

 **STAR Institute**

# 2020 ANNUAL REPORT





## OUR PRINCIPLES

# COMMUNICATION

Transparent, honest and open communication internally & externally.

# RESPECT

Fostering an environment of continuous learning, within an atmosphere of open communication, collaboration and recognition.

# INTEGRITY

Responsible practices in alignment with ethical principles.

# CREATIVITY

Encourage innovation, reflectivity, flexibility and adaptability.

# COLLABORATION

Strong relationships within the team and with existing and potential partners; support communication within our community.

# DIVERSITY

Embracing diversity of ideas, people and culture.

# QUALITY

Highest level of excellence, setting standards for the field.

# ACTION

Acting on what we believe, as agents of change in every context, within the organization and around the world.

# SUPPORT

Commitment to the overall mission and vision of the organization.



## LETTER FROM OUR LEADERS

***Dear STAR Institute Community,***

As we write this the coronavirus continues to turn the lives of families and communities across the nation and the world upside down. 2020 was a year full of unexpected change, social distancing, remote working, safety concerns, and social unrest. While it was nothing like the year we had expected and planned for, we hope you will agree that the STAR staff and broader community achieved more than we could have ever dreamed.

As you read this report you will see how our staff and community pivoted to provide:

- safe on-site services
- remote telehealth services
- remote live and hybrid learning opportunities
- and so much more

Despite the cutbacks, the changes in travel plans, the increase in the cost of service delivery, STAR Institute persevered and continued to serve children, adolescents and adults, and their families throughout the year. We continued to offer our educational programming and even pioneered new opportunities and against all odds our research department still managed to publish papers and collect data. Our commitment to transforming health and wellness outcomes through sensory health only grew more resolute as the year progressed and we saw the impact of the pandemic on communities throughout the world.

The importance of sensory health, mental health, human connection, and well-being has never been more apparent. Today more and more professionals understand that they need to know more about sensory processing to support health and wellness for everyone. Understanding sensory integration and differences in sensory processing are not just an issue that affects a minority and this is being recognized more and more across disciplines.

Our hope as we look back on 2020 and forward to 2021 and beyond is that we can build a society with the knowledge and will to build an inclusive culture, environment, and processes for *every body*.

***Our vision continues;*** *Sensory health and wellness for the state, the nation, and the world.*



**Leigh Kahn**  
*President, Board of Directors*



**Virginia Spielmann, MSOT**  
*Executive Director*

**EVERY  
BODY DESERVES TO BE INCLUDED**



**STAR  
INSTITUTE**

# Celebrating **25** years of research and **15** years of treatment and education.

## ***Leaders in Sensory Processing***

STAR Institute is the international leader for research, treatment, and education related to sensory integration and processing. As a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, we are dedicated to improving mainstream awareness of sensory health and to providing life-changing support and resources for individuals and families across the lifespan. STAR Institute supports all areas of sensory health including mental health, school success, child development, parenting, relationships, and vocational success. For some, disordered sensory processing profoundly impacts daily functioning. However, many differences in sensory processing do not need to be disabling. With more research, education, and awareness across the globe and throughout communities, schools, and workplaces we can make sensory health universally accessible.

## ***Our Vision***

Sensory Health and Wellness for the State, the Nation, and the World.

## ***Our Mission***

To impact quality of life by developing and promoting best practices for sensory health and wellness through treatment, education, and research.

## ***2020 Board of Directors***

Leigh Kahn, President  
Ron Blair, Treasurer  
Ki'i Powell Ph.D., Secretary  
Kris Tower  
Tami Reeder

## ***Executive Director***

Virginia Spielmann

## ***Associations***



AMERICAN  
SPEECH-LANGUAGE-  
HEARING  
ASSOCIATION







## 2020 HIGHLIGHTS

*Transforming health and wellness outcomes  
through sensory processing.*



### Completed Move to Our Forever Home

Service donations from community partners included a zipline, developing our treatment spaces, and landscaping.



