

ANNUAL REPORT 2007

Beyond



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Tomorrow



“Serving their immediate needs allows them the opportunity to plan for tomorrow.” — GARY

AT THE LAD LAKE EDUCATION AND LIFE SKILLS Development Center in Milwaukee, there are two unlikely rooms that inspire and motivate me in a profound way.

In one cluttered storage room, you'll find items donated to Lad Lake by generous individuals so we, in turn, can give them to young adults enrolled in our Independent Living program – specifically, those who have aged out of foster care. With nowhere else to turn, these young adults can turn to us for furniture, a mattress, a desk or lamp, anything that might help them build a home for themselves. Down the hall from that storage room is a food pantry, where those same young adults can stock up on life's essentials – often times, the very meal they plan on eating later that night.

The reason these two rooms inspire and motivate me so much is because they epitomize what Lad Lake has set out to accomplish with our four program areas: that is, to give hope to those who once had none. When I see the appreciation in the eyes of the young people who benefit from these rooms and hear their determination to succeed in spite of not having the natural support so many of us did growing up, it fills me with my own sense of hope for the future and a desire to do everything I can to continue to help them.

For more than 100 years, Lad Lake has dedicated itself to guiding at-risk youth down life's many pathways, teaching the skills they need to enter adulthood with promise and direction. In 2007, we entered into an exciting new phase

of guiding growth with the kickoff of a five-year capital campaign for – and the respective opening of – the Lad Lake Education and Life Skills Development Center.

The center houses many of our Milwaukee-based programs. But honestly, it is more than just a building – it is a sign of hope for the Milwaukee community. A place where individuals can receive an education, learn critical life skills, enjoy recreation and hot meals, and meet with counselors and trained staff who assist in any way possible. At its heart, however, the Lad Lake Education and Life Skills Development Center is really about creating a *culture of care* for those individuals and lending support to everyone who walks through its doors.

One of the most important facets of this *culture of care* is instilling in our youth a sense of future by walking with them – both as individuals and as an organization – and assuring them we will be here for them when they need us in the future, no matter what. Far too often have I spoken with kids who, tragically, don't believe they even have a future to which they can look forward. But Lad Lake is determined to change that outlook for them. Help us, won't you? By donating to our capital campaign.

The Lad Lake Education and Life Skills Development Center is a powerful place, where we teach lessons our young adults won't just carry with them through the night and into tomorrow ... but lessons that will stick *beyond tomorrow*. And that is a gift far more valuable than anything: The promise of a tomorrow beyond tomorrow. One individual ... one life at a time. That's the promise we aim to give.

GARY L. ERDMANN
Lad Lake Executive Director

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RESIDENTIAL

Imparting life skills today lights a path to the promise of successful tomorrows.

VICTOR HAS ONLY BEEN ENROLLED in Lad Lake's Residential program for a few months, but in that short time, he's already discovered something about himself he never knew he had before – a gift for carpentry work. That gift is something Victor – who, at 18, will soon graduate into Lad Lake's Independent Living program – might never have realized he possessed were it not for his work with Lad Lake Community Assistance Coordinator Rose Knapp.

Having worked with Lad Lake for nearly 30 years, Rose can't help but smile when reflecting upon the community relations and outreach she has facilitated with Residential students for nearly two decades.

“I never ask why they’re here or about their past. I don’t want to step backwards with them. I just want to see them for who they are today and help prepare them for who they’re going to be tomorrow.”

— ROSE KNAPP, COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE COORDINATOR

“Working with Rose teaches us skills we can use in the future.” — VICTOR



“It started with community service,” she says. “Picking up garbage along bike trails. And when these kids went into their rooms at night for some quiet time, they’d reflect upon what they did that day ... how good it felt to do something for others.”

So helping Residential students do good work for others became Rose’s mission at Lad Lake. Its Dousman campus provides a great springboard for the many varied jobs these kids perform out in the community. The campus includes 365 acres of rural land with access to a private 50-acre lake, four living units equipped with 59 residential beds, a school and gymnasium, indoor and outdoor recreation facilities, administrative and maintenance facilities, a student employment center, and a licensed Community Based Residential Facility (CBRF) for young adults.

