



A SPECTRUM OF OPPORTUNITY

2019 ANNUAL REPORT

“

Advocating alongside the Autism Society has allowed me to grow, thrive and bring the voices of adults with autism and other disabilities to the table as we fight to preserve, protect and expand our civil rights in this era of uncertainty. The Autism Society makes people with autism spectrum disorder belong and feel truly included.

”

—Nicole LeBlanc, Self-Advocate and David Joyce Advocate of the Year 2019 Awardee

LETTER FROM OUR LEADERS

Since 1965, the Autism Society of America has been our nation's leading grassroots autism organization. Every day, our national affiliate network exemplifies passion and dedication to our mission as we improve the quality of life for all affected by autism.

The Autism Society and our 78 affiliates work hard to provide advocacy, education, information and referral, support, and community at national, state and local levels. **Together, we have proven that a united voice can amplify our cause, expand our reach, and foster collaborative innovation as we work towards a better tomorrow.** This sentiment holds true as we write this letter in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, when the need for compassion, unity, and leadership is more apparent than ever before; with this in mind, we are proud to reflect on our collective efforts and the massive impact the Autism Society had in 2019.

Collectively, the Autism Society was honored to serve and support over 522,000 people nationwide in 2019. More specifically, we fostered community as 38,000 people attended support groups for self-advocates, parents, teens, and others. 12,000 people attended conferences hosted by the Autism Society network, expanding their knowledge and skillsets; in total, our network hosted more than 6,200 events for the autism

community across the country providing education, resources, support and community. Together, we can create more opportunities for a quality life across the spectrum, and throughout the lifespan.

The Autism Society is incredibly grateful for our generous donors and to the community we serve; we are committed to demonstrating our transparency, responsiveness and measurable outcomes.

It is our fiduciary responsibility to provide financial information that demonstrates transparency, and a high standard of ethics. The Autism Society works to use funds in the most effective way possible, while effectively communicating how those dollars are spent. We strive to produce the highest positive outcome by serving as many people as possible, while maintaining an unparalleled quality of support.

We aim to be responsive and accessible, to ensure that our efforts are timely and relevant to our community's greatest needs. Our mission drives us to support all affected by autism—regardless of neuro-divergence, ethnicity, nationality, race, religion, or sexual orientation— throughout the lifespan and across the spectrum. This means our support spans everyday life, while navigating the curve balls life throws our way. With this, the Autism Society remains a thought leader as we can quickly respond with systemic call to actions related to first responder training, policy interventions

1 IN 54 CHILDREN

are diagnosed with autism, the fastest growing developmental disorder in the United States.

17% OF AUTISTIC YOUNG ADULTS

have attempted to live independently.

5.4 MILLION ADULTS

in the United States are estimated to have ASD.

UP TO 85% OF AUTISTIC ADULTS

with a college education are unemployed.

to ensure our community is accounted for, and immediate support needs for individuals with no one else to turn to.

Every day, we are empowered to do this work because we know that our network is needed, valued, and making a tremendous impact for the autism community. We are immensely proud and appreciative for the thousands of volunteers, affiliate leaders and their team members, staff,

and board members that work tirelessly and passionately to fulfill our mission each and every day. Our impact is far-reaching and filled with depth, yet we know there is still much work to be done. **We thank all of the individuals, families, corporations, foundations and so many more that have helped us fulfill our mission to achieve a higher quality of life for all affected by autism.**



Christopher S. Banks
Christopher Banks
President/CEO



Joseph P. Joyce
Joseph P. Joyce
Chairman of
the Board

A SINCERE THANK YOU & FAREWELL

At the close of 2019, the Autism Society of America bid farewell to President & CEO, Scott Badesch, as he ventured into a well-deserved retirement. Throughout his ten-year tenure with the Autism Society of America, Scott was dedicated to improving the health of this organization, he worked to rebuild a trusting relationship between national and our affiliate network, and he furthered the organization's reach.

