NILP

Peer2Peer Resources for People with Disabilities

NORTHEAST INDEPENDENT LIVING PROGRAM INC.

2026 ANNUAL REPORT

FY JULY 1, 2025-JUNE 30, 2026





Independence Through Connection

COMMUNITY	CHOICE	VOICE	INDEPENDENCE
We belong	We decide	We speak up	We thrive

Programs & Services

A one-stop resource for people of all ages and all abilities

As a Center for Independent Living, we connect you with resources and services to live a healthy, independent, and confident life in the setting of your choice. Over 50% of our staff self-identify as a person with a disability, providing you with unmatched Peer Support. We are a community of peers working together to help you achieve your goals!



OPTIONS COUNSELING

Get short-term guidance to explore community-based services and resources you may qualify for.



PERSONAL CARE ASSISTANCE

We help you live independently at home with a Personal Care Attendant (PCA). You'll learn to manage your program with support from our Skills Trainers.



YOUTH SERVICES

For ages 14–22, we teach independent living skills like budgeting, cooking, work readiness, and socialization— offered in school, after-school, and during breaks.



COMMUNITY SUPPORTS

We assist with accessing benefits like health insurance, transportation, social security, housing, home modifications, and more.



TRANSITION TO THE COMMUNITY

We help individuals in nursing homes, hospitals, or care facilities return to living independently in the community.



NORTHEAST RECOVERY LEARNING COMMUNITY

Peer-led recovery support for those facing mental health challenges, trauma, or addiction. Includes 1:1 support, group sessions, social events, and training.



OLDER ADULT PEER SUPPORT

Specialized peer support for adults 55+, focused on reducing isolation through connection and community engagement.



VETERAN-DIRECTED CARE

Provides Veterans the opportunity to receive the Home and Community Based Services in a consumer-directed way to meet their needs and remain in their home.



LTSS COORDINATION

Care Coordination for individuals eligible for both Medicare and Medicaid, connecting them with resources and services in their community.



Mission

The Northeast Independent Living Program, Inc. is a consumer- controlled Center for Independent Living providing advocacy and services to people with all disabilities who wish to live independently in the community.

Philosophy

Independent Living philosophy states that individuals with disabilities are the best determinants of their own needs and service choices.

Through role modeling and peer counseling, with other individuals with disabilities, they become empowered to make changes in their lives and become more self-sufficient and self-reliant.

Vision

Northeast Independent Living Program is known throughout the state for helping individuals regain and retain their independence and equality in the community through Information & Referral, Advocacy, Skills Training, Peer Counseling and Transitions.

We are a community of people who open doors to create an all-inclusive community free of communication, attitudinal, economic and architectural barriers for all people with disabilities.





Dear Consumers and Friends,

Our theme this year is Independence through Connection, reflecting the important role that connection plays in helping people with disabilities live independently and participate fully in their communities. Over the past year, NILP has worked to strengthen connections with community partners, expand our reach, and create new opportunities for the consumers we serve.

Molina Healthcare helped our Youth Services Program to establish a pilot program serving young adults through a combination of Independent Living and employment preparation services. This partnership allows NILP to help fill a gap that can exist as young people transition from youth services into adulthood.

Commonwealth Care Alliance also partnered with NILP through a community benefits grant to provide peer support for older adults experiencing aging and behavioral health challenges at supported housing sites in Charlestown and Chelsea.

Along with these new partnerships, NILP is proud to continue our longstanding relationships with MassAbility and MassHealth after being selected to continue providing many of our core programs. Through these programs, we help consumers learn to independently manage their personal care attendants, support people transitioning from institutional settings back into the community, and prepare youth with disabilities as they transition into adulthood and pursue employment.

Connection to the community, connection to resources, and connection to one another — this is how we promote independence.

