

BECAUSE OF YOUR SUPPORT,
OUR DIVERSE COMMUNITIES
ARE FLOURISHING.

MISSION

Anixter's mission is to provide services that enhance lives, promote inclusivity, and strengthen community.

VISION

We envision a world where access, opportunity, and belonging are realized by everyone.



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Anixtercenter

Transforming Expectations.

... Since 1919

Anixter Center began as an orphanage for children who lost their parents during the global pandemic in 1919. More than 100 years later, Anixter serves over 7,500 Chicagoland community members through more than 30 programs.

Discover more about our impactful work
www.anixter.org

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A Message From Sam

GRATITUDE. APPRECIATION. RESILIENCE.

Every year, I am humbled and inspired by the unwavering dedication and generosity of those who support Anixter Center. Your commitment enables us to advance our mission to provide services that enhance lives, promote inclusion and strengthen community. Our philosophy is simple

but powerful: Inclusion is the norm. This work would not be possible without the solid foundation built by our donors, community partners, and extraordinary Anixter team members, all of whom live our mission every day. Whether it's supporting individuals with disabilities, promoting mental health and well-being, or ensuring communication access for those who are Deaf, DeafBlind, or Hard of Hearing – your efforts are making a measurable difference.

2024 has been another year of transformation for Anixter. Please join me in celebrating all that we have achieved together.

- We relocated the Chicago Hearing Society to a new, state-of-the-art facility in Lincoln Park, increasing our capacity to serve.
- We completed the renovation of our Unity Home in Evanston, offering a fully accessible and customized residential experience for clients who are Deaf, DeafBlind, or Hard of Hearing.
- The Chicago Hearing Society provided over 25,000 interpreter services hours, mentored over 500 Deaf youth and taught nearly 1000 adults, families and youth American Sign Language classes throughout the year.

“We believe every person deserves the opportunity to thrive, contribute meaningfully, and experience true belonging.”

Samantha Handley

- We celebrated a significant milestone – the completion ceremony of our first After 22 Program cohort at Daley College. Launched in March 2022 with just 10 students, the program now serves over 52 students and continues to grow, providing a unique post-secondary experience for individuals with developmental disabilities.

Throughout the year, we've also celebrated countless Mission Moments—real-life stories of impact that reflect how our services and team members truly put people at the heart of everything we do. Whether it's access to communication, mental health support, a safe place to live, or meaningful employment, every service at Anixter reflects our core belief: everyone deserves access to what they need to live fully. Together, we are Transforming Expectations—one person at a time. Looking ahead, we are excited to build on our momentum and expand access to life-changing programs and support. Your continued belief in our work inspires us daily.

With deep gratitude,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Samantha Handley". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

Samantha Handley,
Chief Executive Officer



Robert signing

CHS

ROBERT

For most of his adult life, Robert, who is Deaf, never allowed himself to dream of living independently, believing it was impossible. However, his outlook changed when he connected with the Anixter Center's Chicago's Hearing Society (CHS). CHS provided interpreters, co-navigation services, and a strong peer support network, and Robert began to see a different future for himself.

Here is what Robert has to say:

"I have one daughter, and she is hearing. I have five sisters. I'm the only boy in my family, and just about everyone is Deaf. A few members are hard-of-hearing, and we all communicate through sign language. I started losing my vision around 57 and became fully blind in 2021. That's when it became really hard to navigate life. Luckily, I found CHS and they offered me life changing supports and options.

I am so happy I found CHS. Jason, my Case Worker, really helped me a lot. I'm so thankful for all he's done. With his help, I learned I can do things independently again, and I was lucky enough to get my own apartment. CHS supports me in getting where I need to go around the city. I have learned that I'm not alone in my experience, and there are other DeafBlind folks out there who are going through the same things. Before, being alone at home in Aurora was sad. I lost motivation and felt down. But I'm in a secure place now. Since coming to CHS, it's brought life back to me. CHS is the right place to contact for help, and I am very thankful for them."

