



A Touch of Understanding®, Inc.

5280 Stirling Street, Suite 102 • Granite Bay, California 95746
Phone (916) 791-4146 Fax (916) 791-4134



Report of Activities 7/1/11-6/30/12

“Building Empathy ~ Igniting Respect”

Celebrating 15 Years & More Than 50,000 Students

“Last year I was struggling. I would cry almost every day, wondering why me? Why do I have this disability? I felt like I was falling and unable to reach my dreams. I felt alone and out of place, like no one understood what I was going through. **ATOU came into my life when I really needed it.** I now know that I am not alone, that everyone faces challenges and it’s up to me to overcome mine. I was always told I could accomplish anything, but now I believe them.” These are some of the words Amberlynn shared with the more than 200 guests at our celebration of 15 years since the incorporation of A Touch of Understanding, Inc. and more than 50,000 students participating in the character-building, disability-awareness workshops. Amberlynn has cerebral palsy and had a dream of becoming an ATOU speaker. Her dream came true this year.



Amberlynn speaking at the celebration

Amberlynn’s words express

part of the magic that happens each week on school campuses and in the ATOU office. Hearts are touched and minds are opened.

During the 2011-2012 school year, 5,037 students explored what life might be like having a disability. ATOU provided 112 hands-on workshops allowing students to use wheelchairs,

I learned that in the worst parts of life, you can find good moments.

white canes and Braille equipment. They handled braces and artificial limbs and participated in activities to understand the challenges of having autism and learning disabilities. After the workshop, one student wrote of her new awareness regarding individuals with disabilities: “I thought they were different and that they couldn’t do all the things I could do. But thanks to this program, I learned that they might be a little different, but they are people too and can do a lot of things I can do.” The students also enjoyed interacting with our volunteers, who have disabilities, who serve as encouraging role models of perseverance and resiliency. One student said, “I learned that even though you have disabilities you can still live your dream. DREAM BIG!” Another wrote, “I learned that in the worst parts of life, you can find good moments.”



The ATOU Team celebrates 15 years & more than 50,000 students



Presentation for Roseville City Library personnel

Schoolchildren were not the only participants of our workshop this year. School teachers, administrators, staff members and key volunteers participated as well, thanks to funding from anti-bullying programs. Staff members at the Roseville Libraries also experienced the workshop as part of their plan to serve more individuals with disabilities.

Evaluation Results Prove Program Success

During the past year, we completed a two-year evaluation project of the school workshops under the guidance of independent evaluation consultant, Dr. Christina Borbely. The survey used pre/post-tests based on the well-established Chedoke-McMaster Attitudes Towards Children with Handicaps (CATCH). Over a two-year period, nine-hundred sixty-seven students participated, including seven-hundred seventy-eight matched pre/post-test pairs. Core outcomes showed that 70.1% of students demonstrated overall improvement in feelings, intentions and beliefs associated with people with a disability. This confirms the results shown by the student, parent and teacher surveys.

2011-2012 Survey Response Indicate Program's Success

Student Survey Responses (12% response rate)

- 99% of students feel that ATOU helped them learn more about the tools individuals with disabilities use.
- 96% of students reported that A Touch of Understanding helped them feel more comfortable with individuals with disabilities.
- 91% of students said it would now be easier to make friends with someone with a disability.

Teacher Survey Responses (25% response rate)

- 100% of teachers said that the ATOU workshop is a valuable educational experience.
- 100% reported improved peer interaction in their classrooms.
- 100% want each of their classes to experience the ATOU workshop.

Parent Survey Responses (11% response rate)

- 95% anticipate ATOU leaving a positive, lasting impression on their child.
- 98% of parents think ATOU will be helpful in encouraging their child to accept and include individuals with disabilities in their life.

Want to stay informed about A Touch of Understanding?

Visit us on:

- www.TouchOfUnderstanding.org
- Facebook
- YouTube

This year, we watched the incredible growth of one of our volunteers. Amanda Hussa has autism and joined our team last year. At first she was able to help with the small groups of students at the Autism Station, handing out papers and answering questions. Then she branched out and began telling the students of her experiences with autism. Before long, Amanda told us she was ready to join the speaker portion of our workshop and address groups of 40-60 students. Following a workshop, one student wrote, **"Amanda's story really touched my heart. She had trouble, but still nothing got her down."** Next, Amanda began joining us to speak to local service organizations. In March, she joined Amberlynn in addressing the audience of more than 200 people at the Anniversary Celebration. She shared the impact ATOU has had on her life. From this event, she was asked to be included in a TV documentary entitled

"Autism: Emerging from the Maze." She was excited! In May, Amanda spoke at the premier viewing of the film. Since then, she was filmed for a news special called "Bully" which aired October 9, 2012 on KCRA-3. It is an honor to watch Amanda gain experience and confidence as she takes her place in the world to educate others about the experience of having autism.



