



2024 - 2025

Annual Report

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A Collaborative Message from ICAN's CEO and Board Chair

Over the past year, we've seen firsthand how the need for safe, supportive, and enriching after-school care has reached an all-time high. More and more families are turning to ICAN as a lifeline, not just for their children, but for their families' overall well-being. At a time when affordable care options are harder to find than ever, families are working harder than ever.

A recent national study revealed 61% of low-income families living in communities like those served by ICAN, report that after-school programs are simply too expensive, and nearly half say there are no programs available at all. These realities deeply affect a family's ability to maintain employment and financial stability, and they also impact the long-term success of our youth.

We're also seeing the long-term effects of the pandemic continue to unfold. Many of the students we serve are still working to regain their academic footing and emotional wellness. One critical benchmark we monitor is third-grade reading proficiency. Among the Title I schools ICAN partners with, only 18-25% of students are reading at grade level, well below the state average of 40% (which is also much lower than any of us would like to see). These numbers represent more than just statistics; they reflect real kids with real dreams, navigating real challenges.

And yet, in the face of all this, there is so much hope!

This past year, ICAN adopted a bold new three-year strategic plan that positions us to grow in both reach and impact. We are committed to expanding our capacity to serve more youth and families while continuing to deliver the high-quality programs that make ICAN such a trusted community partner. From investing in our staff through leadership development and training, to reimagining systems through design thinking, we are laying the foundation for a future where even more kids can thrive.

What remains unwavering is our belief that every child deserves access to opportunity, regardless of zip code or income. Together with our community of supporters, we're building a future where ICAN's promise is not limited by capacity, but powered by it!

With gratitude,



Shelby Pedersen
ICAN CEO



Mike McDaniel
Board Chair 2024-2025



Our Mission and Vision

At ICAN, we believe that every child, regardless of their circumstance, deserves the chance to thrive.

Our mission is simple, yet powerful:

To provide access to out-of-school time opportunities that empower all youth and their families to pursue what is most meaningful to them.

Rooted in the vision of our founder, Henry Salinas, ICAN was built to remove barriers and create a safe, supportive space where youth can reach their full potential. That vision continues to guide us today as we respond to the evolving needs of youth and families with care and intention.

Our work is grounded in four core pillars that guide our programming and shape the experiences that help youth thrive:



Academic Support

Providing literacy, math, and homework help, along with other educational supports to encourage academic success.



Positive Youth Development: The 5 C's

Building competencies like confidence, character and connection to support holistic growth.



Enrichment and Exploration

Facilitating enrichment and future exploration opportunities that expose youth to a broad range of career-centric activities at early ages.



Community and Family Support

Providing essential out-of-school time services that promote stability, access, and peace of mind for parents, allowing families to pursue what's most meaningful to them.

When youth are supported through ICAN's programs, they gain the tools and confidence to succeed, both in and beyond the classroom. And when after-school care is no longer a barrier, families are better positioned to focus on what matters most to them.

Because when children and families thrive, so do our communities.

Together, we're building a stronger Arizona—one child, one family, and one future at a time.



2024
2025

**The Year in Stories
and Impact**



Academic Support

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

Finding Her Voice: Theresa's Story

Theresa and her siblings have been part of our community for several years. She has always been kind, helpful, and hardworking, but when she first joined, she was shy and struggled with confidence in her academics, especially in her reading comprehension. In class, she rarely raised her hand to ask or answer questions.

But over time, Theresa blossomed! Her determined persistence, paired with support from ICAN staff, literacy resources, and the steady encouragement of a caring volunteer named Rhonda, helped her grow in confidence and strengthened her reading skills. One afternoon during a classroom lesson, she quietly raised her hand and asked if she could read aloud to the class. She read the entire passage with confidence, ending with a bright, proud smile!

Since that day, Theresa has become more outgoing and engaged, not just in academics, but in how she carries herself every day. She even served as the emcee for a recent school assembly, a proud moment that marked just how far she's come!



ACADEMIC SUPPORT

Creating Confidence and Strong Foundations

Theresa's journey reflects the heart of ICAN's academic programming, empowering youth to overcome barriers through consistent, personalized support. From homework help to broader academic support, ICAN meets youth where they are and helps them grow.

