



The New England Center  
for Children®  
*Autism Education and Research*



# ANNUAL REPORT

FY 2022



**OUR MISSION IS TO CREATE  
A GLOBAL NETWORK OF  
EDUCATORS, RESEARCHERS,  
AND PROGRAMS SO THAT  
THOSE LIVING WITH AUTISM  
MAY LIVE FULLER LIVES.**







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## *Dear Friends,*

The 2022 Fiscal Year was not without challenges, particularly the resurgence of COVID and an unprecedented staffing shortage in the human services industry. I am proud of how we as an organization responded and am humbled by the support and encouragement from the community.

Each of you played a role in helping deliver top-notch services to our students without interruption. Through your support we brought a record number of interns to campus; we made our graduate programs free for direct-care staff; we advanced efforts to be a more inclusive, equitable workplace; and we increased opportunities for our students in the community. You made that happen.

As a large nonprofit, all our revenue is invested in our programs – sustaining them, conducting and sharing research, and preparing for future challenges. We have amazing talent on staff, from compassionate young teachers to clinicians, software engineers, nurses, technicians, and specialists. Your philanthropic support ensures they have the tools and resources they need.

At the heart of NECC's mission is our belief that all children living with autism can live fulfilling lives. For 47 years, we have impacted students and families throughout Massachusetts and New England as well as across the U.S. and around the world. I am personally grateful to each family that has entrusted their child to us, to every staff member who has contributed to our mission, and to you who makes it all possible.

With sincere thanks,



**L. Vincent Strully, Jr.**  
Founder and CEO



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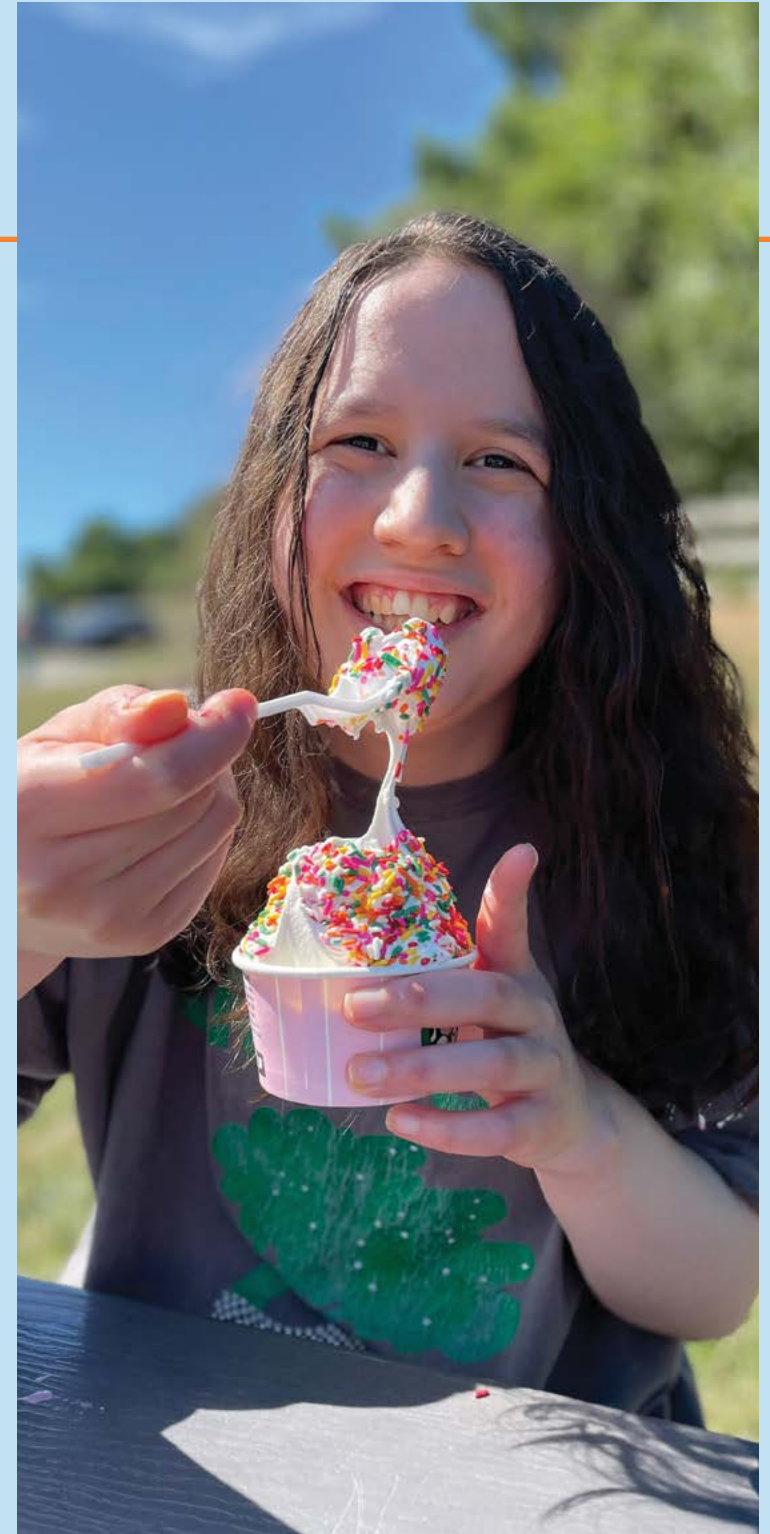
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# NECC WELCOMES LARGEST INTERN CLASS