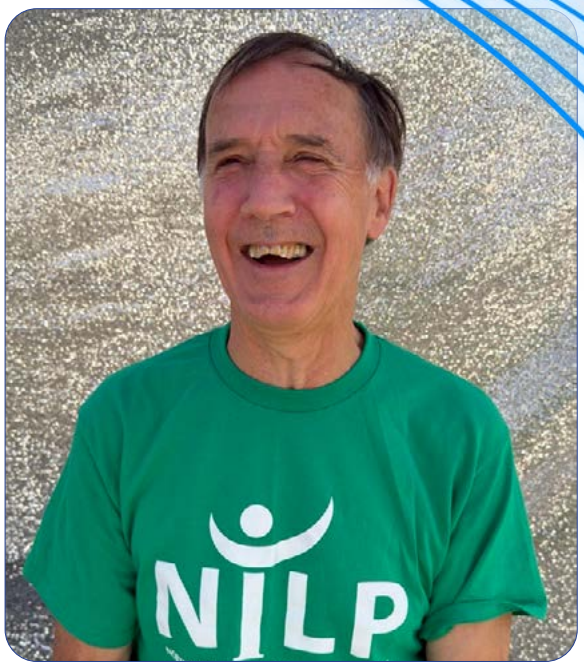
With Gratitude,

Matt Pellegrino
Executive Director

They have helped me navigate my medical issues. They have been pro-active when my condition has changed, in getting me seen by providers and referrals in a timely manner.

- NILP Consumer

Letter from Board President



Dear NILP Participants and Friends,

Last October, we celebrated the 45th anniversary of NILP. This year, we embark upon the next exciting forty-five years. It has been my great honor to have been involved with NILP in several different capacities almost from its beginning. I have seen NILP grow from a staff of four to almost one hundred and from a budget of a couple hundred thousand dollars to more than seven million. Today, NILP serves thousands of people with disabilities through an expanding range of programs, services, and efforts.

Among the issues that the Board followed closely over this past year, two stand out. Last fall, NILP submitted a proposal to MassHealth to continue its PCA program. Approval was necessary for NILP to continue this critical service for thousands of participants. Our proposal was approved, and our PCA services will continue uninterrupted.

Another major agenda item was updating computer equipment and software for staff. This important investment keeps network access and documentation systems current and efficient. Priority attention has also been given to system security, protecting the confidentiality of participant information and the agency against growing cyber threats.

The Board has continued to follow the progress and success of NILP's many programs and services. NILP's continued growth is made possible by the dedicated, passionate staff who give their all for the people they serve. We see this commitment when staff visit our Board meetings, speak about their work, and share the stories of those they support. We are also fortunate to have a superb management team of senior directors and program managers led by Matt Pellegrino.

We, the Board of Directors, are proud to be part of this stellar organization as it continues to thrive for years to come.

Sincerely,

Gary Hale
Board President

They helped guide me on how to find a job suitable for me.

◆ NILP Consumer

2026 Board of Directors

- Gary Hale, President
- David Bradburn, Vice President
- Nachele Logan-Clifford, Treasurer
- Aisha Nakazibwe, Clerk
- Mark Kelly
- Ron Lassman
- Dan Blackwell
- Meghan Harrington



NILP is the hope we want to see in ourselves and the community!

