

Caritas

Quarterly

A SPOTLIGHT ON LOCAL CHARITIES • WWW.CARITASUTAH.COM



INSIDE:

/'karita:s/ (noun) love of humankind, charity

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Volume 6 Issue 1

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Message from Maschoff Brennan:

Janet Reno once said, "Being a lawyer is not merely a vocation. It is a public trust, and each of us has an obligation to give back to our communities." Giving back is also a great way to get to know your community and its citizens.

When you volunteer, you have the opportunity to meet lots of new people. Working alongside individuals who also care about improving their surroundings will allow you to broaden your network of friends. Additionally, it will help you to better understand the circumstances of other members of your community. Having a broad, open-minded perspective of the different walks of life around you will help you to be an effective and empathetic citizen. The lawyers at Maschoff Brennan couldn't agree more and believe our firm's success is directly tied to making the local communities we serve better places and making our neighborhoods stronger.

One way Maschoff Brennan is turning this belief into action is partnering several times a year with For The Kids, holding firmwide service and holiday projects. For The Kids is a nonprofit organization helping children in our own backyard. Every week they deliver bags of food to elementary school children to take home over the weekend and every week they make sure Utah children don't go hungry and have the food and nutrition they need. For The Kids provides hope, opportunity, and the ability to break the cycle of poverty.

Maschoff Brennan is proud to play a small part in the great work they do. We are inspired by the great work they do and encourage everyone join us in making a difference in the communities where we live and work. You'll be surprised by how many people are positively impacted and how little it takes to make a big difference.

-Maschoff Brennan



Message from For The Kids:

Nonprofits rely on companies who have a belief in giving back to the community. It truly takes a village to address challenges right in our backyards! For The Kids is no different: Without the support of companies dedicated to being of service, we would not be able to do what we do. For The Kids have been so fortunate to have Maschoff Brennan as one of our impactful sponsors.

Maschoff Brennan has been Hunger and Hope Advocates for several years. Maschoff Brennan helps us with food drives, gathering food that goes into the 400 bulk food bags that go out to four local schools in the Rose Park area, but they don't stop there. In addition to being Hunger Advocates, they are also Hope Advocates by supporting many families at during the holiday season, making sure kids have toys and treats to bring joy during what would otherwise be a difficult time.

The team at Maschoff Brennan decided in 2021 to be a sponsor at our annual gala where funds were matched to increase to serve local kids. We used funds from their sponsorship toward the holiday food drive. This Christmas we delivered 800 bulk food bags, with a total of 16,000 items of food! In addition, this year we had a "12 Days of Christmas" event where we gathered from the community new coats, boots, gloves, hats and toys. We thank Maschoff Brennan and the community support FTK received to meet the need of so many underserved local kids.

For The Kids sends out 400 bags of food each week. That is thousands of items of food that leave our shelves each month and we are always looking for support. If you are reading this and you think your company would like to partner with a local nonprofit that you can truly make a difference with and be a part of the actual giving and volunteering, we would love to hear from you! Visit our website at www.forthekids.org or give us a call at 801-803-0033.

Thank you to all who serve those less fortunate. I truly believe in making a difference and not just a living.

Minda Zoloth
Executive Director
For The Kids

Good People Doing Good Work for Good Causes



The UNA credential program covers nine essential disciplines for nonprofit management, each course lasting two days. Attendees receive instruction from industry experts in each discipline, as well as guidance developing or updating their relevant documentation and procedures. Photo courtesy of Utah Nonprofits Association.

Everyone knows Utah is home to stunning mountains, world-class skiing, “dirty” sodas, famous national parks and even a little independent movie festival you might have heard something about. But did you know Utah is also home to a thriving nonprofit industry that makes major contributions to both the state’s economic success and its community stability?

In 2021, there were 10,707 nonprofits operating in Utah, addressing everything from animal welfare to mental health support to food and housing insecurity to arts and culture and all the things in-between.

These organizations all represent a real need in the community and a desire on the behalf of a person or group of people to fill that need. But just because someone is passionate about a cause doesn’t mean they have the expertise or experience necessary to run a successful nonprofit. That’s where the Utah Nonprofits Association comes in.

“You get people who see a problem and they

automatically start looking for solutions,” said Kate Rubalcava, CEO of the Utah Nonprofits Association (UNA). “That doesn’t necessarily mean that person knows how to manage people, how to set up programs, how to manage money or what the rules and regulations are. It means they are a person with a passion.”