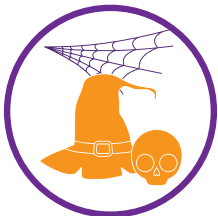
### Sensory Stories

We partnered with artist Jacinta Read to bring six stories to life, geared towards building mainstream understanding of sensory integration and processing. These reached over 258,000 people across our social media channels.



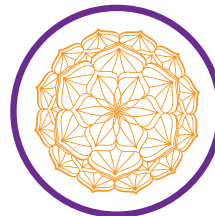
# \$177,899.84

In charitable contributions from over 200 individuals, organizations and foundations.



### Trunk-or-Treat Community Event

First ever community Halloween event held at STAR. This social-distanced, outdoor trunk-or-treat included staff, volunteer and sponsored trunks with 150+ participating children/families.



### Mandala Art

Colorado artist Laura Paul donated 13 community art workshops during the pandemic. Paul also gifted an original Mandela mural to our building.



## 1530+

Individuals participated in our education programs and courses.



## 384

Individuals/families supported via in-person and telehealth services locally, nationally and internationally.



## 13

Research papers and chapters were published in 2020.



## 865,848 Visitors

Over 800,000 professionals, individuals and parents visited our website for free, evidence-based information and resources on sensory processing and sensory health.



## 58,900+ Followers

Over 58,900 professionals, individuals, and parents follow our social media channels for ongoing support, communications, sensory health information, and resources.



## OUR PILLARS

### ***Treatment Center***

STAR Institute is a recognized leader in the field of sensory integration and processing. In 2020, we focused on bringing our evidence-based client-centered care to our clients despite the impact of the global pandemic. We remained committed to overcoming the barriers of COVID-19 and providing essential services to children, adolescents, and adults, from diagnosis to successful intervention. Our dedicated, multi-disciplinary team worked hard to redesign treatment plans and developed new online programs to keep our clients, families, and staff safe. We were able to stay connected with those struggling with sensory processing challenges, locally, nationally, and internationally through telehealth and in-person services.

Our treatment center offers occupational and speech & language therapies, mental health services, pediatrician-led multidisciplinary evaluations, specialized feeding therapy, School Readiness therapeutic classroom, groups, adult & adolescent specific services, adult autism evaluations.

The STAR treatment team addresses regulation and relationships, community engagement, mental health, feeding and eating, academic/vocational success, communication and language development, through the lifespan.

Differences in sensory processing are a key factor in autism, ADHD, neurodevelopmental differences, trauma, learning differences and mental health conditions.

### ***Treatment Achievements***

- During the 2020 Covid Pandemic, we served 384 individuals/families via in-person services (with CDC and Colorado Restrictions and Regulations and safety measures in place to prevent the spread of the virus) and telehealth capabilities.
- World-renowned treatment with 57% of 2020 clients from Colorado, 38% out of state, and 5% International.
- Sustained our School Readiness therapeutic classroom program for 10 months of the year despite COVID restrictions.
- Offered 12 ongoing, online youth groups and programs throughout the year to support children and families through the pandemic.
- Launched new cooking clubs via zoom to support children and parents with feeding.
- Trained 5 OT students.

**ELEVATING  
AWARENESS AND  
KNOWLEDGE ABOUT  
THE TRANSFORMATIVE  
POWER OF SENSORY  
HEALTH**





## OUR PILLARS

### **Education Center**

STAR's Education Department is dedicated to increasing global awareness of the importance and role of sensory health and well-being. We focus on developing and delivering the most up-to-date information on research and treatment to professionals, families, and individuals impacted by disordered sensory processing.

In 2020, the Education Center launched multiple new online offerings to support our community and increase accessibility during the global pandemic. We developed and launched a Foundations of Development course open to any discipline, professional, or community member wishing to learn more about the interrelatedness of sensory processing, regulation, and relationship. We re-organized our professional entry-level courses so that the originally in-person portions were available via live-stream. This allowed greater accessibility via both lowered prices and the ability to learn without having to travel.

