

sparc

specially adapted resource clubs



Dear SPARC Friends,

As we reflect on the past year, I am thrilled to share with you the remarkable progress and achievements that SPARC has accomplished thanks to your unwavering support. **Your generosity has truly been the cornerstone of our success, enabling us to embark on a transformative journey towards financial sustainability and expanded outreach.**

Over the past year, SPARC has undergone a profound financial transformation, thanks to securing both state and federal funding and hosting our inaugural Gratitude Gala. These initiatives have propelled us forward, allowing us to achieve significant milestones such as hiring a full-time program director and a full-time credentialed and experienced site lead. These two hires ensure the best possible programming in all our centers. This marks a pivotal moment in our organization's history, as we have achieved financial sustainability for the first time in 18 years. This success not only validates our efforts but also empowers us to expand our reach and impact. Thanks to federal funding sponsored by Senators Tim Kaine and Mark Warner, SPARC will open in Loudoun County in 2024!



The impact of your support goes far beyond just numbers and figures. It directly translates into tangible outcomes that positively affect the lives of individuals within our community. Your donations have enabled us to provide vital programs to individuals who would otherwise be confined at home, addressing crucial objectives such as ensuring financial stability, hiring skilled personnel, and delivering essential services to those in need.

But perhaps most importantly, **your support has helped us create an inclusive community where individuals with severe and multiple disabilities can thrive.** Your contributions make it possible for us to engage in skill-building activities, therapeutic programs, and foster meaningful connections through fun, friendship, and learning. These programs are not just recreational; they are lifelines for individuals who may otherwise face social isolation.

Your support ensures that we can continue to provide a choice for our population, addressing the critical need for social connections and a sense of belonging. **You are the hero of our story**, and we are deeply grateful for your commitment to building a better, more inclusive community for all.

With heartfelt gratitude,

Debi Alexander
Executive Director

Specially Adapted Resource Clubs 2023 Annual Report

A Note From Our Board Chair



Some of the most profound and powerful words that have ever been spoken are "I have a dream". **SPARC inspires its population of young adults with severe and multiple disabilities to dream big dreams, envision life's possibilities, and fulfill their potential.** 2023 was a year of dreams realized - a year of enormous strides and great successes - a year of overcoming challenges and obstacles and of celebrating the extraordinary lives of our special population.

- We held a hugely successful inaugural gala at which we highlighted the accomplishments and dreams of our SPARC community.
- We partnered with George Washington University and Northern Virginia Community College to augment SPARC's therapeutic programming, by providing much needed clinical work.
- We developed funding sources which increased revenue for stability, sustainability, and expansion of services, with:
- State and local governments,
- Our area's largest businesses, such as Google, Marriot Washington Dulles Airport, Washington Gas, The Washington Planning Group, Dominion Energy, and Anthem Virginia, and VISA.
- Our area's significant foundations, such as The Claude Moore Foundation, The Tullman Family Office, Maximus Foundation, The Foundation for Children with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, KOVAR, and The Jack R. Anderson Foundation.

In the words of Frank Sinatra, "The best is yet to come!"

~ Ellen Dyke
Chair of the Board



Wheelchair Action Art



Kathy Auger, a SPARC parent, taught us how to make art with our wheelchairs. Students from George Washington University joined in the fun as we created masterpieces and then wrote about each piece. In the words of one of our participants:

"I want people who look at this painting to smile and feel happy because we had fun choosing the colors, painting with the rollers, splattering the brushes, sprinkling sparc-ly glitter, working wit the vounteers, and rolling over the paper!"

Some people leave footprints. We left our tire marks by moving our chairs all around, sometimes in circles and that can make you dizzy. If you start to feel dizzy looking at these, close your eyes and imagine being in a black hole swirling in lots of colors!



1st Annual Gratitude Gala

For 18 years, SPARC had been a beacon of hope, offering vital programs and support to its participants. Yet, there was one dream that had always eluded them - to be celebrated and honored by the broader business community, to feel the warmth of recognition and appreciation for their unique talents and contributions. The SPARC participants asked for a gala.

