

2023



Impact Report

*Celebrating
25 years*



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A Message of Celebration

Dear Friends:

What a year 2023 was for everyone involved with Aaron's Acres as we celebrated 25 years since this organization was established! A group of parents saw a need for recreational summer programs for children with disabilities and they made it happen! 25 years later, we are going strong and dreaming of going even stronger as we begin our next chapter.

Since we first began, our core values have been centered around the belief that everyone can actively participate in our programs and the commitment that we will accept everyone, without explanation. We strive to create recreational experiences with meaningful interactions among people of all abilities and we are committed to providing support for the entire family.

In all that we done and continue to do, we have remained true to our values and to our commitments:

- We have never turned away a child because of having a specific disability—children with a variety of disabilities are accepted into our programs
- We have never turned away a family because of financial limitations—we aim to find solutions and we provide scholarships to families in need
- We have always understood the importance of taking care of the entire family (by providing pampering sessions, educational programs, family events resulting in the entire family enjoying an activity together)
- At all our programs, our staff and buddies are trained to focus on the abilities, not on the challenges (building one's self-confidence and self-esteem)
- Our priority is always on building and strengthening one's socialization and communication skills through participating in a variety of age- appropriate recreational activities with their peers

I believe that because of our values and our vision, we have been able to celebrate participants riding a horse or getting into a swimming pool for the first time, participants communicating appropriately who had not had this response in the past, participants separating from their parents with little to no difficulty where this had previously been a challenge, participants actively engaging in activities when they hadn't done so before, staff members receiving tremendous positive feedback from their peers, and more!

The list can go on and on. Celebrations come in all sizes and shapes. During this past year, we also celebrated our growth in the type of programs offered, in the ages of our participants, in the number of service clubs and other volunteer groups that were involved with our organization and the overall number of donors who have committed to supporting the work that we are doing for children and young adults with disabilities.

Celebrations are what fuels us and what fires us up for tomorrow! We celebrate you as you have been a supporter of our organization in some way. You have added fuel to the fire for our next steps.

Enjoy reading all about our celebrations and look for what comes next with Aaron's Acres!



Executive Director

25 Faces of Aaron's Acres

Celebrating 25 years with some of the faces who have been with us along the way.

“Going to Aaron’s Acres has given Adaline the ability to experience all the typical kid stuff at a summer camp that we thought she would miss out on because of her different abilities.”

-Michele Landvater, Aaron's Acres Parent

“To see a youngster with severe disabilities to be in the swimming pool with their counselor and to be laughing and splashing water at another camper was an amazing thing to witness.”

-Bill Bash, Board Member Emeritus, Aaron's Acres

“I enjoyed every moment.” -Lisa Palmquist, Aaron's Acres Dream Maker, Supporter and Nurse

“We love partnering with other mission-focused nonprofits, like Aaron's Acres. I am always amazed by the level of care and commitment the staff show to the kids at Aaron's Acres.”

-Jesse Rothacker, Forgotten Friend Reptile Sanctuary

“We are beyond thankful for ALL the people at Aaron's Acres who choose to step into these families' day to day and bring Exceptional Life and Growth ...with hope, love, and cheer for our journey!” -Jenny Henry, Aaron's Acres Parent

“Seeing the participants grow from the start of camp to the end of two weeks in so many ways was always very special to witness.” -Mark Gales, Former Aaron's Acres Buddy and Camp Counselor

“Aaron's Acres is an extraordinary organization that has absolutely changed my life.”

-Becky Miller, School Year Program Site Supervisor, Aaron's Acres

“Aaron's Acres provides parents and special needs children with a safe and nurturing experience that is invaluable to the community it serves.” -George Nahodil, Aaron's Acres Parent, Donor and Supporter



25 Faces of Aaron's Acres

Celebrating 25 years with some of the faces who have been with us along the way.

