



LETTER FROM THE

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR & CHAIR

Dear Friends.

This year was like none other. We were faced with many new challenges and were more isolated than ever before. We tried to stay connected through technology, through masks, and amidst great fear and uncertainty. Our staff and board at ITA faced these challenges with you, and when our community went remote in March of 2020, we had to quickly decide if and how we would continue to serve the thousands who rely on us for support. We made the decision that, no matter what, we would find a way to help people, to serve our community and creatively adapt to a virtual world.



Jenni Rook, Executive Director

It was because of you, our friends and donors, that we were able to achieve so much this year. You remained **committed** and loyal to supporting our mission. We saw greater generosity than ever before allowing ITA to provide crucial creative arts therapies to thousands. You allowed us to continue our work through teletherapy sessions, to create resources such as "Jessie and the Virus" (a film for children), free weekly online programming for children and adults, and support groups for therapists.



Ginny Trainor, Board Chair

We remained **dedicated** to helping families with limited financial resources, offering our therapies for free when necessary and drastically amending our sliding scale to reduce our session fees for new and existing clients. Because of you, we were able to serve more than 2,600 clients last year.

We made the decision to be **resilient**. To move forward and plan for the future, as uncertain as it may be. Our board and leadership staff engaged in strategic planning and creating goals toward our continued growth as organization to be achieved within the next three years, including our expansion into new communities.

We accepted the challenge to build a major giving program in partnership with the Evanston Community Foundation and their Building the Future matching grant of \$25,000 elevating ITA's approach to fundraising.

We made a commitment to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion in all that we do, seeking education and opportunities to challenge our current practices in order to build a culture of anti-racism.

We are here and we are grateful to have you by our side. We will continue to embrace new opportunities and face new challenges together with determination and hope.

With gratitude,

Ginny Trainor

Jenni Rook

Ginny Trainor Comi Pook

TRANSCENDING LIMITS

As a parent, one of our desires for our children is for them to be happy in life. Christine wasn't sure that was always going to be the case for her son Nick, who experienced severe trauma as a toddler, was abandoned, and completely nonverbal. He often hid in corners, screamed, threw things, and rarely slept. Through research, Christine discovered that art therapy might be helpful for a child with Nick's range of needs.

66 "While the world makes my son feel less than, ITA makes him feel more than", says Christine 99

Through years of art, drama, and music therapy, Nick has learned social skills, self-control, engages in conversation, and is one of the happiest people around. He has confidence, wants to connect with others, and loves new challenges. He was even featured in an ITA video in 2017.

At the time of the video, Christine expressed hope that Nick would be able to live in a group home, have a job, feel successful, and experience happiness. Last fall, Nick achieved the goal they had both dreamed of for so long when he moved into a CILA home with other men. He continues to receive music therapy at ITA. He attends a day program and also holds a job, which he will return to once it's safe to do so.

In addition to being a grateful and proud parent, Christine has been a donor to ITA for many years. She gives because she believes the emotional support she and Nick receive from ITA is as essential of a human need as food, clothing, and shelter. She believes that to have fullness in life, people, especially people with special needs like Nick, need the support ITA provides.

"I am so grateful to ITA for all the support they've given to both Nick and me. They have not only provided countless therapy sessions for Nick, but they've also been a rock for me, especially as we transitioned Nick into the CILA. I give to ITA because ITA's not just for the clients; they embrace the whole family. And that's something that's unique and priceless," says Christine.



Christine's son, Nick, in a music therapy session at ITA.

2020 HIGHLIGHTS

NAVIGATING THE GLOBAL PANDEMIC



Online teletherapy



SPREAD JOY Live interactive music for children



Modified sliding scale to further reduce costs to clients



Self-care workshops for mental health providers





RELIEVED STRESS Easy art projects feartured on our blog



MADE MEANING A video explaining COVID-19 to children

2020 HIGHLIGHTS



MIDWEST CLAY GUILD

The Midwest Clay Guild hosted their annual sale, donating 20% of the proceeds to ITA.



CREATIVE ARTS THERAPY DAY

At a City Council meeting on March 9th, Evanston Mayor Steven Hagerty proclaimed March 20, 2020 Creative Arts Therapy Day, recognizing the importance of ITA's approach to mental health treatment.



HEALING ARTS CELEBRATION

The annual fundraiser went virtual in July, 2020.



