

# Image



**Innovation  
Starts With  
Inclusion**

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### Image is published by Inglis

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Inglis is a 501c3 nonprofit and human services provider throughout Pennsylvania.  
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### Our Mission

Inglis enables people with disabilities – and those who care for them – to achieve their goals and live life to the fullest.

### Our Vision

We champion independence through innovative, life-enhancing services and communities.

# A Note From Our CEO

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As we share this latest issue of Image magazine, I'm struck by the energy and momentum building across Inglis and by what's possible when *innovation starts with inclusion*. When we lead with that belief, we expand what's possible not just for the people we serve, but for the future we are building together.

In this issue, we've included our perspective on the Tech First movement and what it means for the future of our work. At Inglis, we see "Tech First" as more than a framework. It is a commitment to ensuring people of every age and

**“It is a commitment to ensuring people of every age and ability have access to the tools they need to live independently, stay connected, and pursue what matters most.”**

ability have access to the tools they need to live independently, stay connected, and pursue what matters most. That belief continues to guide how we innovate, invest, and grow.

You can see that commitment taking shape in powerful ways. In Southwest Philadelphia, Inglis is investing in the long-term preservation and modernization of our Eastwick apartment community, ensuring that affordable, accessible housing

continues to support independence for decades to come. In Pittsburgh, the Inglis Innovation Center has quickly become a dynamic hub for assistive technology, partnerships, and an anchor for expanded services across Western Pennsylvania.

This work is made stronger through partnership. We're grateful for organizations like PA Health & Wellness and for dedicated volunteers like Kay Gore, whose commitment helps bring programs, spaces, and opportunities to life and expand what's possible for the people we serve.

Thank you for being part of this work and this community.



Dyann M. Roth  
President & CEO





The signage outside of the Eastwick II complex.

# A Promise Built to Last: Preserving Accessible Housing at Inglis

By Lauren Tilghman

**F**or more than five decades, Inglis Housing Corporation has operated with a simple but profound belief that housing is not just shelter—it is the foundation for dignity, independence, health, and opportunity. Long before accessibility was a mainstream consideration in housing design, Inglis was building apartments that recognized the needs of people with disabilities and older adults as essential, not optional.

That commitment dates back to the early 1970s, when Inglis emerged as one of the Region's earliest providers of intentionally accessible, affordable housing. At a time when most housing stock excluded people with mobility, sensory, or age-related needs, Inglis made a deliberate choice to center access and affordability together. Today, as the City of Philadelphia and the state of Pennsylvania confront intersecting housing shortages, demographic shifts, and aging infrastructure—that legacy is more relevant than ever.

Nowhere is this more evident than in Southwest Philadelphia, where Inglis continues its longstanding stewardship of Inglis Gardens at Eastwick, a 42-unit garden-style community built in 1998 and expanded in 2002. For 30 years, this Community has supported people with disabilities with low incomes who are often priced out of the private market and are underserved by conventional housing models. Inglis is working to preserve them as inclusive, equitable housing within the neighborhood long into the future, thanks to the support

of the Philadelphia Housing Development Corporation (PHDC), the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency (PHFA), and the Federal Home Loan Bank of Pittsburgh (FHLB Pittsburgh).

Preservation is not just about maintaining the status quo. It is about reinvesting with intention so that accessibility keeps pace with residents' evolving needs and modern building standards. "We're committed to building stronger communities that accommodate everyone's abilities," shared Heidi Bohn, Executive Director of Inglis Housing Corporation. "Moving forward we want to ensure that our properties exceed basic accessibility and provide services that truly support the wellbeing of each resident that chooses to call our properties home."

After decades of continuous use, Eastwick, like many similar properties, requires strategic upgrades to its critical building systems, unit interiors, and common spaces. These improvements are essential to extending the useful life of the properties and ensuring that residents can continue to live safely, comfortably, and independently.

This preservation work aligns directly with the City of Philadelphia's H.O.M.E. Initiative and Pennsylvania's new Housing Action Plan. Both prioritize safeguarding and reinvesting in existing affordable housing as a core strategy for addressing the housing crisis experienced



*A kitchen, pre-renovation inside Eastwick I.*

across the State. The initiative recognizes the reality that it is far more cost-effective—and far more equitable—to preserve deeply affordable housing than to replace it once it is lost. For communities like Eastwick, preservation also adds to neighborhood stability and prevents the displacement of residents who rely on accessible design features that cannot be easily replicated elsewhere.