Founded in 1990, the Utah Nonprofits Association aims to fill that gap in training for their 650 member nonprofits.

Members have access to a resource library, for example, with vetted service providers who can offer guidance or provide help in a specific subject area such as insurance or accounting. UNA also hosts an annual conference — the largest gathering of nonprofits in the state — where attendees can receive training and hear from industry experts.

UNA also has a role in public policy advocacy for the nonprofit industry, tracking and weighing in on state and federal legislation that could impact its members.

“We pay attention to the bills that come up and make sure the things that are proposed aren’t negatively impacting nonprofits,” Rubalcava said. Any changes in rules and regulations are passed on to UNA members so they can keep their organizations on the right side of the law.

While UNA provides as-needed, ad hoc training for members — a QuickBooks refresher course, for example — the largest training effort is a credential program that covers nine essential disciplines with two days of interactive training for each.

“This training starts to infuse all these best practices and policies in the nonprofit,” Rubalcava said. “It’s expressly designed to force an organization to think differently about their policies and procedures.”

The credential program was launched in

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2015 and so far, only three organizations have completed the whole thing. (There are many more that have completed parts of it.) One of those is the Mountain West Mother's Milk Bank.

Mountain West Mother's Milk Bank is part of a national network of milk banks that collects human milk, screens it, pasteurizes it and distributes it to at-risk or medically fragile infants, mostly in NICUs. A group of volunteers and medical professionals worked for almost a decade to get the organization up and running, and when they finally opened their doors in December 2019, everyone understood the importance of making sure they were doing everything right, said Susan Isbell, vice chair of the board of directors.

"We had clinical mentorship and we knew how the organization needed to be run, but we needed to know how to get going in the government framework in Utah," Isbell said. "The credential took us through the process of 'Wouldn't it be nice if ... ?' to 'We are open and operational.' It seemed like a perfect match to support our sustainability."

The nine areas covered by the UNA credential are:

- Advocacy and civic engagement.



The Utah Nonprofits Association plays an advocacy role for the state's nonprofit sector, tracking both state and federal legislation that will impact the industry and keeping members informed about the rules and regulations they need to follow. Each year members of UNA visit Capitol Hill to lobby for their industry and missions. Photo courtesy of Utah Nonprofits Association.

- Board governance.
- Finance and legal.
- Fundraising and development.
- Human resources.
- Leadership and organizational culture.
- Marketing and communication.
- Outcomes and evaluation.
- Volunteer management.

Each class is offered once a year. After the two-day in-person training (or Zoom, if needed), nonprofits are responsible for gathering whatever relevant documents, practices, regulations or charters they have, updating them based on what they learned and

then submitting them for a review by UNA staff. Once the related paperwork looks good, the organization earns a badge for that discipline.

According to Isbell, one benefit

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CREDENTIAL PROGRAM

The UNA credential program equips nonprofits with the knowledge, skills and resources nonprofits need to elevate and update the policies and procedures that guide and support their organizations in nine essential disciplines.

Nonprofits receive:

- Two days of interactive training-sessions focused on critical skills and knowledge and distilled to include the most important concepts.
- Consultations with subject matter experts to help each nonprofit apply the training to their own organization.
- Ongoing coaching for the continued application of best practices.
- Badges to formally recognize the implementation of credential requirements.

Each course is offered once per year. The nine disciplines are:

- Advocacy and civic engagement.
- Board governance.
- Finance and legal.
- Fundraising and development.
- Human resources.
- Leadership and organizational culture.
- Marketing and communication.
- Outcomes and evaluation.
- Volunteer management.



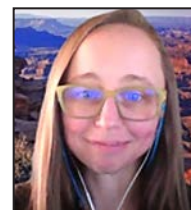
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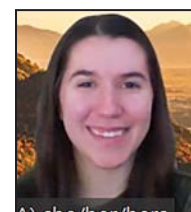
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In accordance with UNA bylaws, 50 percent of board members must work for a nonprofit. All board members undergo an application process, metrics alignment and several interviews with staff before their appointment. Each board member also signs and adheres to a conflict-of-interest disclosure.

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Proudly supporting those who support others.

Backing organizations that strive to make our communities better places to live, work, and play is our pleasure and privilege. That's why we're glad to support the Utah Nonprofits Association and all its members.