For nearly three decades, NECC has been working on a pipeline for direct-care staff through its internship program, providing a steady stream of smart, hard-working, college students with a passion for special education and a desire to grow in the field. At last year's Children of Promise Gala, attendees pledged funds to support the expansion of NECC's program and its future interns. Because of these donations, NECC welcomed its largest class of interns in the program's history this past summer.

According to Ellen Graham, MA, CAGS, program director of graduate studies and internships, NECC was able to offer paid summer internships for the second consecutive summer as well as subsidized housing for 47 interns (up from 29 last year) from across the U.S., Ireland, and Spain. Over 10 weeks, the interns worked side-by-side with staff in the residential and day programs, learning more about the field of ABA, special education, and autism.

"Being able to introduce these individuals to ABA and the great work NECC does on its Southborough campus is crucial to the future of the human services industry," said Graham. "These internships provide hands-on experience and exposure to our field of work. Many of our interns return to NECC for employment after their internships. While we can't solve the national staffing shortage, offering these opportunities to future special educators is invaluable to both NECC and our industry."







## NECC Raises \$1.1 Million at Children of Promise Gala

On November 12, 2021, more than 300 business leaders, philanthropists, and NECC families and friends gathered at Boston's InterContinental Hotel for the annual Children of Promise Gala, which raised an unprecedented \$1.1 million dollars. The Gala's Fund-a-Need focused on NECC's internship program, to which attendees pledged nearly \$165,000.





# WORCESTER RED SOX

## A VALUABLE COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP



For the second consecutive year, the Worcester Red Sox recognized NECC during their Autism Acceptance celebration. Prior to their game on Saturday, April 30, 2022, the WooSox honored NECC as a “Heart of Worcester” for its work helping children with autism lead fuller lives. Two students and four teachers from the New Castle Road residential team participated in the on-field pregame ceremony, with NECC student Xander throwing out the first pitch.

“Our Heart of Worcester program is a way to acknowledge local nonprofits who make a difference in the lives individuals in our community,” said Joe Bradlee, vice president of baseball operations and community relations for the Worcester Red Sox. “The WooSox are committed to serving all of our fans, especially those with autism, and we are grateful for our partnership with The New England Center for Children.”

The game was also an opportunity for staff and the families of those students to enjoy a day at the ballpark. In addition to the April 30 game, NECC hosted several staff outings on the Flexcon deck at Polar Park throughout the 2022 season.

“The Worcester Red Sox are steadfast supporters of autism awareness and NECC,” said Jared Bouzan, chief development officer. “We are thankful for this community partnership with the WooSox and the opportunity to provide our hard-working staff a couple great days at this exquisite ballpark.”



