

2020: A Year of Perseverance



San Antonio Oasis
2020 Annual Report



Greetings from Oasis

2020 was a challenging year for all of us. In March, we had to suspend classes due to the Covid pandemic. In trying to figure out how to continue serving you best, we quickly transitioned from in-person programming to online learning, podcasts, and making calls to reassure our participants. Our goal was to adapt to keep you, our members, safe and offer new ways to keep you engaged, informed, and connected.

We sincerely appreciate the support of our sponsors, partners, and donors who went “above and beyond”—helping Oasis stay financially stable. Additionally, we appreciate your help getting the word out of the transition to the community. I want to thank the Oasis staff for their commitment and dedication in 2020 and beyond. It is with teamwork that we were able to persevere through an incredibly challenging situation.

In September of 2020, we began offering in-person classes once again. However, we continue hosting online courses for participants who feel more comfortable remaining virtual.

San Antonio Oasis remains dedicated to our mission of promoting healthy aging through lifelong learning, active lifestyles, and volunteer engagement in whatever capacity we can to sustain a solid connection to our quality programs. We look forward to expanding our services to even more older adults in the San Antonio community for years to come.

You have kept us strong and focused through not only your generous support but your interest and appreciation of Oasis. Thank you for standing by us!



Brenda Schmachtenberger
Executive Director
San Antonio Oasis

Locally, nationally, and globally 2020 was a year like no other. The social and economic impacts of a pandemic were most acutely felt by lower-income communities, families with children at home due to school closures, and those most vulnerable to symptoms of the disease—older adults. Oasis centers across the country were forced to suspend all in-person operations. Exercise, lifelong learning, and social events, classes, and programs were canceled. Tutors were abruptly cut off from the students they were mentoring with our nearly 700 elementary school partners across the country. By the end of March, we faced the immense challenge of sustaining our mission when everything about the way we connected with participants and communities was no longer possible.

Local and national Oasis leaders and teams quickly shifted focus to a contact-free form of engagement, launching virtual classes through national and regional platforms. In June of 2020, our virtual national Oasis center, oasiseverywhere.org, was born, and within months over 1,000 people were enrolling in live interactive classes. Local Oasis network centers quickly pivoted in sync, offering virtual courses to their Oasis communities, and simulcasting their best content on Oasis Everywhere. The virtual programs allowed participants to continue lifelong learning while following stay-at-home orders, protecting their health and community. Oasis quickly attracted current Oasis participants, as well as new participants discovering us for the first time as a virtual education resource.

As a leader in technology education, we are committed to teaching new digital adopters the basics of safe internet use and building confidence in navigating a digital world. Conversely, the pandemic revealed the reality of living without home internet. The “digital divide” is very real for hundreds of thousands of American families and seniors. Barriers to technology exist across a range of demographic boundaries. As a result, our virtually engaged audience is less diverse. We recognize the need to span these gaps of disproportion to reach ALL older adults. As we emerge from the pandemic and begin operating as dual-venue centers, offering the option of in-person and online classes, we are addressing disparities between our participants. Through new and renewed partnerships, resource communication, presence in community events, and programs not dependent on technology we are continuing our mission to serve seniors across the country in every economical circumstance. Perseverance got us through 2020 making us stronger and expanding our mission. We will emerge resilient and look forward to being together again.



Paul Weiss, PhD
President
Oasis Institute

No Better Place

It's rare to find Frances Stull at home. The busy "people person" volunteers at San Antonio Oasis four days a week, and is the travel coordinator for multiple trips that Oasis plans for members each year.

Frances joined Oasis in 2001 and began volunteering with administrative duties. Sometimes she went on day trips with staff members to help. In 2010, she became the dedicated volunteer travel coordinator, also known as the Oasis escort, to plan multiple trips each year.

Her natural organizational skills come in handy as she works with travel agencies and coordinates all the necessary documents, reservations, payments and itineraries for each trip. She also keeps track of participants to make sure no one is left behind and everyone is doing okay.

"We look out for each other on trips," Frances says. "I really enjoy doing this. I'm happiest around other people. When we travel together, I ask for trip suggestions and we recognize birthdays. It's lots of fun."

The groups have gone on fascinating trips near and far, including Fredericksburg, Georgetown, and San Marcos, as well as trips to wineries, breweries, and local galleries.

"I love to hear that people enjoyed the trip," Frances says. "It feels good to get people out of their houses to do things they say they would not have done on their own."

After one day trip in early 2020, the remainder of the trips were canceled for the year. However, they are back on the books for 2021. The trips include Yellowstone National Park, Mount Rushmore, Nashville, and Dickens on the Strand in Galveston.

