

THE PATH AHEAD

VOLUME 11, ISSUE 3
FALL 2019

IN THIS ISSUE:

- 2 There's No Place Like Home: Finding Housing That's Right for You
- 3 Tips for Finding the Right Home for You
- 4 Creating Great Housing Solutions from the Ground Up
- 6 Wisconsin Housing Resources
- 7 Wisconsin Self-Determination Conference 2019
- 7 Your Meeting Place Hosted by TMG!



tmg[®]

Let's clear the path ahead.

WISCONSIN'S TOP-RATED
IRIS CONSULTANT AGENCY

tmgwisconsin.com

THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME: Finding Housing That's Right for You

Everyone wants a place to call home. Somewhere you feel safe, supported, and happy. It's your own little space to live the way you choose. Thankfully, there are organizations that can help you find just that.

Movin' Out is a nonprofit organization in Madison that partners with people who have disabilities across Wisconsin. They help people find affordable housing in communities where people of all abilities live. The organization offers certified housing counseling to help you find an affordable apartment or house, and can help you build the connections you need to live independently. In some parts of the state, Movin' Out can help current homeowners get money to make repairs to their home or to add accessible features like ramps. They also help Wisconsin home buyers with limited income get money for the down payment and closing

2

costs of their home loan. Finally, the organization has built 15 townhome and apartment buildings in Southeastern and South Central Wisconsin for people with limited income. These provide over 1,000 affordable and individual apartments that people of all abilities call home. A portion of each apartment and townhome building has individual apartments designated specifically for people with disabilities. Since 1995, Movin' Out has helped hundreds of people achieve their housing goals.

“We help people overcome those barriers to make accessible, affordable and high-quality housing available,” says Kathyne Auerback, Executive Director of Movin' Out.

Movin' Out has found that, with the right support and services, everyone can live independently – whether it's on their own or with a roommate or partner of their choice. Kathyne says some people worry that they aren't capable of living anywhere

other than in their family's home or in a group setting. However, when a person has the support to succeed, many people thrive and gain more skills because of their new living situation.



One of the residents of Movin' Out.

“The most gratifying stories I hear are about people (we work with) who started out needing a high level of supportive services. Over time, their needs for supportive services decreased because their independence increased,” says Kathyne. “That’s beautiful to see.”

Of course, finding the right housing situation and lining up



TIPS FOR FINDING THE RIGHT HOME FOR YOU

the right support can take time, and organizations like Movin' Out can help you find a great home. Knowing you have a safe and affordable place to live can make other areas of your life easier as well. A good housing situation can give you access to employment and your community, allow you to save money, and help you gain confidence.

“When housing works well, everything else in life can work well, too,” says Kathryne.

If you want to look for a new place, remember that living independently and being a part of a neighborhood where people of all abilities live can be life-changing. And, as Kathryne notes, having people with disabilities living among other residents is a gift to the community. In other words, your neighborhood is a better place because you live there. So, if finding community housing is your goal, don't be afraid to ask your TMG IRIS Consultant how you can make that happen!

Living independently – whether moving out of your family's home or buying a house – can be a major change. Kathryne Auerback, Executive Director of Movin' Out, shares how to make the transition smoother.

Figure Out Your Finances

Knowing how much money you can spend on rent or a mortgage is the first step you need to take. You'll also want to look at the following things:

- Find out if renting or buying is better for you financially.
- Improve your credit score – this shows potential landlords or mortgage lenders you're responsible with money and will pay on time.
- Learn if you qualify for affordable housing or down payment assistance.

The housing counselors at Movin' Out are a great resource, and can help you find the answers to these questions.

Know Your Needs

Once you start looking for a new home, you'll want to ask yourself a few things to make sure the place you choose is a good fit:

- Do you like the house and the neighborhood it's in?
- Is there transportation available nearby?
- Will you need to make any changes to the house for it to be accessible?
- What type of services and support will you need in your home?

