2020 Annual Report

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Dear Friends,
From our first conference more than 20 years ago, feedback from the individuals, families, and professionals in our community has shaped every resource and program AANE provides. Listening is the foundation on which our mission was built, and it has helped us stay ready for change and be nimble; it has enabled us to deliver on our mission, especially in exceptional years like this one.

This year’s annual report captures AANE’s unique responsiveness in action. Responses to the COVID-19 pandemic and strong currents of social change have been extremely individual, varied, and situationally dependent. Thanks to the growing popularity of our online offerings prior to COVID-19, we were able to shift all of our work to virtual platforms smoothly and swiftly, meeting a wide range of needs while keeping our community safe. We also began offering programs at a reduced cost, or for free.

Our flexibility has meant we have continued to support our community at a time of incredible uncertainty—and it has given people around the country and the world access to programs that were previously only available in person in New England and New York. With lower financial barriers, many new and longtime community members have been able to increase their engagement with AANE, too.

We continue to absorb lessons from this time of extraordinary change. We know it will shape our services for years to come, in particular, our organization-wide commitment to making AANE accessible and welcoming to all individuals, regardless of race, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, or gender identification.

None of this would be possible without your generosity—our donors, community partners, contributing members, board, staff, and volunteers. On behalf of all of us at AANE, thank you. We look forward to continuing our work with you in FY21, both virtually and in-person when it is safe to do so.

With gratitude,

Dania Jekel
Executive Director
AANE
Our Community in 2020

From the start of the fiscal year in July 2019, our community continued to grow far beyond New England and New York. With the arrival of the pandemic and our shift to an entirely virtual model of service, we have seen our national and international presence expand and deepen. Our community now includes individuals and families from 50 states, Washington DC, and Puerto Rico, and 51 countries around the world.

6,431
new contacts in FY20

Location

- 22% In Massachusetts
- 63% US (Outside MA)
- 4% International
- 11% No location listed

Affiliation

- 28% Adult
- 26% Parent of Adult
- 16% Professional
- 10% Parent of Teen
- 9% Parent of Child
- 7% Spouse
- 4% Sibling or Family Member
Meeting the Needs of Our Community

Listening to what our community needs drives our investment in new programs and opportunities. Leading while listening has kept us open-minded and agile during times of change.

When the pandemic arrived in March, we adapted to meet the needs of our community in this unique and challenging moment by improving access to all of our offerings.

**Within one month, 100% of our services from Massachusetts were available online.**

**Within two months, 100% of our services from New York were available online.**

We eliminated or drastically reduced the cost for fee-based programming, adjusted our schedule to meet families and individuals on their time, and increased the frequency of our most in-demand programs. The results have been an increase in engagement from current community members, and a wave of new individuals and families reaching out for support.
Responding to the loss of routine and services for English and Spanish-speaking school-aged children during the pandemic

- We met the sudden and rapid increase in demand for our parent coaching and IEP reviews, offering support in both English and Spanish.
- We joined forces with Massachusetts Advocates for Children, the Federation for Children with Special Needs, and other advocacy groups as part of an emergency response team to advise the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and families about how to support students throughout the pandemic.
- Seeing an urgent need for community and connection amongst our parent population, we transitioned our online forums to a more accessible platform, resulting in an increased frequency of use.

Creating community to alleviate the anxiety and isolation of the pandemic, particularly for those who live alone

- We launched Community Connections, an easily accessible, weekly online chat that provides adults on the spectrum or family members a space to connect with other individuals sharing a similar experience.
- We transformed our popular in-person Pizza and Game Nights into virtual events to preserve the vital social outlet many adults in our community depend on, and making it possible for individuals anywhere to join in the fun.
- We launched innovative new programming for adults on the spectrum, built around shared interests and experiences. Groups include: Creative Writing, Creative Expression for Women, and Advanced Dungeons & Dragons.
- Continuing to lead in the field with programs for women, we added new groups for women ages 35-50 and ages 18-35.
Recognizing how essential our services were, we quickly shifted LifeMAP (coaching) and LifeNet (independent living supports) from in-person models to virtual ones, enabling us to support clients as they navigated the new, quickly-changing landscape of the pandemic.

