Through life’s struggles with everyone else to blame, I felt as if
my world would never be, for I was just a shame. Without the
knowledge, the resource, the courage or the love from family. Support
seems great for a moment...but not in their mentality.

I cried, I prayed, I strayed from reality, only to find I had more
inside of me. Got dreams with no way to fulfill the necessary...the
pain remains my feelings aren’t ordinary.

But the classes, the groups, the tips and advice, helped my mind, my
soul, my lessons learned in life. Without the support from men and
women like you in my lifetime, where would I be?

I don’t even want to think about it, because the bond I have I want
to keep it...they made a home for girls like me in a safe place
and environment.

Temporary stay or stay long...I am a witness to the change in me
once I left Lad Lake.

– Written by Deidra, a 29 year-old small business owner,
songwriter and former Lad Lake resident.

Contents

4 Independent Living Support
5 Education Services
7 Outreach and Mentoring
8 Out-of-Home Care
10 In Their Words
11 Who We Serve
12 Financials
14 Thank You
We all believe that all children should have the support they need to succeed in school and life. But for some, things like poverty, family instability, abuse and neglect threaten that support.

At Lad Lake, 95% of the youth in our care come from a family in crisis unable to support them as they wish; and most suffer from post-traumatic stress or other anxiety disorders. Here in our community, Lad Lake is the emergency room of the child welfare system.

With help from donors like you, we provide kids safety, individualized therapy, and skill-building for independence. Whether it’s support for foster kids, mentors for troubled youth, or a safe-haven for exploited and abused girls, Lad Lake counselors cultivate stability and self-reliance for more than 1,100 kids and their families every year.

For the past 150 years, Lad Lake has evolved to meet our community’s most pressing needs. Our experience tells us the best way to create long-term success is through proven programs that foster healthy relationships, strengthen families, and connect youth to community resources.

When you invest in Lad Lake, you help ensure that kids get a second chance in life, and the opportunities they need to succeed. Thank you for your ongoing support.

Sincerely,

Dan Magnuson
CEO

Cheryl Hill
Board President
Ashley

When you meet Ashley, you immediately know that she is a young woman wise beyond her years. She has to be. At four years old, with an unfit mother and no father around, Ashley entered into the foster care system, where she bounced around from family to family for nearly 15 years. It was a difficult and emotional time. One of the families, in whom she thought she could find trust and protection, was actually the opposite. Ashley remembers being scared to speak up for a long time.

That’s why when Ashley was 17 and about to become an “adult” without ever having been adopted, a judge referred her to Lad Lake to help her get on her feet, and live independently for the first time. She was ready.

“Lad Lake helped me with my first apartment at 17 ½ and taught me a lot of things like ‘big girl’ stuff,” explains Ashley. “I was still in high school at the time so they really helped me do a lot. They helped me with budgeting, food shopping, learning how to sign checks, and understanding an apartment lease.”

After she graduated from Lad Lake’s Independent Living program, she moved onto the Connections program, and even volunteered her time to help others. Recognizing her potential, Lad Lake awarded Ashley a Bright Lights Big Dreams scholarship. Today, she is serving her second term as President for the State’s Youth Advisory Council on Foster Care. She currently works for a social service agency and wants to get her degree in social work – with an ultimate goal of also becoming a motivational speaker for at-risk youth.

“I always considered myself a go-getter,” says Ashley. “Now I want to be a voice for kids who are afraid to speak, or are too little to speak. This is for everybody who has been there like me.”

FACTS:

47% of foster kids who turn 18 without ever being adopted will drop out of school. 42% will become homeless the year they “age out” of foster care.

With the help of Lad Lake, 268 foster kids are able to transition to independent living and are twice as likely to go on to college.

“This is your book, your chapter in life, and you have to speak up for the things you want, and the things you need.”

Independent Living
Any parent will tell you that the teenage and preteen years can be some of the most challenging in a child’s life. For a 12-year-old Matt, Autism compounded those challenges.

Matt was diagnosed with Autism at an early age. He was doing okay in special education classes in public school for much of his life. But as he approached 13, doctors noticed that Matt had developed severe anxiety in addition to his Autism. The medication Matt took to manage his anxiety caused weight gain, kids began teasing him at school. It was too much for Matt to handle. To avoid confrontations, he began skipping school regularly, his anxiety skyrocketed, and his grades suffered.

