

COLLEGE FOR LIVING

“CREATING BOLD, INDEPENDENT
FUTURES FOR YOUNG ADULTS WITH
INTELLECTUAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL
DISABILITIES.”

TAPPING INTO HUMAN POTENTIAL

Imagine being the adult you are today, waking up each morning in your childhood bedroom—surrounded by outdated posters, your past captured in an unchanged room. You long for independence, yet your community never envisioned more for you. For many individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD), this isn't imagination—it's their reality.

Now, imagine something different. Meet Zachary, a shining example of the transformative power of the College for Living program.

When his parents were navigating the unfamiliar territory of how to best provide a future for their son with Down Syndrome, living on his own never felt like an option. Zachary now lives independently, holds a valued position at UPS, and is a respected neighbor and friend.

His story is a testament to the potential within each individual with IDD, given the right support and opportunities.



Day Spring, a local 501(c)3 non-profit in Louisville, refuses to accept that the only option for people with moderate IDD is to forever live at their childhood home. Leveraging our 30+ years of experience caring for those with IDD, we created College for Living—**the only residential life-skills training program in Louisville explicitly tailored for young adults with IDD who have the drive and capacity to gain independence.**

Students participate in personalized and proactive instruction through life skills courses and one-on-one mentorship five days a week. The person-centered program provides the necessary tools to master life skills like culinary arts, financial literacy, home economics, wellness, safety, and social skill-building—all designed to prepare them for independent living and employment. Based on the student's goals and life skills to address, person-centered benchmark goals are established and evaluated each semester. Some students may reach their full potential to safely live independently and thrive in the community within two years while others may remain in the program for up to seven.

A Proven Alternative:

- Day Spring's feasibility study revealed unanimous family support for expanding post-high school programs like College for Living, which focus on life skills, independence, and community.
- The successful graduation and transition of three students in the last year into independent living and employment demonstrates the program's effectiveness.

In order to serve more families and individuals, Day Spring expanded College for Living's residential capacity from 6 to 18 students by moving to a new location on Day Spring's campus in December 2024.

Be a part of the transformative power of the College for Living program.



COLLEGE FOR LIVING

THE WHY

"WHAT'S NEXT?"

A FAMILY'S BURNING QUESTION

Children with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) attend public schools until age 21, where they receive special education, structured support, and access to peer groups. After graduation, however, those supports abruptly end—leaving students and their families to ask: “What’s next?”

Families describe this transition as standing at the edge of a cliff, with few options and no clear partners to turn to. While their peers move forward into college, trade school, or the workforce, these young adults are left behind—returning to their childhood homes with their potential untapped.

Our current systems for adults with IDD—public education, Medicaid, and societal expectations—fail to bridge the gap between a life at home and one filled with confidence and possibility.

After high school, young adults and their caregivers are often left waiting for a Medicaid waiver with strict eligibility requirements. Even if they do qualify, the wait can stretch over 20 years. In Kentucky alone, 12,723 individuals are currently on the waiting list.

By the time many receive a waiver and begin to access services, they may be 40 years old or older—making the transition out of the family home even more difficult, and true independence nearly impossible.

While Medicaid waivers provide supports beyond medical needs—such as day programs, community supports, and behavioral care—the goal of these services is not independence.

A caregiver’s greatest fear is what will happen when staying at home is no longer an option. In the event of a family crisis—such as the death of a parent—the adult with IDD may be forced to move in with other family members, seek community-based care or Section 8 housing, or, in some cases, face homelessness.

Our public education, Medicaid, and employment systems do not lead to a life of self-sufficiency. Instead, they are designed to maintain the status quo—a future no adult, regardless of ability, dreams of.



THE IMPACT

A COST TO EVERYONE

When there isn't a clear path after high school, the adults with IDD, their families and caretakers, and our society bear an emotional, social, and financial burden.

THE SOCIETAL COST

 **Childhood Home & Public School**

The taxpayer invests **\$18,000 per year**, or a total of **\$177,000** in public funding for each adult with IDD. And this support focuses on academic and social development, not preparation for independent living.

 **Childhood Home & Waiver**

Kentucky offers two waiver programs--both are costly to taxpayers. One is **\$62,500** a year per individual. And the other is **\$188,318** in yearly public funding.

THE FAMILY'S COST

 **Childhood Home & Wait for a Waiver**

Each household containing an adult with IDD requires, on average, an additional **\$17,690 in annual income** to achieve the same standard of living as a household without an adult with IDD.

