

L.I.F.E.
LAUREN'S INSTITUTE
FOR EDUCATION



LAUREN'S INSTITUTE FOR EDUCATION ANNUAL REPORT 2023

Our Mission

Working together to empower people through extraordinary services for developmental disabilities



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MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO

Margaret Travillion, CEO / Cofounder



2023 was a year of rebranding, expanding, and solidifying our place in Arizona.

Since its inception, L.I.F.E. has been purposeful in our approach to be a teach-and-learn organization. Whether that was one team member to another, one treatment discipline to another, or sharing our treatment model with our community, we've remained firm in that belief. In 2023 we saw this goal extend out to first responders completing on-site rotations in our environments and with our consumers, training at the annual dispatch training conference, attending a Targeted Readiness Event Forum, and working with members of the Arizona Department of Education on Lock Down Drills and Fire Drills for a medically fragile population

and individuals with special needs. All this was in addition to our ongoing commitment to our current community partnerships, such as the University of Arizona Nursing Program, the Chandler-Gilbert Community College Nursing Program, A.T. Stills professional therapy internships, and our most recent collaboration with J.C.O.R.P.S.

Many people ask why L.I.F.E. does not expand and reproduce in other state areas. I always respond, "L.I.F.E. recognizes it can only serve a set number of individuals through direct care, and we do so to our highest quality of care possible. However, if L.I.F.E. uses its resources to support others in our community and through our model of care in the state of Arizona, then are we not truly serving more?"

Our dream to expand our beautiful and unique 10 acres of land finally became a real possibility in 2023. Lease negotiations and Architectural designs took root, and plans began with 2024 in sight.

In realizing the dream of expanding our property and looking at current research in best practices, we completed a rebrand for our Academy. To protect our ability to teach to the individual needs of our academy students, we developed five learning tracks that best represent our population's objectives and needs. The rebranding was created as follows: Foundations for Learning, Pathways to Independence, Adaptive Classroom Skills, Adaptive Academics, and Essential Skills to Learning. It is five unique options to best serve our students within one great Academy. In addition to rebranding our Academy, we also completed a fantastic remodel of our Therapy environments and School Library.

Laurens Institute For Education will call the Town Of Gilbert home for many years. Lauren's Institute For Education is steadfast in its commitment to educating and advocating for our greater community. Lastly, we are dedicated to progressing and growing with the needs of those we serve. We are as committed today as we were in 2007!

OUR MISSION

Working together to empower people through extraordinary services for developmental disabilities.

OUR SEVEN Cs

The extraordinary in L.I.F.E.'s mission is exemplified in our seven Cs.

CARING

Above all we care about the well-being of our consumers and their families! We consider them part of the “L.I.F.E. Family.”

CUSTOMIZED COMPREHENSIVE

We believe the best approach to disability services is individualized care that considers the whole person, all areas of need, and the family’s goals. We offer an extensive selection of disability services all through L.I.F.E. to reduce strain on families & to foster our transdisciplinary approach.

COHESIVE COLLABORATION

We have always believed collaboration between professionals is paramount to the success of a consumer. However, we recognize cohesive collaboration, where team members’ approaches are all working in concert, is challenging. We make continuous efforts to establish effective transdisciplinary teams.

CURRENT

We strive to employ the most current strategies and interventions using evidence-based practice. We invest in extensive continuing education for our staff, so they remain up-to-date in their knowledge and skills.

COMMUNICATION

We recognize the essential importance of communication. We communicate with families regularly to keep them “in-the-know” on their loved one’s services.

COST-CONSCIOUS

We are a nonprofit that believes the ability to receive the best care should not be based on income. We accept funding through private and state insurance as well as scholarships.

COMMUNITY

We believe it is important to extend our mission outside of L.I.F.E. by helping to educate others that work with the disability community. We have multiple community partnerships and provide consultation services for other organizations.



PURPOSE

Because people with disabilities deserve...



better care than what has been available historically.



to learn and grow from the same educator, therapist, or caregiver quality as their neurotypical peers.



to get the same service regardless of funding, whether they can pay privately or not.



to get services in one place where parents/caregivers can drop them off, they can get everything they need, and then be picked up.



all of their care providers to be on the same page and provide cohesive convenient quality care.



staff that care and will fight for them and be supported in doing so.



care to extend to all their needs, treating them as a whole, meeting them where they are, and helping them grow as best they can.



service regardless of age, demographic, disability, or need. All should be welcome and given a chance to succeed and integrate.



the same level of respect, care, and tailored resources to normalize their lives to the extent possible as anyone who is neurotypical.

Note: A purpose statement describes the overarching reason an organization exists.

