From the moment that expectant parents learn their child has Down syndrome, to the moment an adult with Down syndrome begins building a future and making their mark in the world, the Down Syndrome Association of Central Florida (DSACF) is there. Connecting, helping, and empowering our community—thanks to the generous support of those who care about our families as much as we do. Here’s a look back at the great moments and milestones we’ve achieved over the past year. Let’s be proud of all we’ve accomplished together, and look ahead with excitement, knowing the best is still to come.
Fueled by Visit Orlando’s Magical Dining Grant, the DSACF Family Fund provided 160 families with up to $2,000 in scholarships for therapy, emergency needs, and medical expenses not covered by insurance, totaling more than $113,000.

668 children with Down syndrome and their families enjoyed a free trip—including rides, special meet-and-greets, and VIP treatment throughout the day—to Universal Orlando, SeaWorld Orlando or LEGOLAND Florida Resort during Family Fun Days.

67 new parents, grandparents and family members were welcomed at New Family Celebrations in 2019. This program connects new parents with parents who have walked their path, and introduces them to a teenager or young adult with Down syndrome who is able to share his/her experiences and dreams for the future.

Based on the wildly popular program that teaches babies how to communicate using American Sign Language before they are able to talk, Signing Time! Live brought their interactive songs and fun animation to Central Florida in January 2019 to the delight of more than 700 people.

Held in partnership with Orlando Health and the Down Syndrome Foundation of Florida, the Adult Clinic and Special Clinic for Special Kids connected more than 70 families to doctors, therapists, and other professionals who donated their time to help answer questions, screen, and refer people with Down syndrome to needed services.

Volunteers and staff brought dozens of New Parent Packages filled with information, resources and gifts—along with encouragement and hope—to new parents while at the hospital or their home soon after the birth of their child with Down syndrome.
Music Therapy and Baby Basics Occupational Therapy helped more than 100 children with Down syndrome learn how to express themselves and improve their fine and gross motor skills in 2019.

8 children ages 3 to 5 with Down syndrome started learning daily routines and how to behave in a classroom scenario during the Pre-School Readiness Camp. They also learned social skills to help develop friendships and build communication skills.

New in summer 2020, the Summer Learning Academy launches in partnership with Advance Behavior & Learning. A 1-to-3 ratio will allow certified teachers to create individual reading, writing, STEAM (science, technology, engineering, the arts and math), communication, and social skills goals for each student so they don't fall behind and are ready to start the new school year in August. Of course, there will be fun summer activities like arts and crafts, water slides, and bounce houses.

55 parents and educators learned how to teach reading to children with Down syndrome during a day-long Special Reads for Special Needs Workshop. This workshop will be offered again in Fall 2020.

More than 39 teens and adolescents took part in Buddy Up Tennis, working with buddy volunteers to learn the game of tennis while making friends and gaining new life skills. These fun fitness and wellness sessions are offered at two locations twice a year.

14 teens learned critical social skills needed to build relationships, succeed in school, and prepare for future employment in Start with Hello, a six-week program led by a licensed counselor.

The Friendship Club brought together adults with Down syndrome every Sunday to go mini golfing, bowling, to movies and restaurants, celebrate birthdays, and more! No parents allowed (just volunteers) so the adults could be independent, make friends, have fun, and feel empowered.

Twice a year during Low Down on Law, approximately 100 parents and caretakers learn how the law will affect people with Down syndrome and other disabilities as they turn 18 and become an adult. Attorneys, judges, and experts in their fields educate our families on topics such as guardianship, guardian advocacy, and supported decision making as well as programs like ABLE United and Florida Medicaid waiver.

The 2020 Florida Down Syndrome Virtual Conference gave 56 people the opportunity to hear about transition planning, scholarships and funding sources, classroom behavior, and how to help children with Down syndrome go from dreaming about to achieving their goals. Candace Whiting with Great Life Unlimited gave an inspirational keynote speech.

We expanded our programming by partnering with the Conductive Education Center of Orlando to improve the cognitive and motor skills of our toddlers. Our new Empowerment Series helps adults develop the skills to live more independently.
The Entrepreneur Academy gives individuals with Down syndrome a path towards productive adulthood and financial independence by empowering them with the education and training to start their own business. This life-changing program is the first in the nation for people with Down syndrome, and is setting a new standard for how communities empower individuals with disabilities.

Visit DSACF.org/entrepreneur-academy to see all the self-advocate businesses.

Graduate Spotlight

A few years ago, Allison was unemployed. Then she launched “Doggy Delights by Allison” through the Entrepreneur Academy. Today, she is earning a living and even had to extend her shipping time to four weeks due to her appearance on the Rachael Ray show in January 2019.
Raising Awareness and Support

Even after being postponed due to Tropical Storm Nestor, the Step Up for Down Syndrome Walk brought more than 4,000 families, friends, and supporters together in downtown Orlando to celebrate individuals with Down syndrome. The event featured bounce houses, carnival style rides, games, face painting, live entertainment and dancing, food and a 1-mile fun walk. 138 teams and individuals raised a record $214,000.

