



United Ability  
Annual Report

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**2021**  
**IMPACT FOR  
CHANGE**

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**UNITED  
ABILITY**

## :: FROM THE BOARD CHAIR AND CEO

Dear Friend of United Ability,

Hope. At United Ability, hope is not just a longing; it is a reality. From the minute individuals and families connect with our agency, lives and services intertwine into a journey of what is possible.

There is no denying the challenges we have faced over the past two years — as individuals and communities and as an organization and workplace. Yet, at United Ability, we remained hopeful and resilient. Our staff continued to serve our participants and their families with compassion and excellence; we remained focused on innovation; and, we continued to do whatever it took to meet the needs of the **5,589 individuals** with mixed abilities that entrusted us with their care this year.

In 2021, we deepened current relationships and laid the foundation for future growth by embarking on new partnerships. The pages in this report do not just share numbers about our successes in 2021. For behind every picture and number you see is a story about hope — a person and/or a family whose **lives have been forever changed** for the better by their interactions with United Ability and **because of your support**.

The 2021 calendar year was also transitional — a shift away from the sheer uncertainty of the early pandemic toward a renewed focus on United Ability's future. In many ways, we are emerging from the pandemic stronger than before. And through it all, we have remained steadfast in our conviction to provide hope to individuals with disabilities, connecting them to their communities so they may live full and meaningful lives.

Thank you for the role that you play in these transformations. For that, we are filled with gratitude and hope for what the future will bring.



William H. King, III  
Chair, United Ability Board of Directors  
Fiscal Year 2022-2023



Susan E. Sellers  
Chief Executive Officer





**I hope our story encourages parents to advocate for their child. Don't look at needing support as a negative thing—look at it as a positive thing that you get to utilize those resources and get to help your child reach their potential. When Everleigh was born prematurely, it was intimidating. Now, we're very blessed that we get to take care of her and help her grow."**

Crystal Odom, mother of Everleigh, in a *Bham Now* article on their family and United Ability

## 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 2021, **794** infants, toddlers, and their families directly benefited from visits and teletherapy by our therapists, special instructors, and service providers. In 2021, we conducted **532** evaluations to determine eligibility for services and **31,104** 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. These services are provided in the child's natural environment — homes, daycares, parks, and playgrounds. While the majority of our services were provided in-person last year, teletherapy was also utilized to meet needs.

The Odom family and their physical therapist at a typical home-based session





## HAND IN HAND EARLY LEARNING

Hand In Hand reflects more than just a state-of-the-art early learning program for children like Leah and Tailyn (pictured at left) and their families. 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 ages six weeks to five years with delays in one or more areas of development learn side-by-side with their typically developing peers in ten spacious classrooms.

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

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 2021.

**Our state-of-the-art outdoor environment is unparalleled by any other child development facility in the nation.** By design, the fully accessible playground is the center of all activity. Slides, swings, tracks, and sports activity areas are primary sources of enjoyment for children. Additional unique out-of-doors learning experiences for children include covered and shaded play areas, a large multi-sensory garden, and a nature trail.



## 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. The Ability Clinic provides complex medical services to pediatric and adult patients with disabilities throughout their lifetime.

Because of you, **962** children and adults received medical services in-person and via telemedicine through the Ability Clinic for a total of **1,379** patient encounters in 2021. **440** of those were telehealth visits delivered during the pandemic, ensuring that all patients had access to our life-changing care.

Even during the challenging times of 2021, our resilient medical staff evaluated **149** new patients. According to a survey, 100% of the families served were reassured that United Ability is able to care for their child or loved one throughout their lifetime. In other words, a family can begin with Early Intervention and remain with United Ability through their lifetime.

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

Despite the COVID-19 crisis, we pressed on in 2021, and the EISC impacted **59** children from birth to age three who were seen, evaluated, and given a first-time diagnosis by our medical staff.



United Ability offers world-class care and saw patients both in-person and via telehealth consults in 2021.

Thank you for helping  
make 5,105 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 and alternative communication (AAC) device training. In addition, speech therapy, physical therapy, and occupational therapy are provided. In 2021, our team helped secure **15** alternative augmentative communication devices, giving voice to 15 children, many for the first time.

Vanya, pictured opposite, started in the Early Intervention Program and has received services in speech, physical, and occupational therapy in our Outpatient Clinic. "United Ability has been with us every step of the way," says his mother, Nancy.

An AAC device gives a 'voice' to so many who are non-verbal.

Your support enabled us to help secure 15 devices for children and adults.





ENABLE  
EMPOWER  
AG



## 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 2021 enabled us to directly impact **158** adults and children in a effort to decrease the likelihood of child abuse and/or neglect and strengthen families.