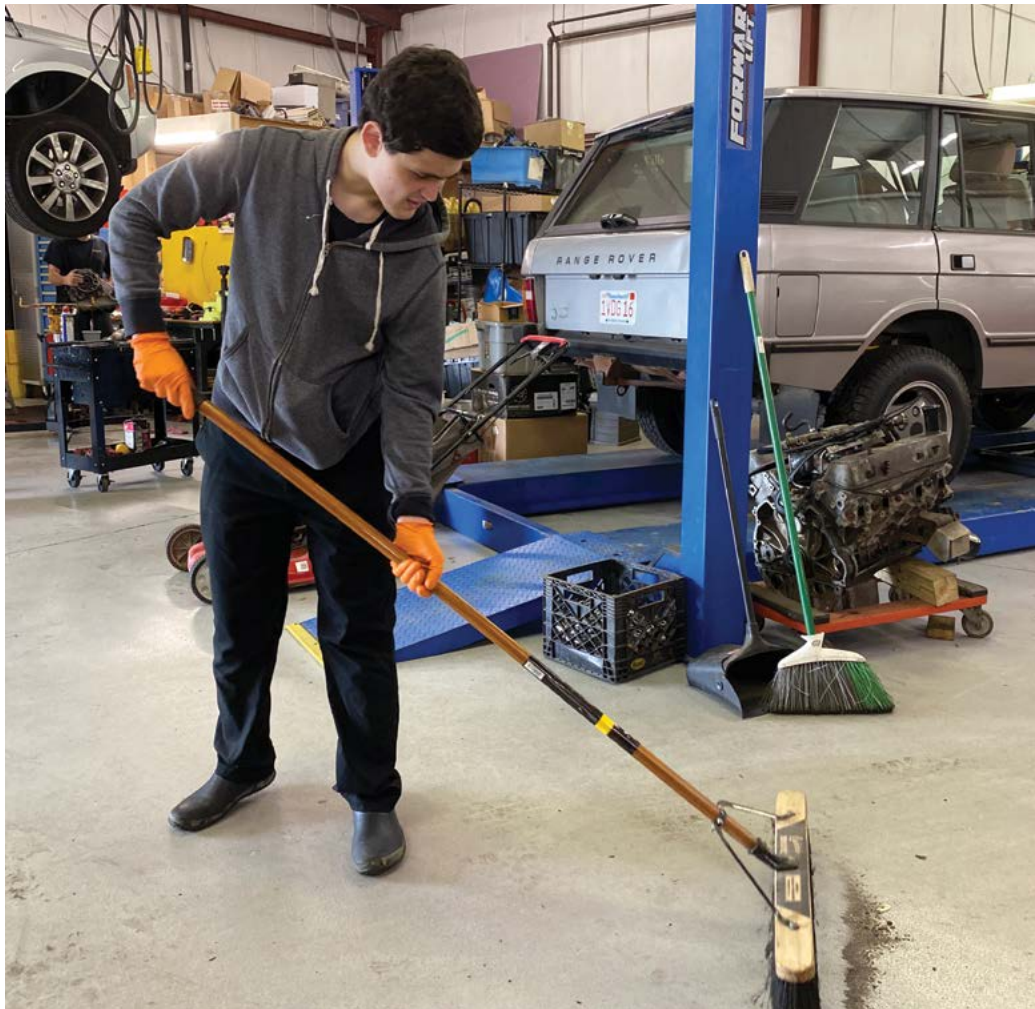


# Organizational Donors

- AAA Northeast Insurance Company
- AAFCPAs
- Algonquin DECA
- Allen & Major Associates, Inc.
- Andrade Management
- Apex Entertainment
- Arthur J. Gallagher and Co.
- Asset Strategy
- Avidia Bank
- BankRI
- Bay State Federal Savings Charitable Foundation
- Beals and Thomas, Inc.
- BJ'S Wholesale Club, Inc.
- Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts
- Boston Mutual Life Insurance Company
- Brattan Industries Electrical Services
- Brewer Lane Ventures
- Brown & Brown of Massachusetts, LLC
- Central One Federal Credit Union
- City Wide Facility Solutions Boston
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- CliftonLarsonAllen LLP
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- David and Judy Shore Foundation
- DCU for Kids
- Erland Construction, Inc.
- Ernst & Young
- Falconi Energy
- Fidelity Bank
- Fifth Generation, Inc.
- Finelli Building, Inc
- Gentle Giant Moving Co.
- Gilbane Building Company
- Global Atlantic Financial
- Greenwood Industries, Inc.
- Hamilton, Brook, Smith & Reynolds, P.C.
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- Long Cadillac
- Lorusso Heavy Equipment LLC
- M&T Bank (formally People's United Bank)
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- MassCUE
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- My Little Buddy's Boat
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- Ross Mortgage
- Ryan Development, LLC
- Saxon Partners, LLC
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- The Eagle Leasing Company
- The Laurence W. Levine Foundation, Inc.
- The VIYU Foundation
- Thiago's Painting
- Thurston Foods
- Tim King-Merrill Lynch
- Voya Financial
- Weston Family Foundation



# DRIVING STUDENT AMBITION THROUGH VOCATIONAL TRAINING



Every Wednesday, Anders travels from NECC to his job as a shop assistant at J. White Automotive in Bellingham. During his three-hour shift, Anders helps keep things tidy in the busy autobody and restoration shop by taking out the trash and cleaning bathrooms, among other tasks. Though it may seem like menial work, Anders is learning the social and vocational skills needed for when he ages out of NECC.

