

Image



**The Therapy We
Can't Afford to Lose**

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Image is published by Inglis

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Inglis is a 501c3 nonprofit and human services
provider throughout Pennsylvania and Delaware.
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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

I'm especially pleased to share this issue of *Image* with you. You may notice something new on the cover and throughout these pages: our refreshed Inglis logo. As we look ahead to our 150th anniversary in 2027, it feels like the right time for a new look that better reflects who we are today and where we're headed. Inglis has grown significantly in recent years—across Pennsylvania and, through our recent affiliation with Community Integrated Services (CIS), now into Delaware—but the mission and values at the heart of our work haven't changed.

In this issue, you'll meet several of our new employment services colleagues from CIS. They bring decades of experience, deep connections to the disability community, and a shared commitment to independence,

“There's a lot happening at Inglis, and even more to look forward to.”

opportunity, and choice. We're very glad to have them as part of the Inglis team.

You'll also get a closer look at recreational therapy at Inglis House and the important role it plays in helping residents stay active, connected, and engaged in the lives they choose. We share a story about our longtime

partnership with Romero Center Ministries, and we asked some of our in-house experts for practical tips on simple, affordable ways to make a home safer and more accessible. We also look at why advocacy, persistence, and participation in the political process continue to matter for people with disabilities.

There's a lot happening at Inglis, and even more to look forward to. I hope you enjoy this issue and the stories of the people and relationships that make Inglis such a special community.

As always, thank you for being part of it.

Dyann M. Roth
President & CEO





“Recreational therapists use activity-based interventions to support physical, cognitive, emotional, spiritual, and social well-being.”

The Therapy We Can't Afford to Lose

By Lauren Tilghman

As more people live longer and seek greater independence, connection, and quality of life, the need for professionals who can support those goals continues to grow. Across human services, long-term care, rehabilitation, and community-based settings, one profession deserves greater attention – recreational therapy.

Recreational therapists use activity-based interventions to support physical, cognitive, emotional, spiritual, and social well-being. Through adaptive sports, creative arts, technology, community integration, and other individualized approaches, they help people maintain abilities, build independence, and work toward meaningful treatment goals.

Demand for that expertise is increasing even as the training pipeline shrinks. Only about 43 U.S. colleges and universities offer bachelor's-level programs in therapeutic recreation or recreational therapy. Meanwhile, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that about 16,100 recreational therapists were employed nationwide in 2024, with roughly 1,300 openings projected each year through 2034. Hospitals employ 43% of the profession, while nursing and residential care facilities account for another 21%.

Jacob St. Laurent, one of Inglis House's newer recreational therapists, summed up the disconnect: "We are in much higher demand than people realize." Having previously worked as the only recreational therapist at another facility, St. Laurent has seen firsthand how longer lifespans and growing long-term care

needs are increasing demand. Yet educational options continue to narrow; Temple University stopped accepting new students into its Recreational Therapy Bachelor of Science program after Fall 2024, while the University of New Hampshire paused admissions to its therapeutic recreation bachelor's option for the 2026–2027 academic year.

For staff, these shifts in programming are alarming. Several of the rec therapists on Inglis House's Therapeutic and Life Enrichment (TLE) team described discovering the profession only because they encountered it as a named college major. "I don't know what I'd be doing for work if I didn't go to Temple because that's how I found rec therapy," shared St. Laurent. Allyson Roach, who supports residents' religious and spiritual programming, worried that without a clearly identified degree path for recreational therapy, "it's hard to find people." Their concerns reflect a broader question about who will become the next generation of clinicians if fewer students are exposed to rec therapy in the first place.

That matters because recreational therapy remains widely misunderstood. Grace Wuillermin shared that colleagues in other departments at previous facilities viewed the profession as the "fun department"—people who "just play games and do stuff." She recalled working with a resident who repeatedly refused



Inglis House Recreational Therapists.

to stand during physical therapy. During a recreational therapy session built around a game and social interaction, the resident stood for approximately 30 minutes.

The point was not that recreation replaced physical therapy. It was that meaningful activity created motivation. "She's socializing, she's thinking...and there's all these other things that are involved," explained Wuillermin. Recreational therapy is clinical work with therapeutic intent and measurable outcomes. Rec therapists in Inglis' TLE program track engagement, movement, communication, motivation, and changes over time—not simply whether someone attends an activity. "We're not *just* having fun," shared Bowen Chen from Inglis' assistive technology team. "Of course we're having fun, but that's not the only reason."