Amanda speaking at Kiwanis meeting

ATOU Youth F.O.R.C.E. “Friends Offering Respect ~ Creating Empowerment”

This has been an exciting year for the ATOU Youth F.O.R.C.E.! The Youth F.O.R.C.E. is a place where our children and young people live out ATOU’s mission of acceptance and respect for all individuals. Each month members of our Core Group met to plan the events. Funding from the State Farm Youth Advisory Board and the Placer Community Foundation allowed us to provide leadership opportunities and social events for this inclusive group. These young people took responsibility for designing and executing some fantastic experiences for groups of as many as 100 participants! A Kid’s Night Out ‘Minute to Win It’ Challenge, a Board



Game Night, a Video Game Night, a Day at the Lake, a Wheelchair Sports day, a Valentine Dance/Party and trips to a high school basketball game, the Railroad Museum and the theatre. They enjoyed a weekend of cross-country skiing and snowshoeing. In March, sixty-five members participated in a “Dark Dinner”, eating dinner while blindfolded at local restaurant, with the guidance of two of our volunteers who are blind. This increased their understanding and empathy regarding blindness. In April, thirty-five young people participated in our annual “Dreams to Goals” Workshop. These participants, most with disabilities, shared their dreams and explored the next steps to achieving them. Each of these events had a community service component to it: creating handmade cards for injured service men and women in Germany, making blankets for volunteers who were ill, and collecting books for children in an underprivileged school. It was thrilling to see these young people, with and without disabilities, come together for fun and service. As one mother of a Youth F.O.R.C.E. member said, “The only time having a disability makes a difference here is to get you through the door. After that, it doesn’t matter at all!” The Youth F.O.R.C.E. members are achieving their mission of **“Making a difference and having fun while doing it.”**



AccessToCare
FAIR

2012 AccessToCare Fair

“This year was the biggest and best!”

That’s what the guests were saying as they moved from table to table among the more than ninety exhibitors of products and services for individuals affected by disabilities and/or issues of aging.



A panel discussion entitled, “Navigating Your Child’s Autism Support Services from Preschool to Adulthood”

included: Dr. Greg Buch, behavioral psychologist and doctoral level board certified behavioral analyst, George Rooks, Licensed Educational Psychologist and Board certified Behavior Analyst; Joe Spector, Disabilities Specialist at UC Davis and Child and Family Clinical Psychologist, and Andy Ponce, Employment Specialist.

A second seminar was provided by Laura Wayman, author of “A Loving Approach to Dementia Care: Making Meaningful Connections with the Person Who Has Alzheimer’s Disease or Other Dementia or Memory Loss.”

Guests were also treated to music from The Freedom Singers, a group of enthusiastic adults with developmental disabilities. Kate Wilmarth, a senior in high school who had to have her feet amputated at 4 days old, provided a demonstration in Martial Arts. She is a third degree Black Belt.

The tentative date for the next AccessToCare Fair is April 20, 2013.

Our thanks to our Program Sponsors/Donors

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Mechanics Bank
MyDisabilityNetwork.com
Private Ocean, LLC

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Jonas Family Foundation
Lionakis Foundation of the Sacramento Region
Community Foundation
PASCO Foundation
Placer Community Foundation, Mental Health
Services Act
Ronald McDonald House Charities Northern CA
City of Roseville Citizens' Benefit Fund
Safeway Foundation
Sierra Health Foundation
State Farm Youth Advisory Board
United Auburn Indian Community of the Auburn
Rancheria
Wells Fargo Foundation

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Community of Christ, Sacramento Congregation
Kiwanis Club of Granite Bay
Roseville Area Neighbors and Newcomers
Roseville Host Lions Club

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Justine Aitken
Jo Ann Baumert
Dr. Christina Borbely
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 American MedEquip, LLC
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 Classic Impressions Awards and Trophies
 COSTCO
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 Paradise Signs
 Pete's Coffee
 Raley's
 Richard Gillespie/Connect IT Data Systems
 Society of Government Meeting Professionals
 Source Restaurant
 Southwest Airlines
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 Webfeet Creations
 Whole Foods