“Anders’s superpower is making people smile,” said Shirley Warren, co-owner of J. White Automotive, who began employing NECC students eight years ago.

J. White, which used to neighbor NECC in Framingham, caught the attention of an NECC executive when he noticed NECC student artwork displayed in the waiting area. He shared that one of NECC’s students loved to wash cars, and that’s when Warren began working with NECC’s Vocational Program. NECC’s Vocational Program allows students aged 14 and older to work up to four hours a week either in the community or within the school through NECC’s Career Development Center.

“Vocational training is crucial in helping students develop the skills they need to be productive members of society once they graduate from NECC,” said Director of Vocational Services Julie Weiss. “Community businesses like J. White help students like Anders focus on career goals and securing employment after NECC.”



"I love to help kids reach goals and gain skills," said Warren. "It is especially fulfilling when they can take the skills that they learn here and use them to further themselves in life."

Over the last several years, the staff at J. White have mentored NECC students and nurtured their talents. Two former NECC students continued to work at J. White after graduating. Chris went from washing to detailing cars, while Harrison went from writing thank you notes to working with accounts payable on data entry. Anders has an open offer as well.

"These NECC students are great workers and have positively contributed to our business," said Warren. "They are valuable employees."



## Student Community Paid Job Sites

Apex Entertainment, Marlborough

J. White Automotive, Bellingham

Neptune Retail Solutions

Old Navy, Framingham

Starbucks, Shrewsbury

Walgreens, Southborough





# EMBEDDING DEI PRACTICES

In the fall of 2021, when NECC executives learned staff members of color were being stopped by police on the way to their overnight residential shifts, they reached out to police in the local communities to address the issue.

“We wanted to help local law enforcement officers understand our diversity while also building stronger relationships in the community,” said Chief Development Officer Jared Bouzan, MEd.

Meanwhile, NECC’s Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Fatou Njie-Jallow has been hard at work expanding awareness of DEI practices among the NECC community. In addition to leading the DEI Task Force, which has planned events celebrating Black History Month, LGBTQ+ month, and Juneteenth, Njie-Jallow has established employee resource groups (each group facilitator received seven hours of training) to provide a dedicated space for community, learning, and support for staff. She has helped evolve NECC’s



promotional process by creating diverse hiring panels, adding a DEI question, and blinding candidates’ selection. NECC now offers a training in foundational concepts of DEI for all new hires. Njie-Jallow also spearheaded the development of a demographic survey, from which the DEI office will continue to learn and measure progress.

“DEI practices are central to fostering inclusion,” said Njie-Jallow. “Belonging is for everyone; our goal is to create an experience of belonging, which we can’t have without equity inclusion, and diversity. Belonging results in higher engagement, revenue, retention, higher performing teams, and better outcomes for our students, consumers, and clients. Leadership must be the champions of DEI strategy — it must live within every leader of the organization, and be embedded in everything we do. I believe NECC leadership is intentional in creating an inclusive culture.”









# EXPANDING AUTISM SERVICES IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## Consulting Impact

<b>328</b>	Students enrolled in partner and cooperative classrooms
<b>45</b>	Consultative districts
<b>520</b>	Students NECC consults to in the U.S.
<b>200+</b>	Students NECC consults to in the Gulf Cooperative Council
<b>24</b>	Dubai Clinic clients

Over the last two years, the pandemic has exacerbated a human services crisis and staffing shortage that has led to individuals with special needs being left without the necessary support. During the 2020-2021 academic year, as it became harder for families and school districts to find out-of-district placements for children with autism and related disorders, NECC expanded its reach by providing much needed educational services outside its walls in Southborough, MA, through its Consulting and Public School Services (PSS) division.

