



# Each Other.

2021 Report to the Community



**DAMAR**

Remarkable people. Remarkable results.



# Love Each Other.

*Powerful words put into action...*



A couple of years ago, when Damar began its association with Indiana University Football Coach Tom Allen, we knew he would bring increased visibility to the people we serve and the work that we do. We knew that his character and passion would reflect well on Damar. And we knew that his guiding principle – Love Each Other, or “LEO” – would align well our mission.

What we didn’t fully comprehend is just how powerful a force LEO would become within the Damar community. It has inspired our team and our clients, not by bringing something new to Damar but by simply and vividly embodying the principle we strive to put into action every day.

I believe that process of putting love into action makes the difference. Everyone can agree that the concept, feeling and emotion of love are important, but what really matters to other people is seeing love put into tangible, observable action.

That’s what I see constantly at Damar. I see it in a direct care professional patiently guiding a client to a new achievement. I see it in one client high-fiving another. I see it in a team member stopping to help another with a task. I see it in a board that encourages new programs and services. I see it in a holiday light show offered free to an appreciated, supportive community. I see it in a contractor working to ensure a family gets the best possible outcome for a child.

You’ll see that kind of love put into action in the stories you’ll read in this report. From a Damar Village resident who has held the same job for 25 years, to a man who opened his heart and home to a “Child of the Dumping Ground,” to a Damar staffer for whom “Love Each Other” might as well be her job description – and others – you’ll see what happens when tangible love creates ripples that improve the lives of all who experience them.

You’ll also see that love-into-action focus in the strategic plan that officially launched on Jan. 1. The plan is built on three pillars:

### **Preserving and Maintaining**

One of the ways we demonstrate our love for our clients is by making sure that the services they rely on will always be there. Even as we grow and innovate, we must maintain what the community and our clients have come to expect from us.

### **Building and Creating**

Why does Damar continue to build and create? Because of the love we have for a certain population that needs and deserves our love. We must always seek to deliver our services in the best way to the most people possible.

## People

Of course, ensuring we can Preserve and Maintain as well as Build and Create requires that we have the right people on the Damar team, but it also requires caring for those people. We will only succeed if they know that we love them, that we want to help them grow and prosper, and that we care about their futures.

Fortunately, those pillars will stand on a foundation built over a half century and on a culture that, no matter how big the organization gets, makes each human interaction feel focused and personal. Whether we've engaged with one kid, one adult or one family, that kid, adult or family will, in that moment, feel love and see it put into action.

With a vision that will push us into new areas and new opportunities, this new strategic plan aims to show more people in more places what it looks like when Damar's love is put into action.

In that ambition, this plan will be driven forward by people like you ... people who, by showing love to the people and families we serve, show love to the Damar team and to the community around us all. In that way, you help us all recognize what can happen when we, truly, love each other. For that, we are grateful.



Dr. Jim Dalton, Psy.D, HSPP, CSAYC  
President and CEO

## About Damar

For more than 50 years, Damar Services has helped children and adults challenged by autism and intellectual, developmental and behavioral disabilities live more successful lives. From its main campus on Indianapolis' southwest side, four ABA (Applied Behavioral Analysis) clinics and other locations across the state, Damar offers a full continuum of services for individuals of all ages, including residential and community-based treatment and therapeutic services, outpatient behavioral health services, public and private schools, and foster care services.

**Damar builds better futures for children and adults facing life's greatest developmental and behavioral challenges.**





# Love Endures...

When a Burger King on Indianapolis' southwest side hired Robert Burcham to cook, clean and do whatever else needed to be done, it's likely the restaurant hoped to hang on to this worker for a year or two. After all, in the fast food industry, that would be a long tenure.

In 2021, Burger King celebrated Robert's 25th work anniversary, honoring him not simply for staying around that long, but for being an employee his managers can count on to be on time, work hard and get the job done ... even though that routinely means getting out of bed at 4 a.m.

In turn, Robert says he can count on those managers to help him succeed. "I've got a lot of people at work who watch out for me," he says.

As remarkable as Robert's tenure with Burger King might be, it runs a distant second to the time he has been with Damar. The 52-year-old arrived at Damar when he was 10 years old, initially living on campus and eventually moving into group homes. He recently became one of the first residents of Damar Village, Damar's housing community created for adults with disabilities.

