

autism speaks®

Annual Report

APRIL 2019 - MARCH 2020



Milan B., 10
Diagnosed at age 7

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

In the 15 years since Autism Speaks was founded, the autism community has seen considerable change, and we have evolved along the way. We've listened to our supporters, our critics and everyone in between – remaining steadfast in our mission to promote solutions, across the spectrum and throughout the life span, for the needs of people with autism and their families.

Last year we made notable progress toward each of our mission objectives, as we look toward a brighter future for everyone on the spectrum.

In our commitment to ***increase understanding and acceptance of people with autism***, we reimagined our brand – introducing a more inclusive look and feel intended to mirror the depth, breadth and infinite differences within the spectrum, and naming 2020 the *Year of Kindness*.

As a ***catalyst for life-enhancing research breakthroughs***, we funded nearly \$5 million in grants for a range of research projects across scientific disciplines. Our science funding will help deliver a spectrum of solutions in the years ahead for millions of autistic people.

In our work to ***increase early screening and timely interventions***, FY19 was a big year, starting with a new bilingual public service campaign to lower the age of diagnosis, especially among underserved populations. By March 2020, promising results from the CDC indicated that the diagnosis gap is indeed closing – the result of decades of advocacy, awareness efforts and collaboration.

In our efforts to ***improve the transition to adulthood***, we launched *Delivering Jobs*, a collaborative initiative with *Best Buddies*, *Special Olympics* and the *Entertainment Industry Foundation*, designed to create pathways to 1 million employment and leadership opportunities by 2025.

In our work toward ***ensuring access to reliable information and services throughout the life span***, we provided access to online tool kits on topics of vital concern to families and professionals, including providing Spanish translations for tool kits covering medical and behavioral topics and providing video toolkits about communication supports in English and Spanish.

Finally, while we had much to celebrate, the fiscal year ended with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. The unprecedented disruption posed considerable challenges for every member of our community. We're deeply proud of and grateful for the Autism Speaks staff, donors, volunteers and broader constituency's unbridled commitment to our mission, as we refocused our efforts to provide immediate support to those impacted. While the pandemic may have shifted some of our plans, it couldn't shake our dedication to remain a trusted source of information and hope for our community.

Thank you for helping us continue to enhance lives today and accelerate a spectrum of solutions for tomorrow. Together, we will achieve our vision that all people with autism can reach their full potential.



Angela Geiger
President & CEO



Brian Kelly
Chairman, Board of Directors



**autism
speaks®**

A new brand and a deepened commitment to a more inclusive world

We celebrated our 15th birthday by unveiling a reimagined look and launching a commitment to make 2020 the Year of Kindness for people with autism – through one million acts of kindness big and small.

Our signature puzzle piece was redesigned to include a spectrum of colors in addition to our iconic blue. The new, more colorful logo signifies the diversity of perspectives and experiences with autism spectrum disorder and our ever-deepened commitment to inclusivity.

We hope that our kindness campaign, together with our more inclusive brand, will fuel an atmosphere of support, understanding and acceptance that will last for many more years to come.

Increasing global understanding and acceptance of people with autism

We're driven by our vision that all people with autism can reach their full potential. Increasing understanding and acceptance of every individual's unique experience is key to making this a reality.

Helped create a more inclusive world during April, World Autism Month, through advocacy and storytelling.

- Unveiled five diverse video profiles of children and adults across the spectrum
- Secured more than 650 news stories reaching nearly 400 million people
- Achieved more than 1 million views, likes, comments and shares inspired by stories on social media
- Engaged more than 100 congressional leaders to share support socially

Provided a platform for the autism community to share stories.

- Launched advertising campaign to create a "Brighter Life on the Spectrum"
- Launched "Spectrum Spotlight" monthly email feature to share inspirational stories; series received 2.8 million bi-monthly page views with a reach of nearly 450,000 people each month

Engaged a social community of 2.8 million achieving more than 400 million page impressions.

- More than 14 million engagements on Autism Speaks social media posts
- More than 300 original stories of autistic people and their families

Invited 50,000+ families to participate in autism-friendly experiences, including holiday experiences with Cherry Hill Programs and travel experiences with JetBlue.

- Shared over 4,750 autism-friendly events and drew more than 480,000 unique page views to online calendar

Drew more than 20 million unique visitors and 24 million page views on autismspeaks.org, with more than 100,000 views of personal story profiles and videos.

Launched our grassroots advocacy network of 700 advocates, representing 48 states and the District of Columbia, who fueled spirited policy discussions across the country.

