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## 40 Years Later, the Journey's Only Beginning

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01/31/25



## Message from Our Executive Director

As we step into the new year, I am thrilled to share that January has kicked off on the right foot! We welcomed the year with new hires, strengthening our team and ensuring that we are more equipped than ever to serve our community. Additionally, we have updated our organizational chart to reinforce the foundation of our operations. Building a lasting organization requires a solid structure—one that can support growth for years to come.

This month, we also had the pleasure of welcoming a new resident to our community. While our mission remains steadfast in delivering quality service and maintaining financial stability, our commitment to continuously refining and improving these pillars remains a top priority. By strengthening these areas, we not only enhance the lives of those we serve but also secure FIL's sustainability for future generations.

January has also been a record-breaking month for us in terms of tours. The number of prospective families visiting FIL has soared, a testament to the growing recognition of our program. FIL has long been a hidden gem in Coconut Creek, serving adults with disabilities with compassion and excellence. As we celebrate our 40th anniversary this year, we are reminded of how far we've come and how much we've grown.

Our journey has not been without its challenges. Like any great endeavor, our success has been shaped by unexpected twists, learning curves, and moments of resilience. But through it all, we have remained steadfast in our mission. As we reflect on our history, we honor the visionaries who laid the foundation for FIL. Though our founders are no longer with us, I believe they would

be incredibly proud to see how their vision has flourished—continuing to provide a safe, loving, and enriching environment for the remarkable individuals we serve, 40 years later. And this is just the beginning.

2025 holds incredible promise, and I look forward to all that we will accomplish together.

Betty Cadet  
Executive Director, Foundation For Independent Living

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## Forty Years, One Grand Night

We invite you and your family to join us for an enchanting evening as we commemorate 40 memorable years of our wonderful organization. Embrace the magic of our Masquerade theme by dressing in your most festive attire and wearing a captivating mask. Prepare for an extraordinary night of celebration, connection, and community—we can't wait to see you there!

[Purchase  
Tickets](#)

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## Learning & Building

We're excited to introduce the Rec L.A.B. (Learning & Building)! This refreshed space is designed to bring people together for hands-on activities, skill development, and creative exploration. Whether you're discovering a new passion, honing a talent, or simply looking to connect with others, the Rec L.A.B. is your go-to hub for growth, fun, and bonding. There's no one-size-fits-all approach here—instead, we invite you to explore at your own pace, forging connections over a shared love of learning and building.

## New Day Program?



In the past, families who sought our support were required to enroll in our entire program. However, we've since discovered that some families only need select services rather than the full offering. We genuinely want to meet you where you are, which is why we're excited to introduce our new Day Program!

With this flexible model, families can choose the specific services that best align with their unique situations, making it simpler than ever to receive the focused support they truly need. Our team is here to help you craft an experience that perfectly serves your goals.

Read on to learn more about how the Day Program can benefit you!

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## Building Skills, Careers, and Community



Our Vocational Program is designed to provide residents with the tools, training, and opportunities they need to develop their skills, gain employment, and make a lasting impact. Through hands-on learning, career guidance, and volunteer experiences, we're helping individuals take the next step toward independence and success.

### **Job Club**

Our Job Club is back and better than ever! Participants will engage in pre-employment and post-employment discussions, gaining valuable training to navigate their career paths with confidence. Sessions include The ABCs of Employment and Resume Building Workshops to help residents develop essential workplace skills.

### **New Resident Employment**

A huge congratulations to Elizabeth, who was recently hired as an After Care Worker! Billie's enthusiasm and dedication are already making a positive impact, and we couldn't be prouder watching her flourish.

### **Community Engagement & Service**

Our residents have been actively volunteering with these organizations and through these partnerships, volunteers are making a real difference:

- Food for the Poor
- In Jacob's Shoes
- Mornings Community Solutions





Volunteering with Branches Miami was a powerful moment for both our residents and team. It provided an opportunity to connect with different communities and contribute to a cause larger than ourselves.

We had the privilege of packing lunches and engaging with volunteers dedicated to supporting underprivileged families. These individuals work tirelessly to make sure that families have access to the resources needed for growth, creating a much-needed foundation for their children's futures.







Experiencing these moments firsthand is what drives us. It reinforces the power of service—values that align perfectly with our mission at The Foundation. Giving back isn't just about helping others; it's about becoming part of a collective effort to build a better tomorrow.

If you're interested in volunteering with our residents, represent an employer offering volunteer opportunities, or would like to host a Job Club session to share your experiences, we'd love to hear from you.

