



Abilities!



Annual Report 2009

*“We have one purpose:
to create a world in which
people with disabilities
live simply as people.”*

-Edmund L. Cortez

Message From the President

It all began in a vacant garage in West Hempstead, Long Island.

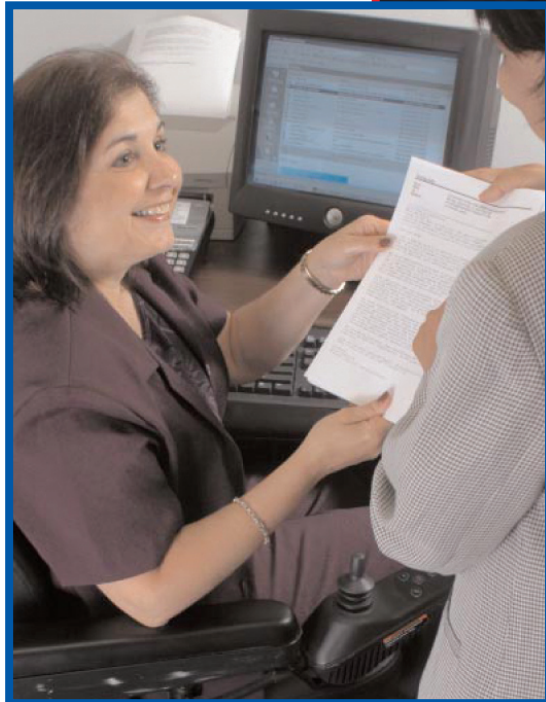
More than fifty-five years ago, Henry Viscardi, Jr., who was born without legs, founded an employment program that he designed to demonstrate the abilities and employability of workers with disabilities. As Abilities, Inc. grew, he added vocational training programs. Then, in 1962, Henry Viscardi founded the school that would eventually bear his name.

Today, Abilities! brings together Abilities, Inc., the Henry Viscardi School, and , Just One Break, Inc. to provide education and employment services to more than 2,500 people with disabilities each year. Looking ahead, we will reach thousands more through our technology, research, and training programs.

Our task is to give people with disabilities the tools and opportunity to become independent and self-sufficient. Our goal is for people with disabilities to be included in all community activities, including education, employment, and recreation. In this way, we will realize our vision of a world in which people with disabilities will live simply as people.



Edmund L. Cortez



Vision

Abilities! is dedicated to creating a world in which people with disabilities will live simply as people. In this world, people with disabilities will have the same opportunities as all other people, be treated with dignity and respect, and have access to all the benefits of our society.

Mission

Abilities! is a non-profit agency dedicated to empowering people with disabilities to be active, independent, and self-sufficient participants in our society. Through education, training, research, leadership, and example, we seek to provide the highest quality services and to influence national attitudes, policies, and legislation in ways that will lead to the greatest benefit for the people we serve.

Summary of Programs

Abilities!

www.abilitiesonline.org

Nathaniel H. Kornreich Technology Center

The Nathaniel H. Kornreich Technology Center is an assistive technology center designed to encourage and support the integration and use of assistive technology in the education and employment of people with disabilities. Its services include:

- Consultation
- Demonstration
- Evaluations
- Library and Information Services
- Online Resources
- Technical Assistance
- Training

Research & Evaluation Center

The Research and Evaluation Center is designed to research and evaluate the effectiveness of our programs and to encourage innovative programming for

people with disabilities. Its activities include:

- Program Evaluation
- Research and Dissemination
- Innovative Programs and Partnerships
- Access to Arts and Cultural Institutions
- Grant Proposal Development

Smeal Learning Center

The Smeal Learning Center administers accessible conferencing facilities and a full-service video and multimedia production studio. Smeal's state-of-the-art technology resources include:

- Fully Accessible Conference Rooms
- Digital and HD Video Production
- Accessible Website Development
- Video Teleconferencing
- Webcasting/Webinar and Podcasting

