

Ascend Cares Foundation

2018 Annual Report

Making a difference
in people's lives and
local communities



Inside This Report:

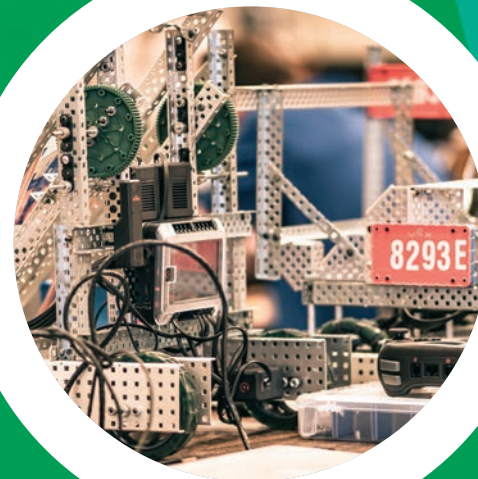
- 1 Letter From the Chairman 2 Ascend Cares by the Numbers



- 4 Helping Those on the Road to Recovery



- 6 Building Playhouses and Partnerships



- 8 Robotics Equipment Supports STEM and Career Skills



- 10 Employees Improve Communities, One Grant at a Time



- 12 A Dream Playground Is Now a Reality



- 14 Creating Ripples Across Organizations



- 16 Partnering Organizations With the Community

- 18 Ascend Cares Efforts Across the Globe

- 19 Helping Coworkers Get Through Difficult Times

- 20 About Ascend Cares

Letter From the Chairman:



Making a Bigger Impact Every Year

When I visited the new sensory playground at the Escambia Westgate School, the first thing I heard was laughter. When I turned the corner to see children playing on the equipment, it was easy to forget that some of these children have autism, maneuver with a walker or use a wheelchair. This playground, funded by Ascend Cares, was designed to include ramps, wheelchair-accessible swings and special equipment for all of the students at the school.

It was incredible to see the children playing. I was so proud that we, as Ascend Cares, were able to pitch in to give these children a playground where they can simply be kids.

Organizing big projects like the playground isn't the only way Ascend Cares gives back to our communities. Employees who have hands-on involvement and support their own personal causes can apply for a Community Impact Grant to give toward their projects. It's a simple idea that did well across our sites. We awarded 65 grants where \$200,000 went back into the communities where they live.

Ascend Cares also values education. Each year we award scholarships to the students of our Ascend families. We awarded 82 scholarships for a total of \$149,000 in 2018.

We are always looking for ways to create more partnerships with other organizations. Momentum, our first conference, brought together our volunteers to talk to each other about the projects across our sites. We also invited organizations that we've been working with to see how we can strengthen our relationships and the foundation. This meeting gave us great ideas for future projects.

As we celebrated many accomplishments, from the sensory playground to Community Impact Grants and scholarships to our first Ascend Cares annual meeting, I'm honored to be a part of an organization that continues to make a bigger impact every year.

Tom Boggs

Tom Boggs
Chairman of Ascend Cares

2018

650K

PLEGGED IN 2018 CAMPAIGN

100%

MATCHED

\$700K+

INVESTED THROUGH SITE PROJECTS

COMMUNITY IMPACT GRANTS

65 grants were awarded to employees and contractors where \$200,000 went back to local communities.

2,618

ASCEND VOLUNTEERS

16,420

VOLUNTEER HOURS



Please note volunteer hours based upon multiple projects. Ascend Cares volunteers may have participated in activities for more than one focus area.

Greenwood:

Helping Those on the Road to Recovery

Recovering from addiction is struggle enough without the little inconveniences that arise in daily life.

Until recently 12 of the 60 men living at the Oaks Recovery Center in Greenwood, South Carolina, started their days not with reading and meditation, but with a wait for the single, cramped bathroom in their residence house.

Nor was the room a pleasant place to begin the day. Outdated fixtures hung on dingy yellow walls. Shampoos and body washes crowded the small bathtub containing a shower. The sink stood directly across from the lone toilet. Privacy was nonexistent.

Enter a team of volunteers from Ascend Performance Materials' Greenwood plant, who provided materials and labor for a remodeling project. Led by Jeff Drake, maintenance mechanic at the Greenwood plant, the effort was part of the company's Ascend Cares initiative of community involvement. Center residents also worked on the renovation.

"These men are putting their lives back together," said Hal McCord, senior site director at Ascend's Greenwood plant. "We wanted to help them do that with an improved facility."

The new, larger space now has two toilets and two showers, all in individual stalls. There's a urinal and a pair of vanity sinks. Tailored striped curtains punctuate soothing tones of white, taupe and gray.

