IN-HOME

SUPPORT

EXCELLENCE

COMMITMENT

PASSION

DIFFERENCES

CREATING OPPORTUNITIES

HOME & COMMUNITY OPTIONS

RESPECTING

DEDICATION

ACHIEVING INDEPENDENCE

RESIDENTIAL

COMMUNITY LIVING

CARE

2016 ANNUAL REPORT

Providing support and residential services to individuals with disabilities since 1975.

Management Team

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Suzanne Horstman

DIRECTORS OF SERVICES:

Division I - Mary Jansen
Division II - Paula Krage
Division III - Lucinda Wiczek
Division IV & Health Services - Joette Gillett
Division V - Kathy Murck

Development - Denny Theede
Finance - Patricia Wood
Maureen Schauble
Human Resources - Cari McCann

MISSION

to provide support and residential services to people with developmental disabilities, enabling them to live as full members of the community.

VISION

for all individuals to have opportunities to enjoy life, strive to reach their full potential, and be accepted members of the community.

Board of Directors

President	Gail Opatz
Vice President	Roderick Baker
Secretary	Kelly Borck
Treasurer	Eva Pampuch

Board Members

Margaret Cassidy, John Collins, Terrianna Gjerdrum, Bill Harris, Eric Johnsrud, Laurel Kruse, Gary Luehmann, Jan Mosher, Robert Youngerman, Laurie Ziliak, Mark Zimmerman

Sharon Kannenberg Committee

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Geri Corey
Peggy Dalton
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Terri Kersting
Jonelle Moore
Jan Northam
Darcy O'Laughlin
Wayne Shustrom
Addison Sim
Lee Turek
Laurie Ziliak
Mark Zimmerman

Thank you to our dedicated board and committee members for their countless hours of service in furthering HCO's mission.

We are blessed to have such an amazing group of individuals from the community - we couldn't do it without them!

Often when I share information about Home and Community Options, I talk about the individuals that we support. After all, they are the reason why we do what we do! This year, I would like to reflect a bit on the individuals who are providing care.

Take a moment to think about the people you may count on in the future for support. Who are your future care providers? Is it the nurse that will take your blood pressure the next time you go to the clinic? The physical therapist that will help your neighbor after knee surgery? The person that your children or grandchildren will have for a teacher next year? Is it the hospice professional that will assist your family as your parent lives out their last days?

At HCO, we know these individuals. We know these individuals because we ARE these individuals. At any one time, HCO has more than 120 employees that are attending one of Winona's three colleges and are planning on graduating with related health and human service degrees. We are given the privilege of helping train them, and often offer them their first experience working directly in the health and human service field. HCO is able to offer these young professionals incredible opportunities to gain hands on experience in many areas directly related to their schooling. They are often responsible for passing medications, teaching new skills, completing range of motion and stretching exercises, providing support to families, and assisting individuals with end of life cares.

Our society sometimes questions the values and work ethic of younger generations. However, I see our younger generations at work each day, and my overall observation is that our Millennials and later (1980 on) are some of the hardest working, compassionate, and ethical individuals that I know. Home and Community Options is fortunate to have many of these individuals as our employees. Not only are they able to share the newest concepts that they learn in the classroom, but they also bring a wonderful level of energy, enthusiasm, and passion to this field.

As graduation season approaches each year, we are excited by the number of well-trained professionals who will stay on as full time employees of HCO, having found their calling as they obtained their degrees. There will also be a number of them leaving HCO to work elsewhere in our community. While we are always saddened to see them leave us, we are grateful for the opportunity to have had them work alongside us here. As our paths cross again in the future and we see them in their new careers, we are proud to know that HCO played a part in laying their professional foundation.

