

Creating One Community, Together



The Campaign for a
Permanent Home for Aaron's Acres

About Aaron's Acres

- ♥ Launched in Lancaster County in 1998 by a group of parents
- ♥ Serves over 300 individuals with complex needs from six Central PA counties
- ♥ Currently programs spread across twelve locations throughout the year
- ♥ Signature program: Summer Camp serving over 100 individuals
- ♥ Utilizing more than 350 volunteers
- ♥ Funding: 42% donations, 29% special events, 16% grants, 13% programs

Our Vision

To provide all children and young adults with disabilities the opportunity to participate in the most innovative and unique social and recreational programs in an atmosphere of acceptance that embraces the individual and family.

The Aaron's Acres Difference

- ♥ Comprehensive, personalized recreational programs for individuals with disabilities
- ♥ Committed to responding to the needs expressed by our families
- ♥ Person-centered and family-focused approach to programming
- ♥ 1:1 or 1:2 staff to participant ratio for ages 5-21
- ♥ 1:4 staff to participant ratio for ages 22-40
- ♥ On-site nurses and professional staff supervision
- ♥ Completely independent local organization
- ♥ No one is turned away due to a specific disability or a family's financial limitations



Dear friend,

Children and young adults living with significant disabilities want the same things their parents want for them: independence, growth, confidence, a happy and healthy life filled with meaning and purpose. Unfortunately, due to a lack of community resources and available programs, these dreams often go unrealized, especially once the individuals age out of school-based programs.

Aaron's Acres has extensive experience in helping these individuals and their families for over 27 years. What has limited our organizational growth is the space to do so—until now. After our long nomadic existence, we have finally found the ideal permanent home: a 6.6-acre property in Millersville.

A former church provides everything we need for our person-centered programs. It will allow us to create a welcoming, inclusive space where individuals of all abilities can partake in activities with support from the Aaron's Acres team. Where parents and caregivers can breathe easier knowing that within this setting everyone "gets it". And for the first time ever, our programs and staff will be housed in the same location.

Most important, this single consolidated facility will enable us to dramatically expand programming to serve our families' two most urgent needs: 1) weekday programs for young adults with disabilities ages 22-40, and 2) year-round programs for our younger participants ages 5-21, including the addition of afterschool care.

According to the National Institutes of Health, the incidence of major developmental disabilities in the general population of our country has been steadily increasing since 2003, creating a greater demand for programs and support services. We ask you to help us meet this critical need for children and young adults living with disabilities and their families in Central Pennsylvania.

With your support, Aaron's Acres can double our number of participants over the next ten years and will finally have a place to call home within this community.



Risa Paskoff
Risa Paskoff
Executive Director



Amanda Katchur
Amanda Katchur
President, Board of Directors

Providing Year-Round Support for Ages 22–40

Our new home will enable Aaron's Acres to serve the young adults for whom any support beyond their family is scarce. Our families have asked for this service for years.



Colin's Story

"Colin was diagnosed with Cerebral Palsy when he was 9 months old. That diagnosis began a 21-year journey that brought some of the most dedicated, loving, and encouraging people into his and our lives. Colin thrived and grew thanks to this group of therapists, social workers, aides, and other families.

"Then one day it is all gone.

"Most parents look forward to high school graduation as a milestone. For parents with special needs children, it comes with dread. With the end of school, the services stop, and over time that network of families and friends slowly erodes.

"Aaron's Acres starting a year-round program would help fill this gap. Their program would be beneficial to not only the adult disabled individual but the family as well."

~Brett, Colin's father



Programming for Young Adults

We piloted programs for age 22-40 in 2024 and attracted 68 participants. Social Scenes provided weekly outings. Kindness Konnections offered the chance to give back through community service projects, such as packing food at a food pantry or playing bingo with senior citizens. The demand for these programs is very high, and we are working to meet it.



