

# IMPACT REPORT 2023



  
**The Arc.**  
Texas

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# WHO WE ARE

Founded in 1953, The Arc of Texas has been instrumental in the creation of virtually every program, service, right, and benefit that is now available to more than half a million Texans with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). Today, The Arc of Texas continues to advocate for including people with intellectual and developmental disabilities in all aspects of society.

## MISSION

The Arc of Texas promotes, protects, and advocates for the human rights and self-determination of Texans with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

## VISION

The Arc of Texas envisions a world where Texans with intellectual and developmental disabilities are included in their communities where quality supports and services are available to meet their needs and choices.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- MAGGIE SUTER, **PRESIDENT**
- TERI HAWTHORNE, **PRESIDENT ELECT**
- DEBBIE WILKES, **TREASURER**
- JULIE ROSS, **SECRETARY**
- JANNIECE SLEIGH, **LOCAL CHAPTER REPRESENTATIVE**
- JAMES MEADOURS, **TEXAS ADVOCATES PRESIDENT**
- VERONICA AYALA
- ALI GENTRY
- RENEE LOPEZ
- SENATOR BEVERLY POWELL
- DR. MARIA QUINTERO-CONK
- CODY SUTTON
- SERGIO ZARATE



# 2023 BY THE NUMBERS

**400**

BILLS ACTIVELY  
TRACKED ACROSS  
ALL FOUR POLICY  
PILLARS

**65**

BILLS REGISTERED  
ON DURING  
COMMITTEE  
HEARINGS

**25**

BILLS SUPPORTED  
IN COMMITTEE  
HEARINGS THAT  
PASSED

**200**

LEGISLATORS AND  
STAFF INTERACTED  
WITH AT HOSTED  
EVENTS

**42**

GRASSROOTS  
ADVOCATES  
SUPPORTED AT  
THE CAPITOL

**4**

LEGISLATIVE  
EVENTS  
HOSTED

**10**

ORAL  
LEGISLATIVE  
TESTIMONIES

**\$568,000**

GRANT  
DOLLARS  
AWARDED IN  
2022

**4,088**

MPT BENEFICIARIES  
SERVED SINCE  
INCEPTION

**17**

PARTNERS IN  
DISSABILITY  
LEADERSHIP  
GRADUATES

**7,469**

ENEWSLETTER  
SUBSCRIBERS  
REACHED EACH  
WEEK

**219**

NEW MASTER  
POOLED TRUST  
ACCOUNTS

# IMPACT: LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The 88<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session of the Texas Legislature will be remembered as a session of advocacy and momentum. Through strategic efforts and collaboration with key stakeholders, we made progress in advancing policies that promote inclusivity, accessibility, and support for the IDD community.

## LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES:

### PROMOTING EQUAL ACCESS TO EDUCATION



- Advocated for increased funding for special education programs in Texas schools.
- Collaborated with institutions of higher education, lawmakers, and advocacy groups on improving access to higher education.

### ENHANCING EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES



- Defended the integrity of home and community-based services (HCBS) and improved legislation to ensure job training programs do not exploit workers with IDD with subminimum wage.

### ENHANCING QUALITY OF LIFE



- Successfully advocated for the passage of the IDD Coordination Council to improve the quality and availability of services.
- Coordinated efforts to pass a tax exemption for all diapers and products used for incontinence.
- Supported improved access to information on publicly available services and benefits.

### ENSURING CIVIL RIGHTS & JUSTICE



- Led the charge in advocating against harmful guardianship bills that strip the rights away from people with disabilities.
- Successfully advocated for mandated training for all corrections officers interacting with inmates with IDD.
- Collaborated with advocacy groups and lawmakers to strengthen the ability to prosecute people charged with trafficking adults with IDD.

**IMPACT AND OUTREACH  
ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

**Organized and participated in legislative briefings, committee hearings, and public forums to raise awareness about the unique needs and challenges faced by individuals with IDD.**

**Engaged in effective coalition-building efforts, forging partnerships with like-minded organizations, legislators, and community leaders to amplify our advocacy efforts and garner broad support.**

**Developed informational materials — including fact sheets, infographics, and personal stories — to educate policymakers and the public about the importance of supporting individuals with IDD and the positive impact of our proposed policies.**

**Leveraged digital platforms, social media campaigns, and traditional media channels to disseminate information, mobilize grassroots support, and drive public engagement on issues related to IDD.**

# IMPACT: GRASSROOTS ADVOCACY

## Legislative Breakfast

The Arc of Texas hosted a legislative breakfast event at the state Capitol in January for all the hardworking legislative staff and members. We were pleased to have an opportunity to speak with staff from numerous offices — as well as

Representatives Venton Jones, Stan Kitzman, and Janet Lopez — on the policy issues most impacting the IDD community in Texas.