Determined to turn this dream into reality, the board of directors, along with the dedicated staff and volunteers, embarked on a mission to host their very first annual gratitude gala. The name "Gratitude Gala" was chosen by the SPARC participants, for it encapsulated the deep sense of appreciation and thankfulness that filled the hearts of everyone involved.

From the outset, the preparations for the gala were infused with excitement and anticipation. Participants and volunteers eagerly took on roles as event planners, decorators, and performers, each one bringing their own special talents and creativity to the table. The business community, upon hearing of the gala, rallied behind SPARC with an outpouring of support, generously offering their resources, time, and expertise to ensure the event's success. We are especially grateful to the Washington Dulles Airport Marriott for stepping up and making the evening financially possible.

As the day of the gala dawned, the air buzzed with anticipation and nervous energy. The venue was transformed into a dazzling showcase of color and elegance, reflecting the vibrancy and diversity of the SPARC community.

Participants, dressed in their finest attire, beamed with pride as they welcomed guests with infectious smiles and warm embraces. A red carpet was rolled out for local, state and federal officials to escort our SPARC friends into the ballroom.

The evening at the Washington Dulles Airport Marriott unfolded like a magical tapestry, weaving together moments of laughter, joy, and heartfelt gratitude. As we celebrated our Hero Award recipient, Senator Tim Kaine and Lifetime Achievement Award recipient Virginia State Senator Dick Saslaw, participants took to the stage, showcasing their power through their heartfelt speeches, captivating the audience with their courage and resilience.

As the night ended, there was a palpable sense of fulfillment and contentment in the air. The participants of SPARC, once overlooked and underestimated, had been celebrated and honored in the most magnificent of ways. They had not only shared their thoughts with the world but had also touched the hearts of all who were fortunate enough to witness their grace and beauty.

The inaugural Gratitude Gala had not only been a celebration of SPARC's achievements but also a testament to the power of community, compassion, and inclusion. It was a night that would be etched in the memories of all who attended, a reminder that when we come together with open hearts and minds, miracles can indeed unfold.



Thank You to Our Gala Donors



JOIN US for the 1st Annual Gratitude Gala of SPARC: Specially Adapted Resource Clubs

Saturday, November 4, 2023 • 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM • Marriott Washington Dulles Airport

Honoring SPARC Hero Senator Tim Kaine

Lifetime Achievement Senator Dick Saslaw

PRESENTING



CHAMPION



LEADER



W. Russell & Norma Ramsey Foundation



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Crescent Cities Charities

ADVOCATE

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Knox Singleton and Tracey Fitzsimmons
Dave and JoAnne Adams - Coldwell Banker
Bill and Debi Alexander
Reston Limousine
Northwest Federal Credit Union
The Goldbranson Family

MEDIA

Washington Business Journal

PRINT

Silverado Printing
SpeedPro Northern Virginia

SPARC is a nonprofit serving young adults — often forgotten — with severe and multiple disabilities.

SPARC by the Numbers

18 years of service

6 locations

SPARC serves

- Fairfax
- Arlington
- Loudoun
- Falls Church
- Warren

52 Participants

Washington Dulles Airport Marriott

"As a company, Marriott International has rallied around our purpose of Connecting People Through the Power of Travel. However our success begins with our 5 Core Values. Mr. Marriott says that our key value of Putting People First is our secret sauce. The other 4 are Pursue Excellence, Act with Integrity, Embrace Change and Serve Our World. As we serve the Dulles Community, both Loudoun and Fairfax Counties, we are focused on Nurturing, Sustaining, Empowering, & Welcoming. As we focus on Nurturing, we are called to support amazing non-profit work around the community. The team at the Washington Dulles Airport Marriott could not be more proud to be a small part of the 2023 Gala to support SPARC. Thank you for allowing us to be a small part of the amazing work you all do!"