Frances says Oasis has become a second home to her since her husband passed away in 2014. "I don't know what I would do with my time if I didn't volunteer at Oasis. It's lonely to stay at home day after day. I can feel yucky when I first wake up, but I get up, get dressed and go to Oasis and forget my aches and pains because I'm involved and around people. I think Oasis is the greatest thing ever for seniors."

As a volunteer and a donor, Frances was an important part of creating the new Oasis center in San Antonio. "I can't think of a better way to spend my money than to donate to Oasis," she says. "There's no better place."



“I’m happiest around other people. When we travel together.”

Walking Safely Through the Pandemic

For the last three years, Alonso Jasso has explored a different park every Friday as part of the San Antonio Oasis Senior Steppers. The walking group meets every week to walk two to three miles in various parks around the city. It's a social and exercise experience Alonso looks forward to and continued to enjoy even through the pandemic.

"We kept going through the pandemic, although with fewer numbers," Alonso says. "It was nice to get outside during that time and was the only thing I was doing during the pandemic. We stayed safe by social distancing and wearing masks. Now it's good to see more people coming back."

The Senior Stepper instructor scouts the park to map out where to walk, considering things like paved trails, the level of incline and distance. Then each week, the Senior Steppers meet at the designated park to walk together.

"We look out for each other and have a chance to talk and get to know each other," Alonso says. "The core group of people are very positive, upbeat people. Being part of Senior Steppers is good socially and physically. When I finish walking, I feel a sense of accomplishment. I wish I had joined this group even earlier."

Edie DeVilbiss moved to San Antonio in July 2020 after she retired as a chaplain. Her sister, Carita, was already part of Senior Steppers, so Edie joined her to meet people in her new city. Both sisters are widows and live together now. "For months of COVID-19, Senior Steppers was my social life since I didn't know people in San Antonio," Edie says. "It was very helpful because I met wonderful people. I also love seeing the parks. I wouldn't know anything about San Antonio if I wasn't part of this."

Edie realizes the health benefits of Senior Steppers are vital. "The movement and being outdoors is so good physically, mentally and spiritually. And the social connections have made me feel more resilient because isolation is devastating for mental health. Senior Steppers is keeping me lively."



