

CONTRACTOR'S FINAL REPORT

Small Grant Opportunity: Engagement and Comfort During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Submitted by The Arc of Arizona to
Arizona Developmental Disabilities Planning Council
November 5, 2020

Arizona's system of supports and services for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) was thrown into a tailspin with the declaration of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020. A system that serves nearly 45,000 individuals enrolled in the Arizona Long Term Care System (ALTCs) through a variety of services – facility-based Day Treatment & Training for Adults (DTA), housing, habilitation, therapies, employment programs, and more – found itself, almost overnight, faced with widespread closures or drastic reductions in service at DTA locations and enforced isolation of group homes residents in their houses to reduce the possibility of exposure to the disease.

These steps were enacted to protect members, many of whom are at particular risk of severe illness or even death from a disease as virulent as COVID-19, and to a large degree they were successful in doing just that. Yet the decisions to close day and employment programs also caused an unprecedented disruption to the normal flow of life for these vulnerable individuals. For even while many members are susceptible to the physical health consequences of contracting this virus, they also are overwhelmingly dependent upon reliable routines and predictable schedules for their psychological well-being. And the inability to participate in the typical activities of life such as going to a day program or employment site, attending community events, dining at a restaurant or even playing in a park resulted very quickly in emotional and psychological downturns for a large number of individuals.

Added to the impacts on members was the burden placed on service providers (private agencies operating group homes, DTAs, and other programs supporting individuals with I/DD) as they faced massive reductions in revenue due to closure or curtailment of the very services for which they contracted with the State of Arizona. Without clear instructions or firm funding commitments from the state, providers were left in a vulnerable position – determined to act in the best interest of their clients but concerned for their financial viability and with few options to keep members engaged and active while isolating within their homes.

Seeing the obvious need to ensure opportunities for activity and engagement for group home residents, as well as members temporarily residing with family members during the pandemic, the Arizona Developmental Disabilities Planning Council allocated \$50,000 for a Small Grants program in Spring 2020. This program, called the Small Grant Opportunity: Engagement and Comfort During the COVID-19 Pandemic, was meant to enable providers to purchase items such



as arts and craft supplies, technology, exercise equipment, musical instruments, and so forth, that would be utilized by members in the absence of their typical daily pursuits. The selection of items was at the discretion of the provider, but had to be relevant to the services offered by the provider and designed to encourage interaction, physical and mental activity, progress on personal goals and/or therapeutic improvement.

The Arc of Arizona was contracted by ADDPC to manage the program. The Arc’s responsibilities included assisting with development and distribution of the request for proposals; creating a grants review committee; acceptance and review of requests; communication of approvals/denials to applicants; issuance of payment to grantees; and securing a final report from each grantee at the end of the project period.

Applicant Organizations

Fifty-eight eligible organizations applied for grant funding; one additional application was submitted from an ineligible individual. These requests came from nearly all parts the state, from providers large and small, non-profit and for-profit, and from both urban and rural communities, including programs on tribal lands.

Programs Approved for Grant Funding

The organizations approved for grants represent a geographically, culturally, and programmatically diverse cross-section of Arizona’s I/DD community, serving 10 of the state’s 15 counties. Their clientele includes noteworthy numbers of individuals from Caucasian, Hispanic/Latino, and Native American communities and are reflective of all socioeconomic backgrounds. In addition, these organizations collectively provide an array of services for children/adolescents and adults, although most agencies focus on either the adult or pediatric population but not both.

