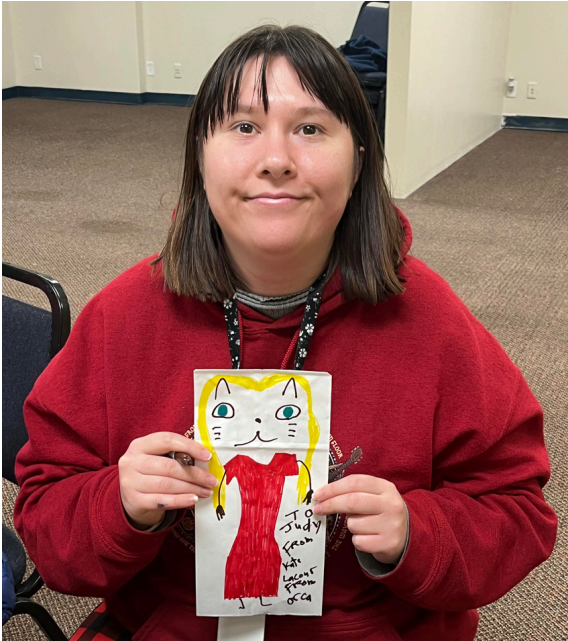


FULL AHEAD

Inspiring Personal Independence

Stories celebrating triumph, independence, and collaboration.

SETTING UP FOR SUCCESS ON A PATH TO INDEPENDENCE



With SAIL's help, Kate was approved for a Developmental Disability Medicaid Waiver, which will help pay for services to assist her with living independently. Long wait lists and complicated paperwork requirements mean attention to detail, patience and perseverance are key.

Kate is a well-known personality around Ketchikan's SAIL office, having participated in ORCA outdoor activities for several years. Kate's initial connection with SAIL led to conversations about her hopes for the future, and her desire to gain more independence in her life. Kate is a young adult who experiences mental health challenges, including anxiety. After in-depth conversations with one of SAIL's Developmental Disability Resource Specialists, Kate identified her top goal as moving into a home of her own.

Kate's path to achieve her goal was bumpy, and called for a healthy dose of patience and perseverance. Kate's first hurdle was getting approved for Medicaid benefits, including a Developmental Disability Waiver, which would help her pay for a place of her own as well as in-home assistance. Because Kate didn't have sufficient medical documentation of her disabilities prior to turning 22 years old, her initial applications were rejected. She needed a new medical assessment, which was expensive, and would have to be paid for out of pocket.

SAIL helped Kate tap into the Last Resort Fund to pay for the medical evaluation she needed. That professional evaluation provided the proof needed for Kate to qualify for benefits, which opened up a host of opportunities.

Kate was approved for a subsidized apartment and felt ready to make the move. SAIL helped Kate plan her budget, and also worked with her to apply for a special grant through the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority, which covered new furniture and housewares for her space - all in pink, her favorite color. She moved in last winter, and is enjoying making her new space feel like home. According to Kate, "I like how nice my house looks. I have pictures on the walls and I like making my apartment look nice. We've been meal prepping and getting my laundry done, too." We're delighted to partner with Kate on her path to independence.

SAIL's Developmental Disabilities Resource Connection (DDRC) program assists individuals who experience developmental disabilities and their families in accessing resources, available services, and support. Learn more at www.sailinc.org/ddrc.

PREPARING FOR EMERGENCIES WITH PERSONALIZED PLANNING

In the wake of the December 2020 weather disaster in Haines, we saw that seniors and people with disabilities faced great challenges to rebuild their lives. That reality aligns with national trends. According to FEMA, people with disabilities are four times more likely to die or be injured, and seniors often represent the majority of fatalities resulting from extreme weather events. SAIL leaned into the recovery efforts as part of the Long Term Recover Group, and led the case management workgroup to ensure that no vulnerable individuals fell through the cracks.



Our work was in collaboration with a myriad of local and statewide organizations, including Chilkat Valley Community Found-

ation, who directed spending from their Emergency Response donor fund. Their grant to SAIL paid for direct recovery needs like medical bills, home repairs, and furniture replacement, and helped survivors return safely to their homes. This same pot of funding supported the preparation of **emergency response totes** for vulnerable households in the Chilkat Valley, and presentations on the importance of emergency planning in the community. The totes are filled with useful first aid items as well as shelf-stable food, a flashlight, multi-tool, toiletries, cookware, and much more.

SAIL is also **helping residents develop personalized emergency support plans**. SAIL's template was developed with a focus on the unique needs of seniors and people with disabilities in coordination with our partners at the Red Cross and is an individual repository for vital information, ensuring that necessary details are readily available when needed.