IN MEMORY OF

Bill & Shirley Beck
 Joan DeDora
 John DeDora

Edward Enis
 Leslie & Richard DeDora
 Jackie Callahan
 Joyce Beeman
 Ruby & John Rodina
 Josephine Rocco
 Joyce Riffelmacher
 Loretta & Rosalino Spatafora
 Dawn & Jeffery Andrews
 Alida Bowden
 Leslie & Richard DeDora
 Grace & Erik Stavrand
 Edward Ennis
 Grace & Erik Stavrand
 Cindy & Jack Love
 The Mallo Family
 Grace & Erik Stavrand
 Susie Glover
 Margaret & John Hardwick
 Lyn Johnsen Erskine
 Meta Stavrand
 Grace & Erik Stavrand

Lauris Ennis

 Robert Ennis
 Lorraine Gaire
 Shirley Kronick
 Chad Mallo
 Ann Mitchell
 Callahan O'Brien
 Ken Shipley
 Maribeth Stavrand

 Eloise Woolf

IN HONOR OF

Laura Beeman
 Leslie DeDora
 Edward Ennis
 Pamela Gehrts
 Amberlynn McLoed
 & other youth with disabilities
 Sue & Cliff Peppers
 Meta Stavrand

Richard & Suellen Beeman
 Grace & Erik Stavrand
 Grace & Erik Stavrand
 Dorothy Abercrombie
 Dorothy Abercrombie

 Wesley Shore
 Grace & Erik Stavrand



Volunteer Appreciation Picnic

**Volunteers served over 10,000 hours for ATOU!
 42 volunteers received the President's Volunteer Service Award contributing 100 hours or more—**

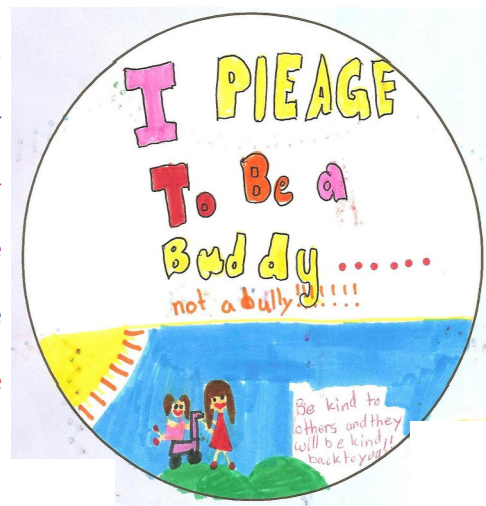
Amanda Husa	C.C. Stevens	Greg Husa	Karen Parsegian	Richard Gillespie
Amberlynn McLoed	Chandler Metcalf	Hope Adrian	Kody Fernandez	Rosa Umbach
Andrew Hazard	Dan Adragna	Jackie Callahan	Mike Penketh	Sandy Puleo
Anna Hoban	Darlene O'Brien	Jana Suthahar	Magy Penketh	Shari Dawson
Anna von Wendorff	Debbie Foster	Jenny Zimmer	Mike Wilson	Stanford Hirata
Ashley Young	Denise Sanchez	John Adams	Nicholas Stanford	Rosa Umbach 2011-2012 Recipient of the Ed Ennis Award
Beth McLoed	Doris Hernandez	John DeLury	Pam Gehrts	
Bob Schultz	Felice Husa	John Kennedy	Paul Mitchell	
Byron Chapman	Greg Elie	Joyce Beeman	Paula Henry	

Volunteer's Comments

- From Byron Chapman: "As a volunteer, I never get enough of the smiling faces and positive comments from today's youth when exposed to the many messages from ATOU. ATOU is a well-oiled and precise program that gets the information out there in the shortest amount of time. The information reaches the heart and soul of everyone involved, from the young student, teacher, volunteers, administrators to the public at large. One cannot help but be so positively influenced and up-lifted in such a wonderful way."
- From Paul Mitchell: "In the year 1996, I got myself in an auto wreck which put me in a coma. In 2001, I was introduced to Leslie DeDora and her new outreach program, A Touch of Understanding. It's been just over 12 years and I both love and appreciate it more now than then. I have improved so much since then and I now have higher self-goals. One certainty I have is an incredible amount of proud honor and self-esteem due to this program."
- From Paul's mother: "He [Paul] has gained confidence and poise and an acceptance of his limitations as well as his strengths as a result of being involved with this great organization. He gains a great sense of being part of a life-changing team as a participant at the presentations and firsthand experience of the students' reactions."
- From Karen Parsegian: "Volunteering for ATOU is one of the best and most fulfilling things I have done since going blind six years ago. Working directly with the students and being part of this dedicated team of volunteers is as much of a good time as it is a privilege. The spirit, grit and respect generated by and for all folks I've met through ATOU, inspire me to keep dancing like nobody's watching. Happy Feet! Broken Eyes! All in a days' work!"
- From Mary Carter: "I chose A Touch of Understanding to do my field experience at during my college course work. The time I spent with the crew at ATOU was one of the most valuable and rewarding experiences of my life."

