



Special Kids  
Special Families

# The Special Times

E-Newsletter

February 2023

## Donations for Zach's Place Kids

Michael Sherman at **4KidzSports** donated several soccer balls, footballs, baseballs and gloves to our youth at Zach's Place. They loved the balls and will use them in their indoor gym space and outdoor playground.

Please help support local businesses & visit [4KidzSports](https://www.4kidzsports.com)



## I Am Me...

### Positive Words In Action

At Zach's Place at The Laurie Hillyard Family Center youth work on building life skills like decision-making, creative thinking, interpersonal relationship skills, self-awareness building skills, empathy, and coping with stress and emotions. This is very important to our families we serve because it helps the youth to be more active members of their family and community. Words placed at the entrance area at Zach's Place are a positive daily reminder that our youth are brave, loved, creative, smart, powerful, beautiful, helpful, kind and important. These "I AM" words were created to build self-awareness, self-esteem and self-confidence which are all essential tools for understanding one's strengths & weaknesses.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT ZACH'S PLACE](#)

**YOU are the HEART of our organization - our clients, parents, caregivers, staff, volunteers, donors, sponsors, grantors - we appreciate everything you do to keep our organization's mission thriving!**





# Engaging Adults in the Community

At our Adult Program, we have started ASL (American Sign Language) classes with ASL instructor, Julie Riddle. Julie has created a curriculum that engages our clients to learn sign language and learn more about the deaf community. The clients were very interested and have been able to retain what she taught. We are excited that Julie will be continuing to teach classes twice a month moving forward. A great learning experience for our clients with a great instructor!



## Volunteering In The Community

Our Adult Day Community program started volunteering at the Cheyenne Mountain Zoo.

At the Zoo, our clients are helping make bird feeders for the bird exhibit and once they have completed this they have full access to the Zoo for the rest of the day! We are excited that this opportunity will be available year round giving our program participants the opportunity to help and make a difference in their community!

[LEARN MORE ABOUT ADULT DAY PROGRAMS](#)



Michael Duck with SKSF Residential Services Director, Sarah Kelso

## Achieving Milestones!

Adult Host Home client, Michael "Mikey" Duck is celebrating his 6 month employment anniversary at Popeye's Chicken. Mikey joined our program after experiencing a personal hardship in the summer of 2021. Now, with a stable home environment and the medical support and advocacy he needs, Mikey is able to focus on working, personal interests (like his pet fish) and other aspects of adult life. We are proud to see Mikey achieve a milestone like this!

## Bowl-A-Thon Bowler Spotlight

Sharon has been attending our Adult Day program for many years and is a key member of our SKSF community. Sharon LOVES bowling! She's been a part of many Special Olympics bowling leagues and bowling has been a long standing tradition in her family. You can pick Sharon out of a crowd by her bright smile. She always encourages others to not sweat the small stuff and be thankful to be alive. Sharon recently celebrated her 79th birthday and shares with others that the secret to celebrating this many birthdays is to be positive and grateful. She loves celebrating others accomplishments and is always the most enthusiastic cheerleader in the crowd. Sharon is not afraid to share her love with others and truly wants everyone in her life to feel special. We are lucky to have such an incredible person on our SKSF bowling team.



Help Sharon collect as many pledges to win the contest prize for **MOST PLEDGES** by [donating in any amount here.](#)

Donated funds will support SKSF's Adult Day Program for adults with disabilities.





SKSF Board Member, Patty Brookes & SKSF Executive Director, Kevin Porter

Because of YOU, the 2022 Give! Campaign raised over \$1.2 million dollars. Our community is better because of YOU! The official wrap-up event for the 2022 Give! Campaign took place this past week with check presentations. We are incredibly honored and grateful to all the donors that chose Special Kids Special Families – thank you for supporting our mission! We raised over \$7800 to support our Zach's Place program. On behalf of the SKSF Board of Directors, staff and the clients we have the honor and privilege to serve - THANK YOU very much for your generosity through this year's Give! Campaign. [WAYS YOU CAN GIVE](#)



give back to  
local nonprofits

## Charity Begins Close To Home

Colorado has a great way to give back to local nonprofits called the [ReFUND program](#). Taxpayers can choose to directly support an eligible Colorado-registered charity with a simple designation on their state income tax return. To participate, taxpayers should look for the "Donate to a Colorado Nonprofit" line of their tax return or tax software and enter the name and registration number of **SPECIAL KIDS SPECIAL FAMILIES #20073010355**. You can choose to donate all or only a portion of your refund. We appreciate your support! Donations will support our programs for individuals with disabilities.