Following approval of an initial set of 21 grants using the funds allocated by ADDPC, the Arizona Community Foundation contributed an additional \$20,000 in the form of a Fund for the Common Good grant. With these funds the grants review committee approved seven more grants from the group of applicants not previously funded, bringing the total number of grantees to 28. A complete list of the grantee organizations, along with their geographic service areas and the number of individuals served with grant funds, is as follows:

Grantee	Geographic Area (County/ies)	# Served (proposed)	# Served (actual)	Grant Amount
Arizona Cooperative Therapies	Maricopa & Gila	50	50	\$ 2,471.00
Arizona Training & Evaluation Center (AZTEC)	Maricopa	118	114	\$ 2,500.00
Arts for All, Inc.	Pima	50	48	\$ 2,299.00
Chandler Gilbert Arc	Maricopa	34	30	\$ 2,216.00

City of Peoria Adaptive Recreation Program	Maricopa	80	114	\$ 1,000.00
Civitan Foundation	Maricopa	150	100	\$ 2,476.00
Community Options (Tempe)	Maricopa	19	18	\$ 2,500.00
Easterseals Blake Foundation	Pima	68	30	\$ 1,250.00
Echoing Hope Ranch	Cochise	30	22	\$ 2,146.00
Goldensun Peace Ministries	Maricopa	12	13	\$ 736.00
Gompers	Maricopa	75	21	\$ 2,310.00
Hozhoni Foundation	Coconino	80	60	\$ 2,364.00
Ideal Care LLC	Maricopa	30	47	\$ 2,500.00
Life Challenge, Inc.	Maricopa	26	34	\$ 1,072.00
Lutheran Social Services of the Southwest	Maricopa	50	54	\$ 2,495.00
Marc Community Resources Inc/Copa Health	Maricopa	92	92	\$ 2,500.00
Milemarkers Therapy Inc.	Mohave	9	20	\$ 2,130.00
Mohave County Arc	Mohave	50	39	\$ 2,480.00
NAU-Institute for Human Development	Coconino & Navajo	30	30	\$ 2,249.00
Northland Rural Therapy Associates	Coconino	25	27	\$ 2,500.00
Northland Therapy Services	Coconino, Gila, Navajo & Apache	20	21	\$ 987.00
One Step Beyond Inc	Maricopa	115	37	\$ 2,500.00
Quality Connections	Coconino	23	23	\$ 2,408.00
TCH/The Centers for Habilitation	Maricopa	62	122	\$ 2,500.00
The Opportunity Tree	Maricopa & Pinal	70	75	\$ 2,489.00
United Cerebral Palsy of Central Arizona	Maricopa	30	30	\$ 1,182.00
VALLEYLIFE	Maricopa	110	101	\$ 2,500.00
Y.E.S. The Arc	Yavapai	13	10	\$ 2,500.00

Note: Organizations highlighted in yellow were funded with supplemental grant from Arizona Community Foundation.

Use of Grant Funding

Grant applicants demonstrated an array of needs and proposed a number of creative projects with which to keep their members active. While several, such as Arizona Training & Evaluation Center (AZTEC), Goldensun Peace Ministries, and the Institute for Human Development at

Northern Arizona University, focused their funding requests on the purchase craft-making and art supplies, board games, puzzles, and basic outdoor supplies such as rubber balls – items used with great regularity in DTA and training settings to encourage physical movement or motor skills development – others such as One Step Beyond and Civitan Foundation sought to build upon existing music education programs with the purchase of musical instruments and development of virtual music classes. Still others focused on meeting the therapeutic needs of those they serve by providing weighted blankets to children with sensory and behavior issues (Arizona Cooperative Therapies) or decided utilizing technology would offer effective solutions to issues of isolation, service provision, and community engagement (Milemarkers, The Arc of Mohave County, and others).