“The job is so rewarding and it pushes me out of my comfort zone each day in the best ways.”
-Livia Jackson, Aaron's Acres Counselor

“Overall, a warm welcoming camp with awesome caring people who are there for the campers.” -Leslie and Ashanti, Aaron's Acres Parent and Participant

“We're honored to have been connected to part of what Aaron's Acres has been over the last 25 years and can't wait to see what the next 25 years will bring!” -Kelly and Kyle, Former Aaron's Acres Staff Members

“This organization gives these kids an opportunity to experience summer camp just like any other kid would.” -Leah, Aaron's Acres Fundraiser

“We will continue to support Aaron's Acres for many years to come for the gift of joy, happiness, “I can moments”, and belonging they bring Matty and all of us as a family.”
-Melissa and Chris Roslevege, Aaron's Acres Parents

“They are so in tune with his individual needs and truly invested in helping him be successful and enjoy each day.” -Shari and Jaden McAuliffe, Aaron's Acres Parent and Participant

“To watch the campers go from being unsure about camp to not wanting to leave is amazing.”
-Tracie Humphreville, Aaron's Acres Counselor

“Aaron's Acres has been and always will be an important part of our lives and the lives of all the families it touches.” -Terry and Michael Tafelski, Aaron's Acres parents, supporters and part of the Aaron's Acres Family

“The staff are the heart and soul of Aaron's Acres.” -Tina Ator, Aaron's Acres Parent



25 Faces of Aaron's Acres

Celebrating 25 years with some of the faces who have been with us along the way.

“To see what Risa and her team are accomplishing at summer camp is absolute magic.”
-Patrick Trimble, Team Trimble, Aaron's Acres Partner

“Every camper who comes through Aaron's Acres goes home knowing they are respected and loved and that is a gift to be treasured forever.” -Cindy Long, Aaron's Acres' favorite music therapist

“It feels good playing a little part of such a fantastic organization!” -Greg Sallade, Aaron's Acres Dream Maker, Ambassador and Supporter

“There is so much reward that comes from Aaron's Acres, not only for the participants but for the staff as well! -Lindsey Macedonio, Site Supervisor, Aaron's Acres

“Over the last almost 5 years, I've been able to witness the amazing things that Aaron's Acres does for the children in our area and they never cease to amaze me.” -Christina Montovino, Jersey Mike's Subs, Aaron's Acres Partner

“The smiles, the camaraderie, and the pure joy were so exhilarating to experience and every year since, it has been my privilege and blessing to be part of this incredible organization.”
-Christi Beazley, Past Aaron's Acres Board President, Board Member Emerita & Dream Maker

“Volunteering at camp, participating in many fundraising activities and events, and watching Aaron's Acres grow in love and influence, has touched our hearts and helped define who we are as individuals and a family.” -Bill Zee, Past Board President and Board Member Emeritus, Aaron's Acres

“The transformation for everyone involved with our organization is powerful and real.”
-Risa Paskoff, Executive Director, Aaron's Acres



About Aaron's Acres

MISSION

Aaron's Acres provides individuals with disabilities ages 5-21 year-round therapeutically based age-appropriate recreational programs directed by specially trained and certified staff in a supportive environment that enhances socialization and communication skills. Emotional, educational, and recreational support is offered for the entire family.

What Makes Aaron's Acres Unique

- 1:1 or 1:2 staff-to-child ratio
- Supervisory staff comprised of professionals
- Nurse on staff at all times

New at Aaron's Acres

After a successful season of its first adult program, Chuckie Magee Flag Football & Cheerleading League, in the fall of 2022, Aaron's Acres introduced a second recreational program for adults with disabilities. The Aaron's Acres Adult Sports League held its first season in the spring of 2023 at Lancaster Brethren in Christ Church for participants ages 21-40.

NUMBERS

In 2023, Aaron's Acres served **124 individuals** across its programs - **90 individuals** through its children and young adult programs (ages 5-21) and **34 individuals** through its adult sports programs (ages 21-40). Of the participating children and young adults, **36** were younger participants, ages 5-12, and **54** were older participants, ages 13-21.

In 2023, Aaron's Acres enrolled children and adult participants across 5 counties in Central Pennsylvania - Berks, Cumberland, Dauphin, Lancaster and Lebanon.

SUPPORT

For an Aaron's Acres participant, programs offer communication, socialization, and physical activity. But the impact does not stop there. Programs also offer respite for caregivers, volunteer experience for high school students, education for future professionals in related fields, opportunities for networking, community engagement and increased general awareness, and improved mental health for the entire family. Aaron's Acres' support of the entire family offers a community of like-minded individuals who support one another.



