



A Touch of Understanding[®], Inc.

5280 Stirling Street, Suite 102, Granite Bay, California 95746
Phone (916) 791-4146
www.TouchOfUnderstanding.org



Report of Activities 7/1/16-6/30/17

The Power of A Touch of Understanding

A Youth Perspective.....By Stephen Christian

Being with ATOU has been a life-changing experience. They came to my school when I was in the 3rd grade. At that point in time I had been teased and bullied because of the way I walked. My class had an assembly where they showed us ways to help people with disabilities and how to treat them. A lot of the teasing stopped after that day. Ever since that day I have been a volunteer for them and this past summer I was able to volunteer in their office. They have changed my life forever, and for that I will be grateful for the rest of my life.

A Family Perspective....By Charlene Christian

Our family first became aware of A Touch of Understanding when the organization visited my son's school in 2008, when he was in 3rd grade. Stephen came home that day and was very excited to share about the group of people who came to the school to show the students how people with disabilities are



Stephen hanging out with his friend, Ryan, at a Youth F.O.R.C.E. Event

regular people too. Up until that moment, Stephen had not interacted with anyone else who wore braces on their legs like he did. When he saw the volunteers with their own disabilities and the love and compassion emanating from the able-bodied volunteers he felt empowered to share his own story. Ever since that day, we knew that ATOU would forever be a part of our family.

“They have changed my life forever and for that I will be grateful for the rest of my life.”

Over the years, Stephen has experienced bullying from his peers at school, which led to feelings of insecurity, doubt and frustration. Through his involvement with ATOU, we have seen Stephen's confidence grow and mature. He is able to express himself, knowing that he has value. As parents, we have endeavored to expose Stephen to a variety of experiences, but none have come close to the benefits that he has enjoyed from his involvement with ATOU. From 'Dreams to Goals' workshops to Youth F.O.R.C.E events and volunteering at workshops and in the office, we have watched our son develop his identity and accept his disability as a part of who he is. Stephen, a young man who sometimes stutters, has bravely spoken at 'Art From the Heart' and other ATOU events. He has conquered his fear!



Stephen speaking at ATOU's Art From the Heart with emcee Rob Stewart

(Continued on Page 2)

Our mission is to encourage acceptance and respect for all individuals and to minimize the discrimination, bullying and misunderstanding experienced by children and adults who are perceived as different for any reason, especially those with disabilities.

(Continued from cover story)

Again, through our involvement with A Touch of Understanding, Stephen was exposed to another life-changing event. Just about a year ago Leslie DeDora told us about a wheelchair basketball camp that she thought Stephen might be interested in. We followed up and Stephen attended the camp. Well that was just the beginning! He is now a full fledged basketball player and his team won the West Coast Championship in 2017. His grades in school have improved and he is looking forward to going to college. Stephen is a healthy young man who loves sports but never thought that he would be able to one day be an athlete. With ATOU in his corner, his dreams are coming true. ATOU has stood by our family from the first time we met the organization, through the many surgeries and the following victories. Through ATOU we have met many wonderful people, some will just pass through our lives and others will be friends for life, but all will leave an imprint.

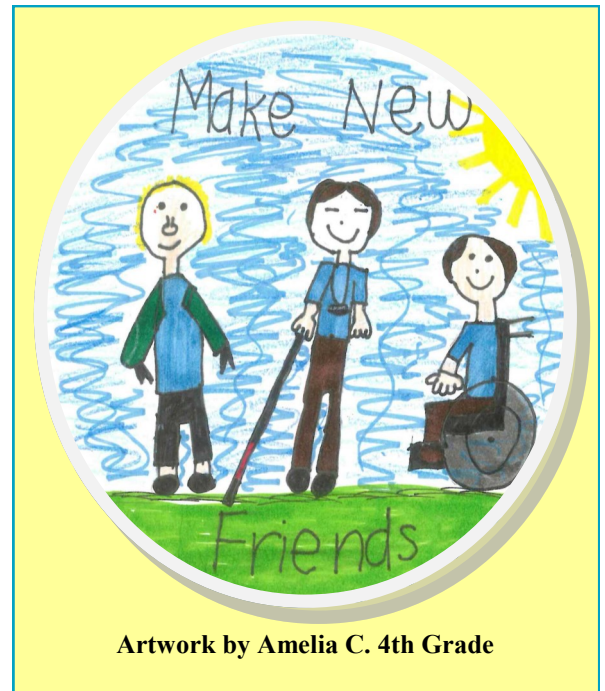
“With ATOU in his corner, his dreams are coming true.”



