



ANNUAL REPORT 2024



OUR MISSION

The Arc of Larimer County promotes and protects the civil rights of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities through individual and systemic advocacy and education, which fosters an inclusive community that embraces people throughout their lifetime to be included in every aspect of community life.



"I told this parent that you
were the most respectful,
knowledgeable, and amazing
advocate in my experience.
I'm making an introduction to
hopefully help this family get what
they see is best for their son!"

- Teacher at Liberty Common School – Fort Collins, Colorado

A LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

I stepped into the Executive Director in July 2024 after years of advocating for my children with disabilities, who are now thriving adults. This journey has strengthened my commitment to ensuring individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) can participate fully in life and have access to essential services. The Arc of Larimer County will continue to advocate for inclusion, supporting access to communities, employment, affordable housing, and education while respecting human dignity and promoting autonomy.

Despite the many transitions over the past few years, one thing remains true: the staff at The Arc of Larimer County works hard to support individuals with IDD and their families. They help educate them on self-advocacy and make sure their voices are heard. Throughout the past year, we have provided advocacy services to individuals with IDD, assisting them in navigating the K-12 and college education systems, Social Security, housing, benefits, and accessing Medicaid Waivers. We have also supported adults and youth involved with the 8th Judicial District Competency teams, aiding employment and resource navigation. This progress has been made possible through collaboration with various organizations, businesses, schools, and community members, enabling us to fulfill our mission effectively.

It truly takes a village to ensure individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) receive essential services and enjoy access to all aspects of life. These collaborations bolster our mission to uphold the civil rights of

individuals with IDD, ensuring they can fully engage in community life and thrive. We are deeply grateful for the ongoing support from our community partners and the organizations committed to building a more inclusive community and protecting the rights of individuals with IDD.

This year, the board of directors for The Arc of Larimer County has achieved significant milestones. Each member contributes unique skills and is actively engaged in advancing our mission. Their commitment to supporting individuals with IDD in Larimer County is evident in our community initiatives and oversight of our strategic plan, which continues to show positive results. The board will continue to support the staff as we implement this plan while ensuring alignment with our mission, leading to tangible outcomes. Their oversight of the organization's financial stability has ensured our economic health, especially as we navigate the ongoing shifts affecting the IDD community.

The Arc of Larimer County board of directors and staff would like to extend our gratitude to the Larimer County community for being a vital support and to our clients for allowing us the privilege of assisting them. We eagerly anticipate another successful year of serving this wonderful community in all the areas mentioned and helping everyone achieve their full potential.

Sincerely,

KKK

Kimberly Aguilar-Pauli, Executive Director



In 2024, we supported 175 children and 194 adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) by protecting their civil rights, navigating complex systems, and accessing resources in our community.

Number of individuals served directly:

Children & Adults: 175 Children, 194 Adults Total Individuals Served in 2024: 369

Main themes addressed in 2024 listed here and throughout the Annual Report:

Education – Our advocates continue to work diligently across our county to address the needs of students in our public education system. This past year, our focus has been to build collaborative relationships with school personnel to problem solve barriers to accessing a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) for individuals on Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and 504 Plans.

Mental Health/Trauma Informed/Behavior — Our advocates worked with individuals and their families to ensure that our clients with mental health challenges are connected to mental health and behavioral resources. We also worked collaboratively with clients' existing mental health teams in conjunction with their Individual Education Plan (IEP) or Service Plan team members.

Case Management – The Arc of Larimer County is working closely with our local case management agency and The Larimer County Department of Human Services to address barriers experienced by our clients when accessing Long-Term Care Medicaid services and case management.

Social Security – One of our advocates received comprehensive training on supporting social security

applications and social security benefits navigation through the SOAR model. This training allows us to better support the social security application process and advise individuals on how to best access this public benefit.

Assessments and Qualification – In 2024, we compiled and continuously updated a list of local resources for psychological testing and evaluations to better support individuals with suspected IDD better understand their disability and support eligibility for disability-based public benefits.

Employment – We supported our clients in getting connected to supported employment resources through the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) and the Larimer County Economic Workforce Development Center to become or remain gainfully employed.

Information and Referral — Our resource assistant and advocates have worked diligently to get our clients connected to resources that support their basic daily needs. We also assisted with referrals and applications for long-term resource needs.

