

2021

ANNUAL REPORT

mission

TACA provides education, support and hope to families living with autism.

vision

For every individual diagnosed with autism to lead an independent life.

values

A

Authentic

We are honest, transparent and hold ourselves to the highest level of integrity.

C

Caring

We care deeply about families living with autism.

T

Tough

We help families overcome challenges and take action.

I

Informed

We believe knowledge is power and value families' abilities to make informed decisions.

O

Optimistic

We believe the future is not set and tomorrow is going to be better than today.

N

Never

We will never give up!



what we provide

TACA has been providing services since 2000 and all of the programs and services are provided at little or no cost to families.

Programs and Support Services Offered:

- Autism Journey Guides
- Educational Conferences and Events
- Family Events
- Hope and Help Facebook Group
- Parent Mentor Program
- Parent Resources
- Scholarship Programs
- Spanish Outreach
- Webinars
- Weekly Meetings and Coffee Talks



dear friends

Thank you and hello! We are truly so grateful for 2021! It is our record revenue year! The health and well-being of TACA have greatly improved thanks to the support of our incredible community and friends of TACA.

In 2021, TACA received our first ever Autism Hero Gift from our friends at Sun West Mortgage, Inc. This gift will be instrumental in getting TACA back into the community and bringing back much needed family services and support. Hundreds of other supporters also stepped up so we can recover and grow to meet the needs of the families we serve.

The ripple effects of COVID-19 continue to affect TACA families. The largest challenge is a continued disruption to school and services. Many families have seen a decrease in services and for some, their services have completely stopped. We are helping them navigate unprecedented times. Parents continue to report their children are experiencing regression, aggression, OCD, anxiety, and an increase in wandering.

TACA is needed more than ever. In December 2021, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) shared another autism prevalence update. There really isn't any good news. The CDC now says that the prevalence of autism amongst US children is 1 in 44. This represents a 241% increase since 2000. However, even more staggering are these numbers:

- In California, 1 in 26 eight-year old's have an autism diagnosis
- 1 in 24 four-year old's have an autism diagnosis
- Every day, over 250 U.S. children will receive an autism diagnosis



Lisa Ackerman

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR & CO-FOUNDER
MOM TO JEFF & LAUREN, GRANDMA TO WILL,
AND WIFE TO GLEN

Despite these enormous challenges, we are moving the autism community forward. I am happy to share some of our 2021 program highlights:

- Average member growth per month was 700
- 2.5 million website views
- Journey guides distributed was up 15%
- Meeting attendance was up 16%
- Scholarship awards grew 38%
- Mentors assigned grew 22%
- Social media reach was over 375,000

Yes, it has been a rough couple of years. It feels like a quote I recently heard, "This too shall pass. It might pass like a kidney stone, but it will pass". While we could all definitely do without that pain, it caused TACA to accelerate initiatives and develop new services that are helping more families navigate autism and access timely, relevant, and caring support for their children. Our extremely needed adult service programming expanded in the first year of development and will continue into 2022 and future years.

Our strategy going forward is to continue investing in and growing our virtual offerings and restart in-person support and family events. We love our volunteers and welcome them back with open arms. Nothing is like in-person community events. Navigating the pandemic has been difficult. However, we have learned that adding the virtual technology platforms to our existing in-person platform has created a more scalable organization, allowing us to reach and help more families at a lower cost.

Truly, I am so grateful for our autism community, great team, connected board and ambassadors, and a community that supports us in fulfilling our mission. Because of you, TACA is poised to be the primary leader in family support services and innovation to meet their needs.

