

ANNUAL REPORT 2024



LIFE STEPS  FOUNDATION®

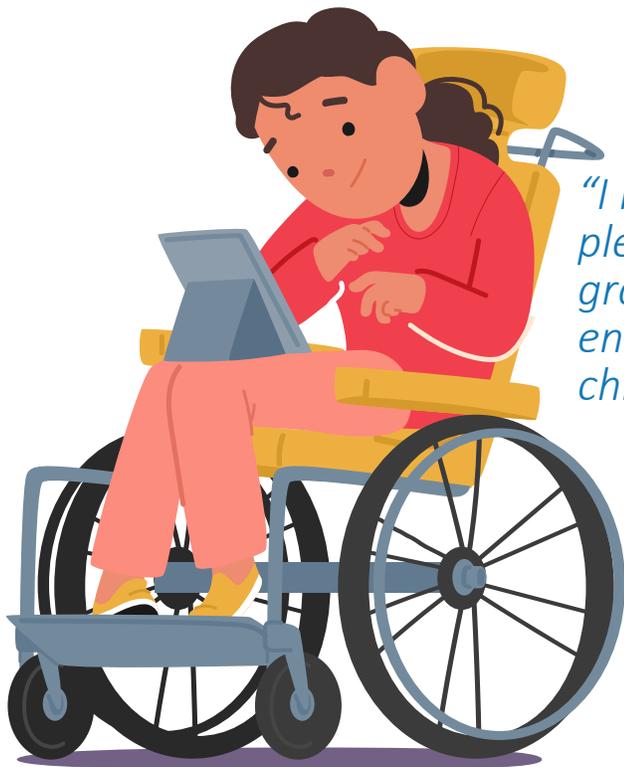
Changing lives one step at a time

Community Comments

“You are Arwen’s favorite teacher. She really likes to play with you and she listens to you.” -Arwen’s Mother.

“Thank you very much for everything you have taught Kingsley in the past year! I appreciate all your patience with him. We wish you the best!” -Kingsley’s Parents

*“Marisa and Sarah were positive, knowledgeable, with great energy. They made each week really enjoyable.”
-Parent*



“I loved participating in this and was pleasantly surprised by this great program! It was nice meeting other parents and getting some feedback on my child’s behaviors.” -Parent

“I really love the community and being able to connect to other parents.” -Parent

A Message from our Chief Executive Officer and Board President

In October 2023, Life Steps Foundation celebrated its 40th anniversary through its signature Lobster Feed fundraising dinner. The celebration was a rousing success and everyone had great time. There were many familiar faces at the event who have generously supported our organization and those we serve over the years. All event proceeds are used to enhance our programs and services for children with delays, adults with developmental disabilities, and frail seniors.

In April 2024, our organization held its virtual Fun Run for Inclusion 5K virtual event. We invited supporters from across California and beyond to be true heroes and join in to celebrate diverse abilities. Our supporters were invited to run, walk, bike, or hike the distance at their favorite location. Life Steps Foundation was fortunate to have several organizations sponsor Fun Run for Inclusion 5K 2024 including Albertsons Companies Foundation, Los Angeles County Supervisor Hilda L. Solis and the First District, Supervisor Janice Hahn and the Fourth District, and Supervisor Kathryn Barger and the Fifth District. The following additional sponsors also supported the Fun Run for Inclusion: Walmart, Acrisure, Nor-Cal FDC, Touchstone Development Company, JBC Group, LLC, PYC Commercial, S3M Insurance Services, Walnut Valley Water District, and ICW Group Insurance Companies.

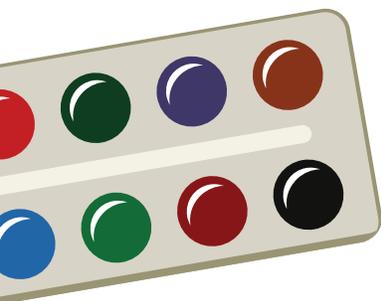
It is my pleasure to report the fiscal health of Life Steps Foundation remains in good standing with a well-managed budget structure to ensure the continued strengthening of cash reserves for long-term stability and to establish a future endowment. I am also pleased to report that in fiscal year 2023-2024 Life Steps Foundation had a 20 percent increase in contributed revenue such as individual donations and grants compared to the previous fiscal year 2022-2023. We continue to work diligently to tap into new sources of donations and grants to diversify the revenue that makes it possible for Life Steps Foundation to deliver vital programs and services, in an effort to bolster long-term sustainability.

