From the Desk of the President

July 1 of 2011 to June 30, 2012 was a challenging and exciting year for Pioneer Center. The organization conducted a search for a new President and CEO to follow the retirement of outgoing President and CEO, Lorraine Kopczynski. The search culminated in January with my hiring. I brought to Pioneer Center over 30 years of experience leading human services organizations in the private, for-profit and government sectors.

In the months following my arrival, the organization faced enormous fiscal challenges with escalating debt deriving from late payments from the State of Illinois. The late payments peaked at over $4 million before the organization was successful in negotiating with the State to begin releasing those payments on a regular basis. By June, the regular payments from the State resulted in the organization being able to turnaround from its deficit situation and reach budget neutrality.

In June, the organization implemented a massive re-structuring, aimed at flattening the administrative structure to create broader engagement in organizational decision-making and accountability. The restructuring allowed the organization to create business efficiencies and to re-focus those found resources on creating more direct-service and supervisory positions, as well as creating a business configuration that oriented the organization toward a managed care and integrated services systems structure.

At the same time that Pioneer Center was implementing its re-structuring, the county’s second largest human services organization (Family Service) succumbed to its own battle with rising debt from late payments from the State. Pioneer Center scrambled to join with the McHenry County Mental Health Board and a network of local service provider organizations to continue services and alleviate crises for those individuals and families affected by the Family Service closure.

The full impact of re-structuring and the acquisition and growth of services related to the Family Service closure is still being measured and implemented by June 30, 2012. Initial data and trending information is indicating significant performance growth for FY13 that is expected to generate at least budget neutrality, and a high likelihood of profitability for the organization.

The bottom line for FY12 is that the organization gained control of its fiscal health and generated strong traction for future growth. Now that the organization is able to generate a solid fiscal foundation, it can turn its attention to creating a future of quality, sustainable services. We look forward to continuing our service mission to our community for many, many years to come.

Patrick Maynard, PhD

Our Mission:
Empowering individuals to achieve their full potential.

Our Vision:
We are PIONEERS, recognized for SETTING THE STANDARD in Human Services.

Our Value Statements:
We engage people of all abilities through innovative, effective, compassionate services.
We employ, develop and support exceptional people to achieve individual and organizational excellence.
We are committed to being progressive industry leaders.
We govern our resources with integrity to realize our mission & vision.

New Website Launched

In December of 2012, Pioneer Center launched a new website that incorporated all of its programs into one comprehensive information portal for the community. Each program:
- Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities
- Behavioral Health Services & Counseling
- Sexual Assault Services—VOICE
- Homeless Services—McHenry County PADS
...has a fresh look and detailed information about program offerings. Check it out at www.pioneercenter.org!
Who We Are

Pioneer Center delivers direct services to more than 3,600 individuals each year. Its scope of programs and services secures its status as the provider of the broadest range of human services in McHenry County.

Fifty-four years ago a mother wanted more for her 7-year-old developmentally disabled daughter. She dared to dream of the opportunity for education and an enriching life for her child. Alongside her, a small group of parents bonded together to create the first day school program in McHenry County for the developmentally disabled. That act of determination led to the creation of the organization that would become Pioneer Center for Human Services.

Over the years Pioneer Center underwent a metamorphosis. What was once an agency dealing solely in developmental disabilities became the county’s largest social service agency fulfilling the needs of a community. We are now...

Behavioral Health Services & Counseling

**Adult Services**
- Day Service
- Community Case Management
- Traumatic Brain Injury Rehabilitation
- Outpatient Counseling
- Employment Services
- Residential Living Services

**Children, Youth and Adolescent Services**
- Delinquency and Prevention
- Intact Family Program
- Outpatient Counseling

Intellectual and Developmental Disability Programs
- Life Skills Development
- Employment Services
- Case Management
- Residential Living Services
- Senior Services
- Autism Services
- Respive

Sexual Assault Services—VOICE
- Medical Advocacy
- Legal Advocacy

Homeless Services—McHenry County PADS
- Day Service Center
- Church Site Partners

Working Toward Wellness

About nine years ago 48-year-old Bill, a building and grounds maintenance specialist, noticed he didn’t quite feel right. His chest felt heavy and each breath he took was an effort. Concerned, his wife brought him to the emergency room where preliminary tests showed nothing was amiss. But back home, Bill’s symptoms not only continued, they began to worsen.

Each day the struggle to breathe became harder and Bill found he had less and less energy to get through life’s daily tasks. His wife began to walk him to his car each morning, helping to fasten his seatbelt so he wouldn’t become too tired from the simple task.