BRIDGING THE GAP

EVERYONE WINS

Day Spring has leveraged its 30 years of experience supporting adults with IDD to create College for Living—a bridge between life at home and a future full of possibilities. The program offers young adults a low-risk trial run at adulthood, helping them build confidence, life skills, and a sense of community—at their own pace and in their own way.



WITH OR WITHOUT A WAIVER

At College for Living, students move into a suite-style dorm or commute to campus, where they benefit from individualized instruction and mentorship five days a week. They learn essential life skills such as money management and meal preparation, while building a strong peer support network.

“FEARING THE WORST IS A THING OF THE PAST”

Students are employed off-campus, gaining valuable work experience and learning to manage transportation and finances. Should a family crisis occur, our students will be supported and remain on the path to resiliency and independence.

INVESTING IN THE FUTURE

College for Living is a private-pay program, but it offers a sliding scale and available scholarships, making the annual cost for most families between \$18,000 and \$24,000—comparable to what many are already spending.

But the investment in CFL isn't just about a place to stay—it's a pathway to something most parents dream of: **independence**.



COMMUNITY IMPACT

EVERYONE WINS

CHALLENGING PERCEPTIONS

Our College for Living students are reimagining what individuals with disabilities are able to achieve. People with disabilities are often isolated in the community, causing the perceptions of the vast majority to place people with different abilities in the “other” category. Students at College for Living eventually become neighbors, coworkers, tax-paying citizens, and active community members.



BOLD FUTURES AHEAD

Now that College for Living has opened its doors to a building that can accommodate up to 18 residential students, more individuals in our community have the opportunity to build and capitalize on their independence.

- 18** Our residential student capacity, with the relocation of College for Living, is now at eighteen.
- 3** We estimate three graduates every year, allowing three new students to join the program.
- 10** Students who are not ready to live on their own can commute to classes, creating a cohort of ten students.
- 61** Through serving a consistent 18 residential students, 10 commuters, ongoing support for an estimated 18 graduates, and introducing 15 new students, College for Living anticipates serving 61 individuals in the next five years.



COLLEGE FOR LIVING

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

THE FOUNDATION

BOLD FUTURES START HERE

At College for Living, our mission is grounded in three fundamental pillars: **community, well-being, and confidence**. These essential elements form the foundation of all that we do, serving as the catalyst for not only academic success but also for a fulfilling life post-graduation. To thrive in our program and beyond, students are encouraged to cultivate a balance of community engagement, personal well-being, and unwavering confidence in their abilities.

3 PILLARS OF INDEPENDENCE AND SUCCESS



COMMUNITY

For a student to thrive independently, they need a strong circle of support. College for Living guides students in building vibrant communities through group outings, engaging events, and the supportive structure of dorm life, all empowering them toward a life of independence.



WELL-BEING

Emphasizing a holistic approach to well-being, College for Living equips students with the knowledge and skills for a healthy, safe, independent lifestyle through education, mentorship, and practical guidance.



CONFIDENCE

We have unwavering confidence in our students' capacity for independence, and work to create a secure space for them to explore unfamiliar or uncomfortable skills so that they can also have confidence in their unique skills and abilities.

THE CURRICULUM

BOLD FUTURES START HERE

The College for Living's core curriculum includes, but is not limited to culinary, home economics, communications, financial literacy, and safety. Additional educational and recreational opportunities are offered each month.



EXAMPLES OF CLASSES

- Bathroom Cleaning Hacks
- Talking in Groups
- Internet Safety
- Packing a Lunch
- Dinner Etiquette
- Kitchen Masters
- Food & Knife Safety
- Building Friendships
- Conflict Resolution
- Finances & Budgeting
- Securing Transportation

EXAMPLES OF OUTINGS & VOLUNTEERISM

- Kentucky State fair
- Sporting Events
- American Red Cross
- Humane Society
- Special Olympics
- Local Restaurants
- Movies
- Friends & Family Nights
- Louisville Mega Cavern
- Seasonal Festivals

