

FHSR

Foundation for Hearing and Speech Resources

ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2021

A sound investment in our children



A NOTE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Greetings! 2021 started with a new name, we are now the Foundation for Hearing & Speech Resources (FHSR). This more closely aligns with our programming and clearly identifies who we are. Despite the pandemic dominating most of the landscape in 2021, the Foundation had one of its busiest and most successful years. From fundraising to program expansion to dipping our toes into the world of webinars and virtual interviews, 2021 for FHSR was a very successful year.

We are grateful to all of our donors and supporters who continued to believe in the merits of our work allowing the Foundation to positively impact the lives of deaf and hard of hearing children in Illinois.

Kristen Van Dyke

KRISTEN VAN DYKE

Executive Director



The Foundation for Hearing and Speech Resources supports innovative educational programs, clinical services and social services that enable children with hearing loss to participate fully in society.

The
Foundation for
Hearing &
Speech
Resources
(FHSR)
develops and
funds
innovative
programs to
support Deaf
and Hard of
Hearing
Children and
Young Adults

BOARD DEVELOPMENT

FHSR welcomed three new Directors in 2021: Steve Hallenbeck, Erik Kessler and Lindsey Saxon and we are thrilled to have both their personal and professional expertise assisting with the guidance of the Foundation.



Steve Hallenbeck, AuD -

Steve is an Audiology Manager at Phonak within the Audiology and Education team in Aurora, IL. He has an extensive history within the hearing care industry and has previously provided clinical services in private practice and hospital settings as well as consultative noise abatement services. He has a deep passion for audiologic education, has been a guest lecturer around the globe and has served as an adjunct faculty member for several AuD and hearing aid specialist educational programs.

Erik Kessler - is a Managing Director with Alvarez & Marsal's Transaction Advisory Group. has more than twelve years of accounting, financial analysis and operational experience. Erik joined the Board because of his family connection to hearing loss, "Growing up in a deaf family/community, I've been very aware of some of the struggles that deaf children can encounter early in their childhood. I've always wanted to find a way to give back and help support their growth and ensure they succeed. FHSR has a tremendous platform that I hope to help continue to expand and help as many children as possible.



Lindsey Saxon - Lindsey Saxon is a strategic healthcare marketing communications professional with more than 15 years of experience counseling companies in the pharmaceutical, biotechnology, medical device, diagnostic, financial and technology industries. Ms. Saxon brings to the FHSR Board her professional experience combined with her passion for the deaf and hard of hearing community. As the mother of a daughter

who was born with progressive sensorineural hearing loss and who received cochlear implants, Ms. Saxon's family has directly benefited from programs funded by FHSR, such as the Music to my Ears program and the Hart Family Cochlear Implant Education program. Ms. Saxon also serves as a parent resource for families of young children with hearing loss and is Captain for Team Hear for Emma in the annual HLAA Chicago Walk4Hearing.

Board of Directors

Ellen Babbitt
Heather Bennett
Jim Borovsky
Jennifer Evangelides
Carey Gelfand
David Gelfand
Robert Handler
Steve Hallenbeck
Erik Kessler
Daniel Lockwood
Paul Lurie
Scott Murray
Rudy Radasevich
Steve Salzman
Lindsey Saxon
Anna Tess

Associate Board

Sabrina Barkal
Laura Conway
Jamie Davidson
EmilyAnn Duffley
Katie Farnsworth
Natalie Goldman
Halie Gubbins
Sarah Moats
Maura Mullen
Kim Tasharski

Advisory Board

Kate Gfeller
Jeff Graunke
Benj Kanters
Amanda Long
Trish Patterson
Richard Reed

FHSR PROGRAMS

This past year FHSR's mission driven synergy between program development and fundraising allowed for us to support additional deaf and hard of hearing (DHH) children though-out Chicago and the suburbs of Illinois. FHSR has three program pillars: Music, Education, and Clinical & Community that deliver unique programs to our kids at no cost to our families.

FHSR currently supports three programming pillars to meet the educational, clinical, and social needs of children affected by hearing disorders, including education coordination services for children with cochlear implants; hearing aid loan initiatives; literacy programs; music education and therapy initiatives; and advocacy and awareness-raising efforts.

Music To My Ears Program (MTME) provides a continuum of tuition-free music classes for DHH children through our partners The Merit School of Music and The Old Town School of Folk Music. This program pillar includes early childhood music enrichment classes, individual instrument lessons, and school-based music programs. A pilot program for music therapy is in the works for later 2022 early 2023.