- NILP Consumer



Senior Leadership Team

Chief Executive Officer **Matt Pellegrino**

Chief Financial Officer **Lisa DiGiuseppe**

VP of Community Development & Advocacy **Jim Lyons**

Program Directors & Managers

Director of Operations **Kristen Parent**

Director of PCA **Alicia Thyne**

Director of NERLC **Gabriel Fonseca**

Director of Independent Living Services **Leo Tonevski**

Youth Services Program Manager **Steve Michelson**

PCA Program Manager **Karen Pelletier Sartell**

Medical Billing & Eligibility Manager **Yojabel Santana**

Resource Development Manager **Jacky McDonough**

NERLC Operations Manager **Rachely Ramos**

Manager of Older Adult Peer Services **Amanda Orfanos**

Long-Term Services & Supports Manager **Justine Carlton**

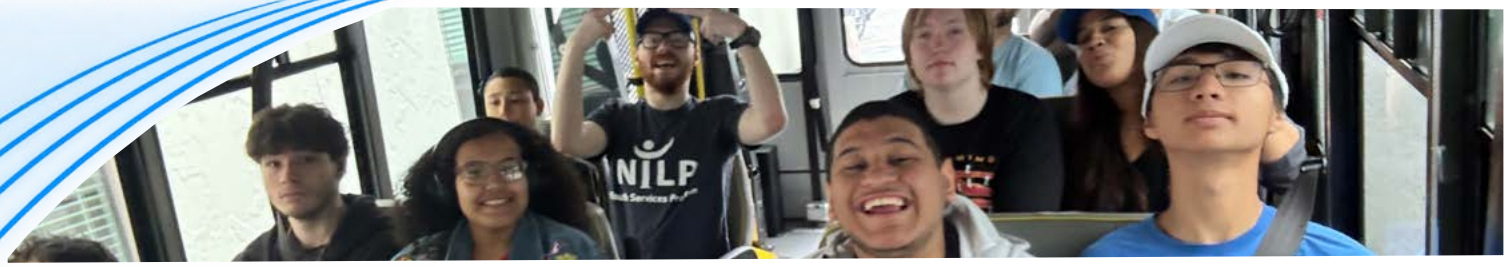
Accounting Manager **Cyndi Wood**

PCA RN Clinical Supervisor **Suzanne McNamara**

I like to think that our conversations were mutually beneficial and that both of us will take what I hope was imparted to one another in our future relationships.

◆ NILP Consumer





Youth Programming

Empowering youth. Building skills. Creating brighter futures.

Number of schools NILP partnered with

27

Total number of students who attended our Driver's Education Trainings:

- Total: 42
- April: 21
- February: 21

Number of students served in internships

34

Number of participating businesses

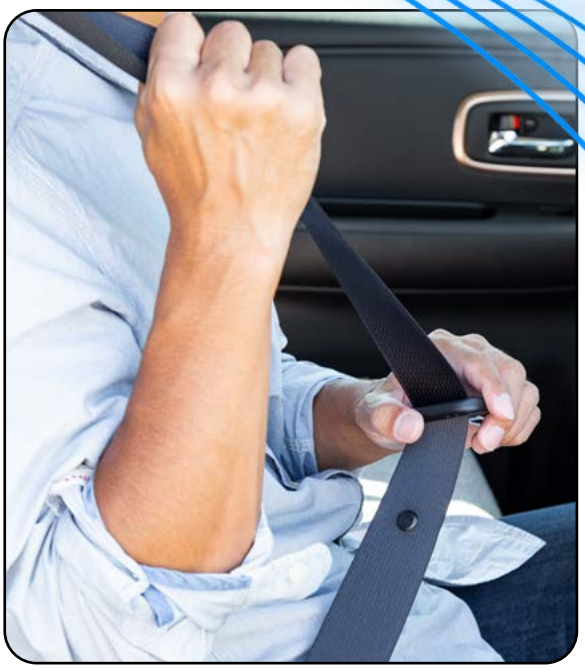
32

Total number of students served:

- Total: 198
- Pre-ETS: 125
- TAP: 73

Through the Young Adult Empowerment Support (Y.E.S.) Pilot Program, we worked with 12 participants who identified and pursued individualized goals related to employment, transportation, and activities of daily living. Participants made meaningful progress toward greater independence by developing practical life skills, increasing self-confidence, and achieving personal milestones that support long-term success within their communities.

Confidence in the Driver's Seat



Silas has a passion for connecting with people – and wherever he goes, he finds meaningful ways to become part of his community.

He lives in Methuen with his family, works at CVS and attends a day program where he especially enjoys talking with others. The program offers activities such as cooking, baking and art, both appeal to him. Cooking has also given Silas an opportunity to practice one of his strengths: paying close attention to details.

Outside of work and his day program, Silas attends the Essex Art Center in Lawrence. Watercolor painting and art meditation classes are among his favorites. Whether he is creating art, working or meeting someone new, Silas enjoys being around people.

> ***"Connection and socialization are really, really important," he shared. Through NILP, he has found even more opportunities to build those connections while working toward greater independence.***

One of Silas's biggest goals is obtaining his driver's license. He is excited – and a little nervous – about getting behind the wheel. Although he has mixed feelings, he already understands the responsibility that comes with driving. He knows he will need to pay close attention to traffic signs, pedestrians and everything happening around him.

Silas has been working toward this goal with Kim, his NILP Young Adult Empowerment Specialist, who helps him study the chapters of the driver's manual and understand the different parts and functions of a car.

> ***"Kim is really good at teaching the chapters of my driving book and teaching me how to build confidence," Silas said. "She also teaches me all the parts of the car – the brakes, gas, how to start, reverse and park."***

Kim is also working to help Silas find a driving school that will be a good fit for his learning style and goals. For Silas, the most important part of the process is building his confidence – one lesson and one new skill at a time.

