

# FUNDING APPLICATION

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### Organization Information

<b>Legal Name:</b> Autism Service Center of San Antonio (dba Autism Community Network)		<b>Federal Tax ID#:</b> 26-2592058		<b>Are you a 501(3)(c) charity?</b> Yes	
<b>Address:</b> 4242 Woodcock Suite 101		<b>City:</b> San Antonio		<b>State:</b> TX	
				<b>Zip Code:</b> 78228	
<b>Website:</b> www.acn-sa.org		<b>Fax:</b> (210) 435-1000			
<b>Head Of Organization</b>					
<b>Name:</b> Tiffany Fresher			<b>Title:</b> Chief Executive Officer		
<b>E-Mail Address:</b> tiffany@acn-sa.org			<b>Phone:</b> (210) 435-1000		
<b>Application Contact</b>					
<b>Name:</b> Patricia Vela		<b>Title:</b> Chief Development and Outreach Officer		<b>E-Mail Address:</b> pattyv@acn-sa.org	
				<b>Phone:</b> (210) 435-1000	

**Previous funding received from The Gordon Hartman Family Foundation**

Year	Funding \$
2013	\$15,000
2014	\$15,000
2015	\$20,000
2016	\$25,000
2017	\$25,000
2018	\$25,000
2019	\$20,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$145,000</b>

**Has the organization applied to the Gordon Hartman Family Foundation in the past and been declined?**  
No

Grant Amount Requested \$:	Total Project Budget \$:	Organization's Annual budget \$:
\$25,000	\$1,447,910	\$1,447,910

**Mission Statement:**  
The mission of Autism Community Network is to maximize the potential of children with autism by providing early diagnosis for those with limited access and educating and empowering the community to support them.

**PROJECT INFORMATION**

**Program / Project Title:**  
Autism Community Network - General Operations

**PROJECT TIMELINE**

Start Date	End Date
01/01/2021	12/31/2021

**Program / Project Description:**  
Autism Community Network (ACN) is a non-profit agency working on behalf of children and families for whom autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is either suspected, or medically diagnosed, in Bexar and surrounding counties. ACN was founded in 2008 by a consortium of health care funders concerned with the growing prevalence of ASD and the lack of developmental services in our area to address the increase in incidence rates. Of particular concern were families challenged by obstacles to quality health care, putting them in greater danger of misdiagnosis or late diagnosis.

Over the last 12 years, ACN has served over 20,000 individuals and provided 7,000 diagnostic services to children. A committed staff of 17 individuals is changing lives of families affected by ASD. ACN's 9 clinicians have a combined 183 years of relevant experience offering this community the most expert and comprehensive approach to medical diagnostics, therapeutic intervention, effective caregiver training.

ACN offers:

- Medical diagnostic services for children,
- Occupational, speech, and behavior therapy for children,
- Classes, hands-on courses, and online resources for caregivers,
- Caregiver wellness monitoring via Resilience Through Relationship program,

- Professional development for professionals serving children with autism,
- Summer camps for children, and
- Community outreach and awareness.

ACN serves children, ages 0-6, suspected of having autism. Our focus is on families who are under-served, economically challenged, Medicaid eligible and/or limited-English proficient.

Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a neuro-developmental disorder characterized by deficits in social interaction, communication and abnormal behavior patterns. Because development occurs early in childhood, it is critical to diagnose and treat children early for the best chance of success. ACN is committed to offering best practice, early diagnosis and intervention to under-served children in our community suspected to be affected by ASD. According to the CDC (April, 2020), 1 in 54 individuals is diagnosed with ASD. Locally, a report commissioned by The Kronkosky Foundation in 2016 found 1 in 81 individuals in Bexar County are affected by ASD.

In 2019, ACN provided 1594 unduplicated services to families from 98 unique zip codes across 17 counties in San Antonio and South Texas. Of these services, 76% were boys and 24% were girls. A majority of the families identified themselves as Hispanic (60%). The remaining families self identified as White (29%), African American (10%), and Asian American (1%). 72.8% were Medicaid eligible, 25.94% held private insurance, and 1.26% were uninsured.

ACN is one of only 3 agencies addressing the Medicaid eligible population for clinical autism diagnostic services. Factoring in private practice physicians still does little to address the gaps in our community because there are only a handful of developmental behavioral pediatricians practicing locally, and one is employed by ACN full time. ACN's current wait list is an average of 10 months from initial referral to diagnostic appointment, which remains the shortest in the city, but is still longer than ideal considering early identification of ASD is critical to ensuring children have access to specialized, evidence-based interventions which foster positive outcomes. Early identification also shortens the diagnostic journey many families unfortunately experience before receiving a diagnosis (Zwaigenbaum, et al., 2015).

The children and families in our area are woefully underserved and lack adequate access to diagnostic services, regardless of their age, zip code, or socio-economic status. Access to appropriate and relevant intervention and therapy is another challenge facing families in our area. Factors contributing to the lack of therapies include, but are not limited to, lack of qualified professionals and limited insurance coverage.

ACN's approach to medical diagnosis has always been innovative and overwhelmingly successful in providing what the American Academy of Pediatrics refers to as the gold standard in autism diagnosis. This is due, in large part, to the work of Chris Plauche, MD, who developed this model (and a guiding algorithm for pediatricians) during her tenure as Medical Director of ACN (Plauche & Myers, 2007). This interdisciplinary approach to assessment provides the most accurate diagnosis. Brief clinical observations (15 minute segments of observation) are unreliable in determining a positive or negative diagnosis of ASD. Experts are likely to miss 40% of obvious markers in children they observe, further supporting the notion that risk assessment and diagnostic evaluations conducted in a typical physician's office are insufficient and unreliable (Gabrielsen, et al., 2015).