Education. Advocacy. Resources (EARs), we strive to be a neutral research and medical based resource for parents of children with hearing loss with an emphasis on the importance of literacy. Currently, we support the READ day and DEAR day, programs that focus on the importance of literacy for DHH children, in central and southern Illinois in partnership with the Chicago Hearing Society which touches over 187 children each year.

FHSR PROGRAMS

Clinical Community Outreach (C&CO), FHSR provides key funding for pediatric loaner hearing aids to Chicago based Audiology centers, assuring no child goes without access to hearing amplification while their hearing aids are being repaired or replaced. The Hart Family Cochlear Implant Education Coordinator serves children who have cochlear implants and are patients of the Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago. A crucial bridge out to the education system and a supportive resource for parents help to place the implanted child on their successful education trajectory.

Free-family events have been the cornerstone to the Foundation's community outreach and advocacy. By bringing the community together at fun and educational events throughout the year, FHSR supports parent connections and fosters self-esteem in DHH children by being around other kids who look just like them.



This program pillar has grown out of our clinical based programs supporting local hospitals, Audiology programs and cochlear implant centers. It made most sense to include our community-based events and outreach to round out the program pillar. While still under the pandemic for the balance of 2021, FHSR proudly continued to support our community through virtual events and increased funding in areas of need.

Loaner Hearing Aid Program

We were thrilled to be back in person this year for our annual *Cheers & Beers for Ears* fundraiser for local loaner hearing aid banks. **Raising over \$15,000 in funds to be distributed in early 2022, this event doubled the amount raised at our last event in 2019.** FHSR prioritized this program and allocated funds toward the loaner hearing aid program at The Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago. These funds were put to good use over the course of 2021, **resulting in 200 hearing aids which were lent out to 150 patients**, all of whom were grateful for the opportunity to have a temporary device.

In its 10th year, the Hart Family Cochlear Implant Education Coordinator at Lurie Children's works directly to support children who have been identified for the cochlear implant program and already implanted children transitioning into school. This year Jen Haney, MA D-TH, **assisted 192 children and their families, conducted 47 meetings with school staff to help CI students**, and attended 14 conferences to educate other professionals on her critical work as an education coordinator for this population. Jen's work to optimize the student's learning has been hugely impactful on her families.



- The Loaner Hearing Aid Program



- The Hart Family Cochlear Implant Education Coordinator at the Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago



Clinical &
Community
Outreach

For Linda, a 7-year-old girl with a complex medical history and a cochlear implant, Jen made sure she was able to learn at school and placed in the best environment for her abilities.

The girl's family, who has socio-economic barriers to care, could not get their daughter to wear the external component of the cochlear implant. Compounding this difficulty, the external device had been lost several times. Jen partnered with the family and school to create a plan to ensure the child had a speech processor that could be kept at school. She also obtained consent from the parents to send any necessary equipment to school so they could assist with troubleshooting as needed. In addition, Jen coached the school's hearing itinerant on goals for Linda's auditory skill development and language targets. Initially, this student was in a special education classroom with hearing peers, but as she made progress by using her cochlear implant and improved her listening and signing skills, she was transferred to a more appropriate program specifically for children with hearing loss. With Jen's oversight, Linda is now wearing her speech processor consistently at school. Jen continues to work with the family to find ways for his young girl to always wear the device at home as well, so her speech and listening skills can be optimized.

Cheers for Ears - FHSR's family concert was able to spread its wings this past year with our first ever virtual event. World renowned children's musical artist Laurie Berkner helped us to celebrate the power of hearing and the joy of music, in a free fun family concert that was zoomed into attendee's homes. FHSR sent out custom egg shakers to encourage music at home after the event. This 60-minute concert brightened the day of our DHH kids and further proved that deaf and hard of hearing children embrace the joy of music.