One day Bill’s health issues got the better of him and he found himself back in the hospital, but this time the diagnosis was much different—a heart blockage that required an immediate angioplasty. The surgery was successful but no one could have predicted the roller coaster ride it would precipitate.

A long recovery resulted in Bill losing his job after his medical leave expired. He became afraid of the world around him—experiencing anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder symptoms from the surgery and the rigors of recovery. After one scary panic attack, Bill was rushed to the emergency room. Told that there was little doctors could do to treat his anxiety, Bill withdrew from life.

This began six years of agoraphobia and substance abuse in an effort to cope with daily life. Realizing that there must be something other than self-medicating his symptoms, Bill finally admitted to his wife he needed help. Immediately she put him in the car and took him to the emergency room. There he began the long process of recovery—ultimately finding his way to Pioneer Center for Human Services three years ago.

Bill became the Psycho Social Rehabilitation Program’s newest client. The first step in Bill’s recovery was the creation of a Wellness Recovery Action Plan, or WRAP. Pioneer Center utilizes WRAP to assist in the process of recovery—getting well, staying well and becoming who you want to be. The WRAP becomes an integral part in helping an individual adapt to challenges faced in life. It is a unique, self-directed plan that focuses on self-help, recovery and long-term stability.

Bill began his WRAP by building a “wellness toolbox” filled with simple, safe ideas to help him feel good and stay well even through daily challenges. Through the use of this tool he was able to discover what he needed to do every day to stay well, what things upset him (triggers) and what to do if these things happen.

Over time, Bill embraced his recovery and slowly saw his life turn around. Most recently, Bill went back to school to work towards a degree in psychology. Knowing that the steps he took to recovery were so profound and life-affirming that he wanted to be able to give those same tools to others dealing with mental illness.

Today, Bill works hard to balance work and play—knowing that taking care of yourself spiritually and mentally is just as important as seeing to your physical needs. He has been the president of Pioneer Center’s Consumer Advisory Council for the past year—working hard to advocate and raise awareness about the need to eliminate the stigma of mental illness and encourage others to seek help.

He is also a trainer at Pioneer Center’s Sunrise Café, a client-run business that teaches general business skills such as customer service, stocking, cleaning, inventory and ordering. Bill believes it is essential to his recovery to help motivate others to find and embrace theirs.

Bill’s words of advice to others suffering like he once did: “There is no magic switch that will take you back to where you were. You have to seek help and work hard at getting well again. Recovery is possible.”

To learn more about wellness recovery or Pioneer Center’s Psycho Social Rehabilitation Program, visit www.pioneercenter.org or call 815.759.7204.
Snapshot of Fiscal Year 2012

Revenue by Source

- State of Illinois 57.2%
- McHenry County 708 Board 11.9%
- Federal 8.5%
- Contributions 7.8%
- Client & 3rd Party Fees 6.0%
- Subcontract & Consulting 3.7%
- United Way 1.8%
- Other Grants 1.8%
- Miscellaneous 1.3%

Expenses by Category

- Staff Salaries & Benefits 72.2%
- Occupancy 5.4%
- Other Operating 4.7%
- Client Wage & Assistance 4.6%
- Depreciation 4.4%
- Transportation 4.4%
- Consumable Supplies 1.9%
- Consultants & Professional Fees 1.8%
- Direct Fundraising 0.6%

Functional Expenses by Area

- Residential Services 28.9%
- Youth Services 16.6%
- Community Services 15.5%
- Vocational Services 14.9%
- Day Services 10.7%
- Management & General 7.0%
- Fundraising 3.9%
- Autism Services 2.5%

Program to Management & General Expense History

Cold, Hard Facts on Homelessness in Your Community

Since 2009, PADS has seen a staggering increase in the people needing our services.
• 48% overall increase in individuals served
• 46% increase of mental illness diagnosis
• 50% increase in physical disabilities
• 58% increase in substance abuse
• 56% increase in the number of children (as part of a family)
• 15% increase in veterans served

Organizational Impact

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Service</th>
<th>Individuals Served</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Behavioral Health</td>
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<tr>
<td>Intellectual &amp; Developmental Disability</td>
<td>402</td>
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<tr>
<td>Homeless</td>
<td>359</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prevention</td>
<td>300</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community Employment</td>
<td>250</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sexual Assault</td>
<td>140</td>
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<tr>
<td>Traumatic Brain Injury</td>
<td>57</td>
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<tr>
<td>TAMI (Teenage Mother’s Initiative)</td>
<td>73</td>
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<tr>
<td>Intact Families</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,634</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Homeless, Lorena’s Story

Sitting in a bus shelter on the corner of a busy street with her 7-year-old son, Lorena contemplated her options. She and her family, her husband, two daughters ages 3 and 2, and son had been bouncing around from home to home taking advantage of generous friends and family. But, something had to give. This wasn’t the way to live…It wasn’t a way to raise children.

