

Summer 2018



SAWS Connections

NEWS FROM SERVANTS AT WORK ► SAWSRAMPS.ORG

SAWs Names New Executive Director



Christina Starace has joined SAWs as the new Executive Director to lead the organization into its next chapter of growth. In response to increasing demand, SAWs recognized the need for new leadership as the organization restructures and

expands well beyond Indiana. "This is an exciting time in the life of SAWs and I am honored to join the team, building on our strengths and leading the organizational expansion that will allow us to provide freedom not only to those who are confined to their houses in Indiana, but throughout the United States," said Christina.

Christina's expertise in multiple areas will bring the necessary skills to the organization. She is an ordained Presbyterian minister and a professional fundraiser. Having served several other nonprofit organizations in central Indiana, she brings the breadth and depth of knowledge and experience that is needed to shepherd SAWs through its next phase of growth.

"Over the past fifteen years, I have been impressed with the stories from SAWs volunteers about how the organization is helping people who are disabled gain independence and confidence," said Christina. "It's amazing how a simple ramp can provide not only access to the larger community, but a healthier mental, physical, emotional and spiritual life for people who are disabled and their families."

"This is an exciting time in the life of SAWs and I am honored to join the team"

CHRISTINA STARACE, SAWs Executive Director

"The SAWs Board of Directors felt that we were being led to expand our mission of providing high quality, re-usable, wooden wheelchair ramps to needy families beyond the boundaries of our home state of Indiana. In order to achieve this next growth phase, a high-energy person who is passionate about our mission was needed. We found that person in Christina Starace. I personally have not been so excited by one person as I am about our new ED. Without a doubt, she is the exact person that SAWs needs to continue our national expansion, secure funding and energize the organization."

The future has been bright for SAWs but now, thanks to Christina's arrival, it is brighter still.



Building Freedom
one ramp at a time

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SAWs Has a New Look!

By now you've noticed: SAWs has a new look! Not only have we changed the format of our newsletter, but we have updated our look with a new color palette and logo. Brighter colors mimic the outdoors where we do our life-changing work and communicate the joy that comes to volunteers and clients alike when we are advancing our mission. Our new logo is simpler while remaining true to our roots and the sense of freedom that the ramp brings. New to this version of the logo is the sense of forward motion that the person in the wheelchair exhibits as they roll out into the community.

We think that this new image captures the spirit of SAWs and hope that you like it as much as we do!



Century Club Surprise!

Seated around a table in June, the SAWs board of directors was thrilled when board member **Tom Godby presented Executive Director, Christina Starace, with an envelope packed with 102 checks from the Zionsville Century Club, totaling \$10,200.**

The club meets on a quarterly basis and draws the names of three members from a hat to make pitches on behalf of a favorite charity. After the three presentations, the club votes and each member writes a \$100 check to the winning organization. At the May meeting, club member Tom Godby's name was drawn



Tom Godby calls for volunteers and offers to share information about SAWs team-building opportunities at any business or organization.

and he presented on behalf of SAWs, ultimately securing the winning votes and subsequent funding for SAWs.

Tom introduced Christina to the club at their August meeting and shared the need for volunteers. Christina thanked the group for their gift and shared stories of the lives that were transformed as a result of their generosity. **Thank you, Zionsville Century Club!**



SAWs Launches Corporate Service Program

by **TIM THURSTON**

Corporations can play key roles in their communities by donating time, talent and treasure. Employees seek out and remain in corporations that have an active community impact program. With these facts in mind, SAWs has launched a Corporate Service Program in central Indiana.

The Corporate Service Program is a turn-key program that allows a company to create its own Day of Service. It provides an opportunity for employees to work together to build a company-sponsored ramp for elderly citizens aging in place, veterans with physical challenges or children with permanent physical conditions. Through this work, employers have the opportunity to translate their values into meaningful and memorable acts of kindness.

