Living Learning
Enrichment Center

Organizational Directory



Welcome

Where Belonging Meets Purpose

Who We Are

The Living and Learning Enrichment Center is a nonprofit organization founded by a mother who envisioned a brighter, more inclusive future for her autistic son. What began as a small social group meeting at the library has grown into a vibrant, one-of-a-kind hub that now supports more than 600 teens and adults with disabilities across Southeast Michigan each year. Our mission is simple but powerful: to help individuals live more independent, empowered, and connected lives, and to give families greater peace of mind for the future.

Why It Matters

We've heard parents and participants ask, "What happens when the bus stops coming?" For many families, the transition out of the school system can feel like falling off a cliff. We're here to offer hope and so much more. Our smiling staff and members will be the first to welcome you, cheer you on, and celebrate every milestone and achievement.

Whether you're exploring programs for someone you love, considering a partnership, or simply curious about the work we do, we hope these pages show you what's possible: independence, employment, and genuine belonging for individuals with disabilities across Southeast Michigan. We'd welcome the chance to show you in person.



Impact at a Glance



Who We Serve

We serve individuals and families across 12 counties in Southeast Michigan, representing a broad spectrum of abilities, disabilities, and life stages. Many families find us at a pivotal moment: when school-based supports end at age 26, the age at which Michigan's special education services conclude, and the path forward suddenly isn't clear. Most of the individuals we serve rely on disability benefits to access and participate in our programs. And most represent a population facing significant odds: only 22.8% of adults with disabilities were employed in 2025.* We're working to change that number, one member, one job, one skill at a time.

Informed by Data, Inspired by Possibility

At Living & Learning, data drives action. We collect and analyze participant, caregiver, employer, and community feedback alongside key performance indicators such as employment retention, program outcomes, waitlist trends, and service utilization. This information helps us continuously improve programs, allocate resources strategically, measure impact, and expand services where they are needed most.

*U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, People with a Disability: Labor Force Characteristics — 2025.

Inclusive Employment

Our organization believes that meaningful employment is a cornerstone of independence, confidence, and community connection. Through our multi-tiered employment pathway, individuals of all abilities have access to personalized support, real-world experience, and employer partnerships that lead to success in the workplace and beyond.

Skill-Building Opportunities

Our vocational programs provide progressive, hands-on opportunities to learn and grow. Each tier offers the right level of support based on an individual's readiness, goals, and interests. We know readiness isn't always linear, so we've built in levels of support to accommodate changing and evolving needs. Our experienced staff can help determine the right place to start.

Voc+: Designed for individuals who require higher levels of support. This campus-based program emphasizes routine-building, communication, and basic job-readiness skills through structured, engaging activities.

Voc Foundations: Builds on core skills by incorporating more stamina and responsibilities on our on-site farm and through supported outings and skill-building in the community.

Voc: Our most in-demand and community-integrated program places members at over 130 partner business sites across Southeast Michigan in industries such as hospitality, food service, retail, manufacturing, and outdoor recreation.

Job Development, Placement & Retention

Our Employment Service program bridges the gap between job readiness and long-term employment, offering personalized support at every stage. From our satellite office in the heart of Downtown Northville, we work closely with inclusive regional businesses to create opportunities that align with our members' goals and provide on-the-job mentorship. We welcome referrals from Michigan Rehabilitation Services and other agencies.

Trial Work Experience: Explore different industries through short-term placements with supportive community partners, gaining exposure and confidence in real-world settings.

Job Placement: Our team matches individuals with meaningful, paid employment opportunities tailored to their strengths, interests, and long-term aspirations.

Corporate Placement Services: We connect highly skilled professionals with disabilities—including individuals with advanced degrees, certifications, and specialized expertise—to competitive, career-track employment. Through strategic employer partnerships and individualized placement support, we help organizations access exceptional talent while empowering professionals to thrive in meaningful, high-earning careers.



Job Coaching: On-site, one-on-one support is provided at the workplace, ensuring a smooth transition and building the skills needed for independence.

Job Retention: Ongoing communication, check-ins, and trouble-shooting challenges with members and employers help address concerns early and promote long-term success. Supported employment is available for those who may need more than the standard 3 months of support.



Employment Readiness

We offer specialized training to help individuals prepare for the workforce with confidence. These services are personalized and practical, covering everything from career discovery to soft skills:

Career Exploration: Members identify strengths and interests through guided discussions, hands-on activities, and real-world exposure.