- Jen Haney, MA D-TH Hart Family Cochlear Implant Education Coordinator



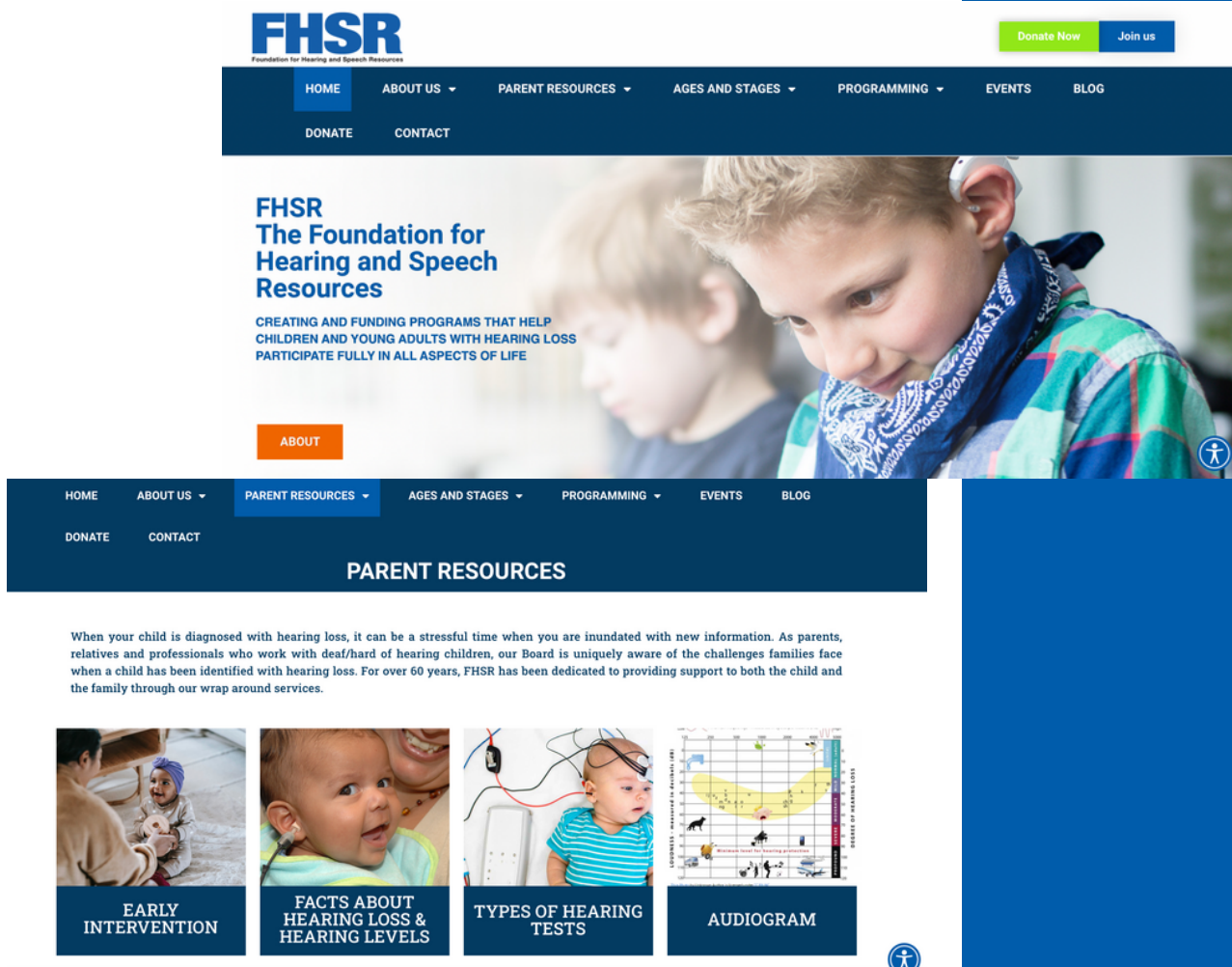
- Cheers for Ears featuring Laurie Berkner



FHSR Website

In 2021 we launched our updated website FHSR.org to better align with the focus of our programming. Learning from the isolation caused by the statewide shutdowns of 2020 and early 2021, FHSR quickly moved to create an online resource for families that was available 24/7 beyond physical boundaries. Presented in a conversational style of communication, we curated crucial information regarding pediatric hearing loss and built out resources to help educate families of deaf and hard of hearing children so they could be their child's best advocate. The new FHSR website won the MARCOM Gold Award, an international creative competition that recognizes outstanding achievement by marketing and communication professionals.

- FHSR launched our newly designed website FHSR.org





It was an exciting year for the music program pillar with the return to in person learning for our school-based sites as well as offering online classes for our music enrichment and instrument classes. Having learned how to successfully pivot to an online format, this welcomed return to in-person and continuation of online offerings met our families at their comfort level under the pandemic.

