

ARKANSAS ADVOCATES FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

ANNUAL REPORT 2019



**ARKANSAS
ADVOCATES**
FOR CHILDREN & FAMILIES



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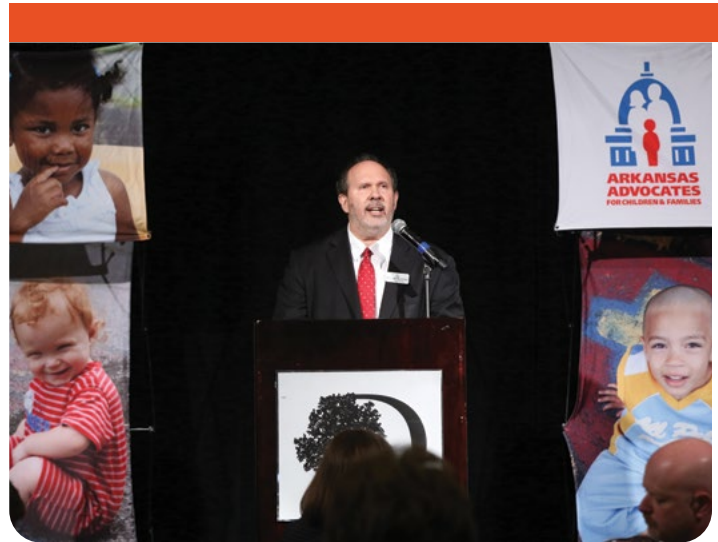
LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

What a busy year 2019 was! The 92nd General Assembly dominated between January and April, with more than 1,091 bills passed. Working with our partners and coalitions, Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families (AACF) helped introduce 12 bills from our 2019 legislative agenda. We testified before legislative committees, and we hosted 140 child advocates at our Kids Count Day at the Capitol. Our governmental affairs director and policy staff spent hours working with legislators and our partners to help gain the passage of laws that will make real improvements in kids' lives. We are especially proud of the gains made in juvenile justice reform and in school discipline practices.

Of course, the legislative session wasn't the only action we saw last year. As you'll read in the following section, we have turned our attention to putting racial equity at the center of all our work at AACF. We are identifying racial disparities in our state and surfacing solutions to help improve the lives of every child in Arkansas. It's important to us that we bring our supporters along with us on this journey, so I hope you'll spend some time on those pages.

We spent a great deal of time advocating against the Arkansas Works (the state's Medicaid expansion program) work-reporting requirement, and we were pleased when the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia ruled that the work-reporting requirement violated the purpose of the Arkansas Works program and a federal appeals court panel upheld that decision. We will, of course, actively monitor future court appeals and any other threats to our state's Medicaid programs, which provide health coverage to hundreds of thousands of Arkansans.

In 2019 we dedicated a lot of effort toward examining the health and other benefits that would come from enacting a state-level Earned Income Tax Credit, as well as exploring ways to encourage Arkansas to adopt this important anti-poverty measure.



Last year we expanded our team to add two new positions: a Northwest Arkansas development director and a racial equity director for advocacy. Our team spent the year growing together, learning each other's skills and strengths, and I'm looking forward to seeing the progress we make toward improving the lives of Arkansas's children and families.

Of course, none of our work would be possible without the support of our donors and funders. If you donated in 2019, we thank you graciously, and we hope you will continue supporting us. If you are new to the organization, I hope this annual report will inspire you to help us be a strong voice for Arkansas's children and families.

Rich Huddleston

RICH HUDDLESTON



CENTERING OUR WORK ON RACIAL EQUITY

At the end of 2018, the AACF board adopted a new strategic plan, making racial equity a top priority for the organization. In 2019, we took two significant steps to best position ourselves to take on this work.

We engaged a consultant agency, OpenSource Leadership Strategies, to help us go deeper on equity in our work.

We received essential feedback from 16 external partners and funders to help us identify opportunities to more fully integrate racial equity into our work.

We participated in a series of staff trainings to explore how AACF should think about equity in both our external and internal work and how individual staff should undertake their own personal journeys on equity.

Our executive director and deputy director received coaching on how to manage the organization's equity work.

We identified initial goals and action steps for future equity work in the areas of policy, communications and engagement, development, and internal culture and management practices.

And we raised new funding to hire a race equity director for advocacy. AACF is one of the first state-level groups in two of our most important national networks —the State Policy Priorities Partnership and the Partnership for America's Children — to create a dedicated staff position focused on advancing equity within the organization and our external work.