Stephen holding his Wheelchair Basketball Team's West Coast Championship Trophy



Stephen leaving the hospital after a recent surgery surrounded by ATOU friends



Artwork by Amelia C. 4th Grade

Current ATOU Board of Directors:

- | | | | |
|--------------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Joseph Blanton | David Dominguez | Stanford Hirata | Bob Schultz |
| Charlene Christian | Kody Fernandez | Darlene O'Brien | Michael Wilson |
| John DeLury | Susie Glover | David Riviello | |

Thank You All! Looking back, and looking ahead....

This is an exciting time for looking back at our accomplishments and ahead to our goals. Looking back, it's been a very busy year! In June, we were honored with the 2017 California Nonprofit of the Year award by California Assembly member Kevin Kiley. **This award belongs to you, all ATOU donors, volunteers, and staff members—to everyone who has been a part of the ATOU Family over the past two decades.**

Looking forward, during this 2017-2018 school year, we are eagerly anticipating reaching the **milestone of 100,000 students** participating in our workshop since incorporation. That's something for all of us to celebrate!

During the past school year, as we celebrated our **20th year** since incorporation:

- 9,539 schoolchildren in 104 schools participated in our disability awareness workshops.
- 209 adults experienced our Spirit of Inclusion workshops.
- 114 people participated in our Dark Meals.

This total of 9,862 participants in our disability-awareness programs brings our total since incorporation up to 94,370!

In addition to our local workshops, we successfully piloted our workshop using telepresence to bring the ATOU experience to students in Howe, Oklahoma.

We also hosted monthly Youth F.O.R.C.E (“Friends Offering Respect – Creating Empowerment”) events and supported four high school ATOU Youth F.O.R.C.E. Clubs.

Over these years, we have seen the immediate impact of our programs **helping children be more comfortable with their own uniqueness and in turn, helping them accept and appreciate the uniqueness in others.** We have created safer, healthier, more welcoming school campuses for all children. Please read the comments on the following pages to see the impact of our programs on this year's students.

After more than 20 years, we also know the lasting, life-changing impact of the ATOU experience on our students and our ATOU Family members. Former students tell of ATOU being instrumental in directing them to careers in healthcare and special education. Parents tell of improved sibling relationships, as well as the growth of self-esteem and confidence in their child with disabilities. Volunteers and staff members tell of the importance of belonging to the ATOU Family.

Over the past five years, with your support, we have doubled the number of students we serve in a single year. Our Board of Directors has set the goal of doubling that number again in the next five years to 20,000 students who will go through our workshop. To secure the future of ATOU in serving our children, we have two ongoing campaigns to partner with individuals and businesses: our 20/20 Clear Vision for the Future, and our Adopt a School Program. We invite you to partner with us through these campaigns.

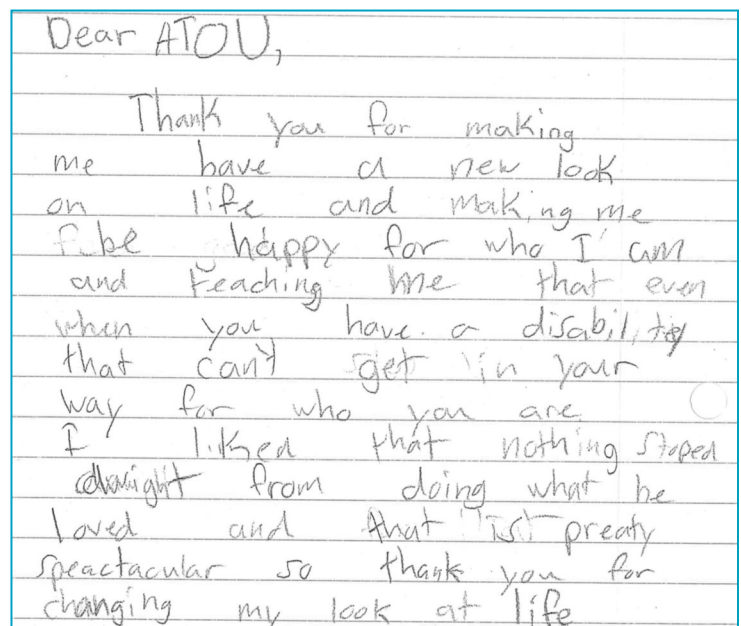
Thank you to everyone who has supported ATOU on this 20+ year journey! **Please read this report knowing you have played an integral role in touching the hearts and minds of almost 100,000 students.**

If you are not yet an ATOU Family Member, please consider joining this incredible family as a donor or volunteer.

