The Center for Independent Living (The CIL) provides advocacy and services that increase awareness, collaboration, and opportunity among people with disabilities and the community at large.

The CIL raises the expectations that those with disabilities have for themselves and their futures, seeking to eliminate damaging stereotypical notions of disability. We provide people with skills, knowledge, and resources that empower them and help them to realize their full human potential.

The CIL emerged from the independent living movement of the 1960s as a powerful social catalyst at the University of California at Berkeley. There, Ed Roberts, Hale Zukas, and Jan McEwan Brown joined forces to lead a movement that made the full academic and social life of the university accessible to all. In 1972, these students and community members came together to form The Center for Independent Living.
Friends,

This year’s letter is a thank you. A thank you to our staff for working so hard through this challenging period. A thank you to the foundations, which allowed us to pause programs and provided additional funding to address the immediate needs of our community. And a thank you to the many individuals who donated when money was tough to support our organization and our goals.

We began 2020 with great enthusiasm and ended with resolve. Covid-19 closed our offices, but the work continued. Thanks to your generous support over the years, TheCIL invested in technology that allowed us to transition to remote services, further develop our online tools, and continue to engage with consumers during this challenging time.

At the outset of the pandemic, TheCIL partnered with the State Council on Developmental Disabilities (SCDD) and the World Institute on Disability (WID) to host a monthly PPE giveaway outside the Ed Roberts Campus, distributing thousands of masks, face shields, and bottles of hand sanitizer. We also proactively reached out to over 800 at-risk individuals throughout our catchment to ensure they were safe and address any needs they may have had during the statewide lockdown, and with the support of the Neilson Foundation, supplied SCI support groups across the Bay Area with funding to provide care packages to the many members of their communities.

We quickly reallocated resources and internal expertise to help consumers learn to use accessibility features on their smartphones and tablets so that they could communicate with family and friends, attend classes, and speak with their doctors during the lockdown.

Our staff handled more than 8,000 consumer requests, and our digital resources reached thousands of additional people with disabilities, providing them with the ability to get general support, food, and transportation.

In Berkeley, we helped transition three individuals out of nursing facilities and into apartments or homes. We not only assisted with home modifications - we helped a total of 43 households with this - but we also were able to secure housing vouchers and apartments for two of the individuals and help them connect with personal assistants needed for their transition.

During the winter months of 2019, TheCIL referred 80 Berkeley-ites to receive holiday checks through the Berkeley Holiday Fund. We also provided peer health and wellness services for 59 Berkeley seniors through our Living Well program.

Despite having to pause in-person training excursions for our Community Connections program – CoCo, as we call it – we continued, moving all trip planning and safety workshops to remote settings, using Google Hangouts to connect with workshop participants.

I will not lie – this last year has been incredibly challenging, filled with much uncertainty, anxiety, and fear. But as things begin to open up, and as we begin to glimpse the light at the end of the tunnel, I can proudly say that because of the hard work our community has done to keep TheCIL up and running through this very tough time, we are ready, willing, and able to leap into a fantastic 2021-22, firing on all cylinders. I hope to see each and every one of you – in person – soon.

Cheers,
Stuart James

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Melissa Male (President)  Owen Kent  Josh Halstead
Caleb van Docto (Vice President)  Peter Sussman
Eric Broque (Treasurer)  Sherri Rita
Anna Basallaje  Edward Olsen
WHO WE SERVE

AGE
- 60+ (61%)
- 25-59 (18%)
- 14-24 (21%)

RACE
- White (32%)
- Asian (20%)
- Black (19%)
- Hispanic/Latino (10%)
- Two or More (2%)
- Unknown (<1%)

DISABILITY
- Physical (56%)
- Hearing (4%)
- Vision (3%)
- Other (8%)
- Cognitive (11%)
- Mental Health (18%)
- Other (2%)

GENDER
- Male (35%)
- Female (63%)

SOCIAL MEDIA IMPRESSIONS
- Facebook: 28,451
- YouTube: 590,204
- Twitter: 124,400
- Other: 18,950
- Instagram: 319,608
- thecil.org: 18,950
# Financials

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<tr>
<td>Total Expenses</td>
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Camden Stein was hired to run Accelerate and TheCIL’s youth programming.

Consumers learned some different tips and tricks at the “Preparing Meals as a Wheelchair User” workshop, led by The CIL’s AT Coordinator Jeshua Aveno.

TheCIL sponsored 20 people with disabilities to participate in the annual Alameda Running Festival.

The Alameda Registrar of Voters and TheCIL held a voter registration drive, complete with a demo of accessible voting machine tech.

TheCIL partnered with Alameda County Library to teach library staff how to better work with people with disabilities.

Our CoCo program attended Fruitvale’s Posadas and Carols event, making Rudolph masks and talking to kids about disability.
Board member Owen Kent’s personal attendant services peer support workshop went virtual, marking a shift to the all-virtual programming.

The 4th annual Ed Roberts Awards honored the greatest advances for people with disabilities in arts and the media.

