



# LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The political environment in Arkansas is changing. As talk of tax cuts and cut-backs rise above the din, making a strong argument for investments in our state's children and families is more important than ever. With that in mind, AACF developed a new strategic plan in 2013 that will guide us over the next four years. This plan will help us meet our goals, with an eye toward re-tooling our communications efforts.

Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube allow us to communicate directly with audiences as varied as the platforms themselves. Through Twitter, we can target lawmakers and other influencers (those with clout, political or otherwise). Facebook has proven to be an excellent way to call our followers to action, asking them to make calls or write letters. YouTube lets us tell the stories we want through messengers who care about our issues: pre-K instructors, pediatricians, and those who benefit from the Private Option.

At AACF, we've always been known for producing data-driven reports to help inform and frame issues for policy makers and the general public. In this new media world, where "shares" and "likes" dictate dissemination of information, we're finding new ways to deliver that data. In 2013, we released infographics on the Affordable Care Act, education funding, and a new series on tax and budget issues called "Fiscal Fitness."

Though political climate and modes of communication may change, AACF's commitment to children and families in Arkansas remains steadfast. No matter the party in charge, or the latest communication craze, we will always use every tool we have to make sure those with political power hear from those whose lives are affected by the wielding of it.

*Rich Huddleston*

Rich Huddleston



Executive Director  
Rich Huddleston

## 2013 AACF PUBLICATIONS

*The Facts on Medicaid Co-Payments: Considerations for Arkansas, February 2013*

*Keeping Kids in Class: Fixing Racial Disparities in School Discipline, February 2013*

*Crossing the Finish Line 2012: Nearing the Home Stretch for Covering Kids and Parents in Arkansas, March 2013*

*Juvenile Justice in Arkansas: Building on Success, March 2013*

*Kids at the Capitol, May 2013*

*NSLA Funding in the 89th General Assembly, June 2013*

*From Playgrounds to Prisons: Police Involvement in School Discipline, July 2013*

*Infographic: The Affordable Care Act in Arkansas, September 2013*

*Why School Facilities Matter: And What We Can Do to Fix the Disparities, October 2013*

*Rules of the Game: How to Navigate the Arkansas Tax and Budget System, October 2013*

*A Better Foundation: Building a Tax System that Works for Arkansas Families, October 2013*

*Infographic: Fiscal Fitness - Getting Arkansas's Tax Code Into Shape, November 2013*

*Infographic: Education Funding is Vital To Arkansas's Future, December 2013*





### Improving Access to Health Coverage

2013 saw major improvements in access to health coverage for Arkansas families. The biggest news was passage of the “Private Option,” a new health coverage option for lower-income adult Arkansans. About 250,000 low-income Arkansans now qualify for affordable coverage. Arkansas is one of only two states in the southern United States to cover these families after the Supreme Court made the Affordable Care Act’s Medicaid expansion optional. During the 2013 legislative session, we advocated strongly for the Private Option, supporting our position with publications including our “Top Ten” reasons to extend coverage, family-friendly principles for this coverage model, an analysis of workers and industries that could benefit, and information about veterans who could qualify for the Private Option.



*Anna Strong, Susana O'Daniel and Brett Kincaid with Gov. Mike Beebe at the Private Option Bill-Signing Ceremony*

### Reforming the Juvenile Justice System

AACF efforts to reform the state’s juvenile justice system took many a twist and turn this year. Legislative reform efforts were unsuccessful during the session but proposed changes brought a great deal of attention to serving youthful offenders in their local community and reserving incarceration only for those youth who pose a serious threat to public safety. AACF staff requested and received a legislative interim study on the juvenile justice system which will focus on the importance of continuing reform efforts. AACF released two juvenile justice publications in 2013: “Juvenile Justice in Arkansas: Building on Success,” and “From Playgrounds to Prisons: Police Involvement in School Discipline.”

### Promoting Early Childhood Development Through Home Visitation

AACF worked closely with the Arkansas Home Visiting Network and Arkansas Children’s Hospital to bring together multiple home visitation programs operating under three state agencies that oversee these programs. This effort created agreement on proposed legislation to establish high-quality standards and relevant outcome measures and to report regularly to the legislature on the progress being made to help vulnerable infants and toddlers. Home visitation is an emerging and effective tool with great potential to reshape the potential of vulnerable children.



