“Whole Learning will always have this big place in our heart. It kind of saved our family. I feel like in a lot of ways, it saved my son. It saved me in different ways. And my daughter, I mean she was never happier than when she was there.”

AOWL PARENT
An annual report should tell you about the past year. We can all agree, the past year working through the challenges created by the pandemic makes a year feel like a decade! Despite the circumstances, Academy of Whole Learning (AOWL) thrived! And given our success in managing our programming and preparing for the future, this report will also be a peek forward, not just a look back.

Late summer 2020, as we were entering the new school year, we confidently made the decision to return to in-person learning. We had the staff and infrastructure to do so, but more importantly we knew it was the right decision for our students. We returned to in-person learning grateful for each member of our AOWL community.

In a pandemic year, where many classrooms were on a screen, we were together. Our staff, families, board of trustees and community members worked tirelessly to keep our students safe. Distance or in-person learning was offered to all families. To help our in-person students learn how to be flexible with distance learning, we met diligently every single week to evaluate and adapt to unknowable circumstances. The plans we put in place for the year matched the recommendations of the experts, and our students continued to build their skills and excel.

Our clinic doors have remained opened and in-person throughout the pandemic. Not surprisingly, the demand for mental health services continued to rise this year. With the generous support of a benefactor (or “a grant”), we secured funds to hire and train new clinic staff. This made it possible for us to serve most of the children who were on our long waiting list, as well as continuing to serve our current clients.

Our adult program, in its pilot year, was named one of the best adult programs in the Twin Cities. We are now approved through the state as a Community Partner with the Department of Employment and Economic Development.

Our enrichment programming continued throughout the year, virtually and in person. For the first time, our summer program enrolled more students from the community than from the school. The future is bright for our programming that builds social skills and offers neurodiverse students opportunities they could not get elsewhere.

Together, we worked to hold our biggest fundraiser online, generating a record-breaking amount of donations. Thank you to our generous donors who made it possible for us to continue a broad range of programming in a year of great challenges.

In a year when many organizations were on hold due to the disruption to their services, together, we took a leap of faith and secured AOWL’s future. With the generous support of major donors who came alongside us, we purchased a building and campus that will be our permanent home.

Last but not least, at this writing, renovation has begun on our new campus. Because of you, we are truly Building our Future – Together. And that future is boundless.
An accredited, private, K-12 school for learners with autism and related learning differences, Academy of Whole Learning provides a unique learning environment that meets each student’s sensory needs and learning style.

While we have existed since 2003, we’re essentially a start-up – passionate about our purpose and innovating every step of the way to meet the needs and fulfill the promise of our community. We have grown each year, whether by adding grades, electives, or staff, like the behavior therapists in each classroom who work side-by-side with our amazing teachers. Just as we’ve grown, so has enrollment. In fact, it’s more than quadrupled in the past 10 years, as more and more families realize we offer not just an alternative to traditional schools, but an avenue to unlock the potential for learning, belonging, and succeeding.

WHO WE SERVE

- **DIVERSITY**
  - 8.2% Hispanic or Latino
  - 1.3% Middle Eastern Semitic
  - 9.5% Black or African American
  - 6.8% Asian
  - 4.1% American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 1.3% Declined to Respond
  - 82.2% White

- **GENDER**
  - 18 Females
  - 54 Males
  - 1 Non-binary

- **Number of students received financial aid, with an average gift size of $16,508**

- **Number of cities from where our students travel**

THE NEED

- 1 in 42 children in Minnesota has ASD

- High school graduation rates for students with disabilities are roughly 20% lower than for other students

HOW WE SERVE STUDENTS

We meet each student where they are and create a tailored plan to unlock their potential. We observe, adapt, and apply behavior strategies while teaching, through the pairing of experienced behavior therapists with teachers in each classroom. We also hire teachers who have both special education backgrounds and subject matter expertise. Through this holistic approach, we help our students build both executive functioning and academic strength to excel inside and outside the classroom.

- 4:1 student to staff ratio
- Behavior therapists and teachers CO-LEAD EACH CLASSROOM
- Students can be DUALLY ENROLLED in school and with Therapy Services — in fact, more than half of students are — to continue academic learning while addressing social-emotional/behavioral needs

SUCCESS STORY

**THEN**

“By December of 6th grade Owen was put in a special education resource room. Here he spent four hours a day in a windowless room, away from all but a few other students. He was in crisis. Our family was in crisis. We couldn’t find a solution. We were worried for our son. We were worried for our family.”