Silas describes himself as passionate, outgoing and good at managing his time. Those qualities serve him well at work, in the community and as he prepares for the road ahead. With the right instruction, encouragement and connections, he is moving closer to a future with greater freedom and independence.



Community Supports Data

Information & Referrals

Number of consumers who worked on their Independent Living Goals with a Community Supports skills specialist

752

Number of consumers who successfully transitioned back into the community after long-term stays in a nursing facility or institution

9

Number of consumers who received Options Counseling

184

Service Category	Number of Consumers
Advocacy/Legal Services	100
AFDC/Welfare	35
Americans w/Disabilities Act	74
Assistive Devices/Equipment	22
Benefits/Finances	56
Communication Services	40
Disability Information	34
Emergency Intervention	7
Employment	111
Fair Housing Act	4
Funding	35
Home Modifications	12
Housing	257
MassHealth	67
Other services	237
Personal Assistance Services	1,152
Public Information	28
Social Security Administration	56
Social/Recreation	115
Technical Assistance	5
Transportation	75

Information.
Support.
Greater Independence.



Opening the Door to Independence

At 20, Dylan has a clear vision for his future: living with his girlfriend, providing for himself and returning to the concerts and the active life he loves.

This future is beginning to take shape. With accessible buttons installed at his apartment entrance, Dylan can now open and close the door and leave independently – an everyday act representing months of work, adaptation and determination.

"Independence is the buzzword in our household" says his mother, Rachel

At 18, Dylan was critically injured in an ATV accident. Following months of care and rehabilitation, he continues rebuilding his life.

Helping Dylan pursue his goals is his personal care attendant, Paul. Each weekday, Paul drives him to appointments and assists with stretching, cooking, showering, medications, medical supplies, shopping, laundry and other daily activities. Because Dylan cannot use his hands or wrists, this assistance is essential. Paul also takes on important care-giving responsibilities, easing the daily demands on Dylan's parents.

NILP has helped Dylan and his family navigate the PCA program. That support extends far beyond individual tasks. It allows people to live in the community, make choices about their lives and move toward greater independence. It also allows families to provide love and support without carrying every aspect of care alone.

The PCA program allows the consumer to have autonomy, and it allows the family to be a family" Rachel says. She wants others to understand that health insurance alone does not meet every need.

Programs like this are the reason some people can live in their communities. It is that serious.

Rachel's greatest hope reaches beyond Dylan's physical progress. "He still sometimes feels like a separate part of society—like he is part of it, but with an asterisk," she says. "My biggest hope is that he feels and knows that he is still part of the community."

Each push of the button that opens Dylan's apartment door brings him closer to a life shaped by his choices, connection and belonging.

Impact of Personal Care Assistant Program

Total Number of Consumers

3,244

Under 5	16
5 to 19	276
20 to 24	63
25 to 59	1,371
60 and Over	1,518

Northeast Recovery Learning Community

The Northeast Recovery Learning Community

Northeast Recovery Learning Community (NERLC) provided 950 peer support groups, trainings, and events across the year.

The following is a list of the groups offered:

- Art Expressions
- Intentional Artistry
- Movie Time
- Coffee and Friends
- Life is Good
- Coffee Social
- Coffee Talk
- Coffee Walks
- Mindfulness Meditation LEC
- Creative Mindfulness
- Social Hour
- Mindfulness Meditation at Home Away From Home
- Mindfulness Meditation Lowell Senior Center
- Get to Know the NERLC
- Resilience Group
- Age is Just a Number Book Group
- Grateful Aspects

We support adults

18+

years old to older adults.

Older Adults who received peer support

over 40

Three languages spoken by NERLC staff

English
Spanish
Khmer





Community Advocacy & Accessibility

NILP's ADA and Accessibility Services continued helping municipalities create more accessible and inclusive public spaces. Our ADA Team partnered with the **Town of Dedham** on accessibility initiatives, coordinated **NILP's Legislative Forum**, and successfully secured a competitive **MassDOT Community Transit Grant** for a new accessible van. Of **228** applications submitted statewide, NILP was among only **131** organizations selected for funding—helping strengthen accessible transportation for consumers throughout our communities.



More Access. Brighter Futures.