## Have a Heart for The Arc Day

On February 14, 2023, The Arc of Texas enjoyed an opportunity at the Texas Capitol to highlight the issues facing Texans with IDD and their families. Chapters of The Arc of Texas, along with families and self-advocates, joined our staff delivering valentines to state legislators with the message, "Have a Heart for The Arc" to celebrate Valentine's Day. This event was a great opportunity to build relationships with decision-makers, let them know people with disabilities are

an important part of their constituency, and to educate them about the key issues impacting Texans with disabilities.



# IMPACT: GRASSROOTS ADVOCACY

## Meet The Arc Day

The Arc of Texas hosted "Meet The Arc" day at the Texas Capitol on April 12, 2023. Advocates from The Arc of the DFW Area, The Arc of Fort Bend County, The Arc of Greater Beaumont, The Arc of the Gulf Coast, The Arc of Harris County, and The Arc of San Antonio came and met with legislative staff and members and enjoyed delicious cold brew coffee and pastries from local vendors.



## World Down Syndrome Day

World Down Syndrome Day is observed annually on March 21 to raise awareness and advocate for the rights of individuals with Down syndrome. The Arc of Texas collaborated with The Arc of Beaumont and Down by the Border to celebrate the day at the Texas Capitol. Dozens of advocates had the opportunity to meet with Lieutenant Governor Dan Patrick, House Speaker Dade Phelan, Senator Robert Nichols, Senator Morgan LaMantia, Representative Janie Lopez, Representative Ernest Bailes, and former Sen. Eddie Lucio.



## Interdependence Celebration

The Arc of Texas hosted an Interdependence Celebration on July 7, 2023. We had a star-spangled good time acknowledging the achievements of advocates and our legislative victories during the celebration. Awards were presented to exceptional legislators, legislative staff, lawmakers, and self-advocates.



# 2023 Virginia Eernisse Legacy Award



Allies of The Arc of Texas gathered at our Interdependence Celebration on July 7, 2023, to acknowledge the achievements of advocates like Ellen Bauman, President of The Arc of DFW Area, with the 2023 Virginia Eernisse Legacy Award for her commitment to grassroots advocacy and the disability community.



“Clearly, Virginia Eernisse set the bar exceptionally high. Her list of accomplishments speaks for itself. I am honored and humbled to receive this award. Her journey is confirmation that ‘well behaved women seldom make history.’ I will do my best to live up to that standard.”

**Ellen Bauman** is a grassroots advocate for people with disabilities and their families. Her journey has evolved out of personal experience while navigating life in search of resources for her granddaughter. Her passion is to inform, educate and empower not only these individuals and their families, but those who are in places of authority, responsible for protecting their rights and providing for their needs. She strives to secure the best quality of life possible for every individual. Her goal is that all people are treated with the dignity and respect they deserve.

# The Moody Foundation



**The Arc of Texas was a recipient of a grant from The Moody Foundation in support of individuals with IDD throughout Texas to engage in advocacy efforts at the local and state level. Thanks to the generous grant funds, we have been able to empower self-advocates to confidently engage their elected officials and advocate directly for their needs and rights. These grant resources have allowed us to successfully foster a platform for self-advocacy, ensuring that individuals with IDD can effectively voice their concerns and aspirations to bring about positive change in their communities.**

# Robert Wood Johnson



Robert Wood Johnson  
Foundation

**The Arc of Texas was selected by The Arc US and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to participate in the 2022 State Chapter Medicaid Monitoring and Story Collection Grant. This grant aimed to grow The Arc's capacity to collect and analyze the experiences of people with disabilities in applying for, maintaining eligibility for, and accessing Medicaid services. This project sought to better identify, elevate, and evaluate barriers and issues individuals and families face in accessing this critical program.**

## Partners In Disability Leadership

After two years of the pandemic necessitating a virtual setting, The Arc of Texas launched its third year of Partners in Disability Leadership, a program to equip professionals with information, leadership skills, and connections to influence positive change in the services and support systems used by Texans with IDD.

**The 2022 class of 17 participants met monthly to learn from distinguished disability-rights experts and advocates from across the country.** Future programs will be reimagined using technology to deliver classes more conveniently and broadly. Learn more: [www.thearcoftexas.org/disabilityleadership](http://www.thearcoftexas.org/disabilityleadership).



## The Whole Person Project

The Whole Person Project collaborated with self-advocates to share their stories in short videos. With these videos, we hoped to gain access to solutions and strategically advocate for systemic policy change as these stories educated and impacted elected officials and the public.

**The Arc of Texas is uniquely positioned to address the mental health care disparities that Texans with IDD experience using our membership base and partner organizations.** Learn more: [www.thearcoftexas.org/wholepersonproject](http://www.thearcoftexas.org/wholepersonproject).