Over the years Inglis House has taken a notably different approach than most long-term care facilities. More than 10 recreational therapists work in varying capacities across Inglis House. Instead of treating it as an optional amenity, Inglis integrates therapeutic recreation into residents' health, independence, technology use, community participation, and daily lives.

“Recreational therapy is clinical work with therapeutic intent and measurable outcomes.”

At Inglis, donor support helps make community outings and other therapeutic experiences possible. Rec therapists Chantell Hubler and Lindsey LaFountain described the opportunity to try new approaches rather than relying on a limited activity calendar. That same flexibility has also allowed Nancy Cinto and Bowen Chen to transition into assistive technology, and Jeremy Ault to support therapeutic education and help launch a facility dog program.

"That investment reflects a broader philosophy," explained Jacklyn Monaco, the director of the TLE program; recreational therapy provides "activities to give our lives meaning and to motivate us." Helping someone find that connection, encouragement, and

sense of purpose, she shared, "is what makes the difference." To Inglis, recreational therapy is a holistic discipline—one that considers quality of

life alongside physical, cognitive, emotional, and social goals. As that vision continues to evolve, Inglis is exploring how the same approach could extend throughout its housing communities, creating more opportunities for socialization, engagement, and meaningful activity in the places people call home.

An aging population and a strained workforce are increasing demand for recreational therapy—not making the profession more expendable. As Inglis looks to the future, its continued investment in recreational therapy reflects a simple but powerful belief: helping people stay active, connected, motivated, and engaged in the lives they choose is not an extra in healthcare; it is essential to it. ●



Therapeutic Life Enrichment Director Jackie Monaco supporting a resident at Keen Games.



Jeremy Ault, Therapeutic Education Instructor and Facility Dog Handler, with Leroy, Inglis House's therapy dog.

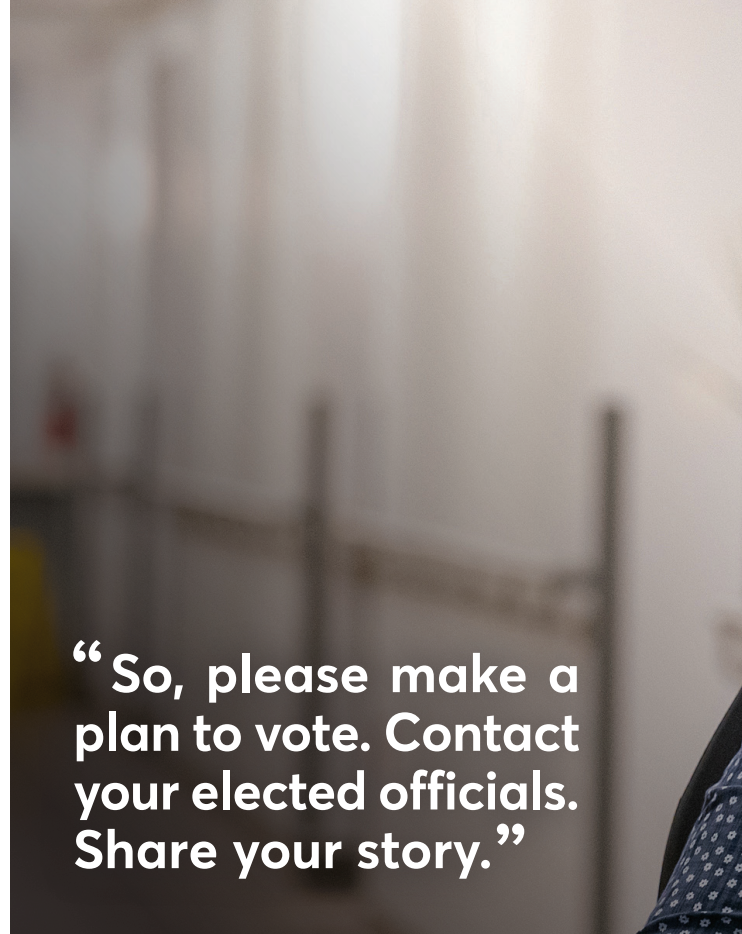
Progress Through Persistence

By Brian Valdez

It has been a challenging and consequential time for disability advocates in Pennsylvania and around the Country. As we take stock of where things stand today, there are real causes for concern, but also important reminders of the power people with disabilities and their allies can have when we raise our voices and engage in the political process. The future will undoubtedly call for continued vigilance, but the progress generated by a vocal and determined disability community, along with the signs of hope that have emerged, should not be overlooked.