STUDENT LIFE

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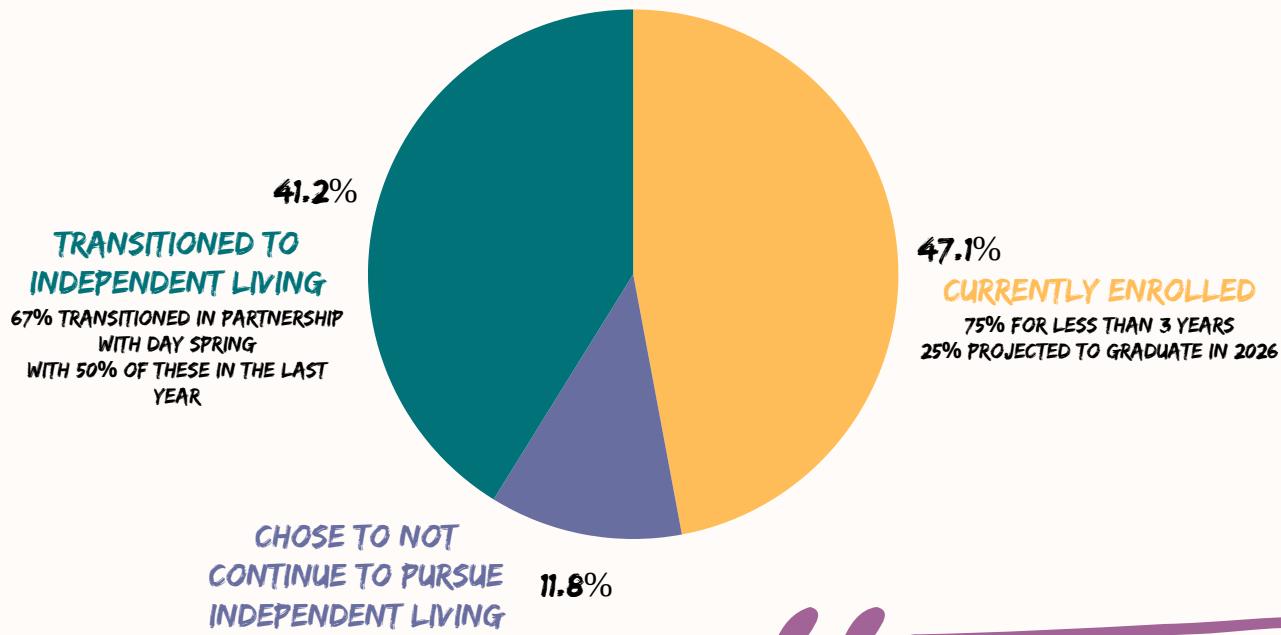


STUDENT STATS

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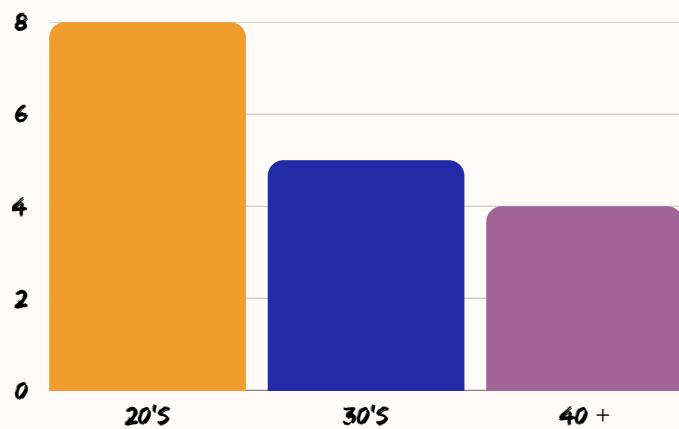
Since its inception in 2017, College for Living has served 17 students. Our philosophy is that independence looks different for every student. Students complete the program at their own pace, typically staying between two and six years in our residential life-skills training apartments.

College for Living aims to support each student in transitioning to the next step of their journey. For some, this may mean moving into a “step-down” model with less staff support but continued guidance. For others, it may mean transitioning into a higher level of care such as senior independent living or a Medicaid Supported Community Living (SCL) waiver home. Many students ultimately achieve the milestone of living independently on their own.



AGE RANGE

● 20's ● 30's ● 40 +



“ Regardless of their next step, 100% of students leave College for Living with more independent skills than when they began—a testament to the impact and purpose of the program. ”

GRADUATE STORIES

PAVING THE WAY

MADISON- GRADUATED IN MAY 2025

Our daughter Madison is on the spectrum along with some other disabilities.

Prior to entering CFL she attended Meredith Dunn, then Bluegrass Center for Autism and the Stewart Home and School in Frankfort. The immediate goal of sending her to all three was for her to try to achieve a moderate level of education comparable to a high school diploma.

