Raising A Reader

Aspen to Parachute

2020–2021 Impact Report

Our mission is to foster early literacy bonds between children and their parents to ensure that all young children from Aspen to Parachute develop a love of books and the skills to become successful readers.

Dear Friends,

Raising A Reader Aspen to Parachute has been near and dear to me since its inception 17 years ago in the Roaring Fork Valley. It warms my heart to see children smile when they open the red bags of books, listen to a story during one of our outreach groups, or cuddle on their parents' laps while reading together at the library. These experiences are part of the programming that Raising A Reader provides 1000+ children and their families every school year.

As a longtime early childhood and elementary educator and leader, I have always believed that teaching children the joy of reading is the foundation of a child becoming a successful reader. Raising A Reader provides those critical and essential resources for our youngest learners, their parents, and their teachers that schools struggle to supply, even more so since the pandemic began in 2020.

The youngest and most vulnerable children in our area have been hardest hit during the pandemic because they missed the most critical early years of learning. Educators work tirelessly in our local schools to fill the learning gaps with limited resources. Raising A Reader Aspen to Parachute has continuously coordinated with local preschools, libraries, and early primary classrooms to provide high-quality books and rich early literacy resources. We are very proud of the services and support we have provided our children, parents, and teachers during this unprecedented time.

I am thrilled to be a part of this outstanding organization, its exceptional staff, and its dedicated board of directors. Thank you so much for supporting our work at Raising A Reader. Your support makes a difference in children's lives, from Aspen to Parachute.

I am looking forward to meeting you and wish you a year filled with health and happiness!

With sincere gratitude,

Suzanne Wheeler-Del Piccolo
Executive Director

Raising A Reader Empowers and Inspires Families to Read Together Every Day

Raising a Reader Red Book Bags. provide 3-4 books every week from September to early May, sent home with each child. During a school year, families receive 75-100 books for reading at home together, along with educational resources for parents to motivate and inspire families to read at home together.

123 Let's Read – This program gifts a book a month for each participating preschool teacher and every student in their class. Each book comes with a list of suggested home activities to stimulate brain development, enhance vocabulary, and motivate families to read together at home.

"Before participating in the program, we did not have books at home, and thanks to your program we have already started our little reading corner."

- Bolsitas Rojas
Parent Participant

Bolsitas Rojas/ Little Red Bags – This outreach program brings together families whose children are not in preschool in all nine public libraries in the region. Each week, children and their parents engage in literacy guidance, storytime, and other fun, enriching preschool activities.

Blue Bag Library Days – Raising A Reader hosts a field trip for preschoolers, kindergarteners, and families at their local libraries each spring. Children receive their first library card attached to a free blue bookbag they can keep, filled with information about the library programming

This year, **Summer Reading Camp** was new to Raising A Reader. It brought parents with preschool-age children together with our program coordinators in local parks twice a week. Families participated in literacy engagement activities and received storybooks to keep.

RAR conducts all of its programming and materials in both Spanish and English.

Raising A Reader Aspen to Parachute Update

Since its inception in 2004, Raising A Reader Aspen to Parachute has practiced a "two-generation" approach to literacy and school achievement, recognizing the importance of family – parent and child together – in ensuring success. Raising A Reader continues this tradition and legacy today in 2021.

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to confront us with numerous challenges, Raising A Reader (RAR) continues to empower parents of our youngest children with books and literacy resources. One of the most valuable outcomes of the pandemic for our organization is the renewed sense of our mission to ensure that our most vulnerable families have access to books and resources to encourage reading at home.

Raising A Reader programs equip parents with the knowledge to create a home environment rich in oral language interactions as the pandemic unfolds in our communities. We know from experience and research that the parent-child bond helps children develop verbal language skills, fosters healthy brain development, and builds early literacy skills critical for school success.

45%
of RAR children receive free or reduced price lunch

48%
of RAR families speak mostly Spanish at home

50%
of RAR parents have a high school education or less

More Time Reading Together

Parent pre-and-post survey data show that families increase the amount of time reading together while participating in our programs.

Families who participated in RAR's school-based 123 Let's Read and Red Book Bag programs spent **30% more time reading together.**

Families who attended RAR's weekly Bolsitas Rojas/Little Red Bags sessions spent **62% more time reading** with their children, which amounts to an **additional 52 days and 520 minutes of reading and cuddling together.**

Possible through Partnership

20
Schools

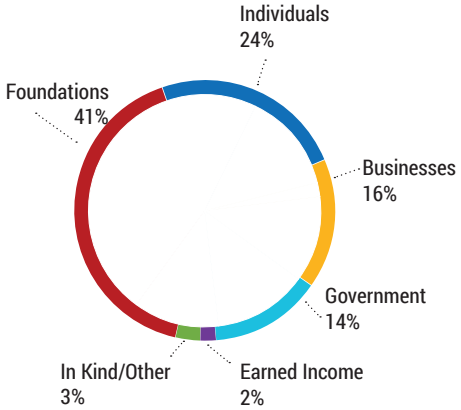
8
County Libraries

124
Generous Donors

Financials

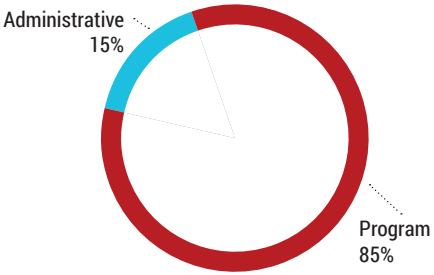
CONTRIBUTIONS

Foundations	$	79,146
Individuals	$	46,273
Businesses	$	29,874
Government	$	26,200
In-Kind/Other	$	5,896
Earned Income	$	5,060
Total Revenue	**$**	**192,449**