With sincere gratitude,



Executive Director



Dear ATOU,

Thank you for making me have a new look on life and making me feel happy for who I am and teaching me that even when you have a disability that can't get in your way for who you are I liked that nothing stopped ~~straight~~ from doing what he loved and that is pretty spectacular so thank you for changing my look at life

Letter from Beckett, 4th Grade, Bacich Elementary

YOU can help build the future for our children through ATOU!

Become a monthly donor through our 20/20 campaign: Our 20/20 Clear Vision for the Future campaign is an opportunity to become a monthly sustaining donor, building the foundation we need to continue reaching more children each year—Building Empathy and Igniting Respect on school campuses and beyond. Sign up at www.touchofunderstanding.org

Adopt a School: Our Adopt a School Program provides the opportunity for individuals or businesses to “adopt a school” to pay the portion of our true costs that schools cannot afford. Businesses benefit from valuable marketing opportunities as a community partner. Visit our website for more information.

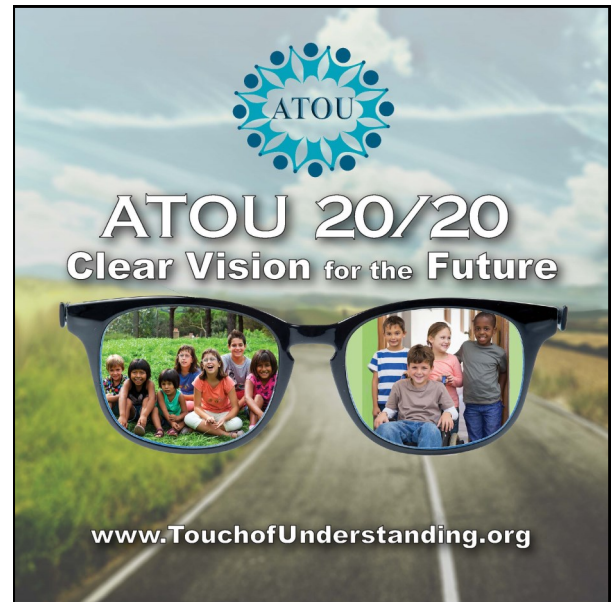
Become a member of the ATOU Legacy Circle: A planned gift to A Touch of Understanding, Inc. will allow you to continue to make a difference in the lives of children for years to come. Please consult your financial advisor to explore how a gift to ATOU will fit into your financial and estate planning goals.

Donate In kind Items: Please check our wish list of items on our website.

Volunteer With Us: For more information on joining a wonderful team of incredible individuals who work and socialize together, contact volunteer@touchofunderstanding.org

Share stories with others about your connection to ATOU: Please post a review on Great Nonprofits www.greatnonprofits.org

Like us and share our posts on Social Media: You can find us on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Instagram



<https://www.facebook.com/ATouchOfUnderstanding/>



<https://twitter.com/atou1234>



<http://tinyurl.com/atouyoutube>



<https://www.instagram.com/atouchofunderstanding/>



2017 Art from the Heart Art Contest Winners, Amelia, Gianna, and Jaelynn.

Student Survey Responses & Comments:

- 95% said they will be more comfortable with someone with a disability after going through the ATOU workshop.
- 89% said it would be easier to make friends with someone with a disability.
- 98% said they learned more about the tools that people with disabilities use.