The beginning of 2025 brought significant changes at the federal level, including large-scale reductions in the federal workforce and funding disruptions that created uncertainty around key Health and Human Services programs. Individuals and families throughout the Commonwealth were left wondering if, and when, they would receive the support they need.

By early summer, Inglis had joined a broad coalition of organizations opposing the "One Big, Beautiful Bill" (HR 1) and raising concerns about its far-reaching impact on Medicaid and the people who depend on it. The bill ultimately became law in July 2025, bringing significant changes to Medicaid that will continue to unfold in Pennsylvania and across the Country. And the challenges did not end there. In June 2026, a new Department of Justice legal opinion challenged the longstanding federal interpretation of the integration mandate under the Americans



“So, please make a plan to vote. Contact your elected officials. Share your story.”

with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504. These protections have helped people with disabilities receive services in community settings rather than institutions.

Given all of this, it is understandable that many people with disabilities are discouraged and even feel ignored. As one Inglis Housing resident recently said, “The media often overlooks the disabled population, but this is not just a disability issue. Almost everyone either has or will be impacted by disability at some point in their life.”

But there is another part of this story that deserves our attention: the impact disability advocates and their allies have had over the past two years.

Again and again, individuals from every segment of the community have spoken out to defend independence, dignity, and access to care. Individuals, families, care workers, advocates, and organizations like Inglis have called Congressional offices, written emails,



attended meetings, shared personal stories, and made sure policymakers understood what was at stake.

Those efforts matter. Advocacy did not stop HR 1, and serious concerns remain about the law's Medicaid provisions. But sustained pressure kept the impact on people with disabilities at the center of the debate and helped shape important protections and exemptions within the final law.

And there are reasons for optimism. In June, members of both parties came together to pass the 21st Century ROAD to Housing Act, one of the most significant federal housing packages in decades. In addition to addressing the Nation's housing supply, the legislation includes a whole-home repair program that recognizes accessibility modifications for people with disabilities and older adults.

The lesson is not that every advocacy effort ends in victory. It is that engagement matters. Sustained advocacy can change the

conversation, influence policy, and make sure decision-makers understand how their choices affect the lives of people with disabilities.

And now is not the time to let up. Those of us who are advocates must continue to speak up and stay engaged. An Inglis Community Advisory Committee member put it best when she said, "If we don't advocate for ourselves, we can't expect anybody else to do it for us."

So, please make a plan to vote. Contact your elected officials. Share your story. Pay attention to the decisions being made in Harrisburg and Washington, and let your voice be heard.

The work is far from over, but the past two years have shown us something important: when the disability community speaks up, we can make a difference, and we cannot be ignored. ●



Members of the CIS Team (left to right) Kathryn DeProspero, Linda Gonzalez, Julia Blackwell (middle), Monique DuPree, and Erin Phouilaychit.



A Shared Commitment, and a New Chapter

By Grady Chambers

Inglis and Community Integrated Services (CIS) recently finalized an affiliation that brings together two organizations with a shared commitment to expanding opportunity, independence, and choice for people with disabilities. By combining CIS' longstanding expertise in supported employment with Inglis' broader range of community-based services, the affiliation creates new opportunities to strengthen supports for people across Pennsylvania and Delaware.

As the two organizations have come together, one of the things that has stood out is just how much they have in common, particularly the people behind the work. Across Inglis and CIS are employees who have dedicated years, and often decades, to supporting others. Their longevity reflects more than experience; it speaks to the passion they bring to their work, the relationships they have built, and a shared belief in helping people with disabilities pursue the lives and opportunities they choose.

Few people embody that commitment more than Monique Dupree, CIS' longest-serving employee. Dupree joined CIS in 1993, just two years after the Organization opened, in her first job after college. "I've had many hats at CIS," Dupree shared. "But I started as a Job Coach in Montgomery County."