At the state level, Inglis' work similarly advances the goals outlined in Pennsylvania's Housing Action Plan, that emphasizes the need to expand access to affordable homes, while addressing the needs of seniors and people with disabilities, and reinvesting in aging housing stock. The Plan also acknowledges that accessibility must be embedded into housing solutions—not treated as an afterthought, and that long-term affordability depends on proactive capital investment.

Planned improvements for the Eastwick community focus on life-safety systems, accessibility enhancements, energy efficiency, and the modernization of units and shared spaces. Assistive technology—such as

modernized intercom and access systems, improved lighting, and wayfinding—will also be incorporated throughout the Properties.

Inglis is prioritizing creating infrastructure that can support future smart-home or health-monitoring technologies across all its properties.

Assistive tech plays a critical role in extending independence for so many; it helps Inglis to continue to align housing design with how people truly live in mind and recognizes that accessibility is not static.

We are modernizing older developments to meet contemporary needs, and technology helps to bridge that gap.

**As policymakers and housing leaders search for scalable solutions to the affordability crisis, Inglis offers a clear example of what works—sustained commitment, thoughtful design, and long-term stewardship. Preserving accessible, affordable housing is not simply about bricks and mortar; it is about honoring a promise made decades ago and ensuring that future generations can age and live with dignity in the communities they call home. ●**

**“Moving forward we want to ensure that our properties exceed basic accessibility and provide services that truly support the wellbeing of each resident that chooses to call our properties home.”**



*The inner part of the complex of Eastwick I, pre-renovation.*



# Supporting the Inglis Program that Inspires You Most

Your gift to Inglis touches the lives of more than 2,000 people with physical disabilities living throughout Pennsylvania each year.

As always, you can direct your gift to the Inglis program that inspires you most.

## To direct your gift...

disabilities—and those who care about them. I'd like to support Inglis with a  monthly gift  \$1,000  \$500  \$250  \$100  I would like my gift designated towards: \_\_\_\_\_

**Make checks payable to Inglis.**  
For your own protection, Inglis asks that you do not mail credit card information.

Use the  in the enclosed envelope

\$35  Other amount

I want to support

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Comments (optional)

Select your favorite program from the "I want to support" drop-down at [inglis.org/donate](http://inglis.org/donate)

PAY TO THE ORDER OF *Inglis*

*Two Hundred and \_\_\_\_\_*

FOR *Inglis House*

22222222 000 1111

Or include your wishes in writing when mailing your gift to Inglis

To learn more about where your support is needed now, visit [www.inglis.org/support](http://www.inglis.org/support)

Want to talk to someone about the best way for you to make an impact at Inglis? We are here for you!

Please contact Jessica Scipione at **(267) 635-2541** or [Jessica.Scipione@inglis.org](mailto:Jessica.Scipione@inglis.org).



*Katie Griffiths, IATS Specialist, guiding Gloria Pemberton through updates on her Amazon Echo Show.*

# Technology First Must Mean Everyone First

## Innovation Starts With Inclusion

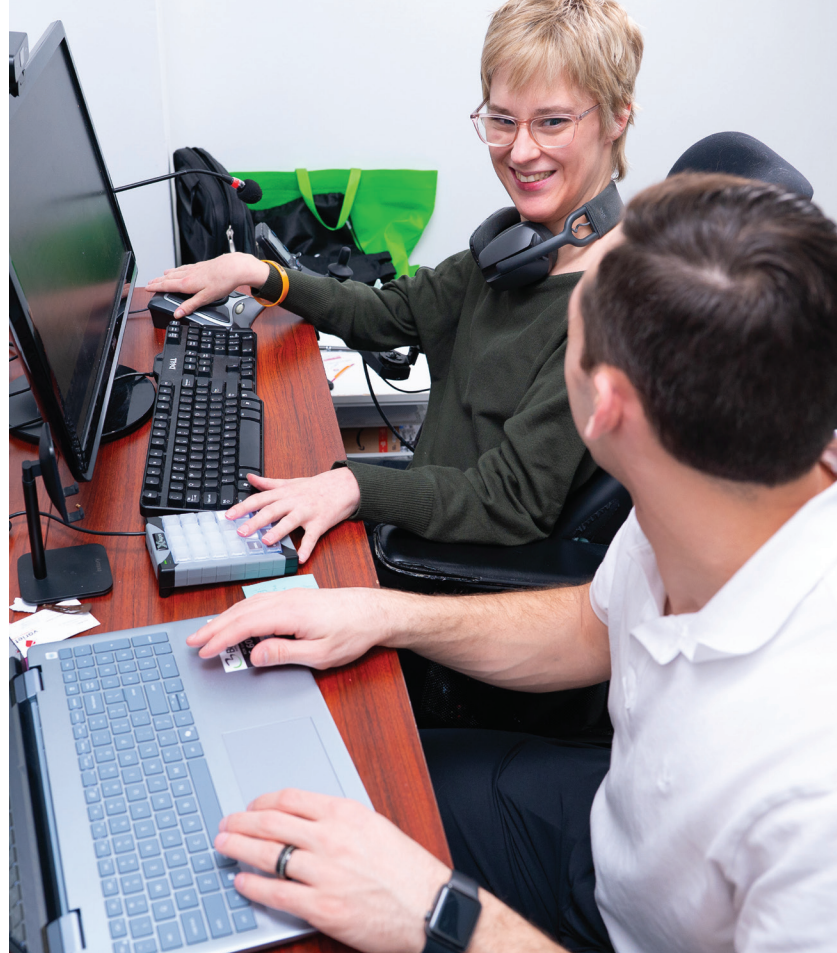
By Leah Marmo, Kristen Rantanen, and Brian Valdez