Interested? Here's how it works. Employers sponsor a ramp for \$2,500 and SAWs schedules a morning for the team to build a ramp for a client. The employer receives:

- A morale-building opportunity
- Increased visibility in the community
- Immediate gratification that they made a difference in someone's life
- Greater understanding of the issues of "aging in place"
- Hands-on experience building a ramp, no matter the skill level
- Service day announcement and photos on SAWs website and social media
- Pre-alerts to area news agencies of the company's participation
- Support for Great Places To Work recognition

The client receives:

- A safe and accessible home
- Ability to age-in-place despite physical challenges

SAWs provides a company with:

- Lunch-and-Learn program at a company's location
- Ramp site training and guidance
- Pre-alerts to area media outlets
- SAWs t-shirts
- Follow-up evaluations

Please contact Carol Wendt at cwendt@sawsramps.org to learn more.



Karl Meyer, Chairman of the Board for Meyer Najem Construction, looks on as Tim Russell, President, transplants rosebushes. Meanwhile Jim Hamilton, SAWs Project Manager, oversees the installation of railings with Meyer Najem employees Jeremy Dixon (and son, Garrett), Thomas Smith and Ross Miller. Hospitality Team Captain, Heather Henigan, offers encouragement.

Charitable Bequests

SAWs exists today because of ordinary people showing extraordinary generosity by donating during their lifetime and designating legacy gifts to SAWs in their wills and estate plans.

Every year, we learn about a bequest to SAWs after the donor's death. While we receive the gift with sincere gratitude, we also regret the inability to thank the donor for such a thoughtful gift.

It is our privilege to personally thank our legacy donors, include them in celebrations and keep them informed about future plans. We are aware that some bequest donors wish to keep their gifts anonymous and we honor those requests. SAWs promises to fulfill our donors' instructions with the highest level of integrity.

Have you made provisions to leave a future gift to SAWs through your will or other estate planning document? If so or you have questions, **please contact Christina Starace, Executive Director at 317.844.7664x6049**. Until then, thank you for your passionate support of SAWs.

Why I give...

TOM LIPINSKI



Our introductory column on giving features our longtime supporter, Tom Lipinski. In addition to serving as the Chairman of the Board of Directors for SAWs and serving as a Project Manager in constructing the ramps, Tom and his wife Jennifer also support SAWs financially.

Question: *You give so much of your time as the board chairman and as a project manager. Why do you choose to also support SAWs financially?*

Answer: I realize that no organization can survive without funding. And I know that the money is being well spent and is being used to serve our mission. My wife and I feel strongly enough about the SAWs mission to make SAWs one of the top nonprofits that we support.

Question: *What makes you confident that your gifts are used wisely?*

Answer: As the board chairman, I see the financial reports monthly and know where every penny is going. I also know that we run very lean and very efficiently, so I am 100% confident that our donations are being used wisely.

Question: *How does SAWs compare to similar organizations?*

Answer: There is a huge gap in services in our communities for low-income people who need ramps and SAWs is filling that gap. Not only does a ramp affect the life of an individual, but the gift of a ramp affects the entire family whose members might have previously had to carry a person out of the house. The addition of a ramp also affects the neighbors because now the person can once again join the neighborhood. The ramp even affects the emergency services in our community because once they have a ramp, a person doesn't have to call 911 just to get out of their house. Each ramp we build has a multi-tiered affect.

Question: *What motivates you to give?*

Answer: I am a person of strong faith. I felt like God has blessed me with enough gifts that I need to return some of those gifts to his work.

Question: *Why does our mission rise to the top of your philanthropic list?*

Answer: Our gift to SAWs is a leveraged gift that affects more than one person, even multiple concentric circles of people.

Question: *What do you want others to know about the difference one person can make by giving financially?*

Answer: If it weren't for individual donors, we would not be able to build 350 ramps per year. Individuals are the lifeblood of this organization. There is no gift that is too small or too large. If your gift is small, when combined with other gifts it will be large. If your gift is large, it can impact an entire community.

When you support SAWs financially or as a volunteer, you are providing a lifetime of freedom not only to the ramp recipient, but to their primary caregiver and their entire family. Thank you for making a tangible difference in so many lives right here in Indiana.





