

That Every Ability May Belong Awards \$1,000 Grants to Faith Communities and Ministries for Creating Belonging for Individuals of All Abilities

CHICAGO (December 10, 2018) — The That Every Ability May Belong (TEAM Belong) Ministry of Pathways.org, a Chicago based not-for-profit, is recognizing seven congregations and four ministries with That Every Ability May Belong Award grants of up to \$1,000. The grants support efforts to welcome individuals of all abilities as active participants in houses of faith. The winning worshipping communities create accessible environments where individuals of all abilities know they belong and can share their gifts. Grants are awarded for specific, planned projects that further their inclusion efforts. Visit www.TEAMBelong.org for more information and applications.

2018 That Every Ability May Belong Award Winners

Bethlehem Lutheran Church, St. Charles, IL

Fredericktown United Methodist Church, Fredericktown, OH

Mishkan Chicago, Chicago, IL

Mustard Seed Project of Loyola University Chicago Andrew M. Greeley Center for Catholic Education

Proyecto Samy Inc., Bronx, NY

Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Chicago Commission on Mental Illness

St. Catherine Laboure Catholic Church, Glenview, IL

St. James Catholic Church, Arlington Heights, IL

St. John Berchmans Catholic Church, Chicago, IL

Twin Falls United Methodist Church, Munroe Falls, OH

Wittenberg Lutheran Campus Center, Normal, IL

Since 1997, That Every Ability May Belong has recognized more than 230 congregations, religious schools and ministries with grants totaling over \$180,000. Read about the projects supported by the 2018 Pathways.org That Every Ability May Belong Awards grants on the following pages.

2018 That Every Ability May Belong Awards Projects

Bethlehem Lutheran Church, St. Charles, IL



Bethlehem Lutheran Church will use their 2018 That Every Ability May Belong Award grant to replace faded and missing accessible parking signs.

The signs indicating the availability of accessible parking at Bethlehem Lutheran Church, St. Charles, IL were faded or missing. The congregation will use their 2018 That Every Ability May Belong Award grant to replace seven accessible parking signs. The new signage will improve communication about accessible parking and the commitment of Bethlehem Lutheran Church to creating an accessible and welcoming environment for worshippers of all abilities. The congregation provides an elevator, accessible washrooms, pew cutouts throughout the assembly, an accessible seating area at the front of the sanctuary, assistive listening devices and large print worship aides. Accessible entrances are clearly marked and mobility aides such as walkers and wheelchairs are available.

"We are thrilled to accept this award on behalf of our community and our congregation's fervent commitment to accessibility. We communicate our commitment to accessibility before people even enter our building with clearly marked accessible parking places. The That Every Ability May Belong Awards grant will help us provide helpful, directional signs in our parking lots so that all people, regardless of physical ability, can park and enter our building safely. Thank you for your generosity and partnership in our shared endeavor to welcome people of all abilities, all the time," stated Reverend Sarah Rohde, Pastor, Bethlehem Lutheran Church, St. Charles, IL.

Fredericktown United Methodist Church, Fredericktown, OH

Fredericktown United Methodist Church will use their 2018 That Every Ability May Belong Award grant to create three pew cutouts in the sanctuary to accommodate gliding armchairs for members with chronic back pain, restless leg syndrome and autism. The need for these chairs became evident when the congregation embarked on a yearlong educational journey that included guest speakers, monthly ministry moments, bulletin inserts, videos and book studies. The process opened the eyes and hearts of members to the importance of welcoming members of all abilities.

The congregation provides accessible parking, a covered drop off area, valet parking, automatic door openers, ramps to the worship area and social hall, assistive listening devices and noise reduction headphones for members with noise sensitivity. Accessible washrooms and large print bibles are also available.

“This grant will enable us to better welcome and provide a nurturing environment to those who often feel ostracized from the church and God’s love. It is a huge step in continuing to extend the church’s outreach. Thank you,” said Reverend Richard Hasley, pastor.



to
create three pew cutouts furnished with gliding armchairs.

Mishkan Chicago, Chicago, IL



Mishkan Chicago will provide a sign language interpreter for worship services with their That Every Ability May Belong Award grant.