Back in February 2011, Lorena’s husband was fired from his job and denied unemployment. He had been the sole provider for their family as Lorena took on the task of parenting their three children. One night, while staying with a relative they learned about McHenry County PADS. That same day they called and left a message with the program coordinator. For the first time in a long while, they dared to hope there was a way out of homelessness. That someone cared and would help them.

In June of 2012, Lorena and her family walked into the McHenry County PADS Day Center and took the first steps towards regaining their lives. She and her family began working closely with a case manager to set goals and determine what services were needed.

Everything was provided from benefits and documentation acquisition to hot meals, from counseling to classes on budgeting or anger management. No page was left unturned in what could help her family leave behind the despair of homelessness.

Just 30 days after arriving at McHenry County PADS a room at the Rinaldi Transitional Home opened up. Because of their dedication and perseverance in working with the PADS staff, Lorena’s family was informed this opportunity was destined for them.

Today, Lorena’s husband has a new job that he has been at for several months. She and her family work steadily towards their goal of acquiring their own home and being independent again. Lorena’s children are healthy and happy and for the first time in a long while…Lorena feels at peace and has hope for what tomorrow will bring.
Beth’s Story

In 2011, there were more than 1,000 cases of suicide in Illinois alone. It is the third leading cause of death in 15 to 24-year-olds.

In 2010, just as Beth was beginning her freshman year of high school, her parents made the difficult decision to get a divorce. The adjustment was not easy. Beth moved in with her Mom and began to struggle daily with depression. One night, two weeks after her 14th birthday, Beth took a handful of pills in an unsuccessful attempt at suicide. The next day she confided in her Mom what she had done and that she needed help.

Beth’s Mom called the crisis hotline and was told to take her to the emergency room immediately. There the emergency room staff treated her for the pills she had taken and a crisis worker did an initial assessment. As Beth stabilized she was deflected with a safety plan. That safety plan included entering Pioneer Center’s SASS program and being assigned a SASS Therapist.

Through the SASS program Beth began to learn how to deal with depression and suicidal thoughts. She received therapy and worked on making her relationship with her mother stronger. At the end of her 90-day SASS intervention, Beth was referred to outpatient therapy.

Over the course of the next several months Beth continued going to outpatient therapy. Gradually, the visits tapered off and freshman year melded into sophomore year. In the beginning of her junior year of high school, Beth’s mental health began to deteriorate and she started to have passive suicidal thoughts again.

Calling her Mom for help, Beth was rushed to the emergency room where she was stabilized. Because this was her second instance and she was now considered high risk, Beth was admitted into an acute inpatient treatment center. While at the center Beth met with a SASS Therapist and began to talk about what the next 90 days would look like and how her treatment through SASS would continue once she was discharged.

Together, Beth and the SASS Therapist constructed a treatment plan that included four goals that she wanted to achieve:

- Build her relationship with her Mom
- Try to get along with her Mom’s new husband
- Work on coping skills to manage her depression and anxiety
- Manage peer conflicts

Upon her discharge, Beth diligently continued her outpatient therapy and weekly meetings with the SASS Therapist. During this time, as Beth acquired the tools needed to help hold her depression at bay and build healthy relationships, she held onto the power behind a quote she had heard by Audrey Hepburn: “Nothing is impossible, the word itself says I’m Possible.”

Today, Beth has one more year of school left. After graduation her goal is to become a cosmetologist.

When asked what advice she would give, Beth shared—“Every person in this world has so much to live for...even if you are going through a struggle. Reach out to your family and friends, ask for help.”

Dear Beth,

I want you to know that I’m so very proud of you for reaching out and getting the help that you needed when you were going through such a rough time. You’re a very caring, loving, sweet, beautiful young woman. You have a heart of gold and you’re always there for your friends when they need either a hug or just someone to talk to. And you have also been there for your family. You’re such an inspiration to everyone that knows you. You wear your heart on your sleeve. I’m so blessed that you’re my daughter and I’m also blessed to be your mom.

I love you Beth! Love, Mom

A Child in Crisis

When a child is in crisis it becomes imperative that a community has a plan in place to assess their risk factor and secure treatment for them so that they do not harm themselves or others. Crisis situations can arise from an untold number of circumstances ranging from family conflict, divorce, bullying, peer relationships, and others.

In McHenry County, the SASS (Screening Assessment and Support Services) Program is the stop-gap that ensures these children are provided for and made safe.

