



## Collaborative Care and Centralized Services for Individuals with Disabilities and Special Needs Under One Roof in San Antonio, Texas – 'Inclusion City, USA'

### Background:

All too often, individuals with disabilities and special needs get fragmented, uncoordinated health and social services from providers spread out all over the community. They often feel they do not have the support or knowledge needed to identify and navigate through their services options. As a result, they become overwhelmed by the complexities facing them and sometimes fall through the cracks. Many eventually give up. When this happens, instead of improving their health and quality of life, they regress or remain in limbo.



The solution is the Multi-Assistance Center at Morgan's Wonderland, or The MAC. This unique and innovative endeavor is dedicated to becoming a one-stop-shop model that provides medical and non-medical services for individuals with disabilities and special needs of all ages. The MAC Care Model is centered around addressing Social Determinants of Health (SDoH) through team members known as MAC Navigators that serve as single points of contact for the individuals with special needs The MAC serves. Thirty partner organizations share a common goal of delivering and coordinating such services under one roof to provide and coordinate such services through The MAC Navigators. Service delivery to clients, or MAC Members, is focused on being comprehensive, complementary, and synergistic, thus providing a better experience for individuals with disabilities and special needs as well as better outcomes through improved coordination and communication among the different providers. The MAC is person- and family-centered, efficient, holistic, and integrated. It's a bold new approach to solving multi-faceted problems of those dealing daily with disabilities and special needs.



[MorgansWonderlandMAC.com](https://MorgansWonderlandMAC.com)



The MAC is an outgrowth of successful ventures to benefit the disability and special-needs community by Morgan's Inclusion Initiative of San Antonio, Texas. The nonprofit umbrella organization coordinates planning, fundraising and communications among a "family" that includes world-renowned, Ultra-Accessible™, fully-inclusive Morgan's Wonderland theme park, award-winning Morgan's Inspiration Island splash park, new Morgan's Wonderland Camp and new Morgan's Wonderland Sports complex. Because of these and similar inclusive endeavors to help citizens with disabilities and special needs, the City Council in 2015 proclaimed San Antonio as "Inclusion City, USA."



### **The Approach: A Community-Driven, Collective-Impact Model**

No single organization can address the broad range of services required by individuals with disabilities and special needs. Thus, the whole community of service providers has banded together into a collective-impact model where collaboration makes it easier for those with disabilities and special needs to receive services. Bringing together 30 organizations means greater synergy and follow-through for better care. Data-driven and outcomes-based, The MAC believes measuring and reporting progress are key to assessing effectiveness and making future improvements to benefit MAC Members.

Ten committees guiding The MAC reflect a community-driven approach:

1. **The MAC Advisory Committee:** comprised of thought leaders and experts in all the areas of services in order to design, develop, and oversee The MAC.
2. **The MAC Navigation Committee:** comprised of organizations that provide guidance to the Navigator function of guiding MAC Members to service providers (and keeping track of them).
3. **The MAC Client & Caregiver Committee:** comprised of future MAC Members and families of individuals with disabilities and special needs that provide feedback and help guide development of all MAC activities.
4. **The MAC Autism Committee:** comprised of key community stakeholders that play a vital role in the development and delivery of the autism services at The MAC.



5. **The MAC Legal Home Committee:** comprised of key community stakeholders that play a vital role in the development and delivery of the legal services available at The MAC.
6. **The MAC Medical Home Committee:** comprised of key community stakeholders that play a vital role in the development and delivery of the medical home services at The MAC.
7. **The MAC Therapy Home Committee:** comprised of key community stakeholders that play a vital role in the development and delivery of the therapy services at The MAC.
8. **The MAC Employment Center Committee:** comprised of community organizations that assist with job readiness and strive to ensure gainful employment and economic stability for individuals of all ability levels.
9. **The MAC Evaluation and Research Coordinating Center Committee:** comprised of analysts to provide access to evaluation results and quality-improvement data. In addition, the committee serves as a central point for facilitating research of interest to The MAC and its stakeholders.
10. **The MAC Chair Committee:** comprised of chairs from The MAC committees to ensure each group is fulfilling requirements addressed in charters.