~ Meinrad Lang III, General Manager



2nd Annual Pancake Breakfast, June 2023

21%
of
participants
attend on full
scholarship

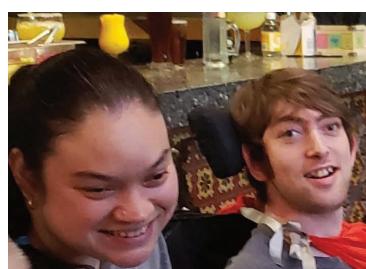


In June 2023, SPARC held its 2nd Annual Pancake Breakfast, a fundraiser for scholarships. The room was filled to capacity with 200 attendees! **The 1st SPARC Hero Award was presented to Senator Janet Howell, who ensured SPARC's financial sustainability by putting SPARC in the state budget.** Delegate Ken Plum was honored with a Lifetime Achievement Award and Lisa Adams was recognized for the Social Collectives Bubbles & Bling gala which raised \$50,000. Fairfax County Supervisors Dalia Palchik and Walter Alcorn awarded the Volunteer of the Year titles to the Advocates Advisory Council members Jonah Gilman, Katherine Montgomery, Lizz Palza, and Kaitlin Payne. Additionally, Mary Burger, Jane Karpick, and Barry Moore were acknowledged. The McLean Business Forum contributed volunteers to run the kitchen.



Advocates Advisory Council

In 2023, the members of the AAC participated in the Long Term Care Coordinating Councils Social Engagement Subcommittee and the Equity in Aging and Disability Subcommittee. Debi Alexander is also serving on the Council on Aging's "S" or Services Subcommittee on SHAPE. The AAC informs her input to this vital work.



"SPARC's unique public-private partnership with Fairfax County has proven that this alternative to the Medicaid model provides a choice for many adults with severe disabilities who do not fit into traditional day support programs funded by Medicaid. SPARC has changed the long-term care blueprint for young adults with severe disabilities by providing a safe, caring environment where young adults with severe disabilities learn and have fun together. The SPARC model is designed to provide access to community services, individualized supports, and other forms of assistance that promote self determination."

*– Rose Mario Risley, Chair,
Fairfax Area Long Term Care Coordinating Council*

Thank You To Our Auction Donors!

8 Chains Winery of Virginia
Gaston Aaroz
Dave and JoAnne Adams
Bill and Debi Alexander
Ancient Peaks Winery
Angelica Theatre
Autobahn Car Racing and Axe Throwing
Baltimore Symphony Orchestra
Bentley's Birdhouses
Bobby McKey's Dueling Piano Bar
Mary and Bob Burger
Jill Campbell
Pat Cassidy
Chesapeake Chocolates
Cooper's Hawk Winery & Restaurant
Creighton Farms
Diamond Spa
Jim and Ellen Dyke
Elite Island Resorts
Angie Erscherns
Fairfax Ice Arena
Shawn Flaherty
Fogo de Chao
Fragrance Net
Ford's Theatre Society
George Washington's Mount Vernon
Kimberly Hartke



Ed and Molly Herbst
David Hillelsohn
Jerry Hulick
Hylton Performing Arts
In and Out Auto Detailing
Karin's Florist
Kathryn Ryan
Chef Charlie Loomis
Loudoun United
Lovington Winery
Nancy Lu
Mary Kay—Leslie Kane
Meadow Farms

Social Group

Led by our full-time site lead, Lisa Domenech, SPARC provides an enriching social experience for its members. This vibrant community organizes a variety of outings on weekends, including dinners and movies, visits to museums, participation in festivals like the lantern festival, and enjoyable shopping excursions. These outings offer members the opportunity to bond, explore new interests, and create lasting memories together.

In addition to these engaging activities, the social group produces a monthly newsletter filled with enriching content. Members can look forward to thoughtful discussions on various topics, sharing of favorite recipes, and insightful restaurant reviews. This newsletter serves as a platform for members to connect, exchange ideas, and stay informed about upcoming events and activities.

Beyond the recreational aspect, the SPARC social group plays a crucial role in addressing social isolation among its members. By fostering a supportive community environment, the group facilitates peer-to-peer advising and mutual support. Members find solace in knowing that they are not alone and can rely on each other for guidance and companionship.



Bubbles & Bling—The Social Collectives Raise \$50,000



The Loudoun County Social Collectives came together in a symphony of generosity and glamour at the much-anticipated *Bubbles and Bling* Gala. This dazzling event, held in support of Specially Adapted Resource Clubs (SPARC), shimmered with the promise of hope, community, and transformation.