"The room is now more open, and the residents can be more efficient in the morning," said Brian Ready, the center's founder and CEO.

More Than a Project

Brian said he created the facility in 2015 "with the dream of an ethical, affordable solution for recovery." Today, 13 staffers and 10 volunteers lead both short-term and long-term programs to help addicts achieve life-long sobriety.

Brian is proud that his center, which has six residence houses among 14 buildings, is among the most affordable in the country. But the emphasis on keeping costs low precludes projects like the recent renovation.

Brian says Ascend approached him about the upgrade after several of the company's employees volunteered for a landscaping project at the center.

"Their help went so much further than a bathroom project," Brian said. "We were not only impressed with their skill level, but the grace they showed our residents."

"For them to support a center that helps with drug and alcohol treatment, even with that stigma of addiction, was a beautiful thing," Brian said. "There were tears at the end."

About Oaks Recovery Center:

Oaks Recovery Center is an addiction rehab facility based in Greenwood, South Carolina. The center offers short-term and long-term programs to men who want freedom from addiction. Residents are patiently guided to recovery in home-like facilities. To learn more, visit oaksrecovery.org.

Ascend Cares volunteers work on the remodeling project at the Oaks Recovery Center in Greenwood, South Carolina.



Chocolate Bayou:

Building Playhouses and Partnerships

Savannah, with her blue eyes, frilled t-shirt and big red Elmo hair bow, is a typical preschooler in many ways. In other areas, though, she needs some extra assistance.

Savannah, who has Moebius Syndrome, is one of Buster's Kids, children who receive outpatient clinical services from BACH, a nonprofit agency in Brazoria County, Texas. BACH equips children and families living with developmental delays and disabilities.

The hard work and time commitment of therapy can make it tough for a kid to be a kid, said Ashlee Beagnyam, BACH Buster's Kids clinic director. "Children come for therapy two or three days a week for a couple of hours at a time. This can be exhausting for a child who is working to improve a disability."

Meanwhile, the Ascend Cares team in Chocolate Bayou had an idea for giving children with a disability a place of their own to relax and have fun. Rohit Aggarwal, a senior project engineering manager at Ascend, had kicked off a project to custom-build playhouses for kids with special needs. He struck a partnership with BACH to match the team with recipients, each of whom would receive a playhouse designed to meet their specific needs and accessibility requirements.

"When a child returns home from therapy, the playhouse is a safe place to have fun with their families," Rohit

said. "These children are in the comfort of their homes and can simply be a kid in their own backyard."

Meet and Greet

Before construction started, volunteers from Ascend Cares met with the children and their families to find out the child's favorite things to include in the design.

More than 130 volunteers worked in mini-construction sites around the Chocolate Bayou facility for creating the 10 playhouses, which stood out as candy-colored contrasts to the typical views at a manufacturing plant. "It was amazing to see the playhouses being built at our site," said Rohit. "One house was bright blue with pink and yellow trim and another was a red barn with a weather vane. And the decks and other add-ons the teams included were unbelievable. The volunteers did a truly incredible job."

Savannah's expression as she tottered toward the new miniature house, painted the same purple and gold colors as the stars decorating the leg braces she wore, was evidence of the project's effect on the children, Ashlee said. "Now, Savannah can come home after working hard during therapy with the reward of playing with her family in the playhouse."

Ascend Cares project leaders Rohit Aggarwal, left, and Paul Conrad, right, with Carla Castillo, left, BACH assistant ECI program director, and Ashlee Beagnyam, right, BACH Buster's Kids clinic director, celebrate the playhouse project at the Chocolate Bayou site in Alvin, Texas.



About BACH:
BACH, a nonprofit organization, provides therapeutic, educational and social programs to children with special needs in Brazoria County, Texas. Founded in 1973, it offers home-based early childhood intervention services for children up to age 3 and outpatient speech, physical and occupational therapy for kids through age 20. To learn more, visit bacheci.org.

Children from BACH see their new playhouses at Ascend's Chocolate Bayou site in Alvin, Texas.

Foley:

Robotics Equipment Supports STEM and Career Skills

Run through an obstacle course. Throw a ball. Pick up rings and put them on a short pole. Sounds like child's play.

Now design and build a robot to do all of those things. Not so simple anymore.

But that's the challenge behind VEX Robotics Competitions, a nationwide program for students interested in science, technology, engineering and math. Each year teams of students from elementary to university levels compete with other schools to see whose robot can best perform a set of tasks.