This past year, we strengthened our academic programming through key partnerships that expanded both reach and impact. Funding from the Department of Education supported critical tutoring and academic services, while collaborations with Chandler Unified School District and Mesa Public Schools provided valuable data and ensured alignment with classroom learning. We also partnered with ASU's Speech-Language Pathology Master's Program, which provided FREE, high-quality literacy intervention for ICAN youth, further enhancing our ability to deliver a holistic, responsive academic experience.



ICAN youth score higher on district-wide literacy assessments.



ICAN youth score higher on district benchmark assessments in both ELA and Math.



ICAN youth have higher attendance rates and are absent less often than those who don't participate in our programs.



Serving Title I schools where only 18–25% of students read at grade level (vs. 40% statewide)

Outcomes reflect data gathered from our Chandler students.

We are currently gathering data to support year-over-year outcomes for students in our Mesa schools.

Academic Progress at Risk

Federal changes are putting the future of out-of-school time programs at risk. With education funding and 21st Century Community Learning Center funding under threat, critical support for youth is shrinking.

This means the tutoring, mentoring, and enrichment activities that help young people build confidence and succeed could disappear. Now more than ever, it will take local investment and community-driven solutions like ICAN to keep these opportunities alive.

Together, we can ensure that youth continue to have a safe place to learn, grow, and realize their full potential.



No Federal Dollars. All-In on Impact.

ICAN does not receive federal funding, and that's exactly why local support matters more than ever. When national dollars disappear, the need doesn't go away. It grows! As access shrinks elsewhere, more families turn to ICAN, placing increased demand on our free programs. Your support ensures we can continue showing up where others can't.

**Donate today to protect
academic programming for the
youth who need it most!**



Positive Youth Development: Nurturing the Whole Child

**ICAN youth aren't just learning how to navigate challenges.
They're becoming the kind of leaders who lift others along the way.**

We deliver our program with the 5 C's of Positive Youth Development in mind: Connection, Competence, Confidence, Character, and Contribution. This past year, we focused on purposeful, age-appropriate programming that nurtured leadership and supported each youth's personal development.

This year, a strong sense of unity emerged across our five ICAN sites. Through intentional staff collaboration and cross-site programming, we cultivated a shared climate where youth feel a deep sense of belonging, no matter which site they attend. A standout example was our 3-on-3 basketball league, which brought together youth from Hartford, Galveston, and Main. More than just competition, the league built lasting friendships, encouraged teamwork, and reinforced a simple but powerful message: ICAN is one community, committed to helping every child thrive.

The 5 Cs: Building competencies like confidence, character and connection to support holistic growth





FEED MY STARVING CHILDREN

Youth experienced the power of contribution through packing meals for communities in need while learning the value of giving back.

GIRL SCOUTS

Through troop activities and leadership challenges, youth built confidence and character while forming strong connections with peers.



FREE SWIM LESSONS

Swim lessons helped youth build competence in life-saving skills while strengthening their sense of confidence and resilience.



GABRIEL'S ANGELS THERAPY DOGS

These special visits fostered connection and emotional competence, giving youth a calming space to practice empathy and build trust.



ARIAN'S FOUNDATION SPEAK PROGRAM

Youth developed character and confidence by engaging in open conversations around emotional wellness and personal growth.

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

A Leader Among Her Peers: Keilla's Story

Fourth grader Keilla is known for more than her smile; she's also known for her heart. Described by staff as deeply caring and fiercely protective, Keilla goes out of her way to make sure every student feels seen.

Whether it's standing up to bullying or speaking up when something isn't right, Keilla consistently uses her voice to advocate for others. Her influence among peers is clear. She's well-respected and admired for how she shows up for others. Her best friend Joe often leans on her empathy and support, and ICAN staff value how she helps keep them informed about what's happening among the youth.

Keilla is a shining example of our 5 C's in action, showing what's possible when youth are empowered to lead with purpose and compassion.

BB

She consistently looks out for others—whether she knows them or not. Her actions carry influence, and she uses that influence for good.

MR. CARNEL





Enrichment and Future Exploration: Opening Doors to Possibility and Purpose

We wholeheartedly believe it's never too early to help youth explore their future. Through enrichment activities that spark curiosity and career readiness programming that builds real-world skills, we help ICAN youth see beyond the classroom and begin imagining what's possible. From STEAM-focused challenges to hands-on volunteer projects, ICAN youth had more opportunities than ever to connect their interests with potential future careers.

