



# the JOURNEY

Spring Edition 2026 | Vol. 13 No. 1

## When Home Changes Everything



**Amy Hoekstra, Director of Adult Case Management and Day Services**



**The Nelson Family**

When Julie Nelson was told her son Kenny would never come home, she refused to believe it. Kenny lives with autism and severe anxiety. As a child, his challenges grew so intense that he was placed in an out-of-state residential behavioral facility. “We were told he was never coming home,” Julie recalls. But she kept searching for a better answer, one that saw her son not as a diagnosis, but as a person with unlimited potential. That answer came in 2020, when LifeScape became the first organization in South Dakota to welcome someone into its newly launched Shared Living program. Kenny was the very first person served.

Shared Living is simple, powerful, and transformational: an adult with a disability lives in the home of a carefully selected individual, couple or family (host home provider) who opens not just their doors, but their life. South Dakota allows the participant’s family to act as his or her host home provider. Together they share daily routines, relationships, and experiences just like any family would. For Kenny, it meant something extraordinary. With the right support in place, his severe behaviors decreased dramatically. He began to make choices, find his voice, and rediscover confidence. “Each morning when my son wakes up, I see the results,” Julie says. “LifeScape listened, saw what an amazing person he is, and gave us a chance.”

That single “yes” didn’t just change Kenny’s life it launched a movement.

Since that first placement, LifeScape’s Shared Living program has grown from supporting just one person to 47 people across South

Dakota in only five years. Families from Sioux Falls to Rapid City and rural communities in between are now choosing this model because it works. LifeScape pairs the individual with a host home provider after doing background checks, and extensive matching process, and training in first aid, medication management, record-keeping systems and other regulatory trainings. LifeScape stays involved as the financial intermediary and provides oversight, including monthly home visits and on-going training.

One of those families is Tavia Wilson’s. Her son Jack thrives in Shared Living in ways a traditional group home could never allow. He volunteers with the American Legion, participates in color guard ceremonies, practices martial arts to manage anxiety, and holds part-time jobs in the community. “If Jack were in a group home, all these things would be near impossible,” Tavia says. “Shared Living lets him live a life filled with quality experiences.”

Behind every success story stands a team of LifeScape professionals working quietly but powerfully to ensure safety, dignity, and stability. Amy Hoekstra, Director of Adult Case Management and Day Services, has been with LifeScape for more than 34 years. She’s seen countless programs come and go, but few have changed lives like Shared Living. “The people we support make every day meaningful,” she says. Since 2022 alone, the program has grown from eight people to nearly fifty, driven by family referrals, new state funding models, and the simple truth that it works. LifeScape has responded to this growth by expanding its professional oversight team from one Shared Living Supervisor to three, ensuring quality and accountability as the program scales. Every placement represents a person who no longer must live in a setting that doesn’t fit them and a family who no longer has to fight alone.



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For donors and partners like you, this is what impact looks like. It looks like a young man finding confidence through martial arts. It looks like a mother seeing her child finally come home. It looks like families no longer being told “no” but being welcomed with open arms.

Shared Living isn’t just housing.

It’s belonging. It’s possibility.

It’s the power of a community that believes every person deserves a real home and a real life.

## From Our Chief Executive Officer



**Steve Watkins**  
Chief Executive Officer

In 2025, there were many moments that reminded me just how far LifeScape has come and how much promise lies ahead.

Throughout the year, I had the opportunity to spend time with our staff, families, community partners, and supporters, and I was repeatedly struck by the same thing: progress isn't always loud, but it is powerful. It shows up in quieter moments, a child communicating in a new way, a family finally receiving answers after a long wait, or an adult settling into a home designed with dignity, independence, and belonging.

This past year, LifeScape continued to grow in ways that reflect both our mission and the evolving needs of those we serve. Across South Dakota, our teams provided specialized care, education, and support to both children and adults with complex needs. Their compassion, creativity, and commitment are the foundation of everything we do, and in 2025, that foundation proved stronger than ever.

We also marked an important milestone in our ongoing initiative to expand housing for adults with developmental disabilities. In March, we opened Washington Home, our fifth adult residential home in five years. Thoughtfully designed to be more than just a place to live, this home offers privacy, accessibility, and a true sense of community, empowering adults to live as independently as possible while receiving the support they need. It stands as a meaningful example of what can be accomplished through long-term vision, strong partnerships, and generous community support.

At the same time, we continued to move forward through innovation and collaboration across the organization. From new approaches that improve safety and care, to partnerships that bring fresh ideas and expertise to our work, we remained focused on finding better ways to serve people today while preparing for tomorrow. These efforts are not about growth for growth's sake; they are about improving quality of life for every person entrusted to our care.

One of the most visible signs of momentum this year has been the continued progress on our new Children's Campus. As construction advances, so does our vision for a space intentionally designed around healing, independence, and possibility. This campus represents more than a new building, it reflects decades of learning, listening, and planning for the future of pediatric care at LifeScape.

None of this progress would be possible without the support of our donors, partners, and community. Your belief in our mission allows LifeScape to continue evolving while staying rooted in what matters most: empowering people to live their best life.