BKD can help nonprofits tackle their CFO to-do list, including financial reporting, grants management and compliance, and audit preparation. We also assist with Single Audit, budget development, and more.

Download our State of the Nonprofit Sector report at [bkd.com/nonprofit](https://www.bkd.com/nonprofit).

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One in 14 kids in Utah is grieving the loss of a significant family member

Since 1993, The Sharing Place has been fulfilling its mission to “provide a safe and caring environment for grieving children, teens, and their families to share their feelings while healing themselves.” This is achieved through a support group model that emphasizes acknowledging any and all feelings related to grief; connection with others experiencing grief; and channeling feelings through art, play and discussion.



Kids are divided into age-appropriate groups that meet twice a month for 90 minutes. The first part of every group is a check-in where kids can talk about "their person" and share a memory or answer a question about them. Sanctuaries around The Sharing Place hold pictures of many of the loved ones being grieved. Photo courtesy of The Sharing Place.

One in 14 kids in Utah is grieving the loss of a significant family member. In 1993, two of those kids were the children of Chris Chytraus, whose husband died suddenly at the age of 36 from a heart condition.

At 6 and 4 years old, Chytraus saw her children’s behavior changing on a daily basis as they grieved, but she couldn’t find any resources in Salt Lake City — or anywhere else in the state — to help. There was, however, a program in Oregon offering grief support for kids. Chytraus completed a training and brought the program back home.

The Sharing Place has been open ever since.

The Sharing Place provides support groups for kids and families in grief. It is not therapy; it is a safe place to share and process with people all going through the same experience of loss.

“We really spend our time on our thoughts, our feelings, our memories, how to preserve those memories and developing coping skills to get us through what we are going through,” said Jill Macfarlane, program director.

Kids are put in age-appropriate groups: preschool, school-aged and teenagers. The school-aged kids, who are in first through fifth grades, are further divided into subgroups: regular, complicated and suicide. Kids might be placed in the complicated

grief if they found their loved one’s body, for example, or were involved in the accident that killed their loved one.

Parents — or the adult attending with the child — are also placed in groups based on the ages of their kids. Each group has 10 kids and meets twice a month for about 90 minutes. The groups are run by a group coordinator and staffed by about five volunteers.

Keeping parents and kids in separate groups is an important part of the model at The Sharing Place. When they are together, grieving parents and kids often try to protect each other instead of talking honestly and openly about their feelings, Macfarlane said.

“They don’t want to talk about hard things,” she said. “This gives them the space to do their own grief work and feel supported enough to support each other.”

Each group, for children and adults, starts with a check-in. Group members share their name, who died, how they died and then answer a question about "their person." The discussions are open, frank and straightforward. There are no euphemisms like “passed away” or “gone to a better place.” People are allowed to be angry and there is no judgment.

Kids and teens spend half of each group talking about their person and their grief and the other half in

open play or creative time. There is a padded room, called the “volcano room,” where kids can safely express anger and literally bounce off the walls. There are stuffed animals and dress-ups and craft supplies.

“We play because we know that’s



A tree in the garden of the Millcreek location of The Sharing Place is filled with prayer flags honoring the loved ones kids and families are grieving. The goal of The Sharing Place is to create a safe space for kids to talk about “their person” and give them the tools to preserve their memories. Photo courtesy of The Sharing Place.

how kids process, but also because we want to give them a place where they can just be kids,” Macfarlane said.

For teens there is a firepit outside and a memory wall where they can paint a brick in memory of their person. Teens spend the bulk of their group time on an activity they can complete together or individually. Parents spend about half their group talking about their own grief and half talking about how to help their kids.

When Jake Knight first came to The Sharing Place as a volunteer, the open and sometimes even graphic discussions made him feel uncomfortable.

“I thought, ‘This is insane. What are we doing here?’” Knight said. “Their approach to grief support really turns a lot of societal norms upside-down.”

Once he got over the shock of hearing people — especially kids — talking so openly about death, Knight said he saw the benefit of such a straightforward approach.

“I was blown away by how much they were able to come out of their shells. They transformed. And I started to think, ‘OK, maybe there is something to this. Maybe there is some logic in the discomfort,’”

CONTINUED on next page

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Knight said. “The biggest thing we try to address is that there are so many emotions and to really process your grief, you have to engage and walk through all of them.”