Résumé, Interview, & Networking Skills: Participants will build a strong résumé, answer common interview questions, and present themselves professionally to potential employers and colleagues.

Workplace Readiness: Developing essential soft skills like time management, teamwork, problem-solving, communication and self-advocacy enables candidates to thrive in any workplace.

For Employers: Looking for great talent or interested in becoming a more inclusive workplace? Our Employment Services team would love to connect.

Skill-building, confidence, and connection...it all starts here.

Pursue employment or become an employer partner.

More information: livingandlearningcenter.org

Contact: Jen Carpen, jcarpen@llecmi.org

Supporting the Whole Person

At Living & Learning, we know that meaningful employment doesn't happen in isolation; it's supported by strong mental health and social confidence. That's why our wrap-around clinical and behavioral services are a key part of what we offer.

From individual counseling and behavioral support to fun, interest-driven social skill groups, our clinical division helps members build the confidence, communication, and self-regulation skills essential for the workplace. Practicing things like eye contact and body language in a safe, supportive setting makes it easier to succeed in professional environments.

We also support families and caregivers through dedicated support groups and benefits navigation, helping them access the services they need. In a landscape where services are often fragmented and hard to navigate, we offer a "one-stop-shop" approach for care, community, and connection.



Clinical Services

Our Clinical Services are grounded in compassion and individualized care, offering mental health and behavioral support tailored to each person's goals, using evidence-based practices that promote self-awareness, emotional wellness, and meaningful progress. Whether addressing anxiety, self-esteem, or behavioral challenges, our experienced, licensed clinicians work to empower every individual; we offer both in-person and virtual options for increased client access to these critical services.

ABA Individual Therapy: One-on-one Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) sessions are designed to promote positive behavior change, build communication and life skills, and support greater independence through individualized, data-driven plans.

ABA Group Therapy: Therapeutic groups where clinicians use ABA strategies to improve social interaction, reduce challenging behaviors, and help members thrive in peer settings, while learning in a fun, structured environment.

Psychotherapy: Licensed clinicians provide individualized mental health counseling focused on areas such as anxiety, depression, self-esteem, identity, and emotional regulation in a confidential, supportive setting.

Progress Tracking & Goal Planning: Each participant receives a customized care plan with measurable goals, reviewed regularly to monitor growth and ensure alignment with evolving needs.

Family Support & Consultation: Our clinicians collaborate closely with families and caregivers to provide continuity of care, parent coaching, strategy sharing, and guidance for challenges at home or in the community.



Expert Care Rooted in Compassion

Our clinical team includes highly credentialed professionals: Board-Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBAs), Licensed Behavior Analysts (LBAs), and Licensed Psychologists (LPs), with years of experience supporting individuals with disabilities. Our team integrates evidence-based practices with a person-centered, naturalistic approach. Meet our team at livingandlearningcenter.org/therapy-services/

Meet our clinicians or schedule an intake.

More information: clinical@llecmi.org • 248-308-3592, ext. 120

Contact: Alyssa Parros, aparros@llecmi.org

Getting Social

Relationships are at the heart of everything we do, and our social programs are where those connections come to life. Some of our members have aged out of school-based supports or never found a space where they truly felt seen and connected. Through engaging, interest-based activities on our campus and out in the community, participants form friendships, practice communication, and gain confidence in supportive, welcoming environments. Some programs are designed for tweens and teens (ages 11–18), while others are geared toward adults seeking meaningful social engagement and connection.

Program Highlights



Writer's Club: A creative space for independent participants to explore different writing styles, share ideas, and engage in thoughtful discussion, no prior experience needed.

Cooking Club: A hands-on experience that blends meal prep, grocery shopping, and budgeting with fun social connections and life skill-building.

Social Hangouts: Casual, inclusive environments where members can enjoy games, group activities, conversation, and pizza with peers, offered to support all levels of member independence.

Guys Group & Girl Talk: Social groups for independent adults to connect through conversation and local outings, offering support, friendship, and plenty of laughter.

Dungeons & Dragons: An immersive, tabletop role-playing experience promoting collaboration, creative storytelling, and friendship through 12-week guided campaigns grouped by experience.

The Zone: A fun, supportive space designed for developing peer relationships, social confidence, and self-expression through games, creative projects, and group activities.

Gamer's Club: A relaxed social setting for video game enthusiasts to connect and engage with fellow gamers.

Saturday Social: A structured and supportive environment where participants build practical social skills through guided lessons and interactive play.