- More than 100 advocates met with 60 members of Congress and congressional staff at the first Autism Advocacy Forum and Hill Day in Washington, D.C.
- Hosted six state advocacy days to advance policy priorities, in collaboration with other organizations and advocates

Grew advocacy ambassador program to 340 volunteers who advocated in support of issues of concern to people with autism through 335 meetings with congressional leaders.

Advocated for the inclusion of people with developmental delays and disabilities in the United Nations Universal Health coverage commitment endorsed by the UN general assembly, in collaboration with UNICEF, the World Health Organization and Special Olympics.

Convened leadership conference to address disparities related to autism.

Engaged 350+ NCAA basketball programs through Coaches Powering Forward initiative to increase understanding and acceptance.



Michael P.
Autism researcher
Brother of sister with autism



MSSNG

The world's largest open-access genome database on autism, MSSNG is the cornerstone of genomics research at Autism Speaks. With partners Verily, DNASTack and Dr. Stephen Scherer's laboratory at the University of Toronto's Hospital for Sick Children, MSSNG deepens our understanding of subtypes of autism and their genetic causes, paving the way for personalized treatments.

- *Reported five new autism-linked genetic variants and their phenotypes*
- *Launched the sixth dataset with 11,000+ whole-genome sequences, as well as important technical upgrades, to speed the development of personalized health care*
- *Partnered with Takeda Pharmaceuticals to begin testing a new drug target in mouse models of an autism-related genetic variation*
- *Chosen as a Driver Project by the Global Alliance for Genomics and Health*
- *Launched first autism cloud-based search tool using the Beacon Network to find additional genomic variations*

Being a catalyst for life-enhancing research breakthroughs

Autism Speaks is committed to deepening our understanding of autism to enhance the lives of people on the spectrum. Through collaboration with leading autism researchers, healthcare providers, autistic people and their families, we aim to be a catalyst for life-enhancing research breakthroughs and genetic discoveries, which will in turn empower more personalized treatments and therapies.

Advocated for the passage and enactment of the Autism Cares Act of 2019, authorizing \$1.85 billion in federal funding for autism research, services, provider training and prevalence monitoring.

- Legislation received broad bipartisan support from over 173 U.S. representatives and 43 U.S. senators and was signed into law by the president on September 30, 2019

Funded nearly \$5 million in grants to 29 researchers studying autism in a range of basic and applied research projects with transition to adulthood receiving the largest amount of funding at nearly \$2.6 million.

Supported multiple studies to help improve the lives of children and adults on the spectrum, including:

- Exercise intervention to reduce anxiety in children with autism in underserved communities
- Randomized controlled trial of a dental intervention to include parent training to improve oral health
- Weight management intervention for youth with ASD
- Sleep education intervention to improve sleep habits and reduce sleep problems for children with autism and their families
- The effects of a mindfulness intervention on sleep and physical health in children with autism and intellectual disability
- Improving resiliency in teen siblings of children with autism using a mind-body intervention
- Improving sleep disturbance in children with autism by researching the impact of ferrous sulfate, a form of iron supplement
- Effects on brain function, memory, gaze, attention, quality of life and other outcomes through a randomized controlled trial of the antibiotic minocycline

Contributed to the understanding of social determinants of health, publishing research about the factors contributing to unmet healthcare needs among children and adolescents.

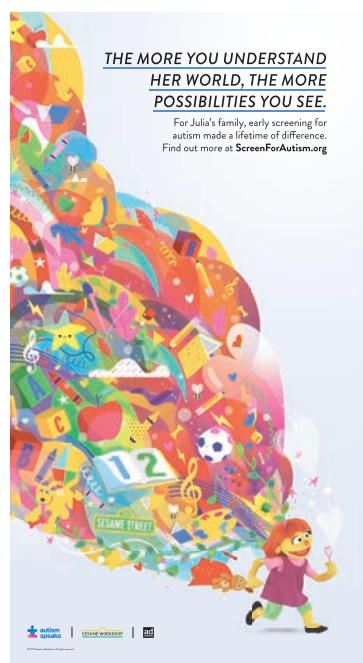
- Factors include access to health insurance, quality of health insurance, access to family-centered care, family-level stress, exposure to adverse childhood experiences and parental employment
- Determined children with ASD had four times higher odds of unmet health care needs compared to children without disabilities
- Learned children with other disabilities had nearly two times higher odds of unmet health care needs compared to children without disabilities

Presented findings of national survey data at the *International Society for Autism Research* and the *American Public Health Association's* annual conference.

