

# Sunshine Cottage™

SCHOOL FOR DEAF CHILDREN

# Listen



## Alumnus Uses Knowledge to Help Others

It is no surprise to us when a Sunshine Cottage alumnus does something great.

Aspen Monts began his listening journey at Sunshine Cottage in the Parent-Infant Program just before his third birthday. He remained at Sunshine Cottage until the second grade when he transitioned into his neighborhood public school.

After high school, Aspen received his bachelor's degree in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology from the University of North Texas, then received his master's degree in deaf education and hearing sciences from the UT, San Antonio completing his student teaching hours as an Associate Teacher at Sunshine Cottage.

Currently, Aspen serves as an itinerant teacher for Dallas Independent School District, working with students in grades K-12 who have different types of hearing losses. In addition to improving students' vocabulary and language skills, Aspen focuses on self-advocacy, using his own personal experiences as a guide. He strives to be a mentor to all his students, not just sharing tips and tricks to get by, but how to access the accommodations that will help them thrive.

Aspen noticed that there was something missing to the itinerant team's approach. That is when he suggested using the Cottage Acquisition Scales for Listening, Language and Speech (CASLLS). By incorporating the CASLLS in their teaching, the itinerant teachers can attain a more complete analysis of language samples and reasonable foundations for their goals. After a few approvals from leadership positions, our very own Aspen not only introduced the CASLLS as the primary language assessment tool, but has become the lead trainer in implementing its practices.

Aspen says, "Being confident and believing in yourself can go a long way."



I have several fond memories of my time as a student at Sunshine Cottage, but one of my most memorable would be taking a field trip to an ice rink with my class. It was my first time on an ice rink, but also my last. I had a great time laughing and falling down with my classmates. To this day, I still talk to my school buddies about it from time to time and laugh just like we did then.

*Mr. Monts is a role model, not just to the hearing impaired boys, but to ALL boys.*

*In this world we need more teachers like Aspen, guiding boys into becoming good men.*

*Miriam Elizondo, parent*



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# Message from the Executive Director

What a wonderful year to be at Sunshine Cottage! We are so blessed that even during these challenging times, we are still producing and performing at the highest levels for our children and staff. COVID-19 has created challenges for everyone, but Sunshine Cottage is still providing a quality level of academic learning and a safe and healthy environment for all. I want to express my thanks to our parents. Thank you for working with us and for your continued support as we adjust to the needs of our children and staff. We are also blessed that during these times of financial hardships for so many, our donors continue to support us so we can provide the best education for our students. Thank you, donors! We are fortunate to have two outstanding individuals join our team.



Bertie Ghans, RN, BSN, joins us as the first school nurse in the history of Sunshine Cottage. Ghans received a bachelor's of science in nursing from UT Health San Antonio. She has more than 17 years of combined school nursing experience with St. Louis Catholic School in Waco, Socorro ISD in El Paso and at East Central in San Antonio ISD. She also has 14 years of nursing experience in other settings such as community health, home health, ICU, MICU, and psychiatric nursing. We are so happy to have her on our team to help care for our students and staff.



Fred Hayes, Ed.D., joined our team in July as principal. Hayes received his bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Texas in Tyler and his doctoral degree in educational administration from Baylor University. His educational career began in Jacksonville, Texas, where he served as a high school football coach and English teacher. He later became assistant principal, and eventually principal from 1989 until 2000. He then served as principal of Clear Creek High School in Clear Creek ISD, which is one of the largest high schools in Texas, enrolling more than 4,000 students. He served as superintendent of Athens ISD, Nacogdoches ISD, and most recently as the deputy superintendent in Southside ISD in San Antonio with much success. Last year, Mr. Hayes decided to retire from public education and join Sunshine Cottage as Principal.

Together, we can use our strengths to bring success to the families we serve. Let's make 2021 our best year yet!

*Mark E Eads*

Mark E. Eads  
Executive Director



Shown left to right: Director of Audiology Andrea Harvey, Development Director Miriam Elizondo, and Baptist Health Foundation President and CEO Cody Knowlton.

## Brightening Our Days

Sunshine Cottage was presented a \$100,000 check from Baptist Health Foundation of San Antonio in support of our Audiology Department. All children enrolled in our program receive daily audiological services. Besides working with our on-campus students, our audiologists provide diagnostic testing to newborns and toddlers referred to us by outside agencies. Thank you to the Trustees of the Foundation for your continued support and the blessings you bestow toward our mission.