As we look ahead to 2026, I am incredibly proud of what we have accomplished together and deeply grateful for the trust you place in LifeScape. The journey continues and I am confident the best is still ahead.

*With gratitude,*  
**Steve Watkins**  
Chief Executive Officer

Community Partner:

## Built to Lift Others Up



At LifeScape, the mission is clear: empowering people to live their best life. For Jim Berman, President and General Manager of Dakota News Now, that belief isn't just something he supports as a community partner, it's the principle that has guided his entire career.

Jim's instinct to inform and connect people showed up at an early age. At seven years old, he taped down the transmit button on a walkie-talkie so it would broadcast continuously. He named it WJRB Radio, after his initials, and began "broadcasting" to his apartment building, spinning records, reading newspaper articles, and even calling play-by-play during games.

"I just thought, I'm giving information. I'm the building information person," Jim recalls. He laughs now about whether anyone was actually listening, but the impulse behind it was real. "I wanted to talk and hopefully get other people to listen."

That instinct followed him to Rutgers University, where a campus radio station became a turning point. For the first time, Jim found mentors and peers who believed in him, people who helped him build confidence and see his own potential.

"That experience was transformational for me," he says. "It lifted me into a whole new place, having confidence, knowing that I could accomplish things, knowing that I could make a difference."

Those relationships still matter deeply. Decades later, Jim remains in daily contact with many of those friends. "These people are like my brothers," he says. "They helped shape me into what I am today."

That foundation shaped how Jim leads today at Dakota News Now and throughout the Sioux Falls community. Over time, he realized his greatest strength wasn't being on the air but helping others succeed.

"What I love more than anything else is helping each person become the best version of themselves," Jim says. "That is my unshakable mantra."

It's the same belief that drew him to Sioux Falls in 2010. In a local market, Jim realized he could do more than just manage a station, he could mentor young journalists, create an environment where psychological safety in the workplace was a top priority, and help people believe in themselves early in their careers. "For a market this size, it's often a first job for those right out of school. And for those people, their experience here may well shape their career path," he explains.

For Jim, empowering people also means protecting them. One of his proudest moments at Dakota News Now came during severe weather coverage when the station interrupted programming to warn a small portion of the viewing area about a tornado threat. Some viewers were frustrated, but that interruption helped save lives.

"Our number one job is to keep people safe," Jim says. "If we don't do that, nothing else matters."



**Jim Berman, President and General Manager of Dakota News Now**

That sense of responsibility, putting people first, even when it's uncomfortable, is the same reason LifeScape resonates so deeply with him. Through years of nonprofit board service and community involvement, Jim has seen how critical it is for people facing challenges to know they are not alone.

"People need help," he says. "They need hope. And they need to know there's someone out there who can help them. Without organizations like LifeScape, what would happen to these people?" Jim asks. "That's why the work matters so much."

Through Dakota News Now's long-standing partnership with LifeScape, including the annual 30-minute television special Empowered by LifeScape, Jim has seen firsthand how storytelling can connect families to services they didn't even know existed.

"Sometimes you'll never know the impact," he says. "Maybe it's not even the person in the story. Maybe it's someone watching from somewhere else in the region who suddenly realizes, 'There's an answer here. There's help.'"

For LifeScape donors, that connection matters. Your generosity makes the work possible. Community partners help amplify it. Together, they create awareness, access, and hope for families across the region.

Jim believes success isn't always immediate or visible, but that doesn't make it any less real.

"If you put it out there, hopefully you've made a difference," he says. "Even if you never know it."

And in Jim Berman's world, just like at LifeScape, that belief is what drives everything forward: lifting people up, empowering lives, and helping every person move closer to their best life.



**Saturday,  
April 4<sup>th</sup>**  
6:30PM on KDLT

Presented By **Sammons**  
FINANCIAL

# From Our Foundation President



**Jessica Wells**  
LifeScape Foundation President

## 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual MallWalk was a record-breaking day to remember!

Early morning walkers were greeted with more than just storefront lights. LifeScape Ambassadors welcomed participants with smiles and direction toward the lively stage area filled with mascots, face painting, balloon animals, and more! On Saturday, February 7th 2026, more than 400 LifeScape supporters filled the corridors of the Empire Mall for the 32nd Annual MallWalk. The MallWalk raises money for equipment, supplies and program support for LifeScape. This year leading up to the event \$109,706 was raised. The generosity continued for weeks after the event breaking a record \$111,988.36!

This cherished event at the Empire Mall drew together 48 teams and hundreds of participants to help raise funds for the LifeScape Wish List. LifeScape staff identify specific equipment and supplies needed across various departments, location and programs. The event has funded school pictures, adaptive switches, environmental controls, games and community activity passes, patio furniture and outdoor recreation games, art supplies, trampolines, swings, large trikes, bicycles, and so much more.

The top individual fundraiser was no stranger to being a high achiever, LifeScape's longtime MallWalk champion Jeff Horstmeyer raised a total of \$6,316.87! The team that raised the most for MallWalk was Smiley Goats, also led by Jeff and his wife Erin. They raised \$9,782.27 with their team!