Abilities, Inc.

www.abilitiesinc.org

Dedicated to increasing employment of workers with disabilities, Abilities, Inc. provides training and placement services to more than 2,000 people throughout the Long Island/New York City metropolitan area each year. Services include:

- Career Assessments
- Skills Training
- Job Placement and Retention
- High School/College to Work Transition
- Adult Learning and GED Prep.
- Job Coaching/Supported Employment
- Adapted Driver Training
- Social Security Benefits Counseling
- Service Coordination
- Case Management/Counseling

Having a National Impact

center, a pilot plant for all the world to copy." Today, we are fulfilling this vision through the activities of our **Abilities USA** and the **Global Institute**.

In 1957, Henry Viscardi envisioned that Abilities! would become "a research and training

Abilities USA is a targeted effort to significantly improve education and employment services for people with disabilities across the nation. Through an extension of several local programs, Abilities! is working with teacher preparation programs throughout the country to

Henry Viscardi School

www.hvs.k12.ny.us

An accredited model academic program for grades pre-K through 12, the school serves approximately 200 students with disabilities from Long Island, New York City, and Westchester County. HVS provides:

- An exceptional staff including teachers, physical and occupational therapists, speech therapists, nurses, psychologists and social workers
- Inclusive Technology, utilizing assistive, instructional, and distance technologies to provide integrated education experiences
- An Independent Living Program, physical education programs, and sports programs
- A universally accessible pool

Just One Break, Inc. (JOB)

www.justonebreak.com

The mission of JOB is to increase the employment of people with disabilities by building relationships with pro-active employers. JOB is an approved VESID (Vocational Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities—NYS Education Department) service provider assisting qualified people with disabilities to obtain gainful employment. JOB's services include:

- Development of resumé writing/ interviewing skills and job search strategies
- Referral to open positions
- Placement follow up with employer and employee
- Comprehensive Resource Room
- JOB Hunt Club
- Disability Mentoring Day
- Business Advisory Council of leading NYC employers

National Business & Disability Council (NBDC)

The National Business & Disability Council (www.nbdc.com) is committed to assisting employers in recruiting, hiring, retaining and advancing qualified workers with disabilities through a comprehensive service package that includes:

- Information hotline
- National resumé database
- Unlimited job postings
- Customized training
- Accessibility surveys
- Technical assistance
- Emerging Leaders Internship Program
(www.emerging-leaders.com)

better prepare the next generation of teachers to educate students with severe physical disabilities and other health impairments in integrated classrooms. At the same time, with the National Business & Disability Council, we have created a national resource for employers to expand their use of assistive technology in the recruitment and hiring of workers with disabilities.

The Global Institute provides an opportunity for education experts throughout the world to convene and jointly identify key issues, emerging trends, and best practices in meeting the needs of students with disabilities. The members of the Global Institute then recommend and support research, model demonstration, and teacher training programs to be conducted at Abilities! and around the world.

Abilities!



"The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams."

-Eleanor Roosevelt

Founded in 1952, [Abilities!](#) is a non-profit organization dedicated to creating a world where people with disabilities receive the same treatment as all other people and have equal access to the benefits society offers. With over 55 years of experience educating and training people with disabilities, [Abilities!](#) has grown to become a leader in the integration of people with disabilities into everyday life. [Abilities!](#) offers services through several major programs.

The [Nathaniel H. Kornreich Technology Center](#) provides consultation, demonstration, evaluation and training regarding assistive and educational technology for people with disabilities. The Center is the leading facility in the tri-state area for consumers and professionals who want to become familiar with the full range of assistive and educational technology products that are used to increase, maintain or improve the functional capabilities of people with



disabilities. It is dedicated to promoting the full participation and independence of people with disabilities in school, at work, at home and in the community.