Cinco de Mayo build—un Motivo de Celebración

Cinco de Mayo is typically a day associated with parties, margaritas and lots of Mexican food, but this year a group of Hispanic men wanted to celebrate Cinco de Mayo in a different way. Noticing that May 5th fell on a Saturday this year, this group of eight young men decided to celebrate by helping others in the community.

After connecting with SAWs through a local community service agency, they raised over \$1,500 to pay for their build. On Saturday, May 5, a group of twelve volunteers showed up at the build site as four of the young men brought their girlfriends with them to participate in the project.

The ramp recipient was a young father who was losing his legs to a medical condition and had rarely been out of his house over the past couple of years because of not

being able to navigate the steps outside. His 6 year-old daughter and his wife were present on the day of the build and were ecstatic to see him roll down and back up the ramp for the first time. We overheard the 6 year-old ask, “Does this mean Daddy can go outside? Oh—that means I can play outside finally!”

Living in a tough neighborhood, her parents had not allowed her to play outside unless they were able to be outside with her. This SAWs ramp not only provided freedom for a young man with many years left to enjoy the outdoors and the freedom to connect with his community, but it brought freedom to a little girl who had not been allowed to play outside without his protective presence.

“Does this mean Daddy can go outside? Oh—that means I can play outside finally!”

6 YEAR OLD DAUGHTER OF RAMP RECIPIENT



Brenda became the first SAWs ramp recipient to participate in a ribbon-cutting ceremony to celebrate her new freedom! This photo was taken immediately after she cut the ribbon as she prepared to roll down the ramp to join the volunteers for some celebratory lemonade.

If you would like to join our hospitality team to help set up the ribbon for the ceremony and provide lemonade and snacks, please call Heather Henigan at 317-844-7664 x6046 to learn more about our hospitality team opportunities.

The Expertise of SAWs Board Continues to Grow

As SAWs moves forward to answer the call of its mission, new expertise is needed to assist our executive director in fulfilling the strategic plan. The board welcomes four new members who bring varied and relevant backgrounds to the team.



Jody Dedon, CFRE, serves as Executive Director of Indy Women in Tech. Jody works to help women recognize and communicate their distinctive value with clarity and confidence while giving them proven strategies for expanding their portfolio of leadership experiences. Previously, she served as Director of Advancement at Leadership Indianapolis, Director of Development at Conner Prairie and Director of Development at Noble Industries.



Meredith Langhorst, MD, is a member of the American Academy of Family Physicians, North American Spine Society, International Spine Intervention Society and the American Society of Interventional Pain Physicians. She has been on the medical board for the World Swimming Championships, the Big Ten Basketball Tournament and the VISA National Gymnastics Championships. She practices with OrthoIndy, a bone, joint, spine and muscle group.



Aaron Johnson brings broad leadership and executive-level experience with acumen and passion for managing and improving operations. As President of Westhill Group over the last twelve years, he has worked with a variety of clients in leadership roles in the areas of Strategy Development, Operations, Sales and Management.



Bob Richmond is a business savvy, laser-focused sales, account management and OEM professional. He is a proven team player who has helped others understand the nuances of their markets. Bob has held the position of Director of Strategic Accounts at Cenorin, Director of National Accounts at Excelsior Medical and Director of Strategic Accounts and Distribution at Smith Medical.

Welcome!



**news
& notes**

SIA Recognizes John Hunter for Volunteer Service

John Hunter was recognized by Subaru of Indiana Automotive, Inc. (SIA) in its first round of Subaru Serves Outstanding Volunteer Awards which included a Jefferson Award for Public Service. Along with the award, John received a \$1,000 grant from SIA for SAWs.

“We are so proud of all of our Associates, and especially excited to be able to honor these great role models of community service,” said Tom Easterday, Senior Executive Vice President at SIA.