These opportunities help youth better understand themselves and envision what's possible for their future. Whether they're exploring coding, robotics, leadership, or life skills, they're doing more than learning; they're preparing for what's next!



CHANDLER-GILBERT COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Our partnership provided ICAN youth with on-campus experiences that sparked interest in college and helped them begin thinking about their next steps beyond high school.



STATE FARM

ICAN youth teamed up with State Farm volunteers for a hands-on STEAM Lego Balloon Car Challenge, combining problem-solving with friendly competition and lots of teamwork-fueled fun, turning learning into an unforgettable adventure.



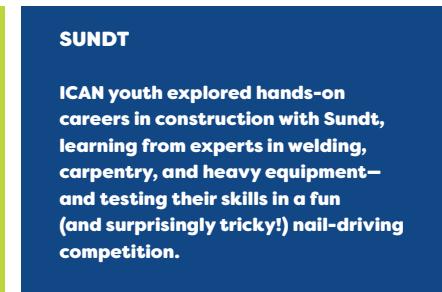
AVNET

ICAN youth had a blast exploring physics and engineering with Avnet volunteers through hands-on STEAM activities like straw rockets and pom-pom launchers, sparking curiosity through a fun and meaningful learning experience.



NXP SEMICONDUCTORS

ICAN youth got creative with NXP volunteers in a hands-on STEAM challenge, designing and building their own "Puff Mobiles" using limited supplies. Teams put their inventions to the test, racing to see whose car could travel the farthest with just one puff of air!



SUNDT

ICAN youth explored hands-on careers in construction with Sundt, learning from experts in welding, carpentry, and heavy equipment—and testing their skills in a fun (and surprisingly tricky!) nail-driving competition.



Compudopt + ICAN: Bridging the Digital Divide with Purpose

This past year, ICAN was proud to partner with Compudopt to provide students with hands-on technology education and FREE access to digital tools that prepare them for future academic and career opportunities. This partnership ensures continued learning beyond the classroom, equipping them with the critical tools necessary for success in school, work, and life. From creating VR stories to solving art heists with tech, ICAN youth explored digital storytelling, STEAM, and career pathways. Each student received a refurbished laptop to continue learning beyond the classroom.



computers distributed



students connected to high-speed internet



youth participated in structured tech learning cohorts

This initiative not only closed technology gaps but also empowered students to explore careers in tech, improve academic performance, and build confidence in their digital skills.



Community and Family Support

FAMILY SPOTLIGHT

A Place to Rebuild. Travis' Story

When Travis and his mom lost everything in an apartment fire over the summer, the start of the school year brought more than the usual challenges. Displaced from their home and navigating the stress of starting over, the family was overwhelmed until they found support through our programming.

When Travis joined the ICAN program, his mom expressed heartfelt gratitude. After everything they had lost, ICAN became a source of relief, routine, and care.



It's not just the academic support, it's the snack after school and the dinner in the evening. It takes a weight off my shoulders after work and helps us save on groceries during the week.

TRAVIS' MOM

Their connection to ICAN grew even stronger during our Winter Me & My Family Night, where Travis and his family built and decorated a gingerbread house together, sharing laughter and enjoying a moment of joy. They even won a second gingerbread house to take home, extending the magic of the evening.



66

It's not just what ICAN does for Travis—it's what they've done for our whole family.

TRAVIS' MOM

COMMUNITY & FAMILY SUPPORT

When Families Thrive, Communities Grow

Supporting youth also means standing beside their families, especially those navigating the challenges of economic hardship. For many caregivers, balancing work and family becomes nearly impossible during after-school hours or long school breaks. While some families can afford fee-based care, those with limited resources often face tough choices: reduced work hours, missed promotions, or stepping away from the workforce altogether. These burdens fall especially hard on mothers, who are more likely to shoulder caregiving responsibilities and, in turn, experience setbacks in their careers and long-term earning potential.

ICAN provides a comprehensive solution

By removing the financial barrier to high-quality out-of-school time programs, we make it possible for caregivers to stay in the workforce and continue building toward long-term goals. While families gain stability and opportunity, youth benefit from consistent support that nurtures their growth in a safe and engaging space.