“By relocating skilled, trained special education teachers and behavior analysts who are proficient in using the ACE® ABA Software System and other systems, NECC impacted more than 1,000 children across seven U.S. states over the past year,” said Amy Geckeler, MS, BCBA, LABA, executive director of Global Consulting.



Amy Grant, MEd, BCBA, LABA, has been a teacher and behavior analyst in one of NECC's 34 Massachusetts partner classrooms for nearly nine years, weathering the challenges that come each year. "We have worked creatively with the district to best serve the needs of the students," she shared. "At times, this has meant starting three to four new students in my classroom within very short time periods or adjusting caseloads to serve more children. Each year has presented new challenges that we have consistently adjusted to in order to provide the most effective programming to all students in the classroom."

Grant has seen remarkable changes in her students, including two who started with her when they were in preschool and kindergarten. "Both were struggling within the inclusion setting, engaging in a range of challenging behaviors ... with very limited communication skills. Now in fourth grade, both students are included for science and social studies every day with their aged-matched peers. They actively engage in meaningful conversations with their peers, each other, and teachers, and are playing the trumpet and drums in band. They both have become integral members of the school community and have continued to maintain near zero rates of challenging behavior as the years have progressed."

In addition to its 66 model classrooms across New England, which provide comprehensive services to over 360 students, PSS also provides consulting services, impacting more than 400 additional students.





# SHARING ABA ACROSS THE GLOBE

This year, the ACE® ABA Software System (ACE®), which provides access to NECC's curriculum for individuals with autism worldwide, celebrated the milestone of surpassing 10,000 learners around the world. Since 2009 when the ACE® was first offered as a commercial subscription service, the award-winning curriculum has impacted the lives of more than 25,000 children with autism in 48 U.S. states/territories and 18 countries.

"Individuals with autism learn best through individualized lesson plans and instruction, and the curriculum bank on the ACE® is a culmination of over 45 years of contributions by NECC's BCBA's, special educators, speech and language pathologists, and occupational therapists," said Nicole Ciotti Gardenier, MS, CAGS, BCBA, LABA, executive director of the ACE® ABA Software System.

According to Gardenier, developing and running a strong ABA program takes time and requires a high level of expertise—resources many public schools and private agencies don't have—which is why the ACE® is so widely used across the globe. "We know that schools and agencies are often short on time, and the more than 2,000 lessons available on the ACE® cuts out the time special educators spend creating individualized curricula," said Gardenier.

"The ACE® has really been a game changer for our program," shared a public-school user.

The ACE® also includes the tools required for good instruction like assessments and reporting, allowing educators and BCBA's to streamline the ABA program process. The client support comprised of master's and doctoral-level BCBA's and special educators, is uniquely qualified to provide high-quality training and support to clients worldwide. NECC holds a patent for the ACE®, which was completely developed by NECC staff, and the software is continuously improving.

"It is impressive what the development team has done," said one private agency user. "ACE® is incredible. I love it."



# NECC Around the Globe

ACE® ABA Software System currently serves **11,900** learners in **34** U.S. states and **13** countries

NECC has onsite programs in **3** countries (United States, Qatar, and the UAE)

**230** students enrolled at MRC-NECC in Abu Dhabi

Staff alumni are working in **7** countries and **42** states, including the District of Columbia





# IMPROVING AUTISM EDUCATION THROUGH RESEARCH

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NECC is dedicated to promoting research that helps further the field of autism education. Teachers and researchers work alongside one another on research projects, often as part of NECC's graduate school program partnerships.

"Research is the best way to develop and evaluate methods that will help our students live the fullest possible lives," shared Dominique Fisher, a residential coordinator at NECC. Her research project as part of her applied behavior analysis master's degree program through Western New England University evaluated a method for teaching students with autism how to safely respond to law enforcement.

Knowing how to appropriately interact with police officers is something Fisher's parents instilled in her growing up. After working closely with her students on the Intensive Treatment Team (ITT), Fisher realized that just as Black individuals are at a higher risk of unsafe interactions with law enforcement, those with autism are as well. "I wanted my thesis project to be socially meaningful and something I was passionate about," shared Fisher. "The ability to move safely through the community is a prerequisite for participating in many facets of the important domains of life, including work, recreation, social connection, and independent living. We want to do everything we can to prepare our students to safely participate across environments that may add to their quality of life."