- Findings aim to improve understanding of factors predicting psychiatric comorbidities and factors predicting departure from work among parents of children with ASD
- As a result of this analysis, a recommendation was made for employers to consider offering care coordination as part of benefits package

CUANTO MÁS ENTIENDAS SU MUNDO, MÁS POSIBILIDADES ENCONTRARÁS.

Para la familia de Julia, la detección temprana del autismo hizo una diferencia de por vida. Conoce más sobre la detección temprana en DeteccionDeAutismo.org.



Closing the diagnosis gap

In March 2020, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimate on autism prevalence increased by nearly 10 percent, to 1 in 54 children in the U.S. For the first time, prevalence rates are the same for Black and white children, and significant progress was made toward the number of children receiving developmental screening by age 3.

Core to our mission is to increase early screening and lower the age of diagnosis, especially in minority populations. This news could not be more rewarding to the thousands of Autism Speaks advocates, donors, volunteers and community partners, as well as campaign partners Ad Council and BBDO whose award-winning work helped make this progress possible.



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Increasing early childhood screening and timely interventions

Research shows that early screening and timely intervention can improve a child's overall development and future outcomes. We have seen substantial progress in this area over the last 15 years, but we know there is more work to be done to ensure all children have access to screening and early support that will help them thrive later in life.

In partnership with the Ad Council, Autism Speaks launched a new bilingual public service campaign to lower the age of diagnosis with an emphasis on underserved populations.

- Since the start of the campaign, more than 537,000 people have visited the M-CHAT, an online autism screening tool, a more than 56 percent increase in M-CHAT visitors from the prior year
- Provided access to resources in both Spanish and English, designed to offer early support and access to timely interventions, found at ScreenForAutism.org and DeteccionDeAutismo.org

Successfully promoted addition of autism insurance coverage in Wyoming and Tennessee, resulting in nationwide state coverage.

- Further advancement in coverage was made by the removal of caps in insurance coverage in New Mexico, Utah and Virginia state-regulated insurance plans as well as expanded coverage to the small group and individual markets in Virginia
- These advocacy efforts led to added meaningful autism insurance coverage for an additional 1.3 million people in 2020, bringing the cumulative total covered nationwide to 204 million people – an estimated 64 percent of the U.S. population

Helped pass the *ACE Kids Act* which gives states new options to provide coordinated care through a *Health Home for Children with Medically Complex Conditions* enrolled in Medicaid.

Supported training of more than 400 community-based medical providers in early screening and best practices in autism care through *ECHO Autism Primary Care*, a program to reduce delays in diagnosis and patient care, with participants reporting better screening and self-efficacy ratings.

Worked with state Medicaid agencies and stakeholders to implement coverage for the treatment of autism.

- Coverage included evidence-based therapeutic and behavioral services in Illinois, New York, Oklahoma, Texas and New Jersey to meet Medicaid's Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment mandate

Established the reliability and validity of a video-based screening tool for infants at risk of autism when used as early as 12 months of age.

Funded a randomized controlled trial of *Autism Treatment Network (ATN)* and the *Autism Intervention Research Network on Physical Health (AIR-P)* sites to monitor other autism centers and provide teleconference-based education interventions with nearly 150 primary care physicians.

- Results showed significant increases in autism screening, general developmental screening, PCP autism knowledge, PCP self-efficacy and significant decreases in number of perceived barriers to caring for children



Phil M., 30
Diagnosed at age 17



Self-advocate spotlight

Early detection means early intervention, but Phil M. didn't benefit from an early diagnosis. Until he was 15, he didn't know he was on the spectrum. He spent most of his childhood struggling with social anxiety, leading to poor attendance and failing marks in high school. It took Phil eight years and a transfer of schools to finally earn his diploma.

Today, this thriving 31-year old holds two jobs and cares for a young son. He credits his introduction to Autism Speaks for kickstarting his transformation into the man he is today.

"Until I got introduced to Autism Speaks... I had no resources whatsoever. As a matter of fact, I didn't even tell anyone I was autistic because I didn't think it was okay to be on the autism spectrum."

Though late in life, an autism diagnosis eventually empowered Phil to overcome adversity and embrace his authentic self.

Improving the transition to adulthood

Autism Speaks is committed to helping people with autism and their families navigate the journey from adolescence to adulthood. Every year, an estimated 70,000 autistic people age out of school-based services. We must ensure that children who have access to services and resources continue to receive support as they enter adulthood.