12TH ANNUAL FILM FESTIVAL

Held in-person at the historic Rialto Theater in Loveland, Colorado. The attendees enjoyed light appetizers and live music prior to the films.



Winner of local film submission contest – Taylor Wiginton - Up Syndrome



Pianist – Gary Schmidt



Caterer – Taste Local

DISABILITY ACCEPTANCE AND INCLUSION TRAININGS (DAIT)

As part of our commitment to fostering a more inclusive community, we continue to deliver Disability Acceptance and Inclusion Trainings (DAIT) to employers, organizations, and community members. These hands-on trainings provide a broad understanding of disabilities and practical strategies for supporting individuals of all types of disabilities, both visible and invisible. They also debunk common myths, highlight important mindset shifts for inclusivity, and include interactive simulations to deepen participants' understanding of the lived experience of disability.

The most powerful part of the training is the direct involvement of individuals with lived experience. We are especially thankful to the members of People First of Larimer County who contribute their lived experience as collaborators and co-trainers. Their firsthand experience and practical suggestions have led to meaningful changes in the organizations and departments we have trained.

In 2024, we were able to complete trainings for the City of Fort Collins Natural Areas, Transfort's Dial-a-Ride staff, The City of Fort Collins Utilities Department, and a four-week Disability Acceptance and Inclusion Training Series for all City of Fort Collins staff and personnel. A post-training survey indicated that City staff gained a better understanding of legal protections for individuals with disabilities, increased their awareness of both visible and invisible disabilities, and found that trainers and facilitators were effective in delivering the training.

We deeply appreciate the departments and organizations who have embraced the challenge of self-reflection and are actively working towards greater inclusion. Their willingness to learn and adapt makes a lasting difference in building a more equitable community for all.







LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY

In 2024 The Arc of Larimer County once again pooled our resources and efforts with all the other state Arc Chapters during the legislative session to try and optimize legislative outcomes on behalf of individuals with Intellectual and developmental disability (IDD). Our efforts included supplying educational information for state legislators as well as supporting testimony at various committee meetings in favor of various bills.

Legislative Priorities

HCBS Services-Legislative Priority-support legislation designed to increase funding and community-based options related to Colorado Medicaid waiver-based support services for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

The Arc of Larimer County is focused on helping individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) and their families access community services and stay safe from institutional care, like group homes. We need to improve waiver services by increasing funding so we can better support people with IDD. We pushed for more funding and better access to Colorado's Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) waivers to use resources effectively and create more opportunities for individuals with IDD.

We are dedicated to helping people with IDD find and use support from their communities. We believe that relying only on government services is not enough, so we promote better access to family and community resources. We will work with local communities to identify these supports.

The Arc will also make sure that funding programs like "money follows the person (MFP)" provide enough money for initial placements and ongoing services. We will partner with other organizations to remove bias against institutions in the state's budget system.

Insurance/Medicaid Legislative Priority: support legislation that enhances the quality and quantity of services and supports for individuals with IDD in Larimer County related to applied behavior analysis (ABA) therapy

The Arc of Larimer County works to ensure that people with IDD have access to quality healthcare. We partner with Health First Colorado and local doctors to improve access to primary care, mental health services, and dental care. We also work with disability advocates and healthcare providers to make wellness and preventive care programs available.

Health insurance should meet the medical needs of individuals with IDD, but many plans fall short. Insurers need to fulfill their responsibilities without pushing costs onto state programs or schools, especially during tough economic times. The Arc helps families understand private health insurance and ensures insurers follow fair practices.

We believe ABA therapy is crucial for improving outcomes for individuals with IDD, especially those with autism. The Arc will keep track of discussions about the effectiveness of ABA therapy in Colorado and monitor school and Medicaid policies to ensure continued access to these services.

Additionally, we support laws that promote fair pay and better working conditions for direct service providers.

Education-Legislative Priority-support the passage of legislation providing families of children receiving special education services with more protections and rights related to seclusion/exclusion (time outs, partial school days) and improper restraints in school settings and monitor legislation designed to provide more oversight of Colorado schools regarding these issues.

The U.S. Department of Education is working to eliminate seclusion and restraint in schools. Seclusion often means keeping students away from general school settings, and restraints are still used as disciplinary tools. There is a serious concern that many incidents of seclusion and restraint go unreported or are reported incorrectly.