"It's a conduit for motivating kids in STEM subjects and getting them to delve further into these technical, highly skilled careers," said Thomas Thorjusen, who teaches high school engineering, physics and robotics classes in Foley, Alabama. A majority of the 50 students in the robotics section participate in the VEX program, he said.

Benefits of Robotics

Craig Saget, site director at Ascend Performance Materials in Foley, saw for himself the program's benefits when his son was in the school's robotics club. So he submitted a proposal to Ascend Cares.

"It's nice to be able to provide what is needed for the kids and see them apply it and use it and get good results," Craig said. Ascend Cares has donated money for the specialized equipment required by the VEX organization and supplied volunteers to coach and judge at competitions.

"In the VEX realm, they're always updating equipment," said Thomas, who advises the high school club. "It's always really good stuff, but we have to upgrade to stay competitive and that is very expensive."

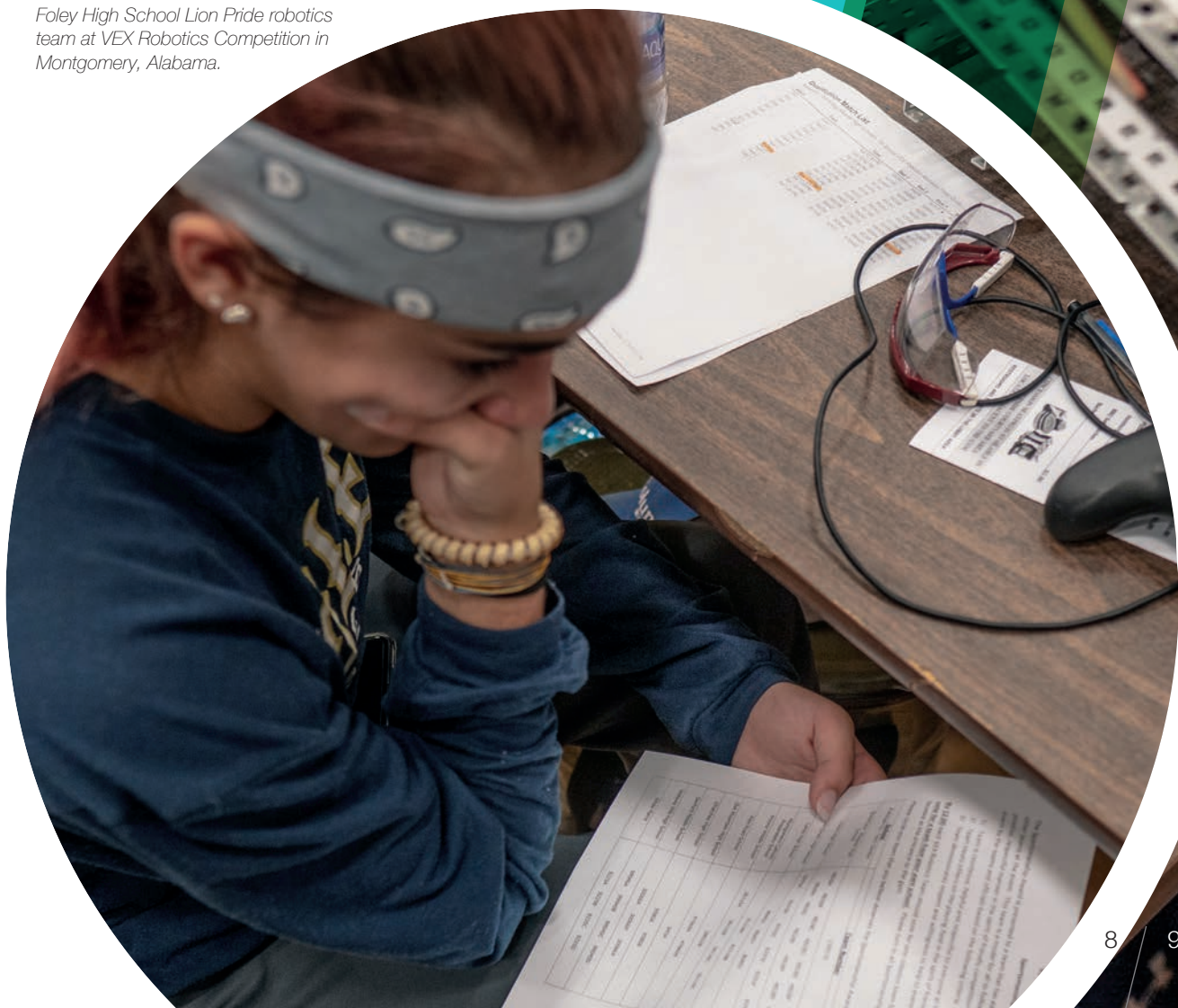
The effort is paying off. A Foley High School Lion Pride robotics team finished second out of 44 teams at a statewide qualifying event. Another is currently ranked No. 1 in Alabama and 161st out of approximately 1,300 teams in the United States.

