

Reporting Instrument

OMB Approval No.: 0985-0061
Expiration Date: February 28, 2025

CIL Program Project Performance Report

Fiscal Year: 2024

Grant #: 2411ILILCL

Name of Center: Regional Access & Mobilization Project

Acronym for Center (if applicable): RAMP

State: IL

Counties Served: Boone (IL), DeKalb (IL), Stephenson (IL), Winnebago (IL)

SECTION 1 - GENERAL FUNDING INFORMATION

Section 725(c)(8)(D) of the Act

Indicate the amount received by the CIL as per each funding source. Enter '0' for none.

Item 1.1.1 - All Federal Funds Received

Title VII, Ch. 1, Part B	\$84,778.00
Title VII, Ch. 1, Part C	\$236,328.00
Title VII, Ch. 2	\$0
Other Federal Funds	\$462,262.00
Subtotal - All Federal Funds	\$783,368.00

Item 1.1.2 - Other Government Funds

State Government Funds	\$1,039,569.00
Local Government Funds	\$905,153.00
Subtotal - State and Local Government Funds	\$1,944,722.00

Item 1.1.3 - Private Resources

Foundations, Corporations, or Trust Grants	\$628,987.00
Donations from Individuals	\$132,170.00
Membership Fees	\$0
Investment Income/Endowment	\$207,643.00
Fees for Service (program income, etc.)	\$115,939.00
Other resources (in-kind, fundraising, etc.)	\$347,814.00
Subtotal - Private Resources	\$1,432,553.00

Item 1.1.4 - Total Income

Total income = (Item 1.1.1)+(Item 1.1.2)+(Item 1.1.3)	\$4,160,643.00
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Item 1.1.5 - Pass Through Funds

Amount of other government funds received as pass through funds to consumers (include funds, received on behalf of consumers, that are subsequently passed on to consumers, e.g., personal assistance services, representative payee funds, or Medicaid funds)	\$60,592.00
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Item 1.1.6 - Net Operating Resources

Total Income (Item 1.1.4) minus amount paid out to Consumers (Item 1.1.5) = Net Operating Resources	\$4,100,051.00
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Item 1.2 - Resource Development Activities

Briefly describe the CIL's resource development activities conducted during the reporting period to expand funding from sources other than chapter 1 of title VII of the Act.

During the reporting period, RAMP carried out a wide range of resource development efforts to expand non-federal funding and support long-term sustainability. Our special events continued to play an important role. The Changing Attitudes & Breaking Barriers Luncheon in October 2024 brought in \$57,706. The Sip & Sample in spring 2025 raised \$22,454. The Bad Pants Open Golf Outing in June 2025 generated \$16,025. The Rockford River Run in August 2025 brought in \$39,353, and our Annual Appeal contributed \$56,537 in donations.

Support from foundations and United Way also remained strong. Local foundations contributed \$373,415, and United Way support totaled \$45,247. We received an additional \$131,064 in corporate gifts, individual donations, service club support, and general contributions.

By the end of the year, RAMP's Endowment reached \$1,998,662, helping provide long-term financial stability for our services across Winnebago, Boone, DeKalb, and Stephenson counties. RAMP also secured two State of Illinois DCEO Capital Grants totaling \$253,019 for facility upgrades and parking lot reconstruction. Additional investments from local mental health boards and community partners supported youth programming, employment services, transportation training, and independent living initiatives. These included \$340,160 from the Winnebago County Community Mental Health Board, \$21,000 from the DeKalb County Mental Health Board, \$20,000 from the Stephenson County 708 Board, \$18,000 from the Rockford Mass Transit District, \$3,000 and \$5,000 from the City of DeKalb for transportation and human services funding, and \$10,000 from DeKalb Township.

SECTION 2 - COMPLIANCE INDICATOR 1: PHILOSOPHY

Item 2.1 - Board Member Composition

OILP-ACL Review Tool: Are there at least 51% total board members with significant disabilities? Yes
 Enter requested governing board information in the table below:

Total Number of Board Members	Number of Board Members with Significant Disabilities
14	8

Percentage of Board Members with Significant Disabilities	57.00%
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Item 2.2 - Staff Composition

OILP-ACL Review Tool: Are at least 51% of total staff individuals with disabilities? Yes
 Enter requested staff information in the table below:

	Total Number of FTEs	FTEs Filled by Individuals with Disabilities	FTEs Filled by Individuals From Minority Populations
Decision-Making Staff	7.0	5.0	0.0
Other Staff	35.4	25.3	7.0
Total Number of Employees	42.4	30.3	7.0

Item 2.2.1 - Staff With Disabilities

Percentage of Staff Members with Significant Disabilities	71.00%
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SECTION 3 - INDIVIDUALS RECEIVING SERVICES

Section 704(m)(4)(D) of the Act; Section 725(b)(2) of the Act; Section 725(c)(8)(B) of the Act

Item 3.1 - Number of Consumers Served During the Reporting Period

Include Consumer Service Records (CSRs) for all consumers served during the period

	# of CSRs
(1) Enter the number of active CSRs carried over from the preceding reporting period	412
(2) Enter the number of CSRs started since the start of the reporting period	470
(3) Add lines (1) and (2) to get the total number of consumers served	882

Item 3.2 - IL Plans and Waivers

Indicate the number of consumers in each category below.

	# of Consumers
(1) Number of consumers who signed a waiver	235
(2) Number of consumers with whom an ILP was developed	647
(3) Total number of consumers served during the reporting period	882

Item 3.3 - Number of CSRs Closed by September 30 of the Reporting Period

Include the number of consumer records closed out of the active CSR files during the reporting period because the individual has:

	# of CSRs
(1) Moved	11
(2) Withdrawn	109
(3) Died	7
(4) Completed all goals set	260
(5) Other	91
(6) Add lines (1)+(2)+(3)+(4)+(5) to get total CSRs closed	478

Item 3.4 - Age

Indicate the number of consumers in each category below.

	# of Consumers
(1) Under 5 years old	4

	# of Consumers
(2) Ages 5 - 19	383
(3) Ages 20 - 24	95
(4) Ages 25 - 59	242
(5) Age 60 and Older	158
(6) Age unavailable	0
Total number of consumers by age	882

Item 3.5 - Sex

Indicate the number of consumers in each category below.

	# of Consumers
(1) Number of Females served	369
(2) Number of Males served	513
Total number of consumers by sex	882

Item 3.6 - Race And Ethnicity

Indicate the number of consumers served in each category below. ***Each consumer may be counted under ONLY ONE of the following categories in the PPR/704 Report, even if the consumer reported more than one race and/or Hispanic/Latino ethnicity).***

	# of Consumers
(1) American Indian or Alaska Native	4
(2) Asian	5
(3) Black or African American	188
(4) Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0
(5) White	534
(6) Hispanic/Latino of any race or Hispanic/ Latino only	57
(7) Two or more races	74
(8) Race and ethnicity unknown	20
Total number of consumers served by race/ethnicity	882

Item 3.7 - Disability

Indicate the number of consumers in each category below.

	# of Consumers
(1) Cognitive	407
(2) Mental/Emotional	165
(3) Physical	269

	# of Consumers
(4) Hearing	21
(5) Vision	13
(6) Multiple Disabilities	0
(7) Other	7
Total number of consumers served by disability	882

Item 3.8 - Individuals Served by County During the Reporting Period

List each county within the CIL's service area, as indicated in the CIL's application for Part C funds and the approved SPIL. Add additional rows as necessary. For each county, indicate how many individuals residing in that county were served by the CIL during the reporting period.

County Name	Number of County Residents Served
Boone, IL	93
DeKalb, IL	153
Jo Daviess, IL	1
La Salle, IL	1
Ogle, IL	7
Stephenson, IL	100
Winnebago, IL	527
Total number of consumers served by county	882

SECTION 4 - INDIVIDUAL SERVICES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Item 4.1 - Individual Services

OILP-ACL Review Tool: Does the CIL provide evidence of the following services?

Information and referral: Yes

Independent living skills training: Yes

Peer counseling: Yes

Advocacy - individual and systems: Yes

For the reporting period, indicate in the table below how many consumers requested and received each of the following IL services.

Services	Consumers Requesting Services	Consumers Receiving Services
Advocacy/Legal Services	46	46
Assistive Technology	13	13
Children's Services	141	141
Communication Services	6	6
Counseling and related services	15	15
Family Services	1	1
Housing, Home Modification, and Shelter Services	112	112
IL Skills Training and Life Skills Training	64	64
Information and Referral Services	2420	2420
Mental Restoration Services	0	0
Mobility training	2	2
Peer Counseling Services	11	11
Personal Assistance Services	76	76
Physical Restoration Services	0	0
Preventive Services	124	124
Prostheses, Orthotics, and other appliances	0	0
Recreational Services	3	3
Rehabilitation Technology Services	8	8
Therapeutic Treatment	0	0
Transportation Services	81	81
Youth/Transition Services	269	269
Vocational Services	218	218
Other	22	22

Item 4.2 - I&R Information

To inform ACL how many service providers engage in I&R follow-up contacts regarding access to

transportation, health care services or assistive technology, please indicate the following:

The service provider did **X** / did not ____ engage in follow-up contacts with I & R recipients to document access gained to previously unavailable transportation, health care or assistive technology.