Strengthening families is central to ICAN's mission

Our Me & My Family Night events bring caregivers and kids together for shared meals and fun, with 50-60% of families participating across our sites. We're also expanding support through tools like **MIA**, a bilingual virtual assistant developed with Valley Leadership, that connects families to essential resources like housing, food, and heat relief, offering help when and how they need it!

This dual-impact approach, serving both youth and caregivers, creates ripple effects that extend well beyond our classroom walls. From daily meals and dependable care, to school break programming and family engagement events, our wraparound support helps families grow stronger—together!

Our impact is amplified through community partnerships that connect families to additional resources and through collaboration across our five ICAN sites, ensuring that families experience a consistent and welcoming environment wherever they are.



CHANDLER-GILBERT COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Empowered parents with workshops on the college application and FAFSA process—ensuring families are equipped to support their child's academic future.

PHOENIX SUNS & MERCURY HOLIDAY SURPRISE

Eight ICAN families were gifted unforgettable holiday suite experiences, including warm-up access, meals, and gifts, at Suns games on December 21 and Christmas Day.



CHANDLER SERVICE CLUB FLOWER GIRLS

Donated hygiene kits to ICAN families, providing support and essentials with care.



ARIZONA CACTUS-PINE GIRL SCOUTS

Engaged youth in confidence-building activities that also encouraged family involvement and connection.



GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF YOUTH, FAITH & FAMILY

Through a child abuse prevention grant, ICAN expanded Mesa programs that help families build healthy, nurturing relationships.

SURVEY SAYS...
ICAN is Making an Impact!

97%

of parents feel ICAN provides a safe and supportive environment for their children

92%

of parents feel ICAN meets their needs extremely well

95%

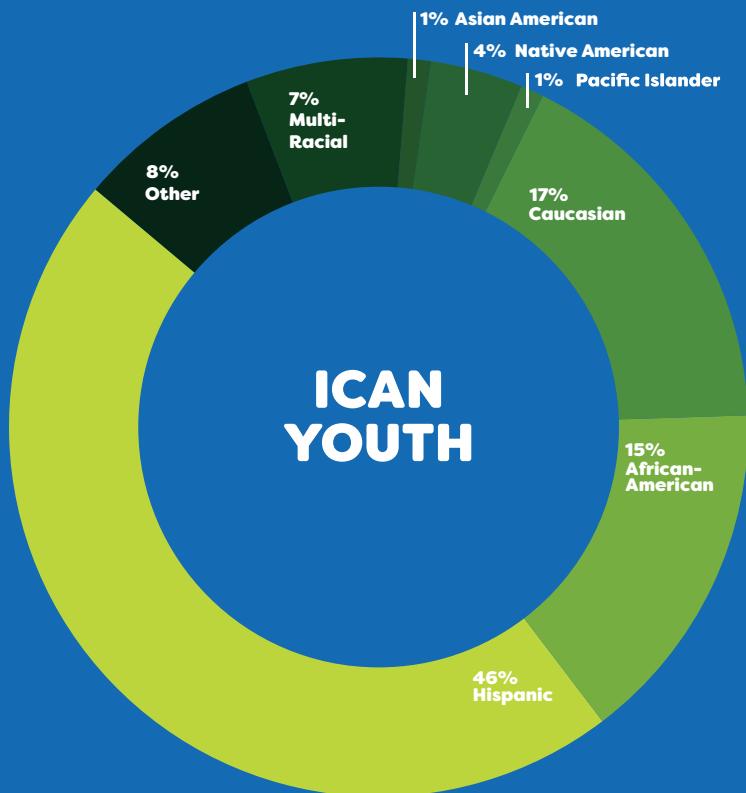
of ICAN youth state they feel safe while in our programs

91%

of ICAN youth state that ICAN helps them learn new things



Our Impact in Numbers



Total Youth Served
706



Total schools served
12

SERVING 2 CITIES



Chandler
— & —
Mesa

**Total # of days/hours
of ICAN Programming**



**Total Meals Served
62,000**

Looking Ahead

As ICAN continues to grow, we remain grounded in our mission while boldly planning for the future. Our new strategic three-year plan outlines a clear path forward, focused on expanding impact, supporting our team, and ensuring long-term sustainability.