We are very proud to have launched our first-ever and highly successful online conference - Virtual Summit: Sensory Processing and Autism. STAR brought 20 speakers from the academic, clinical, and advocacy worlds along with 450 attendees together to discuss the pervasive impact of disordered sensory processing on the Autistic experience.

We continue to strive to increase accessibility to information utilizing both online and in-person platforms for courses, webinars, symposiums, and trainings.

### **Education Successes**

- Educated over 1530 individuals across all our educational courses and trainings.
- International workshops for Sensory Integration Network (UK), Holland Bloorview Kids Rehab Hospital (CAN), and Health Origins Education (CHN).
- First-ever international organized clinical trainings in India, Turkey, Brazil, and South Africa.
- Developed and presented online content for specialized audiences including Treehouse Therapies Associates, Aspire Therapy and Developmental Services, Nova Southeastern University, Orange County Department of Education, and Northern Arizona University.
- Provided School-based Intensive course to Casper School District (WY) and Aurora Public Schools (CO).
- Hosted first-ever SOS Feeding Course online.
- Held our 2020 Annual Symposium online for the first time with over 190 attendees participating.
- Scheduled 2021 online courses for the Association of Occupational Therapy-Ireland and to Brazil.

## FACULTY & INSTRUCTORS

Virginia Spielmann, MSOT (CO)  
Mim Ochsenbein, MSW, OTR/L (CO)  
Sarah Schoen, PhD, OTR/L (CO)  
Renee Allen, MS, OTR/L (CO)  
Lisa Porter, PhD, OTD, OTR/L (OR)  
Colleen Whiting, MS, OTR/L (MA)  
Robyn Chu, MOT, OTR/L (CA)  
Michele Parkins, MS, OTR (NJ)  
Carolyn Schmitt, OTR/L (CO)  
Cintia Cortez, MS,OT (MEX)  
Amanda Newchok, MS, OTR/L (NJ)



## OUR PILLARS

### **Research Center**

The research team at STAR Institute conducts and collaborates in rigorous research into the identification, characterization, and treatment of sensory integration/processing strengths and needs. The overarching goal is to enhance health wellness and quality of life for children and adults and their families. The STAR Institute is recognized as a world leader, educator, and advocate for this research. We are uniquely positioned to fulfill this mission because the clinical education and research programs are all housed under the same umbrella organization.

### **Research Accomplishments**

- **Schoen, SA.**, Hedman, E., Miller, LJ, Picard, R., (2020) Wireless Measurement of Sympathetic Arousal During In Vivo Occupational Therapy Sessions. *Frontiers in Integrative Neuroscience*
- May-Benson, TA., **Schoen, SA.**, Teasdale, A. & Koomar, J. (2020). Inter-Rater Reliability of Goal Attainment Scaling with Children with Sensory Processing Disorder. *The Open Journal of Occupational Therapy*.
- **Schoen, SA**, Miller, LJ & Mulligan, S. (2020). SP3D Occupational Performance Scale. *American Journal of Occupational Therapy*.
- Andelin, L., **Schoen, SA**, Reynolds, S. (2020). A multiple baseline design study investigating the effectiveness of occupational therapy using a sensory integration approach. *American Journal of Occupational Therapy*

### **Research Partnerships**



ROCKY MOUNTAIN  
UNIVERSITY of  
HEALTH PROFESSIONS



COLORADO STATE  
UNIVERSITY

**SCIENTIFICALLY  
DRIVEN - COMMITTED  
TO EVERY ASPECT OF  
EVIDENCE-BASED  
PRACTICE AND  
ADVANCING THE  
SCIENCE OF SENSORY  
INTEGRATION AND  
PROCESSING**