Launched *Delivering Jobs*, an inclusion campaign to create pathways to 1 million employment and leadership opportunities for people with autism, intellectual and/or developmental differences by 2025. In partnership with *Best Buddies*, *Special Olympics* and *Entertainment Industry Foundation*, *Delivering Jobs* will:

- Equip people with the resources to prepare for employment and leadership opportunities
- Motivate employers to hire, support and promote diverse and inclusive workforces
- Increase awareness about the low rate of employment for adults with autism, intellectual and/or developmental differences and challenge the public to advocate for inclusion and equity

Pursued policy solutions for autistic people transitioning from adolescence to adulthood, through strategic partnerships within the autism community.

- Successfully passed state legislation to lower the age of transition services in Connecticut from 16 to 14 and co-hosted a legislative forum focusing on transition in that state, creating a model to pursue similar legislation in states nationwide
- Testified at a congressional briefing on *Civil Rights Protections in Public Schools for Children and Youth with Disabilities*

Convened a *Thought Leadership Summit* on transition to adulthood.

- The two-day meeting brought together research leaders, policymakers, autistic people, parents and service providers to discuss how research can help support autistic adults in achieving their goals

Advocated for the reauthorization of the *Higher Education Act* to include expanded and improved access to academic, social, financial, mental health and other services.

Reached more than 7,000 job seekers on the free Autism Speaks online jobs portal.

- Autistic job seekers can access over 300 employers and 650 service providers from across the country, including *Cummins*, *University of Miami*, *Panera Bread*, *Harvard University*, *Simons Foundations* and more

Continued to work with families and individuals to ensure they maximize available benefits through *ABLE* tax-free savings accounts, with more than \$380 million in assets under management in *ABLE* accounts as of March 2020.

Championed access and improved supports in federal apprenticeship programs and other workplace-based learning experiences that increase access to education, training and employment opportunities.

Championed the extension of the federal “*Money Follows the Person*” program, providing state grants to expand access to home- and community-based services for youth and adults with autism, through November 2020.

Continued to increase corporate employment efforts by assisting companies in developing autism-led hiring initiatives.

- Consultants mentored and trained through this program created more than 600 jobs for people with autism at *Cintas*, *Staples*, *Amazon*, *Quest Diagnostics* and *Meijer Superstores*



Eddie L., 22
Diagnosed at age 3



Providing help and hope

The Autism Response Team (ART) are trained specialists providing reliable information and personalized support to the autism community in English and Spanish.

In 2019, ART connected with more than 51,000 people in the autism community through phone calls, emails, social media and chat, providing personalized interactive tools, expert advice and free information on topics across the life span.

When COVID-19 upended so many lives, ART saw a more than 30 percent increase in incoming requests, providing support and guidance to more than 1,000 people and families and guiding more than 50,000 people to access vital resources through newly created COVID web content.

ART remains on call, committed to providing for our community's diverse and evolving needs.

Ensuring access to reliable information and services throughout the life span

Ensuring access to reliable, vetted information and services throughout the life span can only be achieved through work in communities nationwide and around the globe, prioritizing diversity and individual experiences regardless of age or level of need.

Aided more than 4.1 million people through funded services and supports.

Provided access to online tool kits, downloaded more than 184,000 times. Expanded access to information and resources through Facebook, podcasts and story-sharing.

- All 23 *Autism Treatment Network* tool kits covering medical and behavioral topics in autism, as well as one-page lay summaries, were translated into Spanish
- Two video tool kits about communication supports were developed in English and Spanish, and two sleep video tool kits were also translated into Spanish
- Tool kits available in up to six languages: English, Spanish, Arabic, Vietnamese, French and Somali

Shared information and engaged the public on topics including early diagnosis, transition, adult services and financial assistance through 130 community meetings and outreach town hall events serving more than 15,000 people.

Conducted 1,000+ community training and outreach events, including 71 in non-English-speaking communities.

Published results of transition of the *Autism Treatment Network* into *Autism Learning Health Network*, working with families, clinicians and researchers to accelerate the discovery and dissemination of best practices in medical care.

Helped improve medical and behavioral care of more than 46,000 children and teens with autism, who saw primary care physicians at the 12 sites of the *Autism Learning Health Network* across North America.

Improved access to autism care in local communities, particularly in rural and underserved populations by expanding *ECHO Autism Primary Care* program to nearly 800 providers. *ECHO Autism* provides virtual mentoring and best-practices education for community health providers.

Hosted congressional briefing on *Autism and Disparities: Addressing the Needs of Underserved communities*, sharing perspectives from diverse communities and engaging Congress in this important national discussion.

Brought services and guidance to thousands of autism families in low- or no-resource settings. In collaboration with the World Health Organization, we expanded Caregiver Skills Training program to 40 communities in the U.S. and abroad.