Volunteers like Knight are critical to the success of The Sharing Place, said executive director John Gold. The Sharing Place operates with four full-time employees, 16 group coor-

dinators and 140 volunteers. Training for new volunteers is held once a year, but no background in grief, therapy or counseling is necessary.

“Anyone who can listen and show up for these kids is qualified,” Macfarlane said. She herself has no background in grief or counseling. She came to The Sharing Place as a volunteer herself and then served as a group coordinator before coming on staff.

The Sharing Place’s annual budget is between \$400,000 and \$450,000, which covers staff salaries and the expenses for two locations, one in Millcreek and one in Taylorsville. The Sharing Place is also hoping to raise an additional \$60,000 to \$100,000 to open a third location in Utah County.

Most of the organization’s funding comes from foundations and private individual donors. Nearly a quarter of the budget comes from an annual fundraiser, a Day of the Dead celebration, held every October. It includes a silent auction and “love baskets” for sale honoring lost loved ones.

Families don’t pay anything to attend The Sharing Place and they can stay in the program as long as they need — or want.

Jennie Archibeque and her daughter Darian have been attending The Sharing Place since March 2017 and she said they have no desire to ever

stop going.

In the summer of 2016, Archibeque’s husband started having what they thought were migraines, but they were actually strokes caused by a clot on his brain stem. Within 24 hours, he was brain-dead. Darian was 8 years old.

Archibeque reached out to The Sharing Place after hearing about the program from an acquaintance.

“I wish I could remember that person because I want to continually give them kudos and tell them how amazing it has been for our family,” she said. “I didn’t realize what I was going to get out of it. For me, it’s been a place of acceptance and helping.”

There is no roadmap for dealing with loss and grief, Archibeque said, and it can be really hard when certain milestones come up, like when the headstone arrives or when you have to clean out your person’s closet.

Archibeque said she and her daughter have learned to talk frankly about those hard things when they happen, and now have a lot of tools to process their grief as it comes.

The Sharing Place has also given Archibeque a break from putting on a brave face for her “normal” friends. No one ever says, “I can’t imagine what you are going through” or “I could never do what you are doing.”

At The Sharing Place, she said, she has a right to everything she is feeling and no one judges her for it.

“I had so much pride in being a person who always got up and got dressed and put on make-up and there were a lot of days when I just didn’t want to do those things but it

see SHARING on page 15



With one in 14 kids in Utah grieving the death of a significant family member, The Sharing Place is dedicated to getting their program to as many families as possible. “Grief hits everybody, regardless of wealth status, racial status or where you live,” said executive director John Gold. Photo courtesy of The Sharing Place.



Every year The Sharing Place holds a Day of the Dead fundraiser, which generates 25 percent of the organization’s annual operating budget. Activities include a silent auction and “love baskets” made in memory of those who have died. Photo courtesy of The Sharing Place.



The original location of The Sharing Place in Millcreek is an old house that the organization purchased in the early 1990s. After an anonymous donor paid off the mortgage, the house was renovated and expanded to accommodate more groups. The house includes common spaces, private rooms for each group, a kitchen area and lots of indoor and outdoor play and creative space. The Sharing Place also has a location in Taylorsville and hopes to open a third in Utah County this year. Photo courtesy of The Sharing Place.



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SIGHT THE WORLD

Growing up, Joseph Carbone knew what it was like to be the kid who couldn't see the board at school and struggled to read because he needed glasses but couldn't afford them. As an adult, he vowed to save as many children as possible from the same experience.

A board-certified optician, Carbone left his private practice in 2001 and founded EyeCare4Kids, a nonprofit dedicated to providing as many kids as possible with eye care services, including free screenings and glasses. Last year, the organization celebrated its 20th anniversary by serving its 400,000th child.

"It is a miracle to me to see that we have helped that many people," Carbone said.