### Employment Program and Training Manager

## Moments That Matter - Programming at a Glance

At The Foundation, we know that a strong community is built on shared experiences, meaningful connections, and a little fun along the way! That's why our Day Program is designed to offer engaging, enriching, and dynamic activities that bring residents together while promoting wellness, learning, and personal growth.

Each week, our residents take part in a variety of activities that encourage friendship, creativity, and a sense of belonging. Whether it's Speed Friending, a fun and fast-paced way to spark new conversations, or Black History Month Highlights, where we celebrate culture and heritage, every interaction strengthens the bonds within our community.

Residents can unwind with music therapy sessions, discover new perspectives through library trips and reading groups, or practice self-care with hygiene and life skills workshops. Our Wellness Happy Hour brings a fresh approach to total wellness, combining thoughtful discussions with a monthly signature fruit smoothie to make self-care even more enjoyable.





And because giving back is just as important as personal growth, our community outreach efforts—such as the Cozy Blanket Program and local community giveback initiatives—give residents the chance to make a meaningful impact while working together toward a shared goal.

We also know the importance of fun and relaxation, which is why our program includes weekly movies at the cinema, sunset strolls, and major weekend activities that bring excitement and adventure into the mix.



## February Programming Calendar

1. February 8 – Chili Cookout at River Walk (Opportunity to advance to the International Amateur Chili Cookout!)
2. February 9 – Super Bowl Party (Food, fun, and football!)
3. February 14 – Valentine's Day Party (A celebration of love and friendship.)
4. February 15 – Car Wash Fundraiser (Teamwork and community giving.)
5. February 25 – Family Bingo Night (Fun for all!)
6. February 28 – Clubhouse Concert (Live music and entertainment.)

## Ongoing & Recurring Programs

- Weekly Movies at the Cinema
- Sunset Strolls
- Library Trips & Reading Groups
- Music Therapy Sessions

- Wellness Happy Hour (Featuring Monti's signature fruit smoothie!)
- Hygiene & Life Skills Workshops
- Speed Friending & Social Connection Activities
- Cultural Celebrations
- Community Giveback Initiatives

This is just a glimpse into what a single week at The Foundation looks like. But our impact goes beyond just a calendar of events—we are a program built on consistency. Take this one week, stretch it across a year, and you'll see the bigger picture—a community where every day brings new opportunities to learn. We don't just plan activities; we create meaningful moments that shape lives and strengthen bonds.

Here's to another incredible week ☐



## **Cooking with Chef Fran: A Flavorful Journey**

Get ready to spice things up in the kitchen! Cooking with Chef Fran is more than just a class—it's an experience that brings residents closer to the art of





cooking while making informed, healthier choices.

These sessions will take residents on a journey through spices and their origins, exploring their uses, flavors, and health benefits. From understanding what to look for in healthier ingredients to developing practical kitchen skills, residents will gain valuable hands-on experience in food preparation and mindful cooking.

Through this program, we're not just making meals—we're building confidence and a deeper appreciation for food.



## Fitness & Special Olympics

Our residents are staying active and engaged as the Special Olympics season gets underway! We're thrilled to be competing in Bocce, Tennis, and Cornhole, with our first Cornhole match kicking off in February.



In addition to the Special Olympics, Community Bowling is back in full swing, bringing fun and friendly competition to the lanes.



We're also gearing up for an exciting event—The Coconut Creek FIL Basketball Bash 2025! Under the guidance of Jack, our Fitness Manager, and Luigi, our residents are sharpening their basketball skills in preparation for this big event on Friday, March 14th—just one day before our 40th Anniversary Masquerade Banquet.

We'd love to see you cheering us on from the stands as we showcase our skills, teamwork, and dedication. Your support means the world to us!

**Weekly Fitness** | At The Foundation, fitness isn't just an activity—it's a way of life. Our elaborate weekly fitness schedule keeps residents engaged, moving, and motivated.

Not only is our fitness center buzzing with activity throughout the day, but we also offer offsite fitness opportunities to keep things fresh and exciting, including:

- 10 Speed – Our Thursday biking group, perfect for those who love the open road.
- Daily Walking Events – Encouraging movement, fresh air, and community connection.
- Professional Guidance – Our two fitness trainers visit multiple times a week to provide





If the Day Program is something you're considering, know that fitness and well-being are a huge part of what makes The Foundation so special. Health, movement, and community go hand in hand here—because when we move together, we thrive together!



## New Hires & Promotions: Strengthening Our Team



**Josephine Barnett**

Congratulations to Josephine Barnett on her promotion to Program Director!

We are excited to announce that Josephine Barnett has been promoted to Program Director while continuing her vital role as Resident Advocate. In this expanded position, Josie will provide leadership, strategic direction and oversight to the Programming, Vocational and Independent Living Coach (ILC) departments, ensuring



**Mabell Angel**

We are thrilled to welcome Mabell Angel as our new Director of Marketing and Communications!

