

AART ANNUAL REPORT

2015-2016



All
Ages
Read
Together

MISSION

Educating children in need with free preschool programs in their communities.

VISION

We envision a future where all children, especially our most vulnerable, enter school prepared to learn and succeed. We strive for a future in which public education includes universal access to preschool, making the need for AART obsolete.

Board of Directors

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Penny Desper

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Sandra Shihadeh

Directors

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Christopher D'Arcy
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David McOmber
Lynn Rubin
Bobbi Schaufeld
Cindy Schaufeld
Leigh Shields



“ Having recently immigrated to Leesburg, I was looking for a commensurate volunteer role in a local nonprofit that I belonged to previously. I count myself fortunate that the first newspaper I opened up had an article on Sandra Shihadeh and the good work that All Ages Read Together was doing in the area. I haven't looked back. ”

– Christopher D'Arcy, Board Member



gorilla

g

elephant

h

hippo

WHERE DID AART START?



Over the past decade, it has been my honor and privilege to be part of something that has made a big difference in the lives of hundreds of disadvantaged children. Ten years ago, together with my sister, I felt called to serve the growing number of kids who were on the Head Start waiting list in Loudoun County because there were not enough funds to give every needy child critical school readiness instruction. I wondered how one of the wealthiest counties in the nation could fail to adequately prepare its most vulnerable residents to become successful students and, ultimately, productive citizens. At the same time, I was inspired by the sheer joy that my little nieces and nephews brought to the lives of seniors every time they visited their great-grandmother. And thus the idea of *All Ages Read Together* was born.

Today, I am proud – indeed awed – that we have served so many young learners in Loudoun, and that we have grown to serving children in Fairfax and even Alexandria! I am delighted that we have fulfilled our promise of all ages reading together, from preschoolers to teens to young and middle aged adults to seniors. Year in and year out, we have been driven to serve the need, to fill the gap, wherever we find children whose families have no other options.

As we look to the future, I am excited to be handing the baton to our next leader, the immensely qualified and capable Michelle Sullivan, AART's first Executive Director. I look forward to serving on the Board of Directors as we begin the work of charting our second decade, and I will remain forever grateful to my sister and others who joined me in the founding of AART.

– Sandy Shihadeh, Co-Founder

THE FUTURE OF AART

Dear Friends of All Ages Read Together,

As the first Executive Director of All Ages Read Together, I was asked to look at the organization and our mission with a fresh set of eyes. Our mission is to educate children in need with free school readiness programs in their communities. After participating in a number of AART classes, I was immediately struck by the quality of the program and the unique characteristics that distinguish AART from other programs. Our founders, sisters Sandra Shihadeh and Karen Schaufeld, built this organization and I look forward to making sure a broad audience is aware that AART is very special.

AART defines itself by:

- Serving overlooked and unserved children in their communities;
- Partnering seniors and volunteers of all ages with our four- and five-year-olds to form intergenerational engagement;
- Furnishing a free weekly book for the children to start their own cherished book collections to give them continued access to books at home;
- Canvassing communities for families rather than expecting they will find us; and
- Providing flexible work schedules to attract gifted teachers.

As I experience my own learning curve as the new Executive Director of AART, I try to put myself in the shoes of the children in our program. They are experiencing a variety of emotions as many are learning English while simultaneously trying to master new skills that will prepare them to walk into their kindergarten classrooms and be successful. The guidance they receive is reflected in the thoughtful ways AART teachers focus on each individual child's needs.

Our AART teachers and volunteers show their hard work and dedication to our preschoolers each day, as the students make strides both inside and outside of the classroom. AART classes can help to even the playing field for families and children with limited resources and language barriers. Our work will continue until there is no longer a need.