Mishkan Chicago, a Jewish faith community in Chicago, meets for musical prayer, learning and holidays in synagogues, homes and event venues all around the city. The community will use the 2018 That Every Ability May Belong Award grant to help defray the cost of providing sign language interpretation for Shabbat services, High Holidays and other Jewish holidays throughout the year. Individuals who are deaf have expressed appreciation for the interpreter service and parents of children with ADD have stated that having the interpreter present helped their loved one stay engaged in the liturgy.

"This grant means we can move forward on our inclusion efforts and help people gain access to Jewish holidays they wouldn't otherwise have. Our interpreters translate both English and Hebrew so that folks aren't left out of any part of the service. We are so beyond thrilled to receive this grant and cannot wait to offer more ASL interpreting at our events, services, and holiday experiences," said Ellie Spitz, LCSW, Director of Community Engagement and Wellness at Mishkan Chicago. Rabbi Lizzi Heydemann, founder of Mishkan Chicago, stated, "We aim at radical inclusivity— including the widest possible range of people who want to find purpose, connection, joy and inspiration through Jewish spiritual practice. The That Every Ability May Belong Award is a great bolster to these efforts, helping both hearing and non-hearing people experience American Sign Language and opening up our services to people who would otherwise not be able to fully enjoy the experience.

We are so, so grateful to Pathways and the That Every Ability May Belong Award for this recognition and support."

Mustard Seed Project of Loyola University Chicago Andrew M. Greeley Center for Catholic Education

The Greeley Center for Catholic Education sponsors the annual Mustard Seed Project Conference to enable Catholic Schools from across the U.S. to develop plans and receive coaching on how best to include students of all abilities. The 2018 That Every Ability May Belong Award grant supported conference expenses and scholarships for Catholic School faculty.



The Greeley Center for Catholic Education used their That Every Ability May Belong Award grant to support the 2018 Mustard Seed Conference: Inclusive Practices in Catholic Schools.

"Increasingly, Catholic schools are responding to the call to open their doors to students with disabilities, yet they are in need of supports and guidance in order to effectively build more inclusive environments. The That Every Ability May Belong Award grant will be so helpful in supporting the conference expenses of the Mustard Seed Project and bringing best practices in inclusive education to Catholic Schools," said Dr. Michael Boyle, Director, Andrew M. Greeley Center for Catholic Education.

Projecto Samy Inc., Bronx, NY



Ana De Cunha is one of three project managers who will oversee children's sensory stations at three churches in the Dominican Republic, thanks to a 2018 That Every Ability May Belong Award grant.

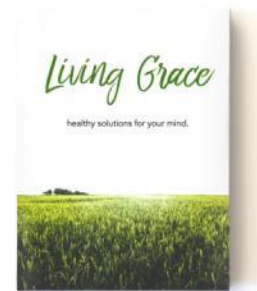
Projecto Samy Inc. will use their That Every Ability May Belong Award grant to create sensory stations at the entrances to the worship space and in religious education classrooms in three churches in the Dominican Republic. The sensory stations will provide sensory toys, fidget toys, sensory sacks and sensory mini-mats to help children with autism, ADD, ADHD and developmental disabilities stay in worship services, fellowship activities and Sunday school classes. Teams at each church will set up the stations, collect toys at the end of services, store the items and set up the stations each week. Sensory items have been shown to relieve anxiety in children with sensory processing disorders. By

meeting this need, Proyecto Samy Inc., will help families to stay in worship settings longer and will help staff to include children of varying abilities in Sunday school.

Johanna Santana, Executive Director of Proyecto Samy Inc., is grateful for the 2018 That Every Ability May Belong Award grant. "The endeavor of building a community that welcomes and integrates individuals with different abilities requires three essential components: 1.) a calling that usually emerges out of personal experience, 2.) a group of vision-sharing colleagues, professionals, and volunteers, and 3.) a community with the willingness to learn, change, and embrace the underserved. However, there will not be any success without the appropriate resources. Proyecto Samy Inc. is grateful to Pathways.org for supporting our endeavor to provide sensory stations for children in need of this support in three houses of faith," said Johanna.

Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Chicago Commission on Mental Illness

Deacon Tom Lambert, Co-Director of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Chicago Commission on Mental Illness and Deacon at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel parish, Chicago, will use a That Every Ability May Belong Award grant to purchase Grace Alliance workbooks for Mental Health Outreach workshops in parishes in the Archdiocese of Chicago. The 16-week series of workshops is an innovative and grace-filled mental health solution and community support initiative for those experiencing a personal journey with depression, anxiety and other mental health conditions. The workshops will provide a ministry of accompaniment for individuals and families with mental health concerns.



