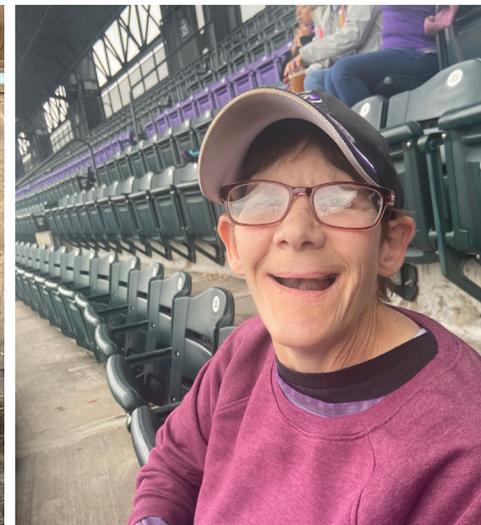




# ANNUAL REPORT 2022

**ark** Regional Services



# MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

Over the past year, Ark has spent considerable time focusing on our future. We developed a new strategic plan and created a new mission statement. The mission of Ark Regional Services has always been to provide outstanding supports for people with developmental disabilities, but we worked to establish a more impactful and motivating guiding statement. We feel our new mission statement better captures Ark's current operations and will



guide us for many years to come. Out of that statement, we developed a new strategic plan to help position Ark to meet upcoming known and unknown challenges. As we continue to address the lack of adequate funding and a statewide Direct Support Professional workforce shortage, our philosophy and the commitment of our dedicated staff will ensure the people we support continue to receive the high-quality services they need, deserve, and our community has come to expect. The past year was full of challenges, but we are incredibly proud of our accomplishments and excited about what lies ahead.

Bob

## VISION

The vision of Ark Regional Services is a world that is equitable, respectful, and values the diverse perspectives of all people.

## MISSION

Supporting people with intellectual and developmental disabilities to actively engage in their life through new opportunities, healthy relationships, and lifelong learning.

## VALUES

The values of Ark Regional Services guide every decision made in supporting people with intellectual disabilities. These values are at the core of what we believe, and in turn how we behave. Ark values:

- Relationships;
- Integrity;
- Communication;
- Diversity;
- Innovation;
- Choice; and
- Safety.

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regionalservices.org

# COOPER CENTER FOR CREATIVE ARTS

This past year has brought excitement and fulfillment to both the students and instructors at the Cooper Center for Creative Arts! As we have learned to navigate the COVID-19 pandemic and saw the number of cases decrease, our artists have again been able to present their creative endeavors and hard work to the community again.

During the week of September 6th, four visual artists from the Cooper Center participated in the 6th Annual Laramie Pop-Up Art Walk. During this week-long event, Guy Bayer, Irene Candelaria, Nate Hildebrand, and Mary Anne McCarthy displayed and sold their work at Night Heron Books and Coffeehouse in downtown Laramie. In late September, the gallery at the Cooper Center hosted an art exhibition, *Worth the Wait*, which marked the first in-person art show since the beginning of the pandemic in 2020. This led to the December performance of *Christmas Chaos*, the first public theater performance to be held in our theater since the pandemic. The artists, cast, crew, and instructors were overjoyed at both events' large attendance. Following these events, visual artists Mary Anne McCarthy and Irene Candelaria ended 2021 by participating in the Holiday Art and Music Thing where they displayed and sold their art at the Laramie Civic Center.

In March of 2022, the Cooper Center premiered the film *Cooper Center Live!* This production was developed over the past year and a half while we could not hold public performances due to the pandemic. This film represented the culmination of a year of hard work in which the instructors and students learned new skills in the area of filmmaking, video and sound editing, and scene design. The premiere was followed in February of 2022 by an art exhibition entitled *Decadence* that included not only the art of our visual artists on the gallery walls but our first installation, which highlighted the scene and costume designs of the students who worked on the *Cooper Center Live!* film. This was all followed by a dance showcase performed in the Cooper Center theater in June.

As the fiscal year ended, students began rehearsing for *Peter and the Wolf*, the first ballet to be performed on the Cooper Center stage, and we have started to discuss what the next year will bring creatively. As always, the artists at the Cooper Center are excited for you to experience their work and look forward to seeing you in our gallery and theater this upcoming year!