WHY DOES RACIAL EQUITY MATTER TO AACF?

We have always been focused on the well-being of children in Arkansas. But research and experience tell us that children of color face more historical and structural obstacles to reaching their full potential. Our state cannot reach its potential while so many children are left behind. Racial inequity is a solvable problem, and we will use our current and expanding abilities to be part of the solution.

WHAT DOES OUR RACIAL EQUITY WORK LOOK LIKE?

We are identifying racial and ethnic disparities in child well-being and sharing solutions grounded in the historical and current circumstances that created those disparities. And we are scrutinizing the impact of structural racism on all legal and policy decisions regarding the approval and use of available public funds.

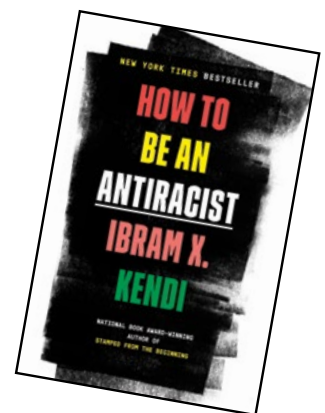
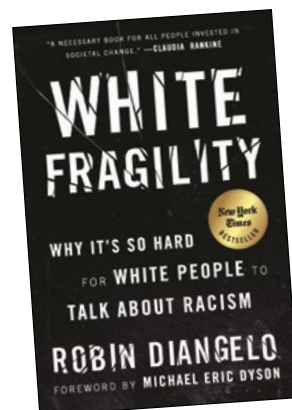
You will increasingly see data from our organization presented in a way that highlights how, when and where policies, programs and proposals negatively affect or disproportionately disadvantage children and families along racial and ethnic lines.

Melvin Clayton (*pictured above right*) joined AACF as race equity director for advocacy in October 2019. Melvin is a graduate of the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff and the University of Arkansas Clinton School of Public Service. He brings a unique blend of experience working on social justice issues and conducting public engagement with diverse stakeholders at the grassroots and grassroots levels.



RECOMMENDED READING

How to be an Antiracist, by Ibram X. Kendi
The Souls of Black Folk, by W.E.B. DuBois
The Inner Work of Racial Justice, by Rhonda V. Magee
White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk about Racism, by Robin DiAngelo
So You Want to Talk About Race, by Ijeoma Oluo



THE DYNAMIC DEVELOPMENT DUO

In January 2019, Missy Darwin Kincaid joined AACF as our first-ever Northwest Arkansas development director. After 10 years with a presence in NWA, AACF was ready for this next step, and Missy was the right person for the job.

In June, Fran Carter joined the team in Little Rock as the new development director.

Both Missy and Fran have extensive experience in successful nonprofit fundraising. Missy was most recently vice president of development at Walton Arts Center, where she worked for 18 years. Fran was director of development for Arkansas Repertory Theatre for the last decade.

What's more, Fran and Missy have known each other since they were kids. They both grew up in Little Rock and graduated from Central High School!

Fran and Missy are glad to be working with donors who want to support such an important mission.

Fran (*pictured below at left*): "Every day, we are learning about the important advocacy work this organization does to help children and low-income families."

Missy (*pictured below at right*): "We work with an amazing team, and we're glad to be part of this vital team effort to make Arkansas a better place for children and families to live. It's exciting to work for an organization that makes such an impact on the lives of children and families. I'm proud to be a part of this vital team of passionate individuals, and grateful that funders in Arkansas and nationally recognize the importance of our work."

YOUR SUPPORT MATTERS

Annual unrestricted funding gives AACF the flexibility to work on new and emerging issues as they arise. It also provides more resources for building coalitions, hosting outreach events around the state to recruit new advocates, and lobbying on behalf of children at the state capitol.

Your support positions us to be even more effective advocates for Arkansas's families.