The second-place team that raised the most was the famous Power of Hope raising \$2,484.45. All the teams from MallWalk made LifeScape's mission their priority when fundraising. It was a fantastic turnout with so many supporters! One of the magical parts of MallWalk is the community it fosters with families facing many of the same challenges and the staff and donors who are there every step of the way cheering each individual on to live their best life!



MallWalk featured child, Tanner (right), and his dad, Paul (left).

**MallWalk 2027 is on February 2nd! THANK YOU and we will see you then!**



Empowering people to live their best life is LifeScape's mission. It means giving the children and adults we support the skills and opportunities to live the best possible life. That is defined by them and their care teams in an environment that surrounds them with dignity and respect. We talk with individuals about what is important to them and what is important to them. We listen. Repeatedly we receive praise from families for how LifeScape staff look past the barriers to find the possibilities and potential.

It is not just the people we support who this mission serves. It is also our staff who provide services at all LifeScape locations in every role. Leadership works with our state partners and legislators on reimbursement, so we can provide competitive wages, maintain facilities, and have the equipment necessary to meet the diverse needs of individuals in our care. For staff, living our best life at work means creating a culture of respect, accountability and collaboration and having the equipment, supplies and training needed to provide the best care.

You are an integral part of our mission, too. At the LifeScape Foundation we are committed to helping our donors live their best lives by accomplishing the impact they want to make in the world. We are a bridge between the legacy you want to leave and the lives that will be impacted by your generosity and support.

As a donor you have the right (within guidelines established by the IRS) to let us know how you want your support used within our mission. This past year you directly impacted the 5,500 children and adults supported through the use of donor restricted funds:

- \$14.6 million towards construction of the new children's campus in Sioux Falls.
- \$1.7 million in new adult residential home construction and remodels.
- \$663,494 in outpatient and outreach therapy program support for children in western South Dakota through our Rapid City facility.
- \$228,473 in staff training, recruitment and retention efforts.
- \$192,768 in adult services including day and residential services.
- \$108,840 in therapy equipment and supplies.
- \$103,470 in education program support.
- \$69,806 in children's residential services.

Unrestricted support helps us meet immediate needs not funded through other ways and if not utilized immediately it is invested to provide the annual distribution to LifeScape operations.

You make a difference in LifeScape's mission every day! You empower people to live their best lives. We are grateful to play a role in you living your best life, too!

Sincerely,

*Jessica Wells*

**Jessica B. Wells**  
LifeScape Foundation President

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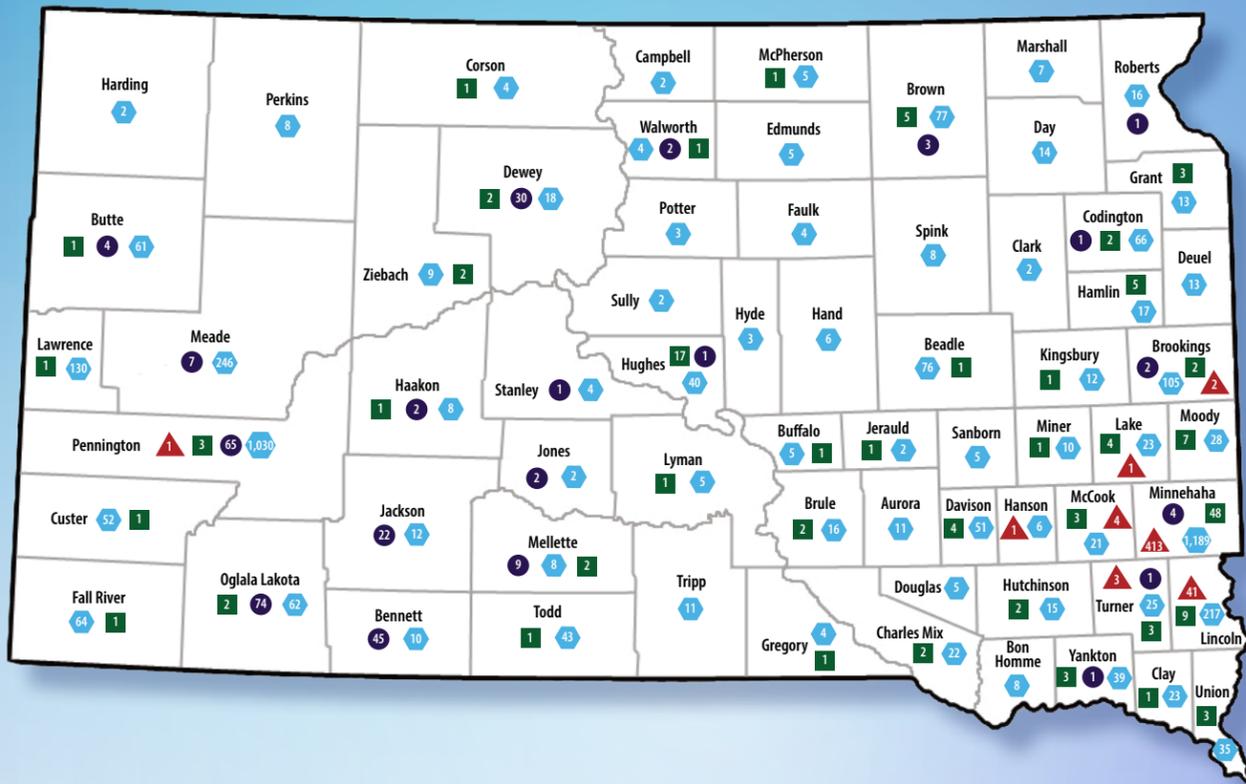
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## Media Sponsors