This past year, The Arc of Larimer County received many messages from families worried about how schools are using "timeouts" or partial school days. These practices often help schools avoid reporting requirements related to seclusion. We will advocate for Colorado's laws and regulations to ensure accurate reporting and hold schools accountable for using "timeouts" or partial school days to wrongly exclude students with intellectual and developmental disabilities from regular education.

LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY CONT.

Career Pathways-Legislative Priority-support workforce development legislation that can lead to increased employment opportunities for people with disabilities, including reducing barriers such as the "benefit cliff."

The Arc of Larimer County is dedicated to helping individuals with IDD make their own choices when it comes to work. They strive to create opportunities that allow people to transition from volunteering to full-time jobs, all while ensuring that these individuals can keep their important government benefits. Unfortunately, nearly 80% of people with IDD are unemployed across the country, highlighting a serious issue (U.S. Department of Labor).

Hiring people with IDD is not only fair but also beneficial for businesses, as these individuals bring unique strengths and talents to the workforce. With Colorado's unemployment rate sitting at 4.3% in 2024, it's crucial that we find new ways to increase job opportunities for those with disabilities. The Arc of Larimer County is committed to leading efforts that boost employment rates for individuals with disabilities. They plan to do this by providing training and resources to employers about the advantages of hiring a diverse workforce.

In addition to employment, The Arc will also keep an eye on other important areas like transportation, the criminal justice system, guardianship, supported decision-making, and various therapy options. They are focused on promoting self-advocacy and improving care services, including providing optional training on how to choose, manage, and let go of personal assistants.

SYSTEMS ADVOCACY

In 2024, The Arc of Larimer County focused time and resources on the following overarching themes and activities in hopes of finding more impactful ways of assisting individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD) and the members of their support groups.

Educational Advocacy: The Arc of Larimer County is a contributing member of the Poudre School District Community Transition Team, which builds partnerships among Poudre School transition staff, local organizations, and community stakeholders to support students with disabilities' ongoing transition to adulthood. As a chair and member of various subcommittees. The Arc is working to improve access and opportunities for all students preparing for transition. We also have membership to both the Poudre School District and Thompson School District Special Education Advisory Committees (SEAC), which advise each district's special education leadership team on how to best support students and families receiving special education services.

Guardianship: In 2024, we provided group workshops and individual advocacy in order to help answer their difficult questions about when guardianships are needed, and how to work with tools such as supported decision making and 'power of attorney' options that can be used as a substitute for guardianship, helping people with IDD retain more control over making the critical decisions that impact the quality of their lives.







Pastels on 5th Street artist – Isabella Aguilar-Pauli



Enjoying a free popcorn and soda at the Film Festival



Door Prize winner at Annual Meeting



Staff participated in Puppy Yoga



SPIN adaptive bike demonstration



High Plains School Volunteer Service Day

THANK YOU FOTZA GTZEAT YEATZ!

On these pages you will find some of our favorite photos from Arc events that took place in 2024.

It was a year in which we combined learning and growing as an agency with some very enjoyable community engagement through time spent with old friends and new. We would like to thank everyone who took the time to participate in an Arc event in the past year, and we look forward to seeing you at more events in the future!







ADDRESSING HOUSING BARRIERS

Finding affordable and accessible housing in our area is a big challenge, especially for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) with low incomes. High housing costs, a lack of accessible units, and complicated eligibility rules make it hard for people to find and keep a stable place to live.

At The Arc of Larimer County, we help individuals navigate these challenges. We assist them in understanding their housing options, connecting them with local resources, and working with housing teams to make sure our clients can stay in their homes. Our team provides support with applications, requests for reasonable accommodations, and advocacy strategies to help prevent eviction or displacement.

We also took part in the State of Colorado HB 23-1296 Housing Subcommittee, collaborating with policymakers and other experts to improve access to housing that is affordable, attainable, and truly accessible for people with disabilities. As part of this effort, we pushed for better tracking of available housing units and a more complete understanding of accessibility—since physical access is just one important part of the bigger picture.

By providing both direct support and advocating for bigger changes, we are working toward a future where everyone we serve has access to safe and stable housing.



CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Our agency has worked diligently over the past year in partnership with the Competency Services Team of Larimer County and The Bridges Program to help protect the civil rights of individuals with IDD who become involved with the criminal justice system in Larimer County.

The Team collaborates with several Larimer County agencies to ensure that criminal justice participants with disabilities receive equitable treatment. The intended outcome of this work is to limit the number of people with mental health or IDD who receive prison sentences, by determining if they have the cognitive ability to understand the court proceedings and aid in their own defense. If an individual is found unable to understand the court proceedings and aid in their own defense. The Arc often supports them through service connection and resource navigation, to the end of mitigating repeat offenses by putting in place the proper services and supports an individual needs to function as a valued member of the community. These supports may include housing placement services, applications for public benefits or supplemental security income, Medicaid waiver services, and/or Medicaid-funded therapy and treatment services.

If the question of competency is raised by the counsel representing a participant or the judge presiding over the case, the participant suspected of possessing a disability is diverted to the competency docket.

Throughout this process, and contingent on court-ordered neuropsychological evaluation findings, The Arc partners with Larimer County court liaisons and competency service specialists to connect participants with court-ordered services that are part of a treatment plan. Even if services are not court ordered. The Arc's role is to guide the participant in understanding and utilizing various services they qualify for through social service and health service agencies, decreasing the likelihood of recidivism by putting the appropriate and necessary supports in place and aiding the participant in successfully reassimilating into the community.

The Arc staff also works with the Larimer County Jail Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Coordinator. who meets with inmates that jail staff suspect may have an IDD. Once referred by the ADA Coordinator, our staff meets with the inmate to provide information about The Arc's advocacy services. Typically, the focus is on helping them navigate housing and waiver (benefit) services. Our staff also assists inmates and their families in obtaining proper documentation of their disabilities as well as with instating services to maintain their stability within the community upon exiting the criminal system to minimize the likelihood of recidivism.

SUPPORTING FUTURE LEADERS

During the 2024 Spring and Summer semesters, we had the privilege of supervising Colorado State University Occupational Therapy doctorate students for their internship placements. These placements aimed to support the students' understanding of advocacy through their professions' lens, bring awareness to the systemic challenges individuals with IDD face, and encourage them to incorporate advocacy into their future practice.

We also became a host site for a Self-Advocate Resource and Technical Assistance Center (SARTAC) Fellow who will utilize short films to raise awareness on the challenges individuals with disabilities face in self-advocating and accessing necessary accommodations. By fostering these future leaders' growth, The Arc of Larimer County is contributing to a legacy of advocacy—where they can build upon the lessons learned at our organization to drive systemic change and champion disability rights in their respective fields.











PEOPLE FIRST

People First of Larimer County is a self-directed community of adults, advised by The Arc of Larimer County, who have intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Mission:

The mission of People First of Larimer County is to promote equity for people with disabilities to live the lives they want by fostering inclusion and self-determination in every aspect of community life.

To learn more visit https://thearcoflarimercounty.org/what-we-do/people-first/

2024 Accomplishments:

- Participated in the Autism Fair at Fort Collins Museum of Discovery by hosting an information table
- Attended a Community Forum, to give input on accessible trails, with the Natural Areas Accessibility Committee, part of the City of Fort Collins Natural Areas Department
- Attended the Disability Rights Advocacy Day at the State Capitol in Denver, which included giving testimony for various Bills being reviewed

- Attended the Disability Policy Seminar in Washington, D.C.
- Hosted a Disability Acceptance and Inclusivity Training for City of Fort Collins public transportation operator Transfort
- Filled blessing bags for the Murphy Center to be given to those in our community experiencing homelessness
- Held a Holiday Party in December for members of People First



To further our mission, we have worked diligently over the past two years to establish strong and lasting partnerships with community organizations and local schools through outreach initiatives. We have expanded these efforts to provide quality training for community members, employers, and their employees. Our services include guidance on the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

Having an in-depth knowledge of the services available in our community is crucial to our work. We believe that a strong network of community partners is essential for effectively serving and supporting individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) in our community. Our outreach efforts help our clients build relationships, engage in enjoyable activities, and foster a greater sense of belonging within their community.