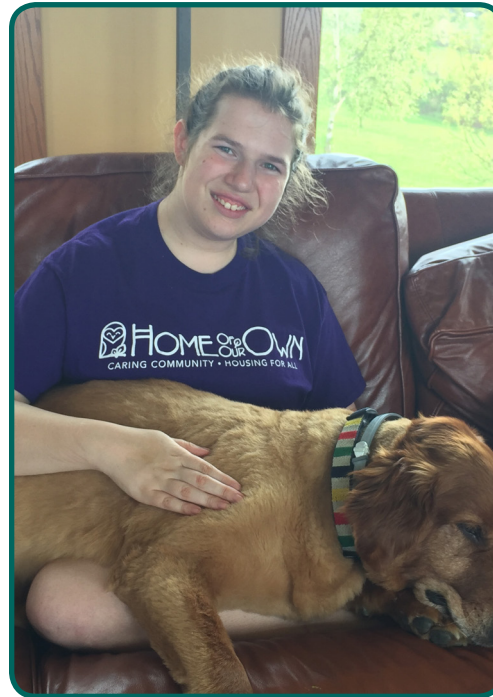
It's always a good idea to talk through this with a trusted family member, friend, or support. Your TMG IRIS Consultant can also help you get the resources you need to successfully live in your community.

CREATING GREAT HOUSING SOLUTIONS FROM THE GROUND UP

When several families in South Central Wisconsin struggled to find independent housing that would meet the needs of their sons and daughters with developmental and physical disabilities, they knew they'd have to get creative. So, they rolled up their sleeves and started planning an affordable apartment complex called Home of Our Own!

Mary Anne Oemichen and her daughter Amy, who is enrolled in the TMG IRIS Consultant Agency, are a part of one of the New Glarus/Mount Horeb area families that are working to make this community a reality. Six years ago, as the children in this group of family friends became young adults, the parents began talking about housing options for their sons and daughters. These young adults need support and services, but Mary Anne and the other parents knew that they wouldn't always want to live with

Mom and Dad. The only other real options available were agency owned and operated group homes for residents with disabilities or renting individual apartments. The



Amy Oemichen and her dog, Bucky!

families felt these options could be isolating and prevent them from fully being members of their communities.

Mary Anne and the other parents knew they needed another option, so the group came up with the idea for Home of Our Own (HOOO). The plan was to create safe, affordable housing in New Glarus, where people with disabilities could have access to the support and services they needed while living among people of all abilities.

“Integration was a non-negotiable factor for (HOOO),” says Mary Anne. “Our sons and daughters want to be a part of the community, and to share their gifts with others.”

The HOOO families began by studying other independent living communities across the country. They took the best ideas from those other communities about how people can live in integrated

settings, and plan to use those ideas in their HOOO model.

Partnering with the Wisconsin Housing Preservation Corp. (WHPC), a nonprofit that develops and owns affordable housing, HOOO located a piece of land in New Glarus that the apartment building will be built on, and WHPC's architectural team has housing plans already drawn up. The building will have 40 apartment units, with 10 of the units specifically designed to meet the needs of people with disabilities. The remaining apartment units will be available for people of all abilities who need affordable housing. There will also be several community spaces, including a community kitchen, a community garden, a sensory area and walking paths, to encourage residents to get together with one another.

The cost of this project will be around \$8 million. WHPC has already helped raise \$7 million through

grants, tax-credits and low-interest financing, as well as provided \$500,000 of their own funds. This means that the HOOO families are responsible for raising the final \$500,000. If all goes according to plan, construction should begin by October 1, 2019, and be completed around September 2020.

Home of Our Own began with a simple question: Where will adults with different abilities live when they are ready for independence, or when their families can no longer support them at home? - From the Home of Our Own website

Although it's been a lot of hard work and there's still a long road ahead, Mary Anne, Amy, and the other HOOO families are feeling hopeful their efforts are inspiring others through the local and national media attention the project has gotten. If the HOOO project is successful,

Mary Anne hopes that people can use HOOO as a model for building more integrated living options in Wisconsin communities. But mostly, Mary Anne is thrilled that Amy could one day have a home of her own.

