We improve lives, support families, & educate communities… TOGETHER.

ANNUAL REPORT 2017/18

Autism Society of NORTH CAROLINA

We improve lives, support families, & educate communities… TOGETHER.
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Our entire Board of Directors proudly supported our mission through their time, talents, and contributions.
For nearly 50 years, the Autism Society of North Carolina (ASNC) has improved the lives of individuals with autism, supported their families, and educated our communities about the needs and contributions of people with autism. Together with our donors and volunteers, we have enabled individuals with autism across the state to live fulfilling lives.

Each of you is an important part of our family, and we want to thank you for the many contributions you have made to our community in the past year. Your leadership, devotion, and generous financial support have enabled ASNC to continue to create innovative programs to provide vital services and supports.

A few important highlights from this year include:

- **LifeLong Interventions (LLI)**, our intensive treatment program that serves people on the autism spectrum of all ages, continues to grow and now serves about 100 individuals in four regions. We are grateful to Gregg and Lori Ireland and the Ireland Family Foundation for their continued generosity. Their support has been critical to creating a state-of-the-art Clinical Program for individuals with autism.

- **ASNC and Trillium Health Resources** continued to work together to address long-standing gaps in social and recreational programming for children and adults with autism in Eastern North Carolina. Through summer camps, afterschool programs, recreational respite, adult programs, and social groups, individuals with autism improved their social and communication skills, peer networks, and physical well-being in Wilmington, Greenville, Newport, and Brunswick and Onslow counties.

- **We opened a second IGNITE program in Raleigh** for young adults with high-functioning autism or Asperger’s Syndrome. IGNITE offers activities and educational groups that foster independence and social interaction.

- **ASNC began offering skill-building and support services for individuals in the Wilmington area**, adding to our array of services for that community.

- **We increased our support to families within our chapter network** by adding Regional Chapter Coordinators.

- **Medicaid managed care** has been a top priority for us this past year, so we were actively engaged in various stakeholder groups. ASNC worked to ensure that individuals’ rights and access to treatment and services continue to be the focus as a new system is designed. Additionally, we were actively engaged in stakeholder meetings about the Innovations waiver renewal and access to Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) through EPSDT.

- **Our staff has been engaged in an effort with many community partners under a grant from the NC Council on Developmental Disabilities and the NC Department of Health and Human Services to increase access to primary health care for individuals with ASD and other intellectual and/or developmental disabilities.**

- **Last year, ASNC provided direct supports to more than 22,000 individuals.** An additional 310,000 learned how to support individuals with autism through our outreach efforts.

This year, over 500,000 children nationally will age out of the school system and lose specialized services. Adults with autism have many needs, and ASNC strives to meet them through employment, social recreation, clinical, and skilled support services. In the near future, we will begin offering adult transition and employment services in two more regions, with plans to add more regions the following year. We plan to borrow from the IGNITE model in our expansion in Eastern NC.

All individuals with autism are an important part of our future. Together, we will build communities that respect and value our loved ones with autism and provide them with the opportunities to reach their goals and dreams.
The Autism Society of North Carolina (ASNC) is the leading statewide organization serving people across the spectrum throughout their lifespans. We understand the challenges of the autism community because we work with individuals on the autism spectrum and their families every day. We reach out to families after they learn their children have autism and work alongside them to ensure that their children reach their full potential as adults.

The Autism Society of North Carolina has a statewide network of resources that connects individuals with autism, their families, and their communities to life-changing programs and supports unavailable anywhere else. ASNC leads the field clinically and prides itself on being the best provider of services for individuals with autism. We train our staff on evidence-based best practices, and as the clinical leader in our state, we widely share our expertise with others. Our goal is to provide opportunities across the lifespan so that individuals with autism live fulfilling lives as contributing members of society.

Our mission

The Autism Society of North Carolina improves the lives of individuals with autism, supports their families, and educates communities.

Where we work

11 locations throughout the state, supporting North Carolinians in all 100 counties
The Autism Society of North Carolina’s high quality direct-support services are tailored to the unique needs of individuals with autism and enable them to have healthy, safe, and fulfilling lives in their own communities. Through therapeutic recreational and skill-building programs, children and adults with autism learn functional communication and independent living skills. Our expertise in home, work, and community settings helps individuals – many of whom have significant lifelong needs – reach their maximum level of independence and achieve their goals and dreams.

We improve lives. TOGETHER.
Improving lives at-a-glance

150
- learned new skills & made friends through Social Recreation programs statewide
- gained skills to obtain and maintain employment

More than 300 individuals improved communication, social skills, and behavior through treatment by our Clinical professionals

Over 830 children and adults gained daily living skills, increased communication and socialization skills, and learned how to participate in community activities of their choice through one-to-one staffing

Clinical & Direct Supports*

- 92% improved social skills
- 81% increased communication skills
- 90% received support that ensured their safety

Each of the outcomes is significant because they address the core deficits of autism.

