

# Anderson Center for Autism



Optimizing the  
quality of life  
for individuals  
with autism

## 2025 ANNUAL REPORT



# Patrick D. Paul

CPA, ERMP

Executive Director and CEO  
Anderson Center for Autism

## Dear Friends,

We are pleased to present our 2025 annual report!

I hope that you'll feel inspired as you read the array of articles included, which highlight exciting news and achievements, detail our healthy fiscal position, showcase some of the great people behind our purpose, and shed light on our agency's strategic vision for the future.

It has been awe-inspiring to see our team step into this second century of Anderson's story with the same commitment, clarity, and compassion that made our first 100 years so successful. This group of professionals never fails to bring innovative ideas and the latest evidence-based practices to their work, remaining ever mindful that the quality of life for individuals with autism is directly tied to the quality of relationships they experience. I am always impressed to see how our team consistently evolves, enhances award-winning programs, and cultivates the sense of belonging that helps everyone in our Anderson family thrive.

And while our agency brings collective heart and focus to the educational, vocational, residential, and clinical services we provide, the quest to share our high-in-demand expertise in ways that benefit all of society is likewise strengthening every day. Inside

of this report, you'll learn more about the ways in which we are using our experience to empower others, far and wide: through our New Dellinwood state-of-the-art training facility, and the ongoing work of ECHO Autism Anderson and Anderson Center Consulting and Training, among other initiatives.

That this broader effort to share our knowledge is critically important is undeniable - and yet, it is in our day-to-day experience that Anderson's impact comes to life for all of us who have the privilege of working here. From students enjoying breakthroughs in the classrooms, young artists showing their work in local galleries, and teenagers dancing at Anderson's prom - to adult residents cooking their first meals in group homes, athletes winning medals at the Special Olympics, and Day-Hab participants taking part in prevocational opportunities - we enjoy countless rewarding moments.

Your steadfast support makes all of this possible. We are humbled by the generosity of our families, donors, volunteers, philanthropists, advocates, and community leaders. Whether you share time, talent, treasure... or some combination thereof... may you know that we are deeply grateful.

Warm regards,

Patrick D. Paul, CPA, ERMP  
Executive Director/CEO,  
Anderson Center for Autism

Our mission is to optimize the quality of life for individuals with autism.

"We are humbled by the generosity of our families, donors, volunteers, philanthropists, advocates, and community leaders."

# Grateful for our Community

Over the past year, Anderson Center for Autism has once again exceeded expectations, prompting a timeless question: What makes a nonprofit organization successful?

As Chairs of our respective Boards of Trustees, we have a unique vantage point as we reflect on this topic in the context of Anderson's longevity and achievements. The elements that immediately come to mind - which we witness on a daily basis - include effective governance, visionary leadership, strategic planning, fiscal responsibility, brand awareness, a collective growth mindset, and an unwavering commitment to our mission.

Underlying all of those components, however, is a community for which we all feel infinitely grateful. The people behind our purpose empower us to courageously overcome challenges, boldly develop aspirations, confidently unlock potential, and enthusiastically engage others in our cause.

Representing a wonderfully diverse group from various geographic regions and all walks of life, it is this community who offers the support needed to bring our goals to fruition. In 2025, we moved forward with plans for New Dellinwood, awarded grants to organizations whose work is aligned with ours, and invested in our programs and services, our workforce, and ongoing professional development. We strengthened existing relationships with stakeholders, and forged new ones here, throughout the country, and around the world. We diversified funding streams - generating private and public grant revenue while increasing legacy giving, restricted and unrestricted

donations, and event sponsorships. And we continued to educate and enlighten - through our podcast, social media channels, press opportunities, speaking engagements, presence at conferences, and more. Our Executive Director and CEO Patrick D. Paul has even traveled to places as far away as India over the past few years to help colleagues understand our methodologies so that they can bring programs to underserved populations. This is thought leadership at its best; we are extraordinarily proud.

All of that traction, however, is the direct result of the momentum we get from the people with whom we surround ourselves - our community. Your support energizes and motivates Anderson's team members, families, volunteers, and advocates to keep doing everything possible to optimize the quality of life for individuals with autism. The ripple effect is obvious - and will make lasting differences in the lives of people we cherish and those we may never meet.

It is a distinct honor to be a part of Anderson Center for Autism's community, and to have all of you as part of our circle. If you know of anyone who would like to be more closely involved, please reach out. In the meantime, we hope you find our 2025 Annual Report informative and inspiring.

## With sincere appreciation,



Philip J. Bronzi  
Chair, Anderson Center for  
Autism & Anderson Center  
Services, Inc.



Marybeth G. Cale  
Chair, Anderson Foundation  
for Autism



# ANDERSON'S SECOND CENTURY

## Empowering Others, Expanding Impact

Kicking off the second century of Anderson's existence has come with many conversations among our team and trustees about what we envision for the future. Time and again, we confirm that we share many aspirations, with "expanding impact" at or near the top of the list.

After all, our mission of optimizing the quality of life for individuals with autism extends far beyond students, residents, and families at Anderson. And with over 100 years of experience, we can help others support autistic and neurodivergent individuals in their own communities.

That said, consensus comes easily on this topic: for more far-reaching results, we must strengthen the programs that bring empowering learning experiences to others.

New Dellinwood, Anderson Center Consulting and Training, and ECHO Autism Anderson all exemplify our commitment to that end. By investing in the continued growth of these initiatives, the capacity to make a greater impact becomes practically limitless.



## NEW DELLINWOOD

We're thrilled to report that Anderson Foundation for Autism's successful capital campaign has brought to life our vision for New Dellinwood, a highly anticipated \$14 million capital improvement project.

This year, we further developed plans for the full rebuild of an 11,000-square-foot carriage house on our Staatsburg campus (which was formerly known as Dellinwood). We are confident that once complete, the sophisticated, world-class training facility will attract a dynamic, diverse group of colleagues who can enjoy transformative professional development opportunities (and beautiful, sweeping riverfront views as well!)