Describe how information and referral services and the other IL core and other IL services are provided to those who request such services in formats accessible to the individual requesting the services. Describe any innovative practices (not mentioned elsewhere in this report) to enhance the availability and effectiveness of IL services.

When individuals contact RAMP, they enter a system designed to remove barriers and increase access to Independent Living (IL) services. Information and Referral (I&R) services are provided in a communication style and format that is accessible for each person, making support easy to use and understand.

For those who prefer in-person assistance, RAMP staff meet with individuals in accessible locations, whether at a RAMP office or another community site that better fits the person's needs. Many others choose remote options, which reduce challenges related to transportation, mobility, or distance. Phone calls, text messaging, email, and virtual platforms such as Zoom, WebEx, Google Meet, and Microsoft Teams allow individuals to connect with RAMP regardless of where they live.

RAMP also provides materials in accessible formats, including large print, Braille, audio recordings, and plain-language documents. Language interpretation, including sign language, and translation of written materials are available upon request. RAMP's use of digital tools such as electronic signature software and online forms helps simplify processes and reduce barriers. For individuals unfamiliar with these tools, RAMP offers training to help them use online options confidently.

Every person who contacts RAMP receives a follow-up within one to three business days. When a request is related only to I&R, staff follow up weekly until the issue is resolved. For those seeking additional IL services, intake appointments are scheduled within two weeks.

RAMP's approach has resulted in the following outcomes for this reporting period:

94% of I&R consumers surveyed said they received the information they needed.

95% reported that the information met their needs.

98% said RAMP staff responded promptly.

92% stated they were satisfied with the I&R services they received.

The impact of this approach is evident in individual experiences, and these are highlighted in the following success stories:

One individual who received I&R services, who is blind and had previously worked with RAMP through our Employment Services, reached out after completing her master's in Clinical Mental Health and receiving a job offer at a private firm. She expressed concern about transitioning from a Mac at home to Windows-based technology at her new job. She needed to learn the NVDA screen-reading software and hoped to find a way to practice before her first day. RAMP connected her with Illinois Assistive Technology, where staff helped her obtain a Windows computer so she could build the skills she needed to start her new position with confidence.

Another individual who received I&R services had a mother who first contacted RAMP in 2017 when her son, who has a diagnosis of Down syndrome, was 10 years old. At that time, RAMP provided information about available supports and connected her with relevant agencies. She contacted RAMP

again in June 2025, explaining that her son had recently turned 18 and she was unsure where to turn for assistance now that he was an adult. RAMP provided referrals to the State of Illinois for support for people with developmental disabilities who need help in their home to maintain independence. She expressed appreciation for RAMP's guidance and plans to reach out again if additional resources or support are required.

Item 4.3 - Peer Relationships and Peer Role Models

Briefly describe how, during the reporting period, the CIL has promoted the development of peer relationships and peer role models among individuals with significant disabilities.

RAMP is committed to promoting peer relationships and role models for individuals with significant disabilities through various peer support and mentoring opportunities. Peer engagement is an integral part of RAMP's programs, and success is measured through survey data. During this reporting period, 67% of individuals who received peer counseling services identified the activities they participated in, exceeding RAMP's 50% goal.

RAMP maintains and develops peer support groups that provide participants with opportunities to socialize, exchange advice, and build friendships. Participants share strategies for navigating life with a disability and support each other in problem-solving and independent living. Among the groups RAMP supports is a general peer discussion group where participants connect, share strategies for independent living, and offer mutual encouragement. Another is the Young Adult Autism Group, which focuses on social interaction and recreational activities, helping participants build peer relationships and support networks over time.

RAMP also organizes events that bring people with disabilities together, such as Accessible Field Day. This event, held in late summer/early fall, offers adaptive recreational activities and a resource fair, providing opportunities for participants and their families to connect with peers, try new experiences, and strengthen social networks in a supportive environment.

RAMP's school-based programs further embed peer support. RAMP delivered three unique curricula to local school districts during the 2024-2025 school year. These curricula included iBelong, Ignite, and Teens 'N Transition. The iBelong program served elementary students with disabilities alongside non-disabled classmates, offering peer support while educating all participants on disability awareness and acceptance. 530 Students participated in iBelong during the 2024-2025 school year. Teachers from the classrooms completed surveys once iBelong concluded. Through these surveys, teachers reported the following program outcomes:

- 100% state that there is increased awareness and acceptance of individual differences.
- 100% report increased knowledge and terminology related to disability and acceptance.
- 100% have noticed an increase in the use of socially appropriate language.
- 100% report increased comfort in discussing disability-related issues or their own experiences.

The Ignite program for middle school students is exclusively for individuals with disabilities and integrates peer support into the curriculum. Students develop skills to plan their futures, practice self-advocacy, identify their personality and communication styles, and set goals for employment and post-secondary education. Thirty-six students participated in Ignite during the 2024-2025 school year. Of those, 25 completed exit surveys and reported the following program outcomes:

80% of students have attended or plan to attend their next IEP or transition meeting.
99% of students can identify their personality and communication styles.
100% of students report practicing self-advocacy skills in 2 or more settings.
60% of students indicate that they feel prepared to advocate for themselves at their next IEP or transition meeting.
80% of students who selected a goal related to employment or post-secondary education/training.

The Teens 'N Transition (T'NT) program supports high school students aged 16-22 in gaining independence and employment skills. Peer support is embedded into the program, which serves only students with disabilities. Participants gain knowledge about post-secondary education and training, practice mock interviews with peers or community partners, set housing and employment goals, and express aspirations for future employment. A case from Belvidere North High School highlights peer support in action in a T'NT classroom. At this particular T'NT class, a student shared his social anxiety about job interviews, prompting an open discussion among peers about mental health and strategies for overcoming challenges. This conversation strengthened connections and increased understanding among classmates. In total, 140 students participated in T'NT during the 2024-2025 school year. Of those, 55 completed an exit survey and reported the following program outcomes:

76% selected a goal for employment or post-secondary education/training.
84% selected a housing-related goal.
85% of students completed a mock interview with a peer or community partner.
95% of students indicate a desire for future employment, either during or after high school.
75% of students can identify at least one mental health resource.

Item 4.4 - Goals Related to Increased Independence in a Significant Life Area

Indicate the number of consumers who set goals related to the following significant life areas, the number whose goals are still in progress, and the number who achieved their goals as a result of the provision of IL services.

Significant Life Area	Goals Set	Goals Achieved	In Progress
Self-Advocacy/Self-Empowerment	112	88	24
Communication	16	10	6
Mobility/Transportation	66	31	35
Community-Based Living	127	73	54
Educational	245	168	77
Vocational	309	221	88
Self-Care	117	57	60
Information Access/Technology	11	5	6
Personal Resource Management	79	41	38
Relocation from a Nursing Home or Institution to Community-Based Living	57	16	41
Community/Social Participation	16	8	8
Other	23	15	8

Item 4.5 - Improved Access To Transportation, Health Care Services, and Assistive Technology

In column one, indicate the number of consumers who required access to previously unavailable transportation, health care services, or assistive technology during the reporting period. Of the consumers listed in column one, indicate in column two, the number of consumers who, as a result of the provision of IL services (including the four core services), achieved access to previously unavailable transportation, health care services, or assistive technology during the reporting period. In column three, list the number of consumers whose access to transportation, health care services or assistive technology is still in progress at the end of the reporting period.

Areas	# of Consumers Requiring Access	# of Consumers Achieving Access	# of Consumers Whose Access is in Progress
(A) Transportation	87	59	24
(B) Health Care Services	85	55	25
(C) Assistive Technology	96	79	15

Note: For most IL services, a consumer's access to previously unavailable transportation, health care and assistive technology is documented through his or her CSR. In some instances, consumers may achieve an outcome solely through information and referral (I&R) services. To document these instances as successful outcomes, providers are not required to create CSRs for these consumers, but must be able to report that follow-up contacts with these consumers showed access to previously unavailable transportation, health care and assistive technology.

Item 4.6 - Self-Help and Self-Advocacy

Briefly describe how the CIL has promoted self-help and self-advocacy among individuals with significant disabilities during the reporting period.

RAMP works with individuals with disabilities to support personal growth, independence, and self-advocacy. Staff provide guidance and skill-building while allowing consumers to make their own decisions, helping them take control of daily life and plan for the future. Regular meetings with RAMP staff focus on setting goals, scheduling tasks, and tracking progress. A consumer may pause services if they are not ready to engage, reinforcing the expectation that progress depends on active participation. Nearly all goals across RAMP programs are designed to increase self-help and self-advocacy skills.