*Home Visiting Bill Signing*

written and adopted in July of 2013. We continue to engage the statewide coalition of afterschool advocates working to put this proven-effective “shovel ready” legislative proposal to work.

### Advocating for Afterschool

AACF worked closely with the Arkansas Out-of-School Network to continue the unrelenting work of making high-quality afterschool and summer programs widely available in Arkansas. During the 2013 session AACF proposed legislation to fund the Positive Youth Development Grant Program Act which passed in 2011. That effort was unsuccessful. Despite the lack of funding, rules and regulation were

## Moving the Needle on Education

This year we joined with the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation to spread the word about the Grade-Level Reading Campaign. The goal of the campaign is that all Arkansas children read at grade level by the end of the third grade by 2020. The year kicked off with an Arkansas Grade-Level Reading Summit. We also joined with Attendance Works to share Arkansas data on absenteeism in early grades and began work on a legislative interim study on grade-level reading that will form the basis of legislative recommendations in 2015.

As part of our work with the Opportunity to Learn campaign, we were able to help pass ground-breaking legislation to require state-level reports on school discipline by race and income level. We worked hard to make improvements in the way schools use state funding for low-income students. Our recommendations will guide an interim study to be completed before the next fiscal session. During the summer we rolled out a video to accompany our report, “Why School Facilities Matter: And What We Can Do To Fix the Disparities,” on remaining facilities needs for low-income school districts. This release provided the impetus for a re-assessment of facilities’ needs, the restoration of funding cuts, and the provision of additional funding for schools. We testified in support of Common Core State Standards in a legislative hearing held this summer, urging that the needs of students who are currently performing poorly be addressed in its implementation.

## Promoting Child Welfare

AACF formed and led two stakeholders’ workgroups during 2013 which will continue meeting next year. The first workgroup looked at when it may or may not be appropriate to place children with relatives or fictive kin instead of bringing them into foster care. In state fiscal year 2013, 3,901 children entered foster care. The second workgroup looked at what types of low-risk allegations may or may not need a full investigation, but rather a family assessment through the Differential Response Program. This program began in 2013 and certain types of low-risk allegations are assigned to it. During State Fiscal Year 2013, 33,353 maltreatment reports were assigned for investigation (22 percent were found to be true) and 1,302 maltreatment reports were assigned to the Differential Response Program.

## Strengthening Economic Security

Defeating bills designed to fundamentally change the funding process for state government became a top priority for AACF during the 2013 legislative session. During the session we helped defeat a bill that would have diverted tax dollars to roads and highways instead of programs that impact our communities like child care and pre-K services, higher education, and public safety. While we certainly agree that our roads and highways are important to Arkansas, we do not believe they are more important than programs that directly impact our children. We also led the fight to defeat a bill that would have arbitrarily limited our state’s ability to invest in programs that support economic growth. In addition to our work at the Capitol, AACF issued several reports that highlighted the need for change in our state’s economic and tax policy.



*AACF Outreach Director Brett Kincaid (right) and Public Policy Panel Executive Director Bill Kopsky presenting at the Little Rock Post-Legislative Conference*

## Reaching Out

The Arkansas Kids Count Coalition asserted its goal to be “the collective force shaping public policy for children and families in Arkansas” during the 2013 Legislative session, hosting another Kids Count Day at the Capitol and three post legislative conferences (in Little Rock, Springdale, and Jonesboro). Members visited with legislators, discussed key issues, and urged support for specific legislation during the session. The coalition also sponsored policy café events in Helena/West Helena, Arkadelphia, and Fort Smith.

AACF also hosted Advocacy Academy events to train participants about issue selection, coalition building, legislative activities, electoral politics, the local media landscape, and legal advocacy strategies. Policy presentations were also given to various local and regional organizations around the state.

## Northwest Arkansas Update

The northwest Arkansas office continues to offer a critical voice for a growing number of children in that region who live at or near poverty. In August, we marked five years with a staff member on the ground there – a presence that offers an important link in our relationships with lawmakers and also the constituents who influence them. Our work in northwest Arkansas covers the range of issues of importance to AACF, with a special emphasis on improving public understanding of the benefits of public investment as well as the negative impact of budget cuts on the region’s families. One example of the importance of this office is the work we’re doing to ensure that immigrants and their families understand their rights and eligibility under the Affordable Care Act.