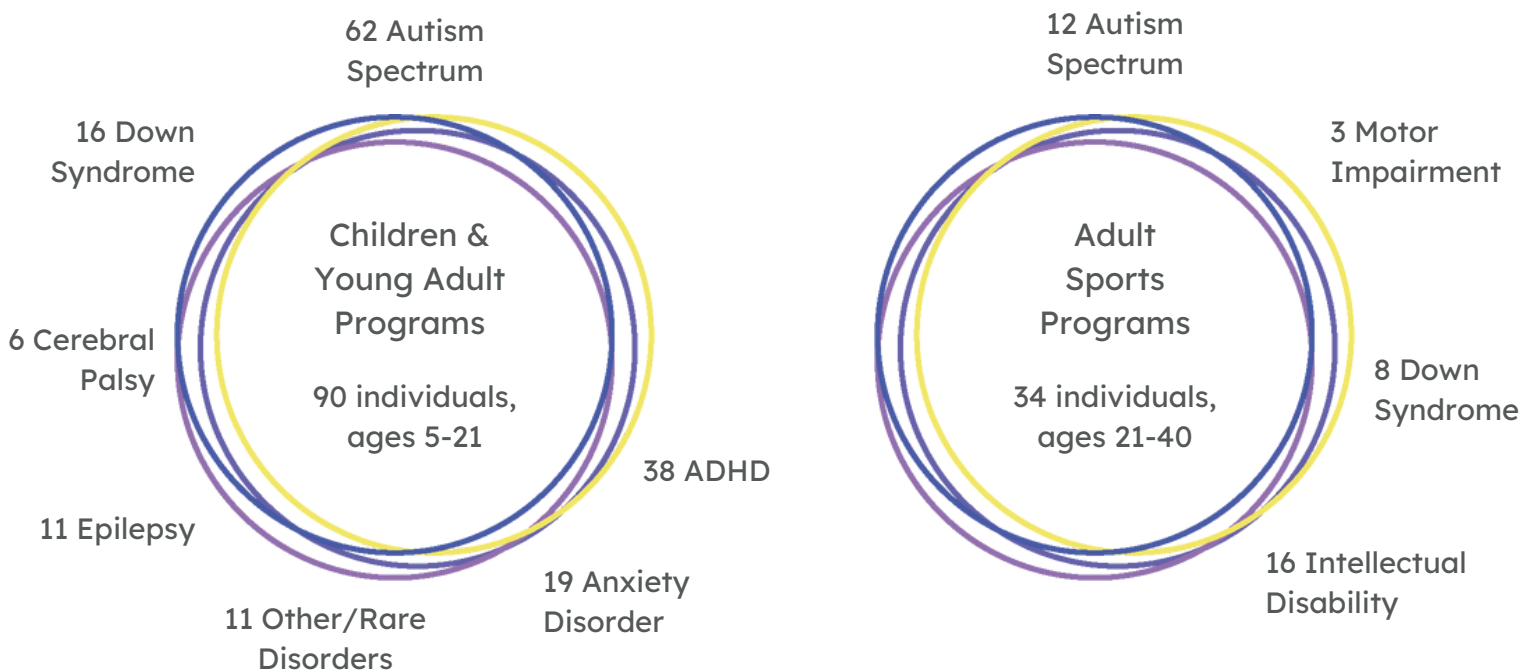
Program Impact

GOALS

Goals are an important part of Aaron's Acres' children and young adult programs, focusing on the areas of socialization and communication. During the application process, caregivers are asked to select a goal the child's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) that they wish for our staff to work on during our programs. These goals are then monitored while the child attends Aaron's Acres. This provides ongoing support and reinforcement on goals previously acquired or assistance with newly acquired skills. Below are the goals that families can select from during the application process:

- Share with others (materials/toys/space)
- Take turns with others
- Ask permission
- Follow directions
- Begin a conversation
- End a conversation
- Take turns in conversation
- Engage in activities with others
- Ask for help
- Wait for needs to be met
- Express anger or frustrations appropriately (using words or gestures)
- Express feelings appropriately

In 2023, **73%** of participants met or exceeded their assigned goal with prompting and **42%** of participants met or exceeded their assigned goal independently.