Regarding services to empower and educate caregivers, ACN employs child development services, parent engagement, parent education, family mental health and wellness to improve life trajectories for families living with autism. Caregiver programs supporting parents in practicing new skills with their child, to create positive interactions, have been shown to be more effective than other parent training strategies (Kaminski, Valle, Filene, & Boyles, 2008). This program includes both didactic, caregiver only learning opportunities, as well as caregiver-child coaching opportunities using evidence based strategies.

In light of the local response to COVID-19, ACN is no longer able to see families in our office. Our staff has successfully transitioned to telemedicine and teletherapy services. However, in visiting with families it has become apparent that we need to scaffold in support for caregivers during this unprecedented time. We launched a series titled "Coffee & Connection" which is tailored to the caregiver. It is a time to provide them with resources, allow them to ask questions, present them with self care opportunities, and connect with one another. We have seen a significant increase from the normal caregiver supports we offer which suggests our caregivers are in need of additional care during this time.

Despite COVID 19, ACN continues to grow and our community continues to need our services. Our future plans are exciting and we are honored to be a part of the Multi Assessment Center as the organization providing medical diagnostics, intervention, and certain therapies to children and families impacted by autism spectrum disorder.

**Evaluation Plan:**

Plan for Evaluation of Success - ACN will provide interdisciplinary diagnosis and treatment for young children with autism; training and education for autism service providers; and comprehensive information and networking for families and professionals. Success for ACN will be evaluated in the following ways:

Clinical Diagnostic Services - Quantitative goals related to number of clients served will be tracked through the clinic database monthly, to be shared by the Chief Executive Officer and with the Board of Directors, ACN staff, funders, and the public. The quality of diagnostic services will be indicated by an increase in cumulative knowledge related to their experiential learning outcomes and by satisfaction with their experiential satisfaction survey items. Of the families, receiving a positive diagnosis 80% will enroll in Autism Lifeline Links and Alamo Area Community Network on the day of diagnosis, or in a subsequent follow up visit.

Training and Education - Autism Community Network will provide interdisciplinary diagnosis and intervention for young children with autism; training, education and follow-along support for their families, and comprehensive information, mentorship, and networking opportunities for families and professionals. ACN will monitor its training goals related to number of individuals participating in training and educational services through our training database. This information is maintained by the Chief Operating Officer and reported monthly to the Board of Directors and major funders. All qualitative goals related to the trainings will be monitored by self-assessment of learning outcomes and satisfaction surveys. This data will be collected by training staff. The Chief Operating Officer will report this information bi-monthly to the Board of Directors and major funders.

Family Empowerment Classes, Courses, Conferences, and Events - Classes, Courses and Conferences are similarly measured and tracked. Measurement tools will be administered post training to measure effectiveness of the presenting clinician. The data is reported bi-monthly to funders and the Board of Directors and ACN staff.

Awareness, Outreach, and Collaboration - Goals related to interactions with the public are monitored through the outreach database and social media metrics and is collected by the Chief Development and Outreach Officer. Caregiver Empowerment Class participation will be tracked through the outreach database. This data will be available to the Board of Directors, ACN staff and donors on a monthly basis.

**Plans to sustain project beyond the term of this request:**

Plans to sustain this program include seeking funding from individual donors, corporations, foundations, and annual fundraising events. ACN intend to partially sustain the program through earned revenue from third party payers.

**Line item Budget:**

Line Item Description	Total Project Funds Allocation	Gordon Hartman Funds Allocation
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Continuing Education and Professional Certification	\$12,000	\$0
Community Forum	\$8,000	\$0
Community Engagement	\$13,500	\$0
Development/Fundraising	\$18,500	\$0
Insurance Expense	\$9,600	\$0
Malpractice	\$5,000	\$0
Occupancy	\$130,250	\$0
Office Expense	\$26,400	\$0
Payroll Expense	\$1,105,640	\$0
Professional Fees	\$51,020	\$0
Supplies and Materials	\$13,500	\$0
Direct Assistance	\$3,000	\$0
Camp Ausome	\$44,000	\$0
Travel and Meetings	\$7,500	\$0
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$1,447,910</b>	<b>\$0</b>

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

### **LIST OF BOARD DIRECTORS**

<b>Name &amp; Office Held</b>	<b>Corporate Affiliation</b>
Brenda Peterson (President)	Tesoro - Retired
Wendy Faldet, RhP (Vice President)	HEB-Director of Pharmacy Programs and Technology
Lalo Guerrero, CPA (Treasurer)	RSM - US
Rose Cofer, MD	Pediatrician
Leann Darnell	Holy Spirit Catholic Church - Counselor
Courtney Floyd	Norton Rose Fulbright - Attorney
Laurie Klose, PhD, LSSP	RespectED - Founder
Jose Hinojosa	EISD - Director of Special Education
Tanya Navalta	Spurs Sports and Entertainment
Sandra Gomez Obregon	KENS 5
Valerie Simmons, SLP	Easter Seals
J. Morgan Stephens	Epic MD - In House Counsel