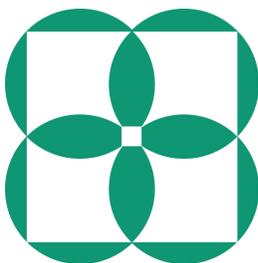


DDRB ANNUAL REPORT

FISCAL YEAR 2025



Expanding Access, Inclusion, and Opportunity for All in St. Charles County



DDRB

Developmental Disabilities Resource Board
of St. Charles County



OUR VISION

We envision a community that is enriched by the contributions and inclusion of all people.



OUR MISSION

Through partnership and direct action, the Developmental Disabilities Resource Board of St. Charles County builds a community that strengthens and includes people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

WHO WE ARE

The Developmental Disabilities Resource Board of St. Charles County (DDRB) is a public agency funded by a local property tax levy, dedicated to building a community where every person is valued, included, and supported to reach their full potential. Through partnerships with local organizations and direct programs, the DDRB invests in services such as early intervention, employment, residential support, and advocacy to strengthen opportunities for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) and their families.

Grounded in our commitment to inclusion, accountability, and responsible stewardship, we ensure that taxpayer dollars are used effectively to achieve measurable results. Each investment is guided by data, collaboration, and our belief that a stronger community is one that welcomes the contributions of all. Together with our partners, we work to create lasting impact—supporting individuals, empowering families, and shaping a more inclusive future for St. Charles County.



A MESSAGE FROM

DDRB Board President

To my fellow St. Charles County taxpayers:

I have had the privilege to serve on the DDRB for more than nine years, with 2025 being my second stint as President of the DDRB. During that time, I have come to appreciate the resolve of the administration and staff at the DDRB as well as those at our partner agencies. Together we have overcome one challenge after another, whether it be a direct support staffing crisis, the COVID pandemic, inflationary pressures, or any number of more minor challenges that arise throughout the course of any given year.

We often say that the developmentally disabled community is one our most vulnerable communities, and as such it is imperative to have a concerted effort between the DDRB and our partner agencies to ensure that the interests of the DD community are protected. As a board member, I have the opportunity to be a part of this process several times each month at board and committee meetings. This pales in comparison, however, to the dedication and resolve of those working in administrative or staffing roles at the DDRB and our partner agencies, especially those that work in direct support positions providing critical services to individual clients.

One of the DDRB's highlights of 2025 came when the St. Louis Post-Dispatch recognized the DDRB as one of the top workplaces in the region. This of course speaks volumes to the workplace culture that has been created by our Executive Director, Denise Cross, and the rest of her leadership team. It also demonstrates that our case managers find the work immensely rewarding. I am confident that this translates to positive interactions with members of the DD community.

As we look forward to 2026, we can be sure that there will be additional challenges that arise. We know that one of those challenges will be the continued threats to our funding sources from legislation to reduce or eliminate real estate and personal property taxes. I am certain that no matter the outcome of those legislative efforts, that the administration and staff at the DDRB as well as our partner agencies will step up to the challenge and ensure that the best strategic decisions are made for the DD community. In the meantime, I would encourage my fellow taxpayers to educate themselves about our real estate and personal property taxes and the critical services that they fund so that you can make informed decisions at the ballot box.

Thank you for the trust you put in me and the rest of the board at the DDRB to be good stewards of your tax dollars.

Very truly yours,
Bryon Hale



A MESSAGE FROM DDRB Executive Director

Dear Friends and Community Members,

Thank you for your trust and support. Because of the continued investment of St. Charles County taxpayers, the Developmental Disabilities Resource Board (DDRB) is able to help people with developmental disabilities live, work, and participate fully in our community. We are deeply grateful to the individuals with developmental disabilities and their families who share their experiences with us—your voices guide our planning, shape our priorities, and keep our work centered on what truly matters.

This was the first year of our three-year strategic plan, and we are proud of the progress we have made together. We worked to make our services easier to access and our communication clearer. We refreshed our social media presence, deepened our outreach in the community, and designed a new, accessible website to help individuals and families find support more easily. This website will launch soon and represents an important step in making information more open and useful for everyone.