Sharing a tidy four-bedroom home with his longtime caregiver, Marty Lindgren, and her stepdaughter, Joyce, Robert is eager to show a visitor the room housing his train set and various collections, including replicas of cruise ships on which he has sailed. The Lindgrens are prolific travelers who take Robert on trips across the U.S. and beyond. They also accompany him to concerts and movies, take him around town for activities, and more. To say he lives a full life would be an understatement.

"Robert's life wouldn't be anything like it is without Joyce and Marty," says Damar Therapist Michelle Woods, who has worked with Robert for about eight years. "He's a part of their clan."

That's a "clan" that, like the people at Burger King and Damar, probably had no idea how long this guy would be in their lives when they first met him, but that now can't imagine life without him.



**February 2021**

Damar opened the autism unit at the Neuro-Diagnostic Institute



**May 2021**

Damar installs sensory wall at Victory Field



# Love Engages...

As Damar's Director of Customer Engagement, Vickye Gerlitz has an official job description that lists a number of responsibilities and duties, but, really, it could be summed up in three words: Show the love.

It's a Damar job for which Vickye is well suited.

For one thing, Vickye knows about everything there is to know about Damar. After all, she's worked at Damar for more than 30 years, serving in a number of roles, from direct care staff to human resources, and she's always ready to jump in wherever and whenever needed.

But Vickye also is one of those people who can light up any room. "I always call her 'Fun Girl,'" says Chief Executive Assistant Katie McCoy. It's a description that has been particularly fitting more recently, as Vickye's job has included celebrating staff members on their birthdays and "Damarversaries," and finding other ways to make the Damar team feel engaged and appreciated.

"I get to do my favorite things," Vickye says with a laugh, "which is interact with people, plan parties and buy things with somebody else's money."

For someone who so enjoys being with people, the pandemic has been hard on Vickye, but she's found ways to continue to make people feel appreciated by reaching out with text messages, sending surprises to people's homes, and so on. As simple as those actions might seem, she feels they support Damar's mission because they encourage the people who make that mission happen. "If our staff aren't engaged, they aren't going to be happy, and if they aren't happy they're not going to do a good job for the people we serve," she says.

On the other hand, when Damar's people are happy and engaged, Vickye says, they shower their clients with the thing they need most: love. "The right kind of person for Damar is truly someone who is capable of loving," she says. "Supportive. Passionate. Caring."

In other words, someone like Vickye.



**June 2021**  
Damar Cup Golf Outing

**July 2021**  
\$21 Million Our Road  
to Remarkable Campaign  
for Damar ends

# Love Beats the Odds...

The community beyond Damar got to know Justin Woodrum in late 2014, when the documentary *Children of the Dumping Ground* premiered.

Telling the story of Justin's incarceration at Pendleton Juvenile Correctional Facility, where he had been sent at age 14 for a crime he didn't understand, the film explained that Justin had been abandoned to the justice system with no family to fight for him, protect him and love him. His story seemed destined for a tragic ending.

But it didn't turn out that way, largely because Mel Osborne stepped up to be the loving family Justin never had.

A member of Damar's direct care staff when Justin first came to Damar from Pendleton, Mel quickly formed a connection with the energetic, blond teenager. With Mel around, notes Damar Vice President of Residential Services Sam Moya, Justin's behaviors were better. He was less apprehensive. He was happier.

Mel enjoyed that connection, too. So, he transferred with Justin when he was moved to a group home from Damar's residential campus, and when a promotion took Mel out of direct contact with Justin, Mel signed on as a volunteer mentor. Even when Mel took a job in

Florida for a while, he talked to Justin almost daily, and flew back to visit him every few months. Upon Mel's return to Indiana, the pair picked up where they left off, and when Justin was ready to leave the group home, Mel was there to give him a new home.

Two years ago, Mel made their bond official by undertaking an adult adoption of Justin, who is now 26 years old. "So he can have a family," Mel says simply. In November, when Mel and Justin were honored at Damar's Difference Maker Awards Breakfast, Mel told the attendees, "He is my world." And when it was time to receive their award, Justin beamed broadly, no doubt delighted to be standing with the family that fights for him, protects him and, most of all, loves him.





### August 2021

Damar hosts the first ever Sensory Day at the Indiana State Fair



The Damar Village opens and welcomes first residents



# Love Teaches...

“I fell in love with the kids.”