# LifeScape Served 5,500+ People in Fiscal Year 2025.



**Children's Services: Includes Specialty Hospital, Residential, Specialty School & Pathways**  
152 children served from South Dakota.

**Adult Community-Based Services:**  
466 adults served from South Dakota.

**Outreach**  
276 children served from South Dakota.

**Outpatient & RISE Custom Solutions**  
3,478 children and adults served from South Dakota.

## We Provided Services to Children and Adults from 65 of South Dakota's 66 Counties.

### Towns/Cities in South Dakota Served by LifeScape

- Aberdeen
- Agency Village
- Alcester
- Alexandria
- Allen
- Arlington
- Armour
- Artesian
- Astoria
- Aurora
- Avon
- Baltic
- Batesland
- Belle Fourche
- Belvidere
- Bemis
- Beresford
- Big Stone City
- Bison
- Black Hawk
- Blunt
- Bonesteel
- Box Elder
- Brandon
- Brentford
- Bridgewater
- Britton
- Brookings
- Bruce
- Bryant
- Buffalo
- Bu alo Gap
- Burke
- Camp Crook
- Canistota
- Canova
- Canton
- Caputa
- Carthage
- Castlewood
- Centerville
- Cherry Creek
- Chester
- Claire City
- Clear Lake
- Colman
- Colton
- Conde
- Corsica
- Creighton
- Cresbard
- Crooks
- Custer
- Dakota Dunes
- Dallas
- Dante
- De Smet
- Deadwood
- Dell Rapids
- Dickinson
- Dimock
- Dupree
- Eagle Butte
- Edgemont
- Egan
- Elk Point
- Elkton
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- Faulkton
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- Florence
- Forestburg
- Fort Meade
- Fort Pierre
- Fort Thompson
- Frederick
- Freeman
- Fruitdale
- Gann Valley
- Garretson
- Gary
- Gayville
- Geddes
- Gettysburg
- Glad Valley
- Glenham
- Gregory
- Grenville
- Groton
- Hamil
- Harrisburg
- Harrison
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- Isabel
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- Kadoka
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- Kimball
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- Lake Norden
- Lake Preston
- Langford
- Lantry
- Lead
- Lemmon
- Lennox
- Leola
- Letcher
- Little Eagle
- Lower Brule
- Madison
- Manderson
- Marion
- Martin
- McIntosh
- McLaughlin
- Meckling
- Midland
- Milbank
- Miller
- Mission
- Mitchell
- Mobridge
- Monroe
- Montrose
- Mount Vernon
- Murdo
- Nemo
- New E ngton
- New Underwood
- Newell
- Nisland
- Norris
- N. Sioux City
- Oacoma
- Oglala
- Okreek
- Olivet
- Oral
- Orient
- Ortle
- Owanka
- Parker
- Parkston
- Parmelee
- Philip
- Piedmont
- Pierre
- Pine Haven
- Pine Ridge
- Plankinton
- Platte
- Pollock
- Porcupine
- Prairie City
- Pringle
- Pukwana
- Quinn
- Ramona
- Rapid City
- Raymond
- Red Owl
- Red eld
- Ree Heights
- Renner
- Rockerville
- Roscoe
- Rosebud
- Rosholt
- Roslyn
- Saint Francis
- Salem
- Scenic
- Scotland
- Selby
- Sherman
- Sioux Falls
- Sioux
- Sisseton
- South Shore
- Spear sh
- Spring eld
- Stickney
- Sturgis
- Summerset
- Tabor
- Tea
- Toronto
- Trent
- Tripp
- Tuthill
- Twin Brooks
- Tyndall
- Union Center
- Utica
- Vale
- Valley Springs
- Vermillion
- Viborg
- Volga
- Volin
- Wagner
- Wakpala
- Wall
- Wanblee
- Warner
- Wasta
- Watertown
- Waubay
- Webster
- Wessington
- Wessington Springs
- White
- White Lake
- White River
- Whitewood
- Wilmot
- Winner
- Wolsey
- Woonsocket
- Worthing
- Wounded Knee
- Yankton

## 708 Children and Adults were from other states:



**Children's Services: Includes Specialty Hospital, Residential, Specialty School & Pathways**  
27 children served from three surrounding states; Iowa, Minnesota, and North Dakota.