John began his volunteerism following Hurricane Katrina and continued with SAWs in Indianapolis. Recognizing the need in Lafayette, John single-handedly brought SAWs to the community and is now the Area Coordinator for Tippecanoe, Clinton, White and Fountain Counties. He has been instrumental in developing the SAWs partnership with Habitat for Humanity of Lafayette.

We share SIA’s pride in John’s dedication and his **significant efforts to change lives.**



John Hunter (far left) honored with other SIA award recipients.

Northwestern Mutual Honors Mike Mathews with \$15,000 Grant

Each year, Northwestern Mutual honors 16 extraordinary individuals for their volunteer work with local organizations. SAWs received a \$15,000 grant on behalf of Michael Mathews at Northwestern Mutual – Indianapolis through the 2018 Community Service Awards program. Mike, a member of the SAWs Board of Directors and long time volunteer, has worked as a financial planner at Northwestern Mutual for 46 years.

“Northwestern Mutual salutes the efforts of Servants At Work Inc. in making your community a better place in which to live. I hope this contribution will be helpful in continuing the important work you are doing,” said Eric Christophersen, president, Northwestern Mutual Foundation.

Mike has helped build over 120 ramps and works with volunteer teams from churches, service clubs, corporations and other organizations. As a board member, Mike sits on the Finance Committee.

Congratulations, Mike, and thank you for all you do in the service of others!



Mike Mathews presents the check from Northwestern Mutual to Tom Lipinski, Chairman of the Board of SAWs.

Ways to Support **SAWs**

How would **YOU** like
to be involved?



Join the SAWs **hospitality team** to help create a warm and celebratory environment to mark our clients' moment of freedom



Register to volunteer on builds at sawsramps.org

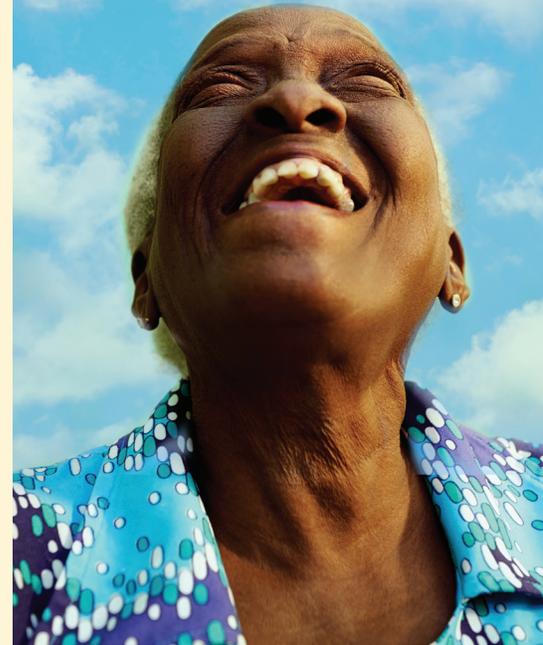


Support SAWs with a donation. Each ramp costs approximately \$1,000 to construct and any level of financial support is welcome.

Please return the enclosed envelope to share how you would like to join our mission!

Building Freedom

**one ramp
at a time**



You can also support SAWs while you are shopping!



Make your amazon purchases at smile.amazon.com and .5% of your purchase price will go to SAWs when you register SAWs as the charity of your choice.

Kroger Community Rewards

Kroger has recently assigned a new account number to SAWs (**EP501**). Current members can update their accounts and new members can enroll at www.kroger.com. Once registered, a contribution from every purchase you make when you swipe your Kroger Plus card will be sent to the charity of your choice.

To benefit SAWs, type in EP501 or Servants at Work in the search box and choose "All" from the "View By Type" dropdown menu. Need help? Email CECOMMUNITYREWARDS@KROGER.com or call 317-579-8324 or 317-579-8321.



SAWs
SERVANTS AT WORK, INC.
Building Freedom One Ramp at a Time

8811 Robbins Road, Indianapolis, IN 46268

SAWs expresses its deep gratitude to these organizations upon which so much of our work depends.

OUR PARTNERS