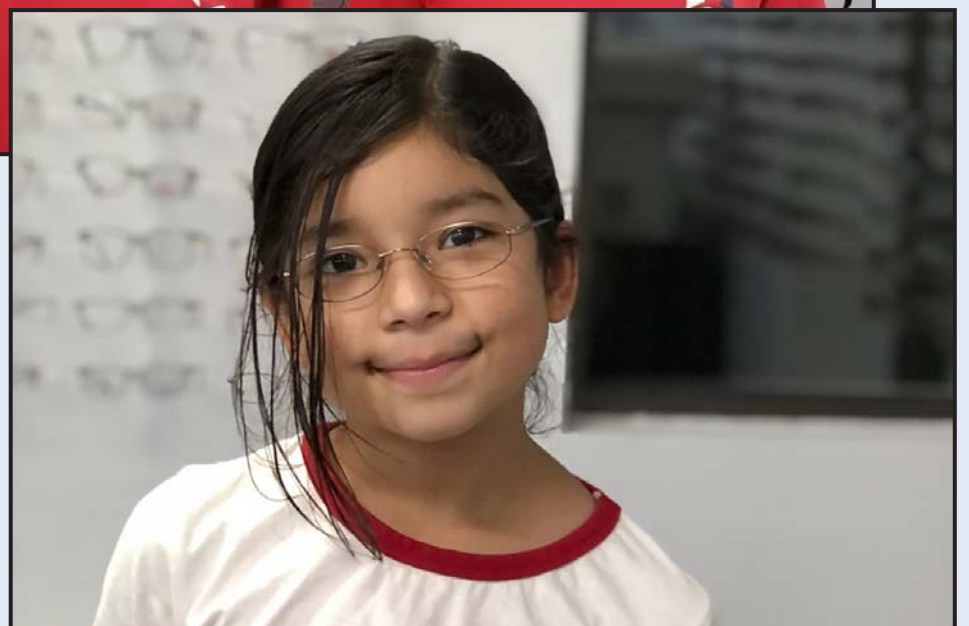
The anniversary year also saw EyeCare4Kids cut the ribbon on a

newly remodeled optometry clinic that includes three exam rooms, two screening rooms and a new reception area and optical shop. The additional 1,500 square feet will allow EyeCare4Kids to see an additional 20,000 people each year.

This expansion was especially critical as EyeCare4Kids saw the need for their services skyrocket during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"There are more people in need than ever because of COVID," Carbone said. "It put households that were already in need in more need and created even more need on top of that."

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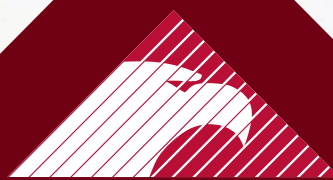
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than three years,” Carbone said.

Under the motto “Sight the World,” EyeCare4Kids is now working hard to expand. In addition to the Salt Lake City location, it operates clinics in Nevada and Arizona, plus several mobile clinics that visit schools, community centers and Boys & Girls Clubs. The mobile clinic in Utah made its 18th trip to the Navajo Nation this summer.

Also this summer, EyeCare4Kids packed up thousands of pairs of glasses and handheld vision screening equipment and headed to Mali to provide free eye care.

“We saw hundreds and hundreds of people from 9 in the morning to 8 at

night,” Carbone said.

When they left, EyeCare4Kids gifted the equipment to a local hospital and trained the staff to use it. And soon they will be back to build a clinic of their own. Plans are also underway to open a clinic in Kenya, where EyeCare4Kids has made several humanitarian trips as well.

While the first 20 years of EyeCare4Kids have seen tremendous growth and service, there are only more great things ahead. For starters, Carbone has a goal to help 1 million people with eye care services by the year 2025. EyeCare4Kids is also partnering with another company to create a virtual

clinic where patients can use virtual refraction on a personal device like a cellphone to get a prescription, and then choose glasses free of charge using a voucher. A donation of just \$35 covers one free pair of glasses, Carbone said.

“They get to leave with the glasses they love,” he said of every person who comes to EyeCare4Kids. “And if they love the glasses, they’ll wear them.”

But kids who come to EyeCare4Kids aren’t just getting glasses, he added. They are getting vision, which unlocks access to better education, which lifts kids and their families out of poverty.

Said Carbone: “We are open and growing and helping kids.”

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In addition to increased financial burdens for many families, many children lost their access to free vision screenings when schools closed as a result of the pandemic. Before COVID, there were more than 50,000 kids in Utah who started the school year without proper eye care, and the number only went up.

“There are some children who haven’t had vision screenings in more



GIVE THE GIFT OF SIGHT!