Dc. Tom Lambert will use a That Every Ability May Belong Award grant to purchase Living Grace workbooks for a series of parish workshops to support parishioners with mental health concerns and their families.

The parish workshops will let individuals and their families know that they are welcomed as part of the parish community and alleviate the stigma often associated with mental health concerns. "Stigma causes isolation, even isolation from the faith community. We want to create a supportive place so that people can get spiritual comfort and healing within the parish community," said Deacon Lambert.

"I am grateful for the That Every Ability May Belong Award grant which will allow the Commission on Mental Illness to reach more families in the Archdiocese of Chicago," stated Deacon Lambert.

St. Catherine Laboure Catholic Church, Glenview, IL



St. Catherine Laboure parish will use their That Every Ability May Belong Award grant to expand their assistive listening devices to their social hall.

Jaden Dias, a fourteen year old parishioner at St. Catherine Laboure parish in Glenview, IL, is proud of the many ways his parish includes people of all abilities. From the accessible parking spaces, curb cuts and automatic door openers at the entrances to the accessible washrooms, low gluten hosts, large print bulletins and missalettes, St. Catherine's cultivates a spirit of inclusion.

Jaden wrote in his Junior That Every Ability May Belong Award essay that "Jesus is our role model and he loves each and every one of us. We have a duty to follow his example and welcome all people to participate with us at Mass."

"As the Inclusion Representative for the parish, I am extremely grateful to Pathways.org That Every Ability May Belong for the financial assistance as well as the educational materials, lesson plans and TEAM Belong Month planning materials available at www.TEAMBelong.org," said Janice Seipp.

"Pathways That Every Ability May Belong Awards have been a blessing to St. Catherine Laboure's Inclusion Ministry. Last year the grant provided additional assistive listening devices for the church. This year the grant will be used to purchase a sound system transmitter for the gymnasium building, making the devices available in the recreation room and social hall. Now parishioners who are hard of hearing will be able to hear speakers at parish events," said Janice.

Under the leadership of Father Maina Waithaka, Saint Catherine Laboure has become an outstanding example of building a caring, accessible and inclusive worshiping community where parishioners of all abilities experience true belonging.

St. James Catholic Church, Arlington Heights, IL



Accessible parking spaces and a canopied entrance are planned at St. James Catholic Church.

St. James Catholic Church is in the midst of the "Open Our Hearts in Welcome" construction project to create a fully accessible worship space through renovation and expansion. The current church building opened in 1952 and has not undergone major construction changes since then.

Renovation plans will make the church accessible and include nearby accessible parking spaces, a canopied ground level entrance, hearing loop, accessible bathrooms, pew cut outs and an elevator.

"The That Every Ability May Belong Award grant will support our efforts to welcome our entire parish community into worship including those with mobility issues. This award supports our desire to preserve and honor the dignity of all. We are grateful to Pathways for this recognition," stated Fr. Matt Foley, Pastor, St. James Catholic Church.

St. John Berchmans Catholic Church, Chicago, IL

At St. John Berchmans Catholic Church, the parish motto, "All Are Welcome," drives efforts to create an accessible and welcoming parish plant. The congregation raised funds to install a two stop elevator to the upper level church and the lower level hall. Accessible washrooms in the lower level church hall and a ramp to the altar are also available. The 2018 Pathways.org That Every Ability May Belong Award grant will be used to renovate the washroom nearest the worship space. Parishioners who need an accessible washroom will no longer have to travel an extended distance to use the accessible washrooms in the church hall.

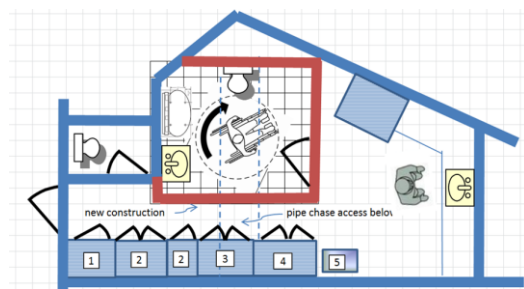


St. John Berchmans Catholic Church will use their That Every Ability May Belong Award grant to upgrade the washroom nearest the worship space for members with disabilities.