COSTUME DESIGN CLASS



20'S DANCE SHOWCASE





## *Operating in Laramie for 32 years!*

Ark Equestrian Center provides opportunities for personal growth for people with and without disabilities in a non-traditional setting through a variety of fun and engaging Equine Assisted Activities. Programs offered at the Center include Therapeutic Riding, Equine Assisted Learning, and Private Riding Classes. Classes can be tailored to accommodate all members of our community, including the individuals we serve and support at Ark Regional Services.

## *YEAR IN REVIEW - 2022*

### *Adult Equine Assisted Learning Classes*

Equine Assisted Learning (EAL) is a non-traditional approach to learning that helps participants build trust, respect, honesty, and communication skills. As people interact with equines, they begin to understand how their verbal and non-verbal communication impacts and influences others; consequently, they gain a heightened sense of self-awareness and an increase in confidence. In 2022, seven classes were offered each week to interested individuals receiving support from Ark Regional Services. In total 53 students participated in these classes.

### *Therapeutic Horseback Riding*

Therapeutic Riding Lessons are designed to support people's cognitive, physical, emotional, and social well-being. During a session in riding skills, participants engage in a variety of fun, therapeutic activities that stimulate the mind and strengthen the body. Each Therapeutic Riding session is individually tailored, yet there are many universal benefits that people experience through participation in riding. People report improvements in balance, equilibrium, coordination, hand-eye coordination, muscle memory, and self-esteem. In this program 10 individuals receiving services from Ark Regional Services participated in Therapeutic Riding.

### *Horticulture Program*

Ark Equestrian Center's horticulture program provides classes throughout the semester, including understanding the basics of horticulture, plant science, plant identification, soil science and organic gardening and farming. Students from Ark and ACSD#1 participated in 2022.





## EAL & ACSD#1

### *Equine Assisted Learning Partnership Program*

Ark Equestrian Center has been serving students in Albany County School District #1 for over 7 years.

Each month, the EAL Program explores a different core Value/Principle. The monthly lesson plans are written in advance to be easily incorporated into the Albany County School Districts lesson for that semester. This results in reinforcement of lessons learned in both the classroom and Equestrian Center, increases chances of success for the students.

The classes are tailored to meet the specific needs of, elementary, middle & high school children, as well as children in the ICARE program.

In 2022, seven schools served with ten classes, including 105+ students ranging in age from 5 to 21. Students were accompanied by teachers, paraprofessionals, counselors, and University of Wyoming practicum students.

## New Beginnings

### *The Births of Lincoln & Porter*

After the donation of four mares, we were surprised to learn that two mares, Penny & Dolly, were pregnant. On April 14th, 2022, the Equestrian Center welcomed two rambunctious foals into the world -- Lincoln and Porter.

The pregnancies and births of Lincoln and Porter proved to be a unique teaching opportunity for students from the school district and from Ark Regional Services. Students had the opportunity to interact with Penny and Dolly while they were pregnant, learning about equine pregnancy and the development of foals in the womb. During the duration of the pregnancies, students enjoyed caring for Dolly and Penny and ensuring that both mares were comfortable and healthy. After the births, students continue to learn about each foals' development as they grow.

We are incredibly excited to continue training Lincoln and Porter while offering opportunities for students to learn about their development as they mature!



# THE CENTER FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

## ARK'S EDUCATION PROGRAM

During the 2021-2022 fiscal year, as in years past, the Education Program at Ark Regional Services offered students a broad range of post-secondary learning opportunities. Students were given 70-75 class options each semester, ranging from creative arts classes held at the Cooper Center for Creative Arts to language arts & literacy classes held at the Center for Professional Development, otherwise known as CPD.

These classes were developed with clearly defined learning objectives, and student progress and successes were measured through various projects, presentations, performances, and portfolios. As we look to the future, further ways to assess students' learning are being developed and implemented across all classes. Information gathered from these assessments will better inform us of the effectiveness of our teaching approaches, expose areas for improvement, and, most importantly, highlight interest and buy-in from our students. Beyond exposure to a variety of subject matter, our goal has also been to equip students with increased critical thinking and interpersonal skills, emotional intelligence, and cultural competency, which are integral for success in all areas of life. Class discussions, activities, and projects incorporate opportunities for students to engage in ways to further develop in these areas.

