

FULL AHEAD

Inspiring Personal Independence

Stories celebrating triumph, independence, and collaboration.



The Big Impact of Small Changes

Formerly called "Success Stories", SAIL's monthly staff meetings include a section dedicated to sharing stories of consumer triumphs - on the ski slopes, at home with a new ramp, or maybe through a successful job match. These stories serve as teaching tools for newer employees, spark conversations, and are one of the ways we recognize the creativity, compassion, and talent on the SAIL Team. A few years ago, we changed the name to "Stories Celebrating Progress," because we've found it's the small steps along a longer journey that best illustrate the impact of our work. This Spring Donor Newsletter is focused on those small steps, and stories where a seemingly small change leads to big impact. Your generosity fuels this progress and so, in a way, we're celebrating you as well. Thank you!

Building Independence with a Fund of Last Resort

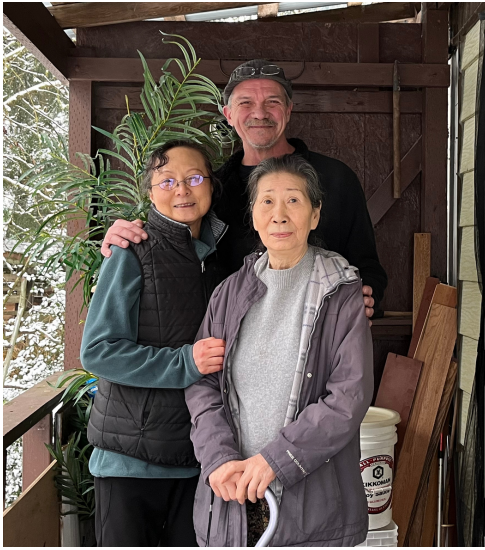
SAIL's Last Resort Fund is designed to meet immediate needs for people with disabilities that have no other options. Small personal grants pay for specific items or activities the consumer has identified as essential to maintain or improve their independence. **Funded by grants and donations, the Last Resort Fund is one of SAIL's most effective tools for finding immediate solutions.**

A Last Resort Fund grant never stands alone as an isolated item. They are available for consumers who have worked with SAIL to identify their goals, and created a plan to improve their independence. In addition, they are used when all other options and funding sources have been exhausted. Often a Last Resort Fund grant is the essential step in helping a consumer move forward.

One example is a Last Resort Fund grant that made it possible for **Alex** to leave his home safely and independently. Many may not think of 5 inches to be that large of a transition from door threshold to the ground, but for this consumer it was. Living with severe environmental sensitivities and limited mobility had created many obstacles on his road to independence. After conversations with Alex and his family, a plan was made to order a simple transition ramp from an online retailer. **Alex is now more empowered to achieve his goals, and isn't held back by mere inches to access the rest of the world on his own.**

Shane was in an automobile-train accident more than 30 years ago in which he was seriously injured, experiencing a Traumatic Brain Injury, as well as multiple amputations. Over the decades, *(continued on page 3)*

Making Connections to Solve Problems...Together



Yong and Oksha immigrated to Juneau from Korea in the 1960's. They've lived together ever since, forming a bond so close they tell everyone they're sisters, though they're not blood related. Yong called SAIL concerned; Oksha, the elder sister, had fallen multiple times in their home.

At the first home assessment, we sat down with Yong and Oksha at the kitchen table to learn more. We talked about the falls Oksha had in her home, their plans to go back to Korea to see family, and their ideas for aging in place. Oksha walked us around the house showing each spot she'd fallen and Yong, chiming in from time to time, described exactly how she picked her up, including "that time she fell right in the middle of the room so I had to roll her all the way to the wall so she could get up!", both of them chuckling a bit. Yong and Oksha, with the help

of a friend and special home modification funding from the Juneau Community Foundation will soon be installing a walk-in shower, new toilet, a new step at their front door, and handrails on their front porch. But the story doesn't end there...

Dan lives across the street from Yong and Oksha in the mobile home he owns. He stops by every morning for a cup of coffee, and checks in to see if the sisters need any help with handy repairs. On the day SAIL first visited, Yong stopped the minute Dan walked in and declared "he needs your help too!"

Dan has worked odd jobs all his life, saving so he could buy a home for him and his daughter. When a motorcycle accident left him with sustained injuries, however, Dan found himself out of work and with some major medical bills to pay off. Dan wasn't sure what help was available, and hadn't had success applying for programs like food stamps on his own. At no point in his recovery, did Dan learn about different community programs that he could tap into. Aside from the support he gets from his neighbors, Dan's been navigating this path alone.