# UCCS

## College of Business

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO COLORADO SPRINGS

# JOB FAIR

Special Kids Special Families will be attending the UCCS College of Business Career Networking Night.

**6-8 pm Wednesday, March 1st**

**Berger Hall, UCCS Campus**

Over 50 employers from the region, state, and elsewhere who are looking for interns, part and full-time employees. It's a great time to network, in person, with representatives from many businesses & organizations. Food and refreshments will be provided. [MORE INFO...](#)



## We are in the midst of a hiring frenzy!

Several Director positions available along with Direct Care Providers needed for adults and children with great pay & benefits. Available positions:

- ◆ Host Home Program Director
- ◆ Behavioral Health Clinical Director
- ◆ Operations Administrative Support
- ◆ Development & Communications Director
- ◆ Quality & Process Improvement Director
- ◆ Child Care Worker
- ◆ Child Care Lead / Teacher
- ◆ Adult Mentor / Direct Care Provider

If interested, visit our website to view job descriptions & to apply: <http://sksfcolorado.org/get-involved/career-opportunities/> or contact Aleah HR Manager at [HR@sksfcolorado.org](mailto:HR@sksfcolorado.org) 719-602-3398.





**Nancy Gonzalez-Gomez**  
Adult Mentor  
Direct Care Provider  
Adult Services



**Stephanie Mytides**  
Child Care Worker  
Zach's Place Program



**Paul Thompson**  
Adult Mentor  
Direct Care Provider  
Adult Services



**Eddie Faunce**  
Residential Home  
Supervisor  
Host Home Services



**Aleah Farrell**  
Human Resources  
Manager  
Administration

What we do at SKSF takes funding. Many of our programs support individuals and families that don't have funds to spare. To live up to our mission, we offer those families a sliding scale-payment for services based on income. In some of our programs, we have more than 60% of our clients paying based on income. This means that we have a deficit. SKSF uses many tools to raise funds, cover expenses and solicit monetary as well as material donations to help us close this gap.



**YOU can make a difference and we value your support – in ANY amount!**

## CONTACT US:

### Special Kids Special Families

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## Welcome - New Board Member



**We'd like to welcome our newest Board Member - Vaughn Villarreal.**

Vaughn is experienced in comprehensive financial planning as well and working with children with

special needs. Having a special needs child of his own, with over 20 years in the health care field, Vaughn has a passion in assisting families in providing financial and therapy-based education in El Paso County.

Specifically, he has been a resource in the community in special needs trusts, estate planning, Medicaid waivers, and pediatric therapies. In his spare time, Vaughn loves spending time with his two younger boys and enjoying the beautiful outdoors.

**[LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS](#)**



**LEARN MORE**

Click here to  
**SPONSOR**



Special Kids  
Special Families

# BOWL-A-THON

## Bowl for the GREEN!

All proceeds from this event support SKSF programming  
for adults with disabilities, their families and caregivers

### SPECIAL THANKS to our SPONSORS:

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[BLAZER ELECTRIC](#)

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[KIDS CARE HOME HEALTH](#)

[SHANDY CLINIC](#)

We appreciate their  
generosity for supporting this event  
& our organization's mission!

SKSF's 14th Annual Bowl-A-Thon is a tradition that many look forward to every year! BOWL FOR THE GREEN St. Patrick's Day Bowl-A-Thon will be held on Saturday, March 11, 2023 at King Pin Lanes.

This annual event is celebrated every year where teams don their favorite St. Patrick's Day outfits, wear their green and bowl to support a good cause helping raise funds for programs for adults with disabilities and their families. We will hold a DRAWING for some great prizes offered by area businesses. We will also be awarding CONTEST PRIZES throughout the event. A goodie bag will also be given to every registered bowler.



**HURRY! ONLY 5 LANES LEFT SO  
REGISTER YOUR TEAM TODAY!!**

Help us SPREAD THE WORD! [Please print out the flyer](#) & post at your place of business  
OR share with a friend or family member. Thank you for your help!