In the end, we hope to offer students classes that they find engaging, inspire passion in new interests, challenge their opinions, and push their understanding of themselves and the world, and classes that are ultimately fun! One of the classes found to be popular among students has been Astronomy which not only took place in the classroom but included weekly night sky viewings (weather permitting) to witness rare planet alignments, comets, and meteor showers. Another popular class was Genius Hour. Students chose a topic of interest, researched it, and ended the semester by presenting their research to a small audience. Such final projects included presentations on Dyslexia, caring for cats, and designing a video game that the audience was able to play. Over the past couple of years, Dungeons & Dragons has

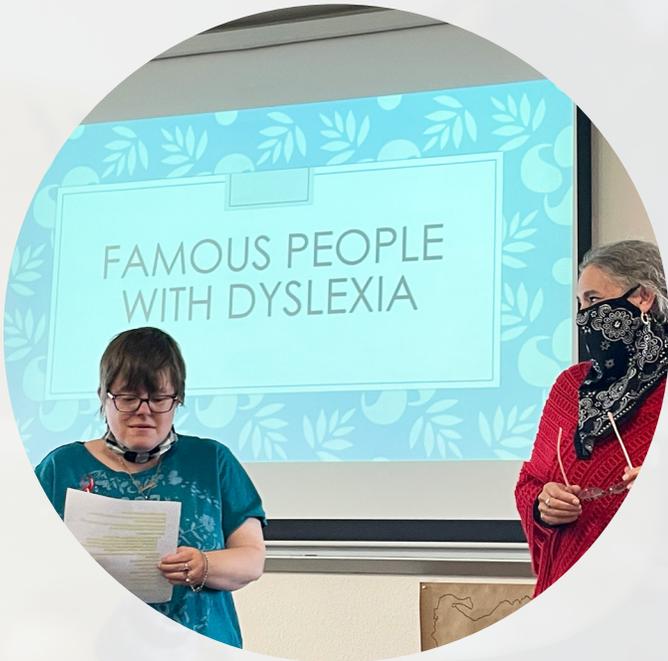
firmly established itself in our course offerings and has gained a cult-like following. While D&D is a fun class, it requires students to use math, critical thinking, imagination, and leadership skills. Also offered was a class entitled I HATE MATH! Students registering for classes were often in agreement with the idea of hating math. Still, once in the class, their groans often turned into laughter as math concepts were made applicable to areas of their everyday life in fun ways, and the question became, *Do you really hate math?*

With the grip of COVID-19 loosening a bit, students interested in performing arts classes were once again able to share their talents with others. Classes such as rehearsal, dance, scene, and costume design culminated in productions for live audiences. Additionally, the gallery at the Cooper Center opened, and students in visual arts classes were also able to show and sell their work to the public.

### Percy Jackson Book Club



SOME CLASSES OFFERED THIS YEAR INCLUDE:



*GENIUS HOUR*



*FIRST AID & CPR*



*PERMACULTURE*



*ALTERATIONS &  
MENDING*

*AND MANY MORE!*

# CARF SITE SURVEY

On November 8, 9, and 10 2021 three surveyors from CARF conducted a survey to ensure that Ark is in conformance with CARF standards. Ark received a 3 year accreditation. Ark's next survey will be in April 2024. The report in full can be viewed on Ark Regional Services web page.

Our survey report included a summary of strengths, areas for improvement, and areas of exemplary practices. The report included:

- **Areas of improvement:**
  - “development and implementation of policies or written procedures or practices in...fundraising, strategic planning, risk management, performance measurements, and expand policy for controlled substances.
- **Areas of strength:**
  - Ark Regional Services is commended for its person-centered, holistic approach to services that emphasizes empowerment and ensures that the persons served have the necessary services and supports to be successful in the community and reach their full potential.
  - The organization is commended for its internal certified direct support professional training program that was developed to prepare the support staff for career advancement and encourage staff retention. The staff members who complete the additional training receive a wage increase and are recognized as future leaders at Ark Regional Services.
  - The persons served were very complimentary of the services offered. One individual shared how proud she was to move out of her family member's home to a home of her own and learn many new skills.
  - The organization appears to have a positive reputation and strong working relationships with the local university and many businesses in the community. These relationships have resulted in partnerships and collaborative efforts in meeting the organization's mission. Many students from the University of Wyoming work part time for the organization while completing their studies.