Since that first meeting, Dan has been connected to our Aging and Disability Resource Program where he is working to set up services that he hadn't been able to access.

This story celebrating progress is about the importance of community, building relationships, and looking out after one another. Because in this case, their relationship and looking out for each other is what saved them from falling through the cracks of systems that were designed to help them. Though we (SAIL) are practically neighbors, Dan didn't know SAIL existed until he found us in the living room of the house across the street.



Thank you to SAIL's 2022 Pick.Click.Give. donors who contributed more than \$13,000 to SAIL. You are helping remove barriers so seniors and people with disabilities can live independently!

It's not too late to Pick.Click.Give in 2023! Even if you've filed for your PFD, you can add or change your Pick.Click.Give contributions through August 31st at pfd.alaska.gov.

Collaboration, Creativity, and Small Grants Boost Outcomes

Jordan is a young adult who experiences significant learning disabilities. SAIL worked with Jordan to develop pre-employment skills to find and maintain summer employment. Living in a community without public transit, transportation was one his biggest barriers. With just \$200 from the Last Resort Fund, SAIL purchased Jordan a used bike. The combination of finding a job he loves, and the transportation to get there made the difference; his employer has already asked him back for a second season!

For **Sarah**, working with SAIL's Last Resort Fund was a life changing experience. Chronically homeless for over a decade, SAIL began working with Sarah to reach her goal of securing safe, stable housing. After many months of searching, and assistance budgeting her limited income, the Last Resort Fund was used to pay the deposit on an apartment and purchase basic household items for Sarah to live safely and comfortably in her new home.

Jim's story exemplifies how community partnerships and collaboration can positively impact a person's life: stranded in Haines, Jim was homeless and experienced significant dementia. With family and a place to live in Ketchikan, but no resources to transport himself and a vehicle back there, SAIL partnered with Ketchikan Indian Community and tapped the Last Resort Fund to share the cost of travel so Jim could return to his community where he has housing and family support.

Gale is a senior with mental health disabilities who recently moved to Alaska. In the move, she lost all of her essential paperwork – including her birth certificate. SAIL worked with Gale on obtaining a new birth certificate, but she couldn't afford the nominal fee required of a new copy. Thankfully, SAIL's Last Resort Fund grant covered the cost. With a new birth certificate in hand, Gale could then obtain a State of Alaska ID and apply for heating assistance and other benefits through the state, all while resting easy knowing that she has that important document on hand for the future.



A simple pair of \$45 walking poles ensured Gerry could safely navigate the icy winter streets on her own.



tinued from page 1) Shane has had ongoing medical issues stemming from his injuries. To stay mobile and active, he uses a specialized manual wheelchair he maneuvers with ease around town. When Shane's wheelchair needed major repairs, there were items that Medicaid refused to cover, including the specialty seat cushion Shane needs to avoid physical complications. Shane's grant from the Last Resort Fund was the necessary bridge he needed to ensure his wheelchair could be repaired and returned to him in good condition.

Keep SAIL's Last Resort Fund Strong!

SAIL's Last Resort Fund is one of our most important tools, because it couples the work of identifying goals and working towards change with funding for specific items that will help an individual move forward in their life.



Unfortunately, sources that support the Last Resort Fund have declined, even as the need continues to rise. The 5-year average for spending from the Last Resort Fund is \$36,000. This year, however, we have less than \$16,000 to respond to the emerging needs of those experiencing disabilities and hardship, and the fund is rapidly dwindling. **Please consider a donation to support SAIL's work and the Last Resort Fund today!**

**Donate at
www.sailinc.org or
Scan to Give!**

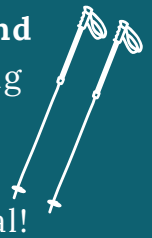


What kind of impact will you have? Here are some recent, real-life examples of the difference your donation can make:

\$40 replaces documents, like **birth certificates** or **photo IDs**, critical for someone's journey to independence and stability



\$80 buys **ice cleats** and **walking poles**, keeping those with balance challenges upright and out of the hospital!



\$150 For **bathroom grab bars**, allowing an elder to age in place.



\$250 provides **emergency groceries** while waiting out Alaska's historic backlog of Food Stamp applications.



\$500 for a **security deposit** on a safe, warm, accessible place to live.



Scan to Donate