



ANNUAL REPORT 2017

Gompers
Empowering People with Disabilities

gompers.org

DEVELOPING INNOVATIVE OPPORTUNITIES FOR
INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES FOR OVER 70 YEARS



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CEO STATEMENT

A STORIED YEAR FOR A HISTORIC AGENCY'S STORIED LEGACY

Like any great novel, Gompers' 70-year story has been filled with the best of times and the worst of times. We may even have had a dark and stormy night or two, but it is hard to imagine too many chapters more exciting than 2017! When the narrative of Gompers is completed, 2017's acquisition of the Blythe Center will go down as a historic milestone. For years Gompers has been looking to bring our exceptional programs and services further into the west valley. When this opportunity presented itself, it seemed like the opportunity of fairy tales. A 30-year-old organization, with incredible services, a tremendous staff, and a family base who was wildly supportive, seemed too good to be true. The acquisition, overseen by Gompers phenomenal Board of Directors, happened so seamlessly that when Blythe sadly closed its doors on Friday, Gompers re-opened in the same location, with members and families seeing no disruption to their lives. While there is no doubt Arizona must do something about its underfunded disability services that led to Blythe's closure, Gompers is happy we were able to step in and move the program forward.

As with any great book, it is the characters who drive the narrative and the heroes who push the story forward. For Gompers, it's our amazing students, members, and staff that move our narrative. Within the pages of this report, you will read incredible stories of perseverance, success and more than a few dreams that have come true. Our students and members are the inspiration that pushes all of us forward. They provide the energy that makes us turn the page into even greater things.

I am excited about what the next chapter will bring us, but until that is written, enjoy the tale of 2017.

IT'S THE HEROS WHO
DRIVE THE NARRATIVE OF
GOMPERS' STORY

OUR STORY

2017 WAS A YEAR OF GROWTH AND EXPANSION FOR GOMPERS. HERE IS JUST SOME OF WHAT WE DID:



ORGANIZATION GROWTH

In 2017 we expanded our services to Peoria, in effort to serve our members! Additionally, Gompers expanded its services into In-Home services allowing us to support members with respite, attendant care and home-based habilitation services!



DONATIONS RECEIVED

\$335,756

DONATED TO SUPPORT GOMPERS ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY EFFORTS, GOMPERS PROGRAMS AND EXPANSION.



KRISTA DISPELS
CULTURAL AND SOCIETAL
CONSTRAINTS **EVERY DAY**



KRISTA'S STORY

Krista Howard is a single mom in her 30s pursuing her career with fervor and dedication. What you don't know about Krista, without meeting her in person, is that she has a disability affecting her speech and the use of her left arm. Krista can only vocalize sounds to communicate, so she has been using an augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) device since she was 5. As an adult, she is like any other single mom trying to build a career while being a parent. Over time, Krista has earned three Associates degrees and she is currently pursuing her Bachelor's degree in Education Studies. Krista's success hasn't come without adversity. She has been tirelessly building her resume since she was 15-years-old.

Krista's goal is to work full time in education helping others with complex communication needs (CCN) as an Assistive Technology Specialist. She strives to enhance the lives of others with CCN by helping them strengthen their voice. Ultimately, Krista wants to educate those who work with individuals with disabilities to empower individuals of all ages with complex communication needs.

In 2017, we had the pleasure of hiring Krista as an AAC Technician in Gompers' Assistive Technology program! She is making a tremendous impact in the lives of our members, building trust with them through her firsthand understanding of life with a disability.

We are inspired by Krista, as she dispels cultural and societal constraints nearly every day. Since Krista's disability is noticeable, she gets the opportunity to show people that she functions much like they do. She is quick to initiate conversation and makes an inspiring, lasting impression

on everyone she meets. When Krista is working in the field, industry professionals can think she is a member of our program, until she quickly and confidently corrects their misconception.

Through her work, Krista has impacted a myriad of educators, parents, therapists, and individuals with disabilities. Through her work at Gompers, she continues to build her skill sets and career. Krista's family and lifelong friends are grateful for the opportunity she has been given and they are not surprised that she is advancing in her career. At Gompers, she helps our members and staff feel at ease providing peer-to-peer modeling for other AAC users. She has facilitated the creation of a staff training series, implemented vocabulary based activities for our members, and coordinated with our partner program device group, AZ Talks Together, a program designed to share best practices between device users.

Krista's role at Gompers has been a game-changer. She is shaping a culture in our organization through empowering our staff, students and adults. Almost all contributions that are given to Gompers are directed to support the efforts of our Assistive Technology initiative. It's these resources that have allowed us to share Krista with our members.