Thank you for helping TACA help families.



quick look

year established **2000**

executive director **lisa ackerman**

employees **21 paid staff**
(12 full-time, 9 part-time)

volunteer contributions **571 volunteers**
hope, help, and information **in 50 States**

www.tacanow.org

 theautismcommunityinaction

 @tacanow

 @tacafoundation

 The Autism Community in Action

accomplishments 2021



83,286

awesome members

377,399

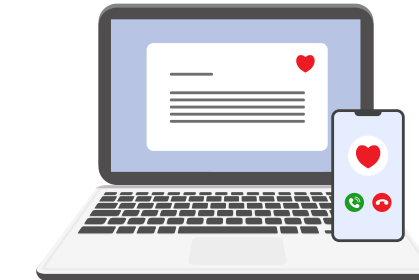
social media followers



awarded more than
\$230,000
in scholarship



571 volunteers
logged in
hours to **5,794**
help families and deliver
TACA's message



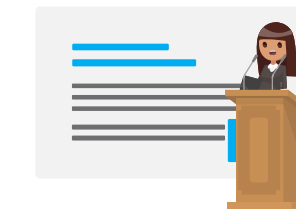
responded to a total of
48,292
phone & online support
requests



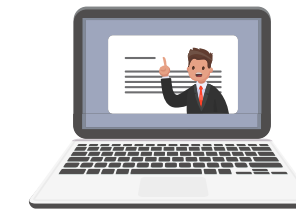
more than
2.5 million
website page views



supported over
14,800
hope and help
fb group members



educated over
2,400
with 1 virtual
autism conference



educated over
22,089
with meetings, webinars,
and social media content



over
545
mentor/mentee matches



**Welcome Bill Oldham
to the TACA Family**

board of directors

- Dan Carney
- Keith Banning
- Inna Kassatkina Jones
- Robby Saggu
- Elizabeth McCoy
- Lisa Ackerman
- Kim Yang-Uk
- Erich Kreidler
- Glen Ackerman
- Bill Oldham

physician advisory

We are honored to have the following Board-Certified pediatricians and medical specialists serve as Physicians Advisory Board Members:

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| • Dr. David Berger | • Dr. Dan Rossignol |
| • Dr. Richard Frye | • Dr. Cindy Schneider |
| • Dr. Elizabeth Mumper | • Dr. Robert Sears |
| • Dr. Nancy O'Hara | • Dr. Anju Usman |





key programs and services

TACA provides education, support
and hope to the autism community

volunteer coordinators



“Nancy saw that I was drowning, and she actually approached me. I am a very proud person and I said ‘Oh no, I’m fine I got this’ and she offered to come in and help. That was really gracious of her. It’s been really neat to do this with her since then. It’s nice to have someone for the past five years, we really complement one another with what we do. I feel really lucky to do that with her.”

- Vanessa Surprise, San Diego Chapter Coordinator

“I feel it’s a privilege to be able to be a coordinator. It’s not something where you just have your name on a card you know? It is work. You do have to show up, be on time, do work, but it’s a privilege for me. I feel like I learn a lot in the process that I probably wouldn’t have learned otherwise and then to be able to spread what we learned through TACA to our community is gratifying.”

- Nancy Kirkman, San Diego Chapter Coordinator

Coordinator Spotlight

After age one, Vanessa noticed her son Cormac started regressing. This was her third child and she had previously been a preschool teacher, so she was well aware of early childhood development, and it was obvious to her that her son was regressing. After being persistent with her doctors, she was finally able to get an evaluation where they confirmed her son had severe autism and recommended therapy and certain support groups. Vanessa went to some of these support group meetings and although it was nice making connections, she always felt more depressed after leaving those meetings. Vanessa researched herself and found other moms online recommending TACA. After going to her first TACA meeting she was hooked. She’s now been a San Diego Coordinator since 2014 and has always loved how TACA is adaptable and continues to evolve and grow to provide the support families need. Cormac is now 16 years old, and although the COVID lockdown was not easy on him, he has been turning a corner and been able to do things that were hard for him just a few months ago.