Grantee	Items Purchased
Arizona Cooperative Therapies	Weighted blankets for children with sensory & behavioral issues
Arizona Training & Evaluation Center (AZTEC)	Arts & crafts, indoor & outdoor games, movies, essential oils
Arts for All, Inc.	Art supplies, Sprout Film Festival videos
Chandler Gilbert Arc	Outdoor evaporative coolers
City of Peoria Adaptive Recreation Program	Arts & craft supplies, activities & games
Civitan Foundation	Standard & adaptive musical instruments
Community Options (Tempe)	Computer tablets for virtual therapy
Easterseals Blake Foundation	Craft supplies
Echoing Hope Ranch	Gardening & outdoor activity supplies, standard & sensory toys
Goldensun Peace Ministries	Art & activity supplies
Gompers	Online Self-Esteem, Social Skills & Internet Safety curriculum
Hozhoni Foundation	Gardening & outdoor activity supplies, standard & sensory toys, outdoor games
Ideal Care LLC	Weighted blankets for children with sensory & behavioral issues, games & activities, sensory toys
Life Challenge, Inc.	Arts & craft supplies, instructional games
Lutheran Social Services of the Southwest	Weighted blankets & lap pads, computer tablets, developmental toys
Marc Community Resources Inc/Copa Health	Arts & crafts supplies, games, outdoor activities, standard & sensory toys
Milemarkers Therapy Inc.	Computer tablets for virtual therapy
Mohave County Arc	Arts & crafts supplies, education supplies, computer tablets
NAU-Institute for Human Development	Arts & crafts supplies, games, outdoor activities, standard & sensory toys for age-appropriate “activity boxes”
Northland Rural Therapy Associates	Supplies for individualized “therapy boxes” and prepaid smartphones for teletherapy sessions

Northland Therapy Services	Art, coloring & journaling supplies
One Step Beyond Inc	Standard & adaptive musical instruments, art supplies
Quality Connections	Indoor & outdoor activities, games, gardening supplies, aquarium supplies & fish
TCH/The Centers for Habilitation	Arts & crafts supplies, games, outdoor activities, gardening supplies, standard & sensory toys
The Opportunity Tree	Art supplies
United Cerebral Palsy of Central Arizona	Art supplies, books, individual & group activities, gardening supplies
VALLEYLIFE	Indoor & outdoor games, individual & group activities, art supplies
Y.E.S. The Arc	Desktop computers for group homes

Results

Grantees were asked to provide a final report on the use of their grant funds and the effectiveness of their funded projects. The final report consisted of six questions, with representative findings provided here:

1. What is the total number of individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities that benefitted from these grants dollars and items purchased?

In most cases, grantee organizations were able to serve either the number of individuals projected in their original funding requests or a number very close to it. For those operating group homes and providing their grant-funded activities only to residents, some variation was noted because a number of residents were removed from the group homes to live with family members or other guardians until the pandemic passes.

Programs whose services are largely or exclusively facility-based were perhaps the most dramatically affected. The greatest negative differences between anticipated and actual participation were experienced by Civitan Foundation, which kept its DTA program open during the pandemic but experienced a significant decline in member attendance; One Step Beyond, which purchased musical instruments that, in normal times, would have been utilized by more than 100 DTA attendees but which during the pandemic could only be loaned to a fraction of that number; and Gompers, which secured an evidence-based, fully online education program for members' benefit but, due to families' lack of technology and/or lack of interest, was unable to generate significant participation. According to Gompers, "The members who did participate really absorbed the curriculum



and their social interactions are better for it...The lack of participation was the only concern that can't be fixed with families.”



Other organizations, however, were able to reach a larger number of individuals than originally planned. The City of Peoria’s Adaptive Recreation Program, which actually received one of the smallest grant amounts, created “Rec to Go” activity bags for use by residents at AZTEC group homes. Through creative use of the funds, the Program put together enough kits to serve almost 50 percent more individuals than initially anticipated.

Ideal Care LLC, a provider of home and community based services (HCBS) in west Phoenix whose clientele are primarily Spanish-speaking families, similarly exceeded its goal by approximately 50 percent – and the impact was not limited to individuals with I/DD. Ideal Care’s director of operations stated:

This project not only helped the DDD Kiddos/Adults, but also their families...Through this endeavor we actually encountered families that didn't have board games, which we provided through your Grant – and their comment after talking to them days later was that getting together with the family and playing these games was an exciting learning experience of 'Togetherness'.

TCH/The Centers for Habilitation, in Tempe, determined the items it purchased with the grant will allow it to serve not only the anticipated set of group home residents but an almost equal number of DTA participants who are slowly returning to the program. And Milemarkers Therapy, Inc., a Mohave County-based provider of autism therapy, also more than doubled the number of individuals it expected to serve by loaning wi-fi enabled tablets to families so that teletherapy could be offered when in-person appointments were not possible.