Within the DDRB, we also strengthened how our Board and staff work with one another—ensuring that more time and attention is spent on thoughtful planning and long-term sustainability. These improvements help us use your tax dollars responsibly and stay focused on our core mission: supporting people with developmental disabilities and the families who care for them. We are closely following discussions about changes to Missouri’s property tax laws. We understand and respect efforts to promote fairness and transparency in taxation. At the same time, we encourage policymakers to consider how these changes may affect the essential services that people with developmental disabilities rely on in their daily lives. We believe our community can continue to value both fairness for taxpayers and strong, stable supports for individuals with disabilities.

To our taxpayers, partners, Board members, and staff—thank you. Your dedication and shared belief in an inclusive community make this work possible. And to the members of the I/DD community who continue to share their lived experiences: thank you for your trust. We are honored to do this work alongside you.

With gratitude,
Denise Cross
Executive Director

AGENCY OVERVIEW

As a steward of taxpayer dollars, the DDRB is committed to effectiveness, efficiency, accessibility, and transparency. In the first year of our three-year strategic plan, we made major progress in strengthening systems, refining processes, and advancing inclusion for people with developmental disabilities in St. Charles County.

STRATEGIC PLAN HIGHLIGHTS

Governance Reform – Redesigned board meetings to create more time for big-picture strategy and thoughtful decision-making while maintaining full compliance and fiduciary oversight.

Financial Preparedness – Advanced long-term goals of funding sustainability, anticipating and preparing for potential decreases in property tax revenue due to state-level reform

Community Engagement – Launched a rebranded social media strategy, expanded outreach, and completed the design of a new accessible website.

Authentic Inclusion – Partnered with employees with disabilities to help shape agency initiatives and ensure our actions reflect the voices of those we serve.

Organizational Alignment – Conducted a role and structure review to strengthen internal efficiency and align staff functions with strategic goals.

Continued Commitment – Through both funding partnerships and direct services, DDRB continues to build a community where all people are included, valued, and supported.

RECOGNIZED AS A ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH TOP WORKPLACE

In FY25, the DDRB was honored to be named a **Top Workplace by the St. Louis Post-Dispatch**, a recognition that is especially meaningful because it is based entirely on **anonymous feedback from our employees**. This award reflects the commitment, professionalism, and heart our team brings to serving people with I/DD every day. It also affirms that our efforts to build a supportive, inclusive, and mission-driven workplace are making a real difference. We are proud of this achievement—and even more proud of the team that made it possible.



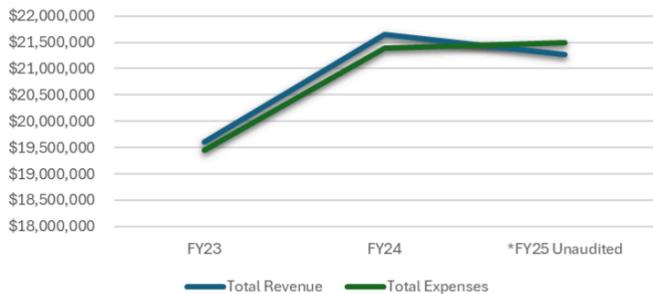
AGENCY OVERVIEW

Financial Snapshot (Unaudited, FY25)

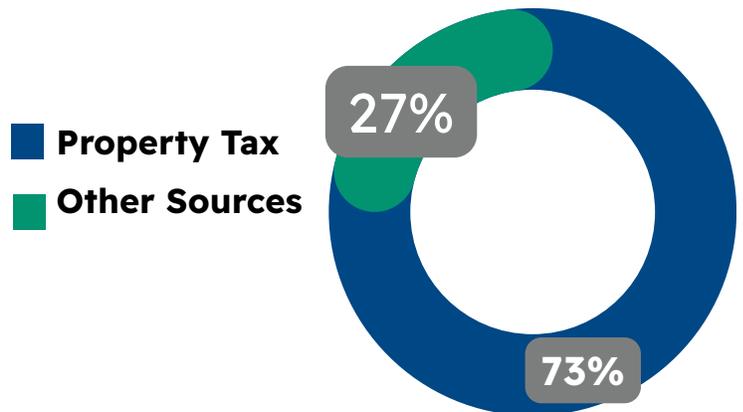
Category	Amount
Total Revenues	\$22,419,796
Property Tax Revenue*	\$15,417,947
Total Expenses	\$22,888,808
Funding Expenditures	\$15,750,846
Net Result	(\$226,638) Deficit
Reserves	Maintained at 2-3 months of expenses per DDRB policy

*includes ARPA funding

Balancing Mission and Fiscal Responsibility



Where Our Revenue Comes From



MEET BEN

Success Stories

Ben's journey with DASA began at just six years old—a determined young boy with cerebral palsy, a bright smile, and a courageous spirit.