Nancy grew concerned after her son was not developing the way her previous child had. He was unable to transition to eating solid foods. He was not even close to meeting any of his developmental milestones. When approaching his first birthday, she knew from her online research that her son had autism. It was a battle to get anyone to agree with her. Finally, a developmental pediatrician confirmed that he without a doubt had autism. After researching and seeing improvements in her son from removing wheat and dairy, she began searching for a biomed support group, which led her to TACA. Nancy’s daughter was also diagnosed with autism. But this time Nancy and her family already had the knowledge and hit the ground running. Nancy has been a San Diego Coordinator for five years. She is motivated to listen to families and provide resources, so that they feel less isolated and have an action plan. Her son Mitchell is now 16 years old. He started off completely unable to chew, and after intensive feeding therapy, he now eats a wide variety of healthy solid foods. Her daughter Robin is now 13 years old and has made a lot of progress on not being so hard on herself and working on self-esteem. There is a general misunderstanding that only boys experience autism. With that, there is some extra baggage that can be a challenge for girls with autism.

Pivoting During the Pandemic

As a chapter, Vanessa and Nancy were very in-person rich before COVID, each having a Coffee Talk every month, along with a monthly meeting with a professional speaker, and another Coffee Talk that was hosted by San Diego mentors. It was heartbreaking for them knowing that for some of these parents, these Coffee Talks were their only time to socialize. The silver lining through all this is that they feel that they are now able to connect with the whole West Coast region through online meetings and that families who could never make it out to their in-person meetings now have been able to, for the first time ever, access the online conference, online meetings, and other virtual support. They both agree that both virtual and in-person opportunities are important and are in the process of trying to figure out what works best for their chapter moving forward.



“For me to be able to give back just a little, it makes it more worthwhile what we went through. Although it was completely worth it for our one kid, why should I only help one kid when I can help more?”

- Martha Simpson, TACA Mentor



mentor program

Mentor Spotlight

Martha and her family had been living in Papua New Guinea until Martha had growing concerns that her second child, Em, was regressing. She stopped sleeping through the night, running away, and was sensory seeking. After not being able to receive answers from doctors in her area, Martha began researching and came across some Yahoo groups that mentioned TACA, which led her to looking into diet changes and supplements. Martha was hesitant about changing her family’s diet but decided to go forward with it even with doctors telling her diet change wasn’t proven to be effective. A few days after implementing the Feingold Diet, she saw changes in Em’s sleep and behavior. After meeting with a MAPS doctor in the states and realizing the road to recovery was a long-term effort with therapies, diets, and more, they decided to permanently move back to the states. And there’s been no regrets. After seeing major progress with a gluten-free diet, Em is now nearly recovered. Em is 15 years old, fully mainstreamed, doing online school, and is on track to do everything she wants to do in life. Em is very creative; she writes, animates, tells stories, and she is interested in learning more about animation, graphic design, and writing novels after high school. Her and Martha mentor TACA parents together, telling their story, from a parent and child’s perspective.

conference

In 2021, we held our 36th autism conference virtually, resulting in 2,401 registrations, 47% of which were new families. This year's conference is the first time TACA has had a all-in-one conference platform.



"I discovered TACA last year. It was like the light at the end of the tunnel. Great information, great speakers, great community. TACA gives me hope."

- Virtual Conference Attendee

"The annual TACA conference is a reminder to me to reboot and breath. Gives me courage to fight on!"

- Virtual Conference Attendee

"I feel so grateful to have had the opportunity to learn from experts in the field. How often does anyone get the chance to learn from those who are the best at what they do? I am filled with much hope."