Did you know that there are over 65,000 kids in the state of Utah who need eyeglasses and can’t afford them? One in three children require some sort of vision correction. A barrier to success, they are struggling to see the chalkboard, read proficiently, and complete homework. Good vision and learning are strongly linked, and if left untreated, vision problems can create issues such as:

- Headaches
- Eyestrain and fatigue
- Itchy, watery, or burning eyes
- Double vision
- Poor concentration, memory and comprehension.

An essential resource for Utah families, Eye Care 4 Kids is dedicated to helping children see their future—one vision at a time! Founded in 2001, the Midvale-based non-profit is expanding its impact statewide through **Catch the Vision**, a special fundraising campaign designed to help us provide over 10,000 children this year with professional vision care. Sponsor a child with a donation of \$25. Your gift will make it possible for underserved youth to receive a free vision screening, eye exam, and a new pair of prescription glasses. Visit our website at eyecare4kids.org for more details or to donate.



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www.eyecare4kids.org
801-285-5443

The SHARING PLACE

Grief Support for Children

1 IN 15 KIDS IN UTAH WILL EXPERIENCE THE DEATH OF A PARENT OR SIBLING BY AGE 18.



By providing a safe & caring environment, grieving children, teens and their families can share their feelings **while also healing themselves.**

The Sharing Place has been providing unique & unduplicated grief support services for youth in our community for over 28 years. Through self-expression with artwork, play and physical activity, children & their parents are able to have a safe haven to grieve and begin to heal.

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We invite you to consider sending a gift to support our fundraising efforts. Scan the QR code to the right to directly donate. Thank you for your support of Utah's grieving children.



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We can't express in just a few words how much we appreciate your dedication. Thanks to your efforts you've made a difference in our community and had a positive effect on us all. For that and more we're grateful.

KeyBank thanks The Sharing Place for making a difference.



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Our Mission:

To provide events and activities to youth who, because of finances, family situation or life-altering conditions, otherwise would not have the means to do them.

Five years ago, Ivan Gonzalez was getting ready to celebrate his birthday and he wanted to do something special. He was working at the Ronald McDonald House at the time and he had noticed the children staying there got bored after a while. The video games and movies got old and there wasn't much else there to keep them entertained. Gonzalez wanted to do something to help.

"Anyone that knows me, I'm the volunteer, charity guy," he said.

And that's how Gonzalez' birthday party turned into a carnival for families staying at the Ronald McDonald House. Gonzalez and his friends cooked dinner, put on a bunch of games and handed out prizes.

"A month or two later I thought, 'I want to do something else,'"

Gonzalez said.

He started hosting events every month for kids who because of finances, family situation or life-altering conditions such as medical diagnoses couldn't otherwise access these types of activities. Gonzalez would even give away his own Jazz season tickets to kids who wanted them or ask friends to pitch in to buy tickets to other performances and events.

Kids and families loved the events and everything else, but Gonzalez' personal budget couldn't sustain everything he wanted to do. So he set up a nonprofit, Best Seat in the House, and started partnering with

CONTINUED on page 14



The Best Seat in the House puts on an average of two events per month, reaching more than 3,000 kids every year. Events range from luaus to makeover nights to carnivals. Photo courtesy of The Best Seat in the House.





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other organizations to host events for them.

"I'm a big believer that by working together we can help so many more kids," Gonzalez said. "We take care of as many people as we can."

Establishing the nonprofit also allowed Gonzalez to pursue donations, both monetary and in-kind. For example, Real Salt Lake donates season tickets every year for Best Seat in the House to hand out. Fat Cats donated their building for Best Seat in the House to host an event for 100-200 people including bowling, arcade games and pizza.

Events are always free to families. In the first few years, the budget of Best Seat in the House was between \$5,000 and \$10,000 a year, and all the money came from Gonzalez himself as well as donations from his friends and family. Now he hosts an annual fundraiser with dinner and a silent auction that provides the main income for the organization. He also writes grants, with some of his most significant support coming from the Sorenson Legacy Foundation. His next goal, he said, is to network and attract more corporate donors.

"More money and more resources means more kids we can reach," he said.

In 2018, Best Seat in the House reached 600 kids with events and activities. In 2019, it was up to 3,000.

see BEST SEATS next page



The goal of every activity put on by The Best Seat in the House is to provide joy through distraction. Whether kids are dealing with a medical diagnosis, a family in difficult socioeconomic circumstances or life in the foster care system, The Best Seat in the House wants to give kids a chance to be kids without worrying about anything else going on in their lives. Photo courtesy of The Best Seat in the House.