Scott was committed to the Autism Society's passionate team, and was always accessible to

affiliates and our constituents. Above all, he led the organization with an unwavering belief that we can build an inclusive society that offers opportunities for everyone to live a quality, meaningful life. It was evident that he loved his job because he loves helping people, and that's what makes him happy.

Scott, we thank you for your work ethic, commitment and your passion throughout your ten-year tenure, and wish you nothing but success and great happiness in retirement.



Autism Society of America's Former President & CEO, Scott Badesch, at his retirement party.

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AUTISM SOCIETY IMPACT REPORT 2019

The Autism Society, and our network of 79 affiliates, is proud to have served over 522,000 individuals and families affected by autism in 2019. Our mission is to measurably improve the quality of life for all affected by autism through five core pillars: education, advocacy, information & referral services, support, and community building at the local, state and national levels.

161,791 Helpline emails supported network-wide



1.3 million people visited the Autism Society of America website for information, resources, and community

OVER 12K ADULTS

on the autism spectrum attended 766 support groups nationwide

38,162 individuals attended support groups in 2019

8/10 individuals who contact our National Helpline expect to improve their quality of life.

8/10 individuals who reached out to the National Helpline would contact again, and recommend the Autism Society to others.



81,723 Helpline phone calls supported network-wide

300+ MEETINGS were held with state legislators, and 100+ meetings were held with federal legislators



19,351 parents attended 1,188 support groups across the country



6,742 first responders received training on safely and effectively interacting with the autism community

1,269 individuals attended IEP workshops across the country



7,965 letters were sent to members of Congress from advocates through the Autism Society Action Center

35+ Legislative bills were advocated at the federal level to better support the autism community

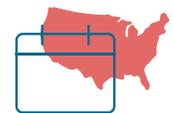
Over 6k events were hosted throughout the Autism Society network

91% OF INDIVIDUALS

who contact the National Helpline found the resources to be helpful.

OVER 12K PEOPLE

attended Autism Society conferences



15,979 people participated in 402 Autism 101 education events nationwide

OVER 181K INDIVIDUALS

attended Autism Society events nationwide



5,681 people attended summer camps or activities hosted by affiliates

MEASURABLE OUTCOMES

Success is measured against our 15 Quality of Life Outcomes that impact the autism community throughout the lifespan.

- *Respect and Dignity*
- *Inclusion*
- *Communication*
- *Health and Well-being*
- *Safety*
- *Academic Success*
- *Social Connections*
- *Independent Living*
- *Meaningful Employment with Fair Wages*
- *Financial Stability*
- *Recreation and Leisure*
- *Subjective Well-being*
- *Self-Identity and Acceptance*
- *Autonomy and Self-Sufficiency*
- *Pursuit of Dreams*

These Quality of Life Indicators are used to measure the efficacy of the Autism Society's advocacy efforts, education, information & referral services, support, and community building.

The Autism Society affiliate network provides unparalleled dedication, support and grassroots advocacy within their local communities.

“ As a member of the Autism Society's Panel of Professional Advisors, I'm able to help support individuals diagnosed with ASD nationwide, along with those who care for and about them. I'm able to do so alongside colleagues who share my passion to help others in their pursuit of a quality life. —Marc Ellison, Ed.D., Executive Director of the West Virginia Autism Training Center, Member of the Autism Society's Panel of Professional Advisors ”

Photo Credit: CelebrateEDU Employment workshop with Autism Society of Colorado



AFFILIATE HIGHLIGHTS

**3,000
PEOPLE**

worked out at Autism Society San Diego's 30 sensory-friendly exercise events.



Autism Society Tidewater hosted 553 teens at social events throughout the year.



Autism Society of Florida educated 3,150 individuals at 10 Autism 101 events.

**784
PEOPLE**

participated in the Autism Society of Oregon's Bike & Swim events.

**5,000
PEOPLE**

participated in 25 advocacy events hosted by the Autism Society of Northern Virginia.



3,600 people attended sensory-friendly movies with Autism Society Nassau/Suffolk.