SECURING LONG-TERM FINANCIAL HEALTH & SUSTAINABILITY

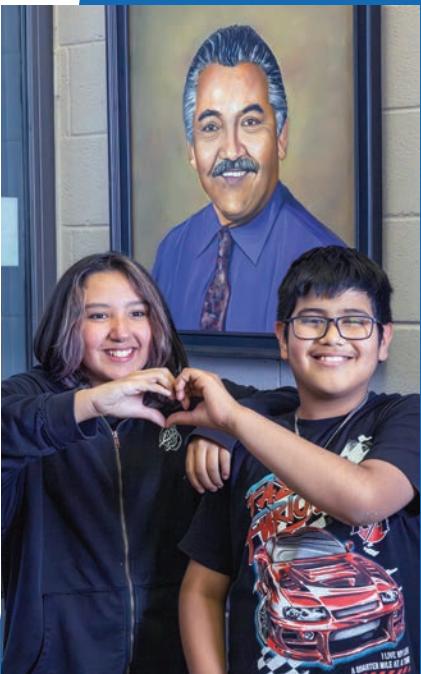
With growth comes the responsibility to strengthen our financial foundation. Over the next three years, we'll focus on scaling programs thoughtfully and exploring new funding avenues—such as child care licensing—that align with our mission and capacity. At the same time, we're deepening our relationships with individual donors and legacy supporters, while expanding board leadership to enhance ICAN's visibility and long-term sustainability. ICAN's newly launched [Together, We Can Campaign](#) is another long-term investment strategy aimed at making ICAN more self-sufficient. Established through foundation giving, this fund transforms today's generosity into a lasting legacy for generations to come.

INVESTING IN OUR TEAM

We know that a strong team builds strong outcomes for youth and families. That's why we're making intentional investments in our team, focusing on what it takes to build a strong culture and support long-term retention. Our goal is to become one of the best places to work in the nonprofit sector. As we grow, we're also laying the groundwork for an internal infrastructure that supports both people and progress.

EXPANDING ACCESS AND DEEPENING IMPACT

The demand for ICAN's services continues to grow, especially in academic support and STEAM education. In response, we're exploring opportunities to expand our reach, both in current communities and new ones. Over the next few years, we'll begin piloting junior high programming and exploring opportunities for elementary expansion, laying the groundwork for future sites that increase access to transformative learning experiences for more youth.



Henry's Hope Legacy Circle

The Henry's Hope Legacy Circle is a group of supporters who choose to invest in ICAN's future through gifts made in their estate plan. Joining the Circle is easy - just determine how best to include ICAN in your plan and share with us that you've done so.

BB After spending 30 years teaching at-risk youth and second language learners, I know how hard it is to succeed in those conditions. A quality after-school program, like ICAN, provides greater opportunities for our youth. I have no children of my own, but I can support the future by leaving what I can afford to ICAN through their planned giving program.

CARLA CANTRELL, 10-YEAR ICAN SUPPORTER



To learn more about Henry's Hope Legacy Circle, contact ICAN CEO Sheby Pedersen at Sheby@icanaz.org.

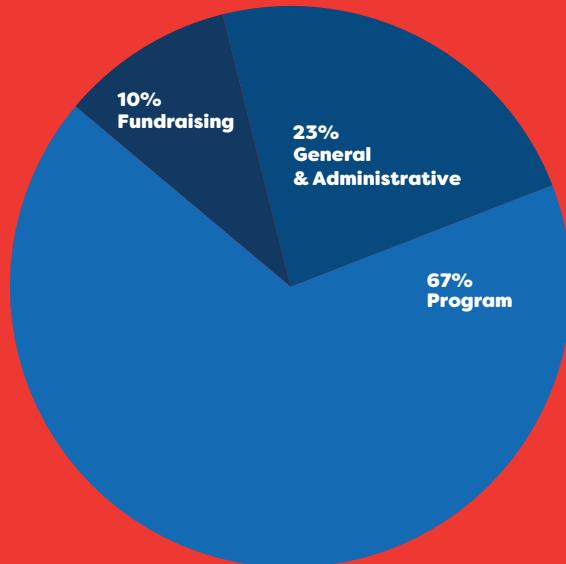
Making Every Dollar Count

ICAN experienced a surplus for the 2024–2025 fiscal year, driven by strong revenue and careful expense management. This outcome reflects our ongoing commitment to responsible financial stewardship during a year of growth and transition.