– Michelle Sullivan, Executive Director

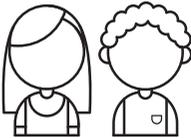


2015-2016 PROGRAM OVERVIEW

“The AART program is the best that I found for my son to get ready to go to school. He has developed better with exposure to more children and teachers, and he has learned English and the letters of the alphabet and more. Thanks to the teachers for their time and patience with our children.”

– Cristina A., Parent of AART Student

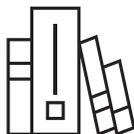
167
students
served



71
volunteers
engaged
providing
over
9,900
hours of
service



3,200
books put in
the hands of
our students



Success Story

St. Matthew's Episcopal Church 2015-2016 Class

Eduardo came to St. Matthew's in October of last year. He was shy and spoke little to no English. He didn't know his colors or shapes. He couldn't hold a pencil and had never held scissors. He couldn't communicate enough to ask questions or engage in circle time. He couldn't recognize, let alone write or spell, his name. He was happy and eager to learn.

Open activities like building blocks, Legos, Play-Doh and puzzles helped him gain confidence and communicate with his new friends. We used activities like using shaving cream or colored sand to practice writing the letters of his name. Playing games like Memory, Bingo, Gone Fishing or Feed the Penguin helped him learn his letters, shapes, and colors. Circle time was integral to his year since we sing songs that encourage language and learning daily. Often these songs coincided with books and letters that we were learning and helped in long term memory of skills. Songs like "Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes" helped him learn body parts. "BINGO" helped with letters. Singing the song "Five Little Ducks" helped learning numbers, and every day his confidence and language would grow. During circle as we sing "The Hello Song," I stop to talk to each child to comment on a color or shape in their clothing to encourage language development and the idea

of making connections. Often times, he would prepare at home so that he could comment back. Eduardo especially loved special snack times where we counted Teddy Grahams or sorted Fruit Loops before making necklaces. When we taught the books, *The Napping House* and *Five Little Monkeys*, we made story sacks that used manipulatives from the book or song to help the students retell or sing the story or song at home. This activity encourages language repetition and promotes success in reading the book.

By the end of the year, Eduardo knew and could spell his name. He could draw a self-portrait and cut successfully. He was counting to ten and beyond in English. His biggest success though was in his ability to communicate with his teachers and his friends. He was singing songs, making predictions and answering questions. He could think about and communicate the ways the book related to his life. He made friends. One of my favorite moments of the year was watching Eduardo and several of the children put together a large floor puzzle on their own, talking out their clues, saying things like "you have the bear!" to signal a friend that they had a piece they needed. When the kids were all done, they screamed "Hooray!" with their fists in the air.

– Lori Berry, Site Leader

HISTORY

2007

Began under auspices of the Loudoun Literacy Council.

Launched Pilot Program.



2010

Received 501(c)(3) designation.



2012

Expanded Board of Directors to 12 members.

Opened summer sites in Loudoun and Fairfax.



2015

Established partnership with Literacy Council to provide English classes for parents of children enrolled in AART.

Grew to 6 sites in Loudoun, 4 sites in Fairfax, 1 in Arlington, and 4 summer programs in Loudoun.



2009

Incorporated in the state of Virginia.

Expanded program to Fairfax County.



2011

Established summer programs.



2014

Expanded to 5 sites in Loudoun and 4 sites in Fairfax.



2016

Opened 2 sites in Alexandria.



PROGRAM OBJECTIVES



Provide at-risk children with individualized school readiness instruction.



Furnish free weekly books to start in-home libraries.



Empower volunteers of all ages to instill a love of reading in young children.

PROGRAMS

Site Programs:

AART is dedicated to serving at-risk preschool age children. Gifted teachers and volunteers of all ages provide individualized school readiness programs to prepare children for success in kindergarten and beyond.

AART provides free programs to vulnerable learners in Loudoun and Fairfax counties. Classes meet twice a week for 30 weeks from September to June. Our locations are convenient to the neighborhoods where these children live: in community rooms, senior centers, churches, and libraries. Classes combine instruction in letters, numbers, colors, and shapes with other basic kindergarten readiness lessons. Children keep the books they receive during the program to build their own home libraries.

