LINCPoint's Adult Day program provides various experiences and services that promote independence, work skills, and community involvement to individuals age 21 and over with a wide range of disabilities. Our dedicated staff strives to give the **171** Adult Day program participants the best day of their life **every day** by offering enrichment activities, socialization, nursing and medical services, art programs, community outings, and vocational training. The socialization and family atmosphere brings joy and smiles to all.

In 2020 the adults took part in **1,444** community outings to places like the Vulcan and Railroad Parks. Because of you, our Physical, Occupational, and Speech-Language therapists provided **734** hours of therapy services to adult participants to foster independence and improve their quality of life.

In addition to the hours of therapy, we provided a staggering **4,806 hours of virtual services** due to COVID-19 restrictions, ensuring that our adult participants stayed connected to their community.



The adults participated in two virtual LINCPoint's Got Talent talent shows that created a great community, though separated.



“Matthew was able to find a career due to his pre-employment training and experience he gained in the hospitals. All because of United Ability.”

*Caroline, Matthew's mother*

## Employment Services

United Ability's Employment Services Program offers adults and students with a wide range of physical and cognitive disabilities individualized job placement and support within competitive employment sites. At United Ability, we envision disability as an everyday part of the human experience, and we are committed to making this vision a reality. Our goal is to help both employers and individuals with disabilities

acquire and maintain a beneficial relationship. Employment brings both a sense of pride and accomplishment.

Because of your support, **1,210** individuals were enrolled in one of our **four employment programs** — **62** clients found community employment, **160** were supported and assisted in maintaining employment during a global pandemic, and an encouraging **73%** of eligible clients were placed in competitive jobs in 2020.

This past year, we were in 26 high schools and worked with 774 students, exposing them to 1,013 training course encounters.

## Transition Services

Transition Services is part of our Employment Services department. Transition Services offers pre-employment training to our local school systems.

Our Transition Specialists go into the special education classes and teach job-readiness skills to enhance employability for high school students after graduation.

Students and Employment Specialists at The Red Barn enjoy their time during our summer Job Exploration Training Services (JETS) Program.





Our Gone For Good Team is ready to safely serve its more than 900 clients in the Greater Birmingham Area.

In 2020, during the COVID-19 crisis, GFG increased its number of active customers to **906**, an 11% growth over the previous year. **91** were new customers.

### United Ability Enterprises - Gone For Good and Outsource Solutions

United Ability Enterprises was established to employ people with disabilities and in 2020 employed **65** adults living with physical, developmental, and intellectual challenges. Gone For Good (GFG), United Ability's secure document and e-waste destruction business is AAA-NAID certified and adheres to the industry's highest levels of security. Gone For Good's services include recurring daily and weekly pick-ups, one-time purges, drop-off, and on-site shredding services.

Thanks to your help,

**5,492**

children, adults, & families were served last year. Your support is life-changing. We are so grateful for your generosity!

## HAND IN HAND EARLY INTERVENTION

**786** infants, toddlers, and families were served in their home, daycare, or community setting through

**7,810**

therapy and special instruction sessions provided — at no cost to the family — to foster a more independent and integrated lifestyle within their natural environments.

## FIRST TEACHER HOME VISITING PROGRAM

**208** children, ages birth to five years, and their family members received home-based training and support to improve parenting skills and strengthen relationships within the family and community.

## HEARTS RESPITE

**81** adults were provided financial assistance to cover the cost of a caregiver while they took a break from the rigors of caring for a child with a disability. **77** children benefited.

## CHILDCARE ENHANCEMENT WITH A PURPOSE

**639** teachers in childcare settings received training and support in providing quality services to children with special needs. **14** programs reported being more prepared to accept children with special needs while **48** daycares received ongoing training and support in servicing children with special needs.

## HAND IN HAND EARLY LEARNING PROGRAM

**193** children, ages 6 weeks to 5 years, were served in an award-winning inclusive child development environment.

**100%**

of the children with disabilities achieved their developmental goals and were equally or exceedingly prepared for the next class or kindergarten upon exit.

## OUTPATIENT THERAPY

There were **4,292** therapy sessions conducted and **461** patients who received speech, physical, or occupational therapy services.

**100%** of families served in Outpatient Therapy reported that they would recommend our clinic to friends and families seeking services. **100%** of the families reported that their child's life was improved by therapy.

## ADULT DAY PROGRAM & ENTERPRISES

**171** adults were served, receiving life enrichment training, therapy, work skills training, and employment. They engaged in **1,444** community outings to foster independence and integration. Work opportunities were provided through **United Ability Enterprises: Gone for Good & Outsource Solutions**.

**22** participants worked **3,761** total hours earning an average hourly wage of **\$9.11**.

## ABILITY CLINIC

**1,605** children and adults received medical services by Dr. Charlie Law with a total of

**2,663** patient encounters.

Dr. Law saw patients on United Ability's main campus and through 10 satellite clinics in Huntsville, Jasper, Anniston, Dothan, Gadsden, Burkett Center, Tuscaloosa, Mobile, Pelham, and Children's of Alabama.