The original estimate of people to be served through these grants was 1,521. In the end, grantees collectively estimate 1,382 individuals benefitted.

2. **How were the purchased items used by individuals with I/DD and/or representatives of your organization (e.g., to reduce anxiety, to communicate with others, to increase activity, etc.)? Please be specific.**

The Small Grants program announcement intentionally allowed prospective grantees broad latitude with respect to how funds could be used, stating “Ultimately, this initiative seeks to identify effective

strategies that individuals with I/DD, families, and provider agencies can institute to ensure individuals with I/DD continue to engage with peers during this period of social distancing and isolation. Funds are available to meet the needs of individuals with I/DD and their families during this pandemic.”

Grantees utilized funding for an array of programs and activities related directly to the needs of the individuals they serve. Each organization determined what it felt was most necessary, most valuable, and most appropriate for its constituents. In the end, as demonstrated in the chart above under **Use of Grant Funding**, grant recipients invested in a wide variety of supplies, equipment, games, therapeutic items, and technology.

The admonition in the grant RFP to “ensure individuals with I/DD continue to engage with peers” was followed by every grantee to the extent they were able. Games, musical instruments, and similar indoor and outdoor activities such as gardening took the place of activities individuals would typically engage in at a DTA. For children and adults with sensory issues, especially those with autism, weighted blankets and lap pads offered “a great strategy to deal with these issues”, according to Arizona Cooperative Therapies. VALLEYLIFE, based in Phoenix, spoke of the difference its purchases made:



Items were used to provide activities to reduce boredom for members confined to their group homes. By providing fun and engaging activities for members in the homes, they were more compatible with each other and staff and experienced fewer emotional outbursts.

Because of the time of year in which grants were made and the rising temperatures associated with the season, Chandler Gilbert Arc was determined to do everything possible to ensure its members did not become isolated indoors. The organization therefore bought outdoor evaporative coolers that “were placed outside the homes and provided outdoor cooling so as to permit residents of the homes to safely stay outside longer into the hot weather season. This enabled greater social distancing, an increased number of outdoor activities, a positive effect on behavioral and well-being, a decrease in isolation, and positive health impact of fresh outside air.”

And for those organizations that purchased technology – Community Options, Lutheran Social Services of the Southwest, Milemarkers, The Arc of Mohave County, Northland Rural Therapy

Associates, and Y.E.S. The Arc – all were able to ensure individuals used the tablets, smartphones and computers in multiple worthwhile ways. According to Y.E.S. The Arc, located in Cottonwood:

The items purchased were used to assist with Telehealth & teletherapy services. In addition, they have been used as a source for continued learning and connecting with peers & family members via zoom. Activities have included virtual tours of museums and landmarks all over the world, self-advocacy, and other self-help videos, and expanding knowledge on other areas such as cooking and budgeting.



3. Did you experience any barriers to purchasing your items? Were there any barriers for families to access their use?

Nearly all grantees stated they were able to secure the items listed in their grant requests with little or no difficulty. For those that did encounter barriers, by far the most common was lack of immediate supply because of the intense overall demand for arts and crafts, school, and activity materials in the early months of the pandemic. Various online and onsite retailers either were back-ordered for days or weeks or were unable to give an estimate of when particular items would be available; others faced workforce issues because their own employees were affected by COVID-19 and therefore were unable to ship purchases as quickly as usual. When this happened, grantees informed us, they sought out alternative suppliers or shopped at multiple retailers to acquire the necessary quantity of supplies.

Because one of the key intents of this Small Grants program was to get resources into the hands of organizations in as timely a fashion as possible, thereby greatly minimizing the impacts of isolation and inactivity on members, delays of even a few days were worrisome. Yet as one representative of Hozhoni Foundation, pointed out, “In some ways, I saw it as a benefit, as new items arrived at various times, they created a feeling of excitement and anticipation on what we were getting and what we were going to be able to do next”. So long as a portion of the purchased items were available, the organizations generally felt they were able to keep members active, even if not to the optimal degree outlined in the grant request.



