

ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT 2025


Morgan Autism
CENTER

Year in Review

Our 24-25 program year was a milestone year for Morgan Autism Center. We began the year by approving our new strategic plan–Vision 2030. Our strategic plan was a nine month effort which began by hearing from our parents and caregivers, our staff, and our community. Our stakeholders' hopes for Morgan Autism Center became our top priorities–significantly increase the size of our school and adult programs, build a better bridge between our school and adult program, and deepen our community-based programming. In order to enable these outcomes, we need to build our Dream Campus 2.0 by adding a new multi-story building and the intentional indoor and outdoor spaces needed for those we serve.

During the course of the year, we continued to grow our impact by accelerating the enrollment growth in both our school program and adult program. In our school program we welcomed fifteen new students and families. Our adult program welcomed three recent school graduates in the summer of 2024 and is expecting to add another three school graduates in the summer of 2025.

In addition to welcoming multiple new participants and their families to our programs, we began to build out our leadership team in order to implement Vision 2030. We are very excited about the quality of the leadership team members



we were able to add as Development Director, Director of New Programs, AST Program Director, and our first BCBA/ Assistant Director.

All of this positive momentum culminated in our most successful Starry Starry Night ever with us raising in excess of \$400,000 in gross proceeds. Starry Starry Night is always a great chance to connect, have some fun, and support Morgan Autism Center. The excitement about our Vision 2030, our Dream Campus 2.0, and our partnership with Magical Bridge was palpable and directly led to our outstanding results that night.

We are excited to share in this impact report further details on our work this past year. This past year represents just the first step on our journey to our Vision 2030—we hope you will join us in this exciting journey to increase Morgan Autism Center's impact on the community we serve.