During this time, **we assumed Madison would be living in our home on a permanent basis** as she was very limited in her social, interactive and daily living skills, even though we consulted several methods to try to help her.

The closest we came to finding success was at the Stewart Home and School, in Frankfort, KY. While this situation was helpful and Madison achieved some success, it was clear that she would not be able to achieve what would be meaningful independence based on the nature of the program. Madison ultimately decided she wanted to move home because there wasn't more she could learn or master at Stewart Home.

Madison's deficits were numerous. CFL's program of residents working in a group on specific classes led by skilled educators while living semi-independently **was much more effective than what we as parents were able to achieve while Madison was living at home.** Madison was able to get a job while living at CFL part-time at a pet daycare/boarding facility. She also felt emboldened enough to take driving lessons (something we never dreamed was possible).

After graduating from CFL, **Madison is living independently** in a patio home, got her driver's license and drives to her job two days per week. She goes grocery shopping, drives to the park to take walks and even to outings at the zoo and restaurants.

While we were in a position to be able to buy a patio home for Madison to live, we provide minimal support (financial or physical). Madison is responsible for keeping her home clean, buying groceries, cooking her meals, doing laundry, taking care of her cat. We pay the electric bill and similar expenses out of her bank account because in addition to her paycheck she receives a very modest monthly disability payment. We expect her to be writing checks herself to pay her bills very soon. We recently took an extended vacation overseas for the first time since Madison is fully living on her own.

Madison's current independence is something we never imagined possible as recently as 2021. As most parents can attest, knowing that our daughter can live on her own takes a tremendous emotion burden off of us, wondering if she will be OK once we are gone. For parents who don't have the financial ability to make sure a facility can take care of their special needs child in the future, **giving their child the chance and the dream of successfully living on their own is one of the biggest blessings a parent can receive.**

-Brian and Sandra Cullinan, parent



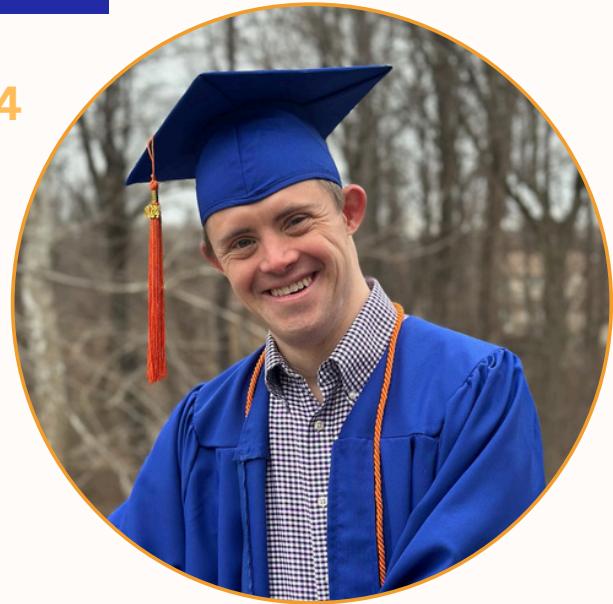
GRADUATE STORIES

PAVING THE WAY

DANIEL- GRADUATED IN MAY 2024

My son, Daniel, is a graduate of the College for Living program. He was a resident at CFL for 7 years.

After high school, Daniel's goal was to live a more independent life and carve a path of his own. I believed that he should have that opportunity. As a parent, it was overwhelming to think of Daniel starting out on his own in the community. **I knew Daniel had the motivation and determination to succeed, but he didn't have enough training or life skills.**



While living at CFL Daniel received life skills training and education. There were a variety of classes focusing on day-to-day living such as cooking, grocery shopping, cleaning, time management, finances, safety, emergency preparedness, hygiene, transportation, and organization. Under the category of "Adulting 101" Daniel matured in the areas of problem solving, decision making, setting a schedule, completing assignments, getting "out of his comfort zone", willingness to try new things, planning events, peer interaction and developing friendships, self-advocacy, increasing his confidence, expressing his own opinion, handling emotions, how to spend leisure time, being self-reliant, and building community.

I am so grateful for the guidance, supervision, and counseling that Daniel received in a safe, nurturing environment at CFL. The support that Daniel received at CFL prepared him for living in the community. I am proud of Daniel enjoying life independently in an inclusive setting. **He is succeeding in his own apartment. He is a productive citizen and a contributing member of society.** He has two part-time jobs. Daniel enjoys a busy social life and spending time with family and friends.