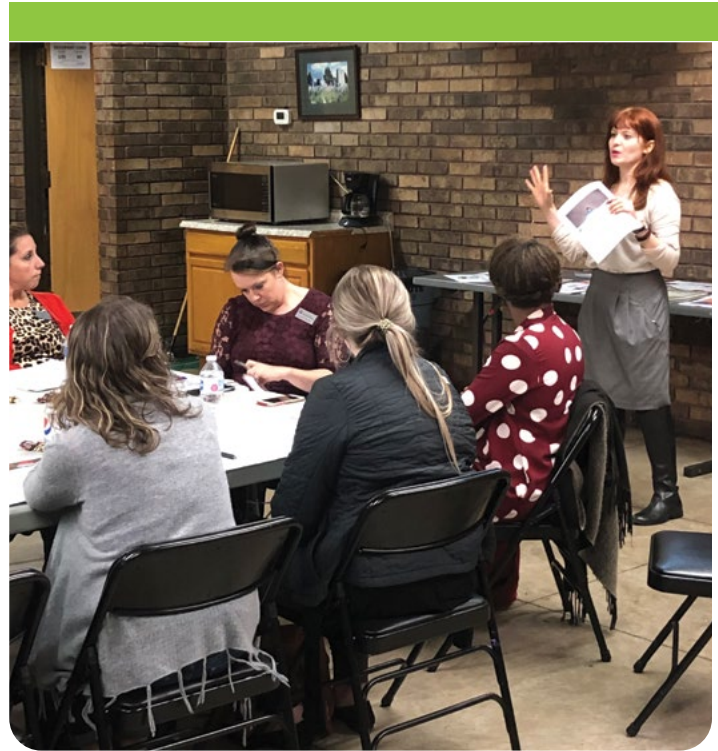


ENGAGING THE PUBLIC IN ADVOCACY

Laws reflect the opinions and wishes of the people who show up. At Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families, we are dedicated to increasing the number of child advocates who are following legislation and policies, contacting their elected officials, and going to the Capitol, so state laws better reflect the interests of Arkansas kids.

Strong partnerships are critical to our work at the Capitol. Through coalitions, we activated our networks in 2019 to protect low-income children and families from efforts to roll back laws that increased incomes and provided a critical safety net.

During the legislative session in 2019, we increased the number of people calling and writing legislators. Through email blasts and social media, AACF quadrupled the number of advocates responding to action alerts from the 2017 legislative year, meaning legislators were hearing from more advocates on how proposed bills would impact the children of our state.



**ADVOCATES AROUND THE STATE STOOD
UP FOR ARKANSAS'S CHILDREN, SENDING**

2,334

**EMAILS AND CALLS TO ELECTED OFFICIALS
IN 2019.**

ARKANSAS KIDS COUNT COALITION: **100+** MEMBERS STRONG

In 2019, the Arkansas Kids Count Coalition, staffed by AACF Community Engagement Director Rebecca Zimmermann (*pictured above, standing*), hosted 18 events, with 470 participants. In Little Rock, Springdale, Bentonville, Fort Smith, Jonesboro, Helena, El Dorado, Texarkana, Cherokee Village, Hot Springs, and Russellville, we talked about what happened during the General Assembly, issues advocates are seeing in their local communities, and how to advocate.

AACF leads workshops on how to advocate. If you would like to schedule a training for your group or organization, please call 501-371-9678.

As we look to the 2021 legislative session, we hope you will join us as a voice for kids.

2019 HIGHLIGHTS & ACCOMPLISHMENTS

HEALTH: KEEPING ARKANSANS COVERED

More than 425,000 children in Arkansas benefited from ARKids First coverage during 2019. Over the past several years, Arkansas has seen an overall increase in the number of uninsured children and a decrease in the number of eligible children enrolled in Medicaid. Our outreach efforts have, therefore, been focused specifically on reversing these trends.

In 2019, we tirelessly advocated against the Arkansas Works work-reporting requirement, which was stopped by a U.S. District Court ruling in March 2019. To date, all subsequent appeals of that ruling have been denied. We remain vigilant against any further threats to coverage and access to health services through Medicaid, ARKids First, Arkansas Works, and the Affordable Care Act.

AACF Health Policy Director Loretta Alexander (*pictured below at left*) and Health Policy Fellow Josh Hall (*below right*) visited communities around the state to share updates on Arkansas Works and hear what health issues Arkansas's families and children are facing.

EDUCATION: PROMOTING EDUCATION EQUITY AND RESEARCH-BASED PRACTICES

We played a role in the passage of Act 557, which bans the use of corporal punishment for many special education students in Arkansas's public schools. And we were part of a coalition that helped defeat two major voucher bills that would have diverted public tax dollars from public to private schools.

We worked with our early childhood education partners to develop and advocate for the creation of a refundable personal income tax credit for early childhood educators. The legislation passed the Senate but did not make it out of the House. We will continue this work in 2020 and into the 2021 legislative session.