# The Sun Shines On...

## New Employees

**Sofia Arjona** recently joined our teaching staff as a pre-school teacher. Sofia is originally from Mission, Texas and now makes San Antonio her home. She received her undergraduate degree at Texas State University in San Marcos in interdisciplinary studies. Sofia is pursuing a master's degree in deaf education and hearing science at UT Health San Antonio.



Joining our staff as teacher assistants are **Clarissa Chavez** and **Dominique Jimenez**.

Clarissa is originally from Laredo, Texas. She earned a bachelor's degree in multidisciplinary studies with concentrations in communication disorders, education and liberal arts. She received a master's degree in deaf education and hearing science at UT Health San Antonio in May 2020. She began working at Sunshine Cottage in 2017 and is happy to be a part of the Sunshine Cottage family.



Dominique is a former Sunshine Cottage student and was enrolled in the Parent-Infant program at the age of two and continued as a student in our day school program. She received her bachelor's degree from Texas State University and is currently pursuing a master's degree in school counseling. Last year she interned in the counseling department. She joined our staff this fall as a teacher's assistant.



We welcome **Olga Bernal** who joined our staff in the maintenance and housekeeping department. Olga has more than 10 years experience working for a janitorial agency. She was previously employed by St. Peters-St. Joseph Children's Home.



*We are happy to have each of you on our team!*

## Event UPdates

### Legacy Luncheon: VIRTUAL EDITION

For the first-time ever, Legacy Luncheon was VIRTUAL!

The Virtual Edition was held on Oct. 13, 2020 allowing family, friends, and donors to enjoy a short presentation about our program from the safety and comfort of their own homes or offices. Instead of a traditional lunch this year, sponsors received a Legacy-in-a-Box containing various treats and surprises including a Sunshine Cottage mug, cap, mask, sunglasses and sun catcher!

*Thank you to everyone who participated with our Virtual Legacy. Your partnership helped us raise more than \$100,000 to support our growing programs.*



## GivingTuesday

GivingTuesday is a global movement inspiring the world to support the work of nonprofits, like Sunshine Cottage. All proceeds go directly to the organization of your choice. Thank you to our donors for their continued support. You helped Sunshine Cottage raise more than **\$3,400!**

## CHAMPIONS FORE CHARITY

Since 2004, Sunshine Cottage has been partnering with Valero Texas Open in Champions Fore Charity (formerly Birdies Fore Charity). Valero's commitment to our community has been an example of social responsibility and collective impact at its best. For every dollar given, **Valero matches it by 7 percent.** Please use the link below to have your gift matched today. Become a Champion for HEARING for one of our children today! <https://bit.ly/2Mojk9>



## ATENCIÓN:

**Noche del Sol 2021** will be taking a **Siesta**. Because our community continues to take precautions to keep everyone safe, we have decided to take a siesta this year and begin Noche preparations for 2022. Stay tuned for more details. **Viva Noche!**

## MAKING AN IMPACT

Sunshine Cottage was awarded \$75,000 to support our long-standing Hearing Aid Loaner Program by IMPACT San Antonio. Since 2004 Impact San Antonio has awarded more than \$4.2 million to nonprofit organizations in greater San Antonio and the surrounding area. This year Sunshine Cottage was honored to be a recipient.



The Hearing Aid Loaner Program ensures that no child who is deaf or hearing goes without sound. All children enrolled in our program have access to and are able utilize our the loaner program during their journey at Sunshine.

*Thank you to the wonderful women of Impact SA for your support!*

## Celebrations of the Season

Sunshine Cottage is a school that values its many rich traditions. These traditions were challenged in 2020 by COVID-19 and safety regulations. However, we continued to honor our traditions, even if they looked a little different. Each event showcased the creativity and dedication of our amazing staff.

### Thanksgiving

With so much to be thankful for, how can Sunshine Cottage simply cancel the annual Thanksgiving Feast? Last year, the students enjoyed all the wonderful foods of the Thanksgiving feast in their own classrooms. Instead of one big feast, many smaller feasts were held. This respected social-distancing guidelines while creating a more intimate setting. The turkey, dressing, mashed potatoes, cranberry sauce, and more were graciously donated by special friends of Sunshine Cottage. We are so thankful for our friends and family.