Early Childhood Music Enrichment & Private Instrument Lessons

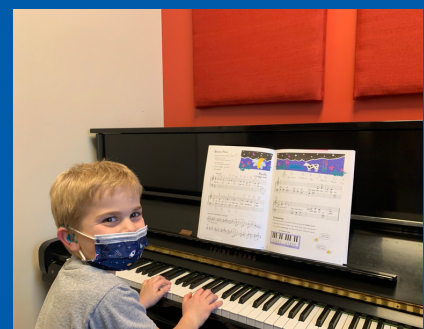
The Early Childhood Music Scholarship Program, in partnership with The Merit School of Music and The Old Town School of Folk Music, successfully began offering classes in-person and online in the late spring /early summer of 2021. We had a small bounce back in our scholarship numbers, due in part to parents and caregivers feeling more comfortable joining an in-person class. While our numbers, **10 DHH children enrolled**, are not yet back to our pre-pandemic high we are optimistic that enrollment will continue to grow in the coming year.

New Partner School- Fall 2021

FHSR was thrilled to create a new strategic partnership with Music Makers, located in Western Springs, for the individual Instrument Scholarship Program. This new location allows FHSR to meet the musical instrument needs of our DHH 4-12 year olds who live in the surrounding western suburbs and are interested in taking private piano, guitar, and drumming lessons. Perhaps even more exciting is the musical theater opportunity this partnership with Music Makers presents to our students who are interested in voice lessons and theater. We currently have **one student enrolled** and look forward to that number growing in the coming months.



- Early Childhood Music Enrichment & Private Instrument Lessons



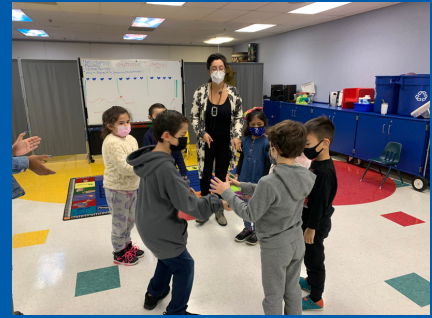
School-based Music Programs:

At Child's Voice Oral Deaf School in Wood Dale, IL, **32 children participated** in the music curriculum program receiving music instruction twice a week for 30 minutes from our lead program teacher, Sally Blandon of The Merit School of Music.

Utilizing a curriculum that is customized for deaf and hard of hearing children who are on a spoken language track, we saw growth across all of our student assessment areas.

Assessment highlights included strong growth in the students' solos which correlates into self-confidence and an ability to self-advocate, both crucial areas of development for DHH children. In addition, the Child's Voice students saw an increase in pitch and voice modulation assisting with the production of non-affected speech patterns.

Our after school programming at Children of Peace/Holy Trinity Deaf Program, in Chicago, shifted in the Fall to one-on-one private piano lessons for children who were in the program. The highly-individualized program allowed for our instructor to meet the needs of each student where they were on their music journey. This targeted response to individual students needs allows us to optimize outcomes for each of the **six students who are currently participating** in the program. We are seeing strong growth in each students' self-confidence and musical knowledge and anticipate continued growth in both of these areas along with welcoming new students in the 2022-2023 school year.



- School-based Music Programs



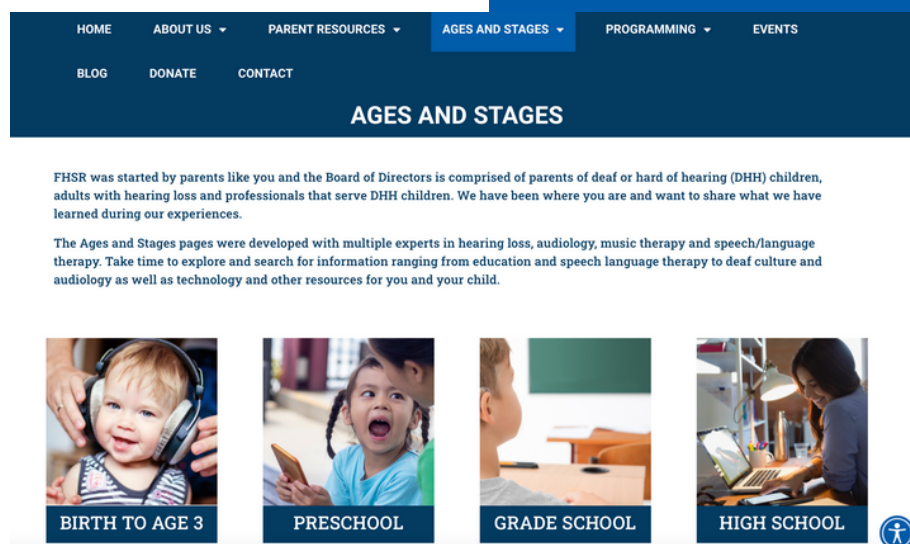
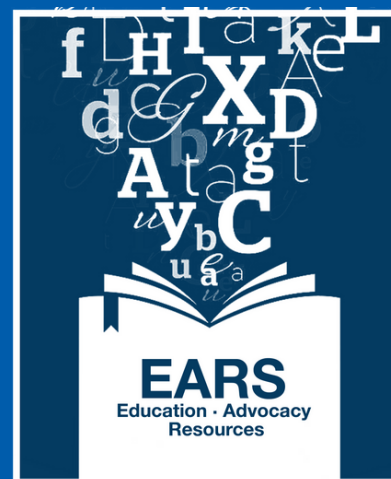
New Partner School- Fall 2021