For the first time, AACF became involved in local education advocacy work in the Little Rock School District, which remains under state control and which serves many low-income students and students of color. What happens in the LRSD has important implications across the state, and AACF advocated for returning the district back to local control and creating community schools — a research-based strategy shown to improve equity and outcomes for students.



JUVENILE JUSTICE: A MILESTONE YEAR

The Arkansas legislature passed Act 189, comprehensive juvenile justice reform legislation; AACF worked with Governor Hutchinson's administration, the Division of Youth Services, juvenile judges, service providers and advocates to help develop and pass this piece of legislation.

ACT 189 GOALS

- Reduce the number of juveniles in secure confinement and shorten their length of stay in secure confinement
- Redirect funding from secure confinement to more effective community-based programs
- Improve accountability in the juvenile justice system
- Improve equity in the allocation of services throughout the state

AACF also advocated for the passage of Act 971, which placed major limits on the use of isolation or solitary confinement for juveniles in juvenile detention or state correctional facilities. The bill is based on well-documented research that juvenile detention or solitary confinement, especially for long periods of time, is bad for the well-being of kids.

TAX AND BUDGET + ECONOMIC SECURITY: MOVING THE CONVERSATION ALONG

AACF worked successfully to minimize the revenue impact of the personal income tax cut that passed in the 2019 session. While the tax cut that passed still almost exclusively benefited higher-income earners, the amount of revenue lost is projected to be closer to \$100 million than the original \$200 million price tag associated with the original tax cut plan.

While it did not become law, legislation creating a refundable Earned Income Tax Credit on the state-level made it farther through the legislative process than it has in the past.

Legislators from both parties and both chambers sponsored the legislation, which made it through the full Senate before time constraints caused it to die on the House side. This is partially because of the work AACF did in conjunction with Children's HealthWatch and Arkansas Children's Hospital, conducting a Health Impact Assessment on a potential state-EITC in Arkansas.

AACF Senior Policy Analyst Bruno Showers (*pictured below*) spoke to reporters and the public at a press conference about the potential impact of large personal income tax cuts.



2019 HIGHLIGHTS & ACCOMPLISHMENTS

CENSUS: COUNTING ALL OF ARKANSAS'S KIDS

An accurate Census count in 2020 is critical to the wellbeing of children around the country, including here in Arkansas. In 2019, AACF, as part of the Arkansas Counts advisory group, worked with grassroots organizations and foundations to increase the likelihood of a complete count of people who have in the past been undercounted, including people who have immigrated to the U.S., people of color, and people living in rural areas. We also worked to raise awareness of the young child undercount with teachers, physicians, and others who work with young children by creating a communications toolkit and giving presentations on the issue.



PROGRESS IN NWA

We were thrilled to grow our Northwest Arkansas office in 2019. Missy Darwin Kincaid joined our staff as our first Northwest Arkansas development director, bringing both fundraising and policy experience to the staff in our Springdale office.

In 2019, we joined our partners at Arkansas United and Arkansas Coalition of Marshallese in advocating for new laws that help immigrants in Northwest Arkansas reach their full potential, the culmination of more than a decade of advocacy for a state-level “Dream Act” that extends access to in-state college tuition to many immigrants and migrants.

While our work in Northwest Arkansas covers the whole range of AACF’s issues, the office continues to place a special emphasis on addressing the unique challenges and obstacles faced by children in immigrant families. From early childhood education to a better foster care system, we’re working to show decision makers in the region how sound public policy can create opportunities for all children.

AACF Northwest Arkansas Director Laura Kellams (*pictured below at right*) leads a panel discussion with Arkansas lawmakers and community leaders, reviewing the laws that passed and didn’t pass during the General Assembly.