Celebrating it’s 20th anniversary, the Down to Party & Auction raised more than $50,000 and added almost $21,000 to the Family Fund in 2019.

A partnership with Talk of the Town Restaurant Group, Round Up for Charity raised more than $16,000 for the DSACF during the month of May by asking its customers to “round up” their bills to the nearest dollar.

More than $13,000 was raised on Facebook by people asking friends to donate to the DSACF in celebration of their birthdays or other special occasions.

Thank You for Your Support!

Giving takes so many forms, and we are so thankful for all you do to enable us to serve more, educate people of all ages, and build our community!

As our Board of Directors searched for a permanent long-term leader, staff continued to offer vital support for families in need at little or no cost. In fact, the DSACF offered more than 28 programs and events managed by our staff and six facilitated by community groups. The DSACF Medical Advisory Board is helping us build our online resources (be sure to keep looking for new updates) and referral lists. New partnerships with organizations like CECO and Advance Learning Behavior are helping us serve more children with Down syndrome. Of course, we couldn’t have done all this without our program, event, and office volunteers donated more than 330 hours to make it all possible!

The Coronavirus pandemic hit all of us hard—worldwide. It continues to affect every aspect of our lives. Our response mirrored others as it became necessary to self-quarantine and practice social distancing. When possible, programs like the 2020 Florida Down Syndrome Conference were offered virtually. In-home activities and virtual sharing were encouraged to celebrate the 2020 World Down Syndrome Day on March 21 as families “rocked their socks.” Unfortunately, some events were cancelled and others postponed. Our staff, like many, worked remotely to continue serving families and planning future programs.

As we look forward, we are committed to our families and building on what we accomplished this year. With your help, we can continue to increase opportunities for people with Down syndrome and help them achieve their dreams!

With Much Gratitude,

Byron Lawson                   Cynthia Williams
Board Chair                   Interim Executive Director
DSACF is completely dependent on donations, grants, and fundraisers to cover its operational costs. We are thankful for all the support we receive from those who generously give to support the DSACF’s mission and turn ideas into action.

Special thanks to these individuals, businesses, foundations, and civic organizations for their extraordinary support of $1,000 or more from August 1, 2018 - July 31, 2019.

**Individuals**
- Carla Smith
- Charlene Sorensen
- Charles Link, Jr.
- Charlie & Diane Levine
- David and Sue Wilder
- Dee Dee and Dave King
- Lisa Khan
- James Poitras
- Jeff and Maureen Branham
- John and Anna Albanese
- Justin Wiley
- Keith Moon
- Linda Clark
- Mariah Anselmo
- Mark Cook
- Matthew & Laura Kleinsteuber
- Mike & Beth Kingham
- Mike & Monica Ponder
- Mike Esmonde
- Mike Hiers
- Oskar & Maryann Kleinsteuber
- Peter Wniewski
- Sean DiMercurio
- Sue Henley
- Thomas & Ingrid Warner
- Tristan Bishop

**Business, Foundations, and Organizations**
- Delta Pilots Charitable Fund, Inc.
- Family Network on Disabilities
- Give with Liberty
- Grand Chapter of Florida, Order of the Eastern Star, Inc.
- Heritage Capital Corporation
- International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local Union 606
- Legend Rare Coin Auctions
- Mountain High Numismatics, Inc.
- Orlando Utilities Commission
- PCL Construction
- Publix Super Markets Charities, Inc.
- Rare Coin Services, Inc.
- Rocco’s Tacos
- SunTrust Bank
- Talk of the Town Restaurant Group
- The Bond Foundation
- The James and Gayle Halperin Foundation
- The Kevin Lipton Family Foundation
- The Wawa Foundation, Inc.
- Universal Orlando Foundation
- Visit Orlando

**In-Kind**
- Amanda Kern Photography
- Chapman Studio’s DJ Services
- Davey Law Group, P.A.
- DEX Imaging
- Dunkin’
- Guardians of Justice
- Legoland Florida Resort
- Lowndes, Drosdick, Doster, Kantor & Reed, P.A.
- Miller’s Ale House
- Outback Steakhouse
- Papa’s Pilar
- Photomodes
- SeaWorld Parks & Resorts Orlando
- Tito’s Handmade Vodka
- Universal Orlando
- VIP Valet
- WFTV Family 9 Connection

**Funding Sources**
- 64% Contributions & Grants
- 31% Special Events
- 1% Membership Dues
- 4% Other Revenue

**Expenses**
- 89% Program Expenses
- 11% Fundraising & Admin

**Total Raised in 2019**
- Fundraising & Admin: $67,670
- Program Expenses: $1,184,056
- Total Raised: $645,519
- Program Expenses: $542,238
- Administration & Fundraising Expenses: $645,519
- Net Assets as of July 31, 2019: $1,184,056
DSACF is the leading voice for all individuals with Down syndrome and their families. We offer hope, acceptance, and empowerment through advocacy, education, and awareness as we guide individuals with Down syndrome through life.