His first goal? To overcome a deep fear of the water. Though Ben had the physical ability to swim, stepping beyond the shallow end felt impossible. At first, he wouldn't go past his knees in the pool.

DASA's instructors didn't rush him. Instead, they focused on building trust, one session at a time. Week by week, Ben grew more comfortable. He eventually took those first steps into deeper water, learned to tread, and became a confident lap swimmer. The pool soon became a place of freedom and joy—proof that progress looks different for everyone, but is always possible with patience and the right support.

As Ben grew, so did his challenges. At age 12, puberty led to significant changes in his mobility. He began using a wheelchair and faced multiple surgeries that required long recoveries. But Ben didn't stop. His goals evolved—from learning to swim, to maintaining strength, regaining independence, and now, returning to competition.

DASA adapted with him every step of the way. After formal therapy ended, Ben transitioned into the DASA Ability Gym, where adaptive strength and conditioning trainers created workouts tailored to his goals. This bridge between rehab and sport allowed Ben to recover, grow stronger, and prepare for a new chapter in competitive athletics.

Today, Ben is training for a comeback in not just one, but three adaptive sports: swimming, track, and archery. He's not only focused on competing—he's aiming to reach his personal best. Ben's story is one of resilience, determination, and the power of adaptation.

Through DASA, Ben has found more than just training. He's found community. Friendships with other teens who share similar challenges have given him a sense of belonging and motivation that extends far beyond the pool or track.

Ben's family has also found strength through DASA. They've watched him overcome fear, recover from surgeries, and reclaim the joy of movement. The organization has become a support system, offering peace of mind and a shared celebration of progress.

For Ben and his family, DASA isn't just about sports—it's about shifting the focus from limitation to possibility. Each practice and competition reminds them all that ability—not disability—defines the athlete.