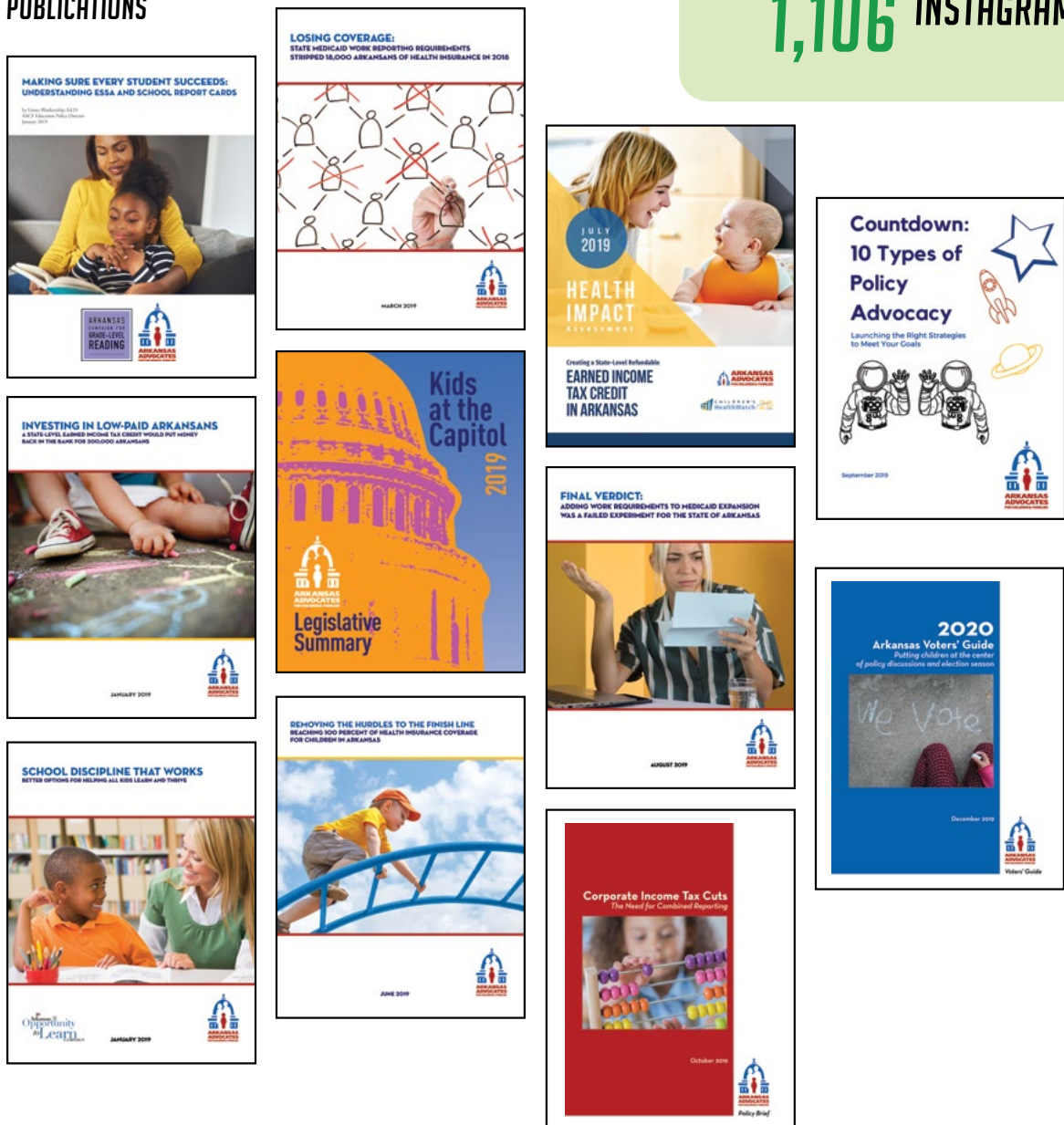


COMMUNICATIONS

In 2019, AACF published 71 blog posts, sent 33 press releases, hosted eight Facebook live videos, created 13 social media videos, and launched a digital campaign promoting enrollment in Arkansas Works.

Our staff and communications products were mentioned in local, statewide, national and even international media more than 250 times in 2019.

PUBLICATIONS



2019 DIGITAL FOLLOWERS

6,009 TWITTER

8,754 FACEBOOK

1,106 INSTAGRAM

As part of our effort to get more people advocating for children at the Capitol, Arkansas Advocates published *10 Types of Advocacy*, a simple guide that reviews different methods of advocacy, like social media, legislative, and administrative. It also includes an advocacy plan template. You can find this guidebook and more at aradvocates.org/publications

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS



AACF was thrilled to be presented with Pulaski County Youth Services' Visionary Award at their 2019 Champions of Youth Luncheon.



We honored Antwan Phillips, First Lady Susan Hutchinson and Kathy Webb at the 2019 Friends of Children Annual Luncheon.