“I learned that just because you have a disability, does not mean you cannot follow your dreams.” - **Sarah, 4th grade, Junction Elementary**

“There’s a lot more to a person than just their disability.” - **Payton, 3rd grade, Stoneridge Elementary**

“I learned to always think of ways to be kind, and keep an open mind to making new friends, even with someone who is different from you.” - **Elise, 6th grade, Ridgeview Elementary**

“I learned that the most important thing to be to someone is a FRIEND.” - **Ben, 4th grade, Edna Maguire Elementary**

“Dwight taught me that you should never give up. You should try, try again because you only have one life so you should make the most out of it.” - **Hannah, 4th grade, Edna Maguire Elementary**

“Dear K.P. (an ATOU speaker who is blind)

You have changed my whole life, and made me realize that everyone is different, and special, and reminded me to think and care about others. You have really changed me and my life. From now on I’m going to help and lead others for no bullies. I know how you feel about being laughed at too, it’s not fun. I hope you will spread your story to lots of others and wish you a happy life. Sincerely, Madison” - **Madison, 3rd grade, Michelson Elementary**

Teacher Survey Responses & Comments:

- 99% said the ATOU presentation was a valuable educational experience for students.
- 98% stated that students are more accepting and respectful of peers after the ATOU workshop.
- 97% said the ATOU workshop increased their students’ sensitivity towards and awareness of children with disabilities.

“I was fortunate enough to have ATOU visit my fourth grade class today, for the second year. My students and I were so deeply impacted by this program last year that follow up activities became a major part of our curriculum in the following weeks. This group is a class act. Not only do they facilitate the understanding of people disabilities, they inspire effort, drive, and grit in children. They offer hope, regardless of circumstances. They teach kindness and empathy, love and respect. I can’t say enough good things about this important work. Thank you, ATOU, for the gifts you have given us today.” - **Lisa Cox-Andrews, 4th Grade Teacher, Del Dayo Elementary**

“You and your team have made a positive impact on our students for years and years. Having ATOU on campus is a life-changing event for our students.” - **Peter Towne, Principal, Greenhills Elementary**

“The students had an amazing experience last Friday and were absolutely buzzing with questions and interest over the materials that were brought and the tasks they went through. We all learned something and we all benefitted!” - **Pam Kissick, Principal, Vencil Brown Elementary**

“I believe this is the type of work that can truly change the world for the better one student at a time.” - **Danielle Christy, School Psychologist, Westlake Charter**

Parent Survey Responses & Comment:

- 99% felt the ATOU experience will help their child accept and include individuals with disabilities in their life.
- 97% anticipate the workshop leaving a lasting positive impression on their child.

“ATOU has been visiting the site I work at, Woodridge Elementary, for years now. Each time, students come away with a deeper perspective and more open hearts. We look forward to seeing you on our campus every year. But now I share my review as a parent. Now my fourth grade daughter at Junction Elementary experienced ATOU for the first time. She's recently seen a therapist for anxiety disorder. When she got to the workshop about invisible disabilities, she completely connected with it and, in a way, it made her feel like she could accept this special part of her now. She even told me she shared with the group about it, which blew my mind. So THANK YOU for providing such needed education for our children, and specifically for my sweet girl.” - **Junction Elementary**

“Being able to “put yourself in someone else’s shoes” is a powerful learning moment that can last a lifetime.” - **Edna Maguire Elementary**

Volunteer Comments & Awards:

"As much as I love seeing how much fun the kids have using the wheelchairs, I love seeing the kid's perceptions of people with disabilities change even more!" - **Dan Smith, workshop volunteer who has spina bifida**

“Seeing the eyes of the students light up when I am explaining to them how I do stuff differently in my daily life is just so awesome. I can’t even explain it in a single sentence.” - **Bill Richards, workshop volunteer speaker who has cerebral palsy and uses a computer to speak to students**

“They have always said that Disneyland is the happiest place on earth - well that is until you volunteer with ATOU. You will shortly find that ATOU is the happiest place on earth. It is one big family: friends, awesome hardworking, loving staff and volunteers. The kids, the kids they just bring you so much love, they make you smile and so much more. I am truly blessed by the ATOU family. It is my home. It is my "Joy Juice." It brings me much happiness.” - **Karen Beer, Office Volunteer**

2016-2017 Ed Ennis Award Recipient

Jeanne Culhane was awarded this prestigious award for dedicated service to children through ATOU.



2016-2017 Presidential Service Awards

Our volunteers served thousands of hours for ATOU!
24 volunteers received the Presidential Service Award for Volunteer Service (50+ hours/youth, 100+ hours/adult):

Karen Beer	Caitlin Mahut
Joe Blanton	Amanda Mulanix
Peggy Cain	Kim Nash
Byron Chapman	Karen Parsegian
Stephen Christian	Sandy Puleo
Jeanne Culhane	Dave Seagraves
JDD Doran-Jammer	Bob Schultz
Betsy Fried	Marlena Sprague
Ian Gayton	Vyas Srinivasan
Susie Glover	Mike Wilson
Qamdhyh Hale	Donna Woodard
Dwight Lunkley	Duane Wyatt

The ATOU Youth F.O.R.C.E. and High School Clubs... “Making a difference and having fun while doing it.”