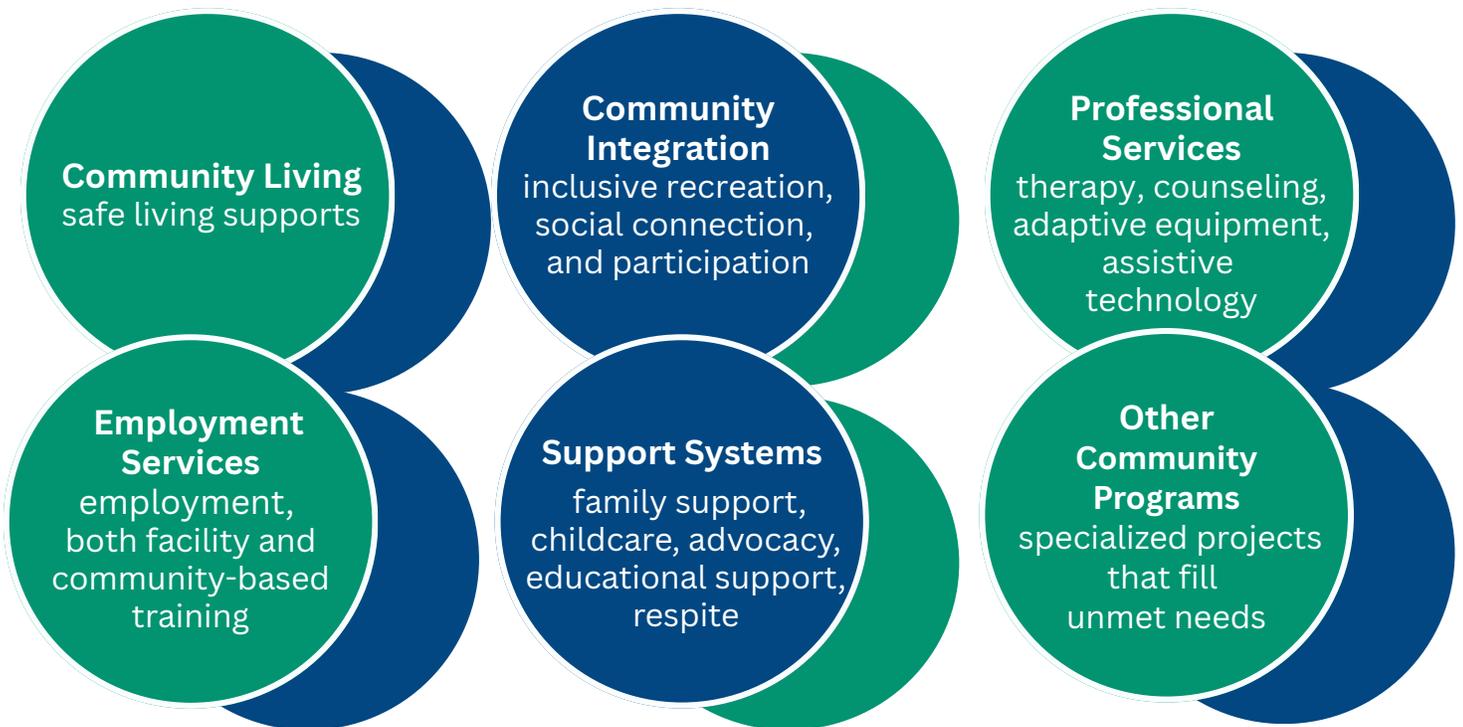


FUNDED SERVICES

Overview

Each year, the Developmental Disabilities Resource Board (DDRB) is proud to partner with more than **30** community organizations that provide high-quality services for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) in St. Charles County. Together, we create a strong, interconnected network of support that helps people live, work, and fully participate in their community.

These services span the entire lifespan, from early childhood intervention to supports for older adults, and address a wide range of needs across the following areas:



As a steward of taxpayer dollars, DDRB remains committed to accountability and efficiency. We prioritize leveraging other available funding sources whenever possible, ensuring DDRB funds are used where they are needed most – to fill true service gaps and strengthen the entire system of care.

We are deeply grateful to the taxpayers of St. Charles County for their continued investment in the lives of people with developmental disabilities and their families. Your support makes it possible to sustain a holistic, high-quality network of services that reflects our community’s values of inclusion, compassion, and opportunity for all.

AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT Partnership

FY25 marked the completion of a multi-year partnership with St. Charles County to administer \$2.1 million in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to help local providers recover from the impacts of COVID-19. Through this support, **9** organizations completed projects that improved safety, technology, facilities, and mental and physical wellness for people with I/DD.

These investments included upgrades to HVAC and ventilation systems, security and surveillance improvements, expanded program spaces, technology modernization, adaptive equipment, mental health supports, and new therapeutic resources such as a therapy pool and expanded exercise programs.

We are grateful to St. Charles County for entrusting us with these funds and proud of the long-lasting improvements they created for our provider community and the individuals they serve.



FUNDED SERVICES OVERVIEW

The DDRB funds services that support people to be employed, live independently, have active social networks, experience well-being, and have support networks that are healthy and thriving. This list is not exhaustive, but represents key areas of funding support.

Invested in providing job training to **108**
(youth and adult) individuals

\$709,047.19

\$1,592,993.99

Invested to support **106** individuals to live
independently

Invested to support **545** individuals with skills
and experiences to have active social lives and
meaningful friendships

\$1,028,741.69

\$3,117,547.16

Invested to support **538** individuals and caregivers
to support and improve their physical and/or
emotional well-being

Invested in programs that support **1,680**
individuals and caregivers by providing
essential information and resources, training,
advocacy, and respite from caregiver duties.

\$5,641,440.41

DDRB Community Programs

DDRB administered programs provide individuals with access to funding for transportation, home furnishings, conference reimbursements, individual assistance, and emergency housing assistance.

\$60,212

Reimbursed for **35** individuals to assist with costs associated with furnishing their living space.

Reimbursed for **41** individuals who used the funds for transportation-related needs, including paying for rides, learning to drive, car repairs, or purchasing a vehicle.