### **What Is a 'Special Need?'**

For The MAC, a person with a "special need" is defined as an individual of any age with a long-term impairment of cognitive, sensory, motor and/or communication function(s), either congenital or acquired, that is not readily rehabilitated. Furthermore, a special need substantially limits an individual's ability to perform activities in the range of what is considered typical for a person of the same age and cultural context. A special need may result in associated social, behavioral, or mental health complexities, requiring specialized intervention by a professional.

### **The Growing Need**

The disability and special-needs population in San Antonio and Bexar County that can benefit from The MAC is large and growing. A March 2019 report by the Texas Workforce Investment Council titled "People with Disabilities: A Texas Profile" indicated 297,255 individuals with a special need in Bexar County, or 15 percent of the total population. Adding the special-needs populations of the seven contiguous counties (Atascosa, Wilson, Kendall, Comal, Medina, Banderá, Guadalupe) increased the total to 369,558, also 15 percent of the combined population of the seven counties. Similar significant totals exist in other areas of the state and nation.

### **The MAC's Mission and Vision**

**Mission** – Improve the lives of individuals with disabilities and special needs through comprehensive and coordinated services in a centralized setting. Services are delivered through a family-centered approach with collaboration from the family, MAC Member, and community partners.



**Vision** – Offer a new way to efficiently deliver an array of integrated and coordinated services that provides value to individuals with disabilities special needs and their families, as well as other relevant community stakeholders.

### **Core Values:**

- **Empower:** We provide opportunities that maximize potential, inspire confidence, and build strength.
  - **Motto:** We invest in you.
- **Include:** We provide a safe and nurturing environment with compassion and purpose.
  - **Motto:** We serve all ages and abilities.
- **Educate:** We provide opportunities to gain knowledge and develop problem-solving skills for the future.
  - **Motto:** We believe learning leads to growth.
- **Innovate:** We embrace change as we explore new solutions to create quality and provide innovative care.
  - **Motto:** We transform visions into reality.

### **Guiding Principles of The MAC Include:**

- The MAC is unique in the scope and breadth of services provided. There is no facility in the United States offering the wide array of coordinated and tracked services for individuals with disabilities and special needs.
- The MAC provides comprehensive, integrated medical and non-medical services for individuals with disabilities special needs of all ages.
- Community organizations with a presence at The MAC provide vital services such as social, legal, financial planning, long-term-care planning, housing, job training, education, and peer support.
- Although many partner organizations make up The MAC, it has one centralized Web presence, phone system and Welcome Center.
- All services provided at The MAC are contained in a framework called The MAC at Morgan's Wonderland Care Model™, which provides members with services they require in one facility and/or one network.