The Autism Society of North Carolina served 66,388 individuals through programs, events, services, and direct support.



Photo Credit: Autism Society of Southern Arizona's Annual Walk Event

AFFILIATE EMPLOYMENT REPORT

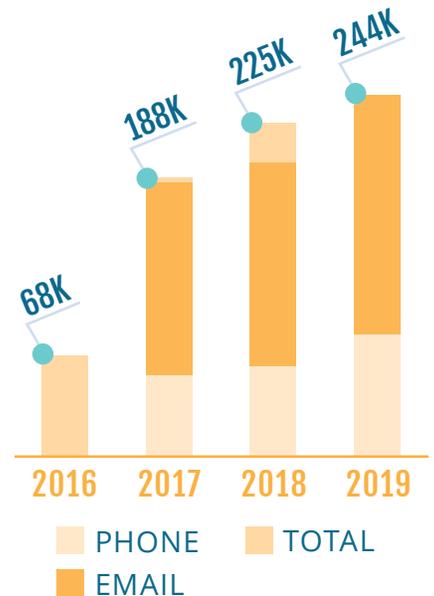
FULL TIME	264
PART TIME	1,042
VOLUNTEER	1,791

TOTAL INDIVIDUALS SERVED YEAR OVER YEAR



*The decline in the number of affiliates affects the total number of individuals served. The Autism Society plans to address the declining numbers in the upcoming strategic plan.

TOTAL INFORMATION AND REFERRAL SERVICES PROVIDED YEAR OVER YEAR





STRONGER TOGETHER

It is our great privilege to represent a strong affiliate network that executes the Autism Society's mission at the local and state level. Grassroots advocacy works best through a trusting, collaborative, and forward-thinking approach; the Autism Society network continues to strengthen this symbiotic relationship each year, as we make a meaningful impact within the autism community, together.



National staff and board members completed 50+ affiliate visits throughout the year; this reflects trainings, events, and crisis management.

National hosted 25 webinars and in-person trainings to disseminate information & best practices.

The Board Chair, Vice Chair & CEO **attended 17 affiliate events during National Autism Awareness Month.**

\$100,000 of grants were distributed to affiliates to assist in program development.

The Affiliate Management Team and Senior staff at National provided **4,500 hours of direct support to affiliates.**

“ The Autism Society of America has provided exemplary, transformational leadership and resiliency for its affiliates nationwide. It has been at the forefront of autism spectrum disorder issues and a voice for its affiliates at the state and national levels. The Autism Society has offered support for team and capacity building, professional marketing collateral, and sustainability. As the primary vehicle of connecting affiliates with each other, we have benefited through engagement, camaraderie, and collaboration. I am so proud to be part of this organization that is rooted in serving the autism community as an advocate, and with compassion, knowledge, and expertise. —Brie Seward, Executive Director of the Autism Society of Southern Arizona ”

ADVOCATING FOR CHANGE

Every day the Autism Society of America exemplifies the power of grassroots advocacy through our strong public policy initiatives that are prioritized at the federal, state and local levels. Our Public Policy team works with policymakers to develop effective laws and protective programs that span healthcare reform, education, safety, and long term services and supports. Our mission is to ensure that the autism community has dedicated supports in place so that autistic individuals can achieve the highest quality of life across the spectrum, and throughout the lifespan.

DISABILITY RIGHTS ARE HUMAN RIGHTS.

In 2019, the Autism Society of America was a major player in helping to pass legislation to reauthorize two important laws: the Autism CARES Act and the Lifespan Respite Care Act.

The Autism CARES Act (PL 116-60) was signed into law on September 30, 2019. Autism Society affiliates and other grassroots supporters were instrumental in helping to move this bill to the finish line. During our Day on the Hill event, approximately 200 people visited their Members of Congress to discuss Autism CARES and other issues; in addition, over 3,000 people sent letters to their Members through our online Action Center.

