



**2023**

**ANNUAL REPORT**

 **TACA**  
THE AUTISM COMMUNITY in ACTION

# 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 support since 2000 and all of the programs and services are provided at little or no cost to families.

## Programs and Support Services Offered:

### Education

- Website Articles, Checklists, and Downloadables
- Educational Events
- Conferences
- The Autism Workbook

### Support

- Hope and Help Facebook Group
- Mentor program
- Virtual Support Events
- Teen and Adult Support and Resources
- Scholarships

### Hope

- Communities (Coffee Talks, Outreach Events, and Family Days)

  
**better individual**  
Quality of life

  
**better family**  
Quality time

  
**independence**

  
**develop skills**

  
**improved health**

# Dear Friends

Hello incredible TACA friends!!

I am so grateful to share our 2023 updates with you!

First, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) issued a shocking 11th release on autism prevalence, indicating that 1 in 36 US children are affected. This represents a 317% increase since 2000. However, even more staggering are these numbers:

- An 18% increase in two years since the previous report
- In California, 1 in 22 four-year-olds have an autism diagnosis
- 37.9 % of the prevalence represents profound autism
- 4 % of all boys have autism

Despite the enormous prevalence increase, we are moving the autism community forward and helping families. I am happy to share our 2023 Program highlights, including the following:

- We served 89,645 members
- 569 volunteers donated almost 4,539 hours
- Education efforts reached 15,767 people
- We released our brand new TACA Autism Workbook and distributed 2,534 copies
- Meetings and outreach events helped 12,933 people
- Awarded 766 Scholarship awards valued at \$166,915
- Two annual conferences reached 2,678 in attendance
- Over 21,000 members supported through our online Hope and Help

Our third annual autism hero award recognized the Warne Family Foundation. Their continued support and commitment to TACA is so appreciated and we are glad to recognize them for their support.

Rollout into TACA Communities post COVID-19 continues to be a focus. We remain committed to investing in the growth of our virtual offerings, in-person support, and family support events. Our surveys show that adding virtual technology to our in-person platform has made our organization more scalable, helping us reach more families at a lower cost and with greater consistency. Families still need both community connections and these resources.

Our committed hard-working staff, active board and ambassadors, and our generous community are dedicated to TACA and our mission. We remain dedicated to being there for the families who found TACA (over 1,500 new families every month) and the current families already part of our network.

Truly, I am so grateful for our community and the dedication to our mission and the families we serve. Thank you for making a difference in the lives of families living with autism!



## **Lisa Ackerman**

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



# Quick Look

Year Established 2000

Executive Director Lisa Ackerman

Employees 26 Paid Staff  
(14 Full-Time, 12 Part-Time)

Volunteer Contributions 569 Volunteers

Hope, Help, and Information in 50 States

**tacanow.org**

 theautismcommunityinaction

 @tacanow

 @tacafoundation

 The Autism Community in Action

# Accomplishments 2023



**89,645**

**Awesome Members**

**396,802**

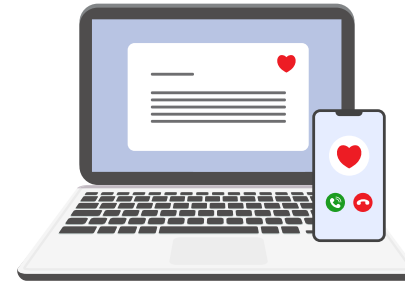
**Social Media Followers**



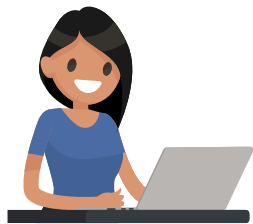
Awarded More Than  
**\$166,000**  
in scholarships