VISION

To solidify a full circle of care that can be promoted throughout our community by creating opportunities for growth for individuals with developmental disabilities as early as possible and for as long as their loved ones wish.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

At Lauren's Institute for Education, it is inherent in our purpose and mission to promote acceptance, equity, and inclusion, both with the community we serve and those we entrust that service to. These principles are at the forefront of our model and growth. We strive to create an environment and culture where everyone believes they have equal value, regardless of gender, sex, religion, age, orientation, culture, national origin, ability level, etc. We believe that by creating an environment where all people thrive, we will be able to create a more successful and diverse organization that best serves our community. We acknowledge the different biases that exist in our world and work to ensure that they do not hinder our impact. We, therefore, are committed to collecting data and evaluating procedures about the diversity of our staff and those we serve, to ensure there are not misaligned practices from our values, or if there are, to adjust to the best of our ability.

COMPANY CULTURE

WORK ENVIRONMENT

01

- Family matters
- Nurture a positive atmosphere
- Acceptance of change
- Celebrate and honor the holiday season
- Promote humility in management style
- Take care of those that take care of our consumers

HONESTY AND INTEGRITY

02

- Transparency
- Be above reproach
- Follow best practices
- Open-door policy
- Solution-focused problem solving

WHOLE PERSON APPROACH

03

- Social and emotional wellbeing
- Cognition support
- Educational needs
- Family support
- Total communication
- Accessibility and independence
- Continuum of care - starts at preschool-adulthood

COLLABORATION

04

- Community is priority - all aspects of care working cohesively
- Transdisciplinary - all team members working together for the benefit of the consumer
- Team - means families and professionals

ECLECTIC IN OUR APPROACH

05

- Flexibility of thought - there is never just one way
- Individualized programming
- Promote diversity and acceptance of interventions
- Support team's professional values

SERVICES ACCESSIBLE TO ALL

06

- Not for profit
- Variety of funders
- Services not based on ability to pay
- Pro bono services
- Scholarships
- Community partnerships

PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

07

- Training and development for staff
- Promote from within
- Rely upon internal expertise
- Incentives
- Equity and fairness
- Encourage and expect continued learning - CEU
- Promote internships
- and community learning projects
- Professional learning communities
- Faith and trust in our staff

DREAMERS

08

- Embrace organic growth
- Stay relevant to our community
- Current in our practices
- Collaborative
- Remain open-minded
- Creative in our approach to care
- Solution-focused problem solvers
- Forward thinkers

2023 GLOBAL HIGHLIGHTS



← CONFERENCES

As a teach and learn facility with different professional disciplines on staff, continuing education is a must. We were thrilled to send participants to two different conferences in 2023. In January we sent a group of teachers and members of their leadership team to the 'Get Your Teach On' conference in Las Vegas. Two months later we had the opportunity to make right by our leadership team on their rain check for professional development missed during COVID, by sending them all to California for the Disney Institute program.

NEW BENEFITS →

Every year when our leadership team renews our budgets and financial projections we look at benefits we offer and where we can improve them. In 2023, we realized a long-desired new benefit with the addition of partially paid FMLA leave, and we also felt privileged to add Juneteenth to our Paid Holiday schedule. PFMLA offers any staff who is eligible to receive half of their usual wages for up to eleven weeks. Juneteenth is now a paid day off for all center-based employees who would normally work that day.



← AWARDS

While maintaining accreditations for School and ABA programs, L.I.F.E. was included in two award categories by the Phoenix Business Journal in 2023: #2 in company size for the Healthiest Employer Award, recognizing organizations with the best health and wellness offerings and #9 in nonprofit category for ACE Award, recognizing the fastest-growing organizations in Arizona. L.I.F.E. was also recognized by the Arizona State University 'Sun Devil 100' group, one of only a handful of nonprofits led by ASU Alumni and one of the fastest growing in company size.



2023 GLOBAL HIGHLIGHTS CONTINUED

QUALITY ASSURANCE – Also in 2023, LIFE has fully embraced the ability to clinically work together as a team in order to achieve the best possible outcomes for our consumers. By analyzing the goals and clinical outcomes across disciplines, we can ensure that we are all working for the betterment of our consumers.

This ongoing audit takes place each month, with each month having new consumer files and goals analyzed with the objective of ensuring that any discrepancies are identified early and rectified quickly.



Specialty Therapy renovation creates an inviting and appealing space

THERAPY REVAMP

This year we were able to update our Specialty Therapy Department. We were fortunate enough to bring in a phenomenal artist (Terry Allen- AZ Muralist), that created an inviting and visually appealing environment in four of our clinic spaces.

Each room was given a theme. Many rooms have hidden gems in the paintings in order to create learning opportunities for the consumers.

The furniture was updated and homogenized to create clean, cohesive, open spaces that allow for therapists from different disciplines to work alongside one another fostering our transdisciplinary method.