The innovative design of New Dellinwood includes indoor and outdoor multipurpose training and conference spaces, clinical, medical, and dental skills practice rooms, and a "living classroom" for visitors who want to see what it looks like to create an autism supportive environment. In addition, there will be a limited number of housing opportunities for Anderson residents available in the space.

One of the main objectives of New Dellinwood's model is to help address a worldwide workforce shortage in the fields of healthcare, education, and behavioral health. Along with all of our training and consulting work, this will afford yet another opportunity for us to share expertise in ways that can help others carry out our mission in their own settings - a win for everyone.



# ECHO AUTISM ANDERSON

At the heart of ECHO Autism Anderson: mutually beneficial relationships that inspire us to keep learning, growing, and discovering... while we foster the same for others.

First developed at the University of New Mexico, The Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes (ECHO®) is rooted in the belief that access to information leads to greater community impact across a number of disciplines. The idea is that one specialist can support the professional development of twenty or more local experts, who then bring newfound knowledge and practices to people who might benefit. Since inception, several states and countries have partnered with ECHO Autism to build capacity so that they can better care for autistic individuals in their communities.

We immediately loved the concept and brought it to our organization as well. Using a virtual learning model, ECHO Autism Anderson aligns with Project ECHO's work to support inclusive, equitable education and lifelong learning. An interdisciplinary initiative, we offer online sessions on a number of subjects throughout the year to professionals, educators, and families who seek to learn, collaborate, have cases reviewed, or explore new and different ways to deliver evidence-based practices. Our sessions are all run by a 'HUB Team' which includes specialists such as a licensed psychologist/behavior analyst, a speech and language pathologist with feeding expertise, a licensed clinical social worker, and others who offer very specific insights.

During each session, participants can pose questions that will help them better understand how to apply best practices in the context of their individual situations. Attendees get answers to their questions in real time - regardless of the miles or oceans that might separate them. In addition to helping educators and therapists refine teaching and therapeutic approaches, the iECHO platform allows our team to remotely train people from districts who cannot afford to hire specialists who can support the unique needs of their autistic students. Thus, the benefits incorporate both professional development opportunities AND the chance to address disparities that exist in society - supporting students, teachers, school personnel, and families who live in underserved regions.

ECHO Autism Anderson has already garnered excellent results, with participants reporting stronger skill sets which have led to improved outcomes for the autistic and neurodivergent individuals with whom they work.



# ANDERSON CENTER CONSULTING AND TRAINING (ACCT)

In the years since it first launched, Anderson Center Consulting and Training (ACCT) has become the go-to for businesses and corporations of all sizes, school districts, universities, healthcare organizations, first responders, and most importantly, families and caregivers seeking to better understand and support the needs of neurodivergent and autistic people in their lives.

In recent years, our expert professionals from ACCT have helped over 200 entities gain designation as Autism Supportive Environments - ranging from Northern Dutchess Hospital's Emergency Department and the Village of Rhinebeck to Newark Liberty International Airport and Rockland Works Career Center, along with banks, restaurants, retail shops, towns, villages, and others. Through onsite and online training options, ACCT has shared knowledge and tools with groups of police officers, emergency medical technicians (EMTs), hospital personnel and healthcare professionals, teachers, professors, school bus drivers, administrators, elected officials, business owners, and many, many more.

For educators, ACCT's training often leads to New York State Continuing Teacher and Leader Education Credits, and for school districts, a more welcoming culture for all. For companies, it typically results in a more productive, collaborative, cohesive workforce. For municipalities, it fosters a spirit of inclusivity. For parents, siblings, and caregivers, it can cultivate confidence and greater peace of mind. And for everyone who works with ACCT, training presents the meaningful opportunity to help autistic and neurodivergent people enjoy every wonderful life experience that they deserve.

Our executive leadership team is projecting a continued trajectory of growth for ACCT and ECHO Autism Anderson, and we expect a strong launch for New Dellinwood as well. We're also quite certain that all of these initiatives, rooted in our plan to empower others, are poised to expand our impact far beyond expectations; we look forward to watching it all take shape in the decades to come.





# Eliza Bozenski

LMSW

Chief Development Officer  
Anderson Foundation for Autism

## “Reaching Out and Looking Within”: Anderson Foundation for Autism’s Chief Development Officer Sets the Stage for the Second Century of Anderson’s Story

When Anderson Foundation for Autism (AFA) was first launched, the objective was to build a ‘rainy day fund’ that could bridge gaps between financial needs and resources for Anderson Center for Autism. In the years since inception, AFA has met and exceeded those initial expectations - leading to all kinds of favorable outcomes for Anderson and our colleagues in the field.

Behind AFA’s impressive success? A team of zealous, creative professionals who focus daily on inspiring, enlightening, and engaging a growing number of families, advocates, donors, volunteers, foundations, and philanthropists. They are ever on the “cutting edge” - and yet, never lose sight of the fact that their work is rooted in good old-fashioned relationship development (which comes naturally to each of them).

We got a behind-the-scenes look at AFA’s current position, aspirations for the future, and fundraising trends in an interview with Eliza Bozenski, Chief Development Officer for Anderson Foundation for Autism. Here is what she had to share:

### As Anderson Center for Autism gets the next century of its story underway, what do you envision for Anderson Foundation for Autism (AFA)?

Reaching out - and looking within. Among our team members, volunteers, and Anderson families, we have an endless reservoir of wisdom available which has long created incredible synergy within our organization - and has, more recently, opened doors that allow us to catapult others to success as well.