Accessible communities create stronger, inclusive futures for everyone.

107
rides



NILP's Transportation Services provided 107 rides this year to consumers and community members with a wide range of disabilities residing in northeastern Massachusetts. These rides supported a variety of needs, including housing searches, transitions from nursing facilities back into the community, socialization, peer support groups, youth program field trips, benefits-related appointments, and other essential community transportation needs.

Still Very Much in Love



"My husband is a very kind, caring and loving person," Elleanor says of Byron, her husband of nearly 62 years. The two have been together for almost their entire adult lives.

Byron volunteered for military service at just 17, requiring his parents' permission to enlist. After basic training, he served in Korea and later in Vietnam, where he was exposed to Agent Orange. He returned home and married Elleanor in 1964, when they were 19 and 18.

Byron built a full and active life as a contractor, earned a black belt in karate and raised two children with Elleanor. While working, he attended theology school and eventually became the pastor of his own church.

Over the years, Byron developed ulcerative colitis, leukemia, prostate cancer, heart problems and Parkinson's disease. The VA found his significant diagnoses fully attributable to his exposure to Agent Orange in Vietnam. As his Parkinson's progressed, Byron had to leave his ministry. Today, he uses a wheelchair and requires assistance with all aspects of his care—but through every challenge, Elleanor says, he has never lost his faith.

Through NILP's Veteran Directed Care program, Elleanor has the support and flexibility to keep Byron safely at home. The program allows families to choose and hire their own caregivers, including family members, and direct how care is provided. Byron's daughter currently serves as his caregiver, and two additional caregivers are being onboarded to provide overnight and weekend support.

NILP Veteran Directed Care Coordinator Wendy helps Elleanor manage every step. Each year, Wendy works with the VA to establish Byron's care budget. She also guides the family and caregivers through the Tempus onboarding process, including employment documentation, required background checks and payroll coordination.

> ***"Wendy has been fantastic," Elleanor says. "She is my go-to person. She is so responsive, caring and helpful. NILP is a great, great program."***

Keeping Byron at home rather than in a nursing home is especially meaningful to Elleanor. Surrounded by the people, comforts and routines he loves, he can watch Westerns, welcome company, play games and do small exercises with her. With PCA support, he can even go out for coffee at Dunkin'.

"I am very grateful that my husband is home and safe," Elleanor says. "He has done so much better at home. Everything being provided allows us to share these things together. After all these years, we are still very much in love."

At home, Byron remains surrounded by his family, sustained by his faith and cared for alongside the woman who has loved him for more than six decades.

2026 Community Partners

- AdLib
- AgeSpan
- Boston Center for Independent Living
- Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association
- Cape Organization for Rights of the Disabled
- Center for Living and Working
- Commonwealth Care Alliance
- Community Giving Tree
- Community InRoads
- Community Teamwork
- Department of Mental Health
- Dignity Alliance of Massachusetts
- Disability Law Center
- Disability Policy Consortium
- Disability Resource Center
- Easter Seals Massachusetts
- Executive Office of Aging and Independence
- Greater Lawrence Kiwanis Club
- Greater Lawrence Community Action Council
- Greater Lynn Senior Services
- Independence Associates
- Lawrence Partnership for Transition to Employment
- Lawrence Partnership
- Massachusetts Commission for the Blind
- Massachusetts Office on Disability
- MassAbility
- Massachusetts Statewide Independent Living Council
- MassGeneral Brigham
- MassHealth
- Merrimack Valley Chamber of Commerce
- MetroWest Center for Independent Living
- Minuteman Senior Services
- Molina Healthcare
- MEVA (Merrimack Valley Transit)
- Mystic Valley Elder Services
- National Council on Independent Living
- Northern Essex Community College
- Senior Care Inc.
- Southeast Center for Independent Living
- Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital
- Stavros
- Tempus Unlimited
- Tewksbury Hospital
- The Wish Project
- Tufts Health Plan
- UnitedHealthcare