Sincerely,

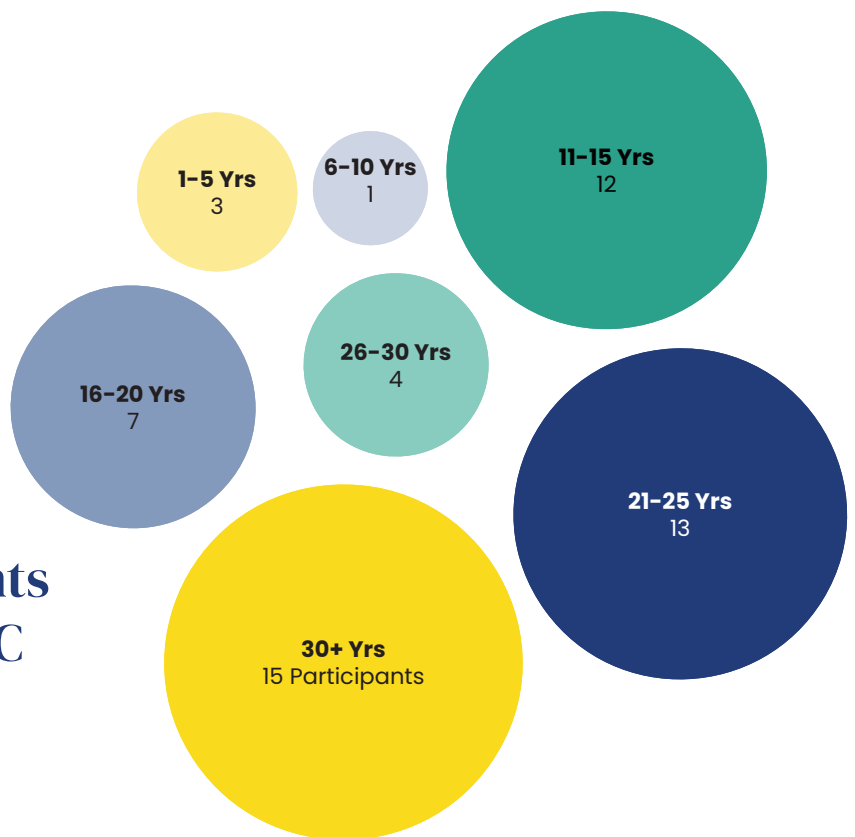
Josh Drake
Executive Director

Tom Caulfield
Board Chair

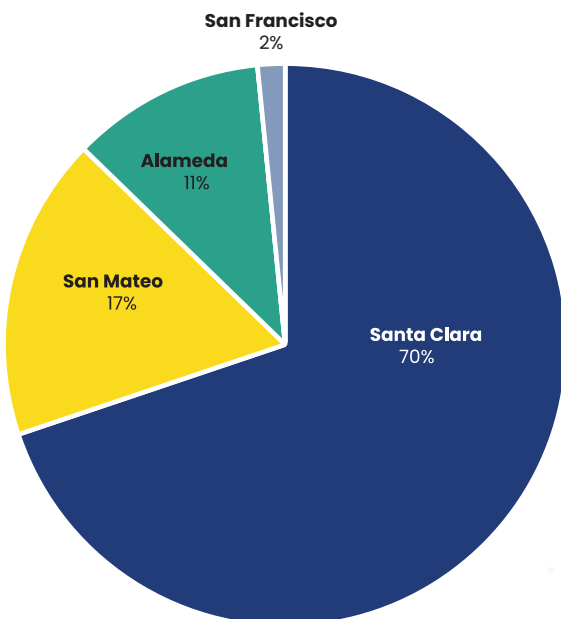


Who We Serve

With over 55 years of experience and our unique programming approach, Morgan Autism Center is considered the premier provider for individuals with profound autism in the Bay Area. Our non-public school program serves individuals aged 5-22. We are dedicated to serving a diverse population across four counties—Santa Clara, San Mateo, San Francisco, and Alameda. Currently, we are currently serving 65 students from 24 different school districts within these regions. Our Adult Program serves individuals 22 and up, with our oldest client being 66 years old. We provide services to 50 clients, also across these four counties. Additionally, we collaborate closely with three regional centers—San Andreas, East Bay, and Golden Gate—to broaden our reach and enhance the support we offer to the community.



**Number of Years Participants
Have Been Enrolled at MAC**



**Counties Served in the School
Program**

Adam “AJ” Giguere-Barraza

By Mark Nielsen



When AJ joined Morgan Autism Center back in October of 2022, he landed with quite a splash! After settling in, he quickly became a beloved presence on campus. Whether he’s lounging with a favorite blanket and pillow or during downtime or playing a game of kickball, AJ’s warmth shines through.

AJ is deeply social by nature—his baseline is a smile, and his joy is infectious. It’s no surprise that when he’s absent, several peers ask for him by name. His friendships are genuine and full of heart, often expressed through warm hugs and spontaneous shared moments with others.

Over the past year, AJ has grown tremendously in his independence. He’s taken initiative with daily tasks, putting things away both at school and at

home, and engaging more deliberately in communication. His social-emotional maturity has blossomed, allowing him to express his needs and connect more meaningfully with those around him.

AJ also has a strong love for the outdoors, especially in the garden. He’s happiest digging up weeds, watering plants, or tumbling compost—always fully immersed in the rhythms of nature.

We’re so proud of AJ’s journey and honored to be a part of his continued growth. His presence brings joy, connection, and inspiration to everyone around him.



School Program Highlights

By Hailey Barker

Post-Secondary Program

This year, Morgan Autism Center expanded its post-secondary program to better support students ages 18–22 in preparing for life after graduation. We increased the number of community-based outings, providing more real-world learning experiences in social, vocational, and independent living skills. Additionally, students now benefit from more small group instruction and individualized vocational tasks aimed at building independence and confidence. These enhancements are designed to bridge the gap between our 1:1 student-to-staff model and the 3:1 ratios typical in adult day programs, ensuring a smoother and more successful transition for our graduates.

Curricular Updates

We also made a significant curricular advancement with the adoption of Readtopia as a universal literacy program across our school classrooms. Readtopia provides differentiated, age-respectful literacy instruction that is accessible to a wide range of learners. Through immersive units, multimedia content, and scaffolded support, students engage in reading, writing, and communication activities that align with their cognitive and developmental levels. This consistent and evidence-based approach empowers our teaching staff and enriches learning across all age groups.



Adult Program Client Spotlight, Jacob Cuellar

By Connor Hauck



Jacob Cuellar joined the Adult Program after graduating from Room 5 in the School Program in July of 2023 and quickly charmed clients and staff alike with his portable DVD collection, practical jokes and Spiderman impersonations. He brought a sharp new mind to our science lessons and worksheet groups. He made cooking class an even zestier experience with his culinary talent and gusto.

By March of 2024, we started to notice a change in Jacob's energy and enthusiasm. After many visits to the doctors, they found a large cancerous mass in his stomach. Our hearts collectively broke. He started chemotherapy in June and we waited months while he was in the hospital, hoping to finally hear good news about his brave fight. In December 2024, it came. Jacob had successfully completed chemotherapy treatment and a very complicated surgery. He was finally cancer-free.