## First Teacher Home Visiting Program

In 2021, our First Teacher Home Visiting Program (FTHVP) served **179** children and family members promoting successful child development and improving parenting skills. The program is for children from 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. Our program is a Blue Ribbon Affiliate as awarded by the Parents as Teachers national organization. This designation recognizes the First Teacher Home Visiting Program's commitment to excellence.



**...we are often able to accommodate, and are successful, because of the additional help from United Ability. Kelli and Meredith are amazing! They bring so much with their knowledge and enthusiasm! We appreciate their visits so much."**

Daycare worker trained by United Ability CCEP staff

## 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.

Our CCEP program provided free training to **1,408** teachers in **118** facilities throughout our service area in 2021, greatly enhancing childcare opportunities for children of all abilities. In addition to the training, **127** children with disabilities were able to attend a childcare center close to home because of CCEP.

Engaging, fun, meaningful social activities at LINCPoint are incredibly beneficial for the 123 participants you enable us to serve.



## 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 **123** 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 2021 the adults took part in **397** community outings. They gave back to their community by volunteering at Firehouse Shelter and Meals on Wheels. Because of you, our Physical, Occupational, and Speech-Language therapists provided **2,077** 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 **50,576** hours of education to improve life skills in our three Life Enrichment Classrooms.



## Employment and Transition 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 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, **1,143** individuals were enrolled in one of our four employment programs — **80** clients found community employment, **135** were supported and assisted in maintaining employment during a global pandemic, and a staggering 100% of eligible clients were placed in competitive jobs in 2021.

In 2021, we hosted our first disABILITY Hiring Expo. It was attended by over **200** job-seekers and according to our community partner, the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services, **30** individuals were interviewed and **20** found employment through this event. Pictured back-center above, Alabama Secretary of Labor Fitzgerald Washington, and in front, Dr. Graham Sisson, Executive Director of the Governor's Council on Disability.



Karson was awarded Employee of the Month in 2021 at a local Chick-Fil-A, where he is happily employed. He has worked with United Ability since high school, where he participated in the Transition Services and Project SEARCH Hoover programs.

**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. In 2021 we worked with **796** students who were enrolled in Pre-Employment Training Service Programs. These training sessions took place in **25** local high schools, exposing them to **3,063** units of service.



“Big Ced,” who has been employed at GFG for 13 years, is proud of his contribution to the program.

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

United Ability Enterprises was established to employ people with disabilities and in 2021 employed **19** adults living with physical, developmental, and/or 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.



In 2021, while the COVID-19 crisis continued and more people worked from home, GFG increased its number of active customers to **992**, a 10% growth over the previous year and an impressive **91** new customers.

Thanks to your help,

**5,589**

children, adults, & families were served in 2021. Your support is life-changing. We are so grateful for your generosity!

## HAND IN HAND EARLY INTERVENTION

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

**8,389**

therapy and special instruction sessions which fostered a more independent and integrated lifestyle within their natural environments.

## FIRST TEACHER HOME VISITING PROGRAM

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

## HEARTS RESPITE

**55** families benefitted from financial assistance to help cover the cost of a caregiver, allowing parents or guardians some time for self-care in order to decrease the stress of caring for a child with special needs and the likelihood of child abuse and/or neglect.

## CHILDCARE ENHANCEMENT WITH A PURPOSE

**1,408** teachers in **118** community daycares received training and support in serving children with special needs.

**127** children with disabilities were supported, allowing for greater success in inclusive environments.

## HAND IN HAND EARLY LEARNING PROGRAM

**193** children, 6 weeks to 5 years of age, were served in an award-winning inclusive child development environment where children of mixed abilities learn, play, and grow together.

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

## OUTPATIENT THERAPY

**5,105** therapy sessions were conducted with **502** patients who received speech, physical, or occupational therapy services. **15** children received an augmentative communication device or "talker."

**100%** of the families reported that their child's life was improved by therapy from United Ability.

## ADULT DAY PROGRAM

**123** adults were served through life enrichment training, therapy, community integration opportunities and employment to enhance their independence, productivity, work skills training, and employment.

**5,537** participant hours were worked in community employment small groups and **397** community outings were provided to foster inclusion and integration.

## EMPLOYMENT

**1,143** participants were enrolled in one of four employment programs. **80** adults were placed in community employment and **796** students in **25** area high schools received Pre-Employment Training Services. **135** individuals were supported and assisted in maintaining employment. The average annual salary earned was **\$21,200**.

## ABILITY MEDICAL CLINIC

**962** children and adults received medical services last year with a

total of **1,379** patient encounters. Through a family focus, the Ability Clinic provides preventative diagnostic, therapeutic, and rehabilitative specialty services for infants, children, adolescents, and adults with disabilities.