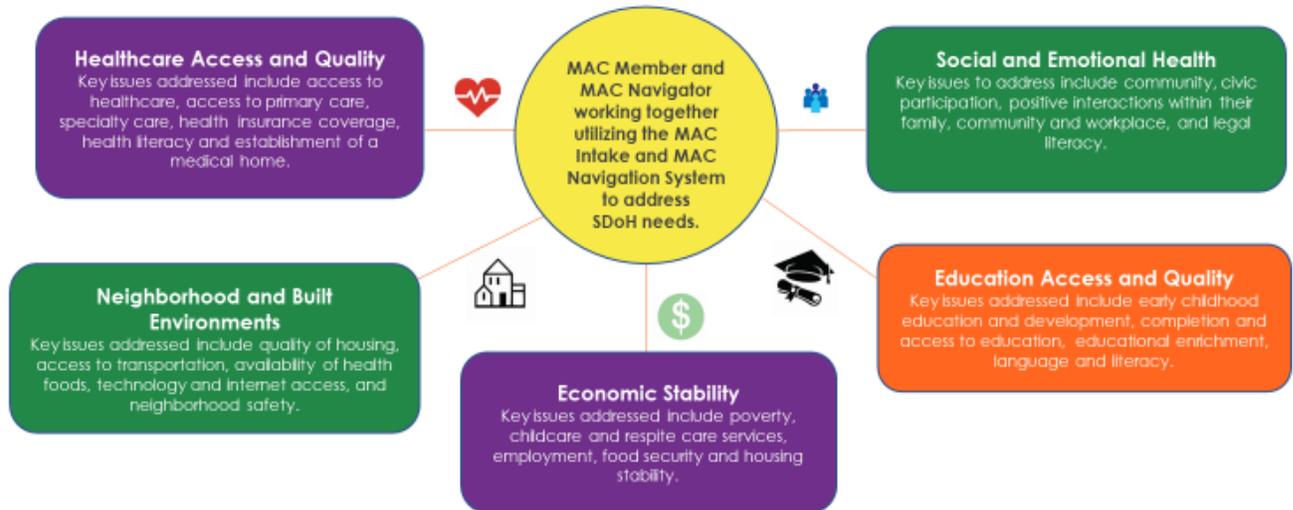
## Social Determinants of Health (SDoH)

The services available at The MAC through its affiliated organizations focus on the Social Determinants of Health, which are conditions in the places where people live, learn, work, and play that affect a wide range of health and quality-of-life risks and outcomes. Such as transportation unavailability and barriers to empowerment that result from income status, education level, food insecurity, etc. Studies have shown that up to 70 percent of an individual's health status depends on SDoH and behavioral factors.

The MAC's approach looks at the individual and family holistically and strives to keep them healthy and equipped with tools for achieving a better quality of life.



## THE MAC'S SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH

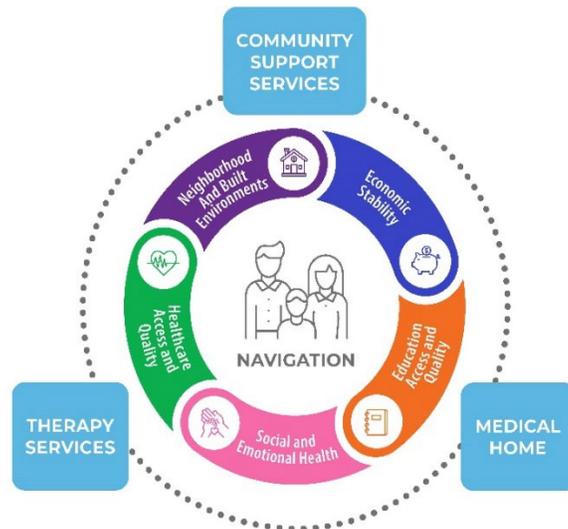


\*Draft and subject to change



## The MAC Care Model™

The MAC Care Model consists of four service categories: Medical Home, Therapy Home, Community Support Services, and Navigation. The Model is summarized in the graphic below: (Note The MAC Care Model™ is subject to change.)



## Medical Home at The MAC

The Medical Home anchors all medical services provided at The MAC, with a primary-care focus. Integrated medical care addresses physical and medical needs, along with emotional and social services support. The experts on-site have specific skillsets focused on individuals with disabilities and special needs, something not seen in most healthcare settings. Feedback from individuals with disabilities and special needs and medical providers suggest that most health centers, hospitals, and physician offices are not welcoming to these patients. Problems currently exist in the physical layout of the facilities; the providers' medical expertise in treating individuals with special needs is often lacking; and physicians are not eager to treat such patients, given the increased amount of appointment time required and the medical complexity of patients. The Institute has dedicated staff members that want to treat the disability and special-needs population and that have the skills to do so. In addition, The MAC is designed with special attention to Ultra-Accessibility™ and sensory sensitivity to eliminate physical barriers in accessing treatment and accommodating all patients' special needs.