The CIL began its PPE giveaway program, giving masks and hand sanitizer to the most vulnerable in our community.

We secured $250,000 in grants allowing us to help several PWD in our community make their houses fully accessible.

Residential Access Coordinator Margie Cochran gave a tour of the ERC to California College of the Arts students, highlighting universal design standards and accessibility.

The CIL brought on two interns from Achieve, a leadership program for underserved students.
On January 23, friends, family, community ambassadors, business leaders, city and county officials, and philanthropists all came together at the UC Theater in Berkeley to honor individuals who carry the legacy of one of our founders, Ed Roberts, in making the world more inclusive and accessible for everyone.

This year, we honored the advances made to better represent people with disabilities in arts and the media. Joining the ranks of past recipients Senator Loni Hancock, Zona Roberts, and Hon. Thelton Henderson were RJ Mitte, Zach Gottsagen, Ali Stroker, Stephanie Thomas, and Jim Fousekis, who received the first ever Joan Leon Award for his decades-long support for TheCIL.

RJ Mitte is best known for his role as Walter White, Jr. on Breaking Bad. He also started a successful anti-bullying campaign called “Cut the Bull”, and served as a news correspondent for the 2016 Paralympic Games in Rio de Janeiro for Channel 4 in the UK.

Zach Gottsagen starred in the hit independent film Peanut Butter Falcon, also starring Shia LeBouf and Dakota Johnson. For his performance, he was named one of the Associated Press’ Breakthrough Entertainers of the Year, the first actor with Down Syndrome to receive the award.

Ali Stroker is an actress and the first ever person who uses a wheelchair to have a lead role in a Broadway show, and to be nominated for and win a Tony for her performance in Oklahoma!

Stephanie Thomas is a Disability Fashion Styling Expert, and the Founder and CEO of Cur8able, a business dedicated to the art and science of dressing with disabilities.

Jim Fousekis received our first ever Joan Leon Award for his time as head of the Friends of CIL in the 1980’s, and the time and effort he dedicated to securing TheCIL’s financial future with private funding.

Organizations such as Lyft, Uber, Kaiser Permanente, and the San Francisco Foundation all came together in support of TheCIL’s mission and goals on Ed Roberts Day. All who attended enjoyed great food, great wine, a silent auction, and live music from the Berkeley High School Jazz Ensemble. All proceeds raised during the event went towards funding TheCIL’s youth programs.
In a bumpy year with lots of struggles and lots of setbacks, TheCIL’s Accelerate program has been an overwhelming success.

Our college-to-career program, Accelerate exists to help recent and future college graduates with disabilities learn the skills they need to compete in the workforce and find a fulfilling job in their field.

In the last year, TheCIL partnered with a number of local universities - among them CSU East Bay, UC Berkeley, Holy Names University, and Chabot College - to provide students with workshops and panels on topics such as writing cover letters, networking, and understanding their employment rights under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Accelerate, for most of its history, has been focused mostly on direct placement into jobs and internships. While we’ve certainly had success using this model, we decided in the fall to shift our focus to building up students’ job search skills, so that instead of just placing a few students in organizations, we send out a huge group of empowered, informed, hungry young people who have the tools they need to land that dream job and thrive.

Even with COVID, Accelerate hasn’t cooled off a bit. The team has been hard at work producing sleek, engaging online panels and workshops to provide the same great information for our graduates from the comfort of their homes.

Our most recent webinar, titled “Disability and Employment: Seeing Yourself in the Competitive Workplace”, featured professionals from companies like Microsoft and Disability Rights California, and was a big hit. In a time where finding a job is even harder, the information Accelerate provides is absolutely essential.

Most importantly, we'd be remiss to not mention our most important Accelerate update - Camden!

TheCIL brought on Camden Stein in October to head up Accelerate and our other youth programs. His biggest takeaway from Accelerate in the last year has simply been the growth of Accelerate itself, and the faith TheCIL has placed in it.

“That there was enough of a positive response to merit expanding the program and investing more time and energy in it is a testament to its success,” Stein said. “I’m incredibly excited to see what Accelerate becomes in 2021.”
TheCIL’s Residential Access program is one of our most popular. Its goal is to make it safer for people to live in their homes, stay out of institutions, and age in place with the greatest amount of independence possible.

In October, TheCIL was lucky enough to receive a number of grants - among them a “Victims of Crime” grant from Cal OES, and a “Victims of Violence” grant from the Reeve Foundation - that allowed us to make some amazing modifications for several people with disabilities in our community.

Devon is one of them.

Devon was a young man who had recently been involved in a severe car accident in which he lost the use of his legs and made it more difficult for him to communicate with others.

However, his home was not wheelchair accessible. The entrance to the house was too narrow, and the door swung the wrong way. There was a step up to the house. There was a step from the door into the house. It was completely unworkable for Devon, and he and his grandparents, new to the world of disability, didn’t know how to get the resources they needed.

