

2018

Annual Report



Celebrating 25 Years of
Providing Support
Promoting Awareness
Advocating for Change



It's hard to believe that 25 years have passed since a group of families gathered at one another's homes, determined to make the world a more accepting and welcoming place for their children and others with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). The efforts of these families led to the creation of the Howard County Autism Society (HCAS), a grassroots organization that has helped make Howard County, Maryland, a national model for autism support, advocacy, and awareness.

Over the years, the organization has grown, serving more than 3,000 individuals in 2018, including those with ASD, family and community members, and professionals. From diagnosis and education to transition and adult services, HCAS continues to provide support, promote awareness, and advocate for change for individuals throughout their lives.

Programs at a Glance

- Free support for individuals with ASD and their families via phone, email, social media, or in-person visits
- Advice and support on special education issues and services in Howard County through consultations, workshops, and seminars
- Free phone consultations with Disability Rights Maryland, if necessary
- Workshops for families and individuals with autism related to lifespan topics
- Monthly support group meetings
- Social groups for older teens and adults
- Social outings that help prevent isolation
- Sensory-friendly events
- Exercise/fitness activities
- 9 1 1 Flagging System in partnership with first responders
- Autism trainings for caregivers, businesses, government agencies, first responders, schools, and others
- Patuxent Commons, a housing initiative that is working to adapt an intergenerational housing model to increase affordable, accessible housing options for adults with disabilities and other vulnerable populations in Howard County
- Advocacy, both locally and nationally



2018 — By the Numbers

3,447
served

90 hours of Family Navigator services

Resource Center Consults

390 by phone

171 by email and social media

52 in-person



95
social events

1,445
participants



130 received 1:1 special education assistance



51
workshops, seminars, support group meetings, and trainings

1,253 attendees

Social Media Followers

2,300 Facebook

4,996 Twitter

404 Instagram

Website Visitors

12,697 **3,361**

HCAS website

Special Education News Center



120,000
community touchpoints annually

Providing Support

Social Events

- Moms' and Dads' Night Out Events
- Yoga classes for children and teens with ASD
- Fitness First Nights
- Winter and Summer Pool Parties
- Sensory Friendly Movies at AMC Theatre Columbia
- Sensory Friendly Santa and Easter Bunny Events at The Mall In Columbia
- Fitness Classes for Teens with ASD who need assistance
- Volunteer/Social Corps created for Individuals with ASD ages 16-23
- Adult Social Group formed for independent adults with ASD ages 24+ (New in 2018)
- *Shine In Your Own Light Showcase*, featuring performances and visual art by teens and young adults with ASD
- Annual Family Trip to Kalahari water park resort



- Offered a Special Needs Camp Fair to provide information on summer camp options
- Hosted Monthly support group meetings—Asperger's Family Support Group and General Support Group
- Offered a Monthly Speaker Series focusing on a variety of ASD-related topics
- Provided Family Advocacy and Parent Education (FAPE) with the support of a generous grant from Howard County, MD, enabling HCAS to assist those with questions surrounding the school system
- Posted updates to our Special Education News Center, information and articles pertinent to special education advocacy and support
- Presented the 5th Annual Transition Symposium in partnership with the Howard County Transition Outreach Partnership, a full-day of presenters and workshops covering a variety of transition topics, including a track for youth
- Offered the Brown Bag Workshop Series in partnership with Pathfinders for Autism
- Sponsored a Career Self-Discovery Workshop
- Hosted a Community Connections intern at the HCAS office



Support for Individuals, Families, and Professionals

- Hired a part-time family navigator to assist individuals and families needing additional supports (New in 2018)
- Held two FAPE Conferences in partnership with RISE for Autism and HCPSS on Social Thinking (Nancy Tarshis) and Evidence-Based Speech and Social Interactions for ASD (Tamara Kasper)



- Awarded a \$5,000 grant to HCPSS to support replication of an Augmentative and Alternative Communications modeling project that was piloted at a regional elementary school program.

Promoting Awareness



- Celebrated our 25th Anniversary with a Gala Celebration in April
- Hosted over 600 attendees at our 12th Annual One Step Closer Autism Walk & 5K Run
- Distributed a weekly eNewsletter and quarterly *Perspectives* Newsletter to over 1,800 recipients, providing updates on activities, programs and workshops presented by HCAS and other organizations
- Gave Presentations/Trainings to Howard County Library System staff, HCPSS local schools, Department of Defense, and local faith-based organizations
- Celebrated Autism Awareness Month in April with special presentations, recognitions, and our “Photo Blitz” featuring members of the local community showing support for individuals with ASD



Advocating for Change

- Held meetings with the HCPSS Department of Special Education and Students Services leadership to continue work on improving services and opportunities for those with ASD
- Participated on HCPSS Special Education Strategic Action Plan workgroups
- Continued our work with the Howard County Transition Outreach Partnership, a coalition of eight cross-disability agencies and organizations, to increase outreach, programming, and support of our youth transitioning from the school system into adulthood
- Together with our HCAS Housing Task Force, launched a website and Request for Qualification for the Patuxent Commons Housing Initiative, a community for people with and without disabilities that will embody values of diversity and inclusion in age, income, and ability (New in 2018)
- Cohosted a Board of Education Candidate’s Forum on Special Education prior to the summer primary election.
- Participated in the 2018 Developmental Disabilities Day in Annapolis
- Partnered with The Arc of Howard County and Service Coordination to host a Legislative Breakfast and discuss concerns of the disabilities community with elected officials—particularly concerns regarding the waiting list of the Maryland Autism Waiver and needs of our *Patuxent Commons* Housing Initiative
- Participated in the National Autism Society Conference in Washington, DC, including a “Day on the Hill” to advocate for the needs of the individuals with ASD

Thank You to Our 2018 Donors

The Howard County Autism Society expresses its sincere appreciation for the generous support of the individuals, businesses, and organizations who have contributed to its work on behalf of individuals with autism and their families.