With over 20 years of experience in corporate communications, public relations, fundraising, and community engagement, Mabell has a proven track record of building strategic partnerships and enhancing brand visibility.

Her expertise in donor



**Rico Thomas**

Congratulations to Rico Thomas on his promotion to Digital Marketing Specialist!

We are excited to announce that Rico Thomas has been promoted to Digital Marketing Specialist! Rico has consistently demonstrated creativity, dedication, and versatility, often stepping beyond his role to contribute his skills in digital media. His hard work has significantly increased FIL's visibility across social media, making

delivery of high quality services that enhance residents' lives, promote independence and support personal growth.

With her strong management skills, strategic mindset and dedication to resident advocacy, Josie is the ideal leader to bridge the needs of residents and families with our organization's mission. We look forward to the positive impact she will continue to make in this new role!

cultivation, stakeholder relations, and nonprofit leadership makes her an invaluable addition to our team. Passionate about helping others, she is committed to driving success through innovation and collaboration.

We are excited for the impact she will make at FIL and look forward to the incredible work ahead! Welcome to the team, Mabell!

a lasting impact on our online presence.

In this new role, Rico will be responsible for creating and managing visual content, overseeing social media channels and apps, and assisting with the website alongside our new Director of Marketing and Communications. His ability to produce engaging digital content that aligns with FIL's branding will be instrumental in expanding our reach and sharing our mission with a broader audience.

We are excited to see FIL's marketing efforts grow under Rico's leadership and look forward to the continued success of our digital strategies.

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## Home Renovations & Modifications

We're committed to making sure that our residents feel safe, comfortable, and supported in their homes, especially as they age. This year, we're strengthening our partnership with Cypress Shores, the community where our residents live, to implement home renovations and modifications tailored to the needs of our aging population.

### Key Updates Include:

- Renovations – Installing grab bars, seat risers, and other accessibility features to improve safety and ease of use.
- Walk-In Showers – Over the past six months, we've successfully installed nine walk-in showers, making bathing safer and more accessible for our residents.
- ADA Compliance – Making personalized adjustments to ensure that each home meets ADA standards based on individual needs.

Through this collaboration, we are focused on enhancing quality of life and promoting independence, to make sure that our residents can thrive in homes designed with their well-being in mind.

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## Introducing Our New Day Program

For 40 years strong, The Foundation has been a place where families could access a comprehensive support system, requiring full enrollment in all of our services. Last





year, we took a step back to reimagine accessibility, exploring ways to better serve future families who may not need full-time residential services but still want to be part of our community.



That vision has led to the creation of our Day Program—a way for families to experience all the benefits of FIL, minus the residential component. However, should the opportunity arise, a seamless transition into full-time residency remains an option.

So, while housing isn't included for Day Program members, the foundation of independence remains the same. Families who enroll in the Day Program can take advantage of:



- Full Activity Calendar – Engaging events, enrichment programs, and social opportunities.

- Fitness & Wellness – Access to our fitness center, offsite activities, and personal training sessions.



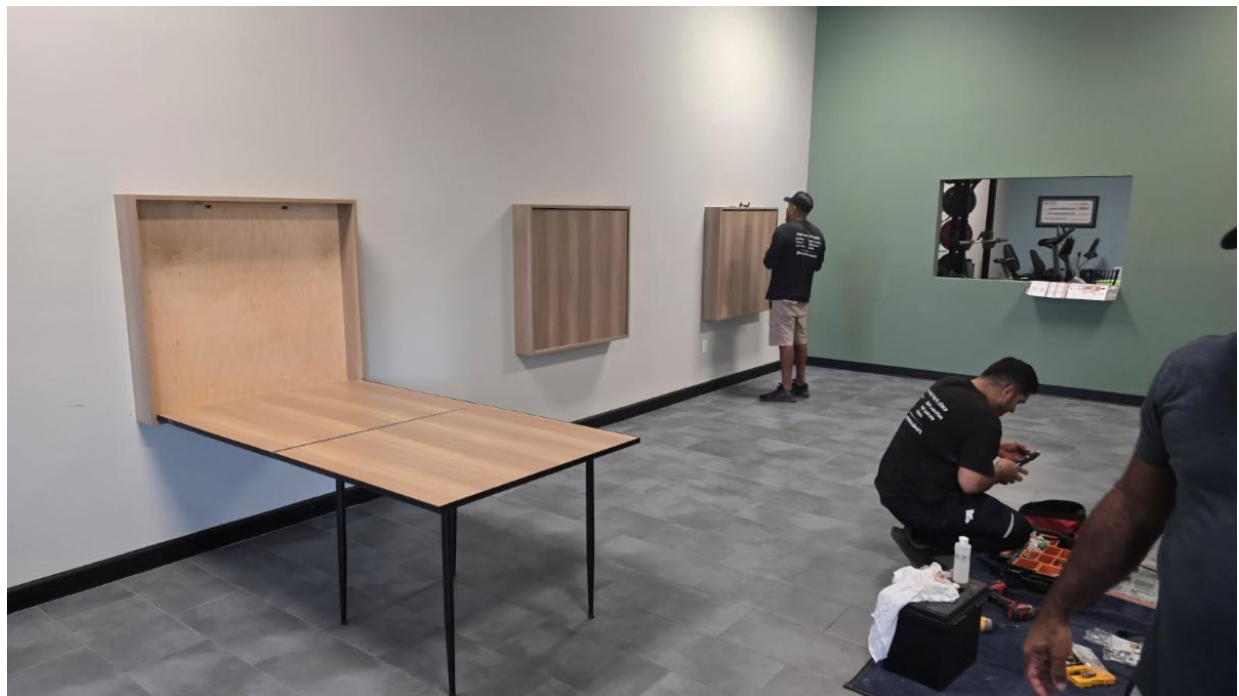
- Healthy Café – Nutritious meals designed to promote well-being and healthy habits.