## OUR IMPACT

### ***Publications***

- Schoen, S. A., Spielmann, V. (in press) Paediatric Neuropsychology in the Multidisciplinary Context
- Miller, L.J. Schoen, S.A. (2020) *STAR approach* In A. Bundy & S. Lane (Eds), *Sensory Integration Theory and Practice*, 3rd Edition.
- Schoen, S.A. & Lane, S.J. (2020) *Applied Research in Sensory Integration*. In A. Bundy & S. Lane (Eds), *Sensory Integration Theory and Practice*, 3rd Edition.
- Schoen, S.A. & Lane, S.J. (2020) *Basic Research in Sensory Integration*. In A. Bundy & S. Lane (Eds), *Sensory Integration Theory and Practice*, 3rd Edition.
- Miller, L.J. Witten, M., Ahn, R. & Schoen, S.A. (2020). Assessment of Sensory Processing Disorder: The Interplay of Sensation, Affect, and Relationship. *In The Oxford Handbook of Infant, Toddler and Preschool Mental Health Assessment, Second Edition* (Rebecca DelCarmen-Wiggins & Alice S Carter, Eds.), NY: Oxford University Press
- Spielmann, V & Dishlip, C (2020). 20Q: Understanding Sensory Integration and Processing. [SpeechPathology.com](https://www.speechpathology.com/article/20387), Article 20387.
- Spielmann, V. & Miller, L.J. (2020). Sensory integration and processing: Impact on anxiety in autism. In S.M. Edelson, and J.B. Johnson (Eds.), *Understanding and treating anxiety in autism*. London: Jessica Kingsley Press.
- Miller, L. J., Chu, R. C., Parkins, M., Spielmann, V. A., & Schoen, S. A. (2020). The STAR process: An overview. In A. C. Bundy & S. J. Lane (Eds.), *Sensory Integration: Theory and Practice* (3 ed., pp. 578-585). Philadelphia: F. A. Davis Company.
- Spielmann, V. (2020). The Interplay of Regulation, Relationships and Sensory Processing: Impact on Function and Participation. *SensorNet, Sensory Integration Education News, UK*, 55: January 2020

**OCCUPATIONAL  
JUSTICE AND HEALTH  
EQUITY FOR ALL**



## OUR IMPACT

### ***Awareness Outreach***

- Offered several community workshops, free or with a sliding scale.
- Free online weekly community "check-ins" during the pandemic from March-May.
- Over 350 therapists participated in our 3 free telehealth webinars supporting our professional community as they pivoted their services during the pandemic.
- Launched an Infant Massage Class and Breastfeeding Support Group.
- First-ever socially-distanced, community Trunk-or-Treat event with over 150 children/families.
- Creation of 6 Sensory Stories for Sensory Awareness highlighting the impacts of sensory health. We provided language translations (Spanish, Chinese, German/Deutsch, Italian/Lingua Italiana, Arabic) for each story, expanding our reach across communities.
- Participated in external events and programs with schools districts and organizations including:
  - Developmental Pathways, Compass Montessori School, Bradley Elementary School District 6, Temple Grandin School, El Grupo Vida, the Autism Society of Colorado, the Occupational Therapy Association of Colorado, Arapahoe County Preschool Educators, Austin Parks Foundation, and Misericordia University

### ***Grants/Scholarships***

- Get Grounded Foundation - \$2500 for School Readiness Program
- Bethany Lutheran Church - \$1500 for program support
- Developmental Pathways - Ongoing funding for kids online groups and programs

### ***Increasing Inclusion and Representation***

- Increased community partnerships by 200%.
- Hired Mariah Person as our Inclusion and Accessibility Consultant.
- Hired Kieran Rose as our Neurodivergent Education Consultant.
- Provided sensory awareness keynote presentation in Spanish to local Spanish Community.
- Offered several Bilingual online youth programs to support children/families in Spanish Communities.
- International, Spanish instructor added to the education team.