Watch the Whole Person Project video series here: [www.thearcoftexas.org/get-involved/whole-person-project](http://www.thearcoftexas.org/get-involved/whole-person-project)

## WAITING ON A WAIVER

A Medicaid Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) waiver helps people with disabilities live and work in their community. Waivers are an alternative to institutions, such as a nursing facility or intermediate care facility.

Unfortunately, there are over **158,000** Texans on the interest list for HCBS waivers, and the wait can be **decades** long. The Texas Legislature continues to **lack the political will** to do something about it, but public pressure is increasing.



A waiver can cover things that are almost **NEVER** covered by private insurance, like an attendant that helps of bed and get dressed, supports to help someone get or keep a job, or specialized interventions to help with someone's behaviors in particular situations.



Want to know more about where in Texas has the most people waiting on a waiver? **The Arc of Texas has interactive maps** showing how many Texans on Medicaid waiver interest lists live within each State House, State Senate, and Congressional district. Visit: [www.thearcoftexas.org/get-involved/waiting](http://www.thearcoftexas.org/get-involved/waiting)



The Arc of Texas was prominently featured in both the Houston Chronicle and Austin American-Stateman investigative series related to home and community-based services (HCBS) Medicaid waiver access. Many of the articles featured commentary from Ashley Ford, Director of Public Policy & Advocacy for The Arc of Texas.

## HOUSTON CHRONICLE

### INVESTIGATIONS

Nearly 200,000 disabled Texans are waiting for the state's help – some for longer than a decade

### INVESTIGATIONS

Faced with a two-decade wait, these families had to leave Texas to receive disability services

### INVESTIGATIONS

'Everything is so broken': Disabled Texans face arduous process while waiting for state's help

## AUSTIN AMERICAN-STATESMAN

SUBSCRIBER EXCLUSIVE

DISABLED & ABANDONED

**'They're waiting for people to die': Texas' decadelong waitlists for disability services are getting longer and dangerous**

DISABLED & ABANDONED

**Abuse, neglect and death: How Texas fails thousands of disabled residents**

DISABLED & ABANDONED

**Vulnerable Texas families wait years for medical care: Here are their stories**

A 15-20 year wait list for Texas Medicaid waiver services is stranding families seeking care for loved ones with disabilities in difficult situations.

**'Opportunity to live:' Kimberly Crawford's family wants Texas to open Medicaid waitlists**

**'We're being set up to fail': Carter family frustrated with Texas Medicaid waiver program**

Texas is legally obligated, under the Americans with Disabilities Act, to provide services for disabled residents like Nola Carter.

**Editorial: State has failed disabled Texans for far too long**

American American-Statesman Editorial Board

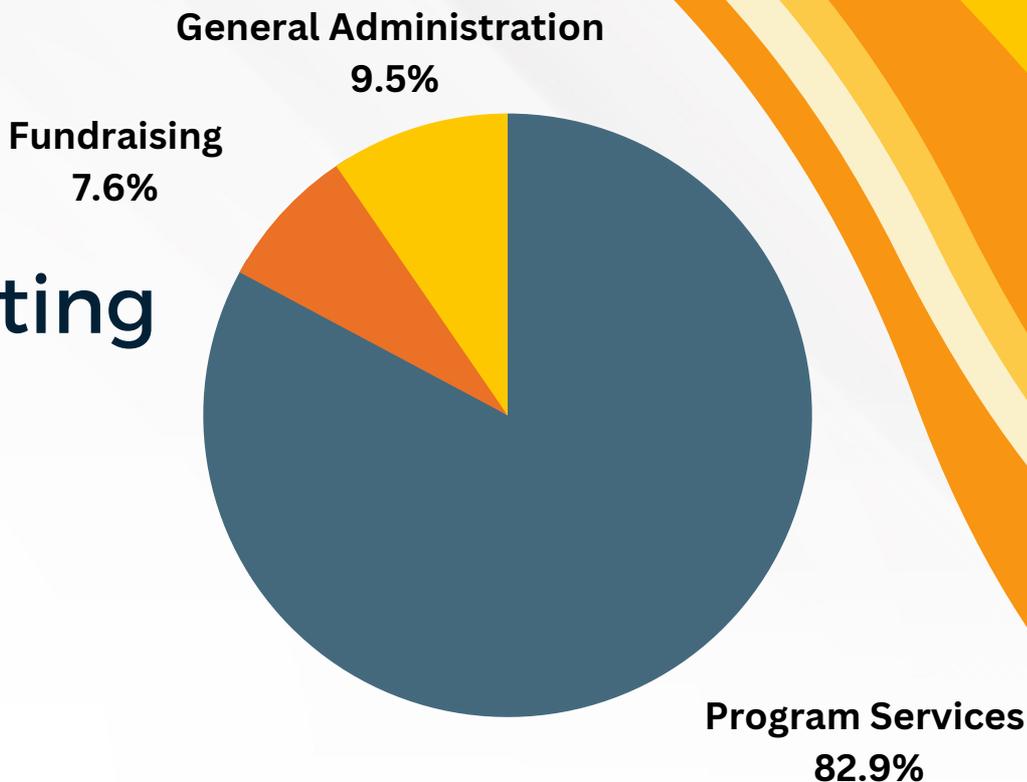
**Grumet: Even with a 30% raise, Texas caregivers may qualify for food stamps**