### Christmas

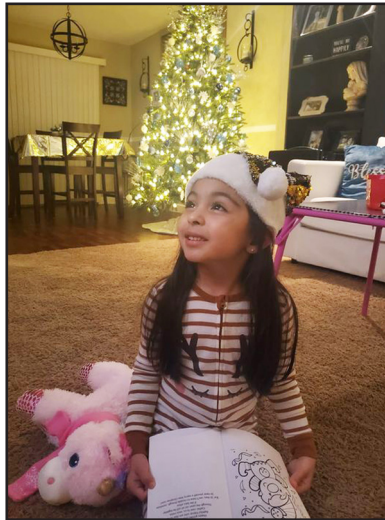
Every December, a beautiful Christmas tree welcomes families into the Sunshine Cottage lobby.

Last year in particular, students and staff members alike were especially excited to start decorating for Christmas. Under the direction of Art teacher Giovi Carrola, each student created an ornament and hung it on the tree. Once completed, the beautiful tree depicted a wonderful representation of our school, full of imagination and individuality.



### Holiday Sing-Along

Continuing the tradition of hosting the annual Holiday Play seemed like a challenge and our play committee were up for the challenge. Instead of our usual production in the Laurie Auditorium, the play committee designed a virtual sing-along presentation to be enjoyed at home with family. The "Sunshine Cottage Home for the Holidays" was modeled after the Holiday Play's most unique feature, where every child has a speaking part. But instead of learning lines they sang their hearts out. Everyone had a front-row seat curled up on their couches with a cups of cocoa and snacks while they watched the online sing-along presentation.



### Santa

Even Santa Claus took careful precautions during his stop by Sunshine Cottage! Making visits to each classroom on campus took the students by surprise. Santa delivered a book, a stuffed animal and Christmas cheer to each child. But what about our students still learning virtually? Santa did not forget them either! Parents drove the students by the school to experience the magic of Santa Claus and Christmas.

# Success Shines Brightly for Sunshine Cottage Alumnus

Dan Solcher decided to retire from AT&T's human resources manager in executive compensation after almost 28 years of service.

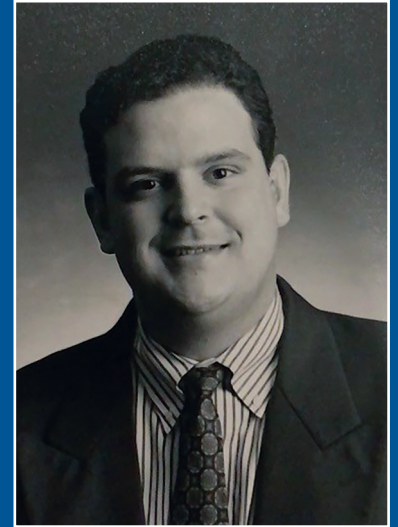
Dan attended Sunshine Cottage until 1971 and then attended the first Sunshine Cottage mainstream program at St. George's Episcopal School. He did very well academically through elementary and middle school and graduated from Houston Stratford High in 1987. He graduated from Texas Tech University with a degree in general studies, with concentrations in natural sciences, social sciences, and business management. He was fortunate to have had plenty computer experience when he was ready to go out into the work force. Prior to the invention of the internet, Dan applied for a human resources job at AT&T, and they hired him on the spot to start working on computer projects.

Dan's first job at AT&T was to maintain the IT side of human resources, which involved so many technologies to work in unison to deliver the services to thousands of managers worldwide. Dan was fortunate to have had many great experiences at AT&T. There are many affinity employee organizations for diversity and employee empowerment. He served as the leader at Ability for 12 years, an organization that supports AT&T employees with disabilities in the workplace. As a leader, Dan helped AT&T formulate employee policies, hiring and onboarding, scholarship program, community events, leadership meetings, and development, and even promoted the training to educate the company about working with employees with disabilities for 300,000 individuals. He also established a website about disability in the workplace, "Do you Speak Accessibility?" Check it out at: <https://about.att.com/sites/accessibility/speaking-accessibility>

*Dan Solcher has always kept a place in his heart for Sunshine Cottage. When he lived in San Antonio, he served on the Sunshine Cottage Board. He has been active member of the Sunshine Cottage Alumni Association and he continues to give back to Sunshine Cottage and contributes in various capacities.*



Left: Dan with classmate Jeff Harlos. Above: Dan as a student at Sunshine Cottage. Right: His first year of work with AT&T.



"As I look forward to the future with unlimited possibilities, I'm enjoying having more quality time at home with my wife, Elizabeth, and my daughter, Sophia."