From autism-specific expertise to the depth and breadth of knowledge Anderson has on nonprofit governance, philanthropy, family and caregiver matters, education, health/medical needs, vocational opportunities, and activities of daily living and learning (and the list goes on!), opportunities abound as we begin the second century in Anderson’s story. To me, this next chapter in our organizational history could be defined by the potential we continue to unlock for individuals with autism and their loved ones - and the many ways we will simultaneously share our experience outside of Anderson to advance our cause throughout the world.

Much of this is already well underway. Our team at Anderson Center Consulting and Training has already been out in the community helping countless businesses, organizations, and groups better understand autism and how to be more supportive - and Anderson Center International has likewise made its mark by doing the same for trainees from various corners of the globe. On campus, our New Dellinwood facility is set to become a center for personal and professional development that will attract people from near and far.

And while the aforementioned outreach efforts expand in scope and impact, we will continue to look within our existing programs to further develop the spirit of innovation, collaboration, and resilience for which we have become so well-known. In fact, we kicked off 2025, the very first year of Anderson’s second century, with a variety of presentations made by members of our team who are working to bring back some staples of our pre-vocational programs - but plan to do so in the context of new methodologies and the progress that has been made in our organization and our field.

“ Our New Dellinwood facility is set to become a center for personal and professional development that will attract people from near and far. ”

In another example of looking inward, we are also noticing an uptick in donations that have been designated for creative recruitment and retention strategies, which will help build our workforce and make our mission more sustainable. So, as we step into this next century, I envision that the Foundation will play an instrumental role as we look within, reach out, and continue to evolve - all while staying true to our mission.

**Are there specific trends in fundraising that are gaining momentum?**

Yes! Real estate giving has definitely become an increasingly popular way to be charitable. Donors can sign over their property deeds to yield tax deductions, sell properties outright and donate the proceeds, set up charitable remainder trusts, or build a gift of real estate into their estate plans. Whether the property is an actual house, structure, or undeveloped land, gifts of real estate are mutually beneficial for the donor and for Anderson. There are financial advisors and attorneys who specialize in these philanthropic channels, and I would encourage anyone interested to inquire about it.

And, of course, let's not forget the "oldies but goodies" when it comes to fundraising - restricted and unrestricted gifts, event sponsorships, and social media fundraisers. We see a wide variety of donations come through AFA; every dollar helps - and we are happy to talk through gifting options with interested donors anytime!

**Now that Anderson Foundation for Autism is in its second year of grantmaking, can you tell us about the wide range of projects and geographic regions represented by submissions - and provide an example of an outcome that has been particularly meaningful?**

This part of the AFA's work, while new, is already showing tremendous promise and impact. In our first year of external grantmaking, we awarded funds to an incredible group of organizations. Among them: a dance studio in Connecticut offering classes for children and adults on the autism spectrum. A group of emergency responders in Illinois, true heroes who not only protect and save lives, but do so with a desire to better understand all of the people they may be interacting with in an emergency situation. A Westchester County, NY organization called Project Ready, which focuses on creating a safe, supportive environment for their Asian community (and beyond) - offering ongoing instructional, recreational, and supportive services to people who (like many) can run the risk of becoming marginalized because of stigma and/or lack of understanding.

Anderson Foundation for Autism funded Project Ready's Ablebloom event in November and I was blown away! It was a standing-room-only event which showcased beautiful art made by youngsters and young adults with autism, and included an evocative and touching music recital presented by autistic music students playing piano, singing, playing duets, and even

demonstrating martial arts! The smiles on the faces of all of the artists and musicians were captivating - and the pride that every parent, grandparent and friend felt as they watched their loved ones do what they love in front of a rapt audience was palpable. At one point, one of the students needed to leave the space. It was one of the most beautiful things I have ever witnessed. The young man started making loud vocalizations, clearly communicating to his parents that it was time to leave or take a break. Since the room was packed, it was not easy to navigate a way out quickly, but as though the sea was parting, everyone in the space just simply shifted and made room without comment or judgment, and without interrupting the person playing music at that time. Suddenly, as a result of that collective sensitivity, the family who needed it had their exit path. The young man got what he needed, and his family left with dignity rather than feeling shame or embarrassment. This is quality of life exemplified - and this is what AFA ultimately supports.

**Tell us about Anderson Foundation for Autism's capital campaign.**

The purpose of our capital campaign is to raise the money necessary for the full reconstruction of the carriage house at our Staatsburg campus that was, for decades, called "Dellinwood". When complete, New Dellinwood will be a perfect example of how we are looking inward and reaching out; this new iteration houses a world-class training center in the footprint of one of our

# Are you a fan of podcasts?

**Then take a listen to our very own! Hosted by Anderson Foundation for Autism's Chief Development Officer, Eliza Bozenski, LMSW, and produced by Pamal Broadcasting, LTD, our 1 in 31: Autism Today show covers all things autism.**

**Eliza's conversations with prominent guest interviewees such as Temple Grandin, Dr. Kristin Sohl, Dr. Deborah Napolitano - along with family members, colleagues, and other experts in the field - are illuminating, informative, and inspiring.**

**Don't miss out!**



most historic properties on campus. It is a state-of-the-art space where professionals can learn about a wide range of topics with Anderson experts. Additionally, New Dellinwood can offer some residential opportunities for students on our campus, as needed, and includes healthcare training rooms where behavioral professionals and medical and dental students will learn desensitization techniques that can be utilized in real-life medical and dental exam situations - making necessary healthcare experiences more accessible and comfortable - both for the patients and providers.

**“Planned Giving” is a term that has been around for quite some time, but eludes many. Can you explain the concept, and shed light on why Anderson Foundation for Autism donors consider this such a meaningful way to leave a legacy?**

Planned giving involves naming Anderson Foundation for Autism in your estate plan. As you create your will with a financial advisor or estate planning attorney, and clarify which assets will be left to whom upon your passing, you can add Anderson to the list of beneficiaries. You can even name Anderson as the beneficiary of a life insurance policy. Regardless of how you set this up, it is an easy and impactful way to support Anderson, and allows you to leave a meaningful legacy which reflects your steadfast devotion to our cause. Remember - every amount can help and anyone can do this!