- Virtual Conference Attendee



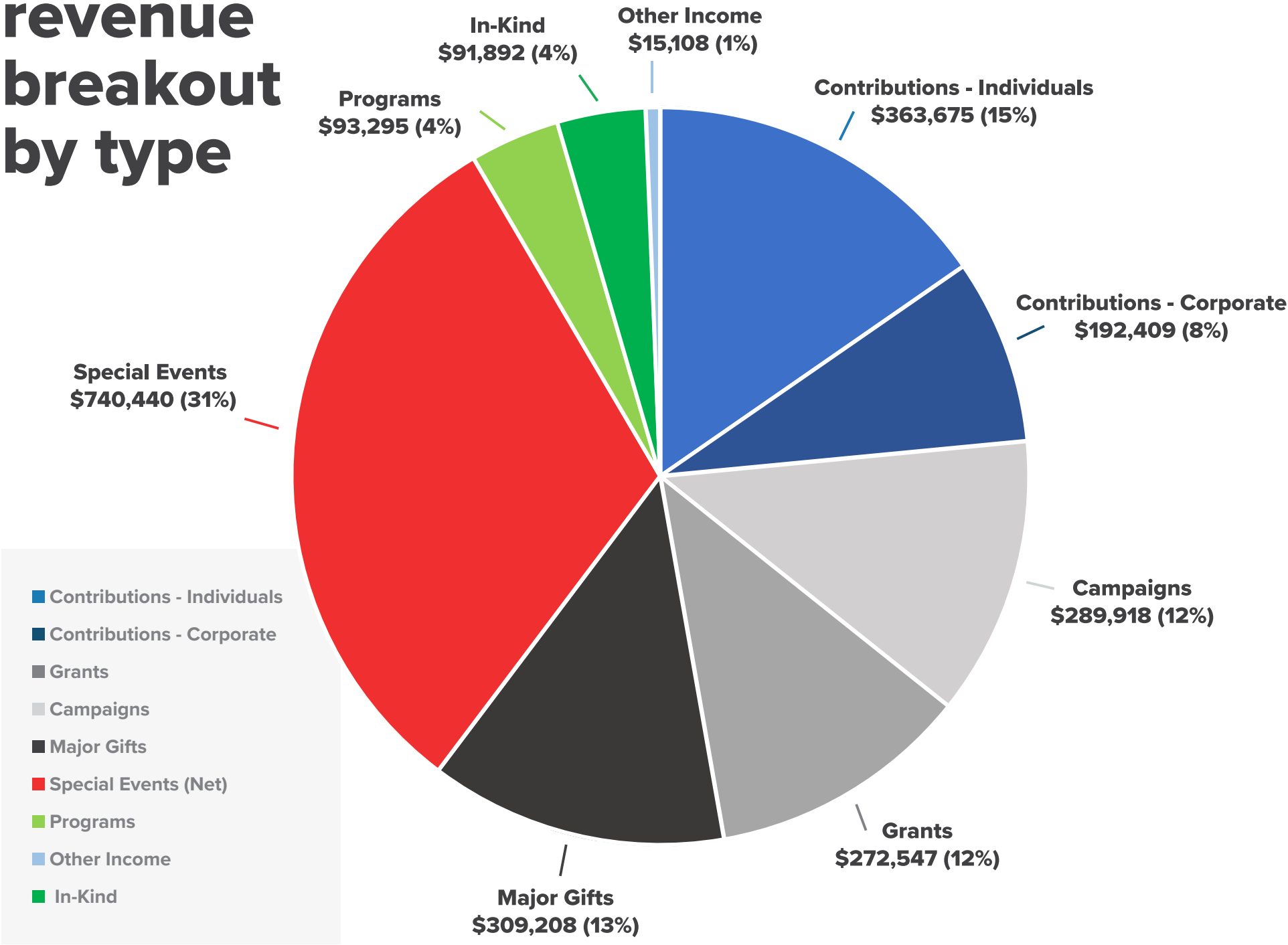
hope and help (facebook group)

Hope and Help for Autism is a private, moderated Facebook Group for TACA members to look to for support. TACA launched the Hope and Help Group in 2018 and it now has over 15,000 members in all 50 states.