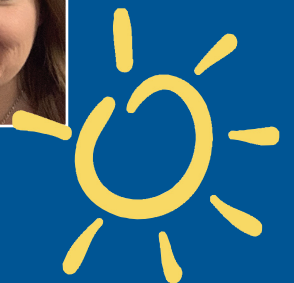
Dan Solcher



Shown with Erik Weihenmayer. Erik is a blind climber who summited Mt. Everest three times and is a personal hero of Dan's.



Shown left to right: Dan's daughter, Sophia; Dan; and his wife Elizabeth. Taken at Christmas time, 2020. Sophia is a sophomore at Allen High School.



# Gifts, Grants, Honors & Memorials

## August 1 - December 31, 2020

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James H. Cook  
Ellen & Jerry O'Gorman  
*In Honor of Her 70th Birthday*  
Sabrina Dannheim  
Kathy Robertson  
Anne P. Simpson

**Lindsay M. Rodriguez**  
*In Honor of 20 Years of Service*  
Sarah McLinden

**Cole & Will Santos**  
Susan Pena

**Jennifer Shell**  
*In Honor of 15 Years of Service*  
Sarah McLinden

**Elizabeth B. Smith**  
Miriam Elizondo

**The Honorable & Mrs. Lamar Smith**  
Hugh & Bitsy Stone

**Terry & Monica Snow & Family**  
Dianna Beckham  
Karen Poidevin

**Beverly Spengler**  
*In Honor of her Birthday*  
Lita Anderlitch

**Emily Stark**  
*In Honor of 15 Years of Service*  
Sarah McLinden

**Kara Stevener**  
Amy Cooper

**Sunshine Cottage Audiology Department**  
Frank & Jacque Patton

**Sunshine Cottage Development Department**  
Mary Bordelon  
Elizabeth Smith

**Sunshine Cottage Faculty & Staff**  
Elizabeth Pruitt

**Sunshine Cottage Parent-Infant Program**  
Lisa Lopez  
Adrienne Russell  
Julianna Wanek

**Lauren Taylor**  
Sara Taylor

**Lindsay S. Vasquez**  
Leo Vasquez

**Michael Vasquez**  
*In Honor of 10 Years of Service*  
Sarah McLinden

**Buff Waters**  
Steven Waters

**Matthew White**  
*In Honor of his marriage to Grace Caldwell*  
Christ Episcopal Church

**The White Family**  
Dana & Gene Powell

**Tuleta C. White**  
Malinda Hernandez  
Mark Tallichet  
**Gentry Workman**  
Pearl Fields  
Lauren Green

*In Memory of:*  
**Kelly Alvarado**  
Jean Boller  
Melanie LeBlanc

**Finn Watkins Anderson**  
Jim & Dana Pickett

**Patricia Anderson**  
Keesey & Lucy Nixon

**Larry Andrews**  
Rosemary Andrews

**Patty Ball**  
Pre Ball

**Ann Bean**  
Marsha Haines

**Joan Blow**  
Marilyn Thompson

**Brent Boller**  
Sabrina Dannheim  
Judy & Bernie Frey

**Eddie R. Bramhall**  
Rusty & Kessie Franklin

**Wallace Bruce**  
A.G. Pyper

**Eloise Dietzmann**  
Mary Bordelon  
LeAnne Galloway  
Sarah McLinden

**Marjorie May Dillow**  
Lita Anderlitch & Linda Brooks

**Edward Duchin**  
Doris Spector

**Elizabeth "Betsy" Slater Dudley**  
Nick & Genny Campbell  
Lindsay Grattan  
Mr. & Mrs. Patrick J. Kennedy  
Camilla M. Parker

**Milly Ehrenberg**  
Doris Spector

**Mary Lynn Estes**  
Rusty & Kessie Franklin

**JoAnn Garner**  
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**Larry Gibbs**  
Rusty & Kessie Franklin

**Eva "YaYa" Gonzales**  
Susan Viola

**Jim Gorman**  
Doris Spector

**Shirley Bon Grossman**  
Bruce & Elsa Grossman

**Roger N. Guerra**  
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Isela Fennell  
Sarah McLinden  
Sara Rosales-Guerra  
Leslie Walter

**James Hayne**  
Sally & Bill Hawkins  
Doris Spector  
Mitchel B. Spector

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Edith Lott

**Gerald F. Kruciak**  
Marilyn Thompson

**John Line**  
Patsy Meyers

**Jack Locke, Jr.**  
Margaret & Mike Thomann

**Tony Luna**  
Kat David

**Judy Renick**  
Priscilla & John Lupe

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*Sunshine Cottage is a 501(c) (3) nonprofit educational organization and does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, creed, color, disability, national origin or affiliation.*