**NOW**

“He’s a thriving young man who has friends, is accepted for who he is... the artist and unique kiddo who just wants to be hugged. Our family can now embrace and look forward to his future.”

BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE IN THE NOW

Thanks to the first phase of our capital campaign, Unlock Potential, we have a new campus in Golden Valley (see pages 12-13). Once the campaign is finished, the campus will be fully renovated and ready for controlled growth.

Our plan for the K-12 school is to grow from 80 students enrolled to 125, continuing to offer a calm environment where holistic learning can flourish.
STAYING ON STRATEGY: PROGRESS DURING A PANDEMIC

Despite the pandemic, we continued to move forward on our strategic plan.

- Therapy Services is now credentialed with seven major insurance companies, including HealthPartners locally and Cigna nationally.
- We applied for and received a grant to double the size of our mental and behavioral therapy staff to better meet the needs of children and families on our extensive waitlist.
- We are now certified through the Minnesota Department of Human Services, which means we can provide services to students who receive medical assistance.

WHO WE HELP

In 2020-21 despite the pandemic, we worked with nearly 70 clients individually through a combination of in-person and telehealth visits. We also helped 91 clients through our Therapeutic Groups.

THE NEED

FACING MENTAL ILLNESS

1 in 5 Minnesotans face mental illness every year*  

WHO RECEIVES TREATMENT

53% of adults  

54% of adolescents  

Only 53% of adults and 54% of adolescents with mental illness receive treatment*

WHAT WE DO

Therapy Services is one of only a few Twin Cities’ providers bringing mental health, social-emotional, behavioral, physical, occupational, and speech therapy together in a single location. We are the only one co-located with a school.

Starting with a diagnostic assessment, we then create a customized approach in partnership with the family and school (when clients are also students). We have trained therapists in:

- Psychotherapy: addressing the social-emotional mental health for children with (but not limited to):
  - Behavioral challenges
  - Mood and anxiety disorders
  - Depression
  - Developmental issues
  - Autism Spectrum Disorders
  - ADHD
- We also work with parents to improve functioning of family systems
- Accelerated Resolution Therapy
- Intensive Behavior Intervention (1:1 individual and family skills training) focusing on
  - Communication
  - Socialization
  - Repetitive behaviors
  - Behavior regulation
- Provide Onsite Rehabilitation Therapies
  - Occupational
  - Physical
  - Speech
- Testing & Assessments

Our trained therapists also lead Therapeutic Group sessions. Research shows this kind of therapy is effective thanks to the increased feedback (from the therapist and other group members), modeling (by the therapist and other group members), and the opportunities to improve social skills through peer interaction.

HOW WE SERVE CLIENTS

SUCCESS STORY

“Kai was getting more and more anxious every day. It got to the point that he was throwing up every day before school. Anxiety is all-consuming for him. I’ve seen him be unable to relate to people, unable to learn. Children like Kai with multiple diagnoses who need help the most have the hardest time finding a therapist who understands all of the conditions they face.”

“He had gotten further in four and a half months in therapy at Academy of Whole Learning than he had two years before that. We are seeing what real-life magic is. It’s one team, it’s one dream...the entire school and the therapy and what we are doing at home is really reinforcing and really starting to work. It gets his mind and body to a place where he is ready to learn.”

500% BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE IN THE NOW

Our plan for Therapy Services is to grow capacity to serve 500 clients each year – that’s a 500 percent increase. The need is there; we are confident we can meet that need with our unique approach and blended expertise.

*MN Department of Human Services, 2017
*Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2015
ADULT EDUCATION

Launched in 2020-21, Academy of Whole Learning now offers a holistic program to help young adults on the autism spectrum or with related neurodiverse challenges live and work independently with confidence. More than a set of classes, we teach students the mindsets to be forward thinkers, the insights to command their own thought processes, and the social and vocational skills necessary to thrive in their communities.

WHO WE HELP

In its debut year, we worked with 5 young adults from ages 19 to 22.

THE NEED

66% Studies estimate 66% of adults with ASD are unemployed

39% Only 39% of people with ASD who start college, finish college

42% 42% of people with ASD in their early 20s have never worked for money

19% Far fewer young adults with autism live independently after high school (19%) compared to nearly 80% of those with learning disabilities

SUCCESS STORY

“Then”

“He was [at a] third-grade level in 6th grade, and he was bullied. It was extremely bad. He completely shut down, mentally, emotionally. We ended up having to put him in a mental health facility.”