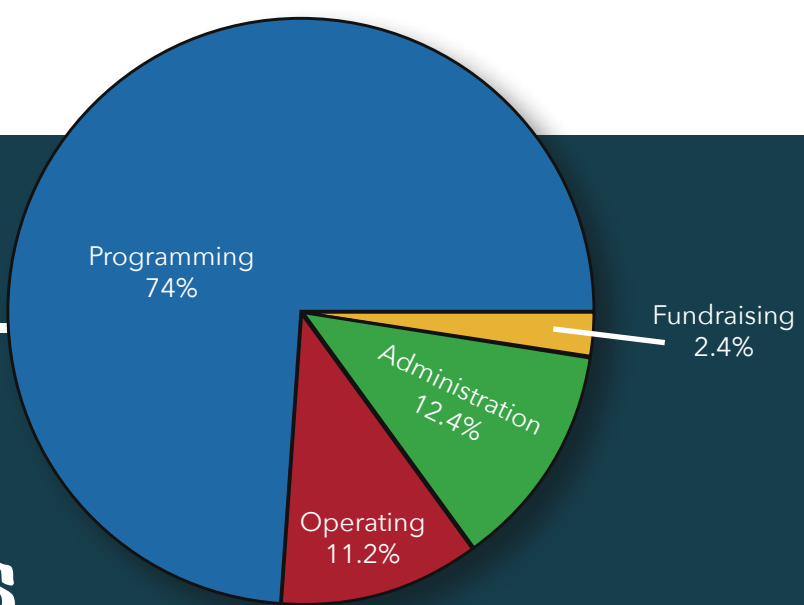
Suzanne Horstman, Executive Director

Home and Community Options, Inc.

Statement of Financial Position

Year Ended: December 31st	2015	2016
ASSETS		
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	$2,658,335	$3,192,292
NON-CURRENT ASSETS		
Escrows and reserves	$78,530	$91,276
Property and equipment, net	$4,118,118	$3,873,125
Long-term investments	$1,952,882	$2,145,454
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS	$6,149,530	$6,109,855
TOTAL ASSETS	$8,807,065	$9,302,147
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	$811,108	$821,360
LONG-TERM DEBT - net of current portion	$755,051	$573,412
TOTAL LIABILITIES	$1,566,159	$1,394,772
NET ASSETS		
UNRESTRICTED	$6,709,839	$7,313,177
RESTRICTED\TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED	$531,867	$594,198
TOTAL NET ASSETS	$7,241,706	$7,907,375
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	$8,807,865	$9,302,147

2016 Allocation of Expenses



Meet the Wojciechowski's...

Sisters Teresa Chris, Fran, and Mary (left to right) share what they remember of their brother Stephen's life growing up, and his experiences with Home and Community Options.

Stephen was humming again, and his four sisters couldn't help but smile at the tune.

"He hums just like Dad did," one sister noted as they sat around the dining room table, remembering the passion for music that Stephen shared with his mother and father. Their mother sang him nursery rhymes as a child and he shared a love of polka with his father, both of which he has continued to love throughout his life. When looking back, it's sometimes hard to believe that we've been working with Stephen Wojciechowski at HCO for over 20 years.

Stephen was born in 1949. The oldest of five children, his birth was difficult - taking around 72 hours – and his entrance into the world was further limited by the knowledge and technology of the time. He was transverse in the womb; and because his mother had tumors, the doctors turned away from the option of a cesarean. To this day, Stephen's family is unsure whether his traumatic delivery may have had an impact on his sight and mental ability, but they've wondered.

As Stephen developed, both his disabilities and his abilities began to show themselves. His mother began to see evidence of his blindness when Stephen's eyes would not follow toys as expected of a young child. His mobility and curiosity, however, was unhindered. "At only a few years old, Stephen was into everything – you couldn't take your eyes off him for a second, and he was ready to go for HOURS," his sister, Fran recalls. "He was smart – once he started walking and toddling around, they had to watch him constantly." He would turn on the gas stove and while living in a second floor apartment, his parents were always worried that he would fall down the stairs or hurt himself. Despite all this, his mother did everything she could to provide him with as normal of a childhood as possible.

As Stephen grew older, his family grew bigger. Mary was born in August of 1951, with Fran following in 1952. Chris came next, and the youngest, Teresa, followed shortly thereafter. The Wojciechowski's loved and took great care of Stephen, but with toddlers and a baby, it was difficult to provide the extra support he needed by themselves. As a young couple, Stephen's parents had to make the painful decision to send him to live with a family that could provide more consistent support for him.