- 88% increased meaningful involvement in the community
- 93% improved future health and wellness outcomes

Social Recreation*

- 83% families received much-needed respite
- 90% individuals tried new activities

Our Eastern NC Social Recreation programs, supported by Trillium Health Resources, served 333 individuals.

*Outcomes according to parent and caregiver evaluations
DONOR SPOTLIGHT: Carolina Hurricanes Foundation

The Carolina Hurricanes Foundation, formerly known as the Kids ’N Community Foundation, is a longtime supporter of the Autism Society of North Carolina.

Recently, the Foundation teamed up with Lenovo to provide an amazing opportunity for some local teenagers on the spectrum. The teens visited Lenovo to experience virtual reality, visit the company’s Innovation Center and Product Lab, participate in a STEM career conversation, and learn about the inner workings of a computer.

“This was a unique opportunity to connect our longtime corporate sponsor Lenovo to the community that they positively impact through their support of the Foundation,” said Lindsay Robertson, the Foundation’s Assistant Director. “It was a special experience to see the campers explore Lenovo’s impressive technology and enjoy a game of floor hockey, too!”

The Carolina Hurricanes Foundation strives to meet the health and educational needs of children, with a focus on underserved populations.

“We are so thankful to Lenovo and the Hurricanes for providing this chance for our campers to explore career options in STEM fields and think about their futures” said Kristy White, ASNC Chief Development Officer. “Even as they were having fun, the campers were learning new skills.

“In just a few years, they will contribute to our community with jobs in this field, and today showed them all that is possible for their futures.”

In the past five years, the Foundation also has donated more than $50,000 to Camp Royall, enabling more local children to attend Summer Camp. Foundation staff members have come out to camp for work days and they also prepare a cookout for campers and staff.

The team has held several autism awareness games, partnering with ASNC to share information and support families.
Achieving his goals

One day when Jack Cullen was almost 4 years old, he bolted from a hair salon and nearly ran into one of the busiest intersections in Greenville. His mother, Joy, managed to catch him just 10 to 15 feet from the road. That same day, she went into the local Autism Society of North Carolina office, still shaking.

Jack had been diagnosed at 2½ but was not receiving services or supports through Medicaid. ASNC helped Joy advocate for him, and within six months, he began to receive the support he needed.

Today, Jack is 19, and he graduated with a diploma in June. “He’s done amazing things that at his diagnosis we didn’t know would be possible,” Joy said.

Over the years, Jack has received support from ASNC autism support professionals. They and the family constantly evaluate Jack’s skills and set new goals for him. In the beginning, the goals were as simple as tolerating brushing his teeth. Now Jack is working on making basic meals and improving his relationship with his siblings.

Many of his support professionals have made lifelong commitments to Jack, staying in touch even after moving on to other careers or new towns. When Jack graduated, one of his former staff was the only person he requested to attend.

Now Jack attends a program at his local community college, covering basic academics and career exploration, and he is well-known around Greenville. “He’s showing one step at a time just how much these folks can accomplish because he is kind, and funny, and considerate, and he genuinely cares,” his mom said.

In his career program, Jack has started to “come out of his shell” and volunteered to lead groups, joy said. She hopes that it will help him get a job that he finds fulfilling.

In the meantime, Jack will keep working on his goals with his family and ASNC support. “We’re pushing onward and upward,” Joy said.

He’s kind of an autism ambassador. He’s showing one step at a time just how much these folks can accomplish because he is kind, and funny, and considerate, and he genuinely cares.
The Autism Society of North Carolina empowers families by helping them understand their options, learn best practices, and connect with community resources. Autism Resource Specialists are often the first people parents talk to after receiving a diagnosis, and they help families navigate the various service systems, learn how to apply methods of intervention, resolve school and treatment issues, and understand how to teach their children to be safe. Seventy Chapters and Support Groups provide families who face similar challenges an opportunity to encourage one another, share experiences and solutions, and have a place where they feel welcomed, accepted, and understood.

We support families. TOGETHER.