We cannot wait to see the many ways in which she will continue to impact our programs in 2018!

MARCOS'S STORY

As is true for most people, our independence is one of the qualities we value most in life. Marcos Rodriguez, a 25-year-old member of our In-Home Services program shares this same goal. Marcos experiences a moderate intellectual challenge; but, if you know anything about Gompers' members, you'll see that his disability does not stand in the way of his desire to be as free and independent as possible.

As Gompers pursued its expansion through the acquisition of the Blythe Center in May of 2017, we had the opportunity to offer new, in-home services to our members and families. Marcos lives with his sisters who also provide in-home services to him.

By working with Marco and his family, we've helped him grow in his ability to focus on tasks and we've taught him how to organize his thoughts and actions in ways that allow him to operate without needing assistance from others. Amusingly, Marcos has developed a keen awareness of when his sisters receive payment for the services they provide! He regularly checks to see when they have been paid, so that he can plan activities and prepare to purchase things he needs. This type of skill, foresight and, planning, can obviously be transferred to other areas of his life as well, which helps him work toward his goal of independence.

Marcos knows that the effort he makes toward mastering his goals will pay off in the future. He is no longer afraid of new challenges and is more responsive to the assistance those around him provide. Once he has mastered a task, he celebrates his success by looking for a new goal to conquer! With his energy and personality, along with his supportive family, Marcos has a limitless future ahead of him!

Marcos works on his drawing skills during arts and crafts time in our Blythe Center Day Training for Adults program.





51

Vehicles that allow us to transport our members to and from our programs and allow our members to get out in community each day.



488

Stops that our vehicles make to pick-up and drop-off our members each and every day.



245

Members transported to Gompers each day.

CARLOS'S STORY

This is a story of a young man named Carlos. He came to Gompers Employment Services needing some help. Carlos has a developmental disability and was in the probation system. Without intervention, he was to transition to a lifetime adult probation. Carlos wanted assistance so he could move toward employment—becoming an active participant in something meaningful to avoid lifelong restrictions.

Carlos's ultimate goal was to avoid probation, and have meaningful employment. He had an immense lack of resources since he didn't qualify for funding that would pay for assistance. Carlos has a cognitive delay that was an obstacle to his success. Additionally, the terms of his probation also limited what he could do independently. Gompers would have to get creative and tailor an affordable program to get Carlos moving toward employment. Thankfully, the Arizona Justice System believed in us enough to suspend his probation payments to make sure our strategy was affordable.

It seemed like all the odds were against Carlos, but we wouldn't let that deter him.

We had three short months to show the judge significant progress toward a meaningful change in Carlos's life. Gompers Employment Services team enrolled him into our Transition to Employment program, a program that enhances self-determination, and teaches people to develop resumes, dress for success, how to apply for jobs, among other skills. In TTE, Carlos was able to begin working on his employment soft skills.

From the beginning, Carlos was profoundly receptive to the program and was eager to learn. In a short time, he attended a job fair, where he met people from Hotel Pros and showed immediate interest in getting a job with them. He applied and got an interview! Carlos did so well in the interview that he got the job, and was assigned a laundry position at the Hyatt Regency here in downtown Phoenix.

In January of 2018, Carlos was removed from probation. The judge over Carlos's case was astonished by the progress Carlos was making. He praised Carlos's hard work, as well as the assistance that Gompers committed to providing. Without the support from Carlos, family, the Arizona Justice system, and Gompers, none of this would be conceivable. Together Carlos was wrapped in the support necessary to be successful and even has the chance to have his charges dismissed in 2019! Gompers continues periodic follow up with Carlos to ensure continued success and to provide support to address any issues he may have.

We couldn't be more proud of Carlos and the work he's done to transform his life!