During this reporting period, RAMP hosted a successful Youth Leadership Initiative program in which youth participants had the opportunity, over several weeks in the summer, to develop leadership, problem-solving, and advocacy skills. Activities included collaborative projects, learning about disability rights, and engaging with community leaders. Illinois State Representative Maurice West visited the program, sharing his path into public service and encouraging youth to see themselves as active contributors to their communities. These experiences provided youth with the opportunity to see themselves as future leaders in the community and beyond. RAMP's Summer Youth Leadership Program is made possible by the generous support of the Illinois SILC.

RAMP's employment and pre-employment programs support individuals in gaining work experience, building transferable skills, and strengthening self-advocacy. Programs including Vocational Rehabilitation Milestone, Ticket to Work, Project SEARCH, and Fast Track assist participants with

career exploration, workplace readiness, and job placement. During this reporting period, these services reached more than 410 individuals and helped 56 obtain employment.

RAMP recognizes that a significant barrier to self-help and self-sufficiency is uncertainty about losing essential public benefits when entering the workforce. Many individuals served through RAMP's employment programs have limited or no prior work experience, or are returning to work for the first time after acquiring a disability. To address this concern, RAMP, alongside other advocates, supported changes to the State of Illinois reimbursement structure for benefits planning services. Previously, there was no reimbursement for this critical support. As a result of these advocacy efforts, benefits planning is now a reimbursable service, allowing providers to be compensated for completing the benefits planning process. This change has created new opportunities for RAMP to support individuals on their path toward employment and independence. Benefits Planning Services are designed to help individuals who receive Social Security disability benefits and other public benefits understand how employment may impact their benefits. Services address questions and concerns related to working while receiving benefits and assist individuals in navigating potential changes. Funded through Vocational Rehabilitation, benefits planning is recommended for individuals receiving Social Security benefits and can also support those who are unsure whether employment is the right fit. Services are individualized and tailored to each consumer's unique needs and circumstances.

RAMP was selected to participate in the statewide Pathways to Partnerships (PTP) pilot program. Through PTP, staff collaborate with the Illinois Department of Human Services and local schools to help students with disabilities prepare for the transition to adulthood. What sets PTP apart from other programs is its employment component: youth participants gain real work experience in the community while developing independence, workplace skills, and self-advocacy. The program integrates career preparation with practical opportunities, giving students a platform to practice decision-making and self-advocacy in real-world settings.

RAMP's Independent Living program also supports adults in developing self-help and self-advocacy skills. One consumer, who had recently lost her primary caregiver, was initially at risk of moving into a nursing home because her family felt unprepared to take on her care. Independent Living Specialists assessed her abilities and guided her on managing finances, switching utilities into her name, setting up home internet, and navigating transportation independently. Over time, she gained confidence in making her own decisions about daily activities, including travel and household management, allowing her to live independently.

RAMP tracks outcomes for consumers working on self-advocacy and independent living skills. Throughout the reporting period, 84% of consumers who received support in independent living identified the skill they improved, and 90% of those who received self-advocacy assistance named at least one self-advocacy skill they engaged in.

Item 4.7 - Additional Information Concerning Individual Services or Achievements

Please provide any additional description or explanation concerning individual services or achievements reported in Section 4, including outstanding success stories and/or major obstacles encountered.

Although many success stories are woven throughout this report, a few additional examples show the different ways RAMP supports and empowers people with disabilities in Boone, DeKalb, Stephenson, and Winnebago Counties.

Youth Education & Advocacy Success Story

A student experiencing significant anxiety was struggling with academic performance and truancy. The student's parent contacted a Youth Education Advocate for assistance in working with the school to find a workable solution. The student wished to remain eligible for school sports while also expressing that a full-time on-campus schedule was contributing to their anxiety and making it difficult to succeed.

Despite multiple meetings throughout the year, the parent had been unable to gain agreement from the IEP team on an alternative learning arrangement. The Advocate collaborated with the parent to gather documentation, including information on the student's anxiety diagnosis, relevant school handbook policies that allow flexibility for students with IEPs, and a written statement from the student advocating for their own needs.

The Advocate and parent met with the school staff to present the information. After reviewing the documentation and hearing directly from the parent and student, the team agreed to develop a modified schedule that allows the student to participate in virtual learning several days each week. The student reported being happy with this plan and shared that they felt heard and supported for the first time during the process.

Employment Services Success Story

A consumer participated in Project SEARCH during the 2024-2025 school year. Through Project SEARCH, consumers complete three 10-week internships in different departments and receive support from a collaborative team that includes RAMP's employment specialists. The consumer was a motivated individual with a strong interest in music and a long-term goal of working in the entertainment field. After discussing the limited availability of entry-level entertainment positions in the local area, he remained determined to gain work experience in other industries to build the skills needed to pursue his long-term goals.

His first internship was in food service. After an initial challenge due to a miscommunication with his supervisor, he refocused, followed safety and sanitation procedures, and completed all required duties. He completed the internship on good terms and gained valuable experience in a field with broad entry-level opportunities.

His second internship was in environmental services, where he excelled. He built positive relationships with mentors, coworkers, and other staff, and interacted well with patients and visitors. Staff noted his strong work ethic and positive attitude.

The consumer's third internship involved greeting visitors and assisting with wayfinding at a front desk location. He again demonstrated strong interpersonal skills and was well-received by staff and guests. His enthusiasm for music helped him connect with others, and he regularly engaged peers and staff in conversations and informal activities related to his musical interests.

The consumer later attended a local community expo and job fair. Although there were few entry-level positions available, he had recently completed a networking lesson and was prepared to apply those skills. With support from his employment specialist, he practiced introducing himself, asking about opportunities, and providing his resume. He approached a music industry booth that aligned with his personal interests.

A few days later, the consumer received an email inviting him to interview for a part-time position. He completed the interview and was offered a logistics role, which he accepted. He began working in September 2025 and reported being pleased to secure a position connected to his long-term interests and career goals.

Home Modification Success Story

A consumer reached out to RAMP because she was having trouble navigating the steps in her home. To get to her basement, she had to walk to her garage, get in her car, and drive around to a side door, a routine that had become increasingly difficult. She was determined to regain her independence.

RAMP, along with other CILs in Illinois, has access to limited funding to help consumers with home modifications so they can stay independent and safely remain in their homes. The consumer asked about installing a stairlift to make it easier to get to her basement. At the time, the program was just getting started, and she was told the process might take a while. Even so, she stayed patient, knowing the result would make a big difference in her daily life.

After several months of coordination, the consumer got her stairlift. She was thrilled and shared her gratitude with a heartfelt message: "Thank you so much for all your hard work in getting the chairlift installed. I love it. Brightest blessings."

Community Reintegration Success Story

The consumer was living in a nursing home and worked with RAMP through the Community Reintegration program to transition back into independent living. He wanted to return to the same apartment building he had lived in before his hospitalization and nursing home stay. However, he owed back rent because he had been unable to provide a 30-day notice while hospitalized and in the nursing home. At the time, the consumer had a tracheostomy and was initially unable to speak, and he did not have the funds to pay the back rent required to regain his apartment.

To meet this goal, RAMP's Community Reintegration staff helped the consumer develop a plan to save \$200 from his monthly Social Security allowance to contribute toward the owed rent. The staff also applied for a grant through Catholic Charities to cover part of the balance. Additionally, RAMP staff contacted the State DHS manager and obtained approval to pay the remaining rent, ensuring the consumer could transition back into his apartment.

As a result, the consumer successfully got his apartment and transitioned back to independent living. He expressed excitement and gratitude, saying he felt blessed to have his own apartment again.

Independent Living Services Success Story

The consumer came to RAMP facing multiple barriers, including homelessness, unemployment, no income, and lack of transportation. Her vehicle was in the shop, making it difficult to access resources, attend appointments, or maintain stability.

The consumer faced difficulty securing housing due to a history of evictions. A RAMP Independent Living Specialist connected her with community agencies and supports for housing assistance and guided her in breaking tasks into manageable steps, helping to reduce her stress and stay focused.

Through the strong partnership with RAMP's Independent Living Specialist, the consumer has since gained employment and is in the process of having her SSI benefits reinstated. With her income restored, she qualified for assistance from a local Community Action Agency to cover her car repair costs. Though initially hesitant due to a previous experience, she agreed to move forward with encouragement and support from Independent Living Services staff, who attended the appointment with her. Having reliable transportation will now allow her to maintain employment and access additional services.

Bus Training Success Story

In November 2024, Project SEARCH DeKalb identified an opportunity to integrate community-based instruction with a meaningful enrichment activity when disability advocate Temple Grandin was scheduled to speak at DeKalb High School. This event was selected as a real-world context for teaching interns to use DeKalb County's fixed-route public transportation system independently.

Before the trip, a RAMP Employment Specialist provided whole-class instruction on using fixed-route buses, including reading schedules, identifying bus stops, understanding routes, and reviewing appropriate rider behavior. The Employment Specialist and the Project SEARCH interns collaboratively planned the trip, including departure times and contingency planning. Interns were also prepared for the unpredictable nature of public transportation, with a focus on flexibility, problem-solving, and emotional regulation.