"Both [Stephen's father] and my mom felt real bad, giving up a child like that. That had to be difficult," Fran reflected. Stephen moved in with foster parents in Minneapolis - Mr. and Mrs. Gordon - who had a daughter around the same age that was blind and disabled as well. The Gordon's cared for Stephen until he was eligible to become a ward of the state. He then moved to the Champion Home in Duluth, and from there, he was transferred to Faribault State Hospital.

Mary, Fran, Chris, and Teresa reminisced on their memories of going to visit Stephen at Faribault as they got older. "We didn't care for the rides back and forth," Mary explained with a laugh. "It was quite a long drive to Faribault for a 3-4 year old."

"Everytime we came to see Stephen there… I swear to God everytime you drove through the main gate, you'd swear you'd see him – at different times, just wandering the grounds," Fran commented. "Stephen didn't wander the grounds because of his blindness, but you'd swear you'd see him." The visits also took a toll on their mother, who would be a wreck for weeks before and after visiting Stephen. "She just couldn't deal with it," Fran explained. "She felt guilty about making him a ward of the state. Somehow it was always her fault."

While at the Faribault State Hospital, Stephen lived in a large unit with other blind and disabled individuals. He wasn't humming or repeating nursery rhymes, and with a ratio of 16 to 20 individuals per social worker, the sisters were doubtful that he ever walked while he was there. Chris recalled him being very tired and silent, and that his feet were always stretched flat from the hospital blankets tucked into the corners of the beds. "Everything he said back then," Mary shared, "would have been something he heard in the mess hall - stay in line; eat your peas – that

sort of thing." His sisters never saw the ward their brother slept in. When visiting, his family would sign in and meet Stephen in a waiting room of sorts. There was also a community hall, but they spent most of their time together at the park nearby.

"For the longest time, he never spoke with us either," Chris added.

Though Stephen's time at Faribault was straining for everyone, his sisters fondly remembered the picnics that they would go on during their visits. "It was the only time we ever went on a family picnic," Chris explained. "We had never gone on a family picnic before, and when we did, Stephen was always with us." The siblings remembered one picnic in which their father wanted to take some family photos. He posed Stephen sitting on a bench between Teresa and Chris, while the others sat on a bench behind them. "Steve took the end of the bench and just lifted it up –he stood up and lifted us," Chris said, recalling the awe she felt for her brother, "It was cool. I mean, you just think of him as a brother, not as the STRONG big brother."

It wasn't until 1993, when Stephen came to Home and Community Options in Winona, that his family got to see him on a regular basis. Faribault had closed down, and though his mother was worried about the transition, her children remember explaining to her that he would receive more attentive care with one-on-one services through Home and Community Options than he had at Faribault.

Stephen with dad, Harry
Age: 1-2 yrs old

"We have gotten to know him better than we ever did as children because the opportunities you have put in front of him are unbelievable," the siblings agreed as they spoke of HCO. They laughed that sometimes when they call, they have to make sure he has time to visit because "he is out and about all the time!"

After coming to Home and Community Options, Stephen became more involved in the community, as well as more active and energetic. All the siblings recognized that Stephen was more alert and involved, especially since changing his medications from the regimen he was on at Faribault. "He was far more welcoming," Mary recalls, "you could have a conversation –even though it was a simple one –with him." He sings rhymes again and laughs.

Stephen with dad, Harry and mom, Marcella

"He laughs just like my dad," Teresa said, warmly. "I love to hear him laugh." Stephen works in the community through DAC, and people often recognize his siblings because they know Stephen. While working, Teresa said she'd often have people saying, "Wojciechowski… do you know Steve?" He has become a welcome staple of the community.

"You guys got him to walk," Chris added.

While Stephen still sometimes expresses himself in unconventional ways, his sisters were eager to point out that everyone expresses themselves differently. They love taking him out to eat and visit him often. "You know, the mentally handicapped always used to be hidden away - hidden away and kept behind closed doors - and they were something to be ashamed of and not talked about. Now it's nice to see them getting out in the public, integrated and getting into the workplace and leading the types of lives they should be leading. And I know HCO is a big, big, huge part of that," Fran commented. "It's different because it's a home atmosphere here and there it was so institutionalized. It's nice to know that he's got a home, that he's got a place to be."