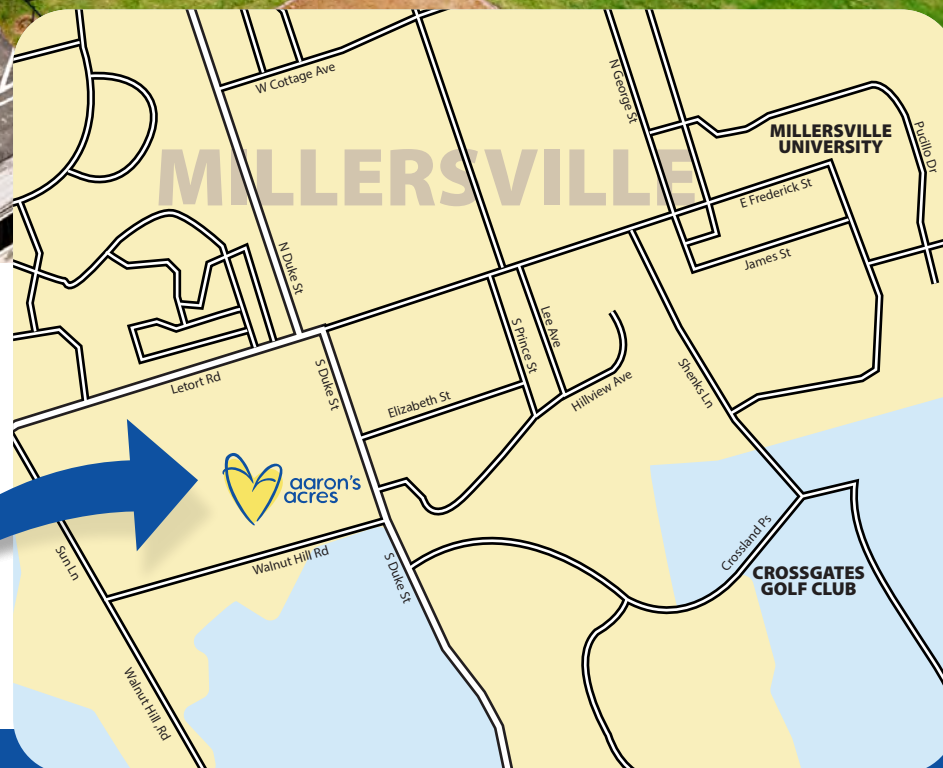
With a Dedicated Facility, We Can Offer:

- ♥ Daily or weekly programs focusing on music, drama/performance, crafts/games, cooking, fitness/recreational sports, yoga, and swimming adapted to the needs of those with varying abilities
- ♥ Parent-child classes that strengthen connections and provide new experiences
- ♥ Purposeful activities building common life skills, allowing for greater independence
- ♥ Opportunities for social interaction in a safe, supportive environment
- ♥ Engagement in community service projects so participants can give back and help others
- ♥ Educational sessions on issues experienced by families
- ♥ Respite and connections for parents and caregivers



One Site Fits All

Without this space, individuals with disabilities and their families will be underserved and our organization simply cannot fulfill its mission. The building will require only minor renovations so we can begin serving our community quickly.



Lobby



Space to Embrace Possibilities

Currently our program staff spend hours finding and leasing venues for our programs, often having to work around each site's schedule. Our 12,000-square-foot building will enable us to devote that staff time to actual programs scheduled around what works best for our families: young adults on weekdays, kids (5–21) after school and evenings, everyone on weekends.

We will be able to provide afterschool care for those who have aged out of traditional programs (typically after age 12).

Multi-Purpose Room



Classroom



Spaces for Everyone

The former sanctuary will become our large recreational space, while classrooms and an upgraded kitchen will offer flexible program spaces. Young adults will have their own hangout space in the lower level – a rarity for this population. Parents will have their own lounge and there will be plenty of room for our staff.

Staffing Up

Our new location will provide students at Millersville University and other local institutions with a variety of opportunities to work with us. Having one permanent, easily accessible location will help attract and retain staff. With ongoing programs and consistent schedules throughout the year, we will be able to offer employment and other options for those seeking more hands-on and paid learning experiences.

Activity Room





Our Own Pool at Last

Pool activities are a highlight for our participants while providing the benefits of aquatic therapy. In the swimming pool individual challenges fade away and all you see are children and young adults having fun. The large flat acreage next to the building offers the perfect spot to build an accessible swimming pool, pool house, and outdoor pavilion.



An Accessible Pool

A 25-by-20-yard pool will feature a sloped “zero-entry” end that gets deeper gradually as well as a lift to transfer an individual using a wheelchair into and out of the water. Adaptive equipment and our specially trained staff make it possible for participants to experience being in the water safely.

Healing Waters

Aquatic therapy can benefit our participants, helping us address their physical, sensory, and cognitive challenges. Water’s buoyancy allows kids with developmental disabilities to move more easily, enhancing their motor skills. Individuals with autism learn how to process what they experience, reduce their sensory aversions, and improve their self-regulation.



Outdoor Program Necessities

A 15-by-20-foot pool house will provide nearby changing spaces and accessible bathrooms. A connected 60-by-25-foot pavilion will offer a shady site for countless outdoor programs in spring, summer, and fall. These are necessary because many of our participants face physical and medical challenges.

