Words From Our Executive Director

It was the year of resilience at RIPIN.

I’ll be more honest here than an ED probably should be in an annual report: if we had merely treaded water this year, I would have called it a victory.

But we did so much more than that. We pivoted to all-remote work with zero downtime. We identified systemic trends in unlawful billing for COVID tests, and worked with State agency partners to fix them. We attended almost 500 virtual IEP meetings, and helped more than 1,000 families partner with their schools to develop individualized plans to further their children’s special education safely. We implemented the first ever all-online family outcomes survey for Early Intervention, achieving record high response rates. We convened an internal racial justice steering team that launched several important initiatives that will guide us as an agency for years.

We helped more Rhode Islanders than ever before.

And we did all this while our own Peer Professional staff—75% of whom are themselves parents or caregivers of a loved one with a special need—faced their own challenges at home.

Thank you to everyone who helped make this possible: our board, our partners, our funders, and, most importantly, our amazing team.
Thanks to Our Supporters!

A special thank you to the funders and community partners who make everything we do possible. Here's to another great year!

Our Funders and Partners

Amazon Smile
American Association of Health and Disability
American Institutes for Research
Amica (employee donations)
Apprenticeship Rhode Island/Building Futures
Care Transformation Collaborative
Coastal Medical
Community Foundation of Howard County
Cranston Rotary
CVS Health Charity Classic
Elder Services of Merrimack Valley
Family Voices
Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation
Jerome Schaffran & Jeanne Carr
(in Memory of Lisa Schaffran)
John E. Fogarty Foundation
Lifespan
National Multiple Sclerosis Society
Neighborhood Health Plan of Rhode Island
New England Regional Genetics Network
Northern RI Collaborative
Paul V. Sherlock Center on Disabilities

Project Undercover
Rhode Island College
Rhode Island Foundation
Rhode Island Health Center Association
Rhode Island Hospital
Samuels Sinclair Dental
Tufts Health Plan
Tufts Health Plan Foundation
UnitedHealthcare
US Department of Education
US Department of Health & Human Services
US Health Resources and Services Administration
Rhode Island Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities and Hospitals
Rhode Island Department of Education
Rhode Island Department of Health
Rhode Island Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Rhode Island Office of Rehabilitation Services
Rhode Island Office of the Health Insurance Commissioner

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2020 by the Numbers
The way we work may have changed, but RIPIN isn’t slowing down! We added new programs, expanded our staff, and served more people than ever in 2020.

RIPIN continues to grow to meet the diverse needs of Rhode Islanders of all ages.

Client Encounters by Program Area

- **30,315** Health Insurance/Health Care Access
- **23,728** Care Coordination for Older Adults
- **14,751** Education and Special Education
- **13,432** Care Coordination for Children/Families
- **4,567** Early Childhood
- **2,053** Wellness Programs

Client Interactions By Year

- 2017: 48,210
- 2018: 58,925
- 2019: 79,575
- 2020: 91,673

COVID-19 Response

- **27%** All Cases
- **41%** Education and Special Education
- **40%** Health Insurance/Health Care Access
- **8%** Other
- **11%** Care Coordination for Children/Families
By The Numbers

$3.9M in Health Care Costs Saved Since 2018

94% Customer Satisfaction

475 IEP/Education Meetings Attended

369 Policy & Advocacy Meetings

90% of Staff Certified Community Health Workers (or on path)

12,036 People Reached by RIPIN Workshops
The pandemic created significant additional challenges for those already caring for a loved one at home.

RIPIN partnered with the Rhode Island Department of Health to offer free, evidence-based virtual classes to more than 120 caregivers, building self-care skills and resources to help ease the burden of stress family caregivers face.

Lisa Ottone Silva, Peer Support Coordinator at RIPIN and mom of Zach, was honored with a Caregiver of the Year Award from the Family Caregiver Alliance of Rhode Island.

This was the third year in a row a RIPIN Peer Professional received the award. Congratulations, Lisa!

RIPIN was thrilled to be recognized as one of the Best Places to Work in Rhode Island by Providence Business News!

Our staff of Peer Professionals enjoy working in a family-centered environment that supports their professional development and offers them the flexibility they need to maintain a healthy work-life balance. We're all proud to be part of the team at RIPIN!

RIPIN surveyed more than 400 families of students with disabilities, asking about their experiences with distance learning. The responses showed that children required a tremendous amount of adult support while learning at home.

Widely reported in the media, RIPIN's survey and recommendations for schools brought much-needed attention to the impact distance learning had on our community.
With distance learning, changes to health insurance rules, limitations on care delivery and countless other impacts, Rhode Islanders needed support more than ever.

RIPIN saw zero downtime as we switched to a remote workplace, and we helped thousands of families with issues relating to COVID-19, from accessing testing and health care to advocating for special education services during virtual learning.

When pandemic safety measures meant we couldn’t offer our high-quality workshops and peer-led support groups in person, we quickly switched to bringing these important programs to our community at home.

Amazingly, our reach grew by more than 600%. This has shown us the importance of continuing to offer online workshops even when it is safe to gather in person again.

RIPIN has re-committed to the cause of promoting racial justice, both in our workplace and in our community.

We’ve enhanced our professional development, created safe spaces for staff to talk about race, and improved data collection about the race, ethnicity, and language of those we serve.

RIPIN is dedicated to addressing inequities in health care and education.

Founded in 1991 by a small group of parents of children with special needs, RIPIN has grown to a staff of over 100 Peer Professionals who help Rhode Islanders of all ages and abilities access and navigate health care, education and more—and we’re still growing!

We’re also still led by peers—a majority of our board and more than three-fourths of our staff care for a child or family member with special needs.
“Literally a life saver.”
“Very helpful and knowledgeable.”
“Son muy amables y responsables.”
“A truly wonderful organization in my experience”
“I always recommend you guys! You guys are great!!!!”
“Thank you for everything you guys do for our kids”
“RIPIN was absolutely fantastic.”
“Gracias a programas como RIPIN, los habitantes de Rhode Island podemos estar mejor orientados e informados.”
“All the staff is knowledgeable, kind, and compassionate.”
“Se preocupan por ayudar a los padres.”
“Great resources for navigating my son’s special needs.”
“I am very happy RIPIN came into our lives.”
“Every staff member at RIPIN has been amazing.”
“RIPIN has been an invaluable resource to me for the past 8 years or so.”

#WeAreRIPIN

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