While Stephen has been through a lot of change in his life over the years, he still remains his sarcastic and humorous self. More than anything, though, Stephen reminds his sisters of their father. From his enjoyment of circus peanuts to his love of polka, Mary, Fran, Chris, and Teresa love having the ability to get to know their brother more every day. "He brings back memories," Mary said with a smile. "He reminds me of my dad. It's part of why we so enjoy coming to see him. Stephen laughs like him, and when he does talk, you can make out certain tones… and his salt and pepper hair!"

"We got the chance to get to know him so much better," Chris said as the sisters watching Stephen laugh across the table. "It wasn't just once a year. It could be as often as we wanted."

2016 IN REVIEW

Exceptional Staff, Volunteers, & Supporters

When implementing quality services for people with developmental disabilities, our greatest assets are the significant number of community volunteers, generous financial supporters, board and committee members, and dedicated staff that assist in providing for the needs of the children and adults that HCO serves. We are continually humbled by these individuals that enable HCO to stand out as a quality organization! We are always challenged in finding ways to adequately thank those of you who help us in our efforts to enrich the lives of our neighbors and friends with disabilities.

For all of you who give, we say again: THANK YOU! Here are some special acknowledgements that recognize those who stand out among many in their dedication to HCO's Mission:

COMMUNITY BUILDER AWARD

This yearly acknowledgment focuses on individuals or businesses who provide outstanding volunteerism to HCO. 2016's recipients include:

Tim and Jenny Hoff, Kevin and Laurel Kruse Family, Steve Libera, Chantelle Merchlewitz, Bob Stuber

GOOD NEIGHBOR AWARD

HCO is a member of Provider's Network, Inc., a southeastern Minnesota organization that holds a regional banquet each year to recognize an individual or business that is a "good neighbor" to our agency. Recipients of this award interact with people with disabilities to help them become part of the greater community. This year's recipients of the Good Neighbor Award for HCO are the **ZIMMERMAN FAMILY** and **DARYL REIDEL**.

NEIGHBORS EVENT

Home and Community Options holds a special gathering to show our thanks to those individuals and businesses that support HCO with their financial generosity. This year, HCO is proud to honor:

Harland and Pauline Knight, Fawcett Junker Funeral Home, Margaret Cassidy, Winona National Bank

ARRM CARES AWARDS

Home and Community Options is a member of ARRM, a Minnesota organization that provides advocacy and training support to agencies like ours. Each year, outstanding direct support professionals from across our state can receive special acknowledgment for their dedication in the form of the ARRM Cares Award. Each recipient must demonstrate exceptional dedication, professional integrity, creative thinking, and commitment to the needs of people with disabilities. HCO is proud to acknowledge **SARA JOHNSON** as the HCO ARRM Cares Award Nomination of 2016.

HCO HAD A BUSY YEAR IN 2016!

35 employees have worked with HCO for **over 15 years**

165
employees attend local campuses

336
employees worked for HCO on average

2016 Employees

93 Full-Time
268 Part-Time

436,336 hours of care provided

Shortly before his retirement at the end of 2016, we sat down with HCO Development Director, Denny Theede, as he shared his thoughts on his past 23 years working with HCO.

Tell us a little bit about how you got into disability services in the first place. Why did you want to do what you have been doing all this time?

Growing up, I had a lot of people I wanted to influence - people with disabilities. I had a close neighbor friend who had a brother who had Down Syndrome, and I had three cousins who had disabilities. As a young child, I saw them interact and I saw them both be part of our family, but I also saw how they were limited in their capacity to be part of the community. That bothered me a bit, so as I moved toward college, I really developed a greater passion for the disability area of learning and went to college and became a special educator. When I was in special education, it was just the beginning of what was called Public Law 94-142, and that law was the first mandate in which children with disabilities could be entitled access to a public education. Before that, it was hit or miss about whether or not a child with disabilities could be provided with an education. They went to DAC or some kind of adaptive programs, but they weren't included all the time in educational services. That law not only mandated participation, but it also mandated that each child have a plan of care which was entitled to help them learn and grow. The next generation, the younger population of people, became a lot more accepting, because they went to school with people with disabilities. It was commonplace to have those relationships and those friends. That was a good thing. As I worked with people with disabilities more, the more I realized the special gifts that they have: that entitlement to the same or better quality of life than any of us.