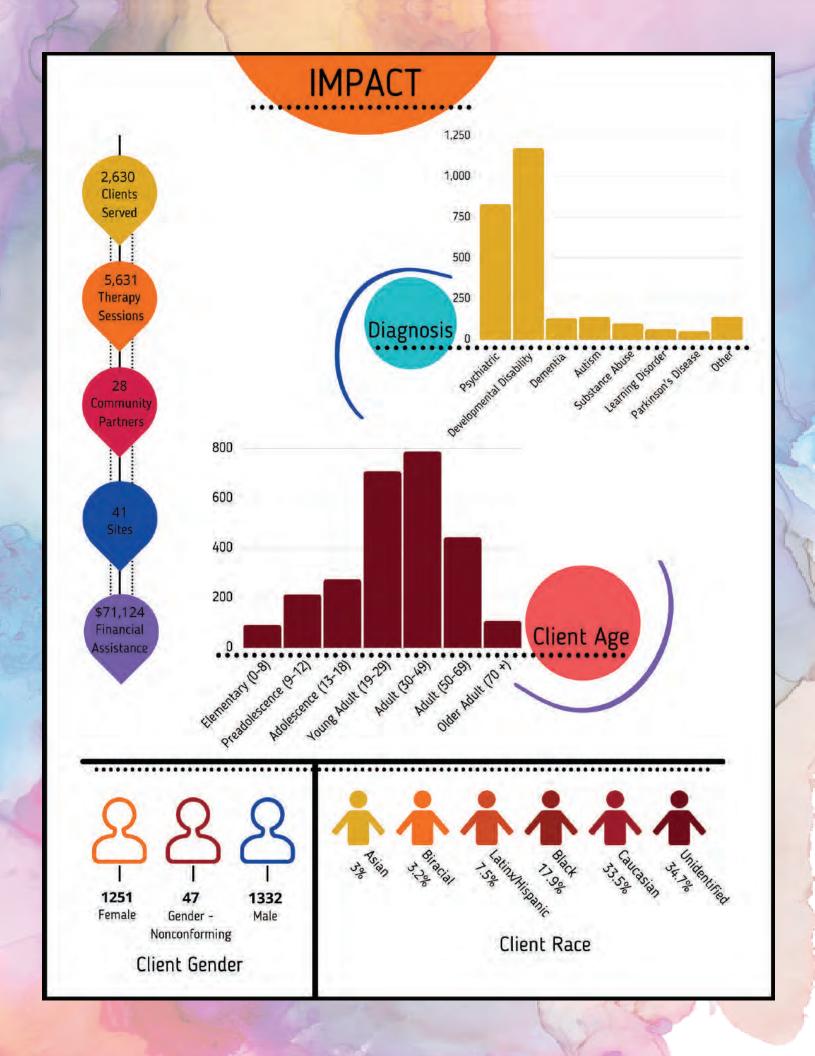
ITA FEATURED ON ABC7

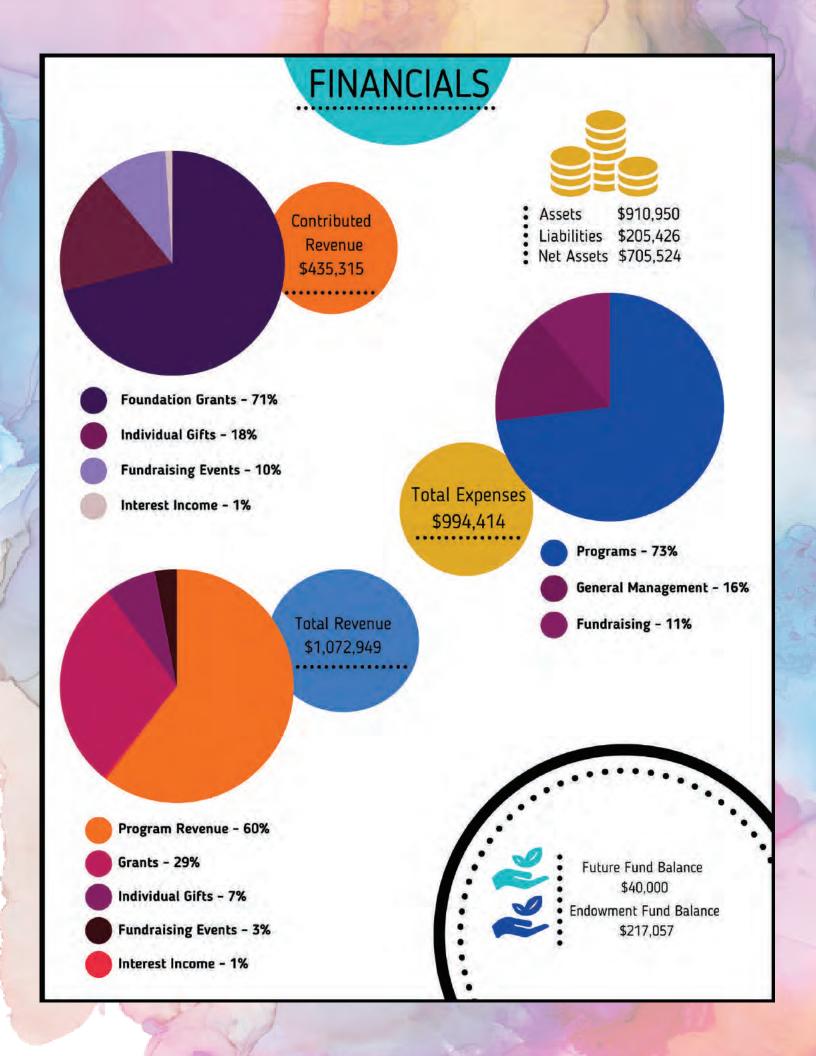
Karen Jordan visited ITA to learn more about art and music therapy. The segment aired several times on ABC7 in early 2020.