569 Volunteers  
Logged in  
Hours to **4,539**  
Help Families and Deliver  
TACA's Message



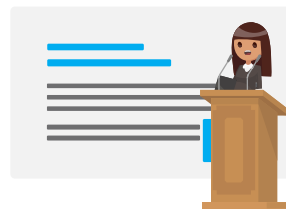
Responded To a Total of  
**42,536**  
Phone & Online Support



More Than  
**1 Million**  
Website Page Views  
With 32 New Articles



Supports Over  
**21,425**  
Hope & Help Facebook  
Group Members



Educated Over  
**2,678**  
in 2 Conferences



Educated Over  
**15,767**  
People with Virtual Meetings,  
Webinars & Social Media Content



Matched  
**526**  
Mentors / Mentees

WARNE FOUNDATION



THE COMMERCE CASINO & HOTEL

WARNE FOUNDATION



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WARNE FOUNDATION







# Board of Directors

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

# Physician Advisory

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

- James Adams, PhD
- Dr. David Berger
- Dr. Richard Frye
- Dr. Robert Naviaux
- Dr. Nancy O'Hara
- Dr. Dan Rossignol
- Dr. Cindy Schneider
- Dr. Anju Usman Singh





# Volunteer Spotlight

Genine Armellino's journey with autism began when her son, Mario, was diagnosed at just 23 months old. Autism quickly became a huge part of her life, shaping her choices and daily routines. When in-home therapies didn't bring the progress they hoped for, Genine and her husband, Ken, decided to take matters into their own hands. They created their own plan, from carefully planning Mario's diet to figuring out the ins and outs of the school system and state services.

Looking back at those early years, Genine chuckles and says her accounting background really came in handy. It gave her the detail-oriented skills to navigate the maze of rules and regulations, which was essential for advocating for her son in a system that often felt like a constant battle. But beyond that, she felt lost. Nothing truly prepares you for raising a child with autism, and the sheer amount of information and challenges can be overwhelming.

This sense of frustration and the quest for professional guidance led her to TACA. Genine quickly became an active member at TACA. She went from just attending meetings to organizing events and leading Coffee Talks — a series of intimate gatherings that offer a lifeline of support for families navigating their distinct autism journeys.