Something that is unique about HCO is that, as Executive Director, you know pretty much every person that HCO serves who comes through your door. You make time to know about their personal lives; you know about their families and their interests. That isn't always the case.

I think leadership of good human service organizations should know and understand the people they serve. Obviously as organizations have gotten bigger, that makes it more challenging for leadership to know everybody, but in an ideal world, I think that's what led us to success. We were very person-centered from the get-go; person-centered means you know them and you know their families. That is part of the culture that I believe is really important for any organization to hold onto at whatever level we can.

When I first started working with organizations, it was not uncommon to go into programs late at night or really early in the morning and provide care and help in an emergency situation, to help families in planning their child's plan of care, or what the goals were for them. When I first started, during the day I did the business part of it. I trained the staff, I heard the staff, I wrote the policies and dealt with the regulations and dealt with the budget. Then at night, I wrote programs for the 13 people who were there. That was just commonplace. One personal positive was that every one of my children became very comfortable and invested within the population, because they were tagging along and helping and following along knowing that it was important work.

Some people say, "Oh, that was a real hardship." But no, it was a real gift. It was a real opportunity to have people with disabilities to be part of our Christmas or Thanksgiving. Holidays when we were shorthanded, filling in was not a negative. It was all a positive. There were a lot of extra hours and it took some extra time with families or to reach out and really know the needs of people that you serve, but that was vitally important. I wouldn't have had it any other way. It was all part of that relationship building that is part of our mission and core principles. I am proud that HCO is hanging onto that. It's not easy when there is a group of 250 people we are serving now; it's hard for us to know everybody. The idea of having close relationships with the people you serve is really important

What do you think are some challenges that HCO will have to face in the future?

Workforce and funding are going to be the biggest challenges moving forward, at least for the next decade. Based on demographics, we are going to have a challenge to find enough staff. We have sustained our core mission, values, and culture so that for the most part, people will like coming to work here. We have a wonderful management team. We are diverse in the way we think and problem solve. That has been a strength of HCO, that with our differences we can solve problems and come to a common ground that is usually successful for the organization at that level. We have a good middle management team of people, stronger than I have ever seen, that do the day-to-day. Our staff is really dedicated, so we are doing something right in training and promoting our culture. People really seem to get it and implement it effectively. Most importantly, we have an innovative spirit that I am proud of. It has been a pleasure to be a part of an organization that doesn't look for a solution for here and now, but continues to seek out new ways of doing service and meeting needs orientated around the families. The resource home is a good example of that. It didn't come from the brain of a leadership staff; it came from the families and what we were hearing they needed. We were smart enough to really listen and develop it. Even the development of remote monitoring technology; it happened because we had the innovative spirit within this organization.

Funding issues are always going to be there. In the early 2000s, when there was an economic recession and state legislature had to cut our service rates, I think we had to take a 5% cut that year. I remember having meetings with family members, stakeholders, and staff about how we were going to go about trying to reduce our budget by 5%. That was really challenging; that was very difficult to go through, and yet we worked together like we always did and came up with a plan. We have a good grassroots advocacy system in place to continue to advocate and request the needed support of government sources. We've just never been able to catch up, really, from those cuts. Unfortunately, it has affected our ability to pay our workforce adequately and have the resources to provide the services like we want to.

From a services standpoint, in a person-centered and driven model, giving people full liberty to live the life they want allows people the possibility to be successful or to fail. So, we will have to be prepared for both. To be truly person-centered, we may be challenged with trying to figure out how we help people when they fail and support them when they make bad choices. It's no different from you or me; it's just that we have typically protected and supported people to avoid any failure. If we are to empower them and give them full rights, then they are entitled to failure too. It is an important step that we need to take, but it is also a challenging one for us as caretakers.