In a small number of instances, grantees were

completely unable to acquire the items they requested. In such cases, approval was given by The Arc for them to purchase substitute items that would provide essentially the same benefit to their clients.

A few minor issues arose for several grantees around use of the items purchased. Most prevalent were challenges with technology: The Arc of Mohave County noted “We did however have a few bumps as we trained the families on how to use the technology and ease them into the program. We found that there is a vast lack of knowledge or training when it comes to up to



date technology and feel this is an area in which we can, not only help ourselves improve, but the members and their family as well.” Community Options, Inc., mentioned, “One barrier encountered was some minor confusion as a result of the large variety of apps used for virtual meetings (Zoom, WebEx, Google Meet, etc.).”

According to Milemarkers, many of whose clients live in isolated rural areas and whose financial resources are extremely limited, “The only barrier identified for some families was access to reliable internet and WiFi services. In these instances, our organization did our best to connect families with services and supports that would allow them to access internet for virtual service delivery. Ultimately, each of these “bumps” was surmountable in some way for the various providers involved.

The only other significant barrier, faced by several grantees, related to the availability or interest of members (or their guardians) to participate. Specifically, as mentioned before, both Civitan Foundation and One Step Beyond could not reach as many members as expected through their music programs because of DTA reductions/closures.

Gompers hoped to reach 75 members through what it considers an immensely valuable remote learning platform; instead, it reached only 21. The organization attributed this to disinterest or resistance from caregivers: “Gompers’ staff could use curriculum with already proven results to improve social-communication on-line, self-confidence and behavior...The barrier was the lack of families participating in tele-programming.”

- 4. What benefits did the purchased items provide to the individuals utilizing them? What changes did you observe in participants using the purchased items? Provide specific examples.**



Grantees were universally enthusiastic in their descriptions of the benefits resulting from these grants. Several general themes emerged:

- Utilization of the items reduced anxiety, stress, maladaptive behaviors, isolation, and sensory challenges
- The variety of games, arts & crafts, and activities increased creativity, social interaction, connectedness, physical activity, and mental focus
- Members experienced improved mood, self-esteem and self-confidence, as well as understanding of the pandemic and the circumstances affecting these individuals
- The grants promoted and enabled access to peers, family members, and therapy/healthcare providers, most of which were effectively cut off once at-home isolation was enforced
- Where new technology was provided, individuals were offered a valuable means of communication with family and friends that otherwise would not have been available
- Despite the disruption caused by the pandemic,



utilization of the items purchased with grant funds acted as an adequate substitute for normal DTA or employment activities.

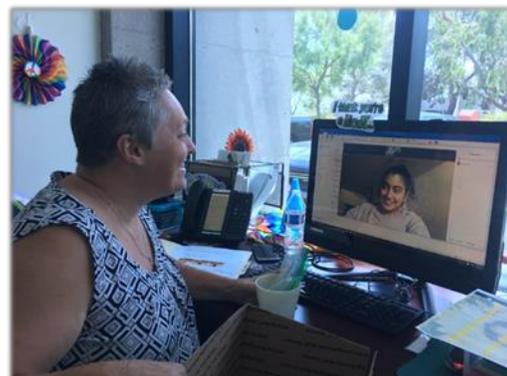
Perhaps most important, providers reported that these grants met the particular needs of individuals with I/DD *in relevant and timely ways* during an especially difficult period of time. As this was the fundamental goal of the program, the results reported by the grantees confirm not only the need for this funding opportunity but the vital need for the very programs, materials, and services this funding made available.

Following is a sampling of grantee responses to this question:

Many of the individuals, parents and guardians called to say that their days were now filled with art and they were very grateful. Many of our students had art every day at the arts center so to be home without any of their favorite activities was very hard for some of them.

- Arts for All

The greatest benefit was virtual visits with families during the pandemic. Many of the individuals have traditionally been able to visit with family and friends in-person and these visits were abruptly



stopped. The families appreciated being able to continue to see and communicate with their loved ones. As a result, individuals did not feel as distanced.

