

# KANDU Connection



March 1, 2021



*A Message from  
Joel Chappelle,  
Board of Directors President*

Dear KANDU Clients, Staff, Families, Friends, and Community Partners:

I write to share my thoughts on some of the extraordinary (and in my opinion, very exciting) changes coming to KANDU. As I have previously stated, I believe you have a right to know and share in changes that may affect the organization, and, by extension, you.

In recent months, the Board, in close collaboration with the Executive Director and leadership team, have undertaken a comprehensive review of KANDU's expenditures, holdings, capabilities, technology, strengths, and weaknesses. Simultaneously, the ED and Directors have been working tirelessly to overhaul policies and procedures across all departments with an eye toward increasing efficiency, reducing costs, and ensuring regulatory compliance. Collectively, these endeavors are part of a bold plan to modernize KANDU, significantly increase its capacity, and otherwise position the organization to enjoy long-term growth. Today, even as we continue to develop some parts of the plan, we are in the early stages of implementing other parts.

To that end, we recently purchased new computer servers and are in the process of completely overhauling the software system, which will significantly increase productivity by reducing the amount of labor dedicated to mundane, time-consuming tasks. Perhaps the most transformative aspect of the plan, however, is to consolidate most (if not all) of KANDU's operations into a single, state of the art facility that, down to the smallest details, will exemplify KANDU's mission. Such a consolidation will of course require a much larger facility than any that we currently have. We hope and expect to deliver more news on that front soon.

In the meantime, you may also see certain KANDU properties placed on the market. Please do not draw any negative inferences from this, as it is an integral part of our plan and not an indication of any financial distress. Remarkably, despite COVID-19, KANDU is in excellent financial health. Indeed, we would not be entertaining such bold and transformative plans if it were otherwise.

Spring is just around the corner. And, just as Spring is a season of growth and resurgence for nature, so too I believe it will be for KANDU. Until next time, I wish you and your families all the best and look forward to sharing exciting updates in the future.



*A Message from  
Kathy Hansen,  
Executive Director*

## **Honored to Serve the KANDU Community**

I am honored that the board of directors has entrusted me to carry on the important mission and vision of KANDU Industries. The passion I have for helping those in need has been ingrained from childhood. I was fortunate enough to have parents that instilled those values, so jumping in and rolling up my sleeves has always been a way of life. It is obvious to me, in the short time I have been here, that KANDU's clients also benefit from people with those same values. People like you.

The clients have been so warm and welcoming, the staff is top notch, and the board is a very skilled and talented team of individuals. What a dynamic environment to get to work in!

Being new to the area, I welcome a chance to get to know you, hear your thoughts and observations, and would be grateful for any ideas you may have. Please feel free to call me any time at (262) 880-3977. Thank you all for your contributions! I look forward to being part of a team that makes wonderful things happen for KANDU and for the communities we serve.

*Kathy brings many leadership and non-profit organization talents from past experiences. As part of her non-profit work, she is the founder and president of the Friends of Rockford Police K9 Unit. Kathy has served as Executive Director of Downtown Racine Corporation, Executive Director of Middleton Outreach Ministry, Exec. V. P. of Johnson Financial Group and has a strong background in development and marketing. She has served on many community boards and was awarded "Woman of Distinction" for Racine County along with many other community accolades. Aside from enjoying non-profit work, she favors getting to know and working with others from a team advantage.*



## **Congressman Bryan Steil visits KANDU! Special Minimum Wage Removed from Stimulus Proposal**

On Thursday, the Senate parliamentarian ruled that wage provisions will not be included in this proposal and the possibility of eliminating 14(c) was removed from the stimulus plan.

The current \$1.9T stimulus proposal included a provision to eliminate of Special Minimum Wage (also known as 14(c)) of the Fair Labor Standards Act, which would limit options for individuals who require more support in order to work.

Leading up to this decision, advocacy efforts were ignited across the country in support of 14(c) and the choice it provides workers with disabilities.

On Monday, February 8th, KANDU welcomed Congressman Bryan Steil as he toured our Barberry Drive location. Staff and clients, as well as parent advocates from A-Team Wisconsin were excited to demonstrate all of the great work we do and discuss the importance of the Special Minimum Wage, which allows organizations like KANDU to offer a wider range of work opportunities to fit the needs of individuals with varying abilities.

“The individual sitting here [at KANDU] doesn’t want daycare. They want to work.” explained Rick Wilson, parent of Christopher (pictured below), a client worker at KANDU.



Christopher Wilson, right, explains his assembly job at KANDU Industries to Rep. Bryan Steil, R-Wis., on Monday during Steil's visit to Janesville.

Frank Schultz

[Click here for the full Gazette article.](#)

Rick also serves on KANDU's Board of Directors and A-Team Wisconsin, an advocacy group fighting to keep 14(c) in place.

“The parents and the families overwhelmingly support these programs, even though some advocacy groups in Washington don’t,” Rick said.

“We need more programs for people to be successful, not reducing choices,” said Julie Smith, KANDU's Client Services Director. “We’re proud of the work we do, and we’d welcome anyone to visit.”

A huge thank you to everyone who advocated for continued work choice, including A-Team Wisconsin, Representative Steil, and everyone who contacted their senators!

# DRAGONS ON THE ROCK

SATURDAY  
**SEPT. 18**  
TRAXLER PARK

PROCEEDS BENEFIT



**DRAGON BOAT RACING**  
**STREET CHEF COMPETITION**

SPONSORED BY

**KERRY**

**LIVE MUSIC**  
**BEER TENT**  
**FAMILY FUN**

Photo courtesy of Anna Coleman and Lindsay Gilge, Contest of Creativity design competition winners

## Exciting Addition to Dragons on the Rock!

KANDU's annual dragon boat race and community festival, Dragons on the Rock, will be held Saturday, September 18th and we are excited to announce a new, mouthwatering addition! This year, the festival will include a street chef competition, sponsored by Kerry. Local street chefs will each prepare a signature dish that includes a different ingredient provided by Kerry. Expert Kerry judges will determine the top three winners. Participating guests will have the opportunity to sample each of the chef's creations and choose their favorite to be awarded People's Choice.

In addition to the street chef competition, food will also be available for purchase from various local food trucks and vendors. For more festival fun, there will be a beer tent featuring specialty drinks by Kerry, live music throughout the day and various family activities, all while cheering on your favorite dragon boat team!

Stay tuned as we continue to unveil more information about Dragons on the Rock, including how you can participate in the dragon boat race!



**Follow Us on Instagram!**

There's always something exciting going on at KANDU and we want to share those stories with you! Keep up with fun client activities, advocacy opportunities, fundraising events, and our weekly series featuring a talented pianist and client, Tunes with Tim. Click below to check out our Instagram and be sure to follow us for more!

KANDU on  
Instagram

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