



The Learning Center

KEYS TO INDEPENDENCE:

A Housing Community for our Community's Adults with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

Dear Friends:

Thank you for your interest in the Keys to Independence Capital Campaign. The Learning Center is confronting the most urgent challenge in our community: a critical shortage of accessible, safe and supportive housing for adults with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD).

What is IDD? Adults with IDD can have many different medical conditions, including cerebral palsy, spina bifida, Down syndrome, autism, genetic disorders and speech-related challenges.

Housing options for adults with IDD are alarmingly limited:

- Some facilities are located in our community's low income neighborhoods, which may not be safe. Adults with IDD are oftentimes victims of crime since they are trusting people.
- Some adults must live in low income Section 8 Housing - a necessity if they work minimum wage jobs or receive governmental assistance.
- Some adults sadly have to reside in assisted living facilities or nursing homes; many of these facilities are also located in our low income neighborhoods.

Instead of fostering independence, these settings often take it away - leaving adults with IDD isolated.



We know they deserve better! We are building a “cradle to adulthood” campus at TLC on our 6+ acres. Through this campaign, we are building 20 safe, affordable apartments. With support services available, residents will have the security they need, while still experiencing the dignity of independence. Parents — many nearing retirement — will finally have peace of mind knowing their loved one has a safe, stable future.

Thank you for your consideration of support. Our residents thank you!



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lynn Cooper".

Lynn Cooper
Executive Director

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE:

Nicole Townsend, Slayton Family Foundation

Shelby Knight, The Center for Exceptional Families

Brad Faught, Jonesboro Public Schools

Heather Walker-Clark, Partners in Grants Solutions

Danny Graham, DNG Seed, LLC.

Alan Preston, Edward Jones

Susan Smith, TLC Board member

Holly Mitchell, Cornerstone Credit Union League

Susan Mattix, Mattix Building Design

Brian Emison, First Community Bank & Jonesboro City Council

UNLOCKING INDEPENDENCE

Why This Campaign is Critical in Jonesboro



Arkansas has one of the highest percentages in the U.S. of adults with IDD living in large, state-run institutions.



More than 847,000 adults in Arkansas live with a disability – that's over one in three of our neighbors.

77%

77% of adult Arkansans with an IDD who need housing are currently waiting for services.

16%

Nearly 16% of those receiving residential services are institutionalized, while many more live in group settings with 16 or more people.



There are no other comparable housing units in Jonesboro, and we are the 5th largest city in the state.

1 in 31

Autism prevalence in the U.S. has risen to a record high of 1 in 31 children (3.2%) – representing a ~300% increase over the past two decades. Sadly, we predict we will continue to serve more and more individuals given these statistics.

WE CURRENTLY SERVE:

- 150** Preschool children, infants, and toddlers
- 130** Outpatient Therapy children
- 50** Adult Day Program participants
- 10** Adults in our Residential Center
- 53** Students enrolled in The Academy of TLC



THE STORY OF THE LEARNING CENTER

Our Mission: Provide lifelong support, therapeutic services, education, and housing opportunities to help every individual reach their fullest potential.

Our story started in 1959, when a group of determined parents, including Dr. John T. Gray, came together with a shared dream. They wanted opportunities for their children with disabilities that did not yet exist – opportunities for growth, for education, and for a life beyond limitations.

In 1990, we officially became The Learning Center of Northeast Arkansas (TLC) - a name that reflects both our mission and our heart.

We continue to expand and evolve to meet the specific treatment needs of our community through the following programming:

Outpatient Therapy Center: The Center provides access to essential occupational therapy, physical therapy or speech therapy for children in our region.

David Puryear Center: The Center offers residential care to 10 adults with IDD who require 24/7 supervision.

The Academy of TLC: The Academy is a private school dedicated to providing specialized education and therapies for children with autism. Last year, we added 4 additional classrooms to service additional middle school students. We also expanded to 6th grade which increased to 7 total number of classrooms.

Diagnostic and Resource Center: The Center serves children ages 2-18 and provides comprehensive psychological evaluations for medical conditions like autism, ADHD, ODD, dyslexia, or intellectual disabilities. We have tested hundreds of children over the past 4 years and have a 18 month waiting list for testing.

TLC Preschool: Our Preschool is an early intervention day treatment program for infants and children with developmental disabilities. We are the only EIDT provider in Jonesboro providing ABA services to children with autism. These services help our children learn social skills, communication and daily living abilities.

Recreational Gym: This year, we are constructing a new recreational gym for additional indoor activity space.