Comic Con: Celebrate all things pop culture, movies, comics, video games, and books through themed activities, creative projects, and group exploration.

Anime & Japanese Culture Club: A vibrant space for anime fans to enjoy watch parties, drawing sessions, and cultural exploration with peers who share their passion.

Adult 20's: Connection, peer advice, and shared entertainment for individuals navigating early adulthood, with a focus on friendship and personal growth.

Monthly Pop-Ups: Theme programs and outings such as holiday shopping excursions, zoo or cider mill visits, driving-with-autism workshops, self-care nights, and more.

Very Special Events

Our signature events create lasting memories, build community, and celebrate the talents of those we serve. From the joy and creativity of our Annual Variety Show to the fun and friendship of our Formal Dance, there's no shortage of opportunities for connection. Each holiday season, our Santa Run brings the community together in festive spirit and movement, while our Hopes & Dreams Gala every spring is a highlight of the year, honoring exceptional individuals and partners while raising vital funds for our mission.







Explore our offerings or register for a program.

More information: livingandlearningcenter.org/social-skills

Contact: Erica Miletti, emiletti@llecmi.org

Summer Camp — An Inclusive Twist on a Seasonal Tradition

Summer camp friendships, crafts, interactive games, life-skill lessons, and field trips fill long summer days with memories to last a lifetime. Finding a camp experience that provides the right support can prove difficult and oftentimes isolating; Living and Learning offers action-packed, daytime camp programs that promote personal growth, learning, and fun!

For 8 weeks each summer, our beautiful 12-acre campus turns into a camper's paradise, complete with slip-and-slides, fuzzy farm animals, cardio drumming, traditional games, and shaded tents with beanbags, noise-cancelling headphones, and fidget toys to aid overwhelmed campers in hitting the "reset" button whenever they may need.

Our experienced, engaged, and passionate staff is the heartbeat of camp, working tirelessly to keep them safe, happy, and having fun. While our camp is a fit for campers with many different types of disabilities, our environment and staff especially cater to the needs of individuals with autism. Our camp counselors undergo extensive training to foster critical life skills, social skills, and independence in our campers.





Camp Offerings

Camps Willow and Lotus, designed to provide different levels of camper support, enable families to find the perfect fit for their camper. Both camps are available as 4-day or 5-day weeks.

Camp Lotus: fosters continued independence and social connection for more independent campers.

Camp Willow: fosters continued growth in life and social skills for campers who need more individual assistance.

Exciting weekly themes include Lights, Camera, Action; Stars and Stripes Celebration; Splish, Splash, and Water Bash; Cooking, Cultures, and Connection; STEM Science Spectacular; All-Star Sports; Down on the Farm; and Back to Nature.



Learn more or register for a summer of memories, belonging, and fun.

More information: livingandlearningcenter.org/social-skills

Contact: Erica Miletti, emiletti@llecmi.org

The Arts — Baseline Art Studio

At the Living and Learning Enrichment Center, we believe the arts are a powerful vehicle for self-expression, communication, and connection, especially for individuals who may not always feel seen or heard in traditional settings. Artistic experiences offer not only creative exploration, but a path to confidence, healing, skill-building, and even income generation.

Our arts programming is centered in Baseline Art Studio, a garage cleverly converted into a fully accessible creative workshop designed to support artists of all abilities and experience levels. Whether someone is picking up a brush for the first time or building a professional portfolio, we meet every artist where they are and help them grow from there. Several Baseline Art Studio artists (and other community artists) sell their work through our Farmstand, at community pop-ups, and at Neighbor X Folk in Michigan Central Station, Detroit.

In addition to serving as a place for empowered artists with disabilities to exhibit and sell their art, our location serves as a supportive working environment for the cultivation of highly transferable job skills. Grit, coachability, attention to detail, visual merchandising and so many other skills have tremendous value well beyond our studio walls.









Current Offerings

Art Explorations: Try your hand at a variety of art mediums in this guided class, perfect for discovering what sparks your creativity.

Sensory Art: Work with yarn, thread, felt, and fabric in this tactile-focused class that's great for building fine motor skills and creative confidence.

Draw & Sketch: Explore color, line, and composition while learning traditional and modern techniques in a relaxed, supportive setting.

Intro to Pottery: Create hand-built or wheel-thrown pottery, and learn how to form, glaze, and fire your own functional or decorative pieces.

Intro to Painting: Combine creativity with self-care in this reflective class that uses the creative process to support emotional regulation and wellness.