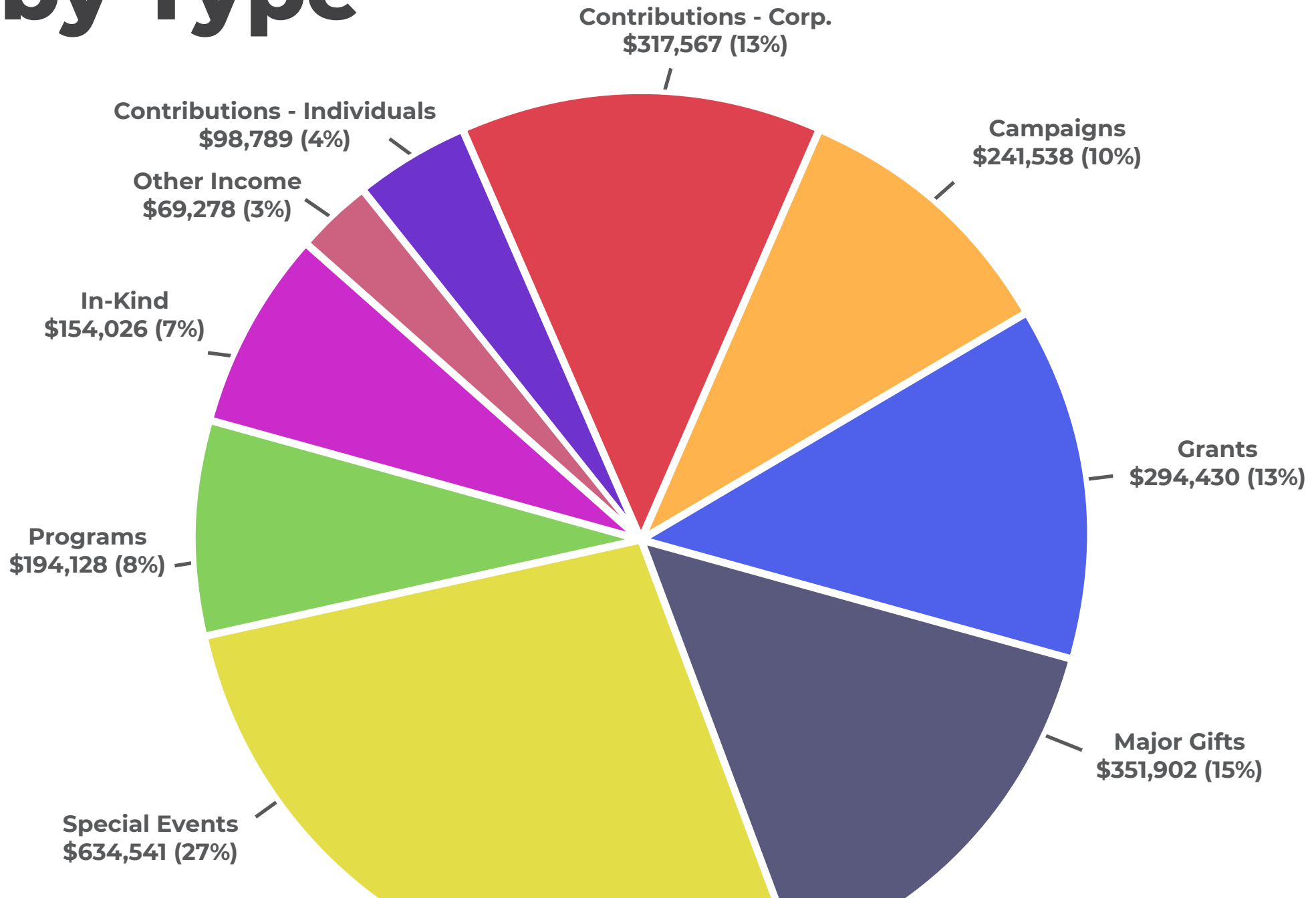
Genine Armellino  
Volunteer Community Leader, New Jersey

*"This is where I wanted to spend my volunteer time. I want to talk to as many families as I can about TACA and the resources we have. It's made such a difference for me, and I just want to help other families too."*

Genine emphasizes the importance of giving families not only emotional support but also practical advice. Her top tip for parents is to focus on building their child's independence. Her motto is: Whatever your child can do, let them do it. It's about letting go a bit, which in turn really helps kids grow. Even though it's not always easy, her son Mario has made amazing progress — he's learned to cut his own food, and his skills in writing, typing, and even tying his shoes have greatly improved. Genine couldn't be prouder!