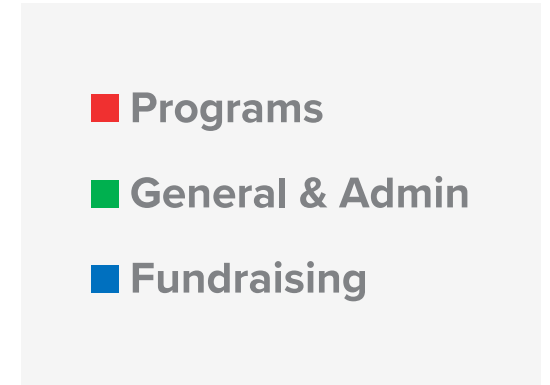
"I just joined this group and I've dived deep into a wealth of information, more than I've seen in years! It's hard to put my phone down, I just want to keep reading everything this group has to offer."

- Hope and Help Member

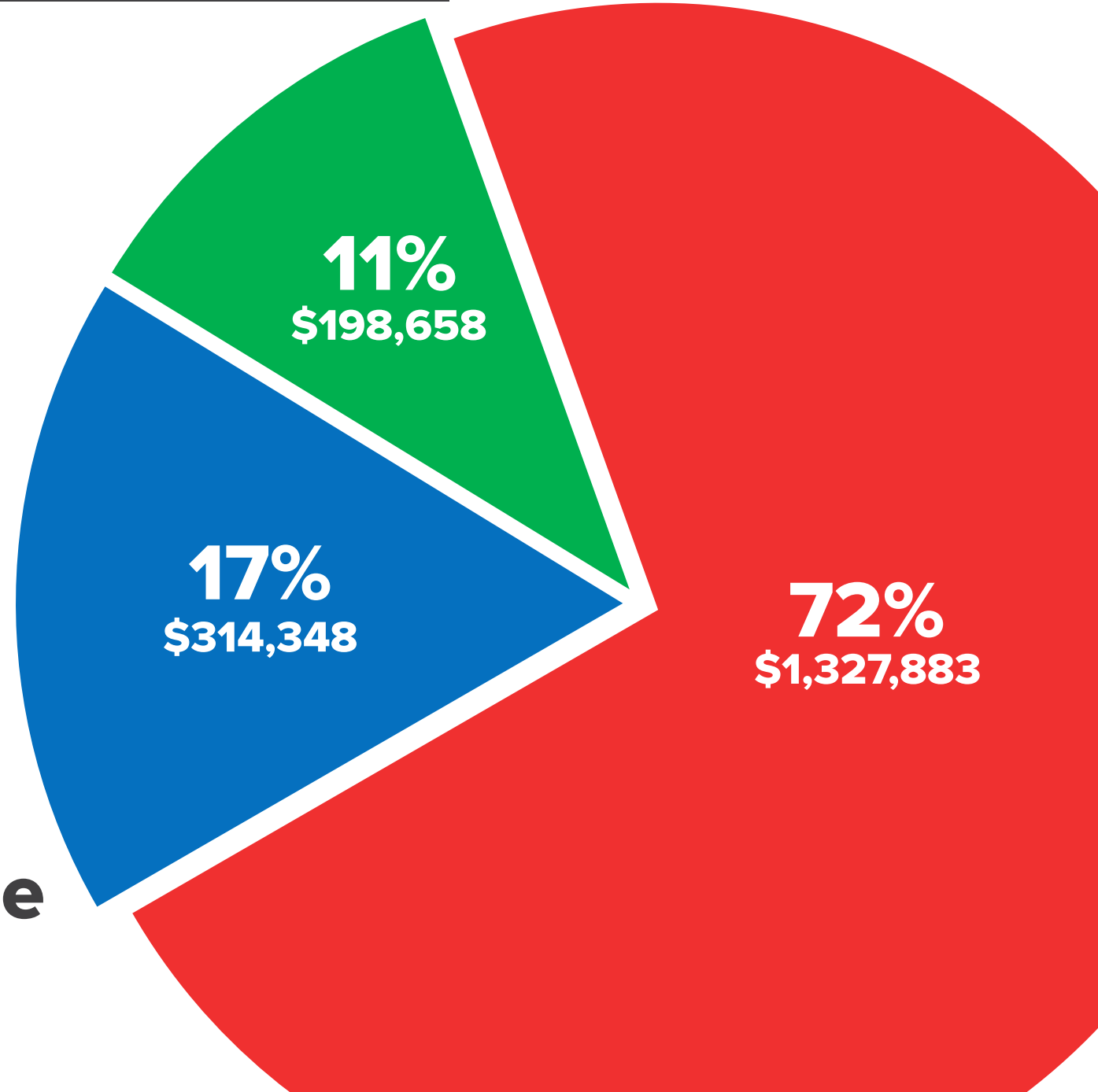
revenue breakout by type



2021 breakout



expense by breakout type



featured partner

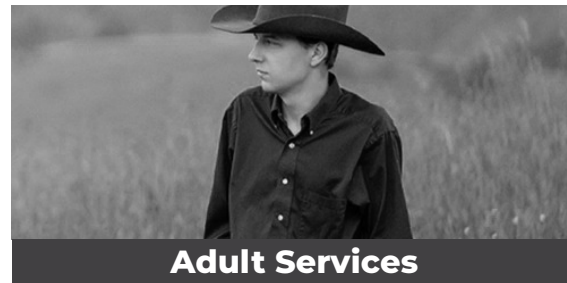


We are honored to name Sun West Mortgage Company as an Autism Hero for their dedication to the welfare of families affected by autism. Through their philanthropy outreach, Sun West Mortgage's focus is to fund necessary social and educational services, ensuring every family has the knowledge and ability to care for their child diagnosed with autism.

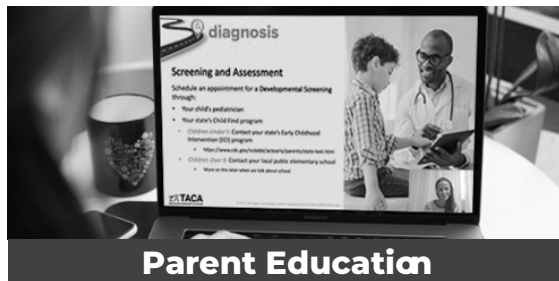
In October 2021, TACA received a transformational gift of \$250,000 from Sun West Mortgage which will nationally support:



Family Events



Adult Services



Parent Education



Conferences

We believe that by December 2022, this amazing contribution will provide resources and support to more than 60,000 families living with autism.



Pavan Agarwal
CEO of Sun West Mortgage Company, Inc.

How has autism played a role in your life?

“Well, it’s just changed our whole life. Our whole life revolves around Michael. All his therapies, traveling to different doctors from all around the country, all his activities. Michael received his diagnosis in 1997, at 3 years old, when there were virtually no services, and everything was new. I mean, a psychologist was diagnosing my son based on how he played with a doll in a room. That’s how it was back then. Nobody knew anything. Lisa, Glen, and all these families - we had to be the pioneers.”