The study, under the direction of Chata Dickson, Ph.D., BCBA-D, LABA, assistant director of research, consisted of four phases. During pretests and posttests, students were scored for their responses to a variety of situations where they were spoken to by a person in a police officer's uniform. The highest possible score was assigned when, upon being spoken to by an officer, students stopped what they were doing, faced the police officer, and held their hands so that they were open and visible. This interaction score improved for all three students after the intervention segment, from an average of 66 percent of total possible points to an average of 99 percent.

"We want our research to lead to practices that are helpful in improving the lives of individuals with autism and we are excited about contributing our findings from the study to the body of research in behavioral science and education," shared Fisher.







# A Hub for Education

**1,743**

Master's degrees earned through on-site programs

**24**

Employees with PhDs

**263**

Employees with master's/advanced degrees

**202**

Employees with BCBA's

**313**

Articles published (all time)

**2571**

Research presentations (all time)

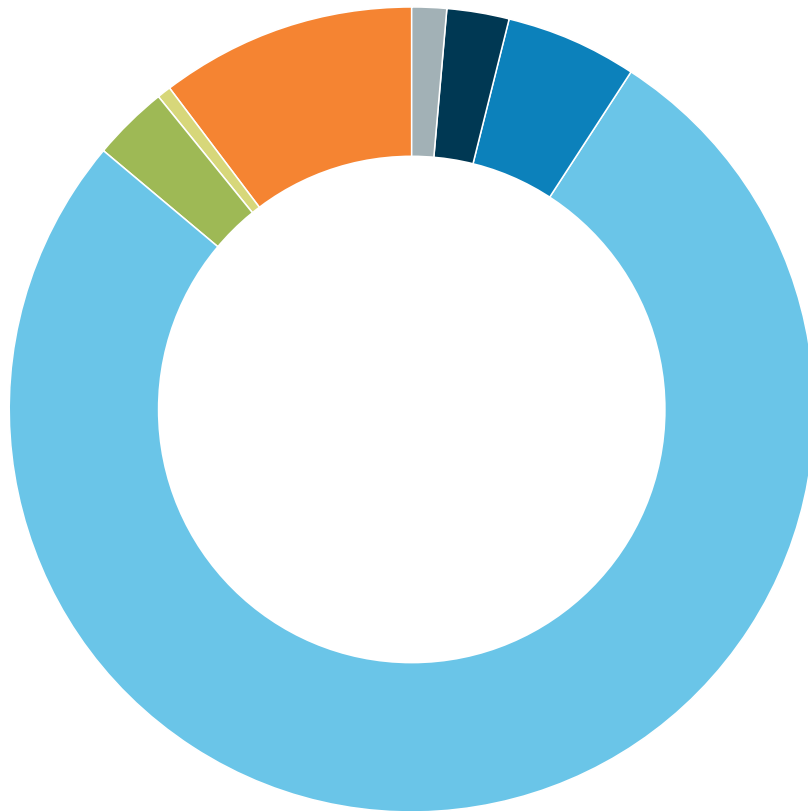
**20**

Countries presented in



# IN-PERSON EVENTS AND ENGAGEMENT RETURN

After more than two years, the NECC community saw the return of many in-person events this fiscal year. These events were opportunities to bring the community together – albeit safely – for some much-needed personal engagement while raising important funds for NECC.



- **FALMOUTH ROAD RACE**  
August 15, 2021 | \$22,688
- **125<sup>TH</sup> BOSTON MARATHON**  
October 11, 2021 | \$38,645
- **GALA GOLF TOURNAMENT**  
October 18, 2021 | \$82,440
- **CHILDREN OF PROMISE GALA**  
November 12, 2021 | \$1,175,184
- **126<sup>TH</sup> BOSTON MARATHON**  
April 18, 2022 | \$45,312
- **4<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL ART SHOW**  
May 5, 2022 | \$11,925
- **16<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL 5K RUN/WALK FOR AUTISM**  
May 21, 2022 | \$153,519







# ANNUAL GIVING DONORS

*Thank you!*



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Sandi Davis	Judith Frommer	Kim and Sean Keogh	Scott and Ainsley McCowan
Jennifer Dennis	Tom and Phyllis Gann	Laura King	Beth and Ken McGonagle
R. Winslow Dennis	Carl Garcia	Linda Komer	Kyla McHaffie and Matthew Cotter