## ENTERPRISES AND GONE FOR GOOD

**992** active customers accessed Gone For Good for secure document shredding and electronic recycling services and Outsource Solutions for kitting, packaging, and assembly tasks.

**4,794** hours were worked by participants enrolled in the Adult Day program.

## :: FINANCIALS

### OPERATING EXPENSES

#### Children's Services

Child Nutrition Program	\$102,065	
Early Learning Program	\$2,213,551	
Early Intervention Gadsden	\$187,692	
CCEP	\$157,526	
First 5 Alabama	\$55,491	
ELP Therapy	\$162,192	
Outpatient Therapy	\$637,033	
Early Intervention Birmingham	\$2,102,189	
First Teacher Home Visiting Program	\$313,066	
Hearts Respite	\$34,069	
	<u>\$5,964,874</u>	52%

#### Adult Services

Adult Day	\$1,653,464	
Community Work	\$20,933	
	<u>\$1,674,397</u>	14%

#### Admin/Fundraising

Admin	\$61,067	
Development	\$509,698	
	<u>\$570,765</u>	5%

#### Employment Services

Community Rehab Program	\$447,465	
Project Search - Birmingham	\$6,984	
School-Based Training Programs	\$418,687	
Summer Work	\$86,899	
	<u>\$960,035</u>	8%

#### United Ability Enterprises

Gone For Good	\$866,613	
Enterprise Solutions	\$7,917	
	<u>\$874,530</u>	8%

#### Ability Clinic

	\$898,944	
	<u>\$898,944</u>	8%

#### Maintenance

LINCPoint Maintenance	\$222,003	
Hand In Hand Maintenance	\$345,234	
Admin Maintenance	\$56,279	
	<u>\$623,516</u>	5%

<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$11,567,061</b>	<b>100%</b>
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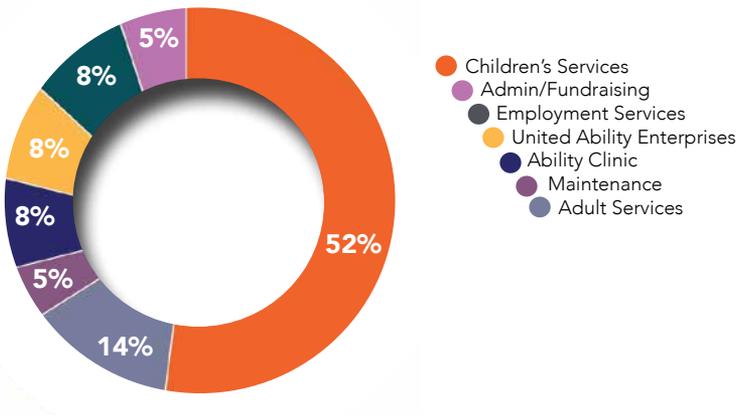
For Fiscal Year Ending September 30, 2021. United Ability's most recent 990 form along with the most recent Audit Report certified by Borland Benefield, P.C. can be found at [unitedability.org/accountability](http://unitedability.org/accountability)

## OPERATING REVENUE

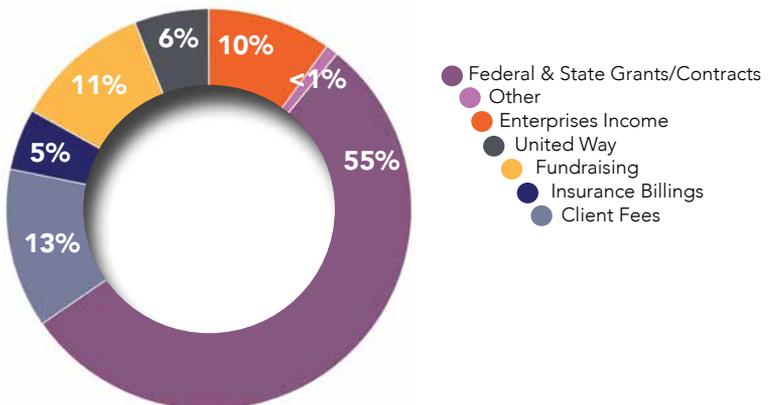
Federal & State Grants/Contracts	\$6,437,868	55%
Fundraising	\$1,288,243	11%
Client Fees	\$1,549,211	13%
Insurance Billings	\$564,883	5%
United Way of Central Alabama	\$680,644	6%
Other	\$4,825	0%
Enterprises Income	\$1,167,054	10%

<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$11,692,728</b>	<b>100%</b>
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## OPERATING EXPENSES



## OPERATING REVENUE



## **:: BOARD MEMBERS**

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Brooke Yarbrough





**UNITED  
ABILITY**

100 Oslo Circle  
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.