The Lifespan Respite Care Reauthorization Act of 2019 (S.995/HR 2035) was passed unanimously by voice vote in both the Senate and House. Because the bills are slightly different, the bills must now be reconciled before being signed into law. The Autism Society is currently advocating for an increase of funding for the law to \$10 million per year from the current \$4 million.

The Autism Society co-sponsored and helped plan several briefings on the Hill surrounding special education, transition services and employment for people with autism and other disabilities. These briefings were well attended by a variety of staffers from offices around the Hill.

**8,000
LETTERS**

were sent to members of Congress in 2019 to advocate for relevant legislation, which more than doubles the amount of letters sent in 2018.



200+ advocates held meetings with state legislators at our annual Day on the Hill event.

**100+
MEETINGS**

held with legislators about policy related to the autism community.



3,227 letters sent to reauthorize the Autism CARES Act.

Photo Credit: Howard County Autism Society at the 2019 Day on the Hill event in Washington D.C.



CELEBRATE DIFFERENCES

The Autism Society is driven by the desire to positively affect change in the lives of individuals and families affected by autism. In 2019, we received thousands of donations from individuals, foundations, corporations, and volunteers, from \$1 to \$126,000.

Millions of people helped amplify our message, mission, and impact across social media channels and within our digital landscape. Advocates shared “Stories from the Spectrum,” parents shared milestones in communal celebrations, and professionals accessed hundreds of resources. Because of this, our reach expanded to donors across the country, and world to help us fulfill our mission.

We understand that every contribution matters - big or small - and we are dedicated to being responsive as we work towards a more inclusive, accepting world.

17,000+
PEOPLE

people donated
to the Autism
Society of America.

\$51

is the average
dollar amount
donated.

10 MILLION+
people were reached
through our Facebook
and twitter posts.

2,300 PEOPLE
hosted Facebook Fundraisers,
raising over \$262k. The power
of peer to peer impact!

1.25 MILLION+
individuals visited our
website for information,
resources, and support.

Thank you to the many donors who supported the following initiatives:

APRIL

The Autism Society of America **raised \$120k during National Autism Awareness Month.**

JULY

Keystone Insurance Group hosted its annual **Fore Autism Golf Tournament** successfully raising **\$96k** benefiting the Autism Society of America.

SEPTEMBER

The Autism Society of America hosted its **third annual Autofest Film Festival** with lead sponsors, **Hyundai and AMC Theaters.** The event featured a Star Panel with cast members from **Everything's Gonna be Okay** and **Duke.**

NOVEMBER

The Embassy of Qatar hosted the **“Spectrum of Opportunity” Gala,** with special guests like **Lea Michele** and **Kodi Lee!** The event **raised \$364k,** over \$100k more than the year prior.

DECEMBER

The Autism Society kicked off the **“Spectrum of Opportunity”** campaign for **#GivingTuesday** and **successfully raised \$24,000,** 3x more than 2018.



WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

LIDL check presentation ceremony with Eric "Bean" McKay and the Autism Society of America.

You can make a difference and further the Autism Society's impact by donating your time, talent, in-kind or financial support.

- Become a sustaining monthly donor at www.autism-society.org/donate.
- Attend or sponsor an event like our virtual programs, golf tournament, or Autfest film festival.
- Become an Autism Society member at www.autism-society.org/membership.
- Take action and support our public policy efforts through our online Action Center at takeaction.autism-society.org.
- Sign up for our Autism Matters monthly newsletter, www.autism-society.org/sign-up.
- Use your personal interests and talents to create your own fundraiser or awareness event.
- Remember the Autism Society of America in your will or trust - make a planned gift by contacting, development@autism-society.org.
- Donate a life insurance policy you no longer need.
- Donate an unwanted car or truck.
- Donate as part of the Combined Federal Campaign or other workplace giving campaign. **We are CFC #11808.**
- Create your own personal Facebook fundraiser. Learn how at: www.Facebook.com/fundraisers.
- Donate a portion of every Amazon.com purchase to the Autism Society using **Amazon Smile**. For more information about the AmazonSmile program, go to www.smile.amazon.com/about.

