

"Amazing Place is a rare gem.

If adult day centers were the new fancy drug it would be a billion-dollar drug because studies tell us that

what Amazing Place is doing is equivalent in terms of effectiveness.

This is cutting-edge caregiving treatment."



Aanand D. Naik, MD
Professor and Nancy & Vincent Guinee, MD Distinguished Chair
Executive Director, Institute on Aging
UTHealth Houston

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR UPDATE

5,335
People Served in 2022 by

Amazing Place

"We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose." – ROMANS 8:28

Dear Amazing Place friends, 2022 was a remarkable year. By working together to leverage opportunities, address challenges and give hope to Houston-area

families challenged by dementia and Alzheimer's, Amazing Place was

able to serve a record number of individuals and successfully accomplish many of our lofty goals. A common thread of adaptability enabled us to evolve existing initiatives, launch new

programs and operate in even more efficient ways.

To help our community better understand what we do and how we do it, last year we instituted a new theme line—Helping Families with the Challenges of Dementia and Alzheimer's. These simple words speak to the comprehensive pillars of our work: caring for those with mild to moderate dementia, supporting family caregivers, and educating the public on brain health and the aging journey.

As we transitioned from the unpredictability of the pandemic, we continued to find opportunity. We refocused efforts on our Day Program, converting more tour visits to admissions than ever before. Meanwhile, our support of family caregivers took on new life as, among other initiatives, we signed a licensing agreement that ensures the unparalleled training, knowledge and skills of our certified Savvy

Caregiver® experts into the future. This evidence-based program helps individuals understand dementia, its effects on behavior, and how to develop strategies for caregiving and decision-making.

Thanks to our collaborative three-

year grant from the U.S. Administration for Community Living, we launched two new initiatives and expanded an existing program in 2022. In the new *Star-C Caregiver* program,

caregivers are given customized recommendations, resources, and encouragement from trained volunteer consultants through a series of home visits and phone sessions. Also, working with churches serving Hispanic populations, we began the implementation of *Cuidando con Respeto*, a Spanish-language, culturally appropriate dementia-related education program.

Finally, we expanded Faith Care Connection into Katy/West Houston, adding staff and faith-based partners to help us identify socially-isolated seniors living alone at risk for dementia and to connect them with the needed resources to improve their quality of life.

Amazing Place plays a vital role in community education. With 1 in 9 individuals over the age of 65 now diagnosed with dementia, our Connections Team shared its expertise to almost 4,000 people last

year. Brain Health Matters, Memory Enhancement and our Training for Healthcare Professionals sessions re-inforced the pent-up need for these offerings.

The power of Amazing Place is that in service to others we are advancing how those impacted by dementia are cared for and given the dignity and respect they deserve. This is a collective effort in which we are blessed and incredibly grateful to have so many of you working alongside us. Thank you for being part of the Amazing Place family.

With gratitude,

Tracey Brown
Executive Director



DAY PROGRAM

Helping those with Mild to Moderate Dementia

I enjoy getting to know the people and hearing their life stories plus knowing I'm helping caregivers recharge their batteries. My time spent at Amazing Place puts life in perspective for me. God says, "I know the plans I have for you..." and Amazing Place is where those plans come alive for me.

> - Mike Pelton, Board Member and Day Program Volunteer

One of the great strengths of our Day Program is that we respect and honor the unique abilities of every participant wherever they are in their dementia journey. More than day care, more than a social gathering, more than a gym for the brain, we strove last year to meet and capitalize on where each individual is in their journey in order to prolong their God-given talents. By living in the moment, we were able to multiply opportunities to engage,

We saw our number of in-person and virtual participants grow throughout 2022, and were especially

our most number of participants in a single year ever.

Additionally, we saw an increase in diversity, including

> more men, people of color and a variety of religions represented. In fact, at the end of the

year for the first-time, we had more men than

women enrolled in the Day Program. Last year was a special reminder of the importance of community

and shared experiences. As we were able to lessen the social distancing forced by COVID and participants re-engaged with those around them,

1,015

People Served

in 2022 by Day Program

we were reminded how camaraderie has healing power. Our participants' desire to be together energized planned activities, created communal

laughter and elevated a sense of wellness on campus. Simply sharing a nutritious meal together at lunch provided greatly needed fellowship for our participants and inspiration for our staff. Returning to routine and reliable scheduling in 2022 proved to be good for the heart and soul of Amazing Place, our Day Program.