The Rae C. Kornreich Library has allowed the Kornreich Technology Center to play a larger role in the field of assistive technology. From its initial focus on evaluation and training of individuals with disabilities, it has evolved into a program featuring collaborations with agencies directly serving people with disabilities, as well as with universities training professionals who work with people with disabilities. A major component of these collaborations is the use of the [Abilities!](#) distance learning capabilities, including video teleconferencing and web based projects, enabling the Kornreich Center to interact with many more individuals than ever before.

[Abilities USA](#) is a national initiative to improve the education and employment services for people with disabilities throughout the country. Through the development of training curricula, materials and programs we are enhancing the skills of employers, teachers, parents, vocational rehabilitation specialists and other professionals working to improve the lives of people with disabilities.

The [Global Institute](#) identifies, researches and promotes innovative and promising

practices in special education and rehabilitation for people with disabilities. Engaging collaboratively with organizations and institutions across geographic, political, linguistic and disciplinary boundaries, the Institute seeks to act as a catalyst for advancing emerging and progressive practices. Capitalizing on developing technologies and fostering intercultural communication, it aims to facilitate access to knowledge, training and resources. It also strives to erase myths and traditions that continue to deny persons with disabilities, here and abroad, full participation in school, community and society.

The [Research and Evaluation Center \(REC\)](#) provides research on issues related to disability and is also responsible for evaluating all of the organization's programs to determine their effectiveness and long-term outcomes. Program specialists also contribute to grant proposal development and evaluation. The REC actively enhances our national and international presence by disseminating innovation and research through conferences, publications and online media as well as participation in groups such as the Museum Access Consortium, a collective of 100 museums dedicated to increased participation by people with disabilities. The REC also provides disability-related research to Abilities! employees in an effort to enhance staff knowledge of current findings in the

field related to our own program services and outcomes.

The REC collaborates on innovative programs with partner organizations. Recent initiatives have included live interactive video broadcasts with PRISM research scientists from the Panamanian Rainforest, virtual interactive tours of the Lower East Side Tenement Museum, and a Jazz Residency program with Friends of the



Arts that has been presented internationally. These projects provide opportunities for students to learn and explore in inclusive environments with their non-disabled peers or facilitate exploration of inaccessible environments through technology. The REC has also provided assistance in expanding several education or training programs in other states. These currently include the Lab Assistant Training Program and the Learn and Earn Programs, both replicated in New Jersey.

Henry Viscardi School

at Abilities!



“

saw a star, I reached for it,
I missed.

So I accepted the sky.”

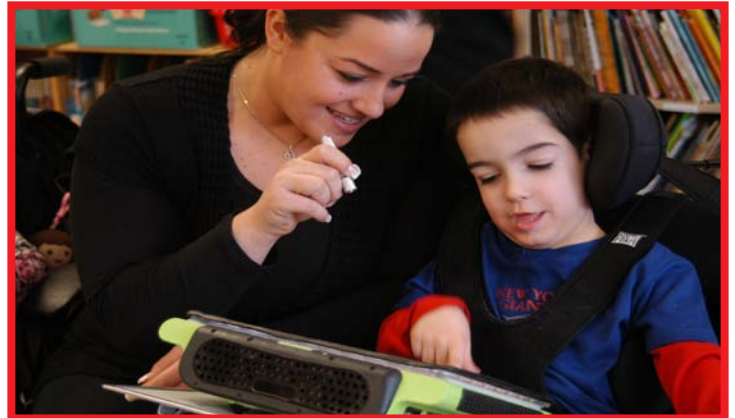
-Scott Fortini,
Former HVS student

The [Henry Viscardi School](#) (HVS) is an accredited academic program for grades pre-K through 12 that serves approximately 200 children who reside on Long Island, in New York city, and in Westchester County. HVS is a resource to school districts that cannot accommodate the education needs of children who require a specialized educational setting with a variety of therapies and medical supports. Many of these students have orthopedic disabilities and are medically fragile. Others have speech difficulties and use augmentative devices that enable them to communicate. More than seventy medical treatments are scheduled daily at the school to enable students who may otherwise be on home instruction to participate in a fully-enriched academic program.