There’s always something to do on campus, and the work they do onsite helps them acquire the confidence and strong work ethic they carry with them offsite to such places as the Dousman-Ottawa Lion’s Club, the Dousman Wildlife In Need Center, and the Dousman-Ottawa Recycling Center, where they work alongside other volunteers.

“We take pride in what we do,” says Rose. “I preach quality, not quantity. If it takes twice the time to do a job, so be it. The goal is to help them feel good about themselves. To give them confidence.”

Anthony, 17, is another of Rose’s workers, and, like Victor, he dreams of one day becoming a carpenter.

“I have a lot of fun working with Rose,” Anthony says. “I want to be a carpenter some day, like my dad. So working with wood is definitely a perk of the job.”

Another “perk” synonymous with working with Rose is learning what it takes to earn respect.

“Basically,” says Mike, 18, another of Rose’s workers, “if you do your job, she’ll respect you. It doesn’t matter if you do it perfectly so long as you try your best. You do that, and she’ll hold you in high esteem.”

But the greater lesson Rose bestows upon her workers is self-respect.

“You build their confidence a little bit by using these tools. You give them a glimpse at how to earn a living, how to work hard, come home tired, feel productive. The result is their self-esteem grows.”

And self-esteem is the building block for success. Not just for tomorrow, but beyond tomorrow.

“When you believe in yourself,” says Rose, “there’s no limit to what you can accomplish.” ■

THE RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT FACILITY hosts approximately 50 full-time staff members, as well as 20 part-time employees who monitor the young males enrolled in the program. Among them are a school administrator, registered nurse, psychiatrist/medical director, a licensed AODA (Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse) counselor, several psychotherapists, youth care workers, teachers, and others – all professionally qualified and more than willing to go out of their way to help our residents. Whether it be physical health, mental health, interpersonal skills, or emotional stability, Lad Lake tackles them all.



EDUCATION

Teaching is equal parts instruction and compassion.

THE NEW LAD LAKE EDUCATION AND LIFE SKILLS DEVELOPMENT CENTER has given students the unique opportunity to make a fresh start for themselves. One such student who has taken full advantage of that opportunity is Ryan.

“Ryan had already successfully completed a number of Lad Lake’s educational programs,” says Lloyd Stephens, Education Specialist, who personally invested himself in Ryan when the youth entered his classroom in grade eight. “But when his grandmother passed away, Ryan fell back into some trouble that landed him at the Lad Lake Education and Life Skills Development Center as a high-risk student.”

Despite growing up with a wonderfully strong mother, Ryan lost his father when he was 10 years old and from that age on, lacked a father figure in his life. So early on, Lloyd decided to take it upon himself to play that role for Ryan. After seeing how disruptive he’d become at the Education and Life Skills Development Center, Lloyd sat Ryan down and the two had a heart to heart.

“Lad Lake tries to help you grow and develop so you can be successful in life.”

— RYAN

“From the point at which Ryan started with us in the past to where he is today, I’m convinced he can do anything. I have so much faith in him. I’m sure we’ll be hearing from Ryan in the future and reading some fantastic things about him, because he’s unstoppable now. He can do anything he wants ... *anything.*”

— SHARON

» “At first, Ryan saw his placement here as a punishment. I told him, ‘This is a good thing for you,’” says Lloyd, “‘An opportunity to turn your life around.’ I told him this was his chance to prove everybody wrong. And since we had that conversation, that’s just what he’s done. He started seeing his placement here as an opportunity, not a punishment. And now, I can honestly say that Ryan is probably our best student.”

“I saw all the trouble I was getting into,” says Ryan, “and I just wanted something better for myself. Lad Lake has really helped me turn things around. This is a smaller setting and it’s organized, but really, it’s the teachers that make the difference. They’re not just teachers, they’re role models ... people you can turn to when things get tough.”

Located on the corner of Capitol Drive and 2nd Street, the Education and Life Skills Development Center combines the resources of Lad Lake’s ULTRA Day Treatment Center and Synergy Alternative School (north), providing classroom space for up to 145 students; office space; a large lunchroom; and a gymnasium that is used throughout the day and evening for Synergy students, as well as the youth and families in our transitional programs.