“I started flunking because I would basically get up and walk out of classes and walk home,” said Matt.

The combination of other life and death events including his mom’s stroke and grandfather’s death made it increasingly difficult for Matt to function in a public school environment. He pushed back.

“I kept thinking to myself - how do I deal with this anger problem?” Matt said.

That’s when his social worker talked to Matt and his family about Lad Lake. Matt began attending one of Lad Lake’s behavioral reassignment schools and he eventually established routines and began to improve. He learned anger management techniques and had more one-on-one help in school.

“The Individual Education Plan at Lad Lake has helped me out,” says Matt, “It’s helped me understand work ethic. I have learned to respect staff and adults.”

Since coming to Lad Lake, Matt has gone from flunking several classes to B’s and C’s. He’s particularly interested in social studies and describes himself as a “history enthusiast.” Most importantly, he’s no longer having outbursts and is back on track to graduate high school next year.

His advice to others when dealing with kids with Autism and anxiety?

“To understand somebody’s problem, you have to learn about them. There’s a lot of people like me.”

FACTS:

According to the National Alliance for Mental illness, only 50% of youth with mental illness and developmental disorders receive treatment, and of those, HALF DROP OUT OF HIGH SCHOOL.

Through its alternative schools, LAD LAKE TEACHERS HELP HUNDREDS OF KIDS with developmental and behavioral challenges succeed in school through individualized education and a one-on-one approach.
RICHARD was a 17-year-old Junior in High School with a world of opportunity ahead of him. He was a top athlete on his school’s swim team, in honors classes and seemingly doing well. As the oldest sibling in his family, Richard even helped his single mom take care of his younger brothers and sisters. He was responsible and smart. It took just a few friends and peer pressure to lead him down the wrong path.

When classmates from his sports team all began using marijuana, Richard started too and within a year, began selling. His grades slipped, and he flunked out of two classes. He was eventually kicked off the swim team and expelled from school.

That’s when he was sent to Lad Lake’s behavioral reassignment school and given a second chance to succeed. At Lad Lake’s school, and with the help of an alcohol and drug counselor, Richard stopped using and started focusing.

“It’s helped because it’s given me one-on-one with teachers,” explained Richard, “It helped me understand some of my more challenging classes like math — and get back on track. It also helped me realize my mistakes. Most of the people who I’ve seen do it [drugs] don’t really succeed in life. I don’t want to be like that.”

In just 4 months, Richard was able to recover the 3 credits in Biology and English, and bring his GPA back up. Because of Lad Lake, Richard is no longer involved with drugs and is set to graduate high school on time next year. He understands the mistakes he’s made and is committed to turning his life around. He is considering joining the ROTC and possibly even going to technical school for mechanical engineering.

Facts:

EVERY YEAR, Lad Lake gives nearly 300 STUDENTS a second chance in school. Lad Lake counselors help teens struggling with drug addiction, while teachers help students get back on track toward graduation.

National research shows that nearly 1 IN 3 HIGH SCHOOL DROPOUTS USE DRUGS. Left untreated, these youth are at GREATER RISK of ADULT POVERTY and COMPOUNDING HEALTH AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS later in life.
Originally diagnosed with ADHD, EMILY struggled throughout childhood with various mental health disorders. Her family didn’t fully understand the severity of Emily’s mental illness until she was 12, when she was hospitalized for suicidal tendencies and depression. Her parents would later learn that Emily also suffers from multiple personality disorder, severe anxiety and PTSD.

“Well, it prevents me from being able to do certain things,” explains Emily, “I overthink things. I have tons of distortions. Panic attacks, worrying, sleep problems, obsessive compulsive disorder, anxiety and anger – all which causes communications problems.”

Emily’s condition worsened before it got better. Family arguments became commonplace. She started hanging with a dangerous crowd and was arrested for shoplifting soon after. Around the same time, she began self-harm as a result of her depression.

“My depression was so bad that I couldn’t see the good in anything. My brain wasn’t good at all and I didn’t feel free,” Emily remembers.

The County recommended that Emily get connected with Lad Lake’s outreach and mentoring program. The combination of therapy, medication and mentors helped Emily heal and move on.