**The Ambulatory Surgical Center (ASC) at The MAC**, a component of the Medical Home services, will be an 11,460 square foot center designed to serve the population with disabilities and special needs destined to open in 2023. The ASC will include five operating rooms and ten recovery rooms along with an embedded imaging suite including computerized tomography (CT) scan, X-ray, and ultrasound equipment. Also provided will be sedated dental procedures as well as optometric and ophthalmic exams, audiological testing, blood-drawing, and outpatient surgeries requiring anesthesia. The center will be the only ASC known to focus on assisting the population with disabilities and special needs.



## Therapy Home at The MAC

Individuals with disabilities and special needs require various therapy disciplines and modalities for habilitation, rehabilitation, and education purposes. To produce better outcomes, these therapy disciplines and modalities need to be coordinated, comprehensive, and complementary. The MAC's therapy philosophy employs a holistic and interdisciplinary approach that concentrates on team goal-setting and provider coordination. Plus, it helps members, and their caregivers understand conditions that must be addressed to improve health and quality of life. Therapy at The MAC is in coordination with programs such as assistive technology, seating, and orthotics clinics and tele-rehab. It's in sync with the MAC Medical Home, Community Support Services, and the MAC Navigation System™ ("MAC Nav"). Therapy services are data-driven and outcomes-based. Measuring and reporting progress are key to assessing the effectiveness of these coordinated and comprehensive services as well as contributing to future improvements.

## Community Support Services

While The MAC offers the best medical and therapeutic services tailored to those with disabilities and special needs, it also features a lengthy list of social services provided by community-based organizations. Many of these services address Social Determinants of Health (SDoH), which are the conditions into which people are born, grow, live, work and age that ultimately affect health and well-being. Studies have shown that 70 percent of an individual's health is attributable to these determinants. All support services are offered under The MAC Care Model™ and tracked using an electronic platform that serves as the client's service record of all medical, therapeutic, and social interventions received.

## Legal Services at The MAC

The MAC's legal services will identify and respond to the legal needs of individuals with disabilities and special needs, and their families, who visit The MAC for medical and non-medical services. Through a combination of educational workshops, legal clinics, and pro bono placement for extended representation, the legal home will meet the unmet legal needs of MAC Members and their families, with a particular focus on addressing Social Determinants of Health (SDoH) that pose obstacles.

## Practice Without Pressure™

Practice Without Pressure™ is a philosophy and model of care that brings together the individual with disabilities and special needs, the caregiver, and the clinician/professional. This approach eliminates restraint and greatly reduces sedation in the MAC Member's medical, dental, and personal care, and it helps the MAC Member receive these services with dignity and respect.





## **Employment Center – Coming in 2023**

Economic stability is one of the Social Determinants of Health (SDoH) included on The MAC Care Model™. The key issues addressed by economic stability include poverty, employment, food security and housing stability. The purpose of the Employment Center is to assist individuals with disabilities and special needs of all ability levels to achieve job readiness and pursue gainful employment and economic stability.

## **Comprehensive Navigation/Navigator – Key to The MAC’s Success**

Everyone with a disability or special need that comes to The MAC is assigned a Navigator, who assesses each MAC Member’s situation and patiently guides him or her to workable solutions to meet their needs. The Navigator conducts a comprehensive SDoH assessment with each MAC Member to ascertain all areas of need to include medical, therapeutic, social, financial, educational, or legal. This means The MAC Member relates his or her story and circumstances once, and the information is entered into the electronic platform for referrals and tracking and updated as services are received.

Once a MAC Member completes the intake process, a score is assigned to the individual that indicates the level of navigation resources needed. Follow-up is accomplished through an innovative and integrated electronic platform (The MAC Navigation System™), which connects all appropriate community organizations/providers and enables tracking and coordination of connections, referrals, and follow-ups.

Since multiple organizations offer services at The MAC, solutions to many needs are available on-site. The MAC’s network also extends to services not offered on-site. This pioneering approach represents the future of how health care as well as social and community services can be made available for individuals with disabilities and special needs.