45th Anniversary Gala

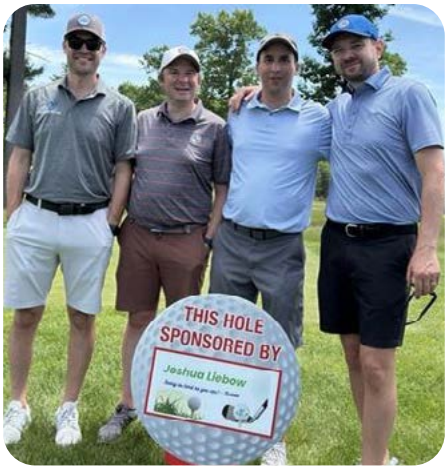
More than 100 guests gathered to celebrate NILP's 45 years of advancing independence, access, and inclusion. With the ocean as a backdrop, the evening featured live music, dancing, a red-carpet welcome, and a silent auction and raffle. It was a joyful celebration of NILP's history, community, and the people and partnerships that continue to move our mission forward. We raised over $30,000.

Golf Tournament for Independence



More than 100 golfers joined NILP at Renaissance Golf Club for a bright, energetic day of friendly competition and community support. From course contests and the popular Air Cannon to a lively reception and live auction, the tournament raised nearly $60,000 to advance NILP's mission and independent living services throughout our communities.







Giving Tuesday

Our second annual Giving Tuesday campaign raised a little over $800, exceeding our 2025 total and demonstrating the growing support of our community. As part of our 45th anniversary celebration, we incorporated our "45 on Giving Tuesday" theme, creating a meaningful way for supporters to join us in celebrating 45 years of making a difference.



Legislative Forum

Legislative Forum: Funding Care, Preserving Dignity

On April 9, 2026, NILP brought together 80 legislators, consumers, staff, and community members to discuss advocacy priorities affecting people with disabilities and older adults across Massachusetts. The conversation included proposed cuts to the Personal Care Attendant (PCA) budget and their potential impact on independence, caregivers, and quality of life. The forum demonstrated the power of community voices united in support of dignity, access, and essential services.

Annual Meeting

On October 22, 2025, more than 75 people gathered for NILP's Legislative Forum, themed 45 Years Together: Community. Voice. Choice. 1980–2025. The event celebrated NILP's history, community partnerships and continued advocacy for people with disabilities. Sarah Luz, Transition Specialist at Amesbury High School, received the Community Partnership Award; Columbia Construction was named Volunteer of the Year; and Richard Rodriguez, ADA Coordinator for the City of Lawrence, received the ADA Champion Award.









Holiday Fundraising

Over the past four years, NILP has hosted a staff fundraising and raffle event during the holiday season. All the proceeds generated have been used to buy holiday gift cards for our consumers. We met our fundraising goal of $1,350, and purchased gift cards for 27 consumers.



We gratefully recognize our Annual Partners for their generous year-round support of NILP's mission.

Platinum Annual Partner

ROCKLAND TRUST Charitable Foundation

Gold Annual Partner

MOLINA® HEALTHCARE

NILP Donors

- AdultFosterCare of the North Shore
- AgeSpan Inc
- Asahi-America
- Bulletproof
- Cape Organization For Rights of The Disabled
- Constant Contact
- Cross Insurance
- Cross Financial Corp
- Disability Law Center
- Disability Resource Center
- Dovetail Apothecary of Beauty
- First Transit Management of Lowell
- Greater Lawrence Family Health Center
- Greater Lawrence Kiwanis Club Foundation
- Hirsch Roberts Weinstein LLP
- Molina Healthcare
- Newburyport Bank
- Omni Print
- Providers' Council
- Renaissance Golf Club
- Rockland Trust Foundation
- The Savings Bank
- Unico Merrimack Valley Foundation
- United Healthcare Services Inc