Daniel is able to make his own paratransit reservations to travel to work and local destinations. The amount of transportation that we as parents have to provide is much less than when Daniel lived at home. Daniel is very resourceful with scheduling and organizing his calendar without assistance. He is trustworthy with his finances and making purchases and saving receipts. He knows who to contact in case of emergencies and has the on-call number of maintenance staff at his apartment complex. Daniel makes his own grocery list and shops independently.

I am so thankful for the positive impact that CFL has made on my son's life and that Daniel's vision of independence has become a reality.

-Lois Hart, parent

GRADUATE STORIES

PAVING THE WAY

ZACHARY- GRADUATED IN JAN 2025

Our son Zachary is a 32-year-old with Down syndrome, he has grown up in Louisville, attending local schools and living and working in the community. He is active in his church and Special Olympics (softball, swimming, basketball and football). He has a special network of friends and organizations that support his efforts.

In 2016 friends from Day Spring reached out to discuss the idea for what would become the College for Living (CFL). We shared ideas and our interest in being a part of the program. On July 1, 2017 Zachary moved into his own apartment at CFL. He graduated from the program January 2025 (having stayed on campus through Covid).

Both my wife, Mary Margaret, and **I have felt that Zachary was capable of living independently. CFL provided a safe space to try the 'idea' out.** The curriculum and a community of residents helped to calm our concern.

While it hasn't been a perfect, straight line there has been a consistent upward trajectory over the years. In addition to living skills **Zachary has developed long-term friendships and (most importantly) the maturity and independence he could not develop living at home.**

Since graduation Zachary has been living in own apartment in a large complex in Middletown. **The property managers tell us he is involved in the community and is considered an asset.** Similarly, it has not been a perfect straight line but we consider his progress and independence remarkable.

Zachary is a part-time permanent employee at UPS, working as a packaging handler. With twelve years of employment, he has established seniority on his team. His job allows him to contribute to rent and expenses; as a benefit he also has a healthcare plan that we envy.

Both Mary Margaret and I have planned for Zachary's future since his childhood days. We are transplants to Louisville with no family in the region. Our concern has been for the time when we are gone. **College for Living allowed us to expand the hopes we have for him.**

We are grateful for the opportunity to be involved with this program and encourage your support to ensure this opportunity is available for others.

-Glen Kelley, parent



ALUMNI INVOLVEMENT

PAVING THE WAY

GRADUATION PACKAGES:

To ensure that graduates do not regress in their skills, College for Living partners with each student and their family to provide continued support.

If a family opts in, a mentor will visit the student once a week for a two-hour session, helping them maintain their apartment or work toward any goals they wish to achieve.

Daniel and Zachary both receive support in this regard.



CONTINUING TO BE A KEY PART OF OUR COMMUNITY:

Our graduates treasure the continued involvement they have with the College for Living. They take their role as alumni seriously—volunteering at open houses, participating in speaking engagements, and offering support to underclassmen.

As strong supporters and advocates, they work to ensure that others know this program can help someone they love, too.

Daniel, Zachary, and Madison have each participated in at least two speaking engagements since graduating and take turns representing the program at open houses.



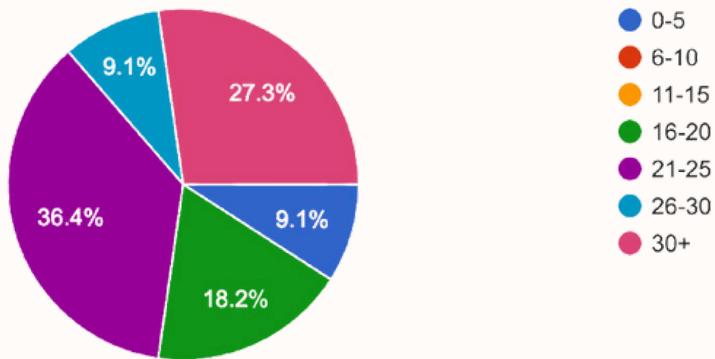


COLLEGE FOR LIVING

PROOF OF NEED & SUCCESS

Ongoing Feasibility Study of the College for Living Program:

If you have a child with an intellectual or developmental disabilities, what is their age range?



What level of independence do you envision your child with a developmental or intellectual disability being able to achieve in the future?

