

## CRAIN'S DETROIT BUSINESS

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Giving Guide 2023

### Autism Alliance of Michigan

AAoM leads efforts to raise expectations and expand opportunities for people touched by autism



### WHAT WE DO

Whether your toddler has just received an autism diagnosis or your teenager with autism needs support preparing for their first job, the Autism Alliance of Michigan (AAoM) is here to help ensure individuals with autism reach their greatest potential. AAoM was founded in 2009 upon the conviction that people living with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) can and should succeed in their lives, and their families and friends can support

them in their journey. AAoM leads efforts to raise expectations and expand opportunities for people touched by autism.

A trusted resource for individuals with autism and their families, AAoM deeply believes that independence, health, safety and well-being are foundational to a full life, and we strive to provide every family with access to services that meet the needs across the life span. Additionally, AAoM is committed to statewide advocacy to address system reform so every child has an opportunity for a quality, inclusive education and readiness for employment, college or the vocational program they desire. The organization and its leadership envision a world where no family member is limited because they have autism.

AAoM's three key pillars of statewide initiatives include: reducing age of diagnosis and access to the earliest interventions; quality, inclusive education; and successful employment and job opportunities. AAoM has served over 45,000 people throughout the state through these mission pillars, helping individuals and families living with autism navigate and understand the complex questions they face on a daily basis.

## HOW YOU CAN HELP

**EXPLORE (WHAT'S NEW):** AAoM is leading two statewide education coalitions to support our 10-year goal to raise graduation rates for students with autism. We are addressing equitable funding, system accountability and evidence-based practices to better prepare students for employment and independent living.

**JOIN:** If you are interested in volunteering for any of our signature fundraising events or ongoing learning programs including Autism 101 or Watch Me Grow, please contact our office at 877-463-2266.

**HELP OTHERS:** If you know anyone affected by autism in Michigan, please direct them to our MiNavigator program (877-463-2266 or [Navigators@aaomi.org](mailto:Navigators@aaomi.org)). MiNavigator offers endless resources and immediate answers through the life span for families overcoming complex barriers to care.

**DONATE:** Your support will help AAoM provide help, hope and answers to Michigan families affected by autism. Donate today at [aaomi.org/donate](https://aaomi.org/donate).

**SHARE:** The Autism Hero Walk is a celebration to raise funds and awareness for families in Michigan affected by autism. The one-mile walk will be held at the Detroit Zoo in Royal Oak Saturday, September 23.

## EVENTS & FUNDRAISING

- Our first Autism Hero Walk is Sunday, June 25 at The Meadows at Millennium Park in Grand Rapids, and our Southeast Michigan area Autism Hero Walk is Saturday, September 23 at the Detroit Zoo.
- Gov. Whitmer and Colleen Allen, Ph.D., AAoM President & CEO at the 2023 Michigan Shines for Autism Gala.

## LEADERSHIP

- **Colleen Allen, Ph.D.**, President & CEO
- **Ronald Fournier**, Chair

## OFFICERS OF THE BOARD

- **Dave Meador**, Co-Founder/Past Chair
- **Stephen D’Arcy**, Co-Founder
- **Brian Calley**, Vice Chair
- **William Ernzen**, Secretary
- **Colette Rizik**, Treasurer





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Return to the 2023 Giving Guide

 Giving Guide

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