- Medical Support – On-site access to essential health services and wellness guidance.



- Employment & Vocational Training – Job coaching, resume-building workshops, and hands-on skill development to prepare for the workforce.

This is a new chapter for The Foundation, one that keeps our core values intact while offering flexibility to families looking for the right fit. If you're looking for a structured and engaging experience for your loved one, the Day Program is here—and we'd love to welcome you!







## Clubhouse Transformation: A Winning Play!

The last eight months have been nothing short of exciting. Our Clubhouse needed a revamp, and just like a perfectly executed play call, we huddled together and called it:

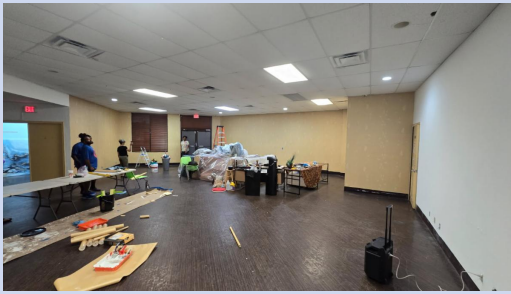
"Revamp Clubhouse, Omaha, Omaha, X 35Z! Tush Push"

But we didn't stop there. Our Clubhouse, Fitness Center, and Rec L.A.B. all went under the microscope. If we were truly going to enhance the experience for both our residents and incoming families, we needed to create a space that was warm, welcoming, and built around interactivity. The goal? A space where staff and residents can enjoy each other's company in a more relaxed and inviting environment. A space that feels like home—where connections thrive.

This transformation wouldn't have been possible without the tireless efforts of our incredible staff. From planning to execution, many hands played a role in bringing this vision to life, and we want to give a huge shoutout to everyone involved. Your dedication and creativity made this happen!

From movies to Xbox, billiards to learning, and fitness to fun, we've got it all covered! Our spaces are designed to bring an enriching experience to every resident—because at The Foundation, there's always something exciting to do!





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## 2025 Late Fee Policy

To maintain high-quality services and support for all residents, FIL has implemented a new Late Fee Policy, effective January 1, 2025, in response to an increase in late payments.

### Policy Details

- **Late Fees** – A 1% fee of the total invoice amount will be applied to any outstanding balance after 30 days.
- **90 Days of Non-Payment** – If a balance remains unpaid for 90 days, resident programming and activities will be suspended until the balance is paid in full.
- **120 Days of Non-Payment** – If a balance remains unpaid for 120 days, FIL will no longer act as the guarantor for the Northland property, and Cypress Shores may proceed with lease termination.

We strongly encourage families to stay current with their payments to prevent any disruptions in services. If you have any questions or need assistance, please don't hesitate to reach out to our team.

[Accounting & Billing](#)

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## FAMILY COMMUNICATION

As part of our ongoing efforts to improve operations, we are enhancing communication with families to ensure that everyone has a clear and direct point of contact for any questions or concerns.

To streamline communication and provide quick access to the appropriate department, we have introduced departmental emails for specific needs. These dedicated email addresses allow families to reach the right team efficiently, ensuring that inquiries are addressed promptly and effectively.

We believe that open and accessible communication is essential in providing the best support for our residents and their families. Thank you for being part of this initiative as we continue to



improve our services!

**Travel**

**Programming**

**Med  
Room**

**Residential**

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