“Now”

“I believe [Academy of Whole Learning] saved Aris’ life, truly. I can honestly see him having a job, living on his own, and I think Academy of Whole Learning has helped in so many ways giving him the confidence; giving me the confidence in my son... I can see [Aris’s] future, and it’s really bright.”

HOW WE SERVE CLIENTS

Using research-based assessments for each student, we pinpoint areas for growth. Keeping class sizes small and student-to-teacher ratios low, we work through each individual plan to provide guidance, skills, and real-life practice.

We offer full-time, part-time, and flexible scheduling. Our classes cover topics including:

- Employment skills
- Independent living
- Social skills
- Community participation
- Self-determination
- Post-secondary education
- Social recreation

One of the ways we prepare students for independence is integrated work opportunities, for example in an assisted-living facility. Last year, our first year of this partnership, students were responsible for cleaning, organizing, and completing paperwork, doing a COVID screening process with employees, and interacting in social activities with the residents. At the end, each participant was offered employment, based on their excellent performance!

BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE IN THE NOW

We know the need is high for neurodiverse adults who want to live independently but aren’t quite ready yet. Once we’re on the new campus, we’ll have more room to grow. We’re also actively pursuing partnerships for job training, housing, and social interactions. We plan to increase capacity to enroll 40 students each year.

STAYING ON STRATEGY: PROGRESS DURING A PANDEMIC

Despite the pandemic, we continued to move forward on our strategic plan.

- We launched our Adult Education Program!
- We now provide students ages 18+ additional opportunities, skills, and training to live confident, connected, independent lives.
Enrichment is both a separate set of activities and at the same time a vital component of our holistic approach. While anyone can participate in Enrichment offerings without being a student of the school or a client of the clinic, many participants are both students and clients, epitomizing the benefits of our wrap-around approach to unlock each individual’s full potential.

From after-school clubs to summer camps, we design engaging activities where students develop leadership skills, become more self-directed, and experience success in new settings outside the classroom or home.

**WHO WE SERVE**

75 students went to Bridge the Gap summer camp in 20-21, with over 50% being community students (non-AOWL)

120 club enrollments throughout the school year

**THE NEED**

Children diagnosed on the spectrum can react to the world differently, and that includes human interactions. Behaviors related to social skills can be a barrier to successful relationships, learning, and navigating any process with other people, from going to the grocery store to playing a sport. These include:

- Difficulty reading non-verbal cues
- Literal interpretations (which makes jokes and sarcasm hard to understand)
- Making appropriate eye contact
- Understanding personal space
- Recognizing and understanding feelings in themselves and others

**HOW WE SERVE STUDENTS**

Our Enrichment programs include:

**AFTER-SCHOOL CLUBS**

- Tech
- Dungeons & Dragons
- Gaming
- Flag Football
- Minecraft
- Arts & Crafts
- Mindfulness & Yoga
- Lego club
- Drama

Strengthens leadership, teamwork, social skills, social awareness, social connection, decision-making, and communication.

**BRIDGE THE GAP SUMMER CAMP**

- Sports
- Tech
- Environmental Science
- Art & Animation
- Reading, English Language Arts, & Math
- High School Skills

Offers students unique opportunities for enrichment and fun in academics and essential social and life skills with trained counselors.

**IN-VIVO LEARNING**

Learning through experiences like:
- Field trips
- Dinner & a movie
- Painting parties
- Bowling

Builds valuable team-based skills, while providing the joy of playing competitive sports.

**PARTNERSHIPS**

- Breck
- Special Olympics

**BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE IN THE NOW**

Our new campus features fabulous outdoor space for camps – our plan is to grow from hosting 100 summer campers to 250! And thanks to our splendid supporters, we’re renovating specific spaces to support clubs, activities, and athletics.

**STAYING ON STRATEGY: PROGRESS DURING A PANDEMIC**

Despite the pandemic, we continued to move forward on our strategic plan.

- We continued to offer our high-quality programming (clubs, summer camp, and sports) with both virtual and in-person options.
- In our Bridge the Gap Summer Camp programming, we grew our community reach with nearly 40 non-AOWL students attending.

**SUCCESS STORY**

“The after-school programs and summer camp are also amazing. He loves the enrichment programs. Our son participates in all the enrichment programs and is so excited to participate. He can’t wait to get up in the morning. He gets up early every day and chooses not to do other things outside of school if it conflicts with one of the programs.”