Staffed by teachers like Lloyd who devote themselves to eliminating the type of inevitable distractions and negative influences students encounter in other classroom settings, the Development Center proudly offers small class sizes and a highly individualized atmosphere for an education experience unlike any most students ever receive. The result is an environment that

nourishes a true desire in our students to learn.

“Usually our kids come here with a lot of baggage,” says Charles Wille, Ryan’s current teacher. “Our job is to get them back on track, back into the swing of things ... back thinking academically. Not only has Ryan been a great example of that, he’s an example of the type of long-term commitment we make to helping our kids. He’s excelled quite a bit since he first started with us, and his behavior has changed for the better too.”

Ryan admits, “Probably the hardest obstacle for me was to overcome my anger problem ... learning to control myself so I wouldn’t get into trouble. Lad Lake helped me a lot with that.”

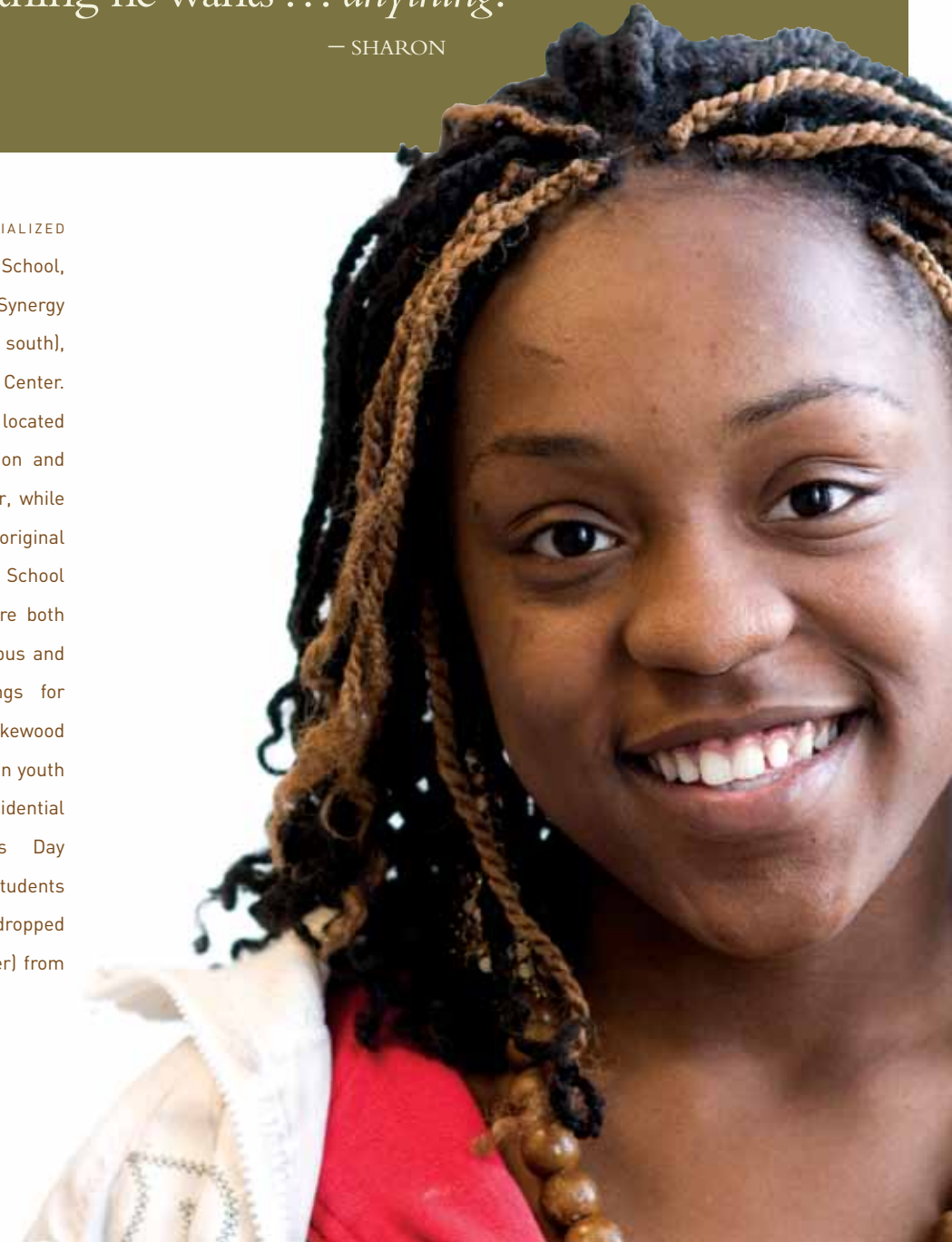
“In addition to being a good student,” says Lloyd, “Ryan’s become a good citizen. And he’s now very goal-oriented.”