DISABILITY SERVICES

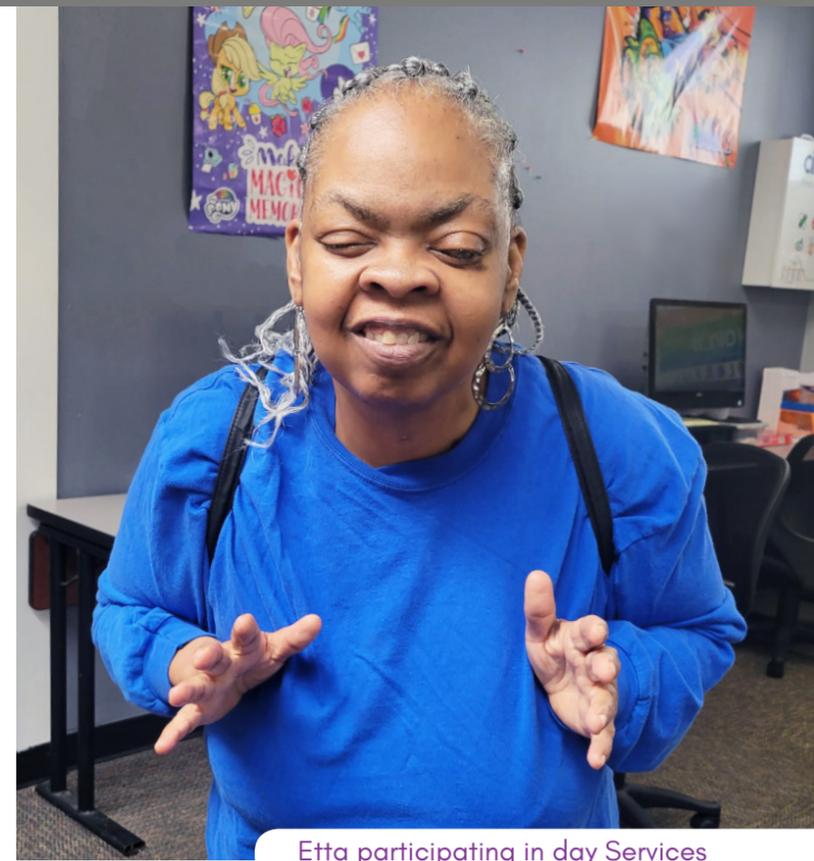
ETTA

Etta was born deaf and while still an infant, lost her vision. At an early age, Etta lived in three psychiatric hospitals for many years due to the scarcity of fully accessible housing in the state of Illinois. While at the hospitals, everything was decided for her, and she had limited autonomy. But in 1989, Anixter Center stepped in and, for over 35 years, has helped Etta reach her full potential. She calls Anixter's Community Integrated Living Arrangement (CILA), McLean House, her home - a place where she can live and experience a rich quality of life with fully accessible housing. During the day, Etta attends Anixter's day program, where independence is fostered and community is experienced in a safe and loving environment - something everyone deserves. "I go to Anixter's day program and have learned how to cook; I learn art; I learn to make crafts; I exercise, and I do so much more," states Etta.

Here is what the staff has to say about Etta:

"Etta has so much support and encouragement at Anixter, but she also supports and encourages us as well. "It's a phenomenal thing to feel and witness. I can honestly say anybody who sees Etta, who has met Etta, ... I mean, she's one of the people I'm glad we can share with the world. She's very intelligent, and we continue to learn so much from her. She teaches us her abilities; what she can do, and it's amazing. For instance, she taught me how to sign my name."

"Etta has taught us how to work with her needs, which many of our clients really cannot do like Etta can. She's very expressive. Despite having what some might consider a disability, she uses her different abilities and is just simply phenomenal."



Etta participating in day Services



Trevon at work

EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

TREVON

"I always wanted to be part of a team, and I am part of the team at Calabria Imports," says Trevon.

Trevon came to Anixter Center through the After 22 Program. He gained work readiness skills through an internship at Mesirow Financial as a porter. Trevon excels at time management skills and understands the importance of doing his best and doing a professional job. While

he thrived in a corporate setting, he expressed a desire to learn other skills and embraced the opportunity to interview with a small, successful business, closer to his home. Shortly thereafter, he was offered a permanent part-time position as a member of the Calabria team.

EMAN

Eman was referred to employment services from Anixter Center's ASL Mental Health Counseling program in November 2024. With the help of her Employment Specialist, Masiya, she secured a part-time job at a Michaels Arts and Crafts store.

Eman identifies as Deaf, so she wasn't sure she could secure employment because of communication challenges she faced during job searches in the past. The support she received from Masiya, helped significantly with securing employment and smoothly navigating onboarding and scheduling concerns as they arose. Eman's story highlights how collaboration, determination, and inclusion can lead to success.



Where Eman works

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

SHARON AND BRUCE

Sharon and Bruce's story began over 50 years ago when their paths crossed at a church gathering. Not long after, fate stepped in when Sharon spotted Bruce at the Howard Line Station. With a spark of boldness, she gave him her number and said, "Call me Monday." And he did.

From that call, their connection quickly deepened into love. By 1979, they exchanged vows and embarked on a journey filled with devotion, laughter, and unshakeable resilience. But their life journey hasn't been easy; both faced the weight of mental health challenges from a very young age.

Together, they began a path toward healing that led them to Anixter Center, where their bond could be supported and flourish. Sharon has lived in Anixter's Community Integrated Living Arrangement (CILA) for nearly four decades, and Bruce, who works part-time, arrives at Sharon's CILA apartment like clockwork every morning. Together, they head to their favorite Chicago diner to share breakfast and plan their day, which usually lies around the corner at the Anixter Hub—their "second home".

At the Hub, they find more than just a place to go - it's where they feel valued, included, and free to be who they are. They find friendship, community, belonging and a place where they can participate in activities and groups. The Hub gives them a purpose and meaning, an opportunity to grow, develop their skills and talents, and live in society.