# STATE SITE SURVEY

On October 10, 2020 surveyors from the Behavioral Health Division conducted a remote survey to ensure that Ark is in conformance with state and federal Medicaid standard.

Our survey report included a summary of strengths, areas for improvement, and areas of exemplary practices. The report included:

- Ark met the standards of the survey at 99%
- Ark received recommendations in 1 area surveyed

A quality improvement plan to address documentation of employees reviewing policies and procedures on an annual basis was written and submitted to the state. Ark was in-compliance with the standards within 30 days of the end of the survey.

# PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Annually, we analyze information in specific areas to further improve the quality of our supports and services. We collect data on, then review and assess our progress toward meeting our targeted objective for efficiency, effectiveness, access, and satisfaction. Performance Indicators and results for Fiscal Year 2022 were:

**Indicator:** People will be free from restraints and receive medications as prescribed.

**Progress:** Ark remains a restraint free organization at this time, no restraints were performed in FY 2022. Medication errors decreased by 17% as compared to last fiscal year.

**Indicator:** People will have stability and consistency in their staff support.

**Progress:** Staff turnover increased by 8% as compared to the previous fiscal year. Ark is working on a staff recruitment and retention plan. An increased starting wage for DSPs and the DSP certification program were utilized in FY 2022.

**Indicator:** More people will have the opportunity to receive support from Ark Regional Services.

**Progress:** Although all applications were reviewed and responded to within 2 weeks, not all acceptance or non-acceptance was determined in that amount of time. Families and the participant were kept informed of where Ark was at in the process and meetings and phone calls were maintained during that time.

**Indicator:** People receiving services and their family are satisfied with services provided by Ark.

**Progress:** 93.5% of families responding to the survey, positively responded to the question: "Overall, I feel that services and supports that Ark Regional Services provides are making a positive difference in the life of my family member."

## ANNUAL SATISFACTION SURVEY

**ARK DISTRIBUTED ITS ANNUAL SATISFACTION SURVEY TO FAMILY MEMBERS AND GUARDIANS. THE FEEDBACK AND INPUT WE RECEIVED FROM OUR STAKEHOLDERS IS VERY IMPORTANT TO US. RESULTS FROM THE 2022 SURVEY INCLUDE:**

- 100% favorable response to the statement, "Ark Regional Services staff treat my family member with respect."
- 93.6% favorable response to the statement, "My family member has access to transportation provided by Ark Regional Services when they want it."
- 93.5% favorable response to the statement, "Overall, I am satisfied with the supports and services provided by Ark Regional Services."
- 90.3% favorable response to the statement, "My family member has the opportunity to complete activities outside of home that are meaningful to them."
- 90.3% favorable response to the statement, "Overall, I am satisfied with the health and wellness of my family member."
- 87.1% favorable response to the statement, "My family member has the opportunity to complete activities at home that are meaningful to them."
- 87.1% favorable response to the statement, "Ark Regional Services staff ensure the privacy of my family member at home."

# ANNUAL SATISFACTION SURVEY, CONT

## **Some of the comments received on question, “What could Ark Regional Services do to improve the services your family member receives?”**

- “We have had wonderful experiences and services from Ark! Keep up the awesome work.”
- “Encourage more group participation or given duties he is expected to perform.”
- “Encourage more fervently engagement in wholesome activities.”
- “Not very much, they do a very good job. Perhaps increase communication on a 1:1 basis between the parent/guardian and the hands-on providers.”
- “A longer learning day at the Cooper Center would be helpful, as would more activities outside the weekday.
- “At this time the services are meeting her needs.”

## **Some of the comments received on question, “What could Ark Regional Services do to improve communication with you?”**

- “I feel the Ark communicates with me well. No improvement needed.”
- “When we have a question, we are always able to contact a staff member and receive a response within a short period of time.”
- “Be sure to include me on any changes to Ark’s improvements, policies, etc. especially those that affect him physically, emotionally, or financially.”
- “Communication is very good. Perhaps an emailed newsletter would be nice.”
- “Text or email as schedules change.”

