

Proactive Living Facility – Home for Adults with Autism

GRANT APPLICATION INFORMATION



MISSION AND VISION STATEMENT

The mission of Proactive Living Facility is to provide **licensed and quality housing, care, and services for adults with autism for generations to come. Our vision is to transform our society from one that warehouses its most vulnerable citizens in facilities that lack humane and adequate care into a society that cares for people with disabilities as valuable and contributing members of its social fabric, providing them safe, loving, and permanent homes for them to age with dignity.

Currently, we are in the second phase of our capital campaign in Ronan, Montana. Phase I of the project included the purchase of 11.5 acres of land. This was completed in July, 2018.

Phase II will be completed with the construction of a new four bedroom living center to serve adults with severe autism. This facility will be specifically designed and equipped to meet the needs of adults with severe autism in a comfortable and secure location, irrespective of race, religion or health condition.

Phase III of our project includes completing three additional homes on our property. These facilities would house a total of 16 adults with severe autism as well as employ 20 to 25 people. The impact in the State of Montana would be tremendous.

Included in each facility will be a commercial kitchen, four bedrooms with attached bathrooms, a dining area, an office, a classroom, and one very large recreation/education room. Services will include occupational and speech therapy, assisted communication services (including Proloquo2Go), day services, and transportation to appointments and outings within the community. We hope to offer four clients full-time living assistance.

With these homes we hope to become forerunners in facilities for adults with severe autism. Our pilot facility will be a collaboration of numerous entities working together for the good of adults with autism, ranging in age from 18 to 45, who are so difficult to place in a traditional group home setting.

To date, Proactive Living Facility has raised approximately \$\$\$\$\$\$ toward reaching our goal of \$\$\$\$\$\$ to build our first facility. Our goal for this project is to have our facility completed, mortgage free, by December 31, 2022. While this may seem like a lofty goal, we believe with the help of grants and donations, as well as local fundraisers, this vision will become a reality.

***We will work closely with the State of Montana's DPHHS Licensing Bureau (Julie Fink) to ensure that we build our facility to its exact standards as per the Administrative Rules of Montana. We are working closely currently with our city planner to ensure this process is followed as well. In order to be licensed, the facility must immediately be able to "provide or coordinate personal care; 24-hour supervision and assistance, both scheduled and unscheduled; and activities and health related services." Once retrofitted, we will apply for licensure.*

WHY IT MATTERS

Adults with developmental disabilities have aged out of care in the American school system and are completely reliant on their parents, who may no longer be able to care for them as they age, physically or financially. They then become wards of the state and are often shipped across state lines, hundreds or even thousands of miles from the only homes and communities they have ever known, to be warehoused in facilities that provide as little as a bed, water, basic medical care, and low-quality food until they die.

Currently, in the state of Montana alone, there are between 750 to 1,000 or more people (numbers through existing agencies have varied) on the waiting list to receive home placement in one of the 256

group homes. People with severe autism, we are finding, are often hard to place once they become adults due to their social disconnect and the inability to express themselves. We believe that even as adults, education and socialization amongst this group is invaluable.

Advancing Futures for Adults with Autism (afaa-us.org) shows devastating statistics for this population and the generations to come. During the past decade, the prevalence of autism has increased to 20 to 70 per 10,000 with the current rate estimated at 1 in every 68 children - 1 in 42 boys and 1 in 189 girls (Centers for Disease Control). In the next decade, about half a million children with autism will legally become adults. When they do, they will leave behind all of the programming and funding they received under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. When this happens, they will enter government services that vary greatly from state to state. According to statistics, less than 2% of all autism funding is directed towards adulthood and aging, even though the majority of a person's life with autism is spent in adulthood. Unfortunately, the need continues to far exceed the available resources, leaving a generation of people with autism and their families in a programmatic, financial, and personal limbo, and society-at-large economically diminished.

The potential of young adults and adults (14 years of age and older) with autism to become employed and engaged citizens of the U.S. is not so much limited by their disability itself but, rather, by the failures of the system charged with supporting them. We need to consolidate and focus our efforts to develop and drive the agenda for lifelong living and learning with autism. We cannot afford 10 to 15 years to get clarity and take meaningful action on this challenge. This agenda needs to be accelerated into a tidal wave that represents real change in the quality of life for adults with autism.

Those with particularly severe disabilities remind us of what it means to be fully human, to be loved and accepted just as we are, regardless of what we can and cannot do for ourselves or others. How we treat the most vulnerable people within our communities is a powerful tool with which to measure the health and humanness of our society. We must do better.

BACKGROUND AND HISTORY OF ORGANIZATION

Proactive Living Facility Home for Adults with Autism is a registered 501(c)3 non-profit organization that was started by a group of concerned parents in 2018.

As parents of adult children with severe autism, we are intimately familiar with the challenges of finding and establishing a caring, safe, and permanent home for our children to age with dignity. We know the kind of day-to-day care necessary to provide a safe, loving, and permanent home for adults with developmental disabilities. Like all parents, we want to know that our children are safe and cared for with dignity, even after we are gone.

A Native-led organization, we are located in Ronan, Montana on the Flathead Indian Reservation, home to the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes.

DIVERSITY & DEMOGRAPHICS

Proactive Living Facility is committed to serving adults with severe autism in the state of Montana that are currently hard to place in traditional residential settings. We serve clients irrespective of race, religion, health condition, etc.

Because our facility is located on the Flathead Indian Reservation, home to the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, we are committing thirty percent of our beds and services to applicants from the 12 tribal nations that are federally recognized in Montana: Assiniboine, Blackfeet, Chippewa, Cree, Crow, Gros Ventre, Kootenai, Little Shell Chippewa, Northern Cheyenne, Pend d'Oreille, Salish, and Sioux.

A Native-led organization, four out of our nine board members are enrolled members of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes. In addition, two thirds of our board members are women.