On the day of the event, interns walked together to the bus stop. This was the first time any intern had used the fixed-route bus system, and many expressed anxiety. When the bus arrived, the group encountered an unplanned challenge: the standard larger bus servicing the route had broken down, and a smaller one was substituted, which could not accommodate the entire group at once. This unexpected change caused increased stress for some interns.

With the Employment Specialist's support and peer encouragement, interns practiced coping strategies and problem-solving skills. They were reminded of the planning that allowed extra travel time and worked together to divide into two groups. The first group boarded the bus, while the second group adjusted their plan and arrived approximately 30 minutes later. Despite the delay, both groups arrived successfully and had sufficient time to engage with the event, including an opportunity to speak with Temple Grandin before her presentation briefly.

SECTION 5 - PROVISION OF SERVICES

Item 5.1 - Compliance Indicator 2: Provision of Services on a Cross-Disability Basis

Briefly describe how, during the reporting period, the CIL has ensured that IL services are provided to eligible individuals with a diversity of significant disabilities and individuals who are members of populations that are unserved or underserved, without restrictions based on the particular type or types of significant disability and in a manner that is neither targeted nor limited to a particular type of significant disability.

RAMP takes a proactive and intentional approach to community outreach to ensure individuals throughout our service area are aware of and able to access our programs. To support this work, RAMP employs a dedicated Community Engagement Coordinator who oversees outreach initiatives and ensures our efforts reach people of all backgrounds. A key focus of this role is identifying and pursuing outreach opportunities that engage underserved populations within the disability community.

Throughout the year, RAMP maintained a strong presence in the community by delivering 176 informational presentations and hosting 52 outreach booths at events across the region. These activities allowed us to connect directly with community members, increase awareness of available resources, and build partnerships with local organizations. RAMP remains committed to supporting individuals of all ages and disabilities, with an emphasis on equitable access to services regardless of background or circumstance.

In addition to broad outreach efforts, RAMP prioritizes direct, individualized support for people who may be disconnected from resources or experience barriers to accessing services. Staff regularly meet with consumers in settings that are most convenient and comfortable for them, including libraries, schools, shelters, coffee shops, and private residences. By meeting individuals where they are, RAMP reduces access barriers and ensures people receive personalized guidance and support tailored to their needs.

Item 5.2 - Alternative Formats

Briefly describe how, during the reporting period, the CIL has ensured the availability in alternative formats of all of its written policies and materials and IL services, as appropriate.

RAMP is committed to making sure individuals can easily obtain and understand information about our services by offering materials in a variety of accessible formats. Upon request, resources can be provided in large print, Braille, or audio formats. Frequently used documents are available in Spanish, and additional language translation services are arranged when needed. Individuals may also request accommodations such as American Sign Language interpreters or translated materials to support effective communication.

At the start of services, consumers are informed of their rights, including their ability to request reasonable accommodations related to their disabilities. This process helps ensure that services and information are delivered in ways that meet individual needs.

Item 5.3 - Equal Access

(A) Briefly describe how, during the reporting period, the CIL has ensured equal access of individuals with significant disabilities, including communication and physical access, to the center's services, programs, activities, resources, and facilities, whether publicly or privately funded. Equal access, for the purposes of this indicator, means that the same access is provided to any individual with a significant disability regardless of the individual's type of significant disability.

Throughout the reporting period, RAMP has taken deliberate steps to ensure individuals with significant disabilities can fully access its programs, services, activities, resources, and facilities. All RAMP locations are designed to be accessible and compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act, featuring elements such as ramps, widened entryways, and accessible restroom facilities to meet a range of mobility needs.

Beyond physical access, RAMP prioritizes effective communication by offering supports such as sign language interpreters, captioning services, and assistive technology to support individuals with hearing or visual disabilities. Offices are also outfitted with Braille signage to improve navigation and accessibility for individuals with visual impairments. Accommodation needs are discussed during intake or initial contact to tailor services to each individual's specific needs.

To maintain and improve accessibility, RAMP conducts yearly accessibility reviews at each office location. These assessments help identify any existing or potential barriers and guide the development of action plans to address and eliminate them, ensuring ongoing access for all individuals served.

(B) Briefly describe how, during the reporting period, the CIL has advocated for and conducted activities that promote the equal access to all services, programs, activities, resources, and facilities in society, whether public or private, and regardless of funding source, for individuals with significant disabilities. Equal access, for the purposes of this indicator, means that the same access provided to individuals without disabilities is provided in the center's service area to individuals with significant disabilities.

During the reporting period, RAMP engaged in individual and systems advocacy activities to promote equal access to services, programs, activities, resources, and facilities for individuals with significant disabilities. The following are some highlights of this work, which addressed barriers across key systems, including education, housing, transportation, health and mental health services, employment, domestic violence, recreation, and public safety, through advocacy, collaboration, training, and accessibility reviews.

In the education sector, RAMP's Youth Education Advocacy services supported students with disabilities and their families in understanding their rights and in navigating school systems to secure equal access to education. During the reporting period, 173 individuals worked on goals related to equal access to education, highlighting RAMP's role in addressing educational barriers and promoting equitable opportunities for students with disabilities.

RAMP also conducted advocacy related to housing and community living by collaborating with statewide, regional, and local partners to address housing barriers and promote greater access to affordable, accessible housing. These efforts focused on identifying systemic challenges and elevating the need for inclusive housing options for individuals with disabilities. Listening sessions were hosted to

gather input from community members regarding housing barriers.

In transportation, RAMP worked with providers to address accessibility concerns and improve service delivery. RAMP staff participated in quarterly meetings with the Rockford Mass Transit District and conducted disability-related trainings for both RMTD and the City of DeKalb public transit staff.

RAMP engaged in health care and mental health advocacy by working with community partners to support accessibility and effective service delivery. Staff attended meetings with CESSA to support mental health crisis response teams and participated in the Family Peace Center task force to help ensure accessibility within visitation services. RAMP also contacted a local health care provider to address outdated terminology in accessible areas, prompting the provider to complete a self-audit and update language where needed.

In the areas of employment and economic advocacy, RAMP worked with the Living Wages Thriving Communities team to support efforts to improve wages and funding for human services workers.

RAMP's advocacy also extended to DV/SA survivor services. In collaboration with the City of Rockford Mayor's Office and the Office on Domestic Violence & Human Trafficking Prevention, RAMP identified and worked to remove barriers for survivors with disabilities in Winnebago County. Funding from an OVW grant helped address service gaps for these survivors and ended in the summer of 2025. Through the project, RAMP and local domestic violence and sexual assault providers worked together to improve policies, procedures, and staff knowledge, enhancing their ability to serve survivors with disabilities.

RAMP operates a robust community training program that provides workshops and training to local businesses, schools, and organizations to promote equal access and disability inclusion. During the reporting period, RAMP conducted trainings on a range of topics, including Disability Awareness, Ableism, Independent Living philosophy, children and disability, mental health, accessible social media, and poverty response. Some of the organizations that participated in these trainings included Rockford Promise, Van Matre, Boone County Health Department, Harlem School District 122, DeKalb Visitors Bureau, City of Freeport, and the Northern Illinois Food Bank. These sessions provided participants with practical strategies to improve accessibility and create inclusive environments for individuals with disabilities.

RAMP's systems change advocate remained involved in statewide and national advocacy efforts, including participation in the biweekly CIL Funding Subcommittee of the Illinois Network of Centers for Independent Living Advocacy Committee, the INCIL Advocacy Retreat, and the National Council on Independent Living Conference in Washington, DC. RAMP also participated in Medicaid funding advocacy efforts, given its importance in maintaining access to health care and community-based services.

Accessibility assessments were conducted throughout the reporting period to identify and address physical and programmatic barriers. RAMP completed accessibility assessments for a variety of community facilities, including Goodwill's new facility, NAMI, Children's Safe Harbor, Adventure Works, Tyler's Justice Center, VOICES of Stephenson County, both Rockford Christian Schools, and a historic rental property in Rockford. These assessments helped organizations improve access and compliance with accessibility standards.

Item 5.4 - Consumer Information

Briefly describe how, during the reporting period, the CIL has ensured that consumers have the opportunity to develop and achieve their goals (either with or without an ILP) and that the consumer has the opportunity to express satisfaction with the center and such consumer satisfaction results are evaluated by the center.

RAMP actively seeks out and values consumer feedback as a critical component of delivering high-quality, consumer-driven services. Individuals who receive services from RAMP are invited to share their experiences through consumer satisfaction surveys, which are typically distributed electronically upon completion of a service. Surveys are available in alternative formats upon request to ensure accessibility. In addition, RAMP participates annually in a statewide consumer satisfaction survey administered by the Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC). The most recent statewide survey results reflect strong satisfaction with RAMP's services. Combining "strongly agree" and "agree" responses: 83% felt they were treated with respect, 81% said staff responded promptly, 71% thought they were given options and encouraged to make their own decisions, 77% received the information or assistance they needed, and 76% reported that staff helped them achieve their goals.