Amidst the glittering lights and sparkling chandeliers, attendees donned their finest attire, each outfit a testament to their commitment to a cause close to their hearts. As glasses clinked and laughter filled the air, the true essence of the evening unfolded—a celebration of unity in benevolence.

SPARC, an organization dedicated to providing day programs to adults with severe and multiple disabilities, stood at the heart of the gala's purpose. Their mission to empower individuals with unique challenges resonated deeply with all in attendance. As Lisa Adams, Founder of the Social Collectives eloquently put it, "SPARC exemplifies the importance of heart and soul and provides our community with the opportunity to better ourselves through benevolence."

Throughout the night, guests bid eagerly on exclusive auction items, knowing that every dollar raised would directly contribute to SPARC's impactful initiatives. A highlight of the auction was a diamond from Hunt Country Jewelers! From adaptive equipment to therapeutic activities, the funds generated promised to transform lives and foster inclusivity within the community.

Yet, beyond the glamorous facade of the gala, it was the spirit of compassion and solidarity that truly illuminated the event. Strangers became allies, and acquaintances forged bonds united by a shared commitment to making a difference. In the midst of the festivities, it became abundantly clear that the power of collective action knows no bounds.

As the evening drew to a close and the final bids were placed, the resounding success of the Bubbles and Bling Gala echoed throughout the gala tent. But more than just a glamorous affair, it stood as a testament to the unwavering generosity and kindness that thrives within the Loudoun County business community. SPARC's mission may have been the focal point of the night, but the true magic lay in the hearts of those who came together to support it.

Bubbles & Bling
A gala event to benefit **SPARC**

Bling Sponsors

- artistic fuel.
- DULLES Town Center
- EOS Entrepreneurial GABRIEL MULLER
- LUXURY PARKS Jewelry LLC
- Mahalo Media Solutions
- NOVEC HELPS
- Stately & Karstetter, PLLC

Food Sponsors

- Artisan PLUMBING
- BLUEMONT STATION
- Local SEO Marketing That Works

Event Team

- Artisan PLUMBING
- BLUEMONT STATION
- Carmel Steindam graphic design
- McCabe's PRINTING GROUP

Thank you to our Donors!

AARP Virginia
Abbey Flooring
Dave and JoAnne Adams
Aglow Dental Studio
Rosemary Ahanor and Ajiri Igbide
Al Alborn
The Honorable Bill and Debi Alexander
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America Services Group
Jack R Anderson Foundation
Trudy Bell
Shawn Flaherty and Roman Blazauskas
Blueberry Shoes Productions
Broadwinds Capital
Donna Budway
Claire Calland
Cameron, Eileen and John
William and Eileen Carlson
Casey Margenau Fine Homes
Christopher Cerone
Chesapeake Chocolates
CityBridges
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Claude Moore Charitable Foundation
Closet Factory
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Lauren Dyke
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Elevance Health, Inc
Angie Erschens
Expert Estate Auctions, LLC
Exterior Medics
Five Star Painting
Friends of Pat Herrity
FVCbank
Abraham Gafni

Claire Geselman
Giant
Elizabeth Bowen Gilman
Michael and Deborah Gilman
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Dr. Richard and Miriam A. Goldin
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Cathy Hoag
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Laura Howard
Jerry Hulick
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Julie Lu
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B. Jill McWhorter
Nancy Mercer
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Tom Minnick
Dr. Michael Mort
Novec Helps
Olkam Tikvah Congregation
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REEP - RTL DTC VA LLC
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Patricia Rohrer
Kathryn Rossi
Maxine Shannon
Shepherd's Center, Fairfax-Burke
Dr. Sally A. Sibley

Silver Beacon Marketing
John Knox Singleton and Tracy Fitzsimmons
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Sharyn W Stahl
Andrea L Stanford
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Shirley Stevenson
Julie Strandlie
Anne E. Strange
Sugar Magnolia Trust
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Erin Toczyłowski
Tullman Family Office
Jonathan and Priscilla Vargas
Virginia Realtors
VISA
Washington Gas
Washington Planning Group
Ross M Weiner and Karen N Alexander
David Weinschel
Linda M Wilder-Curtis
Carol Willis
Joyce Wolf
George Young
Marilyn Zett

Donor Spotlight: The Washington Group

Special thanks to Jerry Hulick for sponsoring SPARC's inaugural Gratitude Gala and for his dedicated efforts to secure essential financial resources for adults with severe and multiple disabilities, both locally and nationally. Jerry's decades-long advocacy work is truly making a significant impact, enabling these individuals to thrive within our community and beyond.