It’s vital that Lad Lake’s teachers impart the necessity of working hard today, while instilling a sense of direction in the students. Our teachers help them understand how working hard today relates to where they’re headed tomorrow.

“For sure, the best lesson I’ve learned since coming to Lad Lake,” says Ryan, “is that I need to look toward my future. Lad Lake helps you plan for your future beyond tomorrow. They ask questions like, ‘Where do you want to be in five years?’” Thanks to Lad Lake, for the first time in his life, Ryan can actually answer that question.

“To me,” says Charles, “Ryan’s got the ability to do anything he determines. His writing skills, his ability to comprehend ... everything is there. All he has to do is apply himself. And if he does that, the future is his.” ■

LAD LAKE OFFERS FOUR SPECIALIZED ACADEMIC PROGRAMS: Lakewood School, Campus Day Education, Synergy Alternative School (north and south), and ULTRA Day Treatment Center. Synergy-North and ULTRA are located at the new Lad Lake Education and Life Skills Development Center, while Synergy-South remains at its original Milwaukee location. Lakewood School and Campus Day Education are both located on our Dousman campus and provide stable school settings for 10- to 21-year-old males. Lakewood School is focused specifically on youth enrolled in the Lad Lake Residential program, whereas Campus Day Education serves commuter students (personally picked up and dropped off by a Lad Lake staff member) from surrounding school districts.





OUTREACH

A close personal relationship can mean the world to someone in need.

WHEN JOEL FLASCHNER RETIRED from the police force in 1999, he still felt a distinguishable calling to serve his community in some way. It wasn't long before Joel contacted Lad Lake and inquired about becoming a mentor. In the years since, he has mentored nearly 30 boys through Lad Lake's Outreach program. Most recently, he's mentored Zack.

"We had an understanding from the beginning," says Joel. "He knew where I was coming from and what I expected of him. And to be honest, the first day I met Zack, he was a pretty bad-mannered young man. Weren't you?" he says to Zack, who's sitting beside him.

“These kids just need somebody they can relate to. They need someone to say to them, ‘I’m here to help you, but you’ve got to help yourself too.’ And they just need an ear . . . somebody willing to listen to them. Some of my best times with Zack are when we’re just driving around the countryside talking. *That’s how you build a relationship.*” —JOEL



“Lad Lake changed me.” —ZACK

» “Yeah, I was,” Zack says with a smile. “I look back at what I was like before I started working with Lad Lake and I don’t even know who that person was.”

Zack has struggled with anger-management and respect issues since he was young. His parents are separated, and because he lives with his mother, Zack doesn’t have a steady male role model in his life. But he’s able to look up to Joel.

“Discipline is important with me. Respect is important,” says Joel. “I don’t know if I’m the one who actually instilled these things in him, but he’s certainly picked up on them. I try to set a good example for him. And I’ll tell you this: He’s not the same boy I met two years ago.”

Whether it’s guidance, friendship, bonding, or even just someone who will listen, our clients can count on their mentors for flexibility and willingness when it comes to filling the role most required of them, adjusting their approach to best suit the needs of whoever is in their care.

“Every boy is different,” says Joel. “Every boy has a different on/off button. You just need to find it. The way you deal with it is you have to have a goal you want to reach. There’s always got to be a goal. The goal with Zack was to get him back into a mainstream school system. And he did that. In fact, he’s one of the few kids I’ve worked with to have actually succeeded in doing so.”

“Before,” says Zack, “when I was in those special classes, I was embarrassed to be in them. I didn’t feel like I belonged there. Now I feel normal.”

Fostering individual growth – like Joel has done with Zack – so clients can overcome obstacles in their lives and achieve autonomy within a community is Lad Lake’s approach to all our Outreach services. In addition to Mentoring, those services include In-home Therapy, The Brighter Future Initiative, parent training classes, supervised visitation, and others. The Lad Lake Outreach program promotes the development of personal one-on-one relationships between each client and caring adult, so we can help stabilize our clients and guide them.