**T**echnology has become the default gateway to health care, employment, education, and community life. Whether we are scheduling a doctor's appointment, applying for a job, or staying connected with family—the digital world is often the first place we turn. But for millions of older adults and people with disabilities, that same digital world is not a convenience, it is a barrier.

The scale of the problem is striking. The average American now spends more than eight hours a day on digital devices, yet only 4% of webpages are fully accessible. 35% of seniors report they do not have reliable home internet access, compared to the 22% of other adults. These gaps are not the result of individual choice or ability. They are the outcome of systems that were never designed with inclusion in mind.

As our population ages and the number of people living with disabilities continues to grow, closing the digital divide is no longer optional. It is a matter of equity, independence, and full participation in community life.

Pennsylvania has taken an important step forward through its embrace of the Technology First movement, which prioritizes technology as a primary support for people with disabilities. At its best, Technology First emphasizes person-driven solutions that promote autonomy, engagement, and self-



*IATS client Laura Power working alongside IATS Program Manager Jeff Ruffing.*

determination. Research shows that the early and effective use of technology can improve outcomes, increase independence, and reduce reliance on direct support professionals.

Yet much of this work nationally has focused on individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. While this progress is meaningful, it is incomplete. Pennsylvania has the seventh-highest median age in the nation, and its older adult population is growing rapidly. For the Commonwealth to truly lead as a Technology First state, this approach must expand to include older adults and people with all types of disabilities.

For more than 30 years, Inglis has seen what happens when technology is treated not as a luxury or a last resort, but as a practical, problem-solving tool for everyday life. Through community-based services such as assistive technology supports and home modifications, and in our long-term care community at Inglis



*IATS client Stephen Clark meeting with IATS Program Manager Jeff Ruffing.*

House, we have worked alongside individuals to identify solutions that support safety, independence, and aging where people choose to live.

One lesson has emerged consistently: access alone is not enough. Technology adoption depends on trust, confidence, and human connection. Innovation does not succeed simply because a device exists. It succeeds when people feel empowered to use it. That is where innovation truly starts.

A recent four-week digital literacy workshop at our Pittsburgh Innovation Center illustrates this clearly. Older adults from North Hills Community Outreach gathered to learn about smartphone safety and fundamentals, including how to retrieve login information, download apps, and use features like the camera or flashlight. Participants were engaged, asked thoughtful questions, and wanted to keep learning.

These questions were not a sign of inability. They were evidence of an unmet demand. Older adults are hungry for Technology First programming that respects their curiosity and supports their independence. Just as important, the workshops created space for social connection.

After each session, participants stayed to talk, share stories, and enjoy coffee together. Several shared that it was the first time they truly felt confident using their phones. That confidence

has real implications for safety, health access, and connection.

This is what inclusive innovation looks like in practice. It recognizes that technology is not just a tool, but a gateway to participation. It also acknowledges that successful implementation requires investment in people, not just hardware.

If Pennsylvania is to lead in the Technology First movement, policymakers and advocates must commit to building an inclusive digital infrastructure that serves people across their lifespan. That means investing in community-based training and digital literacy, supporting accessible design standards, and ensuring sustainable funding for assistive and mainstream technologies alike.