Adam Wise
Alicia Thyne
Alyson Ferro
Andrew Davis
Andrew Mazze
Annette Perkins
Aron Jacobson
Bianca Flores
Bonnie Griffith
Brenda Sanchez
Brendan Dawson
Brian Albert
Brian Goodwin
Bruce Dickey
Candice Pechilis
Carmen Jorge
Charlize Sanabria
Chris Bolla
Chris Harrop
Corey Gelormini
Cyndi Wood
Cynthia A Ciman
Daniel Burke-Starr
Darian Gambrell
Dave Damon
David Bradburn
Dawne Shand
Deborah Pearson
Denise Ramirez-Strawn
Diogenes Luna
Eliezer Hiraldo
Eliza T Williamson
Emily Soares
Gary and Lynn Hale
Grace Tymann
Jacky McDonough
Jean Mathurin
Jeff Martin
Jeff Wilson
Jeffrey Brooks
Jeffrey Hirsch
Jennifer Boles
Jeremy Guillemett
Jim Bures
Jim Lyons
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John Tumolo
John Warden
Joseph Couture
Joshua Liebow
June Sauvageau
Kalvin Fosher
Karen Pelletier Sartell
Keith Stickney
Keric Kelly
Kristen Parent
Linda Braunstein
Lindsey Diforio
Lisa DiGiuseppe
Loretta Guyett
Luis Diaz Sanchez
Lynette McRae
Margaret Hayes
Maritza Cedeno
Mark Kelly
Matt Pellegrino
Matthew A Kane
Matthew Austin
Matthew Whiting
Maureen McGaw
Megan Rennick
Meghan Harrington
Michael Stuart
Mishelle Nunez
Nachele Logan-Clifford
Nancy Cerezo
Naomi Martinez
Neil Shanley
Noemi Alvarez
Olimpio DeMarco
Paul Deguglielmo
Paul Harden
Rachely Ramos
Reanna Legere
Rick Fosher
Robert Cerniglia
Roci Gainey-Graham
Ron Hoy
Ron Lassman
Sadie Simone
Sarah Petersen
Sarah Wilson
Sean Connelly
Sharon Sullivan
Sophie Korpics
Steven Crowell
Steven Michelson
Suzanne McNamara
Toni Wolf
Tony Coelho
Tracy Neff
Wendy Garcia
Wesley Locke
William Haddad
William Sanabria
Yanelly Cruz
Yojabel Santana

Statements of Financial Position as of June 20, 2026

	2026	2025
ASSETS		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	$4,939,704	$4,983,402
Accounts Receivable	$1,192,964	$776,842
Prepaid Expenses	$12,647	$8,871
Property and Equipment	$533,549	$559,857
Other Assets	$54,241	$93,520
TOTAL ASSETS	**$6,733,105**	**$6,422,492**
LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS		
Accounts Payable	$424,894	$171,135
Accrued Expense	$389,444	$287,235
Current Portion of Long-Term Debt	$21,785	$20,226
Long-Term Debt	$262,139	$263,234
Deferred Revenue	$0	$91,543
Other Current Liabilities	$106,618	$107,830
TOTAL LIABILITIES	**$1,204,880**	**$941,203**
NET ASSETS		
Without Donor Restrictions	$0	$0
Unrestricted	$5,528,225	$5,481,289
Designated by the Board for Operating Reserve	$0	$0
TOTAL NET ASSETS	**$5,528,225**	**$5,481,289**
TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	**$6,733,105**	**$6,422,492**
Financials are in draft format and are subject to change.		



Ways to Give

Northeast Independent Living Program (NILP), a 501(c)(3) non-profit, relies on your support to help people with disabilities live independently.

Consider donating through:

ANNUAL PARTNER:
PLATINUM: $10,000
GOLD: $5,000 | SILVER: $3,000

EVENT SPONSORSHIP:
Opportunities include the Annual Golf Tournament, Anniversary Events, and more.

GIFT PROGRAM:
Honor a loved one through memorial or celebration gifts acknowledged to the recipient or family.

PLANNED GIFTS:
Include NILP in your bequests, annuities, trusts, or life insurance.

DONATE BY CHECK TO:
NILP, 20 Ballard Rd, Lawrence, MA 01843

Major Funding Sources

- Executive Office of Health & Human Services
- Veteran's Affairs
- MassAbility
- Department of Mental Health

Grants & Partnerships

- Town of Dedham
- City of Lawrence
- Lawrence Commission on Disability
- Massachusetts Association for Mental Health
- Partners for Youth with Disabilities
- Molina Healthcare
- Minuteman Senior Services
- Mystic Valley Elder Services
- United Health Care
- AgeSpan
- SeniorCare Inc
- Tufts Health
- Fallon Health
- Mass General Brigham



Find and like us on Social Media

Search for us at NILP or Northeast Independent Living Program. We will see you there.

NILP Peer2Peer Resources for People with Disabilities

20 Ballard Road, Lawrence, MA 01843
(978) 687-4288 | help@nilp.org
www.nilp.org

Donate