2

CAROL AND ROLFE JOHNSON

met through a church youth group as teenagers, and it was the beginning of a wonderful life together. As Carol retells the story of their first encounter, "he was my hero." Today, Rolfe remains a hero in their love story which since 2015 has been marked by his Alzheimer's diagnosis and his courageous pioneering of clinical trials to slow progression of the disease.

The two dated throughout high school and married in 1961 while still in college—he was at Rice University and she was at the University of Houston. After graduating, Rolfe was accepted to Harvard Law School, so the young couple packed up and headed to Cambridge, Massachusetts. While there, they added a daughter to their family—enjoying their days in the Boston area but realizing they would head home to Texas when Rolfe's studies were completed.

In the years to come, the Johnsons busily embraced Houston. Rolfe joined and became a partner in prestigious firms, specializing in international business law for more than 35 years. They had three more children, all boys, and Carol became a licensed psychotherapist, working predominantly with children and families. Throughout the years, the Johnsons have stayed actively involved in their church, Bering Drive Church of Christ, and served as youth ministers, teachers and on the pastoral team. Both Johnsons love travel and adventure—sailing and skiing are two passions they share.

"I've made good friends here. It's helpful to know that this is a shared experience," Rolfe says. "A shared experience is a lighter experience."

"Everyone at Amazing Place is alert, capable and encouraging. You can sense God's presence the minute you walk in the door," Carol adds.

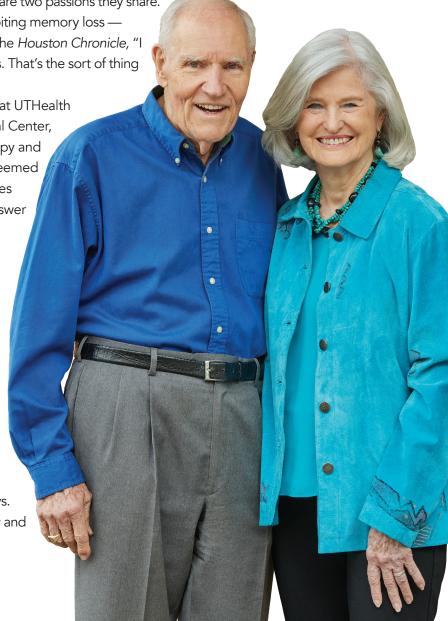
Rolfe was first diagnosed with Alzheimer's after exhibiting memory loss — repeating questions and forgetting details. As he told the *Houston Chronicle*, "I was not remembering things from recent conversations. That's the sort of thing people begin to notice."

They connected with Dr. Paul Schulz, a neurologist at UTHealth Neurosciences and Memorial Hermann-Texas Medical Center, and Rolfe participated in trials including plasma therapy and immunotherapy infusion. Carol believes these trials seemed to slow progression of the disease. When those studies were over, however, the couple was looking for an answer to a prayer.

So, when the FDA approved Aduhelm, a drug aimed at suspending deterioration of the disease, Rolfe was delighted that his doctor recommended him for the medication. In the summer of 2021, he became one of the first in Texas to receive the drug.

Rolfe joined the Day Program two years ago and insists that socialization with others is great medicine. He often gives the devotional at lunch and is known to be a terrific domino player. "I've made good friends here. It's helpful to know that this is a shared experience," Rolfe says. "A shared experience is a lighter experience."

The Johnsons, in spite of challenges, are joyful and upbeat. "We are having a life we love to live," Carol says. "The people at Amazing Place have touched us deeply and we know the Holy Spirit will help us always."



"It's been an emotional pendulum," says Yared. "As a caregiver, you first go through shock and then acceptance.
Amazing Place has been a Godsend for our mother and our family. She is thriving and living to the best of her abilities while the family has peace of mind."

As for Anki? She leans in and whispers, "I am lucky."



have a particular look they give each other during a conversation. It conveys many things—assurance, trust, candor, fortitude—but most of all, unshakable love. As immigrants from Ethiopia, the family's journey to get to this place in time has been filled with a range of highs and lows.

Anketse (Anki) and her husband Dr. Wolde-Michael Akalou were well-established in their careers—he as Vice Chancellor at Addis Ababa University and she as a head nurse at Addis Ababa Hospital — when the Ethiopian revolution forced them to leave their country abruptly in 1974 with their two young boys, Yared and Daniel. Yared says, "we left everything behind- even our dog. It was very, very tough."