That’s how Jason Roney explains the 16 years he’s spent with Damar, and the more than 10 of those years he’s spent with the education mentor program, which he manages. “I love showing them somebody cares about them.”

As much as the mentoring program is about helping students with developmental disabilities control their behaviors so they can succeed in the classroom, it often seems to boil down to letting them know someone’s got their backs, Jason says. Many kids in Damar’s mentoring program don’t get that kind of one-on-one support anywhere else in their lives, he says.

Randy Glenn agrees. As IPS’s Intervention Supports Coordinator, he has seen firsthand the impact Damar mentors can have. And as a former one-on-one mentor himself, he understands what it takes to provide that kind of support to students whose behaviors can be difficult and who often seem to not want a mentor’s help.

“A mentor has to be resilient,” Randy says, adding that he has seen that quality again and again in Jason’s team. Even when

a child’s behaviors are at their most difficult, and even when a particular mentor-student match doesn’t work out, Damar never throws in the towel. “What I love is that that doesn’t present a problem,” Glenn says. “There’s no giving up.”

But there is often going above-and-beyond. Jason says mentors have been known to spend extra time with the kids, send food home with them if necessary, help them get needed clothes ... whatever it takes to turn things around.

The results speak for themselves. Both Jason and Randy share stories of students who seemed to be on the road to failure but who, with the help of a mentor, found a new path. And Jason described a similar revelation that occurs for people who join his team simply for the sake of a job but who, in short order, find themselves emotionally invested in the process of helping a child overcome great challenges.

“Once they get in the door and they start building bonds and relationships with these students, it happens,” he says.

What happens? Like Jason, they fall in love with those kids. And that makes all the difference.



**September 2021**  
 Damar honors donors  
 at the inaugural Blue  
 & Gold Reception

**November 2021**  
 Difference Maker's  
 Breakfast returns



# Love Reaches Out...

As they enter Victory Field through the gate in centerfield, fans quickly find themselves in front of a brightly colored wall with squares of varying textures. Big letters invite fans to touch the wall, and additional type explains that this “sensory wall” is there for the benefit of young fans with special needs who might find the wall comforting if they feel anxious or overstimulated at the ballpark.

“We always strive to make Victory Field welcoming to all, and are always looking for ways to improve on the experience for all of our fans,” says Joel Zawacki, the Indians’ assistant general manager for corporate sales and marketing.

In addition to collaborating with Damar to install the sensory wall, the Indians worked with Damar and KultureCity to offer sensory bags equipped with noise-canceling headphones, fidget tools, weighted lap pads and more. The team also provided all of its employees with training on how to recognize and welcome fans with sensory needs, and how to respond when a fan suffers from sensory overload.

“Everybody bought in to how they could, as employees of the Indians, make the guest experience more welcoming for all,” Zawacki says.

That mindset is not unique to the Indians. Fans also find accommodations when the Indianapolis Colts play at Lucas Oil Stadium, when the Pacers, Fever or other teams suit up at Gainbridge Fieldhouse, and when the Indy Fuel take the ice at Indiana Farmers Coliseum.

And the fans seem to appreciate it. “Just walking around the ballpark during games, you see a lot of kids interacting with the piece,” Zawacki says. “But it’s not only there for those with sensory needs. It’s also there as sort of an education piece on recognizing that there are people out there with special sensory needs.”

In that way, the Indians and Indy’s other sports teams not only share the love, but extend it well beyond the walls of a ballpark, stadium or fieldhouse.



JOIN US IN CREATING A SENSORY FRIENDLY COMMUNITY.

[damar.org/indians](https://damar.org/indians)

SENSORY BAGS ARE NOW AVAILABLE AT GUEST SERVICES!

Can't touch

What is a sensory

Kids with autism and other disabilities experience things differently. They need help relaxing in stressful situations. This sensory wall helps engage children and encourage relaxation.