\$5000 and Up

John & Selena Benevides

John & Kerry Benevides

Kate & Eric Cha

Community Foundation of Howard County

Dart Group II Foundation

Envision Fund/Catonsville Presbyterian Church *

Howard County (MD) Government

The John P. Hussman Foundation

Bobby Syed

United Way of Central Maryland

\$1,500 - \$4,999

Heidi Abdelhady & Mehdy Rahman

Anonymous

Autism Society of America/Hussman Foundation

BAF Group LLC / Donald M. Barrick

Charlotte & Emil Bernhardt

Beyond the Badge Foundation

Howard Hughes

LCA-Vision/Lasik Plus

Linda Boit

Debbie & John Clutts

James Curran

Catriona Johnson & Ben Dorman

Stephen Elville

The Lisa Higgins-Hussman Foundation

The Legal Team of Long & Foster/Stephanie Maric

Mangione Family Foundation

Network for Good

Donna & Lowell Pidel

PNC Foundation *

Melissa & Jim Rosenberg

Wegmans

\$500-\$1,499

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Applied Behavioral Counseling

Bank of America Charitable Foundation

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Jennie & Richard Boxall

Lisa & Patrick Boxall

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Catonsville Counseling

Center for Autism and Related Disorders/KKI

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Chesapeake Employer's Insurance Company

Judith & Edwin Cohen Foundation

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Crafton Dental

Kristen Detwiler/Colonial Life

ECHO of Northrop Grumman

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Dr. Sonny Goel at LasikPlus Vision Center

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 United Way of Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack
 Pravee Velamati
 Maria & David Vershel
 Courtney Watson
 Lisa & Curt Wovas

In-Kind Donors

B-Roll Media & Arts
 Columbia Presbyterian Church
 Howard County Recreation & Parks
 Market Impressions
 National Aquarium
 NextLOGIK
 Sharma & Associates

*Indicates donation to the HCAS Housing Initiative/
Patuxent Commons

The *Howard County Autism Society* is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, donations to which are tax-deductible under section 170 of the Internal Revenue Code. The Howard County Autism Society is an affiliate of the Autism Society of America.

Our Federal tax identification number is 52-1857721.

2018 Financials

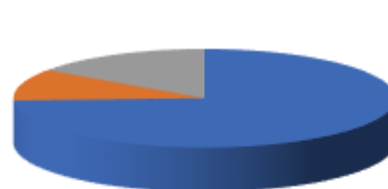


Income: \$319,994



- Contributions, Gifts, Grants & Events
- Program Service Revenue
- Dues

Expenses: \$272,854



- Program
- Management & General
- Fundraising

The Howard County Autism Society typically operates on a balanced budget and relies on the generosity of the community to support its programs and services.



2018 Howard County Autism Society Board of Directors

- Theresa Ballinger, *President*
- Patrick Boxall, *Vice President*
- Eric Cha, *Treasurer*
- Jennifer May, *Secretary*
- Roger E. Thibaudeau, Jr., *Immediate Past President*
- Donald M. Barrick
- Alisa Kobrientz Chernack
- Bill Cheuvront
- James W. Curran, III
- Nora Hart
- Victoria Martin
- Tracy C. Miller
- Erik Kristopher Myers
- Matthew Plantz
- Sabina Sambat
- Heather Stanley
- Mia Williams
- Lisa Wilson

Staff

- Beth Benevides, *1:1 Assistance, Special Education Inquiries Consultant*
- Dana Riley, *Bookkeeper*
- Melissa Rosenberg, *Executive Director*
- Sara Sommerville, *Special Education News Center*
- Michael Stromberg, *Family Navigator*
- Madhu Thibaudeau, *Resource Center & Event Coordinator*

Current and former members of the HCAS Board of Directors pose at the 25th Anniversary Gala Celebration in April 2018.



Spending a Day on the Hill as part of the Autism Society of America's National Conference in July 2018.



About the Howard County Autism Society

The Howard County Autism Society serves individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), their families, and their communities by providing information, support, and advocacy; by promoting awareness of ASD that values the dignity and uniqueness of each individual; and by working to improve the quality of and access to services and educational opportunities.

We believe there is a place for every person with ASD in our world, a place of value, and a place of worth. Much of our work is directed at raising awareness and educating the public about the complexities of ASD. Once people better understand ASD, they are better able to welcome and support people living with autism into our community.



HOWARD COUNTY
AUTISM SOCIETY

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