What are some challenges you are seeing in the autism community?

“Well, what’s happened is, when we first started this organization, all our children were young. Now they’ve aged. So now what? We need to evolve and see what the services are, who is going to care for them, what communities can they be a part of, who is going to be their advocate. That’s one question I get a lot from friends who have children on the spectrum – Who is going to take care of them when I am gone? We still don’t know and that is a problem we need to figure out.”

Why do you feel it is important to support TACA?

“It is for our community. We have no voice. It is a very fragmented industry, many people trying to be the voice, and TACA has done a good job at being an advocate, because these kids need an advocate. That’s the biggest thing – they are an advocate for our community.”



donor spotlight dan carney

Dan and Vicki are part of the “TACA Ten”, the first ten families that came together in a living room as an autism support group and formed what is now TACA. Dan works as a portfolio manager and has been a TACA board member since 2010. This year, Dan was the co-chair for TACA's Ante Up for Autism event, alongside his best friend Keith, who is also a board member. He currently resides in Newport Beach, CA with his wife Vicki, and his children, Michael, 27, who is on the spectrum, and Aspen, 15. Michael is currently in a Challenger league, playing baseball, football, and skiing. He is also making great progress with his letter board.

donor honor roll

We would like to recognize
and thank our generous
contributors

Autism Hero (\$250,000.000+)

Sun West Mortgage Company, Inc.