AACF Board Member Lynn Carver, Northwest Arkansas Director Laura Kellams and Board Member Lowell Grisham at NWA Soup Sunday



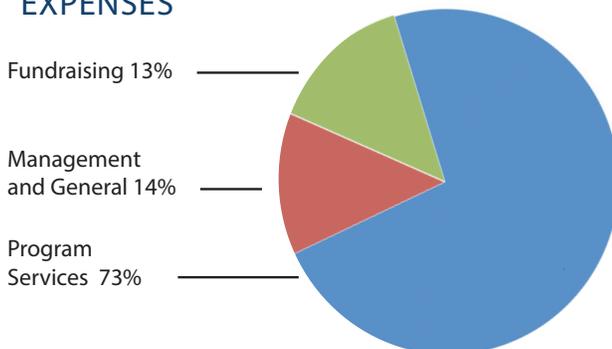
## 2013 AACF FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total Revenue & Support .....	1,691,943
Total Expenses .....	1,619,413
Increase in Unrestricted Net Assets .....	72,530
Decrease in Temporarily Restricted Net Assets .....	(50,000)
Change in Net Assets .....	22,530
Net Assets, Beginning of Year .....	879,792
Net Assets, End of Year .....	902,322

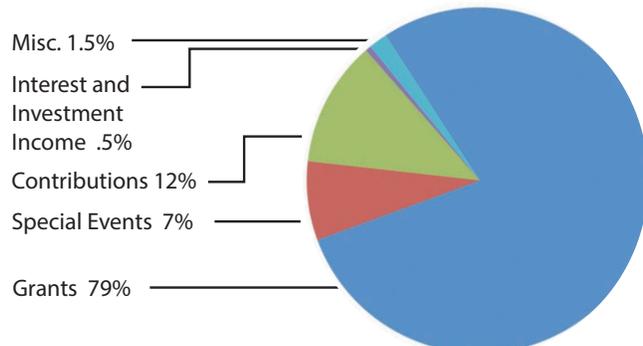
For the Year Ended December 31, 2013

From audited financials prepared by Thomas and Thomas LLP

### EXPENSES



### TOTAL REVENUE & SUPPORT





*Dr. Mary Good Accepting on Behalf of the late Dr. Betty Lowe*



*Judge Wiley Branton*



*Dr. Tom Bruce*

## 2013 FRIEND OF CHILDREN AWARD RECIPIENTS

## 2013 FUNDERS

### Grant Funders (\$5,000 and more)

*Annie E. Casey Foundation  
Arkansas Children's Hospital  
Arkansas Public Policy Panel  
Bowen Family Foundation  
Center on Budget & Policy Priorities  
Charles Stewart Mott Foundation  
Community Catalyst, Inc.*

*David and Lucile Packard Foundation  
Families USA Foundation  
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Mary Reynolds Babcock Foundation  
Nathan Dalton Whetstone Endowment/ARCF  
Public Welfare Foundation  
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*Schott Foundation for Public Education  
Stoneman Family Foundation  
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W.K. Kellogg Foundation  
Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation*

### Organization Donors (\$1,000 and more)

*Adventure Subaru  
Archer Media, LLC  
Arkansas Blue Cross and Blue Shield  
Arkansas Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics  
Arkansas Community Foundation  
Bank of the Ozarks  
C. Louis & Mary C. Cabe Foundation  
City of Little Rock  
Covenant Medical Benefits Inc.*

*Cross, Gunter, Witherspoon & Galchus  
Endeavor Foundation  
Friday, Eldredge & Clark  
Kids for the Future  
Legacy Termite and Pest Control, Inc  
Little Rock Pediatric Clinic  
Mitchell, Williams, Selig, Gates & Woodyard, PLLC  
Munro Foundation  
Olds Foundation  
PPGMR Law, PLLC*

*Tenenbaum Recycling Group  
The Centers for Youth and Families  
The Schmieding Foundation  
UAMS Dept of Pediatrics  
United Methodist Foundation of Arkansas  
University of Arkansas Foundation  
Walmart Foundation  
Willard & Pat Walker Charitable Foundation*

### Individual Donors (\$1,000 and more)

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Janie and Rich Huddleston  
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Dee and John Lea  
Nancy and Darrell Leonhardt  
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AACF President Terri Beiner with Executive Director Rich Huddleston

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[www.aradvocates.org](http://www.aradvocates.org)

*The mission of Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families is to ensure that all children and their families have the resources and opportunities to lead healthy and productive lives and to realize their full potential.*

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