**What do you most enjoy about your work as Chief Development Officer of Anderson Foundation for Autism - and what do you hope supporters most enjoy about their work with your team?**

My team sees themselves as morale-boosters - essentially serving as a “goodwill squad” - and I share their enthusiasm! We are all privileged to be ambassadors for Anderson, welcoming all who inquire and want to get involved - whether they wish to volunteer, attend our events, sponsor and support the good work Anderson Center for Autism does every day, or anything else. Our goal is to develop and strengthen ties with everyone who feels connected to our mission - and to make Anderson’s services and expertise as accessible to as many people as possible.

I deeply enjoy the work of building and maintaining relationships. I love meeting new people, learning about them, and working with all of the different team members at Anderson. My role gives me the chance to interact with just about everyone at some point - our colleagues, families, donors, volunteers, and community members. It is my hope that everyone experiences and enjoys the efforts my team puts forth. We all feel honored to be stewards of their generous donations, their involvement, their loved one’s experiences, and their connection to Anderson Center for Autism. It is incredibly meaningful work for which I feel grateful every day.



**Our goal is to develop and strengthen ties with everyone who feels connected to our mission - and to make Anderson’s services and expertise as accessible to as many people as possible.**



## Mill House Brewing Company

Among many other roles and contributions, most people in our circles at Anderson Center for Autism know Vance Gage as the beloved grandson of Anderson’s founder, Dr. Victor V. Anderson.

What some of you may not know, however, is this fun fact: Vance is also an “honorary brewmaster.” And he earned that title thanks to our friends at Mill House Brewing Company!

It was over a decade ago that Eliza Bozenski, Chief Development Officer at Anderson Foundation for Autism, along with her development team, brainstormed an idea for one of many fundraisers that the group has brought to fruition over the years. In this case, they thought a signature “Anderson Center for Autism” beer would be a fun, creative way to engage people in the cause. Eliza approached the leadership team at Mill House Brewing Company (based in Poughkeepsie, NY) to pitch them on the concept. Without hesitation, they enthusiastically embraced the opportunity to be of help, and plans got underway.

The Mill House team knew that through this beer, they had a unique opportunity to give people near and far a taste of Anderson’s mission. To produce something perfectly aligned with the organization, they set out to better understand the story behind the nonprofit. So they reached out to Vance, who is not only an honorary brewmaster now, but could also be referred to as “Anderson’s unofficial historian!”

**The Mill House team knew that through this beer, they had a unique opportunity to give people near and far a taste of Anderson’s mission.**



Vance walked them through the early days of Anderson and the story of his grandfather’s unwavering commitment to people with special needs, sharing enlightening tales and offering a glimpse into his family’s heritage. Given that Dr. Anderson’s roots ran deep in Scotland, Vance agreed with the Mill House brewers that a Scottish Ale would be the perfect nod to Dr. Anderson.

Making it even more meaningful was the fact that they decided on a 68 shilling beer since, at the time the first batch was brewed, autism incidence rates were 1 in 68. (The shilling system is how the Scottish measure the strength of a beer). And, of course, the name was an obvious choice: Mr. Anderson Ale.

Over the years since, Mill House has hosted a Mr. Anderson Ale launch party almost every spring to kick off Autism Acceptance Month (April). The highly anticipated, lively event typically sells out, and a portion of the proceeds is donated directly to Anderson Foundation for Autism. Following the celebration each year, Mill House then generously allots Anderson an additional \$1 per pour throughout the month of April.

Said Danny Crocco, executive chef and owner at Mill House Brewing Company, “Every time someone raises a glass of Mr. Anderson Ale, we are all essentially toasting the caring professionals at Anderson Center for Autism, and everything they’ve done for over a century now to optimize the quality of life for individuals with autism. We are very proud of this collaboration; we’ve learned so much along the way about what it looks like to be autism supportive, and why it is so important to be a business that pays it forward.”

Crocco and his colleagues at Mill House have been so devoted to the Mr. Anderson Ale tradition, in fact, that Crocco even

hosted a virtual tasting experience during the pandemic, during which he livestreamed himself preparing food that pairs beautifully with Mr. Anderson Ale.

**“Every time someone raises a glass of Mr. Anderson Ale, we are all essentially toasting the caring professionals at Anderson Center for Autism”**

“We enjoy this tradition for many reasons,” reflected Crocco. “Brewpubs are places where people can really connect with one another, and doing so in context of a worthwhile cause makes those connections even more special. I love knowing that people come into Mill House to gather for food and drink, but leave feeling inspired to support those in our region who are more vulnerable. We get a chance to shine a light on Anderson and their work, which touches so many lives with autism incidence rates on the rise. It’s deeply rewarding for all of us to be a part of this.”

“Mill House has gone above and beyond to help us expand our reach and impact,” explained Eliza Bozenski. “They have raised substantial funds for Anderson Foundation for Autism, and have also introduced many new people to our organization and mission. We even had someone become a Board Member who we had met through one of the Mr. Anderson Ale events. We’ve also spoken to many others who have shared that they may not have ever known much about Anderson Center for Autism, or about autism in general, were it not for this initiative.”

Bozenski added, "We love unique projects like this one, which raise funds and awareness while also bringing people together and building community. I'm sure Dr. Anderson would never have guessed that his legacy, marked by his efforts to improve life for people with special needs, also includes a namesake craft beer!"

Follow the events page on Anderson's website for updates, and plan to join us for the next Mr. Anderson Ale launch party at Mill House Brewing Company, 289 Mill Street, Poughkeepsie, NY. You might even enjoy a celebrity sighting, as the honorary brewmaster himself, Vance, often travels all the way from his home in Washington, DC in order to pour the first glass!