At the heart of our efforts lies the belief in empowering individuals to take control of their own preparedness. Whether it's devising a plan for maneuvering a wheelchair during an evacuation or identifying essential equipment for medical needs, advanced planning centers on an individual's unique needs. *(continued on back page)*

Thank you to the 190+ Alaskans who donated to SAIL through Pick.Click.Give. in their 2024 PFD application! It's not too late to add a donation for SAIL - you can add or adjust your pledges online through August 31st at pfd.alaska.gov.

CONVERSATION & CREATIVITY SPARKS NEW INDEPENDENCE



Tony is a longtime consumer of SAIL with a cheerful countenance often likened to Santa Claus. Health complications sent Anthony to Seattle for more than 6 months of medical care, eventually leading to the amputation of his left leg and extensive rehabilitative therapy. He returned to Juneau facing dramatically different circumstances.

“It was a very difficult year,” Tony remembers. Soon after returning home, Tony’s wife Lorna passed away following a long illness. “My friends were supportive but one by one stopped coming around to visit or help me out. I realized maintaining my home independently was going to be very difficult.” Tony made the choice to downsize to a senior apartment, which would allow him to maintain his independence in a supportive community. Working with SAIL and

other community partners, Tony sold his trailer, moved into a good-fit one bedroom unit, and started the work to rebuild his independence.

Following the sale of his home, Tony needed to adjust his assets in order to keep his Medicaid benefits. He sat down with Mollie, one of SAIL’s Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) Specialists, to consider his options.

“We talked about ways to improve my day-to-day life. At that point, my wheelchair limited me and was very exhausting. Life was very confining and lonely,” recalled Tony. Mollie and Tony researched electric scooters to improve his mobility around town. He chose a model with a roof for rainy days and enough storage for supplies and groceries. Mollie helped Tony place the order, which he paid for with his extra income. The stylish red scooter was an instant hit - he named it “Mollie!”

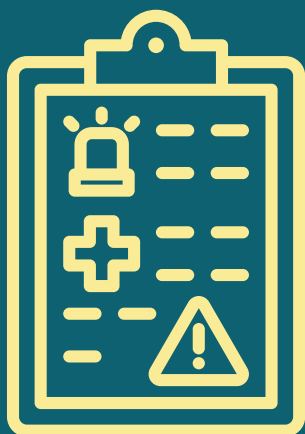
“This scooter has opened up the door for me. Life is more comfortable. If I get lonely, I just hop in and go for a ride. “Mollie” opens up a whole new world. She will take me to Fred Meyer, over the Douglas Bridge, and down to the Whale for a scenic tour on a nice day. People compliment her all the time and it makes for great conversation. I absolutely love it!”

Tony stays in touch, and continues to expand his independence. He told us, “Working with SAIL was more than I expected. Anyone who needs help should reach out to SAIL. I am very grateful.”

Winter to Summer: Core Values at Work! ORCA’s 2024 adaptive snow sports season was a rousing success, with peer support skills and community building on full display. A group even bundled up for a trip to cheer at the start of the Iditarod and try their hand at dog sledding at a professional kennel. Looking ahead to summer, there are still spots available for team building on the **SAIL Challenge Course** in Juneau, as well as employment opportunities through **SAIL’s summer work program** in Juneau, Haines, Sitka, Ketchikan, and now Gustavus! Students ages 14-21 earn money while learning valuable employment skills in their communities. Learn more at www.sailinc.org



A colorful graphic for the SAIL Summer Work Program. It features the SAIL logo, the word "Summer" in a large, bubbly font, and "WORK PROGRAM" below it. A QR code is in the top right. Text boxes provide details: "EACH SUMMER SAIL PARTNERS WITH THE DIVISION OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (DVR) TO OFFER STUDENTS THROUGHOUT SOUTHEAST A SUPPORTED, PAID WORK EXPERIENCE." and "STUDENTS MUST BE BETWEEN THE AGES OF 14-21 AND IDENTIFY AS HAVING A DISABILITY TO QUALIFY." A list of locations (Juneau, Ketchikan, Sitka, Haines, Gustavus) is shown as arrows pointing right. A final box says "LEARN MORE AT WWW.SAILINC.ORG".



Personalized Disaster Planning (continued from Page 2) We witnessed the success of personalized advanced planning when a veteran in Metlakatla identified the need for a backup generator due to his reliance on refrigerated medication, a power recliner, and a wheelchair that needs electricity to charge. Through collaboration and a grant from SAIL’s Last Resort Fund, we were able to purchase a new generator, ensuring continuity of care during power outages. When a winter storm cut power to his residence for almost 24 hours, the generator made all the difference and allowed him to stay safely at home. **Check out www.sailinc.org/emergency-planning-resources to make a personalized emergency support plan and build your own emergency support tote.**