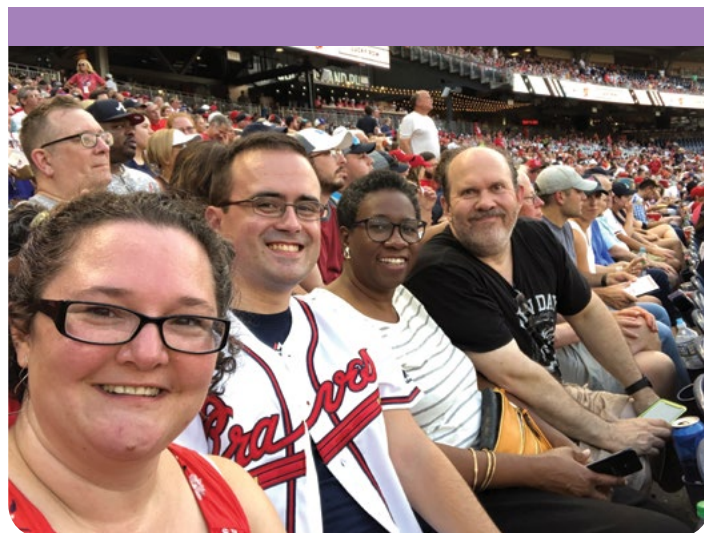
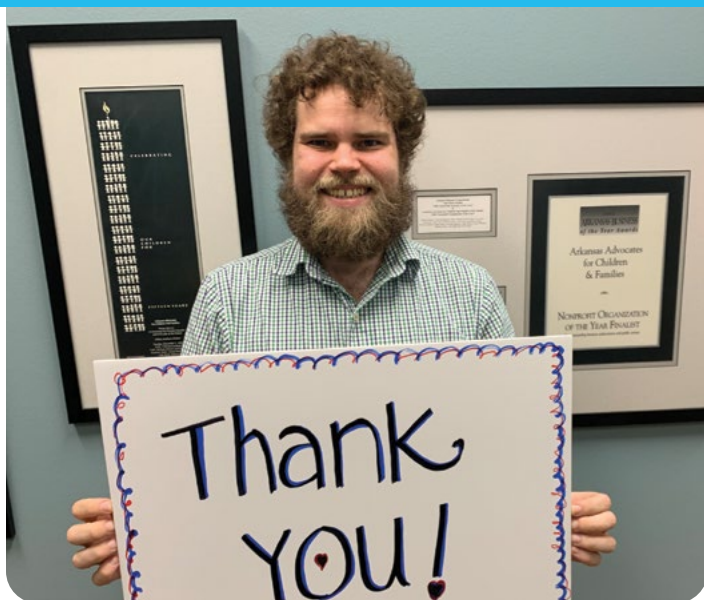
SOUP SUNDAY



Special thanks!
Soup Sunday 2019 in Little Rock was chaired by Krishna Ellington and Kirby Miraglia. Soup Sunday 2019 in Northwest Arkansas was chaired by Meredith Lowry.



AACF STAFF





2019 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PRESIDENT

Joseph (Hank) Bates, III, J.D.

VICE PRESIDENT

Gary Wheeler, M.D.

SECRETARY

Martine Downs Pollard

TREASURER

Shannon Collier-Tenison, Ph.D.

IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT

Jay Barth, Ph.D.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AT-LARGE MEMBERS

Martie North-Hamilton

Danyelle Walker, J.D.

BOARD MEMBERS

Patricia Ashanti

Ryan D. Davis

Xochitl Delgado Solorzano

Hershey Garner, J.D., M.D.

Greg Hale

Kyle James

Susan Sullivan Miller, M.D.

Rev. Natasha Murray-Norman

Tamara Pace-Glover, Ph.D.

Sandra Prater, R.N.

Sheldon Riklon, M.D.

Chad Rodgers, M.D.

William (Bill) Schwab, Ph.D.

Aaron Strong, M.D.