The cluster Pre-K program run by the North Shore Special Education Organization (NSSEO) at the Terrace Elementary School in Des Plaines, IL became our third school-based program site with **13 children attending the weekly music curriculum program.**

Equally unique and exciting is that at Terrace there are two classes with different modes of communication. One is an oral classroom, using Listening & Spoken Language (LSL) and the other is a Total Communication (TC) classroom where the students use both spoken language and American Sign Language as their primary modes of communication. This new site required a class specific curriculum for the TC students. FHSR quickly pivoted to create an inclusive and welcoming program which includes having our lead teacher take ASL classes to enhance her communication skills.

- New partner School

Within our newly organized education program pillar, our work in 2021 turned to creating the new parent focused website FHSR.org to be an online curated resource for parents of children living with hearing loss. The new website works to level the playing field for DHH children by empowering their parents with the most up to date information on pediatric hearing loss. We know that parents and primary caregivers are the key to early intervention successful outcomes so we created a program specifically for them.



Ages & Stages: Early Intervention Birth – 3 years

was launched in the summer of 2021 and is the first phase in a key resource guide geared specifically to parents assisting them be their child's best advocate. When your child is diagnosed with hearing loss, it can be overwhelming emotionally along with a huge amount of information for parents to process. We made sure to include actual parent stories throughout the early intervention stage to let parents know they are not alone, the FHSR community is there for their family. Phases covering school entry, elementary school through middle school years, high school and the transition to college will be forthcoming starting in 2022.

- Ages & Stages

CHS - DEAR Day and READ Day:

This innovative partnership program with Chicago Hearing Society, celebrates the importance of literacy and reading to deaf and hard of hearing students. FHSR supports the expansion of this program into central and southern Illinois, areas often underserved by programs and services. Even though we were not able to be in person, virtual events were held and well attended by school-aged children up through high school, with just over **400 students logging in** to participate over the course of both events. While we look forward to being back in person in 2022, the online opportunity allowed these events to reach even more students and convey the importance of literacy for children living with hearing loss.

Literacy Program for DHH Children - An area of opportunity FHSR identified in 2021 was the need for a literacy program specifically geared toward assisting DHH children in successfully navigating the switch from learning to read to reading to learn. To that, we have actively begun our search for a literacy program that supports this process and can be layered onto local school district's current programs. The program goal will be to give DHH children every opportunity to be on par with their hearing peers on literacy benchmarks. This program is earmarked to launch in 2023.

- Chicago
Hearing
Society



FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

2021 began under the overarching issue of the pandemic which would continue to affect the functioning of the Foundation throughout the year. Concerns about 'donor-fatigue' were strong, along with apprehension regarding the reallocation of personal funds to pleasure as the world opened up for a brief few months. There were almost no in-person fundraising events, and schools struggled to stay open while offering virtual options. Yet despite these challenges, FHSR had its strongest year in over a decade and produced positive net income moving in the direction of sustainability.

Assessing the income side of the ledger, FHSR benefitted from a recently strengthened relationship with donors and friends of the Foundation. FHSR received a \$100,000 donation from the estate of Louise Hart, Foundation founding Director, to launch the Music Therapy program in the summer of 2022. This gift allows FHSR to continue her lifetime legacy of supporting deaf and hard of hearing children.

[EVENTS](#)[BLOG](#)[DONATE](#)[CONTACT](#)

MAKE A GIFT TO FHSR TODAY

A Sound Investment in Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children

Thank you so much for your donation!