DISABLED & ABANDONED

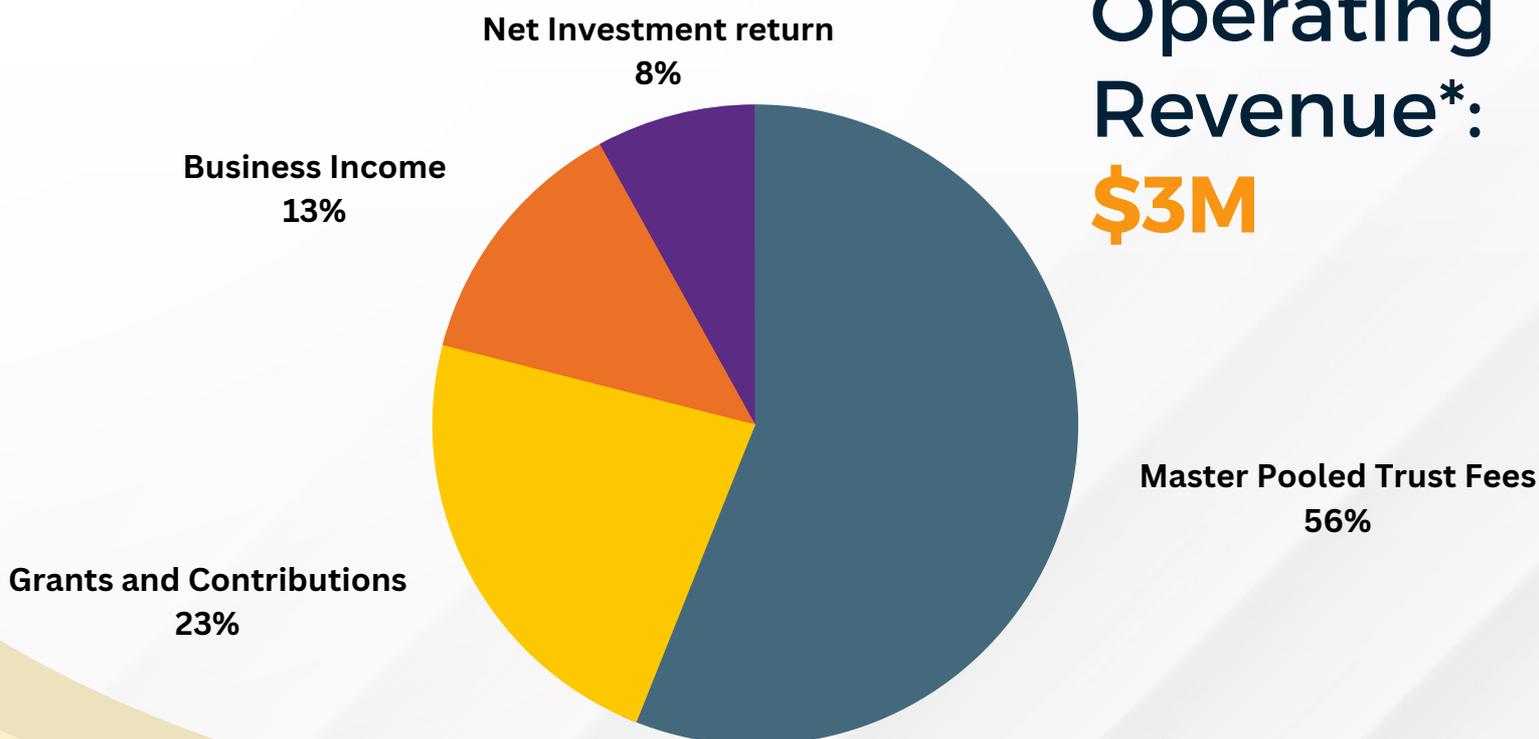
**Poverty wages, exploitative work conditions drive crisis in care for Texas' most vulnerable**

# Financial SUMMARY

2021 Operating  
Expenses\*:  
**\$2.17M**



2021  
Operating  
Revenue\*:  
**\$3M**



\*Numbers are based on most current audited financial information.



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**TRUSTED EXPERTS  
WITH ACHIEVABLE  
SOLUTIONS TO  
ENHANCE THE  
LIVES  
OF TEXANS WITH  
INTELLECTUAL AND  
DEVELOPMENTAL  
DISABILITIES**