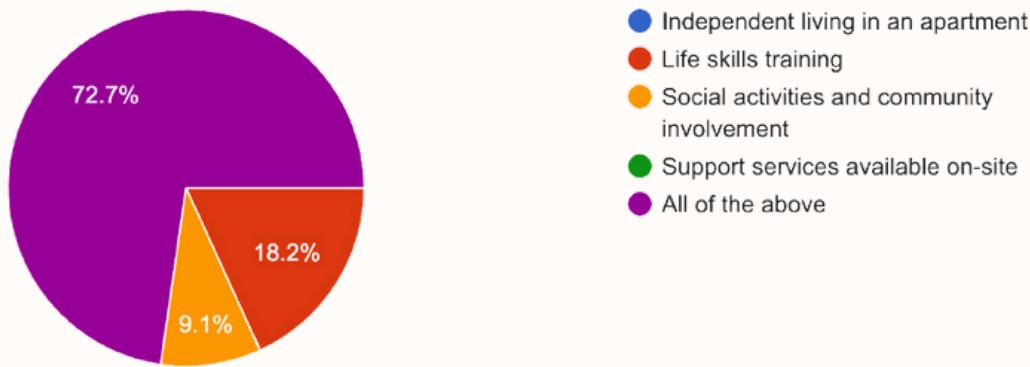


In what ways would you be willing to support the expansion of the residential program?



Ongoing Feasibility Study of the College for Living Program:

Which aspects of the residential program do you find most appealing?



- 100% of responses agreed there is a need for young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities to have peers and a community of natural supports.
- 100% believe there is a need for life skill training for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities.
- 100% believe there is a need for expanding programs beyond high school that support individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities with their individual life goals.



COLLEGE FOR LIVING

THE CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

A PROGRAM OF  DAY SPRING

A BRIGHTER FUTURE

BOLD FUTURES START HERE

THE WHY:

Day Spring's \$500,000 College for Living Expansion capital campaign is essential to achieving the program's initiatives.

When the building was constructed 20 years ago, its primary purpose was to provide housing for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities at various stages of their lives. As a result, the layout and design reflect a senior living facility.

The College for Living program offers young adults the opportunity to experience a dynamic, college-like atmosphere. This capital campaign will allow Day Spring to reimagine and expand the building, providing more space to accommodate additional students, creating intentional learning environments, and fostering the vibrant, communal atmosphere our students desire.

PHASE 1

TOTAL: \$300,000

Ready to break ground and complete all construction needs of the building.

PHASE 2

TOTAL: \$100,000

Purchase and assemble all furnishings.