In 2024, The Arc of Larimer County hosted an in-person Financial Planning for People with IDD workshop at Ginger & Baker. Approximately thirty-five people registered and attended this free workshop. Luke Wheeland and William "Will" Beyers III facilitated the workshop and provided knowledgeable answers to questions posed by the audience.

In 2024, we partnered with several local agencies and organizations in both the non-profit and for-profit sectors to provide essential education and support for individuals with IDD. This collaboration ensures that they have access to employment, housing, education, and resources. The more connections we establish as an organization, the easier it becomes to assist individuals and families in navigating the complex processes and systems that those with IDD face. By breaking down barriers and linking individuals to their community, we provide greater opportunities and access to valuable resources and training.



was treated fairly and got the help she

you did and will never forget it!"

needed and deserved. I appreciate all that

- Sandra

THANK YOU

Thank You For The Generosity of our 2024 Donors:

Kimberly Aguilar-Pauli Leticia Arguello Ana & Mike Astley Maggie Baldwin Jane Barber Rachel Bedard Nathan Beers Philip & Debbie Beers Shannon Benitez **Donald Blanchard** Audra & Trey Brickner Lane & Nick Bryant lames Carr Crystal Chevalier Deborah Childs Aimee Chlebnik Dean Cockroft Ronald Coleman Mandy Crist Jennifer D Van Norman John & Amy Kossler Shelly Densberger Georgia Edson Ioseph Fanelli Sara Freeman Eric Fried Malachy Garbott Kristen Gilbert Norine Gill lessica Grady Walt & Martha Grady Bettie Greenberg Ingrid & Steve Grotheer John McIntosh

Kathleen Hartman John Hartung Ioan Hatch **Ashley Heustis** Beth Higgins Ioseph Hoefler Cynthia Holappa Andy & Barbara Holdgate James & Kathryn Hulings Hayley Inman Mary Ann Jacobosky Celeste Jordan Taylor Kalmus John Kefalas Jennifer Kenyon Dan & Denise Kocol **Drew Koff** Deana Landrigan Maribel larsen Katrina Lawrence lesse Lipson Elizabeth Little Kris Lovell Michail Shaw & Steve Lumb Brian McAlpine leff & Debbie McCubbin

Steve Mckenzie Vicky McLane Doug McNair Yvette & Rod Menking Micki Rae Miller Yvonne D. Myers Marsha Nelson Peter Nelson Kendal Nolan Shaila Parashar lavme & Teresa Parker Kristin Parsons Ion-Mark C. Patterson Andrew Persch Hanni Raley Grayson Reed Nancy Reilly Nancy Reynolds Sheri & Larry Roos Nick Roussos Rachel Ruhlen David Sachau Helen Sanford Pat Shettle Kathyrn Shrum Michael Sisneros Jerry Sisson **Bradley Smith** Lorraine Snow Amanda Snowdon Iill Sorden

James Stanley Tanya Summer Chervl & Jessica Sutherland Hanaa Thigeel Lori Topping Lisa Travis Catherine Tulenko Kathleen Vervalin **Jennifer Vervier** Heidi Wallack Mary Walton **Julian Wang** Susan & ChingYu Wang Lisa Wassell Frances Way **Nancy West** Howard & Laurel Williams Alyssa Wilson Mary Zaks

With Gratitude to Our 2024 Volunteers.

Together you donated 551 hours to The Arc of **Larimer County!**

Kendal Nolan Phil Beers **Drew Koff** Linda Miller Micki Miller Sara Freeman Andy Persch Steve Grotheer Yvonne Meyer

Corporate Funders

arc Thrift store Beyers Law LLC Bohemian Foundation CSU Developmental Disabilities Lab FirstBank Foothills Gateway

Hearts & Horses Therapeutic Riding Center High Country Beverage ILC Colorado Services Kroger/King Soopers Long Building Technologies Markley Motors

Rachel Souders

Old Town Media Our House Inc. Poudre Valley REA Soukup, Bush, & Associates The Rolls Family Fund **UCHealth**

MEET THE TEAM





Patrick Shettle



Lorraine Snow



Hanaa Thigeel Administrative/Resource Assistant



Anais Campbell Advocacy Manager



Youth & Adult Advocate





Nami Novak



Micaela Herman Youth & Adult Advocate



Julian Wang Peer Advocate

2024 **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Executive Committee President: Phil Beers Vice President: Kendal Nolan Secretary: Sara Freeman Treasurer: Drew Koff