**Outreach/Outpatient Services:**  
2 children served from two states; Iowa and North Dakota.

**Adult Community-Based Services**  
1 adult served from Iowa.

**Outpatient**  
675 children and adults served from eight states; Iowa, Minnesota, Mississippi, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, Nevada, and Wyoming.

# You Are My Sunshine

A song sung every Wednesday, June through August, for the past 22 years embraces the essence of a special place in northern Moody County for hundreds of individuals with developmental disabilities and the volunteers who open the world to them. It began with one man's recognition of the magic and soul-feeding experience of spending a day in nature. Lauren Christensen, until his passing late December, took his love for the community and nature and turned it into a place people find connection and joy.

Lauren connected people through all things Trent River Camp. In the acres that comprise Trent River Camp visitors from Dakotabilities, LifeScape, School for the Deaf, and several homeschool children come to feed cows, drive tractor, fish, and eat lunch in the shade of a quiet meadow. Lauren connected over 40 volunteers from the Trent area every Wednesday to rise bright and early to start the campfire so lunch was ready on time. They brought the International C tractor that had been adapted with a hydraulic lift seat individuals could transition from a wheelchair to the tractor seat safely – for many individuals this is the first time ever driving a motorized vehicle. They spend time mowing and keeping the paths clear so the way is smooth for activities.

This year the volunteers will still arrive early to prepare lunch, ready the tractor to drive and check on the cows eager to be fed. Dan Kuper will grab his guitar and lead the group of smiling faces filled with joy singing "You Are My Sunshine" as they finish up lunch. As Lauren once said to us, "People with disabilities aren't always welcome in social settings. They are always welcome here."



Lauren Christensen

Many volunteers and community members continue providing donations of time and money to help support corn for the cows, tractor, mower and wagon parts, and food for lunch. Lauren's love of farming and wanting to share that joy with others lives on. And because of one man's recognition of magic that laughter again will be shared every Wednesday at Trent River Camp this summer.

*"You are my sunshine, my only sunshine.*

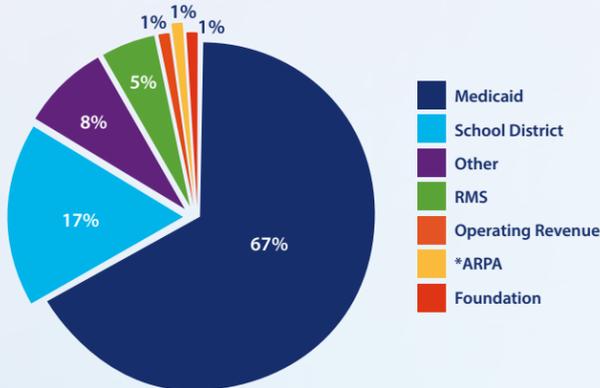
*You make me happy when skies are gray.*

*You'll never know dear how much I love you,*

*So please don't take my sunshine away."*

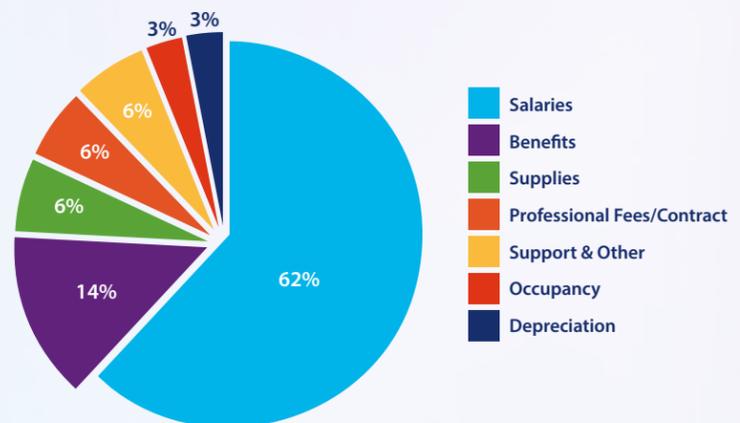
## 2025 LifeScape Audited Revenues Total: \$105,067,320

\*ARPA - \$1.2 million in American Rescue Plan Act funding provided for one-time funding for adult services and assistive technology COVID response, home and community based settings compliance, staff recruitment, training and retention, and vehicle purchases.



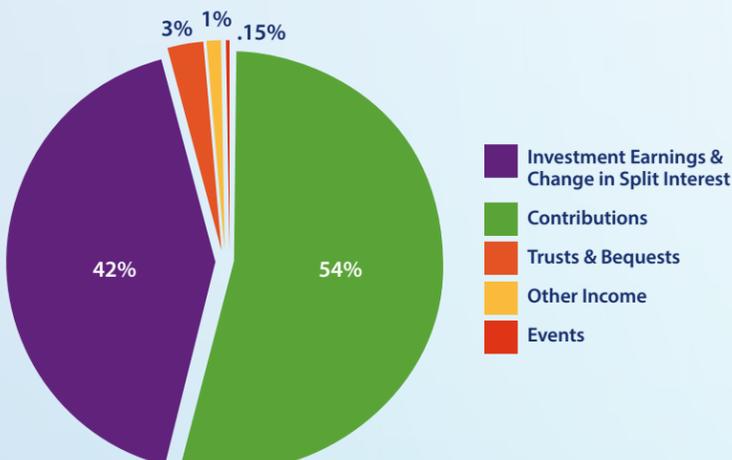
We do not budget for unrealized market gains and losses or the sale of investments.