The Best Seat in the House works with local partners to host events and give away tickets to activities, shows and games to disadvantaged kids and families, including those dealing with serious medical diagnoses. Real Salt Lake donates a package of season tickers every year for the organization to give away to families who need them most. Photo courtesy of The Best Seat in the House.



Ivan Gonzalez, who runs The Best Seat in the House in addition to working a full-time job, remembers getting Christmas presents from a local church when he was a kid. Now he pays it forward by distributing toys, coats and shoes during the holidays.

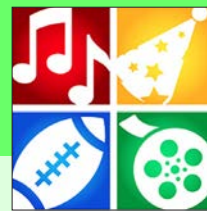


What Best Seat in the House Does

- Provide tickets to concerts, sporting events, festivals and other events in the area.
- Provide themed events for kids, like princess and superhero parties.
- Purchase sports or activity supplies, such as bats, gloves and fishing poles.
- In special cases, arrange "meet and greet" events with musicians and celebrities.
- Provide or pay for lessons and extra-curricular activities, such as art, dance or music lessons.

Who Best Seat in the House Helps

- Children in foster care.
- Children with intellectual disabilities.
- Children who are critically ill or have life-altering conditions.
- Refugee children.
- Low-income or disadvantaged families.



What People are Saying

Wendy, parent

"Thank you for the amazing gift of the Utah Jazz tickets. It ended up being the only time Asher has eaten in nearly a week! We had a great time, and loved hearing Asher say "Dee-feht" (defense) with everyone else. It lightened Julie's mood with being in foster care for the holidays and introduced her to a world she never knew existed."

D, parent

"You guys are incredible! Whenever we come to Salt Lake for my kids' treatments they run up to the reception desk to see if there is a Best Seat in the House event during our stay. Thank you for making our stay more enjoyable."

Meg, parent

"I don't have words to express the gratitude I have for your kindness. I was crying in my room over not having money to buy Christmas presents for my kids and then you gave us toys from your toy drive and gave my kids a Christmas to remember. Thank you, thank you!!!"

parties, the goal is always the same: to provide joy through distraction.

“So many families can’t afford a night out to go to the movies or to go out to eat,” Gonzalez said. “We are helping them create happy memories. It’s so impactful.”

Gonzalez remembers in particular a makeover night. He had volunteers on hand to give manicures and pedicures. But for some reason the event had to be rescheduled multiple times and Gonzalez started to worry it would never come to together.

When the night finally came, a mother brought her daughter, Katie, who was 12 or 13 and in a wheelchair.

She wanted a pedicure. The mom looked extra-emotional, Gonzalez said, so he approached to ask if she needed something. The mom broke down.

Katie had a rare condition, she said, that caused her body to deteriorate over time. The next day she was scheduled to have her feet amputated. When her mother had asked if she wanted to do anything before the day came, all Katie wanted was to have her toenails painted. And there was Best Seat in the House to deliver.

“Experiences like that, that’s why we continue to do it,” Gonzalez said.

Best Seat in the House is a labor

of love for Gonzalez, who still works a full-time job and runs the nonprofit on the side. Volunteers are a key component of the organization, he said, and he would love to find more “core skilled volunteers” — people who could help with social media and marketing, serve on the board, writing grants and raising money.

“Whatever the charity needs, if I don’t have a friend who can do it, I’m doing it,” Gonzalez said, whether he really knows how to do it or not.

But, Gonzalez said, he wouldn’t have it any other way.

“It’s definitely a passion project for me,” he said.

BEST SEATS from previous page

Things took a downturn with the onset of the coronavirus pandemic, but in 2021 the organization was back up to more than 3,000 kids reached.

Whatever the activity, from luaus to makeover nights to carnivals and

thirds of the organization’s revenue comes from earned income such as membership dues and conference and training registration fees. The other third comes from grants and sponsorships.

One of those sponsors is Beehive Insurance. The partnership started 25 years ago, said Beehive senior vice president Todd Valentine, when the company brought on a specialist to work with nonprofits.

“Nonprofits have similar insurable risks but they also have unique insurable risks and coverages,” Valentine said. “The job of our nonprofit specialist is making sure everyone is covered appropriately.”

Beehive’s nonprofit specialist also served as a subject matter expert for UNA, providing training or advice to members as needed.