Independent Studio Time: Reserved for artists looking for quiet, supported time to work independently on their own pieces or practice skills at their own pace.

Plan a visit to Baseline Art Studio.

More information: livingandlearningcenter.org/art-3

Contact: Tina Spencer, tspencer@llecmi.org

Our Campus — Farmstead & Facilities

We believe the magic of our 12-acre campus is essential to the transformative work we do. Nestled on the elegant, former Don Massey estate in Northville, our serene setting blends nature, community, and creativity into one vibrant, welcoming experience.

Inside the Main House

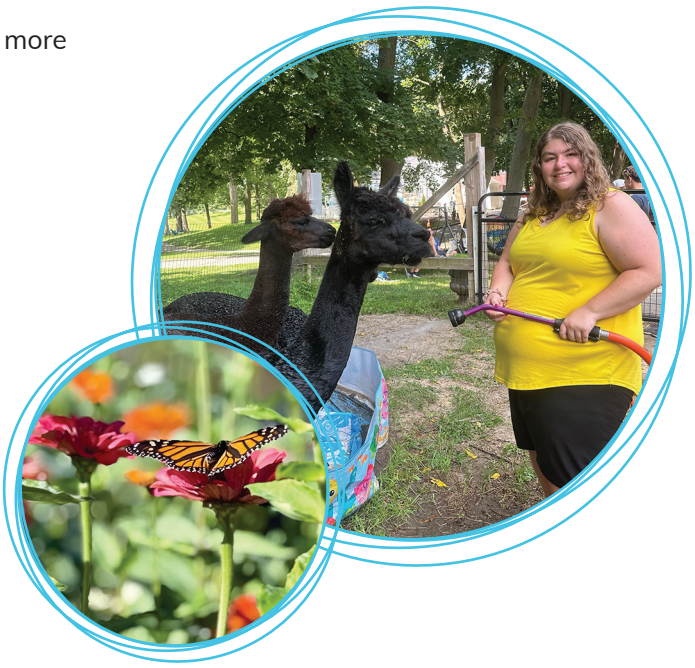
This sprawling estate is always buzzing with energy. A disco ball lights up the living room, where impromptu Friday night karaoke and dance sessions break out. The renovated, fully accessible kitchen hosts cooking classes, shared meals, and lots of laughter. Upstairs, a cozy gaming lounge awaits with couches and video game consoles. Black-and-white photos of our members and staff line the walls, offering a glimpse into the heart and soul of our community. Though no one lives here, it feels every bit like home.

On the Porch and Around the Farm

Step onto our wide front porch and you'll find cushy rocking chairs, friendly conversation, and our member-run Farmstand, where you can shop member-crafted merchandise, fresh eggs, honey, and original artwork. Stroll down the accessible walking path and explore:

- Thriving bee hives
- Friendly alpacas, chickens, bunnies, guinea pigs & more
- Lavender fields, organic produce gardens, and an all-season greenhouse
- A cozy carriage house perfect for life skill-building
- A quaint workshop
- A mini putt-putt course
- Our vibrant floral BLOOM garden

Many of our animals contribute to our agricultural microbusinesses, where members harvest eggs, honey, and wool, turning daily routines into job training and purpose.



Creative & Therapeutic Spaces

Next to the farmhouse, Baseline Art Studio hums with creativity, often spilling into the fresh air through its open garage doors. Other nearby sheds store tools and equipment for farming and groundskeeping.

In and Around the Community

Just a short drive away, you'll find a historic home that provides a safe, comfortable space for our clinical services, and just a few miles further, is our quaint Employment Services office located in a downtown Northville storefront, where our members our proudly centered in the community, not excluded from it. This location brings us closer to the businesses and community partners who make inclusive employment possible. Here, job seekers, employers, and opportunity come together, helping create a community where people of all abilities are not simply included in the workforce, but seen for the talents, skills, and potential they bring to it.

There's so much to see and experience! We'd love to welcome you for a tour. Schedule some time to come see all that we have to offer...Our team would be thrilled to show you around.



Book a tour. Our campus awaits.

More information: 248-308-3592

Contact: Jen Provenzano, jprovenzano@llecmi.org

Partner With Us

The Living and Learning Enrichment Center thrives because of the generosity, passion, and partnership of people like you. Whether you have time to give, resources to share, or connections to offer, we welcome your support in helping us empower individuals with disabilities to lead full, independent, and joyful lives.