The Autism Society of North Carolina provides families with help to address adult issues of employment and residential needs while planning for their children's needs beyond their own lives. We help them care for their children at home and in the community and see them through times of crisis, therefore decreasing the number of individuals with autism who are unnecessarily institutionalized.
Supporting families at-a-glance

6,900+ people learned about resources and how to solve problems from Autism Resource Specialists

22,000+ families received support from our Chapters and Support Groups with outreach to underserved populations

460 Individuals with autism were assisted through a crisis event

Social Recreation & Direct Supports

92% parents said ASNC programs enabled them to maintain employment

Autism Resource Specialists

685+ #help in-person meetings held with families and individuals on issues such as IEPs or understanding a diagnosis

100% of North Carolina counties are covered by an ARS
DONOR SPOTLIGHT: Ron Howrigon

A month before Connor Howrigon’s third birthday, his parents learned that he had autism. His father, Ron, remembers the anguish he felt. “I could only focus on all the things Connor would never be able to do and experiences he would never have,” he said.

But his wife, Kristen, sprang into action. “She was determined that her son would have as many opportunities as any other child,” Ron said.

A few years later, Kristen found Camp Royall, and Connor went off for his first weekend. Ron remembers being worried, because Connor had been away from his parents only a couple of times. The next day, Connor’s counselor called to tell him how great he was doing. He had done the zip line and gone boating, both things that his parents did not think he would attempt. Connor’s weekend was full of victories as he tried many new things and gained independence.

“Camp Royall is much more than just a camp,” Ron said. “For the kids, it’s a chance to do things and experience things that might otherwise be out of their reach. For the parents, it can sometimes be the only respite you get. It can also reaffirm all that your child CAN do in a world that sometimes focuses on what they CAN’T do.”

Ron, who is the President and CEO of Fulcrum Strategies, believes in Camp Royall so much that he joined the Autism Society of North Carolina’s Board of Directors. He also shared his family’s inspiring story at Catwalk to Camp in April, leading to a record total of $190,000 raised to send more children and adults with autism to Camp Royall. Fulcrum Strategies, which he founded in 2004, also was a major supporter of the event.

Connor is 15 now and doing well. Ron says having a child on the spectrum is the hardest and best thing he will ever do with his life.
Collaborating with a team

Three years ago, Aaron McCumbee’s parents were wondering how they would manage over the summer. Aaron had just finished his second year of kindergarten. In addition to being diagnosed with autism, he had apraxia and was unable to put his thoughts into words or communicate his needs. He needed constant supervision. His parents were not sure how they would manage without the support of school.

Then Aaron was accepted into the Autism Society of North Carolina’s summer day camp in Wilmington. “It was literally life-changing and altering for us,” said Aaron’s mother, Meredith.

The camp was “magical,” Meredith said. The staff was eager to constantly learn more about Aaron so they could support him. “They loved him well,” she said. He also made his first friend.

Since then, Aaron has attended three summers of camp, plus the afterschool program. He gained independence in the structured environment where he was required to meet new people and build relationships. The family has also been supported by ASNC’s local Autism Resource Specialist, who has helped Aaron’s schools understand how to help him succeed.

But Aaron, who understands others’ words even though he cannot express his own, continued to have challenging behaviors. “He was just frustrated. There was no other word to describe it,” Meredith said.

A collaborative, team approach has made all of the difference for Aaron, his mother said. Board Certified Behavior Analysts helped train Aaron’s parents, teachers, and counselors to focus on his functional communication.

Now 9, he is able to communicate his needs much better and is so much happier. He loves attention, and loves to make people happy and see them laugh. “He points to your mouth and says cheese, because he wants you to smile,” Meredith said.

“While we don’t know what this journey will look like year to year or even day to day, we do know we have the amazing supports and resources available to our family via the Autism Society.”
The Autism Society of North Carolina focuses on teaching evidence-based best practices that empower individuals with autism, their families, and the professionals who serve them to promote healthy lifestyles, safety, and independent living. Through our clinical training for professionals such as doctors, dentists, teachers, businesses, and first responders, the capacity and quality of care for individuals with autism has increased. We also have worked with families on navigating crisis situations.

In addition, increased public awareness of autism has helped North Carolina to have a lower average age of diagnosis than the national norm. Research has shown that the earlier children are diagnosed and can receive treatment, the lower their cost of care will be throughout their lives.

The Autism Society of North Carolina also works to increase understanding and acceptance of people with autism in the community, ensuring that they are treated with dignity and their unique talents are valued.
Educating communities at-a-glance

210+ TRAININGS 4,600+ PEOPLE
In-person training workshops & conferences
Trainings were held in 50 counties and were also available through webinars to all 100 counties.

Community outreach

More than 330,000 people learned how to support individuals with autism through our external outreach efforts

MORE THAN 540 FIRST RESPONDERS
developed skills to care for people with autism in emergency situations

680+ health-care, direct-care, and foster-care professionals increased their understanding of autism and best practices

740+ school staff, professionals, and caregivers developed better skills to work with students with autism

380+ professionals & volunteers with organizations such as faith-based groups and libraries learned to create inclusive communities

Increasing knowledge

99%计划 to make changes to improve their work with individuals with autism

increased their knowledge on the subject material covered

increased their ability to explain and demonstrate information to others

*Outcomes according to individual, caregiver, professional, and community member evaluations
Giving back to his community

Danny Landry, a 33-year-old who is on the autism spectrum, faced some challenges at his first jobs. He was capable of doing the work but needed a different way to learn the tasks. “A lot of times, the employer doesn’t understand autism or why you’re not picking up on it,” he said.