Pastor Dwight Townsend

2019 STAFF

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Rich Huddleston

DEPUTY DIRECTOR

Jennifer Ferguson

HEALTH POLICY DIRECTOR

Loretta Alexander

DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

Fran Carter

RACE EQUITY DIRECTOR FOR ADVOCACY

Melvin Clayton

COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR

Brooke Edwards

HEALTH POLICY FELLOW

Josh Hall

NORTHWEST ARKANSAS OFFICE

COORDINATOR

Christine Hartman

DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATE

Ganelle Holman

NORTHWEST ARKANSAS MSW INTERN

Lauren Hunter

NORTHWEST ARKANSAS DIRECTOR

Laura Kellams

NORTHWEST ARKANSAS DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

Missy Darwin Kincaid

LITTLE ROCK OFFICE COORDINATOR

Lindsey Lamb

DIRECTOR OF GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Stephanie Malone

SENIOR POLICY ANALYST

Bruno Showers

ADMINISTRATIVE & FINANCE DIRECTOR

Jose Vazquez

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT DIRECTOR

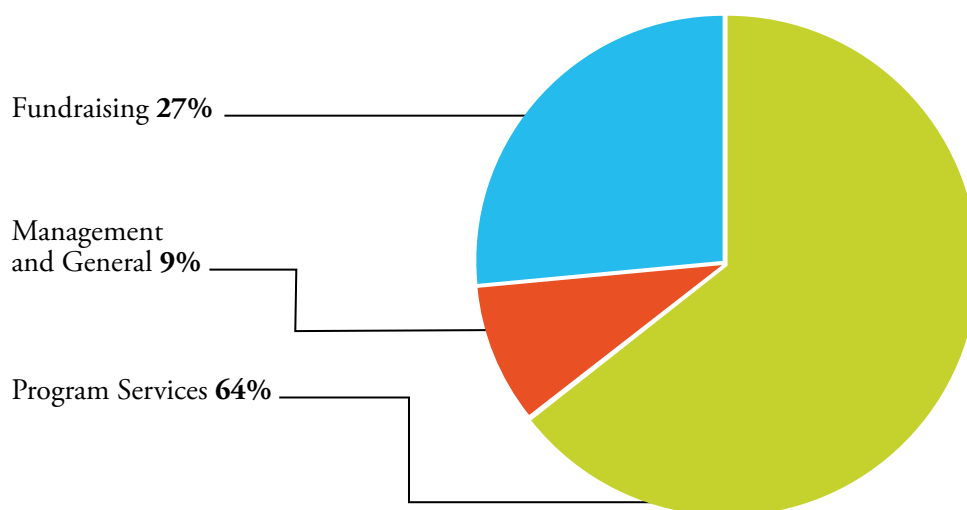
Rebecca Zimmermann

2019 AACF FINANCIAL INFORMATION

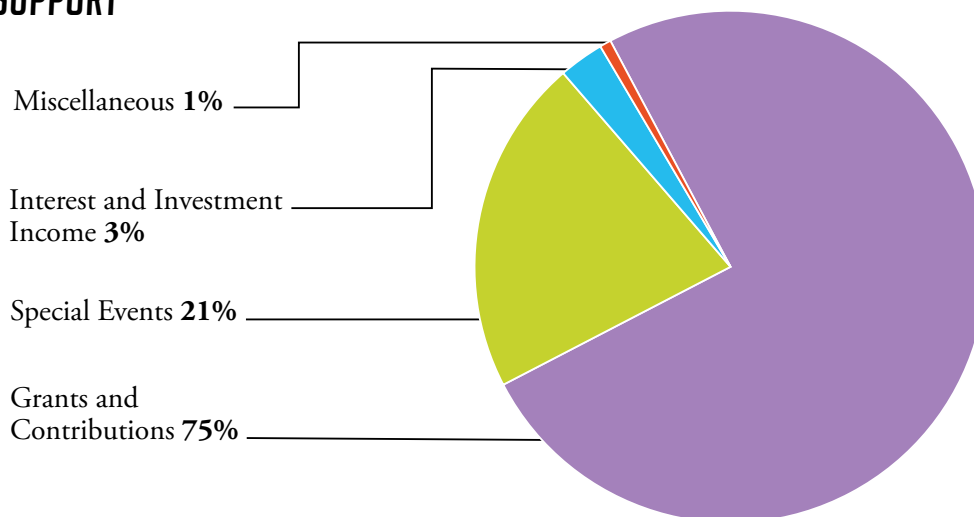
Total Revenue & Support.....	1,461,786
Total Expenses.....	1,742,003
Increase in Net Assets without Donor Restriction.....	(280,217)
Increase in Net Assets with Donor Restriction.....	213,378
Change in Net Assets	(66,839)
Net Assets, Beginning of Year	1,708,013
Net Assets, End of Year.....	1,641,174

For the Year Ended December 31, 2019
From audited financials prepared by Landmark PLC