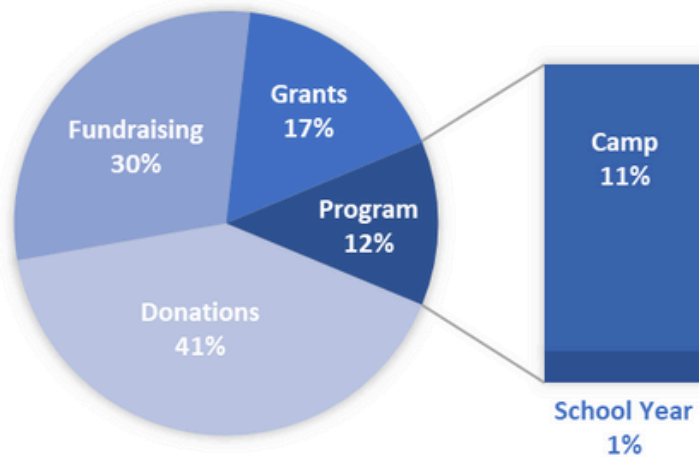


*Aaron's Acres serves individuals with complex needs and dual diagnoses.

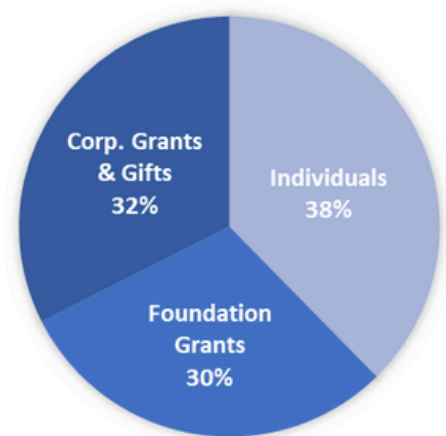
Financial Review

REVENUE

Revenue by Type



Gifts & Grants by Source

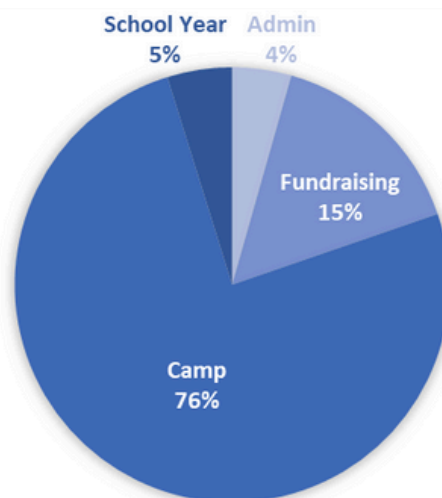


Third Party Fundraisers \$145.0K

Third Party Fundraisers, which are events and initiatives hosted by community members and businesses, grew exponentially this year! We were fortunate to be selected by several individuals and organizations as the beneficiary of their fundraising efforts, resulting in a total of \$145,000 raised in 2023!

EXPENSES

Functional Expenses



25th Anniversary

25TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION WITH THE COMMUNITY

On Saturday, August 26, 2023, Aaron's Acres celebrated its 25th anniversary with the community that made it all possible! Two events were held at Mickey's Black Box on the Rock Lititz campus - a family-friendly carnival themed event during the day and an 18+ music and entertainment event in the evening.

We raised nearly **\$63,000** during our 25th Anniversary Celebration and want to thank everyone for supporting Aaron's Acres over the last quarter-century and celebrating this important milestone with us as we look forward to the next 25 years! We are so appreciative of the community that has stood behind us and helped to make a difference in the lives of our participants and families.

Thank you to our generous sponsors!

Event Sponsor: [The Patrick Trimble Team](#)

Family Day Sponsor: [TAIT](#)

Premier Catering Sponsor: [Cracked Pepper Catering](#)

Catering Sponsors: [P. Alan and Linda K. Loss](#), [Oak Tree Development](#), [Natalie Strickler](#)

Anniversary Sponsor: [Presence Bank](#)

We were grateful to be joined by Next Level Pizza, Stoney's Burgers & Fries, and Twister Sisters Ice Cream and Handmade Chocolates during our Family Day event; and mentalist Jesse Dameron, Mama Tried Band and Cracked Pepper Catering during our Evening Celebration event.