Local Impact

189

Volunteers

6,656

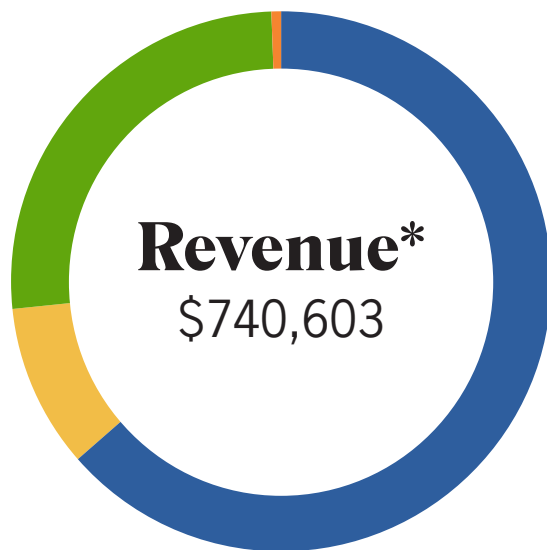
Volunteer Hours

1,258

Participants

8,796

Class Enrollments



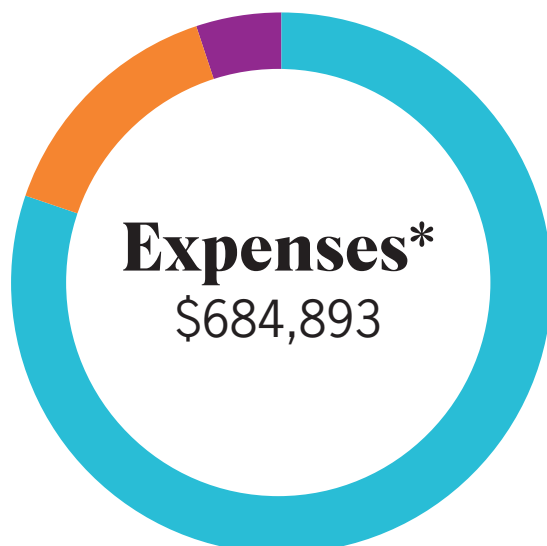
Revenue*
\$740,603

\$470,599
Contributions & Grants

\$192,753
In-Kind

\$73,067
Program Revenue

\$4,184
Other



Expenses*
\$684,893

\$549,852
Program Services

\$100,280
General & Administrative

\$34,761
Fundraising

* Source: 2020 Financial Audit

National Impact

657

Schools

4,500

Volunteers

1,362

Communities Served

4,015

Tutors

82,675

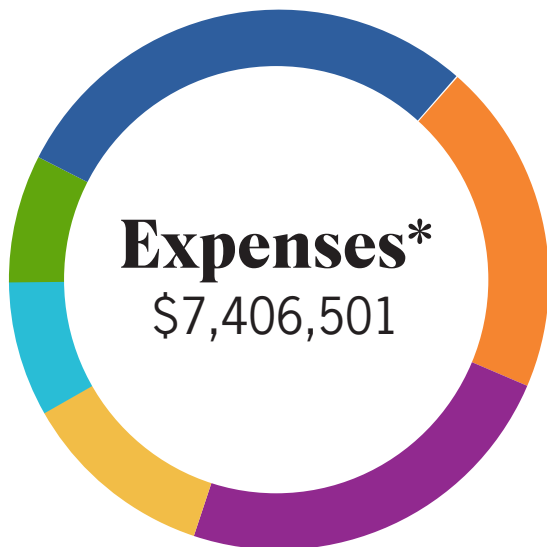
Class Enrollments

115,000

Volunteer Hours

27,250

Participants



\$2,139,445
Health Programs

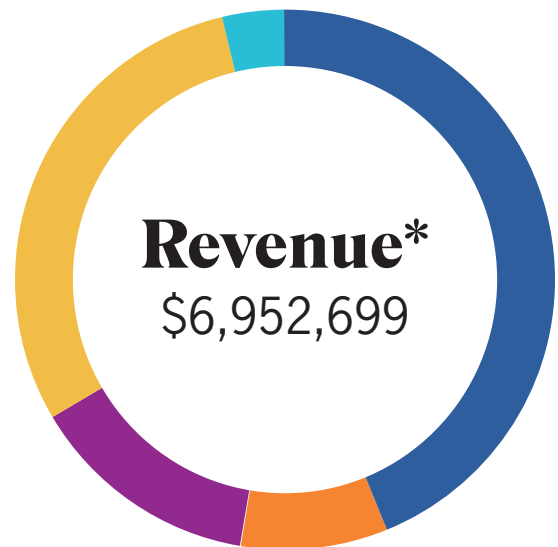
\$561,469
Technology Literacy

\$1,488,532
Education Programs

\$1,750,172
General & Administrative

\$862,741
Volunteer Programs

\$604,142
Fundraising



\$3,049,109
Contributions & Grants

\$609,670
In-Kind

\$2,074,862
Government Grants

\$257,121
Other

\$961,937
Program & Partner Revenue

*Source: 2020 Consolidated Financial Audit

Striving to Stay Fit with Texercise

Geoffrey KongQue and his mother, Dorothy, began taking classes with San Antonio Oasis about two years ago. Dorothy suffered a stroke five years ago that resulted in her developing vascular dementia. Participating in classes at Oasis has made a tremendously positive impact on both Geoffrey and Dorothy's physical and mental health. Geoffrey first learned of Oasis after attending a seminar at the VA on caregiving. He describes the experience: "Oasis gave a comprehensive lecture as part of a program funded by the Roslyn Carter Trust. It was an excellent program with lots of helpful information and handouts." After the presentation Geoffrey browsed through Oasis classes and signed his mother up. Geoffrey and Dorothy took their first Oasis class together and they were hooked!

Dorothy's favorite class is Texercise, which compliments the Sit and Be Fit program she watches on TV at home. "She gets 45 minutes at Oasis and then another 30 minutes at home. It is very important for seniors to keep moving and these programs are very effective at accomplishing this," says Geoffrey.

When the global pandemic hit, ensuing a total shut down—the realities of living through it gradually manifested into health problems for both Geoffrey and his mother. Geoffrey explains, "We take blood sugar, blood pressure, and weight every morning. When we were shut down the numbers got bad." Not only did they suffer physiological effects, but Geoffrey also noticed a decline in Dorothy's mental health. He states, "Folks with cognitive challenges need schedules and routine to help them through the day."

In February of 2021, Geoffrey says he and his mother were "finally" vaccinated and started to get out more. When the San Antonio Oasis center re-opened the two were "very happy to attend face-to-face." He says, "When we restarted the numbers got better." Referring to those of the daily blood sugar, blood pressure, and weight monitoring. "Mother's numbers look like a 20-year-old!" he exclaims.

Geoffrey describes San Antonio Oasis as "spot on in delivering services to the community." He goes on to



talk about how much they enjoy the exercise classes as well as the lectures. He mentions a class he recently took on the French Revolution and described it as "great" and noted how well attended and very interesting it was. Geoffrey concludes by saying "I can't wait for the class on cacti and succulent—I keep killing mine!" The story of Geoffrey and his mother is just one of many reporting the benefits of lifelong learning. The pandemic presented unimaginable challenges, but Oasis, along with its participants persevered.

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