EXPENSES

Program	$	187,885
Administrative	$	31,881
Total Expenses	**$**	**219,766**



2020 – 2021 Board of Directors

Ana Lorenson, M.D. - President

Jamie Nims - Vice President

Kimberly Gorsett - Secretary

Ksana Oglesby - Treasurer

Laurale Cross

Hilary Drummond

Zach Holt

Briar Schreiber

Amy Treese

Donors

We are deeply grateful for the support of all our donors over the years. Please note that the list below reflects only those who gave during the fiscal year July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021.

$20,000+

Buell Foundation
Pettit Foundation

$10,000 – $19,999

Aspen Community Foundation
Miguel and Jacklyn Bezos
Chevron
Colorado Humanities & National Endowment for the Humanities
Pitkin County

$5,000 – $9,999

Garfield County Board of County Commissioners
Melony and Adam Lewis Advised Fund at ACF

$1,000 – $4,999

Alpenglow Foundation
Alpine Bank
Alpine Bank Community Inclusion & Engagement
Aspen Skiing Company Family Fund at ACF
Steve Casey
Castaways Foundation
City of Aspen
City of Glenwood Springs
LuLu Colby
Lucy and Thomas Danis
Michael and Debbi Fields Rose Advised Fund at ACF
Fred and Elli Iselin Foundation
Friedman Family Foundation Advised Fund at ACF
Gallegos Corporation
Mike and Laura Kaplan Advised Fund at ACF
Bill and Sheila Lambert
Laura and Gary Lauder Advised Fund at ACF
Obermeyer Wood Investment Counsel
Spidell Foundation
Town of Basalt
Town of Carbondale
Town of Snowmass Village
Amy Treese
Umbrella Roofing
US Bank
Tamara and Frank Woods

$500 – $999

Bank of Colorado
Gould Construction Inc.
Grand Valley Kiwanis Foundation
Nancy and Barton Levin
Marjory Musgrave
Jayne and Bill Poss
Terri and Sam Potter
SGM
George Shaver*

$100 – $499

Jonathan Armytage
Cindy Blachly
Candace Goodwin and Rick Blauvelt
Mary Boyd
Diane and Carter Brooksher
Georgia Chamberlain and John Foulkrod
Mary Kay Chesley
Kim Coates
Deborah Dawson and Dean Gordon*
Paula Derevensky
Hilary Drummond
Debbie Fifer
Amy and Rob French
Ernie and Lacy Fyrwald
Grossman Family Advised Fund at ACF
Harriman Construction
Judy Huston
Nikili and Rodney Jacobs
Melissa and Rob Jankovsky
Vicki and Sam Johnson
JRO Family Tradition Mortgage Ltd
Jill Knaus

Glen and Tracy Larner
Brett Lear
Bill & Carol Lightstone
Beth McCafferty
Mandy and John Murray
Marcie and Robert Musser Advised Fund at ACF
Jamie Nims and Kristin Gracy
Ksana Oglesby
Lynda Palevsky
Carol Pasternak
Bob and Marci Pattillo
Elizabeth Reynolds
Roaring Fork Financial Services Inc
Rebecca Ruland
Mike Samson
Amelia Shelley
Herb Shugrue
Donna Shugrue
Lorraine & Pat Spector
Jennifer Springer
Betsy Suerth
Linda Vaughn
Pam Yarus and Theron Russell
Jennifer Zetah

Up to $99

Michelle Bassi
Shannon Birzon
Kimbo Brown-Schirato
Carol Carl
Nicole Christianson
Kiara Christianson
Lisa Dancing Light
Erika Delak
Peter and Julie Dolan
Greg and Kathy Feinsinger
Tish Filiss
Nancy Frizell
Alyson and Justin Gish
Cindy Gray
Ruth Harrison*
Barb Hovde-Brown
Ellen and Peter Itzler
Kris and Mike Jewkes
Susan Keenan
Wewer Keohane
Anna Lorenson
Erin Mattice
Brit and Sharon McLin
Helen McQueeney
Dave Merritt
Connie Orcutt
Craig Parks
Lyndie Pearson
Renee Prince
Kinsey Roberts
Mary Ellen and Peter Rogers
Alexander and Susan Slater
Tami Solondz
Joe Sontag
Steve and Sandy Swanson
Donna Ward
Mike and Chip Wells
Judy and Donald Wrigley
Aimee and Luis Yllanes
Susan and Vincent Yoder*
Erin Zalinski