Founded in 1962, HVS is one of eleven specialized, private schools in New York State that offer educational services to students with severe hearing, visual, or physical disabilities. This group of schools receives financial support for operating expenses from New York State but

depends on private donations for program enhancements.

HVS is committed to assisting children with Complex Communication Needs, children for whom technology will be crucial to access the school curriculum and student augmentative/alternative communication devices (AAC).



Unique to HVS is our use of a) Interactive White Boards to model the use of communication symbols throughout the school day, b) the Briefcase Concept to make teacher-authored materials accessible to all interdisciplinary staff, c) E-Books to train motor access and d) a comprehensive E-Writing Program designed to help all children learn to use the computer as a tool for writing.



"Most of us are ordinary people trying to lead extraordinary lives...People with disabilities are extraordinary people trying to lead ordinary lives."

-Dr. Henry Viscardi, Jr.

Abilities, Inc. is a comprehensive vocational rehabilitation facility with over 55 years of experience training people with disabilities in the skills they need to compete for and obtain satisfying jobs. Abilities, Inc. serves over 2,000 individuals and places approximately 300 into competitive jobs each year in industries such as banking and finance, health care, pharmaceuticals, information technology, manufacturing, personal and professional services, retail and food service/hospitality industries. The rate of placement from Abilities, Inc.'s training program graduates is approximately eighty percent.

Each training program has an active Business Advisory Council that guides each program on curriculum development and also provides practice interviews, internships, tours, and job placement opportunities. Abilities, Inc. continually looks to replenish its advisory councils with employers who reflect growth industries and the needs of our current labor market.

Abilities, Inc. offers school-to-work transition programs that focus on

assisting students in both high school and higher education programs to develop the skills necessary to enter the workforce and to reduce the numbers of students with disabilities who are at risk of dropping out of school. As a result of major reforms in the federal government's welfare and social security policies, Abilities, Inc. now provides valuable services designed to increase employment and independence of persons with disabilities and reduce their dependence on public subsidies. Program offerings also include adapted driver education to adults with all types of disabilities utilizing specially modified cars, vans and mini-vans.

Through foundation support, Abilities, Inc. has successfully replicated several of its transition programs as well as its Laboratory Assistant Training program in the New Jersey area. These and other programs are highly replicable to other parts of the country, expanding the number of people with disabilities who can participate and benefit from training and employment as an outcome.

Just One Break, Inc. (JOB)

at Abilities!



“It’s not enough that you do your work here in a single community. You must set up JOB as a pilot program so that the project can be copied by other cities.”

-Orin Lehman

As of July 2008, [Just One Break, Inc.](#) (JOB) became part of the Abilities! family of services. Started in New York City in 1947 by Bernard Baruch, Orin Lehman, Eleanor Roosevelt and Howard Rusk, JOB was founded to help World War II veterans re-enter the workforce. Today, JOB provides employment services for people with all disabilities, with a focus on college graduates and others seeking professional careers.

JOB's staff works with job seekers to help them clarify their job goals, plan their job search, prepare their resumés, cover and thank-you letters, develop and refine their interview skills, research employment opportunities, network, and identify and develop job leads. JOB has a resource room where job seekers can access computers and fax machines to assist their job search. JOB's Job Hunt Club meets regularly so that job seekers can share job leads and networking strategies.

JOB works directly with employers by referring job seekers to open positions at their organizations. After

a placement is made, JOB provides support to both the applicant and to the employer, as needed.

JOB is proud of its partnership with the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities on activities like National Disability Mentoring Day.