As CIS grew, so did her role. Dupree expanded into Philadelphia, conducted community-based assessments, and eventually became Manager of Assessments—the position

she holds today. "I get to connect with organizations and businesses to partner with CIS," she said. "Joining Inglis feels aligned with the good that comes from expanding community connections. I believe our affiliation will open even more opportunities for the people we support."

Linda Gonzalez also found a career at CIS that evolved alongside her own interests. A graduate of University of the Arts with a BFA in illustration, Gonzalez joined CIS in 2015 through Art Works, which supports artists with disabilities. "Working with people with disabilities on their artistic practice gave me new and needed perspective," she said. "It was the first time I felt fulfilled and happy working."

Though Gonzalez has held several roles since then, her artistic background continues to

shape how she approaches her work. "The way I might approach a project as an artist—envisioning something from scratch and thinking through different ways to achieve an outcome—that same kind of envisioning can happen when I am working with participants."

“Across Inglis and CIS are employees who have dedicated years, and often decades, to supporting others.”

For Kathryn DeProspero and Matthew Burris, CIS offered something they had both been searching for—work with greater purpose. DeProspero came to CIS after working in retail. "I realized I

would not feel satisfied with my life if I didn't find something meaningful," she said. A friend recommended CIS, and she applied.

Burris' introduction was less conventional. While working at Redner's in 2017, he accidentally dipped his tie into a container of salad dressing while breaking down the salad bar. A customer heard him singing nearby



CIS team members (left to right) Alan Scott, Alyssa Babuca, and Michael Mahaffey.

and struck up a conversation. "He said, 'You're not the best singer, but you seem to have a stellar personality,'" Burris recalled. The man told him about CIS and handed him a business card. "I dove into the CIS world and never looked back!"



CIS Job Coach posing with a participant at his retail job.

For DeProspero, that sense of purpose can be seen in her work with Pedro, a participant with cerebral palsy who uses a wheelchair. Together, they explored assistive technology that could help him communicate and move more independently at work. Today, Pedro uses a communication device and motorized wheelchair to complete tasks around the arcade where he works. "This technology has been a game changer for him," DeProspero said. It is also one reason she sees so much potential in the Inglis affiliation. "What an opportunity to expand services and provide clients with a wealth of resources under one umbrella."

Those opportunities are built through relationships, too. CIS Director of Business Development Erin Phovilaychit and her Delaware counterpart, Michael Mahaffey, have helped CIS establish hiring partnerships with more than 750 businesses. "This affiliation will help strengthen and grow our partnerships by expanding the resources and solutions we can offer employers," Phovilaychit said.

For Gonzalez, bringing the organizations together also creates opportunities to learn from one another. "It's so important to get the fresh perspectives Inglis will provide and to share our own in return," she said. "With the work we do, we need to constantly be forging new paths."

That combination of long-standing commitment and willingness to keep evolving is what makes the next chapter so promising.

"That's what makes this partnership so powerful—the alignment of both expertise and ambition," said Julia Blackwell, Executive Director of Inglis Community Services and former Assistant Executive Director of CIS. "Together, we bring decades of experience and a long-standing commitment to challenging assumptions, embracing innovation, and expanding what is possible for the communities we serve." ●



Kathryn DeProspero with CIS participant Pedro.



Senior homeowner resting her hand on the stair railing she received from Inglis Home Modifications for Independence.

Making Your Home Work Better for You

By Lauren Tilghman

Making your home more accessible does not have to mean taking on a major renovation—or spending a lot of money. Often, a few thoughtful changes can make everyday routines safer, easier, and more comfortable.

So where should you start? Inglis asked some of our own experts in home modifications and assistive technology—Katherine Griffiths, Patricia Hulick, Jennifer Hsu, Janet Shoemaker, Lynn Stewart-Krieger, Jeffery

Ruffing, and Charles Sammartino—to share simple, practical ways just about anyone can make their home work better for them.

One of the best places to begin is paying attention to the times when you have to reach, bend, stretch, or steady yourself. Those small challenges can point to opportunities for easy, affordable fixes. The most important places to look are right where you spend the most time: your kitchen, bathroom, living spaces, and the entrances and areas outside your home.

In the Kitchen

Make frequently used items easier to reach. Pull-out shelf organizers can reduce the need to bend or reach deep into cabinets. Placing a microwave on a countertop instead of above the stove may also make it easier to use.