“Zack and I are friends,” says Joel. “We’re very good friends. But, we’re not buddies. We’re friends, but there’s a mutual respect we enjoy. You can have fun but there are rules you need to abide by. He’s become very respectful. He tries to treat others how he’d like to be treated.”

“Joel has taught me how to be polite,” says Zack, “and how to use good manners. He helped me to stop swearing. I used to swear a lot. Like, every sentence. Joel helped me understand what it’s like to be a gentleman.” ■

LAD LAKE’S IN-HOME THERAPY allows therapists to meet with clients in the comfort of their own homes. By interacting with clients in a natural, familiar setting, the result is often a deeper understanding of the issues at hand. It also encourages a higher level of cooperation from our clients by relieving the tension and discomfort otherwise felt in other in-office sessions. The Brighter Future Initiative offers intervention services for boys and girls (ages 10-18) – and often their family members, as well – who have committed their first minor delinquent offense.



INDEPENDENT LIVING

Equipping young adults with tools that promote true self-sufficiency.

CRYSTAL'S JOURNEY IN FOSTER CARE BEGAN when she was five. She spent the majority of her childhood bouncing from foster home to foster home, dealing with depression and anger after the loss of her mother and sister, until finally a spark inside her inspired change.

"A light went off in my head," says Crystal, "and I decided I needed to do something with my life." And that's precisely what she did.

Crystal attended the Milwaukee School of the Arts, where she excelled academically, graduated in the top 20 percentile of her class, and was honored with an Artistic Achievement Award.

"I love theater," says Crystal. "It's my home away from home. You have this character in front of you, and you can be that person. I guess I mastered the 'angry teen' because I lived it."

“Lad Lake is a place for guiding and growth. The staff is phenomenal. There is so much love you receive on a truly individual level. It’s not just a place you go to. You have your own personal mentor and a counselor you can talk to. There are so many connections you make. I gave up hope for a little while ... but then I found Lad Lake.”

— CRYSTAL



“Without Lad Lake, I wouldn’t know what to do with myself.”

— CRYSTAL

» But Crystal put the angry teen to rest and dedicated herself to providing a future she could look forward to. She served three terms as Vice-President of the Student Leadership Council and was also involved in Marquette University’s Upward Bound program. Currently, she is enrolled in classes at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee with a focus in business marketing.

In 2006, when Crystal turned 18 and aged out of Wisconsin’s foster care system, she was left to her own devices. That’s when she started working with Lad Lake.

Crystal became involved with our Independent Living program early that summer, entering Connections, a voluntary service for 17.5- to 21-year-olds who have aged out of foster care and are facing life on their own for the very first time. The program, which consists of four core service areas – Employment, Education, Community Resources, and Housing – is tailored toward the specific individual needs of each young adult we help. Crystal was a perfect fit.

“Lad Lake helped me get my first apartment,” Crystal says, “They helped me with my wardrobe, too, which helped get me hired at M&I as a treasury management intern.”

Crystal showed such promise that in 2007, Lad Lake honored her with one of four scholarships awarded annually to one

person in each program who’s displayed exceptional growth. It was at the Annual Scholarship Dinner that Michelle Barnes, Assistant Vice President of Community Partnership at M&I, first learned about Crystal and grew determined to become a positive role model in her life.

“I was just so moved by her story and by her spirit,” says Michelle, “and when I learned she worked at M&I, I wanted to get to know her, thinking we could work together. We have a formal mentoring program at M&I, but with Crystal, it was unique. Because she didn’t approach me, I approached her. That’s how much she inspired me.”

And Crystal continues to inspire. She has become a foster care activist and marched in Madison. She advocated for the addition of health care benefits for youth aging out of foster care until age 21 through BadgerCare Plus, a program that currently helps children under age 19 receive health insurance. And she is all set to spend her fall semester in New Zealand, on her way to acquiring her international business certificate.

On top of all this, Crystal will be honored at the 2009 Presidential Inauguration, where she’ll be crowned as a scholar and attend all exclusive events with the new President.