Life Steps Foundation also continues to invest in the professional development of its staff members. This will foster future leadership and expanded capabilities across all Life Steps Foundation program locations. We recognize the importance of succession planning for organization sustainability to continue to deliver vital developmental disability and senior programs and services for years to come. Ongoing professional development is a key part of this endeavor.

Sincerely,


Susan Chang, M.S.
Chief Executive Officer


Peggy Huang
Board President



LIFE STEPS



FOUNDATION®
Annual Report 2024

About Life Steps Foundation

Mission

Life Steps Foundation is a fiscally responsible, culturally competent California 501(c)(3) nonprofit dedicated to meeting the health, psychological and socioeconomic challenges of people throughout their lifespan who are experiencing mental, developmental or physical disabilities.

History and Goals

Life Steps Foundation (LSF) began in the South Bay of Los Angeles County providing children's services in 1983 as a partnership between three mental health professionals who identified the need for in-home educational and preventive interventions as an alternative to costly institutionalization. Today, LSF is a statewide nonprofit with an annual budget of more than \$10 million providing intensive services to a monthly average of 900 individuals from infants to seniors. Our core tenets are integrity, social responsibility, diversity, equity, teamwork and collaboration, creativity, innovation, and transparency. Life Steps' Board of Directors and staff are over 70 percent minority represented.

Life Steps Foundation assists people with developmental disabilities to acquire confidence, training and social and emotional support needed to overcome obstacles related to their disability. At times, all of us need help taking the more challenging steps in life. When someone is living with a mental, developmental or physical disability, navigating through even the most basic challenges of daily life can be overwhelming. The individuals we serve enjoy an increased quality of life and thrive as vital members of their communities through their experience at Life Steps.

In alignment with its mission, Life Steps Foundation's primary goals are to: 1) Help children and adults achieve their full potential, 2) Empower people with development disabilities and elderly at risk of institutionalization to live independently, 3) Inspire and equip program participants with the necessary skills to become responsible, self-sufficient individuals able to function productively in their homes and communities, and 4) Serve as an information resource for assisting people with developmental disabilities and senior citizens.

Programs and Services

- Children and Family Services - In-home early intervention, inclusion preschools, and parent training.
 - Adult Services - Life skills training, in-home support, and center-based activities.
 - Senior Care - In-home assistance.

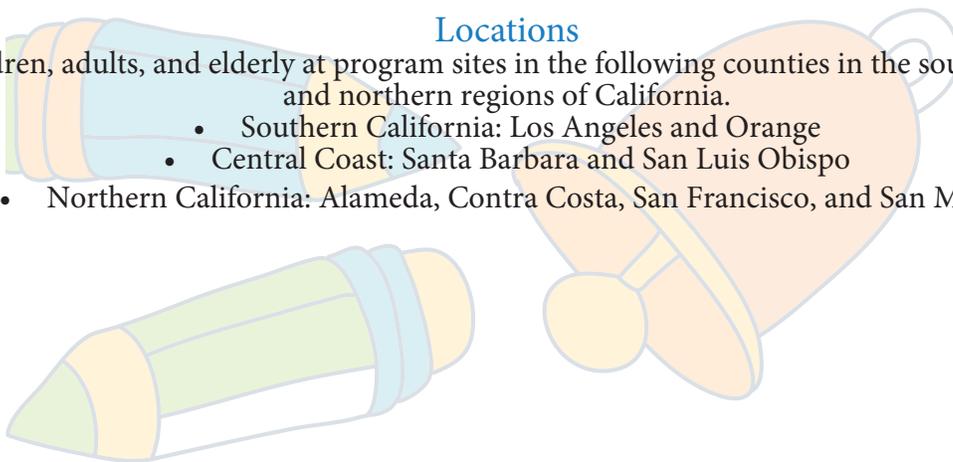
Awards and Recognition

Life Steps Foundation is well-established throughout California and respected for its commitment to best practices, quality services, empowerment of the individuals it serves, and focus on prevention. Over the years, Life Steps has been recognized several times for its work by the United States Senate, California State Senate, California State Assembly, and City of Los Angeles among other government entities.