**100%** of patients reported they gained greater independence as a result of Dr. Law's care.

## EMPLOYMENT

**1,210** participants were enrolled in United Ability employment programs, with **62** placed in community employment and an additional **160** supported and assisted in maintaining employment. On average, the hourly paycheck was **\$12.00** with **32** hours worked per week; the annual salary was **\$21,194**. Of eligible participants, **100%** indicated they were successfully helped to achieve their employment goals.

Additionally, **774** high school students in **26** area schools were engaged in pre-employment classroom training.

## :: FINANCIALS

### OPERATING EXPENSES

#### Children's Services

Child Nutrition Program	\$95,571	
Early Learning Program	\$2,157,363	
Early Intervention Gadsden	\$345,470	
CCEP	\$140,253	
First 5 Alabama	\$58,431	
ELP Therapy	\$174,970	
Outpatient Therapy	\$619,442	
Early Intervention Birmingham	\$2,328,217	
First Teacher Home Visiting Program	\$278,807	
Hearts Respite	\$32,842	
	<u>\$6,231,366</u>	49%

#### Adult Services

Adult Day	\$2,092,079	
Community Work	\$27,000	
	<u>\$2,119,079</u>	17%

#### Admin/Fundraising

Admin	\$89,279	
Development	\$498,439	
	<u>\$587,718</u>	5%

#### Employment Services

Community Rehab Program	\$443,240	
Project Search - Birmingham	\$76,052	
Project Search - Hoover	\$72,200	
WIOA	\$98,814	
School-Based Training Programs	\$308,405	
Summer Work	\$83,235	
	<u>\$1,081,946</u>	9%

#### United Ability Enterprises

Gone for Good	\$923,026	
Outsource Solution	\$10,781	
	<u>\$933,807</u>	7%

#### Ability Clinic

	<u>\$998,520</u>	
	\$998,520	8%

#### Maintenance

LINCPoint Maintenance	\$235,908	
Hand In Hand Maintenance	\$293,929	
Admin Maintenance	\$61,340	
	<u>\$591,177</u>	5%

<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$12,543,613</b>	<b>100%</b>
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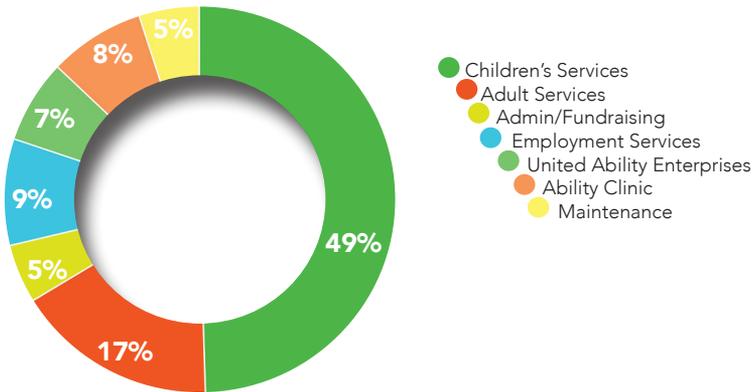
For Fiscal Year Ending September 30, 2020. United Ability's most recent 990 form along with the most recent Audit Report certified by Haley & Woods, LLP can be found at [unitedability.org/accountability](http://unitedability.org/accountability)

## OPERATING REVENUE

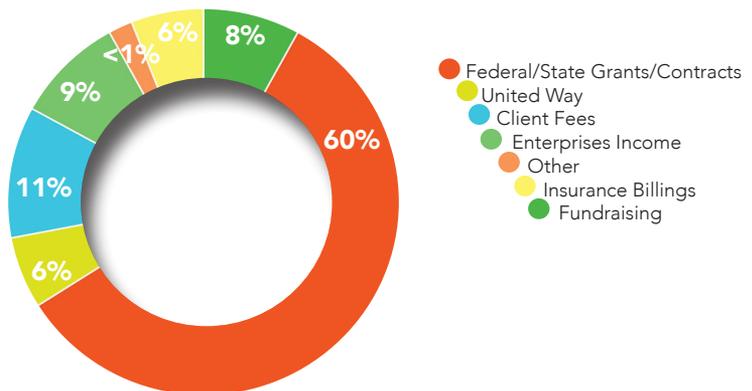
Federal & State Grants/Contracts	\$7,032,721	60%
Fundraising	\$910,694	8%
Client Fees	\$1,331,460	11%
Insurance Billings	\$664,661	6%
United Way	\$736,588	6%
Other	\$5,987	0%
Enterprises Income	\$1,083,137	9%

<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$11,765,248</b>	<b>100%</b>
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## OPERATING EXPENSES



## OPERATING REVENUE



## **:: BOARD MEMBERS**

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Troup Cunningham  
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Meredith Fuller  
Rob Gray  
John Hawkins

Allison Horton  
Ransom Kelly  
Meg McClenney  
Randi McCoy  
Billy McMahan  
Matt Nelson  
Garrett Powell

Sara Thetford  
Blake Thomas  
Van Trefethen  
Donna White  
Colin Winkler





# UNITED ABILITY

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Birmingham, AL 35211  
[unitedability.org](http://unitedability.org)

## OUR MISSION

United Ability provides innovative services connecting people with disabilities to their communities and empowering individuals to live full and meaningful lives.

## OUR VISION

United Ability envisions a world where disability is neither defining nor limiting.