EXPENSES



TOTAL REVENUE & SUPPORT





2019 FUNDERS

GRANT FUNDERS \$5,000+

Alliance for Early Success
Annie E. Casey Foundation
Arkansas Community Foundation
Center on Budget & Policy Priorities
Charles Stewart Mott Foundation
David & Lucile Packard Foundation
Earned Income Tax Credit Policy Development Fund
Fred Darragh Foundation
Marguerite Casey Foundation
MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger
The New World Foundation
The Pew Charitable Trusts
The Walmart Foundation, Inc.
W.K. Kellogg Foundation
Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation

ORGANIZATIONS \$5,000+

Arkansas Children's Hospital
Endeavor Foundation Charitable Support
Legacy Termite and Pest Control, Inc.
Mercy Health System NWA
The Methodist Foundation for Arkansas
William H. Bowen Family Foundation
Wright Lindsey Jennings

ORGANIZATIONS \$1,000 TO \$4,999

Adventure Subaru
AllCare Pharmacy
Arkansas Blue Cross and Blue Shield
Arkansas Electric Cooperative Corporation
Arkansas Family Dental
Arkansas Foundation for Medical Care
Arkansas Hospital Association
Arkansas Minority Health Commission
Baptist Health
Barber Law Firm
C. Louis & Mary C. Cabe Foundation
Catlett Tower Partnership
Arkansas Health and Wellness

Centers for Youth and Families
Children's Advocacy Centers of Arkansas
Create Little Rock
Cross, Gunter, Witherspoon & Galchus, PC
Delta Dental of Arkansas
Entergy Charitable Foundation
The Focus Firm
Gill Ragon Owen, P.A.
Harps Food Stores, Inc.
Katie Mihalevich, REALTOR
Kutak Rock LLP
Law Office of Danyelle Walker, PLLC
Law Offices of Katherine E. Blackmon
Little Rock Pediatric Group, P.A.
Mathews Management Company
McMath Woods, P.A.
Munro Foundation
Nabholz Construction Corporation
Olds Foundation
Regions Bank
Roger and Patty Harness Family Foundation
Schmieding Foundation
Sidecar Health, Inc.
Simmons Bank
Snell Prosthetic & Orthotic Laboratory
The Starr Foundation
Sysco Arkansas, Inc.
Uniti Group Inc.
Willard & Pat Walker Charitable Foundation

INDIVIDUALS \$1,000+

Gayatri Agnew
Drs. Tracy and Katherine Baltz
Dr. Jay Barth and Mr. Charles Cliett, Jr.
Pamela and Kelvin Buncum
Linda and John Burnett
Lynn and Dr. Joel Carver
Prudy and Dale Caudle
Ellon Cockrill
Roger Collins
Jennifer and Todd Ferguson

Denise and Dr. Hershey Garner
Julie Gehrki
Dr. Mary L. Good (1931-2019)
Susan and Orville Hall
Susan Hardin and Barry Haas
Christine and Pete Hartman
Priscilla and Keith Harvey
Janie and Rich Huddleston
Laura and Kyle Kellams
Drs. Eleanor Kennedy and Lee Abel
Missy and Bill Kincaid
Margot Martin
Lisa and William Mayer
Jane Hunt Meade and Benjamin Meade Fund/ACF
Keely Meyer
Barbara Miles and Hank Bates
Patsy B. Mooney
Kelly and Dr. Eddie Ochoa
Dr. James and Eva Pappas Charitable Fund/ACF
Pam and David Parks
Dr. and Mrs. Don Pederson
Kathy and Bobby Roberts
Dr. Chad Rodgers and Eric McDaniel
Judy and Dr. Bill Schwab
Sara and Frank Sharp
Cynthia and Dewitt Smith
Dr. Kate Stewart and Hamid Ebrahimifar
Dr. and Mrs. Aaron Strong
Mica Strother and Greg Hale
Kathleen Trotter and Charles M. Reese
Sue and David Van Bebber
Jana and Chris Villemez
Mary Ellen Vogler
Drs. Rebecca and Gary Wheeler
Nathan Dalton Whetstone Endowment for Arkansas Children's Charities/ACF
Kirk Wilson
Jeremiah and Emily Wood
Dr. and Mrs. Larry Wright
Kristen and Marshall Wright

ARKANSAS ADVOCATES FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

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Learn more at
www.aradvocates.org



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