Provided relief when the COVID-19 pandemic hit the United States in late February, rallying our organization and the broader autism community to:

- Provide financial assistance to more than 400 families through *Autism Cares* grants
- Field more than 1,000 contacts to provide real-time support for those impacted by connecting them to local resources and critical information
- Design a resource page to make it easy for families, adults on the spectrum and healthcare providers or educators to find resources to address the broad range of needs resulting from the pandemic
- Work tirelessly to ensure that the autism community was represented at the grassroots, state and federal advocacy levels as legislators pushed through emergency plans in response to the pandemic



Together, Autism Speaks and Autism Speaks Canada have made extraordinary advancements in the autism community since 2006. With 1 in 66 children and youth in Canada on the spectrum, we remain steadfast in achieving our mission objectives while creating a kinder, more inclusive world for people touched by autism.

Increasing understanding and acceptance of people with autism

- Alongside *Canadian Autism Spectrum Disorder Alliance* (CASDA), Autism Speaks Canada took a leadership role in advocating for a national autism strategy, which was mandated by the Prime Minister of Canada to the Health Minister.
- Executed annual *World Autism Month* campaign to increase global understanding and acceptance of people with autism.
- Launched *Brighter Life on the Spectrum* campaign, sharing authentic stories of autistic Canadians and their unique strengths, challenges, dreams and goals.
- Hosted 18 *Autism Speaks Canada Walks* in five provinces raising more than \$720,000 with over 6,000 participants.
- Provided opportunities for autism-friendly experiences including 400+ sensory friendly movie screenings in 35 locations, hundreds of visits with Santa and the Easter Bunny in over 50 locations, over 100 weekly participants in autism-friendly online gaming streaming events and more.
- Gifted 500 new tablets to individuals with autism and service providers across Canada.

Being a catalyst for life-enhancing research breakthroughs

- Funded two *Canadian Autism Treatment Network* sites dedicated to improving medical care for children with autism.
- Launched the *Partners in Autism Research Fund* in partnership with *Canadian Institutes of Health Research* (CIHR), *Sinneave Family Foundation* and *Kids Brain Health Network* to support early-career investigators.

Increasing early childhood screening and timely interventions

- Provided access to the *M-CHAT-R* online risk assessment screening tool, accessed by over 2,500 Canadians.
- Through funding from the *Public Agency of Canada* (PHAC), partnered with *McGill University* on *Caregivers Skills Training Program* which includes training for five rural and remote service organizations from our Canadian Rural and Remote Network.

Improving the transition to adulthood

- Through *Worktopia National Employment Network*, collaborated with *Sinneave Family Foundation*, autistic adults and other stakeholders to improve the odds of employment success by collecting and sharing data, and networking.
- Through funding from the Government of Canada, collaborated with the *Sinneave Family Foundation* on *Employment-Works* to help autistic individuals build employable skills and create more inclusive workplaces. This program is offered through 10 participating agencies, attracting over 500 participants and 300 employers.
- Collaborated with *Substance Cares* to host *Spectrum Works* job fairs to match autistic individuals with potential employers in Montreal, Vancouver and Toronto.

Ensuring access to reliable information and services throughout the life span

- Provided access to direct services for more than 2,300 individuals through *Family Services Community Grants*; \$286,048 through eight grants shared between 26 organizations.
- Continued to provide reliable information and service navigation through *Autism Speaks Canada CONNECT*, with over 18,000 members, 4,700 service providers mapped and over 861 resources available for free.
- Continued to offer free tool kits for every stage of life. Nearly 6,330 copies downloaded by families and professionals.



Thank you to the Autism Speaks Walk community!

Autism Speaks Walk is the world's largest autism fundraising event dedicated to improving the lives of people with autism. Fueled by the pride of people with autism and the love of the parents, grandparents, siblings, friends, relatives and providers who support them, the 2019 Autism Speaks Walk program raised \$16.5 million across 74 cities nationwide.

Each Walk event is a celebration of the autism community – filled with meaningful messages of hope and positivity – with the funds used to ensure people of all abilities have access to the tools needed to reach their fullest potential.

Because of the selfless people who dedicate their valuable time and donate to fuel our mission to promote solutions, across the spectrum and throughout the life span, Autism Speaks is able to do more good for more people with autism and those who support them.