**PROMOTING  
OCCUPATION,  
PARTICIPATION,  
ENGAGEMENT,  
FUNCTION, AND  
PSYCHOLOGICAL  
WELL-BEING ACROSS  
THE LIFESPAN**



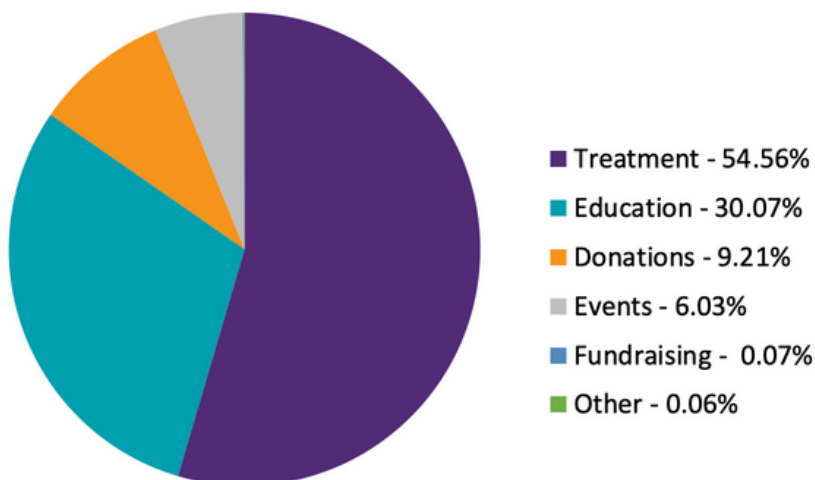


## FINANCIAL INFORMATION

STAR Institute commits its resources to treatment, education, and research opportunities in order to help millions of people whose lives are impacted by sensory processing challenges every day.

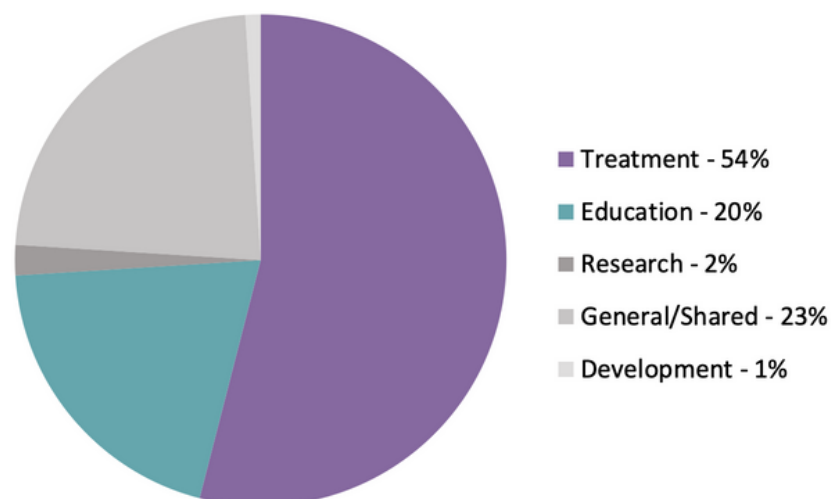
### Revenue

Revenues in 2020 totaled \$1,931,301.50 and were generated primarily from treatment, education, events, and donations.



### Expenses

Expenses in 2020 totaled \$2,096,513.60.



*STAR Institute received a Paycheck Protection Program loan as part of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act). If forgiven, which is likely, these funds will offset any operating losses in 2020.*

## BUILDING AND STRENGTHENING RELATIONSHIPS



## OUR COMMUNITY

### Thank You to Our Community Partners



### Thank You to Our Top Supporters

Roxanne and Henry Brandt  
Foundation  
Tuchman Family Foundation  
Carol Kranowitz  
Lenore Newman Family  
Foundation  
Carol B Schoen  
Bethany Lutheran Church  
Grace Roberts Foundation

The Benevity Community  
Impact Fund  
Scott & Stephanie Rostan  
Jacki Kochanski  
Laura Lee Schwefel  
Miller & Steiert P.C.  
David & Toni Keith  
Janet Wright Fund



STAR Institute for Sensory Processing  
6911 S Yosemite St  
Centennial, CO 80112  
303-221-7827  
info@spdstar.org  
www.spdstar.org

**COLLABORATION  
WITH EXTERNAL  
AGENCIES TO ELEVATE  
THE FIELDS OF  
SENSORY  
INTEGRATION AND  
PROCESSING AND  
OCCUPATIONAL  
THERAPY**