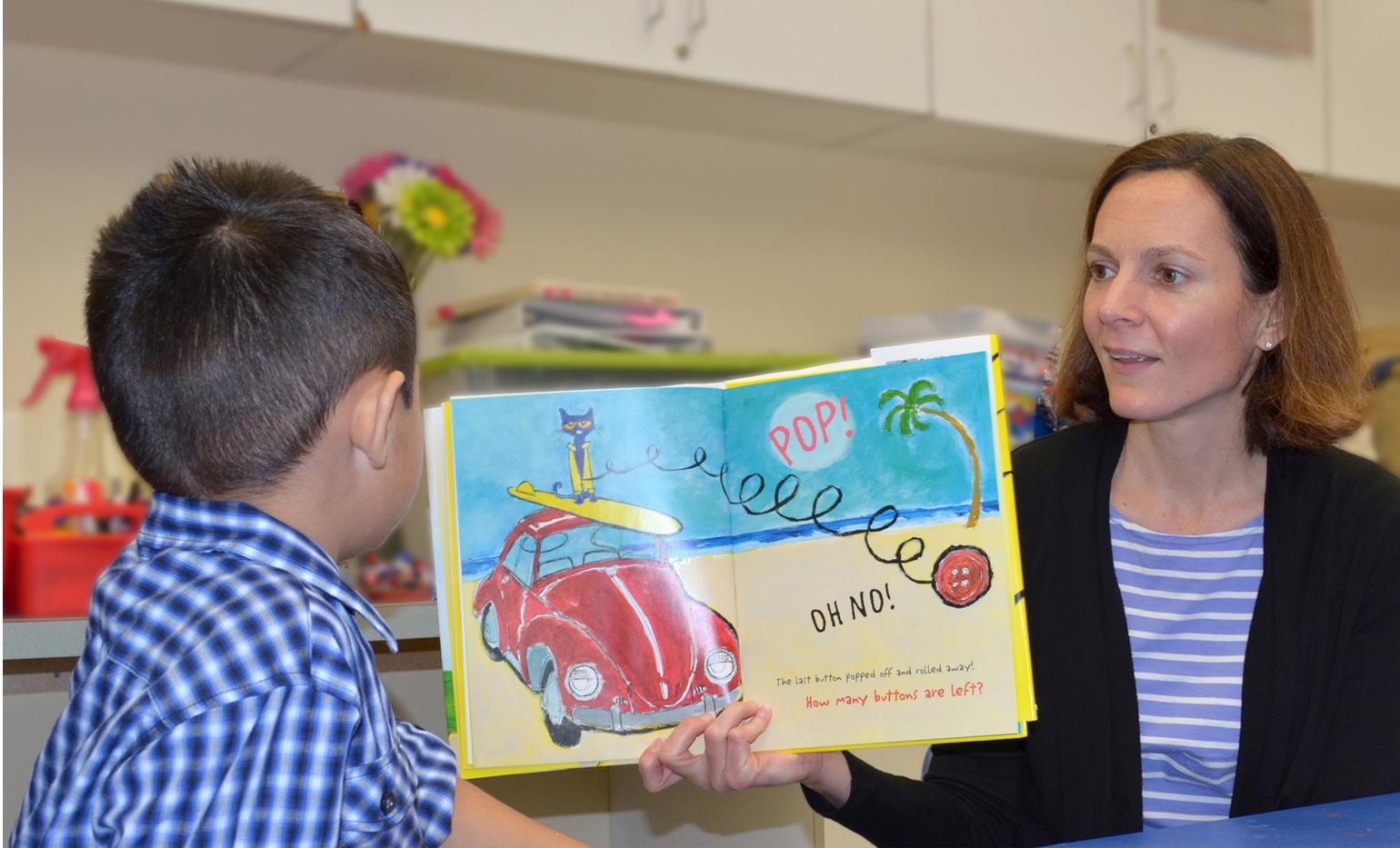
Summer Program:

The AART summer program is an intensive five-week school readiness program, serving rising kindergarteners with little or no preschool experience. Similar in format to the site programs, these programs meet in schools. They are much shorter, meeting three times a week during a five-week period in the summer. In addition to school readiness skills, students and parents are acclimating to the local elementary school.