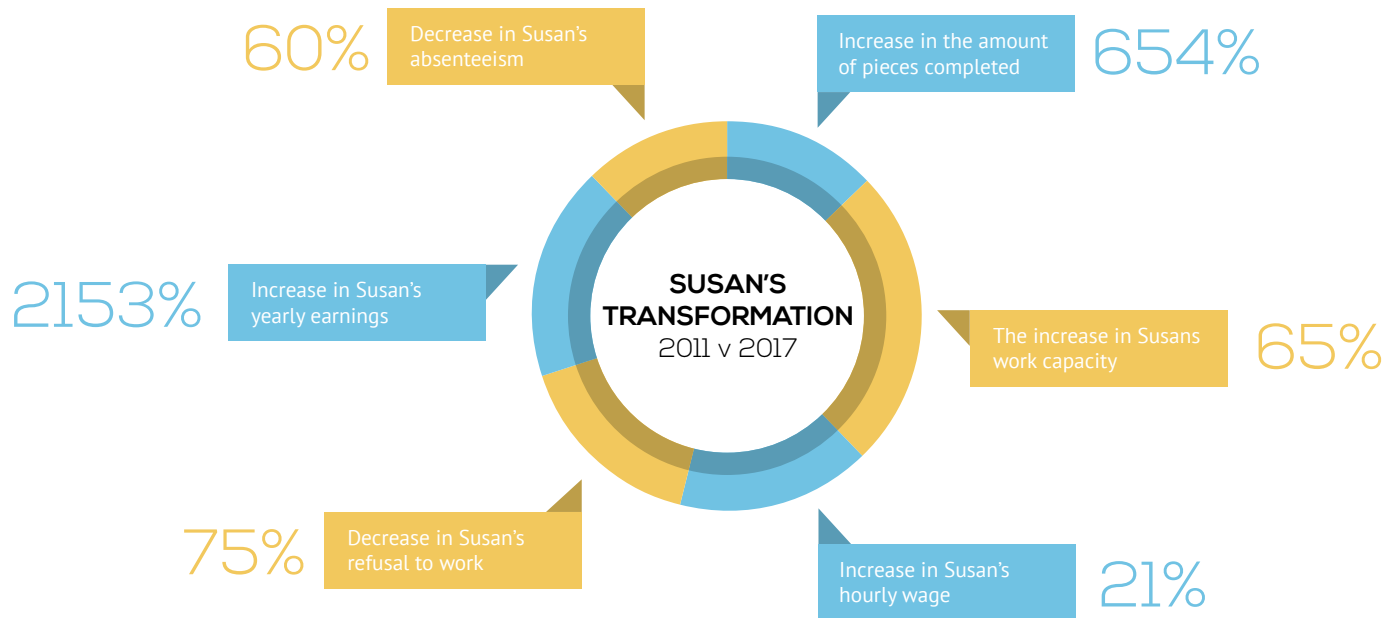
35%

is the estimated percentage of individuals with a disability in Arizona, between the ages of 21-64 that were employed in 2016 according to the 2016 American Community Survey.

HBI INTERNATIONAL SUPPORTS TWO NON-PROFITS WITH ONE AMAZING IDEA!

In 2017, HBI International approached us with an innovative idea. They wanted to fund Gompers to work for a no-kill animal shelter, Home Fur Good (HFG). The partnership represents an innovative approach to the collaborative impact that for-profit businesses can have! We're proud to report that, since we began working with HFG in October 2017, the results have been astounding! With our members, HFG staff can focus on new priorities and on growing the shelter. Recently, HFG approached us about hiring one of our members full-time!

EMPLOYMENT & **ACHIEVEMENT**



A CENTER-BASED EMPLOYMENT CASE STUDY: SUSAN'S INCOME IS TRANSFORMED WITH THE HELP OF ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

Susan has worked at Gompers for nearly six years. She experiences blindness and an intellectual disability which means she frequently needs assistance from our staff to complete simple work tasks. As such, she was limited to making about \$170 per year, until we got creative. Susan's challenges changed when we realized assistive technology could make a HUGE impact. In partnership with Susan, our teams brainstormed and implemented plans to make Susan's workspace manageable without assistance from her staff. The results of our efforts couldn't have been better!



**EMPLOYMENT =
INDEPENDENCE**

JADE'S STORY

What's in a name? Just ask the members of the Gompers Blythe Center Campus!

In May of 2017, Gompers completed its acquisition of the Blythe Center, a 30-year-old Day Training for Adults program. Through the acquisition, we sought to bring the absolute best aspects of Gompers Phoenix to Blythe members. Of course, this included Gompers' in-house café, "Sammy G's".

Our Café allows our members to purchase food and drink items. With the café, members get a chance to practice making choices and hone their financial life skills.

The problem was that the name, "Sammy G's", didn't seem unique enough for our members at Blythe. It would have to be up to them to choose a name that fit the personality of their members.

The Blythe Center staff handed slips out to the members and asked them to pick from three possible names of their café. Voting for our café name may not seem like a significant thing to most individuals, but the ability to have a choice and a voice is one of the most empowering abilities that someone with disabilities can have. Not to mention, the name they chose blew the Blythe Center away.

When the members all turned in their slips, there was a clear winner: "Bubba's Café"

See, Jade "Bubba" Vera (pictured right) was a member of The Blythe Center before his passing in 2015. We asked staff and members about Bubba. They remember his smile and friendly loving soul. He loved outings to movie theatres and The Phoenix Zoo. Bubba was a gifted dancer, which helped him excel in all sports in Special Olympics. When he competed in Special Olympics he won numerous medals that he was so proud of.