Pool Economics

Finding an accessible pool has been our greatest hurdle for the past two decades. After extensive research and discussions with many organizations, a long-term partnership with a local aquatic facility was not feasible primarily due to accessibility and scheduling. While a pool will be a huge investment and an ongoing expense, our participants deserve regular access to an activity they overwhelmingly enjoy. We envision adding aquatic programs such as swim lessons and water fitness. The pool will generate revenue through rentals to other organizations serving a similar population.

Strengthening Collaborations, Internships, and Volunteerism

This new location will make it easier for students majoring in special education (and other fields) at Millersville University and other area institutions to intern with us. Undergraduates can earn academic credit and real-life experience under the guidance of our professional staff in a supportive environment that benefits both students and participants. Year-round programs will create a variety of employment opportunities for those seeking more hands-on and paid experiences.



A Caregiver's Story

As the nurse to a child who has osteogenesis imperfecta type 3, the words "no," "sorry he can't," and "we don't think it would be safe" are ones I hear regularly when we are out in public.

Like any other 11-year-old, my client wants to experience new things. He frequently expresses excitement about Aaron's Acres and the pool. In the pool, he can let loose, spend time with his friends, and above all move with freedom, without the fear of fracturing his bones.

The pool lets him explore his imagination, exercise his muscles and joints, and feel like he is part of the group without having to watch from the outside.

~ Private nurse who is with him at Aaron's Acres

The Campaign for a Permanent Home for Aaron's Acres

This \$5.5 million project will create a place where individuals with disabilities and their families feel like they belong, where they can embrace possibilities beyond disabilities. With your support, a successful campaign will position Aaron's Acres to pledge never to turn away a participant due to challenges created by disability or financial limitations. The project will be funded through a (minimum) \$4 million campaign along with Aaron's Acres' resources and wise borrowing.

Prepared for the Future

Aaron's Acres has built a strong financial foundation, and our leadership has developed an operating plan that will allow the organization to grow and thrive in our new building. Increased services to the young adult community will position us to apply for new funding from area foundations, businesses, and individuals. New grant opportunities will be pursued. Expanded programming will also increase earned revenue from program fees charged to participants. This campaign will also add funding to our permanent endowment fund which will help support programming and operations in perpetuity.

Project Budget

Property purchase and renovations	\$3,225,000
Pool, pool house, and pavilion	\$1,635,000
Start-up operating and endowment funds	\$490,000
Campaign expenses, marketing	\$150,000
TOTAL	\$5,500,000



Gifts of Materials, Labor, and Equipment

Certain aspects of our renovation and construction projects could be divided into smaller tasks that can be completed with donated materials, labor, or equipment. Ask a campaign volunteer if you are interested in helping out.



Gifts Needed to Reach the \$4,000,000 Goal

Donors may take up to five years to pay their pledge.

Number of Gifts	Amount of Gift	Cumulative Total
1	\$750,000+	\$750,000
1	\$500,000+	\$1,250,000
2	\$250,000	\$1,750,000
4	\$100,000	\$2,150,000
12	\$50,000	\$2,750,000
20	\$25,000	\$3,250,000
35	\$10,000	\$3,600,000
50	\$5,000	\$3,850,000
Several	<\$5,000	\$4,000,000

Become an Aaron's Acres Founder

As this site represents our first permanent home, we plan to recognize donors to this campaign as Aaron's Acres Founders. Your visionary philanthropy will benefit individuals with disabilities and their families for years to come. Planned gifts are welcomed and encouraged as part of the campaign. Permanent space naming opportunities exist for gifts of \$25,000 and more. Donors may make gifts in honor or memory of a loved one or a friend. Donors of \$10,000 or more will be honored on an attractive Major Donor Recognition Wall to be permanently installed in our new home.

"The feeling of being 'typical,' 'ordinary,' and 'just like everyone else' is rarely achieved in the lives of a special needs family. Most of the time it is only felt when in the presence of family—and that is what Aaron's Acres has been to us."

~ Michael, father of Elizabeth



“Our son is judged on his struggles, which are too difficult for most programs to even consider. But Aaron’s Acres celebrates our son, they treat him with respect, and they support all of his needs.

He is not able to tell us how much he loves the activities verbally, but he tells us in his excited smiles when we arrive in the morning and in his cheerful laughs when we pick him up. He gets to experience all the fun times just like every other kid.”

~ Michelle, mother of summer camper



The Campaign for a Permanent Home for Aaron's Acres

For more information, contact
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The official registration and financial information of Aaron's Acres may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll free within Pennsylvania, 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.