It is a 90-day, intense, family-focused program providing community-based services to the youth in crisis and their family.

The SASS program focuses its services on youth 21 years of age or younger. These youth are at imminent risk of being placed in a more restrictive setting such as a residential treatment center or psychiatric hospital because their ability to function at home, school or within the community is severely impaired.

The SASS program has three primary goals:

- To provide screening, assessment and treatment of youth in crisis.
- To enhance access to community-based mental health services even in lieu of or following inpatient care or screening.
- To link families and guardians to the appropriate level of care to meet the mental health needs of the youth.

How it works

Initially, a call comes into the CARES (Crisis and Referral Entry Services) hotline. From there a page is sent to Pioneer Center. A crisis worker responds and conducts an initial crisis assessment. Through this assessment information is gathered to determine what immediate concerns must be addressed. This dictates the level of care that will be provided:

1. Inpatient treatment
2. Partial inpatient treatment (youth spends 8 am - 4pm in group therapy each day)
3. Deflection with a safety plan for follow-up treatment

The next day the youth is assigned a SASS Therapist and a follow-up treatment plan is created. Together the family, youth and SASS Therapist craft a plan that may include family therapy, case management, mentoring or other needed services. Throughout the implementation of the treatment plan, the SASS Therapist continuously monitors the level of care needed; prepared to intervene should the crisis escalate. At the end of 90 days the youth and their family are discharged from the program with a new set of tools and supports to help them continue the recovery process.
Keeping the Family Together

In 2012, the State of Illinois introduced massive budget cuts across numerous departments and programs. One of them, Intact Family, was eliminated completely with the discharge of over 300 State employee staff. Through this decisive action by the State, Pioneer Center overnight became the sole provider of McHenry County’s most vital family preservation service. The organization saw its case load more than double and the intensity of family issues being dealt with dramatically increased as higher risk cases once handled solely by the state were now referred directly to Pioneer Center.

What Is Intact Family?

When families are investigated for child abuse or neglect studies have shown that removal of the children from the home should be viewed as a last resort. Through Pioneer Center’s Intact Family Program, families referred by the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) receive counseling and treatment for mental illness, substance abuse, domestic violence and neglect issues. In addition, groups addressing anger management, parenting, and various other topics are made available as well as access to housing referrals, health care and other essential needs. Should the individuals need it, transportation is also available to ensure compliance with recommended treatments.

This home-based program is designed to stabilize families so that they can be responsible and care for their own children. Case managers meet within the family home weekly learning the family dynamics and how best to meet the needs of each individual. All families referred into the program have at least one child under the age of six in the home. Intact Family is intended to be a short term, six months or less, intensive program that vigorously works to identify issues and resolve them quickly.

This past year, the program realized an outstanding 100% effectiveness ratio with none of the families it assisted having children placed into foster care—more than 100 at-risk children were able to stay in now stable home environments with their loved ones. Currently, Pioneer Center sees two to three new cases each week on average—although, it is not unheard of for more than seven cases to be referred in any given week.

Caring for the Community

Back in September, 12-year-old Hannah was busy planning her 13th birthday party. But, unlike most kids her age, she wasn’t thinking of what toys, clothes or other fun things she might get as presents. Instead, Hannah was on a mission. A mission to help Pioneer Center’s McHenry County PADS and TAMI (Teenage Mother’s Initiative) programs.

So, instead of a traditional birthday party, Hannah held a Diaper Drive. She even created a Facebook event for it. In the end, her social awareness and desire to make a difference resulted in dozens of packages of diapers, baby care supplies and nearly $300 that would be used to purchase additional much-needed baby care items. Way to go Hannah!

Michelle’s Story

“Just a little drink to help me sleep.” is what Michelle told herself one night.

Little did she know that a single drink would become a roller-coaster ride that over the next three years would cost her children, marriage, driver’s license and freedom.

In the space of three months Michelle’s life unraveled. Married with two young children, she and her husband were living the American dream—good jobs, nice home, happy family life. But, in 2010, it all fell apart. After seven years working in middle management, Michelle was laid off, weeks later her husband lost his job. Unable to pay the bills they were forced to short sale their house or face foreclosure. The final blow would come when her husband was diagnosed with a pervasive chronic illness.

Over the course of the next few months, family and friends would notice Michelle’s drinking snowball. She would go two to three weeks drinking heavily and then stop for a week or two. Michelle didn’t see it, though, and when asked to get help she refused. Faced with the constant push to “fix her problem” she finally relented and went to outpatient therapy.