If you can't attend the event, not to worry - you can always head over to Mill House Brewing Company during Autism Acceptance Month to participate in the monthlong fundraiser.

And it should also be noted that select bars, restaurants, and retailers in the Hudson Valley region will be carrying kegs of Mr. Anderson Ale, available for purchase. Funds from those sales will benefit Anderson Center for Autism as well; follow Mill House social media pages for updates: @millhousebrewingco and @millhousebrewery on Instagram and @millhousebrewingcompany on Facebook.

If your company wishes to get involved, or would like to propose another fundraising idea to benefit Anderson Center for Autism, reach out to Eliza Bozenski: [ebozenski@andersoncares.org](mailto:ebozenski@andersoncares.org).

Learn more about the annual Mr. Anderson Ale event at: [andersoncenterforautism.com/mranderson](http://andersoncenterforautism.com/mranderson)



# ED & CONNIE HUSSEY

Anderson Parents

## Speaking from the Heart

"September 13, 2006 at 10am. I will never forget that date and time; it was when we made the difficult but important choice to enroll Joey as a full-time resident at Anderson Center for Autism," Connie Hussey wistfully shared. "A parent never forgets." The journey leading up to that moment is likewise unforgettable for Connie and her husband Ed - full of many challenges that reinforced for them the importance of loving our children beyond ourselves.

Ed reflected, "Joey was 17 months old when we wondered if he was deaf. He wouldn't make eye contact or respond when we asked him questions. Yet, Joey would turn to the sound of the television remote control clicking when we changed channels. By 18 months of age, we noticed that he would sort of lose himself in watching a piece of string as he moved it back and forth in front of his eyes. It was clear that he needed to be evaluated by a developmental specialist, so we started the process."

Connie and Ed brought Joey for an assessment, where they watched their toddler ignore a set of blocks that had been offered to him, opting instead to remain in the corner of the room. This was just one of several observations made during a series of tests which resulted in an initial diagnosis of Pervasive Developmental Disorder-Not Otherwise Specified (PDD-NOS).

"I knew that getting the most accurate diagnosis was critical in order to pursue the services Joey would need longer-term," explained Ed. "So I asked the doctor if Joey was autistic, and when the answer was an immediate 'yes,' I said, 'well then, please be specific with that word in your diagnosis letter. This is going to be a lifelong situation and we want every need to be met.'"



This, of course, segued into many years of advocacy that parents like the Husseys never expected would be part of child-rearing. When one has an autistic or neurodivergent child, however, the job of “parent advocate” becomes one of the most significant roles of your life.

In the years following Joey’s initial diagnosis, Ed and Connie found themselves putting that tireless advocacy to work as they searched for a school program that could maximize their son’s potential.

Ed remarked, “Finding the right place for Joey to learn and grow became much more difficult as he got older. He had started with self-injurious behavior (SIB), sometimes hitting himself on both sides of his head repeatedly for hours at a time. When we tried to stop him from doing it, Joey got aggressive. So this pattern made it almost impossible for teachers to manage. And he had no concept of danger either, which meant it was also becoming impossible for us to even take him out anywhere. He’d even lunge at us from the backseat when we’d take him out for a drive.”

Said Connie, “We knew he needed more, so we started looking at residential programs. When we found Anderson Center for Autism, we knew it was the right place for Joey - even though making that choice to do a full-time program was so, so painful for us.”

“Joey was 10 ½ when he moved to Anderson - and it was really hard at first for a lot of reasons. He was still having SIB episodes and showing aggression, and his psychiatrist had to find the right medications for Joey. But once that was figured out, and Joey had experienced ABA (Applied Behavior Analysis) therapies and all of Anderson’s programs and people, we started seeing improvements. Little by little, progress was being made and we knew for sure that Anderson was

definitely the right choice for our son,” explained Ed.

Connie warmly added, “Anderson Center for Autism is really made up of miracle workers. Joey is living his best life because of them.” Now in his mid-twenties, Joey resides in an adult group home and loves his day-to-day life as part of Anderson’s extended family.

Ed beamed, “He so enjoys his day-hab program and everyone in his house. He’s such a HAPPY person now, and I can take him anywhere! We’ve done so much with Joey that we never could have imagined doing when he was young.” The family has traveled to Disney World and Universal in Florida, Lake George, water parks, and the list goes on.

“He loves the mall now. When we get there we have to do his favorite thing first - get cheese from Target. And it’s hard to leave because he loves being at the mall. Joey has so much fun interacting with others, and just people-watching,” shared Ed.

“Joey also loved the colorful sights of Times Square when we stayed at the Marriott Marquis on Christmas Eve (after mass at St. Patrick’s Cathedral). We had a room with a floor-to-ceiling window which I had checked out before making a reservation there. The staff at the Marriott helped me find the perfect room for our family - and that’s just one example of the many ways businesses have welcomed us and become so accommodating over the years,” explained Ed.

Noted Connie, “We’ve traveled all over with Joey. People are really kind and welcoming.” When asked if our society has, indeed, shifted from awareness to acceptance, Ed said, “I think most communities are very accepting now and have a real understanding of what people like Joey need.”

Connie added, “Finally, people are seeing that autism can be very profound. The media always focused on autistic people like ‘The Good Doctor’ and neglected to talk about people like Joey. But I think that’s been changing recently, and the more awareness there is about profound autism, the more accepting everyone is.”