While the scene at a robotics competition may look like a futuristic playground, the lessons being learned are important.

"Designing, gearing, wiring, problem solving, team building—these are real-world skills that are directly transferrable to a career setting," Thomas said.

Craig agrees. "They try something, see how successful it is, and come back and make it better and better. That's what we do in our jobs."

Foley High School Lion Pride robotics team at VEX Robotics Competition in Montgomery, Alabama.



About Foley High School:
Foley High School is a public school located in Foley, Alabama. With more than 1,800 students from grades nine through 12, the school offers many academic and athletic teams. To learn more, visit bcbe.org/foley.

Decatur:

Employees Improve Communities, One Grant at a Time

The Ascend Cares volunteer spirit of our employees goes beyond the foundation. Ascend Cares discovered that many employees had been volunteering at other organizations for years. As a way to support these passions, the foundation offers Ascend Cares Community Impact Grants.

The program was a success across the sites, with Decatur awarding the most grants. Ascend Cares set a goal of 50 Community Impact Grants. By the end of 2018, 65 grants had been awarded.

Necessary School Supplies for STEM Students

Priceville Junior High School shared a campus with Priceville High School until 2016. They also shared science supplies. When the high school relocated to a separate campus, so did the supplies.

As an environmental engineer at Ascend's Decatur site, Bob Burke routinely volunteers at school-sponsored functions. When he realized the junior high students had lost their lab and were unable to conduct hands-on activities, he took action.

"I want students to have the necessary supplies to have fun with science while in school," said Bob. "If a student has an interest in science, they need to conduct experiments and see chemical reactions. After finding out that the school didn't have supplies and equipment, I had to do something for the students in my community."

Students at Priceville Junior High School, located in Decatur, Alabama, conduct science experiments with supplies funded by Ascend Cares.

Bob's grant funded supplies such as goggles, face shields, lab coats, gloves, microscopes and lab kits for hands-on science activities for grades five through eight. Bob was invited by the school to use the supplies for the first time. The visit allowed him to interact with the students and conduct experiments on how chemistry creates the products we use every day, such as the ones produced at Ascend's Decatur site.



BAPS Charities volunteer conducts blood work on local resident at health fair in Madison, Alabama.

Preventative Screenings for Those Without Healthcare

A strength in overall health depends on how early a preventable disease can be diagnosed and treated, said Keyur Pandya, laboratory chemist at Ascend's Decatur site. For four years, Keyur has been volunteering with BAPS Charities, a global nonprofit organization. Now, he wanted to challenge himself to make a bigger impact in his community by coordinating a health fair.

BAPS Charities helps people without insurance to receive wellness screenings through health fairs and awareness campaigns. Keyur's Ascend Cares grant helped sponsor a two-day health fair in Madison, Alabama. More than 160 people received free or low-cost health screenings, blood work and vaccinations.

"There are many people in our community that can't afford preventive health services," Keyur said. "With the Community Impact Grant, BAPS Charities and I were able to reach more people."

Gym Repairs Make a Safer Place for Children to Play

Leonard Horne finishes his nightshift, goes home and takes a nap. After getting some sleep, he volunteers at the Boys & Girls Club of Decatur until he goes back to work. For more than eight years, Leonard has made volunteering a part of his everyday life.



Children playing at the Boys & Girls Club of Decatur, Alabama.

Leonard, a senior operator in logistics at Ascend's Decatur site, interacts with more than 65 children at the Boys & Girls Club each day. As a mentor, Leonard organizes many activities such as fishing, bowling and dining out with the children. He noticed that basketball was another activity to build the children's confidence. Leonard's Ascend Cares Community Impact Grant helped repair the roof and remodel the gym floor at the club.

"We have a girl who didn't want to play," Leonard said. "I worked with her to develop her skills and build her confidence. Now, she plays on the high school basketball team and receives calls for college scholarships."

Pensacola:

A Dream Playground Is Now a Reality

A playground is a place for children to have fun—but only if it is accessible to them.

True Benefits

Escambia Westgate serves children with disabilities from pre-K through high school, many of whom are autistic, medically fragile or nonverbal, according to principal Jobenna Lawson-Sellers. The school was equipped with a standard playground, but the setup, with its inaccessible equipment and wheelchair-hindering sand surface, meant many students were unable to enjoy it.