Top Fundraisers



Lisa Katz
\$ 294,265



Bob & Susan Wright
\$ 173,853



Harry Topping
\$ 124,733



Marla Garchik
\$ 64,964



Neil Balter
\$ 64,927



Spencer Savitz
\$ 51,423



Ryan Arenson
\$ 50,707



Doug Krisnsky
\$ 46,139



Christopher Norris
\$ 43,710



Susie Homer
\$ 43,315



Team Katz
\$ 297,582



NYC Dept. of Sanitation
\$ 119,922



Team Topping
\$ 102,305



**MC Companies
Sharing the Good
Life For Autism**
\$ 100,031



**Chicago
Trading Co.**
\$ 98,180



Team Tyler
\$ 83,800



**Teamsters
Local 25**
\$ 75,000



North Allegheny
(An Evening for Autism)
\$ 70,937



**Christian's
Crusaders**
\$ 66,653



**Jack Garchik's
Crew**
\$ 65,420



Chicago
\$ 1,036,305



Los Angeles
\$ 949,460



Long Island
\$ 645,956



Arizona
\$ 631,946



Miami
\$ 585,928



Atlanta
\$ 585,680



Greater Boston
\$ 524,947



New York City
\$ 463,293



Philadelphia
\$ 411,121




Pittsburgh
\$ 405,843

*Event totals



Funding our mission

April is World Autism Month. Help create a kinder world.  autism speaks

Amanda's Birthday Fundraiser for Autism Speaks
Fundraiser for Autism Speaks by Amanda O'Malley

Donate to Nonprofit

Invite Share More

Fundraiser Ended
Amanda reached her birthday goal! Thanks to everyone who donated.
\$1,700 / \$200 raised

Fundraiser Ended
Robert reached his birthday goal! Thanks to everyone who donated.
\$430 / \$200 raised

Fundraiser Ended
Amanda reached her birthday goal! Thanks to everyone who donated.
\$1,700 / \$200 raised

Fundraiser Ended
Sue reached her birthday goal! Thanks to everyone who donated.
\$210 / \$200 raised

Special events

In 2019, Autism Speaks hosted fundraising events across the country to fuel our mission, and we are grateful to the generous supporters who make it all possible. Our signature events included: *Celebrity Chef Gala* in New York City, *Chip-In Night* in Chicago and golf events at *Winged Foot Golf Club* in New York, *Baltusrol Golf Club* in New Jersey and *Whitmoor Country Club* in St. Louis, MO. Combined, these events raised more than \$4 million further funding research, advocacy, services and supports.

We count on each of our selfless supporters to drive our mission to promote solutions, across the spectrum and throughout the life span for the needs of people with autism and their families. Our supporters included our ticket and sponsorship guests, world-renowned chefs, celebrities from various entertainment industries, in-kind donors and other dedicated volunteers in both leadership positions and day-of support.

Alpha Xi Delta

In 2019, Alpha Xi Delta raised more than \$1.7 million for Autism Speaks through Autism Speaks Walk and signature *AmaXing Challenge* events and a *Letters of Love* campaign where Alpha Xi Delta members commit to doing more in heartfelt messages to the autism community.

Since 2009, Alpha Xi Delta Women's Fraternity has raised more than \$11 million for Autism Speaks and, as the *National Walk Partner*, fraternity members currently walk and volunteer at *Autism Speaks Walk* events nationwide. With over 162,000 initiated members and 129 chapters all across the country, the visibility, planning and energy that Alpha Xi Delta brings to our walks are an enormous part of their overall success.

TeamUp and endurance events

Endurance athletes again went the extra mile to show their support of Autism Speaks, raising \$2.2 million! Their amazing fundraising efforts while participating in world-class events such as the *TCS New York City Marathon*, *London Marathon*, *Berlin Marathon*, *Chicago Marathon* and the *runDisney* event series resulted in \$1.2 million raised for the organization. In seven communities throughout the United States, runners came together for our Autism Speaks series of local 5K and 8K events while raising \$600K for the mission.

We once again partnered with the *Bike to the Beach* series of events in New York, Washington, D.C., Maryland, New England and Houston and were the recipients of a gracious donation of \$400K.

Thank you to our social media community

Each year, our amazing and dedicated social media community fuels our mission through Facebook and Instagram fundraising – celebrating birthdays, milestones and more by raising vital funds to support people with autism and their families. We are so grateful for the continued commitment of this engaged and caring community of supporters.



*left to right:
Robert Varnedoe, Layne Varnedoe, Bill Murray, Eve Murray, John Varnedoe*



Donor spotlight: Meet the Varnedoe family

Autism Speaks commitment to helping more people earlier and improving the transition to adulthood for people with autism hits very close to home for Layne and Robert Varnedoe of Homersville, GA.