## **Ark distributed its annual satisfaction survey to employees. It was made available through the online survey website Survey Monkey. Results from the 2022 survey include:**

### DSP Responses:

- 97.1% favorable response to the question, “I help the people I support to explore new opportunities.”
- 92.9% favorable response to the question, “I am comfortable talking with my supervisor when I have concerns about the clients I support.”
- 91.8% favorable response to the question, “The interactions between me and co-workers working my shift are positive.”
- 87.1% favorable response to the question, “I am satisfied with my supervisor demonstrating the values of the organization.”
- 86.3% favorable response to the question, “The interactions between me and my supervisor are positive.”

- 81.4% favorable response to the question, “I am satisfied with my supervisor providing client specific training.”
- 78.3% favorable response to the question, “I am satisfied with my supervisor in explaining the expectations of my job.”
- 57.8% favorable response to the question, “I have had opportunities to provide input on client services and felt it was valued.”

#### Non-DSP Responses:

- 92.9% favorable response to the question, “The interactions between me and my supervisor are positive.”
- 85.7% favorable response to the question, “The interactions between me and co-workers working my shift are positive.”
- 69.2% favorable response to the question, “I have had opportunities to provide input on decisions in my work area and feel it was valued.”
- 92.3% favorable response to the question, “I am satisfied with my supervisor in explaining the expectations of my job.”
- 100% favorable response to the question, “I am satisfied with my supervisor demonstrating the values of the organization.”
- 92.3% favorable response to the question, “I am comfortable talking with my supervisor when I have concerns about my co-workers.”

#### **Some comments received on the question, “What ideas to you have to increase positive interactions at Ark Regional Services?”**

- “Workers need to continue holding each accountable in a free atmosphere. Giving each other feedback and doing debriefing is crucial.”
- “Encourage DSP-Cs in each house to check on newbies and offer help, answer questions, and provide positive feedback.”
- “The more recognition staff gets from directly supporting clients should be apparent and personal.”
- “In my opinion, I think this can only increase if everyone takes time to reflect on themselves and see how they personally can make interactions more positive.”
- “More employee events.”
- “Meaningful connections between DSPs and leadership would address issues.”

#### **Some comments received on the question, “In what ways could the supervision you receive improve?”**

- “Increased communication.”
- “Continuous feedback is necessary.”
- “I would like to be valued and see my recommendations accepted.”
- “I would appreciate some check-ins to see how staff is doing with their schedules, the clients, and the job as a whole.”
- “Available more often and a better understanding of what the job entails.”

# ANNUAL SATISFACTION SURVEY, CONT

## **Some comments received on the question, “In what ways could Ark improve staff recruitment and retention?”**

- “Developing new ways to acknowledge and celebrate the skills, experiences, and world views each employee (most importantly DSPs) have and bring to the table for our organization.”
- “Maybe more appreciation/recognitions. I love the splash messages about anniversaries.”
- “More training on-site and more consistent expectations.”
- “To improve staff recruitment and retention it would be in Ark’s best interest to provide more competitive pay for DSPs.”
- “To improve retention, Ark should provide easier ways for DSPs to find coverage for shifts they need to take off.”
- “Go to career days and have booths advertised.”
- “Continuous training and professional development. Feedback for employees. Appreciation and recognition.”
- “Listening to staff when they ask for help.”
- “More/better training for supervisors. Welcome packages, retainment packages, and notices/congratulations for reaching 3 months. People want to know when they have passed the first few hurdles.”

## **Ark distributed its annual satisfaction survey to stakeholders. It was made available through the online survey website Survey Monkey. Results from the 2022 survey include:**

- 93.8% favorable response to the statement, “My interactions with Ark Regional Services were positive.”
- 100% favorable response to the statement, “Ark Regional Services was responsive to my questions/concerns.”
- 87.5% favorable response to the statement, “Ark Regional Services effectively met its commitments to my organization.”
- 95.7% favorable response to the statement, “Ark Regional Services has provided quality services to people with developmental and intellectual disabilities.”
- 93.75% favorable response to the statement, “Ark Regional Services has fulfilled its mission.”