Locations

LSF serves children, adults, and elderly at program sites in the following counties in the southern, central coast, and northern regions of California.

- Southern California: Los Angeles and Orange
- Central Coast: Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo
- Northern California: Alameda, Contra Costa, San Francisco, and San Mateo



Life Steps Foundation Children and Family Services in SoCal



Participant Story

Arwen was referred to Life Steps Foundation at 24 months old due to concerns with language and social emotional development. She lives with her mother, older brother and grandmother. Arwen was very active with a short attention span. When she first received our services, she could not sit still for more than 3 minutes. In addition, she did not follow any directions during play because she did not respond to people at all. Our Early Interventionist decided to start with outdoor activities since Arwen could not sit still, and she enjoyed playing with the swing, slides and jungle gyms. During play, she started to talk and learned to say words like “down,” “push,” and “follow me.” Then Arwen started to show more engagement and interaction during play. By the end of our service, Arwen had learned many words and phrases for daily uses, and she could sit for the whole session and play accordingly. She greeted the Early Interventionist every time by saying, “Good morning.” Arwen’s parents are very proud of her improvement in building connection with people, communicating with people, and playing meaningfully.

Our Participants

Total Participants Served 227

Demographics

African American	12%
Asian/Pacific Islander	23%
Caucasian	13%
Latino/Hispanic	45%
Other/Multiple	7%

Types of Disabilities

Autism Spectrum Disorder
Cognitive, Motor and Social Delays
Developmental Disability
Counties Served: Los Angeles

Program

LSF CAFS SoCal, with services throughout Los Angeles County, meets the needs of our youngest community members. Youngsters from birth to four years old who have or are at risk of developmental delays and have a diagnosis of developmental disabilities learn through in-home and center-based (alongside children without disabilities) early intervention programs. These specialized programs support the youngster and maximize their development while helping parents foster their child’s full potential. Through play and fun activities that attract the child’s interest, our young participants learn many skills including how to socialize, make changes from one activity to another, develop attention skills, use language and cope with emotional challenges.



Life Steps Foundation Southern California Adult Services



Participant Story

Reyna is a single mother of five children who struggles to make ends meet financially after her son was no longer eligible for IHSS. This was a main source of income. Reyna was waiting to receive employment support services from the Regional Center and CA Department of Rehab to help get a new job. She had enough of waiting and asked if she had to use these services to get a job. Life Steps explained that she could apply without these services, but she would not have the safety net of on-the-job coaching. After thinking about it, Reyna decided she was going to revise her resume and start applying for housekeeping/caregiving jobs in her area. She landed a perfect opportunity one day when she was speaking to her mobile park property manager about her job search. Reyna was told that there was a ground's keeper position open and that she should apply. This was perfect. Reyna would not have to drive to work. She only had to walk a few feet to the maintenance yard and could have lunch at home, saving money on gas and food. Reyna received assistance from Life Steps with the application process and role-playing interview questions. With Reyna's dedication, hard work, and practice she was hired as the ground's keeper at her mobile park community.

Our Participants

Total Participants Served 200

Demographics

African American	18%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	2%
Asian	8%
Caucasian	30%
Latino/Hispanic	31%
Other/Multiple	11%

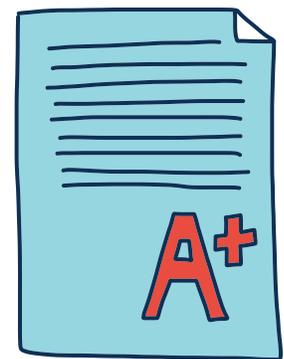
Types of Disabilities

- Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Cerebral Palsy
- Intellectual Disability
- Epilepsy
- Seizure

Counties Served: Los Angeles and Orange

Program

LSF SCAS is based in Long Beach, California and serves an average of nearly 300 adults in the Southern California region each year. Many of the individuals served have a comorbidity of intellectual disability, physical disability and mental illness. We help the adults we serve to maximize their independence and maintain their desired quality of life. Participants learn critical life skills and socialize through a variety of engaging programs, training and center-based activities. The collaborative effort between the program participants and their instructors helps participants become more autonomous, develop a circle of support, reach goals and become positive contributors to their communities.