This has bolstered our ability to learn from one another and help our consumers grow.



social/emotional learning



trunk or treat



therapy

COMPANY HIGHLIGHTS



As the parent of two children who attended L.I.F.E. for the first time in the 2023-2024 school year, I am so impressed and thankful for the amazing quality of services provided. L.I.F.E. truly offers us a safe, secure, and understanding learning environment for children with special needs. Without exception, from my children's classroom teachers and assistants to all the administrative staff I interacted with, everyone is so kind, compassionate, and genuinely focused on the unique needs of the children. My family, and the community, are blessed to have a place like L.I.F.E. available to us - thank you for all you do!



Jason Gad



My son Dominic T. has had a great experience at L.I.F.E. The teachers, paraprofessionals, and therapists are all very caring, friendly, and helpful! As a parent, I appreciate that L.I.F.E. has onsite therapy (speech, physical, and occupational) services that are scheduled during Dominic's school day. This allows Dominic some free time after school! Prior to L.I.F.E., Dominic would have really long days because of therapy sessions having to be scheduled at home after school. I appreciate the thoughtfulness and wholistic approach to L.I.F.E.'s educational model. Thank you for all that you do for our Kiddos!



Donna Gomez

OUTREACH HIGHLIGHTS

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

- University of Arizona - Nursing
- Chandler Gilbert Community College - Nursing
- Gilbert Police Department
- Gilbert Dispatch
- Gilbert Fire & Rescue Department
- AZ Department of Public Safety
- First Things First



Gilbert Police Department



First Teeth First

We continued our nursing partnerships with the University of Arizona and Chandler Gilbert Community College. Our programs with Gilbert Police Department, Gilbert Fire and Rescue, and Gilbert Dispatch Center continue as more recruits/cadets move through those training programs. In 2023 we had 30 individuals come through the program from all over the state of Arizona. Teaching the next generation of first responders to observe and interact with those on our campus, we aim to teach empathy, respect, compassion, and understanding of those with developmental disabilities so they can better serve this population.

We continued our partnership with First Things First obtaining access to resources such as First Teeth First, which ensures our clients have access to oral health care. We also began a partnership with Arizona Vision and Hearing to ensure all consumers are able to be tested for supportive devices such as glasses and hearing aids. We continued to provide free monthly in-person and zoom caregiver trainings on a variety of topics including feeding support, hygiene and self care supports as well as social groups for the consumers and their guardians

ACADEMY HIGHLIGHTS

This year, we maintained our total communication campaign and hot lunch program. Each classroom featured a personalized cozy corner tailored to suit the students' specific needs.

We welcomed Ms. Jacqui as our Social Emotional Learning Coach, who offered read-aloud sessions, facilitated lunch buddies, and conducted individual lessons. We celebrated the graduation of two students this year, including Lauren Reed, for whom our school is named.



180
consumers in Spring

200
consumers in Fall

50+
average staff



academy karate



academy library



invites you to our

2023 GRADUATION CEREMONY

Lauren Reed Vincent Lupo



Date: May 16, 2023
Time: 6:00pm
Location: Lauren's Institute For Education
1305 S. Gilbert Rd. Gilbert, Az 85296

PATHWAYS HIGHLIGHTS

223

consumers served

54,940

sessions

17+

staff

This year, we proudly started our rebranding as the Pathways Department, now comprising of five programs for individuals aged 14 and older. We saw growth in the number of individuals we serve. In our Pathways to Adulthood program, we resumed community outings, fostering greater independence for our consumers. We hosted an amazing Friendsgiving for our

teens and adults as well as two additional social events for our teens. Our Employment Program explored various companies, discovering new job opportunities, and created another amazing float for the Gilbert Days Parade. Thanks to an amazing grant, our Summer Program was the best yet, featuring a foam party, weekly karate classes, and a visit from a mermaid that swam with many friends.



friendsgiving



foam party



job exploration



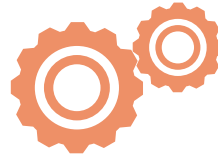
mermaid visit

THERAPY HIGHLIGHTS

Therapy was provided with an opportunity to re-create their treatment spaces to improve the quality of care that they could provide to the consumers they serve.

Each treatment space presents its own unique environment that is welcoming to all.

They foster the ability for individual exploration, group activities, sensory integration, and much more.



262
consumers

16,773
sessions

20+
staff



OT: teaching yoga to help with strength



Kickball: individual motor & group conversation skills



Soaring to new heights with new skills

ABA HIGHLIGHTS

55

consumers served

47,328

sessions

40+

staff

In our ABA department, we evolved our track model to grow and expand our environments and offerings with a group learning environment paired with ABA for a wider variety of consumers and skillsets. We created positions that allowed for professional growth in facilitating these environments and supporting our objectives for each room and the consumers in it. Our environment continues to remain unique in the world of ABA and one that we strive to present to all

stakeholders effectively. In each environment we focus on socialization, self-advocacy, self-management, receptive and expressive communication, listener responding, and self-help skills all while ensuring maladaptive behaviors are minimized and replacement behaviors are taught. We added another BCBA and a masters level program manager to our clinical team which allowed for an increase in onboarding of staff (BTs/RBTs) and consumers served.