## 2025 LifeScape Audited Expenses Total: \$92,243,321



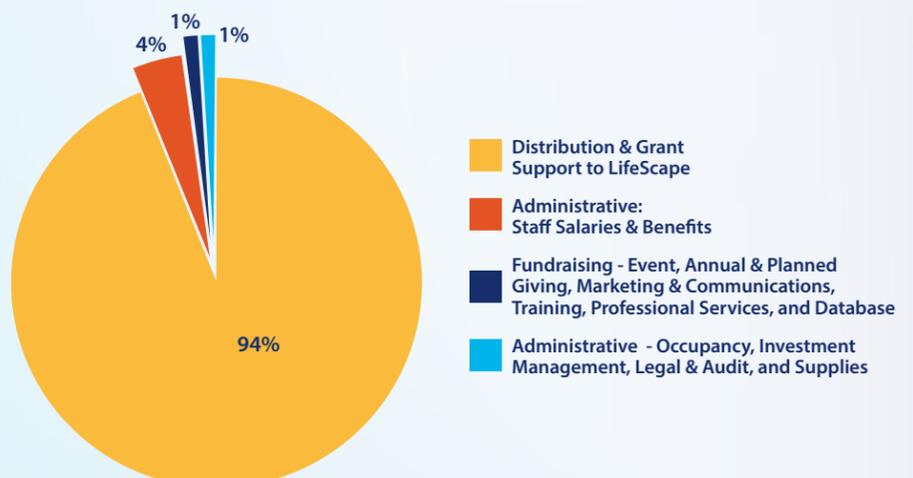
## 2025 LifeScape Foundation Audited Revenues Total: \$22,629,264

Net unrealized Gain on Investments of \$3,826,249 is not included in chart below.



## 2025 LifeScape Foundation Audited Expenses Total: \$19,620,172

LifeScape Foundation has a spending policy which allows for distributing 4% of the 16-quarter rolling average of the endowment's market value. The policy protects the endowment from inflation, provides for endowment growth, and makes possible a distribution amount for program support.



### March 24, 2026: East River Electric Online Auction and Raffle

An online auction to benefit LifeScape will be held on March 24th from 9AM-9PM. Preview of the auction items will be available in the days leading to the auction. You can view the auction items, register to bid and purchase \$100 raffle tickets to win the 2026 Ranger 1000 Premium with Cab at [LifeScapeSD.org/events/](https://LifeScapeSD.org/events/).

### April 4, 2026: "Empowered by LifeScape" TV special

A half-hour Dakota News Now special on the innovations and empowerments happening every day at LifeScape! After airing on KDLT-TV "Empowered by LifeScape" special will be posted at [DakotaNewsNow.com](https://DakotaNewsNow.com) and [LifeScapeSD.org/events/](https://LifeScapeSD.org/events/).

### April 17, 2026: Artability

The city of Sioux Falls is featuring artists with disabilities and LifeScape has many participants this year! If you know someone that would like to submit a piece, submissions are due March 27th. Join us April 17th from 5-7 PM for the Artist Reception. It will be hosted by the Mayor's Disability Awareness Accessibility Review Board (DAARB). Works are also available for purchase!

### May 1-10, 2026: Small Shops, Big Impact

A benefit for LifeScape that also highlights the power of local businesses and the meaningful role they play in supporting our community. Visit at any of the participating stores in the Sioux Falls area between May 1st through 10th and shop with impact, empowerment, and fun! Registration opens April 1st! Early registration earns additional chances to win great prizes! Find more information at [LifeScapeSD.org/events/](https://LifeScapeSD.org/events/).

### July 24-26, 2026: 57th Annual Winner Elks Rodeo

Three days of classic rodeo events at the winner, SD Fairgrounds to benefit children's outreach services across South Dakota. Three days of endless smiles and impact!

### October 10, 2026: 8th Annual Cornhole Tournament

Join us out west in the Black Hills for a day of competition, socializing, and a raffle with prizes. To be held at the Spearfish Holiday Inn & Convention Center. For details, check [LifeScapeSD.org/events/](https://LifeScapeSD.org/events/) and join our fun out in Spearfish, SD!

### December 1, 2026: Giving Tuesday

LifeScape is participating in the national Giving Tuesday awareness. LifeScape uses Giving Tuesday as a day of awareness and recognition! You are welcome to support us in donations or by spreading the LifeScape mission to others. Learn more at [LifeScapeSD.org/events/](https://LifeScapeSD.org/events/).

### February 2, 2027: LifeScape 33rd Annual MallWalk

Create your own team or come as an individual and help fundraise the needs and dreams of the people we support! Join us at the Empire Mall to Walk 'n' Roll for LifeScape! Registration and fundraising will open in November 2026. A day of entertainment and fun for all! Learn more about this event at [LifeScapeSD.org/events/](https://LifeScapeSD.org/events/).