Life Steps Foundation Central Coast Adult Services

Participant Story

Micheal is a part of our Independent Living Skills program at Life Steps Foundation. He lives independently in the back house and his step-mom lives in the front house. Micheal is very sweet and caring. He would help anyone who needs it. Michael loves to go out to see bands in concert, go to the movies, and spend time with his animals. He likes to take his dog out for walks, especially when he is not working at the A Street Café where he works in the dining room bussing tables and giving menus. Michael is also very active in his church's activities. In his free time, he likes to bake and try new recipes found on dinner boxes. Life Steps assists Micheal with his independence by working on budgeting, counting money, completing paperwork for generic resources such as Section 8, food stamps, Medi-Cal, and more. We also assist him with going to doctor's appointments by helping Micheal understand and process the information explained during the appointment. Without Life Steps' assistance, Micheal would not be able to live on his own due to not being able to apply for and keep the generic resources available for many individuals. It is important to Micheal that he can make his own choices and live separate from his family but still have them nearby.



Our Participants

Total Participants Served	105
Adults	52
Seniors	53

Demographics

African American	2%
Asian	4%
Caucasian	73%
Latino/Hispanic	14%
Native American	2%
Other Multiple	5%

Types of Disabilities

- Alzheimer's and Dementia
 - Autism Spectrum Disorder
 - Bipolar Disorder
 - Cerebral Palsy
 - Diabetes and Epilepsy
 - Down Syndrome
 - Intellectual Disability
 - Motor Dysfunction and Symbolic Dysfunction
 - Schizophrenia
- Counties Served: Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo

Program

LSF CCAS provides in-home supportive services and fosters independent living skills for adults with physical and developmental disabilities. Program participants learn daily living skills, and through in-home assistance provided by caring and specially trained staff, they lead full and independent lives within their own community. Some participants live independently and others live with their families or in another supportive environment. Working closely with Life Steps Community Support Facilitators, participants develop skills to overcome everyday challenges and meet their individual goals.

LSF's Senior Homemaker Program provides older adults over the age of 60 who reside in North Santa Barbara County and San Luis Obispo County with Homemaker and Personal Care services. Program participants, many with low income, find that this program empowers them to remain independent in their homes. Life Steps staff members assist participants with light housekeeping and personal care. All services are provided free of charge thanks to funding from the Area Agency on Aging.



Life Steps Foundation Children and Family Services in NorCal

Participant Story

Gael was about two years old when he was referred to Life Steps Foundation Children and Family Services for support with his communication abilities. The initial focus of the sessions was finding games and songs that helped Gael express interest in imitating sounds and making requests. Gael was a happy and playful boy but tended to get frustrated when not able to communicate needs. His frustration drove him to lash out at those around him. Beyond throwing things at the source of his frustration, he often resorted to a game that was really only fun for him – throwing toys behind the couch for his mother to retrieve while he cried. He even brought the broom out for her to get the toys. Our Infant Development Specialist (IDS) recommended limit setting in sessions. The IDS and mother realized part of the root of Gael’s behavioral outbursts was inconsistent limits being set for what he was allowed to do in the home. Working with the IDS, Gael’s mother realized the consistent styles of play and habits built during the sessions led to fewer outbursts and more focused playing. Our IDS explained to Gael that toys thrown behind the couch will stay there until his mother wants to get them and not whenever they get thrown. His mother followed through by holding firm on the limit and sitting with Gael to help him process his feelings and frustrations. His play became calmer, and he spent more time persisting at an activity rather than getting frustrated and sending it into the black hole behind the couch. He began to use more words and learned to use verbal or signed request for items rather than cry for what he wanted. It was exciting for his mother and the IDS as his language blossomed and his play became gentler.