For more information on our programs, please visit www.allagesreadtogether.org.

“ One thing I like is that as the year progresses, the teacher looks at the strengths and capabilities of the children and adjusts the day’s activities to that. Some children learn at a faster pace than others and the program is able to make sure that each child in the class is getting the focus needed. I also think one of the best things AART does is to provide the children with a new book each week. As someone who loves to read, I hope those books will generate that same love of reading to these children. ”

– Pat B., Fairfax County Volunteer

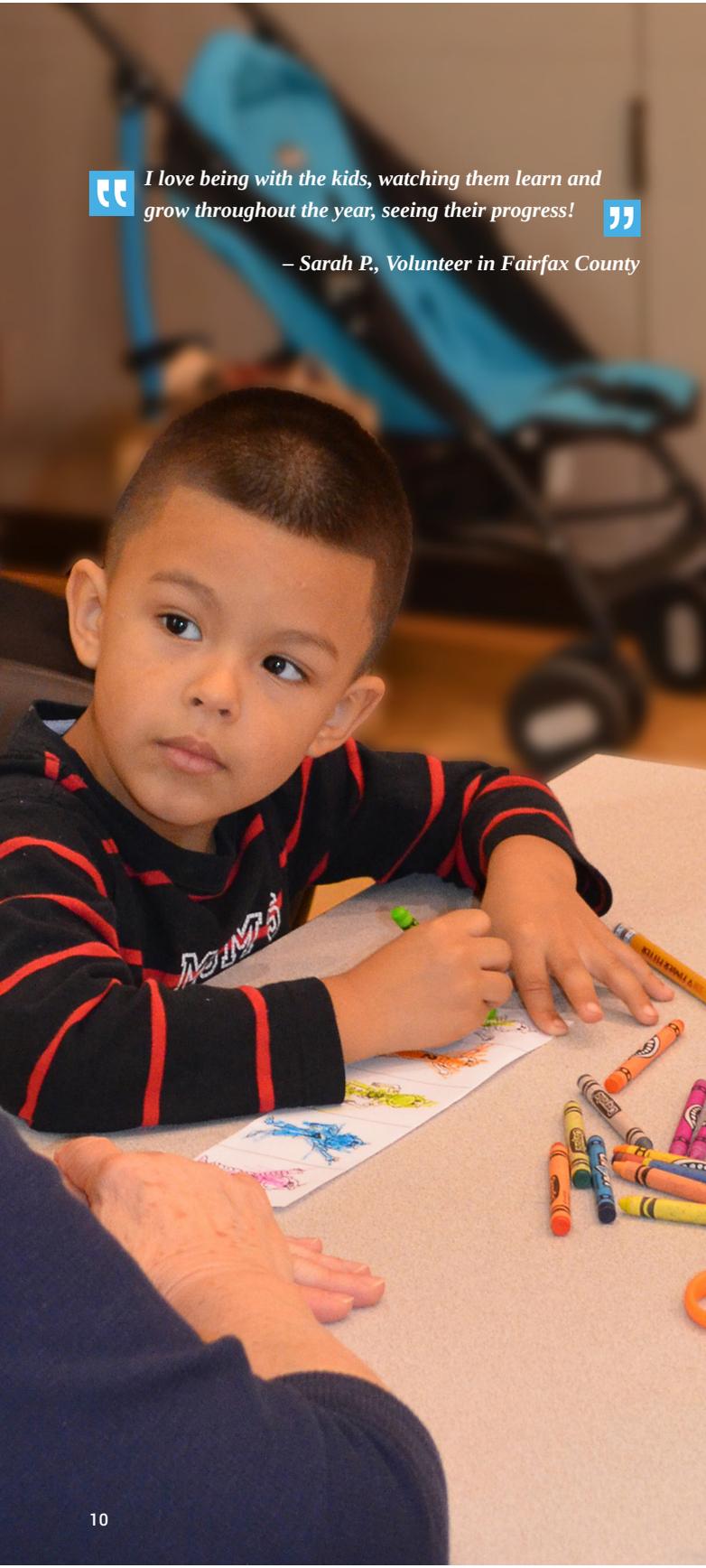


Success Story

Herndon Neighborhood Resource Center

Last school year I had three students who had just arrived to the United States from El Salvador when they began attending my class. None of them knew each other, but all three had a similar story. Their parents had come to the U.S. seeking better opportunities for their children. None of the children spoke or understood any English. I assured the parents that they would learn the language quickly, and they did. Through one-on-one reading, singing songs, and playing games such as BINGO and Zingo, these children quickly learned the language. They learned to communicate with their peers in English. They learned to recognize and spell their names. They learned to state the day of the week and month, and count all the way to the current date (by themselves!). They became confident and lead the class in reading the morning message at circle time, "Good morning! Today is Tuesday. Our letter is G." Again, all by themselves! They learned how to communicate effectively with adults, and ask for help when needed. While being able to count or