



# Guardianship

## Meet the People We Help...

### **Problem**

After her parents died, Dana was the sole heir to their sizeable estate, which included a beautiful home. Because she was mentally retarded, Dana had legal guardians who were supposed to look out for her interests but instead took advantage of her situation and were negligent in their duties. In at least one instance, the guardian—a family member—helped herself to money that was Dana's. Dana was left penniless, and because no one was adequately monitoring her finances, she constantly overdrew her accounts and was able to open up several credit cards, ending up deep in debt.

### **Solution**

The courts stepped in and appointed JF&CS Guardian for Dana. JF&CS cut off Dana's access to her accounts and established a plan for her to pay down her debt, which had mushroomed to \$75,000. The case workers also needed to plan for Dana's future. Although she was medically stable and high functioning, she was still getting older and facing all of the problems associated with aging. Dana had lived with the same caregiver for 15 years, but that woman developed her own medical issues that compromised her ability to care for Dana.

### **Outcome**

"We decided to move Dana out of her home for health and safety reasons," Dana's caseworkers said. Dana is transitioning to a group home and is paying off her debts with income from her part-time job.