The [National Business & Disability Council](#) (NBDC) is recognized as a national leader offering consultation and training services that link businesses to the 41.3 million Americans with disabilities. Working in partnership with corporations committed to diversity, the

NBDC is a comprehensive resource for disability-related information, training, recruitment and technical assistance. NBDC's goal is to assist organizations in the successful hiring and integration of qualified people with disabilities in the workplace and also reaching them in the consumer marketplace. NBDC is well known for its unique ability to objectively assess and respond to employer needs, while sensitively balancing those needs with the rights and responsibilities of individuals with disabilities.

NBDC's customized disability training programs are not only offered on-site, but also online. Training content includes but is not limited to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other legislation, including the recently passed ADA Amendments Act; disability etiquette and awareness; interacting and communicating with people with disabilities; recruiting, interviewing, hiring and retaining employees with disabilities; reasonable accommodation; supervising individuals with disabilities; and marketing to and serving customers with disabilities.

NBDC's newest groundbreaking service is the Emerging Leaders Summer Internship Program for College Students with disabilities (www.emerging-leaders.com) – a competitive initiative that places talented

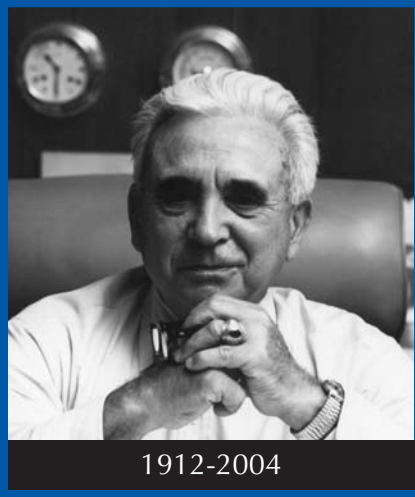


undergraduate and graduate students with disabilities in fulfilling paid internships with our nation's leading employers. Each year's class participates in a Leadership Development Conference where corporate partners provide valuable information and interns have an opportunity to acquire new skills that will enable them to succeed both in their internships and in their subsequent careers.

Emerging Leaders enjoys an excellent track record, with many internships converting to full-time employment post graduation.

History

Founded in 1952 by Henry Viscardi, Jr., Abilities! has evolved into one of the foremost facilities for educating and training people with disabilities.



1912-2004

The original incarnation of Abilities! was Abilities, Inc., which successfully demonstrated that people with disabilities could be productive contributors to society. Staffed primarily by World War II veterans with disabilities, Abilities, Inc. provided assembly and factory work for several

industry giants, such as Grumman, General Electric, IBM and the Department of Defense. In time, Dr. Viscardi added vocational training programs for adults with disabilities and a research department. These new programs eventually grew into the Edwin W. Martin Jr. Career and Employment Institute (CEI) and the Research and Training Institute (RTI). Then, in 1962, Dr. Viscardi founded the Human Resources School to give children with physical disabilities the opportunity to receive a quality education.

Upon Dr. Viscardi's retirement in 1981, Dr. Edwin W. Martin Jr., the former U.S. Assistant Secretary of Education, became the Center's new President and CEO. As he had done throughout his career, Dr. Martin introduced many new ideas at the Center to help people with disabilities achieve independence. Dr. Martin created the first adult education program which integrated physically challenged adults with non-disabled adults. He refocused the Center's employment programs on training and placing workers with disabilities in integrated settings. He also significantly expanded the reach and impact of the Center's Industry

Labor Council, created to help employers recruit and hire workers with disabilities. Dr. Martin was also responsible for the design and construction of a new school facility, which was renamed as the Henry Viscardi School. Shortly after that, the name of the Center was changed to the National Center for Disability Services (NCDS) to better reflect the scope of services provided.

Edmund L. Cortez succeeded Dr. Martin upon his retirement in September 1994. In 1996, the Center founded the Nathaniel H. Kornreich Technology Center to showcase state-of-the-art assistive technology while providing information demonstrations, technology evaluations, and training on assistive technology. In 1997, the Mary Jean and Frank P. Smeal Learning Center opened as a unique multi-media training facility that offers video and audio production and teleconferencing in an accessible training space. Also in 1997, the Center's Industry-Labor Council became the National Business & Disability Council (NBDC), which has become a leading national resource for the successful integration of persons with disabilities into the workforce and consumer marketplace. During this period, the Center's employment programs expanded significantly and were organized under a separate not-for-profit corporation, which took the name of the Center's original employment program, Abilities, Inc.