## **Some comments received on “Please provide any other feedback about your interactions with Ark Regional Services in the last year.”**

- “Ark’s services are the best! They do everything they can to meet their mission.”
- “I have been a part of only the Equestrian Center but all of the experiences I have had there have been amazing. Irreplaceable staff, happy fulfilled and learning clients and so many great things going on in that center. I only wish there were more places like it.”
- “I can really only speak to the programs our students participate in, but I have found the services Ark provides them have been positive, productive, transformative (in a good way!), inclusive, and beneficial.”
- “The staff at the arena are amazing!!”

# COMMUNITY EMPLOYMENT

Throughout 2022, the number of individuals receiving employment support have remained consistent. We currently support 27 employed individuals, five of whom hold positions with multiple employers, and additional individuals seeking new employment.

While reviewing this year's accomplishments, we feel it necessary and noteworthy to acknowledge the longevity of many of the people we support in their employment. Twelve individuals have held their current positions for 1-5 years, twelve have held their positions for 5-10 years, two for 15-20 years, two for over 20 years, and three for more than 25 years!

## Current employers include:

ALBANY COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

LARAMIE BLIZZARDS

ALBANY COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT #1

PERKINS

ARK REGIONAL SERVICES

SAFEWAY

BERNIE'S MEXICAN RESTAURANT

STUDIO CITY

CARL'S JR.

UW HR

DAIRY QUEEN

UW WASHAKIE

EPPSON CENTER FOR SENIORS

WYOMING INSTITUTE FOR DISABILITIES

IVINSON MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

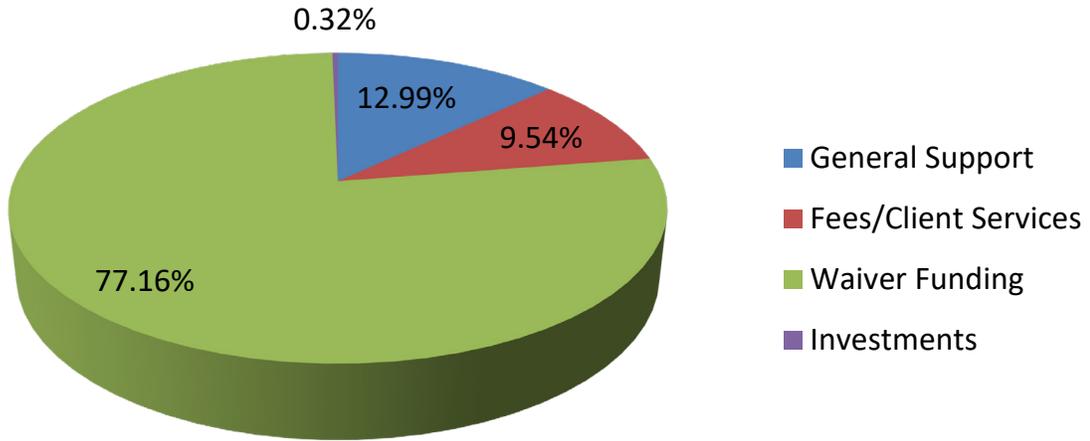
(WIND)