- Community Options

The music instruments were used as an outlet for emotional expression, connecting with others, and addressing and combating anxiety, fear, confusion and sadness – many emotions brought about during COVID-19. We believe our expanded music and songwriting program positively impacted the mental health and wellbeing of our members.

- Civitan Foundation

Individuals also showed an increase in positive pro-social experiences related to the creative art activities and materials. Participants demonstrated an increase in positive and self-initiated socialization as result of their coloring, drawing, and journaling experiences. They reported improved mood as their focus shifted from what was missing (or negatives) in their lives to what they are grateful for. Several family members of participants also reported a decrease in negative family interactions and an increase in positive engagement.

- Northland Therapy Services



The DTA program staff were very creative in selecting, packaging, and utilizing the items...One of the DTA staff who works remotely with a high anxiety

individual found multiple creative activities to practice during the video conference. It became like a game for the individual and the staff to practice the coping skills during their virtual sessions and the staff intends to continue the coping strategies when they return in person.

- UCP of Central Arizona



The IPADS are allowing our folks to stay connected through video and facetime calls. This was beneficial for both our residents and their families. Our residents had

exciting news to share about their daily activities which in turn allowed parents and family members to relax a bit knowing their child/family member had many options and activities to look forward to each day.

- Quality Connections

From our evaluation we found that the tablets created opportunity to have their family visit without having to share a phone or computer. For the older children it was a door to keeping lines of communication and socializing with friends online. Board games encouraged family time, Legos enhanced creativity, lap pads and weighted blankets brought comfort and calmness to those who suffer from anxiety.

- Lutheran Social Services of the Southwest

Families reported that the boxes were an emotional “pick me up” for the entire family during a difficult time, and fun to play with together...Families also expressed that the activities were helpful in setting expectations for their children for preschool and activities they may encounter whenever in-person schooling on the Navajo Nation becomes viable again.

- Northern Arizona University – Institute for Human Development

The engagement with members by their peers and staff allowed for the socialization and skill development or maintenance that many of the members either communicated they needed or was observed by staff. Before the purchase, distribution, and use of the activities purchased through the grant, members and staff were struggling with how to make quarantine work and how to maintain an engaging day.

- Marc Community Resources/Copa Health



5. Were the outcomes you experienced consistent with the outcomes you anticipated? If not, how were they different?

In the case of almost every grantee, outcomes at least met expectations. In a number of cases, grantees shared that outcomes significantly *exceeded* their expectations. Indeed, several expressed how surprised they were at the efficacy of their grant-funded programs to meet the needs of their members. Similarly, they were sometimes amazed at the new things they and their staff members learned about the capabilities of members as a result of implementing their funded projects.

Examples of grantee responses include:

Yes, the outcomes we experienced were consistent with what we anticipated. Everyone had a smile on their faces – those creating the art supply baskets to go to homes and those receiving the gifts. It was a win-win situation for us and brought many happy hours to so many people.

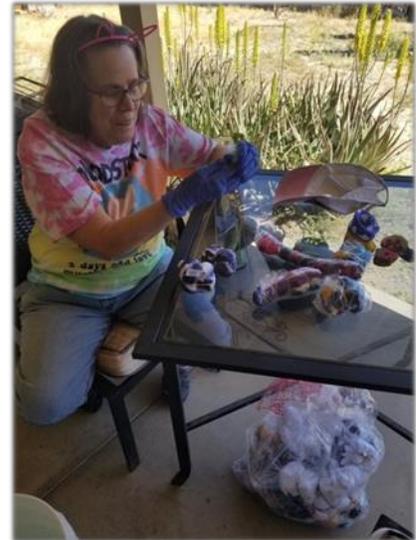
- Arts for All

The outcomes that we have experienced are far greater than we expected. While we knew that our residents would enjoy the new activities, we did not have any idea that they would spark ideas and engage members who might not usually participate.