Bubba remains a Blythe legend and our members chose to dedicate their Café to his memory! Forever in our hearts and embodied in the spirit of Blythe Center, Bubba will always be remembered as a very dear and loving friend.





KARINA'S STORY

ONCE A STUDENT WHO DISLIKED SCHOOL, KARINA IS FINDING A HOME IN LUZ RODRIGUEZ'S CLASSROOM!

Karina is a student attending Gompers Private School. She enjoys watching Harry Potter and listening to Justin Bieber. She lives with her father and new step-mother. She is incredibly smart, funny, sometimes stubborn, but always sweet. Karina came to Gompers Private School in an effort to find an environment that she could feel comfortable attending regularly.

Karina is non-verbal and struggles to appropriately express herself. Her inability to communicate along with poor socialization skills have had a profoundly negative effect on Karina's life, both at home and in school. Before attending Gompers, Karina was not in school, missing over six months of classes. During that six months, Karina rarely left her house. We weren't going to let Karina struggle any longer.

We met with her family and her support team to develop a plan to help Karina succeed. Our school staff would work closely with assistive technology department to support Karina's communication in the classroom. We are able to provide Karina with picture schedules that help her better understand the routines and procedures of her class. Each day, we send familiar staff to pick up Karina from home in a van, not a school bus, which helps her feel less

overwhelmed. Our smaller class size makes Karina feel more comfortable with her teachers, paras, and peers. Karina is provided with opportunities to make choices for preferred activities both on the van and while at school. We've learned that Karina is creative! When she's presented with a choice of activities, she almost always chooses to listen to music or to color and draw.

Since coming to Gompers Private School, Karina attends school daily. She has not had absences due to non-compliance with her parents. In class, Karina sits calmly at her desk and works on her academic tasks. In addition, she willingly attends community-based outings with her peers. We couldn't be more excited about the progress she has made!

The next step in supporting Karina's academic success is increasing her time staying on tasks. Karina's teacher, Luz Rodriguez, is working with Karina on asking for breaks when she is becoming overwhelmed.

We are so grateful to have Karina in our programs and we are honored to be able to support students like her in becoming more successful!



RON'S STORY

Ron has attended Gompers since 2007. He absolutely loves to listen to Michael Jackson music and watch Star Wars movies. So much so, he would proudly admit that he has a crush on Carrie Fischer and her character "Leah". He is a passionate collector of Michael Jackson's photos, books and anything else that he can find related to the pop icon.

Ron can be the center of attention in both the best ways, as well as in some disruptive ways. Ron has Moderate Cognitive Disability and has been working on his coping skills. His coping skills deter him from staying on task and staying focused. With a short attention span, Ron requires a variety of activities and tasks he is interested in to stay focused throughout the day. As a result, our staff has found different ways to help Ron work with his personal issues and coping skills. Working with him to stay focused has helped Ron come a long way in his time at Gompers.

One of the things we love most about Ron is his immense compassion for people that are hurting or sick. For example, if you cut your finger, he will be your "best buddy" and check in on you until it heals. Each day he will ask you if it is hurting and how it is doing.

This past summer, Ron was watching the news during our current events time, when he became concerned about the hurricane victims in Puerto Rico. He asked our staff why the people didn't have food or water. Upon learning of the devastation that happened, he wished he could help them. Fortunately, Ron actually could do something to help! Our staff explained to Ron that we could put our resources together and come up with a plan. Ron and staff put the word out to all three of Gompers' campuses that he was leading a donation drive for the victims of the hurricane in Puerto Rico.

The response from his initiative was astounding! Through the generosity of parents, members, group homes, and our staff, Ron was able to collect things like diapers, bottled water, canned food, clothing, shoes, toiletries, baby food, raincoats, and even a vacuum! Ron delivered the items to a local Puerto Rican Restaurant that was filling a semi-trailer to be delivered to the victims. As you can imagine, Ron was all smiles!

He learned a valuable lesson by working with other people and taking initiative on an idea. It was a great way to help Ron understand the worth of his compassionate and caring heart to help those in need.