Small tools can help. Automatic jar openers, non-slip material under cutting boards, easy-grip utensils, and water dispensers can make meal preparation more manageable.

In the Bathroom

Bathrooms can be one of the most important places to improve safety. Choose bathmats with a firm, non-slip backing, and avoid loose rugs that can slide.

Look for a shower seat with a back and armrests for added support rather than a simple stool. A bidet attachment may also make personal hygiene easier for some people.

One important "don't": avoid suction-cup grab bars. They can come loose without warning. Grab bars, handrails, and other supports that carry your body weight should be securely installed by someone who knows how to anchor them properly.

Around the Rest of Your Home

Fan-pull extenders, cord organizers, remote-controlled lights or fans, and raised outlet extenders can reduce bending and reaching.

A side table with built-in charging ports can keep phones, medication, water, and other essentials within easy reach.

Adding motion sensors and light timers to lamps and in hallways can illuminate your main points of entry on nights when you get home late.

Outside Your Home

Good lighting can make a big difference. Consider solar-powered pathway lights or motion-sensor lighting near steps, walkways, and entrances.

High-visibility house numbers can also help visitors and emergency responders find your home more quickly.

Keep walkways clear and pay attention to slippery surfaces. For outdoor steps or ramps, added traction can help, but choose materials carefully so they do not peel and become a tripping hazard.

If your entrance has a high step or you need a handrail or support bar, that is a good time to call a professional.

The best accessibility changes are the ones that fit you. Start small, pay attention to what feels difficult, and ask for assistance when a change requires installation, technology setup, or structural work. ●



Need a Little Help Getting Started?

If some of these changes feel a little ambitious—or simply out of reach to tackle on your own—Inglis can help. Our team can identify practical, low-cost, high-impact changes that can make your home safer, more accessible, and easier to navigate. Visit www.inglis.org/homemods to learn more about options that can support greater comfort and independence at home.

Sharing Moments and Inspiring Young Lives with Romero Center Ministries

By Justin Windheim

It may seem like hyperbole to say student volunteers from Romero Center Ministries leave Inglis House transformed after engaging with residents. But “transformed” is the term used by Richard Nalen, Romero Center Associate. For decades, Nalen and the Romero Center have organized opportunities for high school and college students to connect with the care, hope, and empowerment that make the Inglis House community something extraordinary.

“Students start with preconceived notions of nursing homes,” said Nalen. “They are fearful and apprehensive. But the residents leave such a positive, indelible impression on us. At Inglis House, our students see human dignity being upheld and the transformation that occurs in just a six-hour period is amazing and awe-inspiring.”

The Camden-based Romero Center has been opening doors for students and Inglis House residents to engage with, learn from, and uplift each other since 1998. As part of the Organization’s Urban Challenge program, students from across the Country come to Inglis House to learn about life challenges, gaining firsthand insight into the experiences of others

while fostering personal growth, compassion, and a desire to serve their communities.

At Inglis House, students participate in everything from Therapeutic Life Enrichment programs to socializing with residents. Without question, their volunteering brightens the days and enriches the lives of residents. And that experience goes both ways.

“While the world continues to change, Romero Center carries on with its mission of helping people no matter the circumstance and showing young people how their kindness can make a large impact on the community,” said Patti Veltri, Volunteer and Internship Director, Inglis House. “Everyone leaves this experience realizing people are people—no matter where they live.”

These student-resident interactions often spark “aha” moments as students discover shared interests, common ground, and meaningful connections with residents.

“One student from Cleveland shared that he and a resident were ‘like twins,’ sharing the same interests in sports and music,” said Nalen. “Although they had different life paths, seeing the resident’s positive outlook changed his worldview.”

Inglis is grateful to Romero Center for this partnership, and we look forward to continuing to bring students and residents together in the spirit of mutual kindness and inspiration for many years to come.

Interested in volunteering your time at Inglis? Learn more about all our volunteering opportunities at www.inglis.org/volunteer or contact Patti Veltri, Volunteer and Internship Director at patricia.veltri@inglis.org. ●



Student with a Romero Center group volunteering at an Inglis House bingo game for residents.



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Please contact Jessica Scipione at (267) 635-2541 or Jessica.Scipione@inglis.org.

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