As owners and operators of *Lee Container*, a national leader in the packaging industry, and parents with an adult son with autism, the topic of employment is important to the Varnedoe family. Founded in 1989 by Donald Lee, Layne's father and Robert's father-in-law, Lee Container was built on the principle that everyone associated with the company – customers, employees, suppliers and distributors – should treat each other as they would want to be treated. Today, this principle continues to guide their business.

Together with Autism Speaks, *Lee Container* is committed to creating opportunities for people with autism and other disabilities to thrive in the workplace – starting in Iowa where one of three production lines is located. In 2019, through the *J. Donald Lee and Laurelle Lee Family Foundation*, led by Layne and her sister Eve, the family together made a generous \$3.7 million gift that will help to advance our commitment to early diagnosis, access to ongoing services and support, and the opportunity for employment.



“We support Autism Speaks because they exceeded our expectations to provide opportunities for those on the autism spectrum to thrive and contribute so much to our society,” Robert said. “We know the opportunities because we are raising John, an awesome 25-year-old young man on the spectrum, who touches so many lives each and every day. We hope that our support will empower other young people on the spectrum, like John, to reach their full potential through meaningful employment.”



The Varnedoe family has also committed to supporting Autism Speaks' efforts to expanding access to care for individuals and families in rural areas. Living in a small town in rural Georgia, they recognize the challenges of accessing autism health care and clinical services outside of major metropolitan areas, so bridging the access gap has become a priority for them. The *Autism Learning Health Network (ALHN)* and telehealth/mentoring, offered through *ECHO Autism*, a virtual learning network of providers offering real-time access to autism and behavioral experts, are helping to create better access and services for their community in Georgia and many others throughout the nation.

With the generosity and unwavering support of champions like the Varnedoe family and *Lee Container*, we look forward to shaping brighter futures for the millions of people with autism in the U.S. today.



Thank you to our generous partners



We are so grateful to our corporate partners for their resolute commitment to our work. Their fundraising campaigns, sponsored events and selfless volunteerism empower our mission.

ILLUMINATOR | \$1 MILLION OR MORE



T.J. Maxx conducted its 16th annual World Autism Month campaign, inviting customers to raise valuable funds towards increasing understanding and acceptance of people with autism.



Toys R Us Canada generously supports Autism Speaks Canada, empowering service providers to build their capacity to support individuals and families impacted by autism.



The Truist Foundation (formerly SunTrust Foundation) announced a two-year grant, expanding upon its partnership to promote financial well-being among families impacted by autism and other disabilities.

CHAMPION | \$500,000 - \$999,999



Quadrant Biosciences provided support for Autism Speaks' work in early diagnosis and intervention as well as key research priorities.



GameStop furthered their support of our mission through an initiative to increase employment opportunities for autistic people, including, among other support, awarding grants to 14 organizations to help teach digital skills to people across the autism spectrum.



KRG Children's Charitable Foundation's support helped to kick start the groundbreaking MSSNG Project in Canada.



Stanley Black & Decker created a first-of-its-kind partnership with Autism Speaks to establish a community college curriculum focused on skills that will prepare people with autism to pursue skilled-labor jobs in manufacturing.



As a partner since 2009, **White Castle** continued to raise funds for Autism Speaks through an annual point of sale campaign, fueling our mission in deep, meaningful ways for more than a decade.

FOUNDER'S CIRCLE | \$100,000 - \$499,999



Bob's Furniture contributed as a multi-location sponsor of Autism Speaks Walk and featured Autism Speaks as its second-quarter Café Collections in-store partner.



Charitable Auto Resources (CARS) accepts donated autos, boats or other motor vehicles to benefit Autism Speaks.



Grant support from **Costco** ensures Autism Speaks' Autism Response Team (ART) can continue to connect people with the information and resources they need to reach their fullest potential.



Since 2015, **Cherry Hill Programs** has delivered experiences across North America for families of children with autism and other special needs, including Santa and Easter Bunny visits in a more calm environment at premier shopping destinations.



Great Wolf Lodge continued their support through on-property fundraising initiatives like blue co-branded Wolf Ears, sensory friendly events and the #GreatWolfCares social media campaign.



More than **100 HHM (Hersha Hospitality Management) hotels** again hosted their World Autism Month campaign with custom hotel fundraising events, donations at check-in and a raffle rewards program.



Home Depot partnered with Philips/Signify Lighting to help people "Light It Up Blue," with blue light bulbs in stores across North America.