In stepped John Benson, now our Residential Access Coordinator. A long-time member of the Berkeley independent living movement, he described his role in the project as being “a handyman of sorts”. Of course, he was able to do great work on the house - they installed a series of ramps that allowed Devon to navigate into and around his house, a new front door, and a new gate into the backyard. TheCIL was also able to gift Devon with a hospital bed, a standing frame, and a new device that helps him type and speak to others.

Just as valuable, though, was the time John spent talking to Devon and his grandparents. Drawing on his decades of experience working with the disability community, John volunteered his time to talk to the family about what it would be like for Devon to live as a disabled person, challenges he’d face, surprises he’d encounter.

In John’s new role, he’s able to make the same impact on families in every project he works on. The changes he sees in the individuals he works with make it all worth it for him.

“The boost in self confidence is amazing. That we’re able to do this work is endlessly rewarding.”
BRIDGING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE
innovation in the age of covid

To say that COVID changed the way TheCIL does business would be an understatement of enormous proportions.

As of March, gone were in-person Accelerate events. Gone were one-on-one assistive technology consultations. Our employees grabbed a laptop and headed home to work. A new age of digital-centric services began at TheCIL.

And though it was tough at first, TheCIL innovated and found a way to provide the community with the services it needed.

First, we held several PPE and hand sanitizer giveaways. We also filled our website with COVID-related resources that our consumers could check out to find help; info on emergency funds, housing, and personal housing attendants can still be found at thecil.org.

Then, it was time to find a way to safely provide consumers with the services they rely on. We’ve invested heavily in producing the same panels and workshops on things like employment, the ADA, and transit in digital form. One recent success was a webinar titled “Shifting Gears: How Bay Area Public Transit Adapts to COVID-19 with Accessibility in Mind”.

We’ve also reimagined what our office space in Berkeley at the Ed Roberts Campus could be. We’ve learned that working remotely simply makes sense for us; it cuts costs, makes it easier to reach consumers, and leads to the same high productivity from our employees.

With this in mind, TheCIL began the process of converting our Ed Roberts Campus office into a community space where anyone with a disability in Alameda County could come to find resources, hold events, or simply meet with friends and family in a safe, empowering, and inclusive space.

We have even more exciting plans for 2021. We recently received a large grant from the San Francisco Foundation to distribute hundreds of tablets to individuals with disabilities in our community isolated from jobs, friends, and family by a lack of access to technology. And upcoming are even more panels, new online curricula for young people, and PPE giveaways.
OUR SUPPORTERS

$50,000+
- Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation

$10,000+
- Uber
- Lyft
- Craig H. Neilsen Foundation
- The San Francisco Foundation
- Gerson Bakar Foundation
- Berkeley Pilgrimage Foundation

$1,000+
- Lawrence Livermore National Security
- Ruth Arnhold Endowment Fund
- 2539 Telegraph LLC
- Bay Area Community Resources
- Matson Foundation
- Kaiser Permanente
- Raymond Lifchez Foundation

$500+
- Allen Baum
- Ability Center
- Crosby Cromwell
- Equal Justice Society
- Follette-Olivieri Family Fund
- Clement L & Nancy Glynn
- Laurie Goldberg
- Marilyn Kecso
- Karen Meryash
- Lifelong Medical Care
- Mary Anne Sayler

$250+
- Helen Apthorp
- Eric Broque
- Javier Castruita
- June Cheit
- Margie Cochran
- Owen Cooper
- Ted Dienstfrey
- James Fousekis
- Nicholas Glass
- A.V. Gratch
- Peter and Harriet Hanauer
- Adrienne Herman
- Judith Heumann

$100+
- Jewish Community Endowment Fund
- Robert Kelleher
- Joan Leon
- David Malcolm
- G. Steven & Gail Martin
- Lisa Maxwell
- Christoper McKenzie
- Nancy L. Ober Alward
- Stephen & Linda Rosen
- Schwab Fund for Charitable Giving
- Kathleen Singleton
- Doreen Sing
- Eric Strauss
- Peter Sussman
- Carol Weinstein
- Marcy Whitebook

$50+
- Linda Lustig
- Grinling & Kathryn MacClelland
- David Madson
- Melissa Male
- Ellen Matthews
- Susan Mautner
- Pamela Mendelsohn
- Shannon Mulhall
- Huong Nguyen
- Peter Nussbaum
- Patricia Orr
- Robert Raburn
- Jean Reilly
- Sherri Rita
- Zona Roberts
- Dennis and Rene Ross
- Doreen Sing
- Dennis Slaughter
- Sally & Joel Spivack
- Martha Stumpf
- Donna Terazawa
- Martha Toppin
- Arthurlene Towner
- United Way California Capitol Region
- Rae Victor
- Volunteers in Asia
- Laurence Walker
- Andrew Wallach
- Linda Ward
- Marcy Whitebook
- Rebecca Williford
- Margaret Wooster
- Ray Yep

PUBLIC FUNDING
- Alameda County Behavioral Healthcare Services
- Alameda County Transportation Commission
- Cal OES
- Caltrans
- City of Berkeley
- Department of Rehabilitation
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
- U.S. Department of Justice