His peers missed and asked about him daily, but we were all overjoyed to see Jacob when he visited MAC. He and his mom brought handmade smiley-faced keychains for everyone to celebrate the reunion. He transitioned back to the Adult Program in mid-January of this year. It was beautiful to see our friend bloom into himself again. We all smiled to see him excitedly quote his favorite movies, share silly dance moves, and quickly answer Jeopardy questions. Joyful and triumphant, Jacob Cuellar was back and shining brighter than ever!

Adult Program Highlights

Staff Longevity – The Steve Shepard Story

By Sara Cedano

It is not uncommon to go around the room in the adult program and hear numbers like 10, 17, 20 that represent years of service at Morgan Autism Center. Staff longevity and retention is mainly due to the cultivated culture with the students and clients we serve daily.

This summer, veteran Adult Program staff, Steve Sheppard celebrated 33 years at Morgan Autism Center. Steve shares a similar origin story as many of us where he planned to be at MAC for a short time but ended up making a long-lasting career here. When asked what keeps him here, Steve didn't skip a beat and simply put that this is the place where he fits in, the job is a lot of fun and that he gets to do the things he loves. In Steve's case doing the things he loves includes playing music for the clients every day after lunch, an activity he's led almost every day for over thirty years.

Steve has seen many of our adult clients start off as young school program students



years ago and now has the privilege to work alongside them as adults. Steve expressed that the Adult Program remains a source of stability as clients age and endure life changes like moving to group homes or losing loved ones. They do so with the support and love of trusted and dedicated staff like Steve Sheppard.

As the Adult Program and Morgan Autism Center continue to expand, Steve shared that he hopes that the staff continue to rely on their heart. He explained that at MAC staff have to “take the plunge,” leave their troubles at the door and realize the happiness and well-being of the clients is the focus.



Then & Now: Adult Program client John Swezey and AP staff Steve Shepard have been working together for over 20 years!

Adult Program Highlights

Exciting News, Our AST Program is Open!

By Jess Moses

We are thrilled that we were able to open our new Adaptive Skills Trainer (AST) program in August 2025. For many years, we wanted to be able to provide adult programming which would enable us to serve a broader continuum of the student needs we see on the school side. To that, two key parts of our Vision 2030 project was to strengthen the bridge between our school and adult programs and to expand our capacity. The new 1:1 AST program we just opened is the immediate tangible manifestation of the bridge we were hoping to create between our school and adult program.

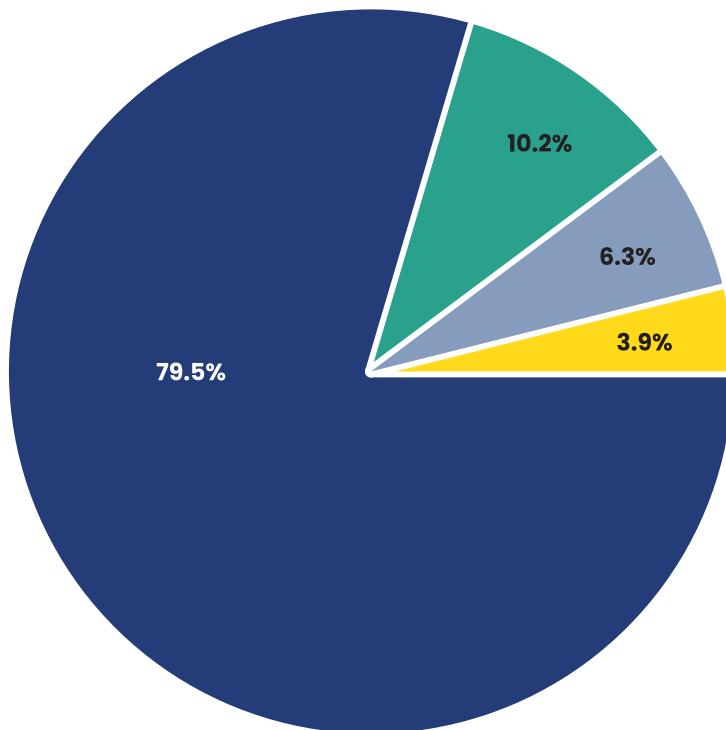
When we opened in 1969, we began with the innovative idea that all children can learn. For the past 40 years, we have been the only organization in the Bay Area operating both a non-public school and an adult day program demonstrating that individuals of any age with profound autism can learn. Today, we are continuing our history of innovation by opening the only program in the Bay Area to offer daily 1:1 service and embedded speech services to adults with profound autism.