It was clear the school needed a sensory playground where children could play and have their sensory needs met with different types of stimulation, Jobenna said.

“Exercise and outdoor exposure is important for all children, and a sensory playground would enable teachers and staff to use it as a tool to help with the functional and social development of our students,” Jobenna said. “The playground would allow the children to increase physical activity and enjoy the health benefits that come with being outside.”

Community Partner

Jobenna always had a playground on her wish list, but she knew the project would take a lot of bake sales to finance it.

When Sharhonda Owens, a senior quality specialist for Ascend’s Pensacola site, heard Jobenna talk about the need at a community appreciation luncheon, she recognized an opportunity for Ascend Cares to get involved. “I told her to dream about what she wanted for her students,” Sharhonda said.

A Playground for Everyone

Sharhonda coordinated a team of volunteers from Ascend Cares Pensacola with Escambia Westgate. Working with designers to make sure they met the needs of all the students, the team came up with a plan to feature wheelchair-accessible swings, a core language board that has pictures associated with activities for the students to communicate and musical equipment.

Kids with motion sensitivities have several options such as a wheelchair-accessible glider that can hold six children. For students with ambulatory needs, there is a cozy dome that has a tunnel with cutouts for playing hide and seek. Ascend Cares volunteers also planted a butterfly and sensory garden.

Jobenna said the changes in the students have been incredible.

“We have one student who can walk, but is not motivated to do so,” Jobenna said. “When he gets on the playground, he’s walking everywhere. He walks more now than he has in the past year.”

The sensory playground installation is the largest single Ascend Cares project in the history of the foundation.

“It’s fantastic to see the children smiling and playing,” Sharhonda said. “I am so proud of the impact this project will have on the students’ lives, their school and their community.”

About Escambia Westgate:

Escambia Westgate dates back to 1946, when Lucy Petree opened a school for children with disabilities. In 1977, the community came together to build a new special education center that later became Escambia Westgate School. The school expanded in 2005 with the opening of the Lacey A. Collier Sensory Complex, a multisensory environment based on the Snoezelen concept. For more information, visit ews-ecsd-fl.schoolloop.com.

Students and teachers play on the Ascend Cares-funded sensory playground at the Escambia Westgate School in Pensacola, Florida.



Momentum:

Creating Ripples Across Organizations

The big smiles and warm handshakes gave the event a festive tone, like a reunion of old friends. But the attendees at Momentum weren't gathered because they were personal buddies—they were there to celebrate their shared passion for community service.

Momentum, the foundation's first conference, brought together representatives from nonprofit organizations and other foundations with Ascend Cares volunteers. The goal of the conference was to recognize the growing impact across communities, learn how to build stronger partnerships and improve processes.

Ascend Cares contributes thousands of volunteer hours per year to dozens of nonprofits, but leaders wanted to ensure they were providing what the partner organizations needed most, said Rachell Gold, the foundation's executive director. "Momentum allowed us to explore how other employee-led foundations operate as well as get feedback from nonprofits on how to approach and grow partnerships."

Ripple Effect

Getting these organizations in the same room allowed them to build relationships with one another as well. One connection forged at Momentum was between BACH, a Texas organization serving children with special needs, and the Escambia Westgate School in Florida.

As Sharhonda Owens, an Ascend Cares site leader who led a recent project with Escambia Westgate, was chatting with Ashlee Beagnyam, BACH Buster's Kids clinic director, she realized the two groups shared a similar mission.

Phil McDivitt, Ascend's president and CEO and Ascend Cares board of directors member, also saw potential for partnership. He arranged for Ashlee to visit Escambia Westgate to see the school's Lacey A. Collier Sensory Complex, a multisensory environment. A multisensory complex is now being considered as an Ascend Cares-supported project at BACH.

"These are the types of relationships that we are building with organizations," Rachell said. "We are also focusing on how we can multiply our efforts by connecting our networks and fostering a pass-it-on culture with those we are serving."

This approach was recognized with the Momentum award that was presented to the Pensacola site for their creative approach to linking Escambia Westgate students with the Council on Aging. This team also facilitated several partnerships between other organizations they are supporting.

Texas Children's Hospital also attended Momentum to share information about the organization. Event attendees participated in a hands-on volunteer project where they decorated canvas bags with cheerful pictures and positive messages. The bags would be filled with games and given to children receiving care at the hospital.

"The conference gave insight to our volunteers on how we can continue to expand our impact as a foundation," Rachell said. "I'm proud of how the organization is growing and creating a ripple effect across our sites and communities."

Read more about the Escambia Westgate School project on page 12.

Read more about the BACH playhouses project on page 6.