**December 2021**

Damar Holiday Village Winter Light Show hosted by Damar Village

Damar elves shop and wrap gifts for 200 children in residential treatment



## DAMAR SERVICES BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

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# Financial Summary:

*Revenue & Expenses for Damar Services, Inc.,  
Damar Subsidiaries & Damar Foundation, Inc.*

**2021 Total Assets: \$114,547,308**

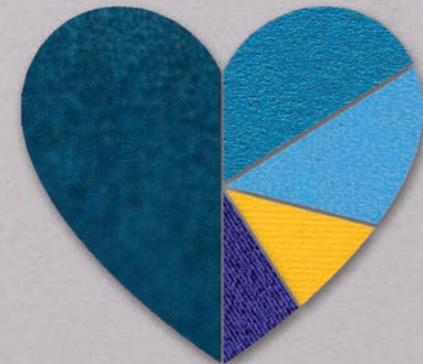
**Revenue: \$93,338,208**

### Sources:

■ Department of Child Services:	44%
■ Medicaid:	17%
■ State Departments of Education:	12%
■ Other Revenue:	10%
■ Commercial/Private Insurance:	9%
■ Investments/Philanthropy:	8%

### Expenses:

■ Residential Treatment Services:	50%
■ Community Living Supports:	16%
■ Clinical and Medical Services:	13%
■ ABA Services:	12%
■ Administration and Fundraising:	9%



Financial responsibility and stewardship is an important role of the Damar Board of Directors and management team in ensuring the financial stability and health of Damar for future generations of families in need. This summary represents Damar's financial revenue and expenditures from July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021. The financial statements of Damar Services, Inc. are audited annually by an independent firm and receive unqualified opinions on a regular basis. Audited financial statements are available upon request. Expenses are shown as a percent of the agency's functional expense allocation.

Thanks to those who showed their love to Damar through a gift this year.



While Damar's services and programs are varied and complex, the goal is simple: to help people achieve their highest levels of self-sufficiency and personal dignity. Our philanthropic giving programs were created to support this goal on a consistent and on-going basis. In 2021, we successfully closed out Our Road to Remarkable \$21 campaign for Damar. For a complete listing of our donors, please visit [damar.org/donors](https://damar.org/donors).

*Damar wishes to thank Hylant and the Hylant Family Foundation for their multi-year generous donation to Our Road to Remarkable campaign.*

**HYLANT**

## The President's Circle

As Damar relies more heavily on philanthropy, one group of donors can be relied on to provide a steady and sturdy foundation for all that Damar does: The President's Circle. These donors of \$1,000 or more a year to Damar give its clients the services and support they need to lead more successful, independent lives.

Our four levels of giving:

- **Circle of Visionaries** - for donors of \$10,000 or more
- **Circle of Benefactors** - for donors of \$5,000 - \$9,999
- **Circle of Advocates** - for donors of \$2,500 - \$4,999
- **Circle of Stewards** - for donors of \$1,000 - \$2,499

## **Visionaries**

\$10,000+

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Bruce & Cindy Agan

Allen Whitehill Clowes Charitable  
Foundation, Inc.

Anonymous

Ralph & Jodie Balber

Brugh Family Foundation

Kurt & Jessica Cohen

Dr. Jim & Jodi Dalton

Scott & Lorraine Davison

Happy & Rosy Dhani

Froderman Foundation

The Glick Fund, a Fund of CICF

William & Michelle Grube

John & Jes Hagale

Hylant

Indianapolis Colts

Frank & Lindsay Knez

Robert Kort & Family

Stephen & Susan Kraabel

Janie Latham

Lilly Endowment Inc.

Meridian Health Services

The OneAmerica Foundation

Pharmanek Pharmacy Services

P.I.P.E., Inc.

PNC Foundation

Gail Shiel-Mahoney

Sunbelt Rentals

Rick & Mary Pat Torbeck

Joe & Nancy Tynan

Mike & Nancy Tynan

Patrick Tynan

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## **Benefactors**

\$5,000-\$9,999

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Dr. John Abrams

The Benevity Community Impact  
Fund

Carniceria Guanajuato

Philip & Andra Cochran

Shawn & Ellen Collinsworth

Damar Guild, Inc.

Delta Dental Indiana

El Paisano Warehouse, LLC

Elements Financial

Eli Lilly & Company Foundation

Kenneth File & Lynn Severine

Frontstream

Jeff & Tracy Hadden

Holladay Construction Group

Indiana Department of Homeland  
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Indiana Sports Corporation

Johnson, Grossnickle & Associates

Gregg Keele

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Jordan Maitland

Donald & Kathryn McCoy

Donnie & Kristin McCoy

Tom & Kathy Mosbaugh

Phil & Peggy Nolting

Joe Robinson

Runnebohm Construction, Inc.