24-25 Financial Review*

The organization had a strong operating year in Fiscal Year 2025 (FY25). In just the past two years, we have increased our revenue by more than a third and more than doubled our net income. With increasing enrollment, improved reimbursement rates, and strong fundraising, our operating performance is increasingly robust. This strength can be seen on our balance sheet as well with a healthy cash position and a low debt-to-equity ratio. Our increasingly strong financial position is allowing us the possibility to move forward and complete our Dream Campus 2.0.

Revenue: \$12.6 Million



School Program

Adult Program

Fundraising

Other

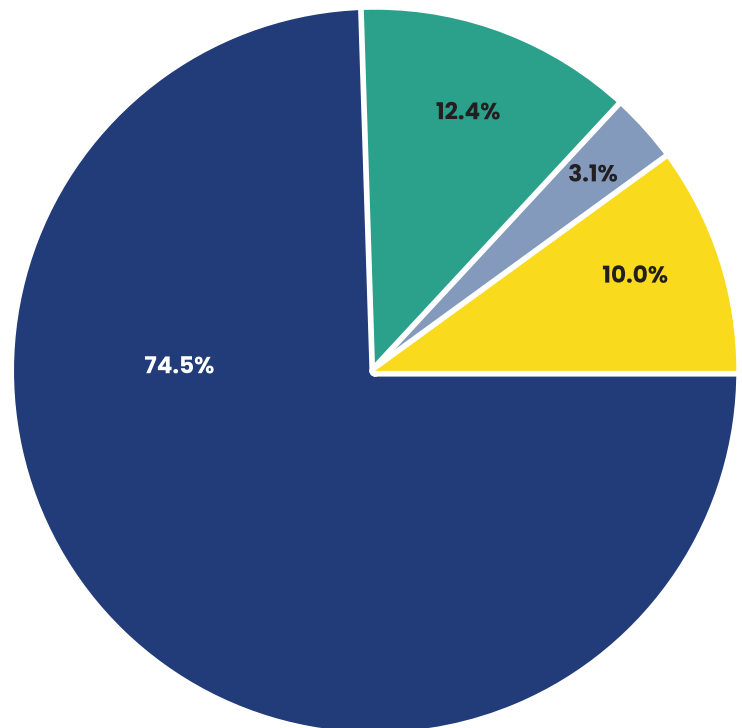
School Program

Adult Program

Fundraising

Administration

Expenses: \$11.6 Million



*Please note: The financial information presented in these charts is unaudited and excludes the one-time benefits of Employee Retention Credit (ERC) payments from the IRS.

Magical Bridge at Morgan Autism Center

As part of our Dream Campus 2.0, we are thrilled to partner with Magical Bridge to profoundly shape our campus into a world-class center of excellence and inclusion in serving families living with autism. Our partnership with Magical Bridge will transform MAC's outdoor spaces into thoughtfully designed, vital resources for our community to learn, play, develop, and grow.

PRIORITIZED SPACE FOR THOSE WE SERVE

The popularity of Magical Bridge Playgrounds can make them overwhelming for those with profound autism. A lack of public understanding adds to the challenge, often leaving families isolated at home. Magical Bridge at MAC will offer a private space designed specifically for our community—accessible during school hours, evenings, weekends, and breaks. With controlled access and trained staff in a gated setting, we can ensure a supportive and inclusive environment.



SETTING THE BAR FOR EDUCATION AND CARE

The unprecedented combination of Magical Bridge at MAC will gain significant attention and we will use this opportunity to educate people about the real challenges of profound autism, MAC's unique programs, and the happiness that comes from building authentic understanding and relationships with our students and clients.

Innovation, Inclusion, and Excellence
Collaboration by Kris Loew and Josh Drake

LEARNING SPACE FOR BROADER COMMUNITY

Beyond our day and adult programs, MAC regularly provides extended programs for high school students to learn about profound autism and build authentic 1:1 relationships with our students in a structured and safe format. Opening our campus for camps and on weekends will allow us to structure similar reverse mainstreaming opportunities for the general public to better learn about profound autism, the needs of those we serve, and offer more people the chance to build those same 1:1 relationships with our students and clients that we so cherish.

MAGICAL BRIDGE: LEADERS IN INCLUSIVE PLAYGROUND DESIGN

With ten award-winning locations across the Bay Area, Magical Bridge Playgrounds are intentionally designed for all ages and abilities. Drawing from decades of research, Magical Bridge at MAC will provide much needed opportunities for movement, sports and exercise, art and relaxation, and educational experiences for our day students, adult programs, camps, research partners, and the community at large.