“It means everything (to our family),” says Mary Anne. “It means our daughter will have other interesting people and activities in her life. It means she’ll have independence; pride in having her own apartment; and pride in her ability to live outside her parents’ home just as any other 26-year-old would do.”

Learn more about the HOOO Project at www.homeofourown.org.



WISCONSIN HOUSING RESOURCES

Do you have questions about housing, such as how do I find an affordable apartment to rent; what steps should I take to buy my own home; what are my rights as a tenant; or how do I get the services and support I need to live independently? Check out our list to help you with your housing needs! For links to these resources, go to [tmgwisconsin.com/housing-resources](https://www.tmgwisconsin.com/housing-resources).



Fair Housing Council: This organization is dedicated to promoting fair housing across Wisconsin and helping people with fair housing complaints. They also provide housing education, as well as information on mortgage fair lending and how to create more inclusive communities.



Movin' Out: This state-wide organization helps people with disabilities find independent housing that best fits their needs. Along with housing counseling and mortgage down payment assistance to qualifying individuals, Movin' Out has rental properties in South Central Wisconsin that support integrated community living.



Tenant Resource Center: If you rent your home and have questions about your rights and responsibilities as a tenant, the Tenant Resource Center offers advice about how to resolve issues you may have with your landlord.



Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA) Housing Counselors: Thinking of buying a new home, but not sure where to start? Then get in touch with a WHEDA Housing Counselor or take a Home Buyer Education seminar to map out a home buying plan that fits your needs.



Wisconsin Housing Search: Looking for a new place to rent? Check out this free resource that lists affordable rental properties in Wisconsin to find a great home that's right for you!

STAYING SUPPORTED AT HOME WITH IRIS

Talk to your TMG IRIS Consultant about the services IRIS may fund to help you meet your goals for finding a home and living in your community. Some examples could include:

- Housing counseling
- Supportive home care
- Personal emergency response system
- Home delivered meals
- Home modifications



WISCONSIN SELF-DETERMINATION CONFERENCE 2019



Join TMG this October at the Wisconsin Self Determination Conference, the largest self-direction gathering in the state! The theme of this year's event is Back to the Future: Self-Determination Powered by Innovation. This conference is a great place to meet other self-advocates, learn how technology can help you live a self-determined life, and celebrate all the amazing things that make a great life possible. TMG is proud to sponsor and present at this conference.

October 14-16, 2019

Kalahari Resort - Wisconsin Dells, WI

Learn more and register by September 27, 2019 at

<https://wi-bpdd.org/index.php/wisconsin-self-determination-conference/>

YOUR MEETING PLACE HOSTED BY TMG!

If you live near New Richmond in the northwestern part of the state, you're not going to want to miss TMG's last open house event of 2019! There you can meet other people enrolled in the TMG IRIS Consultant Agency, learn about community resources, get valuable information at the Supported Decision-Making session presented by attorney George Zaske, and let us know how TMG can help make self-direction better for you.

October 8, 2019

Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College | New Richmond, WI

Check out tmgwisconsin.com/events for more information. We hope to see you there!



one south pinckney street, suite 320
madison, wisconsin 53703
(844) 864-8987
info@tmgwisconsin.com
tmgwisconsin.com

PRST STD
US POSTAGE
PAID
MADISON WI
PERMIT #2783



WISCONSIN'S TOP-RATED
IRIS CONSULTANT AGENCY*

For information about the TMG IRIS Consultant Agency,
visit: tmgwisconsin.com or facebook.com/TMGWisconsin.
Or call our toll-free number: **(844) 864-8987**.

*Wisconsin Department of Health Services Options Scorecard
data for IRIS Consultant Agencies, July 2019