Students Comments

- "I learned that even though you have disabilities you can still live your dream... Dream Big!"
- "I used to be uncomfortable around disabled people. After A Touch of Understanding I think I could be friends with a person with a disability."
- "Today I learned that it is just as easy to make friends with someone with a disability as someone without."
- "It really meant a lot to me. I have a brother who is autistic and now I get why he gets frustrated."
- "I learned that the disabled people are people and they have feelings, so we should treat them with respect."
- "I learned to treat people with and without disabilities as you would want to be treated."
- "Don't judge people just because they look different on the outside, it doesn't mean they are different on the inside."
- "I thought they [individuals with disabilities] were different and that they couldn't do the things I could do. But thanks to this program I learned that they might be a little different, but they are people too. And they can do lots of things I can do."
- "If you can't do something the first time, don't give up. Put your heart into it."



Student Artwork

Parent's Comments

- "During school hours, I witness the benefits of ATOU everyday when taking or dropping off my son at school. He has autism. Since the ATOU program, countless students make a daily effort to speak with our son, understand him and befriend him, despite his challenges. As a parent of a child with a disability, it can bring overwhelming emotions."
- "It made her treasure life and what it has to offer and to accept people for who they are."
- "I think it will make her stop and think about what other people's experiences may be like on a day to day basis whether people have disabilities or not. This program gives her the tools to look at things through other people's eyes and teaches her to be more understanding."
- "I feel this program should be held for all young children. What a great way to teach kids that we're all human and need to be treated with respect!"
- "I think every parent wants their child to grow up to be an accepting, caring and helpful citizen and I think this program helps in learning how easy that can be.. Thank you!"

5,037 Students in 2011-2012

5,037 students in the following schools participated in the ATOU Workshop during the 2011-2012 School Year

El Dorado County

El Dorado High	Placerville
Oak Meadow Elementary	El Dorado Hills

Marin County

Edna Maguire	Mill Valley
Strawberry Point Elementary	Mill Valley
Tamalpais Valley	Mill Valley

Nevada County

Ready Springs Elementary	Penn Valley
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Placer County

Alta Dutch Flat Elementary	Alta
Breen Elementary	Rocklin
Catheryn Gates Elementary	Roseville
Cobblestone Elementary	Rocklin
Coyote Ridge Elementary	Roseville
Crestmont Elementary	Roseville
Dry Creek Elementary	Roseville
Excelsior Elementary	Roseville
Greenhills Elementary	Granite Bay
Heritage Oak Elementary	Roseville
Maidu Elementary	Roseville
Oakhills Elementary	Granite Bay
Ridgeview Elementary	Granite Bay
Roseville Public Library	Roseville
Sargeant Elementary	Roseville
Stoneridge Elementary	Roseville
Twin Oaks Elementary	Rocklin
Valley View Elementary	Rocklin
Vencil Brown Grammar	Roseville

Sacramento County

Albert Schweitzer	Carmichael
Bell Avenue Elementary	Sacramento
Bowling Green Elementary	Sacramento
Brookfield	Sacramento
C.W.Dillard Elementary	Wilton
Caleb Greenwood Elementary	Sacramento
Community of Christ	Sacramento
Cyril Spinelli Elementary	Antelope
David Lubin Elementary	Sacramento
Elk Grove Unified School District	Elk Grove
Glenwood Elementary	Sacramento
Gold River Discovery Center	Rancho Cordova
Hiram Johnson High	Sacramento
Jefferson Elementary	Sacramento
Mariemont Elementary	Sacramento
Natomas Park Elementary	Sacramento
Olive Grove Elementary	Antelope
Pony Express	Sacramento
Raymond Case Elementary	Elk Grove
Roy Herburger Elementary	Elk Grove
Sierra Oaks Elementary	Sacramento
Two Rivers Elementary	Sacramento
Union House Elementary	Sacramento