“Crystal has a magnetism about her,” says Michelle. “I see such great potential in her.” ■

WORKING BOTH WITH MALES and females, Lad Lake’s Independent Living program for 15- to 21-year-olds offers daily transitional services like subsidies, life skills training, housing placement, and supervision. At its heart, the Independent Living program is all about giving young adults the support they need, while equipping them with the life skills required to promote a stable, self-sufficient life in the community.





CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

Building futures and brighter tomorrows one person at a time.

IN THE FEW SHORT MONTHS SINCE LAD LAKE'S Education and Life Skills Development Center opened on the corner of 2nd Street and Capitol Drive in Milwaukee, we have been overwhelmed by the absolute flood of positive responses it has received – from the youth, young adults, and families we work with; and from visitors and people within the community. In fact, it seems every passing day provides another opportunity for someone else to describe precisely why this facility succeeds in helping Lad Lake carry out its mission of *Guiding Growth*.

In our hearts and minds, we knew the youth and families of Milwaukee needed a resource like this, and it took courage and conviction to take that bold step of moving forward with it before completely solidifying funding. After all, it had been more than 40 years since we last approached the community for support.



“This is more than a building, it’s a living, breathing thing filled with humanism and care.”

— TOM CASPER, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY EDUCATION

»“Moving to this location,” says Sharon Kimmel, Site Coordinator for the Education and Life Skills Development Center, “I have definitely witnessed a much different attitude in the kids who come here every day. They see how seriously we’ve taken them. They look around at this place and they think, ‘They built this all for me?’ These kids, they see it as a brand new opportunity to start over.”

And that’s precisely what it is.

The Lad Lake Education and Life Skills Development Center creates a unique learning environment for Milwaukee youth and families who need specialized care; a place where we can respond intensively to their needs, individualize their learning experiences, and equip them with crucial life skills that will ensure the promise of brighter tomorrows.

“We’ve invested in these kids,” says Sharon, “and they know that. And they appreciate that. They appreciate us ... just as much as we appreciate them.”

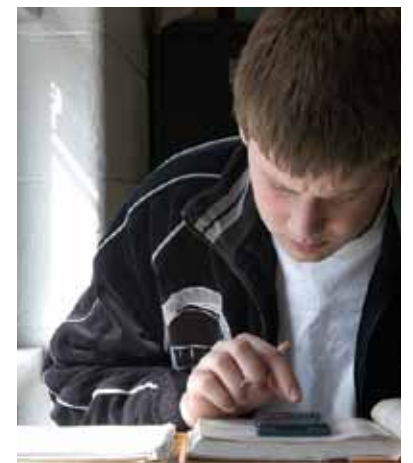
But the *Building Futures* capital campaign is still in its infancy. The combined cost of last year’s building improvements and its eventual purchase total more than \$6 million. And while we have made significant progress in the first year of our fundraising efforts, we still have a long way to go if we are to reach our five-year campaign goal and achieve our dream of permanently owning a facility that will make a world of difference in the lives of at-risk youth and families in Milwaukee for years to come.

That’s why we need your help.

You hold the power to change the life of each person we serve at the Lad Lake Education and Life Skills Development Center. Every dollar of support we receive will provide proven and effective assistance to those who need our help in the Milwaukee area ... today, tomorrow, and beyond tomorrow. Help us address these long-term needs. ■

WHEN YOU JOIN LAD LAKE in this effort and support our *Building Futures* capital campaign with a financial contribution, you invest in today’s youth and provide them all with the promise of better tomorrows.

To donate, or for more information on *Building Futures*, contact Gary Erdmann at 262-965-2131.





“Your gift to Lad Lake is an investment in the youth of today, one that will help us deliver our promise of better tomorrows. Every dollar of support helps us address long-term needs that will give Lad Lake the opportunity to continue our commitment to guiding growth.”

“We all give back in different ways. The success of our kids is an extension of YOUR gift.”

— GARY ERDMANN

In addition to our capital campaign, there are many ways you can support Lad Lake:

UNRESTRICTED GIFTS lend us the flexibility to commit funding to areas in which it's most required. Your unrestricted gift goes directly toward solving Lad Lake's most pressing needs, bridging the gap between where we are today and where we hope to be tomorrow.

