

Full STEAM Ahead!



Kathy Reticker,
Executive Director

Dear Friends and Families,

The theme of this newsletter is “Full STEAM Ahead!” and that is a perfect description of Acre Family Child Care’s year! We have moved full steam ahead in helping women create a pathway for economic independence. Our mission is as important to day as it was over 25 years ago when Acre Family Child Care began.

This year we welcomed 12 new early childhood educators to the Acre Family Child Care system. They include seven women who are starting to offer child care for the first time, and five women who have been providing care but want to be part of our organization. All of them are participating in our signature Benchmarks Professional Development Program.

Being part of our organization means being part of some amazing partnerships. We have continued to move ahead with The Discovery Museums of Acton to build our Science Technology Engineering Arts and Math (STEAM) programming. Children’s natural curiosity makes them eager learners and you can read how we support that curiosity in the article by Lucas Skorczeski.

We’re also moving full steam ahead by expanding our partnership with Jumpstart and have thirty-six preschool-aged children participating in this nationally recognized early literacy program. Our partnership with UMass Lowell’s Community Psychology program has thrived and between 4 and 6 students each semester work with our educators to provide language enrichment activities for the children in their homes.

Our partnership with parents is an area that we continue to expand. We’ve offered activities for families such as our Book and Pizza Party, Summer Kick-off, and Family nights at the Museum, however, we know that we still have far to go. This year we plan to deepen our relationships with the families we serve and partner with them in the work of preparing their children for life. We recognize that parents are their children’s first teachers and are going to offer programming that helps parents be successful. This is one of the areas that we’ll be putting more steam into this year!

I hope you enjoy the pictures from this past year and look forward to moving full steam ahead in 2015!

Sincerely,
Kathy Reticker



“My Beautiful Garden” 2014 STEAM Fair Exhibit

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Letter from our Board Chair

February, 2015

Dear Friends,

It's my pleasure once again to introduce the Annual Report of Acre Family Child Care (AFCC). It seems like we were just preparing last year's Annual Report, and now we've completed another year of excellent child care and economic empowerment! What makes AFCC unique is the total commitment of our educators and our staff to continue in our mission. Our home visitors and social worker are invaluable resources for our educators, keeping them connected and sharing the challenges of caring for children with diverse needs. Our in-service trainings keep providers up-to-date on the latest regulations and issues in child care, such as dealing with children diagnosed with autism. Acre also provides educators/business owners with helpful training so that they can better manage their businesses and their financial futures.

Our educators also continue our emphasis on the STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art and math) curriculum and our partners at the Discovery Museum and UMass Lowell will continue with their support of the STEAM Fair, where children showcase the projects they have worked on with their providers. Thanks to Board member Prof. Alyssa McCabe, we will also continue a successful partnership with UMass Lowell psychology students who spend time in the homes of some of our educators speaking, and listening, to children in order to improve their language skills.

Finally, I want to thank the wonderful Acre staff, led by Kathy Reticker, most of whom have worked at the agency for a number of years, for their continued dedication to our mission and the caring, compassionate atmosphere they have created for everyone involved with the agency: children, parents, educators, Board, and staff. Thank you.

Thanks for taking the time to read this Annual Report. We look forward to more great things for Acre Family Child Care in coming year.

Sincerely,
Patricia Sullivan Talty
Board Chair



Acre Board Chair,
Patricia Sullivan Talty



Full STEAM Ahead!



Partnering to Inspire

Lucas Skorczeski, Director of Early Childhood Education and Parent Resources



The Discovery Museums and Acre Family Child Care have been working together since 2006. During the past eight years we have accomplished many things including organizing some incredible programs and trainings. Our shared knowledge, creativity, trust, and collaboration have helped us build a dynamic relationship that has had a real impact within our communities.

The Discovery Museums brings knowledge from years of developing hands-on science exhibits while the AFCC educators share their expertise from having worked with thousands of children of all ages and backgrounds. Our collective creativity comes from dedicated professionals constantly working with young children eagerly exploring and learning about their world both in formal and informal settings.

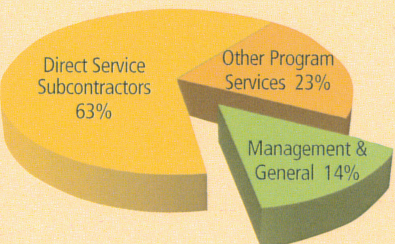
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Acre Family Child Care / Financial Summary

(unaudited, in thousands)

	FISCAL YEAR	
	2014	2013
Revenue & Support		
Program Service Revenue	\$3,869	\$3,641
Other Revenues	35	21
Grants & Contributions:		
Grants – Government	107	108
Grants – Foundations	40	58
Individuals & Businesses	28	62
Grants & Contributions	175	228
Gross Support & Revenue	4,079	3,890
Expenses		
Direct Service Subcontractors	2,623	2,446
Other Program Services	941	910
Management & General	566	560
Total Expenses	4,130	3,916
Operating (Loss) Income	\$(51)	\$(26)

Total Expenses 2014



During the past two years, 86% of all expenditures were used to support our child care service programs, while general management & fundraising expenditures required only 14 cents of each dollar spent.

**2014
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Partnering to Inspire *(Continued)*

Together we have the trust needed to put work and ideas on display for friends, family, and coworkers in venues such as our 2nd Annual Lowell Community Pre-K STEAM Fair (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, Math). Our history of collaborations has proven to be essential to work seamlessly together to pull off such a huge project.

Our story isn't just a collection of past events and success; it is a guide that is helping prepare us and the children and families we serve, for the future. We know lifelong learning starts at birth, and The Discovery Museums and Acre Family Child Care are working hard to be prepared for every infant and toddler we have the great gift of working with. Together, we are working to help children and their families explore our museums, communities, and world.



“Over the last **3** years, there have been **44** AFCC fieldtrips to The Discovery Museums, **7** professional development workshops, **7** family nights at the museum, **8** offsite events in Lowell that the museum has participated in, a new curriculum kit lending library with over **500** pages of curriculum translated into multiple languages, and **2** fantastically successful Pre-K STEAM Fairs.”

Acre Family Child Care
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