On December 8, 2004, the organization unveiled a new logo and brand name: Abilities! Our vision of the future involves the replication of our model programs across the country, and increased participation by the corporate community to help meet these goals.

Effective July 1, 2008, Abilities! entered into a partnership with Just One Break (JOB) that will broaden and enhance the services and programs of both organizations as well as extend our reach to disabled populations in the five boroughs of New York City. JOB was co-founded by Orin Lehman, Eleanor Roosevelt, Bernard Baruch, and Howard Rusk in 1947. At that time, the agency served veterans with disabilities who were ready to go back to work. JOB later expanded its mission to include all job seekers with disabilities, both visible and hidden.

For additional information, please call the Development Office at (516) 465-1464.



Abilities!

201 I.U. Willets Road
Albertson, New York 11507-1599

Phone: (516) 465-1400

Fax: (516) 465-1591

www.abilitiesonline.org

Letter from the Chairman

As the Chairman of Abilities!, I wanted to take the opportunity to express how much the Center means to me. Every time I visit, I find pride in listening to the success stories from the children and adults with disabilities that they serve.

I am honored to be part of an organization that for over fifty years has touched the lives of so many people. Whether it is through the unique Inclusive Technology program at the Henry Viscardi School or Abilities, Inc. adult programs that serve thousands of workers with disabilities, Abilities! continues to be in the forefront of initiating programs for both children and adults with disabilities, while serving as a model program that can be copied around the world.

I look forward to working more closely with Ed Cortez, the other members of the Board, and the staff of Abilities! toward our shared vision to create a world in which people with disabilities will live simply as people.

Ralph Palleschi

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Financial Statements

NATIONAL CENTER FOR DISABILITY SERVICES
(d/b/a ABILITIES!), ITS SUBSIDIARIES, ABILITIES, INC. and JUST ONE BREAK, INC.;
AND HENRY VISCARDI SCHOOL

Combined Statements of Financial Position

June 30, 2009 and 2008

Assets	2009	2008
Assets:		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 6,012,975	\$ 9,339,998
Investments	22,096,278	30,165,054
Receivables (less allowances of \$960,971 in 2009 and \$946,000 in 2008):		
Government agencies	1,666,574	1,192,405
Contributions and pledges	736,148	1,363,481
Other	100,340	920,067
Prepaid expenses and other assets	174,417	154,942
Beneficial interest in split-interest agreements	1,710,297	1,983,785
Property, plant, and equipment, net	<u>6,328,368</u>	<u>6,654,731</u>
Total assets	<u>\$ 38,825,397</u>	<u>\$ 51,774,463</u>
Liabilities and Net Assets		
Liabilities:		
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$ 1,929,976	\$ 1,959,000
Accrued payroll and employee benefits	5,728,684	5,376,705
Note payable	---	62,194
Asset retirement obligation	168,861	169,346
Deferred revenue	<u>151,425</u>	<u>3,377,991</u>
Total liabilities	<u>7,978,946</u>	<u>10,945,236</u>
Net assets:		
Unrestricted	19,978,708	27,365,377
Temporarily restricted	2,954,692	5,125,799
Permanently restricted	<u>7,913,051</u>	<u>8,338,051</u>
Total net assets	<u>30,846,451</u>	<u>40,829,227</u>
Total liabilities and net assets	<u>\$ 38,825,397</u>	<u>\$ 51,774,463</u>

Financial Statements

NATIONAL CENTER FOR DISABILITY SERVICES
(d/b/a ABILITIES!), ITS SUBSIDIARIES, ABILITIES, INC. AND
JUST ONE BREAK, INC. ; AND HENRY VISCARDI SCHOOL