Our Participants

Total Participants Served 443

Demographics

African American	1%
Asian/Pacific Islander	12%
Caucasian	48%
Latino/Hispanic	5%
Other/Multiple	34%

Types of Disabilities

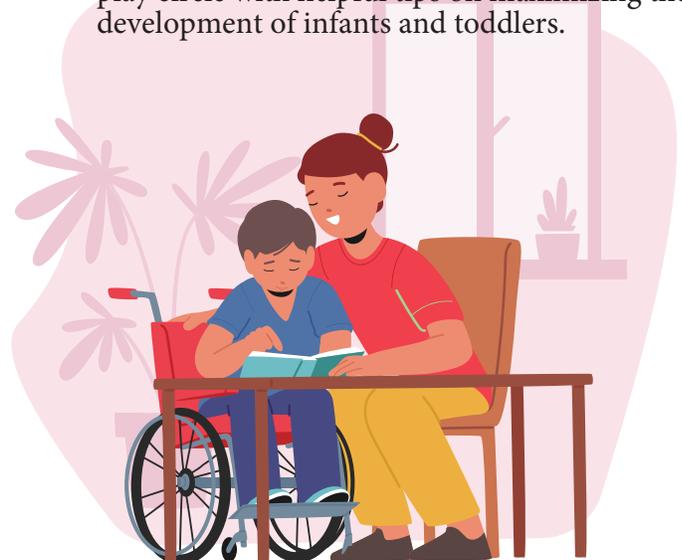
Autism Spectrum Disorder
Cognitive, Motor and Social Delays
Developmental Disability

Counties Served: Alameda, Contra Costa,
San Francisco and San Mateo



Program

LSF CAFS NorCal, with services throughout the San Francisco Bay Area, meets the needs of our youngest community members. Youngsters from birth to three years old who have or are at risk of developmental delays and have a diagnosis of developmental disabilities learn through in-home and center-based early intervention programs (alongside children without delays). This includes our WE Play We Learn inclusion-based preschool program in the scenic coastal community of Pacifica, CA. These specialized programs support the youngster and maximize their development while helping parents foster their child’s full potential. Through play and fun activities that attract the child’s interest, our young participants learn many skills including how to socialize, make changes from one activity to another, develop attention skills, use language and cope with emotional challenges. Additionally, LSF CAFS NorCal offers a Mommy and Me virtual play circle with helpful tips on maximizing the development of infants and toddlers.



Life Steps Foundation Northern California Adult Services

Participant Story

One of the most loved participants here at Social Dynamics Adult Day Program is D.M. He is a 33-year-old who started attending the program almost a decade ago. During his first few years with the program, he exhibited multiple maladaptive behaviors and refused to participate in any activity. Every day was a big challenge for any staff member assigned to him. Due to our team's determination in helping him over the years to improve his way of living and work towards personal growth, we gradually found ways to help D.M. decrease his undesirable behaviors and learn to do activities independently with occasional assistance from his staff. As of this time, his behavioral goals have all been met for the past three years. D.M. is currently working with his favorite staff member to achieve his objectives. On May 23, the team went to Coyote Point Park in San Mateo for our annual Memorial Day barbeque picnic. He enjoyed the celebration and being with his community of friends.



Our Participants

Total Participants Served 56

Demographics

African American	13%
Asian/Pacific Islander	36%
Caucasian	25%
Latino/Hispanic	23%
Other	3%

Types of Disabilities

- ADHD
- Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Bipolar Disorder
- Cerebral Palsy
- Down Syndrome
- Epilepsy
- Intellectual Disability
- Seizure

Counties Served: San Mateo and San Francisco



Program

The LSF NCAS center-based day program for developmentally disabled adults with behavioral challenges is called Social Dynamics. Our participants require assistance and supervision. At the Center, they receive intervention, education and training in a low-pressure environment that is rich in positive reinforcement and designed to empower these men and women to advocate for themselves, participate in their community and maximize their potential. Through interaction with our professional and highly trained staff, our program participants learn important skills such as how to communicate their needs more effectively, methods to integrate into their community and mobility training, so they can move safely around their environment. Participants interested in working are encouraged to pursue volunteer opportunities in the community. We also provide round-trip transportation to and from the Center, and to a variety of community destinations. This includes public libraries, recreation centers, parks, the zoo and shopping malls. Since March 2020, LSF NCAS has been providing alternative services. These services include a weekly drop-off of activity materials and daily Zoom activities.



Fun Run for Inclusion 5K 2024

LIFE STEPS FOUNDATION®

FUN RUN FOR INCLUSION 5K
Run/Walk/Bike/Hike April 13th - 21st 2024

BE A HERO! Help us improve the lives of children with delays, adults with developmental disabilities, and frail seniors.