“It definitely benefitted the whole family,” said Emily’s mother. “The mentoring got her out of the house when all she wanted to do was sleep all day because of her depression. She’s doing better at school now too. We were very thankful to have had that service.”

Today, Emily has learned to live with her mental illness. She uses art, journaling, meditation and interacting with animals to help her manage her symptoms.

When asked about her Lad Lake mentor, Emily replies “I think the best thing she did was just talk to me. She would talk about her life and I would talk about mine...She really made a difference in my life. She taught me a lot. She was really helpful. I learned that you have to love yourself first.”

FACTS:

MORE THAN 90% of children and adolescents who commit suicide HAVE A MENTAL DISORDER.

At Lad Lake residential treatment facilities, OVER 70% OF THE YOUTH in our care have been diagnosed with THREE OR MORE MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS.
DEIDRE is a 29 year-old entrepreneur and mother. In 2014, she decided to follow her passion for baking by starting a pastry business. Her business slogan reads “baked from the heart” (something Deidre has needed a lot throughout her life).

At age 12, Deidre was abused and molested by those who were supposed to care for her. She was later abandoned and put in foster care. As a preteen dealing with trauma, Deidre simply didn’t know how to cope.

“I kept running away. When you get rejected by your family, then you think ‘I’m going to do this myself,’” Deidre explains, “Fighting and running, fighting and running. That was basically my life.”

Deidra continued running until she turned 17 and the court sent her to Lad Lake’s St. Rose campus. There, Deidre received help in school, along with the therapy and support she so desperately needed.

When asked about her Lad Lake experience, Deidre says, “They treated me like a person, not a number. They really care… at first, I thought nobody cared about me. But when I came here [Lad Lake], I realized people do care if you just give them a chance.”

After Deidre left Lad Lake, her struggle was not over. She would later endure marital abuse and divorce. She came back to the one place she knew and trusted, and with Lad Lake again at her side, Deidre received outpatient therapy to help rebuild.

Slowly, Deidre began again. She remarried, had children and successfully started her own business. She says of her time with Lad Lake, “I learned a lot here. It helped me realize who I was as a person…. And even though there were bumps along the way, at the end of the day, they taught me how to be a woman.”

And quite a woman she turned out to be.

Facts:

On average, 92% OF YOUTH IN RESIDENTIAL CARE have lived through multiple traumatic events including severe childhood neglect or abuse.

At Lad Lake, 95% of the youth in our care come from a family in crisis.
Sex trafficking is not just a problem confined to faraway countries. Here in Milwaukee, girls as young as 13 are coerced into the sex trade. **Lucy** was one of those girls.

As a young teenager, Lucy was abducted and locked in a basement by a man she thought she could trust. He drugged and exploited her. Thankfully, she escaped. The memories are foggy, partially because of her attempts to block them out, and partially because Lucy used drugs and alcohol as a coping mechanism throughout her teen years.

Looking back, Lucy understands she relied on drugs to escape the reality of an unthinkable childhood fraught with physical abuse. Even so, she excelled in sports and did well in school. But raised by parents who suffered from alcoholism and mental illness took its toll, and at only 10-years-old, Lucy turned to alcohol herself.

She continued on a downward spiral towards drugs. OxyContin at age 13. Heroin at 15. Her dependence worsened to such crippling levels that she resorted to robbery to feed her addiction. She hit rock bottom.

After the state decided Lucy’s parents were unable to care for her, she bounced around the foster care system. Finally, she was sent to Lad Lake, where she met a counselor at the St. Rose campus who would help turn her life around. “Liz [a Lad Lake counselor] was the only person I could be honest with. She was always there for me.”

At Lad Lake, Lucy engaged in art therapy and daily chores to maintain a schedule, while counselors helped her break her addiction. Today, Lucy has been sober for over a year and recently earned her GED. She works hard to surround herself with positive people, and dreams of one day going to college.

When asked about her experience with Lad Lake Lucy explains, “They planted the seed in me of realizing my problems and wanting to change. I now know what happy is.”

**FACTS:**

13: The average age that a girl is pulled or coerced into sex trafficking.