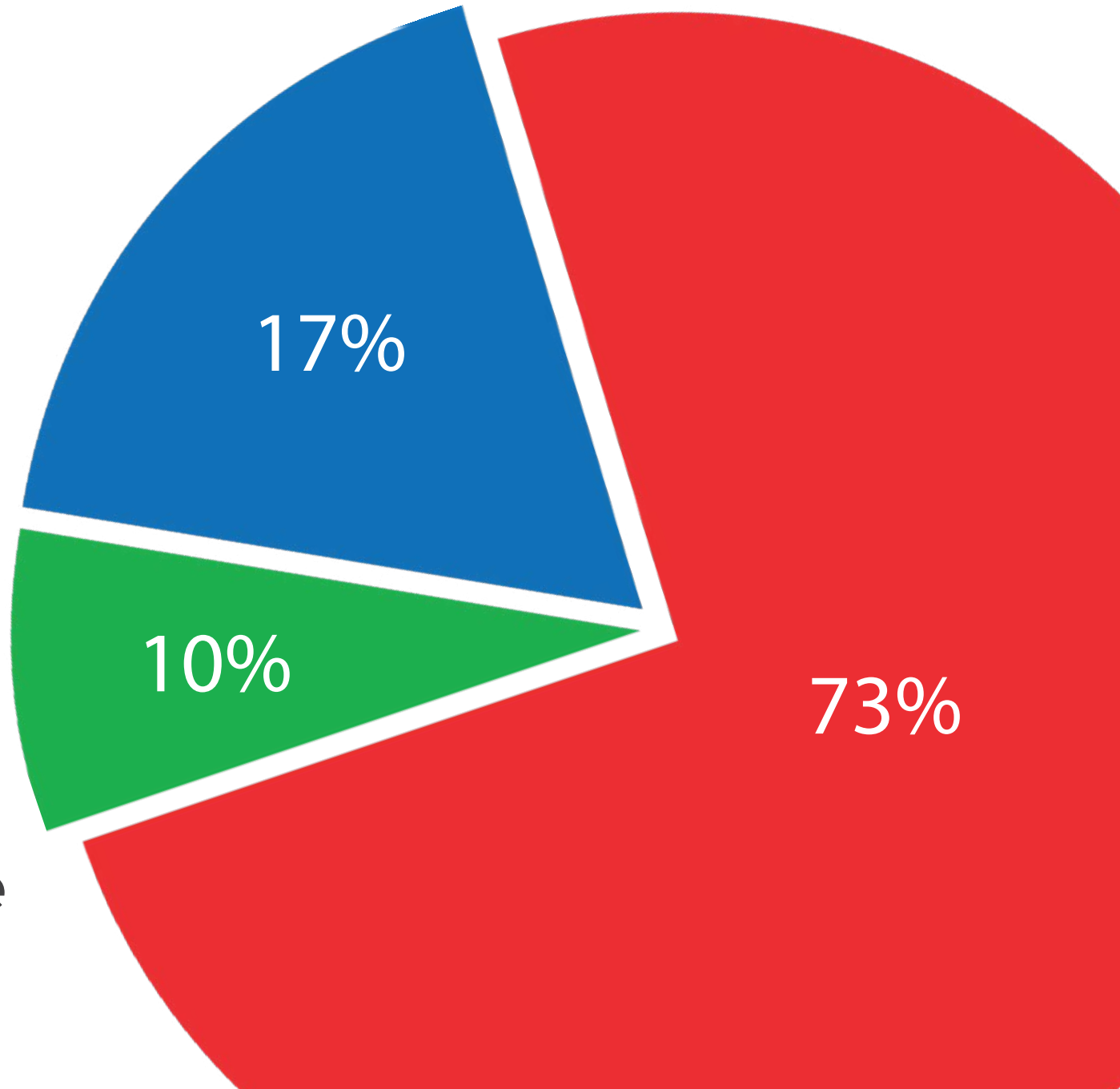
Speaking about the key principle that drives her leadership at TACA, Genine reflects that when she first started taking on leadership roles, she was in the midst of changing schools and fighting for her son's rights with the school district. It was a very tough time. Yet, even at her lowest, she made it a point to encourage others. "There's a meme within TACA that always gives me so much strength: 'A student says, 'I'm very discouraged, what should I do?' And the master replies, 'Encourage others.'" This philosophy really guides me. Leading these events can be exhausting, but at the same time, it fills me up as well," Genine shared, showing how lifting each other up is truly the key to navigating life with autism.

# Revenue Breakout by Type



# 2023 Breakout

- Programs
- General & Admin
- Fundraising



**Expense by  
Breakout Type**

# Donor Honor Roll

We would like to  
recognize and thank our  
generous contributors

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

Anonymous  
Arylessence Foundation Inc  
Kurt and Tammi Belcher  
Garrett Family Foundation  
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The Smidt Family Foundation  
Wilfred M. and Janet A. Roof Foundation  
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## Innovators (\$10,000.00 - \$24,999.99)

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Tenant Inc.

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We are families with autism helping families with autism.