At the core of RAMP's service model is a commitment to consumer choice, self-determination, and individualized goal setting. Direct services staff receive training at hire and on an ongoing, as-needed basis in consumer-driven goal-setting approaches, with an emphasis on ensuring that consumers take the lead in identifying their priorities, goals, and next steps. Staff follow up with consumers on an agreed-upon and flexible cadence to review progress, address barriers, and adjust goals as needed.

RAMP services are tailored to each consumer's unique goals and circumstances. Consumers work collaboratively with advocates to develop plans that support independence, whether or not they choose to complete a formal Independent Living Plan (ILP). To support informed participation from the outset, new consumers receive a comprehensive handbook outlining their rights and responsibilities, available accommodations, HIPAA policies, the complaint and grievance process, and an overview of RAMP services. This ensures consumers know what to expect and understand how to engage in services.

Item 5.5 - Consumer Service Record Requirements

Briefly describe how, during the reporting period, the CIL ensured that each consumer's CSR contains all of the required information.

RAMP's intake process is designed to collect all essential information from consumers while ensuring they understand their options and rights. During intake, staff gather demographic details, provide a clear overview of RAMP's services, and explain the choice to create or waive an Independent Living Plan (ILP). Consumers indicate their decision by signing the intake form. Staff also obtain signatures for the Release of Information to support coordination with other agencies, and consumers acknowledge that they have received and understood their rights and responsibilities.

All consumer information is maintained in a paperless, electronic file system that meets state and federal requirements for security and privacy. To ensure data remains accurate and complete, Service Directors, supervisors, and program assistants routinely review and update consumer files, including performing periodic quality assurance checks. Supervisors conduct random audits of records and monitor Intake and Referral (I&R) documentation to verify that staff are following procedures correctly. RAMP staff receive training as needed whenever there are updates to consumer files, procedures, or data-collection requirements, ensuring consistent, compliant practices across the organization.

Item 5.6 - Community Activities

Community Activities Table

In the table below, summarize the community activities involving the CIL's staff and board members during the reporting period. For each activity, identify the primary disability issue(s) addressed as well as the type of activity conducted. Describe the primary objective(s) and outcome(s) for each activity. Add more rows as necessary.

Issue Area	Activity Type	Hours Spent	Objective(s)	Outcomes(s)
Assistive Technology	Collaboration/Networking	2	Increase access to assistive technology by locating resources and encouraging use among unserved and underserved populations, including minority and urban/rural communities.	RAMP staff networked at a conference hosted by the Illinois Telecommunications Access Corporation. Attendees shared information on increasing the delivery of free assistive technology available to Illinois residents with communication needs.
Assistive Technology	Outreach	18.25	To market free amplified phones and communication equipment to Illinois residents.	Increased community and school awareness of ITAC and RAMP services through targeted outreach at multiple events, fairs, and direct engagement with educators, resulting in broader knowledge of available assistive technology resources.
Assistive Technology	Technical Assistance	0.25	To assist in accessibility efforts and reduce barriers in the community for individuals with disabilities.	Guided a local church on contractors who could install automatic door openers to improve access.
Education	Collaboration/Networking	69.75	Strengthen youth and family support services by expanding partnerships, delivering trainings, coordinating programs, and engaging community, school, and organizational stakeholders to enhance resources and opportunities for consumers.	Increased collaboration with schools and community partners, improved access to trainings and resources, expanded program awareness, and strengthened pathways for youth through coordinated events, presentations, tours, and strategic outreach.

Issue Area	Activity Type	Hours Spent	Objective(s)	Outcomes(s)
Education	Outreach	23.25	Improve access to educational resources and programs for unserved and underserved populations, including minority and urban/rural communities, and encourage their utilization.	Increased awareness of RAMP programs among families, students, educators, and partner agencies, improving referral processes and enhancing collaboration across community and educational settings.
Education	Technical Assistance	0.75	To assist in accessibility efforts and reduce barriers in educational settings for individuals with disabilities.	Provided resources and information to a school employee to improve safety and accessibility for students arriving and departing school.
Education	Community Education/Public Information Services	698.25	Increase community understanding of the barriers that youth with disabilities face when accessing education.	Expanded youth education and community awareness through extensive delivery of RAMP's school curriculum and disability-related trainings, strengthening self-advocacy, educator knowledge, and inclusive practices across schools and organizations.
Education	Community and Systems Advocacy	3.25	To address systems advocacy concerns and complaints related to education.	Increased advocacy for equitable education by engaging legislators, addressing harmful policy proposals, and supporting educators reporting discrimination, helping protect the rights and services of students with disabilities.
Employment	Collaboration/Networking	1480.75	Promote employment opportunities for people with disabilities by actively participating in community coalitions and committees.	RAMP joined the Illinois Pathways to Partnerships pilot program to improve transition, community-integrated employment, and independent living outcomes for youth with disabilities. RAMP also partnered with three Project SEARCH sites in our region.

Issue Area	Activity Type	Hours Spent	Objective(s)	Outcomes(s)
Employment	Outreach	107.75	Promote employment opportunities by connecting unserved and underserved populations, including minority and urban/rural groups, with available workforce resources and programs.	Expanded awareness of youth and adult employment programs by presenting to schools, case managers, students, families, and community partners, hosting events and booths, and coordinating tours, info nights, and outreach activities.
Employment	Technical Assistance	38	Provide the community with information, guidance, and resources regarding employment.	Conducted CARF surveys.
Employment	Community Education/Public Information Services	704.75	Increase community awareness of the employment barriers individuals with disabilities face and highlight the benefits of hiring and supporting them.	Shared RAMP employment programs and the value of the untapped workforce of people with disabilities with the community, and delivered lessons to youth with disabilities on pre-employment and job readiness skills.
Employment	Community and Systems Advocacy	50.5	To address systems advocacy concerns and complaints related to employment.	Advocated for Employment Services and RAMP programs by meeting with legislators, attending Advocacy Day, submitting testimony, and engaging the community to promote funding, pay equity, and support for people with disabilities.
Health Care Services	Outreach	23	Increase awareness and utilization of healthcare services among underserved populations, including minority and urban/rural communities.	RAMP conducted outreach to local nursing home residents and managed care organizations to share opportunities for community reintegration.
Health Care Services	Community Education/Public Information Services	0.5	Enhance the community's awareness of the healthcare access issues faced by people with disabilities.	Exchanged information with local dental providers to improve RAMP's resource list.
Health Care Services	Community and Systems Advocacy	12.25	To address systems advocacy concerns and complaints related to health care.	RAMP engaged in advocacy on Medicaid/Medicare cuts and assisted suicide bills; met with a local health system to update signage, and supported efforts for improved emergency response for the disability community.

Issue Area	Activity Type	Hours Spent	Objective(s)	Outcomes(s)
Housing	Collaboration/Networking	107.25	Promote housing opportunities for people with disabilities by actively participating in community coalitions and committees.	RAMP supported the Home Modification Program, attended the Northern Illinois Housing Coalition, and attended a variety of community-based organization meetings.
Housing	Technical Assistance	5.75	Provide the community with information, guidance, and resources on housing.	Consulted on universal design with developers and advised community-based organizations on housing accessibility.
Housing	Community Education/Public Information Services	37	Enhance the community's awareness of the housing access issues faced by people with disabilities.	RAMP maintained and updated the regional housing list, added new resources, and supported Home Modification program planning and problem-solving.
Housing	Community and Systems Advocacy	18.75	To address systems advocacy concerns and complaints related to housing.	RAMP advocated for accessible housing by collaborating with legislators, national and local partners, and legal resources to protect residents' rights, sustain critical funding, and prevent unnecessary displacement.
Transportation	Collaboration/Networking	38.25	Enhance transportation options for people with disabilities by actively participating in community coalitions and committees.	RAMP collaborated with Rockford Mass Transit District and the City of DeKalb to provide bus training services.
Transportation	Outreach	3	Improve access to transportation for unserved and underserved populations, including minority and urban/rural communities, and encourage their utilization.	Provided a transportation presentation to a local ID/DD group home so that residents can be more knowledgeable about RAMP's bus training services and local transportation resources.
Transportation	Technical Assistance	4.75	Provide information, guidance, and resources regarding accessible transportation to the community.	RAMP provided guidance to the Rockford Mass Transit District on the rollout of a new app that will enhance communication between RMTD and riders.

Issue Area	Activity Type	Hours Spent	Objective(s)	Outcomes(s)
Transportation	Community Education/Public Information Services	24.25	Enhance the community's awareness of transportation access issues faced by people with disabilities.	RAMP provided transportation information to the community, provided disability awareness training for transit staff, updated resource guides, and hosted community forums on transit accessibility.
Transportation	Community and Systems Advocacy	7.5	To address systems advocacy concerns and complaints related to transportation.	Attended the annual SILC Transportation Conference to discuss disability-related transportation issues in Illinois and to share specific transportation concerns from RAMP's service area.

Item 5.7 - Description of Community Activities

For the community activities mentioned above, provide additional details such as the role of the CIL staff board members and/or consumers, names of any partner organizations and further descriptions of the specific activities, services and benefits.