In January 2000, Beehive Insurance worked with UNA to create a nonprofit group insurance coverage plan. UNA members can buy into the plan to get insurance coverage for

their staffs. The co-op buying nature of the group plan means even small organizations can get better insurance coverage for less money. According to Rubalcava, the group insurance plan currently covers 60 nonprofits and around 1,000 people.

Beehive Insurance also has a memorandum of understanding with UNA to provide a set financial contribution to the organization every year. Beehive Insurance’s partnership with UNA was a good fit because of the service the company delivers, Valentine said, but their interest in supporting Utah’s nonprofit community goes beyond just delivering insurance.

“Our partnership with UNA has been fantastic,” Valentine said. “We love helping nonprofits with their insurable risks, but even more we see that we can play even a small role in helping each organization meeting their mission. One of the best parts about what we do in that environment is that we get to see all the needs in

our community that are being met and filled by our nonprofit community.”

The difference between a well-run business and a poorly run business is the same as the difference between a well-run nonprofit and a poorly run nonprofit, Rubalcava said. And the consequences are the same, too. Poorly run businesses and nonprofits will eventually go under.

When a nonprofit closes its doors, however, it leaves a need in the community that is not being met or addressed fully. The goal at UNA, Rubalcava said, is to keep growing alongside the state’s nonprofit industry, so every member organization always has access to the training, support and advocacy they need.

“It’s really an honor to work on behalf of the nonprofits in Utah,” Rubalcava said. “As a group we’re always inspired about what’s happening here. Our members and the other nonprofits in Utah are doing such critical work. I can’t thank them enough for stepping up and stepping in.”

NONPROFITS from page 4

of completing the entire credential is that every governing document a nonprofit has fits within a consistent and unified framework, with no contradictory policies or procedures.

“If someone says, ‘Here’s a problem, how do we fix it?’ I can go back to these documents and my training and I have a pretty good idea of what our first, second and third steps should be to deal with it,” Isbell said. “Completing the credential involved a major commitment, but we are so grateful to the UNA for their commitment to provide such a serious resource.”

A nonprofit itself, UNA operates with a full-time staff of five. Two-

him in this tiny light.”

Five and a half years into her own grief story and her time at The Sharing Place, Archibeque said she also has so much more compassion for different types of loss and grieving and sees herself as a veteran who can validate and protect other people’s grief journeys.

One of the greatest benefits families get from The Sharing Place is that understanding that they are not alone in their grief, Macfarlane said.

“When they sit in a group with other kids, you can see this light in their eyes of ‘Me too! You mean this is normal?’” Macfarlane said. “It’s a really magical, healing moment.”

This kind of connection can be especially important for kids who are often told things like “You have to be strong for your Dad now” or “It’s time to step up and be the man of the

house.” That type of toxic positivity doesn’t help kids or their families work through their grief.

“People think that kids are resilient or they don’t understand what’s happening so it doesn’t affect them,” Macfarlane said. “But we need to talk about grief the same way we talk about bullying and sex ed and drugs and anything else.”

Even families who are grieving a death can be uncomfortable talking about it, Gold added, but people who come to The Sharing Place are grateful for the outlet.

“One dad told me that coming to The Sharing Place is like going to the gym,” Gold said. “You hate going but once you do go you feel so much better. And the car ride home from The Sharing Place is the only time his son will talk to him about his mom.”

Families come from as far as

Logan and St. George to receive this kind of support, and The Sharing Place always has a waiting list of families who want to join. Eventually, Gold said, he would love to have locations across the whole state.

“We want to eliminate any barriers to families to get here because we know what we do makes a difference,” he said.

Beside the distance, one of the biggest things keeping families away from The Sharing Place is the misconception that talking about their grief and their person will only make them more sad. But, Knight said, nothing could be farther from the truth.

“People have this image in their mind that it’s a really sad, depressing environment, but the opposite is true,” he said. “It is such a transformative place for everyone, in a really positive way.”

SHARING from page 7

was like my brain wouldn’t let me marinate in the sadness,” Archibeque said. “The Sharing Place has made it less painful to keep his memory alive.”

In a recent group, for example, Archibeque decorated a small Pingpong ball and attached it to a light. She keeps it by her bedside and turns it on every time she thinks of her husband.

“Why would something so small mean so much?” she said. “But it does. I fit all my love and warmth for



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