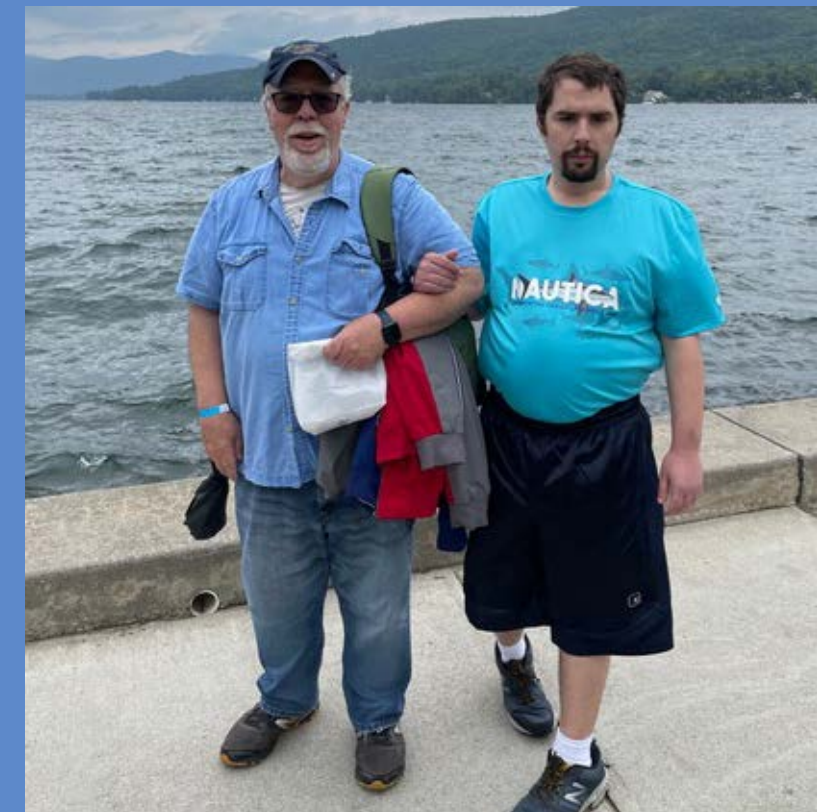
The couple then discussed how the team at Anderson Center for Autism - and Anderson Center Consulting and Training (ACCT) - has really helped make this societal mindset shift possible. “All of the work Anderson has done to train businesses and organizations is definitely making a big difference for Joey and families like ours. They’ve done a terrific job making sure that communities are accepting.”

“But it only works because their students and residents have also been given what they need in terms of training for community integration opportunities,” said Ed, emphatically. **“Joey goes out into the community and meets with success because he’s READY for those experiences; Anderson has given him the tools and education he needs to experience community life. And when he gets out there, the community is ready for him too because of what Anderson has done to prepare them.”**

He then added, “It’s so hard to give your child over to a residence - but when you see how happy Joey is as he volunteers for places like Meals on Wheels or has fun at his Day-Hab or on outings, I can’t imagine anything better. And as we get older ourselves, we know that there is a whole group of people who care about Joey and his wellbeing, which gives us so much peace of mind.”

Connie reflected, “Loving your child means doing what is right for your child, not what is right for yourself. It would have been easier to

deny that Joey needed a place like Anderson, because we would’ve been able to keep him home and close to us. But that would’ve been the wrong thing to do. So many parents go



into denial. But the best thing a parent can do is get as much help as possible, as early as possible. Really loving someone is about doing what is right for that person, not for yourself. Anderson Center for Autism was the best thing we could’ve done for Joey. And it turned out to be great for all of us, because he’s made so much progress that now we can enjoy him more too when we’re all together.”

Proudly wearing a “Dad loves Joey” sweatshirt to complement Connie’s “Mom loves Joey” pullover, Ed smiled as he continued to share from the heart: **“Everyone loves Joey. Everywhere he goes. And we’re just so thankful to everyone at Anderson Center for Autism for giving him such a good life. We are so thankful.”**



# Abby Edwards

## A Sibling's Love Leads the Way

**Although autism is an individual diagnosis, it unquestionably shapes life for an entire family.**

Abby Edwards, whose brother Riley is a full-time resident at Anderson Center for Autism, recently reflected on her own experience with a profound message: "having a sibling with autism is one of the most valued parts of my identity. Riley has made me the person I am today. He has taught me so much."

Her childhood years, which were spent in her hometown of East Moriches, Long Island, were full of moments enriched by Riley's presence.

Abby reminisced, "since I was a young child, I've always had a special bond with him. So many of my childhood memories involve Riley. We would play 'school', 'doctor', and 'kitchen'. We also spent so much time sitting with ice pops on the couch watching SpongeBob SquarePants. The best part of these memories was the fact that we experienced them together. I love my brother and I love spending time with him, so much so that when we were young and teachers came to our house to work with Riley, my parents used to have to remind me to leave them alone so Riley could work on his own stuff."

She continued, "This is honestly where I believe I found my passion for teaching - witnessing those teachers as they worked with Riley." And Abby's aspirations to become an elementary school teacher are now well on their way to becoming a reality. After graduating from Westhampton Beach High School (Class of 2022), she went on to Marist University, where she pursued a degree in psychology with a dual certification in elementary and special education, and an added Birth-Grade 2 certification.

That deep desire to educate others has also come to life through a philanthropic initiative Abby started when she was still in middle school herself: Pajama Day. Inspired by her quest to help foster a deeper understanding of autism, in 2017 Abby came up with the creative idea, developed a Power-Point presentation to pitch it, and invited schools to participate. The concept was this: anyone who wanted to wear pajamas to school in honor of autism awareness

on "Pajama Day" pays a sum of \$3. Proceeds are then donated to Anderson Foundation for Autism in honor of Riley. Since inception, Abby has engaged districts from all over Long Island and the Hudson Valley, raising over \$100,000 in total through this event (so far)! What's more is that she's helped communities learn about autism and its impact on entire families and our society.