Top: Ascend Cares' executive director Rachell Gold speaks at Momentum in Houston. Bottom: Phil McDivitt, Ascend's president and CEO and Ascend Cares board of directors member, introduces Ashlee Beagnyam, BACH Buster's Kids clinic director, and Carla Castillo, BACH assistant ECI program director, to Sharhonda Owens, Ascend Cares team leader in Pensacola, at Momentum in Houston.



Top: Brittany Cooper, Ascend Cares team leader in Foley, shows off her canvas bag at Momentum in Houston. Middle: Sharhonda Owens, Ascend Cares team leader in Pensacola, accepts the Momentum award on behalf of the site. Bottom: Decorated canvas bags at Momentum in Houston.



Houston:

Partnering Organizations With the Community

With a focused look and a grip on her marker, a second grader from Yellowstone Academy concentrates as she writes a message on a drawstring bag: “You are loved. I hope these supplies help you.” The bags, provided by Project C.U.R.E., are filled with medical supplies funded by Ascend Cares and sent to children around the world.

The Yellowstone students recognize the familiar faces from Ascend Cares. Volunteers have been working with Yellowstone, a nonprofit private school for underserved children in Houston, since they adopted the entire first grade in 2016. Ascend Cares Houston organizes events and projects such as hosting mentoring lunches, chaperoning field trips and giving Christmas gifts. Activities like this will continue through the students’ eighth grade year.

“We want to be a positive influence in their lives,” said Sheree Fields, IT senior director and Ascend Cares Houston site leader. “Each student has the potential to do great things, and we want to encourage this through mentoring and educational projects.”

Children Helping Children

This particular visit, however, was different. Ascend Cares asked the Yellowstone students to join them as volunteers for Project C.U.R.E., a nonprofit organization that donates medical supplies and equipment to developing countries. After carefully writing their messages, the students filled the Project C.U.R.E. bags with medical supplies that would go to another child in need. Items included scissors, tweezers, bandages, bar soap and toothbrushes.

“We’ve been fortunate to work with Project C.U.R.E. on several volunteer projects,” Sheree said. “It was a great opportunity to combine two local organizations that we volunteer with and partner them together.”

While the Yellowstone students may not meet the children who receive the bags, they know they are making a difference in the lives of another girl or boy, according to Maria Anderson, director of development at Yellowstone Academy.

“Ascend Cares has been amazing with their involvement and generosity for all 35 students,” Maria said. “This project was an important lesson on how our students can give back to the community.”

About Yellowstone Academy:
Founded in 2002, Yellowstone Academy is a nonprofit, Christian private school in Houston. Serving pre-K – 4th grade, it was established to educate low-income African-American children in the Third Ward area. For more information, visit yellowstoneacademy.org.

About Project C.U.R.E.:
Project Commission on Urgent Relief and Equipment is the largest provider of donated medical supplies and equipment to developing countries. Project C.U.R.E., founded in 1987 by James Jackson, is a 501(c)(3) organization that has delivered medical kits and shipped cargo containers to people around the world. For more information, visit projectcure.org.



Students write messages on Project C.U.R.E. bags and fill them with supplies at Yellowstone Academy in Houston.



International:

Ascend Cares Efforts Across the Globe

Families face difficulties throughout the world. No family to offer comfort during a hospital stay. No soft blankets to call their own. No warm meals during the winter months.

Ascend Cares spirit of volunteerism extends beyond the walls of our U.S. facilities. Employees in Europe and Asia are making a difference in the lives of families in their own communities.

Bringing Happiness to Sick Children With No Families in China

A little boy sits in the lap of an Ascend Cares volunteer in Shanghai. As they look at a book together, the boy begins to smile. At Baby Home Health Care Center, happiness can be hard to come by for these orphan children as they recover from surgery.

Baby Home, an affiliate of the Shanghai Children’s Medical Center, is a nonprofit group that has funded medical care for more than 700 orphans with congenital diseases. Medical and living costs are covered by donations.

