

From the President and Executive Director

In the past year we've experienced a tremendous amount of growth and change. Our programs continue to evolve and expand. On June 10, eight children graduated from Anchor Center's preschool and transitioned to a public school kindergarten class in the fall. Three decades of Anchor Center graduates prove excellent examples of all things truly being possible. As children and young adults, they are athletes, musicians, student council representatives, high school and college graduates, and even licensed counselors.

We've also said goodbye to many staff members this year, as well as welcomed new professionals to the outstanding Anchor Center team. With this continued development and growth, we began renovating our building's basement area for much-needed office expansion. The renovations will provide our staff the space required to work effectively and efficiently, while preparing us for continued growth in the future.

And finally, with this year of change, the Anchor Center community wished a happy retirement to its founding teacher, JC Greeley, in June 2014. For over 30 years, JC guided and taught hundreds of blind and visually impaired children to embrace a world of potential and possibility. She leaves an amazing legacy.

Like JC, you too are an important part of Anchor's legacy. Thank you for helping us continue to create magical moments every day and for believing in the success of every child and family who "sees life differently." The future is bright!

Alice Applebaum

Alice Applebaum
Executive Director

Curt D. Brown

Curt Brown
President, Board of Directors

Annual Report

July 1, 2013–June 30, 2014

Serges' Journey

Since the day he arrived in the world, Flora and her husband, Serges Sr., have known how unique and special their little boy is. Serges Jr. was born with albinism, a genetic condition characterized by a lack of pigment in an individual's eyes, skin and hair. Although surprised by their son's disorder, they considered him a special gift from God.

"In the country where we were living, there was no real support or resources to turn to in order to find help or even ask questions," Flora shares. "Instead we encountered a lot of superstitions and prejudice about albino people. Some mothers reject their child at birth when they discover albinism, while some tribes will even kill the baby if it is an albino (this is very hard to believe, but it is true). We came to the United States when Serges was only 5 months old. We felt such relief to be in a place where there was neither superstition nor prejudice about our child. Finally there were possibilities of support and resources."

**WE ENCOUNTERED
SUPERSTITIONS AND
PREJUDICE**

In addition to pigmentation related challenges, albinism also affects vision. The degree of vision impairment varies with the different types of albinism and many people with albinism are considered "legally blind."

Flora recalls early concerns with Serges' vision. "Just weeks after being born, we noticed that he was not moving his eyes like other children his age. Our older child started following objects visually two days after birth. At the time we did not think it was a big problem, knowing that each child has his own speed of development. However, when Serges reached 6 months of age and was still not showing signs of

continued inside



Serges' Journey, continued

normal vision, we became seriously concerned.”

After visiting with an ophthalmologist, Serges and his family were referred to Anchor Center for Blind Children. “This was the beginning of a new journey, paved with a path made up of hope,” states Flora and husband, Serges Sr. “Before we knew Anchor Center, we were in the dark, not knowing where we were, what could happen, what needed to be done or what even could be done. We were full of anxiety about our child’s vision and future.”

Serges and his family were welcomed into the Anchor family and began benefitting from program offerings including play-based therapies, horticulture therapy, mobility/cane orientation, braille literacy, feeding/eating skills, art, music therapy, speech and language therapy, and occupational therapies.

Now an active preschooler, Serges continues to thrive and is making significant developmental strides. Known for his loving attachment to his teachers and music, he can always be found with a huge smile on his face. “Anchor Center is a great provision of support and hope that has made Serges so confident...so free!”



IN 2013-2014:

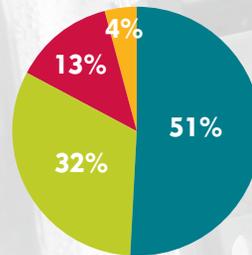
Anchor Center served **380 children and families.**

Teachers and therapists provided **350 home visits** to children too medically fragile to attend center-based services (in Stapleton).

Teachers and therapists made **six rural outreach trips** to support families throughout Colorado.

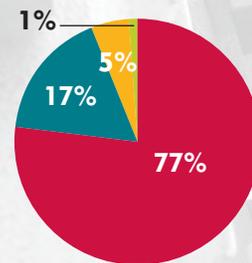
Staff participated in **59 IFSP/IEP meetings**, which are planning/goal setting meetings required by law for all children with disabilities.

Sources and Uses of Income: FY 2013-2014



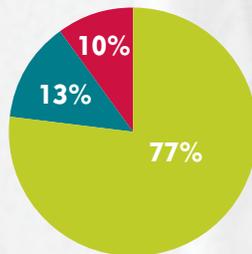
SOURCES OF INCOME

51% contributions	\$1,271,293
32% investment income	790,200
13% special events (net)	334,716
4% program fees	108,332
0% state grants	9,000
0% other	3,633
	<u>\$2,517,174</u>



SOURCES OF CONTRIBUTIONS

77% individual	\$980,744
17% foundations	219,910
5% group	54,702
1% corporate	15,936
	<u>\$1,271,293</u>



SOURCES OF EXPENSES

77% program services	\$1,558,810
13% fundraising	251,206
10% management / general	205,614
	<u>\$2,015,630</u>

“We started attending Anchor Center when my son was 6 months old. At the time we didn’t have a full struggles we were facing and provided important support along our journey. I truly believe we would

Anchor Center's Founding Teacher Retires

It was with heavy, but grateful hearts that we said farewell to our founding mentor and Anchor Center teacher, JC Greeley, following our preschool graduation. Below is a portion of JC's retirement speech, which captures so well the dedication and love that defines Anchor Center's spirit.