The family settled in Chicago and their father, an expert in Urban Geography and African History, began teaching at the University of Illinois while Anki found a nursing position. As she quietly recalls, "I have always loved taking care of people."

The family moved to Houston where Dr. Akalou became the Dean of History and Geography at Texas Southern University and held professorships at other area universities. Anki continued her nursing career while raising her sons. Life was focused on family, faith and community. In fact, Dr. Akalou eventually became Director of the Mickey Leland Center, and launched several non-profit organizations around social impact.

Helping other immigrants find the resources they needed in their new homeland, they sponsored families and Anki was known to take individuals on needed errands and appointments as her boys grew up. Today, Yared is head of design at Hourwork and manages his start-up, Alcove. Daniel lives in Maryland and is a corporate executive with two sons.

When Anki's husband died in 2005, she continued to live on her own, staying busy by caring for those who needed her nursing skills and volunteering with her church, Debre Selam MedhanAlem Ethiopian Orthodoz Tewahedo.

She stayed very independent but was delighted when Yared moved back to Houston from Brazil with his wife and two children.

The family began noticing a change in Anki during COVID. She began getting lost when driving and became increasingly forgetful. Not wanting to be a burden to anyone and in denial, she continued to isolate herself until the family took her to a neurologist who diagnosed her with early to moderate stage Alzheimer's.

Anki moved into Yared's home where initially, her sons hired caregivers to help with Anki's daily needs. Realizing outside care was not always reliable or consistent, Yared and his brother began looking for a better alternative.

They found it in Amazing Place's *Day Program*, where Anki comes several times a week. Yared says his mother has become more engaged since coming to the campus, talking more and participating in activities. A piano player, she loves any activity involving music. Her quiet demeanor and big smile are welcomed by all who are around her.



CONNECTIONS

Supporting Caregivers and the Community

For Amazing Place, helping families with the challenges of dementia and Alzheimer's means we care for those who are or could be impacted by the disease. Family caregivers, faith organizations, individuals, healthcare professionals and community groups who want to know more about brain health and the aging journey rely on our dementia experts for education, resources and care consultation.

We were rewarded last year by the number of Day Program participant caregivers who attended our classes to learn from our specialists and from each other as we shared our collective knowledge about the dementia umbrella, and how to manage the challenges it presents. Once again, most classes were free of charge. In addition to word-of-mouth, we began promoting our scheduled programs virtually via EventBrite, creating greater awareness and visibility for these offerings.

SAVVY CAREGIVER. At the end of the year, we signed a licensing agreement with the University of Minnesota, Emory University and other copyright holders to ensure the unparalleled training, knowledge and skills expected from certified Amazing Place Savvy Caregiver® experts will continue in the future. Last year, more than 600 individuals participated in the traditional sixweek program or the three-week Savvy Express.



CARE CONSULTATION. In addition to the care consultation provided to participant families, last year Amazing

Place increased the number of free telephone-based consultations to those in the community who needed next-step advice, valuable resources, education

and follow-up. We saw more referrals from health care providers and faith partners for these services, reaffirming the need in our community for reliable dementia information.

BRAIN HEALTH MATTERS. For

those individuals who wanted to learn more about dementia,

> preserving memory skills or aging alone gracefully, our Connections team was there to help. In fact, more than 1500 individuals heard presentations from

our experts in 2022. Aging Solo, our

program to empower individuals to better navigate aging, was particularly well-received.

"I can't thank you enough for a really valuable introduction to the landscape of caregiving for dementia patients. The course has been incredibly helpful, and I realize how much I still have to learn. I feel less overwhelmed and have more hope about what may be possible moving forward." — Gary, Savvy Caregiver Participant

3,992

People Served

in 2022 by Connections

2022 PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Last year Amazing Place began offering several innovative programs—either entirely new or expanded from existing successful offerings—that are designed to meet specific needs in our community.

STAR-C CAREGIVER

Our new Star-C Caregiver evidence-based program is designed to identify problems important to a caregiver and develop strategies and activities for reducing these problems. In this free program, trained STAR-C volunteer consultants provide one-on-one dementia caregiver assistance for managing daily life. Our team recruited families who desired a customized approach to caregiving. They also identified a handful of volunteers and





KATHERINE CHRISTIE, LMSW, LOVES WORKING WITH SENIORS.