Directors Micki Miller **Andrew Persch** Steve Grotheer Yvonne Meyers

COMMITTEES

The Arc of Larimer County was represented through service on the following Committees:

- 8th Judicial Competency Services Team8th Judicial District Juvenile Services Planning Committee (ISPC)
- Arc's National Center on Criminal Justice and Disability (NCCID)
- Colorado Executives of The Arc (CEARC)
- Colorado State University Occupational Therapy Department Program Advisory Committee
 The Center for Youth Voice, Youth Choice (CYVYC)
- Youth Ambassadors Guardianship
- DHS Adult Protective Services Team
- Department of Health Care Policy & Financing (HCPF)
- Dial-A-Ride and Transit Accessibility Committee (DARTAC)
- Estes Nonprofit NetworkFoothills Gateway Community Advisory Committee
- Fort Collins Area Interfaith Council
- Fort Collins Chamber of Commerce
- Fort Collins City Council: Disability Advisory Board
- State of Colorado House Bill 23-1296 Housing Subcommittee

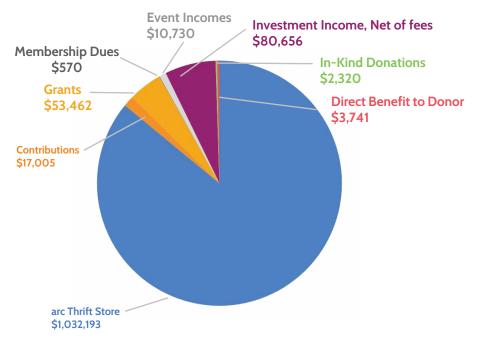
- Human Rights Committee
 Inclusive Housing Coalition
 Interfaith Council Disability Team
- Joint CMA/County? Advocate Partners Committee-
- Juvenile Competency Team
- Larimer County Office of Emergency Management Access and Functional Needs Group
- Leadership PSD (Poudre School District) Committee
 Loveland Disability Advisory Commission (DAC)
- Loveland Latin Community Alliance
- National Council on Disability
- Northern Colorado Mobility Committee
- People First of Larimer County Legislative and Leadership Committee
- Poudre School District Community Transition Team (CTT) Chairs and Subcommittee Member
- **Project Search Steering Committee**
- Sexual Assault Victims Advocate Center (SAVA)
- SAY Community Outreach Committee-Thompson School District
- Self-Advocates Becoming Empowered (SABE)
- Self-Advocacy Resource and Technical Assistance Center Advisory Committee (SARTAC)
- Speaking For Ourselves (SFO)
- Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) Poudre School District
- Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) Thompson School District
- Stone Soup Community Reentry Coalition

City Government Meetings:

- City of Fort Collins City Council
- Loveland City Council
- Wellington Board of Trustees
- City of Fort Collins Disability Advisory Board

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

Fiscal Year 2024 Revenue: \$1,193,195



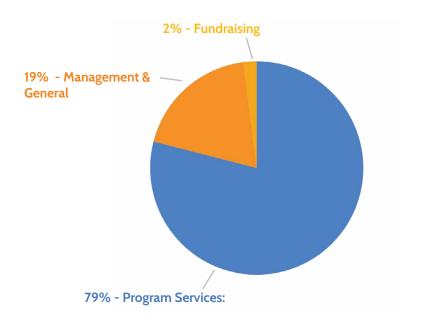
^{*} Source 1: Internal Financial Reporting. Source 2: 2024 CPA-Reviewed Financial Statements (Reviewed by RLR CPAs, Fort Collins, Draft)**

TRAS

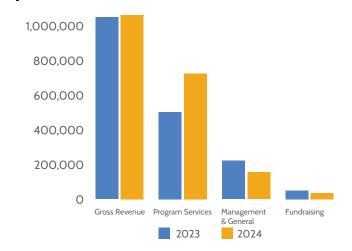
* A Full Report of FY 2024 is Available Upon Request

Expenses:

In 2024, 79% of every dollar went to Program Services



Comparison 2023 & 2024



^{**} The Arc of Larimer County posts its Form 990 at arclc.org or you can call (970 204 6991 x O) or email (info@arclc.org) us to request a copy of the Form