spell their names is a big accomplishment, what I appreciate most about this program is that we encourage these children to get excited about learning. These three children, who had previously lived in gang-infested areas of El Salvador, had no school experience when they arrived. They were timid, quiet, and not exactly thrilled to be leaving their moms to go to an unfamiliar environment. We were their first teachers, their first "school" experience, and we made it a positive one for them.

– Virginia Turner, Site Leader



“ I love being with the kids, watching them learn and grow throughout the year, seeing their progress! **”**

– Sarah P., Volunteer in Fairfax County

HOW YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

- Consider a first-time financial gift or increase your current giving level.
- Attend AART’s annual signature fundraising events – Tee Off for Children’s Literacy Golf Tournament and AART Horseshoe Hoedown.
- Spread the word about the good work AART is doing.
- Send us a note about how your involvement with AART has touched your life.
- Volunteer at one of our sites. If you love working with young children, join us!
- Volunteer your talents – photography, public relations, website, and social media development.

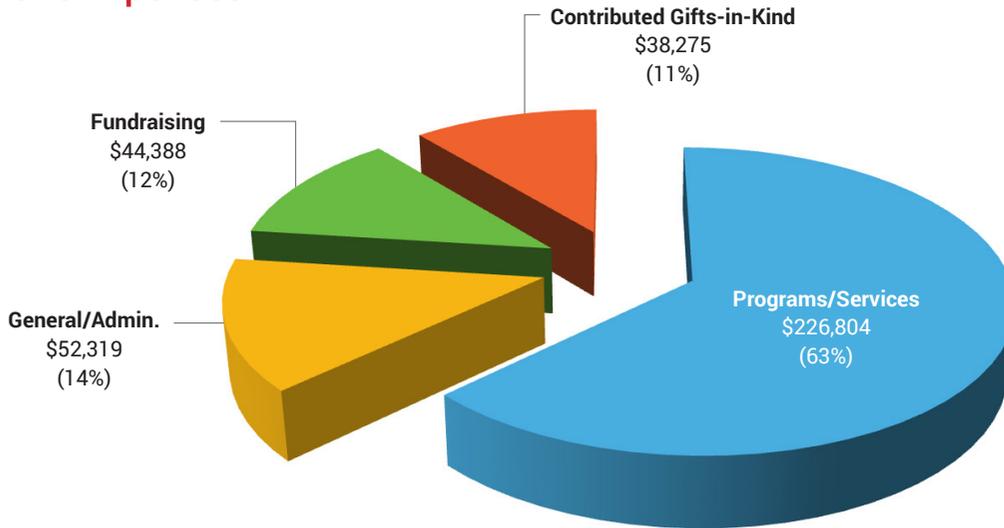
“ I was attracted by AART’s long term goal of influencing our larger system to provide universal pre-kindergarten learning. As our country becomes more complex and diverse, we need more adept and confident adults. The place to start is with local kids who have been overlooked by other educational sources at a time in their lives critical to full development. And, I could join with likeminded colleagues who bring committed action as well as passion to their work. **”**