The situation came to a head when Michelle was pulled over for driving under the influence. She had her 2-year-old daughter in the car with her. Court dates, therapy, and the loss of guardianship of her children followed. Still in denial, Michelle received another DUI. This time was different, though. Her Intact Family Case Manager told her husband not to bail her out; that Michelle needed to learn to deal with the consequences of her actions. After a couple of days in jail a friend posted her bail.

It was at this time that Michelle says “a switch flipped and I thought, what am I doing?” This was the pivotal point in her life when she made the decision that she was going to get help for her. Not for her children, not for her husband, not for her family...she was going to do it for herself.

Michelle entered a 90-day women’s inpatient treatment program. There she struggled to face the truth of what her drinking had done to her life and her family. The Intact Family Case Manager worked closely with her to change her thought processes and accept her addiction.

Upon completion of the program, Michelle returned home. Her case manager helped her with daily struggles—finding work, paying bills and the task of proving she was a fit guardian for her children.

That fall, Michelle successfully won guardianship of her children back. It was one of the happiest days of her life. Today, Michelle basks in the random “I love you, Mom!” she receives from her children. Her son is a star student and is in advanced reading and math. She also received a promotion at work.

Through it all, though, she credits her Intact Family Case Manager. “She stuck by me when she didn’t have to,” Michelle says. “They never gave up. They let me do it my way until I was ready to ask for help and then they latched on and wouldn’t let me falter. All I needed to do was be ready for help.”

Michelle still sees her case manager every two weeks and considers her a friend. The truest kind of friend—someone who could see through her lies and short-comings and still see someone worth helping.

To learn more about the Intact Family Program, visit pioneercenter.org or call 815.759.7204.
Corporate Sponsors 2012-2013

For any non-profit agency to be successful it takes the support of the community and the businesses within it. The following companies have made serving the needs of the community a top priority and are generous supporters of our events and programs. Our applause and gratitude goes out to them.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

If you are a community-minded business that is interested in making a direct, significant impact on the lives of others, contact Christin Kruse, Chief Development Officer, to discuss the many opportunities to join our efforts at 815.759.7114 or ckruse@pioneercenter.org

The Christmas Spirit

A letter to Santa from 9-year-old Ainsley Wehby of Crystal Lake made its way to the North Pole. Along its way it was passed along to family, neighbors, friends, teachers, classmates and was even posted on Facebook. Her selfless request was simple “I don’t want any presents. Instead, please send things for the boys and girls who are homeless.”

Ainsley didn’t have to wait long before an outpouring of gifts from the community were delivered to her door. There was even a gift from a soldier in Afghanistan who had seen her request on Facebook.

In late December, Ainsley, her mom and two brothers brought in boxes and bags packed to the brim with toys, warm socks, long underwear, hats, gloves and canned goods. These items made their way to McHenry County PADS and were distributed to the children and their parents. On behalf of the men, women and children at McHenry County PADS and our staff—Thank you Ainsley for having a big heart and for your very amazing act of kindness!
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Behavioral Health Day & Residential Manager

Pioneer Center gratefully acknowledges local funding from United Way, the McHenry County Mental Health Board and the Mental Health Resource League.

Accreditations
Pioneer Center has a three-year accreditation from the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF). This is the highest level of accreditation and assures a high standard of quality in all programs and services.

Pioneer Center’s youth behavioral health programs are accredited by the Joint Commission; demonstrating our commitment to and compliance with national standards for health care quality and safety.

SleepOut for Shelter
Make change.
Help end homelessness.
MAY 11, 2013

BREAKING NEWS—SleepOut for Shelter goes multi-county in 2013 through a partnership with PADS Lake County. This joining of forces will bring two dynamic organizations together to advocate and raise funds to sustain programs and services. The McHenry County event will be held at Living Waters Church in Crystal Lake. The Lake County event will be at Carmel High School in Mundelein. All monies raised by each respective program will remain within their county.

TWO WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

Register
Register as an individual or team to sleep out and become a fundraiser for our event. By registering you will have access to your own fundraising page (or team page!) to collect donations from family, friends and colleagues.

Sponsor a Participant or Fundraise
If you can’t sleep out, you can sponsor a participant, or you can simply collect donations for McHenry County PADS.

www.sleepoutforshelter.com

Affiliations
American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities
National Association of the Dually Diagnosed
Don Moss and Associates
Illinois Association of Rehabilitation Facilities
Illinois Coalition Against Sexual Assault

Illinois Collaboration on Youth
Infinite Potential Through Assistive Technology
Illinois Voices
McHenry County Mental Health Board
Mental Health Resource League for McHenry County
United Way of McHenry County
McHenry County Continuum of Care
McHenry County Human Services Network
Human Services Advocates of McHenry County

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