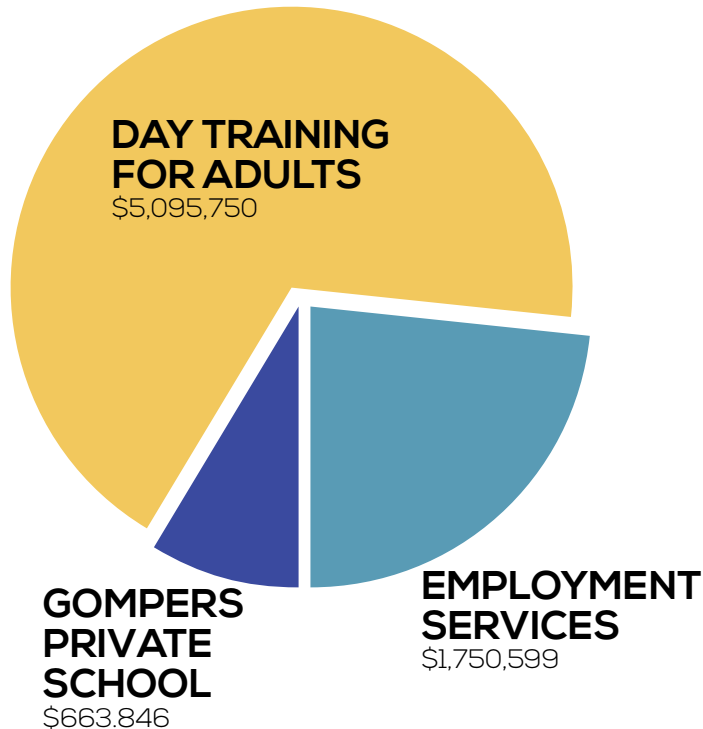
It is obvious that Ron deeply enjoys helping those in need. Ron's continued success, along with our other members, in our program is the inspiration that keeps us coming back to Gompers each day! With continued encouragement and focus, Ron will continue to strive to help others in their time of need.

**RON HOSTED A SUPPLY-DRIVE
TO HELP VICTIMS OF HURRICANE
MARIA IN PUERTO RICO.**

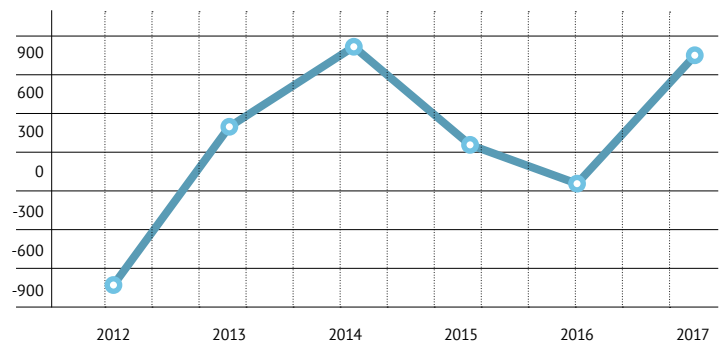
THE NUMBERS STORY

FINANCIAL COMPARISON (FY JULY 1, 2016 - JUNE 30, 2017)	2015	2016	2017
Revenue			
Contributions and Grants	499,505	350,893	335,756
Program Service Revenue	6,878,221	6,566,692	7,721,606
Investment Income	311,381	339,551	969,849
Other Revenue	-19,537	-16,887	-17,300
Total Revenues	7,669,570	7,240,249	9,009,911
Expenses			
Salaries, Compensation and Employee Benefits	5,246,622	5,341,932	5,846,599
Other Expenses	2,188,811	2,026,782	2,283,385
Total Expenses	7,435,433	7,368,714	8,129,984
Revenue less Expenses	234,137	-128,465	879,927

PROGRAM REVENUES



NET INCOME, \$k



**Due to the recency of the introduction of our newest program, In-Home Services revenues were not reported.*



JOIN OUR STORY

PARTNER WITH US IN OUR MISSION TO BRING INNOVATIVE OPPORTUNITIES TO PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES. HERE ARE JUST A FEW WAYS YOU CAN BE A PART OF OUR MISSION!

VOLUNTEER

We need volunteers in almost all areas of our programs! Specifically, we love to have volunteers for our special events, such as Golf Fore Gompers, Spring Fling, and more. Additionally, if you have design, marketing, or administrative skills we need your help to make Gompers' name known throughout the Phoenix area!

DONATE

Your financial resources have a tremendous impact on our mission. There are many ways you can use your financial resources to support Gompers through planned giving, monthly program support or event-specific contributions. Visit donate.gompers.org for more information.

HOST AN EVENT

Want to participate in an event for a cause? Throw a party, a film screening, even a dance off – the options are endless. Almost any event can be used to grow a cause, and we deeply appreciate volunteers willing to host events to benefit our members. We will provide materials about our programs, staff or members to attend and meet your guests!

PLEDGE YOUR BIRTHDAY

Turn a day just about you into a day about supporting individuals with disabilities! What a beautiful day this could be for you and those who love you!

VISIT GOMPERS.ORG/GETINVOLVED





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