Hailing from Spotsylvania, Va., Jerry's career boasts over four decades of invaluable experience within the financial services industry. His illustrious career saw him serve as the General Agent of The Washington Group of MassMutual from 1986 to 2004. During his tenure, Jerry exhibited exceptional leadership skills, guiding his agency to achieve the highest accolades for production and brokerage development from MassMutual.



Following his retirement from the role of General Agent, Jerry embarked on a new venture by establishing The Washington Group Special Care Planning Team. This specialized team focuses on providing comprehensive financial planning services tailored specifically to individuals with special needs. Beyond his professional endeavors, Jerry is deeply committed to promoting education and awareness surrounding special needs within broader communities.

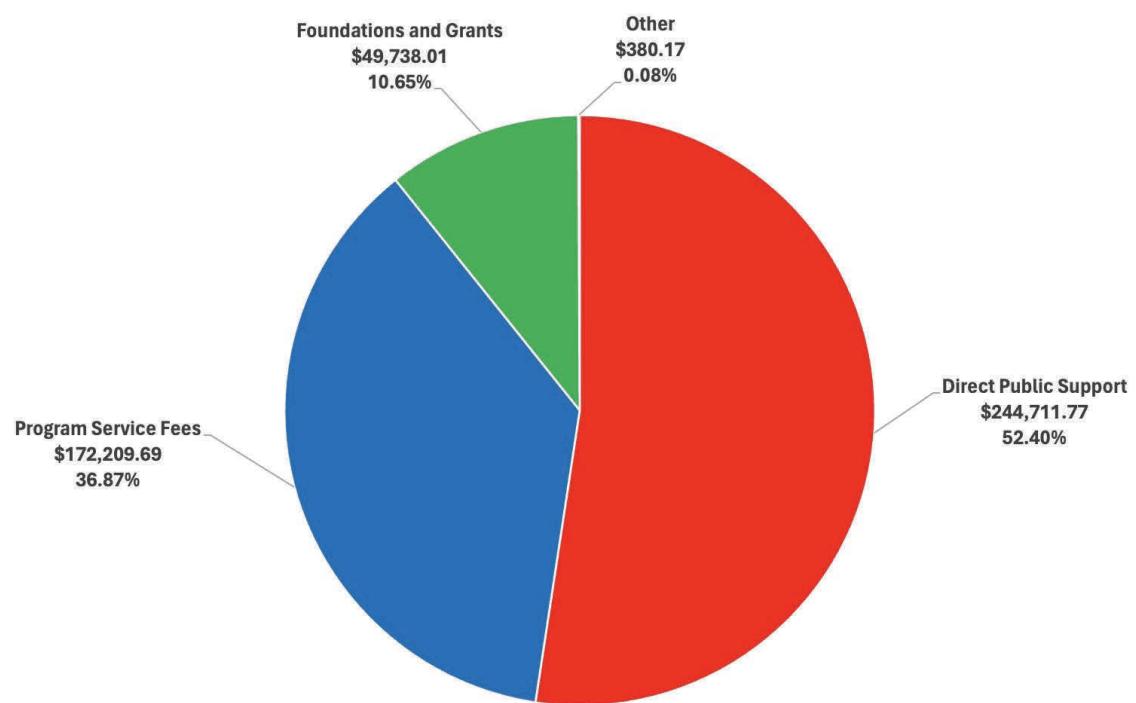
Jerry's passion for advocacy extends beyond his business ventures. He frequently shares his expertise and insights as a national speaker, addressing audiences on topics related to financial planning for families with special needs. Moreover, Jerry's depth of knowledge has led him to serve as an expert witness on financial and insurance matters in legal proceedings involving individuals with special needs situations.