Embedding a dedicated line item in the state budget to advance inclusive technology adoption would be a powerful next step. Such an investment would strengthen independence, reduce isolation, and improve health and community outcomes, while reinforcing Pennsylvania's role as a national leader in inclusive innovation.

**Technology First cannot be measured by intention alone. It must be measured by who is included. Innovation truly starts when everyone, regardless of age or disability, has the tools, support, and confidence to participate fully in community life. ●**



**“Innovation does not succeed simply because a device exists. It succeeds when people feel empowered to use it.”**



**“...PA Health & Wellness is not just a financial sponsor. They’re fully invested in making a difference in the lives of our residents and community.”**

# PA Health & Wellness: A Lesson in Love and Life, Without Limits

By Justin Windheim

**D**ays before she started working at PA Health & Wellness, Kay Gore, Senior Manager for Community Engagement, rolled up her sleeves as a member of the Organization's volunteer team at the Inglis House Keen Games. That was 2019, PA Health & Wellness' second year volunteering. Every year since, Kay has organized and joined the company team giving their time and talent during each day of the multi-day event.

"Kay postponed her vacation for the Games," said Patti Veltri, Volunteer and Internship Manager for Inglis. "She leads by example to inspire others to get involved."

Kay believes PA Health & Wellness is inspired most by experiencing the unique approach Inglis takes and the difference Inglis makes in lives throughout the community. "The Keen Games left me amazed by the great work Inglis is doing," said Gore. "The House is a beautiful place, a family of dedicated people. It isn't a nursing facility. It's a living facility."

PA Health & Wellness' financial and hands-on support is motivated by the alignment of their mission with the impact Inglis makes in the community. "We are committed to improving the health and quality of life of PA residents, one person at a time," said Gore. "Partnering with Inglis allows us to see that our mission is possible—and that it's happening."

For the 2026 Keen Games, PA Health & Wellness will provide t-shirts so all volunteers have a reminder of their experience and the important work Inglis does. "Kay's always thinking about ways to do more," said Sheila Egan, Director

of Institutional Giving at Inglis. "PA Health & Wellness is not just a financial sponsor. They're fully invested in making a difference in the lives of our residents and community."

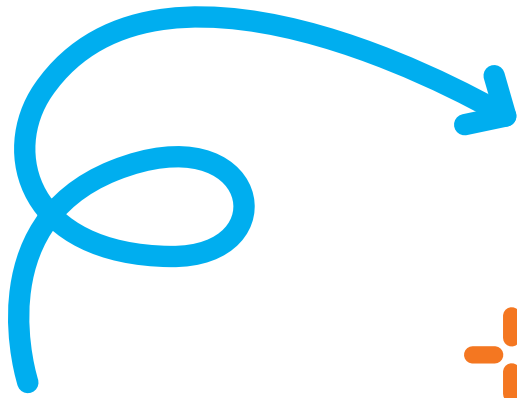
As presenting sponsor of the 2025 Inglis BASH, they funded the Community Technology Center at the Inglis Apartments at Elmwood, and as the 2026 presenting sponsor, they will support renovations of two gyms, one in each of the Inglis Gardens at Belmont apartment buildings. This is part of a larger three-year, \$120,000 commitment to Inglis' mission. PA Health & Wellness takes exceptional care to work with Inglis to ensure their investments support what the Organization, and the communities it serves, need most.

"People hear of someone having a disability and immediately put limits on them," said Gore. "Inglis shows no limits. Everyone can live life—and live it to the fullest."



*Kay Gore, Senior Manager for Community Engagement at PA Health & Wellness.*

**Inglis is extremely grateful for PA Health & Wellness' generosity and a partnership based on commitment and a shared love of community without limits. ●**



# INSPIRED by this story? Your team could be *next*.

When the team at PA Health & Wellness volunteered at Keen Games with Inglis, they didn't just donate time—they experienced firsthand what it means to support a community where people with disabilities live life without limits.



Corporate volunteering with Inglis is more than a team-building activity. It's an opportunity for your employees to connect, give back, and help create moments of independence, joy, and belonging.

From signature events like the Keen Games to hands-on projects that support residents and community members, your organization can play a meaningful role in advancing accessibility and opportunity.

**Is this something your organization could see itself doing?**





**Bring your team  
together for a day that  
makes a difference.**

Learn more about corporate volunteer opportunities at [www.inglis.org/volunteer](http://www.inglis.org/volunteer), or contact **Patti Veltri** at [patricia.veltri@inglis.org](mailto:patricia.veltri@inglis.org).



(Left to Right) Leah Marmo, Jeff Ruffing, and Abigail Goetz.