Outcomes over and above expectations have included the following:

- *Building relationships*
- *Giving back to the community*
- *Creativity*
- *Engagement*
- *Physical activity for better health*
- *Ongoing therapeutic relaxation*
- *Reduced stress/anxiety/behavioral issues*

- AZTEC



The unanticipated outcome was also positive and that was the effect these items had on our ranch employees as well as our residents and participants. The burden they shouldered, in providing safe and engaging diversion, was lessened and that made their jobs easier. In addition, the opportunity to join in to some light hearted fun allowed them to escape some of their own worry for a time.

- Echoing Hope Ranch



We were very pleased with the outcomes we experienced. We anticipated that our members would enjoy having new items. But the extent to which these resources helped us cope with our virus-

related moratorium on community outings exceeded our expectations.

- Life Challenge

The changes in most of our children were undeniably far more than what we could have imagined...The smiles were priceless, and it opened a door that we could not have done without the grant. All our children increased in communication, self-confidence, engage more socially, self-motivated, they dance and sing to music it truly is amazing what a small gift can do.

The outcomes exceeded the anticipated. We did not anticipate the numerous ways the gifts impacted each child. The gifts not only met the anticipated outcome but exceeded them. To know a teenager is dancing and singing, looking up photos of how he would like to cut his hair. A child that was experiencing bad dreams to sleep comfortably with soothing music and a night light is a blessing to us all.

- LSS-SW

Although an unintended effect, the availability of new games and activities that members were able to engage in with their peers and staff, members gained new skills, especially related to social skills! Members that were not identified as having a social skills goal in their plan were able to show improvement in what the team was not even focused on.

- Marc Community Resources/Copa Health

The outcomes were very consistent with what we anticipated. An outcome we did not think about was parents of some of our residents expressed that their stress and worry level decreased hearing and seeing how excited their child or family members are.

- Quality Connections

6. What other information about the impact of this Small Grant Opportunity would you like to share?

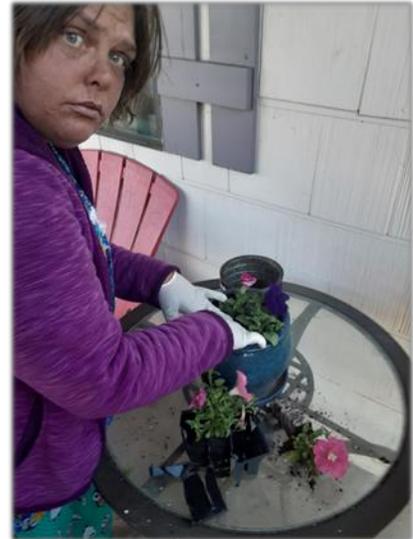
Above and beyond the information already shared about present use and impact of grant funds, the two most common things expressed by grantees were, first, gratitude to the funder for the grant opportunity and, second, commitment to continue utilizing the resources as much as possible to ensure ongoing engagement, activity, and well-being for the individuals they serve.

Grantees roundly praised ADDPC for its foresight and generosity in allocating the funds, especially in light of the financial challenges related to the pandemic. As previously mentioned, reductions in DTA or other services directly resulted in reductions in revenue; at the same time,



a number of expenses increased dramatically, in particular costs associated with personal protective equipment, cleaning and disinfecting supplies, staff health testing, and other safety measures. With revenues declining and expenses rising, many providers had little left for discretionary expenditures. This meant they could not afford the very things their members most needed: supplies, materials, activities, and technology to keep them occupied and engaged.

This grant opportunity was made available at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, when no one was able to accurately predict its duration or its eventual impacts. What was abundantly clear, however, was how rapidly individuals with I/DD would experience declines in health and well-being without thoughtful, appropriate, informed, and adequately funded responses designed to keep their minds and bodies occupied – even when typical activities were out of the question. Thus the availability of grant funds for service providers met an immediate and undeniable need.



Despite ebbs and flows in the number of positive COVID-19 cases, and even with the gradual re-opening of DTAs and other services, this pandemic remains a constant part of our lives almost nine months after its onset. And its effects on the I/DD service system are as profound today as they were earlier in the year. With no end in sight, providers understand the need to make certain those they support remain engaged, active, motivated, and connected to important people in their lives.