Sharon and Bruce having breakfast

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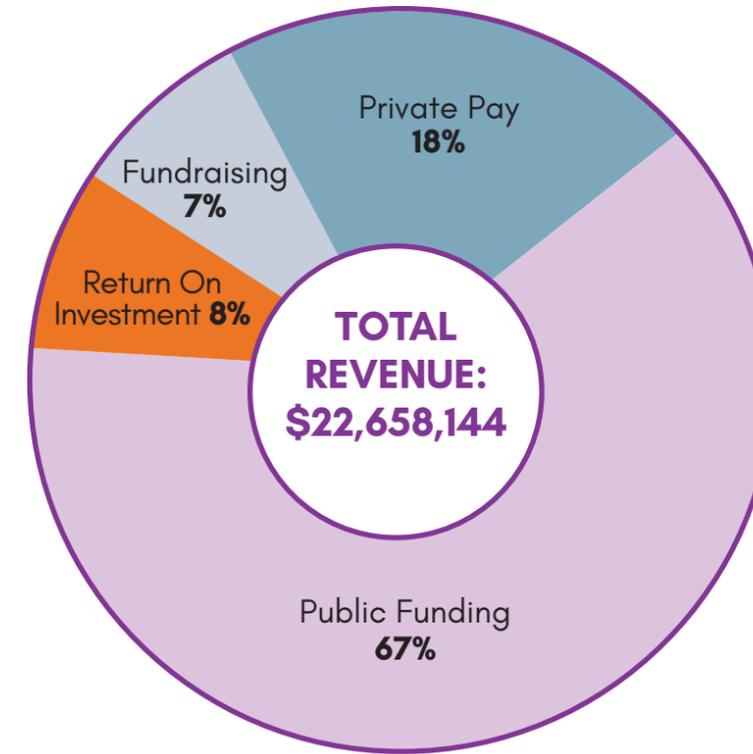
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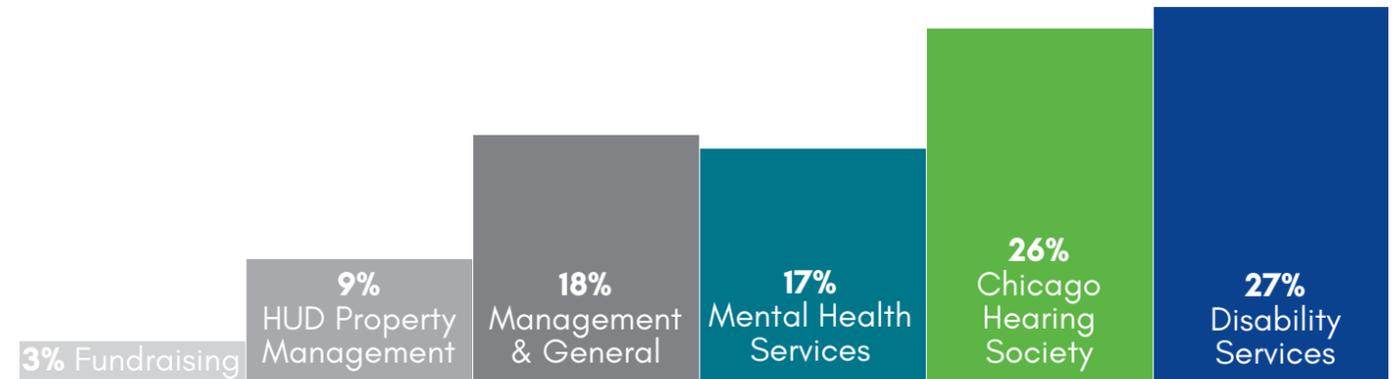
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2024: A YEAR OF MOMENTUM FOR ANIXTER AND OUR CLIENTS.

This year marked significant progress for Anixter as we continued to enhance the spaces and services we provide to our communities.

In October, the Chicago Hearing Society (CHS), a leader in communication access, hearing and assistive technologies, and support services, relocated to a new, modern facility at 2017 North Mendell, nestled in the vibrant Lincoln Park Riverfront area. This progressive neighborhood now hosts a welcoming space where CHS continues to offer essential support services for individuals who are Deaf, DeafBlind, or Hard of Hearing.

At our Wilson Avenue location, we expanded our Community Mental Health services by adding new private therapy rooms and virtual telehealth rooms. These improvements were made to better meet the growing demand for mental health support and to ensure privacy and accessibility for our clients.

We also transformed our Evanston residential setting. Now renamed Unity House, this complete renovation was thoughtfully designed to offer a personalized and empowering living environment for our residents. Unity House now stands as a first-of-its-kind space at Anixter, with enhanced technology options for residents who are DeafBlind and live independently at home.

These milestones reflect our ongoing commitment to innovation, inclusivity, and responsive care. We are proud of the momentum built in 2024 and look forward to continuing to meet the evolving needs of those we serve.