PHASE 3

TOTAL: \$100,000

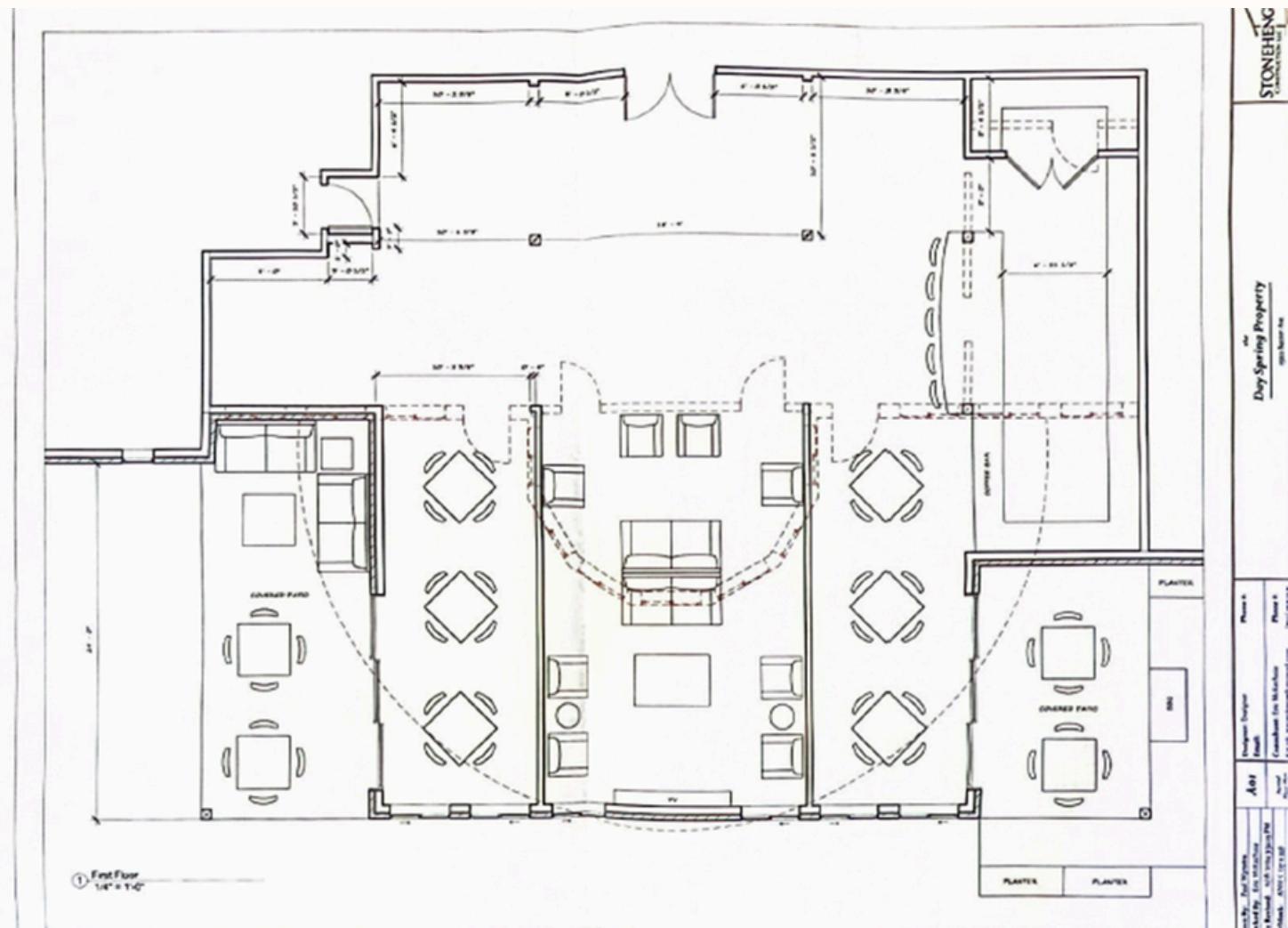
Purchase additional learning materials, interior renovations, and the edible green space.



COLLEGE FOR LIVING

College for Living Expansion Rendering

Day Spring is collaborating with Stonehenge Construction on a proposed remodel which will include the utilization of an additional 1830 square feet. The goals for this renovation are to include a larger instructional kitchen, computer lab, classroom, recreation area, fitness area, and bistro area.



THE EXPANSION

BOLD FUTURES START HERE

EXPANDING THE BUILDING:



CURRENT SPACE



FUTURE SPACE

EXPANDING THE CLASSROOM:



CURRENT SPACE



FUTURE SPACE

THE EXPANSION

BOLD FUTURES START HERE

STUDENT RESOURCES:



CURRENT KITCHEN



FUTURE SPACE



FUTURE EDIBLE GARDEN



FUTURE FAMILY MEETING SPACES

OTHER RENOVATIONS:

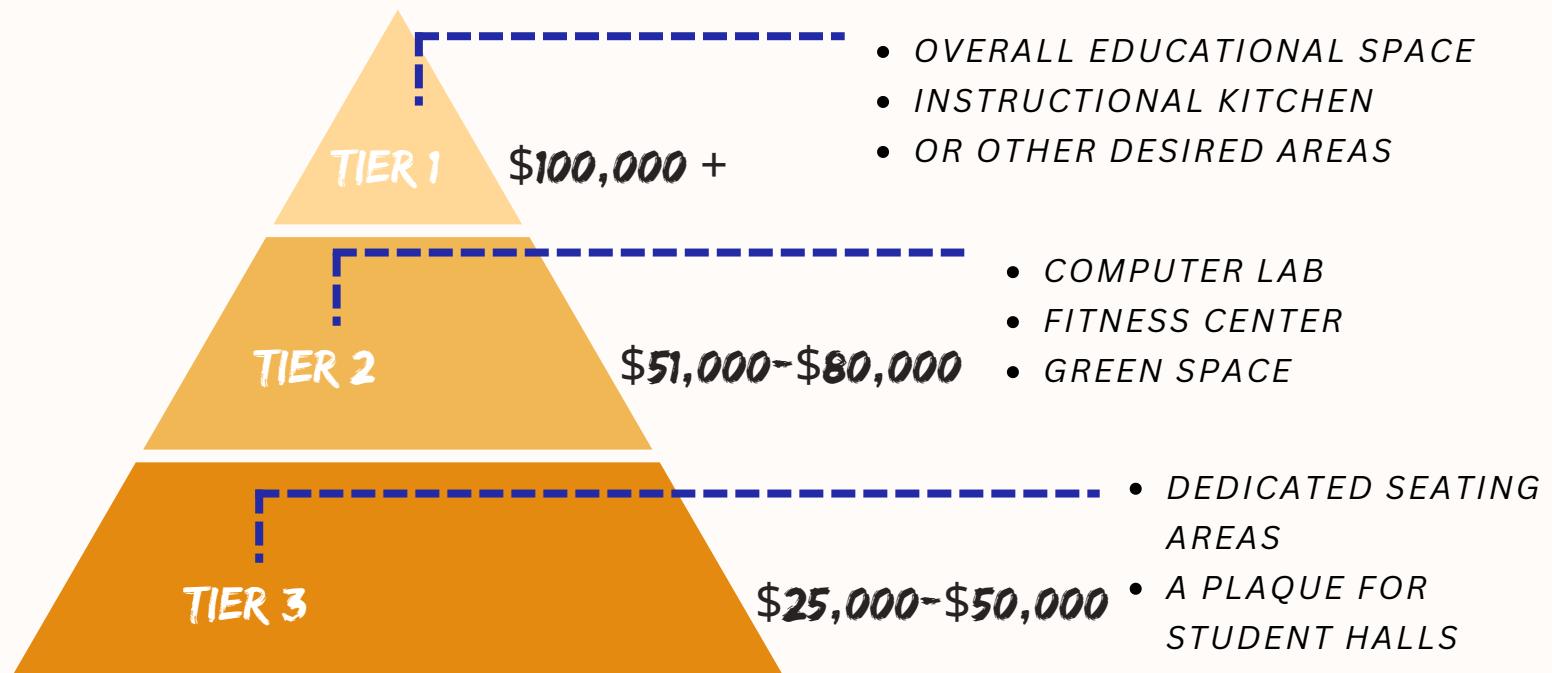
- TECH ROOM
- LAUNDRY FACILITIES
- UPDATED DORM SPACES
- ADDED FURNISHINGS

SHOWING GRATITUDE

BOLD FUTURES START HERE

NAMING RIGHTS:

Generous financial contributions and steadfast belief in our mission by investing in the future of our community and the lives of those we serve does not go unnoticed. Our supporters shine as a symbol of hope and we are proud to showcase donors as our vital partners in making a lasting impact.



Sources:

- Medicaid Waiver Waiting Lists in Kentucky: As of August 2024, the waiting list for the Michelle P. Waiver in Kentucky had 9,061 individuals, with 67% being children and 33% adults. [Kentucky Health News](#)
- In 2021, the average estimated cost per participant for IDD waivers was \$47,315. [AAIDD](#)
- Cost of Institutionalization for Adults with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities: The National Council on Disability, found that the average annual expenditure for an individual in a state institution was \$188,318 compared to \$42,486 for Medicaid-funded home and community-based services. [ALSO](#)
- The serviceable current need in Kentucky is approximately 400 individuals currently living in Kentucky institutional settings. [Kentucky.gov](#)
- 100% of students secure employment or volunteer placements ([National Council on Disability Outcomes Report, 2023](#)).
- 100% of families report reduced caregiving burdens ([Family Impact Survey, College for Living, 2024](#)).
- 95% of College for Living graduates maintain independent living within one year ([College for Living Annual Impact Report, 2024](#)).
- Employment and Earnings: Increased wages and contributions to the economy
- \$25,000–\$35,000 average annual earnings per worker with IDD ([BLS](#))
- Consumer Spending: Contribution through retail, housing, and services
- \$8,000–\$12,000 annual discretionary spending ([AIR Report](#))
- Tax Contributions: Federal, state income, and sales taxes from earned income and spending, \$3,500–\$5,000 per worker annually ([IRS.gov](#))
- Reduced Public Assistance: Savings from lower Medicaid, SNAP, and SSI dependency, \$15,000–\$20,000 saved annually per individual ([SSA](#))
- Community Impact: Increased productivity, local economic growth, and inclusive workplaces, \$5,000–\$7,000 indirect annual contribution to GDP per worker ([NCD](#))
- The Extra Costs of Living with a Disability in the U.S. – Resetting the Policy Table: Households containing an adult with a work-disability are estimated to require, on average, 28 percent more income (or an additional \$17,690 a year for a household at the median income level) to obtain the same standard of living as a comparable household without a member with a disability.