Tynan Equipment Company

United Way of Central Indiana

Chris & Stacey Wilkes

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## **Advocates**

\$2,500-\$4,999

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Barnes & Thornburg

Carla & Brian Bill

BKD, LLP

Anne & Jim Calvert

Robert & Cynthia Chapek

Choice Mechanical

DEEM Mechanical

Delta Dental Foundation

Hendricks Regional Health

Holladay Properties

Kids Count Therapy, LLC

Brad & Stephanie Linville

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Perry & Denise Lyons

Jennifer Maggard

MJ Insurance

Olson Law Office, LLC

Pacers Sports and Entertainment

Priscilla Anderson Ferland

Resultant

Sharp Business Systems

Jessica A. Smiley

Stark Leasing Company

Theoris, Inc.

Tom & Kathy Torbeck

Walmart Foundation

C. Mark Wetzel

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### Stewards

\$1,000-\$2,499

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Carlos & Dorothy Alexander

Bailey Trucking, Inc.

Glenda Butler

CCK Investors, LLC

Robert Chinsky

Brent & Sarah Ducker

Tammy & Craig Duncan

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F.C. Tucker Company, Inc.

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Trenton & Madeline Gill

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Lisa Grimes & Mohammad Loh

Daniel & Pamela Hann

Indianapolis Floor Coatings

Indy West Embroidery

Jim Irsay

Tim Irwin

Jim & Janie Isch

Katelyn's Fund Orphan Ministry Inc.

Jay & Carole Kirkpatrick

Kort Builders, Inc.

Audrey Kuhlenschmidt

Debi & Michael Ladyman

Learfield Communications

Lifeline Data Centers

Link Federal Credit Union

Mary E. Van Drew Charitable

Foundation, Inc.

Joe & Michele Marxer

Mike & Cathy Miller

Joseph & Janet Mitchell

Danny & Rita O'Malia

Oliver-Hoffmann Foundation

Shirley Overton

Jae Park

Victor & Girtha Perkins

Brian & Jenny Peters-Reece

PFM Car & Truck Care Center

PNC Bank

Prolific, LLC

Randle Family Foundation, Inc.

Real Time Furniture LLC

Resultant

Randy & Susan Ruhl

Mike Runnebohm

Elaine Showalter

St. Roch Catholic Church

Donna & Dan Stutler

Superior Carpet Installers, Inc.

John & Jen Thomas

Travelers Insurance

Jason Ulm

Vaco Indianapolis

John Walker

Jack & Carolyn Ward

Marlene Withrow

Annamaria Zimmermann

Zink Distributing





### Donors of Note:

Damar's annual report theme is inspired by our partnership with IU Football Coach **Tom Allen**. His LEO (Love Each Other) message is one that resonates with our entire population – from our youngest clients to our oldest staff. This year, Coach Allen took an extra step for Damar when he allowed Damar to be the beneficiary of all of his Cameo appearances. Cameo is an online platform that allows fans to get personalized videos from their idols. Visit [www.cameo.com/coachalleni](http://www.cameo.com/coachalleni) to order your customized video.

**Dr. John Abrams** had a love for Damar imprinted on his heart by his father, Dr. JJ Abrams. The senior Dr. Abrams was an optometrist and donated his time to Damar for years by offering eye exams to clients. After his passing, the younger Dr. Abrams donated the equipment to Damar to have an entire eye exam suite in our healthcare building. Dr. Abrams will not pick up where his father left off...creating a unique vision for what a loving donor can provide.

*My father, Dr. JJ Abrams, was dedicated to improving the eye care of the west side of Indianapolis since 1950. He gave years of service to the residents of Damar through vision screenings on campus and complete eye examinations in his private optometry office. He had a special place in his heart for the individuals with special needs that were served by Damar. The "Abrams Eye Examination Suite" will allow complete eye examinations on campus at the Damar Health Center. It is Abrams EyeCare Associates' continuing the philanthropy and commitment of Dr. JJ Abrams and my personal memorial tribute to my father for his years of dedicated services to the Damar clients. May his memory be a blessing to all he touched during his 93 years.*

— Dr. John Abrams







Remarkable people. Remarkable results.

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