"Two That Every Ability May Belong Award grants have helped to make our parish motto, 'All Are Welcome,' a reality. Thank you for your continued support," said Joe D'Arco, Director of Operations at St. John Berchmans parish.

Twin Falls United Methodist Church, Munroe Falls, OH

Twin Falls United Methodist Church will use their 2018 That Every Ability May Belong Award grant to create an accessible family restroom on the sanctuary level of the church. The new accessible washroom will be fitted with an accessible sink with accessible faucet handles, grab bars at the accessible toilet, accessible towel dispenser plus a wall mount changing



Twin Falls United Methodist Church will create an accessible family washroom with the help of their That Every Ability May

table. The washroom will assist members of all abilities and families with young children.

The church has been working on identifying barriers to worship with a Disability Awareness Team. The team has audited the church campus and has developed a long-term plan to break down any barriers to including worshipers of all abilities. Their primary concern was to have accessible restrooms on both the sanctuary level and the fellowship level of the church. In addition, the church has installed new accessible parking spaces and entrance ramps.

“Our congregation has always had an open heart for all and a desire to include persons of all abilities. Our aging building made it difficult for us to be a welcoming community to persons with accessibility needs. We are very grateful for this award. It allows us to break down barriers and enables people of all abilities to come for worship and fellowship at Twin Falls UMC,” said Reverend Van Fisher, pastor.

Wittenberg Lutheran Campus Center, Normal, IL

The Wittenberg Lutheran Campus Center meets the spiritual needs of college age students, faculty and staff of Illinois State University, Illinois Wesleyan University, Heartland Community College and Lincoln College. Throughout the school year the Center provides Sunday morning worship and Bible study as well as bible study and worship services throughout the week.

Wishing to be accessible to all, the center has redesigned the parking lot to provide accessible parking adjacent to entrances and provides a sign language interpreter for services.



The Wittenberg Lutheran Campus Center will use their That Every Ability May Belong Award grant to help fund automatic door openers on two exterior entrances.

The 2018 That Every Ability May Belong Awards grant will be used to purchase and install automatic door openers at both exterior entrances for a young woman who uses a motorized wheelchair.

"We want to include as many people as we can when we proclaim the Good News. This generous grant puts us on the way toward improving our outreach to people who face accessibility challenges. Thank God for the work of Pathways.org," said Reverend William Jensen, Campus Pastor.

About the That Every Ability May Belong Awards

The That Every Ability May Belong Awards recognize houses of faith, religious schools and ministries for their efforts to welcome individuals of all abilities and helps fund access and inclusion projects with grants of up to \$1,000. Applications for the That Every Ability May Belong Awards and Junior That Every Ability May Belong Awards (nominated by children, ages 5-18) are accepted annually. Watch www.TEAMBelong.org for deadlines.

To be eligible for a That Every Ability May Belong Award, congregations must submit a completed application form, a video or essay with electronic photos describing the congregation's efforts to create belonging for people of all abilities and a request for funding for a specific project with costs.

Since 1997, That Every Ability May Belong has recognized more than 230 congregations, religious schools and ministries with grants totaling over \$180,000. The goal is to encourage faith traditions, houses of faith and religious schools to welcome individuals of all abilities. For more information and application forms visit www.TEAMBelong.org, call 1-800-955-2445, or email friends@pathways.org.

About TEAM Belong Month

That Every Ability May Belong Month invites faith traditions, congregations and religious schools to celebrate and take stock of their current access and belonging efforts and renew their commitments to welcoming individuals of all abilities as active participants. Visit www.TEAMBelong.org for interfaith TEAM Belong Month Workbooks, prayer cards, bulletin articles, and more.

About TEAM Belong

That Every Ability May Belong (TEAM Belong) is a ministry of Pathways.org, a Chicago based not for profit organization. The interfaith That Every Ability May Belong ministry provides grants, videos and educational materials to help congregations welcome worshipers of all abilities. Visit www.TEAMBelong.org for more information.

About Pathways.org

Pathways.org is a national, non-profit organization dedicated to empowering parents and health professionals with free tools and resources to maximize a child's motor, sensory, and communication development. Pathways.org educational materials are shared freely on our website www.Pathways.org. Pathways.org also promotes belonging for individuals of all abilities with the That Every Ability May Belong Ministry.

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