Combined Statement of Financial Activities June 30, 2009

2009

	Unrestricted net assets	Temporarily restricted net assets	Permanently restricted net assets	Total net assets
Program activities:				
Program Support and revenue:				
New York State grants	\$ 14,404,110	—	—	14,404,110
Federal grants	919,459	—	—	919,459
NYS fees for programs for the disabled	2,120,051	—	—	2,120,051
Other fees for programs for the disabled	2,031,962	—	—	2,031,962
Miscellaneous	403,029	—	—	403,029
Net assets released from restriction for programs and related expenses	1,008,542	(1,008,542)	—	—
Total program support and revenue	<u>20,887,153</u>	<u>(1,008,542)</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>19,878,611</u>
Program expenses:				
Henry Viscardi School	14,807,699	—	—	14,807,699
Abilities, Inc.	6,057,403	—	—	6,057,403
National Business and Disability Council	569,363	—	—	569,363
Just One Break - Placement program	406,987	—	—	406,987
Research and Training Institute	467,757	—	—	467,757
Innovation and expansion	643,508	—	—	643,508
Total program expenses	<u>22,952,717</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>22,952,717</u>
Net program operating loss	<u>(2,065,564)</u>	<u>(1,008,542)</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>(3,074,106)</u>
Supporting and other activities:				
Supporting and other revenue:				
Contributions and pledges	1,529,424	448,409	—	1,977,833
Change in value of split interest agreements	—	(273,488)	—	(273,488)
Investment income, net	(5,607,947)	35,961	—	(5,571,986)
Net assets released from restriction for capital	744,210	(744,210)	—	—
Donor-designated reclassification of net assets	—	25,000	(25,000)	—
Total supporting and other revenue	<u>(3,334,313)</u>	<u>(508,328)</u>	<u>(25,000)</u>	<u>(3,867,641)</u>
Supporting and other expenses:				
Management and general	1,657,069	—	—	1,657,069
Fundraising and external relations	1,294,687	—	—	1,294,687
Total supporting and other expenses	<u>2,951,756</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>2,951,756</u>
Net supporting and other activities (deficit) surplus	<u>(6,286,069)</u>	<u>(508,328)</u>	<u>(25,000)</u>	<u>(6,819,397)</u>
(Decrease) increase in net assets before other changes	<u>(8,351,633)</u>	<u>(1,516,870)</u>	<u>(25,000)</u>	<u>(9,893,503)</u>
Other change:				
Pension-related changes other than net periodic pension cost	29,137	—	—	29,137
Extraordinary investment loss	(155,279)	(659,237)	(400,000)	(1,214,516)
Transfer of net assets - Just One Break, Inc.	1,091,106	5,000	—	1,096,106
(Decrease) increase in net assets	<u>(7,386,699)</u>	<u>(2,171,107)</u>	<u>(425,000)</u>	<u>(9,982,776)</u>
Net assets at beginning of year	<u>27,365,377</u>	<u>5,125,799</u>	<u>8,338,051</u>	<u>40,829,227</u>
Net assets at end of year	<u>\$ 19,978,708</u>	<u>2,954,692</u>	<u>7,913,051</u>	<u>30,846,451</u>

Dolan Rehabilitation Center

In 1991 the National Center for Disability Services received approval from the New York State Department of Health to establish an outpatient rehabilitation center at our Albertson headquarters. The 8,200 square foot facility was made possible by a generous grant from the Dolan Family Foundation.

Today, Abilities! works in partnership with St. Charles Hospital at the Dolan Outpatient Rehabilitation Center to provide numerous services including: physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, neuropsychological evaluations and counseling services.

“The staff at St. Charles is the very best at what they do and I would tell anyone to go there. They just don’t treat the pain, they treat the whole person.”

~St. Charles Rehabilitation Patient

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Abilities! - Fiscal Year 2008/2009

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