**ENRICHMENT**

“These programs create normalcy. They integrate social learning. It’s safe and it’s simple and they get to hang out with kids just like them.”
While the pandemic caused a slight delay, we successfully moved ahead with our goal to buy a new facility to call our own. We found a location in Golden Valley that met all our criteria! Thanks to a vital, valued group of supporters, we bought the property in February 2021. Renovation started in October and our goal is to move all of our staff and programming to our new location in the summer of 2022.

WHY THE CAPITAL CAMPAIGN?
Helping Academy of Whole Learning grow equates to helping more families whose children are just surviving when they could be on a journey with their tribe to thriving. This is not a campaign about simply getting bigger to serve more people. This is about the right kinds of spaces to fully meet the needs of our students, unlocking the potential they all have for a better today AND a brighter future.

125 students each year learning to their full potential

500 people getting the mental, emotional, behavioral help they need to live a full life

40 adults each year ready to work and live independently

1 campus where we can create space for today and adapt for tomorrow

SPACE FOR...
- More classrooms
- Life Skills Kitchen
- Outdoor gross motor skills
- ADA accessible entry
- A gym!
- Room to adapt and grow...

ARTIST RENDERINGS OF OUR FUTURE SPACE

COMMUNITY ROOM
LOWER SCHOOL CLASSROOMS
GYM INTERIOR
EXTERIOR VIEW FROM BOONE AVE
VIEW FROM SECOND FLOOR
NEW ENTRY
### Financials

#### Student Enrollment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Enrollment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-14</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-15</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015-16</td>
<td>39</td>
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<td>2016-17</td>
<td>54</td>
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<td>2017-18</td>
<td>58</td>
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<tr>
<td>2018-19</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019-20</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020-21</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Total Revenue

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Revenue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>$2,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-14</td>
<td>$2,500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-15</td>
<td>$3,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015-16</td>
<td>$3,500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016-17</td>
<td>$4,000,000</td>
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<td>2017-18</td>
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<tr>
<td>2018-19</td>
<td>$5,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019-20</td>
<td>$5,500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020-21</td>
<td>$6,000,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Expense Breakdown

- **Program**: 69%
- **Administrative**: 22%
- **Development**: 9%

#### Revenue by Type

- **Support**: 73%
- **Tuition & Fees**: 18%
- **Therapy Services**: 6%
- **Program Services**: 2%
- **Other Income**: 1%

### Income Statement

**Fiscal Year Ended July 31, 2021**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Support &amp; Revenues</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuition &amp; Fees</td>
<td>$2,290,216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Aid</td>
<td>($310,815)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributions &amp; Grants</td>
<td>$7,916,687</td>
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<tr>
<td>Therapy Service Income</td>
<td>$660,253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clubs, Summer Camp &amp; Others</td>
<td>$229,398</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investments</td>
<td>$67,762</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Income</td>
<td>$7,908</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Support & Revenues**: $10,861,409

**Net Assets Released from Restriction**: $0

**Total Support & Revenues**: $10,861,409

### Expenses

- **Program**: $2,402,406
- **Management & General**: $793,638
- **Fundraising**: $304,468

**Total Expenses**: $3,500,512

### Changes in Net Assets Before Other Income (Losses)

- **$7,360,897**

### Other Income (Losses)

- **Building Expenses – LLC**: ($45,424)

**Total Other Income (Losses)**: ($45,424)

### Change in Net Assets

- **$7,315,473**

### Balance Sheet

**July 31, 2021**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assets</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cash</td>
<td>$510,830</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unconditional Promises to Give, Net</td>
<td>$2,887,194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Receivables</td>
<td>$1,489</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accrued Revenues</td>
<td>$106,163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepaid Expenses</td>
<td>$42,912</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investments, at Fair Value</td>
<td>$3,072,011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Assets</td>
<td>$7,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property &amp; Equipment, Net</td>
<td>$3,746,637</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Assets**: $10,374,736

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Liabilities</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accounts Payable</td>
<td>$256,894</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accrued Payroll</td>
<td>$107,505</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Liabilities</td>
<td>$10,975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deferred Revenue</td>
<td>$652,873</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Liabilities**: $1,028,247

### Net Assets

- **Without Donor Restriction**: $890,937
- **Without Donor Restriction – Board Designated**: $677,842
- **With Donor Restriction**: $7,777,710

**Total Net Assets**: $9,346,489

**Total Liabilities and Net Assets**: $10,374,736

### AOWL Staff Quote

"I really think there’s no one like us...that’s a huge factor. To have a clinic connected to a school, connected to a transition program, into adulthood. To really serve someone holistically for their entire lifespan I think is a really rare find."