OUR VISION

KEYS TO INDEPENDENCE FOR 20 LIVES



Phase I: 2026-2027

We are launching a \$6M capital campaign to fund the construction of 20 apartments for adults with IDD. These homes will be designed for accessibility and connected to supports such as Medicaid Waiver services, where our residents can be supported, yet live independently. The goal is for the entire campus to feel like a small, supportive neighborhood - not an institution.



Phase I Highlights



Apartments will be designed to feel warm, welcoming, and truly “home-like.” Natural materials, clean lines and soft exterior colors will create a calm, dignified atmosphere, unlike institutional settings.



Each unit will include a full kitchen and in-unit washer and dryer so residents can live independently.



Every apartment will feature a front porch, a necessity to creating a community.

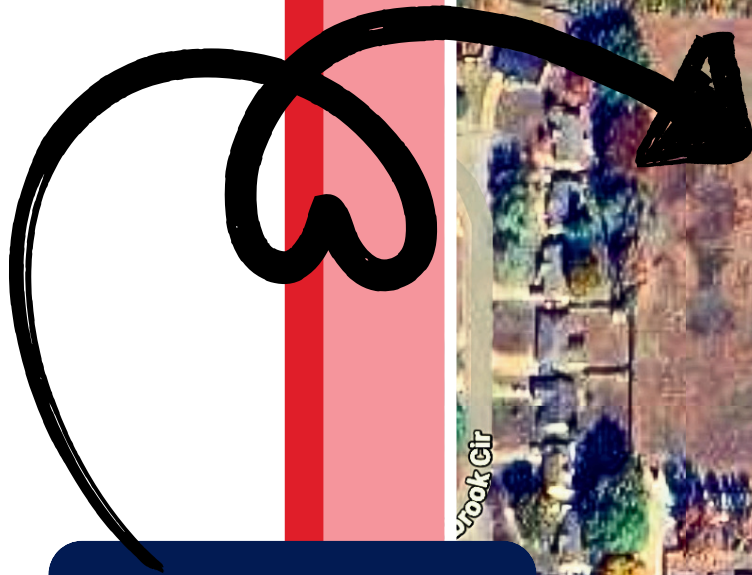


Landscaped pathways will connect the buildings with wide sidewalks, green spaces and outdoor seating that encourage social interaction.



Phase II: 2027-2028

After the housing units are completed, Phase II will complete the Residential Campus by adding the programming, workforce development, and outdoor amenities.



**TLC
RESIDENTIAL
CAMPUS**



Phase II Highlights



Greenhouse:

A greenhouse will teach horticulture and micro-enterprise skills, allowing residents to grow ornamental and vegetable plants that can be sold to the public.



Pavilion:

The pavilion will provide space for gatherings, meals, and family events, which are essential for community-building.



Basketball court and outdoor recreation area:

These spaces will encourage socialization, community life and healthy daily habits, making the campus a vibrant place to live. Regular movement supports cardiovascular health, flexibility, and overall wellness - especially important for adults with IDD, who are often at higher risk for sedentary lifestyles.



PHASE I & II GOALS



Provide safe, semi-independent housing options for adults with IDD.



Build daily living and vocational skills that support long-term independence.



Increase community integration, employment opportunities, and social participation.



Enhance overall quality of life through person-centered support and meaningful daily activities.



Reduce long-term reliance on high-cost care by fostering independence and stability.



Strengthen families' confidence in their loved ones' long-term future.



Demonstrate a best-practice model for IDD residential support that benefits the broader NE Arkansas community.



HOW YOU CAN HELP

We invite our community members, businesses and philanthropic partners to join us in making this vision a reality for our community.

Your financial support will directly contribute to:

- Construction and infrastructure;
- Furnishings and adaptive equipment;
- Land preparation including landscaping and outdoor spaces; and
- Every dollar raised brings us one step closer to providing safe, empowering homes for 20 deserving individuals from our community.

By investing in this project you are funding futures:

- For individuals with IDD – this project creates dignity, independence and the chance to live life to the fullest.
- For families – it offers peace of mind and answers the question, “What will happen when I can no longer provide care?”
- For the community – it ensures Northeast Arkansas becomes a leader in inclusion, building a stronger, more compassionate region where everyone has a place to call home.
- For donors – it is an opportunity to make a tangible, lasting impact, leaving a legacy of independence that will benefit generations to come.

This investment delivers more than housing - it creates pathways to independence, strengthens families and builds a community where every individual can contribute and thrive.

For more information or to make a donation, please contact:

Dr. Lynn Cooper
Executive Director, The Learning Center of NEA, Inc.
lcooper@tlcnea.com
870-666-5155 Ext. 0108





TLC
The Learning Center

2808 Fox Meadow Ln, Jonesboro, AR 72404
(870) 666-5155 | www.tlcnea.com