Then about four years ago, Danny started receiving services through the Autism Society of North Carolina, and his autism support professional created visual supports to help him learn. The employers “learned that I learned different, but I could still do it.”

Now Danny puts his experience to use on the staff at ASNC. As an autism support professional, he works with individuals on the spectrum on social skills, communication, and daily living.

As a person on the spectrum, Danny said he understands his clients’ perspective and how they would like to be treated. “I understand the anxiety,” he said. “Like when my client is worried about the time or something changing.” He recognizes the value of visual supports and how to customize them to each individual. These are all lessons he shares with other support staff. “I can have empathy for both perspectives.”

Danny also serves the autism community through a social group he started six years ago. The Asheville area group offers monthly adult and teen support groups, social outings, and a mentorship program.

He is very thankful for the Autism Society of North Carolina’s support. “It was really nice to have people understand. It greatly improved the quality of my life.”
The Autism Society of North Carolina community includes passionate, committed volunteers, corporate partners, and donors. We extend our heartfelt thanks to our donors who have made it possible for individuals with autism to have healthy, safe, and fulfilling lives in their communities.

This list reflects donations received on or between July 1, 2017, and June 30, 2018. Please contact Beverly Gill if you have any questions at 800-442-2762, ext. 1105, or bgill@autismsociety-nc.org.

We care. TOGETHER.

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Evernham Family-Racing for a Reason Foundation
Erin and Ray Evernham
Mary Evernham
The Ireland Family Foundation
Lori and Gregg Ireland

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Colony NorthStar, Inc.

$25,000-$49,999
Carlisle Companies Incorporated
Covelli Enterprises, Inc./Panera Bread
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The Leon Levine Foundation
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BB&T Charitable Giving

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Avance Health System, Inc.

$2,500-$4,999
23rd Group Facility Management
American Asset Corporation
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ASNC Richmond County Chapter
Autism Society of America
Aveda Institute Charlotte
Bank of America
Burlington Royals Baseball Club, Inc.

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$2,500-$4,999
23rd Group Facility Management
American Asset Corporation
Archer Western Construction
ASNC Richmond County Chapter
Autism Society of America
Aveda Institute Charlotte
Bank of America
Burlington Royals Baseball Club, Inc.
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Christina Stanley
Barbara and Gordon Still
Robert Teddy
Marylynn Tisci
Zack Tomlin
Kenneth Tripoli
Marian and Billy Troxler
Damon Tweedy
Thomas Uhl
Amy Upah
Laura Vandiford
Linda Varblow and James Holloway
Brenda Vaughan
Ryan Vincent
Mary and Chris Vlahoplus
Frances and Richard Warner
Jerry Washington
Heather Watkins
Rebecca and Tom Webb
Donna Weeks
Linda Whiston
Ed White
Kathy White
Matt Whinack
Barbara and Walter Whittemore
Katherine and John Whittington
Charles Wickham
Anita and Willie Wiggins
George Williams
Mary Wilson
Skip Woody
Stephen York
Jane Zeller and John Townsend
Jodi Zoph
The Autism Society of North Carolina relies on donor giving to our annual campaign, A Lifetime Together, to improve the lives of individuals with autism and their families.

Our annual campaign will increase the number of children, adults, and families that we are able to serve.

When you give to the Autism Society of North Carolina, you make an investment that improves lives well beyond the day you make a gift. If you give a scholarship for a camper, he will learn new skills – such as how to make a friend – and build upon them for the rest of his life.

If you give a scholarship to a family to attend a training, they will pick up tools to help them throughout their child’s life. If you give a scholarship for a young adult to attend our JobTIPS training, she will use those skills to gain employment.

Every day, new families learn their children have autism. As we look ahead, expanding this campaign will ensure that individuals with autism lead fulfilling lives.

We share your passion for improving lives, supporting families, and educating communities. Together, we can make a difference for the growing number of loved ones with autism. Together, we will share a lifetime.
We rely on donor giving to provide our high quality programming to improve the lives of individuals with autism.

As can be seen in the charts above, our program and service revenue covers only a portion of our expenses.

All of the money that we raise stays in North Carolina, with 89 cents of every dollar donated going directly to programs for individuals with autism.

The Autism Society of North Carolina is also supported by: [MH/DD/SAS logo]