Lad Lake houses the **STATE’S ONLY RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT CENTER** specifically designed for youth survivors of sex trafficking.
“I just remember this place just feeling safe to me. They treated me like a person, not like a number... They accepted me with open arms and that’s what made me open up more.”
– Lad Lake Resident

“I learned a lot here. The teachers kept telling me, ‘You can do it, you can do it’.”
– Student from a Lad Lake Alternative School

“I just remember this place just feeling safe to me. They treated me like a person, not like a number... They accepted me with open arms and that’s what made me open up more.”
– Lad Lake Resident

“It’s helpful to have somebody, and a safe place to hang out. She was like a big sister to me. It was very therapeutic and a really fun thing to do to get your mind off things.”
– Mentee from Lad Lake’s Mentoring/Outreach program
2014 DEMOGRAPHICS

GENDER

- Male: 894 (60%)
- Female: 599 (40%)

ETHNICITY

- African American: 833
- Caucasian: 518
- Hispanic: 376
- Bi-Racial: 112
- East-Indian: 8
- Native American: 7
- Asian: 7
- Other: 97

PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

- Outreach: 31%
- Residential (unconfirmed): 30%
- Independent Living: 18%
- Education: 21%

COUNTY

- Milwaukee: 1042
- Walworth: 213
- Washington: 41
- Other: 78
- Dane: 18
- Illinois: 5
HOW YOUR GIFT IS INVESTED

A Will to Help Others
There are many ways to fit charitable giving into your overall estate planning. A Lad Lake legacy gift guarantees that the issues that matter to you continue to be supported in your family name, long after you’re gone. Following are some examples of legacy gifts; many of which also allow you to save on taxes including:

- Charitable gift annuity
- Charitable bequest
- Stocks
- Retirement assets
- Charitable Remainder Trust
- Real Estate
- Life Insurance

For more information about giving options, and how you can leave a legacy for our community’s most at-risk youth, please call (414) 339-8910.

“WE MAKE A LIVING by WHAT WE GET, BUT WE MAKE A LIFE by WHAT WE GIVE.”

~Winston Churchill
HONORARIUM
MEMORIAL GIFTS

Gary Balcerzak honoring
Cheryl Hill

William & Catherine Dillon
honoring Rev. W.J.C., Mr &
Mrs. E. Donald Ralph

Thomas Ewing honoring
Cheryl Hill

David & Debra Fohr honoring
Ed Hipke

Jim & Mary Lauderdale honoring
Carl Komassa

Christine Lenske honoring
Glen Alderson

Gerald & Betty Lestina honoring
Jim Frisch

Dr. Edwin & Mary Jo Montgomery
honoring Bill Vandyke

Terry Perry honoring
Claudine O’Leary

Monica Torre-Ricker honoring
Francis Hammes Torre

Dr. Tom & Mary Roberts honoring
Rose Knapp

Judy & Jim Schiel honoring
Ronald Wojciuk

Orlean Schroeder honoring
Pamela Schroder

Grace Sharamitaro honoring
Jelly Ellison and Ronald Wojciuk

Marcos & Dana Vega honoring
Lorraine & Walter Brucker and
Maria Escamilla

Ronald & Sandra Werowinski
honoring Sean Werowinski

In Honor of Chris Steinmetz
Ben J. Abrohams
Natalie Beckwith
Jeffery Beischel
David & Marcie Brenner
Michael & Diane Callen
Harry & Karen Carlson
Alice Hanson-Drew
Margie & Michael Burkwald
David DeBruin
Lynda Di Pierro
Kathy Dwyer
Michael Dwyer
Foley & Lardner
Ivars Gailans
Mr. & Mrs. Mike & Kathleen Gehl
C. Frederick Geilfuss II
Raymond & Joanna Hare
Sheril Hare
James Harris
Paul & Mary Hartnett
Steve & Beth Ann Hartung
John Hawley
Thomas & Doreen Hickey
John & Janis Hovel

In Honor of Alice Traxel
Amy Dretzka & Katie Traxel
Marjorie Hanke
Joan Kleinhenz
Mary Louise Marinkovich
Dorothy Ruthenberg
Nancy Ziegler

Wayne Lueders
Richard & Jeannine Zwieg
Jim & Kathleen Mc Keown
Eric & Kisa Nelson
Jay McKibbin
Greg & Mary Ann Renz
Frank & Margaret Schoegler
Laura Smith
Marjorie Steinmetz
Peter & Leann Stone
Bruce & Marilyn Weiss
Shepard Exposition Services