Learning to play in new fun and interesting ways to promote growth

COMMUNITY HIGHLIGHTS

110

consumers served

88,799

sessions

100+

staff

The community department offers three key services:

- **Respite:** Provides parents and primary caregivers with a much-needed break.
- **Habilitation:** Assists consumers in achieving meaningful goals to enhance independence and quality of life.
- **Attendant Care:** Ensures consumer safety, health, daily living, and overall well-being through the support of a qualified direct care worker.

During the pandemic, the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS) temporarily permitted parents to serve as paid providers for their children, offering habilitation and attendant care services. In early 2024, this initiative became a permanent program, enabling parents to continue providing these crucial services while remaining active as LIFE employees. This shift allows parents to play an active role in their loved ones' care, promoting stakeholder engagement and enriching our transdisciplinary approach.



← MAX DODSON

Max receives ATC and habilitation services within the community department.

Some of his goals include improving his communication skills by having back-and-forth conversations with four or more exchanges and enhancing his community safety skills by staying within arm's length of his provider.

FINN MELLETT →

Finn is focusing on improving his ability to greet others appropriately and engage in short conversations as part of his habilitation goals.

Here is a picture of him with his family at the Commemorative Air Force Museum, where he had the opportunity to practice these essential communication skills.



FUNDRAISERS



GOLF CLASSIC

\$60K

raised

140

attendees

23

sponsorships



CASINO NIGHT

\$52K

raised

208

attendees

8

sponsorships



ARIZONA GIVES

\$3K

raised

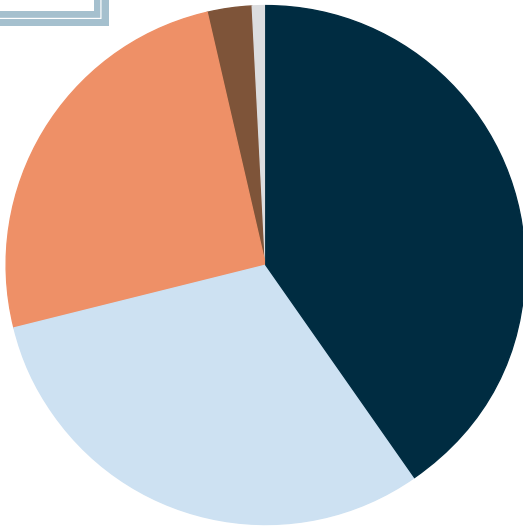
Arizona Gives Day is an annual giving movement established, to celebrate and increase philanthropy in Arizona through online giving.



FINANCIALS

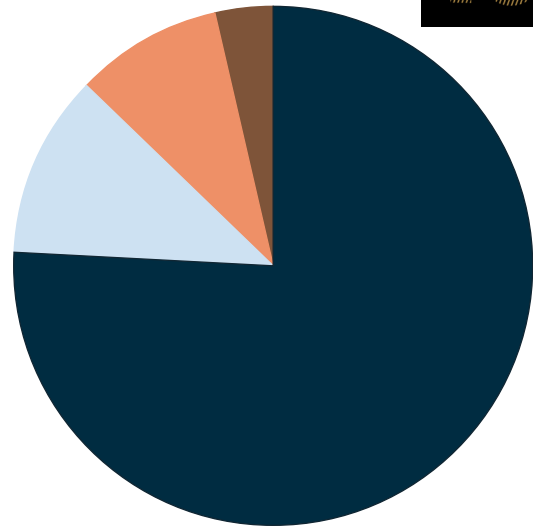
Platinum
Transparency
2023

Candid.



TOTAL INCOME: \$14.6MM

	Tuition	\$5.9MM	40%
	DDD	\$4.5MM	31%
	Insurance	\$3.7MM	25%
	Contributions	\$0.4MM	3%
	Other	\$0.1MM	1%



TOTAL EXPENSES: \$14.1MM

	Payroll	\$5.9MM	40%
	Facilities	\$4.5MM	31%
	Other	\$3.7MM	25%
	Insurance	\$0.4MM	3%

2024 GOALS

- Complete Internal and External Property Expansion and Remodel
- Expand Services and Staffing with revamped environments
- Pilot Test Traveling Clinic

- Solidify the function and purposeful outcomes of the academy tracks
- Continue improvement and accountability of the departmental financial sustainability objectives
- Solidify the organization's professional growth plans with an emphasis on succession planning