The key for HCO moving forward is no different than when we started: to have a relationship with our stakeholders, to listen carefully to the people we serve and their families, to listen carefully to other community leaders, and to align with that moving forward. I have great confidence that our sustainability and leadership will overcome those problems.

Any parting thoughts on your time with HCO?

HCO has always been special. It has been hard work, yes, but it has been a mission, vision, and core value orientated organization that has matched up well with my personal value systems. There are some memories of HCO that I will always treasure. The people I have worked with all of my life, the people with disabilities that I have worked with and supported, have taught me more than I've ever taught them. They have more compassion, empathy, honesty, and integrity than most people I know. They are sincere and caring and have become some of my best friends.

Looking back at my career, there would be nothing else I would have chosen to do. I have no regrets about my work life. All the time and effort has been very satisfying, and I am thankful for the relationships I have had with my coworkers, the families we work with, and the people we serve.

Frequently we are asked, "Which do you want first, the good news or the bad news?" I usually respond, "Give me the bad news first, followed by the good news to lift me back up."

First, HCO is besieged by unfunded mandates; these rules and regulations, though well-meaning, aren't backed by necessary financial resources. As baby boomers age, we are experiencing an increasing number of folks that need assistance. We are providing for those who often have high medical, physical, mental, or behavioral needs. Most significantly, we are experiencing a critical shortage of qualified staff.

Now for the good news: HCO asserts the inherent worth and dignity of each person it supports. We can all strive for this noble aspiration. Like the story of the person who walked along the shore tossing stranded starfish back into the sea, they were told it couldn't make a difference when there were thousands of starfish yet stranded. While holding a starfish the person replied, "It makes a difference to this one."

HCO coordinates with local colleges to mentor and hire students. We provide them (and they provide us) with deep experiences of relationships, skills, and beliefs about our sense of duty to one another. They are a family of qualified providers who live and breathe the 1979 song by Sister Sledge, "We Are Family...." with conviction and purpose. HCO knows that it is necessary for everyone to be included, regardless of our abilities or needs. This takes resources and support from all of us.

Love must guide us, everyone matters. We are all a part of one another. In this climate of unrest and change, step forward and say "I can help."

Gail Opatz, Board President

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If we have neglected to mention anyone, please accept our apologies and know that we deeply appreciate your help and support.

HCO's Grassroots Advocacy Task Force is made up of a dedicated group of staff, family, supporters, and self advocates.

This group is committed to advocating for disability services within the state legislature and works as a coalition with other advocates across Minnesota.

2016 ARRM Day at the Capitol

ADVOCACY MATTERS!

My husband and I have been married for 19 years. We have utilized the services of Home & Community Options for 3 of our children over the past 11 years. Respite provides a moment for parents to catch their breath. Raising Special Needs children is like being in a war zone. At one point, I was prepared to divorce my husband because I didn't want him to have to endure this life. Above caring for our kids, HCO provides suggestions, resources, emotional support, and encouragement to the families. I fear we would no longer be together if we didn't have the ongoing support for our children.

The consistency of staff is crucial to the success of my children. The adjustment period where trust and boundaries are established lasts between 4-8 weeks when a new staff begins. During this time, no new skills are being learned and there is often regression. I feel that this position used to be sought after, but it is now viewed as a low paying job that can be extremely difficult and has a lot of expectations. Currently, 2 of my children are not able to receive coverage that Winona County determined was appropriate. There aren't enough applicants to meet the demand of those needing support.

- Kristin Luhmann, sharing on the impact of staff turnover and need for consistent support

MISSION

It is the mission of Home and Community Options, Inc. to provide support and residential services to individuals with disabilities in order to enable them to live as full members of their communities.

VISION

for all individuals to have opportunities to enjoy life, strive to reach their full potential, and be accepted members of the community.

CORE VALUES

Respect for all people and their differences

Quality services that balance independence with safety and security

The ability of all individuals to learn, build relationships, and enjoy life

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