### The LifeScape Ambassadors

The Ambassadors are an advocacy and volunteer group for LifeScape. They meet monthly for service, social, and educational events. To learn more, email [ambassadors@LifeScapeSD.org](mailto:ambassadors@LifeScapeSD.org).

Our LifeScape Foundation office address is  
3803 N Louise Ave, Sioux Falls, SD 57107.

If you have questions, call us at 605-444-9800!

# Children's Campus Update

## Moving from Vision to Readiness

At LifeScape's new Children's Campus, progress is no longer just conceptual, it is visible in drywall, fresh paint, and newly finished spaces that are beginning to feel less like a construction site and more like the future of our pediatric care in South Dakota.

In recent months, the pace has been steady and encouraging. Sections of the main building are taking shape from the inside out. Painting has begun in completed areas of the school. Walls are rising on lower levels while upper levels move closer to finishing work. Outside, parking infrastructure is being layered into place, gradually defining what will soon become a welcoming and highly functional campus entrance for families.

One of the earliest fully realized spaces is the new maintenance facility, offering a glimpse into what this campus represents beyond aesthetics. Purpose-built environments support the teams who keep operations running every day. Across the new campus, thoughtful planning is visible not only in patient rooms and classrooms, but in the infrastructure that sustains the entire system.

As the physical structure advances, another equally significant phase is unfolding quietly behind the scenes.

Preparing a campus of this scale for opening is a detailed and deliberate process. More than 650 individual rooms and operational spaces must be equipped, furnished, inspected, tested, and validated before the first child arrives. Hospital rooms must align with regulatory standards and clinical workflows. Classrooms must support individualized education plans. Therapy spaces require technological integration and equipment calibration. Residential areas must balance safety, dignity, and daily living functionality.

This work touches every corner of the organization. Technology systems are being mapped and tested. Security protocols are being elevated to meet the demands of a consolidated campus. Infection control and emergency preparedness plans are being re-evaluated and strengthened for a new environment.

The goal is simple, even if the process is complex: when the doors open, it must feel seamless.

Partnerships also continue to play an essential role in this chapter. Coordination with regulatory agencies, healthcare collaborators, and construction partners ensures that quality and safety remain uncompromised. This collaboration positions the Children's Campus not just as a new facility, but as a strengthened regional hub for pediatric specialty care.

There is still work ahead. Construction milestones will continue to give way to readiness milestones. Transition planning will become more visible. Teams will move from preparation into activation mode. But with each completed room and each system tested, the campus shifts from blueprint to reality.

For those who have supported this project from the beginning, this stage carries a particular significance. It is the point where vision becomes reality, where years of planning, partnership, and generosity begin to transform into spaces that will serve children and families for decades to come. For those who have yet to support the project, there's still time to help put the finishing touches in place. Simply visit [LifeScapeJourneyofHope.org](https://LifeScapeJourneyofHope.org) for more information.

The hard hats remain for now. But beneath them, the future is steadily taking form.



# Simple, Flexible Ways to Give Without Writing a Check



**Heidi Schultz**  
Major and Planned Giving Officer

Many assume planned giving (sometimes called legacy giving or charitable gift planning) is only for the ultra-wealthy, or that it requires giving up assets

immediately. In truth, most giving comes from regular families, and many planned gifts work well for people at different income levels. They allow individuals and families to align their personal financial goals with their philanthropic values. The most utilized planned gifts are bequests by will or trust and beneficiary designations. These can often be completed by simply updating existing documents.

A charitable bequest is one of the easiest gifts to make. With the help of an attorney, you can include language in your will or trust specifying a gift be made to LifeScape in addition to family or friends as part of your estate plan. Designating LifeScape Foundation as a

beneficiary to your retirement account or life insurance involves updating your beneficiary designation form. Personally, each year as my adult children become more established, I update my beneficiary forms to adjust percentages to kids and charity.

Some gifts provide lifetime income while offering significant tax advantages. Others pass wealth to heirs in a more strategic way. Gifts that support LifeScape and save you taxes include IRA Charitable Rollovers, Bargain Sales, and Charitable Lead Trusts (and others). Gifts that provide you and your loved ones with income and tax benefits include Gift Annuity, Charitable Remainder Unitrust, Charitable Remainder Annuity Trust, and Give It Twice Trust (and others). Your financial planner and/or estate attorney can help create the tool that meets your philanthropic and financial goals, desire for control, and tax efficiency.

The following table compares three types of planned gifts: bequests, beneficiary designation, and Charitable Remainder Trust (used with permission from www.plannedgiving.com "Compare Gift Plans").