DESIGNATED GIFTS benefit specific programs of your choice, whether they are particular schools within Lad Lake's educational services or a certain program area as a whole.

CORPORATE MATCHING GIFTS are an excellent way to increase your giving potential to Lad Lake. You may work for a company willing to match, or perhaps even double, your donation.

MEMORIAL AND HONOR GIFTS are made in memory of a loved one, colleague, or friend who has passed away. Honor gifts recognize someone special and pay tribute to him or her. When such gifts are made, a special notification is sent to the family or individual being honored.

MAJOR GIFTS demonstrate your profound support of Lad Lake, and represent a strong commitment to cultivate our future and the futures of the people we help.

ENDOWMENTS have been a vital part of private giving to Lad Lake for many years. Your gift will create a lasting legacy in the benefactor's name.

OTHER EXAMPLES OF GIVING include purchasing furnishings, classroom materials, computers, and the like; sponsoring events; etc.

PLANNED GIVING, in the form of gift annuities, charitable remainder trusts, or designating Lad Lake in your will, is also an option.

CONTRIBUTING ONLINE is possible by going to ladlake.org. Choose the "Donate Online" button and complete the subsequent pages on our secure server.

For additional information on these and other ways to offer support, please contact the Lad Lake Development Office at 262-965-2131.

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Kari & Stewart Wangard
The Waterville Horse Association
Thomas Weiskopf
Sandy Widman
Wolf Paving
Charles & Sandy Yanke
Kay Yoost

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Norma Adams
All Saints Lutheran Church
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Curative Care Network
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Gail Radonski
Jeanine Rohn
Victoria Thor
Gary Erdmann
Edward Hipke
Rose Knapp
Judith Budnik
Max Kurz
Mr. & Mrs. Harold Kacanek
Christine Woods
Lincoln Park Community Center, Inc.

2007 MEMORIALS

Stanley Litow
William Upham
Mel Menger
Robert & Lynell Ahlstrom
Ruth Castillo
Bernie Defere
Scott & Kristin Larson
Terry Nelson
Dennis & Pat Neuenfeldt
Steven & Faith Olson Sr.
Steven & Janel Olson Jr.
Marles & Gary Overgard
Douglas & Betty Rasmussen
Kevin & Tracy Schmotzer
Jeffrey & Joan Thune
Gary & Bonnie Vick
Gay Yoost
Rev. WJC. & E. Donald Ralph
Mr. & Mrs. W.S. Dillon
Ed Schleis
Shirley Miller
Joyce Schleis

For questions regarding the list of donors, or for more information, please contact the Lad Lake Development Office at 262-965-2131.

2007 Financials

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

BASED ON PRELIMINARY AUDIT FIGURES

Operating Revenues	\$11,196,669
Operating Expenses	\$11,196,527
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Operating Revenues in Excess of Expenses	\$142
Net Gain on Investments	\$106,238
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Increase in Unrestricted Net Assets	\$106,380
Increase in Temporarily Restricted Net Assets	\$809,943
Increase in Permanently Restricted Net Assets	\$12,038
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Change in Net Assets	\$938,361

The most important number to us is the number of lives we continue to change.

OPERATING EXPENSES

CALENDAR YEAR 2007

	PERCENT	AMOUNT
Residential	41%	\$4,613,667
Education	26%	\$2,954,612
Outreach	6%	\$726,108
Independent Living	10%	\$1,104,955
Administrative/Development	16%	\$1,797,183
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TOTAL	100%	\$11,196,525

CLIENT STATISTICS

FOR YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2007

GENDER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PROGRAM AREA	PERCENT	NUMBER
Male	61%	1,091	Outreach	23%	414
Female	39%	692	Independent Living	33%	580
			Education	34%	614
			Residential	10%	175
RACE	PERCENT	NUMBER	COUNTY	PERCENT	NUMBER
African American	57%	1,011	Milwaukee	75%	1337
Caucasian	24%	434	Waukesha	8%	146
Hispanic	9%	167	Walworth	5%	83
Native American	1%	17	Illinois	3%	58
Asian	1%	9	Dodge	3%	48
Bi-Racial or unknown	8%	145	Dane	2%	44
<hr/>			Washington	2%	35
TOTAL SERVED		1,783	Other	2%	32