– Leigh Shields, Board Member

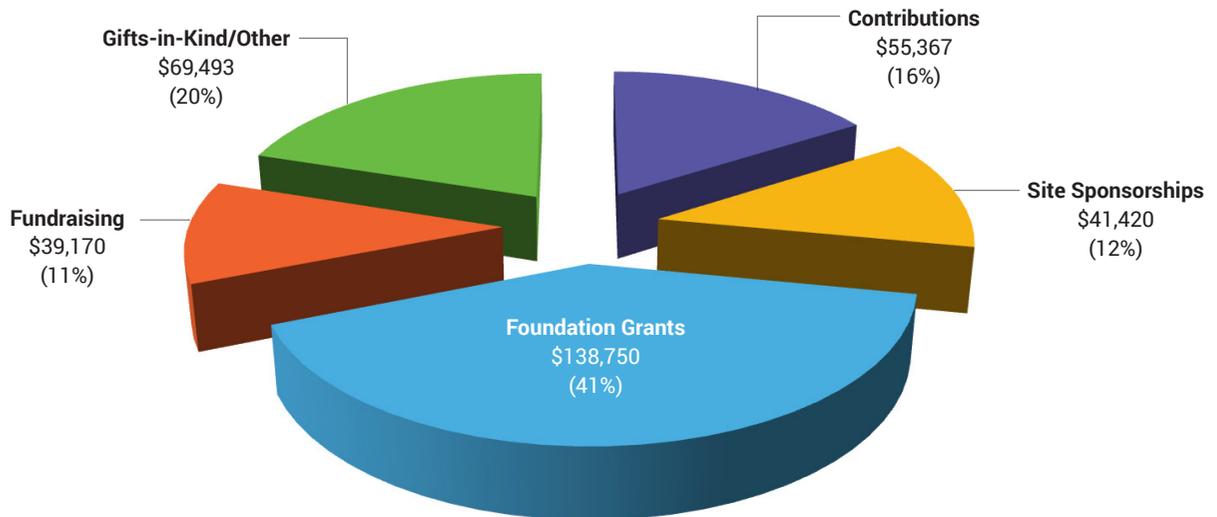
FINANCIALS

Expenses and Revenue FY2016 (September 1, 2015-August 31, 2016)

FY2016 Expenses



FY2016 Revenue and Support



AART DONORS

Recognized below are the donations received during fiscal year 2016 (September 1, 2015-August 31, 2016). Every effort has been made to list donors accurately. Your donations enable us to make a difference in the lives and future prospects of our students. Thank you for your generous support.

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All Ages Read Together by attending
our Tee Off for Children's Literacy
Golf Tournament, AART Horseshoe
Hoedown, and AARTisans event!**

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Loudoun Literacy Council
Lucketts Elementary School
Sacramento Center
St. Matthew's Episcopal Church
Sterling Elementary School
The Fields
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 *There is a tremendous unmet need for high-quality early learning throughout the country. Across the country, fewer than three in ten 4-year-olds are enrolled in a high-quality preschool program. Yet, the importance of early learning is clear. Studies prove that children who have rich early learning experiences are better prepared to thrive in kindergarten and beyond.* 

– U.S. Department of Education



**All
Ages
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www.allagesreadtogether.org

AART

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