This has been a great year for the Youth F.O.R.C.E. (Friends Offering Respect, Creating Empowerment). Each month we enjoyed a different exciting activity. Our members also made new connections with an adaptive sports program, TOPSoccer. TOPSoccer invites youth with disabilities to learn the skills and receive the benefits that playing soccer has to offer. We have had two gatherings with this organization, one in the fall and one in the spring in which our youth with disabilities were able to participate in the soccer drills and activities, while our other youth served as buddies, providing support to those who needed it. We have enjoyed our events with TOPSoccer, and look forward to continuing the partnership.

The Youth F.O.R.C.E. was also very busy giving back to the community. Our members recently created a community service project to benefit Shriners Hospitals for Children, Northern CA.

The patients at Shriners often stay in the hospital for several months.

The Youth F.O.R.C.E. held a BIG board game drive to benefit the patients in hopes of making their stay more comfortable. **By the end of the project, the Youth F.O.R.C.E. was able to complete Shriners’s entire wish list of over 250 new board games.** The Youth F.O.R.C.E. benefitted from a tour of Shriners’ Hospital during the donation event in Sacramento. The experience opened the eyes of many of our members who participated in the project.

Every year the Youth F.O.R.C.E. makes new friends and connections, and gives back to the community. We plan to continue to cultivate those relationships in the years to come.



Some Youth F.O.R.C.E members with a few of the over 250 board games donated to Shriners. These youth also went on a guided tour through Shriners Hospital, and learned about the wonderful work being done there.



Artwork by Jaelynn S. 4th Grade

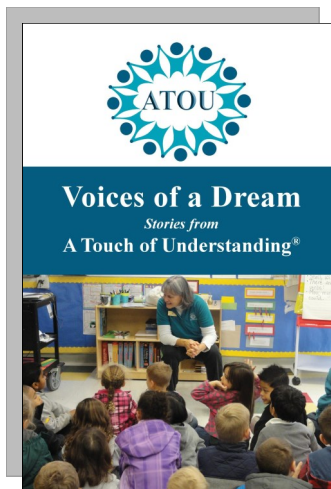
Monthly Events

- **July:** Rafting with Environmental Traveling Companions
- **August:** TOPSoccer
- **September:** Glamping (Glamorous Camping)
- **October:** Halloween Party
- **November:** Preparation for and participation in Roseville Holiday Parade
- **December:** ATOU’s 20th Anniversary Family Reunion
- **January:** Painting and Popcorn
- **February:** Sweet Heart Dance Party
- **March:** Board Game Night
- **April:** TOPSoccer
- **May:** Science night
- **June:** Summer Kick Off Year Party and Board Game Donation at Shriners

Voices of a Dream

Enjoy 64 inspiring stories written by members of the ATOU Family.

Find **Voices of a Dream** on Amazon.com and BarnesandNoble.com.



Available in paperback, Nook, and Kindle.

Remember to choose A Touch of Understanding when shopping with Amazon Smile.

SAVE THE DATE

Join us for the 5th Annual

Art From the Heart

April 20th, 2018

Blue Goose Event Center

3220 Taylor Road, Loomis CA

6:00 pm—9:00 pm



ATOU is improving the climate on school campuses in the Sacramento Region and beyond...

Schools in the following districts participated in 2016-2017:

Calaveras County

Vallecito Union

El Dorado County

Buckeye Union

El Dorado Union High

Mother Lode Union

Rescue Union

Marin County

Kentfield Union

Mill Valley

Nevada County

Pleasant Ridge

Union Hill

Placer County

Ackerman Charter

Alta Dutch Flat

Auburn Union

Dry Creek Joint Elementary

Eureka Union

Loomis Union

Newcastle Elementary

Rocklin Unified

Roseville City

Western Placer Unified

Solano County

Dixon Unified

Sacramento County

Charter Schools

Center Joint Unified

Dry Creek Joint Elementary

Elk Grove Unified

Folsom-Cordova Unified

Natomas Unified

River Delta Elementary

Sacramento City Unified

San Juan Unified

Twin Rivers Unified

Yolo County

Davis Joint Unified

Thank you to our Donors and Sponsors

<u>IN MEMORY OF:</u>	<u>BY:</u>	<u>IN HONOR OF:</u>	<u>BY:</u>	<u>FOUNDATIONS AND GRANTS</u>
Al Brennan	Margaret Hardwick	Laura Beeman	Richard Beeman	Arata Brothers Trust
Carol Cantrell	Margaret Hardwick	Peter Bowman	Kristin Harding	City of Roseville Citizen's Benefit Fund
Rodney Fischer	Margaret Hardwick		Kaiden Sadler	Church Divinity School of the Pacific
Barbara Fossum	Margaret Hardwick		Jennifer Wise	El Dorado Community Foundation
Irene Lange	Catherine and Thomas Hensley	Leslie DeDora and Ed Ennis	Barbara Dubnick & Davina Dubnick	Kelly Foundation
Karen Mayer	Donald Sherman	Karen Parsegian	Barbara Dubnick & Davina Dubnick	Jonas Family Foundation
Erik Norman Stavrand	Meta Stavrand	Richard and Wendy Slepian	Richard Beeman	M&M Whitmire Family Foundation
Donna Thomas	Margaret Hardwick			PASCO Foundation
Mary Walton	Maureen Fitzgerald Jacqueline Fong George Waegell			PG&E Corporation Foundation

2017 ART FROM THE HEART CATERERS AND WINERIES

Alma de la Vina
California Catering
Chef Booker T.
Chili's
J.R.'s Texas Barbeque
Le Casque
Lone Buffalo Vineyards
Moe's Southwest Grill
Nothing Bundt Cakes
Olive Garden
Randy Peters Catering
Vino Noceto
Wise Villa Winery

2017 ART FROM THE HEART SPONSORS

ATOU Board of Directors
Brookfield Residential
Community 1st Bank
George Arrant
IOP School Photography
PRIDE Industries
Sierra Health Foundation
Sprague Family
Style Magazine
Tri Counties Bank
Umpqua Bank

Placer Community Foundation
Safeway Foundation
Setzer Foundation
Sierra Sacramento Valley Medical Society
Teichert Foundation
Umpqua Bank Charitable Foundation
Youth On Course

Our generous individual and in-kind sponsors will be listed on our new website, to be active in early 2018.

"20/20 CLEAR VISION FOR THE FUTURE" MONTHLY DONORS

Meghan & Michael Adamski	Richard & Leslie DeDora	Megan MacPherson	Sue & Cliff Peppers
Joyce Beeman	John & Jane DeLury	Bob Madler	Mark and Tish Santor
Richard & Suellen Beeman	David & Janine Dudley	Janice Marschner	Charity & John Schmidt
Bell, Becky	Kody & Joyce Fernandez	Dean Martens	Bob Schultz
Marge Bladet	Susie & Jim Glover	Kim & Russ Nash	Dave & Tukey Seagraves
Joe Blanton	Stanford & Heather Hirata	Jim Nelligan	Pat Sherman
Katherine Bowers	Gerda & David Imgrund	Elizabeth Noel	Christine Smazenko
Peggy Cain	Phil Johnson	Brenda & Andy Osiow	Marlena & John Sprague
Dave Chamberlain	Bud Krause	Courtney Osiow	Bill Thomasmeyer
Charlene and Andre Christian	Dwight Lunkley	Mike Penketh	Mike & Barbara Wilson
Jeanne R. Culhane			

ATOU Programs for Adults

The ATOU Dark Meal and the Spirit of Inclusion provide disability-etiquette training in two unique ways. Participants acquire skills to more easily and comfortably interact with individuals with disabilities including: blindness, deafness, paralysis, loss of limb, and autism spectrum disorder. The training is facilitated by ATOU Board member, Darlene O'Brien, who lost her sight in 1998 and has dedicated herself to demonstrating that all people with or without disabilities, deserve the same considerations and opportunities found through social interaction and competitive employment. Darlene has developed a reputation for being a dynamic trainer and inspirational speaker. Her enthusiasm and "tell-it-like-it-is" humorous style has won over audiences in both the public and private sectors.