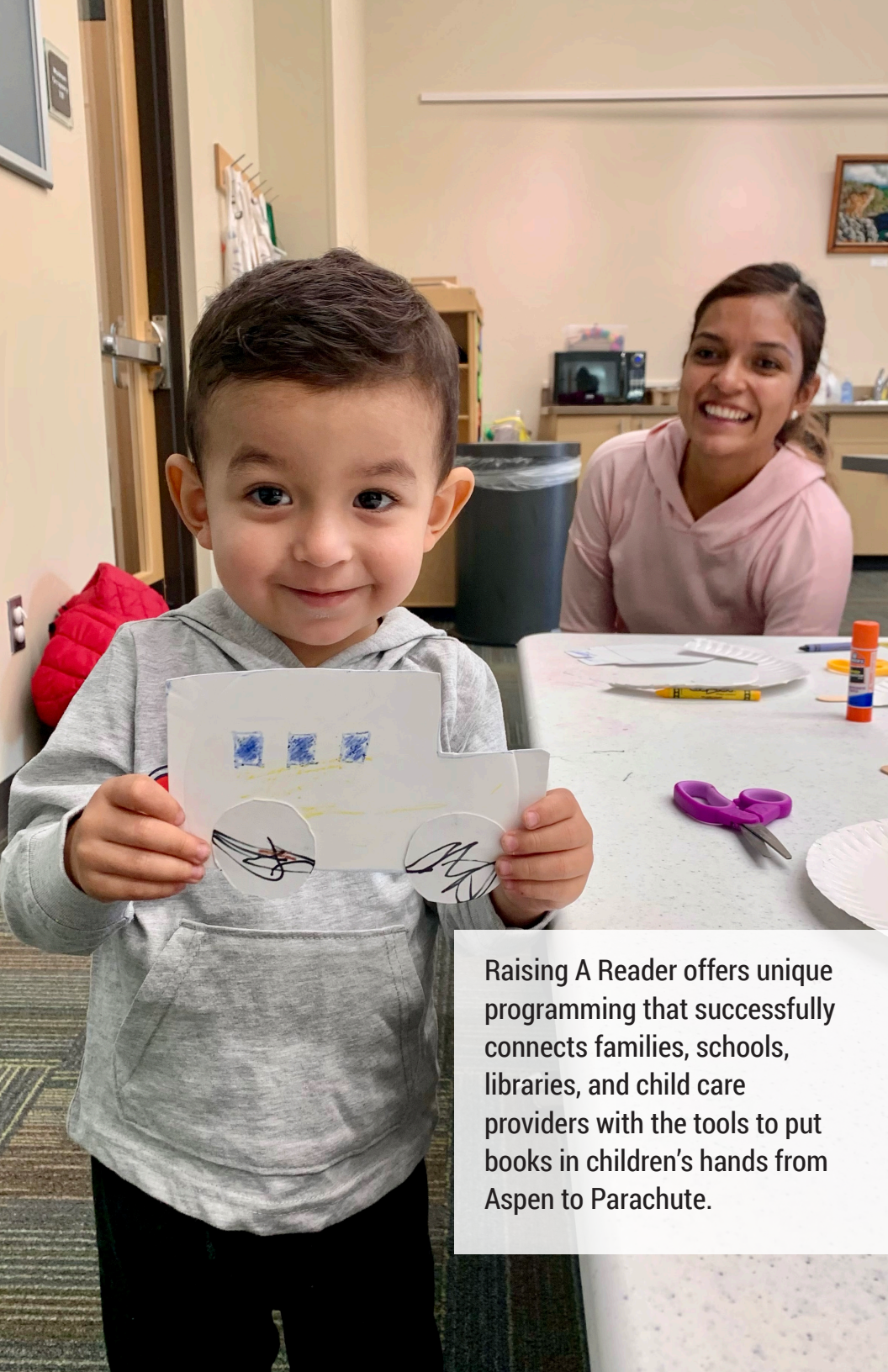
Honorary Gifts*

In memory of Karen Shaver -
Deborah Dawson and Dean Gordon
George Shaver
Susan and Vincent Yoder

In memory of Carole Phillips -
Ruth Harrison

In-Kind

Alpine Bank
Aspen Daily News
Aspen Times
Basalt Regiona Library
Dance Initiative
Focused Kids
Garfield County Libraries
Glenwood Springs Post Independent
La Tricolor
Parent Possible
Scholastic Books
Sopris Sun
Frank Taverna
Voices
Vroom



Raising A Reader offers unique programming that successfully connects families, schools, libraries, and child care providers with the tools to put books in children's hands from Aspen to Parachute.

Raising A Reader

Aspen to Parachute

For more information or to support us, please contact
Suzanne Wheeler-Del Piccolo | Executive Director
PO Box 2533, Glenwood Springs, CO 81601
970-274-0618 | info@rar4kids.org | www.rar4kids.org

SCAN ME

Success starts at home with a parent, a child, and a book.