Adam and Shira Mckay  
Will and Michelle McKendall  
Bethany McNamara  
Mike and Kelly McNeill  
Martin and Estelle Mense  
William Mercer  
Jane Meyer  
Margaret Meyers  
Erin Michaud  
Megan Mohr  
Frederic and Elizabeth Morris  
Heather Morrison  
Michael and Kimberly Morrissey  
Christine Morse  
Lisa Mossner  
Cidia Moura  
Michael Murphy  
Bob and Beth Nahill  
Caroline and William Naylor  
Susan Nelson  
Michele and Todd Nichol  
Utah Nickel  
Nicholas Nolting  
Anne Normand  
Shawn and Jacquelyn O'Brien  
Sean and Lisa O'Brien  
John O'Connor  
Victoria Oellers  
Katerini Papalimberis  
Mary Ellen Parzych  
Theresa and Larry Passmore  
James Peplau  
Heather Pereria  
Michael and Justina Perriello  
Keith and Angela Petty  
Stephanie Pierce

Lynn Pinto  
Sue Dacey and Tina Render  
Jamie Richardson  
Doug Robinson  
Mary and Howard Rock  
James Rooney  
David and Karen Rosenberg  
Michael Rosenfeld  
Meredith and Alan Rosoff  
Andrew Roy  
Jon and Gayle Ruscitti  
Michelle Russillo  
Elizabeth Russo Becker  
Dana and Tonya Rutherford  
Sorrel and Noel Ryan  
Robert Sanchez  
Brian and Anne Shea  
Elizabeth Shoemaker  
Mike Shoemaker  
Kristen Sidman  
Gustavo and Thaise Silva  
Robert Silva  
John Siracusa  
David and Katherine Sloan  
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William and Meredith Starr  
Geoff and April Stein  
Michael Steinkraus  
Jane and Charles Sterling  
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Steve and Meaghan Tardanico  
Isaura Tavares  
Brian Thamel  
Natasha Theofanidis  
Mary Joan Todesco

Tracey Toran  
Steven Tower  
Jade Truitt  
Paul Tryder  
Bill Tull  
Tony Tyan  
Peter Tyson  
Stefanie Upshaw and Joseph Sweeney  
David Venable  
Ali and Jesse Vennard  
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Kelsey Vick  
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Wendy Waller  
Kimberly Walter  
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Annmarie Weisser  
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Anya Weitz  
Sean and Meg Whalen  
Emily White  
Howard and Candice Wolk  
Emily Wood  
Todd and Michelle Wright  
Timothy Zaro  
Andrew Zimmerman and Susan Connors  
Jeremy Zorn  
Sasa Zorovic