# Inglis in Pittsburgh: Building Momentum in Western Pennsylvania

By Lauren Tilghman

**A**s the Pittsburgh Inglis Innovation Center (IIC) enters its third year in the western half of Pennsylvania, year two was marked by growth, credibility, and Inglis deepening its community roots. What began as a strategic expansion has evolved into a trusted hub for assistive technology, collaboration,

and supporting the inclusive advancement of accessible resources for people with disabilities and older adults across the Greater Pittsburgh region.

The initial vision for the Pittsburgh Innovation Center was shaped by a partnership with Highmark Wholecare, which saw an opportunity

in expanding Inglis' long-standing assistive technology expertise beyond Southeastern Pennsylvania. Rather than simply introducing new equipment, the focus was on bringing a full-service model to the region. "It didn't make sense to just bring a 3D printer," explains Jeff Ruffing, Assistive Technology Program Manager. "What would make it stand out is if we brought the service with it."

That approach paid off. By the end of year two, Inglis firmly established itself as a leading assistive technology provider in Pittsburgh—earning recognition alongside long-standing regional organizations. "When people think of assistive tech in Pittsburgh, Inglis is now someone that comes to mind," shared Leah Marmo, Director of Innovation and Strategic Partnerships. "That feels really solid."

Growth was also reflected in expanded partnerships. Referrals from PA Health & Wellness and the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation increased dramatically, with the number of individuals served multiplying several times over year one. "Year one was about getting our name out there," explained Marmo. "Year two is where we started being asked to present, to share our expertise."

Equally important has been the Innovation Center's role as a convener. Through tabling events, networking opportunities, and regional summits, the Team has intentionally woven itself into Pittsburgh's disability and innovation ecosystems. "We seem to be that common thread," shared Abigail Goetz, Innovation Center Pittsburgh and Outreach Coordinator. "People meet through us who otherwise would have never been in the same room."

Beyond assistive technology, year two broadened

the reach of Inglis' home modifications projects in Western Pennsylvania—a meaningful unmet need throughout many rural and suburban counties. With the Pittsburgh Innovation Center as a second "home base," Inglis has created a pipeline to collaborate with more home

construction accessibility contractors and increase the number of people it serves annually. The opportunity to support older adults and people with disabilities through both assistive technology and home mods is a powerful combination

for improving safety and independence at home. The response, staff say, has been overwhelming. "I keep hearing, 'We've been waiting for something like this,'" explained Goetz. "It's exciting to finally say yes—we're here."

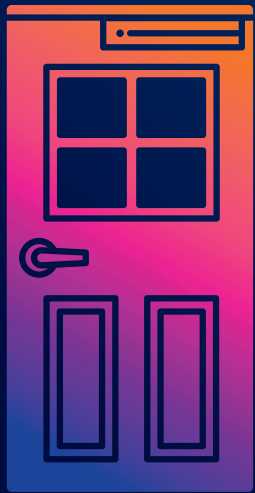
Looking ahead, Inglis is poised to build on this foundation by expanding staffing, strengthening partnerships, and advancing the Tech First movement statewide. As Leah Marmo summed it up, "We wanted to be a convener—and now we are. Year three is about leaning into that role."

**To learn more about Inglis' goals for expansion for supporting the Pittsburgh community and beyond, check out our latest strategic plan at [www.inglis.org/publications](http://www.inglis.org/publications).** ●

**“Through tabling events, networking opportunities, and regional summits, the team has intentionally woven itself into Pittsburgh’s disability and innovation ecosystems.”**



*Local entrepreneurs attending a workshop at the Pittsburgh Innovation Center.*



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# A Look Back on Last Year's Conference!

Included in the photos below are images of the 2025 Conference's workshops; guest speakers Garry Gilliam and Pennsylvania Department of Community & Economic Development Secretary Rick Siger; a group photo of the conference planning team alongside several Inglis executive team members; and last year's gift to attendees, a 3D printed door keychain created by Inglis Assistive Technology Solutions department.





**Ability &  
Independence.  
Redefined.**

2600 Belmont Avenue  
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## Your home should still feel like your home.

If everyday tasks are getting harder, a few simple changes can make a big difference. From safer bathrooms to easier-to-navigate spaces, we're here to help you stay comfortable, confident, and independent—right where you belong. Inglis offers Home Modifications for both older adults and people with physical disabilities.



Learn more about how we can support you at [www.inglis.org/homemods](http://www.inglis.org/homemods) or scan the QR code.