MAGICAL BRIDGE PLAY ZONES™ AND FEATURES

The Morgan Autism Center campus will be divided into classroom and open play areas, bike and walking paths, sports fields, water play, and gathering space. Magical Bridge Play Zones™ will be featured throughout, offering predictability with a variety of accessible play, fitness, and gathering equipment at multiple challenge levels, each with unique benefits.





Fundraising

I am honored to introduce myself as the new Director of Development at MAC. With forty years of experience in nonprofit management and a deep commitment to fundraising, I am excited to bring my skills and passion to this vital organization.

My connection to this facility runs deep; many years ago, I served as the Executive Director of St. Elizabeth's Day Home, and my family has personal ties to this building. From the time my son Nic was just eleven months old until his graduation from Pre-K, we traveled down from the Santa Cruz Mountains for his care and for me to lead the agency. Many cherished memories, including his graduation in this very Amphitheater, shape my fondness for the good that has happened—and continues to happen—in this space. My goal is to increase year-to-year

contributed income from individual contributions, events, corporate and individual sponsorships, and service club, corporate, and foundation grants to help Morgan Autism Center reach its growth goals and position the agency for sustainable, long-term success. I aim to add value to our already successful events, Starry Starry Night and Move-for-MAC, as well as pursue grants from local and national foundations. Additionally, I plan to launch a Monthly Giving Program, expand community outreach to elevate MAC's visibility and awareness, and kick off a Capital Campaign to bring Dream Campus 2.0 to life.

I'd love to hear from you! Please reach out anytime at rfreiri@morgancenter.org.

– Robert Freiri, Director of Development





Starry Starry Night 2025

We are over the moon regarding our recent successful Starry, Starry Night Event! On Saturday, May 10th the air was filled with excitement and the stars aligned for us to have an enchanting evening at the DoubleTree by Hilton in San Jose, CA. We gathered to honor and celebrate the incredible students and clients served at Morgan Autism Center and raised over \$400,000. We're thrilled to announce that our Fund-a-Need initiative shattered records, raising over \$160,000. This remarkable achievement propels us closer to reaching our ambitious goals outlined in Vision 2030 and the development of our Dream Campus 2.0.

SAVE THE DATE: Our next Starry, Starry Night will be held on **Saturday, May 9th, 2026** at the Historic Hayes Mansion!



Move-for-MAC

We're thrilled to announce that our Move-for-MAC 2024 fundraiser raised over \$72,000 to support our strategic plan, Vision 2030.

Our 2025 Move-for-MAC kicked off in mid September 2025 and will run through mid October. The funds raised for this Move-for-MAC will provide us the space we need to expand prior to opening our new building as well as provide needed space during construction for the new building.

Our Sponsors

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all our individual donors and corporate donors who generously contributed \$500+ during the Fiscal Year July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025. Every donation has made a significant impact, enabling us to continue our mission. We have diligently aimed to include all individual and corporate donors at this level, with the exception of ticket purchases. We apologize for any inadvertent omissions.



Better as One with Hopkins Carley

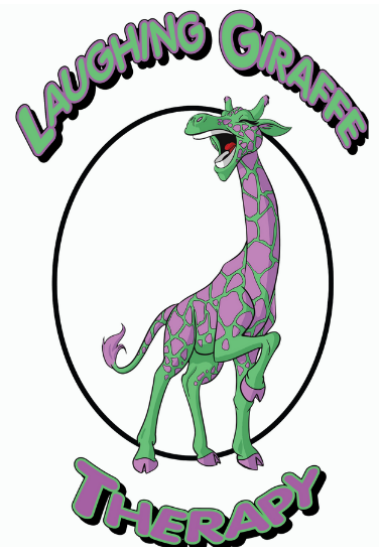


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Executive Director

Mark Nielsen

School Program Director

Hailey Barker

School Program Director

Sun Garcia

Program Director

Aya Sasaki

Adult Program Director

Sara Cedano

Adult Program Director

Jess Moses

Adult Adaptive Skills
Trainer Director

Jennifer Gray

Adult Adaptive Skills
Trainer Director/BCBA

Lisa Lemke

Director of
Administration

Jonnetta Quesada

Director of Finance and
Business

Robert Freiri

Director of Development

Leslie Davis

Director of New
Programs



*Our mission is to help children and adults with
autism and other developmental disabilities
maximize their potential in a dignified, positive and
loving environment.*

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