# Giving by the Numbers

**\$2,150,829**

Total funds raised

**\$784,496**

Contributed by families

**\$73,362**

Given by staff

**\$850,993**

Donated by friends

**\$445,226**

Given by corporations/foundations

**5,246**

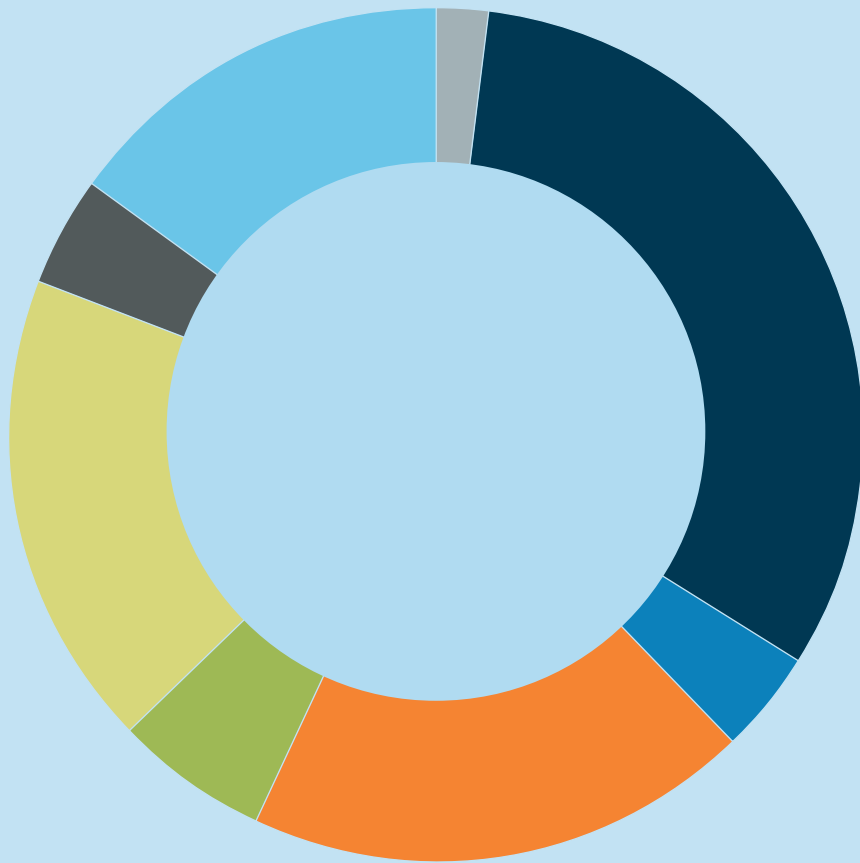
Total number of gifts

**2,440**

Unique donors



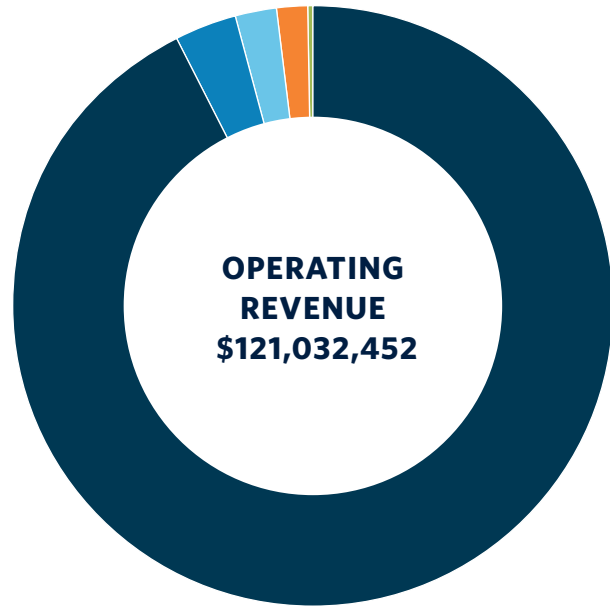
# FINANCIALS



## FY22 ANNUAL FUND ALLOCATION

- **2% | VOCATIONAL**  
Transportation, supplies
- **32% | STUDENT ACTIVITIES**  
Field day, apple picking/farm trips, prom, Halloween, team-specific celebrations and outings
- **4% | INDIVIDUAL STUDENT NEEDS**  
Specialized furniture for student/staff safety, student clothing, protective equipment for staff
- **19% | STAFF SUPPORT**  
Parent and friend-sponsored events (staff appreciation), healthy option vending machines, small reinforcers through team budgets
- **6% | DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION INITIATIVES**  
Consultation to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts throughout NECC
- **18% | RESEARCH AND STAFF TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES**  
Conferences, staff salaries related to research, includes infant research project
- **4% | SPECIALIZED IT**  
Zoom Room systems
- **15% | STUDENT EQUIPMENT AND MATERIALS**  
COVID related expenditures (PPE and sanitizer), fitness equipment at schools and residence, playground equipment and other outdoor activity expenditures, swimsuits, art and music supplies, minor capital improvements to school and residences

# FY22 CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENT



- **TUITION | \$112,244,486**  
Day, residential, adult, home-based, daycare, partner classrooms, international
- **CONSULTING | \$3,965,732**
- **ACE® TECHNOLOGY | \$2,506,362**
- **FUNDRAISING | \$2,126,655**  
Grants, events, in-kind donations and contributions
- **OTHER | \$189,217**



- **PROGRAM SERVICES | \$109,588,550**  
Day, residential, adult, home-based, daycare, partner classrooms, international
- **ADMINISTRATIVE | \$7,234,068**
- **ACE® TECHNOLOGY | \$1,018,367**

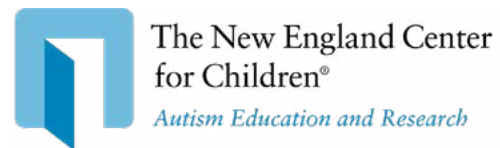






## *Thank You*

TO THE MANY SUPPORTERS OF NECC WHO ALLOW US TO CONTINUE TO  
PROVIDE EDUCATION AND ENRICHMENT TO OUR INSPIRATIONAL STUDENTS.



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*Autism Education and Research*

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ABA Software System

**ABAplus**®  
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