If you are interested in learning more about helping the Autism Society of America, please contact our development staff at development@autism-society.org.

You can also review all giving options on our website at www.autism-society.org/get-involved/donate.

SIGNIFICANT DONORS

The State of Qatar \$364,000.

The Estate of Jerome and Raidelle Newman \$126,000, the Ireland Family Foundation and the John P. Hussman Foundation \$115,000 each.

Billy and Jennifer Frist and ConocoPhillips \$50,000 each.

Tracey and Mike Staley \$40,000.

The Make Waves Charitable Gift Fund and William B. Alsup III \$30,000 each.

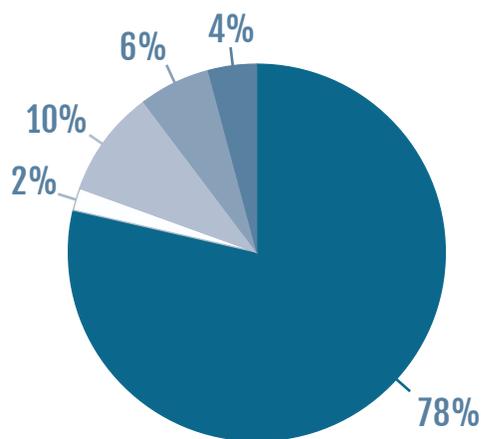
The Eleanor Collins Boas Foundation, EMC Insurance, Excelerate Energy, James R. Cole, Jr. and The Lasky-Barajas Family Foundation \$25,000 each.

The Delman Mortenson Charitable Foundation, PhRMA and the Sunshine Foundation \$20,000 each.

We are thoroughly grateful to these donors and to the thousands of other donors for their support of programs at the national level and throughout our affiliate network.

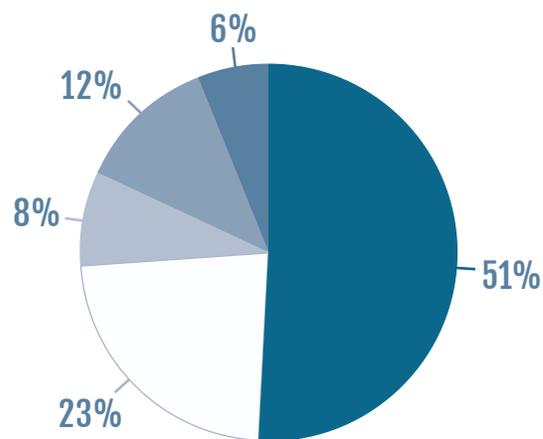
FINANCIAL DATA

2019 REVENUE \$3.6 MILLION



- Contributions
- Conferences
- Fundraising Events
- Corporations + Foundations
- Other Revenue

2019 EXPENSES \$2.9 MILLION



- Core Services
- Education & Awareness
- Public Policy & Advocacy
- Fundraising
- Management & General

REVENUE

Contributions	\$2,779,320
Conferences	\$83,259
Fundraising Events	\$338,900
Corp. + Found.	\$220,535
Other Revenue	\$155,169

\$3,577,183

CHANGE IN NET ASSETS: \$697,479

EXPENSES

PROGRAM EXPENSES

Core Services	\$1,460,746
Education & Awareness	\$675,357
Public Policy & Advocacy	\$223,138

SUPPORT SERVICES

Fundraising	\$349,304
Management & General	\$171,159

\$2,879,704

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the Board



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Brian Roth



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Committee Chairperson,
Panel of Professional Advisors



Curt Warner

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Vanessa Zuber

PANEL OF PEOPLE ON THE SPECTRUM

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Committee Chairperson

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Alec Fraizier

Darrius Frazier

Kate Gladstone

Kris Guin

Russell Lehmann

Anita Lesko

Kerry Magro

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THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUING SUPPORT

Without you, our work would not be possible. The Autism Society sincerely thanks each and every one of you for your generosity, passion, and commitment to the autism community.



 **AUTISM SOCIETY**