Now online, we are engaging LifeMAP clients from around the country and the world.

“Before LifeNet, it was hard for our daughter to engage with others in person. Now she is an active participant in online activities, and she has expanded her limited social network. It is a relief to know that she has someone other than us to lean on, and that they are knowledgeable and responsive to her needs.”

Eileen M.
AANE Parent

“I recently received financial aid in the form of $700 from the emergency funds from the Braun Scholarship. I wanted to express my gratitude for the help that I received. I was able to pay my rent for the month of April, which means that I still have a roof over my head.”

Stephen K.
AANE Adult

Supporting critical needs through LifeMAP’s and LifeNet’s individualized services

- Recognizing how essential our services were, we quickly shifted LifeMAP (coaching) and LifeNet (independent living supports) from in-person models to virtual ones, enabling us to support clients as they navigated the new, quickly-changing landscape of the pandemic.
- Now online, we are engaging LifeMAP clients from around the country and the world.

Responding to acute financial crisis situations

- Through the partnership of The Doug Flutie, Jr. Foundation for Autism, Inc. and The Daniel Braun Memorial Scholarship Fund, we provided adults and families with modest grants to help meet basic needs.
- While financial aid has always been available for our fee-based programs, we made those scholarships readily accessible at the point of online registration.
- We reduced or eliminated fees for our community-based programming.
“The breadth of knowledge and expertise of the facilitators was excellent. The fact that the facilitators themselves and the panelist volunteers supported family members on the spectrum really allowed for real world examples and strategies that were invaluable. This series was a great addition to our D&I initiatives.”

Jennifer W.
Senior Manager
Talent Management
E*TRADE Financial Corporation

“This pandemic took us all by surprise and no matter how you thought you had everything organized and scheduled, this just uprooted everything. On top of trying to get things settled for myself and my young adult, I really needed someone to talk to, too, someone who could relate. I don’t know any other program like AANE. This organization has so many different facets to it—it really, really has been a godsend to me and mine.”

Lisa A. S.
AANE Parent

Promoting awareness, understanding, and acceptance in the greater community

- We partnered with the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission on an initiative designed to enhance employment supports for individuals on the autism spectrum. The initiative included the development of a self-paced e-learning course as well as a 12-part webinar series that trained hundreds of participants.
- We continue to respond to every request we receive for training, serving local governments, state-run organizations, education institutions, businesses, and nonprofits.
- We recorded our Spring Conference in May, ensuring that we could continue to serve our community despite the pandemic; our Summer Conference (FY21) was held completely online and was attended with unprecedented numbers.

Strengthening the organization to better serve the community

- Our investment in a new constituent relationship management (CRM) database yielded key data that enhanced our ability to listen to our community, and shaped our programming for the better.
- A streamlined communication strategy improved our ability to share and respond quickly and clearly, especially as more of our community members turned to us for support and assistance.
Financials
Fiscal Year 2020

Revenue

- 44% Contributions & Grants
- 39% Program Service Fees
- 17% Other Revenue

Expenses

- 80% Direct Service
- 8% Administration
- 12% Fundraising

Year End

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<tr>
<th>Revenue</th>
<th>6/30/2019</th>
<th>6/30/2020</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contributions &amp; Grants</td>
<td>$1,515,282</td>
<td>$1,320,368</td>
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<tr>
<td>Program Service Fees</td>
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<td>Other Revenue</td>
<td>$560,477</td>
<td>$305,555</td>
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<td>$3,401,255</td>
<td>$2,742,769</td>
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Expenses

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<th>Expenses</th>
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<td>Direct Service</td>
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<td>Administration</td>
<td>$302,868</td>
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<td>Fundraising</td>
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<td>$3,766,285</td>
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Net Assets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Net Assets</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Change in Net Assets</td>
<td>($365,030)**</td>
<td>($306,369)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Net Assets at FY End</td>
<td>$692,542</td>
<td>$1,057,572</td>
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*This preliminary financial information for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2020 is unaudited and therefore subject to change.