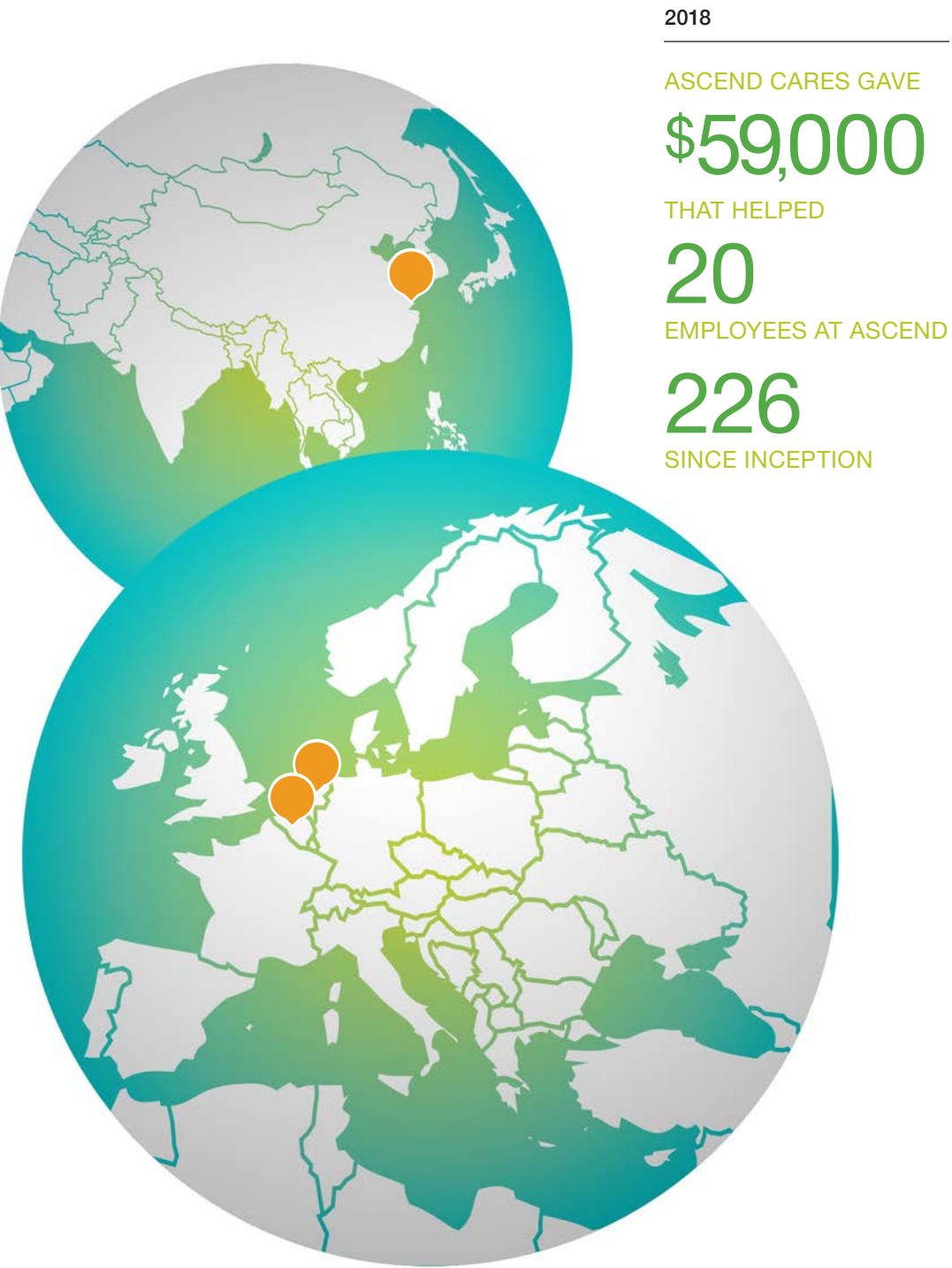
At the center, volunteers from the Shanghai office visit with the kids who otherwise might be facing recovery alone. Volunteers assist nurses in taking care of the sick and disabled children while they go through treatments. They make sure to be careful, but also have fun. “Regardless of their situation, they are still children that want to be kids,” said Shirley Han, Ascend’s HR manager for the Asia region. “You can look in their eyes and know that there is a moment of happiness while playing with them.”

Gifts of Warmth in Belgium and the Netherlands

A security blanket is exactly that: Security. It provides a sense of comfort and familiarity when you snuggle up to sleep. But children without permanent homes who spend weekdays living at a boarding school and weekends shuffling between a series of foster homes aren’t able to bring their own blankets from their beds with them. Our Ascend Cares team in Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium, provided bedding sets for the Point Virgule Charity so 50 children can feel warmth and security no matter where they lay their heads.

“When going from school to a foster home, these children need a sense of normalcy,” said John Saunders, Ascend’s vice president for Europe. “Regardless of where they are sleeping, they can know that this bedding belongs to them and no one else. They can take it with them and know that it hasn’t been slept on by another child.”

Our Ascend Cares team in Tilburg, Netherlands, also focused on providing warmth during the winter months. In Tilburg and the surrounding area, many people live at or below the poverty line. So the team partnered with the Tilburg Food Bank to provide warm food to families in need.