**She detailed the backstory of the popular tradition:**

"In April of 2017, I decided to begin Pajama Day as a way to be a part of Riley's day-to-day life even though I can't be with him. I was a part of Girl Scouts at the time, and had seen a lot of fundraisers organized in my school. It just so happened that I had attended the Anderson Family Partners meeting where Patrick Paul was talking about the importance of families - especially siblings - getting involved at Anderson. This is when I had the idea that I could do something to support my brother from 157 miles away. Riley and I loved being in our pajamas,

“ We have seen Riley become the happiest version of himself and enjoy so much success at Anderson. ”

- Abby Edwards

so I figured... why not start a pajama day fundraiser? The next week, I met with my principal to discuss the idea. He loved it and gave me the go-ahead to begin planning. The fundraiser was scheduled for April, which is Autism Acceptance Month. Year 1 was just at my middle school. The year after that I expanded to my elementary school as well. Each year thereafter, more and more people were eager to join in on Pajama Day - beyond Long Island schools and all the way to Marlboro Middle School

up here in the Hudson Valley region. Each year I learned how to better communicate with school administrators, promote the success of the fundraiser, and most importantly, I realized more and more what a difference this was making - not only for Anderson's community, but others as well as we spread awareness. Schools and community members all got involved. So many friends and family generously donated and supported the cause and continue to get behind it," Abby exclaimed.

She continued, "My main goal for Pajama Day has been to educate people about autism. I specifically focus on this in the school setting through a presentation I provide each year to participating elementary and middle schools; it covers what autism may look like and how we can be accepting. Last year I had the most amazing experience and actually got to hang out at my elementary school for Pajama Day, visiting the classrooms to give this presentation face-to-face."

Abby enthusiastically explained that Pajama Day has become her "passion project." The most fulfilling aspect of it, she says, is the fact that her efforts benefit her brother and his peers. "I always want what's best for Riley and for him to have exciting experiences; I love seeing all of the fun things they're able to do as a result of funds raised through Pajama Day events."

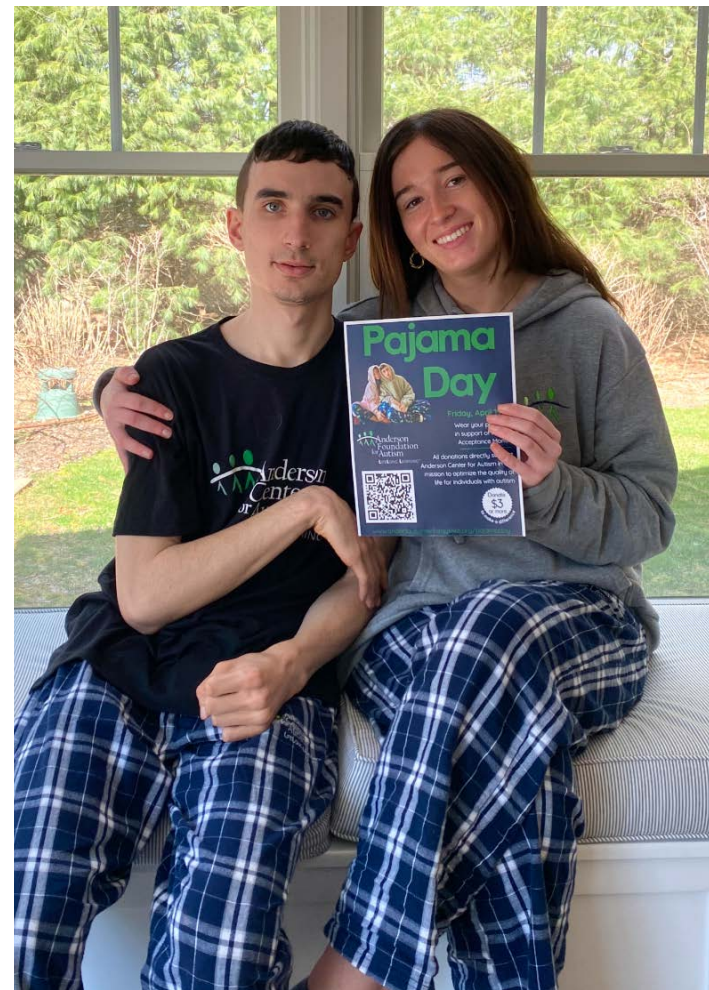
Also deeply rewarding, Abby said, are the “connections I have made and the life lessons I have learned” along the way. Coordinating all components of an initiative like this has given her a remarkable skillset in communications, marketing, community relations, development, advocacy, and more. And the comfort she’s gained with public speaking was evident when Abby delivered her moving, uplifting keynote speech at Riley’s commencement ceremony at Anderson in 2023, along with the messages she’s conveyed during her appearances on Eliza Bozenski’s “1 in 31: Autism Today” podcast. Despite being a self-proclaimed “quiet person,” Abby has discovered the power of using her voice to lift others - helping to build out an entire community of support for Riley and countless other autistic and neurodivergent people.

“I’ve wanted people to be more aware and accepting of autism. As Riley’s overprotective younger sister, I used to get upset when people would stare or I’d notice someone making a face or comment. But then, as I grew up more, I approached situations like these with a different mindset. I realized that many may not know what autism is, what it looks like, and how to be accepting of it. As years have gone on, there has definitely been a shift in awareness as the autism prevalence rate has gone up - but I think an important message I would like to keep communicating is to just be kind. Being kind goes a long way.”

That empathy which Abby brings to the world has also undoubtedly been deepened and strengthened by the perspective she’s gained observing Riley’s life through the lens of their mother Sharon Edwards, father Tim Edwards, stepmother Patricia Cagliostro, and older

brother Josh. While there are many joyful moments for the family, the journey has not been without the difficulties unique to caregivers who are touched by autism.

“In 2012, my parents had to make the hardest decision of their life - to move Riley into his new home on Anderson’s campus. This was the most challenging time for everyone in our family. We all knew it was the best decision for Riley, but of course it was not easy. I remember how sad I was to come home from school and no longer be able to go hang out with Riley all afternoon. I can imagine how tough it was for Riley, too, to adjust to a new environment, a new routine, and new people. Of course I missed Riley so much, but I had learned that he was thriving in his new environment.”