Part of the surplus includes pre-paid, restricted funds designated for future use—ensuring a strong pipeline of support for the years ahead. In addition, several key positions remained unfilled as we prioritized thoughtful hiring to best meet ICAN's evolving needs.

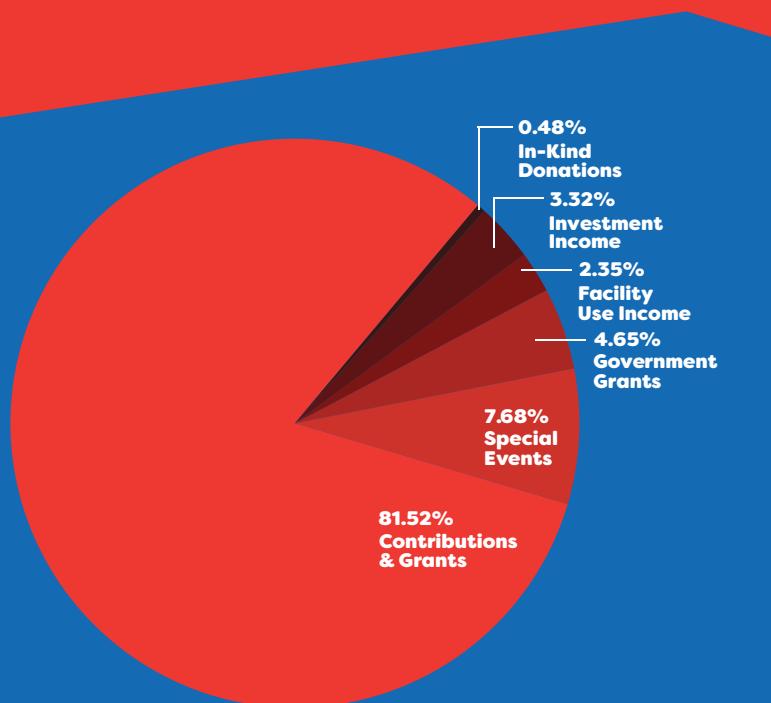
This surplus is not a sign of excess, but of strategic planning and long-term vision. As we look ahead, ICAN will continue to invest in the systems, staff, and infrastructure that strengthen our programs while remaining disciplined in how we manage resources.





EXPENSES

TOTAL EXPENSES: \$3,265,568



REVENUE

TOTAL REVENUE: \$4,366,612

FINANCIAL RESERVES: 12 MONTHS CASH ON HAND

(AS OF JUNE 30, 2025)

FUTURE OF ICAN FUND: \$1,661,172

(AS OF JUNE 30, 2025)





Get Involved
in the Mission

TAKE A TOUR - Stop by for a tour and meet our amazing team and the kids your involvement will support.

VOLUNTEER - Join the ICAN team as a volunteer and help in a classroom, support our administrative needs, and so much more.

JOIN THE HENRY'S AMBASSADOR COMMITTEE - The Henrys are a volunteer ambassador group dedicated to supporting ICAN through volunteerism and philanthropy. Named after our founder, Henry Salinas, the group meets once per month in a fun, social setting.

JOIN THE DREAMTEAM - This group of creative leaders comes together to support the planning and fundraising of ICAN's largest philanthropic event, dreamBIG. The event is hosted in November, and meetings are typically held 4-6 times during the year.

MAKE A LASTING IMPACT: BECOME A MONTHLY GIVER - Whether it's \$10, \$25, or \$84 to join the Henry Salinas Society, your monthly gift ensures consistent support for our free programs and helps us plan for the future with confidence. Consider setting up a recurring donation today, becoming a champion for youth all year long.

HENRY'S HOPE LEGACY CIRCLE - The Henry's Hope Legacy Circle is a group of supporters who choose to invest in ICAN's future through gifts made in their estate plan. Joining the Circle is easy - just determine how best to include ICAN in your plan and share with us that you've done so.

Want to get involved in any of the above ways?

Reach out to Donor Relations Manager,
JR Robertson, at jacqueline@icanaz.org



Stewards of our Mission

ICAN Board of Directors Serving July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025



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