NATIONAL & LOCAL EDUCATION

ITA therapists facilitated local events and workshops focused on the creative arts therapies for mental health and older adults. Staff also presented at the NAMI Illinois state conference, and gave a Grand Rounds lecture at the Brody School of Medicine at East Carolina University.





LIGHTING THE WAY

LAMPLIGHTER SOCIETY
ITA'S PREMIER DONOR COMMUNITY



Lamplighters form deeper connections to ITA and its mission, enabling a greater number of people to receive creative arts therapy and illuminating a path toward growth and healing.

Reflects cumulative giving between September 1, 2019 and August 31, 2020

LEERIE

\$25,000 + Anonymous

TORCH BEARER

\$10,000-\$24,999 Alexandra C. & John D. Nichols

GUARDIAN

\$5,000-\$9,999
Anonymous
Jill & Phillip Calian
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Artwork by ITA client

"At times our own light goes out and is rekindled by a spark from another person. Each of us has cause to think with deep gratitude of those who have lighted the flame within us."

Albert Schweitzer

MISSION

Empowering individuals, families and communities to grow and heal through advanced approaches in Creative Arts Therapy, setting the standard for treatment, practice and training within the field.

EXPANDING POSSIBILITIES

FOSTERING INDEPENDENCE AND RESPECT

ITA partnered with Libenu, providing music therapy to people with disabilities, working together to enhance their ability to participate in social settings. Programming was provided on-site initially, and then shifted to virtual sessions in the spring of 2020.

Libenu's Co-Founder and Executive Director, Dr. Shana Erenberg, believes ITA's creative arts therapy is vital for their residents, especially during the pandemic. "Music therapy helps our residents create a culture of cooperation. A lot less 'me' focus and more 'we' focus. It has helped our residents work cooperatively together as a group and to respect each other's space, opinions, and choices," she says. ITA provided 54 sessions for Libenu residents in 2020, serving 16 individuals.

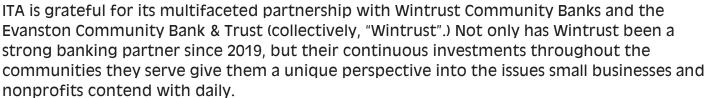


Music therapy session at Libenu

Dr. Erenberg has watched her consumers improve their social skills through music therapy such as collaboration, cooperation, impulse control, and more. She is also pleased to see that ultimately, they have learned to better advocate for themselves, and this will help their consumers achieve one of Libenu's core beliefs that every individual has the right to live independently, with dignity and respect.

WINTRUST COMMUNITY BANKS

A VALUED PARTNER DURING CHALLENGING TIMES







2019-2020 DONORS

With gratitude for the following individuals, families, corporations, and foundations who believe in the power of creative arts therapy to transcend limits and expand possibilites.

This honor roll reflects cumulative giving between September 1, 2019 and August 31, 2020.

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WHO GENEROUSLY GAVE OF THEIR TIME IN 2020.

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