Lids created a limited-edition "Lids Gives" collection of new embroidery options for headwear including the blue puzzle-piece logo and messages of inclusion, donating to our mission through customized merchandise sales.



Michaels confirmed a five-year partnership to support Autism Speaks in a hiring and employment initiative for people with disabilities, including people with autism.



Samsung Canada in partnership with Autism Speaks Canada has donated over 2,500 tablets since 2014 to families and service organizations across Canada.



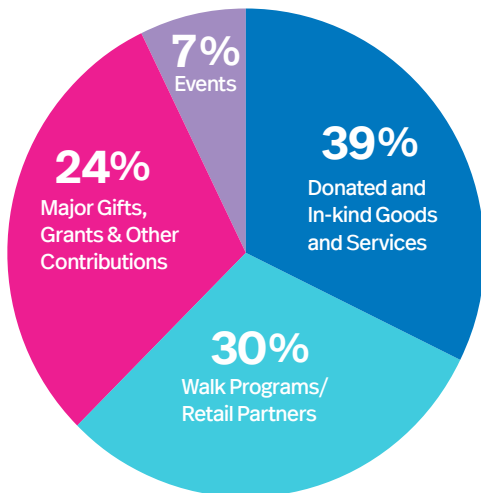
Vellux®, a WestPoint Homes brand, committed to a valuable donation from the proceeds of its weighted blanket sales and was a generous sponsor of the 2019 NYC Autism Speaks Walk.



Wilson Sporting Goods offered the limited-edition "Love the Moment" line of baseball equipment benefiting Autism Speaks.

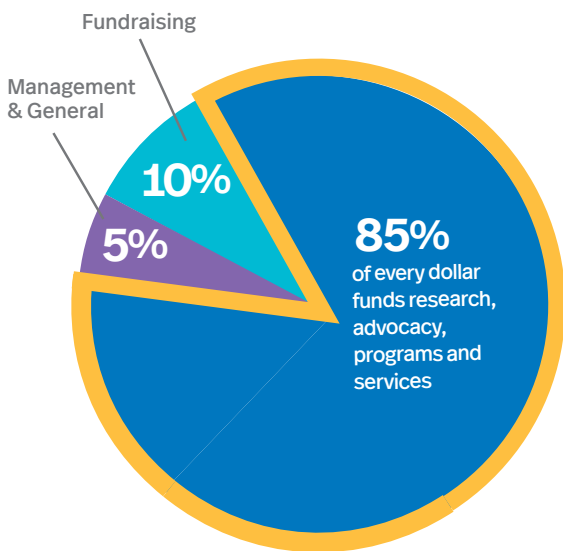


Financials April 2019 - March 2020



FUNDING SOURCES

Donated and In-kind Goods and Services	\$ 37.0 M
Walk Programs/Retail Partners	\$ 28.5 M
Major Gifts, Grants and Other Contributions	\$ 23.1 M
Events	\$ 6.2 M
Total	\$ 94.8 M



YOUR DOLLARS AT WORK

PROGRAM SERVICES

Understanding & Acceptance	\$ 45.0 M
Services and Support	\$ 18.2 M
Science	\$ 12.8 M
Total	\$ 76.0 M

SUPPORTING SERVICES

Management and General	\$ 4.5 M
Fundraising	\$ 8.5 M
Total	\$ 13.0 M

85¢ of every dollar funds research, advocacy, programs and services

NET ASSETS

TOTAL NET ASSETS

at March 31, 2020	Total	\$ 43.2 M
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To view Autism Speaks' complete audited financial statements and Form 990 please refer to our website autismspeaks.org/about-us/annual-reports. Donated media is not included on Form 990 per IRS guidelines.

Included in the Funding Sources and Your Dollars at Work are donated and in-kind goods and services totaling \$37.0M, primarily related to media and related services, with \$36.5M supporting our program services and \$.5M relating to fundraising efforts.



DaShaun V., 18
Diagnosed at age 16



**Thank you for helping us
achieve 15 years of progress.**

We wouldn't be here without you.



Leonardo A., 4
Diagnosed at age 2



Scarlett D., 4
Diagnosed at age 17 months



autism speaks®

Autism Speaks operations are located throughout the United States and Canada to address the needs of the autism community. To find an office, event or support near you, please visit autismspeaks.org.

MAIN OFFICES

New York

1 East 33rd Street
4th Floor
New York, NY 10016
(646) 385-8500

Princeton

1060 State Road
2nd Floor
Princeton, NJ 08540
(609) 228-7310

Toronto

2450 Victoria Park Avenue
Unit 400
Toronto, ON M2J 4A2
(416) 362-6227