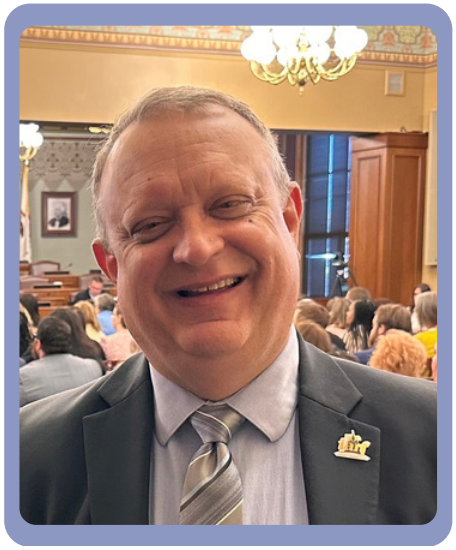
Jeff Stauter

Hill Street Neighborhood - Mt. Morris, Illinois
A Supportive Housing Institute Success Story



Since 2012, Jeff Stauter has served as the Executive Director of Kreider Services, a Dixon, Illinois-based nonprofit that provides group housing, day services, early intervention, and other services to children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. During his time at Kreider, Jeff has seen the need for supportive housing in Illinois communities outside of Chicago and other major urban areas. Inspired by the vision of his friend Brion Brooks to create more community-integrated supportive housing, Jeff joined the Illinois Supportive Housing Institute and teamed up with Brion to create and cosponsor Hill Street Neighborhood in Mt. Morris, a Northern-Illinois Village located approximately 50 miles from the Wisconsin border. Currently under construction, the completed development will feature 24 apartments in 12 one-story duplexes, half of which will offer supportive housing for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, while the other half will be available to income-eligible households with or without disabilities.



"You can put a pin in Mt. Morris and draw a 50-mile circle around it, and you can see there are 900 people with disabilities, roughly, looking for housing – because you get into Winnebago County, you get down into Whiteside County, into Rochelle and DeKalb. There's a larger area, so there's a huge need for people looking for housing.

"The benefit of having the Institute is it brings small-town providers like me into supportive housing who would never have had the opportunity or resources to enter it otherwise. There's no program like this in Lee County [Dixon's home county], or any of the other counties or communities we work in. Before the Institute, Brion and I had no experience working in supportive housing. The Institute gave us the skills and knowledge we needed to break in, then bring back to our communities so we could start building supportive housing ourselves and address the need where we saw it. And, it gave us the confidence to know that if this [Hill Street Neighborhood] works out, we can replicate it in other small towns.

"Brion and I both described the Institute as, it's as much information as you're getting in grad school. There are things they [supportive housing funders] expect that we don't run into in the disability world. It's like if you went from playing American football to playing soccer; they both got balls, they're both on green fields, but the rules are very different. So I think just learning the different rules and the language the industry uses was critical. You will be more successful in your application [for funding] and on projects if you know how to speak the right language.

"To give an example, for me personally, I'm a lot more comfortable talking to contractors and housing developers now. I've learned their codewords and how they describe things, and so that's been very helpful – and, we've had great meetings with larger developers who want us to provide social services for their disability housing. I'm not certain I'd be that confident had I not gotten this little diploma back here from the Supportive Housing Institute. It gives you the ability to speak with folks that you don't normally run into in your normal social service day."

The Illinois Supportive Housing Institute is a capacity-building program jointly offered by the Corporation for Supportive Housing and the Illinois Housing Development Authority to equip organizations with the tools, knowledge, and partnerships needed to develop and manage supportive housing.

Ready to make a difference in your community? Learn more at insights.csh.org/il-institute-interest.