Hardship Grants:

Helping Coworkers Get Through Difficult Times

Life can be difficult. One minute all is well, and then things start to happen that are out of our control. A health scare, a reduction of income, a natural disaster, an unexpected home repair bill—these events can set off a chain reaction of financial struggle that not only can wreck a family’s budget but also can cause feelings of helplessness and stress.

At Ascend, we don’t want team members to feel they have to weather these tough storms alone. For moments like these, employees can ask for help through the Ascend Cares Hardship Committee.

Many employees don’t know that the Hardship Committee exists within Ascend Cares. That’s because the application review process is designed to be discrete and allow the recipient full anonymity.

Donya Charles has been a member of the Hardship Committee since 2017. “From being a part of the review process, one thing I’ve learned is that our employees are strong and resilient,” Donya said. “It’s possible that you are sitting next to someone at work that could be going through something traumatic.”

Employees who are facing a financial challenge can apply for an Ascend Cares Hardship Grant for a need that is personal to them. Grants are available to cover a range of incidents that impact their ability to meet basic living needs as well as funeral and medical travel costs.

“Sometimes we can be very private individuals and it can be hard for us to ask for help,” said Donya, a planning manager for Ascend’s Pensacola site. “Some of these grant applications break my heart. I’m so lucky to be able to help give back to these Ascend family members who are really hurting and just need a little push to get them through what might be the toughest time of their whole lives.

“We don’t plan for the bad things in life,” said Donya. “If an employee needs financial help and doesn’t know what to do, that’s what we are here for.”

Hardship Committee Members

 Matt Chapman Greenwood	 Donya Charles Pensacola	 Brittany Cooper Foley
 Lisa Entrekin Houston	 Stephen French Decatur	 Lynda Green Chocolate Bayou

About Ascend Cares:

The Ascend Cares Foundation is about making a difference in the lives of others. It is led by Ascend employees and supports Ascend families in their times of need, provides inspiring opportunities for community engagement and facilitates community leadership. Ascend Cares is funded entirely by donations and a company match, and every dollar contributed supports the work of the foundation.

Ascend Cares was founded in 2011 after a tornado outbreak in northern Alabama affected Ascend team members and their families near the Decatur facility. Since then, Ascend employees have made a tremendous impact on families in need and their local communities.

Our Focus

Ascend Cares serves community needs in the areas of children’s health and safety, education, housing, hunger and military and first responders support.

Programs

Community Projects

The annual Day of Caring is a time for our employees and their families to come together to give back by participating in projects large and small in their communities. Additionally, employee-led

Ascend Cares teams invest foundation dollars and volunteer hours throughout the year to support causes they are passionate about.

Hardship Grants

Employees and their families sometimes face unexpected financial burdens because of illness, natural disasters or other hardships. Ascend Cares offers direct and indirect financial assistance to team members facing these challenges. The foundation has supported 226 families since its inception.

Community Impact Grants

Ascend Cares is proud of the volunteer efforts of employees. The Community Impact Grants program provides financial assistance to support the hands-on engagement of Ascend employees in their communities.

Ascend Cares Community Service Scholarships

The scholarship program is a way for the foundation to invest in Ascend families and their students’ educations. Scholarships are awarded to dependents attending college or vocational school who have demonstrated a dedication to community service.

Contribute to Ascend Cares

As a 501(c)(3) organization, Ascend Cares is funded through the generous donations of Ascend employees and company match. Contributions are tax deductible in the U.S. (federal tax ID #90-0709302).

Ascend employees can contribute through payroll deduction at any time. Anyone can make a one-time electronic donation on our website: ascendmaterials.com/ascendcares.

The Ascend Cares Foundation is your foundation. Everything it has become and all it can be comes from the caring and giving nature of our people. It’s surprisingly hard to find a word that’s big enough to convey our heartfelt gratitude, and so we simply say, **thank you.**

Board of Directors



Rizwan Amanullah
Houston



Tom Boggs
Chairman - Pensacola



Lynn Crear
Chocolate Bayou



Rachell Gold
Executive Director - Houston



Scotty Hall
Decatur



Hal McCord
Greenwood



Phil McDivitt
Houston



Andrew Ralston
Secretary - Houston



Mimi Smith
Foley

Site Community Team Leaders



Paul Conrad
Chocolate Bayou



Brittany Cooper
Foley



Valerie Dansby
Greenwood



Leigha Diamond
Decatur



Sheree Fields
Houston



Jennifer Flowers
Chocolate Bayou



Sharhonda Owens
Pensacola