### **Abby says that Riley continues to love life at Anderson all of these years later.**

“We have seen Riley become the happiest version of himself and enjoy so much success at Anderson. He thrives on routines, stability, high expectations, and love, and that is exactly what he gets at Anderson. I am so proud of him. I remember when I was younger, myself or my parents would always help him buckle his seatbelt. One day, he randomly did it on his own and I beamed with pride. That is how I feel now when I see him enjoy all of his many accomplishments. And when Riley graduated from the children’s program in 2023, I was holding back tears watching him walk alongside his peers to the graduation song. That day was so special to me - and I was honored to be the commencement speaker at his ceremony.”

Although the backdrops of their lives have shifted as these siblings have turned from children into adults, Abby remarks that when it comes to her cherished friendship with Riley, “nothing has changed over the years. We continue to be close, now even more so than ever. As a Marist student, I’ve lived much closer to Riley at school than at home, so that has allowed me to enjoy time with him on some weekends. Our routine is usually the same; we drive in the car (this is his favorite), go for a walk, get food (usually McDonald’s!), go for another walk, and then he goes home. One time we went bowling at Spins in Poughkeepsie, which was really fun. This one-on-one time with Riley is definitely something I enjoy. I love being with him and I assume he loves being with me too. Every time I go to pick him up he has the biggest smile on his face.”

While Abby is uncertain in what ways Pajama Day might grow and evolve in the future, one thing is for sure: she pledges to continue to help cultivate autism acceptance, wherever she goes - remaining ever-focused on the well-being of Riley, along with autistic and neurodivergent people everywhere.

And although we know that her family, community, and the thousands of Pajama Day participants over the years have learned so much from Abby, this younger sister points out that she’s learned even more from her big brother.

“Riley has taught me so many life lessons. Three things that I carry with me every day that I have learned from him are patience, unconditional love, and acceptance.”

That her brother has shaped Abby’s life in meaningful ways comes through in every statement and decision she makes. From her choice to pursue teaching to her work enlightening others and raising funds, Abby embraces her role as a sibling of an autistic individual with wisdom, clarity, and gratitude. At the root of it all - the special bond she shares with Riley.

“Even though he cannot speak to me, I consider myself his biggest advocate and his voice,” and added, “I love and value how we’re able to connect and understand one another without words.”

**For more information on Pajama Day, visit: [andersoncenterforautism.org/pajamaday](https://andersoncenterforautism.org/pajamaday)**

# Financial Statements

## 2025 Overview

As we deepen our commitment to Anderson Center for Autism’s mission, our team continues to prioritize fiscal responsibility, transparency, and accountability. We work to ensure that programs are well-funded and that every investment we make is aligned with our values.

*Fiscal Year Ended 2025 (Unaudited)*

<b>ASSETS</b>	<b>Anderson Foundation for Autism</b>	<b>Anderson Center for Autism and Affiliates</b>
Cash & Cash Equivalents	136,437	10,596,272
Investments	10,896,893	27,463,033
Accounts Receivable		15,917,989
Pledges Receivable	46,198	46,198
Prepaid Expenses & Other Assets	25,453	2,096,063
Retirement Plan Investments		1,362,103
Property & Equipment, Net		39,351,099
Operating Lease, Right-of-Use Assets		1,707,759
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>11,104,981</b>	<b>98,540,516</b>

## Liabilities and Net Assets

<b>LIABILITIES</b>	<b>Anderson Foundation for Autism</b>	<b>Anderson Center for Autism and Affiliates</b>
Accounts Payable & Other Liabilities	(348)	3,158,848
Benefits Payable		16,669,409
Mortgages/Bonds Payable		19,905,272
Operating Lease		1,949,801
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>(348)</b>	<b>41,683,330</b>

<b>NET ASSETS</b>	<b>Anderson Foundation for Autism</b>	<b>Anderson Center for Autism and Affiliates</b>
Without Donor Restrictions	10,385,972	55,579,245
With Donor Restrictions	719,357	1,277,941
<b>Total Net Assets</b>	<b>11,105,329</b>	<b>56,857,186</b>
<b>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</b>	<b>11,104,981</b>	<b>98,540,516</b>

# Have you heard of **The Anderson Legacy Circle?**

**We encourage you to consider joining our  
community of planned giving donors!**

Whether naming Anderson Foundation for Autism (AFA) a beneficiary of life insurance policies, retirement plans, and annuities, or gifting a specific dollar amount or percentage of your total estate to AFA, you can establish a lasting heritage that will help further Anderson's mission for generations to come. There are many available vehicles for giving, all of which can be customized depending on the charitable interests and tax situations unique to you or your family - and our team is here to help make the process effortless and rewarding.

As part of the Anderson Legacy Circle, you will also enjoy access to private events, unique opportunities to share ideas with Anderson's CEO and executive leadership team, and an ongoing chance to expand personal and organizational impact while leaving a lasting philanthropic legacy.

**Learn more by calling Anderson  
Foundation for Autism at 845.889.9594.**



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Once again, over the past year we secured a number of grants to support critically important efforts at Anderson Center for Autism. We are grateful for the generosity of foundations and philanthropists who recognize the significance of our work and help us carry out our mission.

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Program  
NYSUT Education Learning Trust  
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### Program Support **\$83,750**

Dental Desensitization  
ECHO Autism Learning Community  
General Operating Support  
Gymnasium Divider  
Organic Outcomes Garden Project

### Workforce Development **\$179,000**

Apprenticeships

# Thank You to Our Generous Donors

This list includes those who made monetary or in-kind contributions between January 1 - December 31, 2025. We want to thank the Anderson team members, families, board trustees, neighbors, philanthropists, corporations, and foundations who continue to support our work. Because of your collective generosity, we are well-positioned for success in the next century as well. Our gratitude to all of you.

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