RAMP staff dedicated substantial time throughout the year to community outreach, preparation, and event coordination. Behind the scenes, this included mailing surveys, social media marketing, creating flyers and presentations, assembling materials, and distributing rack cards to ensure smooth events and effective communication with community partners and program participants. Our outreach efforts also included a strong on-the-ground presence. In total, RAMP delivered 176 presentations and trainings to school districts, colleges, disability and advocacy organizations, housing and homelessness partners, healthcare and rehabilitation organizations, managed care organizations, community and nonprofit groups, and local municipalities. These presentations promoted RAMP's services, accessibility, advocacy, and community support. RAMP also hosted 52 community booths to connect directly with residents. RAMP hosted booths at events including NIU events with Dr. Temple Grandin, the Social Emotional Learning Summer Symposium, Rockford Juneteenth Celebration, DeKalb Pride, National Night Out, and multiple food pantries.

Additional achievements included:

- *Collaborating on Accessible Field Day, which provided community members with resources and experiences for accessible recreation, including accessible canoes and a community resource fair.
- *Contributing to Parent Education Nights and Cooking Classes.
- *Staff facilitated autism peer groups, accessible social media trainings, and mental health awareness initiatives.
- *Representing RAMP in meetings with local government officials, legislators, and policy-focused events, including town halls, the ADA anniversary, and domestic violence awareness initiatives.
- *Planning, organizing, and participating in community-focused events, such as the Audubon Accessible Bird Outing, panel discussions, and domestic violence/sexual assault awareness events.
- *Reaching out to 28 police departments regarding mandated autism training, collaborating with the

Salvation Army, Elder Care Services, Birth to 5 programs, and meeting virtually with homeless services and nonprofit partners to strengthen community connections.

*Hosting regular peer group game nights and social events, including summer socials for Project SEARCH participants, to provide structured opportunities for social connection, skill-building, and engagement.

*Conducting 28 personal assistant orientations for individuals supporting those at risk of nursing home placement.

Please note that RAMP tracks time spent addressing attitudinal and physical barriers in the community. This fiscal year, staff recorded 12,348.5 hours dedicated to removing obstacles to equality and accessibility, in addition to the hours reported in Section 5.6.

SECTION 6 - ANNUAL PROGRAM AND FINANCIAL PLANNING OBJECTIVES

6.1 - Work Plan for the Reporting Period

Item 6.1.1 - Achievements

OILP-ACL Review Tool: Does the work plan include goals and objectives and also describe the CIL's progress on each of those goals or objectives during the project period? Yes
Discuss the work plan's proposed goals and objectives and the progress made in achieving them during the reporting period.

RAMP Center for Independent Living Annual Plan
FY 2024-2025

Goal 1: Provide High-Quality Services by Meeting All Deliverables and Outcomes in Compliance with Local, State, and Federal Contracts

Objective 1.1: Adhere to all local, state, and federal contract requirements through regular audits and reporting

Activities:

Submit required reports to stakeholders within designated timelines.

Create a checklist of contract requirements to ensure all are met.

Progress: RAMP developed a new grant tracking tool in collaboration with the services, development, and finance teams to monitor progress on grant requirements and budget plans. All required reports have been submitted on time.

Objective 1.2: Track and complete all program deliverables as outlined in logic models within set timelines

Activities:

Conduct bi-annual reviews with program leads to discuss deliverable status.

Progress: RAMP has met this objective. Deliverable discussions have taken place as needed, often exceeding the goal of two per year.

Objective 1.3: Regularly assess program outcomes to ensure alignment with performance metrics and community impact goals

Activities:

Hold quarterly review meetings to analyze outcomes and make necessary adjustments.

Develop a dashboard for real-time tracking of performance metrics.

Progress: RAMP reviews program outcomes through meetings between the Chief Services Officer and department leads. Department leads have developed tools to track progress, and a quarterly-updated Program Data Dashboard is used to monitor goals, inform capacity planning, and support data-driven decision-making across departments.

Goal 2: Launch Virtual Learning Platform for Disability Awareness Training

Objective 2.1: Develop and finalize an online training platform focused on disability awareness

Activities:

Identify platform software and finalize selection.

Develop content and modules on disability awareness.

Progress: RAMP selected Thinkific as the platform for virtual delivery. A menu of trainings is now available, with additional trainings being added, covering topics such as Disability Rights, ADA Awareness, Service Animals, Judicial System Accessibility, and Poverty Response.

Objective 2.2: Ensure the platform includes courses on disability etiquette, legal rights, accessibility, and inclusion

Activities:

Organize and structure courses to cover key topics effectively.

Conduct a review to ensure materials are inclusive and accessible.

Progress: Training covers Service Animal Awareness, Social Media Accessibility, Disability Awareness, Ableism Awareness, and an ADA-Compliant Workplace. All trainings meet accessibility standards, including closed captioning.

Objective 2.3: Promote the platform to local businesses and organizations for widespread use

Activities:

Develop marketing materials to promote the platform.

Partner with local business associations to reach a wider audience.

Progress: RAMP uses Constant Contact and other tools to promote the platform and expand partnerships with local businesses, chambers of commerce, and visitor bureaus. Invitations to present on social media accessibility have further promoted the platform.

Objective 2.4: Track engagement and gather feedback for continuous platform improvement

Activities:

Implement an analytics tool to track user activity and engagement.

Send surveys to users after completing courses for feedback.

Regularly review data and make adjustments to improve user experience.

Progress: Engagement data is tracked through Thinkific. Best practices for survey collection are being developed for implementation in the new fiscal year. Users can report issues or concerns through multiple channels.

Goal 3: Increase Engagement with Underserved Communities

Objective 3.1: Collaborate with cultural and community organizations serving African American, Indigenous, LGBTQ+, and immigrant populations

Activities:

Identify and reach out to relevant community organizations for partnerships.

Develop collaborative outreach and trust-building plans.

Attend and participate in community events to foster relationships.

Progress: Partnerships have been established, including hosting agencies during a Summer Learning Series. Outreach plans were executed, and RAMP participated in Pride parades and Juneteenth celebrations. Staff serve on 96 external committees supporting underserved populations.

Objective 3.2: Develop culturally relevant materials and services for diverse populations

Activities:

Translate and adapt materials to suit cultural and linguistic differences.

Review materials to ensure relevance and accessibility.

Progress: Spanish translations of popular materials are complete. Materials are regularly reviewed for accuracy and cultural relevance, with updates made as needed.

Objective 3.3: Organize outreach in high-need areas

Activities:

Identify key areas with underserved populations.

Plan and schedule resource fairs and informational sessions.

Collaborate with local organizations to promote events and increase attendance.

Progress: Target areas are identified using participant and census data. Events are planned and executed in partnership with local organizations to increase engagement in rural, immigrant, and low-income communities.

Goal 4: Increase Disaster Preparedness Among Underserved Communities

Objective 4.1: Provide guidance for individuals with disabilities to advocate for their needs during disasters

Activities:

Collaborate with local emergency services to ensure accessibility during disasters.

Progress: RAMP collaborated with the Winnebago County Health Department on the Access and Functional Needs Registry to inform emergency response policy.

Objective 4.2: Provide disability awareness training to first responders

Activities:

Develop a disability awareness curriculum for first responders.

Coordinate with local fire, police, and medical departments for trainings.

Monitor effectiveness through feedback and evaluation.

Progress: Trainings were delivered to first responders in Stephenson County, followed by surveys to measure effectiveness. Outreach to additional first responders continues.

Goal 5: Expand the Pathways Program for Youth with Disabilities

Objective 5.1: Increase local partnerships with businesses for internships and work experience

Activities:

Reach out to local businesses to build partnerships.

Develop and distribute informational materials about the Pathways Program.

Hold meetings with business leaders to discuss the benefits of supporting youth with disabilities.

Progress: RAMP engaged businesses in person and virtually, delivering training and education on disability-inclusive practices. Staff have completed Windmills Training to highlight inclusive employment benefits.

Objective 5.2: Provide workshops on resume building, job readiness, and interview preparation

Activities:

Schedule and promote workshops through schools and community centers.

Collect feedback to improve future workshops.

Progress: Participants are actively engaged in classroom sessions and developing pre-employment skills. Workshops are still in development.

Objective 5.3: Track employment outcomes of participants

Activities:

Create a tracking system for employment status.

Conduct follow-up surveys to gather career progress data.

Share success stories to encourage participation and support.

Progress: Reporting has been delayed due to pilot rollout, but engagement in classroom and training settings continues, with plans to report outcomes next year.

Goal 6: Engage Employers in Disability Hiring Practices

Objective 6.1: Organize job fairs, workshops, and training events

Activities:

Develop training materials highlighting the benefits of disability-inclusive hiring.

Advertise events to attract employers across sectors.

Progress: RAMP facilitated job fairs through Project SEARCH and other events, promoting inclusive employment practices.

Objective 6.2: Provide consulting services to employers

Activities:

Develop inclusive hiring training for employers.