The Navigator’s ultimate key to success is getting individuals with disabilities and special needs and their families to commit to The MAC Care Plan™ created just for them. Just as importantly, the Navigator serves as a trusted partner for MAC Members and their families.

The experience of COVID-19 has taught that the framework of The MAC is needed now more than ever in serving the disability and special-needs community. The MAC brings together 30 organizations under a single framework that allows them to focus on their core missions, achieve greater efficiency, and save resources by sharing costs such as overhead. Furthermore, by pooling their talents, these providers can achieve better outcomes, not just for individuals with disabilities and special needs but for all community stakeholders. Moreover, The MAC provides many services in one place, potentially limiting infection risks to medically-sensitive individuals with disabilities and special needs as opposed to risking exposure in multiple service-provider locations.

## **Sustainability at The MAC**

The MAC’s collaboration model has been designed so each MACer can focus on their services and be responsible for their own operations including their expenses and billing (if applicable). The MAC Care Model brings services that are already being provided in the community into one



facility. However, The MAC Care Model™ also focuses on MACers not having to worry about overhead not directly related to their core mission of providing services to individuals with special needs. The MAC covers some overhead in order to make the MACers more efficient; these expenses are passed through to MACer partners at a relatively low cost. This encourages MACers to join the Care Model and be present on-site.

In terms of programming, The MAC has ensured sustainability thanks to obtaining funding from various sources. For example, in terms of The MAC Navigation System™, The MAC has partnered with the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC), which is funding a model that provides single point of contact for coordination of medical, therapy, and non-medical services for individuals of all ages with disabilities and special needs. This funding is supporting the Navigation Department at The MAC to ensure that the Navigators are the single point of contact for MAC Members. Other MAC-operated programs such as the Practice Without Pressure (PWP) program has secured funding for a minimum of five years.

Navigation services are provided at no charge to MAC members and are available for all individuals with disabilities and special needs who receive MAC assistance. The MAC is working with the Managed Care Organizations (MCO), which are Medicaid providers, to determine how to best assist MAC members in paying for services rendered.

### **In Summary**

The MAC's innovative, one-stop-shop approach strives to provide all medical and non-medical services under one roof and helps individuals with disabilities and special needs of all ages find the assistance they need to improve their health and well-being. Medical and social services experts believe The MAC is a destination for those with cognitive and physical special needs from across the region, state, and nation. Furthermore, creators of The MAC hope that successful implementation of The MAC Care Model™ is going to encourage other communities to adopt a collaborative, coordinated healthcare effort to uplift the disability and special-needs community.

### **MACers (MAC Partners):**

#### **Medical Home**



**CareLink** – A financial assistance program available to San Antonio or Bexar County residents who do not have private or public health insurance. CareLink is not an insurance plan. Based on several factors, such as the number of people in the family and total income, an individual may qualify to be a member of CareLink. Individual will be assigned to a primary care physician and have access to quality healthcare at University Health.



**Center for Health Care Services (CHCS)** – Improves the lives of individuals with mental health disorders, substance abuse challenges, and developmental disabilities. CHCS operates a wide range of psychosocial and medical programs in Bexar County whose target populations include individuals with behavioral health disorders and intellectual disabilities. CHCS provides a Dual Diagnosis Clinic at The MAC, to assist with psychiatric medication management for individuals with a diagnosis of intellectual and/or developmental disability along with a co-occurring mental/behavioral health diagnosis.



**Children's Hospital of San Antonio (CHOSA)** – The Children's Hospital of San Antonio's Comprehensive Autism Program offers a multidisciplinary autism evaluation for children who need a diagnosis of autism or need a diagnosis verified. CHOSA has partnered with the Autism Treatment Center and UTSA's Department of Educational Psychology to bring the gold standard treatment for autism, Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) therapy, to children with autism.



