



As we move towards year-end, the Board of Directors of GAPS is incredibly thankful for renewed progress in 2023.

The pandemic outbreak in 2020 and resulting lockdowns were incredibly hard on many non-profits. As an organization dedicated to providing programming and in-person support, GAPS was not exempt.

Our programming was greatly disrupted. While we tried to use virtual channels to serve our members, the inability to have in person events was a significant setback. In addition, our primary fundraising came from two events, the Watercooler Classic and Strikeout for Parkinsons. Both had significant negative impacts from the pandemic including cancellation.

As the wake cleared, the board focused our efforts in 2023 on two main priorities – increasing programming for our members and resuming our event fundraising to support that programming. We have good news to share on both fronts.

Programming – our 2023 programming initiative got a major boost with the addition of Jennifer Darst this summer. Jennifer brings an impressive skill set and a contagious passion for serving to our organization. If you've seen our weekly email updates, you'll know her efforts to increase programming are already being felt after a few months. We are incredibly optimistic about her efforts to drive programming.

Fundraising – Our special events fundraising is well underway again. The annual Watercooler Classic event takes place on November 9th at Zen in downtown Greenville. This unique event has not only been a key fundraiser, but it is also a fantastic awareness driver for our organization. Our spring event, formerly known as Strikeout for Parkinsons, moves to Conestee Park. The event, known as Strides for GAPS, will take place on April 20th. A fantastic committee is already well into planning and fundraising for this event. We expect it will be a great opportunity for the GAPS community to gather together.

We are excited about recent additions to staff and the Board of Directors. During 2023 our Executive Director, Jody Hamblett, resigned to return to Tennessee with her family. We are very grateful for her service to GAPS. The board is focused on replacing her and adding staff to expand and fund additional programming. As it relates to board development, Pat Sullivan, one of the founding members, has done an incredible job in 2023 expanding our Board of Directors and our Advisory Board. Many of these engaged, committed, and diverse individuals started serving GAPS on committees prior to joining the board. We expect their leadership roles to further enhance the organization in the coming years.

It has been a difficult few years for many in the nonprofit world. We are extremely grateful for the progress made by GAPS in 2023. We look forward to serving the community to the best of our ability in 2024.

Sincerely,

Your Greenville Area Parkinson's Board of Directors