\$52,291

\$3,287

Reimbursed of Conference Reimbursement Funds for **20** Individuals/families to attend a conference to learn and/or gain understanding about their disability and/or a family member's disability.

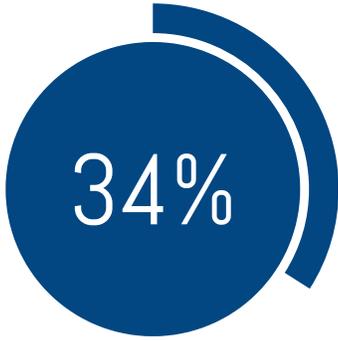
Emergency Housing Assistance funds was utilized to assist **22** individuals/families to remain in their home and/or establish a new permanent residence.

\$27,539



FUNDED SERVICES

Impact



individuals employed in the community have maintained their job for 5 years or longer.



learned the skills necessary for employment



reported less overall stress



gained or maintained skills to ensure personal safety and healthy boundaries.



remained living independently in the community



were able to complete daily tasks more independently

• EMPLOYMENT INDUSTRIES •

43%

ASSEMBLY,
MANUFACTURING,
OR PACKAGING

16%

CLEANING OR
MAINTENANCE

17%

FOOD PREPARATION
OR SERVICE

19%

RETAIL
SALES

5%

OTHER

MEET KAYLANA

Success Stories



When Kaylana joined People First in August 2024, she was looking for something more than just a group—she was looking for connection, confidence, and a place where her voice could truly be heard.

Just weeks after becoming a member, Kaylana took a brave step by attending the Real Voices, Real Choices Conference. It was her first major event with the group, and though she felt intimidated by the size and energy of it all, she chose to go anyway. That one decision changed everything.

The conference helped Kaylana feel more connected to the People First community and opened her eyes to the power of advocacy and self-expression. Inspired by what she experienced, she began showing up to every meeting and event with consistency and determination. Her goal was clear: to become a stronger advocate—not just for herself, but for others as well.

Kaylana’s journey hasn’t been without challenges. Like many, she has dealt with self-doubt and social anxiety. Speaking up or even being in new social settings didn’t come easily. But with each meeting and interaction, she pushed through those fears. The inclusive and welcoming environment of People First gave her the space to grow, and the encouragement she needed to believe in herself.

Through the support of the group, Kaylana learned that advocacy begins with self-acceptance. She started to feel more at ease, more confident, and more connected. Seeing others proudly be themselves inspired her to do the same. She began using her voice—and realizing just how powerful it is.

The impact has been far-reaching. Kaylana spoke at Disability Rights Day in Jefferson City, advocated for herself in a challenging work environment, and ultimately found employment where she feels respected and heard. She’s also taken steps in her personal healing, attending therapy and living in a healthy, supportive environment. With the practical supports provided by People First—like transportation, resources, and a listening ear—Kaylana has overcome barriers that once seemed insurmountable.

Now, she’s dreaming even bigger. “I want to apply to speak at Real Voices, Real Choices next year,” she recently shared with her People First Advisor. Kaylana is a kind, thoughtful, and inspiring individual whose presence uplifts everyone around her. Her story is a testament to the power of community, courage, and finding a place where you truly belong.

“Her goal was clear: to become a stronger advocate—not just for herself, but for others as well.”

CASE MANAGEMENT Overview

The DDRB Case Management Program provides person-centered support to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) living in St. Charles County. In FY25, our dedicated team served **1,426** individuals, helping them and their families access the resources, advocacy, and services needed to achieve their goals and lead meaningful lives.

Our program maintains exceptionally high satisfaction ratings, with **97%** of individuals and families reporting positive experiences and **96%** of community partners expressing confidence in the quality and collaboration of DDRB's case management services. These results reflect our deep commitment to excellence, partnership, and accountability.



CASE MANAGEMENT Overview

Case management supports people across all stages of life:

Through collaboration with local providers, schools, and the Division of Developmental Disabilities, DDRB Case Managers coordinate a comprehensive network of supports that promotes inclusion, stability, and meaningful community participation. These partnerships ensure that each individual can live, work, and thrive as a valued member of the community.