**CommuniCare Health Centers** – A full-service primary healthcare system with multiple locations serving Bexar, Kendall, and Hays counties. Providing integrated primary care (Pediatrics, Family Medicine, Women's Health, Dental, Behavioral Health plus specialty services) delivered by highly trained healthcare providers, utilizing state-of-the-art diagnostic equipment and electronic health records. CommuniCare's focus is to always provide exceptional care and treat patients like family. Their promise to you is to always make you Get Well, Stay Well.



**Community First Health Plans** – Provides health care coverage to the citizens of Bexar and the surrounding seven counties. As the only locally-owned and managed, nonprofit health plan in the area, their commitment to their members is to provide great health care benefits backed by outstanding service, delivered by people who live in South Texas. The goal is to make San Antonio have more successful health outcomes by putting the community first.



**Our Lady of the Lake University: Speech–Language–Hearing Center** – Provides audiology services across the lifespan and provides speech-language-swallowing services for individuals ages 18 and above. Services are provided by experienced state licensed and nationally certified audiologists and speech-language pathologists.



**Sponsel Eye Experts** – Provides comprehensive clinical and surgical eye care to all patients, from birth through adulthood. Through knowledge, science, and a nurturing environment, they strive to offer each patient and family exemplary service and the positive experience they deserve. Although Dr. Sponsel and Dr. Mancha specialize in eye care, they also focus on the total health and well-being of their patients through communication with physicians of all specialties to promote excellent care for all.



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**Happy Ohana Smiles Dental Clinic** – A state-of-the-art, Ultra-Accessible™ facility that focuses on providing dental services for individuals with special needs. Operated by Dr. Melody Zamora and David Zamora. The architectural layout was designed for wheelchair access and a focus on an approach designed to ease anxiety and provide comforting sights, sounds and smells. The specialized equipment in the five treatment rooms in the clinic accommodate both fully self-ambulatory and wheelchair patients.



**Superior HealthPlan** – Superior HealthPlan is a managed healthcare company that provides healthcare to 1.7 million Texas residents. Superior has eight office locations and serves members in all 254 counties across the state. They are committed to improving the health of the community one individual at a time through affordable and reliable healthcare plans. Their approach to healthcare in Texas can meet the needs of each person served.

**Therapy Home**



**Guide Dogs of Texas** – Helping increase days of freedom, mobility, and independence for Texans age 17 and up impacted by blindness through days of guided sight provided by a professionally-bred, raised, and trained and personally matched certified guide dog



**Blue Sprig Pediatrics** – Provides compassionate Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) therapy services to those impacted with autism. From the outset, the focus is on maintaining the highest ethics and quality, while also investing in critical research to advance the field of ABA and advocating passionately for the rights of all children with autism. At The MAC, Blue Sprig provides coordinated care for individuals and their families impacted by autism to ensure they receive the highest quality of care.



**San Antonio Lighthouse for the Blind** – Serves individuals who are legally blind as well as those who are experiencing onset or progressive vision loss by providing Children & Youth Programs, Family, Parent, and child/youth events and activities as well as Orientation & Mobility Programs.



**TeamAbility** – Provides physical therapy, speech therapy and occupational therapy, Cortical Visual Impairment Program (range assessment, comprehensive program, family education), parent support and education, assistive technology assessments, independent student assessments for school districts and parents.

**Community Support Services**



**Alamo Area Council of Governments (AACOG)** – Seeks to enhance the quality of life of all residents of the Alamo Region in partnership with elected and appointed officials, funders, community partners and beneficiaries. Programs offered are Aging Services, IDD Services, Veteran Services, Weatherization Services, Regional Transit, and a resource center.



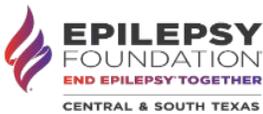
**Any Baby Can (ABC)** – Provides Case Management, Autism Services, Sibling Support and a Center for Infant and Child Loss, which serves children from birth to 17 years old. ABC serves all medical conditions, developmental disabilities both diagnosed and undiagnosed, and the Prescription Assistance Program serves individuals of all ages.