The ATOU Dark Meal:

Imagine eating a meal, with your friends and coworkers under blindfold. In 2016-2017, 114 people participated in the ATOU Dark Meal. To call this an "eye-opening experience" seems a bit of an oxymoron, but that is the comment we hear most often from our participants. By (1) putting on a blindfold, (2) walking into a room and to their seat using a white cane with a sighted guide, (3) receiving instruction to effectively navigate their place setting and (4) eating their meal while talking with their peers, participants gain understanding, appreciation and respect for individuals who are blind, and for the skills they use to navigate the world.

2016-2017 Participants: Vistage members, Rocklin Roseville Chamber of Commerce Leadership Class, and Boys Team Charity

**Teachers and Staff
of William Brooks
Elementary
participating in the
Spirit of Inclusion
Workshop**



Spirit of Inclusion:

"Every human being should go through this program" is a comment we frequently hear from guests at our in-school workshop. We strive toward that goal. During the past year, 209 participants have experienced ATOU's "Spirit of Inclusion" workshop for adults. The 3-4 hour activity-based, diversity training:

- demystifies the challenges brought on by disabilities
- helps participants confidently and comfortably interact with those who have disabilities
- promotes employment of individuals with disabilities
- makes workplaces more inclusive for existing employees with disabilities
- Assists schools/companies/governmental agencies to successfully address the needs of their students/clients/customers who have disabilities.
- allows our community to benefit from the abilities and commitment of our residents with disabilities.

2016-2017 Participants: City of Roseville employees and William Brooks Elementary School Teachers and Staff



**High school youth
participating in a
Dark Meal**

Financial Statements

Statement of Income

July 2016-June 2017

Balance Sheet

June 30, 2017

INCOME

Corporate Donations	5,389
Fundraising	42,412
Contributions Income	48,915
Grants	149,037
United Way	
Contributions	604
Program Fees	166,599
Interest/Dividend	
Income	<u>99</u>

TOTAL INCOME \$413,055

EXPENSE

Youth Force Program	5,238
Computer Expense	775
Copy/Duplication/	
Printing	9,740
Depreciation	191
Dues and	
Subscriptions	6,592
Equipment / Furniture	1,285
Insurance	11,238
Licenses/Filing Fees	207
Payroll Expenses	278,141
Postage and Delivery	742
Professional Fees	7,395
Rent	13,802
Service Charges	618
Supplies	7,071
Telephone	2,826
Travel & Meals	7,208
Workshops/Seminar/	
Membership	<u>2,153</u>

TOTAL EXPENSE \$355,222

NET INCOME \$57,833

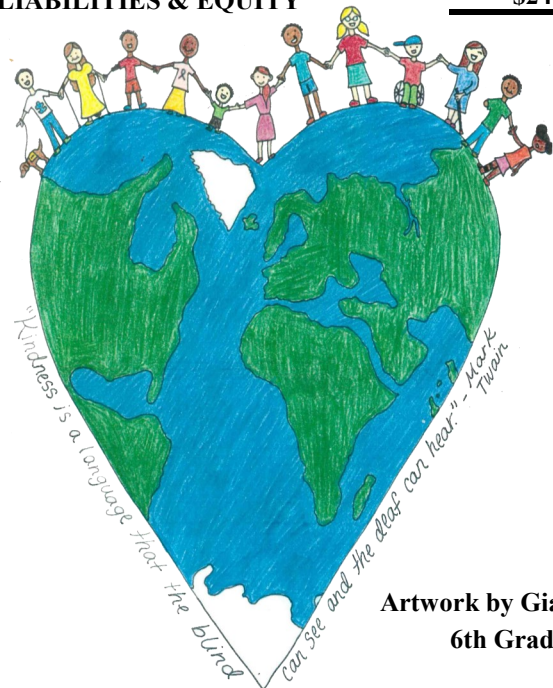
ASSETS

Current Assets	
Total Checking and Savings	234,055
Total Accounts Receivable	<u>3,354</u>
Total Current Assets	237,409
Total Fixed Assets	<u>8,023</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>\$245,431</u>

LIABILITIES & EQUITY

Liabilities	
Total Liabilities	8,022
Equity	
Unrestricted Net Assets	179,577
Net Income	<u>57,833</u>
Total Equity	<u>237,409</u>

TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY **\$245,431**



**Artwork by Gianna B.
6th Grade**