She also loves finding resources and connecting people to them. When she began working at Amazing Place in 2018, it was a match made in heaven. Katherine, a graduate of Baylor University, spent her first years out of graduate school working on the Faith Care Connection and Community Care Consultation teams. When Amazing Place was awarded a grant to expand our caregiver offerings, Katherine was the obvious choice to lead the *Star-C Caregiver* program.

"After learning about successful caregiver models, we identified the need for one-on-one support for caregivers to apply what they've learned into their daily life, "Katherine says. "We knew that we had volunteers who had the capabilities, heart, flexibility and compassion to make this a win-win situation for all involved."

By her own admission, managing the Star-C program fits Katherine's skill-set perfectly. "I love to problem solve and use my communication skills to help people," she admits. "The fact that we are helping pilot a dementia program and be part of something that's never been done before makes my job even more special."

FAITH CARE CONNECTION

Since 2017, Amazing Place has successfully worked with Houston churches to identify seniors living alone and who may be at risk of dementia and connected them to needed resources. This highly successful program has served more than 26 congregations, but more needed to be done. Last year, with the help of a grant, we were able to expand Faith Care Connection to Katy/West Houston and added Katy First United Methodist and St. Paul's Episcopal to our partners in this program. Additionally, we began recruiting program specialists to support this work.



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CUIDANDO CON RESPETO

Hispanics/Latinos are 1.5 times more likely than Caucasians to have dementia, yet there are few programs to address their needs in a culturally appropriate way. Amazing Place's new Spanishlanguage program, Cuidando con Respeto, set out in 2022 to help fill that gap in the Houston area. The program teams up with churches serving predominantly Hispanic congregants and then provides education and resources on-site to those who are concerned that someone they love who is 55 or older may be at risk for dementia. In mid-year, Yadira Reyes, MSW, was hired as Program Manager and Jose Cuellar, a long-time Day Program staff member, joined the team. The two began planning for Cuidando con Respeto's roll-out in early 2023.

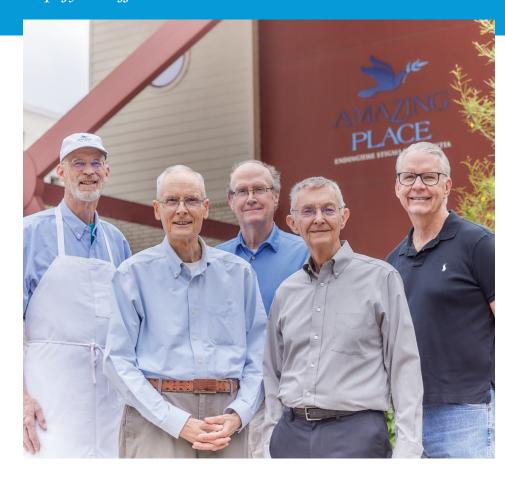
These programs are supported by the Administration for Community Living (ACL), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial assistance award totaling \$1,314,510 with 75% percentage funded by ACL/HHS and 25% percentage funded by non-government source(s). The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by ACL/HHS, or the U.S. Government.

FRIENDS, FAMILY AND THE FUTURE

Amazing Place impacts as many lives as it does because our staff, volunteers, faith partners and donors share our vision and amplify our efforts in word and in deed.

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are a vital part of all that happens as part of our mission. In 2022, Amazing Place was blessed with more than 250 volunteers who gave their time and talents to help our participants and their families. These individuals and groups logged 5706 hours which is the equivalent of 6.1 full-time employees. They served in a variety of roles ranging from covering the front desk, engaging our Day Program participants in cognitive activities, special exercise/ music programs, art classes or Bible study, and assisting our culinary team with meal preparation. Many volunteers were also donors, adding to our Amazing Place community of financial supporters.



FAITH PARTNERS

As in-person activities were re-energized, Faith Care Connection expanded into west Houston, and *Cuidando con Respeto* was launched into Hispanic congregations, furthering our relations into the faith community and their networks. More than ever, we relied on the input, wisdom and guidance of our faith partners to support us, build trust in the communities we serve and share our mission with others. Our gratitude for their prayerful support is ongoing.



AMAZING PLACE WEST

"They've got the property. We're raising the money, and it's going to be just as great as the one we have on Drexel."— Carol Ann Paddock

While Amazing Place has had a presence in Katy/West Houston for more than five years, we have steadily been growing our presence in the area. In preparation for breaking ground in 2023 on Amazing Place West, we expanded our office at The Hub in downtown Katy last year and began offering more classes from there and nearby churches. We also added to our team, hiring Linda Jenkins, RN, as our Faith Care Connection Specialist, and long-time area resident Debbie Godfrey as our Faith Care Connection Coordinator.