**Brighton Center** – Provides intervention services for children with disabilities in San Antonio through therapy, specialized skills training, early childhood education, parent workshops, and education advocacy. Programs offered are Early Childhood Education, Pediatric Therapy, Parent Workshops, and Education Advocacy.



**ConnectAbility** – Supports individuals with life-altering injuries and their families and caregivers. Providing care coordination and support groups for individuals with a primary diagnosis of traumatic or acquired brain injury, spinal cord injury, stroke or amputation, or other condition or disability with similar functional limitation, no age limit.



**Epilepsy Foundation Central & South Texas** – Works to assist individuals overcome the challenges of living with epilepsy and to accelerate therapies to stop seizures, find cures, and save lives. Services include Information and Referral, Support Groups, Case Management, Workshops, and Epilepsy Education for individuals with epilepsy and their caregivers.



**Project Angel Fares** – Providing trips of a lifetime for children with special needs or disability diagnosis since 2012. Their mission is to make it possible for the children and their families to experience all-inclusive Morgan’s Wonderland and Morgan’s Inspiration Island, all expenses paid. PAF now expands to include the needed services that The MAC provides.



**Our Lady of the Lake University – Worden School of Social Services** – The home to OLLU social work programs has set the standard for social work education and is accredited by the Council on Social Work Education. At The MAC, social work interns provide support to the Navigation Department to acquire skills and knowledge for specialized intervention in direct practice.



**Reaching Maximum Independence** – Assists individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities reach their maximum level of independence. This is accomplished on both the program and individual level through a spectrum of services to include: 10 group homes, three apartment living sites, host home companion support, a dynamic day program called Life Enrichment Program. The services networked through The MAC are the Supported Employment Program.



**San Antonio Food Bank** – Fighting hunger is the number one priority of the Food Bank, but it also seeks to educate and aid in many other ways. A variety of programs and resources is available to families, individuals, seniors, children, and military members in need.



**The Arc of San Antonio** – Provides Family Support Services, Community Services Case Management, Community Living Assistance and Support Services case management, and has an Adult Life Enrichment program serving members with IDD.



**St. Mary's University Law School: Center for Legal and Social Justice** – Clinical and pro bono programs; assisting disadvantaged individuals with legal issues. Students may perform important legal work and gain a better understanding of the legal processes while helping those in need through opportunities.



**Mass Mutual** – Provides qualified financial recommendations and next steps that are uniquely designed to address the current and especially long-term planning needs for families with special needs.

**Project Access** – A unique program offered to individuals with documented intellectual disabilities. It is designed to support the student to access postsecondary education developing skills for gainful employment. Curriculum completion is dependent on the student's ability to complete the courses in a semester.



**VIA Metropolitan Transit** – Keeps San Antonio and Bexar County moving with bus, van, and on-demand transit options. VIA Trans is a shared-ride, curb-to-curb service option that offers independence through mobility and expands access to opportunity for customers who cannot utilize regular bus service because of a disability. VIA also offers VIA Link, an app-based, on-demand transit option available in designated service zones.



**University of Texas at San Antonio** – UTSA at The MAC is The Evaluation and Research Coordinating Center that monitors and evaluates the efficacy of MAC programs, services, and research and an active partner in providing information and guidance to The MAC to inform growth.



**San Antonio Housing Authority** – Committed more than 80 years to building and maintaining affordable housing for residents of San Antonio. SAHA provides housing assistance to more than 57,000 children, adults and seniors through its Public Housing, Housing Choice Voucher and Mixed-Income housing programs.



**Life Skills for Living** – Faith-based ministry that provides significant areas to include, Stress Reduction, Conflict Resolution, Relationship Enhancement, Basic Financial Life Skills, and Anger Solutions. Hands-on, low-cost/no-cost, life skills programs are taught by certified facilitators at The MAC in small group classes or in confidential one-on-one sessions.

**For More Information:** [www.MorgansWonderlandMAC.com](http://www.MorgansWonderlandMAC.com)