Every connection made and service coordinated reflects DDRB’s mission of building a community that strengthens and includes all people. The Case Management team’s success—measured not only in numbers but in lives improved—demonstrates the power of thoughtful coordination, strong partnerships, and unwavering dedication to those we serve.

Financial Overview:

The DDRB Case Management Program is primarily funded through Medicaid reimbursements, which have remained unchanged for several years despite rising costs and increased service demands. As a result, DDRB must work efficiently to ensure that service delivery remains strong while managing tight margins.

These operating shortfalls are covered through local tax dollars, ensuring the continuity of services for all eligible individuals in St. Charles County—including those aged 16–17, who are not yet eligible for Medicaid. This transition age group consistently emerges in surveys and feedback as an area of significant need, requiring additional coordination and support as youth move toward adulthood.

Through careful fiscal management and a focus on efficiency and quality, DDRB continues to provide essential services that support individuals and families across the lifespan, despite financial pressures beyond our control.



MEET ETHAN

Case Management Services

At 24 years old, Ethan's world faced significant challenges.

He was unable to communicate, spent most of his day lying on the floor, and showed little engagement with the world around him. His parents were deeply concerned about his declining health and uncertain about what the future might hold.

That future began to shift when case management stepped in. Recognizing Ethan's potential and support needs, his Case Manager made strategic referrals and coordinated a network of supports tailored to his unique needs. Ethan had the following services: Specialized Medical Equipment, Personal Assistance, Occupational Therapy, and Physical Therapy.

His Case Manager facilitated repairs to fix the stair lift that allows Ethan to safely navigate his home. She also worked with United Access to help the family repair their van, restoring Ethan's access to his community. Then, recognizing the need to support Ethan's communication, his Case Manager recommended Community Specialist Services.

The results of adding Community Specialist services have been nothing short of remarkable. Today, Ethan is thriving. He engages with puzzles on his tablet, demonstrating problem-solving skills. His endurance has improved, and he is more connected with his environment and the people around him. His parents report seeing Ethan's intelligence shine through. The floor is no longer his refuge - his world has expanded.

This progress is a testament to the power of coordinating care. Case Management didn't just provide oversight - it built a bridge between Ethan's needs and the services that could meet them. By collaborating with providers and getting services in place, Case Management helped turn uncertainty into hope.

Ethan's story is a vivid reminder of why Case Management matters. It's not just about services: it's about seeing potential, fostering connection, and transforming lives.

“Today, Ethan is thriving. He engages with puzzles on his tablet, demonstrating problem-solving skills. His endurance has improved, and he is more connected with his environment and the people around him.”



EASTERN REGION ALLIANCE



The Eastern Region Alliance (ERA) is a collaboration between the Senate Bill 40 Boards of St. Charles County, St. Louis County, St. Louis City, and Jefferson County. Together we receive approximately **\$62.5 million** in property taxes each year, to invest in services for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The four County Boards aligned in January 2019 with the goal of reducing the administrative burdens, leverage taxpayer resources, and allow for the collection, analysis and reporting of regional data.

In 84% of instances

individuals made progress in obtaining employment, advancing in their careers, and/or maintaining current employment.

In 93% of instances

individuals increased access to their community, improved their well-being, or strengthened their natural support system.

In 93% of instances

individuals made progress in their goals to live independently.

WHO WE SERVE

Persons with Developmental Disabilities

St. Charles County Residents who have a severe, chronic disability attributable to an intellectual disability, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, head injury, autism, or a learning disability related to a brain dysfunction or any other mental or physical impairment or combination thereof.

The disability must have manifested before the age of 22 and is likely to continue indefinitely and results in substantial functional limitation in two or more of the following major life areas: self care, receptive and expressive language development and use, learning, mobility, self direction and capacity for independent living or economic self-sufficiency.

OUR BOARD

Board Meetings are open to the public, and held on the third Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at the DDRB office.

Please check the DDRB website or call the DDRB office to confirm meeting location, date and time. Each meeting includes opportunities for public comment.

OUR BOARD MEMBERS:

Executive Committee Members:

Bryon Hale
President

Missy Fallert
Vice President

Michael Mahoney
Treasurer

Terry Elmendorf
Secretary

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Marc Debrick
Todd Gentry
Missy Palitzsch
Dr. Sue Sharp
Connie Tan