Offer one-on-one consultations on hiring processes.

Create a toolkit for accessibility best practices in recruitment.

Progress: RAMP developed a three-pronged employer training program and toolkit, providing both in-person and virtual options. One-on-one consulting is expanding.

Goal 7: Advocate for Accessible and Affordable Housing

Objective 7.1: Partner with advocacy groups for local and state policies supporting accessible housing

Activities:

Join advocacy coalitions working on affordable housing legislation.

Progress: RAMP actively collaborates with the Northern Illinois Homeless Coalition and SILC Housing Advisory Committee.

Objective 7.2: Educate local governments, housing authorities, and developers

Activities:

Develop educational materials on accessible housing benefits.

Schedule presentations with officials and developers.

Progress: Staff provided education on home modification funding, contacted local housing providers, and attended the NCIL annual conference to promote accessible housing initiatives.

Objective 7.3: Engage consumers in listening sessions with housing providers

Activities:

Organize regular listening sessions to understand housing challenges.

Provide a platform for individuals to share personal stories.

Progress: Four of eight planned listening sessions were held this reporting period.

Goal 8: Advocate on Systems-Level for Disability Rights

Objective 8.1: Work with advocacy groups to identify key legislative areas

Activities:

Participate in meetings with advocacy groups to identify priorities.

Conduct research on policies and gaps in disability rights.

Progress: RAMP's systems advocate conducts ongoing research and participates in multiple committees addressing disability rights and community needs.

Objective 8.2: Develop educational campaigns and trainings on systems change

Activities:

Create multimedia campaigns to raise awareness.

Distribute campaign materials via social media and local events.

Progress: Marketing campaigns highlighted ADA and RAMP anniversaries, reaching the community through multiple channels.

Objective 8.3: Partner with legal organizations to offer workshops on disability rights

Activities:

Develop workshops on legal rights and protections under disability law.

Promote workshops through networks and social media.

Progress: RAMP partnered with the REV Up Coalition for voter education and accessibility training. Plans for asynchronous legal rights workshops are underway.

Objective 8.4: Promote self-advocacy through social media and community events

Activities:

Organize community events and workshops focused on self-advocacy.

Provide resources and support for individuals to become effective self-advocates.

Progress: RAMP hosted four community listening sessions and implemented a Summer Youth Leadership Program focused on self-advocacy skills.

Goal 9: Advocate for Improved Public Transportation Access for Individuals with Disabilities

Objective 9.1: Work with transportation authorities to ensure full accessibility

Activities:

Schedule regular meetings to discuss accessibility improvements.

Progress: RAMP held meetings with the Rockford Mass Transit District to address accessibility needs and to discuss improvements enabled by new technology.

Objective 9.2: Provide disability awareness training to transportation providers

Activities:

Schedule and facilitate training sessions for staff.

Evaluate effectiveness through feedback and assessments.

Progress: Training was conducted for drivers and dispatchers at RMTD and the City of DeKalb, and improved evaluation processes were implemented.

Objective 9.3: Explore alternative transportation models

Activities:

Promote accessible on-demand ride services to individuals with disabilities.

Progress: Alternative models were explored. For example, a HIPAA-compliant ride-share service is being piloted through the Winnebago Mental Health Board.

Item 6.1.2 - Challenges

Describe any substantial challenges or problems encountered by the CIL, and the resolutions/attempted resolutions.

RAMP understands that our services are most effective when provided by experienced staff, though staff retention remains an ongoing challenge. While improvements have been made, financial strain across the social services sector limits our ability to address workforce stability fully. To better support

staff, RAMP has conducted staff satisfaction surveys for several years and has implemented stay interviews this year to identify concerns and proactively prevent turnover when possible. Feedback consistently shows that staff value RAMP's mission, culture, and work environment. In response to ongoing financial challenges, RAMP has increased staff wages and supports where possible and has participated in Living Wages Thriving Communities advocacy efforts to push for increased state funding and higher salaries for human services workers.

RAMP also experienced increased demand for youth services this year, which stretched existing staff capacity. To address this, we increased staffing within the youth services department to better meet demand and maintain service quality.

Operating under multiple state contracts presents additional challenges, particularly when state paperwork and approval timelines do not align with consumer demand for services, resulting in service delays. In addition, state reimbursement rates for specific programs, such as Project SEARCH, are insufficient to cover program costs fully. To address this, RAMP's Employment Services Director and Project SEARCH Manager are working with other Project SEARCH sites and advocating with the state to secure more equitable funding.

Another challenge has been limited consumer participation in some initiatives, particularly peer support gatherings. To improve engagement, RAMP has set goals to collaborate with other CILs that have demonstrated success in this area and has supported additional community engagement training for our Community Engagement Coordinator.

Lastly, RAMP identified that our community trainings were not reaching their full potential. In response, we developed a virtual platform to provide asynchronous online trainings, increasing accessibility and flexibility for participants. We hope that successful implementation will allow excess revenue to be reinvested in expanding underfunded programs and services.

Item 6.1.3 - Comparison with Prior Reporting Period

As appropriate, compare the CIL's activities in the reporting period with its activities in prior periods, e.g., recent trends.

During this reporting period, RAMP experienced an overall increase in participation across nearly all programs compared to prior periods. At the same time, we implemented intentional changes to how and when individuals are opened for services. In the previous fiscal year, RAMP identified that some individuals were being opened prematurely when their needs may have been better met through information and referral services. In response, we provided targeted staff training and strengthened quality assurance processes to improve intake decision-making.

As a result, RAMP saw a decrease in the number of consumers enrolled in our Independent Living (IL) skills program during this reporting period. While a decrease in volume is never ideal, we believe this represents a positive change. Service quality has improved, with staff focusing more on teaching consumers how to navigate their own barriers and build independence, rather than staff taking on tasks for consumers.

Overall, RAMP served fewer consumers across all programs this year than last, 882 versus 990. This decrease is primarily due to the intentional changes in intakes described above. Despite the reduction, several programs served more participants than in prior periods, indicating increased demand and improved program alignment. Staff are also better equipped to motivate and support consumers in achieving their goals, thereby improving retention. During this reporting period, only 41.8% of consumers who closed their records did so due to withdrawal or other non-goal-related reasons,

compared to 48.5% in the previous year.

Compared with last year, many demographic areas show very similar results; however, one notable shift occurred in youth participation. For the first time, the majority of RAMP consumers were youth aged 24 and under. Last year, 43% of consumers were in this age group; this year, that number increased to 54%. Our goal is that reaching youth earlier will lead to more positive, long-term outcomes for individuals with disabilities across our service area.

6.2 - Work Plan for the Period Following the Reporting Period

Item 6.2.1 - Annual Work Plan

List the CIL's annual work plan goals, objectives and action steps planned for the period following the reporting period.

RAMP Center for Independent Living Annual Plan
FY 2025-2026

Goal 1: Provide High-Quality Services in Compliance with Local, State, and Federal Contracts

Objective 1.1: Strengthen internal systems to address contract, reporting, and compliance requirements proactively.

Activities:

Conduct annual cross-department contract review meetings to identify upcoming changes, risks, or compliance needs.

Refine the existing grant tracking tool to include alerts for renewal timelines and reporting deadlines.

Provide refresher training for program leads on compliance expectations and documentation standards.

Objective 1.2: Use program data to drive continuous quality improvement and service planning.

Activities:

Expand the use of the Program Data Dashboard to identify trends in service demand and staffing capacity.

Integrate data review into quarterly leadership meetings to guide program adjustments.

Explore ways to share high-level outcome data with staff to support consistency, accountability, and informed decision-making.

Goal 2: Launch and Expand Virtual Learning Platform for Disability Awareness Training

Objective 2.1: Expand the scope and availability of virtual trainings.

Activities:

Develop and launch at least 12 new virtual trainings by the end of the workplan year.

Prioritize adapting high-demand in-person trainings for asynchronous virtual delivery.

Identify and develop new training topics responsive to emerging community needs and advocacy priorities.

Objective 2.2: Increase platform utilization for revenue generation and community education.

Activities:

Strengthen partnerships with employers, schools, and community organizations to promote platform use.

Track revenue and participation trends to inform program expansion and sustainability.

Objective 2.3: Enhance evaluation and feedback processes for virtual trainings.

Activities:

Implement standardized post-training surveys for all courses.

Conduct quarterly reviews of survey feedback to guide content updates and platform improvements.

Goal 3: Increase Engagement with Underserved Communities

Objective 3.1: Strengthen sustained engagement strategies beyond initial outreach.

Activities:

Visit and collaborate with other CILs to identify effective consumer engagement strategies.

Pilot follow-up approaches after outreach events to encourage ongoing participation with RAMP.

Identify staff champions within specific communities to lead engagement efforts.

Goal 4: Increase Disaster Preparedness Among Underserved Communities

Objective 4.1: Expand disability-focused disaster preparedness education.

Activities:

Collaborate with local health departments and emergency planning groups.

Integrate preparedness education into IL skills sessions or group programs.