Contribution Amount: *

☐ Contributor - \$ 100.00

☐ Supporter - \$ 250.00

☐ Friend - \$ 500.00

☐ Champion - \$ 1,000.00

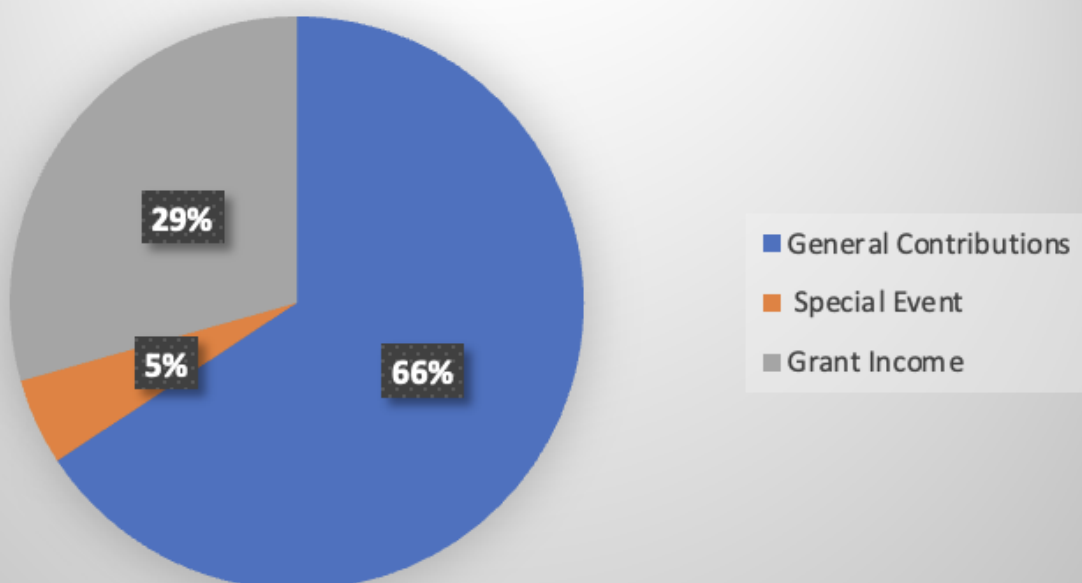
☐ Donor - Your Amount - \$ 0.00

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

The 2021 giving season was strong, with the Directors spearheading gifts to the annual appeal that were just shy of an all-time high from 2020. Move for the Kids and Cheers & Beers for Ears had their strongest showings to date, eclipsing all previous years of giving, again thanks to initiatives lead by Directors and Associate Board members.

In year three, the grant program has gained traction and grown partnerships with funders to increase total grants well over budget and the previous year's grant totals. Of special note was the securing of the ever helpful, yet rarely seen gifts to General Operating funds, which allowed the Foundation to take on specialty projects such as the new FHSR website, developing marketing materials and purchasing much needed staff computers.

2021 Donations by Category



FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

A review of Operating Expense side of the ledger shows that in the largest expense category - consultants and accounting - we were just slightly under budget due to better preparation and internal accounting practices that eliminated extra time preparing the 2020 Form 990.

General Operating Expenses were over budget, as expected, due to the new FHSR website design, the purchase of Staff computers, and a specialty development project with GG+A. Fortunately, the increased expenses were offset by the 2020 General Operating grants and a Board Director special donation for the GG+A project.

FHSR 2021 FINANCIAL ANALYSIS			
INCOME	BUDGET	2021 FINAL**	Budget vs Actual
General Contributions	40,750	205,699	164,949
Special Events Income	5000	15,300	10,300
Grant Income	75,050	92,000	16,950
TOTAL INCOME	120,800	312,999	192,199
EXPENSES			
Professional Services	93,940	91,003	-2927
Operations Expense	9000	32,184	23184
Fundraising Expense	0	1274	1274
EXPENSES	102,940	124,461	21531
PROGRAMS			
FHSR Funded Program / Pledges	146,100	96,143	-49,947
TOTAL EXPENSES	249,040	220,604	-28,416
Total Income	120,800	312,999	192,199
Program Reserve release*	90,000	105790	15,790
Total Expenses	249,040	220,604	-28,436
NET	-38,240	198,185	236,425
* Reflects money raised in previous years			
** Reflects Unaudited numbers as of 2/2022			

Thank you to all of our families, children and supporters!

On behalf of all the FHSR Boards, we are honored to work helping improve the lives of Illinois deaf and hard of hearing children. We look forward to increased programming in 2022 and creating new opportunities to support our deaf and hard of hearing children and their families.

Thank you to all of our donors and volunteers for helping to make our goals a reality in 2021.

The FHSR Boards and Staff