LANDMARK

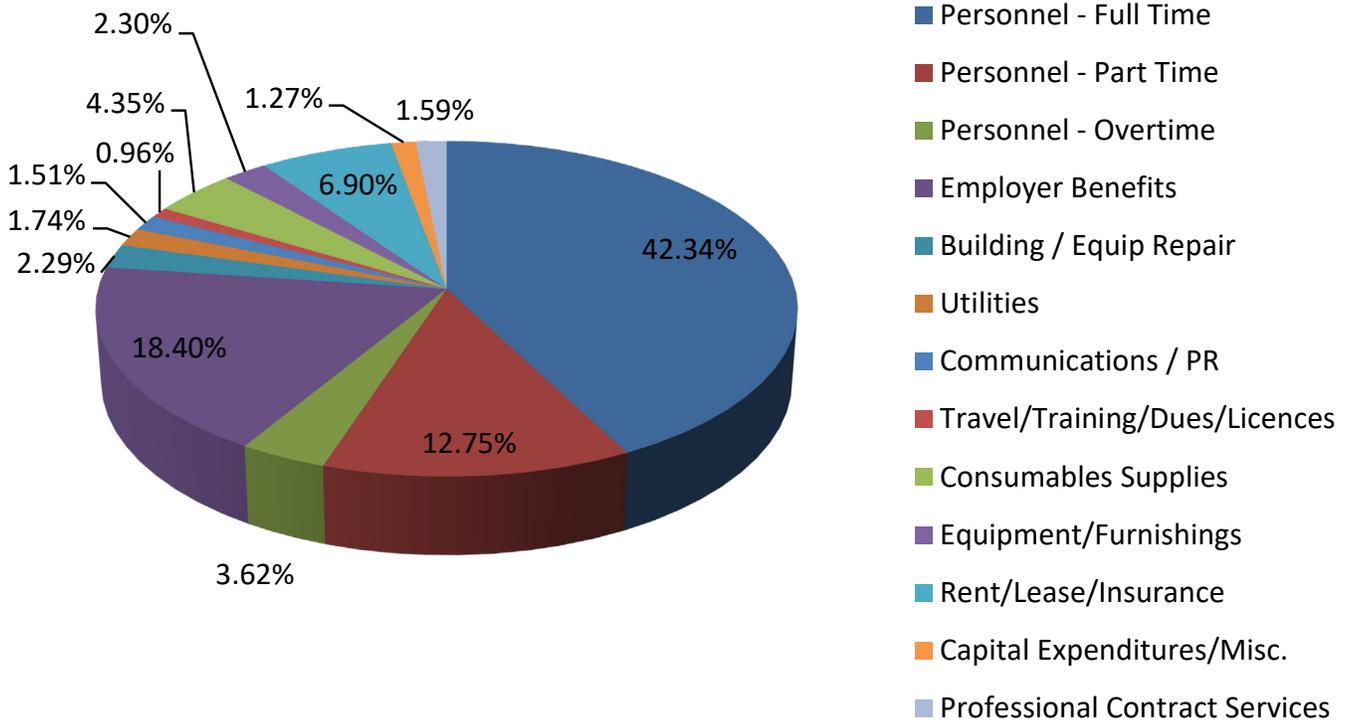
WYOMING SCHOOL OF GYMNASTICS

# 2022 FINANCIAL INFORMATION

## Income



## Expenses



# GRANTS AND FUNDING

22ND ANNUAL EVENT.....	\$66,115
ALBANY COUNTY COMMISSIONERS.....	\$5,000
Community Agency Distribution	
CITY OF LARAMIE.....	\$5,989
Performing Arts Program	
COOPER CENTER ANNUAL GIVING.....	\$11,164
EQUESTRIAN CENTER ANNUAL GIVING.....	\$9,951
GUTHRIE FAMILY FOUNDATION.....	\$21,000
Visual Arts Program	
ROCKY MOUNTAIN POWER FOUNDATION.....	\$3,000
Language Arts and Literacy Program	
UNITED WAY OF ALBANY COUNTY.....	\$29,500
2021 Campaign Allocation	
UNITED WAY OF ALBANY COUNTY.....	\$4,500
Performing Arts Program	
WESTERN STATES ARTS FEDERATION (WESTAF).....	\$28,000
American Rescue Plan Funding - Creative Arts Program	
WYOMING ARTS COUNCIL COMMUNITY GRANT.....	\$9,857
Performing Arts Program	
WYOMING BREAST CANCER INITIATIVE.....	\$4,949
Ark's Monthly Breast Clinic	

*Ark Regional Services would like to thank all grant and funding bodies who contributed to operating and programmatic services in 2022!*

# ANNUAL FUNDRAISER

Ark's 9th Annual Event and Casino Night returned on April 2nd for the first time since the COVID pandemic! The event included casino games, a gift card and liquor pull, live and silent auctions, and raffle prizes. Attendees energetically competed against one another for auction items donated by many local businesses in the Laramie community and beyond. We are beyond grateful for the generosity of participating local businesses and sponsors for their continued support of Ark Regional Services and the people for whom we provide supports.

We look forward to Ark's 10th Annual Event coming in April 2023!

## THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS!

### HIGH ROLLER SPONSORS

TOYOTA OF LARAMIE  
TOYOTA DEALER MATCH

### ACE SPONSORS

ASPEN FAMILY CHIROPRACTIC

### KING SPONSORS

AAA RECYCLING & SALVAGE  
ALBANY EYE CARE  
AMERIPRISE FINANCIAL  
BLUE FCU  
BUD'S BAR  
CAPITAL CLARITY  
FRATERNAL ORDER OF EAGLES  
#3493  
GROATHOUSE CONSTRUCTION  
IVINSON MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

INSURANCE UNLIMITED

LARAMIE LAND COMPANY

PALATIUM HAIR SALON

POLE MOUNTAIN PHARMACY

PREMIER BONE & JOINT

QUALITY IV CARE

ROCKY MOUNTAIN SHIRTWORKS

THE ACRE COMPANY

WALT SMITH WITH TOMAHAWK

WINDY CITY PET STORE

### QUEEN SPONSORS

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GARY'S PLUMING & HEATING  
LARAMIE GM AUTO CENTER  
LARAMIE LAWNERY, INC

LARAMIE TELEPHONE EXCHANGE

JEFF & ARLEE LUND

MOUNTAIN CEMENT COMPANY

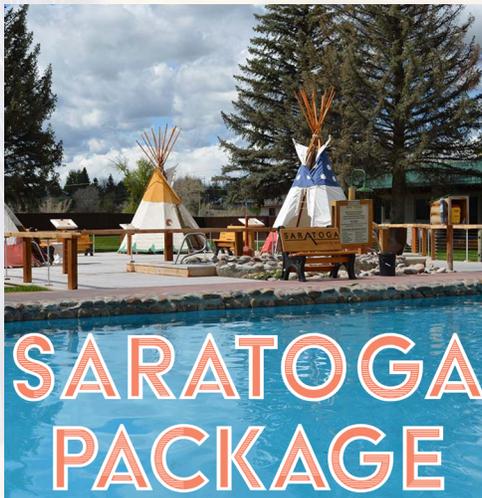
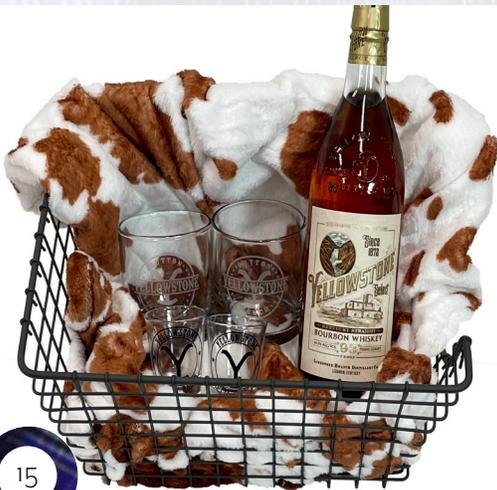
VINCENT SIREN

WAYNE & SANDY HUBERT

WYOMING COMMUNITY  
FOUNDATION

### JACK SPONSORS

ACPE FCU  
DEVIANT PERICING/MEDICINE  
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HALLADAY AUTO GROUP  
HIVIZ, LLC  
KEITH & JOYCE MILLER  
RIVERSTONE BANK  
SNOWY RANGE HEALTH CENTER  
UNIWYO FCU



# BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Our Board of Directors continue to dedicate their time, talent, and commitment to Ark Regional Services. They are an instrumental source of insight and vision as we embark on these exciting and challenging times. We are fortunate that Norm Bock, Sam Dunnuck, Dave Heath, Joe Shumway, and Emory Spiegelberg give their time to guide and govern our organization during this fiscal year. Additionally, we thank Norm Bock, Dave Heath, Rita Basom, and Emily Clark as board members of the Ark Memorial Foundation.

## ARK MEMORIAL FOUNDATION

The Ark Memorial Foundation was established to help ensure the financial stability of Ark Regional Services. The Foundation offers a variety of giving options so donors can support individual programs or the organization as a whole. Some of the options include:

- Ark Equestrian Center
- The Cooper Center for Creative Arts
- Direct Support Professionals training & development
- General operating support for Ark
- Memorials for loved ones

Information on these giving options is available on our website. Donations are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

## CONTACT US

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