## Parent-Infant Program Virtual Visits Payoff



Bennett Clark (shown left) and his family joined the Parent-Infant Program in May of last year during the city-wide shutdown. Bennett has a bilateral sensorineural moderate to moderately severe hearing loss and wears hearing aids. Bennett was learning about parts of the body and decided he wanted to wear Mr. Potato

Head's glasses. After only eight months in the program, he is doing an incredible job with listening and spoken language and plans on attending preschool in January 2022.

April Workman visited Sunshine Cottage three years ago when Sunshine Cottage was a recipient of HEB's Tournament of Champions. April was an HEB volunteer on campus on the day of June 7, 2018 and learned about the services we provide to families with babies who are deaf or hard of hearing.



Two years later she delivered a precious little girl, Gentry Pearl, with profound bilateral deafness. Thankfully, she knew exactly where to go.

Gentry's family enrolled in our Parent-Infant Program when she was five weeks old and she was amplified by six weeks of age. Gentry's implants were stimulated (turned on) when she was nine months old. She is currently 15 months old and doing an amazing job with listening and spoken language.



For more than 70 years Sunshine Cottage School for Deaf Children has been teaching children who are deaf or hard of hearing to listen and talk.

**Jeremy Mazurek**  
Pamela Mazurek

**Bonnie Sue Hillard Mills**  
Barbara Baer

**Edelgard O'Brien**  
Joseph O'Brien

**Mrs. Frederic Oppenheimer**  
Mrs. Jess Womack II

**Cecilia Padalecki**  
Marilyn Thompson

**Jim & Sue Pettinos**  
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Simmons

**Vivian Garner Pine**  
Kathryn Garner

**Michael A. Roach**  
Mary Bordelon  
Sarah Carpenter  
Ron & Isela Fennell  
Jon & Sarah McLinden

**Margie & William Routh**  
Steven O'Shields

**Barry A. Sloan**  
Marilyn Thompson

**Elsie Steg**  
Sabrina Dannheim  
Doe Hollimon  
Vicki McLaughlin  
Sue Oppenheimer  
Ethel T. Runion

**Walton Stewart**  
Rusty & Kessie Franklin

**Jerry Townsend**  
Marilyn Thompson

**Olga Trevino**  
Mary Bordelon  
LeAnne Galloway  
Sarah McLinden

**Harvey Updyke**  
Mr. & Mrs. Ron Taylor

**Sally Walker**  
Chuck & Marilyn Walker  
Peggy Walker

**Luke Warrick**  
Betty Zinn

**Bill and H'ie Waters**  
William Waters

**Dela White**  
Vicki McLaughlin  
Connie Munn  
Dana & Gene Powell  
The Sursum Corda Foundation  
Elizabeth T. Wilde

**Shawna Dean Wiatrek**  
Jimmy & Diana Biela  
Troy & Taryn Biela  
Kristi & Brian Stevens  
Marilyn Thompson

**Dr. Beth Wilkes**  
Barbara Hintze

**Bobby G. Williams**  
Jimmy & Pam Duncan  
Grady & Sue O'Shields  
Steven O'Shields

**Dr. Dale Allen Wood**  
Mari Pagenstecher Rabinowitz

**Hedy Jean Owens Wright**  
Rusty & Kessie Franklin

**Darren You**  
Charlene You

**Dr. Myron B. Zinn**  
Philip Zinn

### In Kind:

Americus Diamond  
Kathleen Azzaro  
Briscoe Western Art Museum  
Cheesy Jane's  
Sabrina Dannheim  
Kendra Scott - Quarry Village  
Messina Hof Winery  
Morgan's Wonderland  
Natural Bridge Caverns  
Paesano's Restaurant Group  
Paloma Blanca Mexican Cuisine  
Pump It Up  
Shetler Fine Jewelers  
Six Flags Fiesta Texas  
Witte Museum

*Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of names referred to in this publication. If you note any errors, please contact Elizabeth Smith at [esmith@sunshinecottage.org](mailto:esmith@sunshinecottage.org)*



*All donations impact the lives of our children. Thank you for your continued support of Sunshine Cottage. Due to COVID-19, the any gifts received after Dec. 31, 2020, will appear in our next newsletter.*