*Lad Lake has made every effort to assure the accuracy of these donor lists. If you have an omission or
discrepancy, please contact the development office at (414) 339-8910.
## DONORS

### Platinum (5,000 to 200,000)
- A.W. Asmuth Family Fund
- Anon Charitable Trust
- BadgerMeter, Inc.
- BMO Harris Corporation
- Greater Milwaukee Foundation
- Bob and Linda Davis Family Fund
- Dierks, Waukesha Foods
- William Edstrom
- The Gordon Flesch Company
- Patrick Doyle & Kristine Helms Kaztекс Foundation
- Nicholas Family Foundation
- ROS Foundation
- Schendel -Pieper Char. Trust
- James & Christine Speaker
- The Streich Family Foundation
- Willis

### Silver ($500 to $999)
- Jim & Susan Allen
- Tony & Kathy Asmuth
- Bob & Cindy Barczak
- Mark & Vicky Benskin
- James & Reopa Brown
- Harry & Karen Carlson
- Thomas Ewing
- Paul & Mary Hartnett
- Henry Gund Fund
- Mark & Lisa Krueger
- David Lynch
- Richard & Karen Maguire
- Laura Melvin
- Dale & Lori Muehl
- National Speciality Shops LLC
- Jeff & Jodie Pease
- Schuett Farms
- Drew & Diane Sebion
- Gavin & Judith Taylor
- Merry Turner
- United Healthcare Services, INC
- George Wallis
- Bill West
- Nicholas & Jean Zanoni

### Bronze($1 to $499)
- 1851, LTD
- 21st. INC
- Dan Abendroth
- Ben J. Abrohams
- Diane Anderson-Blair
- Laura Angelos
- Peter & Joanne Angelos
- Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield
- ASQ
- Gary Balcerzak
- Mike Barylski
- Karen & Glenn Becker
- Natalie Beckwith
- Naomi Behn
- Patricia Beine
- Jeffery Beischel
- Lee Beitzel & Jill Ritterbusch
- James Beres
- Pat Bergan
- John & Tracy Biever
- Maria & Glenn Bishop
- Biz Times Media
- Blankenstein Enterprises
- David & Diane Borash
- Jacqueline Borja
- Erin Bostelmann
- David & Marcie Brenner
- Reginald & Bridgett Brown
- Karen Brunow
- Lisa & Willam Burkhardt
- Margie & Michael Burkwald
- Michael & Diane Callen
- Casper Coffee Company, Inc.
- Michael Churches
- Christine Clay
- Margaret Collins
- Lin & Carol Compton
- Kelly Conley
- Zion Conley
- Robert & Martha Coons
- Mr. Torrey Cooper
- Mike Crowley
- Samuel Cryer
- Alan Damato
- Kristin Damato
- Darren & Theresa Davis
- David DeBruin
- Marc & Sally DeVillers
- Patty Dewey
- Lynda Di Pierro
- Jack & Catherine Tully Dierks
- Holli Dietrick
- William & Catherine Dillon
- Karen Dobias
- Hon. Lee & Susan Dreyfus
- Nathaniel Druecke
- Mark Dunning
- Duquaine, Melka & Koplin
- Kathy Dwyer
- Michael Dwyer
- Diane Dzienogel
- William Eastham
- Gerald & Joyce Egle
- Faces II Esthetic Salon
- Laura Falbo
- David & Debra Fohr
- Denise Frank
- Lance Freischmidt
- Ivars Gailans, MD
- Joseph Garstecki
- Mr. & Mrs. Mike & Kathleen Gehl
- C. Frederick Geilfuss II
- Cynthia & Tom Godd
- Kenneth & Marjorie Gomoll
- Tom & Kate Gomoll
- Mr. Greg Grenier
- Gail Greve
- Vivian Guzniczak
- Marjorie Hanke
- Alice Hanson-Drew
- Raymond & Joanna Hare
- Sheril Hare
- Beth & Don Harris
- James Harris
- Steve & Beth Ann Hartung
- Paul & Mary Beth Haubrich
- John Hawley
- Robert Heffernan
- Carol Hegland
- Ray & Betty Heim
- Katherine Helminiak
- Herbert Kohl Charities, Inc.
- Rebecca Hernandez

---

Thank You To All