AOWL STAFF
$25K ↑
Anonymous
David and Kitty Crosby - The Longview Foundation
Robert and Teri Crosby - The Longview Foundation
John and Amy Higgins
Babs Koch
Margaret A. Cargill Foundation Fund of the Minneapolis Foundation
Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community
John and Mary Ursu

$10K - $24,999
Allison and Jim Barosco from the Rosemary and David Good Family Fund of the St. Paul Foundation
Rosemary and David Good
Jen and Todd Graham
Kate and Rick Hartfiel
Donna and Rob Sheely
UnitedHealth Group

$5K - $9,999
The Howard and Nikki Applebaum Foundation
Autism Speaks
Robert Dingmann and Ethan Reynolds
Jackie and John Fallenstein
Howard and Heidi Gilbert
Donna and Robert Grubka
Christi and Brandon Kruse
Minnesota Independent School Forum
Liz and Jeff Sloan
Kim and Buddy Snow - The Longview Foundation
UnitedHealthCare Services Inc.

$500 - $999
Paul and Elizabeth Erdahl
Susie Fry
Mariah and Carl Awtai
Natalie and Carl Awtai
Lucas Barros
Deb Basco
Andrew and Joel Banon
Lindsey and Tim Brandt
Steve and Theresa Carlson
Mike and Stacey Crosby - The Longview Foundation
Danielle Liana and Steve Hall
Mary Higgins
Laura Hooper
Amer and Maya Kalaaji
Teresa Kempf
Carly and Charles Kortuem
Steve Livermore
Maureen Mahler
Bill McCarthy
David Meier

Every effort has been made to ensure accuracy. Please accept our apologies for omissions or errors. If you discover an error, please contact our advancement team at advancement@awol.org.

thank you!
IN HONOR OF

Jackson Awalt
Dan and Vickie Moore
Mark Basco
Deb Basco
Eve Benson
Dave and Jodi Gubbrud
Fred Kaemmer and Kate Tilney
Derek Foster
Steve Livermore
Sally Fry
Verdella Musech
Kelsey Goth
Craig and Julie Wall
Paul Gloudemans
Abdi Mohamed
Anita Haas
Rick and Kate Hartfiel
Teresa Kempf
Connie Schwader
Ben Higgins
Cathie and Gary Erickson
Bill McCarthy
Zachary Janisch
Ann and Darrin Janisch
Ned Johnson
Gretchen and Thomas Reinsma
Carly Kortuem
Craig and Julie Wall
Matthew Larson
Kathy and Chris Larson
Elizabeth and Jason Phillips
Sam Leo
David Leo and Allison Dent
Adam Letourneau
Joseph and Delphine Casey
Kevin Maher
Maureen Maher
Micah Olson
Dana and Chrysya Olson
Mateo Hudson Olson
Paul and Elizabeth Erdahl
Wayne Ramberg
Anonymous
Eli Unglaube
Anne Lockner Bernat
Aesop Wagner
Jason Wagner
Kaitlin Walsh
Abdi Mohamed
Frances Zolotov
Erin Woodington

IN MEMORY OF

Geraldine
Anonymous
Eunice Schwader
Greg and Chrysti Protsch
Jerome Eitelberg
Karen and Barry Sanders
Jeremiah Thormodsgaard
Lana and David Thormodsgaard
Eiichi Yoshino
Rich Yudhishthu and Aki Yoshino

SPONSOR LEVELS
Platinum: $10,000 | Gold: $5,000 | Silver: $3,000 | Bronze: $1,500 | Friend: $750

PLATINUM-LEVEL SPONSORS
The Higgins Family

SILVER-LEVEL SPONSORS
The Sloan Family
The Grubka Family

BRONZE-LEVEL SPONSORS

FRIEND-LEVEL SPONSORS
Academy of Whole Learning helped me get back on track with my academics and helped me feel more comfortable coming out of my shell and making new friends. Now I can do all of those things in college. This school has made a huge difference in my life.

2021 GRADUATE

My school work and assignments were tailored to my needs. I have learned many social skills such as managing friends and teamwork. We also worked on life skills, like job interviews, resumes, and even grocery shopping. I now have the tools to continue learning and developing my skills. My future is bright.

2021 GRADUATE

The best thing about teaching at AOWL is seeing the students start to believe in themselves and their abilities. To see them recognize their own progress is always incredible and inspires me every day to show up for them and give them my all.

AOWL TEACHER

Congratulations!