"Dignity, grace, and humor make Anchor work. I am so proud that I got to be part of building that tradition. It is the legacy I leave you to uphold. There is no way I can thank you all for everything you have given and shared with me over the last 32 years. We have always had two guiding principles. One, do what is right for the child — always child first — if it is right for the child, it is right for the family. And two, if it works for visually impaired children, it works for everybody; the reverse is not always true.

By following these principles, look at what we've accomplished! We have implemented innovative methods for working with blind children and their families that are now common standards for other programs across the country.

Over the years our close collaboration with ophthalmologists and eye specialists and the medical field in general has given us a continual base for working together that other educational bases miss.

Of course, there is our beautiful building — the first ever to be designed exclusively for young blind children. Every day we see how it is a teacher in itself and look at all the relationships the building and grounds have brought us.

Lastly, there are all the people working together to form community! Our own exclusive village — our volunteers who are so special and talented, staff so committed to continual learning and development at all levels, and our families so embracing of each other. Every child's success or dilemma is felt as if each child is our own.

I've been told I think outside the box. What box? The first little box I want to give you holds the abilities to appreciate the intangibles, the things that resonate through our children, that can be felt, moved, heard, tasted, smelled and seen in indescribable ways. Sensory-rich things that there are no words for. The things some call life forces and others call magic, they are the gifts of blindness.

What talents do you have in your little boxes to share in the big box that is Anchor Center? My challenge to you all is to keep opening them up — and use them."



In addition, the Family Support/ Education Staff held **41 parent/family group meetings** on a variety of topics, including specific diagnoses. The team had also provided individual assistance to families.

Anchor Center for Blind Children is the only private organization in Colorado serving children from birth to 5 years old who are blind, visually impaired or deafblind. Most of our funding comes from individuals. No family is ever denied services due to an inability to pay a nominal tuition fee.

diagnosis and had no idea what we were dealing with. Anchor Center helped our family understand the not be in as good a position as we are today without Anchor Center.

—Joan, parent of former student



2013-2014 Staff

Alice Applebaum, *Executive Director*
 Sarah Azibo, *Teaching Assistant*
 Gwen Borchert, *Office Manager*
 Lorraine Chevarria, *Teacher of the Visually Impaired*
 Chris Clark, *Occupational Therapist*
 Pam Coen, *Office Manager*
 KT Colgan, *Volunteer Manager*
 Linda Corssmit, *Para Educator*
 Mindy Doyle-McCall, *Program Director*
 Frieda Elisha-Hunter, *Physical Therapist*
 Louanna Gerleman, *Teaching Assistant*
 JC Greeley, *Wise Old Woman*
 Donna Halffield, *Occupational Therapist*
 Marcie Jacobs, *Office Manager*
 Stefanie Kirkwood, *Teacher of the Visually Impaired*
 Jennifer Klyczek, *Teacher of the Visually Impaired*
 Paula Landry, *Teacher of the Visually Impaired*
 Caroline Lemmens, *Teaching Assistant*
 Quinn McCall, *Sibling Care Assistant*
 Katie McLaughlin, *Parent Counselor*
 Lisa Roll Moore, *Early Childhood Special Educator*
 Zoe Morgese, *Speech/Language Therapist*
 Kivanc Ozer-Afsar, *Family Specialist*
 Carol Benson Puchalski, *Psychology Consultant*
 Belinda Severtson, *Teaching Assistant*
 Dawn Schipper, *Special Events Coordinator*
 Sarah Bickford Vallese, *Teacher of the Visually Impaired*
 Angela Vanderlan, *Teaching Assistant*
 Cynthia Wadle, *Operations Director*
 Savannah Wippel, *Assistant Development Director*
 Kristine Wolfe, *Development Director*
 Wendy Woodard, *Classroom Aide*

2013-2014 Board of Directors

Murri Bishop	Michael McNeill	Tami Perez-Mesa
Cheryl Blankenship	Andy Miller	Kirsti Peterson
Randy Braun	Vonda Mills	Tricia Potucek
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Susie Horner		

Consulting Partners

Amanda Bryant, *Music Therapist*
 Pat Lewis, *Teacher of the Visually Impaired*
 Karen McClean, *Nurse*
 Doreen Montesano, *Spanish Interpreter*



Anchor Center for Blind Children is a not-for profit organization dedicated to providing early intervention/education to blind and visually impaired children throughout the state of Colorado. Our staff of highly trained vision specialists, therapists and teachers strive to foster the full potential of children who are blind by providing exemplary education, therapy and family support services.

Our mission is to teach visually impaired infants, young children and their families, providing hope and a nurturing environment where children reach their highest potential.

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 anchorcenter.org



"Seeing life differently"