Objective 4.2: Expand disability awareness training for first responders.

Activities:

Conduct outreach to fire, police, EMS, and emergency management agencies.

Update training materials based on previous session feedback.

Track training requests and participation to inform future outreach.

Goal 5: Expand the Pathways Program for Youth with Disabilities

Objective 5.1: Plan for expansion of the summer youth program with postsecondary and employer connections.

Activities:

Identify colleges, training programs, and employers for partnerships.

Meet with potential partners to establish roles, expectations, and timelines.

Develop Summer 2027 program structure proposal.

Objective 5.2: Increase workforce readiness supports for youth.

Activities:

Continue classroom-based skill development sessions.

Refine workshop content based on participant feedback.

Goal 6: Engage Employers in Disability Hiring Practices

Objective 6.1: Strengthen employer engagement beyond one-time events.

Activities:

Expand virtual trainings for employers.

Identify employers for deeper engagement, such as consultations or pilot initiatives.

Implement follow-up processes after job fairs and trainings.

Objective 6.2: Advance employer consulting services.

Activities:

Pilot one-on-one employer consultations.

Refine the employer toolkit based on feedback.

Learn from national models and other CILs offering employer consulting services.

Goal 7: Advocate for Accessible and Affordable Housing

Objective 7.1: Continue policy-level advocacy for accessible housing.

Activities:

Participate in housing coalitions.

Monitor proposed housing legislation and funding opportunities.

Share updates with consumers and community partners.

Objective 7.2: Complete and expand consumer listening sessions.

Activities:

Host remaining housing listening sessions.

Identify common themes and barriers across counties.

Use findings to guide advocacy messaging and education.

Goal 8: Advocate on Systems-Level for Disability Rights

Objective 8.1: Strengthen coordination between systems advocacy and direct services.

Activities:

Facilitate staff opportunities to share trends from direct services.

Use consumer experiences to guide advocacy priorities.

Collaborate with other CILs on systems advocacy initiatives.

Objective 8.2: Expand public education on disability rights and systems change.

Activities:

Develop additional virtual or hybrid advocacy trainings.

Conduct awareness campaigns tied to key milestones in disability rights.

Engage consumers in advocacy education.

Objective 8.3: Build peer and group-based advocacy opportunities.

Activities:

Plan and pilot peer or group advocacy sessions.

Learn from other CILs with established programs.

Identify staff training needs to support facilitation.

Goal 9: Advocate for Improved Public Transportation Access

Objective 9.1: Advance accessibility improvements with transportation providers.

Activities:

Conduct regular meetings with transportation authorities.

Provide feedback on new technologies and service changes.

Share consumer input on transportation barriers.

Objective 9.2: Expand transportation-related training and education.

Activities:

Improve evaluation tools to measure the impact of training.

Explore additional training opportunities with regional providers.

Item 6.2.2 - SPIL Consistency

OILP-ACL Review Tool: Does the CIL describe how the work plan is consistent with the approved SPIL? Yes

Explain how these work plan goals, objectives and action steps are consistent with the approved SPIL.

RAMP Center for Independent Living's FY 2025-2026 Annual Plan aligns with the Illinois State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL) by focusing on consumer-driven, accessible, and data-informed services. The first goal, providing high-quality services in compliance with local, state, and federal contracts, strengthens internal systems through contract reviews, grant tracking, and compliance training. Using program data to guide service planning helps RAMP meet SPIL's expectations for accountability and effective service delivery.

The second goal, launching and expanding a virtual learning platform for disability awareness, includes developing at least 12 new courses and adapting high-demand in-person trainings for online delivery. Tracking participation, revenue, and feedback ensures programs reach broader audiences and respond to community needs.

The third goal, increasing engagement with underserved communities, aligns with the SPIL's inclusive outreach focus. Piloting follow-up approaches, identifying staff champions, and collaborating with other CILs help ensure marginalized populations have access to services.

The fourth goal, increasing disaster preparedness among underserved communities, integrates disability-focused preparedness into IL programs and partners with first responders. Tracking participation and feedback informs program adjustments and supports safe, prepared communities.

The fifth goal expands the Pathways Program for youth with disabilities, supporting transition-age services. RAMP builds partnerships with colleges and employers, offers summer programs, and refines workforce readiness workshops based on participant feedback to prepare youth for independent living and employment.

The sixth goal, engaging employers in disability hiring practices, includes virtual trainings, one-on-one consultations, and follow-ups after job fairs. These activities help employers hire and retain employees

with disabilities and expand employment opportunities statewide.

The seventh goal, advocating for accessible and affordable housing, involves participating in housing coalitions, monitoring legislation, and hosting consumer listening sessions. These efforts use consumer input to guide advocacy and public education addressing housing barriers.

The eighth goal, systems-level advocacy for disability rights, connects trends from direct services to advocacy priorities, expands public education, and develops peer and group advocacy opportunities. This work addresses structural barriers and supports consumer leadership.

The ninth goal, improving public transportation access, includes collaborating with transportation authorities, gathering consumer feedback, and providing training for providers. These activities help people with disabilities navigate communities safely and independently.

Overall, RAMP's FY 2025-2026 plan aligns with the Illinois SPIL by strengthening the independent living network, improving access to services, supporting advocacy in housing, employment, and transportation, and promoting safe, inclusive communities.

SECTION 7 - ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Item 7.1 - Other Accomplishments, Activities and Challenges

Describe any additional significant accomplishments, activities and/or challenges not included elsewhere in the report, e.g., brief summaries of innovative practices, improved service delivery to consumers, etc.

RAMP has had a strong year of growth across many programs, with notable expansion in our youth programs. Our Pathways and summer youth initiatives have continued to build partnerships with colleges, employers, and training programs, giving youth more opportunities to develop workforce readiness and independent living skills.

Our employment programs have returned to healthy participation levels, a significant accomplishment after a few years of low referrals that negatively affected program outcomes and consumer access.

Over the past several years, RAMP has focused on improving staff experiences, resulting in higher staff satisfaction and lower turnover. A more stable, well-supported workforce enables us to provide better services to consumers.

This year, we created a new position, Billing and Grants Manager, to manage grant tracking, billing, and contract compliance. This role helps ensure that our services align with available funding across multiple grants and contracts from private, local/state, and federal sources, allowing the agency to maintain compliance and plan effectively to meet consumer needs.

These developments position RAMP to continue expanding programs, improving service delivery, and addressing the evolving needs of the disability community.

SECTION 8 - TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Item 8.1 - Training And Technical Assistance Needs

Training And Technical Assistance Needs	Choose up to 10 Priority Needs --- Rate items 1-10 with 1 being most important
Advocacy/Leadership Development	
Community/Grassroots Organizing	1
Individual Empowerment	3
Systems Advocacy	4
Assistive Technologies	
General Overview	8
Data Collecting and Reporting	
PPR/704 Reports	9
Disability Awareness and Information	
Specific Issues	5
Evaluation	
Community Needs Assessment	10
Financial: Grant Management	
Fund Accounting	2
Innovative Programs	
Best Practices	6
Marketing and Public Relations	
Community Awareness	7
Other	
Optional Areas and/or Comments (write-in)	
We would appreciate guidance on ensuring compliance with federal regulations for fund accounting while managing staff whose positions are funded through multiple sources. While we have no reason to believe our current approach is incorrect, we would like to confirm that we are using the most straightforward and least administratively burdensome methods.	

Item 8.2 - Additional Information

Provide additional information, comments, explanations or suggestions not included elsewhere in the report.

OILP-ACL Review Tool: Based on the narrative responses, is the CIL in compliance with each of the evaluation standards? Yes

OILP-ACL Review Tool: If the CIL administers multiple Subchapter C grants, is the information in this report distinct and specific only to THIS grant? Yes

PUBLIC HEALTH WORKFORCE (PHWF) - DATA REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Grant Number	10/01/2024 - 09/30/2025 IL
Reporting Period	
State	

Item 1 - Total Number of Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs)

Total Number of Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs)	0
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Item 2 - Type of Public Health Professional(s) Hired

Type	#
Case Investigator	0
Contact Tracer	0
Social Support Specialist	0
Community Health Worker	0
Public Health Nurse	0
Disease Intervention Specialist	0
Epidemiologist	0
Program Manager	0
Laboratory Personnel	0
Informaticians	0
Communication and Policy Experts	0

Item 3 - The Activities They Are Engaged In To Advance Public Health

RAMP exhausted all PHWF funds by September 30, 2024. We have no additional information on these funds to report.

SECTION 9 - SIGNATURES

Please sign and print the names, titles and telephone numbers of the CIL director and board chair.

Jackie Sundquist	
NAME AND TITLE OF CENTER DIRECTOR	PHONE NUMBER

Jackie Sundquist - Signed Digitally	12/22/2025
SIGNATURE OF CENTER DIRECTOR	DATE

NAME AND TITLE OF CENTER BOARD CHAIRPERSON	PHONE NUMBER

SIGNATURE OF CENTER BOARD CHAIRPERSON	DATE