	Bequest	Retirement Plan Assets, IRA	Charitable Remainder Trust
<b>How does it work?</b>	Simplest form of gift planning (plan now, give later)	Name LifeScape as the beneficiary of the plan	Trust that pays income for life or a term of years to donor and/or others. Assets ultimately benefit LifeScape
<b>A good fit for donors who want to</b>	Make a gift that costs nothing during donor's lifetime	Avoid double taxation at death; give tax-advantaged assets to heirs	Diversity assets, avoid or defer capital gains tax, secure often-greater income and possible inflation protection
<b>How does donor make the gift?</b>	Name LifeScape in will or living trust by designating a specific amount or a share of the residue	Name LifeScape as whole or partial successor beneficiary on your plan's form	Create a trust that pays income to donor and/or others; principal (remainder) ultimately goes to LifeScape
Donor Benefits			
<b>Reduce estate Taxes</b>	Donation exempt from federal estate tax	Donation exempt from federal estate and income tax	Removes taxable assets from estate
<b>Reduce income tax</b>		Heirs will avoid income tax	Deduction for gift portion of asset
<b>Reduce or eliminate capital gains tax</b>	Complete avoidance		Partial avoidance
<b>Get income back from the gift</b>			Variable or fixed income for life
<b>Give an asset but keep enjoying it</b>	Control of assets during lifetime	Continue to take withdrawals from plan during lifetime	
<b>More</b>	Make a substantial gift when donor no longer needs the assets	Often overlooked and easily given	Significant income and estate tax advantages
<b>How does it benefit LifeScape?</b>	Ensures LifeScape's future strength	Ensures LifeScape's future strength	Ensures LifeScape's future strength

Information provided is informational and educational in nature. It is not offering professional tax, legal, or accounting advice. For specific advice about the effect of any planning concept on your tax or financial situation or with your estate, please consult a qualified professional advisor.

Remember, planned gifts are designed with long-term impact in mind. They allow you to meet your personal financial goals while making a difference for the future of LifeScape. They allow you to provide more significant, smarter gifts than you thought possible.

For more information please visit our website [WWW.LifeScapeGift.org](http://WWW.LifeScapeGift.org) or to visit about what type(s) of planned giving may work for your situation, reach out to Heidi Schultz, Major and Planned Giving Office (email: [Heidi.Schultz@LifeScapeSD.org](mailto:Heidi.Schultz@LifeScapeSD.org) or phone: 605.444.9800).

## Volunteers promote personal connections in 2025

A key part of LifeScape Volunteer Services is to connect people we support with community members to develop social networks and personal connections and help people supported participate in the community. A record number of volunteers helped accomplish that purpose in 2025!

Here's our volunteer program in numbers:

- Total Number Volunteers: 3,060 (up 737 people from 2024)
- Total volunteer hours: 12,478 (up by 1,572 hours from 2024)
- New volunteers: 418
- Returning volunteers: 2,107 (up by 566 people from 2024)

Christmas Wish List Statistics:

- 1,573 wishes granted out of 2,915 wishes
- 83 adults, 86 children & 4 day students benefitted
- 14 wish tree locations
- Estimated 1500 community members engaged with LifeScape over the holiday!



**Volunteer Anna Sinning (left) enjoys selling cookies and earning scout badges with her friend and fellow Girl Scout Xiomara (right).**

Volunteers help in many different ways at LifeScape from working in classrooms and evening residential program activities, adult day services programs, Miracle League teams, field trips, and baby rockers in the hospital, laundry help, therapy helpers, pre-professional programs for medical students,

# Needs & Dreams Wish List

Your gift helps change lives.

Many people like to provide specific gifts to impact individuals in a very direct way. Here are some ways you can enhance the lives of people with disabilities at LifeScape.

### \$2,500

- Adaptive Climbing Wall
- Rent Assistance (Any Amount)

### \$1,500

- Physical Therapy Slip Trainer
- Sensory Activity Panels for Waiting Room

### \$750

- Buddy Boat Swing
- Protective Head Gear

### \$500

- Vision Assessment & Treatment Tool Box
- Stampede Hockey Season Tickets

### \$250

- Potted Flowers for Hospital & Residential Areas
- STEM Wall Activity Sensory Boards

### \$100

- Sensory Lamps
- Community Activity Funds
- Dynamic Movement Sensory Body Sock

### \$50

- Gift Cards for Movie Passes
- Arts & Crafts Supplies

### \$25

- Men's or Women's Underwear
- Personal Hygiene Items (Shampoo/Conditioner, Soap, Toothpaste)

If you wish to provide one of the above needs, please check the item and send this form with your gift to LifeScape Foundation, 3803 N. Louise Ave., Sioux Falls, SD 57107-0115. Or, scan the QR code below which links to our donation page at [LifeScapeSD.org](http://LifeScapeSD.org). If you have any questions, call us at 605-444-9800 or email [Giving@LifeScapeSD.org](mailto:Giving@LifeScapeSD.org)



Scan this QR code to link to our donation page on [LifeScapeSD.org](http://LifeScapeSD.org)

**Thank you**  
for your generous support!



Get Social: Find us on Facebook, X, LinkedIn, YouTube, and Instagram!



teachers, and therapists, partnering with our LifeScape Girl Scout troop among many other areas! If you or someone you know is interested in becoming a volunteer visit our website at [LifeScapeSD.org/volunteers](http://LifeScapeSD.org/volunteers) to get started or call Volunteer Services at 605-444-9621.