**The excess of expenses over revenue for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2020 was funded in part by donations received in a prior year, and also by the Payroll Protection Program (PPP) funds received in this fiscal year.
Leadership

Executive Director  Dania Jekel, MSW
Associate Director  Brenda Dater, MSW, MPH

FY20 Board of Directors

Dian Bohannon  Chair  July 2019 - February 2020
Carla Brigham  Chair  February 2020 - Present
Karen Lean  Vice Chair
Julie Tedesco  Secretary
David Morrissette  Treasurer

Ken Dandurand  Susan Erickson  Jeanne Hoerter  Peggy Kriss, PhD  Barbara Lund  John Lynch  Adam Markell  Dan McFadden  Donald Michaels

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FY20 Executive Advisors

Neil Blicher  Barbara Rosenn, PsyD
Michael Glenn, LICSW  Ken Shulman
Terry Henderson  Carol Singer, EdD
David Kenny  Nancy Sonnabend
Peggy Kriss, PhD

AANE Executive Advisory Board

Executive Advisors are appointed by the Executive Director to advise the Executive Director and Board of Directors on a range of clinical and organizational issues. Executive Advisors are appointed for a one-year term and may be re-appointed annually.

FY20 Executive Advisors

Neil Blicher  Barbara Rosenn, PsyD
Michael Glenn, LICSW  Ken Shulman
Terry Henderson  Carol Singer, EdD
David Kenny  Nancy Sonnabend
Peggy Kriss, PhD

Professional Advisory Board

Professional Advisors are appointed by the Executive Director and offer their expertise to enrich our resources and programming and provide consultation on a range of clinical and organizational issues.

FY20 Professional Advisors

Diane Adreon Ed.D  Peter Gerhardt EdD
May-Lynn Andresen DNP  Temple Grandin PhD
Tony Attwood PhD  Faith Kapffenberg PhD, RN
Katherine Cody PsyD  Ami Klin PhD
Elizabeth Cohn PhD, RN  Matthew Lerner PhD
Michelle Dunn PhD  Brenda Smith Myles PhD
Dena Gassner MSW, PhD candidate  Stephen Shore EdD
Valerie Gaus PhD  Lianne Holliday Willey EdD
Lynda Geller PhD
Our Thanks to You

Thanks to you, when our community needed us, we were able to be there—for individuals, for families, for professionals, for you. Our donors and funders made it possible for us to transform, adapt, and grow in this incredible year. Our deepest gratitude for all that you have made possible this year, and for the access, awareness, community, and support you continue to make possible every day. A special thanks to our generous corporate, foundation, and community partners.

$25,000+
J.E. & Z.B. Butler Foundation
Cranberry Cup Charitable Association, Inc.
Cummings Foundation, Inc.
William, Jeff, & Jennifer Gross Family Foundation

$10,000 - $24,999
John W. Alden Trust
Felicity House
The Doug Flutie, Jr. Foundation for Autism, Inc.
Foundation for MetroWest
The Kopf Family Foundation
MathWorks

$5,000 - $9,999
Boston Evening Clinic Foundation
Boston Partners Financial Group
Genentech
Krauss Dermatology
Latham & Watkins, LLP
Liberty Mutual Insurance
Don and Marilyn Rodman Foundation
The Village Bank

$1,000 - $4,999
Club Corp., Inc.
The Corwin Russell School at Broccoli Hall
People’s United Community Foundation
Public Consulting Group
RSM Boston Foundation
Service Source, Inc.
West Suburban Community Health Network (CHNA 18)

“AANE is an amazing lifelong resource! I found AANE in 2006 as a college student and re-discovered all it has to offer a year ago as an adult. The variety of activities—from support groups to music lessons to informational webinars—and the close sense of community are among AANE’s many treasures. Knowing that AANE will be there for me throughout my life makes autism so much less scary.”

Julie M.
AANE Adult
Contact Us

For more information about this report and giving to AANE, please email fundraising@aane.org.