Life Steps Foundation proudly presents its Fun Run for Inclusion 2024 virtual 5K benefit event. The event is open to everyone! You can walk, run, bike, or hike in your preferred setting to complete the distance. Life Steps Foundation is a 501c3 nonprofit. All proceeds will support services for children with delays, adults with developmental disabilities, and seniors.

Thank you to our sponsors!

Los Angeles County Supervisor **HILDA L. SOLIS** First District
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES SUPERVISOR - FOURTH DISTRICT **JANICE HAHN**
Kathryn **BARGER** Supervisor - County of San Diego
Albertsons Companies
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Touchstone Development Company
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For more information, please contact us at (310) 410-8190 or development@lifestepsfoundation.org
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On April 13, 2024, Life Steps Foundation held its Fun Run for Inclusion 5K virtual fundraiser that invited people to run, walk, hike, or bike the distance at their favorite location. Participants could choose any day during the week and weekend following the event's launch to complete the distance. Those who took part in Fun Run for Inclusion 5K 2024 were from locations across California and beyond. It was also possible to donate in support of Fun Run for Inclusion 5K 2024 in place of physically taking part. As you can see from the flyer image, Life Steps Foundation was fortunate to have several event sponsors that pitched in to ensure the event was a resoundingly successful fundraiser. We wish to thank all of the generous supporters of Fun Run for Inclusion 5K 2024 helping Life Steps Foundation make vital enhancements to its programs and services for children with delays, adults with developmental disabilities, and frail elderly.

Life Steps Foundation Leadership and Fiscal Position

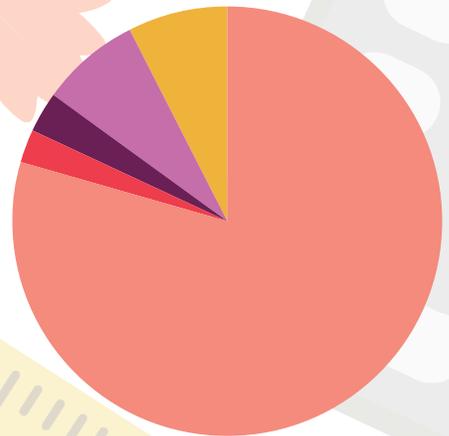
Main Office

For optimal efficiency, Life Steps Foundation has a streamlined administrative support structure with centralized executive leadership, accounting, payroll, human resources, development and community relations, training and quality management, and information technology services located at its headquarters office. These departments serve all program sites in the southern, central coast, and northern regions of California. This structure enables our organization to devote more than 86 percent of its financial resources to programs and services for the children, adults, and seniors we assist.

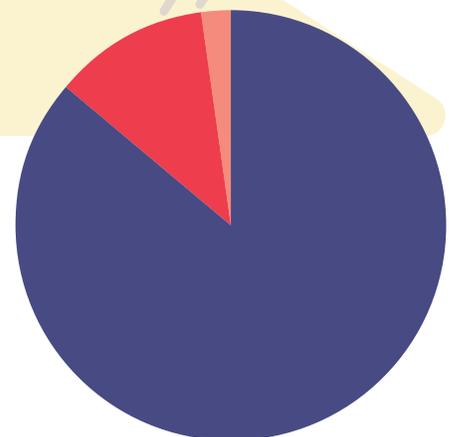
Fiscal Position

For fiscal year 2024, Life Steps Foundation had a budget of just over \$10 million. Since the launch of Life Steps Foundation in 1983, the executive team built a robust 10:1 ratio of assets to liabilities to maintain fiscal stability as a hedge against unforeseen economic circumstances. One of our main priorities is to diversify revenue sources to protect against economic turbulence and shortfalls from any one revenue source. We continue to expand our portfolio of support from foundation, corporate, and individual donors as a pillar of this effort. Our leadership also recognizes the importance of planned giving and works diligently to identify and cultivate opportunities for legacy gifts.

	Regional Centers	\$ 8,651,400
	Rental	\$ 278,888
	Donations & Grants	\$ 318,780
	Private Pay	\$ 822,390
	Investments & Interest	\$ 798,686



	Program Services	\$ 8,680,634
	General and Administrative	\$ 1,183,609
	Fundraising	\$ 197,267



Board of Directors

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