News & Events

NOTEWORTHY MOMENTS IN 2023

In 2023 our donor partners provided support in various ways throughout the year! We held our 13th Annual Aaron's Acres Golf Tournament on May 15, 2023, at the beautiful Bent Creek Country Club in Lititz. Thanks to our event sponsors and donors, we successfully raised a record-breaking **\$116,468!** Our Golf Event Sponsor, Patrick Trimble and Team Trimble once again extended their remarkable partnership and hosted their annual movie event and Wish List supply drive in December, which we are so grateful for!

During the ExtraGive event held on November 17, 2023, Aaron's Acres received **\$69,710** in donations during this exciting annual day of giving in our community! This year we had two generous matching donors who helped to generate extra enthusiasm and additional community support during the day. Thank you to Jersey Mike's Subs and Dr. Clark McSparren, Jr., MD for making this day extra special!

Aaron's Acres was most grateful to once again be selected as a recipient of funds raised during the Members 1st Credit Union's annual golf outing and we were honored to receive a donation of **\$30,000** from this event! Jersey Mike's Subs also partnered with us once again by raising funds during the grand opening of their second location in Lebanon, raising **\$3,079** and also through their Month of Giving in March, raising an astounding **\$68,833.69!** We were also thrilled to be chosen by several individuals and organizations as the beneficiary of their fundraising efforts (Third Party Fundraisers), including the Lancaster Elks Lodge #134 who donated an incredible **\$25,000** from proceeds of their Elksgiving event.

In the fall of 2023, we were so happy to hold another session of our Chuckie Magee Flag Football & Cheerleading League! We appreciated having the outstanding support of our league sponsors, including Event Sponsor, Costanzo Wealth Management of Janney Montgomery Scott LLC, and Touchdown Sponsors, 4 Cole's Kids and the Fraternal Order of Eagles 84.

We were also excited to offer a Community Resource Fair and Panel Discussion, in partnership with the Touchstone Foundation. We welcomed 15 community organizations offering information related to mental health and wellness. The discussion topic was "Addressing the Mental Health of the Familial Unit, Particularly When Raising a Child with Varying Challenges and Disabilities" and was presented by speakers Dr. Thomas Foley, Dr. Carrie Bruey, and Anna Kennedy.



2023 Recap

A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT & COMMUNITY RELATIONS

We are so fortunate to have an extraordinary community of volunteers, donors, and partners at Aaron's Acres. Because of your generous support, 2023 was a year of exciting celebration and progress! We marked an important milestone of 25 years providing meaningful programs to individuals with disabilities. Our team continued to support the individuals we serve with compassion and dedication. We added a new recreational sports program for those over the age of 21. Our relationships with those in our community grew and strengthened.

We know that our programs – and the many opportunities they provide for our participants – would not happen without the support of this dedicated community. We thank you for opening your hearts to our mission and for making a difference in the lives of young people with disabilities through your commitment to Aaron's Acres!

Our Dream Makers are a group of **77 community-minded leaders** who each make an annual donation of **\$100** and then come together to have even greater impact with their collective giving at the end of their membership year. This group met three times during the year and at the fall meeting members decided that they would again support participant scholarships with the group's combined donations in 2023! We thank them for helping to ensure that financial challenges will not prevent someone from taking part in our programs.

The Aaron's Acres Angels is a dedicated group of teens from school districts throughout our local community committing their time to learning about and supporting our participants and families at Aaron's Acres. They gathered several times throughout the year, including attending two of our School Year Program sessions. They also organized a bake sale that raised over **\$250** and assisted with our Aaron's Acres Night at the Movies at Penn Cinema that raised over **\$1,600** to benefit Aaron's Acres!

We welcomed **95 volunteer photographers** and over **100 visitors** during our 2023 summer camp sessions! We are thankful to have the support of these community members who helped us take photos of our campers and took time to learn more about our programs.

Our hearts are filled with gratitude for the many ways in which individuals and various groups from our community have supported us over the past year. Your generous partnership has made a tremendous impact on our organization, and we express our sincere appreciation for your dedication to our mission.

If you are not yet connected with us and are interested in learning more about Aaron's Acres, there are many ways to get involved and we would love to connect with you!



Director of Development & Community Relations

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