Visionaries (\$50,000.00 - \$249,999.99)

Arylescence Foundation Inc

Julie and Thomas Stewart & Starfish Foundation

Warne Family Charitable Foundation - Erautt Family

Leaders (\$25,000.00 - \$49,999.99)

Autism Learning Partners

Keith and Denise Banning

California Relief Program

Devto Support Foundation

Steve and Laurie Duncan

Happy Family Brands

IonCleanse & Neill Moroney

Norman Jones and Inna Kassatkina - Jones

Kim, Yang-Uk

Nina Potter

Rossignol Medical Center & Dr. Dan and Lanier
Rossignol

The Weerasuriya Foundation

Warne Family Charitable Foundation - Roberts Family

Wilfred M. and Janet A. Roof Foundation

Innovators (\$10,000.00 - \$24,999.99)

Tim and Rose Adams

Algonot LLC

Anonymous

Autism Spectrum Consultants

Leyda Bequer

Tranay and John Cady

Dan and Vicki Carney

Judy Courtemanche

Dunbar Real Estate Investment Management & The
Mitchell Family

FlowerChild Holding Company LLC

Grit Cycle - Jon and Gail Gray

HMG Home Loans - Hallstead Malmberg Cady

J&J Foundation

Don and Margaret Jervis

Christopher and Pamela Jung

Erich and Jaya Kreidler

Samantha and Tyler Larsen

Elizabeth and Mike McCoy

Microsoft Matching Gifts Program

Kathryn Morris

OC Community Resilience Fund

O.L. Halsell Foundation

Bill and Casandra Oldham & Oldham Global

Orange County Community Foundation

Phillip Smith

Spectrum Awakening

SprintRay

Stark and Todd Vande Hei

Tilo and Christa Lee Steurer

Tenant

The Allyn Foundation, Inc.

The Smith Group

Brian Wansolich

Lance Watkins

Dewey and Karen White

Wright Ford Young & Co.

Mr. and Mrs. J. Scott Young

Advocates (\$5,000.00 - \$9,999.99)

Ackerman Family

Adams & Associates, APLC

Amazon Smile Foundation

Steve and Lynn Bender

Benjamin and Azrya Bequer

William and Joan Bettencourt

Anna and Scott Blum

Nav Brar

Thomas Bulow

Caught Fish Foundation

Patty and Dick Chatham

Corbino Family Foundation

Directemployers Association Inc.

EEG To Go

Fair Ways for Youth

John Heffernan

Tyson Jacobsen

Johanna Van Beek Stewards Fund

Manuchehr and Leyla Khoshbin

Kristen Lipton

Stacey and Michael Marks

Greg and Carla Matthews

Kevin and Yvette McCarthy

Midwest Insurance

Dr. Asher and Dr. Alice Milgrom

Morgan Stanley Foundation

Elise Perkins

Dr. Jessica and Mike Postil

Michael and Sherry Quinn

Noe Rubio

Safety National

Bina and Robby Saggu

Simple Spectrum Supplements

Gregory and Cara Shelton

Shoyoroll

Justin and Alexis Slagle

Sue J. Gross Foundation

Jim and Leslie Sullivan

The Bulow Group

UBS Business Solution US LLC

Gregg and Barbara Vorwerck

Wells Fargo Advisors

Dr. Travis Whitney

William and Josie Wong

5000 level (\$2,500.00 - \$4,999.99)

Michael Adams

American Advisors Group

Anonymous

Sergio Bechara

Behavioral Health Works, Inc.