Through his unwavering dedication and expertise, Jerry Hulick continues to make a profound impact on the lives of individuals with special needs, ensuring they have access to the necessary financial resources and support to thrive.

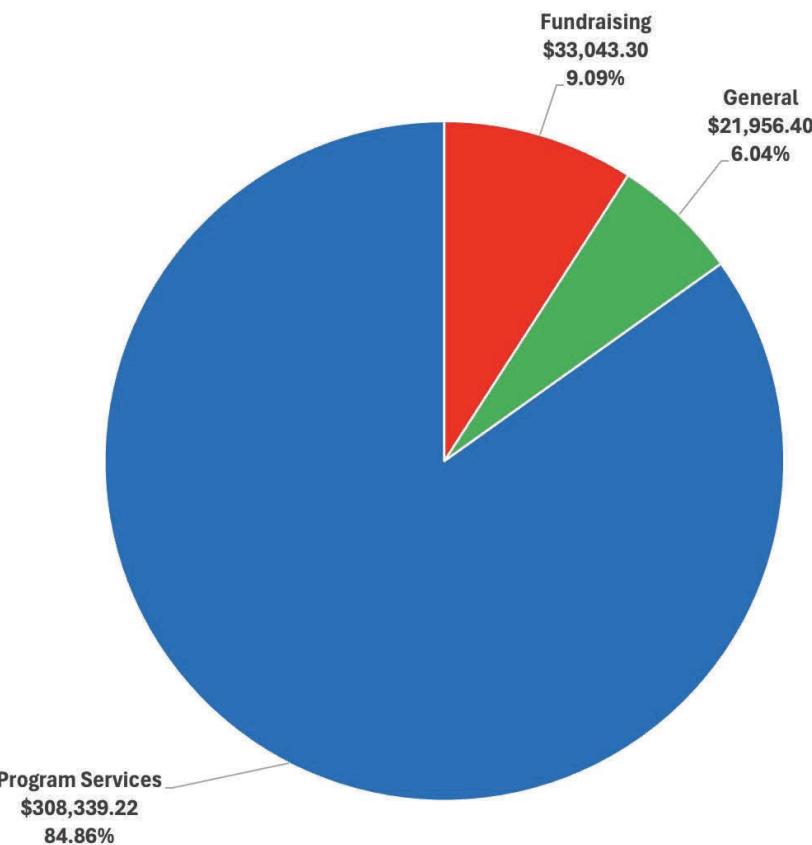


2023 Financials

Income



Expenses



SPARC Saves Millions in Opportunity Costs

WHO WE SERVE

Some SPARC participants have developmental delays. Others have intellectual delays. Some have been diagnosed with cerebral palsy, autism, epilepsy, spina bifida, non-verbal and other similar conditions. Most of SPARC's participants lack self-care and social skills, effective verbal communication, and basic physical mobility. **They need support with all daily living activities and have difficulty seeing, hearing, speaking, and moving.** They are unable to work and often feel isolated with few opportunities to interact with their peers.

\$2 Million Per Person in Housing Costs

With SPARC providing meaningful day programs for adults with severe and multiple disabilities, the option to continue to live with family members rather than transitioning to a group home or supported housing is often selected. Over a ten year period this is a cost savings of \$2 million per person.

\$1.5 Million Per Year in Program Enhancement Fees (per 50 attendees)

Attending five days at SPARC costs the participant \$9,000 per year. According to the Community Services Board, the County pays for an individual on the Medicaid waiver waitlist to go to a Medicaid provider in the range of \$28,000-\$34,000 per year plus transportation costs of \$9,000 per year. If SPARC's current participants had to go to a Medicaid provider that would cost the County \$1.5 million annually plus the cost of transportation.

Specially Adapted Resource Clubs

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Email: Debi@sparcsolutions.org



Save the Dates!

June 15—3rd Annual Pancake Breakfast
November 2—2nd Annual Gratitude Gala



"The goal is to be seen, asked, heard, believed and valued as we are, allowed to exist in these exact bodies, invited to the party and encouraged to dance however we want..."

~ Rebekah Taussig from her book *Sitting Pretty: The View from My Ordinary Resilient Disabled Body*