Solano County

Gretchen Higgins Elementary	Dixon
Tremont Elementary	Dixon

Yolo County

Birch Lane	Davis
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A Touch of Understanding
Winner of the 2011 Business Excellence
Award for Nonprofit Achievement
Rocklin Area Chamber of Commerce

Teacher and Administrator's Comments

- "This experiential approach to education around disabilities and differences is critical in decreasing bullying and increasing inclusion, as when people are seen for who they are instead of for the difference they have, the natural response is to welcome and include instead of exclude and ridicule." *George Rooks, Licensed Educational Psychologist, Program Specialist, Placer County SELPA*
- "Their [ATOUs] presentation opens the door for positive conversation with students and breaks down the walls of the scary unknown. Our students with disabilities greatly benefit from this interaction by having more positive interaction with non-disabled peers." *Mary Patrick, Principal Catheryn Gates School*
- "My kids enjoy meeting real people (even adults) with special needs. Sharing their stories makes the disability sort of diminish and the real person comes to life. Students at our school see kids with special needs every day – in class and on the playground. ATOU brings a deeper clarity to the kids about these students and makes them understand how it feels to "walk a mile" in their shoes." *Third grade teacher*
- "ATOU sets the bar for respectful behavior in our classrooms and on our school campus." *Sixth grade teacher*

Financial Statements

Statement of Income

July 2011-June 2012

Balance Sheet

As of June 30, 2012

INCOME

Community Service Program	15,866.16
Corporate Donations	3,032.38
Fundraising	7,881.00
Contributions Income	17,731.59
Government Grant	32,560.00
Grants	144,951.64
United Way Contributions	1,185.03
Program Fees	63,310.00
Interest/Dividend Income	<u>217.01</u>

TOTAL INCOME

286,734.81

EXPENSE

Youth Force Program Expenses	6,370.30
Advertising / Promotion	320.00
Automobile Expense	750.57
Copy/Duplication/Printing	13,377.12
Depreciation	340.84
Dues and Subscriptions	133.44
Equipment / Furniture	7,774.80
Filing Fees - Business Taxes	70.00
Insurance	7,259.23
Payroll Expenses	135,506.33
Postage and Delivery	1,569.77
Professional Fees	8,295.80
Rent	14,105.20
Repairs	387.10
Service Charges	144.95
Supplies	12,103.07
Telephone	5,865.05
Travel & Meals	8,522.71
Workshops/Seminar/ Membership	<u>679.37</u>

TOTAL EXPENSE

223,575.65

NET INCOME

63,159.16

ASSETS

Current Assets	
Checking/Savings	
Bank of America	<u>142,479.45</u>
Total Checking/Savings	142,479.45
Accounts Receivable	
Accounts Receivable, Program	<u>5,610.00</u>
Total Accounts Receivable	<u>5,610.00</u>

Total Current Assets

148,089.45

Fixed Assets

Durango	24,076.62
Equipment Trailer	3,428.50
Accum. Depreciation	-37,482.24
Furniture & Equipment	<u>10,700.16</u>

Total Fixed Assets

723.04

TOTAL ASSETS

148,812.49

LIABILITIES & EQUITY

Liabilities

Current Liabilities

Other Current Liabilities	
Payroll Liabilities	<u>4,299.04</u>
Total Other Current Liabilities	<u>4,299.04</u>

Total Current Liabilities

4,299.04

Total Liabilities

4,299.04

Equity

Unrestricted Net Assets	81,354.29
Net Income	<u>63,159.16</u>

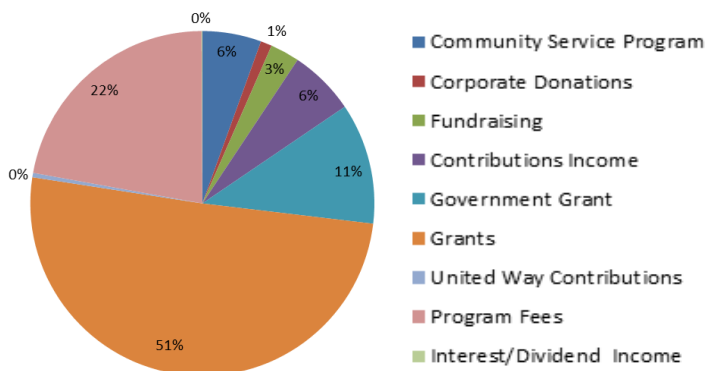
Total Equity

144,513.45

TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY

148,812.49

INCOME



EXPENSE