Donald Cameron

Beth Cavanaugh

Chubb Charitable Foundation

Laurie Chrispen

Marc and Alanna Cole

CompuVac Industries, Inc.

Mike and Suzanne Doucette

Min Kim and Don Farrell

First Harvest Foundation

Justin and Kelly Frame

Philip Gerlicher

Tuce and Shane Giblin

Ro and Dalanie Kolakowski

Lagoon Green, LLC

Lifetrients

Daren and Gina Lipinsky

Alfred Lutter

James and Patricia McGehee

Miracle Foundation Fund

Alice Nguyen

Michael Nikolai

Norman and Susan Abazoris Foundation

Nutramax Laboratories Consumer Care, Inc

Maleny Rodriguez

Ohsiek Family Charitable Fund

Johnathon and Julie Schaech

Dr. Bob and Cheryl Sears

Simpson Chevrolet of Irvine

Matt and Ellie Soseman

Special Hearts

Spoiled Rotten Photography

Stradling Inc.

Talonvest Capital, Inc.

The Lapin Foundation

UnitedHealth Group

Shawn and Lonna Washer

Chance and Claudia Weaver

2500 Level (\$1,000.00 - \$2,499.99)

Josh Adams

Amol and Pallavi Adhav

Ron and Heidi Althouse

Jim and Nancy Alvarez

Amy An

Applied Behavioral Center

Artic Services & Donna Little

Autism Advocate Parenting Magazine

Andrew and Brittany Barnum

Kurt and Tammi Belcher

Michael Bernardin

Brett and Winston Berry

Eden Marie Biele

Jena Bondugji

Chanelle and Danielle Bossert

Bright Funds

David Bulow

Brittany and Rob Cammarata

Cynthia Caruso

Dana and Mike Colosimo

COMMIT to You Fitness, LLC

Jonathan and Nicole Cronstedt

Jamie Davis

Kevin and Kim DeAllen

DefenderShield

Kellee and Randall Dickinson

Noel and Lisa Duarte

Irina Dolan

James East

Edison International

William Egan

Jeanmarie Elkern

Kamran and Shelly Emami

Manjit Erdey

Elizabeth Esteva

Evereve, Inc

Gabe and Molly Finke

Cheryl and Albert Foster

Ty Garcia

GoFundMe and Allen Beach

Google Matching Gifts Program

Emily and Pete Grant

Daneen Green

GreenWich Tri Community Fire Department

Greg Gumser

Joseph and Jen Hadsell

Michelle Hector

Chelsea and Jonathan Henson

Brad Jarvis

Patrick and Buffie Jubard

Kindred Communication

Jim and Pinky Kottoor

Jose Kreidler

Vu Le and Catherine Le

Will and Lindsey Leahy

Christopher and Heather Lewis

Nancy and Tim Loskill

Donna Mascale

Terry Taylor and Amie Meeks

Mobix Labs, Inc

Art Narevsky

Tobi and John Nieland

Paul and Sue Ellen O'Connor

Lonnie Okazaki

Eugene and Ingrid O'Neal

Mike and Jodi Ottman

Palos Electric Co

Edwina Pennington

Allison Quinto

R.E.D. Laboratories

Gary Riphagen

Sawsan Saba

Bobby Samini

ScaleTrains.com, Inc.

Shell Matching Gift Program

Olga Smirnova

Ulmont and Chizuru Smith

Todd Spitzer

Summit to Sea Presented By New Leaf Hyperbaries

The Granger Family Charitable Fund

The Healing Gem

The Hohener Family Fund

Tim Tunney

Adam Vali

Simon Vallejo

Debbie and Terry Villegas

VMware Foundation

West Bend Mutual Insurance

Douglas and Robyn Wonnemberg

Chuck Zhang

In-kind Donors

Happy Family Brands

Hi-Time Wine Cellars

Veronica & Lloyd Mendoza

The Cannery

We are families with autism helping families with autism.