To the extent they can, and where the resources are durable or in adequate supply, several grantees stated their intention to continue utilizing items purchased with grant funds. Technology items seem especially well suited to this, but other things such as games, books, certain gardening supplies, and therapeutic items likely also will have long-term value.

The following exemplify, in their own words, the general sentiments of several providers receiving Small Grants:

We are extremely grateful for this gift. We saw considerable confusion, depression, dejection, and looming feelings of isolation in the height of the COVID pandemic among our members. Having an outlet for expression was tremendous, and allowed them to connect with their peers at the time and re-socialize. This made the process of moving back to “normal” more facilitated, meaningful, and powerful.

- Civitan Foundation

This has been a challenging time for many, but the support and comfort that this grant is offering our members is priceless. The outcomes mentioned above are so important for staying both physically and mentally healthy. Partnerships with the community make all the difference in the world. The timing of the Engagement and Comfort grant was impeccable. We would like to express our heartfelt gratitude for the support of the Arc of Arizona and the Developmental Disabilities Planning Council. The people that we serve thank you! We thank you!!

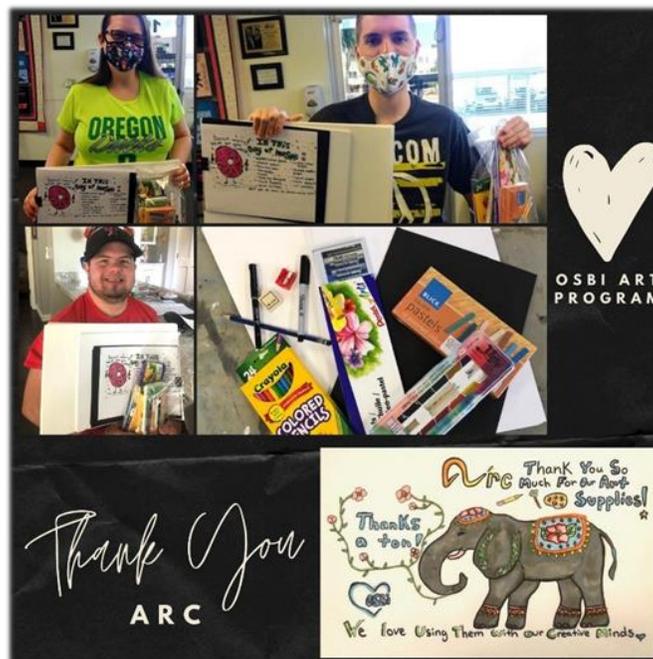
- AZTEC

This was a wonderful idea that empowered many individuals to spend their time in creative pursuits and all are very grateful to ADDPC and ARC.

- Arts for All

As the impact of COVID-19 seems to only be increasing, environmental engineering will continue to play a vital role in effective and safe service delivery as was shown in this project. Additionally, the individuals we serve in the program have never gone this long without going to a day or work program, so although it is difficult to gauge the impact of the coolers, residents of the homes continue to remain stable overall in terms of behavior, boredom, etc., and continue to go outside and use the coolers when the weather permits. THANK YOU!!

- Chandler Gilbert Arc



This pandemic, though nightmarish, has brought about a very human response from people as they try to help each other and nothing makes this more apparent than the spot on goals of this grant. Everyone at Echoing Hope had moments which were touched by the items we received and everyone was better for it.

- Echoing Hope Ranch

While the needs for locating toilet paper and sanitizing products seemed to pre-occupy our thoughts at the outset, the idea to provide games for our constituency was right on target. THANK YOU!!

- VALLEYLIFE

Financial Management

All grant funds were managed and expended in accordance with the Small Grants administration contract between ADDPC and The Arc of Arizona. There were no deviations from amounts granted (delineated above) and no changes to the administration fees retained by the contractor. The Arc retains documentation of all grantee expenditures, as required in the contract and grant acceptance, and grantee organizations were reimbursed only upon presentation of the required purchase receipts.