Volunteer Your Time

- Assist with daily activities or special events
- Help beautify and maintain our grounds and farm
- Support job readiness efforts by taking part in inclusive networking nights or by conducting mock interviews
- Lend your skills in art, music, fitness, or other enrichment areas

Opportunities are available for individuals and groups.





Make a Donation



- Make a one-time or recurring donation
- Many employers offer matching gift programs — your contribution could go twice as far
- Donate cans and bottles to our front porch; we'll take care of the returns and put the funds right back into our programs

Become a Sponsor

- Support specific programs or events
- Fund vocational training, art supplies, a facility improvement, scholarships, and more
- Gain recognition while making a lasting impact in our community

Open Doors Through Your Connections

- Introduce us to a foundation, employer, or civic group
- Share grant or funding opportunities (many operate by invitation only)
- Help us build new partnerships in the community

Attend Our Annual Gala

Our Hopes & Dreams Gala is held every spring and is an unforgettable evening filled with inspiration, connection, and celebration. By attending or becoming a sponsor, you directly support the programs and people that make Living & Learning shine.



Let's talk about how you can help.

Volunteering: Jodie Roden, volunteers@llecmi.org

Personal Donations: Dennis Howie, dhowie@llecmi.org

Corporate Donations: Jen Provenzano, jprovenzano@llecmi.org

The Heart of Our Operation: Our People

At the core of everything we do is our incredible team of passionate professionals, compassionate leaders, and dedicated staff who bring the mission of Living & Learning to life every day.

Our Leadership



Rachelle Vartanian, Founder & President, built Living & Learning from the ground up, inspired by her son and driven by a vision to create a better world for individuals with disabilities. Her lived experience, educational expertise, and advocacy work make her a powerful voice for the disability community. Appointed by the Governor, Rachelle currently also shares her vision and leadership on the State of Michigan's Autism Council.



Pam Travis, Executive Director, brings Living & Learning decades of educational leadership and a keen understanding of organizational strategy. With a heart for mission and a sharp eye for sustainability, Pam ensures the organization remains innovative and forward-moving.

Our Board of Directors is composed of passionate professionals from diverse industries who lend their time, wisdom, and resources to ensure our growth, governance, and long-term impact.

Our staff team includes licensed clinical psychologists, behavior analysts, special educators, social workers, job coaches, artists, and vocational training specialists, many of whom have personal connections to disability themselves. Every staff member is trained in person-centered planning and inclusive practices.

More than a dozen participants have found gainful employment at Living & Learning, centering their unique disability perspectives while sharing their invaluable feedback within our program and facilities teams.

Join our team

More information: livingandlearningcenter.org/careers

Contact: Pam Avdoulos, pavdoulos@llecmi.org



Participant-Driven Leadership: Member Advisory Board

What's more amazing than growing our community nearly tenfold over the past 10 years? It's that so many participants have become staff, volunteers, mentors, and advisory board members who serve as allies and advocates for other members of our community, representing residents with disabilities from 12 counties across the region.

Our Member Advisory Board (MAB) includes many of these members-turned-staff and is a testament to our commitment to centering our community's unique needs; their lived experience drives every MAB decision. Our Executive Director also serves on the board, ensuring that member-led ideas are elevated and supported at the highest levels of leadership. Through monthly meetings, MAB members provide invaluable feedback on programs, accessibility, trends, and challenges. Active subcommittees meet separately to identify the most pressing, yet feasible, ideas for improving existing programs or adding new ones. Organizational changes driven by our MAB include accessible (first-floor) storm shelters for members with physical disabilities and member-driven social media content.

Learn more about our Member Advisory Board

Contact: Pam Travis, ptravis@llecmi.org

Contact Us

We'd love to hear from you, and even better, we'd love to meet you! Whether you're a parent exploring programs, a community member looking to get involved, or a supporter wanting to learn more, we're here to help.

Schedule a Tour

Come see our beautiful campus in Northville and experience the heart of our programs firsthand.

Call or Email Us

Phone: 248-308-3592 • Email: office@livingandlearningcenter.org

Visit Us Online

livingandlearningcenter.org

Follow Us on Social Media

livingandlearningcenter

Book a Speaker

Our founder, Rachelle Vartanian, is available for speaking engagements. Our team also offers engaging presentations on disability inclusion and neurodiversity in the workplace. Give us a call to learn more about bringing our message to your organization, workplace, or event.

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Empowering Individuals with Different Abilities