As we got closer to our capital campaign goal at the end of the year, we sharpened our vision for our planned new two-acre campus on Circle DeMatel. Architectural and landscaping elements that will make our campus truly unique were refined as escalating construction costs and supply issues challenged our thinking. Because of the generosity of donors, we remained confident and on-track to begin construction in 2023.







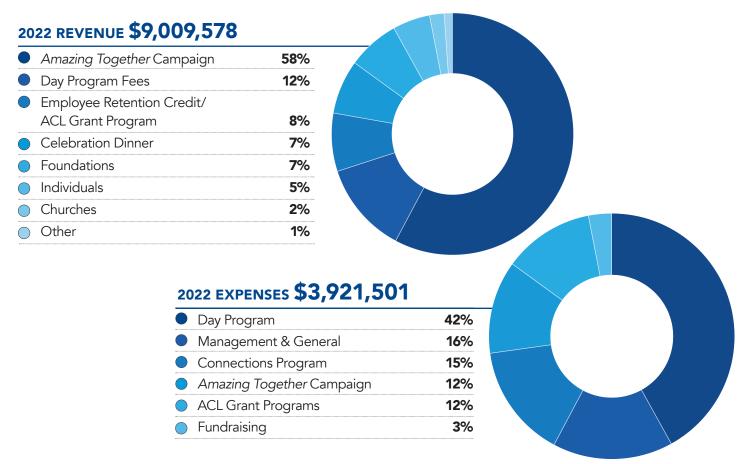


STAFF

The 36 members of the Amazing Place staff – from those who engage with our participants in the Day Program to our Connections team of dementia experts who work with caregivers, congregations, organizations and individuals, to our administrative, operations, marketing and development teams—are purposeful, compassionate and intentionally focused on our mission. In 2022, this team performed their jobs seamlessly throughout completion of a second story building expansion and as planning for our Katy/West Houston campus began in earnest.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Your financial contributions in 2022 were so meaningful and transformative, especially those supporting our campaign and expansion. The cash position of the organization was strong at the end of the year with \$524,798 in operating cash and \$6,572,097 in restricted cash and investments.



ANNUAL DINNER

McGovern Centennial Gardens was the magical backdrop for our 2022 Celebration Dinner on October 19, 2022. Chaired by Ann and Tres Cochran, and Nancy and Price Manford, we honored Carol Ann and Bob Paddock for their years of service to Amazing Place. Thanks to an anonymous \$25,000 match given that evening, **we raised more than \$700,000**, setting the stage for more great things to come from our organization in years ahead.









2022 DONOR LIST

Your gifts are our blessing. Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this list. We acknowledge and awpologize that errors or omissions sometimes occur. We are truly grateful for all of the generous donors who gave to Amazing Place in 2022.

CHURCHES

Christ the King Lutheran Church Grand Lakes Presbyterian Church The Fellowship Bellaire United Methodist Church in memory of Diane McLaughlin Bethany Christian Church Chapelwood United Methodist Church Christ Church Cathedral First Presbyterian Church Memorial Drive Presbyterian Church River Oaks Baptist Church South Main Baptist Church St. Anne Catholic Church St. John the Divine **Episcopal Church** in memory of Betty Jean Ingram Jordan St. John the Divine Go Ministry St. Luke's United Methodist Church St. Martin's Episcopal Church St. Paul's United Methodist Church Round Table Class St. Paul's United Methodist Church St. Philip Presbyterian Church Central Mission Endowment Fund

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

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in honor of Joy and Charlie Hall

West University United

Methodist Church

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Church

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Price Manford

Mary Kay Cooley

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Kelty & Rogers Crain

Lizzie & Doug Craig

Virginia Lee Lootens

The Drew Cozby Family

Elizabeth & Doug Craig

Nancy & Price Manford

Nancy & Price Manford

Carol Ann & Bob Paddock

in memory of Leon Payne

Catherine & Edward Crain

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Kristi & John Cooper

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in memory of Danny Sherwood

in memory of Barbara Cowles

in honor of Amazing Place Staff

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Sallie & Ted Davis

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Jorge de la Torre, M.D.

Julie de la Torre

in memory of

Carol & George Dehan in honor of Carol Ann & Bob Paddock

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in memory of

Myron Sheldon Wolynec

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